



Coweta-Fayette



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COWETA-FAYETTE EMC HOSTS DRIVE-THRU ANNUAL MEETING AND MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

CFEMC hosted its 74th Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Day on Saturday, October 9 at cooperative headquarters in Palmetto, in a drive-thru business-only format.

Members registered for this year's grand prize, a \$1,000 credit on their CFEMC electricity bill, and received their member gift, a Magic Strip Power Cube.

The annual meeting is an important part of the cooperative business model and reflects the cooperative principle – Voluntary and Open Membership. The event traditionally brings members together to learn more about the cooperative's business matters and participate in the democratic cooperative process by electing their board members.

Part of the value of being a member-owner of CFEMC is the opportunity to participate in the election of the board of directors. This year, the nominating committee appointed **Mildred A. Winkles (Seat 3, Coweta County), Donald E. Harris (Seat 4, Coweta County) and Alice J. Mallory (Seat 4, Fayette County)** to serve three-year terms. The nominating committee received no other candidates for consideration. As such, these incumbents were re-elected to the positions.

One thousand, seven hundred and seventy-six people participated in the drive-thru event and/or registered and voted during the week prior. Business session updates and the drawing for the grand prize winner were streamed live via Facebook during the event and are available via CFEMC social media channels. Virtual business meeting speeches and results became available to members online via www.utility.org/about-us/2021-annual-meeting/.

During the virtual business session, **Board**

Chairman Jim Fulton shared highlights from the past year and reiterated the CFEMC's Board of Directors' commitment to its members.

"We continue to be one of the few electric cooperatives in the country to consistently experience growth," said Fulton.

"This year that included upgrades, improvements, and expansion within our service territory, as well as improvements to facility and asset management, cyber security, and continuous review and updating of our policies and procedures to ensure that we remain in conformance with all current governance procedures for co-op boards and management. Our main goal is to always provide – (1) Member Value, (2) System Value, and (3) Employee Value to all our members and employees."

Fulton went on to assure members that CFEMC is currently in a very strong financial position. He stated that an outside independent auditor had reported that CFEMC continues to be in a very strong financial position and that, most importantly, our rates to our consumer/members, continue to be lower than co-ops of similar size throughout

the nation and lower than the average rates of most other co-ops and utilities in Georgia.

CFEMC CEO Chris Stephens shared how the last year has affected the co-op and its members.

"You may think of Coweta-Fayette EMC as poles and wire strung across the countryside delivering power to your homes and businesses, but CFEMC is much more than this; it's a family. And that family extends to you, our members. We are all working together for the common good. If anything, the last 18-20 months have shown us how resilient and strong

we are when we work together," said Stephens.

Stephens also shared how CFEMC is continuing to invest in new technology to strengthen current infrastructure.

"I'm proud to say CFEMC has been on the cutting edge providing green energy options to our members since 2001," said Stephens. "I am also extremely proud to say we're continuing to grow our 'green' options, including our Smart Choice Solar program that was made possible through our partnership with True Natural Gas." "CFEMC is also embarking on our own Net Zero study. We're taking a close look at how we can take steps to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions."

Stephens went on to explain how investing in technology would increase reliability.

"Along with the technology used to produce green energy, we're also investing in technology to improve the reliability of our system," said Stephens. "We're continuing to develop our fiber network and connect all 28 of our substations. This network is vital since we need a strong communication network to make all of this possible."

The business session concluded with the awarding of the grand prize: **Juan Hernandez-Rios was the lucky winner of a \$1,000 CFEMC electric bill credit!**



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LOCAL SCHOOLS RECEIVE GHSA COOPERATIVE SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

Coweta-Fayette EMC (CFEMC) is proud to be among Georgia's Electric Membership Cooperatives who help shape the future of the local community by sponsoring the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) Cooperative Spirit Sportsmanship Award, which honors GHSA member schools throughout the state that exhibit outstanding sportsmanship during competitive events throughout the school year.

Since 2006, the GHSA and Georgia's EMCs, including CFEMC, have sponsored the Cooperative Spirit Sportsmanship Award which reinforces the GHSA philosophy: "Students, athletes, coaches, spectators and all others associated with high school activities and programs should adhere to the fundamental values of respect, fairness, honesty and responsibility."

For the 2020-2021 school year, two CFEMC area schools were selected as award recipients to include East Coweta High School and McIntosh High School.

CFEMC presented the award to East Coweta High School during a Friday night football game kickoff. East Coweta High School Assistant Principal/Athletic Director Hap Hines expressed



East Coweta High School Assistant Principal/Athletic Director Hap Hines accepts the award from CFEMC's Rachel Camp.



McIntosh High School Assistant Principal and Athletic Director Leon Hammon (left) and MHS Principal Maggie Walls (right) accept the GHSA Cooperative Spirit Sportsmanship Award.

his gratitude during the acceptance of the award, which is a testament to the hard work of all those involved in the achievement of the award, according to Hines.

"This award is a representation of the hard work of our student-athletes at East Coweta High School, as well as the exemplary leadership and support from our coaches, faculty, staff, and the community," said Hines. "We believe in helping students grow, learn, and be the best they can be athletically, academically, and socially. This award is a true testament of that."

McIntosh High School Principal Maggie Walls and Assistant Principal/Athletic Director Leon Hammon accepted the award during halftime at a Friday night rival football game, where Mr. Hammon was thrilled for the honor of being selected as an award recipient two years in a row.

"This award is a huge honor for us. The student-athletes at McIntosh High School

work hard in the classroom and on the field, and to achieve this award, especially two years in a row, reflects that," said Hammon. "We also give kudos to the parents of our student-athletes for raising quality young men and women."

Cooperative Spirit Sportsmanship Awards are presented annually to the GHSA-member high schools in the 64 regions from the eight classifications by EMC representatives during fall athletic events and school assemblies. These high schools displayed exemplary sportsmanship across a variety of athletics, ranging from student-athletes to spectators. This award is not only an honor for the students and staff but an honor for the community as well.



The President's Message

Chris Stephens
CEO

For me, this time of year is for reflection, and topping my list of things I'm grateful for is our wonderful community. I know I speak for all Coweta-Fayette EMC employees when I say that we are thankful to be in such an incredible place. We are fortunate to live in the same place where we work, which makes our ties to this community that much stronger.

You may recall that last month, my column touched on two of the Cooperative Principles, so this month, I'd like to tell you about a few more. The Cooperative Principles are essential to the co-op business model and benefit all members of the co-op.

Autonomy and Independence

Autonomy and Independence means that the co-op operates in an autonomous way that is solely directed and guided by its members, reflecting the values and needs of our local community. This means the co-op is not being influenced by leaders or shareholders several states away. Instead, the co-op is led by the local members it serves.

Education and Training

This means the EMC focuses on enhancing the knowledge of co-op employees and board members, which enables them to contribute to the development of the co-op.

By investing in continuous learning for our employees and board members, our co-op is making a commitment not just to individual professional and personal growth, but to the future of our EMC and the high quality of service our members expect and deserve. It's a win-win situation.

We also strive to inform our members (that's you!) and the public about the mission and operations of the co-op. In fact, that's why you receive this newsletter every month, so we can share the latest co-op news and updates.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperation among cooperatives fosters the way that co-ops work together to address bigger challenges. While this principle applies to all types of cooperatives, it is especially relevant in the energy industry. In our case, we put this principle in action after major storms and disasters that cause widespread power outages. When this happens, we call on nearby co-ops to come to our aid and assist with restoration efforts—and we of course extend the same help to them when they need us. I can't think of a better example of cooperation among cooperatives.

In addition, because we are part of the national electric co-op network, we can connect and collaborate with other electric co-ops to tackle industry-related challenges, like cybersecurity and an ever-changing energy landscape.

Concern for Community

The seventh principle, Concern for Community, is essential to who we are as a cooperative. We serve our community not only by being an essential service but by helping to power our local economy. Whether through economic development, volunteerism or donations to local causes, we invest in this community because it's our home too.

I think you'll find that most cooperatives bring good people together to make good things happen in the community. We hope you feel that way about us, your local electric co-op.

On behalf of everyone at Coweta-Fayette EMC, we're thankful for your membership, and we hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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