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

Efficiency Tips

One of the easiest ways to lower your energy usage is by turning back your thermostat. Albemarle EMC recommends setting thermostats to 65 degrees in the winter. You can reduce your power usage by as much as 10 percent.

It is not unusual for ductwork to leak up to 20 percent of the conditioned air into the crawlspace or attic. Ductwork should be visually inspected, then repaired with duct mastic or mastic tape.

Work Begins on Charging Stations

Contractors recently completed the preliminary work on the site where two public electric vehicle chargers will be installed at the Albemarle EMC office.

A slow charger and a fast charger will be installed at the co-op's north parking lot. The slow charger will have two charging ports, and the fast charger will have one charging port.

The chargers were partially funded by two separate grants from the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality. An \$8,000 grant was awarded to help pay for the slow charger. An additional \$48,000 grant was awarded to help pay for the fast charger.



“We are proud to play a part in the rollout of charging infrastructure that is occurring across the state,” said Albemarle EMC General Manager Gary Ray. “We are well located for chargers on the Highway 17 corridor.”

Basketball Camp Applications Being Accepted

Albemarle EMC is once again partnering with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and N.C. State University to make basketball camps available to two deserving middle school students.

The two students will be selected to attend the camps from the following counties, in the Albemarle EMC service area: Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, Camden and Currituck.

To apply, students must submit the online application by March 31 by visiting ncelectriccooperatives.com/community/sports-camps. Eligible applicants must be in sixth or seventh grade during the 2023-2024 school year.

Through the Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarship program, Albemarle EMC will provide one young woman with a scholarship to attend the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp at N.C. State in June (dates to be announced). Young men can apply for a scholarship to attend the Carolina Basketball School which will be held June 17-21 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The scholarships cover all expenses at the overnight camps, which provide a glimpse into life on a college campus. Campers stay overnight in dorms, learn fundamental skills that will help them excel on and off the court and receive individual and group instruction from Division 1 coaches to enhance their basketball and team-building abilities.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation (AEMC) is a recipient of federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance effort is Gary Ray, general manager of Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may file a written complaint with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Washington, D.C. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination action, or by such later date to which the Secretary of Agriculture or the Administrator of the Rural Utilities Service extends the time for filing. Identity of complainants will be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the purpose of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

ACT Grants Benefit Schools



Camden Middle School was recently awarded an Albemarle Community Trust grant. From left are Mike Reaves, principal; Kelsey Gray, president of the Camden Middle School Athletic Boosters; and Hunter Lowe, physical education teacher.



The Perquimans County Schools Foundation was recently awarded an Albemarle Community Trust grant. From left are Brenda Lassiter, executive director of the Perquimans County Schools Foundation, Inc.; and Tanya Turner, superintendent of Perquimans County Schools.

Two school systems were recently awarded Albemarle Community Trust grants.

The Camden Middle School Athletic Boosters received \$3,529 to help pay for a new volleyball net system. The new net will be used by the volleyball team as well as physical education classes.

The Perquimans County Schools Foundation, Inc. was awarded \$3,000 to help pay for an after school academy for girls in grades three to five to participate in Taekwondo. The academy will begin in January and end in April.

"The Academy will strengthen and expand participants' abilities to deal with the unique challenges that females may face in our society," said Brenda Lassiter, executive director of the Perquimans County Schools Foundation. "The benefits of the academy will include knowledge of practical self-defense, empowerment, improved self esteem, fitness and improved awareness."

The Albemarle Community Trust is voluntarily funded by Albemarle EMC members who contribute through their power bills. Close to \$60,000 is raised annually.

Service Pins Awarded



AEMC President John Spence (left) presents General Manager Gary Ray with a 35-year service pin.

The following Albemarle EMC employees recently received service pins recognizing their years of service for the cooperative.

General Manager Gary Ray received a pin for 35 years of service, Crew Leader Bobby Upton, 30 years; Crew Leader Matt Byrum, 25 years; Lineman First Class Kevin Bailey, 20 years; Engineering Technician III Travis Riddick, 20 years.

We ♥ Our Members

Valentine's Day is around the corner, and here at Albemarle EMC we want our members to know how much you mean to us.

This February we are turning 78 years old and we are as focused as ever on making a difference for our members and our communities.

Here are just a few ways we're showing our members the love this season and all year-round:

Capital Credits – Because your co-op belongs to the community it serves, we share any margins with our members.

Energy Management – We offer energy audits, high-use alerts, prepaid billing, leveled billing and much more.

Concern for Community – From supporting teachers with education grants to giving back to local organizations, Albemarle EMC is committed to strengthening the communities we call home and building a brighter future for everyone.



Albemarle EMC is at Your Service

78 Years and Going Strong by Chris Powell, coordinator of public relations

Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation is part of a nationwide group of electric cooperatives called Touchstone Energy. Founded in 1998, Touchstone Energy provides a larger branding umbrella that serves to unite independently governed electric cooperatives. The word *touchstone* originated from the old process of testing the quality of gold and silver alloys by rubbing them against a piece of black quartz. The color of the streak left on the quartz indicated the level of purity. The quartz touchstone served as a constant that could be relied upon.

The word *touchstone* in the cooperative's logo is fitting. Albemarle EMC's 78th anniversary will be Feb. 24. For almost eight decades, your cooperative has also been



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives *The power of human connections®*

a reliable constant, supplying power to the rural parts of the Albemarle region. Albemarle EMC was incorporated in 1945 to provide electrical service to a farming community quickly being left behind. Up until 1945, rural America was lagging the metropolitan areas that had electricity. For-profit power companies simply could not make a profit in the sparsely populated farming communities. To solve that problem, the federal government created the Rural Electrification Administration. Low-interest loans were made available to newly incorporated co-ops, such as Albemarle EMC that were tasked with coming up with their own methods of providing power. What resulted was one of the most successful public-

private programs this country has ever produced. The simple genius of the rural electrification effort was that it put the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the people who would be served the electricity. Instead of dictating how the program would be run, the federal government made low-interest loans available to rural communities that were left with the responsibility of making the programs work.

Imagine the resolve that must have been present in those rural areas. Before them was the chance to bring electricity to their communities and radically alter their immediate lives as well as those of generations to follow. All must have

been willing to do whatever it took to make their electric cooperative a success, to extend the power lines one more mile, then another and so on. The rural electrification program tapped into a vast reservoir of human potential. Rural work ethic, ingenuity and tenacity were harnessed and transformed into a mighty engine that erupted with progress. Across the country, power lines spread, and home after home glowed with electric lights. No longer would their children have to do school work by the dim light of kerosene. No longer would they have to chop wood to cook a meal on the stove. No longer would they have to pump water from a well by hand.

That is the humble yet proud roots from which Albemarle EMC grew, none

of which would be possible without a long history of dedicated employees and loyal members. Electric Cooperatives have always been more in the people business than the power business. Those human connections are evident in the Touchstone Energy logo, which features three people of different colors, joining hands. Known fondly as "the three amigos" by co-op employees, the logo emphasizes the importance of members to the success of electric cooperatives. Members work for the co-op, serve on its board of directors, serve on its charitable board, attend the annual meetings and pay the power bills that keep the co-op running. Albemarle EMC's longevity is also a testament to its business model, which we believe is the most equitable one in the industry.

Electric cooperatives are nonprofits, so any margins left over at the end of the year are returned to members through capital credits. Also the board of directors is comprised of elected members, so consumers have indirect, local control of their co-op. Of course, any qualifying member can run for a seat on the board of directors for direct oversight of the co-op.

The employees and directors of Albemarle EMC are proud to be the current caretakers of a legacy that has spanned 78 years, and we hope you are too. Working together let us all do our part to maintain Albemarle EMC's status as a touchstone for excellence when it comes to safely providing reliable, affordable power.