



*Pictured L to R, former JOEMC employees from the 1960s: Ervin Spain, Roy Stroud, Bill Wonderly, Len South, Clyde Jarman, Fatts Smith, Buster Graham*

## October is Co-op Month: Celebrating 85 Years of Jones-Onslow EMC

This October, as we celebrate National Co-op Month, Jones-Onslow EMC is proud to mark 85 years of providing reliable power and service to our community. Since our founding in 1939, we've grown from humble beginnings to serving nearly 75,000 members and close to 84,000 meters across Onslow, Jones, Pender, Duplin, Craven, and Lenoir counties—and our commitment to delivering affordable, reliable electricity has never been stronger.

### Looking Back: Our Co-op's Roots

Jones-Onslow EMC began with a simple but important mission: to bring elec-

tricity to rural areas that private companies couldn't or wouldn't serve. In 1939, a group of local farmers and community leaders, including Albert Venters and E.C. Marshburn, came together to organize the cooperative. With the help of dedicated individuals who recognized the need for electricity in our region, the Jones-Onslow Rural Electrification Authority was officially chartered in June 1939.

At that time, many rural families relied on kerosene lamps and wood stoves. Electricity was a luxury found only in cities. But thanks to the vision of our founders and the support of the community, Jones-

Onslow EMC began building lines, connecting homes and farms to power, and transforming the region. What started with just a handful of members has grown into a vital part of our community, with over 2,400 miles of lines reaching homes, schools, and businesses.

### Where We Are Today

Eighty-five years later, Jones-Onslow EMC has expanded its services and embraced new technologies to keep pace with the changing needs of our members. We're more than just an electric provider. Today, we offer programs that help you save energy, lower your

bills, and even improve your home's energy efficiency. Whether it's through our energy calculators, efficiency tips, or innovative billing and payment options like AutoDraft and Paperless Billing, we're constantly looking for ways to make your experience better.

Our community involvement has also grown. We sponsor Bright Ideas education grants, sponsor students to attend the annual Washington DC Youth Tour and basketball camps and provide support to local veterans through the No Barriers program— just to name a few ways we serve the community. These

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joemc.com



joemc@joemc.com



(910) 353-1940



259 Western Blvd, Jacksonville  
1225 Hwy 210, Sneads Ferry



James Grantham, former JOEMC Lineman, 1966

### Co-op Month (cont.)

initiatives reflect our dedication to making a difference beyond electricity.

### Looking to the Future

As we look to the future, our focus remains on innovation and adapting to the evolving ways our members use electricity. Whether it's supporting the growth of electric vehicles, integrating renewable energy options, or introducing smart technologies, we are committed to staying ahead of the curve. While the methods of delivering power may change, our promise to provide reliable, affordable electricity will always remain at the heart of what we do.

This Co-op Month, we're reminded of the power of working together. Jones-Onslow EMC wouldn't be what it is today without our members—because, as a cooperative, we're owned by you. That's what makes us different. As we celebrate 85 years, we're excited to continue growing and evolving with you.

Thank you for being part of the Jones-Onslow EMC family. Here's to the next 85 years of powering our community!



## Cybersecurity 101: Staying Safe in a Digital World

In recent years, we've witnessed a growing number of devastating cyberattacks targeting businesses, government entities, and individuals. These breaches have disrupted services, compromised personal data, and caused significant financial damage. While large-scale attacks often target organizations, individuals are not immune to online threats. As scammers continue to find ways to exploit those with an internet presence, there are ways to keep your information safe.

### Learn How to Spot Phishing Attempts

Scammers often attempt to target JOEMC members via text messages and calls, threatening to disconnect service unless payments are made through unauthorized platforms like Zelle. Remember, **JOEMC will never ask for payments this way**. Visit our website, [joemc.com](http://joemc.com), for a complete list of payment options or call us **910-353-1940**.

### Enable Two-Factor or Multi-factor Authentication (MFA)

Two-factor or multi-factor authentication adds layers of security beyond a password. Enable this feature wherever possible for enhanced protection.

### Use Antivirus Protection and a Firewall

- Keep your antivirus software subscriptions active and up-to-date.
- Ensure you have a modern, secure firewall/router at home.

### Keep Your Software Up to Date

- Enable automatic system updates for your devices.
- Use the latest version of your web browser.
- Avoid using outdated browser plugins like Java unless absolutely necessary. If used, keep them updated.

### Use Strong Passwords and a Password Management Tool

- Passwords should be at least 12 characters long, with a mix of numbers, uppercase and lowercase letters, and special characters.
- Use different passwords for different accounts.

Let's all do our part to stay cyber smart and create a safer digital world for all. Visit [staysafeonline.org](http://staysafeonline.org) to learn about additional cybersecurity tips.

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# COZY Home HAPPY Wallet

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As the weather cools down, it's a great time to prep your home for the colder months ahead. Here are some simple energy-saving tips to help you stay cozy while keeping your energy bills in check:

- 1 Seal Drafts** – Check windows and doors for drafts and use weatherstripping or caulking to seal them. This keeps warm air in and cold air out, saving on heating costs.
- 2 Adjust the Thermostat** – Lower your thermostat when you're asleep or away. A slight adjustment can lead to big savings on your heating bill.
- 3 Change Your Air Filters** – A clean air filter helps your heating system run better and can lower your energy use. Replace filters every 1-3 months or per manufacturers recommendations.
- 4 Install a Door Sweep** – A door sweep can block cold air from entering under exterior doors, making your home feel warmer and reducing the load on your heating system.

You can stay warm and save energy this fall by making a few simple changes. Enjoy the season! For more energy-saving tips visit, [joemc.com/energywise](http://joemc.com/energywise).



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## Don't Fear Winter Bills: Sign Up for Budget Billing Today

Unexpected weather can lead to higher than usual utility bills, especially in winter. With Budget Billing, you can avoid surprises by spreading your energy costs evenly throughout the year.

### How It Works

Working together, we will set a fixed payment amount (determined by your prior usage) for 11 months. In the 12<sup>th</sup> month, your bill will "settle up" any difference owed or credit due based on your Budget Billing agreement. Your Budget Billing amount may change with each annual settlement event.

### Benefits

- **Predictable Payments:** Enjoy stable, consistent monthly bills.
- **No Surprises:** Avoid seasonal spikes and manage your budget easily.
- **Stress-Free Budgeting:** Spread your energy costs evenly throughout the year.

Visit [joemc.com](http://joemc.com) or call 910-353-1940  
to enroll and take control of your energy costs today!



## ROTISSERIE CHICKEN POT PIE SOUP

*This simple, kid-friendly soup is fast to throw together*

Source: [www.carolinacountry.com](http://www.carolinacountry.com)  
Serves: 6

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 large sweet potato, cut in ½" cubes
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1 (16-ounce) bag frozen mixed vegetables, thawed\*
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 (12-ounce) can evaporated milk
- Meat from boned and skinned rotisserie chicken
- 2 teaspoons poultry seasoning
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1½ teaspoons each salt and pepper
- Pan of baked cornbread, cubed

### DIRECTIONS

1. Melt butter in heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add potato, onion and celery. Toss with butter and sauté about 5 minutes until tender.
2. Stir in mixed vegetables and cook 4 to 5 minutes until green beans are tender. Add cornstarch and toss to coat. Cook 2 minutes. Whisk in broth and milk. Heat until slightly thickened. Remove from heat and add chicken and seasonings. If too thick, add a bit more broth for desired consistency.
3. Ladle into bowls and top with cornbread "croutons."

# Co-ops Power Communities with Purpose



Gary W. Ray, CEO

Communities come in all shapes and sizes. Some are based on geographical proximity, some on shared interests or hobbies, and some can even be found in virtual spaces like social media groups. Communities can bring people together and create a sense of belonging regardless of where or how they are formed.

Jones-Onslow is deeply committed to our consumer-members, and we're glad you're part of the electric cooperative community.

More than 30,000 cooperatives across the U.S. are celebrating National Co-op Month this month. It's a time to reflect on all the aspects that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses, but more importantly, it's a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities that are built by the communities they serve. For JOEMC, our mission has always been to provide affordable,

reliable, safe power. We care about your quality of life, and because we are locally operated, we're uniquely suited to meet our members' evolving energy needs.

Beyond the business of electricity, our employees and directors are equally invested in our local community. Why? Because we live here, too. That's why we work hard to support local economic development projects, youth programs and scholarships, charitable giving initiatives, and additional programs that make our community a better place to call home.

All co-ops, including Jones-Onslow, are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement. These seven principles are a framework to help all co-ops navigate challenges and opportunities while remaining true to our purpose:

**1. OPEN AND VOLUNTARY MEMBERSHIP:** Co-op membership is open to anyone using the co-op's services.

**2. DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL:** Members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.

**3. MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION:** Members contribute money to the co-op to ensure it runs

smoothly now and in the future. At Jones-Onslow, this happens when you pay your electric bills.

**4. AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE:** Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.

**5. EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND INFORMATION:** Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees have the training and information they need to make the co-op successful.

**6. COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES:** Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other out in times of need because we want other co-ops to thrive.

**7. CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY:** All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve. Co-ops give back to their communities to help them thrive and grow.

As we celebrate National Co-op Month and the power of membership, we hope you will recognize the many aspects that set electric cooperatives apart. Our mission is to deliver affordable, reliable, and safe electricity. At the heart of our purpose are the people and communities we serve.



If you recently made or plan to make energy efficiency improvements to your home, you may be eligible for federal tax credits. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 empowers homeowners to save money on energy efficiency improvements and upgrades. Homeowners can save up to \$3,000 annually to lower the cost of efficiency upgrades by up to 30%.

A few upgrades covered through the IRA include new exterior doors, windows, insulation, heating/cooling equipment and other major appliances. If you completed an upgrade this year or you are considering one, visit [www.energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits](http://www.energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits) to learn if you qualify for a tax credit.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

