



When Shauna Bonds, above right, shared this picture of herself and her sister, Shaniqwa Cooper, on Facebook, it had more than 25,000 likes and shares.

‘She’s my world.’

Shauna Bonds just wants people to know that her sister, Shaniqwa Cooper, is special. Most people accept and love on her sister, but some stare and act scared of her, Shauna said.

When Shauna put the above picture of the two of them on Facebook, many people felt the need to criticize the way her sister looks.

“They took a special moment from me and ruined it,” Shauna said.

Shaniqwa was born with a medical condition called microcephaly, where the baby’s head is smaller than expected. Most babies born with microcephaly have a smaller brain and intellectual disability.

“She has the brain of a 2-year-old,” Shauna explained.

Shaniqwa’s disabilities include trouble communicating and being unable to feed herself.

Instead of talking about the things her sister can’t do, though, Shauna likes to brag on all of the things she can do.

“She can walk, dress herself, put on her shoes and take pictures. And

she loves to get her nails painted.”

In fact, the first thing Shaniqwa wants to do when Shauna gets home from work is have her nails painted.

Shauna describes her sister as “outgoing and funny. She’s always happy to see me.”

Both girls grew up in Ripley and have the same mother, Amelia. They live with their mom and stepdad. They also have a brother.

Shaniqwa is 28; Shauna is 26. Both girls graduated from Ripley High School. Shauna said she enjoyed visiting her sister’s special education classroom whenever she could.

At times, Shauna worries about her sister, but she knows she’ll be taking care of her if something happens to her parents and grandmother.

“She’s my world,” Shauna said. “Our bond is very strong. If anything happened to her, I don’t know what I would do. She’s like my child.”

If you see Shaniqwa, give her a big smile and let her know how much this community cares for her. She is such a happy person, and we don’t want to see a frown on her sweet face again.

2020 Ripley Power and Light Calendar

We’re already gathering dates and pictures for the 2020 calendar. If the public is invited to an event you have scheduled in 2020, send your information to Tracy Etheridge at tracy@ripleypower.com by November 1. If you have pictures from an event in 2019, send them to Tracy by October 1.

Ripley Power and Light offices will be closed...

- Monday, September 2, for Labor Day.
- Monday, October 14, for Columbus Day.
- Thursday, November 28, and Friday, November 29, for Thanksgiving.



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Office Hours & Locations

We are open 47 hours each week to serve you better!

7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday-Thursday

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday

You can pay your utility bill at ...

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- 409 S. Church St. in Halls

If you have not been receiving your bills, call our office immediately so we can verify your mailing address.



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Ripley

POWER AND
LIGHT COMPANY

Fall 2019

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal of state grant: Create jobs

With the goal of creating jobs in the community, Ripley Power and Light Company received a \$500,000 site development grant from the State of Tennessee for a 73,500-square-foot industrial building on Viar Avenue.

The funds will be used for building improvements, including repairing the roof, replacing restroom facilities and clearing interior office space, so that the building will be turn-key ready when potential industries look for expansion and start-up locations.

“Economic growth in our communities is a priority for us,” said Ripley Power and Light President and CEO Mike Allmand. “Instead of building a new facility, many companies look at communities that already have available space.”

“We are committed to working with state and local officials, as well as organizations like TVA and West Tennessee Industrial Association, to make sure we have the infrastructure in place to meet industrial needs.”

The funds are from Tennessee’s Site Development Grant Program, which is part of the larger Rural Economic Opportunity Act supported by the Tennessee General Assembly for the last three years. During this cycle, the program provided more than \$5 million in grants to 13 communities, including Lauderdale County.

Ripley Power and Light’s building is the first building to receive a rural development

grant, Allmand said. “Rural development grants are usually awarded for land improvements.”

“One of Tennessee’s major initiatives is helping rural communities, and with the assistance of these grants, these communities will be better positioned for economic success and investment,” said Gov. Bill Lee.

“I look forward to seeing these communities



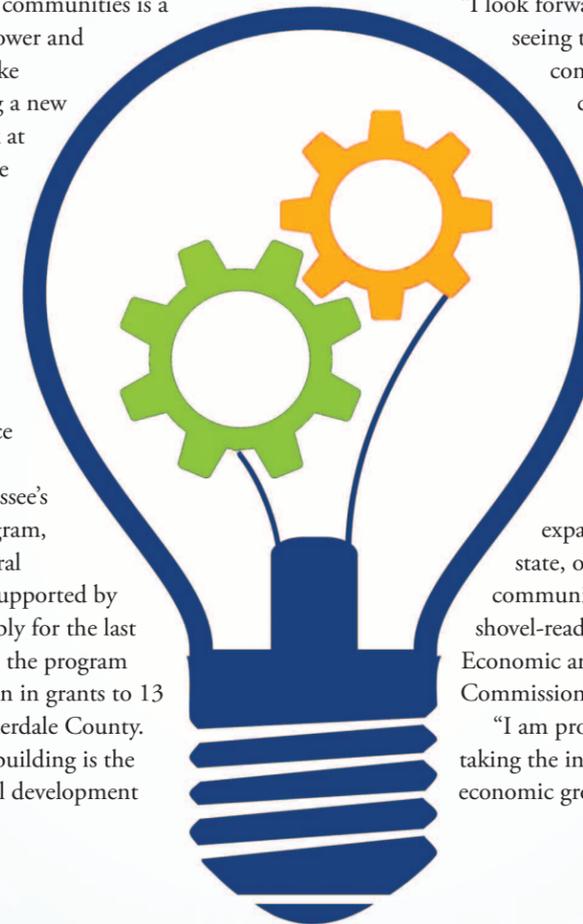
Mike Allmand,
President and CEO
Ripley Power and Light

continue to grow and excel.”

The grants are intended to help rural communities overcome barriers to achieve Select Tennessee site certification and prepare them to receive economic development projects that will create jobs. The funds assist communities in completing infrastructure needs and making engineering improvements on project-ready sites.

“When a company is looking to expand or locate new operations in our state, one of the most important assets a community can have to land a project is a shovel-ready site,” said Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Bob Rolfe.

“I am proud of these 13 communities for taking the initiative to be better prepared for economic growth with the help of the grants.”



JEANS MADE WITH COTTON GROWN IN HALLS

The next time you buy a pair of Wrangler jeans, check to see if they were made from cotton grown in Halls, Tennessee.

Pugh Farms in Halls is part of a new program from Wrangler that honors land stewardship and champions state pride with a line of jeans celebrating farmers from five states.

“Farming is a lifestyle; it’s not a job,” said Eugene Pugh. “I love what I do, and wouldn’t want to do anything else.”

Pugh is a fifth-generation farmer who farms alongside his dad, cousin and uncle. The family has been farming in West Tennessee since the Civil War ended in the 1860s.

Working on his farm is a team effort that begins with a good crew that supports one another, he said. They use sustainable growing methods to cultivate healthy cotton, corn and soybean crops.

“I believe the best thing you can put in a field is your footprint or your shadow,” Pugh said. “You got to be there, and you got to know what’s going on.”

Pugh Farms, along with farms in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and Texas, supplies cotton to Wrangler’s new Rooted Collection. The farmers are the first growers in the

Wrangler Science and Conservation program, which advocates for land stewardship and soil health best practices.

These science-backed methods build crop resilience to weather disruptions while improving yield, reducing water and energy inputs, fighting erosion, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Wrangler aims to source 100 percent of its cotton from farms using these practices by 2025.

“The Wrangler Rooted Collection reflects our commitment to strengthening local communities and supporting U.S. farmers,” said Tom Waldron, President of Wrangler. “Equally im-

portant, the introduction of this collection aligns with our goal to continually improve the environmental performance and traceability of our products.”

specific jean is traceable to a family farm in that state. Each state’s design includes a unique wash, as well as trim and patch details featuring the state’s silhouette and other embellishments. The collection also includes two T-shirt designs for each state, as well as three national designs.

The Tennessee jean features custom shanks and rivets, a Tennessee patch, and the Pugh family’s story on the inner pocket. The jean sits below the waist, is slim through the seat, thigh and knee, and features a sleek, straight leg that fits over boots.

The jeans can be purchased in Lauderdale County.

“I think it’s so exciting to see the jeans from Wrangler that are produced from my cotton,” Pugh said. “We get to see the fruits of our labor, and we also get to take a piece of our crop with us that we’ve worked so hard on all year long.”

Pugh Farms uses cover crops and conservation tillage to build soil health and control erosion. “It’s allowing us to decrease our inputs while maintaining, and even improving, yield. And at the same time, our soil is improving with each passing season.”



The Pugh family has been farming in West Tennessee since the 1860s.



Wrangler jeans, made from Tennessee cotton, will feature the Pugh family story on the inner pocket.



That feels really good.”

The cover crops, which are planted in the fall, include legumes, grasses and radishes. In 2018, when West Tennessee received 70 inches of rain – the most on record – those crops helped save the soil.

“Without cover crops with their roots in the ground, a lot of my soil would have washed away,” Pugh said. “And the tillage radish helped to open up the soil so the excess water could be stored for later in the season.”

“Sustainability to me is maintaining what we have and preserving it for the future,” he added. “I’m glad to have this opportunity to let the world know that we are good stewards of the land, and we run a sustainable farm.”

All customers will get meters with new technology

Ripley Power and Light Company is upgrading all of the electric meters throughout its system to modernize its equipment. “It’s important to keep our meters updated to the latest technology,” said Ripley Power and Light President and CEO Mike Allmand.

Customers in Halls began to see new meters earlier this year. Everyone in Ripley Power and Light’s service area should see theirs switched out over the

course of the next three years.

The new meters support efficient 1-byte pinging for use with fault detection and software applications that proactively monitor outage and restoration events. The new meters have upgradeability and support remote upgrades of transponder firmware.

“This will allow us to upgrade the latest available features in the future,” Allmand said.

A few reminders about hunting near power lines

Hunters should take precautions and be aware of potential electrical hazards while hunting. Here are a few reminders about safety for both hunters and electrical equipment.

- ▶ Note the location of power lines and other electrical equipment before you begin a hunt. Be especially careful and observant in wooded areas where power lines are easy to overlook.
- ▶ Obey all signs or postings that advise electrical safety, especially when selecting the location for a tree stand. Never use power poles to support a tree stand. Look for an ideal tree for your stand, one that is sturdy and alive. Tree stands are the leading cause for hunting injuries.
- ▶ Never shoot nearby power lines or other electrical equipment. A single shot can cause vast damage to the electrical system. Damage to electrical equipment can result in power interruptions and physical risks to those nearby.
- ▶ If you are using a portable electric generator on your hunting trip, make sure that you do not run it in a confined area. Do not use it inside a cabin or RV. Make sure that it is used outside where there is plenty of ventilation.

Source: Safe Electricity

