



VIGILANTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE

VIGILANTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

2016 Leadership Awards

The winners are . . .

Albert Einstein stated “The value of a college education is not the learning of many facts but the training of the mind to think.” While this may be true, this value comes with an ever-increasing cost. This is why scholarship opportunities such as our Leadership Award are so valuable. A little assistance to students with the desire to “train their minds” can have a great and lasting impact.



The unique feature of our Leadership Award is that we pair it with the Montana Electric Cooperatives’ Association Memorial Scholarship. Students can fill out one application and have the opportunity to win two scholarships. The top application received is forwarded to our statewide association for consideration for one of four Memorial Scholarships. This year we selected Mark Waldrup’s application to be forwarded on to the statewide association.

Since the early ‘90s Vigilante Electric Cooperative has provided member youth with scholarships. While the structure of our scholarships has evolved over the years, the intent has remained consistent — provide financial assistance to students that not only excel in the classrooms but in their communities.

On behalf of Vigilante Electric Cooperative, we would like to congratulate this year’s scholarship winners and wish them the best in their future endeavors.

For the 2015-16 academic year, the Board of Trustees of Vigilante Electric Cooperative has awarded 19 \$500 scholarships. This year’s Leadership Award recipients are:

- Hanna Kambich – Beaverhead Co High School
- Jacklyn Kidd – Beaverhead Co High School
- Isaak Koslosky- Beaverhead Co High School
- Ty McKay – Beaverhead Co High School
- Marie Noel – Beaverhead Co High School
- Rachael Nye – Beaverhead Co High School
- Dale Royer – Beaverhead Co High School
- Kathrine Scalzone – Beaverhead Co High School
- Matthew Shenton – Beaverhead Co High School
- Mark Waldrup – Beaverhead Co High School
- Kyra Wood – Beaverhead Co High School
- Carmen de los Rois – BCHS, currently attending MSU
- Payton Dobbs – BHS, currently attending Montana Tech
- Kacee Clark – BHS, currently attending MSU - Northern
- Bailee Field – BHS, currently attending MSU
- Eleanor Ingalls – Broadwater High School
- Skyler Martinell – Lima High School
- Megan Martin – Twin Bridges High School
- Kjersten Sandru – Twin Bridges High School



Prescription Discount Tracker

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Paid Claims..... | 488 |
| Total Savings | \$15,579.87 |
| Total Savings Percentage | 37.42% |
| Feb. Paid Claims | 8 |
| Feb. Savings..... | \$209.12 |
| Feb. Savings Percentage | 36.72% |

Outage Notification Numbers

M-F 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
683-2327 or (800) 221-8271

Dillon

After Hours Mon. - Thurs.
Dan Snellman683-6222
Gary Ferris.....683-6321
Cody Tarter.....925-3326
Charles Wharton ..660-1878

Weekends

683-2327 or (800) 221-8271

Whitehall

After Hours and Weekends
Marty Simons287-3950
Chuck Romerio287-3144
John Moos266-3605

Townsend

After Hours and Weekends
John Moos266-3605
Justin Bair266-3351
Chase White459-3892
Marty Simons287-3950

Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., 2016

One event that we support every year is the Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. This year, two students from our service territory will represent our state and our cooperative on this trip. The participants are selected through an essay contest, with the top essays being forwarded to the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association to be part of a statewide essay contest.

As reported earlier in this edition of the Rural Montana Magazine, Katelynn Sutton from Lima High School was selected as the statewide winner of the Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., essay contest. Katelynn's trip will be sponsored and paid for by the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association, and her essay and picture are featured on page two.

Our second representative is Mariah Mosher, who attends Beaverhead County High School. Her essay is featured below. We congratulate both Katelynn and Mariah on their selection to participate in this year's Youth Tour; we hope they have a wonderful experience and look forward to hearing stories of their adventure.

The essay is in response to the question: "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?"

By Mariah Mosher

Over 250 years ago electricity was discovered by Benjamin Franklin, then in 1879, the light bulb was patented by Thomas Edison, trapping electricity in a perpetual servitude to humanity. Now it controls the vast majority of our world, powering entire cities and ruling the nations, having the power to unleash mass panic on the majorities with a single power outage. To put it simply, we as a people have become quite dependent on the perks of an electric world, with a twitch of a finger a room is lighted, with a twist of a wrist water appears out of a faucet, and with the press of a button our houses are heated. Electricity has made our lives quite convenient and almost totally dependent.



Mariah Mosher

But I'm getting away from myself; the truth of it is that

It's Happened Again

A Repeat Offense

In our industry it is becoming more and more common that utility customers are targeted in attempts to scam money. Now, for the third time in two years, our membership has been targeted. The following situation was brought to our attention by a member. This happened on March 5th.

A call was made to a member of Vigilante Electric Cooperative by individuals claiming to represent NorthWestern Energy. This member was told their account was delinquent and that they had to make payment in the next few minutes, by credit card, or their power would be shut off.

electricity, in all its glory, is quite fantastic. If you asked the average American what our top three energy needs are, it is likely your response would be first reliability, second affordability and third safety. There is always room for improvement, especially in these particular areas. One of the most prominent issues though, is the disinvolvement of today's youth. Too often they take the use and availability of power for granted. So today I will touch on the importance of these matters in light of its significance to our society's youth.

We will start with reliability. As I stated above, our community relies heavily on its electrical harmony. Without electricity we would fall into a chaotic dark age of panicked animosity. Perhaps we could better show how important electric reliability is by having a state of "10 Minutes of Darkness," where the power is turned off for 10 minutes or less in schools and homes, and/or other such businesses. Not only would this bring awareness to the importance of electricity but it could also help the environment, however little, by pausing humanity's electrical fingerprint for even a moment. It may seem to be a bit of a daunting task, even impossible, but I believe if we work together we can accomplish anything we set our minds to.

Next I'll touch on affordability. With the increase of rates has come an increase of irritability among parents and our community's bill payers, as I like to call them. I think we shouldn't do that anymore, it's not good for teenagers' electrified lives. I suggest we stop doing things like that. It definitely doesn't bring our community closer. It's just a thought.

Thirdly, I'd like to talk about safety. As far as safe electricity goes, I'd say we're doing a pretty good job. The only thing I can think of for us to work on is educating kids on what is safe and what is not. For example, blow-drying your hair is perfectly safe, however it becomes unsafe when you do it in the tub. Another example is tying your shoes, that is perfectly fine until someone decides it would be fun to try and catch them on a power line. I have to say my generation isn't exactly a group of overall geniuses.

Anyways, I would like to conclude by restating our three points; reliability and sustainability through conservation, affordability through thought, and safety through knowledge. Thank you for your time and consideration.

This is the same tactic used to scam members in November. Please remember, Vigilante Electric Cooperative no longer takes credit card numbers over the phone, and we do not do high-pressure phone calls for delinquent accounts. The scammers employ this tactic hoping to put you into panic mode to get you to provide your credit card number for their use.

Unfortunately, scams such as this will continue and people will be victimized. Our advice: be a little skeptical when confronted with a call like this. If anything feels wrong about a call, especially one claiming to come from us, hang up and call our office.

Well-Deserved Recognition

During the month of April we nationally recognize two groups of individuals that constitute the heart and soul of organizations such as ours. Because of the efforts of these individuals we are able to keep the power on and the doors open for business. Vigilante Electric Cooperative would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank our linemen and our administrative professionals.

America's electric cooperatives have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day. On April 11th, we proudly recognize our linemen for their work and performance around the clock, often in dangerous conditions, in order to keep the power on and protect the public's safety.

"Electric linemen do not often receive the recognition they deserve," said Rollie Miller, General Manager. "They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous conditions, to restore power to our communities. Our linemen, as well as linemen from across the nation, truly deserve this special day of recognition."

We would like to thank Marty Simons, John Moos, Bill Benzel, Travis Jensen, Justin Bair, Chuck Romerio, Jess Davidson, Charles Wharton, Cody Tarter, Chase White, Vance Forsman, Zach Maersbecker and Morgan Noel for their service to our membership and our organization.

On April 27th, we join businesses across the country in celebration of Administrative Professionals Day. Like most offices, these people work behind the scenes at Vigilante Electric, but their function within our organization is vital. We

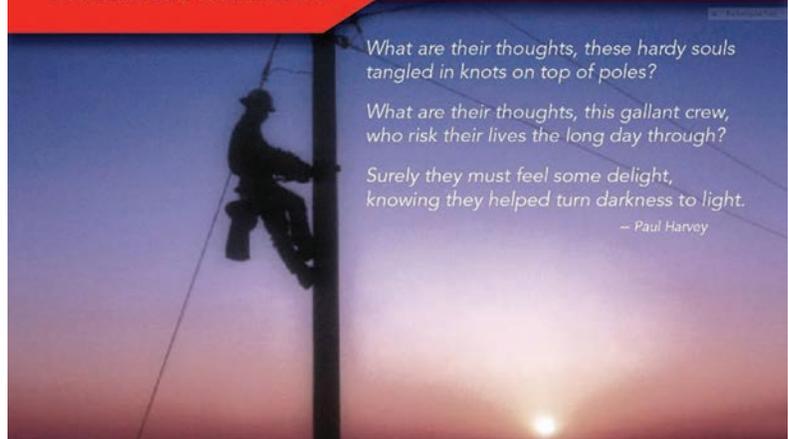
would like to acknowledge and thank these individuals for their efforts in making our office run effectively.

"I am very happy and proud to be working with all of the 'Administrative Professionals' in our office," Miller said. "I am very proud of the accomplishments we have made as a team over the previous year. I hope you take time to thank these people when you see them next."

We would like to recognize Linda Meine, Jackie Clark, Barb Delano, Joy Britton and Emily May for their devotion and valued work to our organization.

Vigilante Electric invites our members to take a moment to thank these individuals for their time and dedication to our organization.

WHEN IT COMES TO A LINEMEN TRIBUTE,
PAUL HARVEY SAID IT BEST.



In Memory of Leonard Waldemar

We are saddened to announce to our membership the passing of retired Vigilante Electric Cooperative Lineman, Leonard Waldemar. The following is the loving tribute by his family:

Leonard M. Waldemar, 88, passed away in Dillon, Montana, on February 19, of natural causes. Leonard was born August 11, 1927, in Bannack, Montana, to Leonard Franklin Waldemar and Estella Fay Dickson Waldemar. Leonard always claimed to have been born in a tent while his family was custom haying in the area.

Leonard spent his childhood in the Horse Prairie and Grasshopper Valley areas. He graduated from BCHS in 1945, where he played on the 1944 state champion football team. Leonard enrolled at Montana State Normal College and played tackle for the Bulldogs before he was drafted into the Army in October 1945. While in the Army, he served as a prisoner of war camp guard. He was honorably discharged in November 1946. He had many tales of a cross-country railroad trip to transport the prisoners from Billings, Montana, to New York City.

In April 1951, Leonard went to work for Vigilante Electric Cooperative as a meter reader. He worked there for 38 years; working his way up to line foreman before retiring on December 31, 1989. During his time at Vigilante, many

changes and advancements were made in rural electrification. Leonard had many fond memories of meals served in ranch cook homes, and not so fond memories of long, cold, snowy nights.

Leonard loved the outdoors; whether it was hunting, fishing, hiking or camping. A long-time tradition starting in Leonard's childhood and continuing today is an extended Waldemar family July 4th camping trip to Reservoir Lake. He spent his retirement years helping with his grandchildren and following any activity they were involved with. He could also be seen driving around town, checking on his family and was the first to lend a helping hand whenever needed.

Leonard is survived by his wife, Mary Jo, of 64 years. Together they had three children: Eddie (Lori), Brenda Borjas (David), and Jerry Rehse (Dennis); four grandchildren: Erik Waldemar, Harley Borjas (Kimberly), Rudy Rehse (Carl Sevalstad) and Susanne Rehse (Nick Valach); and two great-grandchildren on the way, all of Dillon. Leonard is also survived by sisters Fay McCracken of Florence, MT, June Kamps (Monty) of Hamilton, MT, and sister-in-law Nancy Conley (Hank) of Hamilton. Also surviving are many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Take a break from technology

By Meghan Evans

I am not the first — and I certainly won't be the last — to say this, but it is becoming more difficult to escape the pull of technology these days. As a society, we are becoming dependent on our devices for nearly everything we do.

In fact, device dependence has become so severe, that even leaders in the technology industry have started taking measures to wean themselves from their devices.

Have you ever read a line of a book — or an email or a work document — and a minute later, you can't remember it? Well, device dependence could be to blame. Your brain is like a muscle; after it is used, it needs time to recover. Without that time, it may not be able to "soak-up" and process the information it is receiving. Many of us go from one task to another, only taking a break to respond to a text, check Facebook or send a Tweet. But research has shown that using the time in between tasks to rest your brain can increase your cognitive abilities.

Device dependence isn't only detrimental to our cognitive development; it can also strain our relationships.

Here are a few tips you and your family can use to keep device dependence at bay:

- The next time you finish a task, instead of getting online or checking your phone, take a walk in a quiet place, or simply sit back and let your mind wander (some call this

day-dreaming, and it is actually a great way to rest your brain throughout the day).

- Set up gadget-free zones throughout your home. It goes without saying that the dinner table should be one, but try creating a gadget-free zone in the bedroom or living room as well.
- Many of us use our devices to listen to music, read books or even take notes during meetings. Try turning your device on airplane mode when using it for those purposes. If you need Wi-Fi or a mobile connection to perform these tasks, disable all of your push notifications so that they don't distract you from the task at hand.
- You might be thinking there is no way you will be able to coax your kids to put down their devices. Here is a solution: start a contest in your family to see who can go the longest without checking their phone or playing a video game. Make the prize a fun treat as an incentive to win!
- When you are spending time with friends and family, put your device in another room so you are not tempted to check it if there is a lull in conversation.
- On family vacations, make it a rule that devices can only be used to check-in with those who need to know how things are going. Stare up at the stars, not at your screens. We all need time to unplug and give our brains a break. By unplugging, you may even save on your electric bill. And don't worry; Facebook will still be there when you return.

On the Job

Morgan Noel



Vigilante Electric Cooperative would like to take this opportunity to introduce our newest employee, Morgan Noel.

Morgan is an apprentice lineman working out of our Dillon shop. Morgan was born in California, raised in Lima, Montana and graduated from Beaverhead County High School. Morgan attended Northwest Linemen's college in Meridian Idaho and is completing the Mountain States Apprenticeship Program. Prior to working for us he was employed by Outback Power Company based in Great Falls.

We would like to welcome Morgan to Vigilante Electric and look forward to a long association.

SmartHub

Preparing to Launch

Over the last few months we have written about the coming launch of SmartHub. SmartHub is an innovative tool that provides valuable insight into your electrical usage and makes managing your Vigilante Electric Cooperative account simple. This valuable option will be available on our website and for download to a mobile device after April 21st.

Currently, the only way to access account information online is through E-Bill. E-Bill has been very well received since its introduction, with more than 1,000 registered users. However we are launching SmartHub to improve the online experience, as well as provide the additional convenience of a mobile app. For current E-Bill users, your username and password will be transferred to SmartHub.

For new users, you will find SmartHub on our website or you can download the mobile app at the App Store on iPhone or Google Play for Android. The download and registration process using the smartphone app is quite simple. Just make sure that you have your account numbers and an active email address. The app will take you step-by-step through the process.

If you are new to the world of smartphones and are not quite sure what to do — we can help. On our website we will post step-by-step instructions. You can also contact us at our Dillon office, and we will talk you through the process.

