



### Squash Casserole

By Amy Johns, S & S Events, Nahunta, Georgia

(Cut Here)



Published bi-monthly and mailed to members of Okefenokee Rural Electric Membership Corporation Nahunta, Georgia 31553

Michele Hutchins, Editor

OFFICE HOURS  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Monday through Friday  
Speak to a Customer Service Representative by phone Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

CO-OP BUSINESS NUMBER  
Toll Free 1-800-262-5131

<https://oremc.com>

E-MAIL  
[marketing@oremc.com](mailto:marketing@oremc.com)

John Middleton  
General Manager

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

R. Wayne Combs  
President

Steve E. Rawl  
1st Vice President

Cristi Koncz  
Secretary/Treasurer

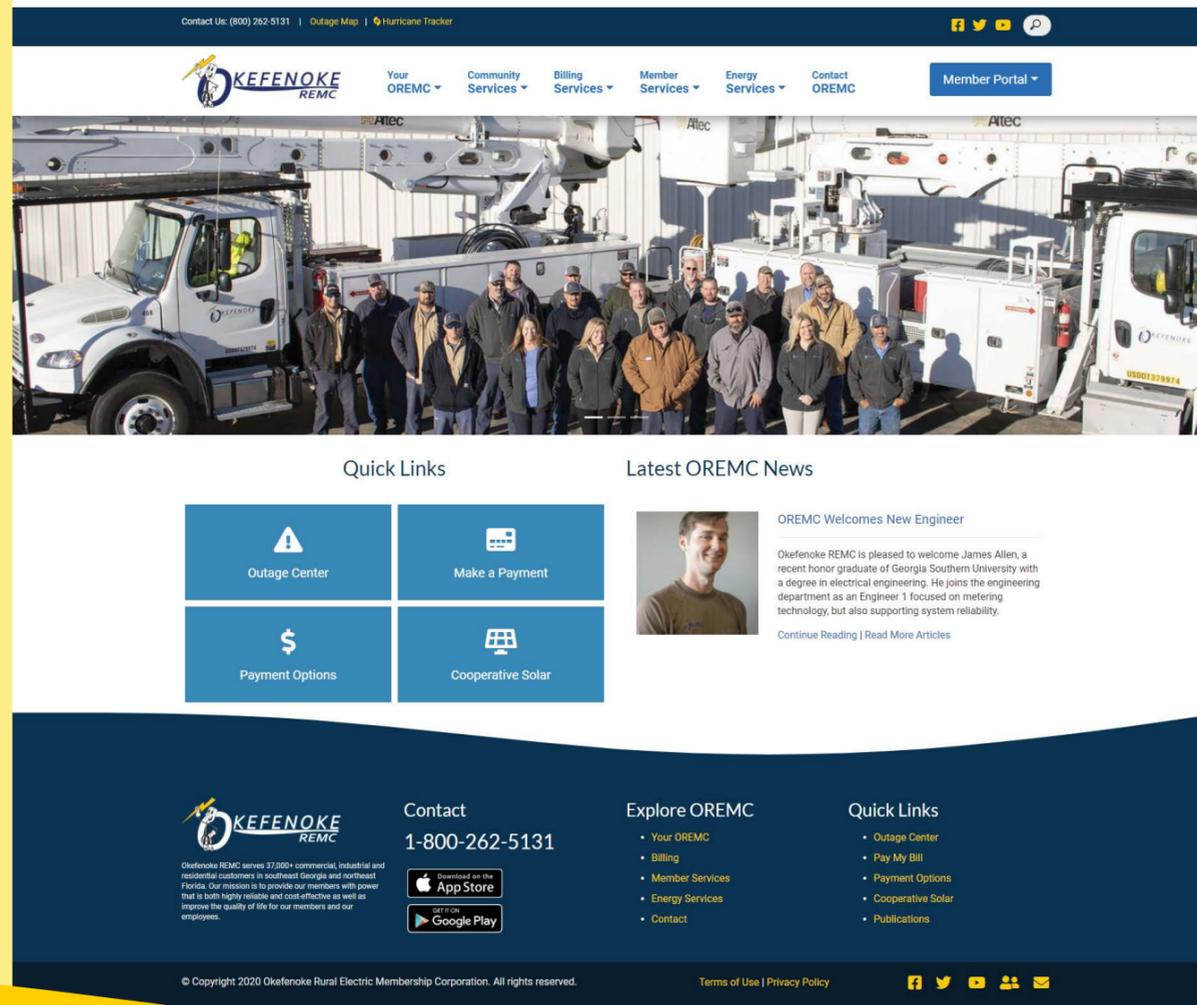
Terrell Brazell  
Jamie Giddens  
Clyde Mizell  
Craig Morgan  
Jimmy Woodard

"OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE"

## OREMC Launches New Website

After several months of development, OREMC launched a new website on September 23. It had been more than six years since the last update, and as time and technology have changed over time, the lag was impacting the user interface and the site's effectiveness.

As OREMC's digital front door, the goals of the updated site are to enhance our consumer-members' online experience with expanded content, streamlined navigation, faster load times and mobile responsiveness. Stop and take a look around at [oremc.com](http://oremc.com).



VOLUME 72, NUMBER 5 • SEPT/OCT 2020

## One for the Record Books: OREMC's 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting

They rolled in, got snacks, parked their cars and tuned their radios to 89.7 FM. No, it wasn't a night at the drive-in theater, but a first-time event for Okefenokee REMC—a drive-in annual meeting.

OREMC held its 81st Annual Meeting on Saturday, September 12 at Brantley County Middle School and welcomed 298 registered members to the historic event. The format of the meeting was changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We didn't know what to expect from the format change," said OREMC General Manager John Middleton. "But we were pleased with the turnout given the change [about half the normal attendance] and feedback has been positive. I liked the drive-in format. It worked well and for many members, made it easier for them to attend as they didn't have to get out of their vehicles. It is definitely a format we will consider continuing going forward."

Voting by honking their horns, members affirmed the slate of board directors up for re-election. Cristi B. Koncz, District 3, East Brantley County and Wayne County, Georgia; Jamie Giddens, District 7, Charlton County, Georgia; and Terrell Brazell, District 9, Southeast Camden County, Georgia were all re-elected for another three-year term.

Jean Craven of Brantley County was the \$500 grand prize winner.



If you've ever been to an event catered by S & S Events, you know their Squash Casserole is a signature dish, and a buffet favorite for special events, birthday celebrations and rehearsal dinners. This version of the traditional southern side dish is compliments of owner Shane Moore's recipe developer Amy Johns. She says its popularity comes from the fact squash is plentiful from early summer through the fall, and is enhanced by the fact most of the squash is local, purchased from their customers' seasonal bounty. If you are lucky, you can sometimes find it on the buffet at *Shane's Kitchen*.

### Lamentations 3:22-23 (KJV)

<sup>22</sup>It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. <sup>23</sup>They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.



### Church of the Month Woodbine Church of God

Sunday School 10 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11 a.m.  
Sunday Evening 6 p.m.  
Wednesday 7 p.m.

1275 Billyville Rd.  
Woodbine, GA 31569-3325

Pastor: Chris Ogden

To nominate your church, contact Dewayne Johns at 1-800-262-5131 Ext. 1143 or email [dewayne.johns@oremc.com](mailto:dewayne.johns@oremc.com).

"I will love the light for it shows me the way,  
yet I will endure the darkness for it  
shows me the stars."  
—Og Mandino

#### Statement of Nondiscrimination

Okefenokee Rural 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).

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



**#PowerOn**

## 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." This principle is the essential DNA of Okefenokee REMC and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

Who would have fathomed in March, 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 OREMC 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— we think these measures were the prudent course of action for the times.

We share all of these efforts 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, we are heartened to see how everyone is pulling together.

In 1939, OREMC was built by the community to serve the community, and that's what we'll continue to do - Power On.

## Cleaning Up After Hurricane Laura

Hurricane Laura roared ashore in Cameron, Louisiana, as a Category 4 hurricane in the early morning hours of August 27, collapsing the electrical grid. By noon that same day, OREMC sent a six-man crew to provide recovery and restoration assistance to Jefferson Davis Electric Co-op based in Jennings, Louisiana. The co-op had 8,000 miles of line on the ground and 9,000 consumer-members without power. Additionally, much of the area's transmission system was destroyed with our linemen reporting steel poles/concrete "snapped at the dirt."

Two weeks later on September 10, we sent a four-man replacement crew so four of the original six could come home to their families. At press time our OREMC linemen had been helping out for 30 days and had yet to see any lights come on. While their work to fix Jeff Davis's distribution system has been steadily progressing, the transmission system feeding their system isn't expected to come online for at least 90 days.

Our prayers go out to all those affected, as well as to our crew and the hundreds of others assisting with the restoration efforts. #PowerOn



**Bayou rendezvous!** A four-man replacement crew arrives at the Lake Charles Tent City in Louisiana—base camp for the restoration efforts following Hurricane Laura. A group shot of all 10 guys before four of the original crew headed home. (L-R) OREMC Linemen Scott Studstill, Todd Gay, Jeff Whitley, Will Testone, Wil Wainright, Floyd Russell, Cody Ragsdale, Ernie Mitchell, Roger Sloan and Ryan Carter.

**Rural communities depend on Co-op Voters.**

- ✓ Learn about the issues.
- ✓ Find your polling place.
- ✓ Talk to your family and friends.

Go to the polls on  
**November 3, 2020.**



## Rate Changes Beginning October 1

Winter billing rates will go into effect on October 1 equalizing the cost per kilowatt hour regardless of usage.

**Winter Rates**  
**Effective October 1-31, 2020**  
**All kWh                      9.58 cents per kWh**

This is an offset to the two-tier rates in effect during the summer months, which saw an increase in per kWh cost to 11.58 when monthly usage was over 1,000 kWh. The two-tier rates were established to encourage energy conservation during peak demand times. A higher demand for electricity during the summer months can result in a higher wholesale power costs year-round.

Beginning November 1, a new rate schedule approved by the OREMC Board of Directors will go into effect. This rate change will affect the cost per kWh and the basic facilities charge—a flat, monthly charge for maintaining our distribution system and service facilities—plus applicable power cost adjustments and sales tax. Currently the basic facilities charge is \$30. Beginning November 1 it will be \$35.

**Winter Rates**  
**Effective November 1, 2020 - April 30, 2021**  
**All kWh                      8.92 cents per kWh**