



# BIG FLAT NEWS



June 2026

[www.bigflatelectric.com](http://www.bigflatelectric.com)

## 2026 Scholarships Awarded

**B**IG Flat Electric Cooperative is proud to announce our 2026 scholarship recipients.

Recipients of the Big Flat Electric Trade School Scholarships, each awarded the amount of \$500, are: Carson Maloney, attending MSU-Northern; Karlie LaBrie, Malta High School; Kenzie LaBrie, Malta High School; Straud Sims, Malta High School; and AC Julian Snell, Hays Lodgepole High School.

Recipients of the Big Flat Electric \$500 Scholarships are: Sommer Green, Whitewater High School; Karlie LaBrie, Malta High School; Kenzie LaBrie, Malta High School; Taylee Messerly, Hays Lodgepole High School; Shaylynn Morin, Hays Lodgepole High School; Trydell Ramirez Manuel, Hays

Lodgepole High School; Bridget Reed, Turner High School; and Kennedy Simonson, Whitewater High School.

Dawson Hammond, Malta High School, was awarded the Big Flat Electric \$500 Manager's Scholarship, which is presented to graduating seniors of Big Flat Electric employees.

Kennedy Simonson and Dawson Hammond were also selected as recipients of the Basin Electric Member-Cooperative Consumer Scholarships, in the amount of \$1,250 each.

Big Flat Electric congratulates all graduates across our service area and wishes them continued success in their future endeavors. RM



Sommer Green



Dawson Hammond



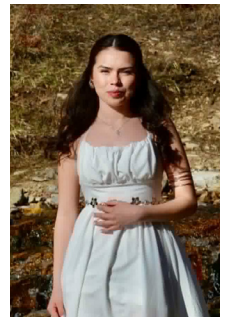
Karlle LaBrie



Kenzie LaBrie



Carson Maloney



Taylee Messerly



Shaylynn Morin



Trydell Ramirez



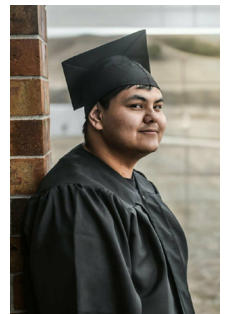
Bridget Reed



Kennedy Simonson



Straud Sims




AC Julian Snell

# 2026 Career Days

**B**ig Flat Electric Cooperative took part in the Tribal College & Career Fair Circuit held at the Red Whip Center, Fort Belknap Agency, and the Malta High School Career Day in April. Big Flat employees were on hand to provide information and answer questions about careers

available at Big Flat Electric and in the electric utility industry.

Big Flat Electric appreciates the opportunity to connect with the bright minds of tomorrow and share insights about opportunities in our industry. 



Debbie Kindle and Leif Sorenson attended the Career Fair Circuit held at the Red Whip Center, Fort Belknap Agency.



Leif Sorenson, Logan Sims, Hunter Goodman and Kari Elletson (not pictured) attended Career Day at Malta High School.



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**B**ig Flat Electric Cooperative encourages our members to visit our website at [bigflatelectric.com](http://bigflatelectric.com), click "Pay Bill Online" and register as a new user. This bill pay option has many advantages such as selecting date of payment and amount, managing payment accounts, setting up auto pay, viewing billing and payment history and managing your personal information.



# Debbie Kindle calls it a career after 30 years

Column by **DEBBIE KINDLE**

**I**t is bitter-sweet to inform our membership that I will be retiring after 30 years of service at Big Flat Electric on July 1st. I was hired in May 1996 by General Manager Jeanne Barnard to fill the billing clerk position held by Marcella McEwen as she took the office manager's position. The duties of my job consisted of billing, collections, customer service, first on phone, member service, service orders and whatever else I could help with.

My job has changed a lot since I started. Our members used to have to read their own meter(s) and then mail in their readings along with their payment, and we would manually input that information into the computer. Now with changing technology we can download the readings, which has cut down on a lot of manual labor. Also, when I first started the payment options were cash, check, cashiers check or money orders. Now members can pay online 24/7 or pay by monthly autopay with either credit/debit card or by checking/savings account, which has cut down on time posting the daily payments.

I believe the most challenging of all my duties were collections. I have been beaten up over the phone many times! Most of the time the members were frustrated and mad at themselves, but seemed to want to take it out on the collector! I have heard just about every story in the book, and some pretty funny excuses and lots of false promises. However, I have always tried to listen to them and work with them. Then there were the members who just got busy with life and mistakenly didn't get their bill paid. Those are the easy ones to collect. On the other hand, hardships happen and I was more than



willing to work out a payment plan that would work for both of us.

I am going to miss the members who I have become friends with by visiting over the phone. Their monthly calls in to make their payment could turn into some of my most enjoyable visits. Some were just lonely, and some just needed someone to listen to them. Many of my old phone buddies have passed on, but I still have some dear ones that I will truly miss.

As it will be different to depart after all these years, I am anxious for the opportunity to spend more time with family and do some traveling. I (finally) became a grandma last May to a beautiful little granddaughter named Thea JoAnne. I look forward to spending a lot of time spoiling her!!

My years here at Big Flat Electric flew by quickly and I will take many memorable memories with me for sure. Thank you Big Flat Electric for giving me the opportunity to work for this cooperative and amazing members. May God bless you all. 

## THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- **Find us on Facebook** under Big Flat Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- **Visit our website** at [www.bigflatelectric.com](http://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](http://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

"The Sun himself is weak when he first rises, and gathers strength and courage as the day gets on."

- Charles Dickens

FROM JUNE 1967: *BFEC NEWSLETTER*

# Mt. Antoine installations wrecked

By **GEORGE HOYNES**

**I**t was May 2, the first day it had been possible to make a trip to the blacked-out U.S. Border Patrol high-frequency short-wave station, the Glasgow micro wave and Phillips County TV installations atop 5,700-foot Mt. Antoine in the Little Rocky Mountains after a record-breaking blizzard.

The Big Flat Electric serves the three stations with a 1½ mile cable laid from the Ruby Gulch mine to the tope of the mountain. The mine is two miles up Ruby Gulch from the mining camp of Zortman. From the mine, under good conditions, the climb to the top of Mt. Antoine is a four-wheel drive job. The Little Rocky Mountains are 50 miles southwest of Malta, headquarters of the Big Flat Electric. Highway 91, which skirts the mountains, was in fair condition considering the late blizzard. Highway cuts had been drifted full and the open country looked more like January of a hard winter than May. A 7-mile gravel road into Zortman was passable and the two miles up Ruby Gulch were negotiated with little difficulty by the Big Flat Vehicle.

From there on to the mountain top,

it was plain to see, was going to have to be made on foot. Two hours later, after floundering up in waist-high snow, detouring around 10-foot drifts that totally obscured the trail, the top was reached and the damage to the Border Patrol station could be seen.

A 160-foot tower was down in a mass of twisted metal. Three antennas were in the wreckage. A small building nearby had been struck by the tower which had collapsed from the weight of snow and ice build-up during a mid-April storm. Remaining poles and overhead lines are covered with sheath of snow and ice.

The TV stations, half a mile further

up the mountain, were still functioning, sending storm warnings to stockmen, travel information and emergency messages to viewers hundreds of miles east, west, north and south.

The Boarder Patrol station is one of a chain extending across the state. Others are near Havre and Fort Peck northern Montana.



The twisted wreckage of the 160 ft Boarder Patrol radio tower and equipment building. Little damage was suffered by the buildings as the tower collapsed in a spiral around them.

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General Manager: Gretchen Boardman



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