

Member Information

2026 ANNUAL MEETING

**TUESDAY, JUNE 9
6:30 P.M.**

VIA TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

Register online at:
slvrec.com/annual-meeting

Registration will close at
3:30 p.m. on June 9.

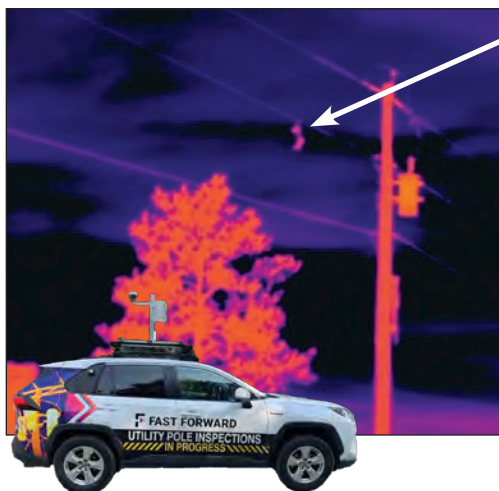
**Listening to this year's
meeting will make you
eligible for prizes,
including \$1,000 CASH!**

**MEMBER APPRECIATION
LUNCH: JULY 9TH**

Fast Forward returning to support grid reliability

In June, we will once again partner with Fast Forward to capture images of our electric system and identify potential problem areas before they impact service. These proactive inspections help identify equipment — such as transformers, wires and other components — that may need maintenance or repair.

Using panoramic and thermal cameras mounted on vehicles marked “Fast Forward,” (see photo



An anomaly identified during the first round of inspections earlier this year turned out to be an unexpected find—a pair of shoes hanging from a power line.

above) these patrols collect detailed images of electric infrastructure both day and night.

Members may see these vehicles traveling through neighborhoods and service areas as they perform inspections. The information gathered helps improve system reliability. This work is part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening the electric grid so members

**See FAST FORWARD
continued on Page 4**

Meet Your Coop

Welcome to the team, AJ Atencio

AJ Atencio recently joined the Cielo team as a fiber technician, bringing nearly 10 years of industry experience with him. Prior to joining Cielo, AJ worked for Spectrum installing cable Internet and troubleshooting Internet and phone service issues.

AJ said his interest in fiber optics and wanting to learn more about fiber Internet technology is what originally drew him to Cielo. In his role, he helps with fiber installation, fiber splicing and customer service, helping ensure customers receive the best possible experience.

“One thing I really enjoy is learning more about fiber and how it works,” AJ shared. “I also enjoy helping customers get connected or fixing their Internet issues. Everyone here has been so kind and helpful during this new journey.”

As he continues learning the system and becoming more familiar with fiber routes and wireless tower locations throughout the Valley, AJ says he’s excited for the opportunities ahead.

AJ is a San Luis Valley native who grew up in Manassa and currently lives in La Jara. He graduated from



AJ Atencio

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on Page 4**

THIS ISSUE

Member Info/Meet Your Coop

Member Info/Efficiency/Cielo

Eric Eriksen

Articles continued

Recipe of the Mo./Historical Happenings

JUNE 2026 | VOLUME 53 | ISSUE 5

Meet Your Coop

Darren Romero brings familiar face to finance department

Darren Romero has stepped into a new role at SLVREC/Ciello as an accountant in the finance department following the retirement of Mary Davis. He officially transitioned into the position on April 1 after serving the cooperative for five years as a customer service representative.

In his new role, Darren is responsible for a variety of financial processes including paying invoices, closing out work orders, processing rebates, assisting with financial reporting and more.

According to Darren, the move into accounting was a natural fit with both his educational background and professional goals. "I'm learning a lot," Darren shared. "A big part of my training has been understanding financial

reporting and processes and realizing how important it is to slow down and make sure everything is done correctly because these processes can have a major impact on our finances."

One aspect Darren has especially enjoyed is seeing how his previous experience in customer service connects to his new responsibilities in accounting. He says it has helped him better understand the bigger picture of operations and has allowed him to build relationships with departments he previously worked with less often.

"After working alongside the same CSR team for five years, I definitely miss the daily banter while working... At the same time, I'm really enjoying having my own office space and making it my own, and I'm excited to



Darren Romero

keep building relationships with my new team. They've been incredibly welcoming and helpful!" Darren stated.

Outside of work, Darren enjoys traveling with his partner of five years and spending time with their 7-year-old miniature dachshund, Kenai. He is also a self-described music buff with a growing vinyl collection that currently includes more than 225 albums — with even more on the way in the mail!

Witherspoon takes over North Area

Russ Witherspoon joined SLV Rural Electric Cooperative in August 2018 as a Journeyman Lineman following five years with Colorado Powerline Inc. After eight years working on the crews, he recently transitioned into the role of North Area Serviceman.

In his new position, he is responsible for 24/7 on-call duty, troubleshooting

See RUSS continued on Page 4



Russ Witherspoon

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As temperatures start to rise, many homeowners focus on staying cool. Don't forget about the small gaps around windows and doors. While air sealing is often associated with keeping cold air out during winter, it's just as important during summer. Tiny cracks and worn weatherstripping allow cool, conditioned air to escape and hot, humid air to seep indoors. This forces your air conditioner to work harder than necessary and increases energy costs. Take a few minutes to check for drafts, replace weatherstripping and seal leaks. A tighter home keeps you more comfortable and helps manage energy use.

Source: energy.gov

ciello THIS IS OUR WHY...

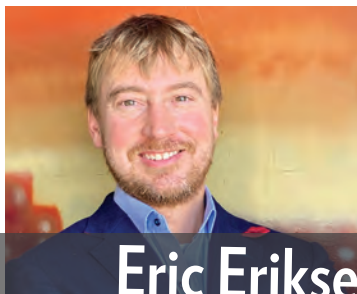
"Ciello is amazing- works consistently which our previous service did not."

*-Cathy Morin, Alamosa
Google*

POWERED BY REC

719.852.3538 • www.ciello.com

Ciello is proud to feature testimonials from our satisfied customers in issues of the Newsboy. Send your testimonials to jalonzo@slvrec.com.



Eric Eriksen

Helping members manage summer energy costs

Summer in the San Luis Valley brings longer days, more irrigation and more cooling needs. At San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative, we understand that every dollar matters. As your local, not-for-profit cooperative, our focus is on providing reliable service while helping members find practical ways to manage energy use and monthly costs.

At SLVREC, we offer several programs and resources that can help members take more control of their energy use, from rate options and budget tools to rebates and financing for efficiency upgrades. Whether you are looking to spread costs more evenly across the year, shift usage to lower-cost hours or make long-term improvements to your home or business, we want you to know what is available.

Time-of-Day rates

SLVREC offers residential Time-of-Day rate options that reward members who can shift more of their electricity use outside of peak hours. Currently, on-peak residential energy use is billed from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. each day, while off-peak use is billed overnight and through most daytime hours. Simple changes like delaying laundry, dishwashing, electric vehicle charging or other large loads can help lower energy bills and ease demand on the system.

Budget billing

If your monthly bills rise and fall sharply, SLVREC's budget billing option may help. Budget billing can smooth out monthly payments so

members can better plan for household expenses instead of absorbing the full impact of seasonal swings all at once. Combined with Auto Bill Pay and SmartHub account access, it can make monthly billing more predictable and easier to manage.

Weatherization and energy savings

Members who want to improve comfort and efficiency should also look at SLVREC's weatherization and energy savings resources and the Electrify and Save On-Bill Repayment Program. Eligible members can finance qualifying upgrades such as insulation, windows, doors, water heaters, HVAC systems and other energy-saving improvements with no money down, no credit check and repayment added to their monthly utility bill over time. Ask a local contractor if they've attended one of SLVREC's heat pump training classes.

Rebate program

SLVREC's Energy Efficiency Credit Rebate Program helps members save on qualifying upgrades and equipment. Rebates are available for a variety of items, including water heaters, premium efficiency motors and variable speed drives, ENERGY STAR refrigerators and freezers, clothes dryers, electric stoves, commercial LED lighting, heat pump installations and split-system ENERGY STAR air conditioners. These incentives can reduce upfront costs while supporting long-term savings.

See SUMMER continued on Page 4

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Conejos/Costilla Counties
719-588-0430

Wade Lockhart, Vice-President
Member at Large
719-588-9246

Creede Hargraves, Secretary/Treasurer
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708-638-0039

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719-849-8304

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719-588-4711

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Alamosa County
719-588-0139

Email: power@slvrec.com

Your email will be forwarded based on the direction you provide in your subject line.

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800-332-7634

SLVREC Office (local calls)
719-852-3538

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www.facebook.com/SLVREC



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Looking for energy efficient upgrades for your home?

Take advantage of SLVREC's Electrify and Save On-Bill Repayment program (OBR) for a simple and transparent financing option.

- + Windows and Doors
- + Heat Pump Water Heaters
- + Whole-Home or Attic Fans
- + Insulation
- + Heat Pumps
- + EV Chargers

LEARN MORE OR APPLY AT
WWW.SLVREC.COM/ELECTRIFY-AND-SAVE

RUSS

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power outages, maintaining overhead and underground distribution and transmission lines, and installing new electric services.

Russ was drawn to the North Area Serviceman role because he enjoys troubleshooting issues, restoring power for members when they need it most and building stronger relationships within the community while creating new opportunities for his

family.

As he continues learning the North Area territory, he's embracing both the challenges and rewards that come with serving members across the region.

Outside of work, Russ enjoys spending time with his wife and daughter, working out and golfing.

Russ is very grateful to his wife and daughter for all of their support and encouragement.

FAST FORWARD

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experience fewer outages and faster restoration when disruptions occur. By identifying potential issues early, we are building a more resilient system prepared to meet future challenges.

San Luis Valley REC maintains nearly 13,200 meters across approximately 2,800 miles of distribution line. Maintaining and im-

proving this system is essential to providing safe, reliable electric service, and these inspections are one of the many ways we invest in the long-term health of the grid.

Thank you for your understanding as our teams and partners work in your area.

SUMMER

continued from page 3

STAY COOL. STAY EFFICIENT.

We're here to help you beat the summer heat. Take advantage of our efficiency programs and energy-saving recommendations designed to help you stay comfortable and cut costs all summer long.

You have the power

Managing summer bills often comes down to a series of small, steady choices.

Start with the basics: set your thermostat as high as is comfortably practical during warmer months, use ceiling fans only in occupied rooms, replace dirty filters, seal obvious air leaks and avoid running several major appliances at the same time during peak hours if you are on a Time-of-Day rate. Those simple habits can make a meaningful difference over the course of the summer.

Members can find more information about rates, rebates, Budget Billing, SmartHub, weatherization resources and Electrify

and Save at slvrec.com or by contacting our office directly.

As a cooperative, we are here to serve our members, not outside shareholders. That means we are always looking for responsible ways to deliver reliable power, strengthen our communities and help members use energy wisely. When our members succeed, the Valley succeeds.

If you have questions about the options available to you, contact SLVREC at 719-852-3538 or 800-332-7634, email power@slvrec.com, or visit slvrec.com. We are proud to serve the Valley and proud to work alongside our members every season of the year.

AJ

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Centauri High School and has been married to his wife Tiffany for nearly 19 years. Together they have three children: RaeLee, Jason and Jaelyn. Outside of work, AJ enjoys spending time with family, attending his kids'

sporting events and riding side-by-sides with family and friends.

"I'm excited to start this new chapter with Ciello," AJ said. "SLVREC/Ciello is such a friendly and supportive place to work."



Recipe of the Month

INGREDIENTS

8 oz. fresh spinach (about 10 c.)
 1-1/2 t. cider vinegar
 1/2 t. sugar
 1/8 t. pepper
 2 boneless skinless chicken thighs
 1/2 t. chicken seasoning
 3 T. crumbled feta cheese
 1 t. olive oil
 3/4 c. reduced-sodium chicken broth
 1 t. butter

SPINACH AND FETA STUFFED CHICKEN

1. Preheat oven to 375°. In a large skillet, cook and stir spinach over medium-high heat until wilted. Stir in vinegar, sugar and pepper; cool slightly.

2. Pound chicken thighs with a meat mallet to flatten slightly; sprinkle with chicken seasoning. Top chicken with spinach mixture and cheese. Roll up chicken from a long side; tie securely with kitchen string.

3. In an ovenproof skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; add chicken and brown on all sides. Transfer to oven; roast until a thermometer inserted in chicken reads 170°, 13-15 minutes.

4. Remove chicken from pan; keep warm. On stovetop, add broth and butter to skillet; bring to a boil, stirring to loosen browned bits from pan. Cook until slightly thickened, 3-5 minutes. Serve with chicken.

www.tasteofhome.com

Historical Happenings

From March 2003 Newsboy

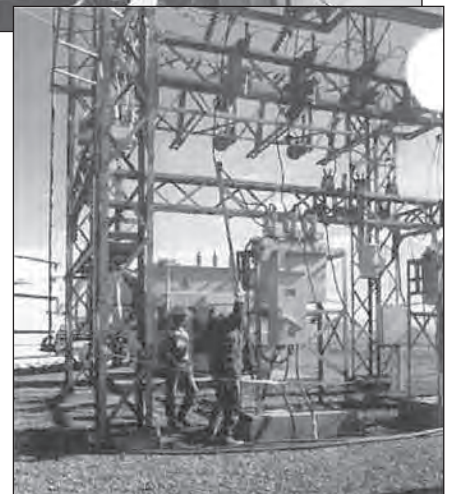


Construction on SLVREC's new shop is well underway. The new shop will meet several objectives. It will separate flammables from the main building, improve the efficiency of the cooperative's vehicle maintenance and repair program, and allow the former shop area to provide much-needed inside storage space.

At right: A new power transformer was installed at the Hooper Substation; it is significantly larger than the transformer it replaced. The old transformer was serviced and will be installed at the Plaza Substation, adding additional capability there. The former Plaza power transformer will be serviced and used in a new substation planned for the north end of the Valley near Villa Grove.



Above: Keith Mullenix, Operations Superintendent, hosted a high-voltage demonstration for the cub scouts.



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June 2026

Periodical Postage
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Lineworkers, including SLVREC's Ruben Heredia and Ryan Christensen, gathered at the Colorado State Capitol last month to celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Month.



During Monte Vista Coop's Annual Safety Day, Tri-State's Michelle Pastor taught the "Story Behind the Switch."

POWERING OUR COMMUNITY

San Luis Valley REC's office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE

866-HEAT HELP (866-432-8435)
www.energyoutreach.org

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Annual Meeting: Tuesday, June 9, 2026, 6:30 p.m.
Board Meeting: Tuesday, June 30, 2026, 9:30 a.m.
The REC Board of Directors *typically* meets the last Tuesday of each month unless otherwise stated. Members are welcome; advance notice required.

This institution is an equal opportunity employer.



REC employees celebrated Mary Davis' retirement at the end of April.