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Proudly serving the members of Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation

Albemarle Sounds

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®

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Albemarle EMC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Incumbents Re-elected

A total of 195 members recently participated in the 76th Albemarle EMC Annual Meeting to elect a slate of directors and receive an update about the state of their cooperative.

The following board directors were re-elected to three-year terms: Robert Whitehead, Pasquotank County; Josiah “Tony” Webb, Chowan County; and Thelma Finch-Copeland, Perquimans County.

Each participating member received the traditional \$2 bill, a compact first aid kit and a boxed barbecue and chicken meal. Entertainment was provided by the family musical group “100 Proof.”

During the business meeting, members listened to speeches from Albemarle EMC President John Spence and General Manager Gary Ray.

Spence reported that the cooperative continues to experience changes in leadership. Longtime Director Virgie Whitehurst passed away shortly after the 2022 Annual Meeting. In addition, General Manager Gary Ray accepted the position of chief executive officer for Jones Onslow Electric Membership Corporation, Jacksonville, NC. Spence thanked Ray for his 15 years of service to the cooperative, 12 of which were as general manager.

“During his tenure, the co-op constructed the South Mills, New Hope, West Albemarle and Bethel substations,” Spence said. “Gary, we thank you and wish you and your wife, Gloria, all the best.”

Spence informed the audience that the board of directors would be interviewing candidates for the general manager’s position and that an interim general



manager would be in place by Gary’s last day of employment.

Ray’s speech to the members focused on affordability, reliability and safety.

He informed the membership that the co-op’s equity level is now at 46 percent, which means the co-op’s debt level continues to shrink. More than \$900,000 in capital credits was returned to the membership this past year.

“Lower debt means larger margins, which becomes patronage capital for our members,” Ray said.

Ray also updated the membership about the recently completed Bethel Substation, which provides more capacity and reliability to southern Perquimans County.

He informed the membership that the co-op had recently completed its three-year national safety achievement certification through the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program. Also, the co-op was just a few weeks away from reaching ten years without a lost-time accident.

Finally, Ray thanked the past and present boards he worked under as well as the employees and the members.

“I’ve enjoyed my time here,” he said. “I will miss you all.”

AEMC to Close for Thanksgiving



Members Win Big at Annual Meeting



Lineman Apprentice Cody Stokeley delivers a prize to one lucky member.

Albert Davis and Henning Bartlett

\$50 — Patricia Hartman, Louise Privott, Lenial Brite, Willie R. Moore, George Benge, Herbert Copeland, Phillip and Amy Burnham, Ann Reed

\$20 — Sarah Bradley, Larry and Markieta James, Dennis Herring, Janice Bryant, Amy Chappell, Pattie Smith, Sandra Welch, Elmer R. Stallings, Edward E. Hall, Robert and Tiffany White.

A total of \$2,000 in prize drawings was awarded during the recent Albemarle EMC Annual Meeting. Fifty-dollar prizes were awarded to the most senior man and woman in attendance. The most senior woman was Myrtle Copeland, age 96; the most senior man was Albert Davis, age 100.

Bobby and Assunta Siller were drawn for the \$500 grand prize, and Maida Jones and Robert Moye each won a \$200 prize. The following are the remaining prize winners: \$100 — Rachel Hinton, Ernest Wahlers,

Interim GM Hired



We are pleased to announce that Winston Howell has been selected as interim chief executive officer until such time as a permanent executive vice president / general manager is hired.

Howell is currently the chief executive officer of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, located in Tarboro, and has worked at that cooperative for 20 years. He became CEO of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC in 2015 and served as chief operating officer for several years prior.

He is a graduate of East Carolina University and completed his MBA in 2010. He is passionate about the co-op business model and serving members. Howell is married with two children.

Thankful to Serve Our Members

It was wonderful to see so many of our members turn out for the recent Albemarle EMC Annual Meeting.

Whether you chose the drive-through registration option or participated in the meeting in person, we appreciate all of you. It was inspiring to see how many members participated in their Annual Meeting. 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 stated during the Annual Meeting, 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.

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!

Toy Drive Still Going Strong



For the 18th year in a row, Albemarle EMC is conducting its Light Up Christmas Toy Drive to help families in need during the holidays.

The toy drive is mainly funded through the co-op's annual charity golf tournament, which was held this past April. After expenses, the co-op raised about \$17,000. The funds are used to purchase toys for more than 500 children that have been identified by the school system. Each year,

Albemarle EMC employees purchase, sort, bag and deliver the toys to local schools. From there, school coordinators arrange to deliver the toys to the families.

Since its inception, the toy drive has raised more than \$253,000, most of which has come from corporate sponsors. However, members can contribute too. Before Thanksgiving, the cooperative is accepting new toys, cash or checks made out to the Albemarle Community Trust. Contributions can be dropped off at our office, located at 125 Cooperative Way, Hertford, NC.

Drawing Contest Held

A Perquimans Middle School 7th-grader's drawing received the most votes in the LUC drawing contest. The design will be used to create an LUC T-shirt, and the student will receive a prize.





Albemarle EMC is at Your Service



Energy Efficiency Myths to Be Aware of

by Chris Powell, coordinator of public relations

Energy and energy savings myths get passed around surprisingly rapidly, often with little scrutiny. However, according to the Department of Energy, many of these myths should be treated with healthy skepticism. Sometimes the basic premise of the myth is correct, but the energy savings are much smaller than people realize. In other cases, the myth is based on factors that were once true but have been subsequently resolved through better design or manufacturing of products. In all cases, the bottom line is that you should always think critically and dig a little deeper to separate the myths from the facts.



Myth: Buying an efficient air conditioner or furnace will automatically reduce your energy bill.

Fact: This is true to some extent, but you won't realize all the possible savings if the equipment is not sized or installed properly. Studies have shown that typical air conditioner and duct systems are improperly installed, wasting one-third or more of the energy used by the air conditioner. New and replacement equipment (and ducts) need to be properly designed and installed to realize all the possible savings. The same caveats about proper installation hold true for insulation, windows and many other energy efficiency upgrades.

Myth: Duct tape is good for sealing ducts.

Fact: Laboratory research has concluded that duct tape has very low durability when used to seal ducts. On new installations, tape often falls off due to poor surface preparation, because ducts tend to be installed in dirty and dusty locations and conditions. On older systems, the tape falls off as it ages and the adhesive dries out and wrinkles. Instead of duct tape, seal ducts with mastic.

Myth: When an appliance is turned off, it's off.

Fact: Most devices continue to consume power when they're switched off, sometimes as much power as when they're on. A surprisingly large number of electrical products, from air conditioners to DVD players, cannot be switched completely off by turning off the device. These products draw power 24 hours a day, often without the knowledge of the consumer. We call this power consumption standby power. One easy remedy for this is to unplug appliances when you are out of the house, easily done if many items are grouped together on one power strip.

Myth: Cleaning refrigerator coils saves energy.

Fact: While this seems intuitively logical, and very small savings may indeed arise, efforts to actually measure this effect have typically come up empty-handed. Cleaning coils is probably a good idea, especially if you want to cut down on dust and dirt buildup in your kitchen, but don't expect lower utility bills from it.

Myth: Leaving lights, computers and other appliances on uses less energy than turning them off and on repeatedly, and makes them last longer.

Fact: The small surge of power created when some devices are turned on is vastly smaller than the energy used by running the device when it's not needed. While it used to be the case that cycling appliances and lighting on and off significantly reduced their useful lifetimes, these problems have been largely overcome through better design. The rule of thumb today is: Turn off the lights when you leave the room, and use the power-management software that comes with your computer and monitor.

Myth: Insulating the ceiling will just cause more heat to leak out of the windows.

Fact: Adding insulation to one part of a home won't increase the pressure on heat losses through other parts. However, it is true that poorly insulated areas will be the major losers of heat, and that they often merit attention before improving already well-insulated parts of the home. To best insulate a home, large and small leaks must be addressed.

Myth: Switching to electric room heaters will reduce your energy bill.

Fact: This is true only under certain circumstances. If you have central electric heating, using individual room heaters may save you money, if you just run the heater in the room that you occupy and that room is closed from the rest of the house. Attempting to heat large areas of a home with one or more space heaters will undoubtedly raise your power bill.

Myth: Running your heating or cooling system while you are away from the house saves energy:

Fact: The rule of thumb is that if you are going to be away from your house longer than two hours, it is better to turn the system off or down. Running your heat and air system all day will unnecessarily increase your bill.