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Proudly serving the members of Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation

## Albemarle Sounds

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**Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
*The power of human connections®*

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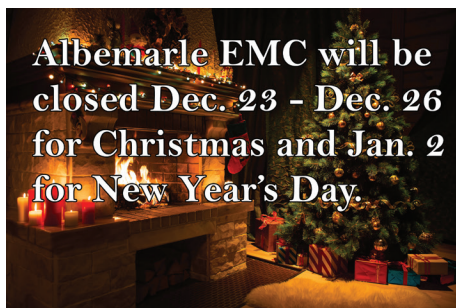
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*Albemarle EMC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

## Albemarle EMC Wishes You a Happy Holidays



Albemarle EMC will be closed Dec. 23 - Dec. 26 for Christmas and Jan. 2 for New Year's Day.

## Co-op Mourns Passing of Director Virgie Whitehurst

Former Albemarle EMC Director Virgie Whitehurst passed away in October, after serving 34 years on the co-op's board of directors.

Whitehurst had served on the Albemarle EMC board since 1988, holding the seat that represents all counties in the co-op's service area. She was born and raised in Belvidere, where she also lived the majority of her life. Whitehurst grew up prior to the electrification of this area, and her memories of that time were documented in an Albemarle EMC 75th anniversary video.

"I just remember lights, we had lights; we can see clearly now lights have come," said a smiling Whitehurst, recalling her childhood, in the video.

She was a graduate of Elizabeth City State University as well as N.C. State University and worked as a teacher until her retirement.

Whitehurst served as the board



Treasurer for several years and helped lead the cooperative with the same attention to detail that she expected in her classroom.

"Virgie took her job as board director seriously," said Albemarle EMC Board of Directors President John Spence. "We have lost a dedicated board member with a tremendous base of knowledge. We miss her dearly."

The Albemarle EMC Board of Directors will fill the vacant seat by appointment.

## Board Officers Elected



*John Spence*



*Glenn Carey*



*Thelma Finch-Copeland*



*Chad Mathews*

The Albemarle EMC Board of Directors recently elected board officers.

John Spence was re-elected president. Glenn Carey was re-elected vice president. Thelma Finch-Copeland was re-elected secretary, and Chad Mathews was elected treasurer.



*From left are Tri B Construction golf team members Paul Holland, Phil Debrito, F.D. Harrison and Wayne Baker.*

# Golf Tournament Raises Significant Funds

The Tri-B Construction golf team turned in a score of 54 to take first place in the 14th Annual Light Up Christmas Golf Tournament.

A total of 75 players on 19 teams played in the tournament. The co-op was able to raise more than \$1,300 at registration. Combined with the \$23,700 in team and hole sponsors, the co-op raised \$25,800, before expenses. The net proceeds will be used to purchase toys for the co-op's toy drive.

"We are so grateful to everyone who sponsored a team or purchased a hole-sign," said AEMC General Manager Gary Ray. "The funds raised will go a long way to help families provide Christmas toys for their children."

The toys were purchased by co-op employees, then delivered to school coordinators, who identified families in need. School personnel then coordinated delivering the toys to the parents.

## Thank You to Our Sponsors



We would like to thank the following Light Up Christmas golf tournament sponsors, who helped us raise more than \$25,000. The net proceeds will be used to purchase toys for the Albemarle EMC toy drive.

**Dinner Sponsor**  
**Lee Electrical**

**Beverage Sponsor**  
**Booth & Associates**

### All Other Sponsors:

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Sound Golf Links at Albemarle Plantation  
Surry-Yadkin EMC  
TEMA  
The Links at Mulberry Hill  
The Okonite Company  
The Pines at Elizabeth City  
Transformer Maintenance & Service Inc.  
Tri-County EMC  
Tri-B Construction  
Xylem Tree Experts

## Application Period Opens



Albemarle EMC is offering two high school juniors or seniors the chance for a trip of a lifetime.

Applications are now being accepted for Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation's Washington Youth Tour. High school juniors and seniors can apply online by visiting [aemc.coop/schools](http://aemc.coop/schools). The deadline to apply is Jan. 10. Two students will be selected based on the quality of a written essay and extracurricular activities.

"We are delighted to once again be able to offer this amazing experience to students," said Albemarle EMC General Manager Gary Ray.

The trip will be June 17-23, 2023. Youth tourists from across the state will meet in Raleigh, then board a bus for Washington, D.C. While at the nation's capital, youth tourists from across the country will meet with legislators, take a harbor-party cruise, visit museums, memorials, monuments and make many friends. For more information, call Chris Powell at 426-2586.



# Albemarle EMC is at Your Service



## Locate the Cause of Excessive Power Usage Early

by Chris Powell, coordinator of public relations

More than any other time of year, the colder months will expose a heating system that is not up to par. The device to look out for the most is a heat pump, the most typical way homes are heated nowadays.

You will know if you have a heat pump, if the outside unit you use to cool your home also comes on when you heat your home. An air-source heat pump, when functioning properly, is hard to beat. However, when an air-source heat pump has malfunctioned, members can get blind-sided by a large power bill that is often easily avoidable. If I could give someone one piece of advice, it would be to simply check to make sure that your heat pump is functioning during the months the unit is used for heating. A properly functioning heat pump is one in which the outside unit is running. The same device that cooled your house all summer must be running to also heat your house in the winter. The fan on top of the unit should be turning, which indicates that the compressor beneath it is working. If you notice that heat is coming from your registers, but the heat pump outside never turns on, you have a problem. If the unit is not repaired promptly, I can almost guarantee you a bill that you will look at with disbelief.

To fully understand why malfunctioning heat pumps cause skyrocketing power bills, we must fully understand how an air source heat pump is designed to work. A heat pump has two methods of providing heat. It has an outside unit that pumps whatever free heat is available in the outside air into the house. However, sometimes there is not enough outside heat in the air to heat a house. When this occurs,

the heat pump automatically reverts to a backup heat system, called auxiliary or emergency heat. The backup heat is a series of metal strips that heat up much like a toaster oven. An air handler blows air through the heat strips. The heated air comes out of the registers at about 120 degrees. The backup system heats a house wonderfully. The problem is that it is very expensive heat. So if your heat pump ceases operating outside,



*A heat pump is the single biggest user of electricity in most homes.*

your system will continue to function with very expensive heat. Another way to tell if your heat pump is inoperable is by looking at the thermostat. Depending on your thermostat, you may see the words *auxiliary heat*, or you may see an indicator light, or you may see nothing at all. The better approach, in my opinion, is simply to visibly inspect your heat pump once a month to make sure it is indeed running.

The next step in making sure your heat pump doesn't unnecessarily consume power is to check the temperature of the air coming from the vents. This can be done with inexpensive thermometers that can be purchased at most auto parts

stores. A thermometer can be placed in a vent on the floor or taped to a vent in the ceiling. A properly functioning heat pump will produce air from about 95 degrees to possibly over 100 degrees. If the air coming from the unit is in the 80s or lower, your unit needs to be serviced or you have significantly leaking ductwork. As discussed earlier, if the air coming from the vents is around 120 degrees, that is a clear indication that your unit is using backup heat, and the strips are running. This may be normal or abnormal, depending on the outside temperature. If the air temperature is in the mid 30s or lower, there is not enough heat in the outside air for your heat pump to bring in the house. As such, it will use backup heat to make up the difference. However, if the air temperature is in the upper 30s or higher, your heat pump should be able to heat the house on its own. If the air coming from the vent is 120 degrees and the outside air temperature is in the upper 30s or higher, your heat pump is not operating correctly and should be serviced.

Albemarle EMC is committed to helping our members use electricity as efficiently as possible. We offer home energy audits at no charge. To schedule an energy audit, call (252) 426-5735. We advocate low-cost methods to save energy for the simple reason that high-cost methods rarely are cost effective over a reasonable amount of time. One of the most valuable things we give members is the knowledge of where their energy dollars are going. Armed with this information, members can then decide which trade-offs they are willing to make to keep their power bills manageable.