

Lineworker scholarship renamed

Martin Christensen: 'Personifying REC's commitment to service'

With the recent passing of former REC lineman, Martin Christensen, SLV REC Board of Directors voted to name the lineworker scholarship in his honor.

The Martin Christensen Memorial Lineworker Scholarship is valued at \$4,000 and covers tuition costs for one Valley student at any accredited lineworker school.

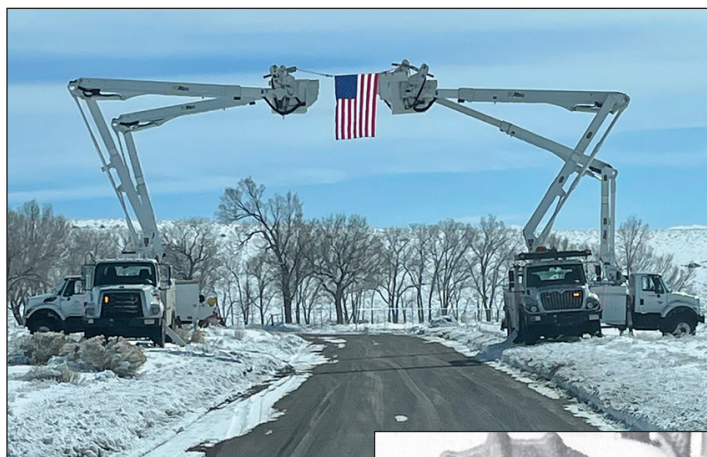
Martin began work at SLV REC in 1963 following the death of his father, Edward. At that time, REC's manager called him to see if he would be willing to return to the Valley to take his dad's place. Martin agreed and began

work right away. In 1971 he became the south area serviceman; after 35 years of service, Martin retired in June 1998, although members continued to call him for the next several years.

Giving a face to the co-op: Martin Christensen

From the November 1996 Newsboy:

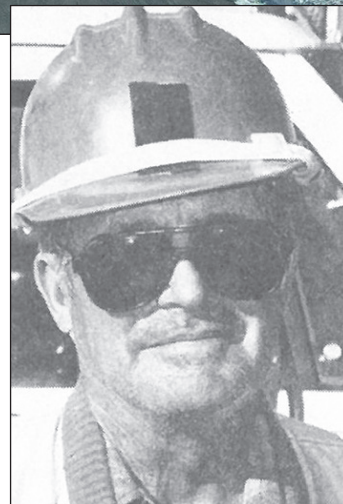
If you're a member of the SLVREC's southern part (from the 8 mile south of Monte Vista to the New Mexico border), it's a good bet that you know Martin Christensen. Martin is a troubleshooter responsible for everything from fixing



Courtesy Photos
Above: SLV REC trucks formed an archway at the cemetery prior to Martin Christensen's burial in January.

At right: Martin Christensen, 1996

See **CHRISTENSEN** continued on Page 5



Meet your co-op

Harrison named staking engineer



SLV REC's Justin Harrison was recently promoted to staking engineer following nearly seven years as the system operator/dispatcher.

Prior to joining REC's team, Justin earned an associate degree in plastics engineering, worked in a lab at a flooring manufacturer in Ohio, as a reclaim technician, quality control and

See **JUSTIN** continued on Page 2

Justin Harrison (left) replaced Staking Engineer Troy Golden (right), who retired in January following 30 years with REC.

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JUSTIN

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research and development.

He gained valuable experience of REC's electric system as well as the software used while working as the system operator. As a staking engineer, Justin will be working on developing infrastructure designs for both electrical and fiber facilities, evaluating costs, line extensions for new customers and designing new services to ensure efficient and cost-effective projects and workflow.

"Currently I am working on staking and designing small jobs, retirements and consumer charge jobs. I'm also learning assembly units, terms and conditions,

rates and best design practices. I am still learning and will be learning for some time to come," said Justin. He will begin the Hi-Line Engineering Staking Certification classes in the fall.

"Not coming from an electric utilities background and not working on the line crews, I have to completely learn assembly units and about line construction," he stated. This is the most challenging part of the new position. However, "I really enjoy the people that I work with [at SLV REC, and] (three-day weekends are pretty great too!)"

Justin and his wife have two kids; they enjoy

the outdoors: camping, ATVs, fishing, hunting and skiing. He also spends time mountain biking and hiking 14ers.

"When I applied to REC I had only been living here for a little over a year (recently moved from Ohio) and didn't really know anything about the

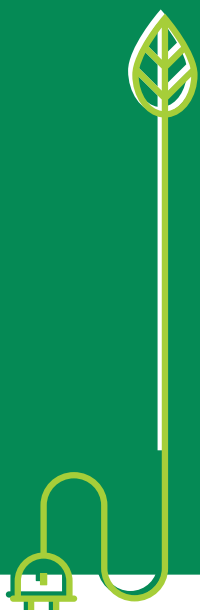
REC. My wife had told me that she heard it was a really good place to work, so I applied. I had always heard that electric utilities were a good industry to get into, even while living in Ohio, so I figured I would give it a shot, and the rest is history," Justin commented.

Conservation corner

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends a temperature setting of 35 to 38 degrees for the fresh food compartment and zero degrees for the freezer. Make sure the refrigerator doors are sealed airtight to maximize efficiency.

Source: www.energy.gov



ciello

Proudly serving our neighbors...

"I am writing to tell you how much we appreciate the excellent service we received last week when I called to report an Internet service outage at our home. I called several times to check on the status and each time I called the person I talked with was knowledgeable and helpful. I am impressed that whoever answers the phone can help me without transferring me to someone else.

The technician who arrived at our house to troubleshoot and ultimately restore our Internet service was outstanding. Andy was knowledgeable, professional and friendly and worked with others in the office to restore the service. It must have been complex because it took a while.

It is not easy to work on an antenna from a bucket on a cold windy day. Thank you to all for your work.

The Internet is an essential service."

*-Mary Montagano &
Dave Tetzlaff, Crestone*

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Loren Howard

REC'S renewable energy

Renewable energy, i.e., solar and hydro in the case of REC, has in the past decade made substantial inroads in playing a part of the nation's electric generation mix. Not only has the cost per kilowatt of installed capacity fallen, but wind has also shown itself to have substantial capacity factors. Capacity factor is a measure of the actual electricity produced compared to the maximum that could be produced. Here in the San Luis Valley, solar is virtually the only renewable generation in play. The elevation of at least 7,500 feet in the Valley provides great solar irradiance along with the many cloudless days provide for solar capacity factors greater than 25 percent.

REC currently has two power purchase agreements for renewable energy resources here in the Valley. Ten years ago, REC contracted with a family to provide electric for a hydro electric facility near Creede. This resource provides about one percent of the kilowatt-hours used annually by REC. In 2016, REC completed a second power purchase agreement for the electric output of the Penitente solar plant near Center. Penitente provides about three percent of REC's annual electric requirements. REC has a wholesale power contract with Tri-State Generation and Transmission which provides the remainder of REC's electric power requirements. Through that power contract, REC fulfills the rest of the Colorado's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirement that 20 percent of electricity sold come from a renewable resource.

Another supply of renewable electricity within the REC electric system is member installations of solar generation systems on their homes or businesses which are referred to as "net meter" systems. These systems provide electric energy to the individual members helping to offset the electricity purchased from REC. Electricity produced by each net meter system is credited to the member's account. If the net meter system produces more electricity than the member uses in a month, the excess electricity is "banked" and can be used in subsequent months. Interest in these net meter systems continues to be strong with new applications happening weekly. Currently, there are 162 net meter installations representing 1,740 kilowatts of solar generation connected to REC's electric distribution system.

So, what is next for renewable energy on REC's system? More solar is in consideration, but one of the challenges is finding a location for another solar system. All of the output from renewable resources on the REC system must be used within the REC electric grid. Finding a location where this requirement can be met has proved to be a challenge. The next solar system will likely be smaller than the Penitente facility which has a capacity of 2,750 kilowatts. This next renewable resource will likely be in the neighborhood of 500 kilowatts.

Renewable energy resources continue to be attractive financially, but integration into the system is a challenge.

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2021 Rebate Product Guide

- Rebates will only be processed for new items purchased within 120 days of rebate application.
- All applications must include an itemized invoice indicating item/model number, price and sale date.
- Please allow six weeks for rebate processing. • For application and more details, visit www.slvrec.com/rebates

LED BULBS	50% OF LAMP/BULB COST • Capped at \$8 per lamp/bulb • 500 lumens or greater • Cap of 50 lamps/bulbs per SLV REC account per year
ENERGY STAR® REFRIGERATOR / FREEZER (min 7.75 cu ft.)	\$30 PER UNIT • Additional \$160 if old unit is recycled. Receipt of disposal must be included with application to qualify for recycling rebate • Minimum size is 7.75 cubic feet • Freezer and refrigerator rebates are limited to a max of two recycles per member, per year
ENERGY STAR® CLOTHES WASHER	\$30 PER UNIT top load • \$40 PER UNIT front load
ENERGY STAR® CLOTHES DRYER	\$30 PER UNIT • \$90 HEAT PUMP UNIT (vent-less)
ENERGY STAR® DISHWASHER	\$20 PER UNIT
ELECTRIC WATER HEATER	\$30 PER UNIT • \$50 PER UNIT with lifetime tank warranty • \$350 PER UNIT for ENERGY STAR® rated heat pump (air source) water heater 30 gallon minimum
ENERGY STAR® AIR CONDITIONER - split system	\$100 PER UNIT • 16 SEER minimum • Permanent installation • Minimum 1 ton Window units excluded
ELECTRIC HEAT PUMP - AIR SOURCE	\$300 PER TON for units rated from 15-17 SEER • \$450 PER TON for units greater than 17 SEER • Not to exceed 50% of equipment cost • \$100 PER UNIT additional with controlled ETS backup • \$85 PER UNIT for terminal heat pump units or window mounted air-source heat pumps • Energy Star® rating NOT required
ELECTRIC HEAT PUMP - GROUND SOURCE	\$500 PER TON for new installation • \$250 PER TON for replacement systems \$100 PER UNIT for ground source heat pump powered hot water (desuperheater) • New or replacement ground source closed loop or open water source heat pumps qualify • Energy Star® rating NOT required
ELECTRIC OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT	25% OF COST up to \$150 for electric mower (walk-behind or riding), snow blower or bicycle • 25% OF COST up to \$50 for electric trimmer, chainsaw, pruner, leaf-blower and power-washer • Minimum purchase price of \$50 • Rebate available for battery or corded equipment • Maximum yearly rebate of \$300/member account

For electric vehicle charging equipment rebates, visit www.slvrec.com/rebates or email power@slvrec.com.

Historical happenings

1938: Construction completed

Construction was first completed on “A” section which included lines reaching to South Fork and extending four miles north of Center, south to Bowen and Waverly (the Resettlement District) and south as far as the Capulin-La Jara road. The 450 kVa substation transformer located at Zinzer Switch was the point electrical current was supplied by the Public Service Company to the REC. The center of Sargent Community was already being served by Public Service. According to first REC Superintendent Willard Johnson, the first pole was set on Paul Roberts ranch. (*San Luis Valley Historian*, Volume XXVI #3, 1994)

Courtesy Photo





Recipe of the month

INGREDIENTS

- 1-1/2 c. coarsely chopped Oreo cookies
See instructions: remove the icing centers first
- 3 c. mini marshmallows
- 1/2 c. milk
- 1/4 c. Creme de Menthe
- 1-1/2 c. whipping cream
- Chocolate shavings
- 5 mini mason jars



NO BAKE MINI GRASSHOPPER PIES

1. Remove all the icing centers of your Oreo cookies (about 1/2-package); using a food processor, coarsely grind the chocolate cookie parts up.
2. In a saucepan, melt the marshmallows with the milk over low heat. Then chill the mixture, stirring it occasionally, until mixture begins to set.
3. Once the marshmallow mix has cooled and set, stir in the Creme de Menthe. Set aside.
4. Using a mixer, whip the cream until soft peaks form. Then fold the whipped cream into the mint mixture. Set aside.
5. For the crust, evenly spread the cookie mixture into the bottoms of your mason jars, then pack it down.
6. Add the mint mixture on top of the cookie mixture, evenly spreading it out between the five jars.
7. Top the mini pies with a little dollop of whip cream, and some chocolate shavings (grated some semi-sweet chocolate)
8. Chill for at least 2 hours before serving.

Recipe by aprettylifeinthesuburbs.com

CHRISTENSEN

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outages and maintaining yard lights to collecting bills and checking meters. He is the doctor who still makes house calls.

Sometimes Martin works with line crews, but usually he works alone. He travels in a well-equipped bucket truck that has proven to be safer and more economical than two linemen in a regular truck. He also knows he's a radio call away from all of the REC's resources. (He never works alone on "hot wire" jobs.

Martin knows his 1,500 square mile territory with its REC consumers like the back of his hand. For many, he is the only contact members have with REC. If they experience an outage, they call him. If they're late paying a bill, they call him. Or if they call the office and are asked what their meter number is, they reply "Oh, Martin knows where it is."

One of Martin's job requirements is that he be on call

24 hours a day. With pagers and radios, life has gotten easier—in the beginning Martin or his wife Barbara had to be near a phone all the time.

Throughout Martin's career, he personified REC's commitment to service. His boots will be large ones to fill.

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Martin's son and REC Foreman Ryan Christensen said, "This is a great honor for him. He mentored a lot of people who became linemen because of my dad—myself; my son Riley works at La Plata. I have two nephews that are linemen— one at San Miguel and one in California. They followed in his footsteps."

Martin's commitment to members of REC will be remembered for years to come; with the naming of the linemen scholarship, generations of future linemen will be impacted by Martin's commitment.



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March 2021

Employee Appreciation Day

March 5, 2021



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Annual Meeting update

SLVREC's annual meeting will be held on **Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 7 p.m.** Location will be announced at a later date, due to COVID restrictions. Petition packets can be downloaded online at slvrec.com/annual-meeting.

Ballots will be mailed by May 6.

POWERING OUR COMMUNITY

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

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SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 30, 9:30 a.m.

The REC Board of Directors meets the last Tuesday of each month unless otherwise stated. Members are welcome; advance notice required.

This institution is an equal opportunity employer.



Photos by Tyler Cerny