

Sheridan Electric Cooperative

LiveWire

Sheridan Electric Cooperative - Medicine Lake, Mont. 406-789-2231

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Capital credits shared with members

BY SCOTT WESTLUND

In late 2018, the board authorized the retirement of \$1.2 million in capital credits to the membership. If you purchased electricity from Sheridan Electric Cooperative in the years 1999 through 2002, you will receive a capital credit check.

The formula is simple: margins for that particular year multiplied by your percent of usage.

Cooperatives operate as not-for-profit businesses. Labor and all expenses are paid from the revenues throughout a year and anything remaining is returned to the member-owners.

Capital credits are nothing more than money. When financial obligations are paid, anything remaining is assigned this designation.

Sheridan Electric Cooperative's goal is to stay on a 15-year retirement cycle. For instance, the year 2018 will be paid out in the year 2033, if the schedule remains the same.

To date, Sheridan Electric Cooperative has returned \$17,185,577.38 to its members over the 72-year lifespan of the cooperative.

With the past high margin years, the cooperative now has more than \$22 million set aside to be returned to the membership through the cycle years to come, from 2003 to present.

Capital credit retirements are quantifiable proof that as a member of Sheridan Electric Cooperative, you are an owner of a successful, effective organization.

It is incredible to think that \$1.2 million is redistributed back into the local economy and into the pockets of the folks served by Sheridan Electric Cooperative.

It was a good exercise in history to see what this cooperative has returned in capital credits throughout the years. We assume that from 1946 to 1950 there were no

margins, as there were no capital credit allocations. The cooperative was just starting and needed the capital to continue to build the infrastructure you see today.

This program solidifies the term, member-owner. You own the business and reap the benefits that any business owner realizes. ■

Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$15 billion to members since 1988 – \$1 billion in 2016 alone.

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

Unclaimed capital credits

Every year, Sheridan Electric Cooperative retires capital credits from previous years. And every year, when the checks are mailed to the addresses we have, some are returned. We take the retirement of these dollars seriously by publishing this list in the local newspapers and

Boyd, Rose
Campbell, Heather
Campbell, Larry Sr.
Christianson, Mrs. R.W.
Clement, Rich and Shirley
Collins, Billie
Dahl, Merle
Damm, Bert A.
Farley, Dave C.
First, Kevin
Fish, Dennis and Patricia
Garrett, Dale T.
Hellickson, Albert
Hohman, Daniel
Laurie, Paula
Loans Arrow, Albert F. Jr.
Macdonald, Alice
McLeod, Norma and Cecil
Pence, Daniel

Richards, Travis and
Patricia
Sebastian, Margaret
Shields, Caleb
Tryan, Wade
Young Bear, Dorine
Zeis, Marty

cooperative magazines. This is our last attempt to locate these folks so we can get their checks to them. Listed are the names of these folks. If you know where they may be, and have a contact for them, please call the cooperative at 406-789-2231 and talk with Jamie. Thanks for your help.

Business/organization name

Furst Eng. Inc.
Apex Energy LLC
Blackstone Cable LLC
Burlington Resources
Columbus Energy LLC
Custom Built Feeds
Dominion Exp. & Prod. Inc., assigned from Dominion
Equilon Pipeline Co. LLC
Ferrellgas
Germany Oper. Co.
Hagberg Farm
Holly Sugar Corp.
Jacobs Facilities Inc.
Journey Operating LLC
Lamar Hunt Trust Estate

Link Energy LLP
LycO Opr. Co.
Mallard Cablevision LLC
MCII Gen. Partnership-DBA Western Wireless
Murphy Exp. & Prod. Co.
Murphy Oil USA Inc.
Oil Quest Resources Inc.
Poplar YMCA
Tipperary Oil & Gas Corp.
Upton Resources Inc.
Wascana Pipeline Inc.

The power within a community

BY SCOTT WESTLUND

Nov. 7, 2018, marked an event that showed the power of a community in northeastern Montana. One of our own had a medical crisis, as Torie and Luke Waller's newly adopted child was hospitalized in Billings, Mont., for a couple of months. Diagnosed with spinal meningitis, the odds were not in favor of Palmer Waller, who fought the hard, long battle toward perfect health.

We rejoiced at the news that Palmer was finding health again, could come home and the Waller family could start to return to a normal lifestyle.

This was a scary time for the Waller family and the cooperative employees, as the days ticked by, sometimes with good news and sometimes with bad news. But in the end, we have a smiling happy family we call our own.

An event was organized by the community to assist with offsetting some of the bills that were accumulated during this time. With donations from every corner

of the community, a silent auction and a live auction, the support began to make a dent in the expenses that brought Palmer back to us in Medicine Lake.

This was community support at its finest. ■



Electricians provided as service

BY SCOTT WESTLUND

Past articles have discussed the reasons Sheridan Electric Cooperative has an electrical services department, and the need for electricians in this region. In this article, we discuss the costs associated with having and keeping this service.

Currently, Sheridan Electric Cooperative charges \$80 an hour per electrician. In addition to this hourly cost are mileage to get to the projects, materials needed, and a charge if heavy equipment, such as a trencher, is used.

The hourly charge is laden with information describing what was being charged by other electrical entities in the area. While we would rather not compete with upcoming businesses, we do need to cover the costs of this service.

The electricians are employees of the cooperative. To keep good employees in this area, you have to pay them well. In addition, these folks are specially trained for their respective areas of expertise. Currently, there are three individuals in the department, but that number can change, depending on the ebb and flow of the economic landscape in the area. When the number of requested projects declines, these folks go to work in the utility department for projects like line retirement and

maintenance. The compensation for these employees includes retirement and health care costs, as well as the wages.

From the standpoint of a cooperative business model, Sheridan Electric Cooperative operates somewhat differently. The cooperative is not profit-driven. The cooperative is only concerned with covering the costs of the department so we can offer the service to the region.

Sheridan Electric Cooperative carries inventory to cover the projects it is requested to complete. There is also additional inventory to cover the public's needs, such as cord ends, wire or home wiring project materials.

The electrical services department was created to help the communities of the area. The department was created in the boardroom based on the requests from the membership. The electricians are still here to serve the membership. The costs Sheridan Electric Cooperative charges are not to make money, but only to cover the costs of the department. This description fits a cooperative business model and is how we continue to operate this department. ■

Annual meeting date survey

BY SCOTT WESTLUND

During the October 2018 board meeting, the annual meeting was discussed in regards to the month Sheridan Electric Cooperative has the meeting. The bylaws clearly state that the annual meeting will be held in September or October, with the date set by the board.

The board member was reflecting on a comment from a member that Sheridan Electric Cooperative should consider moving the annual meeting to the summer months instead.

During the discussion, June was the consensus of the discussion.

This is a bylaw change that will have to be presented at the next annual meeting of the members in October 2019. If approved, it would not take effect until the 2020 cycle.

We need to know what you think.

Should the annual meeting be moved to the summer

months, or should it stay in the same month it has always been for many years?

We will take a couple of different approaches to this question. First, we will create a bill stuffer that will be placed into your billing statements. This can be completed and mailed directly back to the cooperative. The second avenue will possibly be a survey using Facebook. During this venue, there will be some multiple-choice questions to answer.

Please take the time to provide direction so we can better serve you.

Thanks for your help. ■

Lighting to be given away



In the spirit of efficiency, Sheridan Electric Cooperative is giving away light-emitting diodes (LEDs) each month. Each month's winner will receive 12 new LED bulbs.

So this month, take a moment to complete and mail the coupon. Maybe you'll be this month's lucky winner and save on your energy costs. Good luck. ■

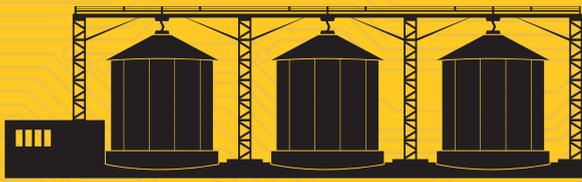
Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Account number: _____

Congratulations to **Harvey Urdahl** for winning this month's light bulb giveaway.



Sheridan Electric Cooperative STATISTICAL REPORT

	November 2017	November 2018
Total miles of line	2,831	2,836
Consumers billed	3,100	3,084
Kilowatt-hours purchased	12,105,944	13,349,308
Kilowatt-hours sold	11,548,767	12,336,345
Average KWH per residential consumer	1,496	1,436
Average bill per residential consumer	\$128.46	\$138
Cost of purchased power	\$647,430	\$647,613
Margins year to date	\$3,757,222	\$35,39,731

LINE DEPARTMENT STATS

	November 2017	November 2018
Weather	3	2
Age or deterioration	1	2
Animals and public	1	0
Power supplier	0	0
Equipment	0	0

SUMMARY OF WORK COMPLETED

	November 2017	November 2018	Year to date
Pole installations	4	150	342
New construction	366 ft.	691 ft.	51,544 ft.
Miles driven	19,471	17,622	239,511
New accounts	0	4	36
Accounts retired	1	6	10

SHERIDAN ELECTRIC CO-OP

Medicine Lake, Mont. 59247
406-789-2231

TRUSTEES

Rod Smith, President Dagmar, Mont.
 Rick A. Hansen, V. President Froid, Mont.
 Rob Rust, Sec. Alkabo, N.D.
 Kerrey Heppner, Treas. Plentywood, Mont.
 Alan Danelson, Trustee Scobey, Mont.
 Andrew Dethman, Trustee Brockton, Mont.
 Harlan Skillingberg, Trustee Plentywood, Mont.
 Jody Lagerquist, Trustee Westby, Mont.
 Sherl Shanks, Trustee Brockton, Mont.

EMPLOYEES

Rick Knick Manager
 Riley Tommerup Office Mgr./Accountant
 Scott Westlund Marketing/Member Service Manager
 Jamie Ator Accountant
 Lisa Salvevold Office Assistant
 Tasha Ronnes Customer Service Representative
 Torie Waller Work Order Clerk
 Kory Opp Line Superintendent
 Bryan Lenz Line Foreman
 Nick Oelkers Staking Tech
 Tim Ereth Operator/Utilityman
 Josh Johnson Electrical General Foreman
 Tom Hinds Electrical Foreman
 Steve Augustine Line Sub Foreman
 Dan Roeder Journeyman Lineman
 Shawn Sansaver Journeyman Lineman
 Josh Marottek Journeyman Lineman
 Josh Ming Journeyman Lineman
 Bill Baillie Apprentice Lineman
 Nolen Drury Apprentice Lineman
 Tristan Ereth Apprentice Electrician
 Jim Bakken Material Specialist
 Vicky Haddix Custodian

OUTAGES • CALL 24 HOURS A DAY
406-789-2231

OFFICE HOURS: 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative