



Vigilante Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 1049, Dillon, MT 59725-1049
(406) 683-2327 or (800) 221-8271

Website: www.vec.coop

E-mail: contact@vec.coop

OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE



The 2022 Montana Youth Tour delegation poses at the Marine Corps Museum in Washington, D.C.

ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY

YOUTH TOUR TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

In June of each year, high school students from across the country gather in our nation's capital to partake in a very special event. They come to see the American history enshrined in Washington, D.C., and witness history being made. They come to learn and share with others, but most of all, they come to have fun. What event brings them together? The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

For more than 50 years, cooperatives like Vigilante Electric have sent students

on this transformative event. The first coordinated tour was in 1964, and hosted approximately 400 participants from 12 states. Today, there are roughly 2,000 delegates and staff participating in this tremendous event.

While in Washington, D.C., the youth cooperative representatives tour some of the finest museums in the world and visit America's most historic monuments. They meet with their elected officials and explore Capitol Hill. They learn



See YOUTH TOUR, next page

VIGILANTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND GENERAL MANAGER

Cheyenne Garrison,
President

Dist. #5
Wise River/Silver Bow/Melrose

Andy Johnson,
Vice President

Dist. #6
Dillon North/Glen

Tom Mitchell,
Sec./Treas.

Dist. #8
Dillon South/Grant

Norm Tebay, Trustee
Dist. #1

Cardwell/Whitehall/Three Forks

Dean Hanson, Trustee
Dist. #2

Silver Star/Waterloo

Tom Helm, Trustee
Dist. #3

Townsend/N. Helena/
Lump Gulch

Colt High, Trustee
Dist. #4

Twin Bridges/Point of Rocks

Dean Peterson, Trustee
Dist. #7

Jackson/Wisdom

Allen Martinell, Trustee
Dist. #9

Dell/Lima

Rollie Miller,
General Manager



SAFETY DEMO

As we like to say, safety is priority number one, and part of this is teaching others to be safe around electricity, especially children. On August 17th, Vigilante Electric Cooperative hosted an electrical safety demonstration for the YMCA summer camp using our safety demonstration trailer.

YOUTH TOUR

Continued from page 5

about the impact electric cooperatives make on their communities, as well as how programs such as NRECA International impact lives around the world.

Participants gain a personal understanding of American history and their roles as citizens. The tour for each student group is organized at the state level, which includes all students coming together for Youth Day. At Youth Day, they get to meet each other and hear featured speakers, who provide insight to the important roles electric cooperatives play in their communities.

Nearly 50,000 students from rural


areas and small towns across America have participated in this program. Some Youth Tour alumni have gone on to design airplanes, lead companies and serve in the highest ranks of our government, including the U.S. Senate.

In 2003, Vigilante Electric started sending representatives to the Youth Tour, and the quality of these individuals over the years has been amazing. In fact, the quality of our representatives has been so good, four have been selected to represent the state of Montana on the Youth Leadership Council (YLC).

Members of the YLC play an important role during NRECA's annual meeting the following spring. Not only are the YLC members recognized on stage, but they also have a hands-on experience with every facet of the meeting,

including the resolutions process and helping our members communicate with their legislators.

Currently, preparations are being made for the 2023 tour. Dates for next summer's Youth Tour will be June 17th to the 23rd. To be eligible, the student's parent or guardian must be a member of Vigilante Electric Cooperative. The student must currently be a sophomore or junior in high school, and cannot have been a prior winner.

Participants are selected based on an application and essay. This year's essay topic is: *If you could witness one historical moment firsthand, what would it be and why?* Information is available through the guidance counselors at area high schools, online at www.vec.coop, or by calling (800) 221-8271 or 683-2327. 

VIGILANTE ELECTRIC AT THE LABOR DAY PARADE



Help for those in need

LIHEAP AND OTHER PROGRAMS CAN HELP WITH BILLS

WE have referred to the set of seven core principles and values cooperatives around the world operate by many times in this publication. Of these seven, the most referenced is Concern for Community. For us, this means not only helping our communities to flourish, helping our members in need.

The prospect of a long, cold winter is something few people look forward to. For low-income families, winter utilities can become an overwhelming financial burden. This is why Vigilante Electric Cooperative has helped qualified members with their winter heating needs since 1998.

Applications for our assistance program are available starting October 1st, and must be returned by December 2, 2022. You can contact us at (800) 221-8271 or (406) 683-2327 for an application. (Please note that if you received assistance last year through our program, you will automatically receive an application from us this year.)

The funding level for Vigilante's



program is limited and we strongly recommend that families in need also apply for the programs offered by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS).

DPHHS administers federally funded programs designed to help low-income families. The following is a brief description of the opportunities available and income guidelines (the same ones we use) for the upcoming heating season.

- **The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** pays

part of winter energy bills and may be able to assist with furnace emergencies for eligible people.

- **The Weatherization Program** helps participants improve the heating efficiency of their homes, and thus reduce their energy consumption.

- **Energy Share of Montana** - Energy Share of Montana is a private nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to help Montanans faced with energy emergencies meet their needs and move towards self-reliance.

LIHEAP INCOME GUIDELINE 2022-2023 PROGRAM YEAR

FAMILY SIZE	LIHEAP
1	\$28,136
2	\$36,793
3	\$45,450
4	\$45,450
5	\$54,108
6	\$71,422
7	\$73,046
8	\$74,669
9	\$77,025
10	\$84,105

If you qualify, call for an application. The application process can be a little daunting, but there are people available to help walk you through the process. Also, be sure to inquire about the weatherization program. Where LIHEAP provides assistance for your immediate needs, weatherization is a long-term solution for helping lower your energy bills.

These programs are administered through regional offices. Each office serves specific counties, so contact the office nearest you.

LIEAP CONTACT NUMBERS

**ACTION INC.,
DISTRICT 12 - BUTTE**
(800) 382-1325
(406) 533-6855

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL LIEAP
OFFICE - HELENA**
(800) 356-6544
(406) 447-1625

DISTRICT IX HRDC - BOZEMAN
(800) 332-2796
(406) 587-4486

VIGILANTE ELECTRIC IS FOCUSED ON SAFETY

General Manager gets re-certified in pole-top rescue after 38 years

THE Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) has identified seven core elements for an effective safety and health program: management leadership; worker participation; hazard identification and assessment; hazard prevention and control; education and training; program evaluation and improvement; and communication and coordination.

Using this as a checklist for our safety program, it is fair to say that we are checking all of the boxes. In last month's *Rural Montana*, Vigilante Electric Cooperative General Manager Rollie Miller highlighted our commitment to safety as an organization and the improvements that we have seen when an organization works together for a common goal.

Rollie also touched upon our commitment to training. Over the course of a year, the training that our employees attend is diverse. Most of the training is specific to our line crew and our industry. The prime example of this type of training happened in our pole yard on August 16th, when our linemen were re-certified in pole and bucket rescue.

Training such as this falls in the same category as first aid and CPR.

Pole top rescue and bucket rescue are skills that our linemen need to be proficient at, but hope they never have to use. For a pole rescue, we use a mannequin that weighs about 175 pounds in order to simulate a real-life situation. The lineman has to climb the pole, secure the mannequin from the top of the pole, and lower it safely to the ground.

During training, technique and proper decision-making take precedence over speed; however, time is of the essence in an actual emergency. When an unconscious person is not breathing, permanent brain damage begins after only 4 minutes and death can occur as soon as 4 to 6 minutes later. So, in this window of four minutes, our lineman has to assess the situation, call for help, ascend the pole, secure the lineman in distress, lower them safely, descend the pole and begin first aid and CPR. There is a lot that has to go right for a rescue such as this to be successful, plus they are not responding to just anybody – this is most likely a coworker and friend.

This year, in addition to 14 linemen getting re-certified in pole top rescue, our general manager dusted off his hooks and belt to make the climb.



General Manager Rollie Miller completes his pole top rescue training for the first time in 38 years. | **VIGILANTE PHOTO**

In the early days of Rollie's career in energy, he was a lineman and so, for the first time in 38 years, he completed the pole-top rescue certification training.

Kudos to the boss for showing us all he's still got it! **RM**



Vigilante Safety Roundup Tracker

Participating members: 746
Total Contributions: \$15,934.78

To apply, contact our office at
(800) 221-8271 or 683-2327

An online application is available at www.vec.coop.