



MARK JOHNSTON
GENERAL MANAGER

MOUNTAIN PARKS IS LISTENING

The sitcom “Frasier,” broadcast for 11 seasons, tells the story of Dr. Frasier Crane, a radio psychiatrist. On the show, he answered each call with the comforting salutation: “I’m listening.” At Mountain Parks Electric, we’re no different. We are always listening to you, our members, even if you don’t want to reach out to us directly.

Four times a year, MPE provides a short online survey at www.mpei.com/content/mpe-member-survey to solicit your feedback and comments. Each survey is approximately 10 questions in length. Taking the survey is also potentially lucrative. By participating, you are automatically entered in a \$100 quarterly bill credit drawing. Usually, MPE receives about 100 responses each quarter. We would love to have more. I recently reviewed our two most recent surveys and wanted to highlight some of the comments.

PRICE OF RENEWABLES

Members commented, both positively and negatively, about incorporating renewables into our power supply. A consistent comment related to the price per kilowatt-hour. MPE is currently constructing two solar projects in Fraser and Walden. A prime consideration in the development of these projects was the economics of the power produced. MPE wants to be responsible with the integration of renewables specifically to ensure that they are competitive power sources. Both of these projects produce power at a cost lower than power provided under our current wholesale contract. MPE estimates these solar arrays will generate significant saving for members over the next 20 or 30 years.

SOLAR PANEL REBATES

Members asked why MPE does not offer solar panel rebates. Good news: MPE does offer solar panel rebates. We established the Green Power program in 1999 to provide assistance to both residential and

commercial members wanting to install solar or other renewable projects. This program is funded by more than 1,200 members who voluntarily make monthly contributions to the fund. In 2018, the program awarded more than \$30,000 for local renewable projects. For more information, visit our website at www.mpei.com, select the “Energy Efficiency” tab, then “Green Power and Net Metering.” This page includes a link to the “Rebate Application Form.”

FIBER VS. BROADBAND

Much like renewables, MPE received positive and negative online survey comments regarding our proposed fiber project. First, I realize that the terms “fiber” and “broadband” are often thought to mean the same thing. This is not true. MPE will be installing fiber-optic cable to improve the communication of our electrical system. Some of our current communication vendors are or will be retiring legacy systems, such as 3G. These changes will affect MPE’s ability to communicate with existing service equipment. The fiber project will improve system communications and help provide more safe and reliable power to our members. [Ryan Massa, ACCT 1030157]

“Broadband” is a possible by-product of the improved communication system. It may allow MPE to offer capacity to local internet providers to improve service to underserved areas. The MPE board authorized investment in the fiber upgrades and is still investigating the opportunities that these upgrades might provide.

I encourage you to continue reaching out to us with your feedback — using our online survey, reaching out to one of our directors, calling us, stopping at one of our offices or by attending our annual meeting or a monthly board meeting. At Mountain Parks, we never forget that we are owned by those we serve. And we are always listening to better serve your needs.

HOW THE WASHINGTON DC YOUTH TOUR MADE A LASTING IMPRESSION

A 2007 Middle Park High School Graduate's Reflections



▲ Briana Rueb (Leyba) now lives in Flagstaff, Arizona, where she works as a 911 communications specialist.

Every year, MPE awards the winner of its annual essay contest (a local high school student aged 16 or older) a weeklong, all-expense-paid trip to our nation's capital. The Youth Tour is markedly different than the eighth-grade, school-sponsored Washington, D.C., trip. In June, MPE's essay contest winner joins students from across the United States to meet with elected officials, learn about the electric industry and make lifelong friendships, as well as visit the national monuments. Here's what former essay contest winner Briana Rueb said about her experience:

How was the Youth Tour trip different than the eighth-grade school trip?

The Youth Tour was a week long. I saw more of the capital and more monuments on this trip than in eighth grade. I also was able to network with students from across

See MPE's essay contest guidelines at: www.mpei.com/contestinfo.com

ELIGIBILITY

The essay contest is open to all high school students who are at least 16 years of age by January 1, 2020, attend a school in MPE's service territory and live in a household that receives electricity from MPE.

ESSAY CONTEST DEADLINE

To enter, students must submit a 500 word or less energy-related essay, energy-related video project or energy-related photo journal by January 6, 2020 to Mountain Parks Electric, RE: Essay Contest, PO BOX 170, Granby, Colorado or email their entry to rtaylor@mpei.com.

the country, essay contest winners from other states, who take the Youth Tour at the same time. Today, I still keep in touch with friends I made during the Youth Tour more than a decade ago.

What is something valuable that you learned during the Youth Tour?

How connected everything really is. Growing up, it was sometimes difficult to see that our federal government's concerns extended to small communities like Hot Sulphur Springs and Granby. But I saw this connection first-hand during the trip. It was interesting to see the multiple levels of work being completed on both large and small scales.

What was one of your fondest memories of the tour?

Speaking in person with former U.S. Sen. Mark Udall. He invited us into his office and asked our group to share ideas about how to improve the electric industry.

What would you say to high school students on the fence about whether or not to enter MPE's essay contest?

Don't hesitate. Make the leap. Every student can benefit from this. For me, it was the trip of a lifetime. I learned so much about communication, relationships, politics and the electric industry. Afterward, I drew on these experiences — the things I learned during the Youth Tour — many times throughout college and even today in my professional career.



4 REASONS TO STOP BY MPE'S BOOTH AT THE NORTH PARK FAIR & RODEO ON SEPTEMBER 6-7

1. **CHECK OUT** our FREE virtual reality experience
2. **LEARN** about MPE's energy efficiency & renewable energy rebates
3. **PICK UP** your FREE MPE swag
4. **TALK TO US** about how we can improve your electric service



Find Your Name Win \$5

If you find your name in this magazine, contact Mountain Parks Electric to receive a \$5 credit on your power bill. Winners must contact MPE within one month of the date of issue.

WAYS TO SAVE

BY LINDSAY MCCANN
BILLING SUPERVISOR



A WINTER CHECKLIST

Energy-Saving Tips

For efficiency and savings this winter, prepare by:

- Replacing or cleaning filters in your home
- Cleaning the oven
- Vacuuming out the lint in and behind your dryer

PET OF THE MONTH



Monique Lussie, ACCT 1025113

COOPER

"A mutt from the pound, Cooper loves to go get the paper each morning and bring it in to us, greets the mailman and brings in the mail, loves to go for walks and rides in the vehicles, kind of picky about food and, above all, is very attached to and loves his mama!"

Owner: Denise Dennett

Email your pet photos and pet bio to rtaylor@mpei.com



Local Chef SPOTLIGHT

RESTAURANT:

LULU CITY

916 Grand Ave., Grand Lake, CO
970-798-8210
www.lulu-city.com

HOURS:

6 a.m. – 9 p.m.

SPECIALTY:

House-made gelato and sorbetto; coffee and doughnuts made to order.

COOKING TIP FOR MPE READERS

When baking at high altitude, overmixing your batter can be detrimental. Use a timer when mixing for optimal results.

GET LULU CITY'S EASY STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE RECIPE AT: www.mpei.com/ccl_bonus_features

Steve Pisano: The Device Doctor Is In

BY ROB TAYLOR, MANAGER OF COMMUNICATIONS

You might say that Steve Pisano is in the business of putting lives back together. Over the past several years, a steady stream of customers have stepped through his door at Device Doctors, clutching smartphones and telling tragic tales: For some, it's a dead battery, or maybe a virus or malware. Others dropped their phones. They cringe at their cracked screens and wear the same expression as those whose phones were submersed in water. Whatever the mishap, it constitutes more of a crisis than an inconvenience, it seems. One by one, they hand over their devices to Pisano, the smiling man in the wheelchair who fixes broken things.

“... at the end of what was a long day, my gf (girlfriend) was already going into phone withdrawals, so he (Pisano) stayed 30 minutes late to fix her phone.”

— Google review

“I get paid for doing what I love,” Pisano said, shrugging it off. Positive reviews are common.

But it's something more than the service. It's the Device Doctor himself, his easy smile in particular, that customers find unforgettable.

Pisano's career path has not followed a straight line. He grew up in Coral Springs, Florida, watching his father, a master plumber and sign maker, wield just about every tool imaginable. “He is amazing,” Pisano said. “As a kid, I learned a lot from him. I always liked taking things apart to see how they worked.” But unlike his father, as a young adult, Pisano ventured into photography and ministry. He eventually settled in the Fraser Valley where, at first, he worked at Timberline Lodge. He could still walk

back then, before the wheelchair, before the day of his own crisis.

It happened in a split second in the summer of 2003. While doing something else he loved, downhill biking, Pisano's tires slipped on the gravel of a steep, declining path in Winter Park. He lost control in a tumble, a rush of adrenaline and then blackness. He lost consciousness for 10 minutes after the crash. “When I came to and couldn't move, I knew immediately that life was going to be different,” he remembered. Within hours, doctors showed him the X-rays. His thoracic vertebra, the T3, was broken.

Treatment followed — three weeks at St. Anthony in Lakewood, and then two and a half months at Craig Hospital in Englewood, which specializes in spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury rehab. That's when he learned that there is no way to repair his damaged nerves.

“The pain is always there,” Pisano said. “Emotions come with it. I'm sad sometimes. But that's OK. I know that all isn't lost, whether your cell phone stops working or you can't walk anymore. You've got to have faith. Got to stay positive.” [Jennifer Davis, ACCT 1031580]

In 2014, Pisano experienced a more pleasant transformative moment when a friend asked if he could fix his wife's broken iPhone. “I think so,” he replied, intrigued by the challenge. He referenced a phone repair video online and found that the tools of the trade were mostly familiar: screwdriver kits, specialty screw heads, pry tools, tweezers and suction cups. During the repair, a singular thought took hold of him: There is a need for this service in Grand County. Just two weeks later, fixing phones became a full-time job.



Steve Pisano is pictured with Pennee, his 6-month-old golden-doodle service dog.

Today, Device Doctors is busier than ever, repairing almost any DC electronic device. “From phones to drones,” he said, flashing that smile again. Recently, he diversified into renting and selling the one thing that you might least expect: bicycles. “They aren't downhill bikes,” he explained, chuckling. “They are electric. Pretty cool. Great for getting around town.”

In 2020, Pisano will add another fixture to the store: Pennee, his golden-doodle service puppy (the featured Pet of the Month in the June *Colorado Country Life* magazine). Currently, Pennee is 6 months old and in training, learning to fetch dropped items, to place items into someone's hand and to open a refrigerator and retrieve a bottle of water. Pisano can't wait to have her by his side every day. Next year, she'll join him full time in the store and, no doubt, give him yet another reason to smile.

DEVICE DOCTORS

located in Winter Park's
Cooper Creek Square
www.devicedoctors.net
970-531-1416