# November 2018 Share Package
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# Ruralite Services 2019 Schedule of Important Dates

## February 2019 Issue

pages 1, 4-5 due .....Dec. 26
special projects due.....Jan. 4
custom covers/color due.....Jan. 4
mailing labels due.....Jan. 9
pages 8, 25, 28-29 due .....Jan. 9
page 32 due.....Jan. 17
camera-ready pages due .....Jan. 18

## March 2019 Issue

pages 1, 4-5 due .....Jan. 25
special projects due.....Feb. 5
custom covers/color due.....Feb. 5
mailing labels due.....Feb. 8
pages 8, 25, 28-29 due .....Feb. 8
page 32 due.....Feb. 15
camera-ready pages due .....Feb. 19

## April 2019 Issue

pages 1, 4-5 due .....Feb.25
special projects due.....March 5
custom covers/color due.....March 5
mailing labels due.....March 8
pages 8, 25, 28-29 due .....March 8
page 32 due.....March 18
camera-ready pages due .....March 19

## May 2019 Issue

pages 1, 4-5 due .....March 25
special projects due.....April 5
custom covers/color due .....April 5
mailing labels due.....April 9
pages 8, 25, 28-29 due.....April 9
page 32 due.....April 17
camera-ready pages due .....April 18

## June 2019 Issue

pages 1, 4-5 due .....April 25
special projects due.....May 6
custom covers/color due .....May 6
mailing labels due.....May 9
pages 8, 25, 28-29 due.....May 9
page 32 due.....May 17
camera-ready pages due .....May 20

## July **2019 Issue**

pages 1, 4-5 due .....May 24
special projects due.....June 5
custom covers/color due .....June 5
mailing labels due.....June 10
pages 8, 25, 28-29 due.....June 10
page 32 due.....June 17
camera-ready pages due .....June 18

This schedule is not intended for Florida Currents deadlines.

# Seal Air Leaks, Insulate for High Efficiency

**Turn off the circuit breaker and use a nonconducting item to check for a leaky gap.**

**Use expanding insulating foam to seal wiring holes and gaps where the sill plate rests on the foundation.**

To ask a question, write to **James Dulley**, Energy Report, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH. 45244, or go to **www.dulley.com**.



***Q:*** *My home has blown-in attic insulation and good windows, but I want to further cut my utility bills. What inefficient spots should I check?*

**A:** Proper insulation and good-quality windows and doors are the most important efficiency factors. There are many other areas where small insulation voids and air leakage contribute to high utility bills. These areas often are equivalent to leaving a 2-foot-by-3-foot window open year-round.

Before checking these areas, ensure your ceiling is adequately insulated by looking for gaps and checking insulation depth. Depending on how it was blown in, insulation may have settled and no longer be the required depth and R-value for your climate. Wind coming in the attic vents can blow it around, creating high and low spots. Use a rake to level it.

Any break in the insulation envelope of your house is a possible location for energy loss.

One common leakage spot is electrical wall outlets and switches on outside walls. They often are not insulated, and the vapor/air barrier is not taped tightly to them. A 1 percent insulation void can lose 10 times more energy than complete insulation.

To check outlets and switches, turn off the circuit breaker to the outlet or switch. Remove the faceplate and probe around the conduit box with a nonconducting piece of wood or plastic. Look for gaps and insulation voids around it. Insert the tube from a can of expanding foam insulation in the gaps and fill them. Do not fill the inside of the conduit box or large cavities inside the wall.

If you need to make the gap bigger with a screwdriver to see better or to insert the foam insulation tube, first switch off the main circuit breaker to the entire house. Even if the breaker to that outlet is switched off, there may be other hot wires nearby inside the wall.

Install foam draft sealers behind faceplates on outside walls. Choose sealers that are at least ⅛-inch thick so they get compressed. They add only a slight amount of insulation, but improve the overall seal.

Ceiling paddle fans are another place to check. If you installed them yourself after the house was built and added support blocking, the insulation level will be less there. There may also be air leaks where the hole was cut to run the conduit box and wiring. Push the insulation away and caulk the attic floor hole, then cover it with additional insulation.

When painting the trim around doors and windows, pry off the decorative molding. There could be a large, uninsulated gap between the rough opening and the door or window frame. Use low-expansion foam in the gap. Use it sparingly because it can deform the frame as it expands. Recaulk the trim to the window and wall.

A lot of energy is lost at the sill plate and rim joist. The sill plate is the piece of lumber that rests on top of the foundation. The rim joist rests on top of the sill plate, and your house walls rest on the rim joist. The rim joist often is not insulated.

Buy some craft paper-faced fiberglass batt insulation and cut it into short lengths to fit against the rim joist between the floor joists. Standard wall insulation batts are effective. With their short length and the floor joists, they should stay in place without stapling.

When looking at the rim joist and sill plate, you may see a gap between the top of the foundation and the sill plate in spots. The top of a concrete foundation wall is seldom perfectly level and smooth. Squirt urethane foam insulation along the sill plate/foundation wall interface. This blocks outdoor air leakage and adds some insulation value to that area. ■

# New Technology Increases Efficiency, Aids Environment

***Q:*** *We are thinking of switching from a furnace to a heat pump for our home and buying an electric vehicle. Is that environmentally beneficial?*

**A:** How to heat your home and fuel your transportation needs are among the most important environmental decisions you can make.

There are a number of changes happening in the energy sector that make electricity cleaner.

Decades ago, coal was the preferred fuel for electricity generation. As investments in environmental upgrades took hold, the energy industry increased the use of low-sulfur coal and found ways to clean the coal and burn it more efficiently. Scrubbers were installed in coal plants to reduce sulfur emissions, but natural gas turbines were still considered environmentally preferable to coal plants.

In 1990, utilities depended on coal to generate more than half of their electricity. By 2016, that dropped to less than one-third.

In recent years, solar and wind generation have taken off and now provide more than 8 percent of utility energy generation. Public utilities have installed solar at a record pace, with solar capacity growing more than four times since 2015. They have pioneered solar programs where consumers subscribe to a community project—a large array is much less costly per kilowatt than smaller rooftop projects.

The environmental impacts of electricity depend on where you live and where your electric utility buys electricity. Many utilities publish this information on their website or in annual reports on the sources of electric generation. Some include information on carbon emissions.

With all that in the back of your mind, let's get to the decisions you are looking to make: home heating and vehicle purchase.

A heat pump is a good option. Heat pumps are about 1.5 times more efficient than they were in the 1970s and function better in colder temperatures. They take care of your cooling needs as well, and can do so with about half the energy they required in 1990.

The best choice for home heating and cooling depends largely on the climate where you live. In more extreme climates, you will need more heating or cooling capacity, and can justify splurging for a more energy-efficient model.

As our energy supply becomes cleaner, electric vehicles are becoming a better environmental choice across the country. The environmental advantage depends on how electricity is generated in different locations.

The fuel cost of an electric vehicle is, on average, half as much per mile as a gasoline vehicle. Electric vehicles generally require less maintenance, but the batteries eventually need to be replaced. Battery costs are dropping, but potential buyers should note this will still be a hefty bill. Electric vehicles cost more up front than their gas counterparts, but the cost is coming down with every new model.

As you make your decision on a heating system and new vehicle, remember there are other things you can do to reduce the environmental impact of your energy use.

- Insulate and seal air leaks.
- Set the thermostat a little cooler in the winter and warmer in the summer.
- Check with your utility to see if it offers a community solar program or additional energy-saving tips. ■

*This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on energy efficiency, visit www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.*


**The network of electric vehicle charging stations is growing rapidly.**

**Community solar projects allow consumers to invest in solar power at a lower per-kilowatt-hour rate than smaller rooftop solar installations.**

Photo by Dan Husted, Lake Region Electric Cooperative

To ask a question, send an email to **Patrick Keegan** at energytips@collaborativeefficiency.com.

# Public Utilities Thankful for Consumer Support

*Utility cooperatives, PUDs and municipals put their communities first*

**Beth Takioka** is communications manager for Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative in Lihu'e, Hawaii.

The scene is familiar and inviting: a respite from the chaos of our daily lives.

Family and friends gather together. They enjoy a football game. Prepare a feast. Talk and laugh over the soft strains of holiday music. They relive fond memories at the dinner table or connect with loved ones across the miles; spanning time zones via Skype and FaceTime.

We hardly notice the common element that enables and enhances each of these treasured moments: electricity.

As it should be. Providing safe, reliable power to meet our community's needs is the mission of your local publicly owned utility and its dedicated employees. We are your family, your friends and your neighbors. If we do our job well, you barely notice we are there.

Yet we are there. We are privileged to be an integral part of our community, and thankful for so many things.

Our membership is comprehensive and diverse, and reflects the complexion of our unique community. Cooperatives are open to all who wish to join and succeed best when all members are actively engaged. Our consumers guide our strategic direction by participating in annual elections and providing insight and guidance to representatives on the board of directors.

We are owned by the people we serve, and our actions reflect what we want for our community. Restoring power quickly when outages occur, making responsible financial decisions, planning thoughtfully to address future challenges and seizing opportunities for improvement are core to the way we conduct business day in and day out.

A healthy, vibrant and prosperous community is important to us, as it is to you. Our employees seek ways to give back through volunteerism, donating to local charities and being active in our schools, churches and neighborhood organizations. Many public utilities operate foundations or programs that offer grants, scholarships and aid to worthy causes.

We provide great career opportunities and find our consumers make the best employees.

As a locally owned utility, we are not motivated by profit, but rather by spending wisely, containing costs and returning maximum benefit to our consumers and our community. They share in our success. The more each of our consumers thrive, the more the cooperative thrives.

There is strength in numbers. We belong to our local utility, but we are also part of an expansive network of more than 2,000 community-owned, not-for-profit electric utilities across the country. Sharing resources helps us keep operating costs low. When natural disasters strike, our sister utilities are ready to assist.

Your electric utility has a job to do. We pride ourselves on doing it well. Ensuring each of our consumers has access to safe and reliable power at an affordable price is a responsibility we embrace on a daily basis.

This year has been a particularly challenging one. In the aftermath of numerous destructive fires and hurricanes, communities around the nation struggle to rebuild and regain a sense of normalcy. Hurricanes Florence and Michael left millions of residents without power. Utilities from as far away as Indiana and Minnesota sent personnel to assist in the recovery. Those who have been spared the devastating impacts can feel thankful not only for their good fortune, but for the opportunity our public power family has to help others in time of desperate need.

As you gather with your loved ones this holiday season to give thanks for the many blessings in your lives, we will be there giving thanks as well. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve our members and to play a role in lifting up and strengthening our community. We are thankful to be a part of a national network of public utilities supporting each other through opportunities and challenges.

We look back on 2018 with gratitude. We look forward with hope and a commitment to finding new ways to work together because that's what public utilities—and families—do best.

Wishing you blessings and peace throughout this holiday season. ■

# Move Over for Power Crews

*Slow down and pass with caution to give lineworkers room to keep electricity flowing*

**By Jennifer Brown**

Flashing lights. A flagger. A line of cars.

Any of these could signal roadside work or an emergency ahead. It also could signal a utility crew is on-site to make repairs or improvements to the system.

No matter the reason, slow down and move over.

The combination of motor vehicles and roadside workers or emergency responders can be a deadly one. That led to creation of the move over law.

Move over laws exist in all 50 states. The laws require drivers—upon noticing an emergency vehicle with sirens and/or flashing lights—to move away from the vehicle by one lane. If that is not possible, the driver is required to slow down to a reasonable or fixed speed below the limit, as defined by local law.

Move over laws protect law enforcement vehicles, fire trucks and ambulances. In 19 states, the laws now include utility vehicles. In March, Washington amended its move over law to apply to utility operations.

"I think the benefit of the law is it makes the public more aware that utility workers do frequently work along the roadway and that moving over gives us a safer workplace," says Jeff Myers, manager of safety services for Columbia REA, based in Walla Walla. "The benefit for the motorist is they recognize the need to slow down and/or move into the left lane for not only the workers' safety, but also their own."

Given its rural nature, Columbia REA thankfully has had few close calls with the public on job sites, says Jeff. Columbia REA employees are trained in traffic control. They set up temporary traffic control zones with flaggers when necessary, and wear safety gear to help drivers see them.

Since not all move over laws specifically protect utility crews, workers must take safety into their own hands. Employees at Harney Electric Cooperative, based in Burns, Oregon, must


maintain valid flagging cards. Crews go through training every two years to keep their certification.

"One of the most hazardous things we do every day is get on the road," says Jason Hill, operations manager for HEC. "It is especially dangerous when we have to take a lane or stop traffic. This requires a lot of pre-planning and site prep. The crews have to come up with a plan to keep themselves and the public safe.

"We had a driver that didn't want to stop where the flagger was stopping traffic. The crews were stringing wire over the road and had traffic stopped on both sides of the project. Luckily, the wire was pulled up high enough to allow the driver that blew past the flagger to cross underneath the wire without clipping it. What very likely could have been a deadly accident turned into a near miss and a learning experience."

Mike Thompson, line superintendent at Northern Lights Inc. in Sagle, Idaho, says NLI contracts flaggers when working on state highways to make sure work areas are safe, and the utility's line crews wear all-reflective personal protective gear. NLI line crews and engineers are all flagger certified, and can flag when contract crews are not available.

"Even if the move over law changes in Idaho, NLI will continue to use contract flaggers on state highways, as well as count on law enforcement to ticket those who put crews in danger," Mike says. ■

## A State-by-State Look at Move Over Laws

**ALASKA**
Drivers approaching stationary emergency vehicles displaying flashing flights, including tow trucks, traveling in the same direction must vacate the lane closest if safe, or slow to a speed reasonable and prudent for traffic, road and weather conditions. This includes animal control vehicles.

**ARIZONA**
Drivers must reduce speed and, if safe, vacate the lane closest to stationary vehicles with flashing or warning lights, including emergency vehicles and tow trucks.

**CALIFORNIA**
Drivers must slow down and vacate the lane closest to a stationary emergency response vehicle flashing emergency lights if safe to do so. This includes tow trucks and Caltrans vehicles, if displaying flashing amber warning lights.

**IDAHO**
Drivers traveling in the same direction must slow below the posted speed limit and vacate the lane closest to a stationary emergency vehicle displaying flashing lights if safe to do so. This includes tow trucks, wreckers and other recovery vehicles.

**NEVADA**
Drivers traveling in the same direction must reduce speed below the posted speed limit and, if safe, vacate the lane closest to stationary emergency vehicles and tow vehicles displaying flashing lights.

**OREGON**
Drivers approaching a stationary vehicle displaying flashing lights—including roadside assistance and tow vehicles—traveling in the same direction, must vacate the lane closest if safe, or reduce speed to at least 5 mph under the posted speed limit.

**WASHINGTON**
Drivers must vacate the lane closest to stationary emergency vehicles, including tow trucks and utility trucks, if they are traveling in the same direction and it is safe to do so. If not, drivers must slow down and may not exceed the speed limit within 200 feet before and after a stationary emergency vehicle that has its flashing lights activated.

# Committed to Their Communities

*Publicly owned utilities are invested in improving the lives of those they serve*

**Compiled by Pam Blair**


**Linemen from Harney Electric based in Hines, Oregon, helped install a new sign for Crane schools.**
Photo courtesy of Harney Electric

In big ways and small, the public power family makes a difference in local communities. Your electric utility and the employees who work there have a stake in the community because they live there, too. Here are just a few of the ways member-owned utilities contribute.

**Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, Anchorage, Alaska.** AVEC provides grave-drilling services in Bethel and reflective trail markers to show dangerous areas to avoid.

**Barrow Utilities and Electric Cooperative Inc., Barrow, Alaska.** BUECI donates $70,000 annually to support athletic, scholastic, cultural and safety activities. It sends high school students to the annual Idaho Consumer-Owned Utility Association Youth Rally for a week of leadership and utility education. The co-op's gas crew digs about 30 graves a year for community members. BUECI also sponsors local radio programming.

**Blachly-Lane Electric Cooperative, Junction City, Oregon.** Employees installed scoreboard posts and lights at Triangle Lake School; repaired a faulty underground cable at Junction City High School; installed lights and replaced poles at Elmira High School football and baseball stadiums; presented safety trailer demonstrations at Oaklea Middle and Territorial Elementary schools; and participate in a high school career fair.

**Central Electric Cooperative, Redmond, Oregon.** CEC and its employees support more than 50 organizations and causes, including childhood health and development, veterans' outreach and food banks. More than 1,000 people viewed the 66 high-voltage safety demonstrations held at the Deschutes County Fair. CEC awarded $10,000 in continuing education scholarships and sponsored two Korean War veterans on Honor Flight.

**Clatskanie PUD, Clatskanie, Oregon.** Employees and board members donated $3,800 to local food banks. The crew installs Christmas decorations in Clatskanie and Rainier. The PUD sponsors the Share the Warmth energy assistance fund to help customers in need.

**Many electric co-ops—including Lane Electric—support 4-H and FFA youth livestock auctions.**
Photo courtesy of Lane Electric

**Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative, Heppner, Oregon.** CBEC donates to the Heppner Booster Club Auction Benefit Dinner, the Ione Education Foundation, the Condon Scholarship Foundation, local 4-H chapters and FFA clubs. Employees volunteer for the rural fire department, coach junior high football and high school softball, and serve on the cemetery board.

**Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative, Port Orford, Oregon.** CCEC plans and hosts a one-day camp for first- and second-graders covering bike and pedestrian safety, electrical safety, fire safety and how to call 911 in an emergency. Interoffice competitions help raise food and other items. The co-op decorates a tree for auction and donates proceeds to a charity. Employees watered plants and flowers in public spaces in Port Orford during the summer.

**Hood River Electric Cooperative, Odell, Oregon.** HREC donated funds to help


**AVEC donates to many community-wide spring cleanups every year, including this one in Andreafski, Alaska.**
Photo courtesy of Andreafski IGAP

Wy'east Middle School's seventh-grade First Lego League robotics team, "The Pink Fluffy Unicorns," travel to compete in the World Festival. Employees and directors donate funds and time to the Hood River County Fair, the FFA "Pass the Pig" fundraiser, Hood River Valley High School's Project Graduation, the Oregon Burn Center, the National Child Safety Program, Boy Scouts of America, Lions Follies and Pig Bowl—The Dalles.

**Lane Electric Cooperative, Eugene, Oregon.** LEC donated more than $20,000 to local schools, athletic programs and other community events. It donated beef bought from the Lane County 4-H Livestock Auction to food banks.

**Lassen Municipal Utility District, Susanville, California.** LMUD hangs Blue Star banners along Main Street, provides high-voltage safety demonstrations to schools, and puts up Christmas decorations for Susanville and Westwood.

**Midstate Electric Cooperative, La Pine, Oregon.** Heritage Park received a makeover thanks to a $10,000 grant from MEC's Operation Round Up program, in partnership with Mid Oregon Credit Union. The co-op donated more than $45,000 to various community projects.

**Northern Lights Inc., Sagle, Idaho.** Through Operation Round-up, NLI's Community Trust funds local food banks, fire departments, schools and community-based organizations. NLI sponsors blood drives every year.

**Parkland Light & Water Co., Tacoma, Washington.** Employees donate to Winterfest, a jacket and toy drive for children from families struggling to make ends meet. PL&W participates in Touch-a-Truck, where kids can get up close with big vehicles, and the Garfield Days Street Fair, providing utility awareness.

**Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative, Portola, California.** PSREC sponsors youth and Christmas stocking programs for children. Employees buy, cook and serve food at community dinners; participate in Adopt-A-Highway cleanups; and host food, toy and coat drives.

**Surprise Valley Electrification, Alturas, California.** Employees donate food and prepare Christmas gift baskets for families in need. SVE donates staff time and equipment to put up decorations and community banners, replace lights and install playground equipment.

**Tanner Electric Cooperative, North Bend, Washington.** TEC offers five scholarships: three to graduating seniors, one to an accredited lineman college and one to NRECA's Youth Tour. Staff donates time and equipment to put up banners, replace lights, set up the town's Christmas tree, provide energy assistance through its round-up program, sponsor youth sports programs and present electrical safety awareness programs.


**During the holidays, Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative, based in Heppner, Oregon, participates in community light parades. In exchange for their help decorating floats, the cooperative contributes money to local youth groups.**
Photo courtesy of Columbia Basin Electric

**Tillamook PUD, Tillamook, Oregon.** The PUD awarded $75,000 in grants to nonprofits for economic development projects. Each year, employees and their family members assemble food and gift baskets for 18 families in need and donate $1,500 to $2,500 to a school district to help children in need.

**Umatilla Electric Cooperative, Hermiston, Oregon.** Employees serve on the Chamber of Commerce and donate turkeys to the annual Kat Country drive.

**Wasco Electric Cooperative, The Dalles, Oregon.** WEC buys 4-H animals at county fairs and annually provides community economic grants totaling $7,500. ■

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(541) 567-6414

**Boardman Office**
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Boardman, OR 97818
(541) 481-2220

Toll Free 1-800-452-2273

For more details: www.CooperativeYouthTour.com

UEC Umatilla Electric cooperative

# Juvenile Osprey Receives a Hand

**By Craig Reed**

**Umpqua Wildlife Rescue's Mike Woychowski, left, and Douglas Electric lineman Tyson Olds prepare to return a juvenile osprey to its nest.**

Photo by Sandra Haines

After about a two-week absence, a young osprey has found its way back home.

But the bird's return didn't come without a lot of help. First were the residents who noticed the bird under its nest alongside Henderer Road near Elkton. Then there were Umpqua Wildlife Rescue members Brenda Weber and Peggy Cheatham, who each spent several days helping the osprey recover.

Finally, three members of the Douglas Electric Cooperative crew showed up with their bucket trucks, giving the bird a lift back to its nest August 30.

"I like that we are the type of company that Umpqua Wildlife Rescue felt it could call to help," says Douglas Electric General Manager Keith Brooks. "Helping get that little bird back in the nest only took a few minutes, but it has made everyone involved feel good for days."

Brenda says the osprey couldn't quite fly yet and somehow fell from its nest on a nesting platform. Douglas Electric has about 25 "sacrificial poles" in its system. They are there to encourage birds to build nests on the platforms rather than on poles that are part of the high-voltage system.

Brenda estimates the bird's age at 3 to 4 weeks when it was found. She says the bird wasn't hurt but was dehydrated and hungry.

"The parents just decided not to feed it on the ground," says Brenda, a 30-year wildlife rehabilitator who specializes in helping birds.

She rehydrated the osprey by putting a small tube down its throat and giving it an electrolyte solution. Feeding it small pieces of herring and anchovy followed.

"It was hungry," she says. "It liked the food a lot. I used 12-inch long forceps and he grabbed the food and ate it."

A day later the bird was eating fish from a dish.

From there, Peggy took over the care of the osprey. Using a platform nest in a flight cage, it wasn't long before the bird was flying from the nest on its own.

It was then time to return it to its home nest.

"We were trying to figure out how to get it back up to the nest," Brenda says.

The nest is about 45 feet off the ground.

"We were so happy Douglas Electric was willing to help out," Brenda says. "It was very helpful."

Douglas Electric linemen Curt Woodyard and Tyson Olds and intern Nick Williams met Mike Woychowski of Umpqua Wildlife Rescue at the nest. Several area residents showed up to watch.

The linemen put safety gear on Mike, who held the towel-wrapped bird. He then went up in a bucket with Tyson and released the osprey.

"The mother (osprey) was flying around, squawking, so we got the heck out of there as quickly as possible so she would calm down," Tyson says.

"The mother didn't dive bomb anybody," Curt adds. "She was probably surprised at what was going on. I don't think anybody likes to hurt wildlife. Anytime you can help wildlife, that's a good thing. Everybody gets a win-win out of it."

Brenda says this type of ending is what the wildlife rehabbers hope for.

"It doesn't always turn out this perfectly, so we were really happy everything went smoothly," she says. "We always want the wildlife to go back to where they belong, with their family."

Curt says that to protect birds and to prevent outages caused by birds, Douglas Electric will place sacrificial poles with platforms about 25 feet from where birds build nests on an actual power pole. Guards are also installed on existing power structures to discourage nest building.

"It works pretty well," Curt says. "They help keep birds off the power line, preventing outages and protecting the birds. I've moved partial nests from power poles to the sacrificial poles. I think most of those poles have a nesting pair."

Sandra Haines of Oakland specializes in tracking osprey in Douglas County and photographing them. She took photos of the recent osprey release.

"I love what Douglas Electric does for these birds," she says. "The linemen were super in helping out. I can't say enough good things about them."

Sandra kept track of the young osprey after its release, and reports it is doing fine. ■

# The 'People's Tree' Makes Cross-country Journey From Oregon to Washington, D.C.

**By Lee Juillerat**

A piece of Oregon will light up Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., during the holidays when, for only the second time ever, the Capitol Christmas Tree will be from Oregon.

The theme for the 2018 Capitol Christmas Tree is "Find Your Trail!" in recognition of two 2018 anniversaries: the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act and the 175th commemoration of the Oregon Trail.

The 80-foot tall tree from the Sweet Home Ranger District of the Willamette National Forest will make a 3,000-mile cross country trek to the Capitol's west lawn, where lighting ceremonies will be held in early December. The selected tree is unique. For the first time ever, it is a noble fir.

## Selecting the Tree

After a lengthy selection process that included suggestions from the public, a Willamette "tree team," which included foresters and a botanist, narrowed the field of candidate trees to five. The final decision was made during an August visit by Jim Kaufmann, Director of the Capitol Grounds and Arboretum, who is responsible for operations and care of the Capitol and grounds.

The tree was evaluated for a variety of desired characteristics, including being 65 to 85 feet tall, having a straight stem, uniform branching, a perfectly conical shape, natural density and rich green color. The tree candidates included both Douglas and Noble firs, the two most iconic conifer species in both the Willamette and Oregon. Other factors included the tree's accessibility by crane and semitruck when it's cut.

"It really was like finding a needle in a haystack," said Joanie Schmidgall, who's handling publicity for the Willamette National Forest.

"It ended up being a great tree," says Nikki Swenson, the Sweet Home District Ranger, whose persistent lobbying is credited with having a tree from her ranger district selected. "This is the 'People's Tree.'"

This national honor is meaningful for Sweet Home and the entire state of Oregon. Upwards of 70 smaller companion trees will also be sent from the Willamette for government buildings and public spaces in Washington, D.C. Oregonians have created nearly 2,000 large, weatherproof handmade ornaments for the Capitol Christmas Tree and 10,000 smaller handmade ornaments for the companion trees.


On Friday, November 2, the tree will be cut and prepared for its journey that will follow a reverse path of the Oregon Trail. After festivities in Sweet Home on November 9, the tree will continue its journey with stops along the way for more community celebrations including in Springfield, McKenzie Bridge and Oakridge.

## See the Tree

Attendees will have the chance to sign banners on the sides of the truck to wish the tree well, learn more about the Willamette National Forest, purchase U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree merchandise, and more.

- Saturday, November 10, 4 to 5:30 p.m., Cabela's, 2800 Gateway Street, Springfield.
- Sunday, November 11, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., McKenzie Bridge (exact location to be determined).
- Sunday, November 11, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m., Oakridge, in front of the post office. ■

*The Oakridge celebration includes Boy Scouts flag ceremony, music performance by OHS choir and band, free cookies, hot cocoa and coffee, special seating for veterans, robotics display and more.*

*For more information, visit www.capitolchristmastree.com.*

# Join Us By Voting on November 6

**By Dan Riedinger**

Our co-op's first priority is providing our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. But doing this job requires a lot more than stringing and maintaining power lines throughout our service territory. It requires political engagement. That may seem far removed from our core mission, but it is absolutely essential to serving you, our members.

That is why we are participating in a national program of America's electric cooperatives called Co-ops Vote.

Co-ops Vote encourages all co-op members to participate in national, state and local elections while educating political candidates and elected officials about the important role played by electric cooperatives in their communities.

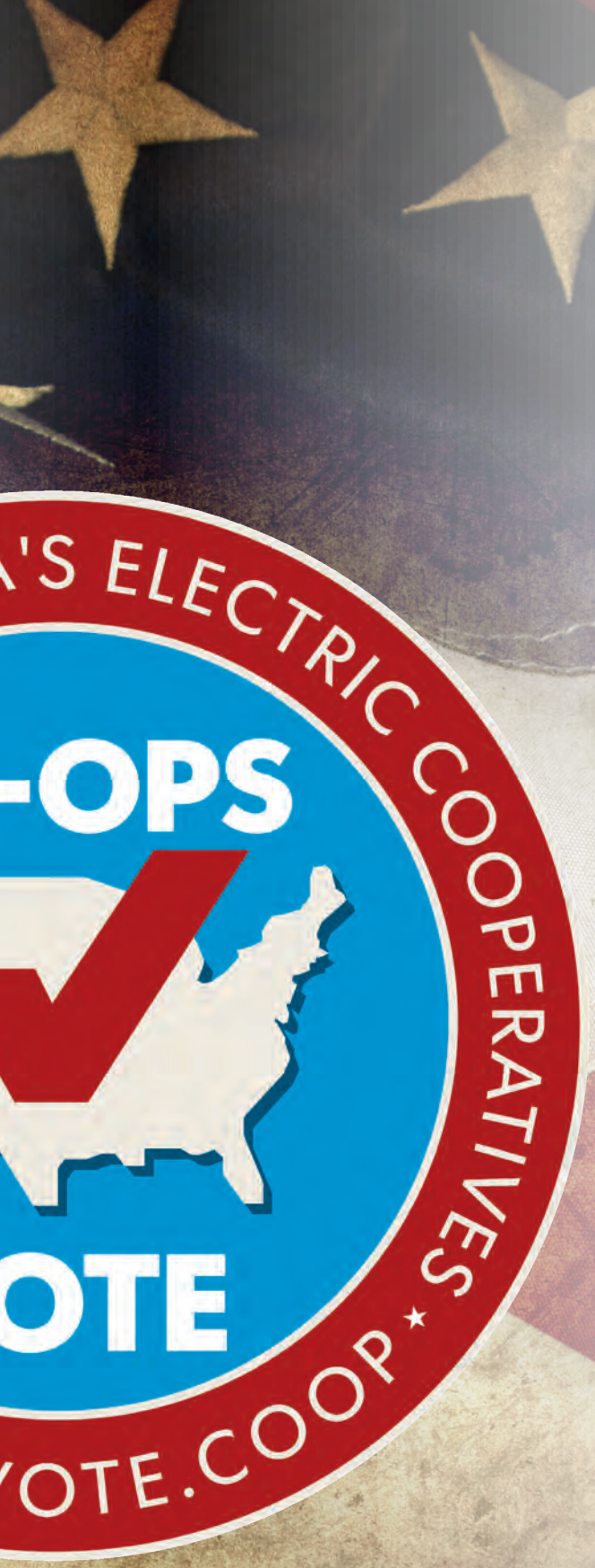
The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the service organization representing the nation's electric co-ops, launched Co-ops Vote in 2016. Co-ops Vote started as a national nonpartisan get-out-the-vote initiative that helped drive rural voter turnout in the 2016 presidential election.

Through this program, electric co-ops realized they had a unique advantage: As co-ops, the civic virtue of voting is in our DNA. We show Concern for Community—one of the seven cooperative principles—through participation in our democracy.

Co-ops have another advantage. Elected officials and decision-makers across the political spectrum trust us because of the work the electric cooperative family has put into political engagement. When we all get involved, we can make things happen politically and in our local communities.

Our participation in Co-ops Vote helps ensure that rural issues remain part of the national discussion—and are supported by our elected officials. But Co-ops Vote is not just for co-ops. It is for co-op members just like you.

You can participate by committing to cast your ballot on November 6. Visit www.vote.coop to learn more about the upcoming elections and access online tools that can help you participate. ■




# Be an Advocate for Rural Electric Service

## Sign up for ORECA-Action alerts and let your voice be heard

As a member of the Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Lane Electric Co-op is asking you to take part in the ORECA-Action network, a grassroots collaboration of the state's rural electric cooperatives.

ORECA works with lawmakers and state officials on legislation that supports our mission to provide safe, reliable electric service at the lowest possible rates. ORECA-Action keeps our co-op values of democratic member control and economical, reliable power in place. Lane Electric can't do this alone, and we encourage members to promote common sense solutions through this grassroots effort.

Signing up is easy at www.oreca-action.org. Once signed up, you'll receive occasional emails, which will come to your inbox in the name of Lane Electric General Manager Matt Michel. The emails will alert you of actions in Salem that may affect Lane Electric's ability to deliver the electricity you need at a price you can afford.

Legislators want to hear from you! Your participation with ORECA-Action allows you to become an important voice in our efforts to hold elected officials accountable and to promote the importance of Oregon's electric cooperatives.

If you have already signed up, don't forget to follow the "Take Action" prompts in support of the action alerts. Your voice does make a difference. ■

ORECA
OREGON RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ACTION

# The Results are in: Ruralite is Here to Stay

*Readership survey shows Ruralite magazine continues to be a household favorite*

Earlier this year, I let Ruralite readers know an independent research firm was conducting our first full-scale readership survey since 2013. I asked folks to watch their mailbox to see if they had been randomly selected from more than 300,000 Ruralite households to take part. I also urged readers to contact me directly with feedback about their Ruralite edition.

I have to say, anytime I do something like that, I get nervous I'm going to be disappointed by the results—or worse, that people won't care enough to respond.

As it turns out, that anxiety should have been focused on other things. On top of hundreds of responses to the formal survey, many of you took the time to give your feedback about the magazine—and sometimes your utility—directly to me.

Here is some of what we learned:

- Ruralite is extremely well-read. Almost 90 percent of survey respondents are regular readers, having read at least three of the past four editions. The clear majority reads every edition. The average reader spends more than 34 minutes with their nose in each edition. According to our surveyors, both of these figures far exceed the numbers for the nation's leading magazines.
- You deeply appreciate information about your publicly owned utility and energy-related content. These subject areas resonated strongly with 90 percent or more of readers.
- Reader interest in features about local people, issues and events is also high, with more than 90 percent of readers liking these types of articles. Stories about home safety, home improvement and energy efficiency also scored in the 90s.
- Recipes—a perennial favorite of our readers—continued to draw lots of interest, with about 85 percent of readers ranking it as a high-interest content area. Topics also scoring well were travel, events, gardening and family-friendly content.
- There was strong interest in organic and locally sourced foods, and content on hobbies is valued. David LaBelle's photo advice and other musings have a loyal following.

In addition to the time spent reading each edition, our survey company experts—who specialize in publication research and have conducted hundreds of similar studies—were blown away by the across-the-board popularity of Ruralite's regular content. One surveyor said our readers have a "powerful bond with the magazine."

We also learned lots of things about our readers. Almost three-fourths of you are pet owners—and 86 percent of pet owners have dogs and 53 percent have cats. You travel—a lot. Two-thirds of readers made three or more domestic trips in the past year,—well above the national average. About 60 percent of readers have a garden, more than 90 percent are homeowners and nearly half have college degrees.

As you would expect, there is a growing desire to have Ruralite available in digital format, but virtually no sentiment to stop delivering it in print. In fact, more than 92 percent of you said you wanted to continue receiving a printed version of Ruralite.

But statistics tell only part of the story. What I loved most was the email feedback. Without exception, it was positive and supportive. These are direct quotes from some readers:

- "PLEASE continue publishing it. Everything about this magazine makes it uniquely American."
- "... I really enjoy the whole thing actually, and I read it cover to cover."
- "I have to say that Ruralite is my most appreciated monthly magazine."
- "Energy efficiency, YES! Outdoor Pursuits ... articles and pictures, YES!"

Some readers saw a recent trend toward healthier recipes and praised that trend, while others lobbied for more hobby stories.

What are we going to do with this information? Many things.

We will use your feedback about content to make decisions about how space in our pages is used in the future. It will also have an impact on a forthcoming redesign of the magazine. We will continue to burnish our digital offerings for the growing number of readers who value that delivery model, which includes incorporating video storytelling alongside traditional print. The demographic information and readership preferences will help us provide advertising that readers find relevant and informative.

Mostly, we will try not to screw it up, since you've told us we—and the publicly owned utilities that partner with us to create Ruralite magazine every month—are already doing a good job.

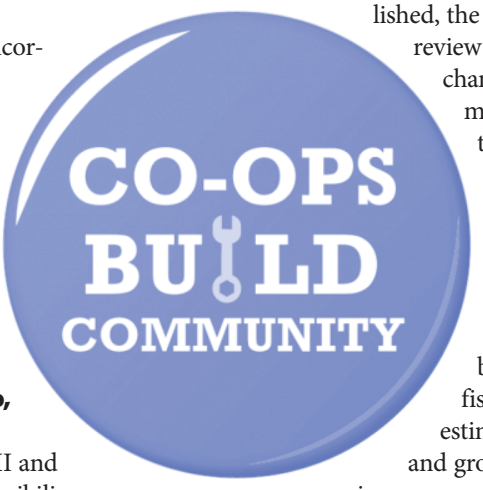
Thank you, and please keep the comments and suggestions coming by dropping us a note anytime at feedback@ruralite.org. ■

**Michael Shepard** is CEO of Ruralite Services Inc. and Efficiency Services Group in Hillsboro, Oregon.

# Get Involved: Run for the Board of Directors

Elections for Blachly-Lane Electric Cooperative Districts No. 1, 3 and 5 director positions will be in the spring of 2019, but it is not too early to consider running for a position.

Behind the scenes of every incorporated institution is an important group of people: the board of directors. The board members of Blachly-Lane Electric Co-op—elected by the membership—are entrusted by the membership with responsibility for the co-op's success.




**Just what does the board do, exactly?**

Blachly-Lane's bylaws Articles III and IV outline the duties and responsibilities of the board of directors. As individuals, board members:

- Become familiar with the articles of incorporation and bylaws of the cooperative, and conduct business in accordance with their provisions.
- Are familiar with the state law under which the co-op was incorporated.
- Attend regular and special meetings of the board.
- Understand the general legal responsibility of serving on the board of directors.
- Commit to participating in training programs to better understand the co-op's operations and the directors' role in it.

As a group, board members:

- Develop and adopt long-range business strategies.
- Adopt broad, general policies to guide the manager. It is the manager's job, rather than that of the board, to make the detailed decision on how to implement the board's policies. Once established, the board needs to monitor and review policies annually and make changes when necessary. Board members make policy decisions; they do not assume responsibilities that are part of day-to-day operations.
- Review written monthly financial reports and operating statements, and review the operating budget for each upcoming fiscal year. The budget should estimate the expected volume and gross income, expenses, and net income expected as a key part of business planning on the part of the board and management.
- Determine the patronage refund allocation, weighing legal requirements against the need for reinvesting funds to provide money to retire old equities and still meet current capital needs.

**I would like to help. How do I place my name on the ballot?**

Consider running if you value the co-op and believe the electric service it provides is an asset to our community. If you would like to represent your district in the oversight and decision-making process, participate in the ongoing conversation about the direction of the co-op, and can attend monthly meetings and spend time preparing for these meetings, look for more information in Ruralite and on the Blachly-Lane website in January when director nomination petitions will be available. ■

Blachly-Lane
ELECTRIC CO-OP

# Home Automation Means Control for Members

**By Derrill Holly**

Home automation systems are placing the powers of control in the hands of co-op members, but many questions remain about the best ways to use them to save money and energy.

"Most smart home technology is about comfort and convenience. Consumers interested in saving money on monthly energy purchases should look at internet-connected thermostats first," said Brian Sloboda, program and product line manager for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

"Around half of all thermostats sold today are smart thermostats. These devices can learn your preferences and adjust the thermostat when you are not home," Sloboda said. "During the cold winter months, these devices have the potential to save seven percent on energy used to heat the home."

Sloboda has watched home automation systems evolve over the years. He is particularly interested in identifying ways to enhance efficiency and potential savings for co-op members.

## Finding Value in Energy Savings

Security system notifications and thermostat controls that adapt to home automation are among the most popular options available. But some consumers are tackling other tasks in ways that actually could help them save or manage energy use effectively.

"There are different kinds of smart when it comes to smart appliances and devices," said Peter May-Ostendorp, principal researcher at Xergy Consulting, which specializes in emerging technologies for energy savings in buildings, including homes.

"For some, smart simply means 'we connected this thing to the network,' which adds minimal value to the consumer," said May-Ostendorp, who also is an energy technology consultant to NRECA. "In other products, smart means that there is some intelligence either built into the product or connected via the cloud that enables a taste of artificial intelligence."

But not every product using artificial intelligence is designed to save energy. In many instances, energy use is secondary to convenience or connectivity features.

## Making Connections

"Most smart devices have nothing to do with energy use, grid management or other resource conservation, " said May-Ostendorp. "Generally, the benefits—dollar savings to the consumer—have not been proven, with the exception of smart thermostats, grid-connected water heaters and similar devices."

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), interest in connected or smart appliances is trending upward among consumers, and manufacturers are responding with a growing list of products.

"If you are thinking of purchasing a smart appliance or thermostat, look for one that is ENERGY STAR®-certified with connected functionality," wrote EPA officials asked about the technology. "Those that meet our criteria are designed to encourage interoperability and offer the following features: low energy use, energy use reporting and consumer ownership of all data."

Besides smart thermostats, the products available now include, room air conditioners, refrigerators and freezers, laundry equipment, light bulbs and fixtures, and power strips.

"While owning a smart product doesn't automatically save you energy, if YOU are smart about using them, they can make a significant difference in your home," wrote the EPA. That means making the investment payoff could take a few lifestyle changes. But dashboards, accessible from computers or tablets, and apps available for smartphones can help.

"I don't think many people want infinite control over dozens of appliances and systems in their homes," said Spencer Sator, president and CEO of Crimson Consulting, another NRECA energy efficiency advisor. "What we really want is 'set it and forget it,' features that we don't have to actively manage," said Sator. "The best devices get installed, adjusted and the consumer can walk away and still potentially save some energy."

According to Sator, consumers are looking for simplicity. That's feeding the popularity of virtual assistant technologies, like Amazon's Alexa and Echo, Google Assistant and Apple HomeKit. Other companies, including Samsung, Logitech and Wink are also offering home-management hubs and platforms designed to help manage connected technology.

Convenience and programming simplicity are among the most important factors fueling consumer acceptance of what Sator

describes as "home ecosystem" products. Home security controls, including locks, alarm systems and lighting are also popular features.

"We're seeing adoption of the technology not necessarily for energy-saving reasons, but for life-enhancing applications, including some that help elderly consumers maintain independence in their homes," Sator said.

Energy advisors agree that controlling devices from various manufacturers that perform different functions with a single system enhances the value of home automation systems.

**Command and Control**

The challenges for consumers are deciding which features meet their expectations and justify the added investment in automation, and how well various products work together under management of a particular hub device or app.

"This is still the Wild West, from a technology value perspective," said Sator. "When you consider available options and actual performance of the devices available, some gadgets perform well and can save consumers money and energy, while others don't measure up to the hype."

With more than 900 manufacturers marketing about 4,100 connected devices, voice command technology is seen as one way to avoid collections of various remotes that typically wind up cast aside in favor of multifunction control devices.

"The Jetsons-like experience—where your Fitbit recognizes you're awake, tells the coffee to brew, queues up your morning news on a smart speaker, ramps up the heating setpoint—isn't really happening," said Exergy Consulting's May-Ostendorp. "People have thought that Alexa or Google Home might be the answer, but do we all really want to talk to our home, Star Trek style, to accomplish basic tasks?"

In fact, smart speaker technology is primarily used to answer questions, check the weather, get news updates or play music. According to a survey conducted in five major industrialized nations, including the United States, 65 percent of those asked cited those functions, while only six percent reported using the technology to control lighting, televisions or other connected devices.

"No one wants a hodge-podge of technologies that can't communicate with each other," said Crimson Consulting's Sator, adding that the necessary hubs and powered interfaces to connect the devices could actually boost overall energy use. "The technology isn't very smart if devices can't work together." ■

*Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.*

# YOUR ADVANCED ELECTRICAL SERVICE METER

## IS COMING SOON!

To provide the safest, most reliable electrical service to our customers, Tillamook PUD has contracted with Anixter to replace the aging Electronic Metering Transponder (EMT) meters in our service area with updated Universal Metering Transponder (UMT) meters. The installation will begin in December 2018 and will continue through September of 2019.

*Modern meter technology allows us to better serve our customers.*


Safety, Quality, Efficiency

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN YOUR METER IS REPLACED...

### 1 Notification

You will receive a postcard four to six weeks prior to meter installation at your service address. The postcard will indicate the timeframe for your new meter installation.

### 2 Day of Installation

A friendly, and easily identifiable Anixter meter technician will notify you when they have arrived at your service location to replace your meter. If you are not present, then the meter technician will replace your meter and leave a door hanger to notify you of the change.

### 3 During Installation

Your electricity will be turned off for a few minutes. During this time, the meter technician will inspect the meter base for damage or rust, remove the existing meter, then check for proper voltage levels and jaw tension. When the technician has completed the safety checks, the new UMT meter will be installed and your electrical service will be turned back on.

### 4 After Installation

Since your electricity will be turned off briefly, you may need to reset your clocks and other devices.


*The certified meter technicians will be easily identifiable. They will be wearing proper personal protection equipment, and their vehicles will be marked with the Tillamook PUD logo and the text, "Contract Meter Installer".*

# ADVANCED METER TECHNOLOGY

UMT meters have advanced capabilities that can detect system anomalies more efficiently. For example, if an outage event occurs, information retrieved from the meters can help identify issues which will allow crews to respond quickly, make repairs, and restore your power.

### Questions?

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Tillamook PUD office at 503-842-2535, 800-422-2535, service@tpud.org or visit our website at tpud.org.

TILLAMOOK PUBLIC POWER PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT

# GVEA Commissions Alaska's Largest Solar Farm


Officials and guests gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at GVEA's new solar farm. Shown (left-right) are ABS Alaskan owner Jim Norman, GVEA President & CEO Cory Borgeson, GVEA Project Engineer Nathan Minnema.

On Friday, October 12, Golden Valley Electric Association and local officials held a ribbon cutting ceremony to acknowledge the commissioning of its 563-kilowatt solar farm.

GVEA's solar installation is the largest photovoltaic (PV) system in the State of Alaska. The project should produce enough energy to power 71 homes (using an average of 660 kWh per month).

"GVEA is expanding its renewable energy portfolio with the addition of this solar PV system," said Cory Borgeson, GVEA's President & CEO.

GVEA's Board of Directors approved this project last fall. A local Fairbanks business, ABS Alaskan Inc., supplied the 1,760 panels, each of which has a peak generating potential of 320 watts. "This solar farm will give Golden Valley a better understanding of the performance of a solar farm on our system and the resulting cost per kilowatt-hour," Borgeson said.

> "This solar farm will give Golden Valley a better understanding of the performance of a solar farm on our system and the resulting cost per kilowatt-hour."

The solar array is constructed on a 3-acre parcel between Van Horn Road and Bidwell Ave. The site is located next to GVEA's Wilson Substation and the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). There's room for future expansion, and the panels are visible looking north from Van Horn Road.

The project will cost just over a million dollars to complete. A grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy for America Program offset $225,000 of the cost.

Golden Valley has a dedicated web page for the project at http://www.gvea.com/energy/solar-farm. The page includes a two-minute project overview video from project manager Nathan Minnema, as well as a video from the ribbon-cutting ceremony. ■

# Golden Valley Solar

## Powering a Clean Energy Future

### Solar Farm Facts

- 563 kW solar PV system
- Online: October 2018
- Footprint: 3 acres
- Contractor: ABS Alaskan, Inc.
- Panel manufacturer: CSUN
- Watts generated: Each of the 1,760 panels will generate 320 watts
- Cost: $850,000 after $225,000 Grant, USDA "REAP"
- Largest solar array in Alaska

GVEA's new solar farm is located on GVEA property next to the Wilson Substation and the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). It is visible from Van Horn Road.

GVEA
Golden Valley Electric Association
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# MORE
## THAN A BUSINESS. BUILDING COMMUNITY.

As a parent, I'm driven to create the best possible community for my children. I'm proud of our shared open spaces, schools, and local leaders from Lassen Municipal Utility District who work with us to make our lives better.

As a community-owned utility, LMUD is driven to be more than a business. By volunteering and supporting local groups, LMUD staff teams up with local parents to build our community. Public power scholarships such as LMUD's offer local children leadership opportunities, and LMUD's drive to bring new companies to our area will help keep our young people employed in our community. When there's a need, we know we can work with LMUD to find the best solution for our community.

We are public power.
We are MORE POWERFUL TOGETHER.

Learn how LMUD contrubutes to our community
#MorePowerfulTogether at lmud.org.

LASSEN
MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT

## Use Energy Wisely

# Prepare Your Holiday Feast Efficiently

Baking pies, roasting a turkey and warming up the side dishes for your family's Thanksgiving feast can be hard on your electric bill if you rely on your oven to do all the work.

This Thanksgiving, consider using your stovetop, barbecue grill, microwave oven, slow cooker, toaster oven, pressure cooker, electric skillet, and even your blender or food processor to "cook" your bird and the trimmings.

Here are some tips for a more energy-efficient Thanksgiving.

- Give your oven a break and your family a treat by smoking or grilling your turkey outdoors in your barbecue grill. It is a quicker way to cook a bird, and the smoky flavor is a nice change from a traditional, oven-roasted turkey.
- Use the microwave oven to heat vegetables, potatoes and other side dishes.
- Consider serving some food that doesn't need to be cooked. The turkey, dressing and potatoes will be hot. Add variety by preparing a few cold salads and raw vegetables with dip. Experiment with simple desserts, such as frozen peanut butter pie or no-bake cheesecake.
- When you do use the oven, resist opening the door. Every time you peek inside, you let out heat and the oven has to work harder to get back to the proper temperature.
- Bake everything at the same time: pies, bread, turkey, potatoes. The more your oven can do at once, the less time you will need to use it. Leave enough space between items for air and heat to circulate.
- Choose glass or ceramic pans for the oven. They cook food at temperatures as much as 25 degrees lower than metal pans.
- The burners on your cooktop will work more efficiently if you match the size of the burner to the size of the pot. Placing a small pot on a large burner wastes the heat from the part of the burner that does not touch the pot.
- Clean the burners and the oven. If you use the self-cleaning function on your oven while it is still hot after you use it to prepare a meal, it will use the residual heat and work quicker. ■

**Save energy, and reduce heat in the kitchen by using your slow cooker to make tasty Thanksgiving dressing.**

## Teach Kids to Help in the Kitchen

Thanksgiving is equal parts family time and cooking, but the two often compete. This year, don't shoo your kids out of the kitchen. Involve them in preparing the family meal.

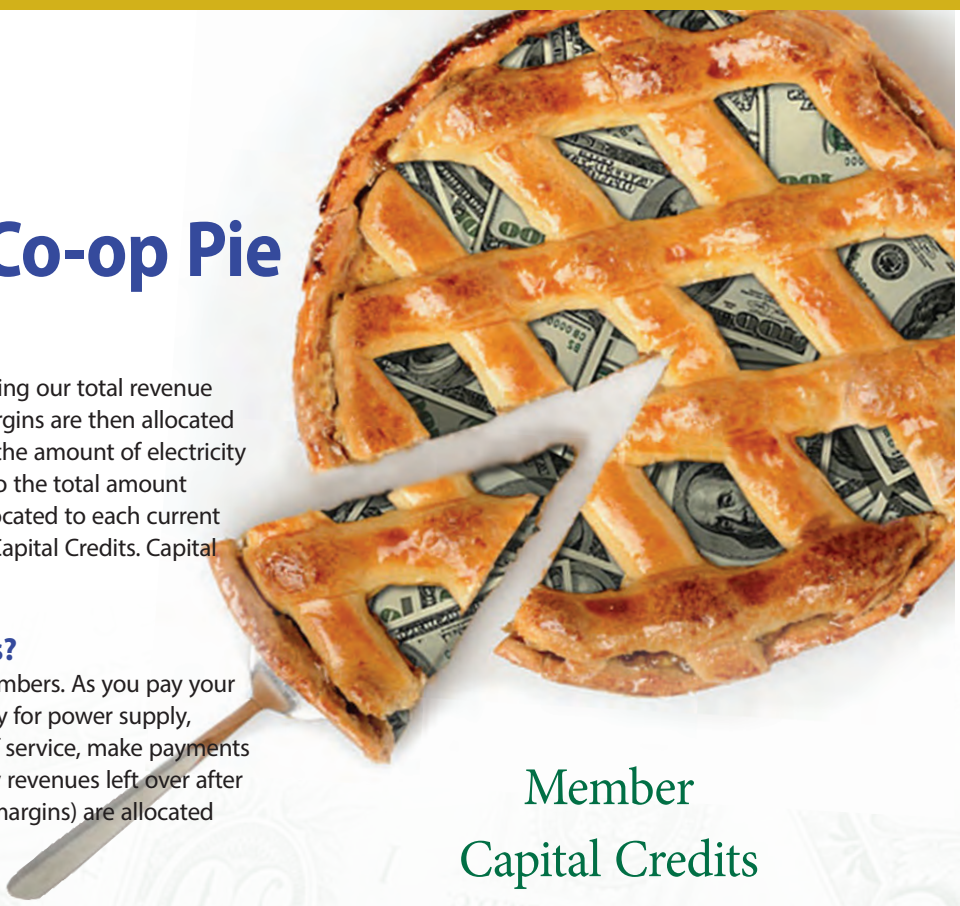
Cooking and baking are valuable skills your children will rely on for the rest of their lives. Here are ways to involve them regardless of their age:

- As you give your children age-appropriate tasks, you teach them how to work safely around a hot stove and oven, and with knives and other kitchen tools. Although you should not give small children jobs that involve cutting with sharp blades or touching hot pots or appliances, you can talk about safety.
- Assign your young helpers the job of preparing salads and vegetables. They may be more likely to want to eat those healthy selections if they helped prepare them.

One of the benefits of cooking with your kids is children who help with meal planning, food shopping and cooking tend to learn more about food, calories and portion control.

**Form lasting memories when you enlist the help of your children during holiday food preparation.**

# Capital Credits:
# Your Slice of the Co-op Pie



### What are MEMBER CAPITAL CREDITS?
Each year, FKEC calculates our annual margins by taking our total revenue and subtracting all operating costs. The resulting margins are then allocated to each member based on their patronage, which is the amount of electricity he or she purchased during that year in proportion to the total amount purchased by all members. Once the margins are allocated to each current member for that year, they are then called Member Capital Credits. Capital Credits are your piece of the pie.

### Why do we PAY Member Capital Credits?
FKEC is a not-for-profit cooperative, owned by its members. As you pay your electric bill each month, FKEC uses that money to pay for power supply, improve electrical infrastructure, ensure continuity of service, make payments on any loans and provide an emergency reserve. Any revenues left over after covering FKEC's operating expenses (also known as margins) are allocated back to you as Member Capital Credits.

### What YEAR are these refunds for?
This year's refunds represent the margins that were allocated to our members in 2000. If you were an FKEC member in that year you will receive either a refund check in the mail or a credit on your November bill.

### Will I receive a CHECK or a CREDIT on my bill?
If you have an active account and are due a refund less than $100, you will receive a credit on your November 2018 electric bill. If your Member Capital Credit refund is $100 or more, you will receive a check. Capital Credit checks less than $20 will only be mailed to former members if it's the final balance pay-out. Checks are valid for 90 days.

### Why is my neighbor's refund MORE than mine?
If your neighbor purchased more electricity than you in 2000, his or her refund will be larger.

### My NAME has changed, what do I need to do?
Contact FKEC to change the name(s) on the account. We will begin to reissue new checks in May 2019.

Member Capital Credits are your piece of FKEC's success, both today and in the future.

**Need more HELP?**
Call FKEC Member Service at 305-852-2431 or visit www.FKEC.com for more information and related forms.

# How You Fit Into GEC

*Understand the origin of your co-op, and your rights and privileges*

Glades Electric Cooperative was founded on a unique business model. You are not only a customer of Glades Electric, you are a member. With that membership comes rights and privileges found in few other businesses in America. You and your fellow members own and have the right to control the direction of your cooperative.

It all started when rural electric cooperatives began to spread across America after President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration in 1935. The executive order that established the REA and passage of the Rural Electrification Act a year later marked the first steps in a public-private partnership that has, during the past 70 years, bridged the vast expanse of rural America. It has brought electric power to businesses and communities willing to organize cooperatively and accept responsibility for the provision of safe, affordable and reliable electric power.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Voluntary and Open Membership** | Cooperatives are open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership. |
| **Democratic Member Control** | Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. |
| **Members' Economic Participation** | Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. |
| **Autonomy and Independence** | Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. |
| **Education, Training and Information** | Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. |
| **Cooperation Among Cooperatives** | Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures. |
| **Concern for Community** | While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members. |

Glades Electric Cooperative was founded in 1945, immediately following World War II. A group of farmers and business leaders from primarily Glades, Hendry and Highlands counties got together and filed the paperwork that established what we know today as Glades Electric Cooperative.

Through the years, members have wondered why they are served by GEC instead of Duke Energy or Florida Power and Light. The reason is simple.

In 1945, investor-owned for-profit utilities did not believe it would be profitable for them to run power lines to sparsely populated areas. President Roosevelt was keenly aware of this since his Little White House in rural Georgia was denied service by the investor-owned utility in that area.

He knew that without reliable power, rural America would never enjoy the new technologies of the times that were common in urban areas—things such as lightbulbs, machines that washed clothes by themselves and stoves that cooked sumptuous meals without the need to cut wood or tote coal.

The business model put together through the Rural Electrification Act was different. There would be no stockholders clamoring for profits. Decisions would be made not on the bottom line, but on what was best for the communities and members the new-fangled electric cooperatives served. They would be nonprofit.

Everyone who bought electricity from the cooperative would have a say in how it was operated, and any money left at the end of the operating year would be allocated back to those members on a pro-rata basis through a system called capital credits. These capital credits, or equity accounts, would be held by the cooperative for a number of years to expand and grow the cooperative, reducing the need to borrow money. In time, the equity systematically would be paid back to the members.

How could everyone have a say? It was decided each cooperative would have a democratically elected board of trustees that would set the policy, direction and budget for cooperative employees.

That is where you, the individual member, comes

in. At the annual meeting each year, you have the right to decide who sits on that board. You even have a right to run for a seat on the board. Each term is for three years, with three directors up for election each year. It is truly democracy in action.

All electric cooperatives are guided by seven cooperative principles (see the box on page 4).

The next several months, each principle will be featured in Florida Currents magazine, describing in detail how they affect the way GEC does business. Hopefully, that will give you a better understanding of who we are and how you fit in the picture.

"Neighbors Working For Neighbors" is more than a tagline for GEC. It defines how we began—just some friends and acquaintances getting together to electrify our rural area when the big boys refused to come. It also is a statement about who we are today and who we want to be in the future.

We never forget that we answer to you, and that we are charged to do what our collective years of experience have taught us is in your best interests. We are proud to be a not-for-profit rural electric cooperative. We want you to be proud to be a part of this unique way of doing business. ■


**Above, Glades Electric Cooperative members gather for the 73rd annual meeting in March, where they voted for fellow members to represent them on the board of trustees and were updated about cooperative activities. Left, GEC is committed to upholding specific values, a vision and mission, which are outlined on a banner displayed at the annual meeting.**

# Take Action to Relieve Life's Demands

*Focus on specific steps to help reduce stress*

**By Demetra Zuras**

Life is stressful. Competing priorities such as work, family and other responsibilities can leave you little time to focus on your state of mind.

Many people experience stress due to the demands of modern life. You are not alone. But ignoring stress can result in physical and mental consequences such as fatigue, unstable relationships, substance abuse and depression.

Here are some ways to relieve stress:

- **Change your diet.** Rather than turning to traditional comfort foods such as pizza and ice cream while stressed, healthier—but still delicious—food options such as fatty fish, carrots and nuts are known to reduce stress levels. According to Prevention magazine, drinking tea can help calm your nerves, too.
- **Get active.** Many find it useful to go on a run or walk to clear their mind and reduce stress. Any type of exercise can reduce stress as your brain releases chemicals such as endorphins and dopamine, which make you feel happier.
- **Meditate.** Taking just a few minutes a day to meditate can help ease stress and lower anxiety levels. According to Dr. Elizabeth Hoge, a psychiatrist and assistant professor at Harvard Medical School, simple mindful meditations that focus on your breathing have been shown to quell anxiety symptoms and control stress.
- **Get involved in community service.** Donate your spare time to help your community—and increase your impact by bringing along a friend or family member. Volunteer at a soup kitchen, visit an animal shelter or help people in your community who need an extra hand or some company. These simple acts will brighten someone else's day and your own.
- **Find support.** It is important to share your problems with others rather than keep them bottled up inside. Depending on the issue you face, talk to a trusted friend or family member, or explore group counseling, which can benefit you by speaking with others who are facing similar challenges.
- **Organize your living space.** An unorganized environment can create more stress by allowing things like bills or laundry to pile up and become overwhelming. Find time to organize your living space to live a less cluttered life.
- **Speak to your doctor.** Stress and depression are major health issues. It is important to get professional medical help. More than 40 million adults in the United States suffer from anxiety, and more than 16 million suffer from depression. You are not abnormal nor alone. ■

*Need help managing stress, anxiety or answering other questions about mental health? The National Alliance on Mental Illness can answer questions about treatment and symptoms, and make referrals to local options. Reach NAMI Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, at (800) 950-6264, or email info@nami.org.*

**Clutter in the home creates unnecessary stress. Organize your living space to restore a sense of order.**
Photo by Joseph Helfenberger