

Member Information

REC considering electronic voting

SLV REC is considering changing the annual director election from paper ballots to electronic voting (casting your vote online), but we want your feedback before making this change.



If electronic voting is put into place, REC members will be able to vote for Board of Director candidates and bylaw amendments online or by mail-in ballot (by special request only). This process has several checks and balances to ensure the privacy of co-op members and the security of election outcomes. The election is administered by an independent, third-party contractor.

The goal of this process is to ensure every member has an opportunity to exercise their right to democratic participation. This protects a basic principle of the cooperative business model and **See VOTE continued on Page 4**

Employees clean up highway



In August, REC employees grabbed trash bags and hit the highway as part of CDOT's Adopt-a-Highway program. Several bags were filled and hauled off by CDOT.

Meet your co-op

Apprentice to Journeyman Lineman... Alec Higel journeys out

More than 50 tests, a ton of bookwork and 8,000 hours of training later, SLV REC's Alec Higel is now officially a journeyman lineman.

Graduating from Alamosa High School in 2013, Alec tried college for a few years at Adams State and University of Northern Colorado before realizing he wanted the stability and great opportunity that he felt linework would provide. He graduated from Colorado Mesa University's line school in 2015, then did contract work with Foothills Energy before coming to REC in August 2018. He loves being a part of REC's crew.

The past four years he's spent many nights reading, studying and taking tests. "The books are huge," he said, "it's a lot of work, especially when you have kids at home."

See ALEC continued on Page 2



Alec Higel

THIS ISSUE

Member Information/Meet your co-op

Meet.../Conservation/Ciello

Loren Howard

Community/Member Information

Recipe/Historical happenings

OCTOBER 2022 | VOLUME 50 | ISSUE 9

Meet your co-op



Valley native joins REC as mechanic

Jarred Gardner comes to San Luis Valley REC with 25 years' experience in the industry. Most recently, he was a service manager at Power Zone Equipment in Center and prior to that spent many years helping build the family's business, Gardner Excavating.

Jarred decided to pursue the job opportunity with REC because he had heard many good things about working here and was excited about the four-day week. He was also traveling a lot with his previous job and was ready for a change.

He is happy to be back in the shop doing "hands-on" work to keep all the trucks and equipment up and running. Jarred is also



Jarred Gardner

enjoying his new coworkers; "there are great people that work here," he said.

He is a San Luis Valley native, graduating from Alamosa High School in 1995. Jarred and his wife have two children, ages 13 and 18. He enjoys hunting, fishing and golfing in his spare time.

ALEC

continued from page 1

"I set a goal to journey out, and here I am. It's a huge weight off my shoulders. I'm so glad to be done studying and taking tests!" Alec commented.

Finishing the program and becoming a journeyman has many benefits, including an increase in pay, the ability to go out on call by yourself, and probably the best part for many—the end of bookwork.

In his free time, Alec enjoys spending time with his wife Marcie and two children. He's also venturing out as a small business owner of Chamiso Farms

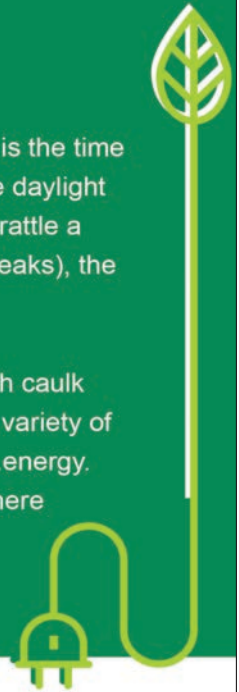
making custom small bales. Being a lineman is not a glamorous or easy profession and is listed as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S. This is understandable as they perform detailed tasks near high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day, having to brave stormy weather and other challenging conditions, linemen must climb 40 feet in the air, often carrying heavy equipment to get the job done. A special shoutout goes to Alec and all of REC's linemen for taking on this special role!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weatherstripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials. Visit www.energy.gov/energysaver to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: energy.gov



ciello

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*-P. Gibson, Sanford
(Google Review)*

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Your email will be forwarded based on the direction you provide in your subject line.

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PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

The Newsboy (publication #551-450) is an official publication of the San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.; 3625 US Hwy 160 W, Monte Vista, CO 81144. The Newsboy is published monthly for SLVREC members. Periodical postage paid at Monte Vista, CO 81144.

Postmaster, send Form 3579 to NEWSBOY, P.O. Box 3625, Monte Vista, CO 81144-3625.

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REC's Strategic Plan, Part 3 - Financial

The third strategic area of focus identified in REC's latest strategic plan is financial. The overarching goal is "Meet all financial metrics while providing affordable services." The action items specific to this area are:

- Implement a 4-year plan to fully allocate fixed and variable costs

- Improve the equity to asset ratio

- Pursue cost savings through internal efficiencies and external opportunities

- Expand Cielo for positive net margin

Both REC and Cielo strive to provide their respective services at the lowest cost possible while maintaining outstanding quality of service. For many decades REC has conducted a cost-of-service study every three years to, as close as possible, fairly and accurately design rates for electric service. Particularly in the past decade, technology has provided methodologies that have improved the ability to allocate fixed and variable costs to all rate classes. Cielo expenses are mostly fixed, so rates for broadband and phone service are a simple rate based on the speed of service.

Every year, REC conducts an audit of financials which includes both the electric and telecommunications businesses. One of the important financial metrics included in the audit is the ratio of equity to asset. REC obtains financing for capital projects from National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). The equity to asset ratio is also an important

metric for accessing financing. In recent years with the startup of Cielo, this ratio, due to the investments in the telecommunication infrastructure has decreased. While still meeting lending and financial requirements, the goal is to increase this ratio.

The fourth action item listed above, "Expand Cielo for positive net margin" is crucial to achieving improvements in this ratio. Cielo had positive margins in July, and while the monthly net margin might bounce in and out of positive numbers, the long-term trend shows Cielo is on track to have a positive margin for the 2023 fiscal year.

Reducing expenses has been an ongoing effort for years. Before Cielo started up, REC had 51 employees. Today REC and Cielo combined have 54 employees. Finding operational efficiencies has meant that for the past six years REC has not had a rate increase even while most price indexes have increased around 10 percent in the past five years. This past year, REC and Cielo entered into an agreement with Enterprise Fleet Management to acquire and maintain many of the vehicles used for both REC and Cielo. This agreement will lower the cost of acquiring and maintaining a large portion of the vehicle fleet.

The final goal in the strategic plan — communication— will be discussed in next month's column.

Concern for Community



REC Energy Foundation donates to Alamosa Veterans Memorial Park

The SLVREC Energy Foundation recently made a donation to the Alamosa Veterans Memorial Park Project to help with phase two—the concrete foundation.

The Veterans Memorial Park will feature a full-sized bronze sculpture by Huberto Maestas, outdoor lighting, seating and a trail system connecting the various entities that are in the area. Honoring the approximately 4,800 veterans that reside in the San Luis Valley with a reflective area and stunning design, the park will represent all five branches

of the military. For more information on the project and fundraising efforts, follow their Facebook page: Alamosa Veterans Memorial Park Project or email alamosamemorial@gmail.com.

The SLVREC Energy Foundation obtains funding through REC members' round-up funds. Under this program, monthly electric bills are rounded up to the next highest dollar amount, and that contribution goes toward the Foundation's mission of providing funds for charitable purposes.

The REC Foundation is



SLVREC Marketing Director Jennifer Alonzo presents a check to Alamosa Veterans Memorial Park Project President Frank Muniz. Also pictured are project board members Janet Yohn and Charlie Griego.

excited to contribute to this cause in honoring the many Valley veterans and their families. “We’re looking forward to seeing this project come to fruition.”

Member information

Sign up for paperless billing & receive a \$5 BILL CREDIT

As postage costs continue to increase, now is a good time to think about signing up for paperless billing. For every 1,000 members who choose to go paperless, more than 24,000 envelopes, 36,000 sheets of paper, and \$6,000 in postage is saved each year.

Every dollar SLV REC saves in



postage and printing expenses goes right back into maintaining rates for members.

Going paperless is great for the environment and members benefit in other ways too:

- A monthly email notification will be sent
- View or print your electric bill anytime with 24/7 secure access to your online account information
- No fees – you can pay your electric bill

online for free

- Reduces your paper clutter at home and more misplaced bills

It only takes a few minutes to sign up via SmartHub online or on your mobile device.

Or give us a call or send an email, and we’ll take care of it for you—

719-852-3538, power@slvrec.com

Be sure to let us know when you’ve changed to paperless, and we’ll credit your account \$5 for making the switch!

VOTE

continued from page 1 _____

empowers members with continued local control over their electric cooperative.

Advantages of electronic voting include:

- Quicker results
- More cost-effective
- Time savings
- Vote from anywhere without having to mail or drop off a ballot

Please go online to our website, www.slvrec.com to vote for which method of voting you prefer: Paper or Electronic



Recipe of the month

INGREDIENTS

- 2 large ripe bananas (or more if you'd like)
- 1 3/4 c. flour
- 2 t. baking powder
- 1/4 t. baking soda
- 1/2 t. salt
- 2/3 c. sugar
- 1/3 c. margarine
- 2 unbeatn eggs

MIMI'S BANANA BREAD

1. Mix dry ingredients
2. Add margarine, eggs and bananas
3. Beat until blended
4. Add to greased loaf pan; bake at 350 degrees for approximately one hour

I like to add cinnamon into batter before baking.

*Variation: recipe also makes great muffins; increase temperature to 375 degrees and decrease baking time to 18-22 minutes.

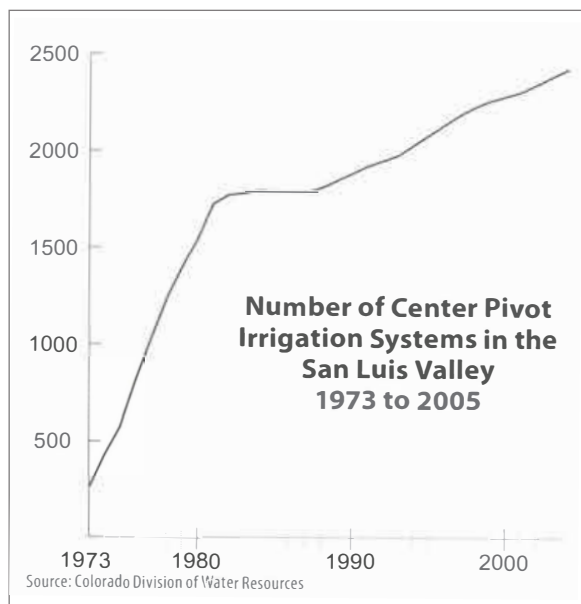
Historical happenings

Center pivot installations increasing

Farmers began installing center pivot irrigation systems. In 1973, there were 262 center pivot irrigation systems in the Valley. The following year, that number surged to 430. By 1980, there were 1,541 center pivots in the Valley. Most relied upon electricity.

SLVREC began to experience problems with voltage collapse during irrigation season. Voltage collapse occurs when power demand exceeds power supply at any point in time. The transmission system could not keep up. The Valley needed more power than the existing lines could supply.

By the mid-80s, plans for a third transmission line to serve the Valley were in place. By the end of that decade, a 230 kV line, jointly owned by Xcel Energy and Tri-State, also followed a route to the Valley over Poncha Pass. When this line was built, engineers anticipated it would meet Valley needs for several decades. In part, they were right. This line served the Valley well for almost two decades. However, the Valley's growth exceeded everyone's expectations.



Make A Difference Day

Saturday, Oct. 22nd
8 a.m.-12 p.m.

Take one day to help others • Sponsored by the Baer Family

Clean up your yard and community. Bring your trash to the SLV Regional Landfill between Monte Vista & Del Norte.

Cost is a donation of non-perishable food items. Call for details!

All donations will be given to the Monte Vista Food Bank.
719-852-3810 • slvlandfill.com



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October 2022



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SCHEDULED MEETINGS
Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 25, 9:30 a.m.
The REC Board of Directors meets the last Tuesday of each month unless otherwise stated. Members are welcome; advance notice required.

This institution is an equal opportunity employer.

