



COLQUITT EMC NewsLINE

VOLUME 55, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 2025

EMCs PROTECT THE INVESTMENTS OF FIVE MILLION GEORGIANS

This article was featured in the August 2025 edition of *Georgia Magazine*. Colquitt EMC wishes to share this pertinent information regarding pole attachments with our membership.

By Dennis Chastain

Five million Georgia residents—nearly half the state's population—have something important in common: They receive electricity from a not-for-profit electric cooperative.

Electric membership corporation (EMC) members get safe, reliable and affordable electricity delivered to their homes and businesses every day. Their local electric utility is led by trusted neighbors and friends. And because electric cooperatives are owned by the people they serve, co-op leaders are principled and duty-bound to protect the financial investment of each EMC member.

Readers of *Georgia Magazine* know the benefits of membership with their local cooperatives, but it helps to be reminded that EMC members are also part of a large grassroots network across the state with common interests.

Protecting EMC members' financial investments

One way that electric cooperatives meet their communities' needs is to provide space on electric utility poles for broadband companies to have quick, reliable and low-cost access to deploy their technology to area residents. This alleviates the need for cable and telephone companies to install their own poles.

Because co-ops are not-for-profit utilities, member-owners pay for the installation, maintenance and replacement of utility poles through their monthly electric bills. Georgia's cooperative leaders believe it is critical that cable and telephone companies using EMC poles pay a rental rate that covers their fair share. Otherwise, the EMC member-owners are subsidizing the for-profit cable and telecommunications industries.

EMCs are enthusiastic about sharing utility poles with industry partners, especially in rural parts of Georgia where broadband deployment is still needed. That's why, in 2020, EMCs offered the One Buck Deal: one dollar per year per pole for six years to any broadband provider that would deploy its technology in an area of Georgia unserved by broadband.

Deeply rooted in community

In addition to providing electricity and meeting member needs, Georgia's EMCs care deeply about the health and prosperity of their local communities. The leaders who govern each EMC are directors elected from within the cooperative's membership through a democratic voting process.



RAOTA JOSELUIS / STOCK.ADOBE.COM

EMC directors are farmers, teachers, small-business owners and neighbors who care about the communities the co-ops serve because they live there, too. Each EMC invests and participates in a variety of efforts supporting volunteerism, economic development, and youth and education programs.

Just as electric cooperatives stepped up to help those without electricity 85 years ago, many EMCs are filling gaps for their members today by forming partnerships or affiliates to provide retail broadband service to unserved and underserved residents. In less than six years, 26 EMCs have committed more than \$1 billion to make high-speed internet available to more than 339,000 Georgians in 108 counties so that members have access to the same opportunities same and quality of life as those in more densely populated areas. *Continued on page 3.*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Board Candidate Information - Bios
- Church of the Month: Grace Tabernacle Apostolic Church
- Recipe: Balsamic Chicken Thighs



Save the Date **Sunbelt Expo** **October 14-16, 2025**

DISTRICT 1 – COLQUITT COUNTY

Brett Bennett

- 1994 Graduate of Colquitt County High School
- Began B&C Poultry Farm in 1994
- Kenny Bennett Farms since 1998
- Farm Manager/Co Owner L&M Farms of Georgia 2000-2024
- Owner/Operator of Bennett Family Farms since 2024
- Member of Colquitt County Young Farmers
- Member of Colquitt County Farm Bureau
- Member of Colquitt County Junior Livestock Association and served on various committees within the association
- Member of Autreyville Baptist Church



Al Funderburk

- 1987 Graduate of Valdosta State College with Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting
- Successfully completed the Uniform Certified Public Accounting (CPA) Examination in 1992
- 38 years' experience in accounting and taxation for individuals and small businesses
- Partner at Funderburk & Newsome, CPAs in Moultrie since 2002
- National Wild Turkey Woodlands Conservation Award Winner in 2007
- Member, Treasurer and Deacon of Hartsfield Baptist Church



Matt Murphy

- Sales Representative for Lasseter Tractor 17+ years
- Graduate of Louisiana Tech University and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
- Farms row crops and cattle
- Graduate of Georgia Agrileaders Foundation Program (AGL) Class of 2009
- Honorary Member of Georgia Young Farmers
- Member of First Baptist Church Moultrie



Paul Tompkins

- 1980 Graduate of Moultrie Technical College
- Master Educator with 29 years of service with Southern Regional Technical College, formerly Moultrie Technical College
- Division Chair of Personal Services
- Owned and Managed personal businesses in Colquitt and Tift Counties for over 45 years including family farm, plant and landscaping design and barber and beauty shops.
- Member of First Baptist Church Moultrie



DISTRICT 5 – LOWNDES COUNTY

Thomas (Trey) Cothron, III

- Served on Colquitt EMC's Board since 2022
- Fire Lieutenant with Valdosta Fire Department; assigned to operations division
- Farmer and cattleman with 82 head of cattle
- Attended Valdosta Technical College; received Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 Certification
- Attends Redland Baptist Church



DISTRICT 6 – TIFT COUNTY

B. Don Copeland

- Served on Colquitt EMC's Board since 1979
- Credentialed Cooperative Director
- Previously served as Chairman and Vice Chairman of Colquitt EMC Board
- Previously served as Chairman and Vice Chairman of Georgia Electric Membership Corporation's Board of Directors
- Retired from United Parcel Service
- Member of New River Baptist Church



PROTECTING INVESTMENTS CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Commitment to those we serve

EMCs are grateful for the opportunity to serve 5 million Georgians and make a difference in their communities every day. They take great pride in being the backbone of prosperity and growth in rural and suburban communities by serving the energy needs of their member-owners, and they are committed to protecting the financial investment of every single one. If you'd like to learn more, visit emcs4ruralbroadband.com.

Dennis Chastain is president and CEO of Tucker-based Georgia EMC, the statewide trade association representing the state's 41 electric cooperatives, Oglethorpe Power, Georgia Transmission Corp. and Georgia System Operations Corp.

CEMC'S 89TH ANNUAL MEETING • LUNCH RESERVATION FORM

OCTOBER 28, 2025 DRIVE-THRU: 9AM - 1PM SPENCE FIELD IN MOULTRIE

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Account # _____

Member's Signature _____

Including myself, you may plan on _____ person(s) for lunch.

Deadline for drive-thru lunch reservations is October 15, 2025. (Limit 3 meals per member)

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Colquitt EMC is proud to power the NEW Tift County Middle School! We're honored to support the future of education in our community. *Thank you for trusting Colquitt EMC as your energy partner!*

Colquitt EMC was proud to stand alongside fellow community partners at Conger Gas' Hometown Heroes event in Tifton. We loved connecting with neighbors, sharing tips on electrical safety, and shining a light on the values that power our cooperative.

SAVING ENERGY MADE EASY

Want to put a dent in your electric bill? Good news: you don't need fancy gadgets or a pile of cash to start saving energy. With just a few clever tricks, you can cut down on waste and keep your home humming happily. Let's dive into some super simple ways to save energy.

Top Ways to Save Energy at Little or No Cost:

- **Flip the switch!**

Turn off lights, fans, and electronics when you leave the room. It's like giving your house a nap.

- **Unplug the vampires.** Devices like chargers and coffee makers suck energy even when they're off. Unplug them when not in use!

- **Let the sunshine in.** Open curtains during the day to light your home naturally. Bonus: it boosts your mood, too!

- **Be a thermostat ninja.** Set your thermostat a few degrees lower in winter and higher in summer. Your comfort zone might be more flexible than you think!

- **Wash smart.** Use cold water for laundry and only run full loads. Your clothes will still sparkle, and you'll save energy.



- **Air dry like a pro.** Skip the dryer and hang clothes to dry. It's old-school cool and energy-friendly.

- **Seal the deal.** Use weather stripping or draft stoppers to block outdoor air from sneaking in. Your air conditioner will thank you.

- **Fan-tastic savings.** Use ceiling fans to help circulate air. Just remember to turn them off when you leave the room.

- **Microwave magic.** Reheat leftovers in the microwave instead of the oven—it's faster and uses less energy.

- **Dress for Success.** Light and loose clothing is the way to keep your cool when it's hot. Wear a sweater or snuggle under a blanket when the mercury drops.

Why It Matters

Saving energy isn't just about lower bills (though that's pretty awesome). It's about protecting our planet, reducing pollution, and making your home a happier, healthier place. And the best part? These tips are easy, free, and totally doable.

Recipe OF THE MONTH



Balsamic Chicken Thighs

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs Skinless Chicken Thighs
Salt and pepper to taste
¼ cup chopped shallot
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
Cooking spray

DIRECTIONS

Spray large frying pan, preheat. Rinse and pat dry thighs. Season with salt and pepper. Brown well on all sides. Cover, reduce heat to medium and cook for approximately 25 minutes or until thighs are done, depending on size. Add shallots, cook for 2-3 minutes, until they soften. Stir in balsamic vinegar, cook for about 1 more minute, turn chicken to coat thoroughly. Spoon sauce over thighs to serve.

Church of the Month



Grace Tabernacle Apostolic Church

2144 N. Lee Street • Valdosta, GA
Bishop Ulysee Williams

Service Schedule

Sunday School	10:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 AM
Sunday Nt. Prayer Band	5:00 PM
Monday Nt. Community Prayer	7:00 PM
Wednesday Nt. Bible Study	7:00 PM
Friday Nt. Family Prayer	7:00 PM

To nominate your church for Church of the Month, please contact Shelby Cloud at 229-985-3620 ext. 1246 with your church's information or email marketing@colquittemc.com. Please include service schedule, address and pastor's name.

Bible Verse of the Month

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

~ Romans 10:9