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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.*

## Closed for Thanksgiving



## Directors Elected at Annual Meeting

A total of 206 members recently participated in the Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation's Annual Meeting, held in Hertford. Members were given the option of registering and voting outside or attending the in-person meeting inside. Sixty-four members chose to vote and go, while 142 members opted to attend the meeting inside the Perquimans County Recreation Facility.

Prior to casting their votes, members had the opportunity of meeting each of the candidates at two tables set up outside of the recreation facility. Members also could view video speeches from each candidate prior to casting their vote. The following were elected to three-year terms on the Albemarle EMC Board of Directors. Chad Mathews was re-elected to the Perquimans County seat. Ray Albertson was elected to the Camden County seat, and A.J. Layton was elected to the Chowan County seat.

The remaining term of L.A. Harris Jr. has been filled by Robert Whitehead, who was appointed by the board of directors. Whitehead has been an Albemarle EMC member since 1996 and has voluntarily served on the co-op's nominating committee and Albemarle Community Trust.

"We are fortunate to have someone with Robbie's capability willing to serve the membership," said Albemarle EMC Board President John Spence, in his speech to members.

Spence also spoke about the changes in the co-op's leadership. He announced the retirement of longtime board members L.A. Harris Jr. and Garry Meiggs and thanked them for their decades of service. He also reported the passing of former director Aubrey Tynch. "He was a humble and dedicated servant, and we miss him dearly," said Spence, before asking for a moment of silence.

General Manager Gary Ray also addressed the members in attendance. His speech focussed on the co-op's ongoing safety record, now over 3,200 days, and the rising costs of doing business. "We have not had a rate increase since 2012, but the costs of equipment and materials continue to rise," Ray said.



*The following individuals (from left) were elected to three-year terms on the Albemarle EMC Board of Directors: Chad Mathews, representing Perquimans County; Ray Albertson, representing Camden County; and A.J. Layton, representing Chowan County.*



# Strong Participation at Annual Meeting

For the first time in two years, members were able to attend an Albemarle EMC Annual Meeting in person, instead of participating remotely. Those who turned out received a cast iron pan, calendar, \$2 bill and a to-go plate. Members who attended the inside meeting were treated to a musical performance by Paris Gonzalez, daughter of co-op employee Ruben Chavez. A cash-prize drawing was held for members who attended the drive-through or in-person portion of the meetings. In addition, prizes were awarded to the most senior man (Sid Stickles) and senior woman (Myrtle Copeland). Copeland's name was also drawn for the grand prize of \$500.

"I want to thank all of the members who took time out of their day to attend the co-op's Annual Meeting and vote," said Albemarle EMC President John Spence. "Members' ability to choose their cooperative's leadership is what sets us apart from other power providers."



*Credentials and Elections Committee member Alan Corprew holds a ballot box for a member to cast their vote.*



*Paris Gonzalez, a junior at Northeastern High School, entertains the audience prior to the start of the meeting.*



*Lineman Aaron Phippen hands out a meal to members*



*The John A. Holmes High School Junior ROTC renders colors for the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem.*



*A member casts their vote after viewing videos of candidates' speeches.*



*A member receives a prize, after their name was drawn.*

## Members Win Big

*Below are some of the members who won prizes at the recent Albemarle EMC Annual Meeting. Because members did not have to be present to win, some prizes were awarded the following week.*



*Patricia Hartman  
\$20*



*Rosa Jordan  
\$50*



*Shirley Manley  
\$200*



*Linda Sawyer  
\$100*



# Albemarle EMC is at Your Service

## Thankful to Serve Our Members

by Chris Powell, coordinator of public relations

It was wonderful to see so many of our members turn out for the recent Albemarle EMC Annual Meeting. It has been a while since we could host such an event, and we were delighted to be able to do so!

Whether you chose the vote-and-go option or chose to participate in the in-person meeting, we appreciate all of you. It was inspiring to see how many members stayed to hear about the state of their cooperative and listen to candidates' speeches. Any of you who took precious time away from your Saturday to be a part of the meeting show just how fortunate we are to serve such a dedicated group of people. As General Manager Gary Ray mentioned in his speech to members, the cooperative is financially strong and the past 12 months have been good ones. In this season of Thanksgiving, let us all take time to count our many blessings.

### Safety

At the top of the list is our ongoing safety record. We are now more than 3,200 days without an injury serious enough to require an employee to take time off to recover. The risk associated with labor, whether in the field or office, can never be reduced to zero. However for almost nine years, the employees of Albemarle EMC have limited workplace mishaps to almost none. The focus and attention to detail to achieve that has been tremendous.

### Financial Health

During the past year, your cooperative retired close to \$1 million in capital credits. For the fourth year in a row, the cooperative's board of directors approved a record-breaking capital credit refund in 2022 – \$617,338. As a not-for-profit corporation, our goal is to break even. When margins are earned, we give them back to the members in the form of capital credits. It is a business model we have adhered to since our formation in 1945, and it has worked well.

### Community Support

We recently hosted the 2022 Light Up Christmas Golf Tournament and were able to raise more than \$20,000 to fund our annual toy drive. The golf tournament is sponsored by our corporate partners as well as local golfers and we are grateful for all of them. Through their generosity, we are able to purchase toys for more than 500 children. Each year, we coordinate with our local school systems, who identify the children and arrange for the toys to be given to their parents.

Through our Bright Ideas program, we were able to grant more than \$15,000 to help educators in our service area bring innovative projects into their classrooms.

We also must pass along our gratitude to the members who voluntarily contribute to Operation RoundUp, which is overseen by the Albemarle Community Trust. During the past year, the ACT board was able to grant close to \$60,000 to community-minded organizations such as food pantries and volunteer fire departments.

### Beat the Peak

Occasionally we ask members to reduce their energy use during times of extreme temperatures. These requests go out as text messages advising members to adjust their thermostats or delay the use of large appliances or hot water. The Beat the Peak program helps your co-op lower the cost of wholesale power, which puts downward pressure on rates. To all of you who have participated in this program, we are thankful and encourage you to continue doing so.

### Our Members

Our deepest appreciation is extended to our members. Albemarle EMC is truly a team effort. Working together we are all a force for progress and economic growth in our region. Our service area continues to get stronger and better-positioned. The credit for our ongoing success goes to our members, who make all we do possible. We are thankful for you!

