

Good Coffee and Great Art

From Randy Pijoan's perspective, the question we must ask ourselves is not "Can we afford art education in our schools and our communities?" but rather, "Can we afford *not* to have art education?"

The northern New Mexico native believes we must enrich our lives by creating art for two reasons. First, art teaches creative problem solving.

As an example he said, "I give you a blank canvas and say, 'We need to make a car that runs great and uses energy wisely.' It is the creative minds who come up with a way to make it beautiful and aerodynamic and yet still have a spot to hold the batteries."

He continued, "Yes, we sometimes call these people engineers. But really, math and science don't add up to anything if you can't follow through with the creative process all the way to the final application. This is what art education teaches."

Secondly, Pijoan argues that creating art enriches our lives because art celebrates our cultural heritage, and at the same time, offers a path to the future. In celebrating who we are, we see where we need to go.

Pijoan said, "There has to be a marriage between the modern world and our heritage. We live in a global society. How do you take a community like San



The Ventero Open Press mission: Ventero Open Press is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization emphasizing fine art; dedicated to giving back to the next generation by providing education, scholarships, art supplies and exhibition opportunities for both emerging and established artists.

Luis and train it for the modern global world? I look at it this way: if I were to travel to Tibet, I would want to meet Tibetans. In the same way, when people come here, they want to experience our culture. We must celebrate our unique history, the culture that evolved between the merging of the Spanish settlers with other influences to create what outsiders sometimes see as a dysfunctional—and yet to us—a highly functional way of living. Art helps us make this leap."

If you don't quite understand what Pijoan means, then visit Ventero Open Press on Main Street in San Luis for a tangible expression of this idea.

Ventero Open Press was the brain-child of Pijoan. Seven years ago, a rare heart valve disorder turned Pijoan's world upside down and inside out. A successful and accomplished artist, Pijoan nearly died from the effects of this condition.

In fact, he did die. "I was undergoing emergency heart surgery and I died on the table. I was resuscitated, brought back to this world from the after life. I remember this experience vividly."

The brush with death created a paradigm shift for Pijoan. Not the kind of paradigm shift we banter about in



The work area at Ventero Open Press adjoins the gallery. Workshops teach the art of printmaking.

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SLVREC CEO, John Villyard

On February 17, in Denver, President Barack Obama signed into law the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The act includes many provisions for green energy and green jobs.

Like many Americans, I agree we must protect our environment for future generations. However, as CEO of an electric utility, I hope that as the act is implemented, our legislators do not forget to factor in the costs of their actions upon average citizens and the communities in which they live.

As a cooperative, we believe communities come first. People are our first priority. As much as I would like to see us move away from fossil fuels as our primary energy source, I can't help but think about all the communities in our state whose economies depend upon coal in the same way that the Valley's economy depends upon agriculture.

We can't just walk away. We need a time of transition; a time to rethink our approach and time to

retool to new technologies in a way that supports the communities who would be most impacted by a change in how we generate electricity.

SLVREC isn't alone in holding this view. In fact, representatives from National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and generation and transmission cooperatives from around the country met in Dallas last month to discuss one of the key issues affecting our industry—carbon emission reductions.

Two reduction strategies have been proposed: carbon taxes or cap and trade programs. At the Dallas meeting, industry executives considered which would be in the best interests of our members. It's clear that both have onerous implications.

Do industry representatives have a better solution? Perhaps. We would rather see legislators look at strategies to encourage the rapid development of technology aimed at carbon reduction. From our perspective, increased technology funding and tax incentives for research in this field could help to reduce carbon emissions faster and with a smaller economic impact upon our members.

Research could help us craft ways to support the communities who currently are dependent upon fossil fuel extraction to provide our nation with power.

The economic stimulus package does include grants for emerging

renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. It does include a program to fund carbon capture and sequestration demonstration projects. We don't think this goes far enough.

Additionally, we believe it's important to retain a sense of balance and keep our priorities clear. In the Valley, we have taken a three-pronged approach to energy issues. We encourage energy conservation, we promote voluntary green power sign-ups for those who have discretionary income and we are strengthening assistance programs for those who can't afford higher electric rates.

What does the future hold? Ken Anderson, senior vice president of generation and power management at Tri-State Generation & Transmission, recently said, "the only thing we know for sure is that uncertainty will prevail in our industry." I hope that a concern for communities and the people within them also prevails as we look to our future.



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Scheduled Meetings

Board Meeting March 31, 9:30 a.m.

The Board of Directors meet the last Tuesday of each month unless otherwise stated. Members are welcome.

Statement of Publisher

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Return Your Information Request Card for a Chance to Win!

Look carefully inside your March bill to find an information request card. This card has been designed to gather information for a new software upgrade at SLVREC. Four of the returned and completed cards will be selected to win a \$250 credit toward power purchases.

The cooperative will upgrade accounting software to improve service. The new software includes many new fields for information such as multiple cell phone numbers, e-mail addresses, off-season phone numbers and security verification data. SLVREC is asking members to completely fill out this information card so the data can be entered into the new accounting software.

This additional information will enable the cooperative to respond to outages faster, to contact members more expediently, to link accounts more easily, to allow additional family members access to accounts and to improve capital credit tracking. Improved account tracking and better contact information will ensure that members and past members who are entitled to capital credits receive their repayment.

Along with the request for information, the infor-

mation request card also includes a short survey asking you about the direction you want your cooperative to take for future technology upgrades. For example, the survey asks members if they would be interested in receiving notification of outages at their service location, and if they are, how they would prefer being contacted. Based upon member response, features like these may be implemented in the near future.

The cooperative will hold a drawing on June 9 at the Annual Meeting. All cards received by May 31, with pertinent data filled in, will automatically be entered. Four winners will be randomly selected. Each of the four winners will receive a \$250 credit on their account. Even though the drawing will be held at the June 9 meeting, members need not be present to win.

For more information about the information request, if you are a former member of SLVREC or if you know of a former member who would like to ensure that the cooperative has good contact information, contact us at 719-852-3538 or 800-332-7634. ☺



New apprentice lineman

Wade Warman signed on as SLVREC's newest apprentice lineman last summer. Now, with several months of work under his belt,

Warman confirms that he made a great choice to pursue a career in electric linework. He said, "I really like it a lot. It's a good job. I like being outside and I work with a great bunch of guys."

Warman chose a career as an electric lineman in part because his grandfather worked as a lineman in the 50s through the 70s. He knew from what his grandfather told him, he would like the job.

Warman graduated from Del Norte High School in 2005. He attended the Western Colorado Community College program for electric lineworkers sponsored by Mesa State College. SLVREC offers lineman training scholarships. Contact the cooperative to learn more. ☺

Always assume it's energized

Recently, a car hit a utility pole and caused a power line to come within a few feet of the ground. The line remained energized. The person who hit the pole left her car—her second near miss that evening. Miraculously, she was not electrocuted.

If you are in an accident involving a utility pole, never leave your vehicle unless you face an imminent danger by remaining inside the vehicle. Call 911 or if you don't have a phone, wait inside the car until help arrives. Keep others away from your vehicle, the utility pole and any down power lines. You can't tell if a power line is energized by looking at it. If you get too close, electricity can jump from the line to you causing serious injury or death. **Always assume down power lines are energized.** ☺

Considering an electric lineworker career?

Maybe you should!

- Earnings are higher than in most other occupations that do not require postsecondary education.
- A growing number of retirements should create very good job opportunities, especially for electrical power-line installers and repairers.
- Keep in mind though, that line installers and repairers often work outdoors and conditions can be hazardous.
- Most line installers and repairers require several years of long-term on-the-job training.

Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook 2008-2009, U.S. Department of Labor

workshops or that someone might experience after moving to the mountains and finding a need to sell their jaunty little sports car to buy a rough and tumble 4-wheel drive vehicle. For Pijoan, the paradigm shift meant his inner compass took on an entirely new direction. He reinvented his entire life. Everything changed including his values, friends and goals. "My life took on a new purpose," he said.

"While I was in the hospital and recovering from the surgery, I lost three months of work and missed the major show that had, in the past, annually paid my bills. And yet, the only thing that felt good to me, the only thing I wanted to do, was volunteer. That felt better than any check I ever got in my life," Pijoan said.

Pijoan signed on with La Puente. He fixed toilets and washing machines. "If it hadn't been for La Puente, I would never have understood the meaning of non-profit," he said.

Next, Pijoan started teaching art classes at Centennial High School. In the face of budget cuts, the art department began to shrink. He saw kids who reminded him of himself as a struggling high school student and he worried about their future. "There were kids who weren't good in traditional studies; but, who were gifted in visual arts. These are the children you have to push in the right direction. I worry how the lives of students like these would turn out without an art education." Pijoan believes that for some high school students, success in the arts helps build self-esteem, which in turn, helps improve overall academic performance.

Pijoan started pulling the pieces together: the value a non-profit can bring to the community, the need to provide art education to people of all ages, the need for art education funding sources for our schools and the importance of celebrating our heritage. He also put together a team of "yes" people.

Pijoan explained, "By that I mean, a team of people who say 'Yes, this can be done!' and who say, 'What can I do to help?' I wanted people who are self-less and who have an unconditional love of the idea."

That team included, among others, Jan Emmanuel and Judy Burrell. Together, the team helped to realize Pijoan's dream: a fine art printmaking facility—an open press, much like those found in many larger communities. They envisioned a place where artists can come and rent press time to make fine art prints, as well as a place for classes and workshops to learn about printmaking as an art form. The entire business would be non-profit. It would include a gallery, where newfound talent could

hang work alongside accomplished artists. Volunteers would staff the business. Earnings would funnel back to the community and to the schools for art education. Artists would help aspiring artists, the community and themselves.

The first step was to find a space. Pijoan put together a business plan. He went to lunch with county commissioners and put forth his proposal. He asked for their help to find a building and asked for letters of support so he could start writing grants. The commissioners asked, "Can you really start a business here for under \$30,000?" He replied, "Yes."

Impressed with his optimism, they helped make a connection with the new owner of a derelict building on Main Street in San Luis. The downstairs of the building was filled with rubbish; the upstairs had been gutted by a fire. Undaunted, the Ventero group moved forward.

Arrangements were made between landlord and tenants. That was six years ago. Shortly after the agreement was made, Pijoan brought in a master printmaker to draw up floor plans. Work began.

A board of directors was established. Pijoan joked, "Kent Anderson became the president of the board. Kent retired after 30 years of public school experience. He served as the liaison between my little Randy-world and the public school system." In a more serious tone, Pijoan added, "Kent's assistance and

As volunteers, Jeremy Elliott, web master, and Vicki LaVoie, blog writer, are entitled to use the print facilities. Volunteers earn points. Points can be redeemed for t-shirts, thermal mugs or press time. Here, Jeremy is helping Vicki with a reduction block print, a new printing technique for Vicki.



The donation volunteer-staffed bar serves Rancho Coffee touted Alaskan Coffee cis Martinez (right) volunteer espresso bar Ventero Press also whole bean shirts, hats a



Randy Pijoan points out some of the features of one of the facility's two presses. Pijoan teaches workshops on several different printmaking techniques. Recently he worked with a group of 5-year olds. He also teaches older children and adults how to use the presses to create original works of art.



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The studios are nicely fitted with full kitchens and an open studio/living area.

belief in the project has been invaluable.”

The board of directors also includes Charles Ewing, Mike Gibson, David Guerrero, Richard Nichols, Stephen Quiller, Reagan Rossberg, Gene Schilling and Cynthia Trevino. Support for the venture came from a diverse and wide-reaching group. As Pijoan put it, “I called in all the chips I had earned as a professional artist.”

After three and half years of volunteer labor, Ventero Open Press opened its doors.

Upstairs, the building now houses three complete studio apartments where visiting artists can live and work. Each studio includes a work area, full kitchen and bath. Downstairs, the building has been transformed into an espresso bar, community gathering spot, fine art gallery and printmaking facility complete with an artist's lounge and wireless internet.

The transformation was accomplished entirely with in-kind donations and volunteer labor. Ventero's landlord provided needed infrastructure such as a deep 3-basin stainless steel sink, a ventilation system, hazmat drench shower and other essentials. People like volunteering at Ventero Open Press. Pijoan said, “People want to get involved and make their community a better place.”

On April 2, 2007, the grand opening celebrated the many volunteers and their contributions. The list included, “A thank you to all the doubters who helped us clarify who we are,” Pijoan said, “The night of our opening, there was more than one person who came up to me to say, ‘I have to admit, I was the bottom line on your thank you board; I was a doubter.’”

Now, nearing their two-year celebration, few doubt the success of the venture. Jeremy Elliott, web designer for Ventero Open Press said, “It's been a struggle, but its been worth it. This is one of the few places I know where you can sit down with a coffee and talk to one of the county commissioners.” He attributes a large portion of Ventero's success to the consistency of hours.

The facility is open 6 days a week. Elliott said, “Monday through Saturday, there's always someone here. If you are out for a drive, come by and check us out. We've got good coffee and great art.” ☺

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Learn more about Ventero Open Press online at:

<http://www.ventero.org>

Read the Ventero Open Press blog at:

<http://venteroopenpress.blogspot.com>

Tri-State will host solar augmentation project in New Mexico

With a goal of increasing power plant efficiency while incorporating renewable technologies, Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association (SLVREC's power provider), has entered into an agreement with the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) to host a case study aimed at helping electric utilities add solar energy to fossil-fueled generating stations.

Tri-State's 245-megawatt Escalante Station in New Mexico has been identified as the host facility for the study. The project will evaluate the success of introducing steam generated by a solar thermal field to the conventional power plant's steam cycle to offset some of the fuel required to generate electricity.

Potential benefits of a solar-augmented steam-cycle facility include adding utility-scale solar power generation without the challenges of siting a new plant and new power block, reducing the facility's carbon dioxide footprint and gaining valuable experience with solar thermal technologies to assess their future potential in a utility's generation mix.

Dr. Bryan Hannegan, vice president of generation and environment at EPRI said, "These 'hybrid power plants' will combine the low-cost reliability of existing fossil power plants with the environmental benefit of renewables, and help companies meet federal and state mandates to reduce their emissions of air pollutants and

greenhouse gases with renewable energy."

The project—one of two similar efforts that EPRI is currently spearheading—will provide a conceptual design study, analyze options to retrofit the existing power plant and identify new plant design options. EPRI will rely on its expertise in solar technologies, steam cycles and plant operation, as well as past solar and fossil plant studies.

Ken Anderson, executive vice president and general manager at Tri-State, said, "The technology being studied would allow us a larger net output of electricity from Escalante Station, but without consuming more fuel to gain the additional electricity."

Tri-State also is participating with several other utilities on an EPRI-led solar-to-steam study project applied at natural gas-fueled, combined-cycle power plants in Arizona and Nevada.

"Even as we deal with a difficult economy, we are not shying away from critical investments in new programs and new technologies," Anderson said. "As those emerge and scientific progress is made, Tri-State will seize new opportunities to further cultivate the local resources that enhance our power production and delivery system in order to bring more value to our member systems." ∞

Glenn English Encourages Grass Roots Effort

Speaking before more than 9,000 local co-op leaders from around the nation, Glenn English, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), warned that federal climate change legislation will be terribly expensive and make electric bills less affordable for consumers. He asked the assembled: "How will we respond?"

He encouraged cooperative managers to enlist members as grassroots advocates for affordable energy and climate policies. "Barring any monumental shift in the prevailing attitude of Congress," he said, "we will soon see carbon dioxide regulated at the federal level." English urged co-op leaders to look beyond the polarizing rhetoric and become engaged in a fast-tracked policy debate that will bring "seismic change to the electricity business."

The former ten-term Congressman from Oklahoma told the crowd that Representative Henry Waxman, Chairman of House Energy and Commerce Committee, had set an ambitious agenda to move an energy and climate change bill that sets federal carbon dioxide targets by the Memorial Day recess. He said, "We have

90 days in which to maximize our strength, 90 days to demonstrate to elected officials in Congress that affordability is something they must take into consideration."

The Senate Leadership and New Administration share Chairman Waxman's agenda for fast-tracked legislation to mitigate carbon dioxide emissions, said the co-op leader. English lamented that current, politically expedient, cap-and-trade proposals amount to turning consumer electric bills over to Wall Street. "Any way you go, this is a tax, either through cap-and-trade or a straight carbon tax," said English. "A carbon tax is the honest, straightforward way to do it." A carbon tax, he said would have multiple advantages; ensuring transparency of application, enabling consumer advocates to directly track cost increases and providing near-term certainty to an industry in transition. "In the end, it is the responsibility of our elected officials to pass taxes —not pass the buck." ∞



Glenn English, CEO NRECA

All of this month's recipes were contributed by Linda Howard. Linda works at O&V Printing, who has printed the Newsboy's for well over a decade.

Each month, when the Newsboy is delivered to O&V, Linda immediately checks the recipes. She is a great cook and offered to share some of her favorite recipes with other Newsboy readers. Enjoy! You can reach Linda and O&V printing at info@oandvprinting.com.

Pillow-Soft Rolls

- 2 pkgs. yeast
- 2 cups warm milk
- or
- 1 cup warm milk and 1 cup warm buttermilk
- 6 Tbsp. shortening
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1½ tsp. salt
- 7 to 8 cups flour
- ½ cup warm water

In a large mixing bowl, dissolve the yeast in warm water. Add the milk, shortening, eggs, sugar, salt and three cups of flour; beat until smooth. Stir in enough flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 1- minutes (dough will be sticky).

Place in a greased bowl; cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about one hour. Punch down, divide into 24 pieces. Shape each piece into a roll and place 2 inches apart on greased baking sheets. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes. Bake at 350 °F for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown.

Sweet Potato Rolls

- 2 pkg. yeast
- 1 cup warm water
- 1 15-oz. can sweet potatoes, drained and mashed

- ¼ cup melted butter
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup shortening
- 1 egg
- 1½ tsp. salt
- 5 to 6 cups flour

In a large bowl, dissolve the yeast in warm water; let foam for five minutes. Mash sweet potatoes with butter and beat in along with sugar, shortening, egg, salt and three cups of flour. Add enough remaining flour to form a stiff dough.

Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled. Punch down, and make into rolls or crescents. Place in greased pans and let rise until doubled, about 40 minutes. Bake at 375 °F for 15 to 18 minutes or until golden brown.

Mexican Pizza

- 1 Chef-Boyardee pizza mix (double crust)
- 1 lb. hamburger
- 1 can refried beans
- 1 can green chilies, diced
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 can Stokes chile
- 3 cups cheddar, mozzarella or Monterey Jack cheese, shredded
- onion, chopped
- lettuce, chopped
- tomatoes, diced
- sour cream
- salsa

Make the pizza dough and place in a greased 9-inch by 13-inch pan. Brown hamburger and drain (cook onions with hamburger if desired). Add the refried beans and green chilies; heat through. Season. Top pizza dough with Stokes chile and then the hamburger mixture. Add the cheese and bake at 400 °F for 20

to 25 minutes. Cut into squares and top with remaining ingredients.

Tater Tot Casserole

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can green chilies (diced)
- 2 jalapenos, diced
- onion powder
- garlic powder
- salt and pepper
- 8 slices velveeta
- ½ to ¾ bag Tater Tots

Brown the beef and onion. Drain. Add the soup, green chilies, jalapeno and spices. Heat until well blended.

Place the mixture in a greased casserole dish and top with the velveeta. Cover completely with tater tots and bake at 375 °F for about 40 minutes.

Root Beer Float Cake

- 1 pkg. Betty Crocker Super-Moist white cake mix
- 1¼ cups root beer
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- Root Beer Cream (recipe follows)

Preheat oven to 350 °F. Generously grease and flour a 13-inch by 9-inch pan. Beat cake mix (dry), root beer, oil and eggs in large bowl on low speed for 30 seconds. Beat on high speed 2 minutes, scraping bowl occasionally.

Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool. Serve with Root Beer Cream. Sprinkle with crushed root-beer-flavored hard candies if desired.

Root Beer Cream

- ½ cup instant nonfat dry milk
 - 2 tsp. sugar
 - ½ cup chilled root beer
- Chill small bowl and beaters. Combine milk powder with chilled root beer in bowl. Beat until stiff, adding sugar gradually, about 4 minutes.

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keep our postage costs down!

March 2009

Using surge strips to reduce electric use



You might think that your television, cell phone charger, DVD player and other similar electric devices don't use any electricity when you aren't using them. That's not true.

Any device with an instant-on feature, a large box-like plug-in, LCD lights or a remote control uses electricity even when it is "off." You can help reduce your electric bill by plugging items like these into a

surge strip and turning the strip off when you aren't using the devices.

Depending upon what you plug into it and how well you use it, a surge strip can pay for itself in a matter of months. Consider that with a large LCD TV, the difference between having the television plugged in all the time and having the television plugged into a power strip that is turned off when the TV isn't in use, can be about 60 kWh or more each month. Add in a DVD player, a receiver and a few other devices and it really adds up.

Choose your surge strip wisely and you will also add an extra layer of protection for your electronic devices. Compare the clamping voltage specifications when choosing among surge strips. Also look at the connected equipment insurance policy. SLVREC sells high quality surge protection. You can purchase a good surge strip with an excellent connected equipment insurance policy at the cooperative. ☺