

Big Skylights



An internal newsletter of the STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

A report from your Chief Executive Officer Dave Wheelihan

April 27, 2017

Demand charge explained at Marias River Electric Co-op's annual meeting

Members of Marias River Electric Cooperative heard updates on construction, and details on a new program and on Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, during their annual meeting April 21 in Shelby.

Board President **Merle Raph** told the membership that Marias River Electric recently joined Touchstone, a marketing and branding cooperative, and explained the benefits of that membership. Mr. Raph also talked about the difference between the base rate and the kilowatt-hour charge, and why the industry trend is to institute a demand charge.

Manager **Kris Ingenthron** updated the membership on the construction and maintenance that took place system-wide in the past year, including the replacement of approximately 500 poles.

Mr. Ingenthron also told members about Operation Roundup, a charitable giving program that members can choose to be a part of, which is in the early stages of implementation.

The board also honored former trustee and longtime member **Ray Zell**, who passed away.

In trustee elections, incumbents **Eve Jacobson**, **Mel Fretheim** and **Dan Gliko** were re-elected without opposition.

Flathead Electric elects new members to board

Results of trustee elections at Flathead Electric were announced recently. Four seats on the Flathead Electric board were up for election this year. Voting is done by mail-in ballots. Trustees **Duane Braaten** and **Gary Boe** were elected without opposition. **Jerry Bygren** was elected, replacing **Paul Holland**. **Terry Crooks** was elected to replace **Earl Messick**, who did not seek re-election.

Glacier Electric to host NESC training May 16

MECA, in cooperation with Glacier Electric Cooperative, will hold a one-day NESC training at Glacier Electric Cooperative in Cut Bank on **May 16, 2017**.

The course will focus on the major changes in the 2017 NESC, and provide a general overview of each part of the NESC. A full course description has been sent to line superintendents and line foremen. The registration deadline for this training is Monday, May 1.

For those participants needing overnight accommodations, area hotels include the Super 8 in Cut Bank (406) 873-5662; the Glacier Gateway Plaza in Cut Bank (406) 873-5544; the Comfort Inn in Shelby (406) 434-2212; and the Best Western Shelby Inn and Suites (406) 424-4560.

If you have any questions, including questions about registration, please contact **Lea Potoczny** at meca@mtco-ops.com or (406) 761-8333.

Job Market**Journeyman Lineman**

Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. has an immediate opening for a qualified journeyman lineman or apprentice lineman. Requirements include a high school diploma/GED, successful completion of an apprenticeship school or holding a union journeyman lineman card. A valid Montana Class A CDL with excellent driving record is also required. The person in this position will be located at our office in Lewistown, Montana. Technical skills testing and a drug screen are required.

Fergus Electric Cooperative offers an excellent wage and benefit package, including defined benefit and 401k retirement plans. Fergus Electric is committed to having a strong safety program, and safety is the co-op's priority.

Employment applications are available online at www.ferguselectric.coop; or call 406-538-3465 to request an application. Please send resume and application to: Dale Rikala, Fergus Electric Co-op, Inc., 84423 U.S. Highway 87, Lewistown, MT 59457-2058; email ferguslinesup@ferguselectric.coop; or call 406-538-3465. Applications will be accepted through May 5.

CALENDAR**May**

2-5	NRECA Connect Conference	Tampa, FL
6	Northern Lights, Inc. Annual Meeting	Sagle, ID
7-10	NWPPA Annual Meeting	Sunriver, OR
9-10	MECA Line Superintendents' Group Spring Meeting	Lewistown, MT
9-11	Gettysburg Leadership Experience for Co-op Leaders	Gettysburg, PA
9-11	New Director Orientation	Arlington, VA
16	National Electric Safety Code (NESC) Training	Cut Bank, MT
17-19	New CFO Orientation	Dulles, VA
13	Hill County Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Havre, MT
23-24	Accounting for Non-Accountants Workshop	Great Falls, MT

June

1	Lower Yellowstone REA Annual Meeting	Sidney, MT
2	McCone Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Circle, MT
2	Southeast Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Ekalaka, MT
6	FEMA Training	Sidney, MT
8	FEMA Training	Great Falls, MT
8	Fergus Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Lewistown, MT
10	Fall River Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Ashton, ID
10-16	Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.	Washington, D.C.
22-23	MECA Managers' Group Summer Meeting	Helena, MT

July

6-7	MECA Summer Board and Committees Meetings	Kalispell, MT
13	Goldenwest Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Golva, ND
22	Tongue River Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Broadus, MT