

### The Fulton County REMC Operation Roundup Trust Non-Permanent Fund

The Fulton County REMC established the Operation Roundup program in 2004. In this program, Fulton County REMC members' bills are rounded up to the next dollar, and then that spare change is put into a fund to give back to the community. Members only donate spare change, which rarely adds up to any more than six dollars a year, yet the combined amount is enough to grant an impressive sum to the community.

This program first started in an REMC in North Carolina and spread from there. The idea was brought to the Fulton County REMC board in June of 2003. The program was accepted in February of 2004, and they gave their first grant in June of 2004. They decided to adopt this program because of the 7<sup>th</sup> principle of their organization, which is concern for community. Joe Koch, the CEO of Fulton REMC, believes that "this program is a chance for REMC and our members to help the community."

In nine years, Fulton County REMC has donated an impressive \$232,000 to nonprofit organizations in the community. A total of 85% of REMC members participate in the Operation Roundup program. The program provides up to \$6,000 dollars in grants per quarter. This money does not only go to organizations in Fulton County; it can go to all serviced communities, including areas of Cass, Pulaski, Marshall, Kosciusko, Starke, and Miami counties. Organizations to which Operation Roundup has supported include the Lutheran Fire Department, Pulaski Fair Board, Sheriffs' Department, Habit for Humanity, and many more.

"The fund is pretty simple," Koch said. "It makes it easy when the Community Foundation does all the hard work!"

The REMC Operation Roundup Board awards grants that are, on average, about \$1,000. They look specifically at organizations that deal with youth programs, affect a number of people, and stays within the community. Koch enjoys awarding grants to individuals who have an idea and need help getting it off the ground.

"You don't realize what all is out there as far as helping people, until you get involved," said Koch. The Fulton County REMC Operation Roundup Trust Non-Permanent Fund has done just that. It has gotten the community involved in a program which allows small contributions to add up to something much larger!