



## Bright Ideas Program Rewards Shining Stars in Local School Systems

What's more fun than surprising an unsuspecting and dedicated teacher in front of a classroom full of kids with a goody bag, big check and cries of, "You're a winner!"...? How about ambushing 23 of them in a two-day blitz of excitement and mayhem across two counties? Welcome to the annual prize pandemonium that is Bright Ideas.

This program—in its eleventh year at Coweta-Fayette EMC and an offshoot of the popular Operation Round Up initiative—provides educational grants to teachers for special projects outside the normal scope of everyday learning and otherwise not often financially possible in tightly budgeted school systems. This investment in education touches students' lives and helps encourage innovation in grades Pre-K–12 across the EMC service territory. Grants are open to all subjects, and projects may be funded up to \$1,500.

Earlier in 2015, teachers were asked to submit proposals for creative classroom projects, and nearly 60 grant applications were received. Without knowing the names of schools or the educators involved, a group of retired teachers from Coweta, Fayette and Heard Counties rated requests according to the level of creativity, as well as potential student involvement.

Each fall, the Bright Ideas "award wagons"—com-

prised of EMC personnel, Operation Round Up Directors and Bright Ideas judges—visit schools to deliver the gifts and checks to each winning teacher, with secrecy being key.

The Bright Ideas program is sponsored by the Coweta-Fayette EMC Trust Board,

Inc., Board of Directors from funds raised by EMC members who allow their bills to be "rounded up" to the nearest dollar each month. The difference between what is actually owed and the next highest dollar is placed in an interest-bearing account managed by the Trust Board. This grant is available every year, so interested educators are encouraged to begin working now on plans for their 2016-2017 applications, which can be found online at [utility.org](http://utility.org).

In 2015, \$30,000 in Bright Ideas grants were awarded to deserving recipients—like Elm St. Elementary's Rebecca Springfield above and Huddleston Elementary's Adele Moore below—throughout the EMC service area.





## The President's Message

Chris Stephens  
President and CEO

Seventy-five years ago, a Tennessee farmer stood up in church and said, "The greatest thing on Earth is to have the love of God in your heart, and the next greatest thing is to have electricity in your house." Last week, I attended the NRECA regional meeting in Biloxi, Miss., where the organization's Board Chairman Mel Coleman discussed "The Next Greatest Thing," which was this year's theme and an acknowledgement of the great work electric co-ops have already done and must still do in the future.

When the Rural Electrification Act (REA) was first discussed in our nation's capital in the 1930s, many felt providing electricity to rural America was impossible and too costly. It took our ancestors joining together and standing up for their beliefs to make "The Next Greatest Thing" a reality.

Now it's our turn. The face of the electric utility is changing. Cooperatives are again in a position to succeed because our structure is such that we can overcome disruption by innovation. We are typically small, and therefore nimble. As Mel put it, "Our problems are not going to be solved by some heavy-handed, top-down edict. The solutions are going to come from small groups of motivated people working together to try new ideas."

This is one of the reasons we are against the Clean Power Plan (CPP), the Environmental Protection Agency's strategy to limit carbon dioxide emissions

from electric generating units nationwide by 32% below 2005 levels by the year 2030. Through prior regulation known as Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, Georgia utilities have already reduced our carbon footprint by 30%. Under the CPP, we are now being required to reduce emissions another 34%. As an electric co-op, we prefer to utilize one of our greatest assets—innovation—rather than regulation to develop solutions for our members. We believe in answers that make sense. In fact, without any regulation, co-ops led the nation in grid modernization through Advanced Metering Infrastructure, distribution automation, self-healing networks and demand management. When it comes to watts per consumer, three of the top four solar utilities in the U.S. are electric cooperatives.

If you consider our generation mix, Coweta-Fayette EMC should be seen as a poster child under the CPP. Fourteen years ago, we led 15 Georgia co-ops and formed Green Power EMC. Today, 38 co-ops in the state are members. Green Power EMC will have over 250 MW of renewable energy by the end of 2016, more than 200 MW of which will be solar. We were developing renewable resources before it was cool, and we didn't do it because the government said we had to: we did it because we knew it was best for our members. This is proof that cooperatives take on challenges and develop creative solutions.

Remember, it's not a matter of "if" someone will develop "The Next Greatest Thing," but "who" will. Cooperatives are families, and we will continue to develop innovative solutions as Coweta-Fayette EMC has done for almost 70 years. We will stick to our principles and listen to our members to continue providing the safe, reliable and affordable electric service that you have come to expect.

I hope you have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Feeling a few drafts as cooler temperatures return? Weather stripping is typically an easy fix that will eliminate energy waste, help save on monthly electric bills and keep your home more comfortable in the winter months to come.

### WHAT WILL I NEED TO WEATHER STRIP DOORS AND WINDOWS?

There are a variety of materials available to weather strip your home. Here are a few options to help you choose:

\*Apply weather stripping around the door frame and stop. At the bottom of a door, install a door sweep, door shoe or threshold; or apply reinforced-foam weather stripping. Apply weather stripping at the top and bottom of window sash.

#### FELT

Reinforced with a flexible metal strip.

Should be stapled, glued or tacked into place.

Cost: Low

Advantages: Easy to install and inexpensive.

Disadvantages: Low durability. Do not use where exposed to a great deal of moisture. All-wool felt is more durable but very visible.

#### ROLLED OR REINFORCED VINYL

Pliable or rigid strip gasket (attached to wood or metal strips).

Cost: Low to moderate.

Advantages: Easy installation, various colors to help with visibility and some types of rigid strip gaskets provide slot holes for height adjustment.

Disadvantages: Very visible.

#### REINFORCED FOAM

Closed-cell foam attached to wood or metal strips.

Cost: Moderately low

Advantages: Effective sealer, rigid, proven to work well.

Disadvantages: Can be difficult to install and very visible.



Source: Department of Energy

\*For more weather stripping options, visit

<http://energy.gov/energysaver/articles/weatherstripping>



# Meet the rest of our Bright Ideas Winners for 2015!



**Lisa Quick**  
Arbor Springs Elementary School  
The Problem Solvers' Club  
\$926.26



**Jennifer Doonan**  
Lee Middle School  
Read, Write, Create!  
\$1,402.80



**Orla Thomas**  
Northgate High School  
The Colors of Chemistry  
\$1,490.00



**James "Mitch" Bailey**  
East Coweta Middle School  
Pedals for Pilots  
\$1,476.00



**Melanie Barnett**  
East Coweta Middle School  
Learn to Invent, Invent to Learn  
\$1,444.50



**Permeil Dass**  
Sandy Creek High School  
Connecting and Growing  
\$1,500.00



**Susan Boyd**  
Bennett's Mill Middle School  
Taking Care of Myself  
\$1,382.49



**Grace Cannon**  
Mdntosh High School  
EnteroPluri Identification  
\$642.70



**Gina Perrotta**  
Peeples Elementary School  
Interactive Writer's Workshop  
\$1,500.00



**Guy Serapion**  
Huddleston Elementary School  
You Are My Sunshine  
\$1,500.00



**Kelly Duggan**  
Newnan Crossing Elementary  
School  
Simple Robotics  
\$1,494.74



**Paula Corley**  
White Oak Elementary School  
Circuit Circus  
\$1,500.00



**Michael Britt**  
Central Educational Center  
Cyclorama Wall  
\$1,500.00



**Meehan Murphy**  
Rising Starr Middle School  
Screen Printing Fashion  
Fundamentals  
\$1,500.00



**Gail Frantz**  
Peeples Elementary School  
Please Lettuce Grow  
\$1,172.00



**Stephanie Lemons**  
Kedron Elementary School  
Lead the Way  
\$1,460.00



**Elizabeth Hilton & Ellen Adams**  
Newnan High School  
Digital Microscopy  
\$51,490.00



**Lisa Roby**  
Whitewater Middle School  
iPads for iNdependence  
\$1,500.00



**Donna Clark**  
East Coweta High School  
PPP-Promethean Board Providing  
Participation  
\$1,500.00



**Jillian Greenwood**  
Ruth Hill Elementary School  
Enhancing Gross and Fine Motor  
Skills  
\$1,000.00



**Kelly Gagne**  
Willis Road Elementary School  
The Fast Track  
\$493.71



# Be Prepared for Winter Storms

When temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Coweta-Fayette EMC cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.

Snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without electricity. During extremely low temperatures, this can be dangerous. While restoring power during an outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to get the lights and heat back on, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

- Stay warm – Plan to use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove during a power outage. Be sure your chimney is kept clean, and exercise caution when using. Never leave the heating source unattended. Remember that fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat should be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.
- Stay fed – The CDC recommends having several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked. Crackers, cereal, canned goods, bread and plenty of water are good options.
- Stay safe – When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. It is best not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay as far away as possible, and report the situation to our dispatchers by calling 770-502-0226.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead can often be the difference between life and death. Your EMC is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be ready, too.

Chris Stephens, President and CEO  
C. Bradford Sears, Jr., Attorney  
Douglas B. Warner, Attorney

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#### POWER *lines*

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***Coweta-Fayette***

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**[www.utility.org](http://www.utility.org)**

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## Get a Rebate Now, AND Save Later.



If your aging home could be made more efficient, it would help your family enjoy savings for years to come, and Coweta-Fayette EMC has rebates to help with those improvements. These incentives can assist you with heat pump replacements, insulation, additional air leakage sealing and lots more. We can even provide financing to help cover the cost.

If you need help determining what modifications need to be made, contact our Energy Services department to schedule an energy audit for suggestions on upgrades that will help you the most.

For a complete list of rebates, visit [www.utility.org](http://www.utility.org) or call us at 770-502-0226 and begin planning now for a more comfortable home for the winter.