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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 Easter

Albemarle EMC will
be closed March 29
in observance of
Good Friday.
Happy Easter!



Co-op Loses Longtime Director



Albemarle EMC Board Director
Glenn Carey, Sr. passed away on Jan. 2, leaving behind a lasting legacy of service to the cooperative.

Carey was elected to the Albemarle EMC Board of Directors in 1988 and faithfully served for 35 years. During his tenure, he was vice president of the board of directors from 2015 to 2023, when he chose to step down.

Known for his sense of humor, Carey was a calming presence on the board when difficult decisions had to be made.

He helped guide the cooperative through a period of significant modernization that included the switch from mechanical to automated meters, the addition of several new substations, the construction of a new office building and numerous upgrades to the co-op's power distribution lines.

"Glenn's death was shocking and totally unexpected," said AEMC Board President John Spence. "At our December board meeting, he was the same old Glenn, joking and lighthearted. He was a very close friend, confidant, and advisor. When I first came on the board, Glenn helped me to understand the responsibilities of being a good board representative and the impact that it would have on each member. His presence during the board meetings lightened the mood and helped to foster a close-knit group focused on what was right for the membership. We will all miss him."

Senator Meets with Electric Cooperative Leaders



Representatives from Albemarle EMC, Roanoke Cooperative, Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative and Tideland EMC recently met with Sen. Bobby Hanig (center) to present him with a PAC check and discuss matters of importance to electric cooperatives.

Time to Apply for Basketball Camp Scholarships

Many young basketball players dream of playing under the bright lights of a college arena, showcasing their skills on the hardwood. Albemarle EMC is helping to make that dream a reality for two lucky students by once again partnering with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and N.C. State University.

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 University, June 16-19. Young



men can apply for a scholarship to attend the Carolina Basketball School which will be held June 22-26 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Eligible applicants must be in sixth or seventh grade during the 2024-2025 school year at a qualifying school. To apply, students must complete and submit the online application by March 31 at neclectriccooperatives.com/sports-camps.

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.

Welcome, Open Door of Perquimans

Albemarle EMC is pleased to welcome its newest commercial account.

Open Door of Perquimans, a nonprofit food pantry based in Perquimans County, recently relocated to its new home on the corner of Creek Drive and Highway 17, in Hertford. The building was renovated and enlarged to create a supermarket feel, complete with aisles and a produce section.

Albemarle EMC members have supported Open Door of Perquimans for many years through its nonprofit subsidiary the Albemarle Community Trust. Recently, Albemarle EMC employees donated 369 pounds of food to the food pantry.



Open Door of Perquimans Representatives Kim Stites and Dina Hurdle with Perquimans County Manager Frank Heath and Winfall Mayor Preston White cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the organization's new facility.

Outages Restored Quickly

Strong winds from a storm resulted in about 3,600 members losing power in the early morning hours of Jan. 10th. The majority of those outages were restored by 1 a.m. thanks to a quick response from Albemarle EMC line crews.

About 660 members in the Weeksville area lost power due to a Dominion Power outage on the power line that feeds the co-op's Weeksville Delivery Point. The Weeksville outage was restored by 5:45 a.m.

The co-op also incurred outages in South Mills due to a broken pole. An outage in Bethel affected 719 residences when a tree fell on a line. A tree on Millpond Road fell into a power line on Millpond Road cutting power to 112 meters.

"Our linemen and office-support did an outstanding job of safely restoring power to members in a timely fashion and adverse conditions," said General Manager Kevin Heath.

Teams Sought for Golf Tournament



The 16th Annual Albemarle EMC Light Up Christmas Golf Tournament will be held Friday, May 3. The tee time will be 10 a.m.

If you would like to enter a team, purchase a hole sign or donate, please contact Chris Powell at chris.powell@aemc.coop or 252-426-2586. The entry and prize donation deadline is April 26. Funds raised at the tournament will go to support local families during the holidays. Since its inception, the fundraiser has raised more than \$273,000.

E-mailed Bills Are an Option

Members have a way to reduce the amount of mail they receive at home.

Albemarle EMC offers members the option to receive power bills through e-mail. Bills received through e-mail reduce the amount of trash entering the waste stream. The e-mail option also helps to save your cooperative money because a hard copy of the bill doesn't have to be generated, and envelopes and postage don't have to be paid for.

Members can benefit from receiving their bill a few days sooner because there will be no mail delay.

Members have several options to pay their bills. Cash is accepted at our office, located at 125 Cooperative Way, Hertford, during normal business hours. Checks and money orders are accepted at our office or by mail. Automatic draft can be set up, using a credit card or checking account. Using credit cards, members may also pay 24 hours a day online, using our mobile app or by calling 252-426-4419. Payments are not collected in the field.



Albemarle EMC is at Your Service



AEMC Leverages Technology

by Chris Powell, coordinator of public relations

One of the key strengths of Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation, and electric cooperatives in general, is their small size.

In the power industry, co-ops are small. Albemarle EMC currently has 36 employees. But that small size gives us a unique advantage. Electric co-ops can be nimble, especially when it comes to implementing technologies that enable efficiencies. Any improvement that can act as a workforce multiplier is naturally welcome at electric co-ops. A particular technology will often be implemented at one co-op, which then serves as a test case for other cooperatives. This approach enables electric cooperatives to more easily navigate a rapidly changing industry.

FlexPay

Another advancement has been the implementation of FlexPay. This technology enables members to pay for electricity prior to using it. Prepaid metering benefits both the cooperative and the member. The co-op benefits by reducing the number of unpaid power bills. It also benefits by reducing the number of reconnects that must be performed.

Members benefit by not having to pay a large deposit. For just \$125 (a \$25 deposit, a \$50 connect fee and a \$50 prepayment of electricity) a member can participate in the program. Once enrolled members are not subject to any reconnect, disconnect or late fees. There are, of course, no monthly bills because members pay for electricity in advance. The prepay aspect enables members to better manage their personal finances. Instead of receiving a monthly bill

that might strain a family's resources, FlexPay participants are able to better manage their cash flow as well as their kilowatt hour usage throughout the month. Participants can set up automatic alerts that notify them if their amount of pre-purchased electricity is running low. Payments are made using cash, check or credit cards in our office during normal business hours. Members can also make credit card payments 24 hours a day via the member internet portal www.aemc.coop or through our mobile app or by calling 252-426-4419.

Automated Meters

The FlexPay program is made possible through the use of the co-op's automated meters. We've had this technology for several years now. But it is worth mentioning because automated meters are the platform upon which much of our current technology is built. The digital meters enable us to read meters electronically. Members' usage information is sent digitally through the power lines to the co-op. This, of course, eliminates the need for human meter readers. Members benefit from the digital meters by having access to considerably more usage data. Years ago, the co-op could only provide monthly usage data. Now, with automated meters, we can provide daily as well as hourly data! We can also show how this usage correlates with outside air temperatures. This information has helped us notify members of excessive usage at their homes. All of this information is available to members through our member portal at www.aemc.coop.

Outage Map

The Albemarle EMC outage map, also

located at the co-op's Internet homepage, enables members to view close to real-time outage information that includes number of meters that have had power restored as well as if a crew has been assigned to the outage.

Drones

Albemarle EMC utilizes aerial drones to perform inspections of the co-op's electrical system. The drone is equipped with an infrared camera that enables it to also detect hot spots in equipment. Hot spots occur when a piece of electrical equipment is nearing failure, and heat is building up. The drone has a maximum speed of 40 miles per hour and has a flight time of about 13 minutes on a fully charged battery. It will also automatically return home when the battery charge reaches a certain level. The drone comes with multiple batteries for repeated use. Two of Albemarle EMC's linemen are certified to operate the drone.

When outages occur, much time is often spent visibly inspecting the lines to determine the locations of damaged lines and tripped fuses. These faults can sometimes occur in areas that are hard to access. The drone enables our line crews to more quickly inspect for damage, thus reducing the duration of outages.

Technology Equals Efficiency

As nonprofits, cooperatives often operate on thin margins. Technology has become an invisible workforce that is continually allowing us to do more with less. Anything that saves the cooperative ultimately benefits members. In addition members receive a higher level of service. It is a win-win relationship vital to cooperatives' continued success.