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building, Carpenter said.

The wooden shingles on the roof of the old cabin directly behind the Mock House have started to leak and need to be replaced before water ruins the inside of the structure.

About three years ago, the old springhouse, or well house, that sat behind the cabin washed off its log foundation when the creek overflowed its banks. The foundation logs have rotted and are unrestorable, and the roof structure is sitting in the creek.

The general consensus of those attending the June 11 meeting was that the springhouse is a complete loss.

Bamboo and brush have overgrown the creek area behind the Mock House, making the area completely unusable.

There is some gutter and drainage work that needs to be attended to as well at the Mock House and new Annex Building, plus some scraping and painting around the Mock House trim.

Carpenter said it's too soon to expect any estimates from the people she has contacted regarding all the necessary repair work, but as someone familiar with remodeling, she estimated the total cost for all the repairs to be in the neighborhood of \$25,000.

The Historical Society does not currently have the funds to carry out all the necessary repairs and cleanup, largely due to the recent expense of a new heating and air system at the Old Courthouse.

Manpower is also in short

supply, and Carpenter said many of the small, ongoing maintenance projects could be handled quickly by a group of history-loving volunteers.

And as always, donations are much appreciated.

For more information and to find out how to volunteer, call the Historical Society at 706-745-5493.

In other news, the Historical Society is inviting the public to attend Antique Show-and-Tell Day at the Union County Farmers Market on June 29.

People are encouraged to bring their antique, primitive, rare, historic or just really old items they want identified or displayed to the Historical Society booth at the Farmers Market this Saturday morning, and to share the history of those treasures.

Antique Show-and-Tell Day is also part of a drive for new membership.

Also on June 29, Blairsville native and Atlanta icon George Berry will speak at the Old Courthouse starting at 2 p.m.

Berry worked in Atlanta politics for years and was a driving force behind the growth of Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

He will be speaking to the public and Historical Society members about his experiences throughout his working years and how his Blairsville roots carried him through.

And Historical Society member Mary Carol Akins is asking that the Union County High School Class of 1955 join her in supporting their former classmate George Berry on June 29.

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be necessary. That's why Mitchell is recommending that the board start to consider a series of revenue-neutral rate adjustments to take place over several years.

Simply put, a revenue-neutral rate adjustment is a proportional lowering of the energy charge and raising of the customer charge so as to have no impact on the electric bills of average residential users.

Such adjustments would result in the transfer of fixed costs out of the co-op's variable energy charge, thereby allowing the EMC to recover more in fixed costs regardless of power use.

Mitchell also pointed out that implementing revenue-neutral rate adjustments would work to even out power bills somewhat throughout the year, as decreased variable energy rates would result in smaller fluctuations in electric use during typical high-usage times like summer and winter.

Of course, there's a separate issue associated with the idea of revenue-neutral rate adjustments, namely the question of who should be responsible for the financial burden of delivering electricity to the entire membership.

Because fixed costs have historically been built into the per kilowatt-hour energy rate, fixed charges have always varied per household based on energy usage.

For example, a family of four would likely use more energy than a part-time resident in a second home. This would understandably result in higher energy charges for the family, but it would also result in the family paying disproportionately more in fixed costs to maintain the EMC, despite all co-op members relying equally on the same infrastructure to keep the lights on.

The same would hold true for lower-income households in which homeowners can't afford to adopt more energy efficient technologies or home modifications, potentially culminating in higher fixed charges for lower-income residents compared to part-time and/or lower-use members.

Ultimately, future revenue-neutral rate adjustments would help maintain the EMC by granting it better cost recovery in an inflationary environment featuring declining individual power sales, all while enabling a fairer distribution of fixed cost charges than is currently the case.

Members Joseph and Lourdes Trutie attended the June 17 meeting to express dissatisfaction with higher-use, full-time members having to pay more of the EMC's fixed costs than part-time residents.

They suggested that the EMC establish an additional charge for part-timers with second homes, though Director Cory Payne informed them that it would be against the EMC's agreement with TVA to do so.

In other rate news, EMC General Manager Jeremy Nelms announced that, given recent public remarks made by new TVA CEO Jeffrey Lyash, it's possible that the expected 2019 TVA wholesale rate increase may be postponed, potentially indefinitely.

The EMC Board voted in May to pass the expected increase – with corresponding EMC revenue-neutral rate adjustment for residential and GSA1 accounts – on to member bills.

Should TVA Board Members decide in their August meeting not to implement the expected rate increase, EMC members will dodge the across-the-board \$1.54 per month additional charge that was slated to begin in October.

However, as determined by EMC Board Members in their May meeting, the co-op's corresponding revenue-neutral rate adjustment will go into effect regardless of what action TVA takes on its expected rate increase.

Discounting the TVA rate increase, the EMC rate adjustment will result in slightly higher bills for below-average residential power consumers, while above-average users will see slightly lower costs, and average users, at 907 kWh, will experience no change in their monthly bills.

If TVA does choose to implement the rate increase, all

residential and GSA1 member accounts will experience the same \$1.54 in additional charges per month for a flat \$18.48 more a year.

Members should keep in mind that the revenue-neutral rate adjustment will result in the customer charge on all residential accounts reflecting a \$1.54 increase from \$21.37 to \$22.91 on Oct. 1, though without the TVA increase, the energy charge will remain at the lowered variable rate.

This will be the third year running that the EMC has conducted a revenue-neutral rate adjustment in anticipation of annual TVA rate increases in recent years.

Mitchell has only recommended revenue-neutral rate adjustments for residential and GSA1 accounts, as larger commercial GSA2 and GSA3 accounts already pay additional demand charges not paid by smaller accounts.

GSA1 accountholders are members with modest power needs that are still greater than typical residential members, like members requiring second meters at their homes or small businesses.

And the EMC membership overwhelmingly consists of these smaller user accounts, which is why eventually moving the needle on fixed costs by making revenue-neutral rate adjustments on residential and GSA1 accounts figures so heavily in the future financial solvency of the EMC.

Currently, the EMC serves 53,015 members, with 42,066 residential members, 10,683 GSA1 members, and only 266 GSA2 and GSA3 larger member accounts.

Also in the June 17 meeting, the EMC Board approved the co-op's FY2020 budget of \$92.8 million. The budget features an additional \$750,000 in new fiber-optic internet construction in the

EMC's five-county area, which will augment the \$740,000 in new fiber built out this year.

Members interested in running for the EMC Board of Directors ahead of the 2019 Annual Meeting in September should turn in Director Candidate Forms to the EMC's Nominating Committee no later than June 26.

If a potential candidate misses this deadline, they will be required to seek nomination by petition.

OHV (Off Highway Vehicle) passes available at local retail partners



U.S. Forest Service managers on the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests, Blue Ridge Ranger District, are pleased to announce a partnership with the following locations for public purchase of the daily Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) pass for use of the respective OHV Trails, beginning June 30, 2019:

Davenport OHV Area - Nottely Food Mart, 5916 Murphy Highway, Blairsville, GA 30512, 706-745-4159; Whisenhunt OHV Area - Clay Creek Falls Grocery Store, 2261 Oak Grove Road, Dahlonega, GA 30533, 706-482-0515; and Beasley Knob OHV Area - Chevron, 430A Young Harris Highway, Blairsville, GA 30512, 706-745-0964.

The partnership with local locations allows visitors to conveniently purchase a daily pass prior to arriving at the OHV area. Visitors using recreation sites where fees are required must display a valid recreation pass per posted instructions; usually either per person or per vehicle (up to \$100 fine for non-compliance).

Motorists are encouraged to view the Recreation Conditions Report or "call before you haul" for confirmation that the OHV area is open. Please contact the local retail stores to confirm hours of operation and pass availability.

More information is available at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/conf/recreation/ohv> or by calling the Blue Ridge Ranger District at 706-745-6928. NJun26Z19/CA