

# DISCOVERING SOUTH KENTUCKY

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## Recognizing a legend: Retired SKRECC serviceman Harlan Stout

Story by Joy Bullock

The most important asset or resource in any organization is its employees. This is true of all organizations, but especially so in the electric utility industry. Electric lineworkers are a special breed of individuals, willing to answer the call in all types of weather conditions, all hours of the day and night, weekends, holidays, 365 days a year. Their dedication and loyalty is instrumental in keeping the lights on for our members.

Harlan Stout is one of the South Kentucky RECC lineworkers that epitomizes that dedication to the co-op and its members. Harlan retired from SKRECC in August 2019 after reaching an unprecedented 55 years of service to the co-op. That service is now being recognized on a national scale.

Harlan has been selected for induction into the Lineman's Hall of Fame for 2020. The International Lineman Museum & Lineman's Hall of Fame, which inducted its first members in 2006, was created to honor, acknowledge and pay respect to lineworkers who have made notable contributions to the industry.

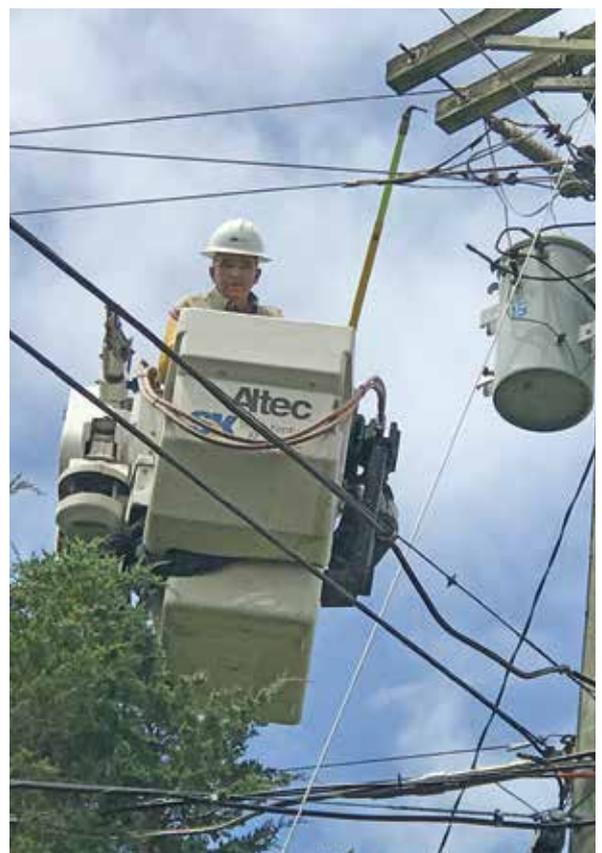
Each inductee must be nominated by a coworker, supervisor,

friend, family member or company and then deemed deserving by the Hall of Fame's board of directors. The inductees are of all ages, backgrounds, states and walks of life, but are joined together by one common thread—their passion for the linework industry.

While the induction ceremony was originally scheduled for April, due to COVID-19, Harlan is scheduled to receive his award at a ceremony on October 17.

South Kentucky RECC Vice President of Engineering and Operations Kevin Newton says no one is a better representative or more deserving of a place in the Lineman's Hall of Fame.

"Harlan Stout was a very dedicated employee, who took exceptional pride in his work. He wanted his assigned area of western Pulaski County to be in the best possible condition. For someone to work at such a demanding job for 55 years, which requires skill, stamina, and drive, Harlan deserves this recognition as one of only a few across the nation to be chosen and honored this year."



Retired SKRECC serviceman Harlan Stout remained an active, vital part of the co-op workforce until his retirement in August 2019. This photo was taken as Harlan worked on his last day. Photo: Bruce Parkey

Newton adds that another aspect of Harlan's work ethic that sets him apart is his depth of concern and caring for the membership.

"Harlan was an employee who wanted to improve our system for the

members that lived in the area in which he worked. He was not at all bashful or reticent about asking for the improvements that he felt were needed to improve the operations of South Kentucky RECC's electrical distribution system. Harlan truly cared about our members."

Harlan's nomination to the Lineman's Hall of Fame recounts that the members who live in Harlan's territory also realized how diligently he worked for them. It says many times when someone from Harlan's area would call into the co-op with an issue, they would tell the employee taking the service call to "just tell Harlan about my problem—he knows where I live." Newton says that alone speaks volumes on Harlan's work ethic and pride of workmanship.

Harlan began work on an electric line crew in August 1964, at a time when there were no bucket trucks, and most poles had to be set by hand. It was hard, tedious labor, but enjoyable work for Harlan, who was enthusiastic and loyal. After about 10 years of working on a line crew,



**Retired SKRECC serviceman Harlan Stout, second from left, with, from left, his last supervisor, Mark Wilson, construction manager; SKRECC VP of Engineering and Operations Kevin Newton; and fellow retiree Robert Edwards, serviceman, who worked with Harlan for 40 years. Photo: Joy Bullock**

Harlan transferred to the service department where he was a serviceman for the remaining 45 years of his work career at South Kentucky RECC. He says while he appreciated the livelihood that the co-op offered him for so many years, there were other things that were just as important.

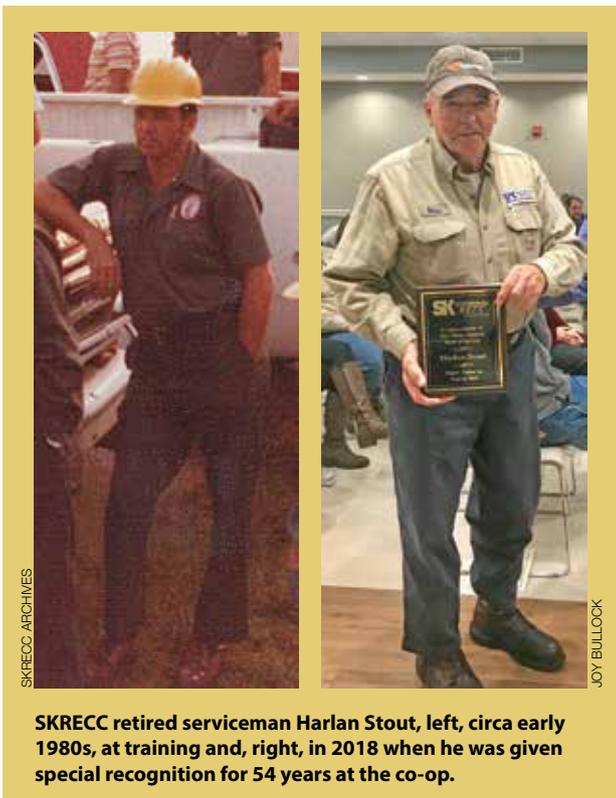
"I truly appreciated being able to bring electricity to the rural areas of southern Kentucky and helping make life easier for its residents. It was a great pleasure to me to meet the many, many members that I have gotten to know over the years and to talk with them. And, it's been an honor working with some of the best employees."

That coincides with the advice Harlan says he would give to a young person who is considering a career as an electric lineworker—"to give

your best" and "to honor the members and your co-workers."

Harlan says much changed from when he started working at South Kentucky RECC until he retired. From the days of doing most of the work by hand, SKRECC today employs cutting-edge equipment and trucks that simplify the work and make it go exponentially quicker. He adds another major change has been the safety programs that are in place today. You can't find much on industry safety standards until 1970 when the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was put into place by the federal government. Today, however, South Kentucky RECC lineworkers follow strict safety guidelines put in place to keep them safe.

From the earlier days until today, South Kentucky RECC serviceman Harlan Stout saw many changes. One thing that didn't change was his commitment to the co-op and the members it serves, and South Kentucky RECC is very honored that Harlan is receiving this much-deserved recognition. **DSK**



**SKRECC retired serviceman Harlan Stout, left, circa early 1980s, at training and, right, in 2018 when he was given special recognition for 54 years at the co-op.**

# Co-op Connections Card

South Kentucky RECC began the Co-op Connections Card program 15 years ago to help members save money when dining out, staying at hotels or making purchases.

With 511 co-ops across the nation participating, including South Kentucky RECC, which was among the first to participate, members can always find a deal or a discount. More than 32,000 local and national business offerings are currently available to South Kentucky RECC members.

The Co-op Connections Card program has expanded over the years to include prescription savings, and

in 2019, SKRECC members who don't have prescription insurance or needed prescriptions not covered by insurance saved nearly \$38,000 on prescriptions.

In addition to prescription savings, the program introduced Healthy Savings Discounts savings on lab and imaging services, chiropractic, dental, vision and hearing care in 2011 to help members live healthier every day. The discount program is NOT insurance and cannot be used in conjunction with insurance; however, for SKRECC members who may not have insurance that covers prescriptions or certain health services, this could offer significant savings.



For more information on your Co-op Connections Card or to get a new one, please contact your local South Kentucky RECC office, and start saving today. To get information on the many deals available with the card, visit [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop).



**The offices of South Kentucky RECC will be CLOSED on Friday, July 3, in observance of Independence Day.**

**If you have an emergency or outage, call your local office or (800) 264-5112 for 24/7 outage reporting.**

# EV EZ

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South Kentucky RECC is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Visit [www.skrecc.com](http://www.skrecc.com) to pay your bill online, to visit our outage center, or for more information about the Co-op Connections Program.

**To report an outage 24/7/365**, please call your local office, (800) 264-5112, or set up your account to be able to text outages. Please do not report outages via social media.

**Plug into South Kentucky RECC. Follow us on social media:**



# Red, white, blue? Be counted, too!

This month, communities throughout South Kentucky RECC's service area will be decked out in red, white and blue in observance of our nation's Independence Day. Across our area, state and nation, Americans will collectively express patriotism with parades, fireworks and plenty of barbecues. South Kentucky RECC urges every member of the cooperative to add one other act to this list: completing the 2020 Census.

Article 1, Section 2 of the United States Constitution requires an accurate count of all residents every 10 years. Since 1790, the census has ensured that communities like ours are fairly represented in government. It's a civic duty to step forward and say "I COUNT!"

The number of seats Kentucky holds in the House of Representatives depends entirely upon census results. The census is also the guiding factor in federal funding and numerous allocations.

Census responses are confidential and protected by law. You'll be asked

to tally the number of people in your household and record basic information such as age, sex and race. The survey does not question any individual's citizenship or ask for social security or financial information.

Participating in the 2020 Census is simple and takes 10 minutes or less. You can respond online at [my2020census.gov](http://my2020census.gov). You can also call (844) 330-2020 to be counted. Or, you can complete and return the paper questionnaire mailed to you.

Caring for the community is fundamental to the way South Kentucky RECC does business. It's why we invest in programs such as STEM education in local schools and economic development initiatives that bring new jobs to the area. And it's the reason SKRECC is urging every co-op member to stand up and be counted in the census.

The 2020 Census is important, safe and easy. Declare July 4 as your day to be counted, and inspire others to do the same. Then, feel free to wave that American flag with extra gusto because you are a true patriot.

