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UPCO news

Director Brumbeloe retires after 46 years

A long-serving member of your co-op's board of directors, Raphael Brumbeloe, recently announced his retirement after 46 years of service.

Seventy-five years ago on a farm in Pike County, Maggie Brumbeloe instilled the value of "honesty first" into her young son, Raphael. It's still the principle that Raphael Brumbeloe lives by today.



Brumbeloe at Upson EMC's Annual Meeting of Members in 1978.

Brumbeloe is a Pike County native and was first appointed to the board on March 15, 1978. When he was appointed as a director of Upson EMC, Brumbeloe's first goal was to further upgrade the electric system. In 1978, Upson EMC had 929 miles of line, 5,476 meters and \$3.1 million in valuation. He successfully completed his first goal along with many others. Currently, Upson EMC has 1,410 miles of line, 9,578 active meters and has



Brumbeloe is seated in the center. From left: Director Greg Hobbs; Secretary/Treasurer and Director Kenny Coggins; Chairman and Director Ronnie Hendricks; Corporate Attorney Alan Connell; Director Jim Meeks; Vice-Chairman and Director Lorenzo Wilder; and President/CEO Ken Simmons

assets valued at \$40.7 million.

In 1982, Brumbeloe joined the Georgia EMC board of directors and by 1988 he was elected to serve as president. Brumbeloe also served as

a member of the board of directors at Oglethorpe Power Corp., Georgia Transmission Corp. and National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corp. In 1998, Brumbeloe became chairman of Upson EMC's board and remained chairman until his retirement in March.

Brumbeloe remembers when one lone lightbulb swung from the middle of a room in his childhood home. When he pulled the cord to turn the light on, the bulb would swing making shadows move around the room. Now with the flip of a switch you can light up multiple bulbs. A lot has changed over the last 46 years, but Upson EMC's role has still remained the same, thanks to Brumbeloe, and that is to provide the most reliable and economical electric service possible for its members.

Upson EMC's employees and directors wish Brumbeloe well and hopes he has a long, happy and healthy retirement.



Brumbeloe, center, with his family, from left: Ray Brumbeloe, Nathan Brumbeloe, Abigail Lynch, Gina Lynch, Uldine Brumbeloe and Chad Lynch.

A recipe to fix America's broken energy policy

By Jim Matheson

American families and businesses rightfully expect their lights to stay on at a price they can afford. Our national energy policy must embrace this fundamental promise—or so you would think.

Unfortunately, our country is confronted with a harsh reality—we are quickly approaching a point where there won't be enough electricity to go around.

Sobering reliability assessments

The North American Electric Reliability Corp. (NERC) is the nation's grid watchdog. For years, the organization has issued a string of increasingly dire reports warning that threats to grid reliability are mounting, and more frequent rolling blackouts could soon become the norm.

Nine states experienced rolling blackouts at the end of 2022 as demand for electricity outstripped supply during a period of extreme cold. In its 2023-2024 Winter Reliability Assessment, NERC warned that half of the nation faced the same risk during extreme weather this past winter.

Looking further into the future, the picture gets even more grim. Over the next five years, NERC forecasts that all or parts of 19 states from Montana to Louisiana are at high risk of rolling blackouts during normal peak conditions. And most of the country faces similar risks when demand for electricity spikes during exceedingly hot or cold temperatures.

Is this what America is supposed to be? The answer is obviously no.

How we got here

Keeping the lights on is not a partisan issue. But politics and energy policy have had an outsized impact on how



we got here. The current state of our nation's energy policy related to electricity can be summed up simply: Do more with less.

That's just not possible. From data centers to EVs, from home heating and cooling to the way we run America's farms, our nation is increasingly reliant on electricity to power the economy. That trend is set to grow dramatically in coming years.

And opposite that increasing demand for electricity is an alarming reduction in supply as our country shutter's existing always available power plants to comply with various federal and state regulations. PJM, a grid operator throughout the mid-Atlantic, recently projected that 25 GW of power generation, enough to power nearly 19 million homes, will soon be taken offline in the region because of short-sighted state and federal policies.

The final challenge to meeting our nation's energy needs is the arcane set of rules and regulations required to build anything in this country. The process for siting, permitting and building infrastructure—everything from solar farms to pipelines to transmission lines—is mired in red tape and years of litigation.



NERC

Jim Matheson

Additional threats on the horizon

These trends are not going to get any better in the coming years.

The EPA recently proposed a rule to overhaul the way always-available power plants operate—requiring them to either deploy carbon-capture technology or run on clean hydrogen in seven years. If enacted, the proposal will lead directly to more blackouts, higher costs, and uncertainty for America. That's a dangerous approach to regulation.

An antidote for the problem

We must have a serious policy conversation in this country about where we're going and what it will take to realistically get there. Policymakers cannot overlook the laws of physics or the reality of the current situation. Adding more renewable resources to the nation's energy portfolio can be part of the solution. But since the sun doesn't always shine, our country also needs a robust supply of always available energy resources to call on at a moment's notice.

The grid can be strengthened, but it will take greater coordination among stakeholders, visibility on how demand for electricity is growing, and federal and local policies that promote the development of new power generation and transmission.

Keeping the lights on is vital to America's economy and national security. The stakes are too high to get this wrong.

Jim Matheson is CEO of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association that represents the nation's more than 900 not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives. He previously served seven terms as a U.S. representative from Utah.

Save the date – Tuesday, October 22, 2024

87th Annual Meeting of Members

Thomaston-Upson Civic Center, 101 Civic Center Drive, Thomaston, Georgia
Registration begins at 9 a.m. • Business meeting begins at 11 a.m.

VENDOR EXPO

Visit with local businesses and organizations.

ATTENDEE GIFTS

Free commemorative gift to the first 500 members. What will it be? You'll have to come and see for yourself.

CO-OP UPDATE

President/CEO Ken Simmons will give a brief report on the state of the cooperative. Members will elect two directors.

DOOR PRIZES

In addition to the attendance gifts, each member will receive an entry into the prize drawing. More than 40 door prizes will be given away, including home appliances, a flat-screen television, bill credits and gift cards.

Important Annual Meeting information

In order to facilitate the orderly transaction of business at the Annual Meeting of the cooperative, any members desiring to address the members at the Annual Meeting, or to ask questions of management of the cooperative at the Annual Meeting should contact Brooke Parrott at the office of the cooperative seven (7) days prior to the Annual Meeting to secure a place on the agenda. Comments and questions should be limited to subjects directly affecting the affairs of the cooperative and are subject to a maximum time limit of three (3) minutes.

Local civic nonprofit organizations shall be allowed to place an exhibit booth at the Annual Meeting and distribute or offer items (other than food or inappropriate items) for sale prior to the beginning or after adjournment of the Annual Meeting. Such organizations should contact Brooke Parrott at the cooperative's office prior to the day of the Annual Meeting. Upson EMC reserves the right to limit the number, size and content of exhibit booths.



HAPPY
LABOR DAY

Upson EMC's office will be closed on Monday,
Sept. 2, in observance of Labor Day.



Preparation = convenience, comfort and safety

It's simple to get ready for extended power outages

Now that we are in the middle of hurricane season and on the doorstep to winter storm season, you should be ready in case of extended power outages. With just a little preparation, you can stay a lot more comfortable during a long outage. It can also help keep life more normal and may even save you money.

Focus on these areas when preparing for extended power outages:

SAFETY

Have a first-aid kit and adequate supply of prescription medicine. If you use a fireplace, space heater or generator, have a carbon monoxide detector and fire extinguisher nearby. Do not run generators near or in dwellings.

MEDICALLY FRAGILE PATIENTS

You must have a contingency plan in place. Determine an alternate

location for housing the patient during the outage and have extra medical supplies on hand. Consider a standby generator to run medical equipment.

FOOD

Have a supply of nonperishable foods. If you want hot food, go outdoors to heat food on a grill or camp stove. Don't forget a manual can opener. Prior to the storm, freeze gallon containers of water to aid in keeping the freezer and refrigerator cold.

POWER

Get a power pack for charging your cellphone. You can also charge your phone and laptop in a car. Charging a laptop in the car requires a power inverter. These devices can also run other small electronics and appliances. Stock up on extra

batteries. Invest in a properly installed generator.

LIGHT

Have light sources that don't require flames, like battery-powered lanterns and flashlights. Choose LEDs rather than traditional bulbs for much longer battery life.

INFORMATION

Go to upsonemc.com for outage information. During a major storm, you can also get updates on our Facebook page. Have a battery-powered radio in case the internet is out. Having a weather radio is also a great idea.

WARMTH (for winter storms)

Keep outside door openings to a minimum. Stay in one room and cover windows and doors with blankets. Wear extra clothing and make sure you have enough blankets and sleeping bags.

WATER (for those on a well)

Before the storm, fill bathtubs for household use. You can still flush toilets by filling the tank manually. Fill jugs, pitchers or water coolers for drinking or buy bottled water.

MONEY

Have some extra cash on hand in case ATMs aren't working.



Home Energy Survey

Upson EMC will be conducting a Residential Home Energy Survey this fall. The purpose of this survey is to collect information needed to plan for the future. Your participation in the survey is very

important to us, so please consider completing the online survey if you receive a request. We know your time is valuable, and we appreciate your effort in participating in the survey.

