



# Plugged in to Altamaha EMC | Fiber



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



## Local Students Shine in 2025 Area 4 FFA Wiring Contest

Local students recently demonstrated their electrical skills and problem-solving abilities at the 2025 Area 4 FFA Wiring Contest, sponsored by the Electric Membership Corporations (EMCs) of Georgia, including Altamaha EMC/Fiber. The competition brought together some of the most talented students in the region, highlighting the bright future of the electrical industry.

**Evan Hardeman** from Montgomery County High School delivered an outstanding performance, finishing in 2nd place and earning a spot at the state competition. His skill and dedication were evident throughout the contest, securing him the opportunity to compete at the next level. Other talented competitors included **Chestin Collins** from Treutlen County High School and **Ben Bailey** from Toombs County High School, both of whom showcased strong abilities in electrical problem-solving and practical applications.

The contest featured three key components designed to test students' technical knowledge and hands-on skills. In the Practical Wiring Exercise, participants were required to complete real-world wiring tasks, demonstrating their ability to work with electrical systems. The Problem-Solving Exercise challenged students to apply the National Electric Code (NEC) to solve complex electrical scenarios, testing their critical thinking and industry knowledge. Additionally, the Speech Demonstration Activity evaluated their communication skills, an essential aspect of the electrical trade, as professionals must often explain technical concepts to clients, colleagues, and stakeholders.

The Electric Membership Corporations of Georgia, including Altamaha EMC/Fiber, play a vital role in supporting events like this, ensuring that students have opportunities to develop their skills and pursue careers in the electrical industry. Their commitment to fostering young talent helps strengthen both the local workforce and the communities they serve.

With the state competition ahead, Evan Hardeman is set to represent Area 4, bringing recognition to his school and showcasing the exceptional talent developing in the region. ***Congratulations to all participants for their hard work and dedication!***



# OPERATION ROUND UP SPOTLIGHT:

## Supporting Education and Community Welfare

Operation Round Up is proud to support organizations that make a lasting impact in our communities. This quarter, we highlight two recipients of \$2,500 donations: Montgomery County High School's Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and His Works Ministries Outreach and Food Bank in Lyons, GA. These organizations are dedicated to empowering students and supporting families in need.

The Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) at Montgomery County High School (MCHS) is shaping the future by equipping students with essential life skills and leadership abilities. As part of the Family and Consumer Sciences education curriculum, FCCLA provides students with opportunities to grow academically and personally, preparing them for college, careers, and community involvement. The organization helps students develop leadership skills, explore career paths, engage in community service, and gain real-world experience. Additionally, FCCLA enhances students' abilities in planning, goal setting, decision making, and interpersonal communication.

MCHS FCCLA members engage in various projects and competitions that promote personal and professional growth. Recently, students have participated in competitive events, including a pizza luncheon with the school district and community, and have presented projects on topics such as the importance of positive communication and the impact of sugar consumption in daily diets. The impact of MCHS FCCLA extends beyond the local community. In 2024, students from MCHS earned medals at the FCCLA National Leadership Conference in Seattle, with one

student securing an impressive fifth-place finish. These achievements highlight the dedication and hard work of MCHS students, supported by FCCLA's mission to empower youth. With a \$2,500 donation from Operation Round Up, FCCLA will continue to provide invaluable experiences that prepare students for successful futures.

His Works Ministries Outreach and Food Bank in Lyons, GA, is a beacon of hope for families facing food insecurity. With a mission to serve and uplift the community, this faith-based organization provides essential resources to those in need, ensuring that no one goes hungry. The organization offers food assistance by providing groceries and essential food items to families in need. It also operates outreach programs that offer support services and faith-based encouragement to individuals and families in crisis. Additionally, His Works Ministries engages with the community by partnering with local organizations and volunteers to maximize outreach efforts and assist as many families as possible.

Through the generosity of donors and community support, His Works Ministries continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those they serve. Families rely on this outreach not just for food, but for compassion and encouragement during challenging times. With a \$2,500 donation from Operation Round Up, His Works Ministries will be able to expand its outreach and food assistance programs, ensuring more families receive the help they need.

Operation Round Up is honored to support both MCHS FCCLA and His Works Ministries, reinforcing our commitment to education, leadership, and community welfare.





# Call 811 Before You Dig: Protecting Our Fiber Infrastructure

Spring is here, and with it comes a season of yard work, home improvement projects, and landscaping. As we freshen up our outdoor spaces, it's important to remember a simple but crucial step before digging—calling 811. Protecting our underground fiber infrastructure ensures that we all continue to enjoy reliable high-speed internet for work, school, and entertainment.

## Why Calling 811 Matters

Our fiber network is built on a system of underground cables that are vital to keeping us connected. These cables are incredibly efficient but also very fragile. Even a minor nick or cut can cause major disruptions, affecting your service and that of your neighbors. Repairs can be costly, complex, and time-consuming.

## The Real Cost of Cutting a Fiber Cable

Accidentally damaging a fiber optic cable can lead to significant consequences, including:

- Immediate repair expenses that can cost thousands of dollars.
- Potential fines and service outage compensations.
- Business and personal disruptions due to internet downtime.

# Dig Smart. Dig Safe.

Before you dig, call 811 or visit [call811.com](http://call811.com) to mark underground utility lines. 811 is a free service that helps keep our community safe.



Fortunately, these issues can be easily avoided by calling 811 before you start digging.

## Call 811: A Free and Easy Service

Whether you're planting a tree, installing a fence, or laying a new garden bed, it's essential to call 811 first. This free service will notify utility companies to mark underground lines, helping you dig safely. Here's how it works:

- **Call or Click:** Dial 811 or visit the 811 website a few days before you dig.
- **Wait for Marking:** Utility companies will mark underground cables in your area.
- **Dig Safely:** Start your project, avoiding the marked locations.

## Your Role in Protecting Our Network

With so many yard projects happening this spring, remember to always call 811 before you dig. Taking this small step helps prevent damage, costly repairs, and service interruptions. For more information, visit the 811 website or contact our customer service team.

Thank you for your cooperation in safeguarding our fiber network. Let's work together to keep our community connected!



# What to Do When an Altamaha EMC Members Passes Away

Losing a loved one is never easy, and handling their affairs can feel overwhelming. Amid the many decisions and responsibilities, one important but often overlooked task is managing their Altamaha EMC account.

### Understanding Capital Credits

As a member-owned cooperative, Altamaha EMC returns margins to its members in the form of capital credits. These credits accumulate over time and are a valuable benefit of membership. However, capital credits belong only to the primary account holder and are not automatically transferred to a spouse or other family members.

If the account remains in the deceased member's name, capital credits will not continue to accrue for the household. Instead, they are paid out to the estate upon the member's passing. To ensure these funds are properly claimed, a representative of the estate must visit our office and provide a copy of the death certificate. A check for the accrued capital credits will typically be issued within 4-6 weeks.

### Updating the Account

To avoid any interruptions or complications, it is important to update the account by transferring it to a surviving family member or legal representative. This ensures that capital credits continue accruing in the new account holder's name and that billing and service-related matters are properly addressed.

### We're Here to Help

We understand that dealing with the loss of a loved one is an emotional and challenging time. Our team is here to guide you through the capital credit process and make the transition as smooth as possible. If you have any questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to call our office at (912) 526-8181.

## How Capital Credits Work

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits.



**1** Altamaha EMC tracks how much electricity you buy and how much money you pay for it throughout the year.

**2** At the end of each year, Altamaha completes the financial reports and determines whether there are excess revenues, called margins.

**3** Altamaha allocates the margins to members as capital credits based upon their use of electricity during the year.

**4** When a member passes away, a representative of the estate can apply for a refund of the capital credits that have accrued.

**Altamaha EMC has retired \$9,635,455.86 in capital credits to members.**

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

### TIP OF THE MONTH

March is an ideal time to service your home cooling system, ensuring it runs efficiently when the heat of summer arrives. Routine maintenance, like cleaning or replacing filters, checking refrigerant levels and inspecting parts, can improve your system's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. By addressing potential issues early, you can avoid costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of your unit. Scheduling service in the spring helps you beat the peak-season rush, giving you faster access to qualified technicians. A well-maintained cooling system can save energy and keep your home comfortable all summer long.





# Member RECIPES

## Pecan Smoked Winter Squash Hummus, Candied Pecans

### INGREDIENTS)

1 ½ lb Local Winter Squash, such as butternut  
3 Tbsp Georgia Olive Oil, divided  
1 ½ cup Chickpeas, drained with  
liquid reserved  
2 Tbsp Tahini  
2 clove Minced Garlic  
1 ea Lemon, juiced  
½ tsp Salt  
To taste Black Pepper  
Pinch Cumin  
¼ tsp Paprika  
½ cup Candied Pecans, chopped  
Applewood smoked salt, to taste (optional)



### DIRECTIONS

Cut winter squash in half and deseed. Coat with Georgia Olive Oil, salt and pepper. Place on a smoker on medium heat with pecan wood. Smoke until fork tender, about 1 ½ hours. Or, bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until tender. Add squash, 1 ½ Tbsp olive oil, chickpeas, tahini, garlic, and lemon to a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Add in spices and blend until well combined. Taste for seasoning. If baked, add applewood smoked salt for seasoning to create a smoky flavor. Top with more olive oil and candied pecans for garnish. Serve with vegetables, crackers, or toasted bread for dipping.

*-Courtesy of Georgia Grown*