



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Southside Electric Cooperative Member Receives Statewide Good Samaritan Award** *Virginia's Electric Cooperatives Honor Charlotte County Resident*

Southside Electric Cooperative member Sheila Jones has received the 2015 Good Samaritan Award, a statewide honor bestowed by Virginia's electric cooperatives.

Jones, a Charlotte County resident, organized the annual Truckers' Parade Against Cancer (TPAC) 15 years ago. She accepted her award at a Jan. 26 luncheon in Richmond during the Winter Meeting of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives.

The Good Samaritan Award was developed to honor individuals whose body of good work has been so selfless and life-changing to others that it is held up as a "gold standard" of philanthropic community service. Following the loss of her mother to cancer in 1997, Sheila joined her local Relay for Life team, taking part in numerous fundraising events. Looking for a way to bring in even more dollars to help fight this disease, she and her husband Darrin, a semi-truck driver, brainstormed about developing a major event involving trucks and tractor-trailers.

With help from several family members, including Darrin's uncle at the Virginia Truck Center and Sheila's father at Dodd's Farm Supply, the Truckers Parade Against Cancer made its debut in fall 2000, raising over \$10,000 in its first year. Growing steadily over the past decade-and-a-half, Charlotte County's TPAC event raised almost \$75,000 in 2014 and has inspired similar events in Nelson County and the Town of Galax.

"Participation in this event has exploded over the years," said Susan Jones, a reporter for the Southside Messenger. "What started as a small get-together has grown into an all-day event, with 147 trucks this past October."

Fellow TPAC organizer Cheryl Vassar added, "Sheila works all year long to make sure this one day is a success. TPAC members meet and discuss new ideas to make the next event still better than the last. Since its inception, this effort has raised more than \$500,000!"

**(more)**

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In honoring Jones with the Good Samaritan Award, Larry Howdyshell, chairman of the VMDAEC Awards Committee noted, “because of Sheila’s hard work raising money for cancer research, more people than ever are claiming the title ‘survivor.’”

Richard Johnstone, executive vice president of VMDAEC, said “Sheila exemplifies the 7<sup>th</sup> cooperative principle of ‘concern for community.’ We are proud to recognize her inspirational leadership that has made such a difference in her area of the state.”

The Good Samaritan Award was established in 2010 and nominations are solicited from the members of the 13 electric cooperatives that serve Virginia.

Founded in 1944, VMDAEC is the trade association for 15 consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric distribution cooperatives that serve Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. The Glen Allen, Va.-based Association provides its member cooperatives with employee, director, and safety education and training, government relations and legislative support, and communications services, including the publishing of *Cooperative Living* magazine. For more information, visit [www.vmdaec.com](http://www.vmdaec.com), [www.gaff-n-go.com](http://www.gaff-n-go.com) or [www.co-opliving.com](http://www.co-opliving.com).

Southside Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Crewe with district offices in Altavista, Crewe, Dinwiddie and Powhatan, is a not-for-profit member-owned energy provider that serves over 54,000 homes, farms and businesses in portions of 18 Central and Southside Virginia counties, five towns and the City of Petersburg. For more information, go to [www.sec.coop](http://www.sec.coop).

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