



Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

JUNE 2019

The Official Newsletter of Altamaha Electric Membership Corporation

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

Students Chosen For 2019 Washington Youth Tour



Falynd Holland



Hunter Brotman



Arham Shah



Briley Braddy

Altamaha EMC recently selected three local students to attend the 54th annual Washington Youth Tour, a once in a lifetime leadership experience made possible through the generosity of the electric membership cooperatives (EMCs) in Georgia. This year's tour, which takes place June 13-20, will expose students to the fast-paced world of politics and leadership.

Students are carefully selected through an application process which includes a study packet, written test, and a personal interview. Chosen to represent Altamaha EMC on the 2019 tour are **Falynd Holland** of Toombs County High School, **Hunter Brotman** of Robert Toombs Christian Academy and **Arham Shah** of Swainsboro High School.

Briley Braddy of Vidalia

Heritage Academy was also selected as a delegate for this year's tour. Because Briley's father serves on the board of directors for Altamaha EMC, she was not eligible to compete in the local contest. Georgia EMC sponsors a state-wide essay contest for children of EMC employees and directors. Briley's essay earned her a spot on the 2019 tour.

The Washington Youth Tour was established to inspire the next generation of leaders. During the tour, student delegates will explore government on a local and national level, gathering in Atlanta before departing for Washington, D.C. While visiting our nation's capital the delegates will have the opportunity to meet with their elected officials to discuss and learn about issues that are important locally. The

Georgia delegation will join more than 1,700 additional youth representing cooperatives across the nation. The students will have the opportunity to exchange ideas and views about local and national issues with peers from other states.

Former delegates and participating EMCs agree the Youth Tour has grown into an invaluable program that gives young adults an experience that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. 2016 Washington Youth Tour delegate Greg McKenzie said, "The Washington Youth Tour was an enriching experience for me. I was able to learn a plethora of new information about our nation's capital and gain leadership skills that proved to be valuable throughout the remainder of my high school and college career."

Keep cool for less this summer

It's guaranteed to be hot this summer, so you probably will need to run your air conditioner a lot. Here are some tips on how to cool your home—without going broke.

You may need to focus on inefficiencies in your home's cooling system, but don't overlook some other potential problems:

- Do you have a freezer or second refrigerator in the garage? This can be a major energy hog, especially if it's old.

- Do you have a well? Your pump may increase your energy costs if you use more water during the summer. Start by looking for leaks in the system, and if necessary, reduce irrigation.

- How about a swimming pool? It may be time to overhaul or replace the pool pump. If the pump is in good shape, try putting it on a timer.

If you have central air conditioning (A/C)

or a heat pump, make sure your filter has been changed or cleaned recently. Then call an HVAC contractor for a tuneup and a complete assessment of the system. A tuneup can improve the efficiency and extend the life of the unit, and typically includes cleaning the condenser coil, checking the refrigerant levels and taking a good look at the pump and electrical contacts. Talk to the contractor about the efficiency of the A/C unit. If it's old, it may be cost-effective to replace it, even if it's still working.

Your system's ductwork is equally as important, so make sure the contractor you choose is capable and willing to provide an expert assessment. A real pro will know how to measure the air flow at each supply and return register. If you're not getting cool air to the rooms that need it, the contractor may be able to modify the ductwork.

Leaky ductwork could be making your system less efficient. If the ducts are in an unconditioned area like a crawl space or attic, it's especially important to make sure they're sealed and insulated. It will also help to seal ducts that are in conditioned spaces.

Some HVAC contractors can do a duct-blast test to measure duct leakage. Discuss whether you should ever close any supply registers. Most experts recommend that supply registers always



A duct-blast test can identify air leaks in your home's ductwork.

remain open.

If you cool your home with window A/C units, there are ways to maximize your cooling while keeping costs as low as possible.

- Use window A/C units in rooms that can be closed off with a door, to make the cooling as effective as possible.

- Make sure you have the right size unit for the room. A unit that's too big will cool the room before the humidity has been lowered, which will make it feel less cool, while a unit that's too small will have to work harder, thus shortening its life span—and it may not do the job.

- Use an electric fan or ceiling fan to help distribute the cold air throughout the area you are cooling.

- Turn off the A/C unit and fans when no one is in the room.

- If your window A/C unit isn't cooling properly, it may need to be replaced. Look for an ENERGY STAR-certified unit to make the most of your cooling dollars.

Of course, the simplest way to save money on air conditioning is to not use it. As much as possible, keep your activities limited to rooms that are easily cooled. Try to spend more time cooking and eating outside. If you have a basement, think about setting up a second bedroom down there, where it's cooler. Think of it as your new summer hideaway!

For more information about getting the most from your A/C unit, please visit collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.



Make sure that your window A/C unit is installed flat or according to manufacturer's directions so that it drains properly.

Stay Back and Stay Safe

Working with electricity can be a dangerous job, especially for line workers. In fact, *USA Today* lists line workers among the most dangerous jobs. That's why for Altamaha EMC, safety is the number one priority. This is not empty talk. We have created a culture of putting our crews' safety and that of the community above all else.

Our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, our consumer-members. Yes, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to you, but equally important, we want our employees to return home safely to their loved ones. This requires ongoing focus, dedication, vigilance – and your help!

Distractions can be deadly.

While we appreciate your kindness and interest in the work of our crews, we ask that you stay back and let them focus on their task at hand. Even routine work has the potential to be dangerous, and it takes their full attention and that of their colleagues, who are also responsible for the team's safety. Distractions can have deadly consequences. If a lineworker is on or near your property during a power outage, for vegetation management or for routine maintenance, please allow them ample room to work. These small accommodations help protect our crews—and you.

If you have a dog, try to keep it indoors while lineworkers are on or near your property. While

most dogs are friendly, some are defensive of their territory and can't distinguish between a burglar and a utility worker. Our crews work best without a pet "supervising" the job.

We recognize that for your family's safety, you want to make sure only authorized workers are on or near your property. You will recognize Altamaha



EMC employees by simply looking at the vehicle they are driving. All service trucks are marked with the Altamaha EMC name and logo. If you ever have a question about whether or not someone on your property is an Altamaha EMC employee, please call our office for verification.

Slow down and move over.

In addition to giving line workers some space while they are near your property, we also ask that you move over or slow down when approaching any utility vehicle on the side of the road. This is an extra barrier of safety to help those who help all of us.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Want to light up your outdoor space without increasing your energy use? Try outdoor solar lights! They're easy to install and virtually maintenance free. Remember, solar lights work best when the solar cells receive the manufacturer's recommended hours of sunlight.

Source: energy.gov



HOLIDAY CLOSING NOTICE

All offices of Altamaha EMC will be closed Thursday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day

The Lyons, Soperton and Swainsboro offices will reopen at 8:00 AM on Friday, July 5th.

The East Dublin office will reopen at 9:00 AM on Friday, July 5th.

The drive-in window at the Lyons office only will remain open on Independence Day.

You can always make payments on your accounts by using our kiosk machines at any of our offices. Payments made using the kiosk post immediately to your account.

In the event of a power outage or other emergency, please call 912-526-8181.

June is Home Safety Month

June is National Safety Month, and safety starts at home. Join the observance by checking for electrical accidents waiting to happen in your home. Here's how:

- Inspect every appliance in your home to determine if it is still working. Turn each one on and then off as you listen to the motor. Inspect plugs and cords for damage.
- If you have young children, plug wall outlets with child-safety caps.
- When you replace appliances, buy ones with a rating from a testing laboratory like UL.
- Choose lightbulbs with the correct wattage for each lamp and overhead light fixture. You'll find the maximum safe wattage imprinted on the fixture.

- Put away extension cords. They're designed for temporary use.
- If you're hiding any cords under the carpet, move them. Covering cords can cause them to overheat and start a fire.



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Member **RECIPES**



Slow Cooker Chops

Ingredients:

Pack of pork chops
1 can Cream of Chicken soup (or Cream of Mushroom soup)
1 packet dry Ranch dressing powder mix

Place chops in crockpot. Top with soup, sprinkle Ranch dressing over top. Cook on low for 6 hours or until tender (OR on high 4 hours). Enjoy chops as main course or use with meat and gravy over rice or mashed potatoes.

***-From the kitchen of
Anita Shepherd***

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.