

Board President's Address to Membership

John Spence

This year Albemarle EMC celebrates its 75th anniversary of service to our region. This year is also unique in that for the first time, the co-op's Annual Meeting will not be conducted in person. The co-op's board of directors decided to hold this annual meeting, instead, by phone due to COVID-19. Though these precautionary measures prevent us from seeing old friends and neighbors, know that you are held in our hearts. Much like the men and women who overcame challenges to build this cooperative so long ago, we too must press ahead. On behalf of the Albemarle EMC Board of Directors, I would like to thank you for participating in this historic Annual Meeting.

It is special and very rare for a company to remain in business for three-quarters of a century. Albemarle EMC was incorporated in 1945 by rural farming communities who knew they had to do whatever it took to bring electricity to their communities, or be left behind.

Their can-do spirit, work ethic, and drive to see a better future for their children made for fertile ground from which Albemarle EMC has grown. Through determination and, often, back-breaking work the infrastructure of Albemarle EMC was built. Mile after mile of power line began to traverse the countryside, and houses once lit by the dim flame of kerosene began, one after another, to shine through the darkness with the brightness of electricity.

From those humble beginnings, Albemarle EMC has grown into a multi-million-dollar business that has become an integral part of northeast North Carolina's success. Your co-op now has more than 13,100 meters, 1,400 miles of line, a state-of-the art office building and a highly trained, professional group of employees.

To stand the test of time, as Albemarle EMC has, it takes several key ingredients. It takes a mission of providing reliable, affordable electricity to members. It also takes a dedicated group of employees to safely provide electricity through a high level of service. Finally, and most importantly, it takes a membership that understands that they are not customers of the cooperative; they are the cooperative. It is the membership that is the most special ingredient of all. They are the ones who make all that we do possible.

Your participation is vital to the health of this cooperative. Members have always been its strength and are represented in every aspect of the cooperative. Members serve on the board of directors; members work as employees, and members volunteer on the various co-op committees.

Albemarle EMC is our collective legacy; it is the inheritance that was entrusted to each of us. Together we have all done our part to improve this cooperative. And when it comes time for us to pass this co-op on to the next generation, I think all of us can rightly say that we will have left it better than we found it.

Thank you for playing such an important role in helping us reach this historic three-quarters of a century milestone.