

BIG FLAT NEWS



February 2025

www.bigflatelectric.com

MEMBER APPRECIATION NIGHT



For Customer Appreciation Night, Big Flat Electric Cooperative handed out meal vouchers during the North Country and Turner basketball game held in Whitewater. | **BIG FLAT ELECTRIC PHOTO**

SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications are available now

Big Flat Electric Cooperative Scholarships

Big Flat Electric Cooperative is offering \$500 Scholarships. High school graduating students whose primary residence is served by Big Flat Electric may apply for one of these \$500 scholarships.

Trade School Scholarship

The Trade School Scholarship is being offered to students of any age who are attending or plan to attend a trade school. Up to \$1,000 will be awarded to a selected applicant whose primary residence is served by Big Flat Electric.

Applications can be found at our office in Malta, on our website: www.bigflatelectric.com, and at the local school's guidance counselor office.

Due date for applications is April 4.



NRECA YOUTH TOUR 2025 Essay Winner

Sommer Green wins trip to Washington, D.C.



EACH year the sophomores and juniors from the schools within our service territory have the chance to win an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., by submitting an application and writing an essay. This unique trip is truly the trip of a lifetime as youth watch history come alive as they explore the museums, memorials, monuments and so much more with

other students from across Montana and the nation. They will also gain a personal understanding of American history and explore their role as U.S. citizens by meeting their state's representatives and senators.

Big Flat Electric Cooperative had several excellent applications this year and selected Sommer Green as the winner for the 2025 Washington, D.C.,

Youth Tour. Sommer, the daughter of Dallas and Ashley Green, from Whitewater High School will represent Big Flat Electric in Washington, D.C., this June. Congratulations, Sommer.

This year's essay topic was: *What was the most important event to have occurred in our nation during your lifetime? How did it affect you?*

Below is her essay.

How technology has impacted my life

ESSAY BY SOMMER GREEN | WHITEWATER

IN my life of nearly 17 years, many events happened or came to be in my world. Some important ones include the COVID pandemic, wars in Israel and Ukraine, many school and large-event mass shootings (even in churches), bombings and weather tragedies of fire and water and, most recently, the highly political election for the presidency of the United States. The list goes on.

These events, caused by man and nature, made impacts on me in various ways, but personally, none of these have impacted me in my brief life span as much as the technology of the cell phone with fiber optic high-speed Internet.

The World Wide Web is in the palm of my hand. It is ironic that the first iPhone was introduced in the year of my birth, 2007. Polls show that the use of cell phones in the United States of America has grown from 1.4 million in 2007 to 231 million in 2024! I believe that technology has been the most important event to have occurred in my lifetime. Technology has been around for quite some time and although it

didn't originate in my time, it was a world event that has advanced greatly since.

Being in such an isolated area is hard, especially when it comes to technology. We are constantly trying to get ahold of people, but when you live in the middle of nowhere it can be hard. Thanks to fiber optics, we are able to have service in more distant areas. When we are moving cows and someone needs to call me, they can. Not only is the technology today a convenience, but it's also a lifestyle. Being that I live on a farm and ranch, technology has helped us both in the field and the corral. Instead of waking up at four in the morning to go check cows, I can just check them on the cameras.

If your dad is anything like mine, every task has to be done perfectly. When it's harvest time and I have to drive the swather, my dad can just set up the GPS so I know where to go and I don't even have to steer, because I have autosteer for that. All I have to do is sit in the seat.

I have benefited from technology in many different ways, mainly medi-

cally, educationally and socially. It has greatly impacted my life with my singing. It helps me get my voice out there. I can record myself singing and post it online to many platforms.

If it wasn't for MRIs they would have never figured out what was wrong with my knee, and I would have never gotten the chance to play sports. Today, robots are able to analyze you and find the problem. They are also able to operate on you.

Speaking of sports, I am able to watch my cousins play their games live without actually being there. Instead of having to wait for the newspaper or news station on TV to hear about what is going on in the world, I can just look it up on Google or open my news app.

If we were to go back to 2019 when COVID had its outbreak, what would we have done without computers and phones? Schools shut down, and if it wasn't for computers we wouldn't have been able to continue our schooling. We all had to social distance. Thanks to Zoom calls with teachers and classmates, we were able to still get some type of social interaction. We were able




Sommer Green, a junior at Whitewater High School, is the winner of the 2025 Youth Tour essay contest and will be going to Washington, D.C., in June. | COURTESY PHOTO

to receive and turn in assignments through email. The only way to see long-distance friends and family was through a video call. Almost every class I have requires some sort of device to complete my schoolwork. This gives me the opportunity to get my work done easier if I am going to be gone, because all I have to bring with me is my computer, instead of 10 books. I also have access to higher education right at my fingertips. I can learn just about anything I want online.

Although technology has benefited us socially, it has also given us a disadvantage. We lack the ability to hold eye contact in a conversation or go out and make friends. I personally am very outgoing and don't struggle to make friends, but it is a challenge for me to talk to those whose only social skills involve their thumbs. A phone does help you make friends all over the world, and help stay in touch with friends who live miles away. But when it comes down to it and we see them again in person, they aren't the same and it's hard to get two words out of them without them looking everywhere but your eyes. Not to mention problems

of arthritis, poor posture and carpal tunnel that will plague my generation in the future!

Technology has both benefitted and hindered me. It is almost impossible to be phoneless. It's a necessity to live. A requirement. If it wasn't for technology my world would be completely different. I'm hardwired for technology, just like the rest of the world. I will forever have some type of dependency on it as well. From storing photos and videos to the "cloud," to the many different social networking platforms available, technology has become irreplaceable. I can apply for a job, check on family across the country, share photos with family in another state or country, check on my medical records, or simply see what shows are streaming on my Smart TV that day. Almost everyone I know has a smartphone, except for my Great Grandma Sally. If you want to get ahold of her you have to call her on a landline!

To say that technology has greatly advanced in my lifetime is simply an understatement. I sometimes wonder what life would be like "back when" before all this technology, but hey, now I can just "Google it!" 

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- **Find us on Facebook** under Big Flat Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- **Visit our website** at www.bigflatelectric.com.
- **Sign up for budget billing** and/or ACH (auto payments) by calling our office.
- **Bills** are generated on the 1st working day of each month and are due on the 20th of each month.
- **Bills that are 60 days in arrears are subject to disconnect.** Once disconnected, a reconnect fee will be charged. The bill will then have to be paid in full to be reconnected.
- **We have a secure, automated toll-free phone number** for members making payments by credit card and/or bank account: 1-844-968-1965. You will need to have your account number and/or phone number that is on file with our office to access the automated system.
- **Take control of your electric account with SmartHub.** You can pay your bills; set up and cancel reoccurring payments; set up notifications; obtain duplicates of your bills; and view your monthly and yearly usage, all at your fingertips. Visit our website: www.bigflatelectric.com or download the SmartHub app from your Play Store on Android or the App Store on Apple devices.
- New service and service change quotes are only **valid for 30 days**.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

ALL OUR DREAMS CAN COME TRUE, IF WE HAVE THE COURAGE TO PURSUE THEM.

WALT DISNEY



FROM FEBRUARY 1963: BFEC NEWSLETTER

Along Our Lines

FEBRUARY 1963 – BFEC Newsletter

- Security lights have been installed on the Clarence Harmon and Lydia Shaw premises near Turner.
- The Eddie Harmons of Turner are among our consumers in the process of installing electric heat in their homes.
- Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Truax and family of Whitewater have moved to Malta to make their home. Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Robertson and family have rented the Truax house. Mr. Robertson has accepted the janitor position in the Whitewater school.
- We of the Big Flat Electric would like to extend our deepest sympathy to the George Knudsen family of south Malta. Mr. Knudsen passed away January 23.
- Mr. and Mrs. Dale Green and family have move to the former Tom Helgeson place near Malta.
- Graham Hutton of Turner is remodeling his kitchen and utility room and installing electric appliances.
- Electric heat is now heating the home of Joe DeSaye of Turner.

Employee Retires

Sam K. Carlson, who has been a groundman on the Big Flat Electric crew since April 22, 1952 retired on January 15, 1963.

Sam and his wife, Jennie plan to remain at the present time in Malta where their children, Karen, Mike, Tim, Janet and Janice are attending the Malta Public Schools and Jimmy, who is a pre-schooler, is at home.

The employees held a combination Retirement and Birthday Party in Sam's honor on the evening of January 9 at the headquarters building. Potluck dinner was served and the evening was spent playing cards. Sam was presented with a gift from the group.

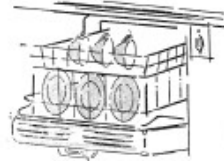
Replacing Sam is Sigurd M. (Sig) Salveson. Mr. and Mrs. Salveson and family have moved to Malta from the south community where they have been consumers of the Big Flat Electric when the headquarters was in Turner.



... for her. But after every meal you serve, you do have dirty dishes, lots of them.

If you're still doing dishes by hand, you're doing them the hard way—the old-fashioned way. Let an automatic electric dishwasher wash dishes really clean—in water hotter than your hands can stand.

Imagine meal-time in an all-electric kitchen—from a well-stocked refrigerator freezer... to a cleaner, cooler, more dependable elec-



tric range... and finally to a time-saving, more sanitary electric dishwasher.

The step-saving efficiency of an all-electric kitchen makes meal preparation ten times faster, cleaner, easier. It's today's modern, convenient way, and electricity does the job economically.

Ask your rural electric representative or electric appliance dealer how you can up-date your kitchen the modern electric way.



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