

Big Skylights



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

A report from your Chief Executive Officer Dave Wheelihan

August 10, 2017

Congressman makes stop at Sun River Electric

We appreciated the opportunity to visit last Thursday, Aug. 3, with Montana's congressman **Greg Gianforte** about issues of concern to Montana's electric cooperatives. The congressman stopped by Sun River Electric Cooperative's headquarters building in Fairfield for a listening session, and General Manager **Scott Odegard** graciously invited MECA and Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative to participate in the visit. In addition to Mr. Odegard, other Sun River Electric employees also participated in the listening session.

Solar array up & running at Fergus Electric Co-op

Congratulations to Fergus Electric Cooperative on the successful start-up of its new solar array. The array began operation Aug. 4. General Manager **Scott Sweeney** reports the co-op is very pleased with how it's operating.

The solar array, which is located on the west side of Fergus Electric Cooperative's headquarters building west of Lewistown, features 324 solar panels, which cost \$600 per panel. Per-panel production is estimated at 450 kWh per year. Panel owners are credited at a rate of 10 cents per kWh, resulting, based on the production projections, in a credit of \$45 per year. The payback period is estimated at nine years.

Co-ops sponsor co-op night at baseball game

The Popular Co-op Night at the Ballgame, organized by the Montana Council of Cooperatives, is fast approaching and MECA has free tickets available.

MECA is among the sponsors of the annual event, which takes place at 7 p.m. Aug. 18 at Centene Stadium in Great Falls. This year's baseball game features the Great Falls Voyagers vs. the Helena Brewers. There will be giveaways throughout the game, goodie bags for the first 100 families through the door and free T-Shirts for the first 300 kids.

Tickets are normally \$8 per person, but you can get free tickets for Co-op Night at the Ballgame by calling MECA at (406) 761-8333 and asking for **Ryan Hall**, or email him at ryanh@mtco-ops.com.

Job Market

Apprentice Lineman

Glacier Electric Cooperative is seeking a full-time apprentice lineman to join the co-op's Browning outpost. Glacier Electric is a member-owned electric cooperative serving 5,100 members in northwestern Montana. The diverse membership base is comprised of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, several Canadian/U.S. border crossings, most of Glacier National Park, several small towns, and significant rural agricultural load.

Required Skills/Qualifications: The successful candidate will possess a great attitude, personality and work ethic, and be committed to safety and service to our members. The apprentice will work under the direct supervision of a journeyman lineman or foreman. Duties include constructing, repairing, and maintaining lines, structures, and equipment involved in the distribution and transmission of electricity. The successful candidate must meet all physical, educational, and regulatory qualifications of an apprenticeship program, and must have and maintain a minimum Class A, Type 2 Commercial Driver's License.

Education/Experience: Minimum of a high-school diploma or GED required. Completion of apprentice line school or equivalent experience preferred. **Lifting Capacity:** Must be able to lift 75 pounds. **Compensation:** based on experience. This is a union position with an excellent benefits package. The successful candidate must pass an initial substance screening and, as an employee, will be subject to random drug/controlled substance screenings.

Interested parties are to direct inquiries to Operations Manager **Mike Pyette** and submit the following: (1) completed application for employment; (2) resume; and (3) three references. Applications for employment are available at the co-op's Browning and Cut Bank offices, and on the co-op's website at www.GlacierElectric.com. Applications must be received by Aug. 31, 2017.

Accountant/Benefits Administrator

Big Horn County Electric Cooperative, based in Hardin, MT, is currently accepting resumes for the position of accountant/benefits administrator. A bachelor's degree in accounting and/or a minimum of five years experience in accounting is recommended.

Accountant responsibilities will include maintaining work orders, inventory records, asset records, and preparing the monthly and annual financial statements. Benefits administrator responsibilities include all duties associated with record keeping and reporting of employee benefits/payroll. Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications. Send resume to: **Karan Uffelman**, Office Manager, Big Horn County Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 410, Hardin MT 59034, or email to kuffelman@bhcec.com. This position will remain open until filled.

CALENDAR

August

17-18	MECA Office Managers & Accountants Summer Meeting	Fairmont Hot Springs, MT
22-23	OCR School	Kalispell, MT
29-30	MECA OCR School	Huntley, MT

September

7	2630 Certified Credentialed Director's Course	Lewistown, MT
11-14	Annual MECA Operations Conference	Helena, MT
19	"Generational Differences" Training Course	Great Falls, MT
23	Beartooth Electric Annual Meeting	Absarokee, MT
29	Legislature's Energy & Telecommunications Interim Committee Meeting	Helena, MT

October

2	943.1 Conversation Skills Outside the Boardroom BLC Course	Great Falls, MT
2-5	MECA Annual Meeting	Great Falls, MT
14	Sheridan Electric Annual Meeting	Medicine Lake, MT
16-17	Substation Class	Sidney, MT
16-18	NRECA Region 7 & 9 Meetings	Denver, CO
19-20	Substation Class	Missoula, MT
27	Park Electric Annual Meeting	Livingston, MT