



LINeworkERS KNOW HOW TO GET THE JOB DONE.

LET'S THANK THEM FOR POWERING OUR LIVES.

Lineworker Appreciation Day
April 13, 2020

Remember to #ThankALineworker April 13

Lineworkers serve on the front lines of our nation's energy needs, and on April 13, Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC), along with other electric cooperatives across the country, will honor the brave men and women who work hard to keep the lights on.

Line crews work around the clock, sometimes in difficult and dangerous conditions, to keep power flowing to our local communities. Whether they're restoring power after a major storm or maintaining critical infrastructure to our electric system,

lineworkers are at the heart of our co-op.

When a storm hits, they set aside their personal priorities, because Mother Nature doesn't work around holidays, vacations and birthdays. A service-oriented mentality is one of the many admirable characteristics of an electric lineworker.

LYREC is proud to honor the 10 lineworkers who maintain 2,100 miles of power lines in our service territory. LYREC invites all co-op members to take a moment and thank a lineworker for the important work they do. ■



The Montana line crew take time to pose with a group of children from Villa Cotoco during their mission to Bolivia.

Life in the Amazon

I can only imagine

by Jami Propp

My alarm sounds. I start to roll out of bed and realize I'm tangled in a mosquito net. I feel as if I haven't slept a wink. I'm jet-lagged from the 40-hour trip and didn't sleep well after I witnessed a tarantula crawling across the floor in my cabin. I'm hot and sticky from the humidity. A warm shower is calling my name, but then I remember there is no hot water! I'm in and out of the shower like the speed of lightning.

Since the cabin where I slept (or mainly just laid awake) doesn't have a kitchen, I mosey over to the commons area. The camp host is preparing our breakfast over an open flame. While I wait, I decide to grab a cold drink. But wait. There

are no cold drinks, because there is no refrigeration. I eat my breakfast and drink a warm bottled water and head to work.

Our team has a good plan in place to bring power to this village, and we are excited to get started. After we get the limited number of tools loaded, we head to the first pole. After checking the pole, my first thought is, "I miss the bucket truck." The poles are concrete, so I'm not able to climb them. So, this ladder is going to have to do the trick. I make several trips up and down the ladder to get all the necessary components needed. I am already beat from the drastic change in climate and humidity and think "only 93 more poles to go."

The work is exhausting, but all I can think about is how excited these villagers are going to be when the power comes on.

As night falls, we head back to the cabins. I'm exhausted from being on high alert all day. I've seen several frightening-looking snakes, lots of creepy crawlies, and just thinking about the Cayman lurking in the area is making my hair stand on end.

The camp hosts cook some fresh fish that they caught earlier in the day. We eat our dinner and get a chance to speak with some of the locals. Then what? I miss my family and am excited to tell them about today's adventures, but there is no cell service. There is no TV and catching up on social media is out.

I crawl into my mosquito net that encompasses by bed (although I'm not sure the mosquitos will bother me anymore today as they have almost sucked me dry) and close my eyes. Tonight, I sleep. If the creepy crawlies crawl into bed with me, "so be it." I'm too exhausted to care.

Approximately 1.2 billion people in the world still live without electricity. The trip to Villa Cotoca, Bolivia is part of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International program. The program has sent lineworkers on these humanitarian missions across the world for more than five decades. While some Montana lineworkers have participated in NRECA International trips, this is the first time the state is sending a full contingent on a project.

Stories and photos will be featured in the main section of the April issue of the *Rural Montana* magazine. ■

Grant awarded to Eight Mile School District

Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) is pleased to announce that the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) grant was awarded to the Eight Mile School District No. 6 in Trenton, N.D. The grant will be put toward offsetting the total project cost of replacing the football field scoreboard that was originally installed in the early 1980s. Pictured is Superintendent Matt Shriver and Member Service Manager Jami Propp of LYREC.



Heating assistance deadline April 30

If you need help this heating season, funds are available. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) does not accept applications after April 30. If you reside in Montana, you can download an application from www.lyrec.com or contact Energy Share at 800-227-0703.

North Dakota residents can contact Williams County Social Services at 701-774-6300, McKenzie County Social Services at 701-444-3661 or Community Action at 701-572-8191. North Dakota residents may also download an application at www.lyrec.com.

If you find yourself in an emergency after April 30, you may still be able to get assistance through the Energy Share Program. For more information, call the numbers listed above or Lower Yellowstone Electric at 406-488-1602. ■

Office closed Friday, April 10.

HAPPY EASTER!



Schlothauer wins \$1,000 scholarship



Jade Schlothauer is the 2020 recipient of the Basin Electric Power Cooperative \$1,000 scholarship. She is the daughter of Dirk and Laurie Schlothauer, Fairview, Mont. Jade plans to attend Montana Technological University in Butte, Mont., to seek a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. Determining the recipient of the Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship

is a difficult decision. Lower Yellowstone Rural Electric Cooperative (LYREC) thanks everyone who took the time to apply for the scholarship.

Join LYREC June 3 at the Richland County Event Center, along with a parent, for LYREC's 84th annual meeting. Several scholarships will be awarded that evening. ■

TRACTOR TECHNOLOGY DOESN'T ALWAYS EQUAL SAFETY



As farmers use more equipment with auto-guidance systems, less focus is needed on steering, which may lead some drivers to think they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. However, even while using a GPS with auto-steering, farmers need to keep safety in mind and stay focused on their surroundings.

Electric cooperatives have had accident reports from farmers who are trusting their auto-guidance

systems blindly and hitting power poles and other infrastructure.

Putting safety first requires alertness, focus and knowledge of potential hazards and safety steps. Varying pass-to-pass accuracy levels and potential issues, such as power poles not being correctly plotted in the system, reinforce the need for drivers to stay focused on the location of the farm equipment while in the field and to be ready to take action if necessary. ■

Operating report

Year to date:	January 2019	January 2020
Total miles energized	2,103	2,114
Total number of meters	6,161	6,187
Kilowatt-hours sold	24,955,543	27,756,112
Revenue	\$2,442,672	\$2,692,606
Total expenses	\$2,265,146	\$2,752,155
Operating margins	\$2,391,153	(\$52,339)

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Kelly Keyser	Operations Manager
Lee Alvstad	Journeyman Lineman
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Jesse Obergfell	Journeyman Lineman
Blade Jankovsky	Journeyman Lineman
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