



Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

November 2019

LYONS, GA

The Official Newsletter of Altamaha Electric Membership Corporation

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

Prepare Now for Winter Storms

While we are enjoying the cooler days of autumn, winter's colder temperatures are lurking just around the corner. Preparing for winter now can make a world of difference when the temperatures dip into the freezing range.

Frigid temperatures can cause heating systems to work overtime, and since heating costs can make up nearly half of your electric bill, you may experience sticker shock when you open that bill. Instead of waiting until after a high bill is in your mailbox, be proactive. There are things you can do now to manage your energy use and spend less.

- Wrap exposed pipes and water heaters.
- Maintain and inspect heating equipment and chimneys to ensure they are working safely and properly.
- To keep the cold air out, keep the fireplace damper closed when the fireplace is not in use.
- Change the air filter in your HVAC system once a month.
- Open blinds and curtains during the day to allow sunlight to warm the inside of your home.
- Caulk or weather strip around doors and windows.
- Cover windows with plastic to keep the cold air out.
- Dress for the weather, even if you are inside. Wearing long sleeves and pants, or wrapping up in a cozy blanket, will help combat the temptation to bump up the thermostat.

Using these tips can certainly help you manage your energy use, but your bill may still be higher than normal in winter months because weather has a big impact on electric bills. Even the most efficient HVAC systems will run more during cold weather.

For example, if you set your thermostat to our recommended 68 degrees in the winter, when it is 19 degrees outside, your system has to work hard to make up that 49-degree difference. Your heater works harder and cycles on and off more often, making your use much higher. That means your bill will be much higher.



Winter storms often bring heavy accumulation of ice and snow, which can lead to downed power lines and extended outages. Altamaha EMC crews work hard to restore power quickly but having a winter survival kit on hand is a smart idea.

- **Food:** Store food that does not require cooking, such as canned goods, crackers, dehydrated meats and dried fruit. Keep a large supply of water on hand. Experts recommend five gallons of water per person in the event of an extended power outage.
- **Medication:** Refill all prescriptions if severe weather conditions are predicted.
- **Other items:** First-aid kit, blankets, flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries.

Call Altamaha EMC at 912-526-8181 to schedule a home energy audit. Let us recommend some energy-saving tips before cold weather hits.

Operation Round Up: Every Penny Counts



Using funds raised by members through Operation Round Up (ORU), Altamaha EMC awarded \$18,500 in grants to six community organizations in June. ORU is funded by members who round up their power bill each month to the nearest dollar. These pennies come together to make a huge impact on the communities we serve.

A \$2,000 grant was awarded to the **Toombs County Boys & Girls Club** to establish a reading and STEAM curriculum to enhance learning for the 250-plus children and teens who attend the club.



From left, Mack Griffin, Altamaha EMC Foundation Board Chairman; Wes Chapman, Boys & Girls Club of Toombs County Board Chairman; Ralph Goethe, Boys and Girls Club of Toombs County CEO; and Romanous Dotson, Altamaha EMC General Manager.

WINGS of Dublin, GA

received a \$2,500 grant to purchase supplies for their prevention program offered to middle school, high school and college students. WINGS supports families of domestic violence by providing safe shelter for victims and their children.



From left, Heather Mullis, WINGS Executive Director, and Tammye Vaughn, Altamaha EMC Foundation Coordinator.

Southeastern Early College and Career Academy (SECCA) is an educational partnership among four local school systems and Southeastern Technical College in which high school students participate in courses directly relevant to their career choices. SECCA received a \$5,000 grant to help create an Energy Industry Pathway to prepare students for careers in the energy industry.



From left, George McLendon, Altamaha EMC Assistant Manager; Romanous Dotson, Altamaha EMC General Manager; Mack Griffin, Altamaha EMC Foundation Board Chairman; Kip Hart, SECCA Energy Pathways Instructor; David Avery, SECCA Director of High School Programs; and Tammye Vaughn, Altamaha EMC Foundation Coordinator.

Interested charitable organizations and agencies can apply for funding by completing the required application on Altamaha EMC's website at www.altamahaemc.com.

For more information, contact Tammye Vaughn at 912-526-2120.



The Toombs County Family Intervention Center was formed in 1980 to provide after-school programming to Toombs County youth ages 12-17. Their goal is to help youth develop life skills and build strong character. The center received a \$5,000 grant to help purchase a van to transport their students.



From left, Mack Griffin, Altamaha EMC Foundation Board Chairman; Maude Anderson, Family Intervention Center Executive Director; Wesley Walker, Lyons Police Chief; Tracy Johnson, Family Intervention Center; and Romanous Dotson, Altamaha EMC General Manager.

Vidalia City Schools received a grant for \$2,500 to help sustain the 21st Century after-school program for the upcoming school year.



From left, Ginger Morris, Vidalia City Schools Assistant Superintendent; Jared Sharpe, Vidalia Learning Center Site Coordinator; Paige Williamson, Vidalia Learning Center Program Manager; Mack Griffin, Altamaha EMC Foundation Board Chairman; and Romanous Dotson, Altamaha EMC General Manager.

A \$1,500 grant awarded to the **Muscular Dystrophy Association** will help fund the costs for two local children with muscular dystrophy to attend the MDA summer camp at Camp Twin Lakes.



From left, Vivian Stewart, MDA Development Coordinator; George McLendon, Altamaha EMC Assistant Manager; and Bridgett Monroe, MDA Executive Director.



Member RECIPES

Leftover Thanksgiving Shepherd's Pie



- 2 cups leftover stuffing, approximately**
- 1 1/2 cups leftover turkey,
cubed or cut in small pieces**
- 1/2 cup cranberry sauce**
- 1 cup leftover veggies**
- 1 cup leftover gravy, or more if you like!**
- 3-4 cups leftover mashed potatoes**
- 2 tablespoons butter, cut into
1/2-inch pieces**

Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease a 9-inch pie pan or an 8-inch by 8-inch baking dish. Layer stuffing, turkey, cranberry sauce, veggies and gravy. Spread potatoes over the casserole. Dot with the butter. Bake until heated through and potatoes are golden, 40 to 50 minutes. Let cool slightly. If you want, drizzle more gravy on top! Enjoy!

—From the kitchen of Brenda Brantley

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, please 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.



Scholarship Applications Now Available

Altamaha EMC is 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 composed of EMC directors and managers selects students who exceed in these areas and who struggle with college expenses.

Twelve scholarships will be awarded statewide in early spring 2020. Scholarship applicants must be accepted or enrolled in an accredited undergraduate degree program. They also must complete an application and write an autobiographical sketch that provides a preview of his or her future plans.

Created in 1985 by the Board of Directors of Georgia EMC, the scholar-



ship 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 \$140,000 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. Completed applications are due by January 31, 2020.



GATE Certification Expires Dec. 31; Time to Renew

House Bill 386 was signed 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, 2019.

Effective January 1, 2020, all your Altamaha EMC accounts that are currently tax exempt will be taxed unless you provide us a copy of your 2020 GATE card. We must have this card on file before December 31, 2019, in order for your accounts to be tax exempt on January 1, 2020.

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

Thanksgiving Closing Notice

Altamaha EMC offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 28 and 29, for the Thanksgiving holidays. The drive-in window at our Lyons office only will remain open for the convenience of our members.

In the event of a power outage or other related problems, standby personnel will be on duty. You can report power outages by calling us at 912-526-8181, or toll-free at 800-822-4563.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family!