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PowerSouth helps Dorsey Trailer receive \$1 million loan

Ten years ago, anyone driving to Elba, Ala., on Highway 84 would have seen a dormant and deserted Dorsey Trailer. One of three original Elba businesses, this once thriving industry was evidence of the Great Recession's impact on manufacturing operations throughout the country.

The company was closed for more than a year when Jeff Pitts, owner of Pitts Enterprises in Pittsview, Ala., acquired the company in bankruptcy court in 2007. He knew what the business once meant to the City of Elba, so he took a chance with the hope of rebuilding the company.

"It was a complete reboot from zero," Pitts says.

The City of Elba and PowerSouth helped Dorsey secure a \$1 million zero-interest loan, which the company will use to expand and create up to 50 new jobs.

Dorsey Trailer currently employs 300 people who manufacture tractor truck trailers with an emphasis on flatbed trailers. Over the past 10 years, Pitts' leadership has helped Dorsey

Trailer become the fastest-growing platform trailer manufacturer in the country.

Elba Mayor Mickey Murdock says Dorsey Trailer's expansion will greatly benefit the city.

"Dorsey has been a cornerstone for Elba and has meant a lot to the growth of the city," Murdock says.

Successful small industries are critical to the economic strength of rural communities like Elba. PowerSouth understands the vital role of these businesses and supports their continued growth. Through its existing industry initiative, PowerSouth and local cooperative leaders meet with existing industry representatives to discuss available resources.

"It all goes back to jobs," says Caleb Goodwyn, PowerSouth Community Development and Finance Representative. "A good measure of the strength and health of our communities is the number of jobs they have. We try to help foster that growth."

The loan to Dorsey Trailer is through the United States Department of Agriculture's

Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program, which provides funding for rural projects. PowerSouth and its members have participated in the program since 1996, securing more than \$24 million in loan and grant funds.

Elba, one of PowerSouth's four municipal members, did not meet the cooperative requirement of the loan program. PowerSouth served as the intermediary, applying for the loan on Elba's behalf.

"I am always proud to advocate for the expansion of jobs and the use of available resources and partnerships through the USDA," U.S. Rep Martha Roby says. "I'm glad that in this case, a small business in rural Alabama benefited from our federal taxes in a tangible way. I am excited for my friends at Dorsey Trailer, and I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success."

"It means a great deal to us that PowerSouth and the City of Elba helped us," Pitts says. "Small businesses are often overlooked, and we very much appreciated getting that extra consideration to grow our business." ■

(Above, left to right) PowerSouth Community Development and Finance Representative Caleb Goodwin, Pitts Enterprises Owner Jeff Pitts, and Elba Mayor Mickey Murdock.



Headquarters Warehouse staff are (left to right): Charles Moore, Mike Pollock, Ricky Cook, Brenda Rodgers, Tim Whatley, James "Bo" Welcher and Brian Ward.

Keeping it stocked and checked

PowerSouth's warehouses are the foundation of reliability

More than \$50 million worth of tools and parts fill the shelves and storage areas of four PowerSouth warehouses, where professional teams meticulously track the inventory.

The system is a key component in the cooperative's emphasis on reliability because PowerSouth plants and crews must have quick access to the parts and tools needed to supply energy to member systems. The warehouse workers make it possible.

PowerSouth has four warehouses, at Central Generation, Lowman Power Plant, McIntosh Power Plant and Headquarters.

"We are like their Walmart," says Ronda Kirkland, Inventory Control Supervisor at Central Generation. "We need to have anything they need to do their job. Reliability is essential for the power plants. So we have to

be reliable at all times, making sure our plant teams have the parts they need."

Central Generation

Kirkland joined PowerSouth 29 years ago. She and storekeepers Dale Martin and T.J. Defee take pride in their work. For the last 15 years, the Central Generation warehouse has checked out 100 percent in inventory at the end-of-the-year audit. That's no small feat considering they have more than \$14 million worth of parts, equipment and safety equipment in their warehouse. An efficient, well-organized warehouse allows them to keep track of every item. Then, they back it up with regular spot checks.

"When I first started, I asked Ronda about something being off, and she said that's why we check it, double check it and then triple check it," Martin says. "We do a lot of spot

checking, and that's why we always check out at 100 percent."

Power plants operate around the clock, and the warehouse is organized so that plant supervisors can find what they need after hours. A ticketing system also helps Kirkland and her team track inventory once it is distributed, including who received each item.

"We not only take pride in the count being right but also in the cleanliness, the organization and ease of using the warehouse," Kirkland says.

Lowman Power Plant

The Lowman warehouse contains \$9.6 million worth of inventory, including bearings, belts, pulleys and spare parts for plant equipment.

Bill Blount, who has worked at PowerSouth for 33 years, recently became the Inventory Control Supervisor in the Lowman warehouse.

Previously, Blount was a storekeeper, a position that keeps track of the inventory in the warehouse, locates the part or equipment requested, and delivers it. Blount now supervises three storekeepers: Dorothy

Smith, Tommy Deas and Leslie Threadgill. Sherry Criswell serves as clerk. In addition to managing the warehouse, the team also helps unload shipments, and stock inventory. They also help contractors unload equipment.

"You have to work together, and you have to trust each other," Blount says. "For me, I have to trust the person working the front desk and trust the storekeepers to do their job. It's critical that we do our job and do it right."

McIntosh Power Plant

The McIntosh Power Plant's warehouse is the smallest and managed by one person — Beverly Wilson, Maintenance and Inventory Scheduler.

"If it happens in the warehouse, then I do it," she says.

Wilson — who manages orders, stocking and distribution — has worked at PowerSouth for 23 years and has served in her current role since 2010. Before that, she was an administrative clerk in the warehouse at Lowman.

Wilson handles all warehouse duties, a manageable role because McIntosh is a peaking plant and only runs when energy demand is high. The warehouse's inventory is valued at almost \$16 million and includes large items, such as an 11-ton rotor assembly. In addition to warehouse duties, Wilson also works as the plant's maintenance scheduler and administrative clerk.

"Being involved in maintenance scheduling helps me better understand the parts," she says. "I love getting to work in a lot of different areas. I get to learn a lot, and I'm always asking questions trying to learn as much as I can."

Headquarters

The Headquarters warehouse is different from the others in that it doesn't supply parts to a power plant.

"This warehouse is centered on keeping the power transmitted," says Mike Pollock, Warehouse Supervisor. "We have anything that it takes to get the power from the power plant to member cooperatives."

The warehouse supports two line crews, six substation crews, system protection crews, telecom crews and many others who need parts and equipment. They also serve three district offices: Western District in Leroy, Ala.;



Central Generation Warehouse staff are (left to right): Dale Martin, Ronda Kirkland and T.J. Defee.



Lowman Warehouse staff are (left to right): Tommy Deas, Sherrie Criswell, Bill Blount, Leslie Threadgill, Carrie Beverly and Dorothy Smith.

Baldwin District in Robertsedale, Ala.; and Chipley District in Chipley, Fla.

Parts include power poles, line, transformers and more. Currently, the warehouse stock is worth more than \$17 million. The warehouse has five storekeepers: Ricky Cook, Charles Moore, Brian Ward, James "Bo" Welcher and Tim Whatley. Brenda Rodgers serves as administrative clerk.

"In this position, you get a chance to learn about the cooperative," Pollock says. "All of our guys will ask questions about what parts do. You learn about everything that goes on at PowerSouth. That interests me and all of us out here." ■



Beverly Wilson is the Maintenance and Inventory Scheduler at the McIntosh Power Plant.

Pay yourself first in 2018!

How the 401(k) Pension Plan can help you save for the future

PowerSouth offers you a great benefit — participation in the 401(k) Pension Plan. With a 401(k) Plan account, you are in the driver's seat. You get to decide how much to contribute to your account each paycheck and how those dollars will be invested. You can also adjust your savings rate and investment strategy as your circumstances change. Many people increase their contributions each time they get a pay raise so they will not notice the difference in their take-home pay.

There are advantages to building your retirement savings through your 401(k) Plan:

1. Paying yourself first is easy

Automatic contributions are made straight from your paycheck to your 401(k) Plan account, so you do not have to make a decision to save each month.

2. You get a pre-tax advantage

One of the biggest benefits of a 401(k) Plan: Your contributions are made before income taxes are calculated on your paycheck. That means you pay less income tax now, and for every dollar you contribute, less than a dollar comes out of your take-home pay. Of course, there is also the option to contribute on an after-tax basis. You can contribute to Roth and pay the taxes now and not have to pay them later.

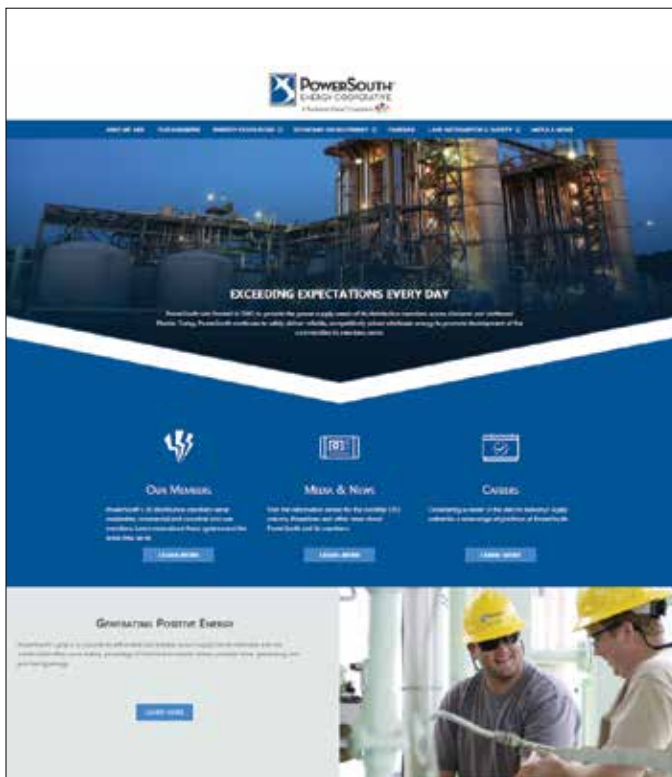
3. You own your benefit 100%

From day one, you are 100% vested in your 401(k) Plan contributions. As an added bonus, the 401(k) Plan accepts rollovers from other qualified retirement plans, so you may be able to put these benefits to work for your other retirement savings as well.

4. Invest according to your comfort level

The 401(k) Plan offers a wide range of investment options. You can choose to invest in any of the funds, including NRECA's Target Date Portfolios, which offer an automatically diversified, hands-free way of investing based on your age.

When you need help...NRECA offers a special resource to all participants: the Personal Investment & Retirement Consulting (PIRC) team. A PIRC team member can help answer your questions about savings, investment choices and retirement planning. PIRC team members are financial professionals who work for you — not for commissions. They are here to provide you with one-on-one objective guidance to help you with your financial decisions, including making the most of your 401(k) Plan account. To contact PIRC, call 866.673.2299 (option 6) Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Time (or by appointment) or email pirc@nreca.coop. ■



PowerSouth has a new website! Visit www.powersouth.com to see the new, user-friendly design.

Reeder joins PowerSouth Board of Trustees



Tracy Reeder of Slocomb, Ala., has been elected to the PowerSouth Board of Trustees to represent Wiregrass EC. His appointment was approved at PowerSouth's November board meeting.

Reeder, a U.S. Postal Service carrier, was originally elected to the Wiregrass EC Board of Trustees in 2009. He has served on the Alabama Rural Electric Association (AREA) Board of Directors and has received a board leadership certificate. He has served as Chairman of Geneva County Board of Equalization and as President of Slocomb Pee Wee Football Association. He currently serves on the Public Building Authority Board of Geneva County.

He and his wife, Amy, have three children: Chase, Wade and Max. They are members of Rehobeth Baptist Church, where Reeder is a deacon and a Sunday school teacher. ■

Jimmy V and Jackson

Since 2006, the NCAA and ESPN have sponsored Jimmy V Week, showcasing the country's best college basketball teams in a competition to fund the V Foundation's effort to cure cancer.

Jimmy V Week was founded upon a speech made by Jimmy Valvano in March 1993 at the first annual ESPY Awards. The former basketball coach, who won a NCAA National Championship at North Carolina State in 1983, delivered a powerful and moving speech while accepting the Arthur Ashe Courage and Humanitarian Award.

Coach Valvano was in the final stages of his battle with bone cancer. He had to be assisted to the podium by his two close friends, Dick Vitale and Mike Krzyzewski. Once there, Coach Valvano came to life and was full of energy and passion saying, "I am fighting cancer. Time is very precious to me. I don't know how much I have left, and I have some things that I would like to say."

He told the crowd, "There are three things we all should do every day. Number one is laugh. You should laugh every day. Number two is think. You should spend some time in thought. Number three is, you should have your emotions moved to tears — could be happiness or joy. But think about it. If you laugh, you think, and you cry, that's a full day. That's a heck of a day. You do that seven days a week, you're going to have something special."

Coach Valvano talked about the Jimmy V Foundation for Cancer Research and the importance of raising money for cancer research. He said, "It may not save my life. It may save my children's lives. It may save someone you love. The Foundation's motto is 'Don't give up, don't ever give up.' That's what I'm going to try to do every minute that I have left."

Finally, he said, "I gotta go, and I got one last thing and I said it before, and I want to say it again. Cancer can take away all my physical abilities. It cannot touch my mind, it cannot touch my heart and it cannot touch my soul. And those three things are going to carry on forever."

Cancer took Coach Valvano two weeks later. There are many memorable speeches, but every so often there is a speech in the most extraordinary of circumstances that stands the test of time — a speech that continues to move people to tears and motivates them in ways they had never imagined. A speech that stays with you forever. Coach Valvano's speech was one of those.

Last week I met Jackson Conway, a remarkable young man. He is from Evergreen, Ala., is 14 years old, a freshman at Sparta Academy, plays all sports, likes hunting and fishing, is an avid Alabama football fan, and has cancer.

He was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma last July, with a tumor on his jaw bone and deposits in his lungs. We have flown him to M.D. Anderson for treatments. He has been taking chemo treatments for months. Doctors recently removed the tumor and a large section of his right jawbone. They replaced his jawbone with a bone graft from his right lower leg, which left him with a terrible scar and in a walking boot. They also took his lower right teeth and left him with a scar under his right jaw.

He is a handsome and intelligent young man. A young man that could just as easily be mine or yours, instead of Kristy and Terry Conway's. He is stoic, yet upbeat about his situation. He talks about playing sports and hunting deer.

He also talks about his recent trip to Tuscaloosa, attending an Alabama football practice, spending time with the players, meeting Coach Saban, hanging out in Coach Saban's office, and trying on his practice hat. He gave the players wristbands that have his name and favorite Bible verse, Jeremiah 29:11. Some of the players, including quarterback Jalen Hurts, wore Jackson's wristbands in the game against Mercer in November. They send him messages of encouragement.

Through his treatment, Jackson has been a rock of faith. He tells his family, "I know I am going to be OK. Don't worry, I am going to win this." In Houston during Hurricane Harvey, Jackson asked his Mom, "Why are y'all worried about the storm? God has helped me through cancer up to this point, so he's going to take care of us through the storm."



Jackson follows Coach Valvano's creed, "Don't give up. Don't ever give up."

Do something to help, do something to help someone. We can't save Jimmy Valvano, but we might save your child's life or someone you love. We might save Jackson's life. He still has a long, hard fight in front of him.

You can follow Jackson and make a contribution on Facebook at TeamJackson. I hope you have as good a month as Jackson. ■



Gary Smith

PowerSouth President and CEO

Service anniversaries



Sam Sullivan
Lowman
39 years, Jan. 30



Mike Blocker
Telecom Services
38 years, Jan. 2



Kenny Weaver
Lowman
37 years, Jan. 2



Darrell Lathan
McIntosh
37 years, Jan. 5



Wayne Phillips
Lowman
37 years, Jan. 13



Fred Bryant
Lowman
37 years, Jan. 19



Ray Smith
Lowman
37 years, Jan. 19



Tommy Deas
Lowman
35 years, Jan. 24



Jill Jones
Bulk Power Services
33 years, Jan. 28



Johnny Mack
T&D Technical Services
32 years, Jan. 20



Dewayne Foshee
Energy Services
30 years, Jan. 25



Tim Hattaway
Energy Services
29 years, Jan. 9



David McDuffie
Central Generation
29 years, Jan. 9



Casey Thompson
T&D Eng. & Const.
28 years, Jan. 3



Sam Phillips
Lowman
28 years, Jan. 15



Tim Sullivan
Lowman
28 years, Jan. 15



Wanda Woods
Communications
28 years, Jan. 29



Reggie Chestang
Lowman
27 years, Jan. 7



Danny Taylor
Lowman
27 years, Jan. 7



John Goldman
Lowman
27 years, Jan. 28



Brian Fleming
Comp. Info. Services
26 years, Jan. 6



Horace Horn
External Affairs
18 years, Jan. 3



Michael Hardage
Central Generation
18 years, Jan. 10



Joe Boyd
Central Generation
18 years, Jan. 17



Phil Bush
Energy Services
18 years, Jan. 24



Chad Chandler
Energy Services
18 years, Jan. 31



Steve Ballard
Central Generation
17 years, Jan. 29



Ricky Cochran
Central Generation
17 years, Jan. 29



Keith Curry
Central Generation
17 years, Jan. 29



Stephen Erdy
Central Generation
17 years, Jan. 29



Joe Jones
Central Generation
17 years, Jan. 29



Johnny King
Central Generation
17 years, Jan. 29



Mark Pippin
Central Generation
17 years, Jan. 29



Craig Wilson
Central Generation
17 years, Jan. 29



Anthony Whitman
Substation O&M
16 years, Jan. 2



Brian Salter
Substation O&M
15 years, Jan. 1



Christi Scruggs
Communications
14 years, Jan. 26



Jody Jackson
Energy Services
13 years, Jan. 3



Jason Kelley
Energy Services
13 years, Jan. 3



Justin Williams
Lowman
12 years, Jan. 16



Bert Pettis
Lowman
12 years, Jan. 23



Angela Crittenden
Safety Services
8 years, Jan. 19



Ginny Grimes
Legal Affairs & Comp.
5 years, Jan. 3



Nick Cleland
Transmission O&M
5 years, Jan. 7



Chris Clements
Lowman
5 years, Jan. 7



Mitch Alexander
T&D Technical Services
5 years, Jan. 14



Stephanie Williams
HR Services
5 years, Jan. 18



Chris Harwell
T&D Planning
3 years, Jan. 5



DeLana Henagan
CRC
3 years, Jan. 5



Brent Hinds
T&D Eng. & Const.
3 years, Jan. 5



Tiffany Johnson
Telecom Services
3 years, Jan. 5



Tina Little
CRC
3 years, Jan. 5



Wes Scott
T&D Technical Services
3 years, Jan. 5



Lanie Sells
Substation O&M
3 years, Jan. 5



Travis Thomas
Planning, Reg. & Comp.
3 years, Jan. 5



Amy Turner
Computer Info. Svcs.
3 years, Jan. 5



Lisa Dodd
Finance & Accounting
3 years, Jan. 19



Drew Wilson
Substation O&M
3 years, Jan. 19



Michael Smith
Telecom Services
3 years, Jan. 30



Dilan Manring
Environmental Services
2 years, Jan. 18

Comings and goings



Welcome

Ethan Hall, Plant Technician at Central Generation, effective Nov. 16.



Clark Sanders, Analyst II - Planning in Power Supply, effective Nov. 28.



Alex Short, AV-Multimedia Specialist in Communications, effective Nov. 20.



Shawn McCardell, Analyst II - Planning in Power Supply, effective Dec. 4.

Board Meeting

The January 26 Board meeting will take place at Trustee Update.



NEW arrivals



Congratulations to **Rita Kelley** (Finance & Accounting) on the birth of her twin grandsons, Walter Declan Stephens (7 lb. 10 oz. and 19.5 inches long) and Fred Dalton Stephens (7 lb. 14 oz. and 19.75 inches long) on Oct. 4. Proud parents are Justin and Allison (Kelley) Stephens.

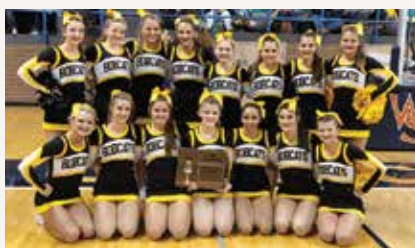
Happy Birthday!

- January 2..... James Pugh
Carl Sherrouse
Jerrold Syphrit
- January 3..... Heath Mills
Anna Stephens
- January 4..... Kelly King
- January 5..... Land Sikes
- January 7..... Jonas Lathan
- January 8..... Neal Floyd
- January 9..... Eric Copeland
- January 10..... William Holley
Russell Rigdon
- January 11..... Michelle Stokes
- January 12..... Charlie Etheridge
Scottie McBride
- January 15..... A.J. Johnson
Ronnie Moore
Bert Pettis
Keith Stephens
Justin Williams
- January 16..... Ira Bryant
- January 17..... Mike Majors
Matthew McIntyre
Christi Scruggs
Wes Thomasson
Vickey Weeks
- January 18..... Tracey Bennett
Gabe Cartee
Chuck Dutton
- January 19..... Golden Coleman
Marlin O'Guynn
- January 20..... Jason Renner
- January 21..... Daryl Batley
Amber Dearmon
- January 24..... Danny Dees
Tim Whatley
Lamar Williamson
- January 25..... Merrill Davis
David Norris
Barry Orso
- January 26..... Andrew Jones
Bruce Monk
- January 27..... Steve Griffin
Eddie Howell
- January 28..... Caleb Williams
- January 29..... Vann Bumpers
Craig Kilpatrick
- January 30..... Jamey Reeves
Ceil Smith
- January 31..... Russ Dowling
Dylan Hopper
Mike Murphy

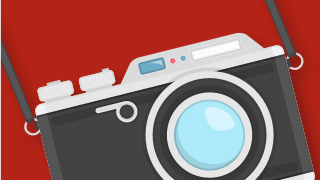


Opp Freshman Connor Tillman, son of **Chris Tillman** (Fuels and Energy Resources), competed in the AHSAA Class 1-5A South Sectional swim meet in Mobile, Ala., in November.

Connor placed second in the 500-yard freestyle event and fourth in the 200-yard freestyle event. Both finishes qualified him to compete in the AHSAA state swim meet at Auburn University on Dec. 1 and 2.



Opp's cheer squad repeated as Class 3A state champions and have now won state titles in the three of the last four years. Cheer squad members include Avery Tillman (standing, far right), daughter of **Chris Tillman** (Fuels and Energy Resources); and Presley Bracke (kneeling, far right), daughter of **Brent Bracke** (Central Generation).



January photo contest winner: **Daryl Batley**

Congratulations to **Daryl Batley (Lowman)** who won this month's photo contest with his entry of Lowman's coal pile blanketed in snow on Jan. 8.

Remember: February's photo contest theme is **"The Way We Work."**

IMPORTANT: When sending photos taken with a mobile device (cell phone), be sure to send the highest quality possible.

The deadline for submitting entries for the February contest is January 15.

Send entries to Christi Scruggs at christi.scruggs@powersouth.com or via interoffice mail. ■



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