

A FINAL FAREWELL

The Future is Bright for MVEA

BY JIM HERRON CEO | HERRONJC@MVEA.ORG

After 26 years of greeting you every month, it is bittersweet to be writing my last column for *Colorado Country Life* magazine — a final hello and a farewell at the same time. On one hand, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the members of Mountain View Electric Association through decades of co-op growth in an ever-changing industry. On the other hand, I am equally grateful for the opportunity to spend more time with family and exploring all that retirement has to offer. It goes without saying that when I wake-up on July 1 as a fully-retired former CEO of MVEA, it will take some getting used to. I have worked in the electric co-op world for over 40 years. It is what I know, and I will miss it.

Leading up to retirement, I have been asked what I will miss the most. I keep coming back to the people I have met over the years — co-op members and employees alike. Maybe it is the proud history shared of working together to bring electricity to rural communities decades ago, or maybe it is the dedication to adopting innovative technologies to better serve our growing co-op communities above and beyond keeping the lights on. Whatever it is, there is something special about being part of an electric cooperative and working with people who are drawn to serve.

When I joined MVEA in July 1996, I came from Farmers' Electric Cooperative in New Mexico where I worked in many areas of the co-op. In fact, I started my career at Farmers' as a warehouseman and worked my way up to general manager. While I had a great career at Farmers', it was an honor to be selected to join MVEA and make the move to Limon, Colorado. At the time, MVEA served over 20,000 members and more than 25,500 meters through more than 4,700 miles of energized line. And, much like today, the co-op was growing. During my



JIM HERRON

tenure at MVEA, we have grown to serve over 52,000 members and nearly 62,000 meters through more than 6,200 miles of energized line. And, behind every meter, every mile of line, and behind every new member who is welcomed, is a dedicated MVEA employee. The faces may have changed over the years, but the “heart” of MVEA's employees has remained the same.

I recently read an article about the three things that a business must have to succeed: strong financials, dedicated employees and an optimistic future. MVEA has all three of these (and has since before my time). Due to a legacy of fiscal stewardship by the MVEA Board of Directors, the co-op is financially strong and able to invest in and adopt innovative technologies to benefit the cooperative and its members. Due to a commitment of investing in employees for their dedication to the co-op, MVEA is able to hire and retain a highly-skilled workforce. And, due to the size and placement of our service territory, the co-op will continue to grow and thrive for decades to come.

At the time of this writing, the next MVEA CEO has not been selected. That is the hard part about editorial deadlines...sometimes the article is due before an announcement is made. While I do not know who the individual will be, who I will pass the baton to, I do know that they will be selected from a large and talented pool of candidates. I also know that no matter what the future holds, it will be bright for MVEA.

In closing, I want to share that it has been my greatest honor to serve as MVEA's CEO. From my family to yours, God bless.

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MVEA Awards \$23,000 in Scholarships to Local Students

As a Mountain View Electric Association member, you are part of an electric co-op that is dedicated to creating programs that give back to the members and communities that we serve. This year, students from over 20 different schools throughout MVEA's 5,000-square-mile service territory applied for scholarships to help them pursue the next level of their education. MVEA's scholarship program includes scholarships to accredited colleges, universities, junior or community colleges, vocational/technical schools and a Power Engineer Scholarship to current college students pursuing a power engineering career. Although there were no applicants this year, MVEA also offers

Power Lineworker Scholarships for lineworker training programs. In addition, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association and Basin Electric Power Cooperative each donated a \$1,000 scholarship to be awarded to dependents of MVEA members.

Visit www.mvea.coop/scholarships to learn more about the scholarship winners and MVEA's scholarship program. The next scholarship application period will start September 1, 2022. Applications are due by January 16, 2023.

Congratulations to the 2022 scholarship winners! We wish them the best in their future endeavors.

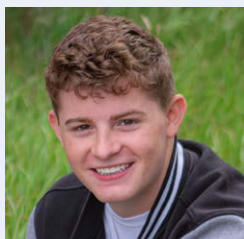
\$1,000 MVEA SCHOLARSHIPS



MCKENZIE AKERLUND
MIAMI-YODER HIGH SCHOOL



TIFFANY BACKEBERG
FALCON HIGH SCHOOL



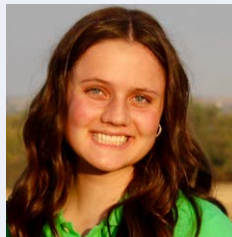
BRANDT BANE
LEWIS-PALMER HIGH SCHOOL



BETHANY BONSER
DISCOVERY CANYON CAMPUS



TREY HINES
LIMON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



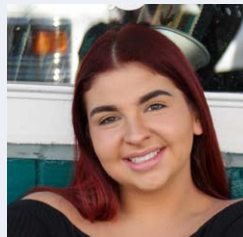
RYANN KOOBS
PONDEROSA HIGH SCHOOL



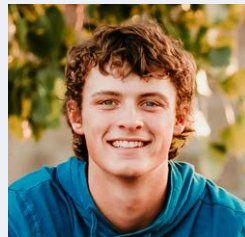
RILEY MARR
PALMER RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL



TRISTA MARX
LIMON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



ASHLEY MCALLISTER
ELLICOTT HIGH SCHOOL



BRADY ROCKWELL
LIMON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



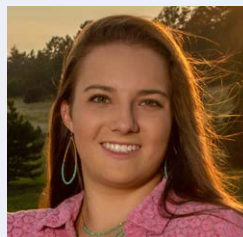
JESSICA SMITH
ELBERT HIGH SCHOOL



OLIVIA SMITH
PALMER RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL



NATE TRICE
DISCOVERY CANYON CAMPUS SCHOOL

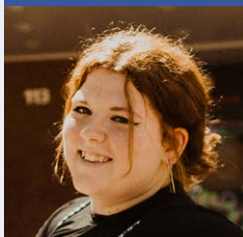


CRYSTAL USHER
PEYTON JUNIOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



ELIJAH WEISENSEE
LIMON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

\$1,000 MVEA VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL SCHOLARSHIPS



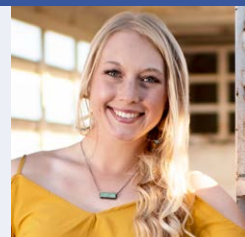
MACEY BRAUN
BIG SANDY SCHOOLS



GAVIN COSTA
RAMPART HIGH SCHOOL



NECIA KNOEDLER
PINE CREEK HIGH SCHOOL



SKYLER VICE
LIMON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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SCHOLARSHIP**



ANDREW HENDRICKS
UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

**THE \$1,000 BASIN
ELECTRIC POWER
COOPERATIVE
SCHOLARSHIP**



EMILY ESSER
PEYTON JUNIOR SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOL

**THE \$1,000 TRI-STATE
GENERATION AND
TRANSMISSION
ASSOCIATION
SCHOLARSHIP**



RYAN KUEHN
PINE CREEK HIGH SCHOOL



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A Special BEPC Scholarship for Dependents of Co-op Employees



ASHTYN LAITINEN

Congratulations, Ashtyn Laitinen! Ashtyn, a senior at Peyton Junior-Senior High School and the daughter of MVEA Maintenance Foreman Scott Laitinen, won one of the Basin Electric Power Cooperative member-cooperative employee scholarships. BEPC sponsors a scholarship program for dependent children of member-cooperative employees. BEPC awards only 20 of these \$1,000 scholarships each year. Scholarship recipients are selected based on academic record, leadership, participation in school and community activities, honors, work experience, education and career goals, and an outside appraisal.

20 PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST 23

MOUNTAIN VIEW ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

Last Call For Entries

As an MVEA co-op member, you are invited to **send in your photos**, taken within our 5,000 square mile service territory, that capture the seasons, people, lifestyle or landscape of co-op country. The winning photographs will be included in MVEA's 2023 calendar. The deadline for entry is July 7, 2022.

For complete Photo Calendar Contest information and the entry form, please visit www.mvea.coop/photo-calendar-contest.

Send entries by email to nikki.r@mvea.coop.
Questions? Call (719) 494-2657.



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You Can Make a Difference in Your Community

BY ERICA MEYER COMMUNITY RELATIONS SPECIALIST

What if, for only \$6 a year, you could support multiple charities, educational organizations, and your neighbor who's been struggling to make ends meet? Through Operation Round Up®, that's possible.

Operation Round Up was formed to assist charitable organizations, communities with special needs, and individuals who have suffered from loss, personal disaster or medical emergencies and it is completely funded by MVEA members who voluntarily round up their bill to the nearest dollar. The average member contribution is 50 cents a month or \$6 a year, but members never donate over \$11.88 a year. This amount may not seem like much, but when multiplied by the 26,300 MVEA accounts that are currently enrolled in the program, the fund can make a little bit of change make a BIG difference.

Out of respect for privacy, we don't name MVEA members who apply for Operation Round Up grants. We can share these funds have been vital in helping get our friends and neighbors back on their feet during the pandemic and as they continue to recover from hardships this year. Funds have kept individuals from getting evicted and have helped pay for car repairs, past due medical bills, propane for heating in the winter and more.

In addition to helping individual co-op members, the fund plays an important role in assisting charitable and educational organizations. For instance, in 2021, Emergency Incident Support is a volunteer organization that uses grant funds to provide food, shelter, rehydration and replenishment to local fire departments, HAZMAT, Wildland Fire, police, sheriffs, FBI, SWAT, Public Health, the Office of Emergency Management, Secret Service and Search and Rescue during wildland fires. Additionally, Fresh Start utilizes Operation Round Up funds for pantry food purchases and for mission-based expenses in its efforts to



▲ The Operation Round Up Board recently received a thank you card from two disabled children who needed funds to help pay for their therapeutic riding lessons. Their single mother was having trouble finding the money to pay for their physical therapy, and Operation Round Up was able to assist their family.

end hunger and build up our community.

These are just two examples, from a long list of organizations, that put Operation Round Up funds to work for the greater good. In 2021 Operation Round Up was able to distribute more than \$142,000; in total, the program has given back over \$3.5 million since its inception in 1999.

The program is administered by a volunteer Operation Round Up Board of Directors, which is an independent board of community leaders who grant funds according to the program's policies. MVEA is not involved in the distribution or awarding of funds. Funds collected stay right here in MVEA's service territory and are used for the benefit of our members. Funds are not used to pay electric bills or for political or religious purposes. To round up your bill, and help your neighbors in need, visit www.mvea.coop/round-up.

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- ☑ Go Paperless and/or Bank Account Auto-Pay & Receive a Monthly Credit

Two Common Factors For A Surprising Summer Bill

Air Conditioning. Keeping your home cool in the summer can increase your electric use in a big way.

School's Out For Summer. The number of people in the home, using electricity throughout the day, increases energy use.