

Power of the People

By W. Marc Farmer,
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Some Good News

It is always nice to share some good news and even better to actually have some to share. With all of the storm articles, metal theft and such, that I have reported lately, now I get to tell you about the good things happening here.

In my Independent article of April 5, I wrote about the need of the Co-op to acquire more Journeyman Linemen and the difficulty to find them. We are four Linemen short of where we need to be in order to field enough crews and keep up with the work load. I am pleased to say that we are half way toward our goal as we have hired two new Journeymen Linemen. Larry Massey and Bill Brannon have joined our Co-op family, and we are very happy to have them on board.

I am even more pleased to announce that Grant Brown has carded out as an Apprentice Lineman and is now a fully certified Journeyman Lineman. Our congratulations to Grant on successfully completing the Apprenticeship program and we are happy to have him as our newest Journeyman Lineman. In the Apprenticeship program, Grant had to successfully pass many tests covering varying aspects of the electric system and of being a Journeyman Lineman, complete three years of schooling and over 7000 hours of on-the-job training, and the review of his peers. Excellent job Grant!

Another staff congratulation goes to Darlene McLeod who, on May 1, was promoted to Manager of Finance and Administration. Darlene has been serving as the Office Manager for the past year since our Chief Financial Officer left for a job in Washington. Darlene has successfully proved her capability to handle the duties and responsibilities required for the position and we

congratulate her on her new promotion. Great job Darlene!

Speaking of Darlene, she has been working diligently with FEMA on recovering some of the costs we incurred during the storms this winter. We received a check for \$13,018 for damage to our system in Clatsop County in the November 22 storm. We are working daily on the numbers for the December 14 storm. Four of the five counties – Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, and Yamhill – were declared federal disaster areas for which we are working to recover 75 percent of the costs for restoring the system and power to our members. Washington County was not certified, even though we incurred a lot of damage there. We are working with FEMA on how to restore the 16 miles of damage to the Timber-Elsie Transmission line. An engineering study will begin next week, and then the options will be presented to the Co-op Board, staff, and FEMA in May. We will then review the options and decide which one will be best for the present and future location of the line to improve reliability. The trees on both sides of the line have grown up over the years to now dwarf the line, and root rot and storms are causing them to fall across the lines from both sides. We will need to either expand our right of way, require trees to be removed farther back from the existing right of way, or relocate the line. Once the costs have all been determined and how much we can expect from FEMA to pay for the restoration or relocation, we will make the decision and get the project started. It will be time-consuming as there are no roads to over 95 percent of the line and a lot of it had to be put in by helicopter the last time it was rebuilt. The good news is that 75 to 90 percent of the costs will be covered by FEMA funds for the sections in the four counties that were declared.

Of course the other good news for all of us is that spring is finally here so we will have better working conditions and less outages due to weather. Our Linemen sure appreciate it a lot, and those of us in the office sure feel our spirits lift on a sunny day.

Nominate your favorite volunteer

From page 14

In a continuing effort to honor Oregon's outstanding volunteers, and in recognition of National Volunteer Week, local organizations and individuals have the opportunity to nominate community members to receive a Governor's Volunteer Award through a program coordinated and sponsored by Oregon Volunteers, the Commission for Voluntary Action and Service.

Regional and statewide winners will be selected in seven

categories: Youth Volunteer, Adult Volunteer, Senior Volunteer, Volunteer Program, Statewide Volunteer Program, Youth Volunteer Program or Group, and Employee Volunteer Program. Winners will be honored at a luncheon in Salem on Friday, September 28.

Nominations will be accepted through Tuesday, May 15, 2007. Nomination forms are available online at www.oregonvolunteers.org or call 888-353-4483.

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