



## 'TIS THE SEASON TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

BY MARK JOHNSTON GENERAL MANAGER

*It's a Wonderful Life* is my favorite Christmas movie. Jimmy Stewart portrayed the unforgettable George Bailey, a man who had given up his personal dreams to help others in his community. It's a storyline that gets me thinking about our country's rich history of giving.

In 1887, a Denver woman, a priest, two ministers and a rabbi got together. It sounds like the beginning of a bad joke. But Frances Jacobs, Myron Reed, William O'Ryan, Dean Hart and William Friedman didn't walk into a bar. Instead, they focused their efforts on making Denver a better place. Together, they created an organization that collected funds for local charities, coordinated relief and offered emergency assistance grants. That first year, they raised \$21,700 for this cause (equivalent to more than \$500,000 in today's dollars), and in the process created an organization that would one day become the United Way.

In 1891, Salvation Army Captain Joseph McFee was distraught because so many poor people in San Francisco were going hungry. During the holiday season, he envisioned providing them with a free

Christmas dinner. He only had one major hurdle to overcome: funding the cause.

Where would the money come from? He lay awake nights, worrying and praying about how to feed 1,000 of the city's poor on Christmas Day. Then it came to him: He remembered how at Stage Landing in Liverpool, England, there was a large, iron kettle called "Simpson's Pot" that passers-by tossed in a coin or two to help the needy.

The next day, he placed a similar pot at the Oakland Ferry Landing at the foot of Market Street. Beside the pot, he placed a sign that read, "Keep the Pot Boiling." Soon, he had the money to feed the needy. Six years later, the kettle idea spread from the West Coast to Boston. That year, the combined effort nationwide resulted in 150,000 Christmas dinners served. Today, the Salvation Army assists more than 4.5 million people during Thanksgiving and Christmas.

This same spirit founded and defines electric cooperatives like MPE: people helping people. You are the reason that numerous individuals and charities receive funds each year. Through our Operation Round Up program, MPE consumers



MARK JOHNSTON

voluntarily round up their electric bill to the next dollar. Additionally, our consumers' unclaimed patronage capital supports local schools, college- and tech-school-bound students, businesses and individuals through MPE's Education Fund. Every day, Mountain Parks employees give their time and talents to be coaches, board members, volunteers and other essential cogs in our community.

You, too, can make a difference by giving. Not just money, but, like our employees, you can give your time to help an organization that helps others — maybe volunteer in your child's school or help the local food bank distribute meals to the elderly.

Whatever you do, this holiday season, we encourage you to make a difference. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from your Mountain Parks family.





## MPE HOLIDAY LIGHTING CONTEST

### CONTEST RULES

#### 1. POST YOUR PHOTOS ON FACEBOOK

Post photos of your favorite outdoor lighting displays within MPE's service area on MPE's Facebook page at [facebook.com/MountainParksElectric](https://facebook.com/MountainParksElectric) or email them to [memberservices@mpei.com](mailto:memberservices@mpei.com).

#### 2. DO NOT LIST STREET ADDRESSES

When posting and commenting, list only the area of the home's location. Do not post the street address. Example: "Tabernash" or "Grand Lake" or "rural Jackson County."

#### 3. WINNING ENTRY SELECTION

On or before December 23, the Lighting Contest Committee, comprised of local chambers of commerce representatives, will review contest entries and select the winners.

#### 4. WIN A BILL CREDIT FOR POSTING PHOTOS

If an MPE consumer posts a photo of the contest winner but is not the homeowner, that consumer will receive a \$5 MPE bill credit.

#### 5. PRIZES

**1st prize:** \$300 MPE bill credit

**2nd prize:** \$200 MPE bill credit

**3rd prize:** \$100 MPE bill credit

#### 6. SPONSORS

Contest sponsored by MPE and the chambers of commerce from Grand Lake, Hot Sulphur Springs, Kremmling and Destination Granby.



## HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR THE TECHIES IN YOUR LIFE

#### 1. ENDER-3 S1 PLUS 3D PRINTER

Create cutlery, bottle openers, hinges, wrenches, combs, planters and more! *Approximate cost: \$500.* Rebecca Plush, ACCT 1012706



#### 2. LEGO® TECHNIC TOYS & COLLECTIBLES

Ideal for the remote-controlled hobbist in your life. Build an RC car, plane or motorbike — all with LEGO. *Approximate cost: \$150-500.*



#### 3. EMBER TEMPERATURE CONTROL SMART MUG

Tired of reheating your coffee because you got busy? With the Ember, you can program the exact temperature you want to keep your coffee. *Approximate cost: \$120.* Nathan Depuydt, ACCT 1025147



#### 4. BARXBUDDY BUSY BALL

Dog shopping done! This pet toy is an interactive, rechargeable, randomized-motion play ball. *Approximate cost: \$50.*



#### 5. KOREHEALTH KORESCALE G2 SMART SCALE

Measures BMI, body fat, muscle mass, bone loss, metabolic age and protein levels. *Approximate cost: \$100.*



## 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.



# EVEN OUT IN THE COLD, WE WORK HOT

BY ADAM PAULSON MPE MANAGER OF OPERATIONS

Not one I know likes power outages or even slight interruptions that cause oven clocks to reset to midnight. What causes this? Numerous things, including heavy snow, strong winds, osprey dropping 4-foot branches on power lines and even an occasional wind-blown boat tarp flying 15 feet in the air.

On average, MPE consumers, many of them with homes situated between lodgepole pines, experience less than two hours of outages per year. That's right in line with the national average. It's a testament to the resilience of our grid and the efficiency of our operation.

Line work is one of the most dangerous professions in the country — right up there with logging, piloting aircraft, mining and fighting fires. Despite the risk, every job on this list is essential to our way of life. David Boals, ACCT 1029304

Here's something you might not know: MPE's lineworkers perform most grid maintenance when power lines are energized with more than 14,000 volts. It sounds dangerous, and it is. We could de-energize the grid for maintenance. But we work lines "hot" so that you experience minimal service interruption.

At MPE, our lineworkers undergo extensive safety training to perform hot work safely. This includes:

- Learning to (essentially) simulate a bird on wire
- Regular truck inspections, to ensure our vehicles' insulating features are intact
- Frequent personal protective equipment inspections — insulated gloves, insulated sleeves and other gear
- Six months to two years of lineworker school, then a four-year, 8,000-hour apprenticeship for journeyman lineworker certification



 MPE lineworkers go out in all conditions to keep your electricity flowing.

Here's a couple more things you might not know: When we are up in a bucket truck wearing a half-inch thick rubber glove and sleeves, we feel the electricity buzzing through the gloves. And, believe it or not, most lineworkers know more about trigonometry than you would ever guess (to anchor guy wires at the proper angle, for example).

So the next time you have to reset your oven clock, know this: Our crews are out there in the storms, at night, on weekends, holidays, 24/7 trying our best to minimize your inconvenience. That's because, for us, it is all about you.

*For more real-time outage information, please visit our outage map, accessible from our website.*



## Happy Holidays

From our co-op family to yours,  
wishing you a joyous holiday season and  
a happy and peaceful New Year!



## WAYS TO \$AVE If you own a vacation rental

BY LINDSAY MCCANN MEMBER SERVICE SPECIALIST

- Place a “friendly reminder” by the front door, asking guests to turn down heat when leaving for the day.
- Consider installing a programmable thermostat so you can control the heat remotely. MPE offers rebates for these: [mpei.com/rebates](http://mpei.com/rebates)
- Provide extra throw blankets in the lounging areas.
- Use flannel sheets and extra blankets on the beds.



## ESSAY CONTEST Attention High School Students: Boost Your College Applications

- To enter, submit an energy-related, 500-word or less essay, short video or other project to [rtaylor@mpei.com](mailto:rtaylor@mpei.com) by Friday, January 6, 2023.
- **1st place prize** — all-expense-paid, weeklong trip to Washington, D.C. (much more extensive than a traditional 8th grade D.C. trip)
- **2nd place prize** — all-expense-paid, weeklong trip to Youth Leadership Camp in Clark, Colorado.
- **More information** — [mpei.com/scholarships-and-youth-programs](http://mpei.com/scholarships-and-youth-programs)

## Mountain Parks Electric to REFUND More than \$2 Million

In December, Mountain Parks Electric will be returning \$2.2 million to its consumers. As a not-for-profit utility (a co-op), on a regular basis, MPE returns its profits based on margins earned from the sale of electricity. In the co-op world, this is known as capital credit retirement. The \$2.2 million reflects margins earned from electric sales in 1995, 1996 and 2001.

MPE’s margins are not refunded in the year they are earned due to the co-op’s significant start-up costs. To construct its grid and electrify its rural service area 76 years ago, MPE borrowed a significant amount of money. If MPE were to fully repay its debt from retail energy rates, the price of electricity would be unaffordable for many, if not most. Even so, MPE’s equity stands at more than 50%, higher than the national average for electric co-ops.

Since 1977, MPE has retired more than \$19 million of capital credits to consumers.

“By returning these capital credits, we are demonstrating in a very tangible way that Mountain Parks Electric is owned by those it serves,” said Mark Johnston, MPE general manager. “This retirement will infuse cash into our communities just in time for the holidays.”

The refunds will be issued the first week of December in the form of mailed checks if the amount is \$50 or greater or as a bill credit for anything less than \$50.



For more information about your MPE capital credits, email [capitalcredits@mpei.com](mailto:capitalcredits@mpei.com).