



During Lineworker Appreciation Day, we recognize our lineworkers, left to right, **Preston Long, Ryder Peterson, Tanner Roth, Cole Jankovsky, Trey Schepens, Lee Delp, Jory Bell, Jesse Obergfell, Rich Gorde, Aaron Eide** and **Bryan Franck**.

## Electric cooperative heroes

**W**hen you think of heroes, do electric lineworkers come to mind? Probably not for most of us. However, when you have been without electricity for several hours or days and your power is restored, you may reconsider who you think of as heroes.

On April 10, 2013, the U.S. Senate declared April 18 as National Lineworker Appreciation Day. This was following the 2012 Hurricane Sandy, which affected 24 states across the United States, downing power lines and causing \$65 billion in damage along the way. It was after this tragedy that line crews across the country stepped up in droves to help get the affected states running again, rebuilding the power system from the ground up.

While every trade professional deserves appreciation and praise, lineworkers especially deserve a pat on the back for putting their lives at risk every day. Electrical linework is one of the most dangerous jobs in the country, based on the

conditions and situations where their work calls them. With work needing to be done at all hours of the day and night, in dangerous environments and inclement weather, line crews risk their own safety daily to keep power flowing to our homes and businesses.

Make sure to reach out to the lineworkers in your life and thank them for all the hard work they put in day after day! ■

### SAVE THE DATE

**Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative annual meeting**

Wednesday, June 7

Richland County Event Center

Registration starts at 5 p.m.



## You can't AVOID what you CAN'T SEE

Starting a job — big or small — without first getting utilities marked could result in serious injury, service disruptions for you and your neighbors, and a hefty fine.

Call 8-1-1 before you dig.

Learn more at:  Safe  
Electricity.org®

## No foolin': April is Safe Digging Month

**S**pring showers bring May flowers, but digging on your own this spring could spell big trouble. Even if you think you could get lucky or digging one small hole (or two) won't matter, don't take for granted what lines might lurk beneath the soil in your yard or easement.

Before you use that posthole digger or other unearthing tools, STOP and call 811 to request that buried electric, gas, cable and other live lines in or near your yard be marked. The service is free, but digging in an unmarked yard may not be.

You might think you don't have time, but ask yourself, "What's the worst that could happen?"

**YOU COULD DIE OR BECOME SERIOUSLY INJURED.**

It doesn't make that yard project quite as pressing, does it?

What are other consequences of blindly digging and taking a chance? You could cause a power outage. You could hit a gas line and get burned or cause an evacuation in your neighborhood. You could be fined. If you hit a telephone line or fiber optic line, you might lose your telephone, cable TV or internet service. Worse yet, it could interfere with your neighborhood's emergency assistance technology.

Although it all seems like "your" yard, utilities

have the right of way to the live lines lurking under the ground in places where you might dig. In fact, an underground utility line is damaged once every nine minutes across the nation, because someone decided to dig without getting their yard properly marked, according to data collected by Common Ground Alliance. You may think one or two "small holes" won't matter, but that's what the person thought who hit a line nine minutes ago.

Take a deep breath, look over your landscaping or fence plans, and call 811 before you dig. By calling 811, utilities or the companies they contract will come to your home and mark your yard before you dig.

The website, [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com), lists the name and contact information for each state's digging notification service. The site also lists the advance notice required for marking services, which is usually two days, not including the day you call.

So tiptoe through the tulips this spring and summer, both literally and figuratively. Know what's underneath that flower bed and everywhere else in your yard.

As [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com) states, "Know what's below." Then dig safely. For more about electrical safety, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org). ■

# Rural Development Finance Corporation grant available

The Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) is offering a grant up to \$3,000 per member-cooperative to be used to support community-owned entities, nonprofits and community-based projects.

Eligible projects include: community-owned businesses (cafe, grocery store, motel); community facilities (ambulance services, fire districts, recreation, hospital/clinic, community center and others); or community-based projects (schools and youth projects) that benefit rural areas and lead to community betterment. Medical fundraisers or general operating costs are not eligible for the grant.

This grant is based on matching funds. If you would

like more information on this grant, or to download an application, go to [www.lyrec.coop](http://www.lyrec.coop). ■



## CO-OP 101:

# Co-ops need member involvement!

### The most important part of an electric cooperative is YOU!

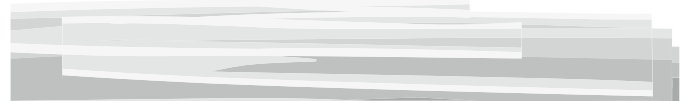
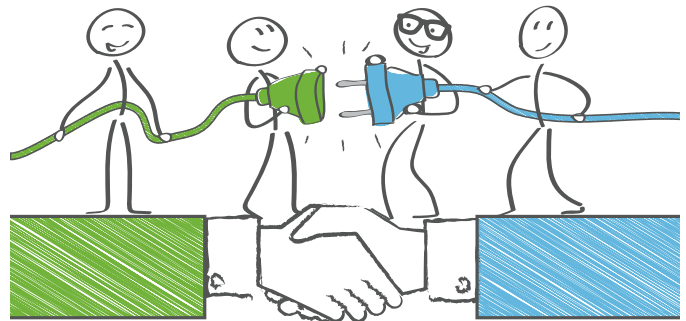
Electric cooperatives exist to meet the needs of their members. And members are the owners, too!

Electric cooperatives are owned and democratically controlled by their members – the people who use the electricity.

### Use your voice!

By attending your cooperative’s annual meeting, you learn more about your electric cooperative’s financial standing, its past accomplishments and future plans. An informed member can be a valuable asset. And members also elect their representatives to the board of directors.

Cooperatives operate on the principle of “one member, one vote.” So, each member of a cooperative has the same voting power. And as a member, you have a voice in how your co-op operates, by electing directors to represent you.



### Get involved!

Those directors are your representatives on the board. Without their involvement, your electric cooperative would not be able to operate!

Members who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions are vital to a cooperative. They help decide how active an electric cooperative will be in the community, such as providing scholarships or sponsoring other activities to develop young leaders in our communities.

We encourage you to become involved in your cooperative. Attend your annual meeting, cast a ballot for directors and consider serving on the board of directors. **YOU are the electric cooperative!** ■



Liliana Johnson

## Johnson nominated for scholarship

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative's (LYREC) Scholarship Committee nominated Liliana Johnson for the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association (MECA) memorial scholarship.

Liliana is the daughter of Ray and Heather Johnson of Sidney. She is currently attending Montana State University-Bozeman in pursuit of her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

Liliana's scholarship application will be entered into a pool of other applicants from the northeast district of Montana. If Liliana is chosen by MECA, she will receive a \$500 scholarship from MECA. ■



Logan Adams

## Adams wins \$1,000 scholarship

Logan Adams is the 2023 recipient of a Basin Electric Power Cooperative \$1,000 scholarship. Logan currently attends Lambert High School and is planning to attend Butte Technological University to major in chemical engineering.

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative thanks everyone who took time to apply for the scholarship. Follow LYREC's social media to see more scholarship opportunities. ■

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### TRUSTEES

Allen Thiessen ..... President  
 Greg Rauschendorfer ..... Vice President  
 Dennis Schmierer ..... Secretary/Treasurer  
 Colin Gartner ..... Trustee  
 Tim Franzen ..... Trustee  
 Dennis Nelson ..... Trustee  
 Jim Vitt ..... Trustee

### EMPLOYEES

Jason Brothen ..... General Manager  
 Brenda Bond ..... Chief Financial Officer  
 Jami Propp ..... Member Service Manager  
 Kyle Kavanagh ..... IT Coordinator  
 Margo Zadow ..... Billing Coordinator  
 Pam Wilcoxon ..... Plant Accountant  
 Tiffani Hentges ..... Customer Service Representative  
 Melissa Buckley ..... Customer Service Representative  
 Chris Hillesland ..... Chief Operations Officer  
 Rich Gorde ..... Journeyman Lineman  
 Eric McPherson ..... System Controller  
 Kevin Goff ..... Operations Assistant  
 Kelly Keyser ..... Operations Manager  
 Aaron Eide ..... Journeyman Lineman  
 Bryan Franck ..... Journeyman Lineman  
 Jesse Obergfell ..... Journeyman Lineman  
 Tanner Roth ..... Journeyman Lineman  
 Ryder Peterson ..... Journeyman Lineman  
 Cole Jankovsky ..... Journeyman Lineman  
 Lee Delp ..... Apprentice Lineman  
 Preston Long ..... Apprentice Lineman  
 Trey Schepens ..... Apprentice Lineman  
 Jory Bell ..... Apprentice Lineman  
 Brandon Mueller ..... Master Electrician  
 Mike Eberling ..... Mechanic  
 Dan Gieser ..... EMS  
 Lee Alvstad ..... Mechanic/EMS  
 Richard Tremblay ..... EMS  
 Bo Kindopp ..... GIS/Easement Technician  
 Corey Candee ..... Chief Information Officer  
 Jeremy Reese ..... Information Technology Technician  
 Edwin Gatzke ..... Line Locator/Groundsman  
 Justin King ..... Warehouse Supervisor

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Operating report

Year to date:	January 2022	January 2023
Total miles energized	2,127	2,149
Total number of meters	6,221	6,245
Kilowatt-hours sold	28,739,999	32,956,178
Revenue	\$2,864,920	\$3,339,816
Total expenses	\$3,050,764	\$3,500,193
Operating margins	(\$185,017)	\$2,074,606