

AMICALOLA

BEACON

"Owned By Those We Serve"

March 2003

Welcoming a New Neighbor

Located just south of the Amicalola EMC headquarters office in Jasper is the new Mountainside Medical Center. Construction began in late September 2001, and the center's scheduled opening date is early May. Mountainside Medical Center is moving from East Church Street in Jasper, where it opened as Pickens General Hospital in 1969. Mountainside Medical Center serves Pickens, South Gilmer, West Dawson and North Cherokee counties.

The new hospital will encompass more than 70,000 square feet and will accommodate 40 beds. It was constructed so that the hospital could be expanded up to 80 beds. This new hospital is looking forward to having larger diagnostic imaging, greatly improved surgery and outpatient facilities, and five rooms available for special procedures. Amicalola EMC will provide the power to the new facility.

Earl Whiteley, CHE, Chief Executive Officer of Mountainside Medical Center, stated the reasons for constructing the new hospital go back to the same basic needs of every community, which include good healthcare and economic development. The original hospital was constructed in the 1960s and lacks the space, perceived looks and



New Mountainside Medical Center

cleanliness of a new facility. Replacing the hospital is the only option for keeping up with a progressive community. Pickens County is the 24th fastest-growing county in the nation. The new hospital will also help the economic development of the community by adding to the excellent professional staff offered at the hospital.

The developer and physicians are planning to build medical office buildings around the hospital at its new location. There are no definite plans for the old hospital at this time, but it could be used for needed services such as extended care, rehabilitation or extended living.

Watch for more details on the official opening, dedication ceremony and open house of Mountainside Medical Center.



Washington Youth Tour 2003

The Washington Youth Tour contest deadline, March 14, 2003, is growing near. Apply now to win a trip of a lifetime, all expenses paid, to Washington, D.C., June 12-19. The winner will also receive a \$500 scholarship to any two-year or four-year accredited college, university or technical college in Georgia.

Qualifications:

- High school student who will be 16 to 18 years of age during the Youth Tour
- Must reside in an Amicalola EMC household

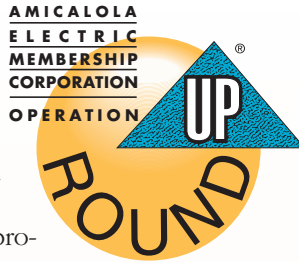
To enter:

- Fill out an application.
 - Submit a paper (150 words or less) on why you feel you would make a good representative of Amicalola EMC on the 2003 Washington Youth Tour.
 - Obtain a letter of recommendation from a teacher or counselor.
- For more information on the Washington Youth Tour visit our Web site at www.amicalolaemc.com and click on the Youth Tour link or contact Stacey Fields at (706) 253-5287 or staceyf@amicalolaemc.com.



Amicalola EMC's Operation Round Up[®] Continues to Support Our Community

Since Amicalola EMC began Operation Round Up in January 1999, numerous organizations and individuals in our local communities have benefited from the program. Many more will benefit from the program with its continued success, thanks to our caring customers.



In the last distribution, seven local families and 11 organizations received a total of \$24,000 in contributions from Operation Round Up. Operation Round Up works by rounding up the power bills of our consumers to the nearest dollar and taking those cents and giving the money back to the community. The amount that your bill is increased by is so small that those giving the money don't even notice it. But the people who are helped by these pennies definitely notice what our customers are doing to help them.

Amicalola EMC customers can sign up for or find out more information about Operation Round Up by contacting customer service at (706) 253-5200.

The following are among our latest Round Up donations:

- A Pickens County man who has been hospitalized for over a month without health insurance is being helped with medical expenses not covered by Medicare.
- A Gilmer County college student who is a music education major is being helped so he can participate in a music education summer program.
- A Gilmer County man, whose sole income for him and his wife is Social Security, is receiving help with bills he is behind on and to purchase heating oil.
- A Pickens County man is receiving help to replace his furnace.
- A Pickens County woman who was a tornado victim received assistance.
- The Pickens County Fill-A-Stocking program received a donation to purchase toys and clothing.
- The Truth and Harvest International Ministries received assistance to help purchase educational videos and CDs for their students.
- Gilmer High School received help to purchase consumable supplies for laboratory courses in science.
- Gilmer Friends of Foster & Adopted Children received help with foster care expenses.
- The Appalachian Cattleman's Association received assistance with their scholarship program.
- Habitat for Humanity for Pickens County will receive money for building materials on its next house.
- Rock Eagle 4-H Pavillion received a donation.
- Dawson County Mentoring Program received assistance for their program.
- Reinhardt College received a donation to assist with its scholarship program.
- Georgia Mountain Master Gardeners received assistance for an education garden to be used by handicapped and special education students.
- Pickens County Certified Literate Community Program received funds to help update reading programs.
- Gilmer Middle School received assistance to help with their Life Skills program.

Relay for Life Car Show Scheduled

The Amicalola EMC Relay for Life Team raises money every year to support the American Cancer Society through various fund-raising efforts. One of the team's big fund-raisers this year is the second annual car show. The car show will be held June 7, 2003, (rain date June 14) at the Amicalola EMC headquarters office in Jasper from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Door prizes will be given away and trophies will be awarded for the top cars, trucks and motorcycles entered. Early registration forms and general information can be obtained by contacting Gail Stewart or Heather Chastain at (706) 253-5200.



Last year's car show drew a large crowd, and even more are expected this year.

Eminent Domain Protects Us All

Many years ago, the Georgia Legislature granted electric utilities the authority to use eminent domain, when necessary, to acquire property for “public use,” that is, for the benefit of the public as a whole. It’s a legal principle well grounded in both the United States and Georgia constitutions.

Some critics, in an attempt to delay or halt construction of needed electric transmission lines, are encouraging the Legislature to amend the law that has served Georgians well by adopting new restrictions on the use of eminent domain authority.

From the EMCs’ point of view, the only way to guarantee the reliable delivery of electricity—and other essential services like water and gas—is to build the infrastructure that delivers electricity where it is needed. Sometimes that means having to invoke eminent domain authority. In the case of electric utilities, property must be acquired for the network of transmission lines and substations that bring electricity from the point of generation to local power distributors, including EMCs.

In practice, electric utilities seldom use eminent domain authority. Typically, it is used as a last resort to keep a single property owner, group of property owners, or even a local government, from refusing to sell property, thus jeopardizing the delivery of electricity to an entire community.

For the past five years, Georgia Transmission Corp., the cooperative that transports power from

generating sources to the EMCs, has invoked eminent domain authority in only 6 percent of land acquisitions.

When property must be taken for public use, electric utilities are required to pay the owner fair market value for his land. It’s a fair process from beginning to end. If the parties to the transaction can’t agree on the property’s value, a local Superior Court judge will appoint a Special Master, an independent third party who will listen to all sides before setting a value for the property. If the landowner is still not satisfied, he can take the matter to court and

have a jury of his peers set the value.

When your hard-working neighbors at Georgia Transmission are sometimes forced to use eminent domain to move a project forward, just remember, it is being invoked to keep up with a demand for electricity that has been nothing short of phenomenal in recent years.

If we are to avoid the potential for outages and blackouts in our future, the present transmission system must be upgraded and expanded. It’s as simple as that. Most people understand and appreciate the efforts we are making to keep their lights on today and far into the future.

The next time you hear eminent domain authority has been used by an electric utility to acquire land, remember—as one customer said—“it’s about keeping the lights on.”

Indeed, it is.



Amicalola EMC Accepting Scholarship Applications

Amicalola EMC will be awarding a \$500 scholarship to five senior students from surrounding counties in the Amicalola EMC service area. One student from each county, which includes Gilmer, Pickens, Cherokee, Dawson and Lumpkin, will receive the scholarship, which will be awarded in April.

Recipients of the scholarship must reside, as their primary residence, with an Amicalola EMC member. The recipient must also be enrolled or accepted into an accredited program, either full time or part time, and must be an undergraduate student only.

When students apply for the scholarship, they will also become eligible to receive the Walter

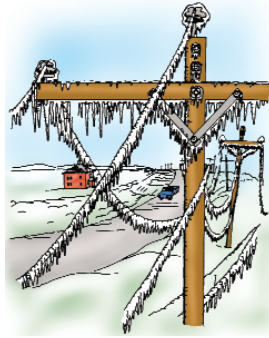
Harrison Scholarship, which is selected by Georgia EMC. The recipient of the Walter Harrison Scholarship will receive \$1,000 that can be used at any two-year or four-year accredited college or university including vocational schools. **Deadline for accepting applications is March 5, 2003.** Winners of the scholarship will be notified by May.

Students who are interested in applying for the scholarships can pick up an application at the headquarters office in Jasper, or at one of our district offices in Ellijay and Dahlonega. For additional information contact Stacey Fields at (706) 253-5287, staceyf@amicalolaemc.com or by visiting our Web site at www.amicalolaemc.com and clicking on the Scholarships link.



Amicalola EMC's Plan Behind Power Restoration ...

When severe weather causes power outages, Amicalola EMC's employees immediately begin working to restore power to as many people as possible in the shortest amount of time. Restoration begins with a thorough assessment of the damage to Amicalola's facilities. The assessment process begins with a visual examination of the affected area by AEMC employees. In the early stage of a widespread outage, information is the EMC's most valuable asset. This assessment will allow the EMC to determine which component of an electrical system is affected. The components of an electrical distribution system are:



point could restore power to hundreds or thousands of people.

Main Distribution Lines

These are the 7,200- to 14,400-volt lines that you see along roadways that carry power from the substations to the customers. When power is restored at this stage, all customers served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem further down the line.

Tap Lines

Tap lines are electric feeder lines with limited capacity that carries power from a main distribution line to utility poles or underground transformers and serve a small group of customers.

Individual Services

These are the lines that serve individual homes or businesses that run from the transformer to the customer's meter. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. Amicalola EMC needs to know if you have an outage here, so a service crew can repair it.

For the safety of its customers, Amicalola EMC employees will visually inspect every component of an electrical distribution. As in any situation of extreme stress, some things can get overlooked. This is where the cooperation of the customers is most important. Please report any outage that you might have. Stay away from all downed wires, and call your local EMC office.

Substations

Amicalola EMC has 12 local distribution substations in its 1,177-square-mile service area. Within the service area there are 4,584 miles of distribution line serving 37,288 customers. When a major outage occurs these distribution substations are checked first to make sure that the transmission system is supplying power to the substations. If there is a problem at the substation it could cause all of the homes and businesses served by the substation to be without electricity. Repairs at this

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Amicalola Electric Membership Corporation is the recipient of federal financial assistance from the Rural Utility Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject of the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which provide that no person in the United States, on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap, shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Patricia B. Evans, Executive Assistant to the President/CEO. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above, and/or may file a written complaint with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250; or the Administrator, Rural Utility Service, Washington, DC 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

Gift Certificates Now Available

Trying to find the perfect gift? Give the gift of power! Amicalola EMC now offers gift certificates for any amount requested. Once a gift certificate is purchased the amount is credited



to the recipient's account and the recipient will receive a card from Amicalola EMC indicating that they have received a gift certificate and from whom, or you can always choose to remain anonymous. Call (706) 253-5200 or stop by for additional information.