

SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



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Happy Thanksgiving from Southeast Electric Cooperative. Our office will be closed on November 23, 2017 so that our employees can celebrate with their families.



Manager's Notes - By Jack Hamblin

Yes! I can drive a motorhome!

We just returned from attending the annual meeting of the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association (MECA) in Great Falls. This event brings cooperative directors and employees from all parts of the state together once each year — the same as with each individual co-op. As with our local annual meetings, there's always lots of good food and good company. And of course some necessary co-op business. It's a great, informational gathering with good co-op people. Invariably, I get a comment or two about Miss America and some of the articles I've written in the *Rural Montana* magazine.

Miss America and I have developed a tradition of coming to this meeting in our travel trailer; a kind of "end-of-the-season" trip. Shortly after returning home, the camper is winterized and put away for several months. We are not die-hard campers, but we do enjoy some RV'ing together.

So, I bought a motorhome. I bought it for Miss America, so she could visit her children and grandchildren more often without kicking them out of their beds every time we came to visit. I'd better admit I wanted those things also. Although we have thoroughly enjoyed our travel trailer, I was tired of the hooking up and unhooking, the setting up and taking down, the nursing over 50 feet of machinery down the highway. I wanted something more convenient and easier. So, I bought a motorhome.

On its maiden voyage we stayed in an RV park where we spent a couple nights. It is a labyrinth of narrow streets parallel to each other running in a diagonal pattern connected to a circu-

lar drive. The idea being that all RVs would pull in and out of their individual spaces and exit the campground pointing the same way. Thus, the traffic would always flow in a single direction, making ingress and egress smooth and simple. For those few campers not bright enough to figure this pattern out on their own, the end of each narrow, parallel street was painted with a large, curved arrow indicating which direction you should turn. I guess I wasn't paying much attention to the arrow and turned the wrong way. Once I did that, it was nearly impossible to correct. My next turn also took me the wrong direction down another narrow street. I soon found myself in a horrible maze of narrow passages, only able to make another wrong turn at the end of each street.

Miss America was dutifully trying to follow me in her car, but seemed reluctant to disobey the arrows as I had. We passed each other a couple times and I could see her pointing and gesturing that I was going the wrong way. I just smiled and shrugged. After the second time we passed, I decided that turning the other way may get me back on the right orientation. As I did, the rear wheels of the motorhome cut across some newly mowed, freshly watered grass, leaving some nasty ruts and nearly taking out a small tree. She gave up following after that and sat at an intersection hiding her head in her hands. When I finally came around again, she was just sitting in her car laughing hysterically at my antics. She had rolled down her window and was saying something between laughs. I put my hand up with the palm facing her. That's the universal symbol for "Don't

try to tell me I don't know what I'm doing." She kept laughing. My thought was that if I could just get to the outer circle, I could easily make it to the end of the park. I knew I was in trouble when I passed Miss America's car the third time. Now she was outside, trying to flag me down. Her laughter had turned to frustration and embarrassment. I didn't stop, but raised my hand again, palm toward her.

My goal was the dump station at the end of the park. I finally got there, only to find Miss America already there in her car . . . still laughing at me. When I got out and discovered I was on the wrong side of the dump station, I looked over at her again. She was nearly doubled over and holding her side. She started to say something and my hand went up again. After another loop or two around the park, including a figure-eight around the playground area, I found myself third in line to use the dump station. I could swear I'd seen the guy in front of me just getting up when I started my little driving exhibition. I looked over at him and waved, but he quickly turned away so I wouldn't see the big smile on his face. I turned back to Miss America, still in some pain from all of the laughing. I was looking for a little understanding and maybe some sympathy. As I started to speak, she turned her head in a feigned attempt to hide another chuckle. I tried to say a couple words in my defense, but she simply raised her hand, palm toward yours truly.

Meet Southeast Electric Veterans

“Throughout the course of American history, courageous men and women have taken up arms to secure, defend, and maintain these core principles upon which our nation’s freedoms depend.” – George Bush

Meet Southeast Electric Cooperatives’ courageous men: Jerry Kalstrom



Jerry served for three years and 289 days in the U.S. Navy. He went to California; Guam; Adak; Alaska; Japan; the Philippines and various West Pacific Ports of Call. He was very frustrated with the hurry-up and wait of the military, and said that he was not impressed with the food and the wind in Adak. (Although he did note that they would do some evening fishing and have an occasional fish fry that was pretty tasty.) Besides all of the countries he got to visit, he enjoyed seeing the Orient. He was very honored to have served our country. Jerry has been with Southeast Electric for 35 years and is looking forward to retirement. He has always enjoyed being able to work outside. One of his favorite things about his job is the people we serve.

Mike Dalzell

Mike served in the U.S. Navy for 8 years. He served on the Aircraft Carrier USS Coral Sea in Norfolk, Virginia and the USS LaSalle in Bahrain. While on the ships, he visited France, Spain, Egypt, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, United Emirates, and Kuwait, and finished his last 3 ½ years at NAS OCEANA. The traveling was Mike’s favorite part about the Navy, but he really did not care for the food. Mike has two daughters who also wanted to serve their country by joining the Army Reserves. Caitlin is a 2nd Lieutenant and Jessica is finishing Sergeant training. Mike has been with Southeast Electric for a little more than 21 years. His favorite part about being a lineman is the consumers.



Jake Hammel

Jake served in the Army National Guard in Iraq for one year. He got to see many things, including the Golden Mosque in Samarra, Iraq, before they blew it up. He said his favorite thing about serving in the Army National Guard was getting to wear green — he looks good in green. His least favorite thing was acronyms and, of course, getting shot at. Jake has been with Southeast Electric Cooperative for seven years, and his favorite part about his job is the happy customers.



Bill Kalstrom

Bill also served in the U.S. Navy for 5 years. He served at FRCNW in Oak Harbor, Washington. He was deployed to AIMD Misawa, Japan twice for a total of one year. He was also deployed on the USS Enterprise Detachment for four months. He enjoyed the ocean, touring an ancient Japanese fort and watching aircraft launched and recovered from sea — stating “That is pretty



sweet!” He wasn’t impressed with senior enlisted personnel tried telling him how to do his job when they don’t have anything to do with his job. Bill also said he drank a few beers, chased a few girls, cussed, you know, sailor stuff! But there were no tattoos. Bill has been with Southeast Electric since October 2014. His favorite part about being a lineman is being outside and seeing every part of our system in all times of the year!

Southeast Electric would like to express our thanks to you and your families for your service. We are thankful that we have the freedoms we do because of all our servicemen and women past and present. May God bless you and keep you safe!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Albert Paul, President; Mike Hansen, Vice President; Karen Kreitel, Secretary-Treasurer; Dave Hayden, Leroy Jardee, Doug Gardner

EMPLOYEES:

Jack Hamblin, Manager
Jerry Kalstrom, Line Foreman
Mike Dalzell, Lineman
Greg Erlenbusch, Lineman
Jake Hammel, Lineman
Adam Kuntz, Lineman
Bill Kalstrom, Lineman
Sam Erfman, Lineman
Dave Johnstone, Groundman
Robin Kuntz, Office Manager
Rita Williams, Office Assistant
Vicki Fix, Member Services
Terri Buck, Custodian

Southeast Electric presents Ekalaka Ambulance with a check in the amount of \$5,992

The Ekalaka Ambulance service is staffed by 11 volunteer EMTs. Two EMTs are on-call per shift, which runs from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day of the year. The ambulance service area is approximately 3,300 square miles. It responds to calls 15 miles north of Ekalaka to the Wyoming border south of Ekalaka. The ambulance service takes patients to Baker, Miles City, Billings, Bowman, Spearfish, Sturgis and Rapid City. The average number of calls per year is 75 to 100. They consist of both medical and trauma. To keep the ambulance licensed with the state, it must submit e-reports to the Montana Emergency

Care Systems in Helena. This requires computers in each ambulance. When the ambulance needs special equipment, fundraising efforts begin. This time, Southeast Electric Cooperative, with the help of matching funds, answered the call.

Southeast Electric was happy to deliver a check in the amount of \$5992, which included matching funds from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Co-Bank, to the Ekalaka Ambulance. This check covered the total cost of the computers needed. We are proud to be able to support our local EMS volunteers.