



CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Park Electric is pleased to announce an internal promotion and a new hire. Carol Amunrud was selected as our new Office Manager. Carol has spent the last 4 years working in the Operations department as the Operations Assistant. Before she worked for Park Electric, she spent 20 years working for Flathead Electric Cooperative in Kalispell in their Member Service and Accounting departments. We look forward to her joining Tiffany and Sarah in the front office.

Heather Rinehart was hired to fill Carol's position in the Operations department. Heather came to Park Electric from Kenyon Noble in Belgrade where she worked as the Office Manager. Heather is a Livingston native and a Park Electric local. Her dad, Dan Franck, was a lineman at PEC when she was born. Her favorite activity outside of work is bow hunting whitetail. When asked about her best hunting memory, she recounted her luck in getting a velvet whitetail a few years ago. Heather is happy to not be commuting to Belgrade every day, even though her husband still has to. So far at PEC, she has learned a lot and enjoys working with an entertaining crew. We welcome Heather and look forward to working with her.

SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE!

Park Electric is pleased to offer the following opportunities to win a scholarship. We encourage all eligible students to apply for BOTH opportunities. All applications are **due to Park Electric by January 25th, 2023.**

Basin Electric/Park Electric

Park Electric, in conjunction with Basin Electric, is offering a \$1000 scholarship to a student who plans to enroll or is currently enrolled in a vocational or tech school or an accredited college or university. These students must be a member of Park Electric or be a dependent of a member of Park Electric. Applications are available at our website at www.parkedelectric.coop/scholarship-and-applications.

MECA Memorial

The Montana Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) Memorial \$500 scholarship is chosen on a statewide level. Eligible seniors in high school turn in applications to Park Electric. Park Electric selects a winner that is sent MECA and they select one winner from each of the four regions across the state. For more information or to apply for this scholarship, please visit our website at www.parkedelectric.coop/scholarship-and-applications.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in your ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form.

Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.

Source: energy.gov



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

The Park Electric office will not be staffed on Friday, December 23rd, Monday, December 26th or Monday, January 2nd.



Managers Comments

by Matt Haggerty

PARK SPARKS
DECEMBER 2022

The 2022 annual meeting of membership commenced on October 21st celebrating 83 years in service since our incorporation in 1939. Due to safety and health concerns, the board of trustees decided to hold another drive-in-style annual meeting. This was the second year members had the option to vote either by mail or in person at the meeting. Dan Skattum retained his seat for district two and Perry Anderson retained his seat for district seven. President Alan Johnstone called our meeting to order and gave his report summarizing Park Electric's accomplishments over the last year. He discussed the board's goal and mission to bring value to our member-owners and communities by providing reliable electricity and superior customer service at fair and reasonable prices. He explained the damages PEC's building received during the flood and how it caused an estimated 1 million dollars in damage. Lastly, he feels it is unlikely that we have a rate increase in 2023.

In the manager's report, I highlighted that the growth in new services over the last 2 years has been the highest PEC has seen in the last 3 decades. Additionally, I informed the membership of the updates to our website including online bill payment options and energy efficiency resources available through our energy efficiency program. This program includes rebates for energy efficient appliances, smart thermostats, and water heaters, and provides information on DIY projects helping to reduce energy consumption. For members who are interested in contributing to green energy, Park Electric offers green power tags through Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Prairie Winds – Energy in Motion Green Tag Program. Green Tags are an intangible environmental benefit associated with energy produced from renewable resources. It allows our members to voluntarily contribute to the development of alternative energy production facilities such as wind energy. The Green



Tags do not purchase the alternative power, rather the funds are used to participate in the development of green power. The premium is an additional expense above normal rates for each kilowatt-hour consumed.

On the operations side of the business, I reported on the completion of line improvement projects that focused on improving our reliability. As part of our strategic plan, we contracted with a tree removal company to clear trees in the Boulder area and Wilsall area which should reduce outage times in the future in those areas. Our line crews have replaced 20 sections of aging underground cable throughout our coverage area which should help reduce the number of underground faults going forward.

Also in my report, I reviewed our current power supply. Our power comes from 2 entities, Western Area Power Association (WAPA) located in Lakewood Colorado, and Basin Electric Coop located in Bismark North Dakota. WAPA provides 65% of our supply and is 100% non-carbon emitting hydro generation. The remaining 35% comes from Basin which includes hydro, wind, coal, solar, natural gas, nuclear, and oil. Pricing from our power supplier will increase in January of 2023. This, combined with the inflation of materials, is putting pressure on our margins and future rates. The management team and PEC's board of trustees feel it's unlikely that we have to have a rate increase in 2023, but I feel that it is very likely that we will have a rate increase in the upcoming years. Our goal is to maintain the lowest possible rates we can. As a reminder, it has been about 10 years since our last rate increase in 2012. Though we do not expect rate increases, Park Electric is billed demand charges during peak electric use times. Peak times are from 6-9 am and 5-8 pm. To help maintain low customer rates, we suggest our members use electricity during non-peak times of day as much as possible.