

BEACON



Amicalola Electric
Membership Corporation

"Owned By Those We Serve"

Vol 69 | Issue 6 | DECEMBER 2019

Comments from the CEO



May your holiday season be merry and bright

The holidays are a time of year that many of us eagerly anticipate. The season is marked by special foods, seasonal decorations and lots of festivities. Right here in north Georgia, we look forward to the many annual Christmas traditions.

We cherish carrying on old family traditions and enjoy creating new ones. For me personally, I look forward to spending more time with family and friends. Even with the hustle and bustle of the season, the holidays can also offer an opportunity to slow down and reflect.

One of our founding principles as a co-op is Concern for Community. While our main focus is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we want to give back. We want to help our community thrive.

In looking back at this past year, I'm grateful that we were able to make such a positive impact in the community. Through the many donations made possible by unclaimed property, which you will see more about on the next page, we awarded \$370,000 to local education, economic development and charitable efforts. In addition, due to your generous contributions, we collected close to \$75,000 this year in our Operation Round Up program. As a result, we were able to



help many families in the community pay for food, shelter, clothing, education and health needs. If you don't participate in Round Up, consider adding that to your holiday to-do list.

We were also grateful for the opportunity to partner with local schools to raise awareness of the importance of electrical safety. This year, we visited several schools across our service area and were able to reach hundreds of students about the importance of staying safe around electricity.

We continue to work closely with our local schools to award college scholarships and other grants. In 2019, we awarded \$138,000 to local scholars

and \$50,000 to local teachers.

There are many ways we help the community. Whether we're providing information about our programs, or helping you find ways to save energy at home, we want you to know we're here to help.

Looking ahead

Looking ahead to 2020, we are about to roll out a new Rural Energy Savings Loan program which will enable many of you to replace aging HVAC systems or increase insulation/weatherization levels using low-interest energy loans. Look for more information on this in the near future.

We hope you will share your opinions with us. We recognize that our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we continually seek your input. Whether through community events, our social media channels or the Annual Meeting, we want to hear from you. We are led by you—the members of the co-op—and we depend on your feedback.

As we prepare for next year, we look forward to the opportunity to serve you and the greater community. On behalf of the Amicalola EMC family, we hope your holidays are indeed merry and bright!



Todd Payne
President/CEO
Amicalola EMC

\$370,000 for education, economic dev

Cooperative business principle

Property that remains unclaimed following a mandatory waiting period of five years, is disposed of in accordance with Georgia's unclaimed property laws (O.C.G.A. §44-12-236). **Why is this important?**

Our cooperative business model,

in conjunction with Georgia's unclaimed property laws, has allowed us to provide our local communities with \$370,000 this year, and a total of \$2.7 million since 2011. Our scholarship program, Bright Ideas teacher grant program, fire department donation

program and many other economic development and charitable grant programs are all funded using this unclaimed property. The cooperative principle of Concern for Community continues to allow us to work for the sustainable development of our communities.



From left: Amber Gilleland, of Lumpkin High School; Karen Spencer, of Dawson Middle School; and Mariam Brunner, of Lumpkin Middle School, were among 78 Bright Ideas teacher grant winners who were recently awarded \$50,274 at 29 schools across our service area.



Cherokee County Fire Department was one of 46 departments across our service area to be presented a \$1,000 donation. From left: Amicalola EMC Chief Financial Officer Penelope Marshall, Cherokee Fire Chief Tim Prather and Amicalola EMC President/CEO Todd Payne.



Lumpkin County Fire Department was another recipient of a \$1,000 donation. From left: Amicalola EMC Chief Financial Officer Penelope Marshall, Lumpkin Fire Chief David Wimpy and Amicalola EMC President/CEO Todd Payne.



Office closings

Our offices will be closed Tuesday, Dec. 24, and Wednesday, Dec. 25, so our employees may celebrate Christmas with their families. We will be closed on Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2020, for New Year's Day. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Development and local nonprofits in 2019

of Concern for Community at work



CORE (Collaboration on River's Edge) in Gilmer County (above) and **FUNK Heritage Center** (upper right) and **Cherokee by Choice** (lower right), both in Cherokee County, were among local Economic Development efforts that received \$20,000 donations.

Annual Meeting recap



The 78th Annual Meeting of the Membership was held on Oct. 5, 2019. Approximately 350 were in attendance. Directors James H. Bryan (Post 4 – Pickens/Gordon counties), Kathy Burt (Post 7 – Dawson/Forsyth counties) and William Leon Davis (Post 9 – Lumpkin County) were re-elected. Attendees were treated to refreshments, gift bags and entertainment by the Glory Bound gospel quartet. Many members won door prizes, including grand prizes of a \$250 power bill credit, 50-inch HD TV and four \$500 cash prizes. Among those receiving service awards were John H. Bennett Jr. (35 years of service to the board of directors), above left, and T.D. Childers (50 years of service).

2020 Scholarship & Youth tour deadline

It's scholarship time! The deadline to apply for the 2020 Amicalola EMC Scholarship



(high school seniors) and the 2020 Washington Youth Tour (high school juniors) is Jan. 31, 2020. Students must live in an Amicalola EMC household to be eligible. To apply, go to www.amicalolaemc.com, My Community. For more information, please call Stacey Fields at 706-253-5287.



Don't let energy efficiency take a holiday

No matter what or how you celebrate, energy use tends to increase during the holiday season. With more guests in your home and activities taking place, your electric meter spins a little faster than usual, costing you more money. Start the new year off right. Celebrate the holidays efficiently so you don't have to worry about a high electric bill.

Decorating

- If you decorate with strings of lights, consider LED (light-emitting diode) options. They use over 80 percent less energy than traditional light strings and have a longer life. Make sure to purchase high-quality strings from reputable sources. Safety and the lifetime can be compromised in less expensive LED strands.
- Solar-powered lighting options are also worth considering for decorations. Instead of having a plug handy, make sure you have a proper location for the solar panel that powers them.
- Place strands of electric lights on timers so they automatically turn on in the evening after the sun sets and turn off around bedtime. You won't have to think about plugging and unplugging them, or spend money powering them when unnecessary.
- Decorate with less lighting. Consider a natural, vintage feel for your decorations. Use items like pine cones, greenery, candy canes, popcorn strings and gingerbread. The whole family can get involved in decorating the home with these safe and festive items.

Cooking

- Cook with your microwave, toaster oven or slow cooker whenever possible. Small appliances cook quickly and more efficiently than your oven.
- When you do use the oven, cook more than one item at a time. Do you



have a ham, sweet potato casserole and rolls that all need to cook in the oven? Make some adjustments to cooking temperatures and times, and put all your dishes in at once to take full advantage of the heat that's being produced.

- Don't peek! It's tempting to open the oven door to check on holiday treats. Use the oven light instead and keep the door closed. This will retain the heat where it belongs—inside the oven.
- Glass and ceramic dishes allow you to cook food at a lower temperature than metal baking dishes. If the recipe calls for a metal baking pan, and you substitute glass or ceramic cookware, reduce the temperature by about 25 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Have food defrosted before you cook. Simply planning ahead can cut cooking times and energy use in half. Place any frozen dishes in the refrigerator the night before so they are ready to go in the oven the next morning.

Around the house

- Turn down your home's thermostat a few degrees. Extra people bustling around the home and the oven warming food will heat up your home a few more degrees. Take advantage and adjust your thermostat accordingly. You will save some money on your bill, and your guests will still be comfortable.

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Membership Corporation
544 Highway 515 South
Jasper, GA 30143

Todd Payne, *President/CEO*

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TELEPHONE NUMBERS TO CALL IN CASE OF POWER INTERRUPTIONS:

Outage Hotlines

- 706-253-0359
706-276-0359
706-864-0359

Amicalola Electric Membership Corporation

544 Hwy. 515 South
Jasper, GA 30143
Telephone: 706-253-5200

www.amicalolaemc.com

Eastern District Office

1234 Dawsonville Hwy.
Dahlonega, GA 30533
706-864-7979

Northern District Office

150 Tabor Street
Ellijay, GA 30540
706-276-2362

Office Hours: Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Closed on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays

Beacon Editor:

Stacey Godfrey Fields, CCC

