

JEMCO

A PUBLICATION FOR JACKSON EMC MEMBERS

news

in touch

AN INSIDE LOOK AT
TAKING MEMBER CARE
TO THE NEXT LEVEL

NOVEMBER 2017

HANDS ON LEARNING WITH JACKSON EMC
PROPER INSULATION MEANS BIG COST SAVINGS
INNOVATIVE CLASSROOM IDEAS EARN TEACHERS BRIGHT IDEAS GRANTS

JACKSON
EMC



THANKFUL

If your family is like mine, it's been a whirlwind since summer ended. Back to school. Family gatherings. Packed calendars. Busy times.

But with Thanksgiving, there's the blessing of slowing down – even for just a little while – to afford reflection on the things we value the most.

I'm thankful to call Jackson EMC home. I'm especially honored to work with so many dedicated colleagues who are committed to exceeding your expectations. I enjoy hearing from you when one of our employees goes the extra mile for you. As you'll read in this issue of *JEMCO News*, we value providing skilled and caring people to help exceed your expectations.

A member contacted us recently to say they appreciated the extra time Barbino Garcia, a bilingual customer service representative, took to fully explain the billing and payment options available to them.

In another note I received, a member shared a story of their experience as a victim of identity fraud. The member was having to contact multiple businesses, including Jackson EMC, to resolve banking issues due to the fraud. The member expressed their appreciation for Brenda Moore in our contact center for going the extra mile and making the process easier for them.

For another member, customer service representative Wanda Welch was "fantastic, cool and calm" when the member called

the contact center to discuss their account and create an online account. Wanda spent 25 minutes guiding the member to set up an online account profile.

When hiring, we truly seek people who have a heart to serve others. We look for people who are kind, empathetic, courteous and friendly. I'm grateful that we have been blessed to welcome such outstanding individuals to work at Jackson EMC.

And, I'm thankful for you. Our members. You're not just a customer; you are a member-owner.

I'm thankful that you have recognized our commitment to caring for you, our communities and our employees. This year, J.D. Power and Associates ranked Jackson EMC one of the top five electric utility cooperatives in the nation for customer satisfaction. Again, thank you.

Enjoy this special time and look around for the blessings.

Have thoughts on my column? Send me a note to chip@jacksonemc.com.

Chip Jakins, President/CEO

WAYS TO SAVE: PROPER INSULATION MEANS BIG COST SAVINGS

ONE OF THE BIGGEST WAYS TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR ENERGY COSTS IS SOMETHING YOU MAY HAVE CONSIDERED ONLY WHEN YOU BOUGHT YOUR HOUSE.

Proper insulation can save up to 30 percent of your heating and air conditioning costs. But, according to one study by Harvard University, almost 65 percent of houses in the United States are poorly insulated.

Is your home costing you more money because of poor insulation?

TV star and home energy expert Ty Pennington explains how you can identify if it's time for you to consider additional insulation in your home.



GO TO JACKSONEMC.COM/TYTALKS TO VIEW VIDEOS.



INNOVATIVE CLASSROOM IDEAS

Earn Teachers Bright Ideas Grants

Jackson Electric Membership Corporation (EMC) employees delivered big checks into 34 middle school classrooms in 21 schools with \$50,000 in grant money from the Bright Ideas program throughout the month of October. Winning entries represented a variety of disciplines, including engineering, computer technology, language arts, math, music, science and social studies.

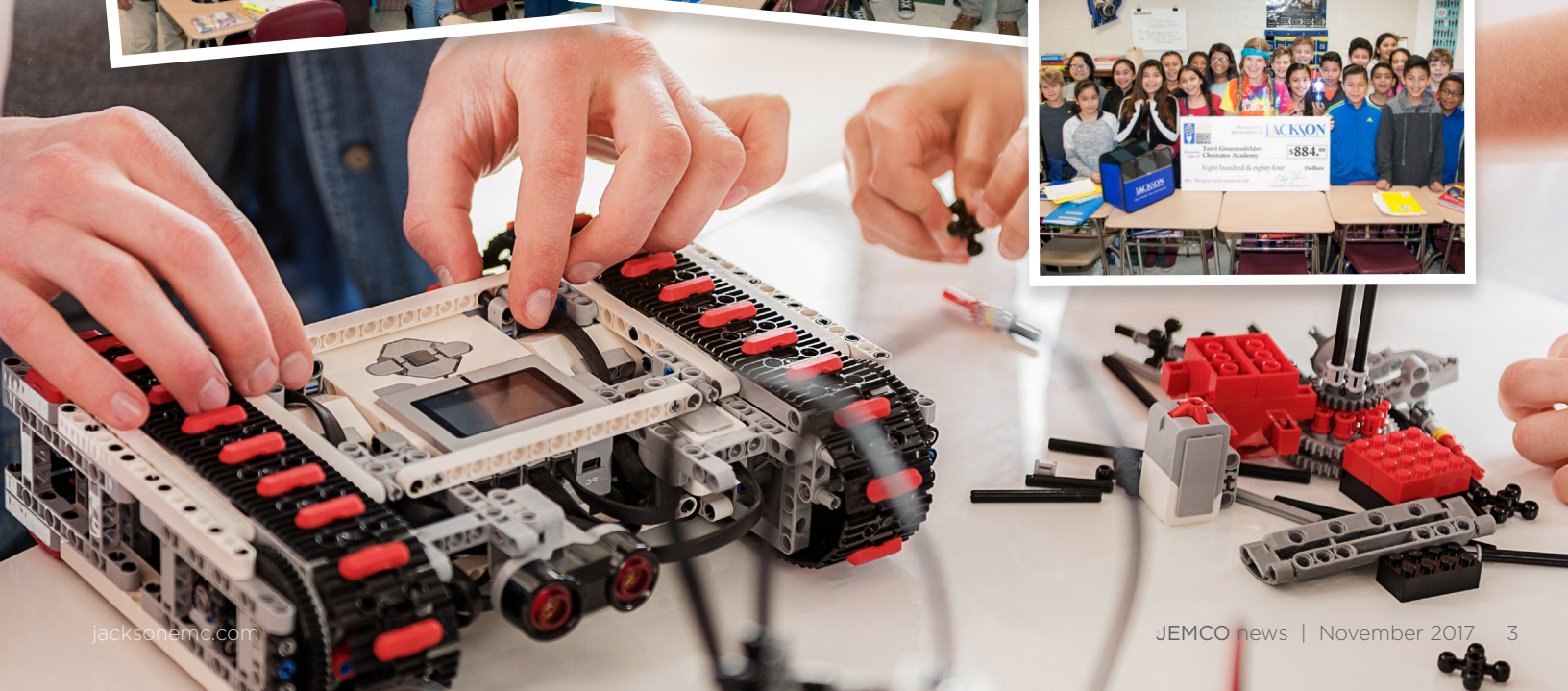
The 2017 grants represent the diversity of learning options for the 21st century student, including live theater production lighting and sound engineering, kinetic sculptures and animatronics, and agriculture technology. In addition, the grant provides teaching options for today's educators, such as quadratics through catapult building, history through a student-written play, and earth science through wind turbine construction.

The Bright Ideas grant program, now in its fourth year at Jackson EMC, funds innovative classroom projects developed by state-certified public middle school educators within the counties served by Jackson EMC. Educators for grades six through eight are awarded up to \$2,000 in grant funds for classroom projects that are not funded through general education dollars.

A TOTAL OF
\$50,000
DONATED THROUGH
THE BRIGHT IDEAS
GRANT PROGRAM



FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF
BRIGHT IDEAS WINNERS, OR
FOR MORE INFORMATION
ABOUT THE PROGRAM, VISIT
[JACKSONEMC.COM/
BRIGHTIDEAS](http://JACKSONEMC.COM/BRIGHTIDEAS).





KYLE RAINWATER

in touch

AN INSIDE LOOK AT TAKING MEMBER CARE TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Like many of her colleagues at Jackson EMC, Brenda Medrano (shown on cover) was working long hours to help restore power for members after the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma.

As a customer service representative, Brenda was on the front lines answering calls from members to report downed power lines and power outages.

After an extended shift due to the storm, Brenda stopped by a store before heading home to rest. At the store, a woman noticed her Jackson EMC shirt and asked if she was one of the many employees helping to restore power.

"I told her, I sure do work at Jackson EMC," Brenda said. "And if you're on our power lines, I can assure you that we are working around the clock to get your power back on."

The woman told Brenda, "Honey, I can see it on your tired face that you guys are doing your best. I've been without power for two days, but I know that you guys are working hard."

Hurricane Irma became the second most damaging storm in Jackson EMC's 79-year history. About 55 percent of the cooperative's 224,500 members lost power at some point during the storm.





BARBINO GARCIA

Customer service representatives, like Brenda, help members report power outages during storms. But, on typical days, they also help new members establish electric service, resolve billing issues, and direct members to resources that may serve them better, like budget billing.

“To be a good customer service representative, you need to have a strong back and a tender heart,” said Baxley Williams, a customer service representative.

Last year, Jackson EMC’s contact center answered more than 475,000 phone calls and 21,500 online requests from members. Customer service representatives receive extensive training to help them identify members’ needs, such as those who may benefit from automatic bill payments or pointing members to the cooperative’s My Energy Use portal (available at ebill.jacksonemc.com) to view energy usage.

“Many of our members want to know how they can save money on their energy bill,” said Brent Cochran, director of customer service. “Our customer service representatives receive lots of training about energy efficiency resources and green energy to help members interested in those services.”

Indeed, customer service representatives at Jackson EMC’s contact center oftentimes serve as a gateway for members learning more about the cooperative’s services.



BAXLEY WILLIAMS

That includes everything from how to read a residential electric meter to registering for security services through EMC Security.

“You have to know a little of everything to help members get what they need,” said Briana Minish, a contact center supervisor. “A member may be asking about one service, but during the course of the conversation, you identify and explain to them how another service may help them.”

But, there are times when members are reaching out to the contact center because of difficult situations. Customer service representatives are resources to help guide members to services that may best serve the members’ issues, even pointing them to local non-profit organizations for additional assistance.

“You hear it all,” Briana said. “We are like counselors. We hear about people going through a divorce, a bankruptcy, a loss of a loved one and really challenging family situations. We want to help and support them.”

Jackson EMC’s contact center also has more than 10 bilingual customer service representatives to better serve members.

In addition to live customer service representatives, Jackson EMC will launch a self-service portal in 2019 that will provide a turnkey solution for members to check energy usage, pay bills online, sign up for services, receive rebates and more.

COMMUNITY IMPACT: GEORGIA CHILDREN'S

Chorus



NOW IN ITS 20TH SEASON, THE GEORGIA CHILDREN'S CHORUS ISN'T JUST ABOUT SINGING. FOR ITS YOUNG PARTICIPANTS, IT'S ALSO ABOUT LEARNING RESPONSIBILITY, COMMITMENT, TEAMWORK AND SELF-CONFIDENCE.

The Georgia Children's Chorus is a 100-voice children's chorus in-residence at the Hugh Hodgson School of Music at the University of Georgia. Its singers - who range from age seven to 18 and are from the Athens area - receive professional choral training and opportunities to perform.

The chorus offers beginning, intermediate and advanced vocal training. Singers are selected through an audition process and placed in a choir according to their singing ability and age.

Each year, the non-profit chorus performs two major concerts in Hodgson Hall in the UGA Performing Arts Center, along with numerous community events. The chorus has also performed at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia and the Lincoln Center in New York City.

The Jackson EMC Foundation recently awarded a grant of \$12,500 to the Georgia Children's Chorus to help up to 20 students from low-income families in Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, Madison and Oglethorpe counties participate in choral training and performance opportunities.

Lifelong benefits for students of music include enhanced critical thinking skills, higher test scores, better vocabulary and advanced reading skills, according to Georgia Children's Chorus' artistic director Carol Reeves.

“ Kids who've been through the program tell me they learned music but so much more. It's built their confidence and helped them learn communications skills. When they go into the work field or college for interviews, they feel they can better handle themselves with more confidence and poise. ”



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
GEORGIACHILDRENSCHORUS.ORG

OPERATION ROUNDUP: YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

The Jackson EMC Foundation
Board of Directors awarded

\$119,233 IN GRANTS

to area organizations during
its September meeting.

\$15,000 | Girls Scouts of Historic Georgia, serving girls in Clarke, Hall and Jackson counties, to help fund the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, which teaches girls how to understand themselves and their values, use that knowledge to explore the world, care about and team with others, and take increasing responsibility for designing and implementing activities to make the world a better place.

\$15,000 | Hi-Hope Service Center in Lawrenceville to help fund part-time nursing and nutrition services for 20 developmentally disabled residents from Gwinnett and Barrow counties, providing services such as daily medication, insulin, blood checks and specialized medical treatment to residents who require onsite nursing care.

\$15,000 | Junior Achievement of Georgia for program materials, support materials and supplies, and program development to provide the JA Biztown and JA Finance Park interactive programs at Discovery High School to more than 30,000 Gwinnett County middle

school students, teaching them the concepts of financial literacy, business, entrepreneurship and career readiness.

\$15,000 | Peace Place, Inc., domestic violence shelter in Winder, to help refurbish four apartments and two houses that serve as safe transitional housing for women and children in Banks, Barrow and Jackson counties who have survived domestic violence and are seeking to rebuild their lives, independently and free of abuse.

\$14,985 | Boy Scouts of America, NEGA Council, serving all Jackson EMC counties for underprivileged youth, to provide uniforms, handbooks and summer camp fees that will help underprivileged youth participate in scouting, teaching them to make ethical choices and promoting citizenship, leadership, mental and physical fitness.

\$13,248 | Side by Side Brain Injury Clubhouse, a Stone Mountain nonprofit organization that helps individuals recovering from traumatic brain injury to regain employment and living skills, to provide four weeks of rehabilitation services for nine adults from Gwinnett County who are permanently disabled by traumatic brain injury.

\$12,500 | Georgia Children's Chorus, an organization that provides vocal and choral training to young people in Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, Madison and Oglethorpe counties pursuing choral music education, to help up to 20 students from low-income families participate in choral training and performance opportunities.

\$10,500 | Asian American Resource Foundation a Gwinnett non-profit that provides supportive services to members of the community in need, for its Transitional Housing Program that provides homeless single mothers and their children with up to 24 months of housing assistance and support services to transition them to permanent housing.

\$8,000 | Barrow Ministry Village in Winder, which provides food distribution, foster family resources and affordable counseling services



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND
TO APPLY FOR A GRANT, VISIT
JACKSONEMC.COM/FOUNDATION

MEMBERS MAKE IT DELICIOUS

Oatmeal Pecan Cake



“ I lost my grandmother almost 25 years ago. She made this cake pretty often (she said it was better than pecan pie). We loved it. She had a huge pecan tree in her backyard. We loved to climb in and pick pecans for her...This recipe might look a bit much, but it's really worth it.

Please give it a try and you'll see. ”

- RENE BELANGER, LAWRENCEVILLE

CAKE INGREDIENTS:

1 cup oats (Quaker Quick Oats)	1 1/3 cup self-rising flour
1 1/4 cup boiling water	1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup Crisco or baking sticks	1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup brown sugar	1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup white sugar	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup pecans	1 teaspoon vanilla
2 eggs	

TOPPING INGREDIENTS:

1 stick butter	1 cup coconut flakes (optional)
1 cup packed sifted brown sugar	1 cup chopped pecans
1 whole egg or 2 egg yolks	*Milk to make spreadable

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Pour boiling water over oats. Cream Crisco with brown and white sugar, and add eggs one at a time. Whip oatmeal and add it with vanilla to creamed mixture. Sift dry ingredients in a separate bowl. Gradually add dry ingredients to wet. Pour mixture into greased (13x9) baking pan. Bake for 45 minutes to one hour.

FEATURED
RECIPES RECEIVE

\$200

PRIZE
PACKAGE



SEND YOUR BEST COMFORT FOOD RECIPE: RECIPES@JACKSONEMC.COM OR MAIL TO:
COOPERATIVE COOKING | JACKSON EMC | PO BOX 38 | JEFFERSON, GA 30549

**YOUR POWER.
YOUR COMMUNITY.**

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JACKSON EMC MEMBERS

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hands on

LEARNING WITH JACKSON EMC

Educators looking to bring learning to life can request Jackson EMC employees to visit their schools and classrooms for demonstrations or speaking opportunities.

Jackson EMC employees can present an electrical safety demonstration, showcase the electrical safety trailer or Powertown™, or participate in a career fair or job fair. The content can be customized for elementary, middle and high schools, and supports Georgia curriculum standards.



LEARN MORE AT JACKSONEMC.COM/SCHOOLVISITS