

FLASHES

Committed to safely and economically provide reliable energy and other services which bring value to its membership.

\$1.5M Instant Owner Rebate Paid To All 2023 Members

For just the fifth time in Co-op history, the Fall River Electric board has authorized an Instant Owner Rebate to be issued to owner-members of the Cooperative that received power in 2023. This year's rebate totals \$1.5 million and marks the fourth consecutive year members have received a rebate!

A number of factors made this rebate possible, including growth of new electric services that totaled 720 new connections, increased kilowatt hour revenue due to a colder winter in 2022 and 2023, and the strong financial condition of the Co-op with a current equity ratio in excess of 48 percent.

Most significantly, the rebate is due to the exceptional financial performance of Fall River's owned subsidiary, Fall River Propane, which increased gallons sold by 11 percent above the previous year. This was in addition to a 24 per-



cent increase in gallons sold from 2021. Fall River Propane also increased customers by even greater numbers than electric had new connections.

If you use propane at your home or business, you should be buying from the company you own!

Rebate credits, which are calculated based on the amount of power you used in 2023, will be applied to owner-member statements in February, so check your statement for your rebate.

Members To Elect Board Candidates In 2024

One of the seven guiding principles of Fall River Electric Cooperative is democratic member control, wherein our Co-op is controlled by its owner-members who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives of Fall River's Board of Directors are accountable to the membership and this year, three of those nine seats are set for election. The seats up for election this year are District 1, the Rexburg/Rigby areas represented by Husk Crowther; District 5, West Driggs/Tetonia where Brent Robson currently serves; and District 6, the Ashton area represented by Dede Draper.

The nominating committee will select candidates for each of these three districts and a notice as to the eligible candidates for each district will be posted at the Ashton Idaho office of Fall River Electric on April 19. Members interested in being on the ballot can file a Nomination by Petition by the deadline of April 12, 2024.

If you are interested in being considered as a

board candidate, please contact Bryan Case by Friday, April 5, 2024, at bryan.case@fallriverelectric.com or call 800.632.5726 and ask to speak with him. Qualifications and expectations for board members can be found on page seven of our bylaws, which are located on our website at www.fallriverelectric.com/bylaws.

Information regarding the candidates up for election this year will be included in the "Notice of Annual Meeting" that will be mailed to all active members in early May. This mailing will include a ballot to allow members to vote by mail or online. Election results will be announced at the conclusion of our annual business meeting in Driggs on June 8.



Husk Crowther



Brent Robson



Dede Draper



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS OPEN UNTIL MARCH 22

Fall River Electric will be accepting applications for more than \$75,000 in available scholarships to current high school students who are planning to further their education next fall. Deadline to apply is Friday, March 22, 2024, and applications can be found at www.fallriverelectric.com/scholarships.

Students must have parents or guardians who are owner-members of Fall River Electric Cooperative and scholarships are funded by unclaimed Patronage Capital.



Where Service Matters



Rexburg Food Pantry; back row, left to right: Fall River linemen, Derek Hanks and Trevor Ostberg; EICAP CEO, John Radford; Fall River foreman, Jeremy Banta; and Fall River Member Services Manager, Clint Washburn. Front row, left to right: Morgan Orr, Upper Valley EICAP Coordinator, and Brenda Jackson, EICAP Director.



Teton Valley Food Pantry; back row, left to right: Sheree Petrovic (volunteer), Marianne Sturken (pantry assistant), Tina Oathes (volunteer), and Fall River Linemen Jace Arnold, Aaron Kearsley, Taggart Heward, and Phil Byman. Front row, left to right: Clint Washburn (Member Services Manager), Siena Hester (Operations Manager), and Fall River lineman Kade Larson

Food Drives Result In Near Record Donations

During the holiday season, Fall River Electric's staff conducted four food drives at area grocery stores in support of our local food banks and pantries. It was the Co-op's fifth year of supporting families in need.

New this year was a competition between several local high school senior classes. Each class was invited to hold their own food drive prior to the Christmas holiday break. The class collecting the largest number of pounds per senior class member was awarded a \$1,000 prize, along with a traveling trophy.

North Fremont High School's senior class collected 26.98 pounds per 43 senior students to earn the top prize. North Fremont was followed by West Yellowstone with

10.71 pounds per 21 students, followed by South Fremont with 9.80 pounds per 98 students, and Teton with 2.26 pounds per 137 students.

A total of just over 5,000 pounds of food was collected for the regional food banks, including Teton Valley Food Pantry in Driggs, North Fremont Food Pantry in Ashton, West Yellowstone Food Bank, and to the food pantry in Rexburg operated by Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership. This was nearly double what was collected last year!

In addition to the non-perishable food donated, the food pantries received \$2,327 in cash donations from individuals and by Fall River Electric.

Fall River Electric Earns Idaho Private 100 Spot Again

For the fourth year in a row, Fall River Electric Cooperative has been named as part of the Top 100 privately-owned companies headquartered in Idaho.

The recent recognition came about as part of Nerus Strategies' annual survey of top performing privately held Idaho-based companies, as compiled by the international accounting firm KPMG.

Fall River Electric was ranked #78, up five spots from last year. It is the only electric utility listed in the Top 100.

"Our continued focus on exceptional customer service to our owner-members is a key contributing factor to our growth," says Bryan Case, Fall River Electric's CEO/General Manager. "Our Cooperative has seen remarkable growth in our equity due in part to our board's focus and our staff's excellent work in controlling costs."

Fall River Electric was one of only twelve privately-owned companies based in east Idaho that made the list this year.



Member Teens Invited To Free Youth Rally

Would you like your high school student to have an opportunity to build leadership and team building skills, gain knowledge about the electric industry, and learn about cooperatives and industry related careers, while meeting new friends from across the Northwest—at no cost to you?

Encourage them to apply to attend Fall River Electric's summer Youth Rally Program! Students that qualify must be sophomores or juniors in high school at the beginning of the spring 2024 season, have parents or guardians who are Fall River Electric owner-members (customers), and apply with a short essay. The deadline to apply is April 19, 2024, for students attending the July 8-13, 2024, rally to be held in Treasure Valley (Boise area). Applications are available at www.fallriverelectric.com/youth-rally. Each student selected will receive a \$500 scholarship plus the chance to earn more scholarships during the rally in July.





RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Where Service Matters.

800-632-5726
208-652-7431

ASHTON

1150 North 3400 East
Ashton, ID 83420

DRIGGS

1605 N Highway 33
Driggs, ID 83422

WEST YELLOWSTONE

436 Madison Ave
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

All Our Offices Are Open
Monday - Friday
8:00am - 4:30pm

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Husk Crowther
District 1
Rexburg/Rigby
Vice President



Travis Markegard
District 2
West Victor



Georg Behrens
District 3
East Victor
Board President



Anna Lindstedt
District 4
East Driggs



Brent Robson
District 5
West Driggs/Tetonia



Dede Draper
District 6
Ashton



Jodi Stiehl
District 7
South Island Park
Secretary/Treasurer



Jeff Keay
District 8
North Island Park



Doug Schmier
District 9
West Yellowstone



Bryan Case
Fall River Electric
CEO/General
Manager

Parties File Objections To Dam Removal Agreement

Article courtesy of NewsData



The states of Idaho and Montana, along with the Public Power Council (PPC) and the Inland Ports & Navigation Group, have each filed objections to the proposed agreement to temporarily settle litigation over the Columbia River Systems Operations (CRSO) that is intended to be a precursor to lower Snake River dam removal.

The parties claim the proposed deal would harm their interests and have asked the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon to deny the stay to litigation. The State of Idaho argues that a stay would “effectively lock Idaho out of court” in relation to its counterclaim, contending any decision to breach the four lower Snake River dams (LSRD) must be authorized by Congress.

The State of Montana agrees with Idaho, further stating they were excluded from

the settlement negotiations and that the pending agreement will impact electric cooperatives in their state.

PPC contends the U.S. government’s commitments in the pending agreement go beyond BPA’s lawful authority under the Northwest Power Act.

Finally, the Inland Ports argue that the stay’s ten-year plan of operations “poses serious threats to safe navigation” through the eight locks on the river system.

Plaintiffs, defendants, and the Six Sovereigns that filed for a stay to the case through 2028 say the parties unhappy with a proposed short-term settlement failed to show how they would be harmed if litigation is paused for up to ten years.

Look to future editions of the *FLASHES* newsletter for updates on the U.S. District Court’s decision.

Board Member Jeff Keay Receives MECA Award

Jeff Keay, a board member at Fall River Rural Electric Cooperative, was the recipient of the Montana Electric Cooperatives’ Association Hard Ridin’ Award.

In September 2021, Jeff was diagnosed with Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma, a rare salivary gland cancer, after his 41-year-old son was diagnosed with Stage 4 colon cancer and subsequently encouraged Jeff and his siblings to be screened for cancer.

Jeff had noticed a slight change in his voice and was also experiencing some trouble swallowing. Doctors discovered the tumor in August 2021. Jeff endured three surgeries to remove the tumor. Chemotherapy did not work, and he decided to forgo radiation, but has now been cancer free for over a year and a half.

After receiving his cancer diagnosis, Jeff was determined to be positive and to take positive actions. Everyday Jeff expresses gratitude for something in his life, and in the life of his family, and whenever he



comes in contact with other people, he seeks a way to say something nice, encouraging, or uplifting to them.

Jeff also says he is actively working to shorten his “bucket list.” He’s taken a backpacking trip with two of his adult sons, and he and his wife Judy took a trip back to his home states of Wisconsin and Michigan to visit friends and take in last fall’s colors. You can find his story on his personal Facebook page. Jeff Keay is a great example of perseverance and determination, a hallmark of MECA’s Hard Ridin’ Award.

NEED HELP PAYING YOUR WINTER ENERGY BILL?

If you are struggling to pay higher winter energy bills, help is available. The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance program (LIHEAP) is available to qualifying Fall River Electric members.

To inquire, call the office in the state you reside in:

IDAHO 208.522.5391 (deadline to apply is March 29, 2024)

MONTANA 406.587.4486

WYOMING 800.246.4221 (deadline to apply is February 29, 2024)



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833.682.3671

We Care For The Communities & Areas We Serve

Our Island Park Fall River linemen noticed a damaged osprey platform near the Buffalo summer home area of Island Park and sought permission from the U.S. Forest Service to make repairs, which they completed before the snow flew. The platform is now ready for spring habitation!



Fall River's FLASHES newsletter is printed on recycled paper and is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. Products certified by FSC directly support responsible forest management.

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