

**Mini-grants totalling
\$5,000 are available for
teachers in the
Co-op's service area**



Up, up and away
Technology students in Genia Smith's class at Marianna High School fill their hot air balloon for its next flight. A Co-op mini-grant furnished construction materials and a propane launcher for the project.

WFEC mini-grants fund classroom projects

West Florida Electric Cooperative is offering mini-grants totaling \$5,000 to teachers at schools throughout its service area in Washington, Holmes, Jackson and Calhoun Counties. Part of the funding will be provided by the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association and the National Rural Education Association, which will award ten mini-grants of \$250 each for classroom projects during the 2000 – 2001 school year. WFEC will match that amount with an additional \$250 for any teacher who receives one of the NRECA/NREA mini-grants.

Any rural kindergarten through twelfth-grade teacher whose school is within a community WFEC serves or whose students' homes are served by the Co-op can apply. The grants are intended to fund projects featuring student investigation of some aspect of the science of energy or electricity. Teachers applying for the grants are encouraged to plan projects according to the needs and curiosity of their students. For example, some students may want to examine how the local geology relates to energy; others may prefer to explore alternative energy sources for the future.

Grant recipients may use the money for anything that will enable them and their students to complete the project, including field trips, books, computer software or equipment. The grant also may be used to extend or expand an existing project if the project's scope meets the grant guidelines.

In evaluating the grant applications, judges will be looking for project designs that demonstrate cooperation among students and their teachers and the community, encourage high levels of student involvement, and are appropriate for age and grade levels.

Last year, Marianna High School Technology teacher Genia Smith's \$500 mini-grant purchased a propane launcher and materials for her students to build hot air balloons. The previous year, Linda Pigott, a second-grade teacher at Kate M. Smith Elementary School in Chipley, used the grant she received to provide each of her second-grade students with equipment to study electricity and magnetism.



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