

Trust Board members round up support for community effort

By Walter Allread

There was plenty for York Electric Cooperative members to enjoy at this year's Annual Meeting, but few things could bring the satisfaction offered at one small table.

It was the one where members of the Operation Round Up Trust Board reminded fellow co-op members to continue to support the program, which the cooperative initiated four years ago. Officially, they serve on the York Electric Trust, a non-profit charity that administers the funds collected through Operation Round Up.

Co-op members who participate in Operation Round Up have their electricity bills rounded up to the next dollar. Contributions help people in need in the communities served by York Electric Cooperative, which Trust Board members say is deeply satisfying.

The board includes nine members, each recommended by members of the cooperative's elected Board of Trustees to represent their district. The Trust Board meets several times a year to review applications and decide who most deserves assistance.

Touching stories

Lynn Howell, a Trust Board member for three years, says he's often moved by the stories of people who apply for help. "All of them touch my heart," he says. One in particular was a family who had suffered a house fire that caused one son to lose sight in one eye, he recalls.

Many destitute families have received a

helping hand through Operation Round Up, Howell says. "It brings tears to my eyes," he says.

Henderson Borders, who has been on the Trust Board for two years, notes that York Electric Cooperative members who participate in Operation Round Up usually contribute about \$6 a year. The small change really adds up, however.

"It accumulates into a lot of money," Borders notes. So far, the Trust Board has allocated \$543,140 in local assistance.

In addition to helping individuals and families in need, member donations to Operation Round Up have benefited community aid groups, such as local hospices and county emergency response teams, as well as organizations such as Hope Inc., which helps needy Rock Hill residents with food, clothing, rent, medicine and more, and Keystone Substance Abuse Service, which received Operation Round Up money for a child care program. The co-op regularly reports where the money goes on its web site, www.yorkelectric.net.

Currently, about 67% of the co-op's approximately 33,000 members participate in Operation Round Up, board members say. The Trust Board does the work of reviewing the applications, but Borders credits participating York Electric Cooperative members for the program's success.



At the co-op's annual meeting on May 8, Al Quarles talks with fellow York Electric Cooperative member Teeny Hall, who serves on the Trust Board that administers member donations to Operation Round Up.

"The co-op members are the ones who actually make it work," he says. Teeny Hall, a Trust Board member for about a year who also serves as its treasurer, agrees. "If it wasn't for them, we couldn't have this program," Hall says.

Want to help?

Trust Board members convinced a good many co-op members to support Operation Round Up during the annual meeting, but if you missed your chance, don't worry. Signing up is easy.

To participate, call York Electric Cooperative at (803) 684-4247 or, toll-free, (800) 582-8810. After that, your electric bill will be rounded up to the next highest dollar each month. The difference is your contribution to Operation Round Up. Members may discontinue participation at any time by contacting the co-op.

Contributions to Operation Round Up are tax deductible. The cooperative mails participating members a summary of their annual contributions at the end of the year.

Need help?

If you're facing crisis, Operation Round Up may be able to help. To apply, call the cooperative at the numbers listed above or write to: York Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 150, York SC 29745, for more information. ↑



Operation Round Up 2nd Quarter Statement—May 2004

Second Harvest Food Bank	Mobile pantries	\$10,000
Carolina Community Actions	Head Start Program for disabled children	\$ 5,700
Safe Passage	Assist with purchase of generator	\$ 5,000
Children's Attention Home	Clothing for clients	\$ 2,500
York Place Episcopal Home	Project Brain Booster for library	\$ 5,000
Four Individual Families	Emergency needs	\$ 6,100
Total		\$34,300