

Concern for Community

REC employees volunteer at Care & Share

Care & Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado is a nonprofit dedicated to ending hunger across 29 Colorado counties. They work to “make sure nutritious food gets in the hands of everyone who needs it—wherever they are.”

With nearly 300 partner agencies— food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, schools, community centers and churches— more than 47,000 volunteer hours are given annually to help in their mission.

At the three distribution centers, volunteers help sort, organize and pack food received through donations or purchased at low costs from suppliers, community partners and federal programs. The food is then distributed to those in need through various partners and programs.

A group of San Luis Valley REC employees spent a July morning helping at Alamosa’s Distribution Center. As part of SLVREC’s Leadership Program, employees volunteer annually to help different service projects throughout the Valley. “This is a great opportunity for us to give back to our communities in a small way. We enjoyed learning the process at Care & Share and are looking forward to volunteering in the future,” said Jennifer Alonzo, marketing and communications manager.

For more information on Care & Share or to volunteer, go online to careandshare.org.



Above: Ryan Christensen & Manny Garcia
Below: REC employees and other Care & Share volunteers



Meet Your Co-op

Barr completes apprenticeship, journeys out

Following monthly tests, bookwork and 8,000 training hours, SLV REC apprentice Dakota Barr is now officially a journeyman lineman.

Dakota joined SLVREC in July 2021 following about a year working as a traveling apprentice for Probst Electric. Graduating in June 2020 from Northwest Lineman School in Meridian, ID, he went on to join Probst doing power line and transmission construction, working in Wyoming, Kansas and Florida before transitioning to SLVREC.

Dakota enjoys team roping, fly-fishing and traveling with his wife and children. Congrats, Dakota— REC is proud of you!



Dakota Barr and Chief Operations Officer Shawn McKibbon

THIS ISSUE

Concern/Meet Your Co-op

Meet Your Co-op/Efficiency/Ciello

Eric Eriksen

Concern for Community

Recipe/Member Information

SEPTEMBER 2025 | VOLUME 52 | ISSUE 8

Meet Your Co-op

Sanford native joins REC crews as journeyman

Sanford native Ty Mortensen has joined the crews at San Luis Valley REC, bringing great experience and Valley perspective.

"I graduated from Sanford High School, where I actively participated in basketball, football and baseball. Following graduation, I spent two years traveling and working in the oil industry alongside REC colleague Dakota Barr. For over a year, we resided together in northern Montana... after several years in the oilfield, I recognized that it was not the ideal environment for building the family life I envisioned. Inspired by my uncle, Perry Sowards, who found fulfillment in his career as a lineman, while providing a stable life for his family, I decided to pursue a similar path. So, I enrolled in the line worker program at Mesa State College," Ty explained.

Upon completing the program in spring 2013, he secured an apprentice position with La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) in Durango, Colo. where he took on a four-year apprenticeship. After successfully completing it, Ty advanced to the role of troubleman, spending eight years troubleshooting and resolving outages across Durango and La Plata County. "This experience significantly enhanced my expertise in the field. While I cherished my time in Durango, I

believed the small-town atmosphere of the Valley would better suit my children," he said.

"As a proud father of four—Axtyn, Indy, Navy, and Rev—my children are my greatest priority. In my leisure time, I find joy in hunting, riding dirt bikes, and running. If I am at work, I prefer to have my

hooks (boot attachments for climbing poles) on or at least working lines 'above ground.'" Ty commented.

Ty is grateful for the opportunity to serve this community and further his knowledge in the high-voltage industry across the Valley. "REC has a great community environment; the leadership seems open-minded, and they carry experience in the industry. Along with that, the grid has a large dual voltage footprint, so I am excited to hit the ground running on this new endeavor and be an asset alongside the rest of the organization in this quickly changing industry," he said.

Welcome to the team, Ty, we're happy to have you here!



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Take advantage of "shoulder months," which refer to the transitional periods between peak heating and cooling seasons. During the fall, these milder weeks typically occur between September and November. Shoulder months offer a great opportunity to reduce home energy consumption as the need for extensive heating or cooling is reduced. Look for simple ways to boost indoor comfort without running your heating and cooling system. Use ceiling fans and open windows on breezy days to ventilate your home. On cooler days, add a layer of clothing and avoid running the heat.

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—Georgia Lima, Crestone, Google Review

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Ciello is proud to feature testimonials from our satisfied customers in issues of the Newsboy. Send your testimonials to jalonzo@slvrec.com.



Eric Eriksen

Exploring the jagged frontier of AI innovation

It's that time of year when kids head back to school. Families are celebrating life milestones while adjusting to the change. My two children are young adults now, but I still very much cherish those memories. And thankfully, I have a few photos too. I wish your families a safe and happy start to the school year.

Here's the challenge... your child may start bringing homework to you asking for help. They might say, "Mom/Dad, I've been learning about Artificial Intelligence (AI), and especially Generative AI tools like ChatGPT or Copilot. I'm excited with how it can help, but also a little scared – and confused. Can you help me with my homework to figure out what the impact of AI will have on our future?" What are you going to do?

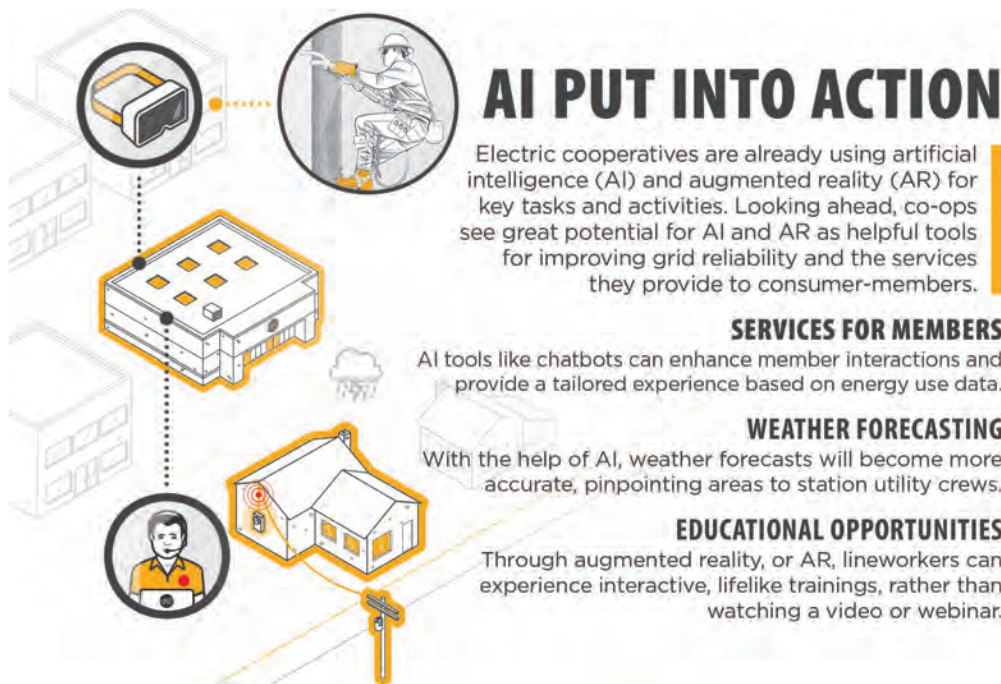
AI is a hot topic, sometimes exciting,

sometimes a little scary, and mostly unknown. It has the potential to bring many opportunities – and a few challenges – to the electric utility sector too. I wanted to share that we are beginning to investigate AI and how it can be utilized to better serve you.

Last week, I was invited to Harvard University to participate in a new program on Strategic Leadership, AI, and Change Initiatives for the electric industry. It included free tuition. And I passed! My family and REC were proud.

I learned new perspectives on AI. Contrary to what Hollywood would have you believe, AI can't think for itself. AI doesn't increase productivity; it expands capabilities. Imagine the various AI platforms we hear about as tools in the

See AI continued on Page 4



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Concern for Community

Valley students benefit from Tri-State employee school supply drive

San Luis Valley REC's wholesale energy provider, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Cooperative, conducts an annual school supply drive. As cooperative employees, giving back is important to Tri-State; "our employees walk the walk with both the seventh cooperative principle of concern for community, and Tri-State's company value of service. We know that many families, for different reasons, struggle to purchase the supplies their kids need, and we want to help if we can," stated Brigid Woodward, Tri-State's People and Culture Manager. "Each year, we do the drive in a different state in our service territory in collaboration with a Member System. Our first priority is any area affected by natural disasters (drought, flooding, fires, etc.); in the years we are lucky enough to not have a big disaster, we look for schools with great economic need."

The supplies were donated to San Luis Valley BOCES to distribute to any of the 14 Valley school districts in need. Adeline Duarte of SLVBOCES commented, "The school supply drive was extremely helpful to San Luis Valley families. When we remove financial barriers from education, our children will succeed. Thank you Tri-State and REC for supporting our students!"

We're always excited to partner with Tri-State on helping local organizations; they're committed to giving back to our rural communities, and we love that! Thank you, Tri-State employees!

AI

continued from page 3

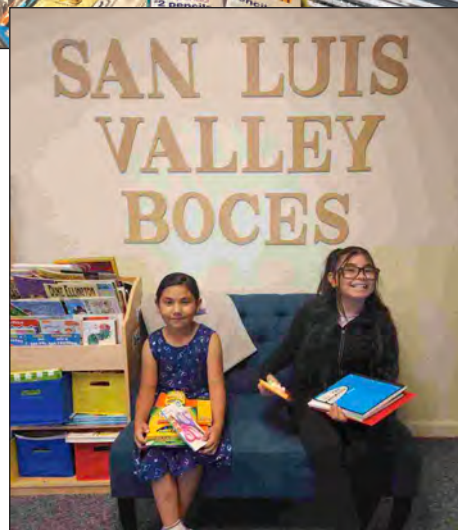
toolbox. Like picking up a wrench, we will be stronger with AI. We are now learning when and where to grab the right tool for the job, hence the jagged frontier of AI innovation. Harvard presented resounding data illustrating that AI isn't just Hollywood hype; rather, it is here to stay. In the not very distant future, ChatGPT and Copilot will be like Word and Excel are to us today.

As we consider emerging AI tools, our focus won't be so much on the technology itself as on better serving members with real value. If AI can streamline a process, predict an issue or improve service for our members, it's worth considering. It could even help our employees better manage the local electric grid, predict storm or



Two Tri-State employees show off all the great items collected in their annual school supply drive.

The supplies will be distributed to Valley students through San Luis Valley BOCES.



wildfire responses to deploy crews more efficiently, and improve member services. Ultimately, AI consists of different types of new tools that can help utilities like SLVREC/Ciello serve you better, making energy more reliable, services faster, and operations more efficient.

So are you ready to help with homework and capture life's precious moments?

Send us your feedback. Whether it's asking to learn more, identifying a hazard, asking for help or letting us know when we mess up. We want to hear from you. Connect with us online, in person, or through our social media channels. However you choose to connect, please let us know how we can serve you better.



Recipe of the Month

INGREDIENTS

- 4 slices bacon, chopped
- 1 lb. fettuccine pasta
- 12 oz. medium-width asparagus spears, trimmed and cut crosswise into 2-inch pieces
- 1 c. heavy cream
- 1/2 c. unsalted butter
- 1/2 t. kosher salt, plus more for pasta water
- 1/2 t. black pepper, plus more for garnish
- 2 c. freshly grated parmesan cheese, divided, plus more for garnish
- 1/2 t. lemon zest
- 1 T. lemon juice

ASPARAGUS PASTA

1. In a small saucepan over medium heat, cook the bacon, stirring occasionally, until crisp and rendered, 8 to 12 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate. Set aside. Wipe the pan clean.
 2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook the pasta according to package directions, adding the asparagus during the last 2 minutes. Reserve 1/2 cup of the pasta water.
 3. In the same saucepan used to cook the bacon, heat the cream and butter over medium heat until hot. Season with salt & pepper.
 4. To a large serving bowl, add 1 cup of cheese and the lemon zest. Stir in the butter and cream mixture.
 5. Drain the pasta and asparagus and immediately pour them into the bowl with the cream mixture. Toss a few times to coat, then add the lemon juice and the remaining 1 cup of cheese. Toss to combine, thinning with pasta water as needed to make a silky sauce. Garnish with bacon, pepper, and cheese. Serve immediately.
- thepioneerwoman.com*

Member Information

Historical Happenings will return next month

Saving energy during peak times benefits all

Conserving electricity during peak energy use times not only lowers your monthly bill—it can benefit our entire community.

“Peak times” refer to periods of the day when the demand for electricity is highest. Think early mornings when people are getting ready for work or school and evenings when families return home, cook dinner and unwind with electronics. When everyone uses energy at once, it adds pressure on the electric grid.

San Luis Valley REC works around the clock to ensure that electricity flows to your home whenever you need it. Behind the scenes, an enormous and intricate system is at work—one of the most complex machines in the world: the U.S. power grid.

Electricity comes from a diverse mix of sources—hydropower, natural gas, coal, solar, wind and more. Some power plants can respond quickly to spikes in demand, while others are less flexible. Once energy is generated, it travels through high-voltage transmission

lines to local utilities, like SLV REC, which then deliver it to you through distribution power lines.

When electricity demand surges during peak times, it's more expensive to generate or purchase power. If supply can't keep up, the risk of outages increases. That's why using less energy during peak hours is more important than ever. It not only eases strain on the grid but also helps you save money.

So how can you “beat the peak”? Start by adjusting your thermostat a few degrees during peak hours. Smart thermostats can automate this for you. Delay using energy-hungry appliances like ovens, clothes washers and dishwashers until later in the evening. Charging your electric vehicle overnight instead of right after you get home can also help.

Small actions taken by many households can lead to big results. When we all work together to reduce energy use during peak times, we protect our power grid, help control costs and ensure reliable electricity for our communities.

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SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Board Meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025, 9:30 a.m.
The REC Board of Directors typically meets the last Tuesday of each month unless otherwise stated. Members are welcome; advance notice required.

This institution is an equal opportunity employer.

