

DECADES OF INNOVATION:

1970s

A look back at the milestones that powered 90 years of progress

During the 1960s — what some called the “Golden Age” of electric utilities — Walton EMC members experienced steadily declining power costs. The 1970s experienced the opposite.

PRICE SHOCK

The 1973 Arab oil embargo triggered energy shortages and skyrocketing prices. This spike rippled throughout the economy and affected electricity costs. While the embargo was the dominant factor, it wasn't the only reason costs were rising.

New environmental regulations for existing coal plants and costly new safety requirements for nuclear plants under construction drove up costs.

Also, a surge in residential and commercial construction increased electricity demand. High interest rates further increased the cost of financing new power plants needed to meet that demand.

Power generating companies, like Georgia Power imposed wholesale rate increases on co-ops which were ultimately passed on to our consumers. From 1972 to 1974, the wholesale rate to EMCs doubled.

TAKING MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS

It became obvious that Georgia's EMCs needed to gain control over their power supply. Georgia Power needed cash and was eager to sell some of their assets, creating a golden opportunity for the co-ops.

In 1974, 39 of the state's EMCs formed another co-op called Oglethorpe Power Corporation (OPC). OPC helped purchase and operate parts of Georgia Power's generation plants and transmission lines on behalf of the EMCs.

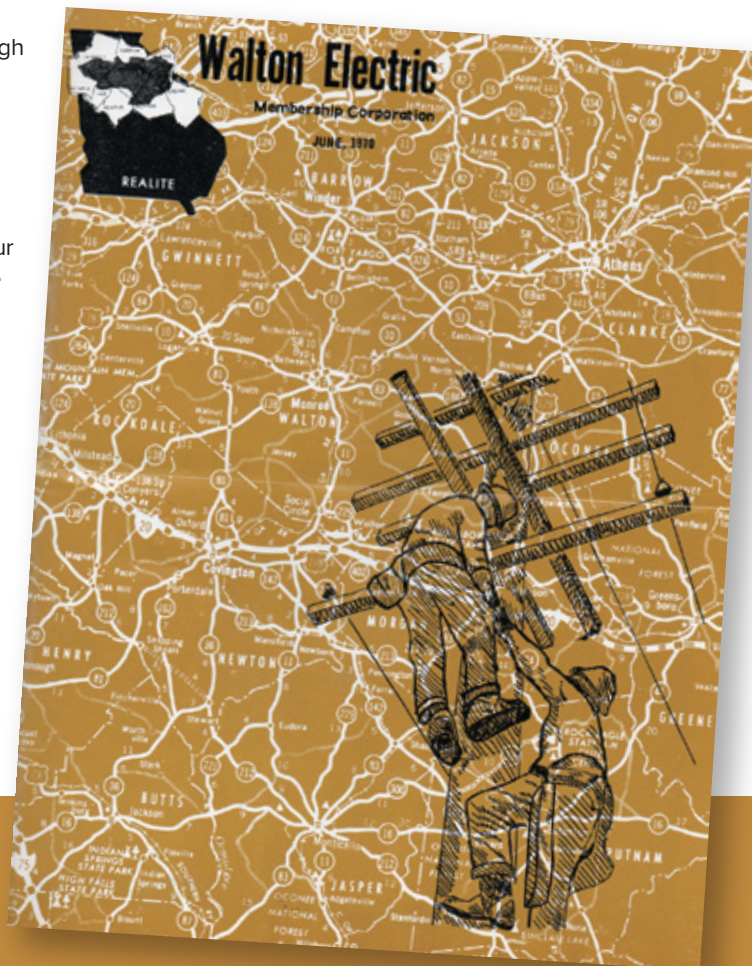
PROTECTING CO-OP TERRITORY

In 1973, the Georgia Legislature passed the Territorial Act. This law prevented costly duplication of power infrastructure and stopped other utilities from poaching territory and loads from the co-ops.

PEAK DEMAND

Co-op members became familiar with the term “Peak demand”. Walton EMC started programs like “Watt-Wiser” and “Switch/Save” to educate members and give them the tools to help combat rising prices.

Despite the turmoil, the cooperative's principle of service to its members remained constant.



Walton EMC Realite issue from June 1970.

JULY 2026

REALITE

Walton EMC

90 Years
1936-2026

WALTON EMC TEAM DOMINATES AT

Georgia Lineman's Rodeo



Walton EMC
waltonemc.com

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quick guide

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©2026 Walton EMC is a customer-owned power company. That means our cooperative focuses on service, not profit. We serve more than 145,000+ accounts in Athens-Clarke, Barrow, DeKalb, Greene, Gwinnett, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Rockdale and Walton Counties.

Our subsidiaries supply natural gas and security services.

WALTON EMC
Sporting
Clay Charity
Shoot



Aim for good!

Benefitting Camp Twin Lakes,
ESP (Extra Special People),
Walton County Special Olympics

Thursday, Aug. 20

Cherokee Rose Gun Club,
895 Baptist Camp Rd., Griffin

Registration:
7:30 a.m. **Pre-register
& details**

Shotgun Start:
9 a.m.
Lunch included



Must register by Aug. 7

WALTON EMC TEAM DOMINATES AT

Georgia Lineman's Rodeo

Apprentices capture lion's share of competition awards

Walton EMC's apprentice linemen showed up and showed out at the 31st Georgia Lineman's Rodeo, claiming nearly every award presented to win the event's competitive apprentice division.

Team members swept the top five overall placements, with seven of the top 10 finishers being Walton EMC linemen. Hollis Lucas led overall scoring to earn first place. Ranking second through fifth were, respectively, Mason Tolbert, Phillip Mork, Landon Robertson and Mason Byron.

Walton EMC apprentices, who competed as individuals, also shut out fellow competitors to claim first place in all five of the skill-based events. Out of 143 apprentice linemen competing, Walton representatives brought home 13 of the 15 event awards presented.

The team's impressive showing continued in the journeyman division. Two of the co-op's journeyman teams were among the division's top 10 overall.

With 31 individuals competing, Walton EMC fielded its biggest team ever for the 2026 rodeo. Six veteran Walton EMC linemen coached the team. Another 10 co-op employees served as contest judges.

The competition pushes linemen to perform at a high level while showcasing skills demanded in the electric linework trade.

"It takes strength, skill and focus to succeed in this profession," said Adam Simmons, safety and training instructor for Walton EMC. "By training and competing together, our line team develops the confidence and coordination they need to work safely and efficiently — real-world skills our co-op customer-owners depend on."



See photos and
complete results from
the 2026 Georgia
Lineman's Rodeo.



Apprentices Isaiah Glasper (left) and Cason Stracner tackle the hurtman rescue — a timed event that simulates safely bringing an injured lineman down from a pole.

TOP PERFORMERS

APPRENTICE DIVISION

Top 10 overall

- 1st: Hollis Lucas
- 2nd: Mason Tolbert
- 3rd: Phillip Mork
- 4th: Landon Robertson
- 5th: Mason Byron
- 7th: Cody Jarrett
- 8th: Nate Howell

Other Individual Event Winners

Harry Ruiz, Bryce Watson, McCray Reynolds

JOURNEYMAN DIVISION

Top 10 Overall

- 8th: Brad Adcock, Brandon Brooks, Blaine Ogle
- 9th: Tyler Gray, Ryan West, Jacob Brooks

COVER PHOTOS:

TOP: Apprentice Hollis Lucas climbs his way to the top overall score, finishing first out of 143 competitors.

MIDDLE: Journeyman lineman and operations director Brad Adcock works a rope through steady rain. His team finished eighth overall in the journeyman division.

BOTTOM: Representing Walton EMC at the 2026 Georgia Lineman's Rodeo are, front row, from left: Adam Simmons, Adrian Mendoza, Blaine Ogle, Harry Ruiz, Mason Byron, Cody Wright, Cody Stewart, McCray Reynolds, Jacob Daria, Nik Harrison, Cody Jarrett, Brandon Short, Bryce Watson, Brayden Horne. Back row: Greg Pannell, Brad Adcock, Shawn Thurston, Brandon Brooks, Jacob McNary, Colin Phelps, Mason Tolbert, Cason Stracner, Landon Robertson, Isaiah Glasper, Tyler Standridge, Hollis Lucas, Phillip Mork, Coby Pickett, Tyler Gray, Preston Roberts, Ryan West and Jacob Brooks. Not pictured: Nate Howell and Logan Burleigh.

Tournament raises record \$60,000



The Boys and Girls Club of Walton County will begin the new school year with an extra \$60,000 — proceeds from the Charity Golf Tournament hosted by Walton EMC Employee Charities.

The record-breaking proceeds from the annual fundraising event help the local organization fulfill its mission of promoting academic success, healthy lifestyles, character and leadership among local youth.

Walton EMC employees give back to the community through events like the golf tournament, showcasing the co-op's dedication to improving the quality of life in local areas.

ORU Grants

To date, more than \$9.7 million in ORU grants have been shared with local organizations. Grants are funded by Walton EMC customer-owners who "round up" their monthly power bill to the next dollar in support of the cooperative core principle of caring for the community.

RECENT OPERATION ROUND UP RECIPIENTS

Angel House of Georgia — Sponsor women entering substance abuse program

Barrow Ministry Village — Counseling for individuals affected by the Apalachee High School shooting

Because One Matters — Life skills training for foster children

Georgia Transplant Foundation — Emergency assistance for patients

Humane Society of Morgan County — Spay/neuter clinics

Kate's Club — Grief support services for children

Learn more about Operation Round Up and recent grant recipients.

Oconee County 4-H — Project achievement competition sponsorship

Operation Appreciation — Aid to military members and their families

Palm House Recovery — Expenses for men entering residential program

Restoring Hearts for the Brave — Mental health services for first responders and veterans

Young Life — Camp scholarships

YMCA of Athens — Camp scholarships

