

JEMCOnews

A PUBLICATION FOR JACKSON EMC MEMBERS

ROLLING OUT THE RED CARPET

OFFERING INCENTIVES TO BROADBAND
PROVIDERS TO SERVE RURAL GEORGIA

OCTOBER 2020 | IN THIS ISSUE

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ANNUAL MEETING ELECTION, PRIZE WINNERS ANNOUNCED



A BOLD & INNOVATIVE SOLUTION

If you've been reading my column on a regular basis, you know I rarely devote time here to legislative issues. However, I want to bring to your attention the Georgia Broadband Opportunity Act, which was passed by the state's General Assembly last year.

Through this act, the Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) has been tasked by the legislature to decide a fair rental rate for attaching cable equipment to our power poles. This may seem like an obscure issue that's unrelated to the expansion of broadband service to rural areas, but the cost for broadband providers to attach their cables to our poles is a small part of the equation.

In response to this act, electric cooperatives across the state, including Jackson EMC, will be seeking a rate that fairly recovers the cost to install and maintain the poles. Think about it in terms of renting space in your home. If you rent a bedroom in your house (like renting space on our poles) you would seek to rent it at a rate that fairly recovered your cost of building and maintaining that bedroom.

Just like you, EMCs want broadband service to expand in rural areas. So, as part of our solution we want to incentivize

broadband providers to expand in the areas that need it most. To achieve that goal, EMCs will put forward a bold solution that rewards broadband providers that expand into unserved areas of rural Georgia. Our proposal will offer the best of both worlds for expanding broadband in Georgia: It protects EMC members with a statewide rental rate that fairly recovers the cost of the poles but also offers tremendous incentives to broadband companies to expand in unserved areas of the state.

Here's how the proposed EMC solution would work: Throughout the state of Georgia, broadband providers will pay EMCs a rental rate based on one statewide formula, which is a fair cost recovery for the cooperative's members who have paid to acquire, install and maintain the pole infrastructure. In unserved areas, EMCs would offer a deep discount for attaching to our poles. We call it the "One Buck Deal" and it means any new attachments to power poles that broadband providers use to deliver internet in unserved communities will be charged just \$1 to attach to our poles. And we would fix that annual fee at \$1 for five years to allow their expansion plans to fully develop.

In addition, we are proposing the "Georgia One Touch Make Ready" program to empower broadband providers to prepare EMC poles without delay for their equipment. These incentives will make Georgia a

national leader and show that EMCs are pursuing every feasible path to expanding broadband availability for rural Georgians without raising your electric rates.

While Jackson EMC doesn't have plans to offer broadband service directly, we continue to explore meaningful partnerships with broadband providers and believe in doing everything we can to support the efforts to provide reliable internet service in rural areas of our state. Our plan will protect those Georgians already receiving broadband service while rolling out the red carpet to welcome broadband expansion in our state. We know the PSC wants to do what's best for you and your fellow Georgians, so we're championing this important effort. It's an important issue, and I'd encourage you to learn more in this issue of *JEMCO News*.

Have feedback on how electric cooperatives can partner with broadband providers? Email me at chip@jacksonemc.com.

Chip Jakins, President/CEO

NEED TO KNOW: LOWER WINTER RATES NOW IN EFFECT

Decreased demand for electricity during the winter enables Jackson EMC to pass savings along to you through lower electric rates. Winter rates begin in October and continue through April.



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR RESIDENTIAL ELECTRIC RATES AT JACKSONEMC.COM/RATES AND VIEW SCHEDULE A-20 FOR STANDARD RESIDENTIAL SERVICE.

winter RATES IN EFFECT

STANDARD RESIDENTIAL RATE*
SERVICE CHARGE: \$23 PER MONTH
FIRST 650 kWh: 8.81 CENTS PER kWh
NEXT 350 kWh: 8.16 CENTS PER kWh
MORE THAN 1,000 kWh: 8.06 PER kWh

* The Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment and other applicable taxes are also part of your total electric bill.



Annual Meeting

RESULTS AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS

Jackson EMC's 81st Annual Meeting was held September 15-17 in an alternative format, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, member registration and voting took place at each of Jackson EMC's local offices for the board of directors election and to approve the minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting.

Alton Thornton, Lynn Price and Shade Storey were elected to serve on the Jackson EMC Board of Directors for a three-year term. The minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting were approved. Ballots were counted and the election results certified by the Credentials and Elections Committee as provided for in the cooperative's bylaws.

Members may view videos of the president's report, chairman's report and financial report at jacksonemc.com.

Twenty-one members won prizes for registering at the meeting.

Winners were: Todd Gurley, David Lewis, Linda Tinker, Kondria Woods, Elizabeth Smith, Dianne McMillian, Megan Boling, Linda Lowery, James Samson, Chuck Reed, Sandra Nolan, Herby Lawson, Brandon Nolan, William Wilbanks, Gilbert Wier, Clinton Norton, Jeanie Brashear, Timothy Koss, John Ring and Iris Wheeler.

Harvey Thomas won the grand prize, \$3,000 in energy efficient appliances.

Winners were notified of their prize after Annual Meeting.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ANNUAL MEETING,
VISIT JACKSONEMC.COM/ANNUALMEETING.

ROLLING OUT THE RED CARPET

OFFERING INCENTIVES TO BROADBAND PROVIDERS TO SERVE RURAL GEORGIA



For many parts of Georgia, access to broadband service to connect homes, businesses and schools via the internet is limited. The state's electric cooperatives - including Jackson EMC - want to partner with broadband providers to change that.

More than 507,000 Georgia homes and businesses lack access to reliable broadband service. Nearly 70% of those homes and businesses are in rural Georgia. The Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative made that determination this year after developing a statewide map illustrating areas where households and businesses don't have access to high-speed internet.

This digital divide has economic consequences for communities across Georgia.

"Electric cooperatives understand how the lack of reliable internet service in rural Georgia is affecting our communities," said Chip Jakins, president/CEO of Jackson EMC. "We're part of our communities. Our members have told us what broadband service could do to help their businesses thrive and keep their families connected to others, along with educational and healthcare resources. That's why EMCs want to partner with broadband providers to

serve and protect their members' interests."

During the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jackson EMC Foundation awarded grants to four local school systems to provide internet service via hot spot Wi-Fi systems placed on school buses. Those school buses were parked in neighborhoods where students needed internet the most — areas in Jackson EMC's service area with inadequate internet service.

Electric co-ops serve the most rural and economically disadvantaged regions of Georgia. Using the infrastructure of EMCs — which provide electricity to more than 4 million Georgians — co-ops and broadband providers have an opportunity to be champions for rural members lacking reliable internet service.

But now electric cooperatives in Georgia have a new plan to partner with broadband providers to bridge the state's digital divide.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Georgia's electric cooperatives are rolling out the red carpet to broadband providers with new incentives to encourage them to expand in rural areas. In addition to proposing a fair, cost-based statewide formula for attaching equipment to our member-owned power poles, the EMCs are offering a two-pronged incentive approach:

A **"One Buck Deal"** for any broadband provider that will partner with EMCs in unserved areas. EMCs will lower their pole attachment rate to \$1 per pole, per year, for five years for new attachments in unserved areas.

The **"Georgia One Touch Make Ready"** program will empower broadband providers to prepare EMC poles without delay for their equipment. This will make it cheaper and faster to extend broadband service to rural areas.



WHO DECIDES WHAT HAPPENS?

The Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) has been tasked by the General Assembly to decide the rates cable companies will pay to attach their equipment to EMC poles. Electric cooperatives are proposing one statewide formula for all pole attachment rental rates, plus generous incentives to encourage broadband providers to jumpstart their investments in rural communities.



HOW WILL THIS AFFECT MEMBERS?

Jackson EMC was founded in 1938 to bring electricity to rural homes and businesses in our community. As a not-for-profit cooperative, our members pay for electric service through their monthly bills. Jackson EMC pays millions of dollars each year to install and maintain poles throughout our 10-county distribution system. Today, many of our members remain in unserved areas for reliable internet service.

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, Jackson EMC operates at cost. If cable companies do not pay their fair share of the cost to purchase, install and maintain the poles that they use, then Jackson EMC's members will bear an unfair financial burden. The solution proposed by the state's electric cooperatives protects members and provides real incentives and accountability for bringing broadband service to rural Georgia.



WHAT CAN I DO?

Learn more about the issue and how Georgia's electric cooperatives are proposing a solution by visiting www.emcs4ruralbroadband.com. Follow Jackson EMC on social media for more information about the PSC's decision.

\$89,302 IN GRANTS AWARDED IN JULY

The Jackson EMC Foundation board of directors awarded a total \$89,302 in grants during its July meeting, including \$86,000 to organizations and \$3,302 to an individual.

ORGANIZATIONAL GRANT RECIPIENTS:

\$20,000 | Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta—Gwinnett, divided between the Norcross and Lawrenceville clubs’ Power Hour programs, part of its overall Academic Success program that provides club members with daily support, resources and guidance needed to complete school assignments while maintaining educational confidence and ability.

\$15,000 | Children’s Center for Hope and Healing, in Gainesville, to provide children in Barrow, Banks, Hall, Jackson and Lumpkin counties who have been sexually abused with therapy to reduce trauma symptoms such as nightmares, bed wetting, anxiousness, depression, anger, fatigue and self-hatred, and to

decrease their families’ sense of isolation, strengthen the family, assist with parent-child attachment and family functioning.

\$13,500 | Food to Kids Madison County, a program promoting literacy by alleviating hunger in children, to purchase food for its Weekend Backpack Program that provides food for the weekend to families who have been identified by counselors in four Madison County elementary schools as food insecure.

\$10,000 | St. Mary’s Independent Living Extension (SMILE), a Lawrenceville nonprofit where adults with developmental disabilities receive care and instruction so they can engage and thrive in communities where they live, work and play, for its Asleep But Not at Risk program, which provides overnight care staff for those adults.

\$10,000 | United Methodist Children’s Home of North Georgia (Wellroot Family Services), in Gainesville, which provides

financial assistance for foster care development, training, recruitment and community building throughout Jackson EMC’s service area, to help close the gap between the need in Northeast Georgia and the number of available homes.

\$10,000 | YMCA of Georgia’s Piedmont, Inc., in Winder, for its Pryme Tyme program providing homework help, sports, arts and crafts to children from economically disadvantaged families in Barrow, Gwinnett, Hall and Jackson counties.

\$7,500 | Bethel Haven, in Watkinsville, to support mental health services and therapeutic counseling sessions for distressed children, teens, adults and families in Banks, Barrow, Clarke, Gwinnett, Hall, Jackson, Madison, and Oglethorpe counties.

INDIVIDUAL GRANT RECIPIENTS:

\$3,302 to provide a disabled applicant with the dental surgery necessary to be considered for an organ transplant.

\$67,400 IN GRANTS AWARDED IN AUGUST

The Jackson EMC Foundation board of directors awarded a total \$67,400 in organizational grants during its August meeting.

ORGANIZATIONAL GRANT RECIPIENTS:

\$12,400 | Jackson County Certified Literacy Community Program, which addresses low adult literacy rates and has a goal to reduce the functional illiteracy rate by 50% within 10 years, to provide financial assistance for students to take the GED exam.

\$10,000 | Adventure Bags, an Auburn-based nonprofit that creates comfort bags and distributes them to displaced children through local DFCS offices, domestic violence shelters, fire departments, group homes and children’s shelters in Jackson EMC’s service area to provide comfort and security in a crisis.

\$10,000 | Ark: United Ministry Outreach Center, in Athens, to provide emergency financial assistance for rent, which prevents eviction for workers in low-wage jobs, the disabled and the elderly in Clarke, Madison and Oglethorpe counties who are facing unexpected expenses.

\$10,000 | United Way of Hall County, in Gainesville, for its GAP Funding and Basic Needs program to provide emergency rental assistance for its low-income clients.

\$10,000 | United Way of Northeast Georgia, to allow Clarke County children under the age of five to receive one age-appropriate book each month for one year, supporting childhood literacy and success in school, as part of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program.

\$7,500 | Prevent Child Abuse Athens, a grassroots organization focused on

ending neglect and abuse of children in Banks, Barrow, Clarke, Franklin, Jackson, Madison and Oglethorpe counties, to provide assistance with the First Steps primary prevention program, which offers support, parenting education materials and community resources and referrals to new parents to help them with the challenges of parenting.

\$5,000 | Burn Foundation of America, to provide financial assistance with purchasing specialized pressure garments and distraction therapy supplies, which assist in healing and help reduce stress during procedures, for burn patients and their families in all Jackson EMC counties.

\$2,500 | River Community Church Food Pantry, in Murrayville, to provide assistance with the purchase of food and for the expansion of the food pantry with a roll-up door to aid distribution efforts to its low-income and homeless clients in Hall County.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING LATEST GRANT AWARDS AND HOW TO APPLY FOR A GRANT, VISIT JACKSONEMC.COM/FOUNDATION.

CREATE A HOME FIRE ESCAPE *Plan for Your Family*

If you had a fire at your home, would your family members know how to escape safely?

The National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) recommends families make a home fire escape plan in case there's a fire in their home. In October, NFPA celebrates National Fire Prevention Week.

When creating your family's fire escape plan:



ENSURE YOUR HOME HAS WORKING SMOKE DETECTORS

Press the test button to ensure they're working properly or replace them.



PICK A DESIGNATED MEETING SPOT OUTSIDE

It should be outside of your home for everyone to meet at in the event of a fire.



VISIT EACH ROOM IN YOUR HOME

Identify two ways out of the room.



PRACTICE YOUR PLAN

Do a home fire drill.



TALK ABOUT YOUR FIRE ESCAPE PLAN

Be sure to discuss the plan with everyone in your home.



TO LEARN MORE FIRE PREVENTION TIPS, VISIT NFPA.ORG.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

(Required by 39 W.S.C. 3685)

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Kerri Testement, Editor

**YOUR POWER.
YOUR COMMUNITY.**

A PUBLICATION FOR
JACKSON EMC MEMBERS

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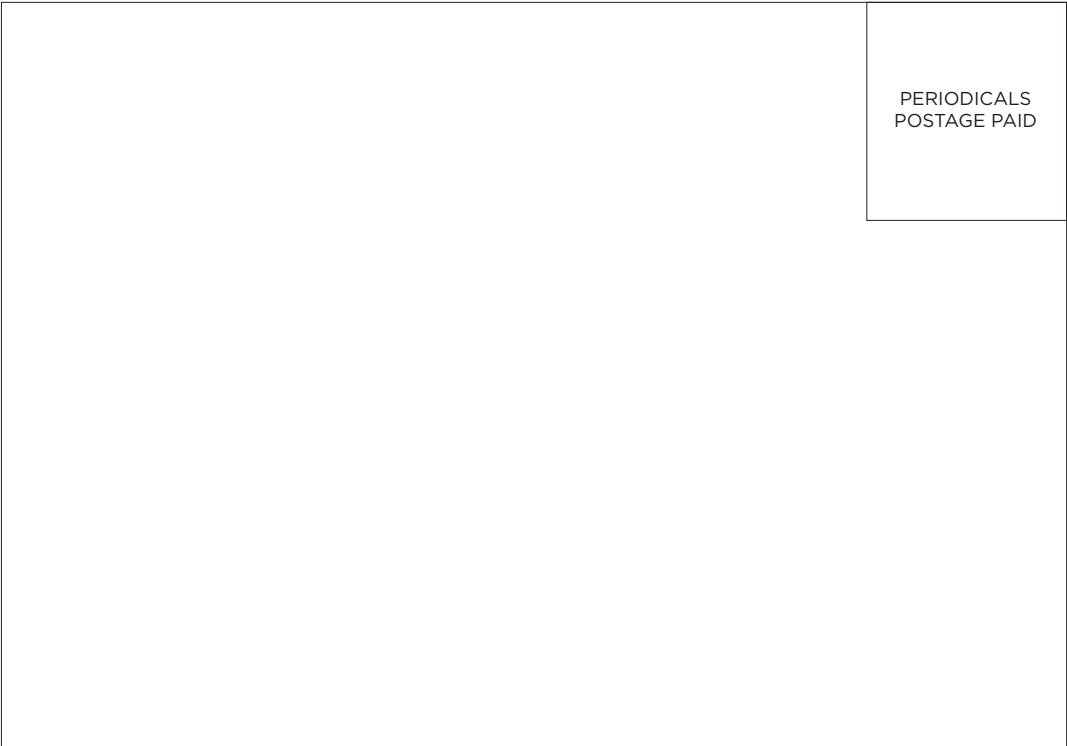
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MEMBERS MAKE IT DELICIOUS



Meaty Tortellini Soup



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 12-oz package frozen vegetables
- 3 quarts of chicken stock (or about 5 chicken bouillon cubes)
- 8 oz. chopped chicken strips, cooked
- 18 to 24 frozen meatballs, cooked
- 1 bag frozen cheese tortellini
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 8-oz. package frozen spinach, chopped and drained (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

In large pot over medium heat, add olive oil and frozen vegetables. Saute for 4 or 5 minutes. Add chicken stock. Bring mixture to boil over high heat until slightly bubbly. Stir mixture, then turn heat to low. Stir mixture occasionally and let simmer for around 25 to 30 minutes.

Add cooked chicken, meatballs, tortellini, salt and pepper (and cooked spinach, if desired) to pot. Simmer until added items are heated, around 10 to 15 minutes. Serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

“ The first time I tried this recipe, we were pleasantly surprised at how tasty and delicious it was. It’s a perfect dish for cooler weather ”

— BRENDA BROCK, GAINESVILLE

SEND US YOUR BEST RECIPES: RECIPES@JACKSONEMC.COM OR MAIL TO:
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