

F E R G U S

FEATURES

Member Newsletter ♦ Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc., Lewistown, MT ♦ www.ferguselectric.coop

2023 SCHOLARSHIPS

CONGRATULATIONS BROOKE, RILEY AND HAYLEY

WE received several excellent applications for the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association Memorial Scholarship, which was awarded by

Fergus Electric, and for the scholarships sponsored by our power supplier, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Members 1st. It was fun to read the

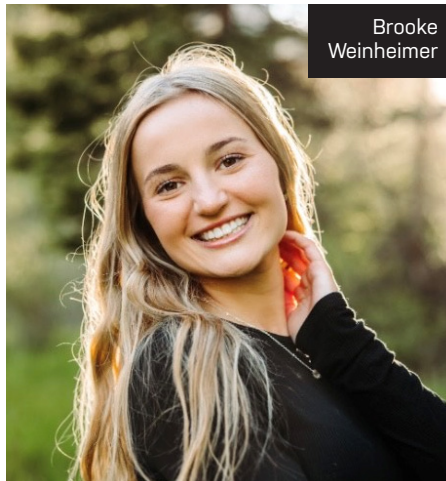
many essays and hard to select winners. Congratulations to this year's scholarship recipients: Brooke Weinheimer, Riley Obert and Hayley Stahl.

Brooke Weinheimer SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association Memorial Scholarship sponsored by Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Brooke Weinheimer of Moore was selected to receive a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. The scholarship recipient was selected based on academic strength, activities in school and community, awards and honors, employment, volunteerism, community service and personal statement.

Brooke is a senior at Fergus High School, and will graduate with a 4.0 GPA. This fall, Brooke will attend Montana State University-Bozeman, with plans to become a nurse. Throughout the year, she has had the privilege of shadowing and observing many different nurses and providers as part of her internship at Central Montana Medical Center. Her passion for helping those in need led Brooke to enroll in the high school EMT class, as it allowed her to help her community and gain experience in medicine. Considering her future, Brooke explained, "I knew I wanted to go into nursing when



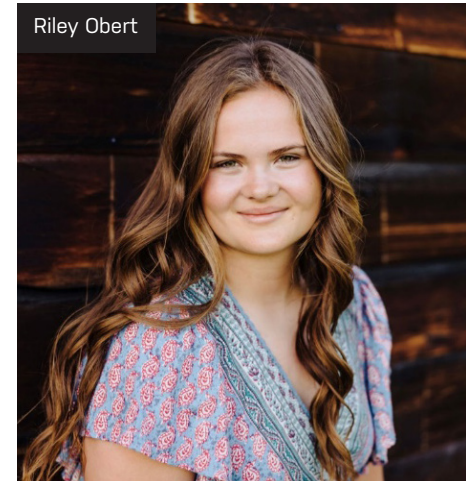
Brooke
Weinheimer

I watched my grandpa go through open-heart surgery. I observed over the next few days how comforting the nurses were not only to my grandpa, but also to my mom and grandma. I felt inspired by the nurses' compassion."

Riley Obert SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Basin Electric Power Cooperative

Riley Obert of Hobson was selected to receive a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Basin Electric Power Cooperative. The scholarship recipient was selected based on academic record,



Riley Obert

potential to succeed, leadership and participation in school and community activities, honors, work experience, a statement of education and career goals, and an outside appraisal. The topic for the 2023 Essay Scholarship was: "What challenges face rural electric cooperatives in the coming years, and how do you think challenges should be addressed?"

Riley is a senior at Hobson High School, and will graduate with a 3.95 GPA. This fall, Riley will attend the

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

From Carson Sweeney

EVEN though our June 8th annual meeting is still more than a month away, I wanted to focus on this unique event for our message. Electric cooperatives are structured in a way that members can actively participate in decisions that direct our vision, mission and values during the annual meeting. Active member participation helps us understand items of concern or importance to our members. We have many members that join us every year at the trade center. I appreciate their time and dedication to attend. We enjoy seeing and visiting with you. With that, we would really enjoy seeing our total attendance numbers increase.

Unfortunately, a growing trend throughout the United States is the decline in member attendance at cooperative annual meetings. I recently reviewed historic documents from Fergus Electric's annual meetings in the 1940s & 1950s. More members attended our annual meetings back then than we had in 2022. I would encourage you to mark June 8th on the calendars and attend our upcoming meeting at the Fergus County Trade Center. Registration will begin at 11:00

a.m., lunch will be served at noon, and our business meeting will start at 1:00 p.m.

We will be presenting information on proactive line inspection and maintenance, infrastructure replacement and investment, rate structures and eventual rate increases. We review financial information to show that our cooperative continues to grow in membership and electric revenues, while maintaining expenses at reasonable levels. We will share how we actively participate in our state's legislative session and that we have a strong relationship with the elected officials who represent us at the federal level. Our long-term wholesale power supplier, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, continues to help us lower our wholesale power costs, which has helped postpone the need for a rate increase.

The impressive team at Fergus Electric is engineering and constructing electric lines to ensure that we continue to provide reliable electric service at a reasonable and affordable cost to our members. Our plans include invest-

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FERGUS ELECTRIC PREPARES FOR 85TH ANNUAL MEETING

Scholarship drawing to be held at the 85th Annual Meeting

MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN

Fergus Electric Cooperative will offer ten \$1,000 scholarships in a drawing at this year's annual meeting, Thursday, June 8.

Rules for the scholarship drawing are: 1) The applicant or applicant's parent/guardian must be a member of Fergus Electric Cooperative, 2) The applicant must have at least a "C" grade average, and 3) The scholarship may be used for undergraduate college, vo-tech or for graduate studies.

No support documentation is required. Winners are determined by the luck of the draw. Checks will be written to the college or school in which the student is enrolled.

Please complete the following application and return it to: Fergus Electric Scholarship Drawing, 84423 U.S. Highway 87, Lewistown, MT 59457. **JUNE 6 DEADLINE.**

FERGUS ELECTRIC SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

College/Vo-Tech attending/will attend: _____

I maintain at least a "C" average: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____



Fergus Electric's Board of Directors awarded all 19 students who attended last year's Annual Meeting a \$1,000 scholarship to pursue their educational aspirations, thanks to the estate of Charlie Guinn and Susan Knedler for generously donating their capital credits to be used for student scholarships. Sign up for this year's scholarship drawing using the form to the right.

85TH MEETING IS JUNE 8

Pursuant to Article III, Section 3 of the bylaws of Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc., notice of the 85th annual meeting is hereby given.

The member meeting will take place

at the Fergus County Trade Center, Lewistown, Montana, on Thursday, June 8, 2023. Registration begins at 11 a.m., with lunch at noon.

The business meeting convenes at

1 p.m., with the order of business as follows: report of members present, reading of notice and proof of publication, election of two trustees and transaction of other business. RM

MEET THE BOARD CANDIDATES

In accordance with Fergus Electric Cooperative Bylaws, Article IV, Section 4.3, the nominating committees met and nominated candidates for the Board of Trustees.

In addition to the procedures set

forth above, any 15 or more members acting together from the district in which a trustee is to be elected may make other nominations by petition not less than 30 days prior to the meeting, and the secretary shall post such

nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the aforesaid committees are posted.

No other method of nominating candidates for trustee shall be posted. RM



Brett Maxwell

District 2

Brett Maxwell is the owner/operator of a family-owned cow/calf and hay operation. He was born and raised on the same ranch that he calls home

today, nine miles southwest of Lewistown. He is a graduate of Fergus High School and has a certificate in livestock technology from Dawson Community College.

In addition to ranch duties, Brett served eight years on the Fergus County Fair Board, he has served as treasurer and vice president of the Fergus County Livestock Association, served on the advisory board for the Lewistown branch of the Bank of the Rockies, and is currently proudly serving his fifth term on the Moore Farmers Oil Board as secretary.

His wife Jennifer works for the state of Montana at the Office of Public Assistance. They are the parents of Meagan (18), Kate (17), Thomas (14) and Emmet, aka Knute (7).

Serving as Fergus Electric Cooperative's District 2 Board Director since 2018, Brett says, "It is an honor to be selected for this position, and I look forward to the challenges and opportunities to broaden my horizon and to preserve this great co-op." In 2022, Brett successfully completed the requirements set by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association to earn his Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate. The program focuses on basic governance knowledge and essential skills required of cooperative directors.



Cathy Kombol

District 4

I have served on the Board of Directors of Fergus Electric for the past six years as your District 4 trustee and am seeking a third term. In 2019, I completed the NRECA series of courses required to earn my Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate.

It has been an exciting and rewarding experience full of challenges and learning opportunities as I continue to represent the members of Fergus Electric. Every employee, management and board member are top-notch, keeping things running smoothly even in times of outages, storms and fires, always going the "extra mile". I am proud to be a part of this group and a member of this very strong Fergus Electric Co-op.

My husband Terry and I live on the family ranch, which was homesteaded in 1909. We are the third generation to do so. We raise livestock, including cattle and goats. We appreciate the fortitude our ancestors had to survive in this challenging business, and we have been doing so since 1982.

We have two sons. Our oldest, Casey, and his wife, Michelle, have two children, Tyler and Kayla. Our son Bo, and his wife, Christine, have a son named Cooper.

My hobby is quilting, contributing many hours per year to the Quilts of Valor project for veterans and making charity quilts for children's services. I enjoy spending time with family and friends, usually working side by side to get things done!

I encourage every member to join us at the Fergus County Trade Center in Lewistown, Thursday, June 8th for the co-op's annual meeting, and I would sincerely appreciate the opportunity to continue to serve as a trustee on the Fergus Electric Board of Directors. Thank You, Cathy Kombol

SCHOLARSHIPS

Continued from previous page

University of Montana, where she will major in psychology and minor in early childhood education. Riley says, "As I plan for further education, I have been considering my plan for my finances, housing and education. In order not to become overwhelmed, I have begun to create a set of goals that are specific, measurable and achievable in a manageable time frame."

Hayley Stahl SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT Basin Electric Power Cooperative sponsored by Members 1st

Hayley Stahl of Roundup, MT was selected to receive a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Members 1st Power Cooperative. The scholarship recipient was selected based on academic record, potential to succeed, leadership and participation in school and community activities, honors, work experience, a statement of education and career goals, and an outside appraisal. The topic for the 2023 Essay Scholarship was: "What challenges face rural electric cooperatives in the coming



Hayley Stahl

years, and how do you think challenges should be addressed?"

Hayley graduated from Winnett High School, and currently attends Sheridan College in Sheridan, WY, holding a 3.79 GPA. Hayley plans to graduate with a degree in agriculture business. Her broader goal is to start her own custom farming business and eventually own her own farm or ranch operation. Hayley's ag business instructor at Sheridan College described Hayley saying, "Hayley is one-in-a-million. She is aware of herself, and constantly works to better herself and those around her."

We wish all of you the best as you begin a new year of academics and adventures. RM

MANAGER

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ments we expect will serve our membership for the next 60-70 years. Our long-term investment in the Roundup area is currently under construction as we build a new office/shop east of town. We are also aggressively testing our wood poles to identify those requiring replacement. This information will help our team identify the best plan forward to meet our operational needs.

At the annual meeting, your member-elected directors are available for you to meet and discuss any items of concern. The seven directors that sit on the Fergus Electric Cooperative Board of Directors are a committed

group actively involved in our cooperative and associated organizations. We travel regularly throughout the nation to learn, discuss and vote on matters of significant importance to our electric cooperative.

To bolster participation from our younger members, we continue to be very generous with awarding several scholarships at our annual meeting for eligible students who attend. If there is an upcoming high school graduate or college-enrolled student within your household, I encourage you to have them complete the Fergus Electric Scholarship Application included in this month's *Fergus Features*, and to attend our annual meeting together.

We look forward to seeing you next month at our annual meeting. RM

IDENTIFY ACCOUNT NUMBER*

WIN A \$32.50 CREDIT

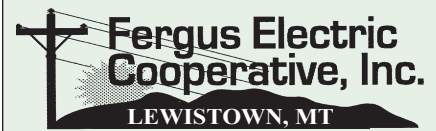
If one of the following account numbers is yours, call Fergus Electric (406-538-3465) and identify yourself and your account number and you will receive a \$32.50 credit on next month's statement.

**Account 320476, Account 396378
Account 355320, Account 321814
Account 258101, Account 395590**

CONGRATULATIONS!

John Westby and **Phillip Nichols**, both of Lewistown, were last month's winners!

*NUMBERS ARE DRAWN MONTHLY



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

FOR OUTAGES

First: Check the fuses or breakers in the building in which the electricity is off.

Second: Check the breaker below the meter.

Third: If electricity is still out, call a neighbor to see if they have electricity.

Fourth: Call 406-538-3465 day or night or:

Dale Rikala	406-366-3374
Bret Ophus	406-366-7523
Bret Nellerhoe (Roundup).....	406-939-0636
Carson Sweeney	406-366-0971
Melanie Foran.....	406-462-5650
Scott Olson.....	406-366-5822
Dan Balster.....	406-366-0975

FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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59457-2058

Tel: 406-538-3465

Office Hours: 7 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. M-Th.

Website: www.ferguselectric.coop

E-mail: ferguselectric@ferguselectric.coop

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ferguselectric

Carson Sweeney.....General Manager
Dale Rikala.....Line Superintendent
Sally HoracekOffice Manager
Janine Rife Didier.....Editor
Fergus Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 1:	Paul Descheemaeker, President, Lewistown, 428-2417
District 2:	Brett Maxwell, Lewistown, 538-9002
District 3:	Brad Arntzen, Hilger, 462-5555
District 4:	Cathy Kombol, Roundup, 428-2202
District 5:	Terry Frost, Vice President, Roundup, 323-3415
District 6:	Jason Swanz, Sec./Treas., Judith Gap, 473-2462
District 7:	Bob Evans, Jr., Geyser, 735-4476

**Fergus Features is an
award-winning newsletter.**