



The Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative line crew, left to right, includes **Preston Long, Lee Delp, Cole Jankovsky, Ryder Peterson, Trey Schepens, Rich Gorde, Jesse Obergfell, Bryan Franck and Jory Bell**. Not pictured are Aaron Eide and Tanner Roth.

Lineworkers wired for service

by **Jason Brothen**

In the quiet hours before dawn breaks, while many of us are still nestled in our beds, lineworkers begin their day, often clad in flame-resistant clothing, safety goggles, rubber gloves and thick, heavy boots.

They are the individuals who epitomize dedication to service in its purest form. As we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day April 14, this is an important moment to reflect on the essential role they play in our daily lives.

Amid towering utility poles and power lines, lineworkers exhibit a strength that goes far beyond the physical. Whether battling inclement weather, troubleshooting technical problems or navigating treacherous heights, lineworkers demonstrate resilience and a quiet determination to keep our lights on, our homes comfortable and our communities connected.

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) crews travel across our five-county service territory, building, maintaining and repairing parts of our local system. Their extraordinary skills ensure our homes remain connected to the grid, businesses stay operational and emergency services remain accessible. It's a lifeline that connects us all.

In moments of crisis, when the lights go out and we find ourselves in the dark, lineworkers emerge as beacons of hope. Their swift response restores normalcy, offering reassurance in times of uncertainty. Whether repairing storm-ravaged power lines or ensuring continuity during emergencies, their unwavering commitment illuminates life when we need it most.

LYREC lineworkers also answer the call beyond the boundaries of home. Our crews travel to fellow cooperatives, near or far, when widespread outages occur and additional support is needed. Cooperation among cooperatives is one of our seven guiding principles, and no one embodies this core commitment better than lineworkers.

This month, as we celebrate the remarkable men and women who ensure reliable power, let's recognize their unwavering dedication to the local communities they serve.

The next time you flip a switch, please take a moment to remember those who make it possible – the lineworkers, who are wired for service and dedicated to illuminating life. ■



Hunter Sanders

Sanders earns \$500 scholarship

Hunter Sanders has been awarded a \$500 scholarship from Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) and has also been nominated for the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association (MECA) memorial scholarship.

His application has been submitted to the MECA Scholarship Committee, where it will be reviewed alongside other applicants from eastern Montana for a chance to win an additional \$500 scholarship.

The son of Melissa and Kirk Sanders of Sidney, Hunter plans to attend Montana Technological University to pursue a degree in optometry. While still in high school, he has completed over 50 college credits. In addition to his academic achievements, Hunter excels in sports and is actively involved in the community. ■

Erickson awarded \$1,000 scholarship

Sayer Erickson has been named the recipient of a \$1,000 scholarship from Basin Electric Power Cooperative. A senior at Savage High School, he is the son of Jessica and Jerren Erickson of Savage.

He plans to attend Montana State University-Billings to pursue a degree in agricultural mechanics. After college, he hopes to return to Savage and establish an agricultural equipment repair shop.

Sayer has been actively involved in various local activities. He has maintained excellent grades, earned numerous awards and achievements, and participated in multiple extracurricular programs throughout high school. ■



Sayer Erickson

SAVE THE DATE

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative annual meeting

Wednesday, June 4
Richland County Event Center
Registration starts at 5 p.m.



Know what's below. Call before you dig.

**Planting a tree? Installing a fence?
Remember to contact Montana One Call first!**

Numerous utility lines may be buried on your property, ranging from electric and telephone lines to water and sewer lines, but Montana One Call will help you locate these lines before your project begins.

Contact Montana One Call and utility line owners will locate and mark their lines. These locates do not include any lines you may have installed to your private facilities, such as detached garages, wells or yard lights.

**Go online at www.montana811.org or call 800-424-5555 or 811.
It's free, it's simple and it's the law.**

The 811 process:

1. Notify

Notify the Montana One Call Center by calling 811 or making an online request at least 48 hours before work begins, excluding weekends and holidays.

2. Wait

Wait the required amount of time for affected utility operators to respond to your request.

3. Confirm

Confirm all affected utility operators have responded to your request and marked underground utilities.

4. Respect

Respect the marks. The marks provided by the affected utilities are your guide for the duration of the project. The marks are valid for 30 calendar days. If you are unable to maintain the marks during your project, or the project will continue past your request's expiration date, call 811 to ask for a re-mark.

5. Dig carefully

Dig carefully around the marks. No mechanical excavating can take place within 24 inches on either side of the marked location of the underground facility. If you plan on digging within that 4-foot-wide area, hand digging is allowed, but dig carefully and cautiously. ■



I hit a power pole or other equipment: Now what?

We all think it won't happen to us, but accidents can happen in an instant.

A car slides off the road and crashes into a power pole. A farmer's tractor or equipment touches a power line. A dump truck or feed truck raises its bed and catches a power line.

When something hits a power line or other electrical equipment, it can break the normal flow of electricity. This can electrify the ground, vehicles or equipment around it. Knowing what to do in this situation can save your life.

- Stay in the vehicle! If you hit a power pole, a pad-mounted transformer (the green electrical box) or other utility equipment, DO NOT get out. Call 911 and wait for utility workers to shut off the power.
- If you hit a guy wire (the wires

anchored to the ground to stabilize power poles), call 911. If the wire is damaged or pulled loose, it could be electrified.

- If your vehicle is on fire, you will need to get out. Open the door, but don't touch the ground and the car at the same time. Jump with both feet together and land with your feet touching. Then, shuffle or hop with your feet together for at least 30 feet to get to safety.
- If you see an accident with a downed power line, DO NOT go near it! You can't tell if a line is live just by looking at it, and touching it could be deadly.

Always assume power lines are live and dangerous. Even a small amount of electricity can be deadly. Stay safe and be extra careful around power lines! ■

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
Dennis Schmierer	Secretary/Treasurer
Colin Gartner	Trustee
Tim Franzen	Trustee
Dennis Nelson	Trustee
Jim Vitt	Trustee

EMPLOYEES

Jason Brothen	General Manager
Jami Propp	Member Service Manager
Pam Wilcoxon	Chief Financial Officer
Melissa Buckley	Plant Accountant
Kyle Kavanagh	IT Director
Margo Zadow	Billing Coordinator
Katie Jochim	CSR/Billing Coordinator
Tiffani Hentges	Customer Service Representative
Chris Hillesland	Chief Operations Officer
Rich Gorde	Journeyman Lineman
Eric McPherson	System Controller
Kevin Goff	Operations Assistant
Kelly Keysor	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
Preston Long	Journeyman 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
Tom Hall	GIS Specialist
Corey Candee	Chief Information Officer
Jeremy Reese	Information Technology Technician
Edwin Gatzke	Line Locator/Groundsman
Justin King	Warehouse Supervisor
Parker Brothen	Summer Help

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative