

# F E R G U S

## FEATURES

Member Newsletter ♦ Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc., Lewistown, MT ♦ [www.ferguselectric.coop](http://www.ferguselectric.coop)

# CONGRATULATIONS!

## 2024 Luck of the Draw Scholarship Winners

**E**ACH of the 33 students who received a \$1,000 scholarship at our 2024 Annual Meeting are starting college, and are anxious and excited about their futures.

In early 2022, it was announced that the personal representative of deceased co-op members Susan Knedler and Charlie Guinn had chosen to generously donate the entire estate's capital credits to Fergus Electric Co-op for the purpose of using approximately \$70,000 to help support scholarship opportunities for students within our area.

To date, 54 scholarships have been credited to the Guinn/Knedler account. The Guinn/Knedler account scholarship donations are in addition to the annual 10 Luck of the Draw scholarships Fergus Electric Cooperative donates.

As founders and owners of Hi-Heat Industries, Charlie and Susan were supporters of, and job creators within, our local economy. We join the students in expressing our gratitude for the kind and generous donation of the personal representative of the Guinn/Knedler estate. Their donation has led and will

continue to lead to many scholarship opportunities to support continuing education of our youth for years to come.

We would like to remind our members that you, too, can make plans now to donate your capital credits, so you can be sure they will be used to help support scholarship opportunities for students whose parents/guardians are members of Fergus Electric Cooperative.

We asked the college students to share their career goals in their own words.

### Denton High School



**Callie Donaldson** is attending Montana State University – Bozeman and studying occupational therapy. "I plan to graduate from MSU and move on to apply to an

occupational therapy program. My intention is to work in central Montana after I get my degree! Thank you for your support!"

### Fergus High School

**Carson Barta** is attending the University of Montana – Western and studying business. "I plan to work for a fishing charter business in Montana after college. I would



also like to own my own charter business at some point. I hope to someday charter deep sea fishing."

**Bridger Bolton** (Winner of the 2024 Lineman and Luck of the Draw Scholarships) is attending Montana Tech/Highland College – Butte and will participate in the lineman program. "My career goals are to complete the pre-apprentice



line program, find an apprenticeship and work there until I become a journeyman lineman."

**Cutler Chromey** is attending Montana Tech/Highlands College – Butte and will participate in the lineman program. "I



will attend Highlands College and learn as much as I can while there. I want to get a job and pay off all my student loans. My goal is to excel at the job I get and learn as much as I can to continue on as a journeyman."



**Madeline Denton** is attending Montana State University and studying nursing. "My career goals are to obtain a bachelor's degree in nursing. After that, I will gain a couple of years of ICU experience. Then, I will go back to anesthesia school to become a nurse anesthetist."

*Scholarship winners continue next page*

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**Abe Friesen** is attending Tabor College and studying biology. "I want to start a personal business within the field of biology, return to my hometown and pursue a successful career."



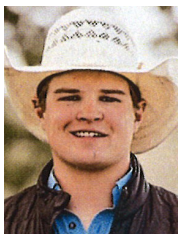
**Josephine Friesen** is attending Montana State University and studying nursing. "I am currently attending my clinicals in Billings, Montana, where I plan to stay for a few years, and then either return to Lewistown and practice my BSN degree or go to nurse anesthetist school."



**Gabriel Jonathan Gee** is attending Montana State University – Billings and studying secondary english teaching. "I want to teach and bring excitement back into reading. I also want to hopefully spawn a writing career."



**Mitchel LePage** is attending Carroll College and studying biology. "I want to graduate college and become a doctor. As a doctor, I want to help people."



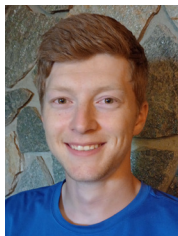
**Trace Martin** is attending the University of Montana – Western and studying Business Administration with a minor in farm and ranch operations. "I plan to come back and take over our family ranch. I also plan to expand my real estate business."



**Kate Maxwell** is attending North Dakota State University and studying pre-veterinary medicine. "My future goals in my career are to become a licensed veterinarian. I would then like to come back here and practice at a local clinic, hopefully one day being able to open my own."



**Megan Maxwell** is attending the University of Jamestown and studying exercise science. "I want to help people improve their lives with healthy lifestyle changes. I want to teach people that you don't have to be scared of food or the gym. I want to help people live their lives to their fullest potential by encouraging, supporting and providing the resources and plans to help people live longer, fulfilling and happy lives through the promotion of fitness and healthy eating habits."



**Ashton Moseman** is attending Montana State University and studying mechanical engineering technology. "I plan to have an engineering career in Montana, and get an engineering job with a company like Spika, FEC or BNSF."



**Jacob Reisig** is attending Northeastern Oklahoma and studying agricultural engineering. "I hope to run a successful cattle/haying business, contribute to my community and provide opportunities to the next generation of youth."

**Brookelynn Ruckman** is attending the University of Montana – Western and studying secondary education and modern history. "I want to teach history and government classes to high school



students. I firmly believe that these classes produce educated, productive and well-rounded citizens."



**Wylee Snapp** is attending Montana State University – Northern and studying electrical. "My goal is to gain full-time employment as an electrical employee. I will graduate from MSU – Northern with my electrical degree, and will make a lot of money."



**Allie Uecker** is attending Sheridan College and studying health science. "I plan to study health science in Sheridan, Wyoming. I will eventually study dental hygiene in hopes of coming back to Lewistown to serve the community that served me."



**Brooke Weinheimer** (Won the 2024 Basin/Fergus and Luck of the Draw Scholarships) attends Montana State University – Bozeman and studying nursing. "I want to become a nurse. After I get my degree, I want to work in the ICU for a couple of years then go back to school to get my nurse practitioner license. I then hope to move back and help in a rural community."



**Carter Wichman** is attending Rocky Mountain College – Billings and studying aviation. "I would like to fly commercially for a few years then come back to Lewistown as a Certified Flight Instructor and start my own business."

## Harlowton High School



**Angus Glennie** is attending Montana State University and studying mechanical engineering. "I want to graduate college and become successful in mechanical engineering. Working on airplanes is where I want to work, and move up the ranks there."

## Hobson High School



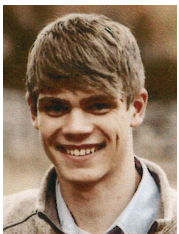
**Leon Aminkeng** is attending Montana State University – Bozeman and studying engineering. "I think it would be cool to become an inventor! Engineering is the fastest path to that!"

**Dakota Auck** is attending Dickinson State University and studying nursing. "I plan to graduate with my bachelor's and work as an ICU nurse to gain valuable experience before furthering my education to become a nurse anesthetist."



**Ashton Deegan** is attending MSU – Bozeman and studying ag business. "I hope to find a job in precision agriculture after I graduate. This would include helping farmers in the field with GPS. I also would like to come back to the farm eventually to help run it."

**Carter Derks** is attending MSU – Northern and studying to be a diesel technician. "I would like to open my own shop someday. Another option is working for a couple more years and returning to the ranch to help my dad."



**Jackson Swanz** is attending Carroll College and studying environmental biology. "I plan to attend Carroll College to receive a degree in environmental biology. I will use my degree to manage wildlife populations and would like to research the increasing population of elk in central Montana."

*Scholarship winners continue next page*




## MANAGER'S MESSAGE

From Carson Sweeney

## Cost of electricity from our suppliers will be increasing

**O**n the heels of an enjoyable summer and a strong financial year at our electric cooperative, this month's message comes with recent news that the cost of electricity from our power suppliers will be increasing in January 2025. The Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), which transmits wholesale electricity across a 15-state region from 57 hydropower plants, has communicated a 7.5% rate increase. Basin Electric Power Cooperative has recently communicated that the 2025 rate may have to increase as much as 9.5%. To put these increases into perspective, we anticipate our annual cost of electricity to increase by approximately \$1,750,000.

The team at Fergus Electric Cooperative will be analyzing our financials and developing several options for our Board of Directors to review. I have previously shared with our membership that I am a supporter of smaller regular increases as compared to larger, more abrupt, increases. Throughout the next few months, I will be working through the data to understand how we can navigate these cost increases in a smooth and stable manner. Options for our board to consider will include postponing a rate increase until mid-year as well as spreading the necessary increase across multiple years.

As our discussions progress, I will provide regular and transparent information updates to the membership. As we work to understand the implications of these expected cost increases, please let me know if you have any questions. 



Continued from previous page

## Homeschool



**Andrew Cox** is attending Montana Tech – Butte and studying mining engineering. "I am attending Montana Tech to study mining engineering. After graduating, I will pursue a career in that area."



**Mazie Davidson** is attending New Saint Andrew's College to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree. "I hope to one day be married and raise a family. I want to be a mother."



**Caden Epperson** is attending Montana State University – Bozeman, and is studying business management. "I want to broaden my skill set by continuing my education through MSU's wide variety of classes."



**Faith Osmundson** is attending Montana Wilderness School of the Bible and studying Bible and Theology. "After attending MWSB, I hope to either work at the Montana State Capitol or work at my family farm. Long-term goals – I am interested in accounting and global missions. Right now, I am not sure where the Lord will call me. Thank you so much for this scholarship!"

## Moore Public School

**Danielle Horan** is attending Montana State University and studying biochemis-



try. "After graduating in the spring of 2025, I intend to continue conducting biochemistry research at MSU. Additionally, I will apply to graduate and medical schools, aiming to obtain a PhD in biochemistry and/or an MD."



**Cole J. Martin** is attending Flathead Valley Community College and studying gunsmithing. "I am attending FVCC to pursue my career in gunsmithing. Although I have completed my gunsmithing classes, I am staying to take additional business finance and machining classes to assist my future career. I am already actively utilizing my skills to bring gun repair to customers."

## Winifred High School



**Lexie Goettlich** is attending Montana State University – Bozeman and studying elementary education: P-3. "My career goals include a child-centered focus, emphasizing the development and well-being of the children in my care. I want to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children."



**Joel Warneke** is attending Montana Tech and studying mechanical engineering. "I hope to graduate in about four years, and from there I hope to get involved in engine manufacturing and design. My top pick would be in tractor design."

*Congratulations to all of the winners, and good luck with everything that comes next.* 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 363791, Account 319088  
Account 396087, Account 320847  
Account 397999, Account 88320**

### CONGRATULATIONS!

**Arlene Cripps** of Grass Range, **Norman Ostby** of Roundup and **Lynda Cederberg** of Moccasin 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

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**Dale Rikala**..... Line Superintendent  
**Sally Horacek** ..... Office Manager  
**Janine Rife Didier**.....Editor  
Fergus Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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*Fergus Features is an award-winning newsletter.*