



Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative lineworkers include, back row: Blade Jankovsky, Jesse Obergfell, Lee Alvstad, Bryan Franck, Rich Gorde; front row: Ryder Peterson, Eric McPherson and Richard Tremblay. Not pictured: Tanner Roth and Aaron Eide.

## The power behind your power

As spring arrives, we look forward to getting outside or opening our windows for fresh air. Most of all, we long for the day when the snow disappears and the weather gets warm.

But springtime often marks a beginning of a potentially stormy season that can include power outages. While Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) strives to provide reliable electricity to our members, there are times when Mother Nature has other plans. Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort of our homes. However, a group of professionals spring into action when the weather takes a turn for the worst – co-op lineworkers.

### A dangerous job

Braving stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers often must climb 40 or more feet into the air, carrying heavy equipment to restore power. Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S., lineworkers must perform detailed tasks next to high-voltage power lines.

To help keep them safe, lineworkers wear specialized protective clothing and equipment at all times when on the job. This includes fire-resistant clothing, insulated and rubber gloves, hard hats and safety glasses to limit potential burns and injuries. In addition, lineworkers must also wear BuckSqueeze, that provides fall protection, a hand line used to retrieve materials when on the pole, equipment to assist in climbing and an equipment

belt. While the gear performs a critical function, it also adds additional weight, making the job more complex.

In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing to the top of a pole to repair a wire. They are also information experts who can pinpoint an outage from miles away and restore power remotely. Line crews use their iPads to map outages, take photos of the work they have done and troubleshoot problems. LYREC lineworkers are responsible for keeping more than 2,000 miles of lines across five counties working, in order to bring power to your home and our local community 24/7, regardless of the weather, holidays or personal considerations.

While some of the tools that lineworkers use have changed over the years, the dedication to the job has not. Being a lineworker is not a glamorous profession. Line work is inherently dangerous, requiring lineworkers to work near high-voltage lines in the worst of conditions, at any time of the day or night. During storms, crews often work around the clock to restore power. While April is known for spring showers, there is also a day set aside to “thank a lineworker.”

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 9. So, during the month of April, if you see a lineworker, please take a minute to say thank you to the power behind your power. Let them know you appreciate the demanding work they do to keep the lights on, regardless of the conditions. (Meter No. T21673) ■



*Benjamin Brodhead*

## Brodhead wins Basin scholarship

**B**enjamin Brodhead is the 2018 recipient of the Basin Electric Power Cooperative \$1,000 scholarship. He is the son of Mark and Julie Brodhead, Sidney, Mont. Ben plans to attend the University of Montana and seek a degree in business administration, with a focus in marketing. Congratulations, Ben!

Determining the recipient of the Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship is inevitably a difficult decision and is based on many factors. Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) thanks everyone who took the time to apply for the Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship.

Join LYREC, June 6 at the Richland County Event Center, along with a parent, for LYREC's 82nd annual meeting. Thirty luck-of-the-draw scholarships will be awarded that evening. ■

## Heating assistance deadline April 30

**I**f you need help this heating season, funds are available. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) does not accept applications after April 30. If you reside in Montana, you can pick up an application at Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric's office or contact Energy Share at 800-227-0703. If you reside

in North Dakota, contact Community Action at 701-572-8191.

If you have an emergency after April 30, you may still be able to get assistance through the Energy Share Program. For more information, call the numbers listed above or Lower Yellowstone Electric at 406-488-1602. ■



## MEDORA DISCOUNTS OFFERED

Planning a trip to Medora this summer? Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) is able to offer its members a discount by being a Touchstone Energy® member. Simply call 1-800-MEDORA-1 and give the discount code of "Touch 2018" for a 15 percent discount on any of the following during any night of the season.

Things to do:

- Medora Musical

- Pitchfork steak fondue
- Bully Pulpit Golf Course

Lodging at any of the following:

- Bunkhouse Motel
- Badlands Motel
- Rough Riders Hotel

LYREC members can also receive 20 percent off admission at the Cowboy Hall of Fame by providing the discount code "Touch 2018."



*Educators tour the coal mine and get a close look at the dragline bucket.*



*Attendees mine chocolate chips during the seminar.*

## 2018 Lignite Education Seminar in June

The Lignite Education Seminar will be held June 11-14 at Bismarck State College's National Energy Center of Excellence, Bismarck, N.D. Applications are being accepted until the seminar is full or until April 13, whichever occurs first.

This four-day seminar is designed to provide teachers with a broader understanding of the lignite coal industry and the key role it plays in providing electricity to consumers, farmers and businesses in North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa and Montana.

The seminar includes discussions on how lignite coal is mined and converted into energy, and the economic impact of the industry on the region. It also includes a tour of a lignite mine, a lignite-based power plant and the Great Plains Synfuels Plant.

Teachers attending the seminar will receive electronic copies of each presentation, examples of lesson plans, classroom exercises, coal and ash samples, audiovisual materials, and information on the facilities they tour.

Free lodging is available at a

Bismarck State College dormitory. The Lignite Energy Council will provide meals during the seminar and transportation during the "Coal Country" tour.

This seminar offers two graduate credits paid for by the Lignite Energy Council. To receive the credits, teachers must attend all portions of the seminar and prepare a lesson plan demonstrating how they could use the seminar information and materials in their classroom.

For more information and an online application, visit [www.lignite.com/teachers](http://www.lignite.com/teachers). ■

# HIDDEN NUMBERS

If you find your meter number hidden in this issue, it is worth a \$25 credit on your next statement. The meter number will appear within the four Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative pages. Give us a call during the month your meter is listed, and claim your \$25 bill credit.



## April is National Safe Digging Month: Call 811 before you dig

Every six minutes, an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first calling 811.

April is National Safe Digging Month and Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative reminds both professional excavators and do-it-yourself homeowners that one easy phone call to 811 quickly begins the process of getting underground utility lines marked.

Knowing where underground utility lines are buried before each digging project begins helps prevent injury, expense and

penalties. When underground lines are damaged, vital services and everyday conveniences can become disconnected, not only to an individual home, but to the entire area.

When planning an excavation project, residents should dial 811 at least 48 hours (two working days) before work begins. Professional locators will then mark the approximate location of their utility lines, free of charge. Residents can dig confidently, knowing the utilities will not be disturbed.

It's safe. It's free. And it's the law. ■



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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Operating report

Year to date:	December 2016	December 2017
Total miles energized	2,111	2,102
Total number of meters	6,139	6,167
Kilowatt-hours sold	265,962,773	260,972,860
Revenue	\$25,034,035	\$26,483,788
Total expenses	\$22,104,771	\$24,866,666
Operating margins	\$3,778,290	\$3,786,490