

# Membership MATTERS



## Members Helping Members: Foundation Presents Grants

Thanks to members joining together through Operation Round Up®, 14 local nonprofit organizations were recently awarded grants totaling more than \$41,500. The grants were awarded by the Blue Ridge Electric Members Foundation, with grant recipients selected by a volunteer committee of cooperative members.

The Blue Ridge Electric Members Foundation awards grants to local programs and services that improve the quality of life for local residents. Crisis heating assistance is also funded through the Foundation (see “The Perspective” for more information). Foundation grant monies come from Operation Round Up as well as from donations from the profits of the cooperative’s subsidiary, Blue Ridge Energies. Through Operation Round Up, Blue Ridge members voluntarily choose to have their monthly electric bills rounded up to the next-highest dollar amount. The difference between the two figures – from a penny to a maximum of 99 cents – is the members’ monthly tax-deductible gift. Operation Round Up Plus® is also available to members wanting to contribute more than the minimum amount.

The Blue Ridge Electric Members Foundation was created in 2006 by Blue Ridge Electric to expand the cooperative’s commitment to help local communities. The Foundation enables Blue Ridge Electric members to help worthy causes in Alleghany, Ashe, Caldwell and Watauga counties, where Blue Ridge Electric serves some 73,000 members. Administration of the Foundation is covered by the cooperative.

For a full listing of the most recent grant recipients, see the “More News” page inside this newsletter.

Local groups in the Blue Ridge service area that would like to apply for a Members Foundation grant should visit the “In the Community” tab of [BlueRidgeEMC.com](http://BlueRidgeEMC.com) or call their local Blue Ridge Electric office.



# THE *Perspective*

## Your Support is Making a Difference

As a local, community based cooperative, the people we serve will always be our top priority. A key way we're demonstrating care to those we serve is through the Blue Ridge Electric Members Foundation and the support it's providing for crisis heating assistance, weatherization efforts, and funding grants for programs and services that improve the quality of life for people in this area.

Blue Ridge Electric provides for the administration of the Foundation but it's the generous support of our members participating in Operation Round Up® that make it possible to help so many in our area. And with an economy struggling to get back on its feet, the need is greater than ever. We saw requests for crisis heating assistance double last year from previous years and Operation Round Up and our Members Foundation are meeting the need: nearly 1,000 families were given crisis heating assistance thanks to your generous support.

Helping families keep warm in our cold winters is particularly meaningful to those participating in Operation Round Up and the member volunteers who serve on the Foundation Advisory Committee. In the current economy, it's not unusual to know someone who is temporarily out of work or struggling financially. Enabling them to receive heating assistance can mean the difference between not having to go without groceries, medicine, gasoline or other necessities.

By relying on local agencies to select recipients and to administer the funds, we're assured that those who most critically need a helping hand receive up to \$150 to help with heating bills. Members tell us they're pleased we can all join together to help those less fortunate in a way that makes it easy to

give and easy to maximize all our contributions for the greater good of our communities. They also like the fact that all funds stay local in our communities.

Because the need is so great, in 2010 we're asking more members to participate in Operation Round Up by rounding up their bill to the next dollar amount and donating the change to this effort that's making a real difference in our local communities. Currently 31 percent — or 23,000 members — are participating in Operation Round Up. Some members asked to do even more to help local families and because of them we created Operation Round Up Plus in which another seven percent are participating by contributing at higher monthly amounts. I'm also proud to say our employees are giving to Operation Round Up through a payroll deduction program.

From the profits of your heating fuels subsidiary, Blue Ridge Energies, the cooperative is also making donations to the Members Foundation. For the past two years, \$25,000 has been given annually to the Foundation and in 2010 we expect to do the same.

Through the power of cooperation and the generosity of the members of Blue Ridge Electric, you have helped make Blue Ridge Electric Members Foundation and the Operation Round Up programs a tremendous success. This spirit of neighbors helping neighbors not only benefits our communities right now, it's also creating a legacy to build on for years to come to ensure north-west North Carolina is a better place for future generations.

An Editorial by  
Chief Executive Officer Doug Johnson



## Thank You!

*The 2009 Christmas Ice Storm will not soon be forgotten. Nor will the efforts of our linemen and hundreds of other internal and external employees together with visiting line technicians from sister cooperatives and other utilities who worked tirelessly to restore power to approximately 25,000 members over the recent holidays. The magnitude of the damage, the enormous effort required to make the repairs, and the difficulty of the crews to work through downed trees, freezing temperatures, and difficult terrain was a testament to the professionalism of everyone involved.*

*Our members must also be recognized for their patience throughout this difficult time. The numerous "thank you" calls, emails, Facebook messages, and cards were compiled and passed along to everyone involved. Your kind gestures were appreciated more than words can express and make us proud to work for you.*



# More News

## Members Foundation Grant Recipients

### Caldwell County

<b>Adult Life Programs, Inc.,</b>	\$3,750	scholarships for elderly and disabled individuals that can't afford daycare
<b>Shelter Home of Caldwell County</b>	\$9,500	security improvements to protect domestic violence victims
<b>Caldwell Senior Center</b>	\$2,000	purchased energy efficient electric heaters for low-income senior citizens
<b>Granite Falls Elementary School</b>	\$5,600	to assist special needs students

### Watauga County

<b>High Country Caregiver Foundation</b>	\$2,000	provides caregiving, assistance while allowing family members a break
<b>Relatives as Parents</b>	\$3,000	support/resources for relatives serving in the caregiver role to a minor child
<b>Hospitality House</b>	\$5,000	capital campaign to build a new facility
<b>Blazing Saddles</b>	\$1,400	program fees for low-income families for the therapeutic horseback riding program

### Ashe County

<b>Ashe Sharing Center</b>	\$4,000	food for qualifying families
<b>Ashe Services for Aging</b>	\$2,400	purchased energy efficient electric heaters and portable wheelchair ramp
<b>Ashe Country Partnership for Children</b>	\$4,500	emergency financial support for domestic violence victims

### Alleghany County

<b>Alleghany Trail Blazers</b>	\$1,000	scholarship assistance for therapeutic horseback riding program
<b>Alleghany County Rescue Squad</b>	\$1,000	aid in purchasing rescue vehicle for rural search and rescue
<b>Piney Creek Dirty Fingers Club</b>	\$4,000	to help supply water for community meeting facilities
<b>Alleghany Wellness Center</b>	\$1,000	installed solar window film to reduce energy costs

### Multiple County Projects

<b>Parent-to-Parent Family Support Network</b>	\$2,000	support for local families with special needs children hospitalized in Winston-Salem
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A complete financial report for the Blue Ridge Electric Members Foundation is available online at [BlueRidgeEMC.com](http://BlueRidgeEMC.com) or by calling Grey Scheer, community relations director, at (800) 451-5474, extension 3294.

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## Members Only NEWS ~ For Members of Blue Ridge Electric

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(PowerLine® is an automated account information and outage reporting system.)

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To report an outage at any time,  
call one of the numbers listed above.

**OFFICE HOURS**  
8:30 am - 5:00 pm, Monday - Friday  
Night deposit available.

Visit us on the Web:  
[www.BlueRidgeEMC.com](http://www.BlueRidgeEMC.com)

## Scholarships Available

As part of our support of local communities, Blue Ridge Electric annually awards scholarships and youth leadership opportunities to high school seniors and adults returning to college who live in the cooperative's service territory.

This year, scholarships worth \$14,800 will be awarded based on financial need, community activity, school performance and activities, and personal interviews. For high school seniors seeking a bachelor's degree, five \$2,000 **Goodman-Hurt** scholarships are available; and for residents seeking a two-year degree, six \$800 **Goodman-Hurt** technical/vocational scholarships are available. An additional \$800 **Charles Suddreth** scholarship is available to a Caldwell County resident seeking a two-year degree. Scholarship applications are due by **March 31**.

The Washington Youth Tour is an educational week-long trip to Washington, D.C. held in the summer and may be awarded to four high school juniors in the cooperative's service area. Winners will meet and talk with Congressional leaders, visit historic sites, and learn about the cooperative way of doing business. They are also eligible for college scholarships. Applications are due **March 15**.

Seven students may also be selected to attend the summer Broyhill Leadership Conference at Queens College in Charlotte. The five-day conference is open to 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students nominated by their guidance counselor. The conference helps students understand goal setting, motivational techniques, group dynamics, communication, and cooperation.

Applications are available from high school guidance counselors, local community colleges or online at [BlueRidgeEMC.com](http://BlueRidgeEMC.com) under "In the Community."

## Energy-Saving Kitchen Tip



If you cook with electricity, turn the stovetop burners off several minutes before the allotted cooking time. The heating element will stay hot long enough to finish the cooking without using more electricity. The same principle applies to oven cooking.