Lineman’s Rodeo comes to Pee Dee Electric Commerce Park

PEE DEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE along with The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina are pleased to announce we are hosting our first South Carolina Lineman’s Rodeo right here in the Pee Dee at Pee Dee Electric’s very own commerce park, located at the intersection of I-95 and Hwy. 327 in Florence. The event will start at 8 a.m. on Saturday, March 16. I welcome and encourage PDEC members to come and see just what it is linemen do every day. There will be 19 cooperatives from all across South Carolina there to compete in events like a speed climb, line transfers, light and recloser change outs, knots and crossarm lifts and a hurtman rescue.

Along with all that excitement, there will also be a children’s area with crafts and bounce houses and the Touchstone Energy hot air balloon will be there for tethered rides, weather permitting. Food and drink vendors will also be on site. The rodeo is intended to demonstrate the skills and knowledge in areas of safety, team work and productivity of lineworkers in a fun and safe environment for the whole family. In addition to the competitions, we hope it will provide the opportunity for students to explore potential careers in line work and electrical system maintenance. Live-line safety demonstrations will also take place that day.

Linemen representing PDEC this year in the Journeyman division are Eugene Bryant, Chris Blackmon and Sean Stephens, and those representing the Apprentice division are Barett Altman, JP Watson and Greg Beckum.

All events that day are open to the public, and we hope to see you there.

MICHAEL S. FULLER
President & CEO
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Pee Dee Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider.
SOUTH CAROLINA

LINEMAN’S RODEO 2019

Saturday, March 16  8 a.m.

Pee Dee Electric Commerce Park in Florence
Intersection of I-95 and S.C. Hwy. 327 (Exit 170)

Visit ecsc.org/rodeo for more information
BY DANIEL NOLKER

SUNLIGHT SHINES THROUGH wide front windows and glistens off rows of motorcycles covered in dazzling chrome and metal fleck paint. Out front, the distinctive throbbing roar of Harley-Davidson engines fills the air as a group of riders pull into the parking lot. The riders enter with a smile and a wave as they spread out to check out new motorcycles, peruse the clothing, or settle into a leather chair with a freshly brewed cup of coffee.

At the Black Jack Harley-Davidson dealership in Florence, this could be the scene on any day of the week. Located on 6.5 acres in Pee Dee Electric’s Commerce Park, the dealership is a new facility designed to offer comfort and style for Harley-Davidson riders and fans alike.

Marketing Director Penny Gilson-Kearns said the dealership moved from TV Road to its new location in the commerce park in May 2018. The personality and creativity of the staff influenced the design and layout of the facility, she said.

Vintage photographs and custom graphics hang on the walls while lounge areas equipped with furniture and a coffee bar mix among the 80 motorcycles and racks of merchandise on the showroom floor. Every detail of the dealership helps communicate their story with folks and is a link to the 116 years of motorcycling at Harley-Davidson, she said.

“We combined a classy and industrial atmosphere and there are little touches from the employees everywhere. We want you to be comfortable when you walk in. People come in to hang out, and folks who don’t even know each other will strike up a conversation. We love when people want to come in and spend time with us,” Gilson-Kearns said.

Black Jack Harley-Davidson managing partner Matt Flintrop said the new location gives the dealership increased visibility and convenient access to the interstate which allows them to better serve their customers and the community.

Pee Dee Electric’s Commerce Park is 705 acres located at exit 170 off Interstate 95 and the intersection with SC Highway 327. The location is the midpoint between New York City and Miami and has over a mile of frontage on the East Coast’s main transportation route, with more than 50,000 daily travelers. The commerce park offers commercial, industrial and service industry opportunities.

“Pee Dee Electric Cooperative is super accommodating and very supportive. They facilitate communication with our neighbors, and we have formed some terrific relationships with other
businesses in the commerce park,” Flintrop said. With the advantages of their new location and facility, they want to be the hub of motorcycling in the Carolinas, Flintrop said. The dealership is focused on offering riders everything they need: new and used motorcycles, service department, cutting edge dynamometer, customization, safety and riding training, event venue, and hangout spot.

In order to serve the diverse family of Harley-Davidson riders, he said the dealership is working to expand the facility to host more events and fundraisers. Chili cook-offs, benefit rides and even weddings could all be future events at the dealership, Flintrop said.

“We’re close personal friends with a lot of our customers, and we want to help the people who are part of the Harley-Davidson family. At a motorcycle dealership, our customers are very diverse, and motorcycling is what we use to communicate with each other. On one day we could see a church group, motorcycle club and a young family looking for their first motorcycle. People don’t see their differences, only their similarities. It’s what the world would be like if everyone was an optimist,” Flintrop said.

Daniel Nolker is a freelance writer, specializing in agriculture, outdoors and rural life.
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