

OPERATION ROUND UP PUMPS \$218,125 INTO COMMUNITY CHARITIES

Wow! Walton EMC's customer-owners' pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters add up to some serious money that benefits our neighbors who need it most.

These generous people allow us to round up their monthly electric bill to the next dollar. That spare change goes to worthy organizations that help those going through tough times and crises. Check out the latest good work they've made possible.

A Child's Voice Advocacy Center – \$13,450 for direct services to children who are victims of sexual or severe physical abuse. *Entire territory.*

ART Station – \$2,500 for their arts camp and youth performance company scholarship. *DeKalb, Gwinnett, Newton, Rockdale, Walton.*

Athens Area Diaper Bank – \$9,000 for diapers for low-income families. *Barrow, Clarke, Oconee, Walton.*

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta – \$5,000 for their mentoring program. *DeKalb, Gwinnett, Newton, Rockdale, Walton.*

Boys and Girls Club of Athens – \$3,000 for games and workbooks in their Mind Blowers program. *Clarke.*

Boys and Girls Club of Winder-Barrow – \$4,800 for teen critical programming. *Barrow.*

Christopher Lamont Cosper Foundation – \$1,000 for hygiene items for the homeless. *All counties.*

Faith In Serving Humanity – \$15,000 for medical needs of disadvantaged citizens. *Walton.*

Falcon Fury/Phoenix Pass – \$1,500 for Christmas gifts for needy children. *Gwinnett, Rockdale, Walton.*

Family Promise of Athens – \$9,000 for emergency shelter and services for homeless families with children. *Clarke, Newton, Oconee, Rockdale, Walton.*

Friends of Disabled Adults and Children, Too – \$15,000 to provide home medical equipment for low-income or uninsured patients. *Entire territory.*

KidsPeace National Centers of Georgia – \$5,000 to assist children with mental health issues. *Barrow, Clarke, DeKalb, Gwinnett, Morgan, Newton, Rockdale, Walton.*

Partnership for Families, Children and Youth – \$2,000 to assist special needs high school students explore post-secondary education opportunities. *Walton.*

Penfield Addiction Ministries, Inc. – \$10,000 to pay for substance abuse treatment for those who can't afford it. *Entire territory.*

Reach One Corporation – \$500 to assist domestic violence victims improve self-confidence, education and job opportunities. *Barrow, DeKalb, Gwinnett, Newton, Rockdale, Walton.*

Go to the "Community" tab at waltonemc.com and click on the Operation Round Up link. Every customer-owner's donation helps those in need. Walton EMC covers all administrative costs of the program.

operation
round up

Side by Side Clubhouse – \$3,500 to assist brain injury patients who can't afford their programs. *DeKalb, Gwinnett, Newton, Rockdale, Walton.*

Tiny Stitches, Inc. – \$2,500 to provide at-risk infants up to three months old with clothes and blankets. *Clarke, DeKalb, Gwinnett, Walton.*

Touch of Light Ministries – \$1,700 for their Sharp Think youth entrepreneur program. *DeKalb, Gwinnett, Rockdale, Walton.*

United Way of Greater Atlanta – \$2,500 toward building a homeless shelter. *DeKalb, Gwinnett, Rockdale.*

Wheels of Hope – \$2,000 for their transportation service that helps the disabled and elderly who can't drive. *Barrow, Clarke, Oconee.*

Eight families – \$36,674.98

American Red Cross of Northeast Georgia, Friends of Gwinnett Senior Services, Judy House Ministry, Lawrenceville Cooperative Ministry, Southeast Gwinnett Cooperative Ministry – \$72,500 for emergency food, shelter and medical needs. (These particular funds come from unclaimed capital credits.)

Walton EMC
Customer-Owned Electric Power

realite

POWER 101

What's all that stuff on a power pole?

1. WOODEN POLE

Buried at least four feet in the ground and preserved to prevent decay. Most are made from Georgia-grown pine trees.

2. GUY WIRE

Often mispronounced as "guide wire." Made of steel and used to stabilize and secure the pole.

3. TRANSFORMER

Steel tank containing copper or aluminum coils. Reduces voltage from primary lines before it goes on the service wires so it's usable in homes and businesses.

4. NEUTRAL WIRE

Makes a connection back to the substation and balances the amount of electricity on the system. The wire is also connected to the earth/ground and made of aluminum surrounding a steel core.

5. SERVICE WIRE

Carries electricity from transformer to building. Made of aluminum surrounding a steel core.

6. PRIMARY WIRE

Carries high-voltage power from the substation. There are three primary wires on this pole. Made of aluminum surrounding a steel core.

7. CUTOUT

Facilitates the connection from the primary wire to the transformer. Also contains a fuse to protect against overloads and short circuits.

8. INSULATOR

Prevents electricity from flowing into the pole. Made of porcelain or plastic.

MAR '20

- > planting for tomorrow
- > senior citizen discount
- > employee recognition
- > operation round up

Walton EMC
waltonemc.com

REALITE MAR. 2020 VOLUME 70, NO. 3

quick guide

IF YOUR POWER IS OUT

770.267.2505

waltonemc.com > Report an Outage

WHEN WE'RE AVAILABLE

Power Outages and Emergencies > 24/7

Contact Center > M-F, 7A-7P

Business Offices > M-F, 8A-5P

find us

Monroe 842 US Hwy. 78

Snellville 3645 Lenora Church Rd.

Watkinsville 2061-D Hog Mountain Rd.

Web waltonemc.com

Facebook facebook.com/waltonemc

Youtube youtube.com/emctv

emc leaders

CEO Ronnie Lee

Senior VP Corporate Services Russell DeLong

Senior VP Engineering and Operations
Ron Marshall

Senior VP Power Supply Robert Rentfrow

Senior VP Finance Marsha Shumate

VP Walton Energy and External Affairs
Jim Bottone

Board Chair Sam Simonton

Board Vice Chair Dawn Taylor

Board Secretary/Treasurer Dan Chelko

Board Members Tommy Adcock, Billy Ray Allen,
Johnny Allgood, Michael Lowder, Jason Sidwell,
Jim Whitley

Community and Public Relations Director
Greg Brooks, MCC

Communications Coordinator
Savannah Chandler, MCC

Design mPrint Design Studio

walton gas

NEED NATURAL GAS SERVICE?

770.GAS.HEAT or walgas.com

emc security

NEED SECURITY SERVICE?

770.963.0305 or emcsecurity.com

©2020. Walton EMC is a customer-owned power company. That means our cooperative focuses on service, not profit. We serve more than 131,000 accounts in Athens-Clarke, Barrow, DeKalb, Greene, Gwinnett, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Rockdale and Walton Counties.

Our subsidiaries supply natural gas and security services.

WANT TO HELP?



Need help paying your bill?

WALTON EMC SENIOR CITIZEN LOW INCOME DISCOUNT

Qualifying seniors are eligible for a 50 percent discount on the regular monthly service charge.

To qualify:

- Be at least 65 years old.
- Have a total annual household income of \$20,000 or less.
- Only your primary residence is eligible.
- Apply in the customer-owner's name.

Call us at 770-267-2505.

UNITED WAY 211

Dial 211 or visit unitedwayatlanta.org/need-help. You can also text your zip code and need to 898211.

LIHEAP

Qualified applicants may be able to receive home heating assistance.

To qualify:

- Household income must be at or below 60 percent of the state median income level.
- Person applying must be responsible for paying the energy costs of the primary home heating source and be a U.S. citizen or legal immigrant.

The assistance is generally a locally issued check to the utility on your behalf. The one-time benefit ranges from \$350 to \$400.

Barrow, Clarke, Oconee: 770-532-3191

Greene, Morgan: 478-453-4111

DeKalb, Gwinnett, Newton, Rockdale
Walton: 404-537-4300



ALONG THESE LINES Planting for tomorrow

UGA RESEARCH FACILITY GROWING BETTER FRUITS, VEGETABLES AND ORNAMENTALS

By agriculture standards, it's just a small farm. But big things are constantly happening at the University of Georgia's Durham Horticulture Farm in Watkinsville.

Weeks before most Georgians start thinking about what to plant in their gardens, yards and orchards, work is already at full throttle at the research facility popularly referred to as the Hort Farm. The 90-acre farm is home to research projects that may shape the future of what we eat and drink, the plants we put in our Georgia gardens and even the origin of our Halloween jack-o-lanterns.

"Better" is the word research station superintendent Ryan McNeill uses to describe the objective behind a variety of student and faculty research projects aimed at advancing fruits, vegetables and ornamental plants grown in Georgia. Some projects focus on improving the productivity and profitability of Georgia commercial agriculture. Others concentrate on the development of better plants for small home gardens.

Most of those projects will get an early start in one of the farm's 13 greenhouses. The houses, which average about 2,000 square feet, use artificial lighting, fans, heaters and well irrigation powered by Walton EMC. These controlled environments

The 90-acre farm is home to research projects that may shape the future of what we eat and drink, the plants we put in our Georgia gardens and even the origin of our Halloween jack-o-lanterns.

allow researchers to get a head start on the outdoor growing season.

"Most of the plants being studied are started as seeds in one of the houses," said McNeill, explaining why reliable electricity is crucial to the experiments. "We'll grow them to a good size before transplanting them outside in the middle of May."

The farm is a beehive of activity in late spring, said McNeill, who has worked there for 14 years. This year will be no different, as some new and exciting projects get underway.

A new blueberry plot is among the projects planned for this spring.

"We're always looking to develop better varieties," he said, referring to the state's ranking among the nation's top producers of blueberries.

In another area, researchers are working to improve the disease resistance of watermelons. Georgia ranks third in the U.S. in watermelon acreage.

About six acres of the farm are dedicated to growing organic vegetables. This summer, researchers are concentrating on bell pepper and tomato production.

Fans of Georgia wines might be excited to know that the farm has

several trials to evaluate new grape varieties that can thrive in the hot, humid climate common to local vineyards.

"We're looking at some European wine grapes that can perform well here in the South," said McNeill.

Prefer a locally sourced pumpkin for your Halloween jack-o-lantern? The Hort Farm is working on that, too.

"Traditionally, pumpkins don't grow well in this part of the country," McNeill explained. "We're testing for varieties that can do better here."

One of the varieties showing promise has been given a name that will leave no question as to its state of origin. It's called Orange Bulldog.

Ornamentals, particularly colorful hibiscus, are also among what's growing at the farm. "We're breeding for better colors, more flowers and pest resistance," McNeill said.

Home gardeners interested in getting a look at the hibiscus trials will get a chance later this summer when the farm hosts its bi-annual open house. A field day for organic farmers is also planned. To learn the dates for these activities, McNeill suggests following UGA Horticulture's Facebook page (facebook.com/ugahorticulture/).



TOP: The plastic that protects these raised onion beds keeps out weeds and preserves moisture.

MIDDLE: Developing new, and improving existing, varieties of ornamental plants, like these azaleas, is some of the research happening at the UGA Horticulture Farm.

BOTTOM: University of Georgia Horticulture Research Station Superintendent Ryan McNeill oversees the 90-acre facility and 13 greenhouses where experiments yield new and improved varieties of food and ornamental plants.

Employee recognized for community efforts

Cindy Haddon, Walton EMC marketing representative, may need a wheelbarrow for all her recent awards.

Concern for her community and hard work benefiting the organizations she belongs to are nothing new for Haddon. She has a long history of caring about others.

"Lots of people work hard for the community," Haddon humbly says. "It's nice to be recognized, but I don't do this for the awards. I do it because people need help."

The marketing representative has been active in many organizations including the Walton County, Oconee County and Athens Area chambers of commerce; the Athens Area Home Builders Association; the Northeast Georgia Red Cross; The Clarke and Oconee YWCO; Oconee County and Area 7 Rotary Clubs; and as a volunteer for local schools and her church.



HADDON'S RECENT AWARDS INCLUDE:

- Homebuilders Association of Georgia Shining Star – recognizes and celebrates associate homebuilder members across the state who exemplify what it means to be dedicated, supportive and hardworking.
- Athens Area Homebuilders Association Associate of the Year – recognizes a local associate member who works tirelessly to assist and promote the organization.
- Athens Area Chamber of Commerce Athena Nominee – recognizes a woman who demonstrates excellence, creativity and success in business and furthers those goals for other women.
- Oconee County Chamber of Commerce Women in Business Diamond Award – recognizes a woman who colors the lives, inspires and empowers others in the community by giving back.