

Meet your co-op

Retiring after 40 years with REC

Forty years at one job is no easy feat, it takes commitment, reliability and perseverance. Linda Wells, current REC plant accountant, has shown those characteristics in her 40-year tenure with SLV Rural Electric Cooperative.

Beginning on May 26, 1981 as a service order clerk, Linda has worked her way through a few different positions over the years: accounts receivable clerk, work order clerk and now plant accountant.

She has seen many changes through her career, the biggest

being mainstreaming all processes from paper to computer. "Everything was done by hand; there was only one computer in the billing department that we all used," she stated.

Linda will leave the co-op with many memories—the best being helping at the annual meetings. She enjoyed seeing and talking with all the members. Growing up in the Bowen area, Linda got to see many familiar faces at the meetings. She'll also remember all the fun employee Christmas parties. The people of REC and their friendships will be missed by Linda; many friends



Linda Wells

have retired before her, but she still cherishes those friendships and always will. She gives a lot of credit to Billie Farnham, who was manager of the billing department in 1981 and helped hire her. "She took a chance on me by hiring me, and I've been here ever since. She kept me

See LINDA continued on Page 2

Returning to the classroom...



SLV REC serviceman Ruben Heredia and Apprentice Alec Higel presented for the fourth grade classes at Bill Metz Elementary in Monte Vista on April 22. The students enjoyed asking questions, examining some of the guys' gear and inspecting a piece of Fulgurite. It was great to be back in the schools sharing information with the students after more than a year due to the pandemic.

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LINDA

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going and got me through a lot,” Linda said of Billie.

Raised in Monte Vista and graduating from Monte Vista High School, Linda spent many years out on her family’s farm digging potatoes, running the tractors and more. She fondly remembers Sunday dinners at Grandma Dutton’s house, as well as riding horses and having fun with her cousins.

Linda is married to Don Wells, has one son, Kevin Long, as well as one grandson, Wesley. She also has two fur babies— her dogs Foxy and Kuschel. Upon retirement, Linda looks forward to spending more time with them, as well as doing things around the house. She enjoys being outside and painting, as well as canning. “Don does the gardening, and I do the canning. I do not like to do the gardening!” she laughed. She also leaves the cooking to Don; “I get spoiled with that; but we have a deal... He does the cooking, and I do the dishes,” she said. In addition, she and Don have a trip planned to go see family in Oregon later this summer.

Linda will also be able to spend more time with her mom, Wilamae, who resides in Del Norte at the River

Valley Inn. And no doubt Linda will spend more time watching sports— football, hockey and baseball, especially the Colorado teams. She’s a big sports fan, as well as a collector. Linda currently has a salt & pepper shaker collection, many bells and numerous owls.

Linda says, “it’s going to be different not coming here every day,” as she has for the past 40 years, but she knows her job is in good hands. “James [Romero] makes retiring easier because he’s easy to work with and knowledgeable. He’s one of the goods ones, and I have no doubt that he’ll be just fine,” she said.

Congratulations Linda! Enjoy retirement; you’ve earned it!



Linda, 1986

Conservation corner

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

A dirty filter causes your air conditioner to work harder than necessary. Remember to change your air filter every month (or every two months) to prevent dust buildup, which can lead to even bigger problems.

Source: www.energy.gov



ciello

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Loren Howard

Electric Rates Part 1- Customer Charge

Over the past year and a half, the Newsboy has included several articles and information on how REC develops electric rates. As I have written before, no one likes “price uncertainty” for anything we buy, and electricity is no exception. The change in the design of REC’s rates for residential members certainly caught many members off guard and resulted in a formal complaint and a revision to the rate on an interim basis. In a continuing effort to provide a better understanding of electric rates and how they are developed, this article focuses on the first of the three components of electric rates – the Customer Charge.

The three components of electric rates are Customer Charge, Demand Charge and Energy Charge. The Customer Charge covers the costs primarily related to managing billing which includes preparing and mailing electric bills to members, processing payments, metering of usage, usage data collection and customer service.

The billing process starts with collecting the meter data for each member for the billing period, which for REC is typically a calendar month. For several years, REC has had in place an advanced meter infrastructure (AMI) system which collects usage information, demand and energy, every 15 minutes. This data is transmitted to a data management system about every six hours. This AMI has provided many benefits including reducing the cost of metering. Also, members have access to all the information collected by the AMI meters which helps members analyze their electric usage. This

system has eliminated estimated bills and reduced the cost of meter reading since there are no longer meter readers.

Once the usage information is collected, the data is reviewed for accuracy and summarized for billing. This summarized usage information is sent to the billing system and monthly bills are prepared and sent to members. There are many options for members to pay bills including direct debit of a bank account, payment by credit card and the traditional write a check and mail it.

REC has five customer service representatives whose primary functions include setting up new service accounts, transferring or disconnecting services and helping members with billing issues such as a high bill or inability to pay a bill. In addition, REC has an after-hours answering service to assist members with outages and disconnections.

All the costs of the above services are collected and included in the triennial cost of service study conducted by REC. The cost of service study, conducted by an independent consultant, uses industry standard methods to allocate the cost of providing service to the designated rate classes. This cost of service study is the work that prepares and recommends the three components of REC’s electric rates including the customer charge.

Next month, the Newsboy will discuss the Demand Charge which is new to residential members, but has been a part of most other REC electric rates for many years.

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Concern for community

Adams Street lights back on

On a chilly morning in April, the OptiMystics Citizens Action Network met up with SLV REC servicemen Ruben Heredia and Charlie Booth to install new high-efficiency dusk to dawn LED lighting on Adams Street in Monte Vista.

The new lights will automatically turn on at dusk and off at dawn, with no need for the businesses to set timers or manage the lights. Businesses were not charged for installation or purchase of the new bulbs and will be spending much less per year for their operation. The OptiMystics estimate each bulb will cost less than \$4/year, and the new LED lights should last for numerous years before needing replacement.

Getting the lights back on was the first step in the group's downtown revitalization plan. They hope to continue onto the next phase with awning repairs/replacements.

The group was super thankful to REC for sending



Photos courtesy of Adam Lock/OptiMystics

OptiMystic founders Adam Lock (left) and Ken Hamko (right) stand with Ruben Heredia (in the bucket truck).

the guys out in their bucket trucks to help with this small but impactful task. For more information on the OptiMystics projects, see optimystics.org.



Charlie Booth



New lights displayed after dark

ANNUAL MEETING • TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 2021

7 A.M.-6 P.M.

**OPEN HOUSE ANNUAL
MEMBERSHIP MEETING,
SLV REC OFFICE, MONTE VISTA**

*Light refreshments, prize drawings**

*(*must attend membership meeting to be eligible)*

7 P.M.

**START OF VIRTUAL
BUSINESS MEETING**

Business meeting will be conducted online.

*To register to view the business meeting,
go to slvrec.com or call 719-852-3538.*

ALL MEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE IN THIS ELECTION: ONE MEMBERSHIP = ONE VOTE

Candidate bios are available online at www.slvrec.com/annual-meeting



Recipe of the month

INGREDIENTS

1 c. butter, cubed
 1-1/2 c. self-rising flour
 2-1/4 c. sugar, divided
 3/4 c. 2% milk
 1 t. vanilla extract
 1/3 c. baking cocoa
 4 c. fresh strawberries, quartered
 2 c. boiling water
 Whipped cream and additional strawberries

CHOCOLATE COVERED STRAWBERRY COBBLER

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Place butter in a 13x9-in. baking pan; heat pan in oven 3-5 minutes or until butter is melted. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine flour, 1-1/4 cups sugar, milk and vanilla until well blended. In a small bowl, mix cocoa and remaining sugar.

2. Remove baking pan from oven; add batter. Sprinkle with strawberries and cocoa mixture; pour boiling water evenly over top (do not stir). Bake 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into cake portion comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes. Serve warm with whipped cream and additional strawberries.

Recipe by www.tasteofhome.com

Historical happenings



Far left: The whole family would gather around the radio to listen to various programs. At left: A multi-use one-horse motor; below: having lights at night changed the lives of many who had previously read by kerosene lamplight.



June 25, 1938: The big day has arrived!

At last the big day had arrived; on June 25, 1938, the lines in the first section "A" were energized. Imagine the excitement at having electric lights for the first time, having water pumps bring water into the house from the well and the unique new electrical appliances! For the farmer, a one-horse motor was the best hired hand he had ever had; it pumped water, sawed wood and lifted hay to the loft. Home life changed too; it was a toss-up whether electric irons or radios were the most popular item. (*San Luis Valley Historian, Volume XXVI #3, 1994*)



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June 2021



Photo by Blain Decker

POWERING OUR COMMUNITY

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SCHEDULED MEETINGS
Annual Meeting: Tuesday, June 8 (*see page 4 for details*)
Board Meeting: Tuesday, June 29, 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.



Photo by Tyler Cerny

