

# Big Skylights



An internal newsletter of the STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

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A report from your Chief Executive Officer Dave Wheelihan

March 18, 2010

## Computer basics workshop in danger of cancellation

A MECA Computer Basics Workshop scheduled for April 6 will have to be cancelled unless more people register. As of today, only 10 people have enrolled. Enrollment of at least 20 people is needed by Wednesday, March 24, to hold the class. Please call or email **Sharon McDonald** of our staff to register. This workshop will provide basic training to people unfamiliar with computers or with use of the Internet.

## Tentative schedule set for MECA board and committees

A tentative schedule for this spring's MECA board and committee meetings has been set for April 6-8.

On Tuesday, April 6, MECA is planning to hold a Computer Basics Workshop. The workshop (see article above) will be held from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Following is the tentative schedule for committee meetings on Wednesday, April 7: 9-10 a.m., Audit Committee; 10-11 a.m., MECA Managers' Group; 11-12 Noon, Communications Committee; 12 Noon-1 p.m., Lunch & Pre-briefing for all prospective Montana delegates to the 2010 NRECA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.; 1-2 p.m., Climate Change Legislative Subcommittee; 2-3:30 p.m. Policy and Bylaws Committee; 3:30-4:30 p.m., Legislative Committee; 5 p.m. Cocktail Hour; 6 p.m. MECA Dinner.

The MECA board meeting will be held on Thursday, April 8, beginning at 8 a.m.

Official notices for the board meeting, agenda and committee schedule will be mailed soon. RSVP cards for the lunch and dinner, which were mailed out Feb. 25, are due at our office Wednesday, March 31.

## Hotel rooms available for legislative conference

Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association (MECA) delegates to the May 2-5 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. have been assigned a block of hotel rooms. A block of 40 rooms is available at The Liaison hotel located at 415 New Jersey Ave. NW. The rate is \$270 + tax for singles and doubles.

As in 2009, all conference and hotel registrations must be made through **Sharon McDonald** at the MECA office. The hotel registration form was mailed to MECA-member co-op managers and MECA board members. These forms must be completed and returned to the MECA office no later than Friday, March 26. The room block will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Names must be attached to a reserved room by close of business on March 26.

If you are planning to attend this conference but are staying elsewhere please let Sharon know so she can prepare an information packet for you. As in past years, the Montana delegates, in addition to meeting with the Montana congressional delegation, will be assigned to meet with several members of Congress from states that do not have electric cooperatives. A complete schedule of events and team assignments will be mailed to participants in late April.

As always, if you have any questions, please call our office or e-mail Sharon. Our phone number is (406) 761-8333. Sharon's e-mail address is [sharonm@mtco-ops.com](mailto:sharonm@mtco-ops.com).

## Condolences

### Gene Hanson

We were saddened to hear of the death of **Gene Hanson** on March 15. At the recent annual meeting for Vigilante Electric Cooperative, Mr. Hanson was honored for serving as district trustee for 36 years, representing the Silver Star-Waterloo area. During that time, he held every board office and was very active in the political affairs of the power industry as well as being aware of local customer concerns.

He took a great interest in legislative activities of Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association, having served on our Legislative Committee. His position on the Vigilante Electric board allowed him to travel to meetings throughout Montana and the United States. Among Mr. Hanson's survivors is his wife of 57 years, **Martha**,

and three sons, including **Dean Hanson**, who was elected at the co-op's annual meeting on Feb. 26 to replace his father on the co-op board.

**Joseph Alberi**

Our condolences to **Dave Alberi**, manager of Vigilante Electric Cooperative, on the death of his father, **Joseph Alberi**. Mr. Alberi passed away March 8. He was a long-time member of Beartooth Electric Cooperative, having moved to this area in 1952. The elder Mr. Alberi had served on the Beartooth Electric Cooperative board from 1976 to 1985. No date has yet been set for memorial services.

## CALENDAR

### March

20	Flathead Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Kalispell, MT
20	Missoula Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Missoula, MT
23	Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Billings, MT
24	Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative Annual Meeting	Great Falls, MT
26	Sun River Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Fairfield, MT
27	Lincoln Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Eureka, MT

### April

6	MECA Computer Skills Workshop	Great Falls, MT
7	MECA Committees' Meetings	Great Falls, MT
8	MECA Board of Directors	Great Falls, MT
10	Glacier Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Cut Bank, MT
16	Marias River Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Shelby, MT
20	Tools for Effective Management & Motivating Employee Workshops	Great Falls, MT

### May

2-5	NRECA Legislative Conference	Washington, DC
8	Northern Lights Annual Meeting	Sandpoint, ID
12	Western Montana Electric G & T Cooperative Annual Meeting	Missoula, MT
15	Hill County Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting	Havre, MT
25	Emotional Intelligence at Work workshop	Great Falls, MT
26	Conflict Is Seminar	Great Falls, MT