



Brimhall Industrial: keeping power on

Even the most observant of drivers heading north from Monte Vista on the Gunbarrel could easily drive past Brimhall Industrial Machine Service. The company's small, unassuming sign belies the fact that Brimhall Industrial plays a key role in keeping power generating facilities at dozens of different locations in the Western U.S. running smoothly.

Brimhall Industrial's client list includes—among others—Xcel Energy, Public Service Company of New Mexico, Arizona Public Service Company, Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association, Salt River Project, Hoover Dam, and several municipal utilities in the region. Brimhall refurbishes, reconditions and repairs equipment used by these facilities to generate power and to reduce emissions.

The full-service machine shop offers in-house welding and machining capability. Brimhall works on pumps, heat exchangers, gearboxes, hydraulic and pneumatic cylinders, and other equipment. They can provide “turn-key” pump and heat exchanger repair.

Brimhall President, Mark Brimhall, said, “Typically, we can refurbish

or repair equipment for half the price of new. We use the latest technology in our work to increase longevity. We offer solutions to help plant managers increase the time between equipment failures.”

That's reassuring for power consumers. Plant managers keep an eye on equipment condition and schedule maintenance months in advance. They reroute power delivery, using planned outages to minimize the potential for unanticipated outages. Unfortunately, unanticipated outages still occur. In those cases, Brimhall Industrial responds quickly to get equipment back in service.

How did Monte Vista end up offering a home to such a specialized company? Mark offers the short answer, “I grew up here.” However, the route to Monte Vista wasn't quite as direct as Mark's answer suggests.

Mark did grow up in the Valley; but in his 20s, the combination of persistent medical issues and the stress of ownership and operation of an automotive machine shop required a change of pace. He leased the auto shop and accepted a job with Ingersoll-Rand's new service center, in Farmington, New Mexico, where he gained technical knowledge and experience in industrial equipment repair.

After a couple of years in Farmington, his health improved; but, he missed operating his own business. So he and his family moved back to Monte Vista, and resumed operation of his automotive machine shop. Within a few years, the Brimhall's sold the automotive shop, opting for the industrial repair work.

Brimhall Industrial began operating in January, 1989. Mark, and his wife Lola, were the two original employees of the business. Mark handled the technical side; Lola, the financial side. The business started in the 2,500 square foot building that had been the home of Mark's automotive shop. Since then,



Mark Brimhall of Brimhall Industrial. The company repairs, refurbishes and maintains equipment used at power generation facilities throughout the Western U.S.

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Mike Rierson, President SLVREC Board of Directors

I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak directly to SLVREC members. Normally, SLVREC's CEO writes this column. But, a year from now, our current CEO, John Villyard, will be retiring.

As part of the transition process, over the next year, each of the directors will alternate with John in writing this column. We believe that by doing so, you will have the opportunity to see the cooperative from a slightly different perspective and will also have the chance to get to know your directors a little better. Please, if you have any comments about the cooperative, take the time to call your director!

Hiring a new CEO isn't a job any of us on the board take lightly; the greatest responsibility we have as directors is selecting the cooperative's CEO. To facilitate the selection process, we hired a consulting firm, Langley & Associates of Castle Rock, Colorado to help. Carol Langley will look for the best qualified person for the REC—whether that person be from in-house or across the country. Carol has completed executive searches for several electric cooperatives and utility companies. We are pleased to have her work with us.

She initiated the search process for SLVREC by talking with the co-op's board and staff. Her objective: understanding what makes SLVREC tick, determining the cooperative's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. Armed with this information, she will begin a process of winnowing out the best panel of candidates for the board's consideration.

As we move forward this year, SLVREC's board is keenly focused on ensuring affordability and innovation for our members. We work for you! Every decision we make places member interests first.

For example, we are closely monitoring the status of the PUC on the proposed transmission line to serve the Valley. This line will be very important to you, our members, in terms of the quality of service we can provide.

One of my responsibilities, as a director, is also serving on Colorado Rural Electric Cooperative's (CREA) board of directors. As a director on CREA's board, I am pleased to report that CREA successfully lobbied to extend the sales tax exemption on electricity used for commercial uses such as irrigation last year, a savings of about \$300,000 for our cooperative's members alone.

That's a conservative estimate. Most of us believed that the counties would have piggy-backed local sales taxes onto the state sales tax. Combined, ag producers in the Valley would have been faced with a tax

bill of close to \$600,000.

CREA serves as more than our legislative lobby. The Association also provides the framework for the safety program at our cooperative and cooperatives around the state. CREA serves as an excellent resource and helps us maximize our commitment to safety at all levels. I am very proud of SLVREC's employees, who celebrated a full year with no lost-time accidents last month! This translates to a cost savings through lower insurance costs; but more important it keeps our employees and members safe.

SLVREC's board and staff are still working closely with the Governor's Energy Office and Veteran's Green Jobs on weatherization. I thank all of our members for their support of this excellent program.

In closing, on February 10, SLVREC will sponsor a presentation on a community solar garden at the Community Ag Forum. It's a concept that was tried at Holy Cross, the cooperative serving central Colorado. We are interested to hear the discussion and look forward to hearing your thoughts on this exciting project.



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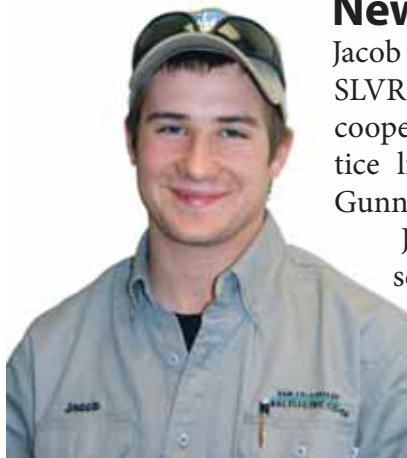
Scheduled Meetings

Board Meeting January 25, 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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New Lineman

Jacob Cadwell started work at SLVREC on December 13. The cooperative's newest apprentice lineman moved here from Gunnison.

Jacob, a recipient of a \$500 scholarship from Gunnison County Electric Association (GCEA), a cooperative serving the Gunnison Valley, graduated from the electric lineworker

program at Mesa State College.

Jacob's older brother works for GCEA and according to Jacob, "He's the reason I considered linework for a career. My brother told me a bunch about his job and I went to work at GCEA as a summer temporary. I liked the work, so I decided to go to line school."

Jacob enjoys being outside. To him, that was one of the more appealing aspects of pursuing a career as a lineman. "I really like being outside. I didn't want a job where I had to sit inside all day," he said. When he isn't working, Jacob enjoys hunting. He looks forward to working at the cooperative and settling into the Valley. ☺

Annual Meeting update

The nominating process for open director positions will change slightly this year. However, the Energy Fair format for the Annual Meeting will not.

The Annual Meeting will be held on June 21. Like last year, members will have the opportunity to learn about energy conservation and energy-related products during the day. The meeting will start and end earlier. Food will be available for purchase at the Energy Fair. Door prizes will be awarded at the meeting.

In 2009, members voted to streamline the nomination process, adopting the changes through a revision to the co-op's bylaws. In 2011, members will be asked once again to vote on a revision of cooperative's bylaws—this time to comply with House Bill 1098. Detailed information on the nomination process will be available on the cooperative's web page.

Members who are interested in running for the open director positions may pick up a petition on or after February 8. Directors for Districts 1, Rio Grande County, and 7, Member at Large will be elected this year. These positions are currently held by Carol Lee Dugan and Mike Rierson respectively.

For more information, contact SLVREC. ☺

Green power price cut in half

If you have already signed up for 100 kWh blocks of green power, you'll see a pleasant surprise on your next bill. Effective the 26th of January, the price has been cut in half. Now 100 kWh blocks will cost 40 cents each.

Members who purchase green power blocks, ensure that the amount of energy they purchase enters the power grid from renewable generation sources. In this way, green power blocks reduce the generation demand for power generated from conventional sources such as coal and natural gas.

The 40 cent premium members pay facilitates the development of new renewable generation sources. Tri-State Generation & Transmission, who provides SLVREC with power, has been actively developing renewable generation. Recently, Tri-State brought the Cimarron Solar Facility's first module of 10 megawatts online. When complete, this 250-acre facility in north-eastern New Mexico, will produce 30 megawatts (mW).

The 51 mW Kit Carson Windpower Project is also nearing its startup phase. The project is located on a 6,000 acre site approximately seven miles northwest of Burlington, Colo.

Adding green power blocks is the least expensive way to "go green." Call SLVREC to sign up today! ☺

2010: No lost time accidents

Last month marked a full year with no lost-time accidents at SLVREC. CEO John Villyard said, "I'm really proud of the work the employees at our company have done to bring us to this milestone. We do a difficult and dangerous job. Our employees work hard to keep themselves, each other and our members safe. It's something I'm proud to celebrate with them."

The cooperative's safety program has been developed by 11 employees with support from loss control specialist, Royce Anderson of Colorado Rural Electric Association (CREA). Journeyman lineman Shawn McKibbon served the last three years as the safety committee chairman. He stepped down as chairman in 2011. Many of the employees on the committee, like JoAnn Self, who does mapping and drafting for the engineering department, have served for several years. She was the committee secretary for over a decade. All positions on the committee are voluntary.

In addition to an active in-house safety program, SLVREC also promotes safety for members by participating in school programs, scout meetings, and more. The cooperative also offers annual safety presentations for emergency responders in the Valley. ☺



Equipment coming in for repair, above, shows pitting and wear from the abrasive setting in which it operates.

Dam. The big computer-controlled machine he is using can work to tolerances as small as 1/1000th of an inch—precision critical to this, and most other projects Brimhall Industrial completes.

The company must keep current with new technology to ensure quality on current projects and to facilitate future orders. Information must be on hand and ready to use.

In late 2009, the business was fortunate to be able to hire Mark and Lola's son, Michael, who graduated with high honors from Colorado School of Mines. Michael has been helping to further organize and develop the technical side of the business. Michael and his family moved back to Monte Vista, from Sugar Land, Texas. There, he worked for three years as an engineer with Fluor Corporation, a global engineering, procurement, construction, maintenance (EPCM) firm.

Because of the technical nature of the work, it's hard to find trained workers for both production and office positions within the Valley. So, Brimhall Industrial has trained some workers from the ground up.

the business has relocated twice and now occupies about 20,000 square feet of shop and office space in two buildings. The company employs 30.

It wasn't easy growing the business. Brimhall Industrial—unique as it may be for the Valley—isn't the only machine shop taking on this type of work.

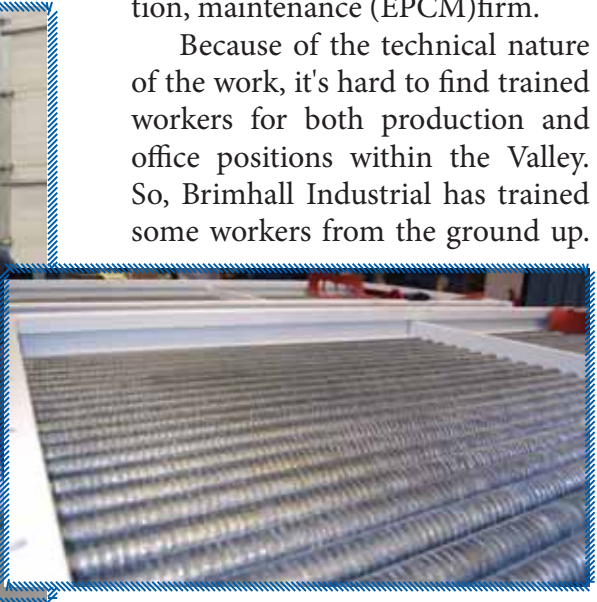
Mark said, "We tried to carve out a niche. Even so, we bid against General Electric and big shops in Denver and Salt Lake City." With the competitive nature of the business, margins are lower than you might expect. Mark added, "Car dealerships charge more per hour than we do."

To help stay competitive, the company maintains a small fleet of trucks to pick up and deliver work. Additionally, the company invests in state-of-the-art equipment such as Computer Numerically Controlled equipment, with some pieces weighing up to 95,000 pounds and costing over \$100,000 each.

Why so expensive? The equipment must be extremely precise. Mark points to a worker who is crafting a new heat exchanger for Hoover

The photograph in the top left corner of this page shows one of Brimhall Industries' Computer Numerically Controlled (CNC) milling machines. Extremely precise, these computer-driven pieces of equipment require significant training time to use effectively.

To the left, one of Brimhall's workers fabricates a heat exchanger tube sheet for Hoover Dam. Tolerances are critical. The heat exchanger tube sheet must be precisely aligned for each cut. Below left and right, air coolers for Hoover Dam are reconditioned. These air coolers work on the same principal as a car radiator, just on a much larger scale.



Others, lured by the rural life-style of the Valley, came here as trained machinists. The company has a low turnover. "We pay pretty well for one thing," Mark said with a smile.

Employees must have a variety of skills. Many of the pieces Brimhall reconditions rely on special coatings and heat treating for protection from the abrasive and caustic environment in which they operate.

Particulates wear and pit the metal. Ceramic coatings help protect pumps as they move slurries of water and ash from power plant boilers. Brimhall serves as a full-line distributor of AW Chesterton Company products. Chesterton makes the seals and coatings used in the repairs Brimhall tackles.

Pointing to the pitted metal of a disassembled pump with its parts cleaned, numbered, and ready for repair, Mark said, "This is a slurry pump. The exhaust off the boilers in coal-fired power plants goes through a scrubber system with a lime slurry. The particulates stay with the slurry

ensuring that the flue gas is clean. The slurry, with all the particulates in it, can really damage things, in spite of the fact that most of what we work on, like this pump, is stainless steel," Mark said.

As he walks along a row of wooden pallets and boxes lined up along the path from the main office to work areas, Mark tells story after story. He pointed to an ash pump from a power plant in New Mexico. "It's been seven years since its last rebuild," he said.

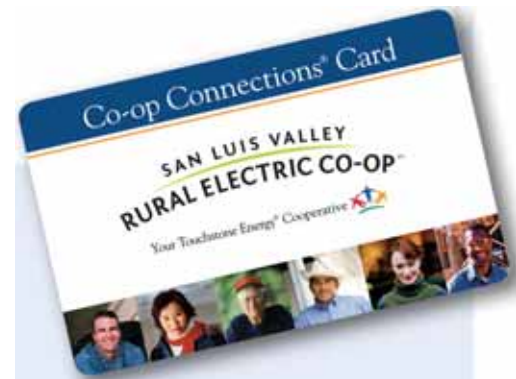
He knows the contents of each box, can describe what the equipment does, who it belongs to, when the work must be completed, and other pertinent details—all from memory. It's impressive. And it also underscores the focus and attention to detail Brimhall Industrial offers to each of their clients.

Not one to brag about his accomplishments, when asked how it is that his small company, located in such a remote area can compete with others in the field, Mark simply shrugged and said, "Well, we must be doing something right."

Right, indeed. ∞

To learn more, visit www.brimhallindustrial.com.

To the left, as equipment comes in for repair, it is cleaned, cataloged and numbered. Boxes or pallets contain each separate project. In other cases, as below, disassembly and reassembly takes place on a much larger scale.



Look for it in April!

SLVREC will mail out Co-op Connections® Cards to members this spring. All SLVREC members will receive a Co-op Connections® card in the mail. Be sure to watch for it and keep it in a safe place. The cards may be used for discounts at participating businesses.

The program helps both the businesses SLVREC serves and co-op members. There's no cost to co-op members who use the card, no cost for businesses who choose to participate in the program, and no cost to SLVREC as a partner in the national program.

Under the program, participating businesses offer a discount to cardholders. SLVREC will list this discount on its web page and provide the information to the national program coordinator for a listing on the national page. Discount information for participating businesses in the U.S. can be viewed on the program's national web page (<http://co-opconnections.com>). Your card entitles you to any discount offered to Co-op Connections® cardholders nationwide. With over 130 electric cooperatives participating, there are over 23 million Co-op Connections® card holders in the U.S.

For more information, or to sign up your business in the program, contact SLVREC. ∞

STAR Report

In December 2010, the Governor's Energy Office released the Strategic Transmission and Renewables (STAR) report. This report offers a vision of Colorado's electric industry through the year 2050. The analysis includes recommendations to meet the long-term interest of Colorado's citizens.

One of the challenges facing the state is Colorado's growing population—the population is expected to grow from 5 million to 9 million by 2050. Because of this, the report suggests it will be critical to find ways to moderate electric load growth and to expand the development of renewable energy sources. However, the report recognizes "there are operational limits on the penetration of variable renewable resources" and the models used in the analysis were constrained to recognize these limitations.

One key finding points to the importance of developing new transmission capacity within the state: "Transmission infrastructure is a linchpin issue that needs to be addressed to enable Colorado to deliver the renewable energy to the markets. Transmission is an enabler that achieves a variety of economic objectives over a very long time period with comparatively minimal operation and maintenance expenses. As has been proven in Texas and elsewhere, the return on investment is fast, and transmission represents less than 10 percent of the customer's electric bill." The study recognizes a series of prior studies that have concluded that Colorado's transmission infrastructure is congested and undersized in voltage and capability.

Another key recommendation is that utilities should look to developing new natural gas-fired generation. Utilities have argued that natural gas price fluctuations make it difficult to keep electricity prices stable with natural gas plants. The report states, "The nation's natural gas supply has been expanded considerably in recent years, and price forecasts provide a greater confidence in price stability compared to the price volatility experienced over the past three decades."

Among other recommendations, the report suggests that lawmakers need to consider "whether the '10 percent by 2020' renewable energy standard for rural electric associations and municipal utilities should be revised to match the state's '30 percent by 2020' standard for investor-owned utilities."

Read the entire report or view summaries of the report on the GEO web site at:

http://www.rechargecolorado.com/index.php/programs_overview/star_project



Rio Grande County residents

If you live in Rio Grande County, call the Rio Grande Public Health Agency to receive a free radon test kit.

Radon is a cancer-causing radioactive gas that you can't see, smell or taste. Its presence in your home can pose a danger to your family's health. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers, and the second leading cause of lung cancer in America, claiming about 20,999 lives annually.

The kit will be mailed to you directly from the testing lab. You will be responsible for mailing it back using Priority Mail. A limited number of kits are available to Rio Grande County residents. For more information or to request a radon test kit, call 719-657-3352. ☺

Customer Service improvements

SLVREC has reenergized a customer service strategic committee. The committee's mission: looking for ways to implement new programs that will help members.

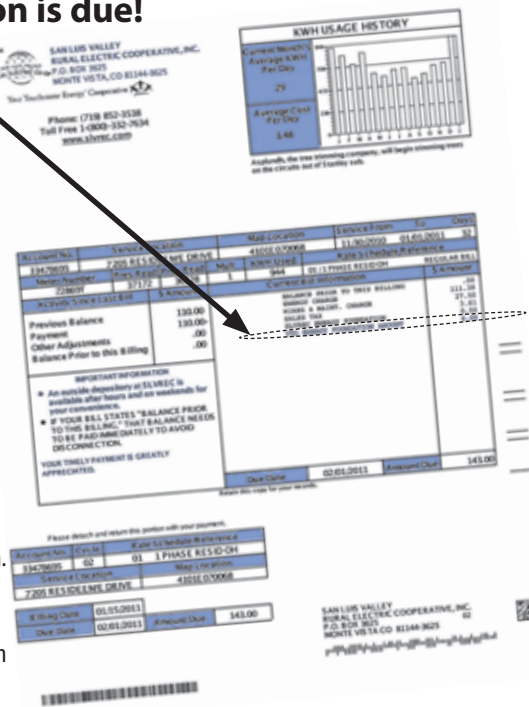
The committee includes customer service supervisors as well as other management employees at SLVREC. Discussion topics on the table include pay as you go meters, security deposits and reducing write-offs at the cooperative. Additionally, the committee will be looking at ways to tweak or change programs to make them more member-friendly.

If you have suggestions or ideas for ways the co-op can serve you better, please call customer service! ☺

Your ideas are welcomed!

An explanation is due!

You might notice what appears to be a new charge on your January billing statement. It's not really a charge at all. The amount printed in blue with the title, "YTD Energy Foundation Amount" is your contribution in 2010 to the San Luis Valley REC Energy Foundation. **It is not added into the total amount due.** The amount is printed on your bill for tax purposes—you can claim it on your 2010 taxes as a charitable contribution. For more information on the Foundation and the difference your contribution makes, see the January edition of the Newsboy!



Fish Tacos

- 2 Tbsp. taco seasoning
- 1 Tbsp. fresh squeezed lime juice
- 1 Tbsp. fresh squeezed orange juice
- 1 lb. halibut, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 1 cup green cabbage, shredded
- 1 cup red cabbage, shredded
- ½ cup green onions, chopped
- ¾ cup nonfat sour cream
- ¾ cup salsa
- 8 (6-inch) corn tortillas
- lime wedges

In a medium-sized bowl, combine taco seasoning, lime juice and orange juice and mix well. Add fish and toss to coat. Heat oil in a non-stick skillet to medium high heat. Add fish and sauté for about 5 minutes or until done.

In a medium-sized bowl, combine green and red cabbage, and green onions. In a separate bowl, stir together sour cream and salsa and mix well.

Heat tortillas according to package instructions. Spoon ¼ cup of cabbage mixture in center of tortilla then equally divide fish and place on top of cabbage vegetables. Top with up to 3 tablespoons salsa blend and a squeeze of fresh lime juice. Fold or roll up tortillas and enjoy.

Curried Cauliflower and Potatoes

- ¾ lb. potatoes, peeled and cut into ½ inch cubes
 - 3 lb. cauliflower, cut into florets
 - 3 Tbsp. vegetable oil
 - 1 small onion, chopped fine
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - 2 Tbsp. curry powder
 - 2 tsp. lemon juice
 - ½ tsp. salt
 - 1 cup water
- Boil the potatoes in water until just

tender, about five minutes. Remove the potatoes, add the cauliflower and cook about five minutes or until crisp-tender; drain.

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook until soft. Add the curry powder and cook, stirring for two minutes. Add the potatoes and cauliflower and cook for two more minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the lemon juice, salt and water. Cook until the liquid is absorbed, about five minutes.

Tuna Melt

- 6 oz. can tuna in water
- 3 Tbsp. celery, diced
- 3 Tbsp. red onion, diced
- 2 Tbsp. carrots, diced
- 2 Tbsp. tomato, diced
- 2 Tbsp. apple, diced
- ½ cup nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1½ tsp. white wine vinegar
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ¼ tsp. parsley flakes
- ⅛ tsp. pepper
- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- 2 slices tomato
- 2 (1 oz.) slices reduced fat Swiss cheese

Stir together first 11 ingredients in a medium bowl until well combined. Divide tuna salad equally among both slices of bread. Top each with 1 slice tomato and 1 slice cheese. Broil topped bread halves for 5 to 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Makes 2 servings.

Crustless Breakfast Quiche

- 2 cups eggplant, chopped
- 1 cup zucchini, chopped
- 1 cup red pepper, chopped
- 1 cup yellow onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 egg
- 1 cup egg whites
- 1 cup skim milk

- ¾ tsp. ground pepper
- ½ tsp. dried thyme
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ½ cup fresh basil, torn
- ¾ cup part skim shredded mozzarella
- olive oil

Preheat oven to 425°F. Saute eggplant, zucchini, pepper, onion and garlic in oil in a large skillet over medium heat for 10 minutes. Turn off heat. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg, egg whites, milk, pepper, basil and mozzarella to vegetable mixture. Stir until everything is evenly distributed.

Oil an 8-inch pan and pour in vegetable and egg mixture. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from oven and let sit for 10 minutes before serving. Serves 5.

Asian Sesame Noodles

- 8 oz. soba noodles
- 1 cup carrots, shredded
- 8 oz. snow peas, strings removed
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 pound(s) chicken-breast tenders, cut lengthwise in half
- 1 Tbsp. fresh ginger, diced
- 3 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. sesame oil

Cook soba noodles as directed on package; add shredded carrots 4 minutes and snow peas 2 minutes before noodles are done.

Meanwhile, in 12-inch nonstick skillet, heat vegetable oil on medium 1 minute. Add chicken, ginger, and 2 tablespoons soy sauce, stirring to coat. Cook about 10 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink throughout, stirring often. Remove from heat.

Drain noodles and vegetables; add them to chicken in skillet along with sesame oil and remaining 1 tablespoon soy sauce. Toss ingredients gently to combine.

SAN LUIS VALLEY
RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OP™

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The power of human connections®

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**SLVREC will be closed on
February 21 for
Presidents' Day**

Periodical Postage
Paid at Monte Vista, CO

Conservation Corner

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High School Seniors: Scholarship Applications Due February 3!

Don't delay. Visit www.slvrec.com to download
an application. Complete it now! Bring it in!

The co-op will award several \$500 scholarships, a few \$1,000 scholarships, one scholarship to attend an electric lineworker training program and one 4-year scholarship to Adams State College. Don't miss the deadline!

February 2011

Save energy to reduce your carbon footprint

The Colorado Governor's Energy Office (GEO) encourages Coloradan's to reduce their carbon footprint. It's easier than you think! Best of all, reducing your carbon footprint can save money on your electric bill too.

The GEO created Project C to help people measure, reduce, and offset their carbon emissions. Visit the Project C web page (www.colorado-carbonfund.org) to use a carbon calculator to measure the greenhouse gas emissions from your energy use, driving and air travel. You can find additional information on the site on ways you can conserve energy and reduce carbon emissions. Some of our favorites include:

Power strips. Watch out for phantoms loads: 75 percent of the electricity used for appliances and electronics in an average U.S. household is consumed when the products are turned off. Reduce your power load consumption by plugging electronics into power strips that you can turn off when you aren't using the devices.

Computers. Consider a laptop—laptops are more energy efficient than desktop computers. To save on power consumption with your desktop computer, turn off the monitor for absences longer than 20 minutes and turn off the entire computer when you're away for more than two hours.

Laundry. Wash cold; line dry. When you must use the dryer, use the cool-down cycle to take advantage of the dryer's residual heat.

Hot water. Set the temperature on your water heater to 120 degrees or lower to save as much as \$25 a month.

Home energy audit. Home energy audits can lower your heating bills while improving your energy efficiency and increasing your home's resale value. Visit www.rechargecolorado.com for available rebates on energy efficiency improvements, energy saving tips and more!