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Students Enjoy 'Comfy' and Safe Courtyard

Students at Mariam Boyd Elementary School in Warrenton are now enjoying a "comfy" and safe place to wait after school for their parents to pick them up. Thanks to Shirley Pendergrass, instructional assistant, Mariam Boyd received a grant from Halifax Helps this past May to construct what the school refers to as its "Comfy Courtyard."

Mrs. Pendergrass, along with the rest of the staff, noticed the need for a designated pick-up spot after witnessing a few near misses after school last year. "Students would dart across the street to run to their parents and go in front of cars," Pendergrass said. "Four students almost got hit last year doing that." On September 28, Mariam Boyd held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the "Comfy Courtyard" and invited Halifax EMC as well as members of the Halifax Helps board. Debbie Hardy, president of Halifax Helps, and Director Suzie Bumgarner attended the event along with Charles Guerry, executive vice president of Halifax EMC.

Amidst the shade of a beautiful old tree, the "Comfy Courtyard" is

outlined by landscape timbers and azelea bushes on three sides so that students must exit from the front when their parents arrive each day. There are several benches for the students to sit upon as they wait.



Students sitting on the benches in the "Comfy Courtyard," made possible by funding from Halifax Helps.

Pictured at top, from the left, first row: Principal Canecca Davis and Instructional Assistant Shirley Pendergrass; second row: Amanda Miller, Tyler Powell, Judith Reyes and Layla Foster; third row: Elsie Guitierrez, Maria Reyes, Starr Seward and Rocky Stone; fourth row: Brianna Alston, Jabrell Lee, Alexis Carter and Jordan Pugh; fifth row: Dr. Frank Polakiewicz, assistant superintendent of administration; Debbie Hardy, president of Halifax Helps; Charles Guerry, Halifax EMC executive vice president, and Suzie Bumgarner, Halifax Helps board member.

Charles H. Guerry

*Executive Vice President
& General Manager*

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Business Hours

8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

Locations

Enfield/Macon: (252) 445-5111

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Halifax EMC is your electric cooperative. Your comments and questions are very important to us. Please tell us how we may improve our service.

Return your comments/questions along with your payment, or e-mail them to bamartin@halifax-emc.com. Specific account questions will be answered personally. Remember to include your account number for these types of questions.



Electric Lines

“Be on the lookout for more new services for members.”

by Charles H. Guerry

Executive Vice President & General Manager

Last month's featured topic was Pay-As-You-Go Electric Service, which is now being offered by Halifax EMC. I am excited to report that several of our members have taken advantage of this new service and are already seeing the benefits. One noticeable change is a reduction in energy usage by some of these members. They have taken control of their energy budget and are spending less money on electricity.

Another service that Halifax EMC began offering to its members this year was the ability for members to receive alerts and reminders by e-mail or text concerning their account. In the August issue of the newsletter you learned about the many notification options that are available via e-mail or text messaging, such as a due date reminder or an alert when your member profile has been updated. At that time, the only way to sign up for this service was by calling the office and speaking to a Member Services Representative. However, now you can access these features and activate or deactivate them yourself through our new customer portal.

You may have already noticed that upon logging into online bill pay through the co-op's website, the page has a new look. The updated customer portal offers more options for our members. Not

only can you pay your bill or sign up for alerts and notifications but you can also access your usage history. The usage history allows you to view kWh usage in a graph format based upon a desired date range. Members can use this information to analyze their usage and make wiser energy choices.

Be on the lookout for more new member services. In the very near future, Halifax EMC's customer portal will be accessible through mobile apps for Apple and Android phone users. The apps will make it fast and easy to pay your electric bill anywhere, anytime from your mobile phone.

Lastly, while the topic of rates does not fall into the same category as the new member services mentioned above, I feel it important to remind you that October 1 marked the beginning of a new billing rate as previously discussed in my August 2012 article. Even though Halifax EMC has experienced a sizeable increase in wholesale power costs, most members should have seen a minimal effect from the implemented rate increase on their bill, thanks to your Halifax EMC staff's hard work to reduce the impact of these increases. The co-op will continue to strive to serve our members with the safest, most reliable service at the lowest possible cost.

Boost Your Business: Join the Connections Program

Businesses! Allow Halifax EMC to help you grow your business. We invite you to join the growing number of local businesses that have increased their visitors and sales by becoming a part of the Co-op Connections Program. The program gives your business exposure to the 11,000 plus members served by Halifax EMC and millions served by our fellow Touchstone Energy Cooperatives nationwide. We offer you this avenue to promote your business without spending any advertising dollars.

The program is FREE to participating businesses. There is no cost to you other than the discount you offer our members. Simply commit to a discount offer or service. It can be anything that you are currently providing or something new, and then agree to accept the Co-op Connections Membership Card when a purchase is made. In exchange for your participation, we will promote your business and the discount offer at no cost to you. It's that easy! All Halifax EMC members received a card about three years ago, and we're regularly providing cards for new members and to replace lost ones.

Your business benefits by:

- Increased traffic—Simply display the “We’re a participating business” decal.
- Increased visibility—You will receive FREE listings in all our member communications about the program, bill inserts, www.halifaxemc.com, and www.connections.coop.
- Increased image—The Co-op Connections Membership Card encourages members to shop locally.
- Flexibility—You set your own parameters! Decide what discount or offer you wish to use to attract the customers you need to grow your business.
- Ease of enrollment—Simply complete the Participating Business Contract. Call (252) 445-1188 for your participating agreement or pick up a form at the Enfield or Macon offices.

The program is designed to benefit your business and our members. Halifax EMC believes in “buying local and staying local.” We encourage residents to look in their own back yard for products and services before shopping elsewhere. When this is accomplished, everyone wins and the community prospers.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Thanksgiving-Leftovers Shepherd's Pie

- 3 cups cooked stuffing
- 1 cup cranberry sauce, plus more for topping (optional)
- 1 lb sliced Roast Turkey
- 10 oz glazed carrots (or any leftover vegetable)
- 4 to 6 tbs gravy
- 3 to 4 cups mashed potatoes

Preheat oven to 350°. In a 9- to 10-inch pie plate, mound stuffing on bottom; layer with cranberry sauce, turkey and carrots. Drizzle with gravy; spread potatoes over surface to sides of dish. Top with more cranberry sauce, if desired.

Place pie on a baking sheet and bake until heated through and potatoes are golden, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool slightly.

*Source: Martha Stewart Living
November 2003*

The Smart Way to Use Space Heaters

Space heaters, including electric models and those powered by kerosene, are a convenient source of warmth during winter months, especially if there's a power outage, but they can be dangerous if not used properly.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), in a recent year, there were 10,900 residential fires and 190 deaths associated with space heaters. Space heater hazards stem not just from fires caused by contact with or close proximity to heating elements. They also include fires started by flammable fuels used in the heaters, defective wiring in the appliance and carbon monoxide poisoning caused by improper ventilation.

Stay warm and safe this winter by following these tips from the CPSC for using space heaters:

- Keep the heater at least three feet from flammable items such as curtains, furniture, or bedspreads.
- Select a space heater with a guard around the heating element.
- When buying a heater, choose one that has been tested and certified by a nationally recognized testing institution such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Buy a heater appropriately sized for the area you want to heat.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Never leave a space heater unattended.
- Never go to sleep with a space heater on.
- Never use or store flammable liquids near a space heater.
- Do not use a heater in a bathroom— it's a high-moisture area that could cause damage.
- Keep heaters away from water to prevent electrocution.
- Do not use an extension cord with a space heater.
- Do not use the heater to dry clothes.
- Be sure the heater's plug fits snugly in an outlet. The cord and plug may feel warm when operating since the unit draws so much power, but they should not feel hot. If they do, unplug the heater and have a qualified repair person check for problems.
- Do not attempt to repair a broken heater yourself. It should be checked and repaired by a qualified appliance service center.

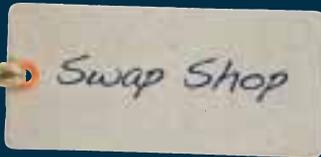
Daylight Savings Time Ends

Remember the rhyme we all learned as a child—"Spring forward, fall back?" Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, November 4. Time reverts back to standard time at 2 a.m. on Sunday morning so make sure to set your clocks back one hour before you head to bed.

Safety Tip: Use this time also as a reminder to check the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms!

Holiday Closing

Halifax EMC will be closed on **Thursday, November 22 and Friday, November 23** for Thanksgiving.



For sale: Love seat/sofa, rusty red plush fabric, very good cond., \$125. Call: 252-826-4061 (Scotland Neck).

For sale: 2007 Suzuki Burgman 650, grey, \$3,500; Edison Diamond Disc Phonograph, purchased in 1920, manual w/24 discs, Chipendale cabinet, includes Certificate of Authenticity, \$400. Call: 252-586-1811 (Littleton).

Lawn maintenance: Complete lawn maintenance for commercial/residential, fully insured, free estimates. For more details, Call: 252-904-1598 or 252-826-3957 (Lawn Ranger, Sonny Padgett, Scotland Neck).