



## Meet Your SEC Employee



**Linda Keesee**  
**Customer Service Supervisor**  
**21 years of service**  
**Altavista Office**

“Southside Electric, this is Linda. Can I help you?” is how Linda Keesee answers the telephone at her corner desk in the Cooperative’s Altavista office.

On this particular occasion, a member is calling to make a payment with a credit card. Keesee asks for the member’s account number and name, gets the payment amount and credit card information, and gives the caller a confirmation number for the transaction. Reassuringly, she tells the member the payment has been applied and “Everything looks good.” She thanks the person for calling and cordially says “bye-bye.”

That's one transaction handled. The next minute might find Keesee at the drive-through window taking another payment or at the member-service window explaining the PrePay program.

Helping members is a big part of Keesee's day as the customer service supervisor in the Western District office. She also works with two customer service representatives, provides training and keeps the Altavista office running efficiently. Keesee has been a supervisor for two years; she's been with Southside Electric Cooperative (SEC) for 21.

"My background has always been working with customers," Keesee adds.

Before coming to SEC, Keesee worked in the stock-brokerage business in Florida for 15 years. As a vice president of operations with E.F. Hutton and also in stints with Merrill Lynch and Paine Webber, she filled in at various offices, solved problems, provided training and helped customers. She traveled to New York City and visited the New York Stock Exchange.

"It was exciting," Keesee recalls of seeing the exchange. "It gets exciting here in a different way." Explaining, she says employees' adrenaline gets going when working to quickly and safely restore electricity during an outage or when helping a member get power for a new home.

"There's never a dull day. There is always something new to learn," says Keesee, who grew up in Altavista.

Keesee says she is "extremely thankful" to SEC for her career. She adds that it's been a wonderful place to work.

Asked what she enjoys most about her job, Keesee says it's a combination of two groups: co-workers and members. She says if she doesn't know the answer to a member's question, she knows one of her colleagues will have it. And her co-workers are more than simply people she works with — they're her friends.

With the members, Keesee notes there are some she's assisted regularly for years. Some of those small children who once were accompanied by a mom or grandmother to pay a bill are now members with their own families.

While Keesee has worked with SEC members and brokerage clients for many years, she fondly recalls the other two interesting, people-oriented jobs she had while in high school. At age 15, she became the pianist and choir director at a nearby Baptist church. She made \$25 a month and had an allowance for special music. She kept the job until graduating from Altavista High School and heading off to college. Keesee still plays the piano and can pick the guitar, though music is now just for personal enjoyment.

And Keesee's depth of experience in customer service goes further. Also at age 15, she was the personal secretary for the wife of one of the founders of the Lane furniture company in Altavista. Recommended for the job by her business teacher in high school, a black limousine would pick Keesee up after high school so she could handle her client's personal correspondence.

As for her family, Keesee has a daughter, Alex, and a granddaughter, Asia. Keesee lives with her mom and brother, not far from her office. Her favorite thing to do, she says, is taking her mom out to eat and on a shopping excursion every Sunday.

“She out-shops me. I think she looks forward to it more than me,” Keesee says jokingly.

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