

WATT'S UP

AT LA PLATA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

LPEA

La Plata Electric Association, Inc.
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

MAY 2017

Shaping the future by building trustworthy community partnerships as an innovative, forward-thinking industry leader, delivering excellence in our member-owned cooperative.

LPEA Annual Meeting – Honoring our Heritage, Embracing the Future

Election results... a complimentary lunch... news about your electric cooperative... door prizes... test drive an electric vehicle... all part of the LPEA Annual Meeting, set for Saturday, May 13 at Sky Ute Casino and Resort, Ignacio. Registration begins at 9 a.m., with the business meeting set to start at 10:30 a.m.

"It's the one time during the year that our membership can join together, see friends and neighbors and learn more about your rural electric cooperative that is truly part of everything you do," says CEO Mike Dreyspring.

Jeff Wilbanks, plant specialist at the Tacoma Hydroelectric Generation Station, is the keynote speaker, and will share his extensive historical knowledge of electricity generation in the region. Tacoma began supplying alternating current in 1905 and remains a viable energy producer to this day.

"We're very honored to have Jeff Wilbanks as our keynote speaker. I know everyone will find his presentation extremely enlightening and informative," says Dreyspring. "One gets the impression after listening to Jeff's history discussion on the plant that he knows every bolt and brick. It's here you realize a few significant things. One, hydro power is clean and durable. No air emissions issues to debate. And how many other forms of electric generation can boast a 100 year life?"

In addition to Wilbanks, presentations during the LPEA Annual Meeting will include reports from CEO Dreyspring, Board President Davin Montoya, Treasurer Karen Barger, Attorney Shay Denning, and CREA Representative Kohler McInnis. An update on happenings at Tri-State Generation and Transmission will

be presented by Joel Bladow.

Also, looking to the future, the Four Corners Office for Resource Efficiency will offer test drives of a 2017 Nissan Leaf as part of the non-profit organization's electric vehicle group-buy program.

Election results in three districts are expected to be announced prior to the complimentary lunch. In accordance with LPEA's bylaws, annually one seat in each of LPEA's four districts comes up for election. This year in District 1 (Archuleta County), incumbent Bob Lynch is the only nominee, thus the election in that district is cancelled and Lynch will retain his seat for another three years.

Candidates in District 2 (south and west La Plata County) are incumbent Davin Montoya and Kim Martin. District 3 (City of Durango) candidates are R. Michael Bell and Rachel Landis. District 4 (north and east La Plata County) candidates are Guinn Unger and incumbent Joe Wheeling.

Learn more at www.lpea.coop or call 970.247.5786 with any questions.



LPEA Board Member Kohler McInnis will offer his spirited presentations covering both the Round Up Foundation and the Colorado Rural Electric Association, LPEA's statewide trade organization, at this year's Annual Meeting.

Rock the vote!

If voting by mail, mail ballots by May 8 to ensure delivery.

Ballots may be delivered in person up to 4 p.m. Friday, May 12 at LPEA's Durango office; La Plata County Clerk; La Plata County Administration in Downtown Durango; Bayfield Town Hall, and Farmer's Fresh Market in Ignacio.

Vote in person at the Annual Meeting prior to 10:30 a.m. [Ballots will not be accepted after 10:30 a.m.]

Adieu Marilyn, welcome Cyndi



Marilyn Arnaout

Cyndi Pierce has joined LPEA as a new Customer Service Representative, based at LPEA's headquarters in Bodo Industrial Park, Durango, Pierce works with LPEA members on billing issues, new accounts and the

cooperative's various products and services. She fills the shoes of Marilyn Arnaout who retired in April.

Pierce comes to LPEA after serving with La Plata County for five years at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Born and raised in Fort Morgan, Colo., she lived in Texas and Washington state before moving with her family to Durango 28 years ago. An avid horseback rider, she also worked for a variety of local businesses, including Over-the-Hill Outfitters, participating on the backcountry rides.



Cyndi Pierce

"I still ride, but not as much as I'd like to," says Pierce, now a grandmother of two. "I'm happy to be at LPEA. This is a good group of people. I love it."

And she adds that Arnaout will be missed, giving her wealth of knowledge after

being with LPEA for 15 years.

To her co-workers, Arnaout noted, "It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with you all. I am thrilled to retire, but will miss you!"

Watch for the 2016 LPEA Annual Report in the mail and at www.lpea.coop.

LPEA hosts Operations & Engineering Conference

Annually, engineers and operations personnel from Colorado rural electric cooperatives convene at the CREA Operations & Engineering Conference to further education and networking for the benefit of co-op members. In April 2017, LPEA, with Manager of Operations Justin Talbot and his right hand Charlene Sandoval at the helm, organized the event and brought some 200 professionals, many with their families, to Durango.

"I really wanted to ramp it up this year," said Talbot, noting that while a trade show at the La Plata County Fairgrounds was part of the four-day event [where vendors could promote their services and products], the focus of the conference was on education. "All our speakers discussed trends in the industry, solutions for addressing coming challenges and more."

Group sessions included presentations by Dan Harms, LPEA manager of rates, technology and energy policy, covering LPEA's successes with Time-of-Use, outage management and Pre-Pay programs. Ron Meier, manager of engineering and member relations discussed the challenges and successes of integrating renewable generation throughout the local grid.

As a La Plata County native, Talbot also wanted to showcase Southwest Colorado and made sure as part of the conference, participants had the opportunity to experience the flavor of Durango. Attendees had the opportunity to travel back in time and ride the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad on a special train to the Tacoma Hydroelectric Generation Station.

"It was a great opportunity for people who really understand how electricity is generated to get up close, touch, and even feel, the power at Tacoma," says Talbot. "And it was great fun for all those folks who don't live among wildlife to spy it from the train, as well as experience the stunning beauty of the Animas Canyon. I'm very proud of where I've grown up, and I wanted us to share as much as we could during this conference."

Participants also experienced the beauty of the Hillcrest Golf Course, enjoyed a "poker run" among Durango's award-winning craft breweries, and savored additional local history while dining at the Strater Hotel.

"LPEA was honored to host this year's conference, and I believe those in attendance expanded their knowledge of industry trends," says Talbot. "And I'm very happy they enjoyed Durango. I talked to many who said they will be coming back here for vacation."

Participants in the 2017 Operations & Engineering Conference rode the D&SNG to tour the historic Tacoma Hydroelectric Generation Station.



LPEA Golf Tourney next month!

As has become tradition, the IBEW Local 111 Unit 26A "Brotherhood" in Archuleta County will once again host the La Plata Electric Golf Tournament, Saturday, June 17 at the Pagosa Springs Golf Course.

Proceeds will benefit the Foundation for Archuleta County Education: FACE, to support teacher grants for education resources.

To participate as a Hole Sponsor, or field a team, contact Garrett Hammer, 970.946.9434 or Jeremy Matney, 970.759.8881.

Students to visit Washington D.C.

Area high school students Isaac Jordan of Ignacio, Collin Jackson and Sloan Mazur of Bayfield, and Jesse Laverty and Tate Hinger of Pagosa Springs have been selected to represent LPEA as part of the National Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington D.C., scheduled for June 8-15, 2017.

"This trip is a tremendous opportunity for our area juniors," says Mike Dreysspring, CEO. "Our communities, as well as the country and the world are facing many challenges in the energy arena, and the industry is changing, so it's important that our next generation gain an understanding about energy policy development at the federal level. We are pleased to be able to further that education."

LPEA's student representatives will join juniors from the cooperative's sister electric co-ops across Colorado. The schedule includes an intimate look at the nation's Capitol and the government from the inside, including discussion of current concerns with Congressional representatives. Tours of Washington D.C.'s monuments and museums, plus social activities, are also part of the agenda.

The opportunity to participate in the D.C. Youth Tour was open to all current high school juniors, including home-schooled students, who receive their electric power from LPEA. Students completed an application and penned a 500-word essay covering an aspect of the electric industry.

Applications for the 2018 Washington D.C. Youth Tour will be available in November 2017 at LPEA's offices in Durango and Pagosa Springs, through area high school counselors, or on the web, www.lpea.coop.



Isaac Jordan



Collin Jackson



Sloan Mazur



Jesse Laverty



Tate Hinger

CO-OP MEMBERS

Ask...

Q: I've heard about an electric vehicle group-buy program that gives a great discount. Is this an LPEA program?

A: The electric vehicle (EV) group-buy program is organized by the Four Corners Office for Resource Efficiency (4CORE) in coordination with Refuel Colorado and in partnership with Nissan of Durango. Up to \$22,500 in rebates/savings may be available for purchase of a 2017 Nissan Leaf through the group-buy by May 25, 2017. Visit www.fourcore.org for further information.

LPEA has applied for and received a "Charge Ahead Colorado" grant to install EV charging stations at our facilities. LPEA is currently researching equipment and policy options. The charging stations are not directly tied to 4CORE's group-buy program, but EV owners will likely benefit from the charging stations in the future.

LIVE WIRES

Board meeting May 17, 9 a.m.

The next meeting of the LPEA Board of Directors is set for Wednesday, May 17, 9 a.m. at LPEA headquarters in Durango. The agenda will be posted 10 days in advance of the meeting at www.lpea.coop. All members are reminded that public comment is heard at the beginning of the meeting.

LPEA offices closed

In honor of Memorial Day, LPEA offices in Durango and Pagosa Springs will be closed on Monday, May 29.

Round Up Grants

The following organizations received Round Up or Educational grants, distributed by the Round Up Foundation Board of Directors, in April:

- Southwest Center for Independence [\$3,000]
- Pine River Shares [\$2,000]
- Title VI Parent Advisory Committee [\$1,000]
- Women's Resource Center [\$1,000-Round Up; \$4,000-Educational]

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Sign up for email alerts for workshops, job availability and more at www.lpea.coop. Click on "contact us."



@LaPlataElectric



From the President YOU are invited

BY DAVIN MONTOYA | BOARD PRESIDENT | DMONTOYA@LPEA.COOP

We all seem to be very busy these days, but I want to invite all our member-owners to slow down a bit, take some time and remember what a great thing it is to be part of a rural electric cooperative. Come visit with your friends and neighbors at your LPEA Annual Meeting, Saturday, May 13. Honor our heritage... and let's look to our future.

We're returning to the Sky Ute Casino and Resort in Ignacio. In addition to the event center being a great venue, it's about as centralized as we can get in LPEA's service territory. We hope many of our members will be able to attend. There's plenty of parking, and we'll have golf cart shuttles to make everything easier.

Registration opens at 9 a.m.,

including a continental breakfast. The business meeting starts at 10:30 a.m. And, of course, a buffet lunch, courtesy of LPEA and catered by the Sky Ute Resort, follows at about noon.

As you hopefully know, we're in the midst of an election in three of our LPEA districts. In those districts where we will have elections, you should have received your election packet, and if you haven't yet voted, be sure to consider the candidates carefully and mail your ballot by May 9 [remember mail goes to Albuquerque and takes two days!]. Every single vote counts.

Bob Lynch, incumbent director in District 1 [Archuleta County] received no challengers, so the election was cancelled in that district. A review of the candidates in the other three districts is available at www.lpea.coop.

You can also bring your ballot to the Annual Meeting, but arrive early to register and submit your ballot before the meeting officially starts to ensure that your vote is counted. The election results will be announced by the end of the meeting.

During the business meeting we will share important information about your cooperative, as well as report on the company's financial performance over the last year and discuss the challenges of providing reliable power at the lowest reasonable cost, while remaining environmentally responsible.

In addition, our Keynote Speaker this year is Jeff Wilbanks. He's the plant specialist up at the Tacoma hydro generating plant, and beyond maintaining that plant as a great example of renewable hydro electricity generation, he's a historian. Tacoma has been in operation since the early 1900s. And while he hasn't been there that long, Jeff has absorbed all the history. He'll share the fascinating stories with us at the Annual Meeting.

Remember, if you register at the meeting, you'll receive a \$5 credit on your electric bill plus a special gift – and be eligible for a wide variety of door prizes.

So I hope to see you there. We make history every day, and you are part of it.

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603 S. 8th St. Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

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Mission Statement:
La Plata Electric Association provides its members safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost while being environmentally responsible.

Board of Directors:
Davin Montoya, President [District 2]
Kohler McInnis, Vice President [District 2]
Joe Wheeling, Secretary [District 4]
Karen Barger, Treasurer [District 4]
Mike Alley [District 1]
Britt Bassett [District 3]
Jeff Berman [District 3]
Bob Formwalt [District 1]
Dan Huntington [District 2]
Bob Lynch [District 1]
Doug Lyon [District 3]
Jack Turner [District 4]

Chief Executive Officer:
Michael A. Dreystrup

Statement of Non-discrimination
LPEA is an equal opportunity provider and employer M/F/ Disability/Veteran.
If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

