

# WATT'S UP

Save Your Energy  
**LPEA**  
La Plata Electric Association, Inc.  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

AT LA PLATA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION | Celebrating 75 years in 2014

JUNE 2013

## Opportunity is knocking

BY LINDA LOOMAN | HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR | LLOOMAN@LPEA.COOP

If you've scanned the classified advertisements recently, likely you've noticed quite a few listings under the LPEA logo. No, LPEA is not suddenly expanding its workforce, and no, we haven't had a rash of firings. (The latter hadn't occurred to us until we got a Twitter notice asking that very question!)

In truth, for the right people, LPEA is a GREAT place to work. Few employees opt to leave here for other positions. Rather, they RETIRE from here after many years, and that's why all those ads are popping up.

Through workforce planning, we've determined that in the next five years, some 30 employees will be eligible for retirement, many of whom have been here for 30-plus, even 40 years. When you have only 101 full-time employees, that's a big transition in a short period of time and we've got to be prepared.

At LPEA we do try to promote from within, so with recent and pending retirements in our Operations area – the department that probably has our most seasoned veterans – some Journeymen Linemen may be moving into supervisory roles, leaving us with a need for new linemen to keep those lights on. By the time this is published we hope to have hired two new Journeyman Linemen – one each for Archuleta and La Plata counties.

To further prepare Operations for the future, we will “grow” our own linemen, as it were, and will be taking on three Apprentice Linemen. It's a four-year program that allows the apprentice to be on-the-job, earning a living as he or she is trained for a life-long career.

In other departments, we have thus far this year hired a new Customer Service Representative (as you will read on page 3), plus a new Billing Clerk has come on board. We had hundreds of applications to review, so we were able to find the right “fit” for the cooperative.

Many of the new faces added to our team in the upcoming years will be from our community, while some skilled tradesman, such as Journeyman Linemen, may need to be recruited from other areas. LPEA, like other electric cooperatives around the country, offer very good jobs. We strive to keep our compensation and benefit packages competitive in the industry and are excited to have these career opportunities available.

Still, as our retiring employees start pulling out their fishing rods and packing up their RVs, we'll try and download as much of their knowledge and experience as we can. It's both a challenge and an opportunity and we're looking forward to the future – coming together to do the best we can for you, our members, to supply safe, reliable electric power.

If you're interested in learning about up-coming job opportunities at LPEA, visit our web site, [www.lpea.coop](http://www.lpea.coop), and sign up for email alerts. I'll keep you posted. ☀



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**Next Board Meeting:**  
9 a.m. | Wednesday, June 19, 2013  
LPEA Headquarters, Durango

**Mission Statement:**  
La Plata Electric Association provides its members safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost while being environmentally responsible.

**Board of Directors:**  
Davin Montoya, President - District 2  
Heather Erb, Vice President - District 4  
Ken Fox, Secretary - District 1  
Joe Wheeling, Treasurer - District 4  
Britt Bassett - District 3  
Jeff Berman - District 3  
Tom Compton - District 2

Bob Formwalt - District 1  
Mark Garcia - District 1  
Jerry McCaw - District 2  
Michael Rendon - District 3  
Jack D. Turner - District 4

**Chief Executive Officer:**  
Greg W. Munro

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# Your Annual Meeting

Some 500 local community members, ranging from toddlers to octogenarians convened at the Sky Ute Events Center on Saturday, May 11, 2013 for the 74th Annual Meeting of La Plata Electric Association. The count for registered voters in attendance was 238, which exceeded the number needed for a quorum.

Members in attendance received a continental breakfast, sumptuous lunch, giveaways and door prizes, plus heard news of the cooperative from LPEA Board President Jerry McCaw, CEO Greg Munro and Treasurer Joe Wheeling. Among other legal issues, attorney Barry Spear discussed the status of LPEA's PUC complaint against Tri-State Generation and Transmission for its rate structure. Kent Singer, executive director of the Colorado Rural Electric Association explained CREA's role in supporting rural electric cooperatives like LPEA. Questions were taken from the assembly and director election results announced (see below).

A celebration of LPEA's 75th anniversary will be part of the Annual Meeting in spring 2014. Stay tuned for details. ⚙️



Some 500 people attended the 74th Annual Meeting of La Plata Electric Association held at the Sky Ute Events Center.



Jack Turner and Michael Rendon



Sandie Marlatt and Kelly Alsum



Mark Schwantes and Enid Brodsky



Jim Haug with Mark Garcia

## DIRECTOR ELECTION RESULTS

LPEA's Board of Directors has three new faces as Mark Garcia and Jack D. Turner unseated District 1 incumbent Lindon (Lin) Stewart and District 4 incumbent Herb Brodsky, respectively, in the recent elections. Michael Rendon won in District 3 over Alan Yoder, to fill the seat of retiring Harry Goff.

Out of LPEA's 22,827 residential and commercial members who were mailed ballots, only 5,140 cast votes – a 22.5 percent return. In contrast, approximately 26 percent returned ballots in 2012. This year in District 2, incumbent director Tom Compton was the only nominee, thus he retains his seat.

In District 1, Archuleta County, with approximately 7,700 members, Garcia received 792 votes and Stewart 760. In District 3, the City of Durango, new candidates Rendon and Yoder received 1,305 and 544 votes, respectively. District 3 includes approximately 7,400 voters. In District 4, which covers north and east La Plata County and includes approximately 7,700 eligible voters, Turner received 895 votes to Brodsky's 838. ⚙️

## Passing the baton



He's going to take time to "smell the roses," and she's filling some much beloved shoes. Customer Service Representative [CSR] John Mackley retired in May after eight years with LPEA. Amy Paylor has been selected to join the CSR team and fill Mackley's position.

Known in many ways as the "voice" of LPEA as he broadcast the weekly "Enlightening Energy Updates" on the Four Corners Broadcasting stations, Mackley is a radio veteran, having worked in all aspects of broadcasting for some 25 years with KIUP/KRSJ. He and wife Pam are looking forward to spending time with their daughters and grandchildren.

Paylor has been known in Durango as "the bookstore lady" from her 26 years with Waldenbooks. A Colorado native, she graduated from Fort Lewis College, with a bachelor's in History and English. She also earned her teaching credential, but followed a career with Waldenbooks.

"We're delighted to have Amy as part of the team," says Betsy Lovelace, customer service manager. "Her experience serving customers, as well as her knowledge of cooperatives, has prepared her perfectly for this position with LPEA, but we will certainly miss John. We wish him all the best in this new chapter in his life." ☀

## Time to tee-off!

LPEA will host its annual Golf Tournament at the Pagosa Springs Golf Course, Saturday, June 22. Space is limited and registration deadline is June 19.

Organized by LPEA's line personnel, members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers [Local IBEW 111 26A] based in Pagosa Springs, the LPEA Golf Tournament is open to ALL community members and will benefit the Darin Rome Memorial Scholarship for local music students. Rome, an LPEA Journeyman Lineman, lost his life in a tragic accident in 2011.

"The LPEA Golf Tournament is one of those events that puts the 'fun' in 'fundraiser,'" says Mike Alley, district supervisor. "Golfers can enjoy a day on the links, plus lunch, and are eligible for numerous prizes – on top of what we will raise for the scholarship fund. Over the years we've raise more than \$100,000 for non-profits in Archuleta County. It's a really great thing!"

As a special addition, following the tournament a dance and silent auction, including live music with Tim Sullivan and special guests, plus a cash bar, will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Ross Aragon Community Center. Rome, a drummer, often performed with Sullivan.

"Even if you aren't a golfer, plan to attend the party," says Laura Rome, LPEA executive assistant who has stepped up to organize the events in the absence of her late husband.

The tournament is a four-person scramble, with four flights beginning with a 9 a.m. shotgun start, rain or shine. Entry fee is \$65 per person, which includes lunch, golf cart, prizes and more. The field will be limited to 36 teams. Hole sponsorships are available for \$150, \$500 and \$1,000. Tickets for the dance, available at locations throughout Pagosa Springs or at the door, are \$15/person, \$25/couple. Please note, cash or check only, no credit cards.

To register, or for further information regarding the Tournament and the post-tourney dance, contact Mike Alley, 970.749.0260, malley@lpea.coop, or Laura Rome, 970.382.3508, lrome@lpea.coop. ☀

## MONTOYAS HONORED BY LPC HISTORICAL SOCIETY



For their efforts as advocates for La Plata County's agricultural and ranching community, their goals to promote and protect sustainable water and ranching practices and their desire to preserve distinctive features of La Plata County, Theresa and Davin Montoya (and family) received the 2013 Community Heritage Award on May 24 at a special fundraiser organized by the La Plata County Historical Society and held at the Bar D Chuckwagon. Davin Montoya has been a member of the LPEA Board of Directors since 1990.

The Community Heritage Awards event annually raises funds for the La Plata County Historical Society and Animas Museum. For additional information, visit [www.animasmuseum.org](http://www.animasmuseum.org). ☀

## LPEA names 2013 scholarship recipients

Recipients of the 2013-2014 La Plata Electric, John Voelker Memorial, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Tri-State Generation and Transmission scholarships have been announced.



LPEA's scholarship recipients are (clockwise from top left), Ruby Roll, Isaiah Thompson, Lukas Morgan, Aaron Cash, John Skeath, Austin Scalf, and Seumus McAliney



The 29th Annual LPEA College Scholarships, two four-year scholarships [up to \$7000 annually or \$28,000 for tuition, books and fees] have been awarded to Ruby Roll, a senior at Durango High School, and Isaiah Thompson, a senior at Pagosa Springs High School. Roll plans to major in physics at Lewis & Clark College, Oregon. Thompson is heading to the University of Denver to study computer science.

Seumus McAliney and Lukas Morgan, seniors at Durango High School, have been awarded LPEA's 13th Annual John Voelker Memorial Scholarships, \$10,000 for two years, for vocational, technical school or junior college. McAliney will study mechanical engineering at Yavapai College in Arizona, while Morgan will attend Universal Technical Institute in Arizona to pursue his passion for automotive technical training. LPEA's John Voelker Memorial Scholarship remembers former LPEA board member John Voelker, who was instrumental in creating the vocational scholarship. Voelker perished in the Egyptian Air plane crash in October of 1999.

Aaron Cash, a senior at Durango High School, received the \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship. With plans to attend Colorado State University at Fort Collins, Cash will pursue a degree in mechanical engineering.

Austin Scalf and John Skeath, seniors at Durango High School, each received \$500 scholarships from Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association. Scalf intends to study engineering, and colleges under consideration are CSU-Fort Collins, Stanford University and Duke University. Skeath will focus on electrical engineering and attend the Colorado School of Mines.

"We endeavor to spread our college scholarships and awards throughout our service territory, but the majority of applicants were from Durango this year," said Jeannie Bennett, coordinator of LPEA's scholarship process. "All of our scholarship recipients are great students with exciting potential, but we hope next year that more students from Bayfield, Ignacio and Pagosa will apply. At LPEA we are proud to be able to offer these educational opportunities."

Funds for the LPEA and LPEA/John Voelker Memorial Scholarships come from LPEA's unclaimed Capital Credits. Each year, LPEA endeavors to find "missing" members who are due a share of retired Capital Credits. Those funds unable to be returned to members are then put back into the community - in this case, into college scholarships.

For further information or for questions regarding future scholarship opportunities, contact Jeannie Bennett at 970.382.3505, or [jbennett@lpea.coop](mailto:jbennett@lpea.coop). ⚙️

### LIVE WIRES

#### E-cycling event

The City of Durango hosts its semi-annual electronics recycling event Friday and Saturday, June 14 and 15, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the La Plata County Fairgrounds. Residents, businesses, government agencies and schools are encouraged to recycle their electronic products. Cathode ray tubes (CRTs) and circuit boards found in televisions and computers contain significant amounts of lead, chromium and other toxic materials. Recycling keeps these hazardous materials out of area landfills. Call 970.375.5004 for further information.

#### Alternative Energy Plan underway

After months of research, study and work, the LPEA board and staff are expected to finalize a long-term Alternative Energy Plan during the June Board of Directors meeting that incorporates more local energy production into the cooperative's mix. Currently, LPEA has 2MW of local, net-metered renewable energy generation. Board meetings are open to the public. Be certain to check the meeting agenda at [www.lpea.coop](http://www.lpea.coop) for final agenda items. ⚙️