

## Power of the People

By W. Marc Farmer,  
General Manager  
West Oregon Electric Cooperative



It is hard to believe that one year has already gone by since I first started as General Manager here at West Oregon. The year has proved to be challenging, educational, and rewarding.

The educational part has included learning the history and background of the co-op and its subsidiary, becoming familiar with our system, service area, staff and board, and understanding the unique aspects and challenges of our service territory and membership. The challenges have included dealing with the affects of the weather on our electric system, on our staff and budget; figuring out what direction is best for our subsidiary, theft of equipment from our pole yard and substations, and keeping up with tree trimming and maintenance of our system. All of the work that ODOT is doing on the bridges, and the new State Park have added to our challenges. The rewards have come from the great people I work with and the way they rise to meet the challenges, and getting to know and rub shoulders with you, our members. My family and I are truly enjoying the people and beauty here in our service area and are very happy to be here.

The past year has seen us hold steady on our rates, receive a glowing report from our auditors as no audit adjustments were necessary; we were able to meet Tier with RUS and pass their annual inspection, have made progress

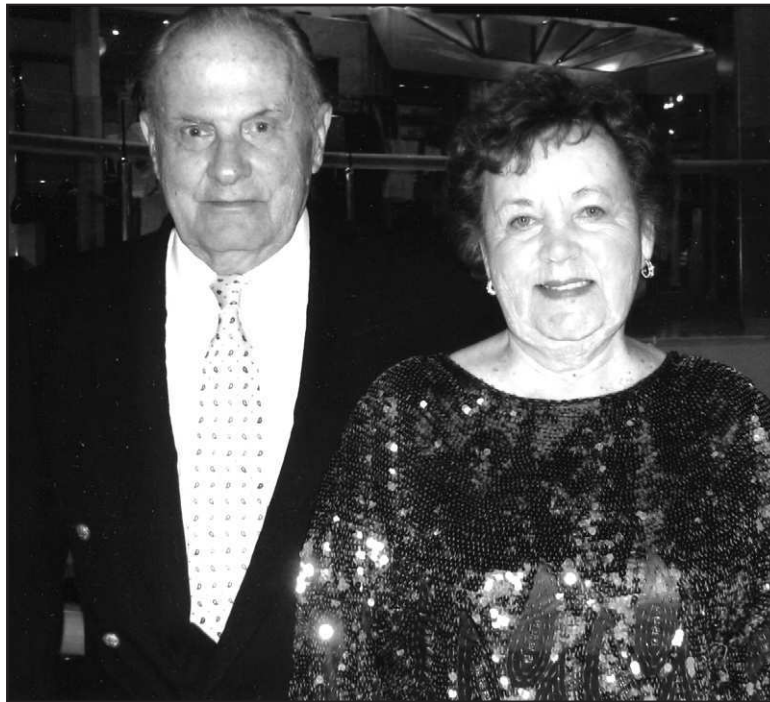
on our tree trimming and system inspections, and had an excellent water year which helped us keep our wholesale power costs down. Our staff put in a lot of hours during a two-and-a-half month stretch of rain and wind that wreaked havoc on our system and our power providers' systems. They have also had to take on extra workload as Royce Hagelstein, our long time CFO, recently accepted a position at Cowlitz PUD. I am pleased to report that our staff and crew have performed in an admirable and professional manner and I enjoy working with all of them.

We have welcomed a new Board Member, Mike Pihl, who replaced Tom Budge. Tom had done an excellent job representing District 5 for over 14 years and his knowledge and experience will be greatly missed.

We have signed up 42 Wild-Blue Internet subscribers and anticipate it continuing to grow. WildBlue is a high-speed Internet service using satellite technology for rural areas. Our subsidiary, Columbia Broadband, now has a positive cash flow.

I know there will be a lot more to learn as I begin my second year. I look forward to the opportunities and also the challenges that we will face together. The challenges are focused on three main areas: the decision on our power supply after 2011, when our current contract expires; the best strategy for our subsidiary, and keeping our rates steady as costs continue to rise. We remain committed to keeping our system maintained and trees trimmed, keeping our costs in line, and providing the best possible service for our members. With a great staff, board, and membership, we will be successful, I am sure.

# Minger's celebrate 65th anniversary



Charles and Irene Minger, formerly of Vernonia, celebrated their 65th anniversary recently by going on a cruise to the Mexican Riviera with their three children and spouses; Diana and Marion Knoll and Kathy and Jim Eckland, all of Keizer, and Steven and Sue Minger of Vernonia.

Charles Minger and Irene May were married July 1, 1941, in Vancouver, Washington. They lived in Vernonia until 1979 when they moved to Scappoose. They moved to Keizer in 2000. In addition to their three children, they have six grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren.

## Rose Award to Whiteman yard

The Golden Rose Award, for the July Yard of the Month, has been given to Steve and Sue Whiteman at the corner of State Avenue and North Street, behind Vernonia Auto Parts. The award, a plaque, will visit their yard until the August Yard of the Month is chosen.

Vernonia Pride presents the award, throughout summer with the final selection in September, for a well-maintained and landscaped yard.

To help choose the next Yard of the Month, cast your vote in the box on the information table inside Vernonia City Hall, at 1001 Bridge St., Vernonia.

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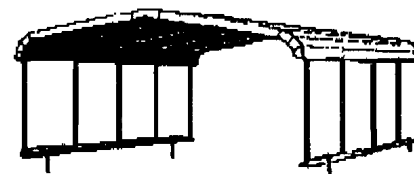
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