

newsletter

Serving the Members of Ocmulgee Electric Membership Corporation

The Declaration of Independence and electric cooperatives

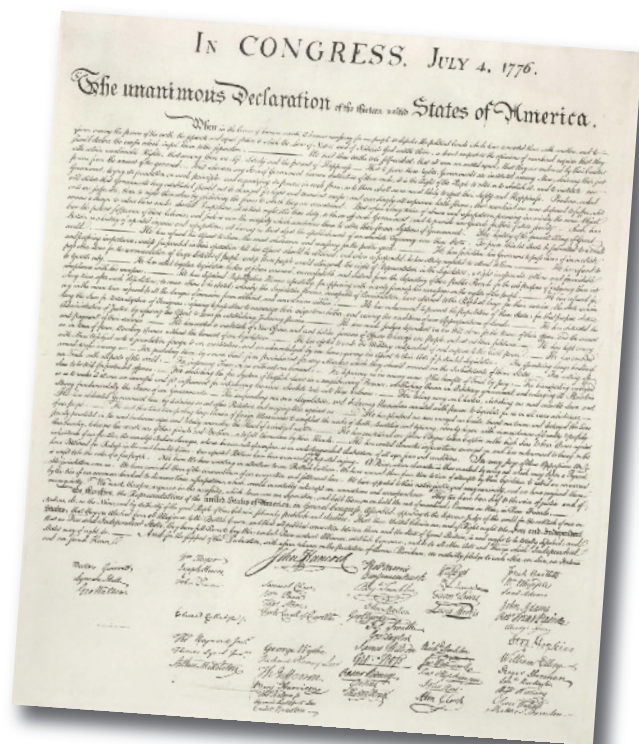
BY BOB ROEDEL

When Benjamin Franklin signed the Declaration of Independence, he was credited with saying, "We must, indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately." Recognizing the need to work together may also be why Franklin, in 1752, founded the first successful cooperative in the United States, the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire, which still operates today.

The principles behind the Declaration of Independence that form the basis of American democracy also form the basis of cooperatives. A cooperative is owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services. Each member has one vote, regardless of his or her stake; that is, individual members cannot buy more control than anyone else. This stands in stark contrast to investor-owned businesses, in which only shareholders have a vote in how the business is run. Even among shareholders, some have more votes than others, depending on their shares of stock.

The Declaration of Independence declared the equality of rights for our country's citizens and that people had the right to organize to secure their futures when their rights were infringed upon. At the time the Declaration was written, representative government was a pretty untested idea—but the founders of our country were determined to make it work.

So when you and your family celebrate the many liberties and rights we enjoy, think about those princi-



ples that inspired our Founding Fathers. They also inspired the pioneers who established electric cooperatives—folks who were determined to provide safe, reliable and affordable power to secure the futures of rural communities.

Electric cooperatives have always operated under the principles of democracy, and we are dedicated to fulfilling that promise as we serve members today and in the future.

—Bob Roedel is manager of Corporate Communications at Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.



Holiday closing

The offices of Ocmulgee EMC will be closed on Wednesday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day. Our office will reopen for regular business on Thursday, July 5, at 8 a.m. In case of a power outage or emergency, call (478) 374-7001 or (800) 342-5509. Have a safe and happy Fourth of July.

Ocmulgee EMC Bylaws

ARTICLE III—DIRECTORS

Section 1. General Powers. The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a Board of nine (9) Directors, which shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative except such are by law or by the Articles of Incorporation of the Cooperative or by those bylaws conferred upon or reserved to the members.

Section 2. Qualifications and Tenure. At the annual meeting of the members held in 1943, nine (9) Directors shall be elected by ballot, by and from the members, three (3) of whom shall serve for one (1) year, three (3) for two (2) years and three (3) for three (3) years, or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified, subject to the provisions of these bylaws with respect to the removal of Directors. At the annual meetings of the members held after 1943, three (3) Directors shall be elected at each annual meeting of the members for a period of three (3) years or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified, subject to the provisions of these bylaws with respect to the removal of Directors. No member shall be eligible to become or remain a nominee for a Director or a Director of the Cooperative who will not be twenty-one (21) years of age or older on the date of the election; or

(a) is not a member of the Cooperative and bona fide resident of the county represented; or

(b) is not receiving service from the Cooperative at his primary residence unless temporarily prevented from doing so by causes reasonably beyond such member's control. Provided, however, that any Director currently serving on the Ocmulgee EMC Board will be exempt from this requirement as long as he continues to serve and be re-elected; or

(c) is currently or has been within five (5) years before the date of the election an employee of the Cooperative, an employee or Director of a competing utility or enterprise, an employee or Director of an enterprise which regularly contracts with the Cooperative; or

(d) is a member of, employed by or financially interested in an enterprise or organization which competes with the Cooperative

or regularly contracts with the Cooperative, except when such membership, employment or financial interest is, in the judgment of a majority of the disinterested Directors, so inconsiderable and incidental as not to pose a reasonable prospect of a conflict of interest (provided, however, that this determination shall be made by the Credentials and Elections Committee if the person is a potential nominee or candidate for the Director or if the disinterested Directors request the committee to rule); or

(e) has been convicted of a felony; or

(f) has failed to attend more than four (4) consecutive meetings of the Board, except when such absence is excused by a vote of the Board of Directors for reasonable cause, or who has failed to attend, for any reason, twelve (12) consecutive meetings of the Board, or who has been determined by the Credentials and Elections Committee to be incapable of fulfilling the duties of a Director; or

(g) has not been an active member of the Cooperative for six (6) months prior to the election; or

(h) has not been in good standing financially with the electric cooperative for a period of at least six (6) months prior to election. (*Revised October 14, 1998*)

When a membership is held jointly by a husband and wife, either one, but not both, may be elected a Director, provided, however, that neither one shall be eligible to become or remain a Director or to hold a position of trust in the Cooperative unless both shall meet the qualifications herein above set forth. Nothing in this section contained shall, or shall be construed to, affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Nominations. It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than thirty (30) days nor more than one hundred ten (110) days before the date of a meeting of the members at which Directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of not less

than three (3) nor more than nine (9) members who shall be selected so as to give equitable representation on the committee to the geographical areas represented by the Directors whose terms are about to expire. No officer or member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed a member of such committee. The committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least twenty (20) days before the meeting a list of nominations for Directors, but any fifteen (15) or more members may make other nominations, in writing over their signatures naming the Director, or Directors, whose place, or places such nominee, or nominees, are to fill not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting, and the Secretary shall post at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. Any member may announce his candidacy for a Director of the Cooperative in writing over his signature, naming the Director whom he wishes to succeed, not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting, and the Secretary shall post the same at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. Each nominee for Director must be a resident of the same county as that of the residence of the Director whom he desires to succeed. The Secretary shall mail with the notice of the meeting a statement of the number of Directors to be elected and showing separately the nominations made by the committee on nominations, the nominations made by petition, and the individual nominations, if any. No additional nominations shall be made from the floor at the meeting of the members. The members may, at any meeting at which a Director or Directors shall be removed, as herein before provided, elect a successor or successors thereto without compliance with the foregoing provisions with respect to nominations. Notwithstanding anything in this section contained, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of Directors. (*Revised October 9, 1996*)

Section 4. Vacancies. Subject to the provisions of these bylaws with respect to the removal of Directors, vacancies occurring in the Board of Directors shall be filled by a majority vote of the

remaining Directors, and the Director thus elected shall serve for the unexpired term of the Director whose vacancy is thus filled, and until his successor shall have been elected and shall have qualified.

Section 5. Compensation. For their services as such, Directors shall, on a per diem basis, receive such compensation, which may include insurance benefits, as is fixed by the Board of Directors. Directors shall also receive advancement or reimbursement of any travel and/or out-of-pocket expenses, actually, necessarily, and reasonably incurred, in performing their duties. The Cooperative shall indemnify Directors and may purchase insurance to cover such indemnification as provided for in Georgia Code Section 46-3-306. (Revised April 21, 1993)

Section 6. Rules and Regulations. The Board of Directors shall have power to make and adopt such rules and regulations, not inconsistent with law, the Articles of Incorporation of the Cooperative or these bylaws, as it may deem advisable for the management, administration and regulation of the business and affairs of the Cooperative.

Section 6(A). Director Emeritus. There is hereby created the office of Director Emeritus of the Cooperative. Any member who has served the Cooperative continuously as a Director for a period of twelve (12) years and is no longer a Director shall automatically be a Director Emeritus. So long as a Director Emeritus is a member of the Cooperative, he shall have the privilege of attending all meetings of the Board of Directors, and participate in the discussions thereof. He shall not have the right to make or second any motion nor to vote on any matter before the Board. So

long as he is a member of the Cooperative, he may serve on any committees appointed by the Board or by the President. He shall not receive any compensation or expenses for attending meetings of the Board of Directors. He shall be eligible for insurance as though he were a Director and the Board of Directors may authorize payment of premiums on such insurance from funds of the Cooperative.

Section 7. Accounting System and Reports. The Board of Directors shall cause to be established and maintained a complete accounting system, which, among other things, subject to applicable laws and rules and regulations of any regulatory body, shall conform to such accounting system as may from time to time be designated by the Administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration of the United States of America. All accounts of the Cooperative shall be examined by a committee of the Board of Directors which shall render reports to the Board of Directors at least four (4) times a year at regular meetings of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall also within six (6) months after the close of each fiscal year cause to be made a full and complete audit of the accounts, books and financial condition of the Cooperative as of the end of such fiscal year. Such audit reports shall be submitted to the members at the following annual meeting.

Section 8. Change in Rates. Written notice shall be given to the Administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration of the United States of America not less than ninety (90) days prior to the date upon which any proposed change in the rates charged by the Cooperative for electric energy becomes effective.

Employee Recognition

W.H. Peacock
General Manager – 35 years

Ossie Wright
Office Services – 13 years

Felton Hilburn
Operations – 26 years

Diana Sheffield
Human Resources – 13 years

Huberta Powers
Operations – 40 years

Thanks for your hard work and continued dedication!



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Membership Corporation
P.O. Box 669
Eastman, Georgia 31023

DIRECTORS

Barry H. Martin
President

John T. Woodard Jr.
Vice President

Charles M. Pittman
Secretary-Treasurer

James W. Fordham Sr.
Billy Hartley
Billy L. Joiner
Algie Jones Jr.
Ray Lancaster
Joel Blake Rowland

OFFICE STAFF

W.H. Peacock
GENERAL MANAGER

Chuck Lowery
SUPERINTENDENT OF MAINTENANCE
AND CONSTRUCTION

Jeffrey Underwood
MANAGER OF OFFICE SERVICES

OFFICE HOURS:
Monday Thru Friday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Drive-thru Hours
8:00 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.

TELEPHONE:
(478) 374-7001 or
TOLL FREE
(800-) 342-5509
Emergency Service
24 Hrs. a Day
Including Weekends & Holidays

Ocmulgee EMC clears the way for your comfort, convenience

Ocmulgee EMC recently added some serious horsepower to its right-of-way program. As part of an ongoing commitment to provide the most reliable service possible, Ocmulgee purchased a 2012 Kershaw Klearway tractor with a shredder head attachment. This new machine will mulch and mow much faster than the tractor it replaces.

This tractor will allow our right-of-way team to clear many more miles of line each year. The OEMC in-house crew will continue to run two Kershaw Sky Trim to side trim trees, followed closely by this big machine to mulch limbs and mow underbrush. This combination of trimming, mulching and mowing has proved very effective and cost efficient in maintaining the 1,900 miles of line that deliver electricity to Ocmulgee EMC members.

Ocmulgee EMC also contracts several Asplundh crews to clear service lines in yards, take down problem trees and to clear the many dead trees that threaten power lines. OEMC also contracts to chemically spray 200 to 300 miles of line each



Chris Brown, left, and Brett Grenade show off Ocmulgee EMC's new Kershaw Klearway tractor, which will make clearing right of way much easier.

year, to help prevent the rapid regrowth of foliage and trees inside the right of way.

With your continued cooperation, Ocmulgee is having great success in re-establishing and clearing the right of way underneath, and 15 feet on either side of overhead power lines. It is so very important

to keep this clearance for safety concerns and for the huge dividends it pays in your comfort and convenience when the storms come and the winds blow.

Thanks again for doing your part as a responsible co-op member. After all, we are simply neighbors helping neighbors.

Ocmulgee EMC Foundation keeps giving money for worthwhile causes

The Ocmulgee EMC Foundation Board is pleased to announce continued disbursements from the Operation Round Up program. Board members approved applications for funds totaling \$5,325. The board approved an allocation of \$2,825 to Dodge County High School science classes for the pur-

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chase of lab equipment, and the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension (Dodge County) SAFE program was awarded \$2,500 to assist the Dodge County 4-H shotgun competition teams and Dodge County 4-H BB competition teams.

The Operation Round Up Foundation Board meets on the fourth Thursday of January, April,

July and October. The deadline for submitting an application is the first day of each meeting month. Applications are reviewed at each regularly scheduled meeting, and successful applicants are notified upon approval.

Applications are available at the office of Ocmulgee EMC, 5722 Eastman St., Eastman, Ga. For more information, call (478) 374-7001, or visit our website at www.ocmulgeeemc.com.