



# PARK SPARKS

Park Electric Cooperative, Inc. Livingston, MT (406) 222-3100 www.parkedelectric.coop Like us on

## Ever wonder how your bill payments get processed?

Here is how we do it: Every day, the mail from the Post Office and our 2 drop boxes is picked up and brought into the office. Depending on the time of the month, there may only be a few pieces or quite a lot. We divide and open all the envelopes by hand, separate the checks from the payment coupons, and double check the payment amounts. The stacks of checks and payment coupons are then separated and 2 people go through the process of verifying the total of the checks with the total of the payment coupons.

Since we do all of this by hand, it is very important for you to double check the following:

**Payment amount** Does it match what's on the coupon? Is the correct amount written in the box and on the line of your check?

**Accurate contact information** Please keep us up to date with your address and phone number. If we have a question about how to post your payment, we need to have current information. Also, in the event of an outage, you will need to give your phone number to dispatch and if it is incorrect, your reporting will take longer.

**No staples** Staples slow down the process of sorting payments. Please refrain from using them.

**Correct member account numbers** We want to post your payment to the correct account. Without the payment coupon or member account number on your check, we are challenged to guess at your intent for payment posting.

**Multiple Member Accounts** If you have



multiple member accounts, it is fine to write one check for the amount owed. If the check is for the sum of all accounts, please be sure to send in the matching remittance stubs or an itemized list of how the payments should be posted.

**Bank Checks** Many times when you pay through your banks online bill payment system, they send us a paper check that we have to process here in the office. It is EXTREMELY important to put your accurate and current member account number on these checks. If you do not, they may be posted incorrectly or we may be unable to post them at all.



Park Electric Cooperative, Inc.

## Annual Meeting Recap:



**228 members registered and almost 400 meals served**



**Happy \$1,000 scholarship winners!**

**Over 40 door prizes given away**



**Grand Prize winner Judith (& Jack) Ryan**



**Lois Olmstead, guest speaker She stole the show! Thank you, Lois**

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# Managers Comments *By Tim Stephens*

At this year's annual meeting I covered a lot of ground with my report. I am going to try to give you a quick recap so those of you who were unable to attend can have something to talk about around the dinner table tonight. The Clean Power Plan was approved by Environmental Protection Agency on the day of our annual meeting last year. While there has not been a final decision on the legality of the plan, if the courts decide it is a legal rule it will create sweeping changes to the way electric utilities do business all across the country. Recent signs are that this rule is an attempt by EPA to eliminate or extremely limit all types of fossil fuel generation. Your coop, along with almost every electric utility in the country, is keeping a very close eye on what is happening and are monitoring all of it while we make plans for the future. In the meantime, be assured that we have very solid power supply with contracts that run through 2050 and 2075.

As you hear more on the Clean Power Plan I want to remind you of the generation portfolio we draw from. About 65% of the power supply Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative buys on our behalf is non-carbon emitting hydro-electric energy. The remaining comes from Basin Electric Power Cooperative. In March of this year I reported in the Park Sparks that the nameplate total of Basin's generation was about 21% renewable. That number has risen to over 24% at this time. The point I'm trying to make is that when you hear about the efforts to reduce CO2, you should first know that, by nameplate, the generation of our power supply is over 73% non-carbon emitting. In addition to

these numbers Basin already contracted for an additional 200 mW of wind with an option for an additional 100 that will be online in 2019. As a matter of fact, Basin Electric has gone from emitting 1.2 Tons of CO2 per mWH in 2004 to an expected .8 by the end of 2016.

We have seen a small number of our members take a great interest in producing power for their own use and know that interest is going to continue to grow. We refer to these projects as distributive generation or DG. The projects that have been installed to this point have been mostly small solar and wind projects. Most of them are run through a meter that can measure the power going to the home as well as the power coming back onto our system. In most cases this is referred to as a net-meter. We currently have 26 net-metered services on our system. We receive numerous phone calls from members asking questions concerning this topic. There has been enough interest that your directors approved the installation of a 4.6 kW solar array at the office that we can use to show interested members what can they can expected from such a project. You can check out its production on our web site from anywhere you have access. One issue we have recently been made aware of with DG services on our system is that some of you have installed these systems without discussing it with us. For the safety of the general public as well as our line crew, we need to know where all of these systems are. Please let us know if you have installed a DG system that is feeding back into our system. For those of you who are considering installing one,

please give us a call so we can help you make an educated decision on your service. At the very least talk to us before installing a system. We don't operate the same as the investor owned utility in the area, so make sure the system you have installed meets our requirements.

We are pleased to announce that we recently agreed to re-join Touchstone Energy. You may remember that we were members of this organization several years ago. You will see a great deal of new communications coming out of Park Electric with Touchstone's help, including a new web page that will contain more information and should be easier to navigate. By the way, those of you on Facebook, don't forget to check out our page. We post planned outages on there and try to provide information on unplanned outages, along with other timely posts and news. We are also in the process of planning more energy efficiency programs for 2017. Keep an eye on the Park Sparks insert in your Rural Montana magazine for details.

It looks like we are finally going to have a replacement for our Livingston substation. I have talked about this for at least three years. We are now making some good headway. We have a tentative agreement with our partner NorthWestern Energy, on the new substation they are constructing near Shopko in Livingston. It is scheduled to come on line about a year from now. The really good news is that by sharing with them we will be able to save a substantial amount of money on the construction and we really like saving you money.



*Happy Holidays from your Park Electric Cooperative. The office will be closed Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> and Monday, December 26<sup>th</sup> in observance of the Christmas holiday. We will also be closed Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017 for New Years. May your season be joyous and bright!*

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