



Dear SRE members,

I would like to personally thank each of you for your patience and understanding during Singing River Electric's recovery efforts following Hurricane Zeta. This late season storm was just another reminder of how the year 2020 has evolved. Each year, our management team reviews the cooperative's Emergency Preparedness Plan and this year has successfully exercised the plan on five separate occasions including three spring storms involving tornadoes, Hurricane Sally and Hurricane Zeta.

Following the storm early Thursday morning, Singing River Electric had more than 62,000 of its 75,798 members without power. We were successful in restoring power to 38,000 meters within the first 48 hours. I believe this success is in part due to your cooperation, our careful planning and qualified employees. Prior to the storm, key personnel, SRE crews, and visiting crews were assigned throughout the service area. In addition to our crews, we had visiting crews from 18 electric cooperatives from as far away as Illinois. There were also numerous contract and right-of-way crews that worked along side and in front of line crews to ensure trees were removed to speed restoration. This resulted in more than 500 line workers participating in SRE's total restoration process.

Some reports have indicated property damages in north Jackson, George and Greene counties to be comparable to, if not worse, than what was experienced in these areas in Hurricane Katrina. Our entire service territory experienced damages. This was not a huge surprise, as the National Weather Service in Mobile confirmed Hurricane Zeta's center and southeast eye wall tracked inland through our service territory with 70-75 mph winds and gusts registered at 91 mph. The straight-line wind damage was evident with all the whole trees ripped out of the ground, roots and all, and our estimates of nearly 900 broken power poles.

Many of you expressed gratitude following Hurricane Zeta through calls, cards, email and social media comments, and our employees are extremely grateful. Some of you have expressed frustration during the process over not having service when a neighbor had power, and I would like to discuss this.

Line personnel must follow a methodical process in order to restore power. When Singing River Electric experiences damages of this magnitude, power must be restored in stages. Transmission lines and substations are first inspected for damage and repaired before power can be restored to anyone. Next is service to hospitals and three-phase power lines. These lines energize necessities like gas stations, restaurants and grocery stores. Following that, servicemen inspect tap lines and individual distribution lines to homes. They also return to damaged areas to make repairs and restore service.

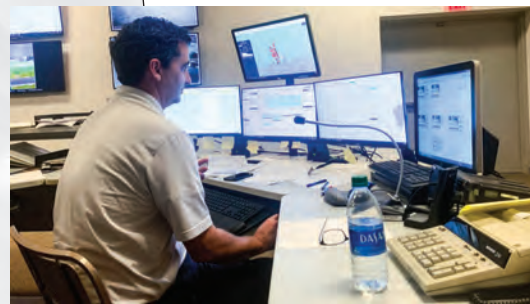
Current estimates indicate expenses due to Hurricane Zeta will total more than \$15 million. This unexpected late year cost will definitely factor into the board of directors' decision on moving forward with broadband service, and for that reason, they will need additional time to carefully consider a plan to move forward.

The results of their decision will be announced in the January 2021 *Today in Mississippi* magazine.

I again express my gratitude for your understanding during this time of recovery and rebuilding. As we near the end of 2020, we can continue to be thankful for the many blessings we have. On behalf of the board and employees of Singing River Electric, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year.

*Brian Hughey*

Brian Hughey  
General Manager & CEO



General Manager and CEO Brian Hughey assisting dispatch during Hurricane Zeta.



## Zeta strikes; Singing River Electric responds



# Continued coverage of Hurricane Zeta



Thank you!

THANK YOU TO ALL VISITING CO-OP CREWS AND CONTRACT AND RIGHT-OF-WAY CREWS THAT ASSISTED SINGING RIVER ELECTRIC AND OUR MEMBERS FOLLOWING HURRICANE ZETA.

- |                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 4-County Electric         | Northcentral Electric          |
| Adams Electric            | North East MS Electric         |
| B&B Electric              | Pearl River Valley Electric    |
| Cambium Tree Care         | Pontotoc Electric              |
| Central Electric          | Prentiss County Electric       |
| Chain Electric            | SouthEastern Illinois Electric |
| Delta Electric            | Tombigbee Electric             |
| Dixie Electric            | Treeline Services              |
| EnerStar Electric         | Tri County Electric            |
| East Mississippi Electric | V-Tech                         |
| Magnolia Electric         | Yazoo Valley Electric          |
| MDR Construction          |                                |
| Monroe County Electric    |                                |

Hurricane Zeta's southeast eye wall and center tracks across SRE's service area late this evening.

**OCT 28** Wednesday

**OCT 29** Thursday

Crews assess damage, begin repairs; 82% of members or 62,388 meters out. Transmission service restored late that evening to all SRE George County substations. Contract crews, right-of-way crews and some visiting co-op crews arrive to help. We end the day with 44,530 meters without power.

Crews work to restore power to three-phase power lines, which gets power to places like gas stations, grocery stores, restaurants and hotels. Also, began working with Mississippi's Secretary of State to ensure power to all voting precincts for following week's election. As of 6 p.m., SRE has 27,833 meters without power. Crews continue to work late into night to restore power. Visiting crews arrive including Yazoo Valley and 4-County Electric.

**OCT 30** Friday

**OCT 31** Saturday

More visiting co-op crews arrive including Dixie Electric. Some visiting crews took some days to arrive to help because they had to make repairs at home first. At 9:30 p.m., SRE had 19,800 meters without power. Hardest hit areas include north Jackson, George and Greene counties.

Estimate 400 broken poles, later to find out that number is nearly 900. Significance of this is it takes several hours and 1-2 small crews to replace one pole. Receive visiting co-op crews from Illinois and end the day with 15,582 meters without power.

**NOV 1** Sunday

**NOV 2** Monday

Right-of-way crews work to remove the extraordinary number of damaged trees and tree limbs ahead of line crews. Crews end the day with 9,875 meters out.

All election precincts have power. More than 500 line personnel are assisting SRE's restoration efforts, which includes help from 18 electric cooperatives. Tuesday ends with 7,000 meters without power.

**NOV 3** Tuesday

**NOV 4** Wednesday

Pushing to have 95% power restored to all non-recreational accounts by end of day and succeed! End of day outage map shows 4,424 meters out, down from 62,388.

Dispatch employees work hard to coordinate all the crews to restore power and keep safety top of mind. Outages are down to 2,847.

**NOV 5** Thursday

**NOV 6** Friday

Pushing to restore power to all areas accessible by truck by end of day. Public relations personnel work to document Zeta's damage and crew progress throughout the day and across the service area in pictures on SRE's social media. Friday ends with 1,520 meters without power.

Working toward 99% restored by end of day. Member service representatives answered nearly 11,000 calls and 1,100 emails from members during the Hurricane Zeta restoration. Crews end the day with 470 meters out.

**NOV 7** Saturday

**NOV 8** Sunday

Power is restored to all who can receive it in non-recreational areas by 8 p.m.

GIVE  
**JOY**

THIS  
**HOLIDAY  
SEASON**

Round your bill to the next whole dollar and help a neighbor.



Ask Us How Today!

**Singing River  
Electric Cooperative**  
A Truist Energy Cooperative

Four easy ways to round up:



**1**

Check the NHN Energy Assistance box at the top of your bill.

**2**

Sign up using the SmartHub app on any mobile device.

**3**

Go online with your computer at [singingriver.com/give-joy](http://singingriver.com/give-joy)

**4**

Call any SRE office and request to participate. Once enrolled, the billed amount will "round up" to the next whole dollar.

The  
**Magic of  
Christmas**  
NEVER ENDS  
**Its Greatest Gifts**  
ARE FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Everyone at Singing River Electric wishes you and your family a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Our offices will be closed on **Dec. 24 and 25** for Christmas and **Jan. 1** for New Year's Day.

# Christmas at Granly Brings Joy to Danish Descendants

By Nancy Jo Maples

"Glædelig Jul" or Merry Christmas in Danish.

For the first time in 35 years the Danes of Jackson County will not host their merriment festival the day after Christmas due to COVID-19. Previous years drew 60 to 100 people to the authentic Scandinavian "forsamlingshus," Danish for meeting house. Here they ate Danish food, sang Danish songs and joined hands dancing around a live Christmas tree garnished with Danish flags and paper hearts.

"Holding hands and gathering around the tree symbolizes love," said Danish descendant Else Nygaard Martin. "It's a 'hygge' moment. In Danish that means a feeling of being content, happy and joyous."

Martin, a retired genealogist for Jackson-George Regional Library System, is proud of her Danish heritage. So is her nephew Lee Hedegaard, retired General Manager/CEO of Singing River Electric Cooperative. Their families and others have met Dec. 26 at "forsamlingshus" since it was renovated



in 1985. Each year's live tree is planted on the grounds as were Christmas trees from Martin's childhood. She attended the first Christmas the year it was built in 1936, the same year she was born. The cedar tree used for Christmas that year still stands next to the building.

Danes settled in Harrelston in 1930 after purchasing from Lampton Lands Company 4,000 acres of cutover timberland marketed to immigrants for farming opportunities. Most of them came from Minnesota, Montana, Wisconsin, Iowa and Nebraska. Many had lost their farms in the Dust Bowl.

Their new colony was called Granly, Danish for "in the shelter of the greens." They were well-read, educated, excelled at dairy, poultry, flower and vegetable farming, knitting, sewing, cooking, baking — talents necessary in those days. The Danes were instrumental in getting electricity to Granly and other rural areas in Singing River Electric's territory. Having lived in northern cities with electricity, they knew its value. The

meeting house served as their church, Bethany Lutheran Church, as well as a book exchange library and a site to dance to Danish songs. Rev. Knude Knudsen donated the five acres where it and the cemetery sit.



Else Martin, Kevin Martin and Lee Hedegaard stand beside a monument dedicated to Granly settlement founders. (Photo/Nancy Jo Maples)

A marble marker outside the meeting house lists the original settlers' surnames, including Alhoff, Borgesen, Brinkman, Buck, Christensen, Jacobsen, Jensen, Johansen, Knudsen, Lanther, Larsen, Lykke, Madsen, Mathiasen, Mortensen, Nielsen, Nygaard,

Outzen, Pedersen, Pelle, Schmitz, Smidt, Sorensen and Warneke.

Martin said the Danish waited until Dec. 24 to put up Christmas trees and took them down on Epiphany, Jan. 6. "As a child we did not get to see the decorated and lit tree until after Christmas Eve dinner. The door to the living room was kept closed all day on the 24th, and while eating we could see light flickering under the door. How excited we were to finally finish dinner and open that door!"



Else Martin and Lee Hedegaard hold Danish and American flags inside the historic forsamlingshus. (Photo/Nancy Jo Maples)

Award-winning journalist Nancy Jo Maples has written about Mississippi people and places for three decades. Contact her at [nancyjomaples@aol.com](mailto:nancyjomaples@aol.com).

**Glædelig Jul!**