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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.

G.M. Moves to Larger Co-op

Gary Ray has resigned his position as Albemarle EMC general manager to return to the electric cooperative where his career began.

Ray left Albemarle EMC on Sept. 25 to become the new chief executive officer for Jones-Onslow Electric Membership Corporation, in Jacksonville, NC. Ray had worked for Jones-Onslow EMC prior to being hired as manager of engineering for Albemarle EMC in 2008. Ray was promoted to general manager of Albemarle EMC in 2011.

At press time, an interim general manager had not been hired by the Albemarle EMC Board of Directors. Once an interim general manager is hired, the board of directors will begin interviewing candidates for the general manager position.

“We will be diligent in our search to

find the right person to continue moving this cooperative forward,” said Albemarle EMC Board President John Spence. “We have dedicated employees and a solid management team to continue operating our cooperative at a high level.”



During his tenure, Ray led the cooperative through several, storm-related outages. He made grid reliability a priority, advocating for the construction of the South Mills, New Hope, West Albemarle and Bethel substations. He also emphasized the creation of a culture of safety. The cooperative saw significant improvements to its tri-annual safety inspections and has not had a lost-time accident since 2013.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the membership,” Ray said. “I will miss the directors and employees who made working here a joy.”

AEMC Seeks Toy Drive Donations



Albemarle EMC’s annual Light Up Christmas toy drive is under way, and members

are encouraged to drop off new toys or monetary donations before Nov. 15. Our office is located at 125 Cooperative Way, Hertford.

Grant Presented to Fire Department



The South Camden Fire Department recently received a grant from the Albemarle Community Trust.

The \$3,353.66 grant will be used to purchase two Zoll automated external defibrillators that will be placed on first responding fire engines.

“The AEDs will provide life-saving services to our citizens,” said Larry Glasscock, a firefighter with the department. “In recent years, we have found our calls have increased for live-saving measures to provide CPR before the rescue squad can arrive on scene.”

October is National Co-op Month

Just like all co-ops, Albemarle EMC was created out of necessity—to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. So in 1945, a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op so everyone in our community could benefit. For a modest membership fee to the co-op, anyone in the co-op’s new service area could get electricity brought to their home. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem that they all had but couldn’t solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community, and the newly established power lines helped power economic opportunity in our community.

Albemarle EMC’s heritage is one of focus on our mission and serving the greater good. In this, we include everyone to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the entire community.

Members control the cooperative through a democratic process whereby the co-op’s board of directors is elected by neighbors just like you.

Financial resources are used for capital investments and co-op programs, and any margins are shared equitably with the members through capital credits.

Energy Efficiency Tax Credits Available

Did you know that qualified energy efficient improvements to your home may qualify for a federal tax credit up to \$3,200?

The credit equals 30 percent of certain qualified expenses for improvements made through 2032. The qualified expenses include qualified energy efficiency improvements installed during the year and residential energy property expenses.

The maximum credit that can be claimed each year is:

- **\$1,200 for energy property costs and certain energy efficient home improvements, with limits on doors (\$250 per door and \$500 total), windows (\$600) and home energy audits (\$150)**
- **\$2,000 per year for qualified heat pumps, biomass stoves or biomass boilers**

The credit has no lifetime dollar limit. You can claim the maximum annual credit every year that you make eligible improvements. The credit is nonrefundable, so you can’t get back more on the credit than you owe in taxes. You can’t apply any excess credit to future tax years.

To claim your tax credit, you will need to file form 5695 Residential Energy Credits Part II with your tax return. You must claim the credit for the tax year when the equipment is installed, not merely the purchase-year. For more information, visit irs.gov/credits-deductions/energy-efficient-home-improvement-credit.

Grants Benefit Community



Melanie and Chiquita Sutton accept a check for What About Our Children, Inc.

Two community-minded organizations were recently awarded grants from the Albemarle Community Trust.

What About Our Children, Inc. received \$750 to provide meals, school supplies and activities to youth in the Hertford area.



Rachel Clipston and Amanda Hurdle (from left) receive a grant check for the Albemarle Development Corporation.

The Albemarle Development Corporation was recently awarded a \$1,000 Albemarle Community Trust grant.

The grant will be used to purchase portfolios, bags, pens, calculators and handouts for a Real World Simulation. The event teaches youth about fiscal planning, education, career and lifestyle choices.

AEMC Receives 17th Safety Achievement

For the 17th time in a row, Albemarle EMC has earned a safety achievement accreditation.

Every three years, Albemarle EMC receives a comprehensive Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP) inspection. A team of safety professionals performs a surprise inspection that covers all aspects of the co-op’s work activities. In addition, a crew visit is performed, and employees individually are asked safety questions they are required to know the answers to.

The RESAP evaluated the co-op on numerous categories that included document verification, safety equipment, warehouse, vehicles, clothing, trucks and personal tools. In the RESAP summary, Albemarle EMC received 24 *Exceeds Requirements*, 134 *Satisfies Requirements*, nine *Partially Satisfies Requirements* and no *Attention Areas*.

On Oct. 24, Albemarle EMC will have operated 10 years without a lost-time accident. A lost-time accident occurs when an employee is injured severely enough to require one or more days to recover.

“To go ten years without a lost-time accident is a tremendous achievement,” said Roy O’Neal, manager of operations. “This can only be accomplished through teamwork, training and diligent employees.”



Albemarle EMC Apprentice Lineman Drake Trueblood uses line guards, rubber gloves and sleeves, a helmet and safety glasses to safely work on a transformer.



Albemarle EMC is at Your Service



Ray Reflects on Tenure at Co-op



After working 15 years at Albemarle EMC, 12 of which as general manager, Gary Ray recently accepted the position of chief executive officer with Jones-Onslow Electric Membership Corporation. Before he departed, the following interview was conducted to discuss the challenges and opportunities he experienced while here.

You were first hired as manager of engineering at AEMC. What did you notice were the biggest strengths and weaknesses of the co-op's grid?

It was apparent that the cooperative had started capital projects to strengthen our grid reliability. There was a need to continue to improve our grid to Morgan's Corner and South Mills, but also other weak spots – New Hope and those areas served by our Burgess Delivery Point.

How did being manager of engineering prepare you to become general manager?

It was helpful to closely see our main connection to our members—our electric distribution system. I also worked closely with our staff and employees and got to see our wonderful employees in action—serving our members. By meeting with and speaking to many members, I learned a lot about our membership and the communities that we serve first hand.

What motivated you to apply for the

general manager's position?

One of my motivations in moving to Albemarle EMC was to learn more about different cooperatives, with a hope to one day lead a cooperative. When the EVP/GM position opened here, it was a wonderful opportunity to meet a career dream and a natural fit.

Once hired as general manager, what did you see as your biggest challenge?

The financial piece of business was most challenging, but I had great resources and a wonderful team. In the early years, I put much time into financial learning. The other main challenge with leading an organization is the human side. Leading many different personalities with different motivations and goals.

During your time here, you earned an MBA, how did that affect your management decisions?

My MBA experience was wonderful and I learned so much about myself and business. The knowledge helped me in many business decisions here at AEMC.

What did you see as your biggest opportunity?

My biggest opportunity here at AEMC has been to mentor and guide our employees to improve and grow. I enjoy this aspect of my job immensely.

What was it like working for a board of directors?

That aspect of the job is challenging and different than working for one boss or supervisor. My board has been wonderful and has let me do the job they hired me to do. They offer assistance or guidance when I've asked, but trust me and our team to handle the daily business of the cooperative.

What role did the board of directors take in guiding the cooperative?

The board of directors has a key role in making policy and rates, as well as many legal decisions at AEMC. As representatives of our members, they are

also a direct tie to them, and our board is eager to listen to our membership.

Looking back at your tenure here, what are you most proud of?

I am proud of the growth of our employees while I have been their leader. I am immensely proud of the wonderful things that we have accomplished and know that will continue after I leave. I feel the cooperative has improved during my tenure as GM, and that is directly due to our employees' hard work and dedication.

What did you like the most about being general manager?

I love being a leader and decision maker. I get to do both, daily, as GM.

What did you like the least about being general manager?

The human aspect is sometimes difficult. From making a tough personnel decision that impacts one's career, to telling a member that we cannot do a certain thing that they wish us to do.

What advice would you give to the incoming general manager?

Just to treat everyone with respect and caring. Everything else should fall into place. They will be inheriting an amazing team of employees and directors.

Is there anything you would like to say to the employees and membership before you start your next chapter?

I have enjoyed my 15 years here at AEMC and my 12.5 years as your EVP/GM. This move was a huge decision for me and my family, and we will miss everyone. I appreciate the support and well wishes. I have felt a lot of love throughout my time here, but especially since I announced my move. I hope that everyone has felt my love and admiration for them here. AEMC truly has a family atmosphere. I hope that I will always be part of the AEMC family. I will certainly stay in touch, and I will always want the very best for Albemarle EMC.