

Big Skylights



An internal newsletter of the STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

A report from your Chief Executive Officer Dave Wheelihan

July 14, 2005

Plans taking shape for 44th annual meeting

Under the newly selected theme of “The Synergies of Co-op Energy,” plans for the Montana Electric Cooperatives’ Association’s 44th Annual Meeting are taking shape. The annual meeting will be held October 3-6 at the Heritage Inn in Great Falls. Tentative topics are: “Challenges and Opportunities of Alternative Renewable Energy,” “Montana Policymakers’ Vision for Electric Co-ops and the Energy Industry,” “Building MECA’s Grassroots Power Network,” “How the Federal Energy Bill Affects Montana’s Electric Co-ops” and “Key Issues for Future Power Delivery and Generation.”

An initial mailing on the MECA annual meeting will go out on Friday, July 15, to approximately 500 directors, managers and employees. The mailing will include a tentative agenda as well as registration forms. This year’s registration deadline is Sept. 12. After Sept. 12, a late registration fee will be charged. Online registration over the Internet should be available beginning on Saturday, July 16.

MECA holds first-ever class on co-op basics

MECA has successfully completed its first-ever orientation session for new directors and employees with 14 people having taken the course held in Missoula on Friday, July 8.

Instructors included: MECA **President Bob Evans, Jr.**, discussing MECA’s structure, **Stacey Bartlett**, a director at Ravalli County Electric Cooperative, talking about the origins and history of electric cooperatives; **Jay Downen**, president of Flathead Electric Cooperative, providing an overview of the director’s job; **Ric Brown**, manager at Ravalli County Electric Cooperative, discussing the role of the co-op manager; **Jeanne Barnard**, manager at Big Flat Electric Cooperative, talking about cooperative financing options; **Jack Hunt**, manager of Missoula Electric Cooperative, explaining Montana electric cooperative power supply sources; MECA’s **Gary Wiens** covering key legislative issues and the legislative issue-development process at MECA; and MECA Attorney **Max Davis** reviewing major legal cases affecting electric cooperatives.

Attendees were **Erik Langaunet**, **Danny Baker**, **David Lopez** and **Tracy Hilderman** of Missoula Electric Cooperative; **Wayne Olson** of Ravalli County Electric Cooperative, **Duane Klindworth** of Big Flat Electric Cooperative, **April Heyn** of Lincoln Electric Cooperative, **Ruth Hinnaland** of McCone Electric Cooperative, **Mel Fretheim** and **Robert Pace** of Marias River Electric Cooperative, **E.J. Lundgren**, **George Taylor** and **Stephanie Wallace** of Flathead Electric Cooperative, and **Jim Smith** of MECA.

**MECA instructor
gains pro status
on safety**

Congratulations are in order to **Art King**, a MECA safety/loss control (S/LC) instructor, who recently completed requirements for becoming a Certified Loss Control Professional under a program administered by NRECA. MECA now has two instructors having achieved that status. MECA S/LC Instructor **Johnnie Stanton** completed his requirements last year.

Condolences

Our sympathies to the family of **E. "Duke" Baney**, who passed away Saturday, June 25. His funeral was June 30. Mr. Baney served 18 years as a trustee at Lincoln Electric Cooperative. He held various officer positions on the board during that time, retiring from the board in March, 2004. Cards may be sent to his wife, **Ann Baney**, at 2291 MT Highway, Eureka, MT 59917.

2005 CALENDAR

July

16 Tongue River Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting Ashland, MT

August

8 – 10 Office Managers Conference Dillon, MT
29 – Sept 1 Operations Conference Missoula, MT

September

24 Beartooth Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting Red Lodge, MT

October

3 – 6 MECA 44th Annual Meeting of Members Great Falls, MT