

HIGHLINE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

The Beacon

JUNE 2020



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Our mission is to provide our members with reliable, high-quality electricity and other needed services, which will improve their economic and social well-being and provide significant long-range benefits for our communities, our state and our nation.



HIGHLINE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER



Touchstone Energy®

COVID-19

BY DENNIS HERMAN GENERAL MANAGER

“A problem is a chance for you to do your best” — Duke Ellington

There is no doubt that the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has had an almost unfathomable impact on our communities, our states, our country and our world. I’m sure that in some ways our lives will be forever changed. It is late April as I’m writing this, and the state of Colorado is transitioning from “stay at home” to “safer at home.” I can’t even begin to predict where we will be when this article gets to you early in June, but the impacts to date have been unprecedented.

The impact on Highline Electric Association has been profound. We had to cancel our annual meeting due to limitations on large gatherings. This marks the first time in Highline’s 82-year history when an annual meeting wasn’t held. Statewide and national meetings and training have been canceled for the foreseeable future.

The changes have also affected our day-to-day operations. Our headquarters and both outposts are closed to everyone but employees and have been for over a month now. Our crews are staged to start and end their days at different times. Office personnel have been divided into two groups that alternate weeks between working in the office and working from home. Our employees have been provided with face masks to use when working near another person. All these changes have been made with the goal of minimizing exposure to others and limiting the number of employees who could be infected at one time.

We have done our best to minimize the impact on our members caused by actions we have taken to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and the orders put in place by the states of Colorado and Nebraska.



DENNIS HERMAN

Officer reports that would have been presented or available at the annual meeting are available online; links can be found at www.hea.coop. Drawings from the entire membership were held for the prizes we received from our vendors to give away at the annual meeting. The list of members who won prizes in the drawings are shown at the conclusion of the 2020 Annual Meeting Update video; the link to that presentation is on our website homepage. The list of the 2020 scholarship winners is also available on our website: Click on Scholarships under the Youth menu. If you do not have internet access or prefer a hard copy, you can call the office in Holyoke and we will provide you with any or all of the resources mentioned above. We will also have oven mitts and flashlights available to all of our members who stop by any of our offices once they are again open to the public.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has presented us all with a series of challenges, I encourage you to face the problem head on and do your best. Use this as an opportunity to get in touch with friends and family you may have taken for granted. Utilize increased time together to strengthen family bonds. I’m confident we will get through this together and that we will be stronger from the experience.

Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following employees who observe an employment anniversary in June:

- Rance Ferguson..... 27 years
- Joni Kinney..... 8 years
- Alex Astley..... 6 years



Pesticide Safety

Please protect our employees

Our employees face serious health risks when they unknowingly enter a field that was sprayed or chemigated with any chemical. Just as you would not subject your family or employees to risk, we do not want to subject our employees to risk.

Please consider the following:

- If you used any chemicals on a field, please notify Highline. You may call the office or you can place a flag at the entrance to the field. Please note the day when it is safe to enter the field and what chemical was used.
- Notification signs or flags are available free of charge at any Highline office.
- If calling during in an outage, please notify Highline if the field was sprayed.
- The initial and long-term effects of absorbing chemicals in the body are extremely hazardous to one's health. Please don't subject our employees to these dangers.

Youth Tour and Camp this Summer

This year, two students were selected to represent HEA at the 2020 Washington D. C. Youth Tour in June. Nathan Brekel and Cole Sigmon, both of Fleming High School, were selected to attend. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, this year's Washington D.C. Youth Tour has been canceled. Highline has elected to send Nathan and Cole on the 2021 Washington D.C. Youth Tour along with two more students that will be chosen this fall. They will join more than 1,900 other students from around the country for a week to learn about electric cooperatives and legislative processes and have the opportunity to explore our nation's capital and meet U.S. senators and representatives.



Nathan Brekel



Cole Sigmon

Check our website and Facebook page in the fall for the 2021 application.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP: Watch for information in the July issue of Colorado Country Life.



June 2020 Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Home cooling makes up a large portion of your energy bills. Try to keep the difference between the temperature of your thermostat setting and the outside temperature to a minimum. The smaller the difference, the more energy you will save.



County Fair Dates

- Perkins:** July 20-25
- Phillips:** July 21-26
- Dundy:** July 22-25
- Washington:** July 27-August 1
- Sedgwick:** July 29-August 1
- Logan:** July 30-August 9
- Yuma:** August 1-5
- Deuel:** August 6-8
- Chase:** August 9-16

Events subject to change due to COVID-19. Please check with these counties for updated information.

Congratulations to This Year's Scholarship Recipients

Earlier this year, dependents of Highline Electric Association consumer-members competed for scholarships provided by HEA in conjunction with power suppliers Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association and Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

Over 50 applications from 14 different school districts were considered for two renewable four-year scholarships at \$1,000 per year and eight one-year \$1,000 scholarships. In addition, one \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Basin Electric and two one-year \$500 scholarships sponsored jointly by Tri-State and HEA were awarded.

A scholarship committee evaluated applications to determine awards — an

extremely difficult task considering the quality of applications submitted.

Jaelyn Adler, Wray High School, and **Kyerie Lechman**, Revere High School, received the renewable four-year scholarships at \$1,000 per year.

Winners of a one-year \$1,000 scholarship were **Madison Brown** of Chase County High School; **Lauren Bergner**, **Slaten Burris** and **Tristen Roll**, of Holyoke High School; **Tanner Hutt** and **Brooke Mertens**, both of Merino High School; and **Ananisia Gallegos** and **Rachel Rosas**, both of Sterling High School.

Two one-year \$500 scholarships sponsored jointly by Tri-State and HEA were awarded to **Jozie Schilke**, Chase County High School; and **Camryn Trump**, Sterling High School.

The committee awarded the \$1,000 consumer scholarship sponsored by Basin Electric to **Savannah Burris**, Holyoke High School.

HEA is a nonprofit, rural electric cooperative that provides electric service to roughly 4,000 consumer-members in seven counties in northeastern Colorado and four counties in southwestern Nebraska.

Highline Electric Association may award scholarships each year to assist students in attaining higher education. Application information, when available, is posted on Highline's website, hea.coop, as well as on the co-op's Facebook page, and made available to area high schools within the service territory each year during the fall.

Co-op Connections Spotlight

>> BarkWell Animal Care Center



Keeping pets on paths to wellness

BarkWell Animal Care Center is all about compassionate, high-quality pet care.

Pure and simple.

Here you will find a clean, welcoming environment and people who love your pets as much as you do.

520 S. Interocean Ave., Holyoke, CO 80734 | 970-854-2888 | barkwellvet.com

Co-op Connections discount offered: When you schedule a pet dental cleaning, we will add on a fluoride treatment for free.

BarkWell was established in 2018 and has been the lifelong dream of owner-veterinarian Dr. Nicole Lenz. At BarkWell, she and her team strive to provide a wide array of veterinary and pet-related services to the surrounding communities.

Would you like your business featured in HEA's magazine? Contact info@hea.coop. Featured businesses will also appear on HEA's website, Facebook and connections.coop. Features are free of charge. Featured businesses must participate in the Highline Co-op Connections program. We look forward to hearing from you.



Farm and Ranch Safety Practices

We don't have to remind those who work the land and raise livestock that they have a potentially dangerous occupation. However, due to the nature of the job and because of long days of tiring work, some safety precautions are worthy of repeating. Here are some reminders about electrical dangers on the farm or ranch.

IF YOU MAKE CONTACT WITH A POWER LINE, DON'T GET OUT

If you make contact with a power line, guy wire, power pole, electrical box or any other electrical equipment, do not get out of your cab or truck. Stay put and call 911 to dispatch our utility crew to de-energize the power.

If you must get out due to smoke or fire, make a solid jump out without touching any part of the tractor or vehicle, and hop away as far as you can, keeping both feet together as you hop. Or, after you make a clean exit, shuffle or waddle away while keeping your feet together and on the ground.

Once you are out, never try to re-enter the cab or truck until it is cleared by the utility crew.

Remember: If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line or other

utility equipment, do not get out of the cab. Stray power could energize your equipment and the ground. Call 911 and wait for us to arrive and cut the power so that you can safely exit your tractor or vehicle.

DETERMINE PROPER CLEARANCE

Contact us to measure power line heights; do not do this yourself. Once you know the heights, you can determine safe clearances of your equipment. Always maintain at least 10 feet between the power line and the tallest height of the equipment that will be transported. Keep in mind that, due to wear, age and even weather conditions, power lines can change height. Please contact us with any concerns. It's good to know power line clearance, but always have a spotter.

CALL US BEFORE MOVING OR ADDING A GRAIN BIN

The National Electrical Safety Code addresses grain bins and their proximity to power lines with extremely specific requirements. The requirements are in place to help keep farmers safe — to decrease the chances of farming equipment and machinery coming in contact with power lines. If you are planning on building a new grain bin or remodeling around an area

that already has one, contact us at Highline Electric at 970-854-2236. We can help with specific code requirements. The taller a grain bin, the farther it must be placed from a power line.

ALWAYS DIG SAFELY

Whether you are installing new fence posts or using large tillage tools, call 811 before you dig to have underground utilities marked. Even if you think you know where buried gas, power and other lines are, don't rely on your memory. Get all utilities marked so you know for sure. (Note: Utility locators dispatched by 811 do not mark private lines.)

USE STANDBY GENERATORS WITH CARE

If you have a standby generator to provide essential power during an outage, be sure to correctly use the transfer switch. Once you properly engage the switch, it stops your farm's generated power from entering utility lines (backfeeding), which can electrocute lineworkers who are working to restore power.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.