

SOUTHEAST COLORADO POWER ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2019



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Our primary mission is to provide high-quality, reliable electric service at a reasonable cost to our members, improve their quality of life through new technologies and services, be a visible and active member of the community and serve our members with respect, courtesy and responsiveness.

SOUTHEAST COLORADO
POWER ASSOCIATION IS AN
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER
AND EMPLOYER



Touchstone Energy®



OUR EMPLOYEE TEAM

BY JACK JOHNSTON CEO

There are many complex facets to both the electric and broadband industries — our cooperative, Southeast Colorado Power Association, in the former and its subsidiary, SECOM, in the latter. Materials, technology, science, financing, partnerships, regulation, legislation, economics, competition and Mother Nature are many of the important inputs necessary to running our companies.

Not surprisingly though, it is our employee team that is truly the backbone needed to achieve any and all success.

With the largest electric territory statewide, SECPA employees are spread throughout many southeastern Colorado communities. A workforce of 52 employees is ready to meet consumer-member needs on a 24/7 basis. SECOM's marketplace spans an even larger footprint, currently requiring 70 employees to service an expanding demand for high-speed internet services.

We always strive to be an employer of choice in all the areas we serve. Although an important piece, salary and benefits are not the only ways to achieve this mark. A demonstrated commitment to community, both economically and socially, are important to potential applicants. The ability to offer contemporary and fulfilling jobs is also a key factor. Industries that offer a far-reaching and meaningful service, which electricity and broadband do, is a significant appeal. Stability is certainly one of the greatest draws, and SECPA's 80 years and SECOM's 20 years in business are a proven steadiness.

Over the past few years, SECPA added five new positions that didn't exist previously. One is filled with multiple individuals and all focus on taking operations to a



JACK JOHNSTON

higher level. SECOM created 12 new positions filled by 16 new employees. These jobs cover many disciplines: engineering, outside plant operations, information technology, network operations, customer service, sales, marketing, technology, human resources and legal. There were also 18 promotions and seven apprentices became journeyman linemen, providing many desired growth opportunities.

We also had several individuals celebrate their retirements these past years — all of whom had multiple decades of service adding up to 40 years. Our goal is always to offer not just a job, but a career that supports families and keeps the most talented and hardworking individuals in their desired communities.

We know that if we maintain this proven hiring philosophy, everyone everywhere that is important to our business will thrive. You have an extremely qualified, vibrant and dedicated employee team whose members take pride in their companies and know it is you who makes every job a reality.

You Could Be A Winner This Month

If you find your name in this issue as follows (WIN* your name, your account number), please contact Southeast Colorado Power Association at 719-384-2551 or 800-332-8634 to receive a credit on your next power bill.

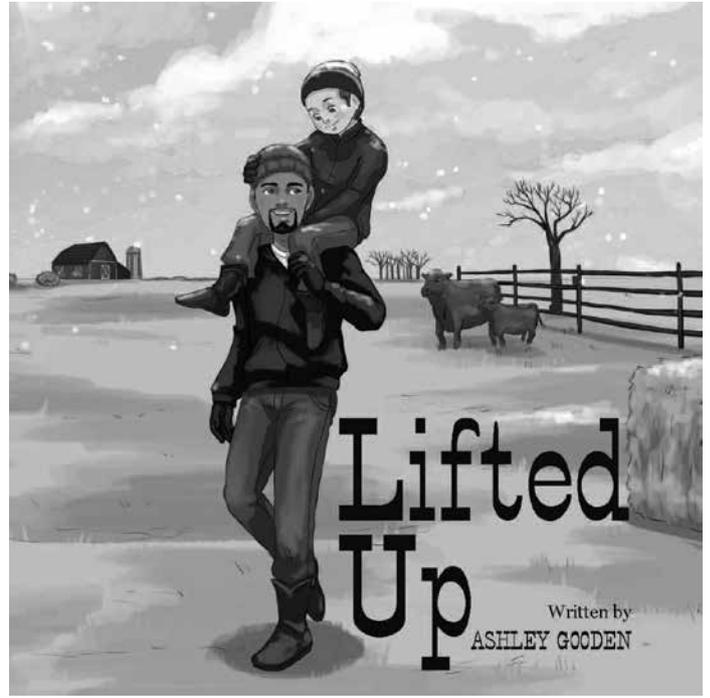
**Last Month's Winner –
Jose Rizo Acct# 18020120000**

Co-op Talent

Ashley Gooden, has her bachelor's degree in elementary education. She is a former classroom teacher. Ashley resides on the plains of Colorado with her rancher husband, Kenan, and their three energetic sons.

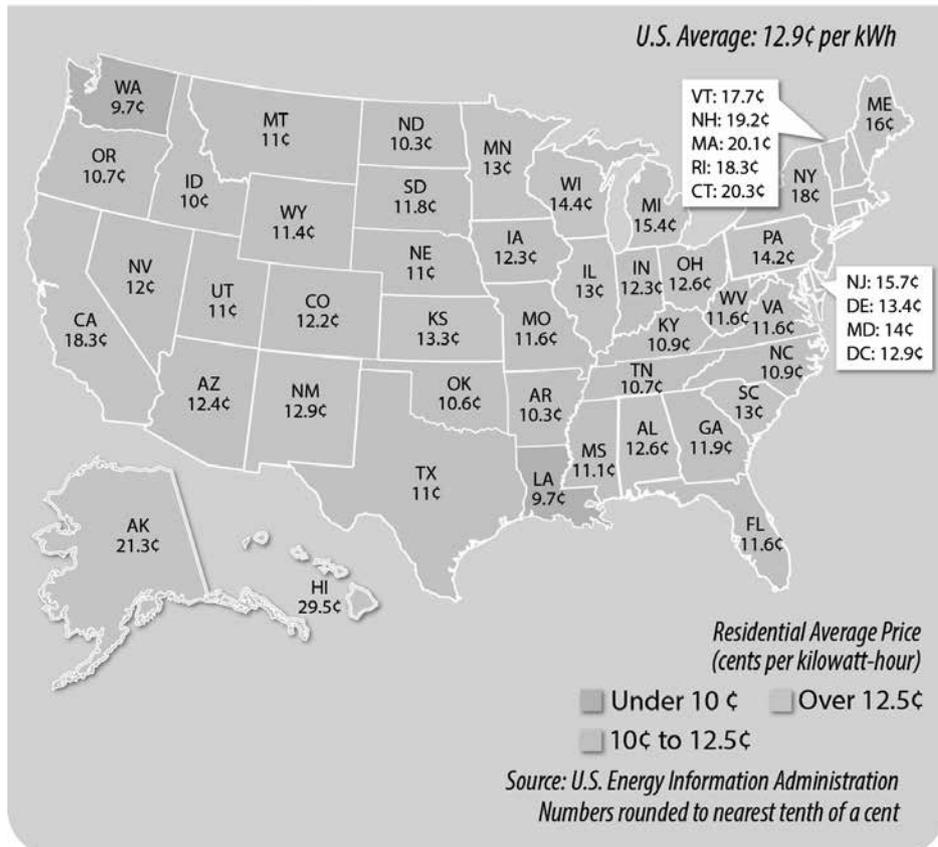
She was inspired to write *Lifted Up* to bring honor and glory to the heavenly Father. She wanted to bring in some aspects of her own personal life to this story as well. Ashley shares about the life in southeastern Colorado that we all know and call home. It gives a glimpse of what it is like to live on the Gooden ranch and how they work together as a family. Ashley stated that they try to make every moment enjoyable and take advantage of spending time together while doing chores. In the small details of their day-to-day life, they can see and be reminded of Christ. This book is written for families to enjoy reading together and be a tool to spark conversation about what Jesus has done for us and how He loves us.

If you are interested in checking out *Lifted Up*, visit www.liftedup-gooden.com. The book is available for purchase on the website, amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com.



Average Prices for Residential Electricity

2017 figures, in cents per kWh



February 2019
Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

LAUNDRY TIP:
Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter-weight clothing. You'll spend less time running the dryer for lighter-weight items, which saves energy.

Source: energy.gov



▲ Jace Noe, SECPA journeyman lineman



▲ Elijah Ridgwell, SECOM wireless manager

Real-World Problems Solved by Santa Fe Trail BOCES Students

The real-world problems of “Who provides my electricity and how do I get it in my home?” and “Who provides my internet and how do I get it in my home?” were solved or at the least researched by the La Junta Junior High Career Exploration class, taught by Shawna Frankmore. On November 5, the seventh and eighth grade students visited the SECPA and SECOM main office as part of the problem-solving process. SECPA and SECOM professionals were eager to share with the students how to get these essential utilities to their homes.

The real-world problem scenario experience is part of the Pathway to Prosperity project that the Santa Fe Trail Board of Cooperative Educational Services member districts are participating in. Based on the model developed by Building Bridges to Careers in rural Marietta, Ohio, the six Santa Fe Trail BOCES member districts (Wiley, Cheraw, Las Animas, East Otero, Swink and Rocky Ford) are creatively connecting their students to their communities by solving real-world problems. This opportunity is a partnership between Battelle for Kids, Generation Schools Network, Building Bridges to Careers, the Colorado Rural Education Collaborative

and the Santa Fe Trail BOCES.

SECPA and SECOM are valuable community partners of this project. The launch of this project began in the SECPA and SECOM conference room in October. At that time, educators were teamed up with community partners to solve problems. Angela Bamber, chief human resource officer, brainstormed with the La Junta Junior High educators to come up with these real-world problems:

“Who provides my electricity and how do I get it in my home?” and “Who provides my internet and how do I get it in my home?”

Student groups were assigned one of the questions to solve. They were tasked with solving the necessary questions. In fact, without electricity or the internet, the research would not have been possible. Real-world problem scenarios are an innovative, relevant education project that fosters teamwork, research, problem-solving and presentation skills. Students are encouraged to reach out to the community to solve the assigned problem.

The field trip to SECPA and SECOM headquarters provided a firsthand opportunity to learn who provides electricity and internet and discover how these services

get to the customers. The students were given a tour of the SECPA and SECOM headquarters beginning with the essential customer service representatives, because, in real life, the customer service reps are the first people to talk to when power and internet are needed in a home. The students then got a glimpse of the rest of the team. After the initial tour, more concentrated time was spent in the students’ five favorite departments. Local career exploration is an added benefit to students participating in the project. Exposing students to local careers and encouraging them to get the education and skills to qualify for those careers is a foundational focus of the Pathway to Prosperity project. The students learned that there are 50 careers at SECPA and SECOM. Many other wonderful SECPA and SECOM professionals participated in this educational opportunity.

Bamber was instrumental in helping the students resolve the assigned problems. The interest of the SECPA and SECOM professionals are examples of the commitment of SECPA and SECOM to the families of the Santa Fe Trail BOCES.

This partnership of rural students with rural businesses and leaders is a two-year Pathway to Prosperity Building Community Bridges project.

For more information or to get involved, contact Jennifer Nesselhuf at jennifer.nesselhuf@sftboces.k12.co.us. [Wes Loader, Acct# 1208810000]



**SAVE
THE
DATE!**

You're invited to

**SECPA's
Annual
Meeting!**

Southeast Colorado
Power Association
will hold its
annual meeting
on

**Thursday,
April 11, 2019**

****Cash prize drawings
throughout the day****

Please join us at
Lamar Community College
2401 S. Main St., Lamar

BOARD DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

Registration 5 p.m.

Dinner 6 p.m.

Meeting 6:45 p.m.

**WATCH for Director Candidates
in your March Billing Statements**

Electricity 101: The Flip of a Switch

BY PAUL WESSLUND

Have you ever wondered why they named it “electricity?”

It's named after those little pieces of atoms called electrons, and that's the place to start in understanding how power plants make something that reliably lights your home with the flip of a switch.

Getting all those electrons to march together inside a wire has been described as one of civilization's greatest and most complex engineering feats.

Just about all of your electricity starts with the scientific phenomenon caused when a magnet spins inside a coil of wires to generate electricity. So, deep inside most central station power plants are large turbines that are turned in different ways: falling water at a hydroelectric dam; burning coal or natural gas at a fossil fuel station; atomic energy at a nuclear power plant; or the rotating blades of a wind turbine. One exception is solar energy, which uses materials that produce electricity when they're activated by sunlight.

Every one of those power plants is unimaginably complicated — think about

what you would do if you were handed a lump of coal and told to make it run your refrigerator.

Most large electric generating plants need large banks of transformers to boost the voltage for the cross-country trip through wires held up by tall transmission lines and towers. As it nears your neighborhood, the voltage is reduced at one of those fenced-in complexes of wires and transformers called a substation. Lower voltage makes the electricity safer for home energy use. As the electricity gets closer to your home or business, the voltage is reduced again with smaller transformers, which you can typically see mounted on a nearby utility pole or in a ground-level green box in your yard.

Beyond those basics, all that flowing electricity needs to be coordinated so it gets to the right house just as it's needed. When you think about it, that's a lot of power in the simple flip of a switch!

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Powerful Sources

Nationally, electric cooperatives and other utilities use a variety of fuels to power American homes and businesses. This diverse fuel mix supplies co-op members with the safe, reliable and affordable power they depend on.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2017 data)

