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## For Immediate Release

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### **Brunswick County resident supports community with birthday fundraiser**

**SUPPLY, N.C. (August 11, 2021)** – Most people expect to receive gifts on their birthday, but not Jane-Marie Terefencko. The Brunswick County resident used her seventieth birthday as an opportunity to give to others. Jane-Marie celebrated her big day by asking her friends and family to support Brunswick Electric’s Warm Homes, Warm Hearts utility assistance program. Together they raised \$13,215, which was matched by Brunswick Electric, providing \$26,430 to help those in need.

“We are blown away by the generosity of Jane-Marie, her friends and family,” said Josh Winslow, CEO of Brunswick Electric. “Their support of Warm Homes, Warm Hearts will have a huge impact on our communities. Last year was a difficult one, with many of our neighbors experiencing unemployment or financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This contribution helps ensure that funding is available to those who need a helping hand with their electricity bill.”

Jane-Marie themed her birthday party around The Amazing Race, her favorite TV show. Her family and friends formed 13 groups of four to take on a series of games and challenges throughout the day, all of which helped raise money for the cause.

“At age 70, what did I need?” asked Jane-Marie. “A surprise party? Gifts? Dinner? Nah. Instead I thought that it is time to be thankful for all the wonderful things that have happened over my 70 years and give back. Our Brunswick Community Charities Committee gave a list of vetted organizations in our area, but the one that stood out was the Brunswick Family Assistance(BFA) in conjunction with BEMC’s Warm Homes-Warm Hearts program and the ‘power of neighbors helping neighbors’. With BEMC matching funds, we felt that any money we raised, and then doubled, would benefit so many more people in our area.

“The first goal was to raise \$5,100, representing the year I was born,” continued Jane-Marie. “When the \$5,100 was surpassed thought just maybe \$7,000 representing my seventieth birthday might be a possibility. I never could ever believe that neighbors helping neighbors could raise \$13,215.”

The Warm Homes, Warm Hearts utility assistance program began in 2008. Dollar for dollar, donations are matched by Brunswick Electric up to \$50,000 annually. One hundred percent of the funds go to help those in need and are distributed through Brunswick Electric partnering agencies - Brunswick Family Assistance and the Columbus County Department of Aging. Since the program’s beginning, well over \$1 million has been given to help thousands of local families.



**BRUNSWICK ELECTRIC**  
MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

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“The money from Warm Homes, Warm Hearts enables BFA to help low-income individuals and families with their utilities and avoid disconnection,” said Stephanie Bowen, Executive Director of Brunswick Family Assistance. “To have electricity means a working refrigerator, air conditioning in the hot summer months and heat in the coldest part of winter. These are basic human needs that some people simply cannot afford. BFA is so grateful to BEMC and our community for keeping this vital program alive. It is only with the help of community partners like BEMC and the love and support of people like Jane Marie, who want to give back, that BFA can continue to provide the increasing levels of support needed in Brunswick County. These funds mean so much to the people in our County struggling to make ends meet and BFA is grateful to be an avenue of support through the Warm Homes, Warm Hearts program.”

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***BEMC is a locally owned and operated not-for-profit corporation. It is the second-largest electric cooperative in North Carolina and serves more than 98,000 meter locations in Brunswick, Columbus, and parts of Bladen and Robeson counties. Founded in 1939, BEMC has a longstanding commitment to the communities it serves, providing support for a wide variety of activities that contribute to the quality of life for all citizens.***

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