

Small change can change lives

The holiday season is finally here. Some call it the most wonderful season of all. That's because we associate it with family traditions, and gathering with friends and loved ones. It's a time of giving and spreading joy.

But giving back reminds us of the many good things we have right here in our communities and why it's so important to spread the good as far as we can, especially to the most vulnerable in our local area. We're also reminded of how wonderful our communities are and what a big impact we can have when we work together.

When you are a member of Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC), you help us spread the good throughout the year. When you "round up" your monthly bill from LYREC and donate to this fund, you're making a big difference in someone's life. You are helping to meet an immediate need, but just as importantly, you are telling the people who belong to these organizations the community cares.

Over the years, LYREC has held coat and food drives to help those in need in our communities. We have also held book and craft drives to help senior citizens and children during COVID-19.

LYREC also participates in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a weeklong immersion to experience democracy in action. Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs, because of you and your neighbors.

You've likely heard us say the cooperative principle, "concern for community," is part of LYREC's DNA. It defines who we are as an organization. When we first brought electricity to this community in 1937, the quality of life improved. But other things also need to be addressed and this co-op has been at the forefront of bringing improvements to the quality of life in our communities through the year. It's why we do what we do in the communities.

To date, with your help, we've given \$48,371 back to nonprofit and community organizations through Operation Round Up. And across the country, more than 350 electric co-ops have an Operation Round Up program, and together, we've raised millions for local communities. This shows that small donations from electric co-ops like ours, over time, can collectively make

The Operation Round Up board donated \$250 to the Lambert school music department to help with the purchase of a trombone.



a big impact.

As a local cooperative, we have a stake in this community. It's why we support local organizations. We hope you will think of LYREC as more than your energy provider, but also as a catalyst for good in our community.

We hope all our members have a joyous holiday season. May it be merry and bright! ■

Gorder wins John Redman memorial scholarship



Brielle Gorder, the daughter of Shane and Lisa Gorder, has been chosen for the first John Redman memorial scholarship. Gorder graduated from Sidney High School and is currently a freshman at the University of Montana, majoring in business administration/marketing.

Gorder and several other applicants submitted a short video explaining what they believed made a great leader and how they demonstrated their leadership skills.

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) started this memorial in Redman's name after he passed away in early 2022. Redman served 29 years on LYREC's board and was passionate about youth programs. The \$1,000 John Redman memorial scholarship will be awarded annually. ■

Scholarship opportunities offered

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) is accepting applications for the Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association (MECA) memorial scholarship. All applications must be submitted to: LYREC, Attn: Jami Propp, P.O. Box 1047, Sidney, MT 59270 by the due dates listed below.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a LYREC member's dependent. The applicant must be a student who is enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school in the fall of 2022.

Scholarship recipients are selected based on academic record; leadership and participation in school and community activities; honors; work experience; a statement of education and career goals; and an outside appraisal. To apply, complete the required criteria, which can be obtained at www.lyrec.coop. The application is due Feb.14, 2023.

MECA memorial scholarship

MECA is offering a \$500 scholarship to one eligible student from the northeast district of Montana. The applicant's parent/guardian must be a LYREC member and the applicant must be attending college in the fall of 2023. Applications are judged on

academic strength; school and community activities; employment; volunteerism; community service; and a personal statement.

A committee comprised of LYREC staff will choose one application to send to MECA for a chance to win a \$500 scholarship.

To apply, complete the application form, along with all required materials. You may get an application at www.lyrec.coop. MECA memorial scholarships are due Jan. 25, 2023. ■





Light the holiday with safety

As you light your holiday with shining stars and shimmering snowmen, be sure to decorate safely. For a happy, and safe, holiday, follow these tips from Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative:

Use lights approved for safe use by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.

Never connect more than three strands of incandescent lights together.

Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices. They can overheat and cause a fire.

Make sure cords are not pinched in doors, windows or under heavy furniture, which could damage the cord's insulation.

Consider purchasing LED lights, which use less energy and run cooler than traditional incandescent lights.

Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Cracked or damaged sockets, loose or bare wires and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire.

Before decorating, determine how many outlets are available and where they are located. Plan your displays accordingly.

Follow the manufacturer's use and care instructions that accompany electrical decorations.

Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices.

Keep all extension cords and light strings clear of snow and standing water.

Exercise caution when decorating near power lines. Keep yourself and your equipment at least 10 feet from power lines.

Make sure all extension cords and electrical decorations used for outdoor decorating are marked for outdoor use.

Plan now to save energy and money this winter!

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) can't change the weather, but we can help you change your energy use – and your electric bill. LYREC hasn't raised residential electric rates since 1993, and members enjoy some of the lowest electric rates in Montana and the nation as a whole. However, winter bills can take us by surprise. This is because most of us don't realize how much extra electricity it takes to keep our homes and businesses warm in our cold climate.

For example, when we set our programmable thermostat to 72 degrees in December, our furnaces, heat pumps or baseboards use increasingly more electricity to keep the inside air at 72 degrees as the outside temperature falls to single digits.

As a cooperative, our concern for our community is what defines us, and we're committed to helping our community save energy and money. If you need help with your cold-weather electricity bill, we want to help you find reasonable solutions. Here are a few options:

Budget billing

Budget billing levels electric bill amounts by using the average of a member's last 12 months electrical usage to determine a more

consistent monthly bill amount. Members avoid seasonal bill highs and lows with budget billing. You must sign up for budget billing between April 1 and Aug. 31.

Prepay

Prepay lets members take charge of their energy budget. Members buy electricity in advance, which is applied to their account. Members can track usage and account balance, so they'll always know where they are within their budget.

Energy assistance

Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) of Montana or Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) of North Dakota benefits cover a portion of home heating costs through the winter months. Benefit amounts are determined by total income and the number of household members.

Energy Share of Montana helps with temporary heating or electricity crisis. Energy Share eligibility is not based solely on income, but also on the extenuating circumstances the household is facing.

If you would like additional information on any of these programs, visit www.lyrec.coop or call LYREC's office at 406-488-1602. ■

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Fax: 406-488-6524

Website: www.lyrec.com

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 Brandon Mueller Master Electrician
 Mike Eberling Mechanic
 Dan Gieser EMS
 Lee Alvstad Mechanic/EMS
 Richard Tremblay EMS
 Bo Kindopp GIS/Easement Technician
 Corey Candee Chief Information Officer
 Jeremy Reese Information Technology Technician
 Edwin Gatzke Line Locator/Groundsman
 Justin King Warehouse Supervisor

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Operating report

Year to date:	September 2021	September 2022
Total miles energized	2,127	2,140
Total number of meters	6,224	6,237
Kilowatt-hours sold	208,602,329	234,196,596
Revenue	\$21,879,796	\$25,064,648
Total expenses	\$20,854,689	\$23,605,323
Operating margins	\$2,061,567	\$2,274,645