



# Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

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

## 2020 Annual Meeting - What You Need to Know

- Wednesday, November 4, 2020
- Southeastern Technical College in Vidalia
- Registration begins at Noon and ends at 2:30 PM
- The meeting will be conducted in a drive-thru format.
- Members will remain in their vehicles at all times.
- Enter the access route using Pete Phillips Drive (between Walmart and Southeastern Technical College). Employees will direct traffic to the registration area.
- **PLEASE BRING THE COVER FROM THE NOVEMBER EDITION OF GEORGIA MAGAZINE WITH YOU TO THE MEETING. THE COVER CONTAINS YOUR REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND VOTING BALLOT. YOU WILL RECEIVE THE GEORGIA MAGAZINE IN THE MAIL DURING THE LAST WEEK OF OCTOBER.**
- The business meeting will be broadcast over an FM radio station.

While the drive-thru format annual meeting will be a first for all of us, concern for the health and safety of our members and employees is our utmost priority. *We look forward to seeing you – at a distance – on November 4th.*



# Power On: October is National Co-op Month

As an electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the consumer-members we serve. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local community—and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guides all co-ops is “concern for community.” To me, this principle is the essential DNA of Altamaha EMC, and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.” Keeping this theme in mind, I recognize the essential role we play in serving a special community like ours.

Who would have fathomed in March of 2020, that the COVID-19 virus would amount to a test of our community and our nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we’ve all been challenged to operate differently, and Altamaha EMC has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.

As an essential service, and to ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews and other employees began working on staggered schedules to maintain separation. Some staff worked remotely. In the office, we limited and modified meetings and gatherings to allow for safe separation.

We also adjusted our walk-in office availability and in-person service calls to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members. For our members impacted by COVID-19 who

needed help with their electric bills, we waived suspended disconnects for a period of time and worked with those hardest hit to make special payment arrangements. For the health and safety of everyone, we think these measures were the prudent course of action for the times.

In addition, we are planning our 2020 annual meeting of the members to be a drive-in event where all members attending the meeting will remain in their vehicle at all times. More information about the annual meeting will be in the November edition of Georgia Magazine - Watch your mailboxes for delivery in late October.

I tell you about all of these efforts not to boast about Altamaha EMC but to explain how much we care about this community—because we live here too. We’ve seen other local businesses rising to meet similar challenges during this time, because that’s what communities do. While the challenges caused by COVID-19 have been daunting, I’m heartened to see how everyone is pulling together.

In 1936, Altamaha EMC was built by the community to serve the community, and that’s what we’ll continue to do – ***Power On.***

*–Romanous Dotson, CEO*

Then. Now. Always.  
We’re proud to power your life.  
**October is National Co-op Month.**



**#PowerOn**





## Right-of-way work keeps you connected

The first time many people encounter the term “right-of-way” is in a driver’s manual or on a driver’s license test. It brings to mind something you have (or yield) when you’re behind the wheel of a motor vehicle. But in the electric co-op world, “right-of-way” (ROW) takes on an important alternate meaning. It refers to the corridor or path an electric line follows, either along a road or through the woods.

Trees and branches that are downed by storms are a primary cause of power outages. Like all electric cooperatives, Altamaha EMC has developed an aggressive right-of-way maintenance program in which we trim vegetation near power lines. Storms still may bring down branches or trees, but the trimmed-back vegetation is far enough from power lines that it is much less likely to fall across them.

**“A good right-of-way program significantly reduces outages,” says Romanous Dotson, Altamaha EMC’s CEO. “It also makes troubleshooting a lot easier.”**

Trees along a utility ROW increase the possibility of power outages and blinks. They also can delay power restoration after storms because fallen trees and debris must be cleared before crews can gain access to damaged poles or lines.

Large trees around utility rights-of-way pose a safety hazard by providing children an opportunity to play near power lines. Power lines can carry up to 14,400 volts, and an energized tree branch is extremely dangerous—even deadly. When a tree

limb comes in contact with a power line, someone touching or climbing the tree could be shocked or even electrocuted. It also can produce a spark, which can start a fire, especially if the area is very dry.

Each electric cooperative member agrees in the membership application to grant the cooperative a right-of-way easement, giving permission to cut and keep clear all trees within a set distance of primary power lines, secondary and service lines. The distance allowed for clearing vegetation is 15 feet on each side of a primary power line, says Dotson. The clearing cycle ranges from four to six years. Along with our own employees, Altamaha EMC also uses two contract crews to do right-of-way work. Proper clearing consists of removing trees, mowing underbrush, controlling vegetation growth and trimming limbs that extend into the right-of-way.

Many times trees that are outside of the allowed cutting area of the ROW are responsible for outages. The trees and/or tree limbs are not within the ROW, but the trees are tall enough to strike the wires when they fall.

If you believe that a tree on your property poses a threat to a power line, call us to file a report. We will determine if the tree is a danger and whether it should be removed.

In addition, when planting a tree in your yard, keep in mind the tree’s size at maturity. The larger the full-grown tree will be, the farther it needs to be from a power line.

# 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. Twelve scholarships will be awarded

statewide in early spring of 2021. 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 \$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](mailto:tammye.vaughn@altamahaemc.com). Completed applications are due by January 29, 2021.

## Get smart about power cords

Here are five tips about power cords that will keep your family safe and your appliances running better.

**1. Never bend a power cord.** If you are rolling it up to store it, don't crimp the cord. Cords and cables have wires inside. Bending them can break the cord, which will ruin it.

**2. Avoid covering a cord with a rug.** If you need to plug a long cord or an extension cord into a lamp or other device, your device is too far from

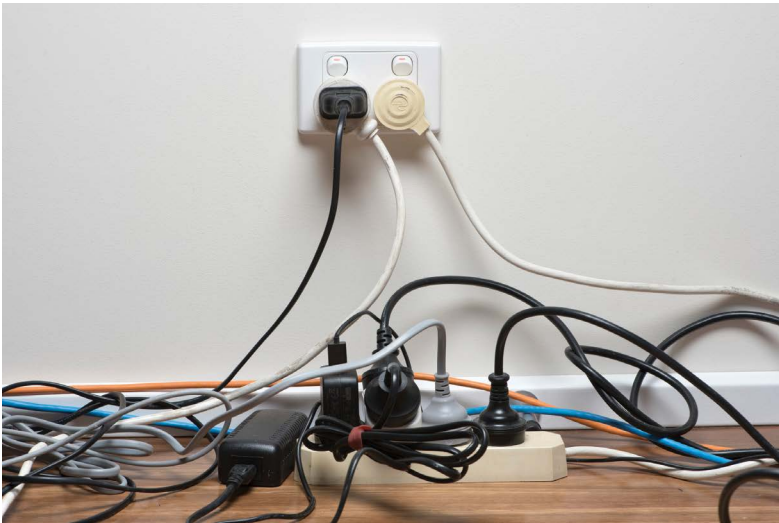
the plug. Move it closer. If you have to hide a long-distance cord under a rug, it could overheat, or someone could trip over it.

**3. Cords and appliances are supposed to "match" when it comes to amperage and wattage rating.** If you plug a high-wattage appliance into a low-wattage cord, you will overburden the cord. That can cause the cord to overheat and the appliance to malfunction.

**4. Don't force a cord's plug into an outlet if it**

**doesn't fit.** If the outlet is too big and the plug does not fit snugly, the outlet probably will overheat and damage the cord and the plug. If the plug is too big, use an adapter or find a different outlet. Never cut the third prong off of a three-prong plug to fit it into a two-prong outlet.

**5. Inspect power cords often.** Even a tiny nick in the cord can cause a shock or even a deadly electrocution. Do not use cords—or appliances with permanent cords—if the cord is damaged in any way.



**ALTAMAHA**

Electric Membership Corporation

Community Owned · Community Built · Community Builder





# Member RECIPES

## Green Bean Casserole

1 can (10 1/2 ounces) Campbell's®  
Condensed Cream of Mushroom Soup  
3/4 cup milk  
1/8 teaspoon black pepper  
2 cans (14 1/2 ounces each) French style  
green beans, drained  
1 1/3 cups French's® Original Crispy Fried  
Onions, divided  
2 tsp Worcestershire sauce

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix soup, milk and pepper in a 1 1/2-quart baking dish. Stir in beans and 2/3 cup Crispy Fried Onions. Bake 30 minutes or until hot. Stir. Top with remaining 2/3 cup onions. Bake 5 minutes until onions are golden brown.

Try using French's® Crispy Jalapeños or Red Pepper Crunchy Toppers in place of the Crispy Fried Onions for a fun flavor twist.

***-From the kitchen of Emily Daniels***

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.