

F E R G U S

FEATURES

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

Right place, right time

Fergus Electric employees save injured pilot

Story and photos by
Charlie Denison,
Contributing Writer

When you see something disconcerting, it's best not to hesitate about taking a second look.

On July 30, Brian Godbey and his Fergus Electric Cooperative co-worker Melanie Foran experienced this firsthand when they found a dying man who had crashed his airplane about half a mile from the Roundup Airport.

"Brian and I were riding together from Lewistown to Roundup," Foran said. "I don't go to Roundup very often, and the two of us traveling together is pretty rare."

It was about 8:45 a.m. when Godbey — riding in the passenger seat — thought he saw something resembling the tail of an airplane a few yards off US Highway 87.

"Brian said he'd feel better if we stopped and checked it out, so I turned the car around and Brian called local dispatch on the way to see if anything had been reported," said Foran. "Nothing had."

When they got as close as they could to the site, Foran and Godbey exited the vehicle and started hiking up the hill, where it became more and more evident Godbey's instincts were correct.

"At first I thought we were going to find a junk plane or something," said Foran. "Then I saw blood. That's when I knew this was the real deal."

The blood was the first indicator; then they heard a voice from the bushes nearby. A man was crying for help.

"I nearly jumped out of my skin," said Foran.

When they heard the wounded pilot, the gravity of the situation became clear



Lifesavers, Melanie Foran and Brian Godbey were at the right place at the right time!

— Photo by Charlie Denison

to them: They were saving his life.

"I knew we were going to rescue him and we were ready for it, said Foran. We do mayday trainings at Fergus Electric for these kinds of situations because you never know when you might need it. We weren't squirmish or anything. We were like 'let's go. Let's get him out of here.'"

Keeping their cool

An EMT, firefighter and Search and Rescue leader, Godbey knew how to proceed, and he guided Foran all the way.

"Brian stayed with the pilot and had me go back to the road to guide in emergency services," said Foran. "I helped cut a fence to make way for the ambulance."

The Musselshell County Sheriff's Department was next on the scene,

followed by the fire department and ambulance. Foran helped brief them when they arrived.

"Melanie did a super job," said Godbey. "She was thrown into the thick of things and performed flawlessly. It's great to see that from someone who hasn't been in the situation before."

As Foran helped the emergency response crew, Godbey worked with the pilot, assessing his injuries and rolling him onto his side to help him breathe. He did all he could to help him.

"The pilot had a broken ankle, a broken pelvis, numerous broken ribs, a punctured lung, two broken wrists and head lacerations," Godbey said, relaying information he received later. "He deserves a lot of credit for his survival. He knew he was at risk of

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

From Scott Sweeney

Capital Credits and Membership

Every Fergus Electric Cooperative member holds an ownership interest in the cooperative. That ownership interest comes in the form of capital credits. Capital credits are allocated to members annually, based upon the earnings of the co-op.

The Cooperative Bylaws allow the Board of Directors to retire capital credits and make cash payment to members. For example, in 2018, the Board of Directors voted to retire capital credits and make payments to the members totaling \$1,284,413.83. These payments were made to members who earned capital credits in 1987, 1988 and 1989.

In addition to annual capital credit retirement payments authorized by the Board of Directors, Fergus Electric's capital-credit policy permits payments of capital credits to the estates of deceased members, who own capital credits in their individual names.

It is important that members understand that the co-op will only make payment to estates upon the death of individual members. In contrast, the co-op does not make payment upon the dissolution of a company or upon the termination of a trust, association, partnership or agency.

Members fill out a membership card when they join the co-op. That membership card allows the member to identify their membership as an individual, corporation, partnership, trust, limited liability partnership, association or government agency. Upon the death of a member, Fergus Electric will review membership cards to verify ownership. If the member owned capital credits as an individual, the capital credits will be retired, and payments will be made to the estate or to the family of the individual.

Please consider the following types of member ownership:

- **Corporations and Limited-Liability Companies.** Members who are corporations (including non-profit

corporations) or limited-liability companies will receive payment as the Board of Directors approves retirement of capital credits under the normal retirement cycle. Upon dissolution, the corporation or limited liability company must provide the co-op with a resolution transferring ownership of the accrued capital credits to another entity or to one or more individuals. Please note that board policy does provide for payment upon death, if a corporation or limited-liability company is owned by one individual so long as the corporation or limited liability company is terminated upon the death of the sole owner.

- **Clubs and associations.** Members who are clubs or associations will receive payment as the Board of Directors approves retirement of capital credits under the normal retirement cycle. Upon dissolution, clubs and associations must provide the co-op with a resolution transferring ownership of the accrued capital credits to another entity, or to one or more individuals.
- **Partnerships.** Members who are partnerships will receive payment as the Board of Directors approves retirement of capital credits under the normal retirement cycle. Upon dissolution, partnerships must provide the co-op with a resolution transferring ownership of the accrued capital credits to another entity, or to one or more individuals.
- **Trusts.** Members who are trusts will receive payment as the Board of Directors approves retirement of capital credits under the normal retirement cycle. Upon termination, the trustee of the trust must provide the Co-op with a resolution transferring ownership of the accrued capital credits to another entity or to one or more individuals. Please note that even if the trust is a "living

trust", capital credits will not be paid upon the death of the trustor.

- **Assumed Business Names and D/B/A Designations.** If a member uses an assumed business name or a "doing business as" designation on the membership card, the co-op will disregard the assumed business name or D/B/A designation for the purpose of capital credit retirement and distribution. The co-op will distribute capital credits based upon the status of the underlying member. For example, a corporation using an assumed business name will have its capital credits paid out under the normal retirement cycle while an individual using an assumed business name will have his or her capital credits paid out upon death. Using assumed business names on membership cards tends to cause confusion. The co-op would prefer that members not use assumed business names on member accounts.

Members may change the ownership of their respective accounts. Do you want to own your member account as an individual rather than as an entity? In the alternative, do you want an entity to own your member account? If you want to make a change, please stop by the office and meet with our well-trained staff. We will help you change ownership on your membership card. Please understand that change will be effective from the date of the change forward. For example, if you earned capital credits as a limited liability company from 2000 through 2018, those capital credits will remain property of the limited-liability company, even if you change over to individual ownership in 2019.

Please call or stop by the co-op if you have questions or concerns regarding your capital credits.

Congratulations

At the MECA annual meeting, two winners were drawn and Fergus Electric was pleased to have one of its members, Ken Siroky of Roy, MT, win a 55-inch big screen TV for signing up to become a part of the MECA grassroots efforts.

Congratulations Ken!

Right place

Continued from page 3

shock, and he also knew he was in danger if he stayed by the plane, so he crawled away from the scene. He didn't panic and he didn't give up. He found some shade to get away from the sun and tried to stay calm. It must have been hard as he heard the cars pass by on the highway...he had a lot working against him."

Godbey talked with the pilot, telling him "You're OK, you're alive, this is better than it could have been."

"I asked him if anyone was looking for him and if anyone knew where he was," Godbey said. "He would not give me his wife's number. I think he thought he was in trouble. Finally, he gave me his daughter's number. I thought this was funny. He was coherent enough to know his wife was going to chew him out (laughs)."

But this incident was no laughing matter. If Godbey and Foran hadn't stopped when they did, the pilot might not have survived.

"The doctors told him he had two

or three hours left to live if we hadn't found him when we did," said Foran. "I'm so glad we followed our gut."

On their way back to Lewistown later that day, Godbey and Foran passed the scene and reflected some more, hardly believing it had happened — a 15-minute life-saving detour on their way to work.

"It was almost surreal," said Godbey. "We were like, 'did that really just happen? Did we just do that?'"

They did indeed, and their actions have not gone unnoticed, as they recently received the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association Life Saver Award for saving the life of another individual.

The phone call

Months passed before Godbey and Foran heard about the well-being of the pilot.

"We'd called his daughter twice and didn't hear from her," said Foran. "We couldn't help but start assuming the worst."

But on Labor Day weekend, Godbey got a call from the pilot, who was alive and recovering at his home in Canada.



Fergus Electric Cooperative employees stopped to investigate when they saw something resembling the tail of an airplane about half a mile from the Roundup Airport.

— Photo by Brian Godbey

"He wanted to make sure we knew he was OK and that he hadn't forgotten about us. He was grateful," Godbey said. "I told him if he's coming through this way again, we'd like to see him... under better circumstances."

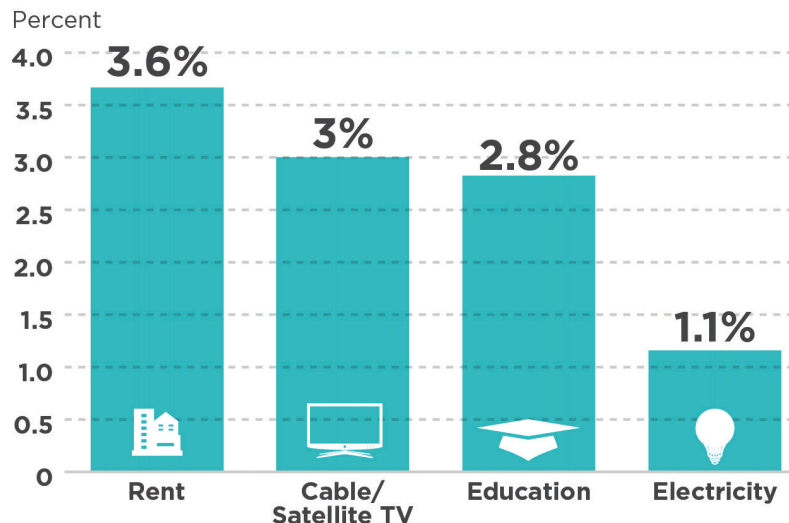


At Fergus Electric Cooperative we are thankful for our membership. The board of directors, management and staff are grateful that we have good communication with our members throughout the 14 counties we serve. Many of you take the time to routinely offer a word of thanks for the work being done by our line crews and office staff. Your continued support and encouragement throughout the year provides a tremendous boost to our employees, who are committed to providing reliable and dependable service to each of you! We appreciate that you trust us to provide power to your homes, ranches, farms and businesses. We wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving!

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2013-2018



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index





As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.

— John F. Kennedy

Fergus Electric Cooperative will close to honor Veterans on Monday, Nov. 11, and for Thanksgiving Nov. 28 and 29, 2019.

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.

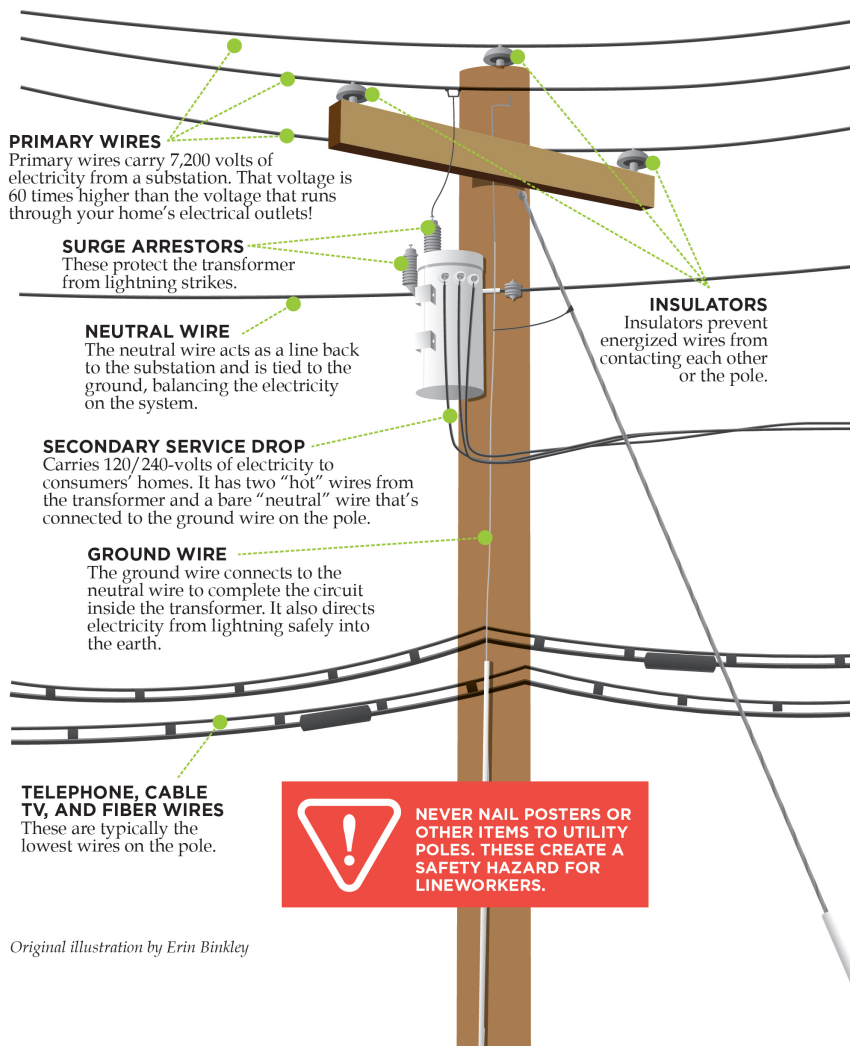
**Account 394951 • Account 364818
Account 125301 • Account 45503**

You will receive a \$32.50 credit on next month's statement.

**Numbers are drawn monthly.*

WHAT'S ON THAT POLE?

This illustration shows the basic equipment found on electric utility poles. The equipment varies according to the location and the service they provide.



Original illustration by Erin Binkley

Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. LEWISTOWN, MT

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 Rikala406-366-3374
Bret Ophus406-366-7523
Guy Johnson406-366-9170
Scott Sweeney406-538-7218
Don Criswell (Roundup)406-366-3465
David Dover406-366-1975
Melanie Foran406-462-5650

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Fergus Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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