

Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

High School Sophomores & Juniors



Write a winning essay and
win a trip of a
lifetime:
All-expense-paid trip to
Washington, D.C.

CHECK IT OUT AT
www.youthtour.coop

Contest rules/prizes

- To enter the essay contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school in the fall of 2015.
- You and your parents or guardians must be a current LYREC member.
- The essay is not to exceed two, double-spaced pages on this topic:

Considering your top three consumer needs, how do you believe we, as an electric cooperative, can best communicate our care and concern to the younger members of the cooperative?

An application can be picked up from your guidance counselor, or on our website at www.lyrec.com. Go to "My Community" then "Washington D.C. Youth Tour" for additional information.

- The deadline is Nov. 30, 2015. Emailed entries should be directed to jamip@lyrec.com, and hard-copy entries mailed to: LYREC, Youth Tour Essay Contest, 3200 W Holly or PO Box 1047, Sidney, MT 59270. Make sure to include the application along with the essay.

1st Place

- An all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 11-17, 2016
- \$1,000 toward college education
- \$200 bill credit for student's parent

2nd Place

- \$500 toward college education
- \$100 bill credit for student's parent

3rd Place

- \$100 toward college education
- \$50 bill credit for student's parent



2014 Youth Tour winner shares thoughts

BY CHANTEL WILCOXON

My trip to Washington, D.C., was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I had so much fun learning about what co-ops are and what they do. I learned that there are many companies that people don't know are cooperatives, such as Land O'Lakes. This was such an amazing experience to learn about what co-ops are and what they do.

Co-ops are all about people. Without them, the co-ops, which are basically nonprofit, would not run. They provide people with the things they need, such as electricity or food. It amazes me to think how different life would be if co-ops were never invented.

It was such a fun trip! We saw many monuments such as the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial and many more. There was a lot of sight-seeing, along with trying some of Washington's many restaurants. I think my favorite part was seeing a ton of people in the same city all learning and being potential co-op leaders. I had so much fun meeting people from all over the United States. It was an amazing experience to have with all of them.

I just want to thank you for sending me on this trip to understand more about what cooperatives are. They are a very important part of life and things would be so different if they were never invented. Thank you to all of you at Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative! ■

Coat and food drive in October

In the spirit of Co-op Month, Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) will be holding its annual coat and food drive through the entire month of October.

With the state of the economy, there are many individuals and families in need of assistance this year. If you have boots, hats, coats or any other winter gear that you no longer have a use for, please drop them off at our office. All items will be donated to the Salvation Army in Sidney at the end of October.

LYREC is also collecting nonperishable food items for the Richland County Food Bank through October. The Richland County Food Bank is also in need of hygiene supplies, such as laundry detergent, toothpaste and shampoo. Monetary donations are also accepted. Please make checks payable to Richland County Food Bank. ■



2015 National Cooperative Month



Cooperatives are unique! Co-ops are not-for-profit, member-owned businesses. They may serve a few people or a large group. But all co-ops follow seven key principles.

As part of our Co-op Month celebrations, we will take a look at the important roles co-ops play in your community.

What are co-ops?

Cooperatives are owned by their members or, in other words, the people who receive services from them. There are more than 900 electric co-ops serving 42 million Americans. According to the National Cooperative Grocers Association, 30 percent of farmers' products are marketed through more than 3,000 farmer-owned cooperatives in America. Familiar brands like SunKist, Land O' Lakes, Ocean Spray and Sun-Maid are all co-ops formed to help farmers distribute products.

In banking, 10,000 credit unions provide financial services to 84 million members across the nation. Co-ops have also been formed to provide child care, insurance and housing. Nearly 30,000 cooperatives operate at 73,000 locations nationally.

Guiding principles

The cooperative movement traces

its roots to a store started by weavers in the town of Rochdale, England, in 1844. The Rochdale model revolved around a set of guidelines drawn up by one of its members, Charles Howarth. When introduced into the United States by the National Grange in 1874, these "Rochdale Principles" fueled a cooperative explosion.

Although stated in many ways, the Rochdale Principles state that a cooperative must provide:

- **Voluntary and open membership:** Membership in a cooperative is available to all who can reasonably use its services, regardless of race, religion, sex or economic circumstances.
- **Democratic member control:** Co-ops are democratically controlled, with each member having one vote. As a result, control remains in the hands of all members. Directors are nominated and elected by the members. The seven Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) directors make decisions on what they believe is in the best interest for LYREC members.
- **Members' economic participation:** Cooperatives provide services "at cost" and remain not-for-profit regardless of the value of benefits delivered. Any money left over after all expenses are paid – margins – belongs to the members. Each member's share in the margin is determined by the amount of his or her use of the co-op's services. The margins are reimbursed to the members through their capital credit checks dispersed in June each year.
- **Autonomy and independence:** Cooperatives are self-sustaining,

self-help organizations controlled by their members. If cooperatives enter into agreements with others or raise money from outside sources, they do so on terms that maintain democratic control as well as their unique identity. LYREC owns, operates and maintains its electrical grid.

- **Education, training and information:** The cooperative keeps members, directors, managers and employees up-to-date on issues so they can effectively govern the co-op. Communication, particularly with young members and opinion leaders, helps generate necessary public support for cooperatives. LYREC provides education through the monthly magazines and social media, to name a few. Another example would be LYREC's support in continuing education not only for its members though scholarships, but also for its employees and directors.
- **Cooperation among cooperatives:** Mutual support helps cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies and deal more effectively with social and community needs. When a disaster occurs, LYREC assists neighboring co-ops with the repair to their system and vice versa. Another example is networking with local cooperatives to support community events such as Co-op Day at the Fair.
- **Concern for community:** Cooperatives develop communities with programs supported by the membership. LYREC is a huge supporter of community programs and activities throughout its service territory. ■



Co-op Day at the Fair held

Aug. 6 started out raining, but turned out to be a beautiful day at the Richland County Fair to have a root beer float with your local cooperatives. During Co-op Day at the Fair, a total of 950 floats were given away in an hour and a half. Each year, Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative, along with seven other local cooperatives, team up to make Co-op Day at the Fair possible. If you missed the free root beer floats this year, join us next year during the fair for a delicious treat. ■



New employee

Tiffani Hentges is Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative's new customer service representative. Tiffani, her husband, Lance, and their daughter, Gracie, live in Sidney. Tiffani had been employed with Checkers for the past three-plus years. Tiffani is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church. She enjoys walking, traveling and being a "dance mom." ■

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 Electric pages. Give us a call during the month your meter is listed, and claim your \$25 bill credit.

LYREC needs your assistance

It is important that Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) has your correct contact information. There are times when LYREC needs to reach you in an emergency situation. Please either email LYREC at lyrec@lyrec.com, call or put

the updated information on your payment coupon. If you depend on electricity for medical reasons, please contact LYREC immediately at 406-488-1602 so you can be placed on the medical emergency list. (Meter No. 30215). ■



3200 W. Holly - Sidney, MT 59270
Phone: 406-488-1602
Fax: 406-488-6524
Website: www.lyrec.com

TRUSTEES

Allen Thiessen	President
Greg Rauschendorfer	Vice President
John Redman	Secretary/Treasurer
Colin Gartner	Trustee
Dennis Schmierer	Trustee
Dennis Nelson	Trustee
Jim Vitt	Trustee

EMPLOYEES

Jason Brothen	General Manager
Brenda Bond	Office Manager
Jami Propp	Member Services Coordinator
Kyle Kavanagh	Technology Coordinator
Cassie Parker	Office Administrator
Margo Zadow	Billing Administrator
Pam Wilcoxon	Staff Accountant
Tiffani Hentges	Customer Service Representative
Chris Hillesland	Operations Manager
Doug K. Hettich	Asst. Mgr. of Operations
Rich Gorde	Foreman
Eric McPherson	Sub-Foreman
Kevin Goff	Engineer Assistant/Materials Mgr.
Kelly Keyser	Engineering Staking Technician
Lee Alvstad	Journeyman Lineman
Richard Tremblay	Journeyman Lineman
Aaron Eide	Journeyman Lineman
Bryan Franck	Journeyman Lineman
Jesse Obergfell	Journeyman Lineman
Dan Gieser	Journeyman Lineman/Meter Tech.
Blade Jankovsky	Apprentice Lineman
Ryder Peterson	Apprentice Lineman
Tanner Roth	Apprentice Lineman
Mike Eberling	Mechanic
Bodrey Kindopp	Staking Technician
Corey Candee	Electrical/IT Tech.
Edwin Gatzke	Line Locator/Meter Reader
Justin King	Warehouse Worker

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