



Doug Hettich retires after 35 years

“I feel very fortunate, like I am the luckiest person in the world to have been involved with the co-op,” says Doug Hettich, as he reflects on his 35 years with Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC).

“I remember when I was 8 or 9 years old, I watched the REA boys doing some work on the outskirts of town. The linemen were climbing poles and I knew then, that was what I wanted to do,” Hettich says.

Straight out of lineworker school, Hettich began his career with LYREC as a staking technician. He staked

and helped in the shop for more than a year, “pining” for the day he could join the line crew. Hettich was hired as an apprentice lineworker a year later, and spent the next 24 years living his childhood dream.

“From the first day Doug came to work at LYREC, he has been dedicated to giving the co-op and its members more than they have asked for. Treating everyone fairly and consistently has always been something Doug has strived for. He has had a major impact on where LYREC is today,” Chris Hillesland states.

For the past decade, Hettich has worked in the operations department, supervising the lineworkers and ensuring the projects were completed proficiently.

“My favorite part of being in the operations department has been watching the young lineworkers grow into what they have become today,” he says.

“Doug’s passion, hard work and dedication to his employer and employees went above and beyond. He was a true friend to all and a mentor to many. Doug always took the time for questions and concerns, whether it be in regards to work or personal ventures,” Foreman Rich Gorde says.

Hettich currently serves as a board member for the Foundation for Community Care. He spends his free time hunting, fishing, hiking and carving. After retirement, Hettich plans to help ranch and volunteer in the North Dakota state parks.

Hettich has enjoyed his years at LYREC, but after 35 years of service, is ready to start a new journey. His wife, Kris, retired from Stockman Bank three years ago. His son, Ben, is employed with Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative as a lead construction coordinator.

“Hettich gives 150 percent every day! He has made an enormous impact on each and every one of his co-workers through his knowledge of the co-op and kind heart. He will be greatly missed and we wish him luck in his next venture,” Jami Propp states. (Meter No. T20489) ■

Hometown Heroes

In their own words...

We've all been there: It's Friday night, the kids are finally tucked into bed, and it's time to put a bag of popcorn in the microwave, curl up on the sofa and watch a movie. Then: Bang! A flash of lightning, the crash of thunder and the lights go out. The night's ruined. All you can do now is call the co-op, report the outage and go to bed.

But what if you were a lineman for the co-op? It's still Friday night, you're still disappointed you can't spend the evening curled up on the sofa watching a movie - but now you've got to go to work in the storm.

The linemen that keep your lights on work in some of the most physically challenging and dangerous conditions. And they do so during some of the worst conditions. That's why we like to refer to them as "hometown heroes."

This APRIL, when cooperatives throughout the United States celebrate Linemen Appreciation Day, we asked LYREC linemen to tell us about their jobs - in their own words. ■



They head up so that we don't let you down!
April 11 is National Lineman Appreciation Day
#thankalineman

The Lineman

He walks through the door at the end of the day just kisses his wife, he has not much to say

his brain is still tired from working lines hot it's a lineman thing, this tired brain he's got

from watching each move he's made all day long to watching his buddy so nothing went wrong

with his hands still wrinkled from wearing the gloves he touches the face of the woman he loves

his boots feel so heavy as he unties the laces they're old, worn and dirty, they've been many places

with his head in his hands, he takes in a sigh and thanks the good lord today he didn't die

with a thin rubber glove protecting his life the lord brought him home to be with his wife

some say he's crazy to work like he does he can't see the juice, he can just hear it buzz

but he made it home safely and tonight he'll pray that tomorrow God walks with him through one more day.

Steven Crawford

of LYREC

Name: Dick Tremblay
Age: 41
Number of Years at Co-op: 10
Family: One son



Dick's most memorable time of working with LYREC was when he and another lineman went to Mor-Gran-Sou to help restore power after a storm. "Mor-Gran-Sou had 14,000 poles on the ground. We assisted Mor-Gran-Sou for two weeks... they had already been out of power for over a month before we got there," says Dick.

What would Dick tell someone who is looking at attending lineman school? "I would tell them that it is a good job, but it is not for everyone! I have seen a lot of people go through the schooling and not be able to do the work. They are too scared of the work and of the electricity."

Name: Blade Jankovsky
Age: 25
Number of Years at Co-op: 4
Family: Spouse, Becca



What made you decide to become a lineman?

"My dad has worked for Lincoln Electric Cooperative for 24 years. I have seen the life that he has made for himself as a lineman. He has a great job, great pay and great benefits and that is what I wanted for myself. It's also nice to wake up every day and know that I will always have a job because there will always be a need for lineman," says Blade.

Blade's younger brother is also a lineman.

Name: Rich Gorde
Age: 45
Number of Years at Co-op: 14
Family: Spouse, Linda;
Three Daughters



Rich says, "the most memorable time as a lineman was the storm of 2011. There were 200 poles down and 16 inches of snow. The members treated us as good as their own. They stopped by to visit, often times with hot coffee and pastries. There is no better place to work than LYREC. It is like a big family!"

Name: Lee Alvstad
Age: 32
Number of Years at Co-op: 10
Family: Spouse, Kelly;
One daughter



"The most rewarding part of being a lineman is getting the power restored when the weather is bad. The members are very appreciative."

If someone was interested in the lineman profession, Lee would say, "Go for it, it is a good career choice especially if you like to be outdoors."

"As a lineman, the co-op is the best place to work. If your family is your number one priority, it is great because you get to go home every night," says Lee.

"The most demanding part of a lineman's job is being out in the weather elements, being on call one week out of every month, and making sure you are knowledgeable when dealing with live wire."



Name: Aaron Eide
Age: 35
Number of Years at Co-op: 10
Family: Spouse, Mickyla;
Two daughters and one son



Aaron says the most rewarding part of his job is "getting the power back on after a storm." Aaron remembers back to the 2011 storm when the line crew worked 16 hour a days for two weeks to get the power restored.

Aaron would tell someone who may be thinking about becoming a lineman, "there are no two days alike."

Bloesser wins scholarship



Trey Bloesser

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC), along with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, congratulates Trey

\$1,000 scholarship. Trey is the son of Rolly and Jan Bloesser, Savage, Mont. Trey is planning to attend Montana State University, to pursue a degree in agricultural business. Trey has not only excelled with his academics through his high school years, but he has also been active in sports, band, FFA, student council and his church. Trey was also the winner of LYREC's Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., during his junior year.

Bloesser, this year's winner of the Basin Electric Power Cooperative

Thank you to everyone who took the time to apply for the Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship. There were many great applicants. If you were not selected this year, you may apply again next year. There will be additional scholarship opportunities during our June 1 annual meeting. Join LYREC at the Richland County Event Center, along with a parent for LYREC's 80th annual meeting.

Congratulations, Trey! ■

Operations department goes to summer hours

Beginning Monday, April 4, the operations department will be working from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

If you have projects that you need scheduled, please call the operations department Monday through Thursday. The line crew will only be available for outages on Fridays. The office hours will remain the same throughout the summer, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. ■

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.



Operating report		
Year to date:	December 2014	December 2015
Total miles energized	2,142	2,106
Total number of meters	6,024	6,105
Kilowatt-hours sold	249,606,712	277,000,185
Revenue	\$23,446,316	\$26,253,832
Total expenses	\$19,961,151	\$21,757,598
Operating margins	\$4,055,118	\$5,164,694



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

TRUSTEES

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 Greg Rauschendorfer Vice President
 John Redman Secretary/Treasurer
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Jason Brothen General Manager
 Brenda Bond Chief Financial Officer
 Jami Propp Member Service Manager
 Kyle Kavanagh IT Coordinator
 Cassie Parker Staff Assistant
 Margo Zadow Billing Coordinator
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 Chris Hillesland Chief Operations Officer
 Doug K. Hettich Asst. Mgr. of Operations
 Rich Gorde Foreman
 Eric McPherson Foreman
 Kevin Goff Operations Assistant
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 Lee Alvstad Journeyman Lineman
 Richard Tremblay Journeyman Lineman
 Aaron Eide Journeyman Lineman
 Bryan Franck Journeyman Lineman
 Jesse Obergfell Journeyman Lineman
 Dan Gieser Meter Technician
 Blade Jankovsky Apprentice Lineman
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