

# BEACON



Amicalola Electric  
Membership Corporation

"Owned By Those We Serve"

Vol 66 | Issue 1 | JANUARY 2016

## Comments from the CEO

### Amicalola EMC is looking for the next generation of leaders



Todd Payne  
President/CEO  
Amicalola EMC

High school seniors may also enter the 2016 Amicalola EMC Scholarship program to win money for college. Perhaps you know of an exceptional student who would be a great candidate for one of these programs. If you do, please share this information with them as both juniors and seniors can win scholarship money for college. The deadline to enter both programs is Jan. 29, 2016. All 2016 winners will be announced at our annual youth awards banquet in the spring.

Help us find the next generation of leaders. For more information about Amicalola EMC's opportunities for our young leaders, call 706-253-5200 or visit [www.amicalolaemc.com](http://www.amicalolaemc.com).

#### ★ **Mark your calendar!**

Jan. 29, 2016, is the deadline to apply for the Washington Youth Tour for high school juniors OR the Amicalola EMC Scholarship program for high school seniors. Applications are available at your school counselor's office or at [www.amicalolaemc.com](http://www.amicalolaemc.com).



BYRON McCOMBS

Amicalola EMC delegates spend the day on Capitol Hill. From left: Tucker Green and Taylor Haynes, of Pickens High, and McKenzie Chambers and Will Ridings, of Gilmer High.

What do 1,500 high school students, our nation's capital and electric cooperatives have in common? The Washington Youth Tour, of course!

The Youth Tour was established with one thought in mind—to inspire our next generation of leaders. Since 1964, more than 50,000 young Americans have taken advantage of this special opportunity offered by their electric cooperatives.

It all takes place in June, when hundreds of electric co-ops across the country send students to Washington, D.C., to learn more about our nation's capital and the cooperative business model.

While in D.C., participants have

a chance to meet with their elected officials and discuss the issues that are important back home. Without a doubt, the Youth Tour has grown into a valuable program that gives young Americans an experience that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

This month, our cover features the Amicalola EMC 2015 Washington Youth Tour winners. We are now accepting applications from local students to attend the 2016 Youth Tour. If you are a high school junior interested in traveling to Washington, D.C., please contact us for more information. Interviews will be conducted with select students in the upcoming weeks.

# Add to the success stories: Be a part of the Washington Youth Tour

**C**ream of the crop. The best and brightest. Upper echelon. High achievers. Just about any superlative fits each year's group of Georgia delegates for the Washington Youth Tour (WYT), sponsored by the state's electric membership corporations, including Amicalola EMC.

Every delegate's accomplishments and interests are highlighted during the kickoff banquet each year, before the high school students begin their whirlwind week of team building, traveling, sight-seeing, learning and bonding. There are some common themes: Not only are these young people very smart—and polite—but they also do *a lot*. Active in their churches. Busy with volunteer work. Gifted athletes. Beta Club. National Honor Society. Eagle Scouts. The list goes on and on.

Considering the rigorous application process (which varies by EMC), it's not surprising



2015 Amicalola EMC delegates at the kickoff banquet in Atlanta as they get ready for a life-changing week. Bottom row, from left: Tucker Green, Pickens High; Stacey Fields, Director of Public Relations; Will Ridings, Gilmer High; back row: Taylor Haynes, Pickens High and McKenzie Chambers, Gilmer High.

that the students chosen as WYT delegates have such impressive backgrounds. Some EMCs test applicants on their knowledge of electric cooperative history. Others receive recommendations from school counselors. Many co-ops conduct in-person interviews with the best candidates.

A big reason why these delegates—who begin Washington Youth Tour week as strangers—bond so quickly and develop lasting friendships is that they are all driven to succeed. Those biographies shown at the kickoff banquet list the delegates' college plans and career aspirations, and it's clear that all set the bar high for themselves.

Ready to count yourself



U.S. Sen. David Perdue (R-GA) with Tucker Green, 2015 Amicalola EMC WYT delegate from Pickens High School.

among the success stories? The 2016 Washington Youth Tour will be held June 9-16. For information, call 706-253-5200.



Are you a Washington Youth Tour alumna or alumnus? If so, we would love to hear from you! Go to [goo.gl/forms/eQM7kt6RT7](http://goo.gl/forms/eQM7kt6RT7) to fill out a quick survey.

# Keeping the right-of-way clear keeps the lights on

**R**ight-of-way (ROW) maintenance is one of the key components in providing electric service to our members. Amicalola EMC spends more than \$2 million a year keeping our rights-of-way clear.

Trees and tree limbs must be cut or trimmed away from high-voltage power lines. It's an important part of the service we provide to you for three reasons: safety, reliability and cost.

Our primary concern is the safety of our workers and members. A properly maintained ROW keeps our crews safe when they are restoring service and maintaining our system. Keeping trees clear of power lines also keeps your family safe.

When a winter storm arrives, a well-maintained ROW leads to fewer outages and faster response time. Trees are less of a threat. When trees *do* fall, crews are able to restore service more quickly than they could with poorly maintained areas.

As a not-for-profit company, we strive to keep costs affordable for you, our members. Maintaining our ROW is an important part of controlling costs. Fewer and shorter outages save money for everyone. When



crews work in well-maintained areas, we can reduce risks for employees and equipment, too—another way to keep costs low.

Many times trees that are outside the allowed cutting area of the ROW are responsible for outages. The trees and/or tree limbs are not within the ROW; however the trees are tall enough to strike the wires when they fall. If you have a tree on your property that you believe would pose a threat, give us a call. Our ROW department can come out and do an assessment. If it is determined that a tree is a danger and could strike the wires when falling, it could be removed at no cost to you.

You'd be helping us supply you, and other Amicalola EMC members, with safe and reliable electric service.



**Official Publication**  
**Amicalola Electric**  
**Membership Corporation**  
**544 Highway 515 South**  
**Jasper, GA 30143**

Todd Payne, *President*

#### **Board of Directors**

Charles R. Fendley, *Chairman*.....Post #3  
John H. Bennett, Jr., *Vice Chairman* ..Post #6  
Randall Ponder, *Sec.-Treas.* .....Post #1  
James H. Bryan .....Post #4  
Kathy Burt .....Post #7  
Travis D. Cline.....Post #5  
Wm. Leon Davis.....Post #9  
David J. Pierce .....Post #2  
Reggie Stowers .....Post #8

#### **TELEPHONE NUMBERS TO CALL IN CASE OF POWER INTERRUPTIONS:**

#### **Outage Hotlines**

706-253-0359  
706-276-0359  
706-864-0359

#### **Amicalola Electric Membership Corporation**

544 Hwy. 515 South  
Jasper, GA 30143  
Telephone: 706-253-5200

[www.amicalolaemc.com](http://www.amicalolaemc.com)

#### **Eastern District Office**

1234 Dawsonville Hwy.  
Dahlonega, GA 30533  
706-864-7979

#### **Northern District Office**

150 Tabor Street  
Ellijay, GA 30540  
706-276-2362

**Office Hours:** Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
*Closed on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays*

#### **Beacon Editor:**

Stacey Godfrey Fields, CCC



## Statement of Nondiscrimination

Amicalola Electric Membership Corporation is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

# Be prepared for winter storms

**W**hen winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Winter storm severity varies depending on where you live, but nearly all Amicalola EMC members are affected by winter storms at some point. We care about your safety, and want you to be prepared.

Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without power. During extremely low temperatures, this can be dangerous. During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

- **Stay warm**—Plan to use a safe, alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove



during a power outage. These are great options to keep you and your loved ones warm, but exercise caution when using, and never leave the heating source unattended. Remember that fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.

- **Stay fed**—The Centers for Disease Control recommends having several days' supply of food on hand that does not need to be cooked. Crackers, cereal, canned goods and bread are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage.

- **Stay safe**—When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. It is best not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, *always assume*



*they are still energized.* Stay as far away from the downed lines as possible, and report the situation to 911 first, then to one of our outage hotline numbers: 706-253-0359, 706-276-0359 or 706-864-0359.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead can often make the difference between life and death. Amicalola EMC is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be ready, too. For more winter safety tips, visit [www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather).

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



If you only want to heat or supplement inadequate heating in one room, small space heaters can be less expensive to use than your central heating system.

—Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

