

SEMCO NEWS

Official Member Newsletter

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
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October 2022

Membership Elects Lehanne Singleton as Marion County Director

At the Sumter EMC 2022 Annual Meeting of Members, Lehanne Singleton was elected by the Members to fill the Marion County directorate seat left vacant by the death of Bob Jernigan. Singleton was elected to serve a three-year term effective August 6, 2022.

Singleton was born and raised in Schley County. She grew up in Ellaville, attended Tri-County High School, and has worked and made her home in Marion County for 36 years.

Following her high school graduation, Singleton attended Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW), and she soon found her true calling as an educator. She received an education degree, and it was in this capacity as a teacher that she made an impact on the students she taught over the years. Being the lifelong learner she is, Singleton continued her education and completed two additional degrees in education from Georgia College & State University and Troy State University. Singleton taught business ed for 15 years at Tri-County High School and later at Marion County Middle/High School.



Lehanne Singleton

Singleton transitioned from the business ed classroom to the media center, where she became the media specialist. She coordinated all of the media center duties, along with facilitated online classes. She became the system media specialist before retiring after 30 years of service with the Marion County School System.

Singleton has been married to her husband, Ken, for 36 years, and they have two children, two grandchildren and a third grandchild will join their family in December. The Singletons

own K&L Forest Nursery Inc. in Buena Vista, where they work alongside their two sons, specializing in hand-lifted, hand-graded and hand-packed slash, coastal loblolly, and piedmont loblolly pines. One of Singleton's hobbies is quail hunting, and she has four fur babies, including two bird dogs, a beagle, and a black lab. The family attends Union Church in Marion County.

Singleton is no stranger to serving her local community. She currently serves on the Board of Education in Marion County and is a past trustee with the Sumter EMC Foundation.

"I am very excited to have been chosen to follow in Mr. Bob Jernigan's footsteps as the Marion County representative on the Sumter EMC Board of Directors," Singleton says. "I sincerely hope to continue Mr. Jernigan's strong legacy of service to the members of Marion County."

"We are pleased to welcome Mrs. Singleton to the Sumter EMC Board. We look forward to working with her and sincerely appreciate her willingness to serve our members in Marion County," says Rene Smith, President/CEO of Sumter EMC.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weatherstripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials. Visit www.energy.gov/energysaver to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: www.energy.gov



Dedicated leaders of Sumter EMC

Sumter EMC is a not-for-profit, Member-owned electric cooperative that was created to provide reliable electric service at an affordable cost. The cooperative relies on a team of dedicated employees who are committed to this mission, and their effectiveness is reflected in very high customer-satisfaction ratings from the cooperative's Members.

One of the cooperative's key employees is Julie Higgins, Vice President of Finance and Accounting, who



Julie Higgins

plans to retire in March of 2023 after more than 33 years of dedicated service. As part of a well-planned succession process, she has passed the torch to William "Chip" Hammack and will continue

to work alongside him until her retirement date.

Julie graduated from Jacksonville State University in Alabama with a bachelor's degree in accounting and later obtained her master's degree from Georgia Southwestern State University. In November 1989, she joined the Sumter EMC team as an accountant, and throughout the years has worked

various jobs in accounting, and finally held the position of Vice President of Finance and Accounting, which is the position from which she is retiring.

Julie has been instrumental in the financial success of the cooperative over her 33 year tenure, and she has worked countless hours to ensure it is left in good financial standing upon her retirement. Julie has also held leadership roles in her church and community. She plays a vital role in training and leading employees in the Accounting, Billing and Customer Service departments, as well as the Appliance Sales and Service Center while it was in operation.

Julie and her husband, Al, who live in Americus, have two daughters, Kathryn and Rebecca, and four grandchildren. In retirement, Julie plans on traveling and spending more time with her family. She also enjoys sewing and quilting, often sharing her homemade pieces with others.

"I am very proud to have been a part of the Sumter EMC family for 33 years," Julie says. "My time here has been very rewarding and I truly value my co-workers and our Members. I am confident in the financial standing of the cooperative as I depart, and I have no doubt that Chip's knowledge, experience, and leadership skills will continue moving Sumter EMC in a positive direction in both billing and finances."

Sumter EMC welcomed Julie's

successor, Chip Hammack, on Feb. 14, as Vice President of Finance. Chip is a



Chip Hammack

proven professional with more than 27 years of experience in multiple facets of the operations and management of electric cooperatives, including customer service, billing, collections, finance

and accounting, information systems, project management, and cooperative governance.

Throughout his career, Chip has served in various senior-level financial capacities at Pataula EMC, Flint Energies, Southeastern Data Cooperative, Cape Hatteras Electric, and Booth & Associates, LLC. No doubt his experience and expertise are of extreme value to the cooperative, and he has transitioned into the leadership role at Sumter EMC with ease.

"I am blessed to be a part of the Sumter EMC family and look forward to many years here. I am thankful to Julie for guiding me and prepping me for my new role," says Chip.

Chip and his wife, Vida, have one son, Noah. They reside in Chip's hometown of Butler and will relocate to Americus by the end of the year.



OCTOBER IS
**BREAST
CANCER**
AWARENESS MONTH



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

Celebrating membership

Fall is a busy time of year, and October is a particularly eventful month with the full swing of school, community, and sports activities. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

When we say Sumter EMC celebrates Co-op Month, it means we are celebrating you! This is a milestone year as Sumter EMC also celebrates serving Members for 85 years. We have the opportunity to serve over 15,000 Members across 11 counties, and we don't take that for granted. After all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you, our Members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. Concern for Community is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions—because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.



We appreciate you!

Sumter EMC plans to celebrate its members with Member Appreciation Days during the first week of October!

**More details to follow*

Sumter EMC works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and a local board comprised of neighbors who live right here in our community. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique needs and strive to help meet them.

We're proud to support local youth through our Washington Youth Tour and Walter Harrison Scholarship programs. With your help, we also offer Operation Round Up to support worthy causes within our communities.

The word cooperative is close to cooperation, meaning people working together toward a common goal—

mutually benefiting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and Member-elected board members are invested in the community where they live and serve.

Above all, as a co-op, we put our Members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you. That's why we have numerous programs to help, including rebates, energy audits, and prepay billing.

We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, we encourage you to take a moment and download the

Sumter EMC smartphone app. Through the app, you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. And we're here to help, so give us a call at (229) 924-8041 and ask to speak with someone in Member Services if you have questions about your energy bills.

Sumter EMC continuously examines ways to operate more efficiently while providing the highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. We're your local co-op, and we were built by the Members we serve!



Sumter EMC
Your Member-Owned Electric Cooperative

Focused on YOU.

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH





Energy Explorers


ENERGY VAMPIRES WORD SCRAMBLE

Energy vampires could be lurking in your home! These are electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not being used.

Unscramble the bolded words to identify common energy vampires. Check your work in the answer key below.

 When you're finished playing that new video game, unplug your **eagm oncloes**.

 Tell your parents to unplug the **efcfeo kmrea** when they're finished brewing.

 When you're done watching your favorite show, unplug the **seotnivile**.

 If your phone is juiced up, unplug your **nophe rahrgce**.

Answer key: game console, coffee maker, television, phone charger