

Small Change Makes a BIG Difference
PPCS Members Reach a Major Giving Milestone

[Ellsworth, WI] – When Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services (PPCS) launched Operation Round Up® in 1993, everyone was certain it would do a lot of good in our local community. But no one predicted that the commitment of PPCS members to support this charitable giving would eventually translate into over half a million dollars in support for local non-profit organizations.

The first Operation Round Up program was started by Palmetto Electric Cooperative in Hardeeville, South Carolina in 1989. Their CEO Tom Upshaw came up with the idea as an easy way for Palmetto's cooperative members to come together and use their collective power to make a positive impact in their local community. Palmetto Electric trademarked the program, but they allow other cooperatives to start their own programs for a nominal cost if they abide by the original bylaws. PPCS is one of 350 electric cooperatives across the United States that have established their own Operation Round Up programs. The idea has caught on so well that you may see other organizations, like local retailers, asking you to "round up" at the register. The funds collected through Operation Round Up are distributed through Pierce Pepin Cares Foundation, PPCS' charitable foundation.

"There are so many great organizations doing good work in our communities," said Katie Feuerhelm, member director for Pierce Pepin Cares Foundation. "Across the organizations that are asking for financial support, there are committed individuals volunteering time and working hard to better the lives of those in need, right here in our neighborhoods."

Over seventy percent of PPCS members participate in Operation Round Up. To date, PPCS members have donated over \$510,000 to community programs like local food shelves, senior citizen programs, veterans' programs, winter clothing for children, and equipment for law enforcement, fire departments and EMS. On average, members who round up their monthly energy bill contribute only about \$6.00 per year.

"It's a small amount of money that adds up because of the generosity of many," said Feuerhelm. "The funds are used responsibly and equitably to improve our community and meet the needs of our less fortunate neighbors."

When asked why she participates in Operation Round Up, Feuerhelm replied, "The organizations that benefit from the funds generated from Operation Round Up are doing good work and making a difference in our community. It's pocket change each month that adds up to a substantial enough amount across the cooperative to fund sizable, meaningful projects. I would encourage individuals to learn about the organizations that have been recipients of the grants and the good work that has been accomplished through the program."

PPCS is very grateful for its members' generosity and is looking forward to all the good that will be done in the coming years.

(cont.)



Ryan Meyer, Laure Andrlé, Greg Falde, Heidi Shepler, Brad Ristow and Charity Lubich are PPCS employees who are also PPCS members and participants in Operation Round Up.