



GCEA

POWERING POSSIBILITIES

OCTOBER 2022



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We want to be social with you!

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram to find out about GCEA events, energy efficiency tips, safety tips and so much more.



facebook.com/
GunnisonCountyElectricAssociation



@gcea_news

WINTER HOURS

Starting Monday, November 7, GCEA office hours will be Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

COFFEE WITH YOUR CO-OP



JOIN GCEA FOR COFFEE WITH YOUR CO-OP AT LOCAL COFFEE SHOPS THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF OCTOBER.

10/07 LAKE CITY
9:30 - 10:30 AM, CHILLIN'

10/21 CRESTED BUTTE
9:30 - 10:30 AM, RUMORS



GCEA

COOPERATIVE MEMBER MONTH

GCEA keeps our members in mind when powering possibilities and opportunities. GCEA is here to make sure the power is on and our members are happy with their electric service.

In the past, keeping members happy meant delivering power to the rural areas of Hinsdale and Gunnison counties. In 2022, it means so much more. Our involvement now goes far beyond the power lines and finds ways to provide safe, reliable, responsible energy to our members. You, the members, are first on our priority list.

October is National Cooperative Month, and we are celebrating the benefits and values that co-ops bring to their members and communities.

During October, we honor you as a GCEA member and want to celebrate with

Visit your local GCEA office in October to get your complimentary hat.



you during Member Appreciation Month.

Visit either our Crested Butte or Gunnison office to receive your complimentary gift: a GCEA hat. Or join us for "Coffee with Your Co-op" at local coffee shops throughout the month of October. For details, "like" and follow Gunnison County Electric Association on Facebook or follow GCEA News on Instagram. Thank you for being a member of GCEA.

In Service to the Membership

The Women and Directors of GCEA

BY SHERRY SHELTON

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

You may be familiar with the sight of linemen working in the field, but GCEA continues a long tradition of women working in service to the cooperative. Of our 42 employees, 19 are women. The resilient spirit and independent values of Western women have been a hallmark of GCEA since its incorporation in September 1938.

The ranching women of the Gunnison Valley were a driving force in the incorporation of the electric utility, and the inaugural GCEA Board of Directors included three women and four men.

As of June 2022, and for the first time in 83 years, GCEA once again has a board of directors that includes three women. We want to tell you more about these women on the board and their male colleagues who all faithfully practice their due diligence in representing the interests of the entire GCEA membership today.

Our diverse board of elected directors currently includes individuals with backgrounds as ranchers, writers, entrepreneurs, small business owners and rural electric co-op retirees. Although each is required to reside in the borders of their geographical districts, they all come together to determine what best benefits all the members of the GCEA service territory.

The directors' in-depth discussions include consideration for financial responsibility, the maintenance of a reliable infrastructure, environmental action, the safety of employees and the public, and realistic expectations for the CEO's and the staff's time.

The directors ask themselves tough questions, study industry and internal metrics, and listen to feedback from members



▲ GCEA Board of Directors (left to right): Mark Daily, Morgan Weinberg, Michelle Lehmann, Darcie Perkins, Greg Wiggins, Tom Carl. (Not pictured: Polly Oberosler.)

related to them directly or through staff reports. It takes a great deal of personal time and interest to serve the members. The role seems best suited for those with the ability to have somewhat flexible schedules, as there is a significant time commitment in order to attend regular, special and annual meetings; committee meetings; industry meetings; and member forums and events. Board members must also complete education requirements necessary to serve.

Our first board of directors formed as the cooperative was incorporated in September 1938 and included:

Janet W. Allen and Ruth H. Dickerson of Gunnison, and Hannah S. Shackelford of Almont, as well as Anton Danni of Almont, J.H. Sanders of Iola, and W. Richard Walker and Harvey S. Lobdell of Gunnison.

Janet was GCEA's first member. She served on the board for 36 years until her retirement October 24, 1974.

Throughout its history, GCEA has had women serving the board nearly continually. Along with Janet, Hannah and Ruth, former directors of note include:

Kay Drury, August 25, 1976 – September 28, 1993 and Helen Allen, June 22, 1996 – June 22, 2010.



▲ Board member Polly Oberosler



▲ GCEA's first board of directors



▲ Board members Michelle Lehmann and Darcie Perkins with photos of women who held positions on the GCEA board of directors throughout its history.

We now have Michelle Lehman of Powderhorn (District 4) serving since 2016; Polly Oberosler of East Gunnison County (District 6) serving since 2018; and Darcie Perkins of Almont (District 3) serving since June 21, 2022.

The men currently serving with Michelle, Polly, and Darcie are:

Greg Wiggins of Crested Butte (District 1) serving since 2011; Morgan Weinberg of Mt. Crested Butte (District 2) serving since 2019; Tom Carl of Lake City (District 5) serving since 2017; and at-large director Mark Daily of Ohio Creek (District 7) serving since 2015.

GCEA benefits from having many long-serving directors throughout its history. Their experience is invaluable. However, we're fortunate that GCEA's board has also had a steady influx of new directors. Ours is a board with a higher rate of turnover than most. Per recent data provided by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the average director tenure is 15 years. In the past 10 years, GCEA has seen six new directors for its seven seats. Greg Wiggins is our current longest-serving director with a tenure of 11 years.

Democratic member control and equal voting rights (one member, one vote) is one

of the seven core governing principles of the cooperative business model and your cooperative. GCEA thanks all our directors — past, present and future — who have or will serve the co-op, and we thank the membership whose diligence has helped to determine their service.

If you are interested in running for the board or learning more about the board of directors, please visit gcea.coop. We also encourage our membership to join us at our member events to visit with our board of directors in person.

MEET YOUR MEMBER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

GCEA is lucky to have an awesome and diverse group of women on the member support specialist team. When you call or visit either of our offices, you are in good hands. If this team can't figure out your question or issue, they will get you to the correct person who can.

Crested Butte MSS Crew

Marni Joslyn

Marni Joslyn is GCEA's veteran Crested Butte member support specialist who has taken care of GCEA members for over 15 years. Marni cares deeply for members, and many people who walk through her office door are friends or neighbors. She puts others' needs before her own and has helped several members through tough times. She's a "steady eddie" and brings tremendous value to the GCEA team.

Tracy Wheeler

Tracy Wheeler started as a member support specialist at the Gunnison office 11 years ago. In the winter of 2019, she moved up north to join Marni in the Crested Butte office. Tracy enjoys getting to know GCEA members on a personal level and loves to help them out however she can. She keeps your best interests in mind when helping you, and makes you feel at ease when you come to her with an issue. When you walk in the Crested Butte office, you are greeted with her smiling face.

Gunnison MSS Crew

Antoinette Wilson

Antoinette is the first friendly face you see when you walk in our headquarters' front door. She has been a hard worker for GCEA since March 2016. She is always eager to get things done correctly for the company and for GCEA members.

"What I enjoy most about GCEA is working with the members/consumers of the co-op and beyond. I like learning about electric vehicles, e-bikes and beneficial electrification. I feel grateful to be part of an organization that is motivated to transform the industry by supporting renewable energy. Outside of work, I enjoy time with family and friends, being out among the trees and nature, and going on adventures."

Ali Ackley

Ali started her job as a member support specialist with GCEA in January 2019 and has been a great asset to the MSS team. She is a hard worker who makes sure her job is done in a timely manner. When members work with Ali, they know they are in good hands. She brings a laid-back feel to the office that keeps members relaxed when they are discussing issues with her.

"I enjoy helping members with billing questions. In my time at GCEA, I've learned a lot about electric vehicles. GCEA is a great company to work for and is a great family. In my personal time, I enjoy riding my dirt bike, snowmobiling and hiking. I like being adventurous — I'm living life to the fullest and not on the couch."



▲ GCEA's Gunnison Member Services Specialists Ali Ackley (left) and Antoinette Wilson enjoy working with members at Gunnison's office.



▲ GCEA's Member Services Specialists Marni Joslyn (left) and Tracy Wheeler are happy to help members who visit the Crested Butte office.



EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES

Holly Palmer, Member Relations & Billing Supervisor — 24 years
Sarah Tamarcaz, Billing Assistant — 4 years

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES
YOU ARE THE FUTURE!

POWERING STUDENTS FUTURES

GCEA has offered student opportunities for decades! As your local electric cooperative, we are here to help enrich the lives of all our members.

*must be a GCEA member to apply

DON'T MISS OUT!



WASHINGTON D.C. YOUTH TOUR

The Washington D.C. Youth Tour introduces students to the nation's capital with tours of museums and historic monuments, meetings with Colorado congressional delegations, and fun-filled activities.

- FREE
- High school Juniors and Seniors
- June 2023
- Denver and Washington D.C.
- Must be 16 at the time of the tour



APPLICATION AVAILABLE IN OCTOBER AT GCEA.COOP
DEADLINE - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2ND, 2022



COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP

A week-long adventure at Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. The primary objective of the camp is to provide educational experiences and to develop leadership skills that will assist young adults in meeting future challenges.

- FREE
- High school Juniors and Seniors
- July 2023
- Glen Eden Resort, CO
- Must be 16 at the time of the camp



APPLICATION AVAILABLE IN OCTOBER AT GCEA.COOP
DEADLINE - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2ND, 2022



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

GCEA awards scholarships to graduating high school seniors, returning college students, and nontraditional students. Scholarships will be awarded to students who meet all the requirements and plan to attend an accredited college, university, trade school, online school, or community college.

- Eligibility dependent upon receiving electrical service from GCEA.



APPLICATION AVAILABLE IN DECEMBER AT GCEA.COOP
DEADLINE - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1ST, 2023

📞 970-641-3520



GCEA

🌐 gcea.coop



ENHANCE YOUR CYBER AWARENESS

October is cybersecurity awareness month. GCEA is committed to making cybersecurity a strategic priority and we encourage you to engage in enhancing your own cyber awareness.

Below are four things you can do right now to help improve your cyber posture immensely:

1. Enable multi-factor authentication everywhere

2. Use strong passwords — learn to use a password manager
3. Understand and recognize phishing
4. Update your software

For more information about Cybersecurity Awareness Month, visit cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month