

Nominating Committee to meet in March



Nelson



Rauschendorfer



Thiessen

The Nominating Committee will meet Thursday, March 2, at Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative's (LYREC) office. The purpose of the Nominating Committee is to select candidates for the board of trustees.

The Nominating Committee will consist of two members each from District 5, District 6 and District 7. The committee will nominate one or more candidates for District 5, District 6 and District 7. The present

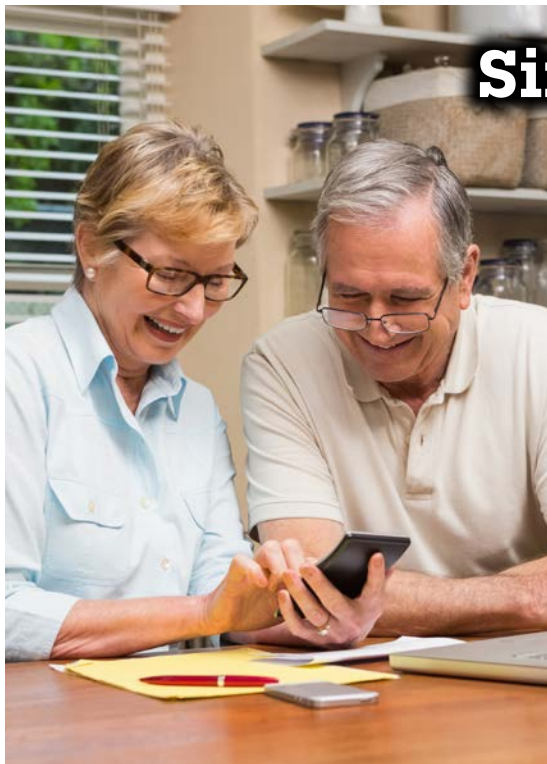
trustees holding seats in these districts are Dennis Nelson, District 5, Greg Rauschendorfer, District 6, and Allen Thiessen, District 7.

Nominating Committee members are:

- Representing District 5 - Kirk Panasuk and Bryce Romo
- Representing District 6 - Victor Gustafson and Mason Johnston
- Representing District 7 - Mark Pust and Lana Watson

If you are a member of LYREC, reside in District 5, 6 or 7 and are interested in becoming a candidate for the board of trustees, contact one of the Nominating Committee members and ask to be considered for nomination.

If you have a joint membership, either member on the account can run for the board of trustees seat. A joint membership is entitled to one vote at any meeting of the cooperative. ■



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The good and the bad of 2022

by **Chris Hillesland**

It has been another productive year at Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC), with many systemwide projects completed.

We had a storm roll through our service territory April 23, 2022, that took out a large portion of our substations. By the evening of April 24, all substations were energized, with just a few scattered outages.

By April 26, all residential meters were restored. Although the storm was bad, we considered ourselves lucky compared to our neighboring cooperatives. LYREC had little damage compared to our neighbors to the north and east. We lost roughly 30 poles, while others lost thousands of poles. One of the neighboring cooperatives was not able to restore power to some members for 10 days and another had some members without power for over a month.

One of our biggest struggles has been supply chain delays. Emphasis has gone from lowest cost to “when can we expect to get it?” It has caused us to reevaluate the quantity of inventory we keep on hand. Fortunately, we have managed to keep moving forward, regardless of the shortages we are seeing. Cooperatives are



Chris Hillesland

blessed to be able to purchase or borrow material from other cooperatives. As a cooperative, you may have a good amount of inventory, but when a storm takes out thousands of poles, the inventory dwindles quickly. Cooperating with other co-ops is extremely helpful to everyone involved to help overcome the supply issue.

LYREC crews have been busy with system maintenance and installing new services. We hired four contractors in 2022 to help us stay on top of projects. They have been installing new and replacing old underground cable; they were able to complete a large job in the east Sidney area this summer. They also replaced undersized overhead lines east of Sidney and in the area northwest of Fairview. We have been working on getting our poles tested. The contract crew was able to get 7,000 poles tested, with less than a 1% rejection rate.

As new technology comes available, we make changes to keep our system more reliable. One of the tools we have been using for a few years is supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA). The SCADA system allows us to monitor our equipment and loads on all circuits and to remotely open and close breakers. We currently have all but one substation automated.

LYREC has seen some nice growth in 2022. Residential usage increased 4%, while commercial usage increased by 16.5% for the first 10 months of 2022. All in all, LYREC is excited to see what 2023 will bring. Happy New Year from all of us at LYREC! ■

Holiday food drive held

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) and Reynolds Market held a holiday food drive during Co-op Month in October. Reynolds had a collection bin at the store and collected 129 pounds of food from the community. LYREC employees and board members donated an additional 895 pounds of food and \$1,367 for the Richland County Food Bank. ■



Scholarship opportunities available

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) member's dependent. The applicant must be a student enrolled in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school in the fall of 2023.

Scholarship recipients are selected based on academic record; leadership and participation in school and community activities; honor; work experience; a statement of education and career goals; and an outside appraisal. To apply, complete the required criteria, which can be obtained at www.lyrec.coop. These applications are due Feb. 14.

MECA memorial scholarship

The Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association (MECA) is offering a \$500 scholarship to one eligible student from the northeast district of Montana. The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) must be LYREC members and the applicant must be attending college in the fall of 2023. Applications are judged on academic strength; school and community activities; employment; volunteerism; community service; and a personal statement.

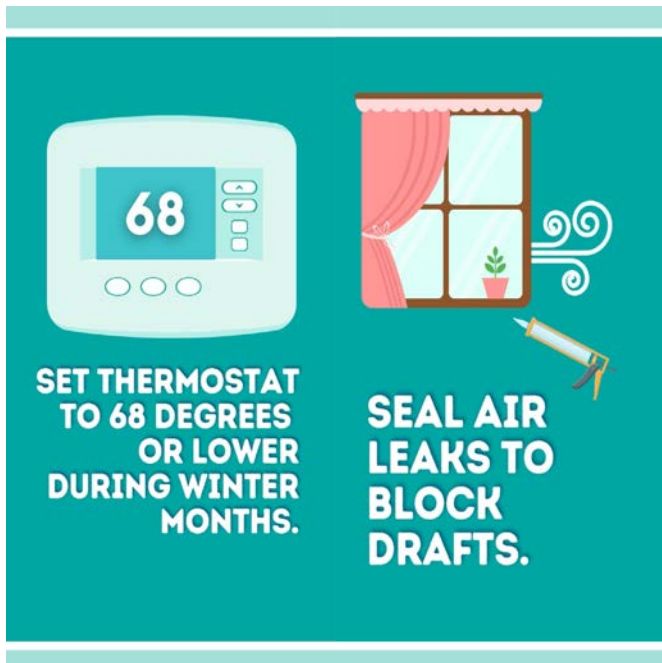
A committee comprised of LYREC staff will choose one application to send to MECA for a chance to win a \$500 scholarship. The MECA committee will then



choose one student to be awarded the scholarship.

To apply, complete the application form, along with all required materials. You may get an application at www.lyrec.coop. MECA memorial scholarship applications are due Jan. 25.

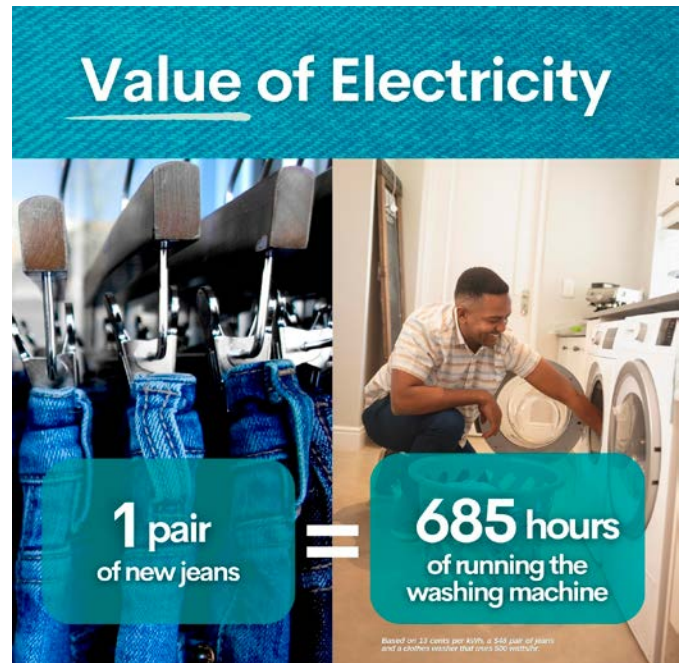
Please send all applications to LYREC, P.O. Box 1047, Sidney, MT 59270. ■



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SEAL AIR LEAKS TO BLOCK DRAFTS.



Value of Electricity

1 pair of new jeans = 685 hours of running the washing machine

Based on 11 cents per kWh, a \$60 pair of jeans and a clothes washer that uses 500 electricity.

Trustees retire \$750,000 in capital credits



Each year, your board of trustees, along with Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative's (LYREC) staff, review the co-op's financials and determine if capital credits can be returned to the members - YOU!

In 2022, the board of trustees approved two capital credit retirements. The first capital credit retirement was on the bill received in June and the second capital credit retirement check was on the bill

received in December. The second retirement amount was \$750,000. The grand total retired to members in 2022 was \$1,695,000.

Members who had service with LYREC in all or part of 2007 and 2021 may have received a credit in December. Most capital credits are returned to members via a credit on their electric bill. Crediting bills instead of sending checks saves members a significant amount of money in printing and postage costs.

Capital credits are not returned immediately, because rather than the co-op borrowing money, it uses the capital credits to pay for materials and equipment which, in turn, helps keep rates low for members.

It is important to keep your co-op informed of your current address, even if you move out of the area. LYREC will continue to send checks to members for several years once they move off our line. There is a list of past members who LYREC has not been able to reach on our website at www.lyrec.coop.

Under Montana law, a cooperative can use unclaimed capital credits for educational purposes, such as our scholarship program. ■



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Website: www.lyrec.com

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 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:	October 2021	October 2022
Total miles energized	2,127	2,140
Total number of meters	6,217	6,241
Kilowatt-hours sold	230,557,115	261,083,289
Revenue	\$24,206,736	\$27,945,387
Total expenses	\$23,103,583	\$26,240,289
Operating margins	\$2,152,206	\$2,536,368