

WHAT'S GOING ON IN OTHER CO-OPS



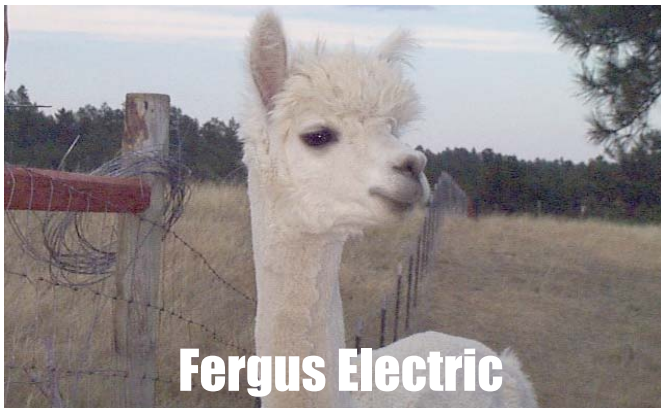
Yellowstone Valley Electric

YVEC, based in Huntley, reports a near tragedy in its newsletter pages. As kids were heading off to school on the morning of Nov. 14 they saw that a car had hit a 3-phase pole. Soon YVEC crews were at the scene replacing the splintered pole.

About 70 consumers were without power for about an hour. No one was hurt.

Always drive safely and keep your mind on the road and your driving, the newsletter advises.

In the winter give yourself extra time in case the roads are icy or it is storming out.



Fergus Electric

Writing in the "Fergus Features," based in Lewistown, Judy Byrne tells of Ed Raastad's conversion to Montanan. Born in Brooklyn and raised in New Jersey, Raastad confessed to a lifelong urge to migrate to Montana and a new life raising alpacas.

"Even as a boy, I was entranced with the idea of living in Montana," he says. "My dad called me Montana Slim."

He retired from Arizona law enforcement in 1996, then added a stint with the Arizona Department of

Corrections. Still, he felt compelled to head for Big Sky Country. "Arizona is a great state, but I got tired of the sameness," he explains. "The only thing that changes is the color of the license plates when tourists arrive."

Raastad now enjoys the changing seasons on his ranch east of Roundup where he lives in a small cabin, a bug-out place away from the bother of city life, Byrne writes. He fills his days with construction of his permanent home and caring for his six alpaca, two cats, and Jet Boy, his guard llama. Raastad took the alpaca photo above.

Lincoln Electric

Manager Mike Henry used the co-op's newsletter pages to excerpt an op-ed piece written by Terry Flores, Executive Director of Northwest RiverPartners in response to a report titled "Revenue Stream," by conservation groups.

Reliable hydro is what keeps electricity flowing when the wind isn't blowing. Conservation reduces load and cannot be used to meet new growth. The clean,

renewable power produced by these dams is vital to our growing region. Removing them would require building five new large coal or three nuclear plants, Flores writes.

In the ultimate ironic twist, the report's authors hope to create revenue by expanding the salmon-harvesting industry. Imagine spending billions to remove dams and replace 3,000 MWs of a renewable resource, to allow fishermen to kill the fish we are trying to save.

Glacier Electric

The direction that the state energy policy should take is already creating the probability for heated debate in the 2007 legislative session, writes manager Jasen Bronec in his column to members of Glacier Electric, based in Cut Bank. More than 26 energy-related bills have been introduced, with the certainty that more will appear as the session progresses.

Bronec excerpts a piece in The Missoulian newspaper that evaluated renewable power, such as wind, to clean-coal power.

"Montana's largest utility, NorthWestern, now obtains about 7 percent of the electricity needed to serve its 310,000 customers from a 90-turbine, 8,300-acre wind farm near Judith Gap," the newspaper wrote.

"For wind turbines to even rival coal generators, we'd need turbines on every ridgetop in Montana. Goodbye, open space! Even then, the electricity would cost consumers more, and they'd still have to have coal, hydro and natural gas power as a backup for when the wind isn't blowing."



Missoula Electric

In its newsletter, "Current Flashes," Missoula Electric Cooperative announced the acquisition of a former drive-in movie theater. Not for showing old movies, obviously, but for the eventuality to accommodate expected growth and potential construction of new facilities.