

# Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

DECEMBER 2016

*The Official Newsletter of Altamaha Electric Membership Corporation*

**Serving: Toombs, Montgomery, Emanuel, Treutlen, Laurens, Johnson and Tattnall**

## Protect Yourself From Utility Scammers

In recent months, we have received numerous reports of scammers targeting our members demanding payment for their electric bill. The scams originate with an unsolicited phone call from someone claiming to be an Altamaha EMC employee. Some of the scammers have even identified themselves as Georgia Power representatives authorized to collect on behalf of Altamaha EMC. The scammer warns that the member's electricity will be disconnected unless they make a payment – usually within a one hour time frame. These scammers are targeting both commercial and residential accounts. Often times the scammers use caller ID spoofing so that Altamaha EMC's phone number shows up on the member's caller ID.

The scammer instructs the member to purchase a pre-paid debit or credit card – widely available at retail stores – then call him or her back to supposedly make a payment to Altamaha EMC. The scammer then asks the customer for the prepaid card's receipt number and PIN number, which grants instant access to the card's funds.

Below are tips on how our members can protect themselves:

- **Altamaha EMC mails monthly bills** to all members and we will also mail a delinquent notice if a bill is not paid by the due date. Our employees do not call our members regarding payments on delinquent accounts.
- **Customers can make payments online**, by phone, automatic bank draft, mail, payment kiosk or in person at any of our offices. We NEVER ask a member to purchase a pre-paid debit/credit card to pay their bill.
- **If you suspect someone is trying to scam you**, hang up and call the local police and then call Altamaha EMC at 912-526-8181 to report the scam. Never dial the phone number the scammers provide.
- **Never provide your social security number**, credit/debit card number or banking information to anyone requesting it over the phone unless you initiated the call and feel confident with whom you are speaking.
- **Beware of the door-to-door sales approach.** Never allow anyone into your home to check electrical wiring, natural gas pipes or appliances unless you scheduled an appointment or reported a utility problem. Always ask utility employees for proper identification.
- **Be proactive.** If you already have provided information to someone claiming to offer this service, contact your bank immediately. Also contact the three national credit bureaus - Equifax, Experian and TransUnion – and request a notation made on your account so that it doesn't impact your credit rating.
- **Inform others.** Share this information with friends and family so they do not become victims. The elderly are common victims of this type of scam, but anyone who pays a utility bill is a potential victim.



# 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Highlights

A crowd of over 1,000 people gathered at Southeastern Technical College in Vidalia on November 2nd to help Altamaha EMC celebrate our 80th annual meeting of the members. A total of 894 members registered for the meeting.

Romanous Dotson, Altamaha EMC General Manager/CEO, addressed the membership and discussed the 80 year history of the cooperative. Bryan Isgett of McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks and Co. reviewed the cooperative's financial reports showing the sound financial position of Altamaha EMC.

Directors Drexel Braddy, Randall Morris and Myron (Mike) Sweat were each re-elected by acclamation to a three-year term on the board.

The management, board and employees of Altamaha EMC chose Domestic Violence Awareness as the cause for this year's annual meeting. The Refuge Domestic Violence Shelter was on hand selling raffle tickets for a \$100 gift card. Members also donated money to The Refuge to help victims of Domestic Violence.

Door prizes were awarded after the meeting adjourned. All members and guests were given a bucket with prizes and treated to refreshments as they left the meeting.



*The staff of The Refuge Domestic Violence Shelter partnered with Altamaha EMC at our annual meeting to promote Domestic Violence Awareness.*



*Pat Hart of Uvalda was the winner of the \$100 gift card raffle to benefit The Refuge Domestic Violence Shelter.*



*A huge thanks to Lasseter Implement of Lyons for allowing us to use the John Deere tractors to pull our shuttles.*



*In honor of our 80th anniversary, we awarded ten cash prizes during the door prize drawings. Each winner won \$80 cash!*



*Many members attending the meeting enjoyed learning more about the Altamaha EMC electric car.*



*Stella Kate Marsh's picture from our 2015 annual meeting was featured in this year's promotional material for our 80th annual meeting. She proudly posed for another picture this year. She's going to be famous one day!*



*All attendees were given an 80th anniversary commemorative bucket as they left the meeting.*

# 2007 Chevrolet Truck For Sale

Altamaha EMC is accepting sealed bids for the 2007 Chevrolet ½ ton pickup shown below. The truck has 108,500 miles. Bids will be accepted until 5:00 PM on Tuesday, January 31, 2017. **Only Altamaha EMC members are allowed to submit a bid.**



The truck is available for your inspection at our office on Hwy 280 in Lyons. Viewing hours are Tuesday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:30 pm. The truck will be sold on an as-is basis.

All bids must include name, address and telephone number. Bids can be dropped off at our Lyons office or mailed to PO Box 346, Lyons, GA 30436 (Attn: Joe Waters).

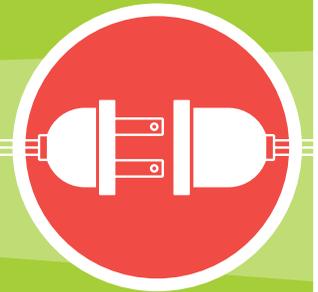
For more information, contact Joe Waters at 912-526-2168 or [joe.waters@altamahaemc.com](mailto:joe.waters@altamahaemc.com)

## Holiday Lighting Safety Tips



Consider purchasing LED holiday lights; they are cool to the touch and more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs.

Test holiday lights by connecting each strand before hanging them.



Make sure there are no broken bulbs or damaged or frayed cords. Discard any defective strands.

Use holiday lights that include the Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) label.



Avoid resting bulbs on tree needles and branches. Try using a clip to keep the bulbs upright.

Do not overload electrical outlets or extension cords.



Turn off all indoor and outdoor holiday lighting before leaving the house or going to bed.

# HOLIDAY CLOSING NOTICE

*The board of directors, management and employees of Altamaha EMC extend to you and your family our best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous and Happy New Year!*

*In observance of the holiday season, the offices of Altamaha EMC will be closed Monday, December 26, Tuesday, December 27, and Monday, January 2.*

*In the event of a power outage or related problems, standby personnel will be on duty. You can report power outages by calling (912) 526-8181 or (800) 822-4563.*

## Scholarship Applications Now Available



Altamaha EMC is currently accepting applications for the Walter Harrison Scholarship, a program sponsored by Georgia's electric cooperatives.

The \$1,000 scholarship can be applied to academic expenses at any accredited two- or four-year university, college or vocational-technical institute in Georgia. Factors for consideration include grade point average, SAT scores, academic standing, scholastic honors, and financial need. A scholarship committee comprised of EMC directors and managers selects students who exceed in these areas and who struggle with college expenses. Ten scholarships will be awarded statewide in early spring of 2017. Students who apply for the scholarship must be accepted or enrolled in an accredited undergraduate degree program. They also must complete an application and write a biographical sketch which provides a preview of his or her future plans. Created in 1985 by the board of directors of Georgia EMC, the Scholarship pays tribute to the late Walter Harrison, a pioneer in the rural electricity movement and a leader at local, state and national levels in the electric cooperative program. Since 1985, Georgia's electric cooperatives have awarded more than \$181,000 to students via the Walter Harrison Scholarship program. Applications are available for download on our website. You can also request an application by contacting Tammye Vaughn at 912-526-2120 or via email at [tammye.vaughn@altamahaemc.com](mailto:tammye.vaughn@altamahaemc.com). **Completed applications are due by January 31, 2017.**

## GATE Certification Expires December 31<sup>st</sup> *Time to Renew*

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal signed House Bill 386 into law in 2012. Under this law, all agricultural producers must apply ANNUALLY to the Department of Agriculture in order to remain tax exempt. Current GATE certifications expire on December 31, 2016.

Effective January 1, 2017, all your Altamaha EMC accounts that are currently tax exempt will be taxed unless you provide us a copy of your 2017 GATE card. We must have this card on file before December 31, 2016 in order for your accounts to be tax exempt on January 1, 2017.

You can apply for the tax exemption certificate on the Department of Agriculture website at [www.agr.georgia.gov](http://www.agr.georgia.gov). If you have questions about your certification, please contact the Dept. of Agriculture at 1-855-327-6829.



# Member RECIPES

## French Toast Casserole

### Ingredients

1 loaf French bread  
8 large eggs  
2 cups half-and-half  
1 cup milk  
2 tablespoons granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
Dash salt  
Maple syrup

### Praline Topping

2 sticks butter, melted  
1 cup packed light brown sugar  
1 cup chopped pecans  
2 tablespoons light corn syrup  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

### Directions

Generously butter a 9 x 13 flat baking dish. Slice French bread into 20 slices, 1-inch each. Arrange slices in baking dish in 2 rows, overlapping the slices. In a large bowl, combine the eggs, half-and-half, milk, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Beat with a mixer or whisk until well blended but not too bubbly. Pour mixture over the bread slices, making sure all are covered evenly with the milk-egg mixture. Spoon some of the mixture in between the slices. Cover with foil and refrigerate overnight. The next day, preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare the praline topping by combining all ingredients in a mixing bowl and blend well. Spread Praline Topping evenly over the bread and bake for 40 minutes, until puffed and lightly golden. Serve with maple syrup.

*—From the kitchen of Mandy Sumner*

Each month, our newsletter features recipes submitted by our members. If you have a favorite recipe and would like to share it with other readers in the Altamaha EMC service area, send a copy, complete with name, address and daytime phone number to: Tammye Vaughn, Altamaha EMC, P.O. Box 346, Lyons, GA 30436. Each month, a recipe will be selected for publication. The member who submitted the featured recipe will be given a \$10 credit on their next Altamaha EMC bill. Due to limited space, not all recipes received will be featured. Recipes printed in *Plugged In* are not independently tested; therefore, we must depend on the accuracy of those members who send recipes to us.