

THE NEWSBOY

News for Members of San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative



Planting Seeds of Knowledge

During the fall of 2016, San Luis Valley REC was fortunate enough to get use of the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon. While this was a great experience for those involved, it also a netted a contribution from Touchstone Energy that the co-op was able to donated back to the community.

After careful consideration, Sargent School, located in the vast farmland of the San Luis Valley was selected as a prime candidate for a donation. What is Sargent going to do with the \$765 donation? Well, what a Sargent Farmer does best! The school has decided to start a garden project.

The idea came for fourth-grade student Rhyzan Oaks-Jaramillo, who loved the idea of school gardens that

she had seen at other schools. Elementary school Principal Joni Hemmerling was instantly invested in the idea of a garden for the students and community.

Kendra Sanderson — fourth-grade teacher, the NEHS (National Elementary Honor Society), along with the Sargent student council (all featured in the photo), will be instrumental in the organization and implementation of the garden project. The school also hopes to garner additional help from the community, parents and other students.

Joni and Kendra hope to include a bench as a memorial to their mother, Jeannie Leach, as she would have loved the garden.

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Company News



Procedure for Petitioning onto the REC Board of Directors.

Are you interested in serving on the San Luis Valley REC Board of Directors? Members will vote on the seats for District 3, Saguache County, and District 5, Conejos County.

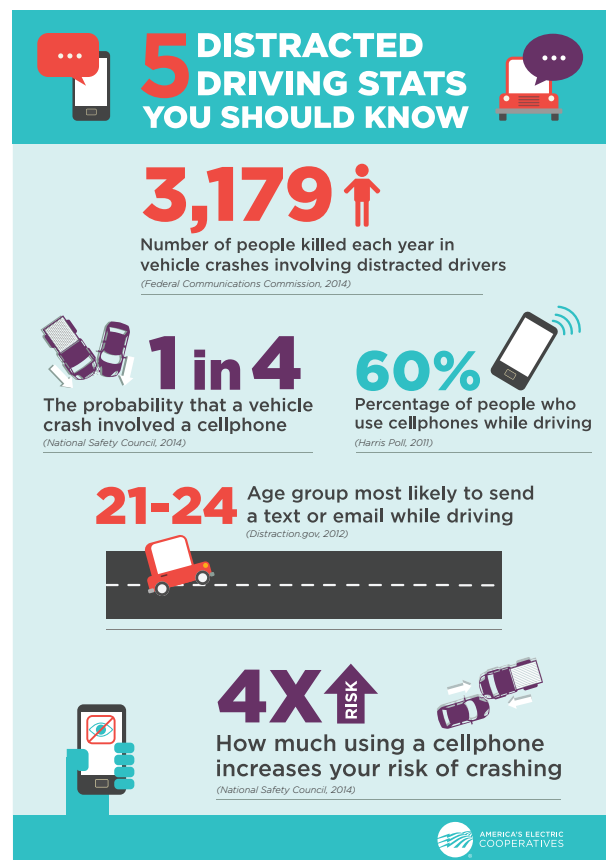
To petition on, members must complete a petition signed by 20 or more members to be considered as a candidate. All candidates, including incumbents, must submit signed petitions.

Petitions will be available mid-February at the REC office and on the cooperative's website at www.slvrec.com under the About Us tab and then to the Annual

Meeting tab. The link will also be on our Facebook page at San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative. Prospective candidates must return the petitions no later than April 28; however, to have a candidate profile featured in the April edition of the Newsboy, petitions with bios must be submitted by early March.

Safety

It is that time of year when roads can be unexpected icy and treacherous. With warmer days and still-cold nights, driving conditions can still be very slippery for your morning and evening commutes. Let's all do our part and not be distracted to while we drive.





LOREN HOWARD

Investing in Your Co-op

As a member of San Luis Valley REC, you make an investment in the co-op every time you pay your bill. This collective investment in the co-op benefits you and the community immediately and over time. So what exactly is this monthly investment, and how do you benefit from it?

The wires and maintenance fee is a monthly investment that helps your co-op cover the expenses of maintaining the overall electric system. Combating cyber-security threats and maintaining poles, wires, substations and co-op equipment takes strategic planning and significant resources. The wires and maintenance fee essentially ensures that all equipment operates properly and staff is trained and ready so the lights turn on when you need them.

Regardless of how much electricity a particular family uses, the cost of delivering power to that house is the same. As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, we believe the operational costs should be spread fairly and equitably across all of our members, regardless of the level of electricity use. That is why every member pays the wires and maintenance charge each month to cover basic operational costs.

amount for the cost of operation since all members benefit from the same service. In essence, this gives each REC member an equal share in REC's operation.

Your monthly investment ensures that you have access to safe, reliable and affordable power when you need it. We appreciate and value the investment that you make in REC each month, and we strive to use that investment wisely for the benefit of all members of our community.

All members are charged the same

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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719-379-2629

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719-852-5412

Scott Wolfe, Secretary
719-852-0966

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719-274-5680

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

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Conservation Corner



Do you want to save money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy, a “typical American family” spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money, however, is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances, or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several relatively easy ways to save energy without a substantial commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home. And, you won’t have to hire a specialist or call in a favor from someone who is handy with tools to help you.

According to *Money Magazine*, “improving the envelope” of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind vibrations can loosen up even a tight home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not close tightly, and duct work can spring leaks, wasting cooled and heated air. By placing weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors, you can keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and creates greater efficiency. Apply weather stripping around overlooked spaces like your attic hatch or pull-down stairs.

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LED bulbs have an estimated operational life span of typically 10,000 to 20,000 hours compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent. According to the Dept. of Energy, by replacing your home’s five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with models that have earned the ENERGY STAR rating, you can save \$75 each year.

Installing a blanket around your water heater could reduce standby heat losses by 25 to 45 percent and save you about 7 to 16 percent in water heating costs, according to the Dept. of Energy. For a small investment of about \$30, you can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets and install them in about one hour. On a safety note, the Dept. of Energy recommends that you not set the thermostat above 130 degrees Fahrenheit on an electric water heater with an insulating

jacket or blanket; the higher temperature setting could cause the wiring to overheat.

Given that a large portion of your monthly energy bill goes toward heating and cooling your home, it makes sense to ensure that your home’s heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system is performing at an optimal level. Checking, changing or cleaning your filter extends the life of your HVAC system and saves you money.

Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Otherwise, dust and dirt trapped in a system’s air filter leads to several problems, including: reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs; lowered system efficiency; and costly duct cleaning or replacement. Many HVAC professionals recommend cleaning the system filters monthly. A simple task like changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently, keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

Take a look at your programmable thermostat. When was the last time you checked to make sure it was programmed for the current season and family schedule? This is one of the best energy-saving tools at your fingertips. It enables you to fine tune the temperature during specific hours of the day. Many models allow you to differentiate between weekday and weekend schedules, and internet-connected thermostats can learn your schedule and make adjustments automatically. Most models come with an override option so you can make manual adjustments without losing overall programming. You can only achieve these efficiencies and savings if it is programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.





RECIPES OF THE MONTH

INGREDIENTS

3/4 cup balsamic vinegar
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 tbsp. honey
2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 tbsp. dried thyme
1 tbsp. dried oregano
4 steak fillets, such as sirloin
2 beefsteak tomatoes, sliced
kosher salt
4 slices mozzarella
Fresh basil leaves, for serving

Caprese Steak

In a small bowl, whisk together balsamic vinegar, garlic, honey, olive oil, dried thyme, and dried oregano.

Pour over steak and marinate for 20 minutes.

Season tomatoes with salt and pepper.

Heat grill to high. Grill steak 5 minutes per side, then top with mozzarella and tomatoes and cover grill until cheese is melty, 2 minutes.

Add basil and serve.

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 ounces peach schnapps
5 ounces frozen mango mix
1 tablespoon grenadine
2 cups crushed ice

Kiss on the Lips

Combine the peach schnapps, frozen mango and crushed ice in a blender and blend in spurts until smooth. Pour the grenadine into the bottom of a cocktail glass and then pour the blended mixture in over the top of it. Garnish with a pineapple slice and cherry.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup whole hazelnuts
12 whole Medjool dates, pitted and roughly chopped
2/3 cup almond butter
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa
2 tablespoons water
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

Healthy Brownie Bites

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Spread nuts on a small rimmed baking sheet. Bake at 350°F until lightly toasted, about 10 minutes, stirring once. Cool 10 minutes. Rub off skins. Reserve 20 hazelnuts. Pulse remaining hazelnuts in a food processor until finely chopped; transfer chopped nuts to a small bowl.

Pulse dates in food processor until almost pastelike. Add almond butter, cocoa, 2 tablespoons water, vanilla, and salt; process until well combined. Turn mixture out into a bowl; divide into 20 equal portions. Roll each portion around 1 whole hazelnut to form a ball. (Mixture will be oily.) Roll each brownie ball in chopped hazelnuts to coat. Chill until firm, about 30 minutes.

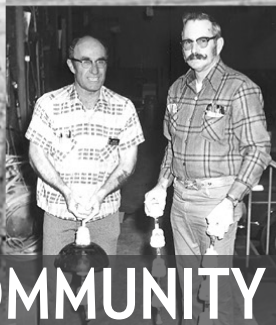


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POWERING A VITAL VALLEY

P.O. Box 3625
Monte Vista, CO 81144

February 2017



Celebrating

80

Years



POWERING OUR COMMUNITY

SLVREC's office is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Thursday.
The office is closed Friday through Sunday.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE

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

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Board Meeting—February 28 @ 9:30 a.m.
The Board of Directors meets the last Tuesday of each
month unless otherwise stated. Members are welcome.

This institution is an equal opportunity employer.

Your Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperative

