



BIG FLAT NEWS



November 2022

www.bigflatelectric.com

PRO-AM ARM-WRESTLING TOURNAMENT

Lineman Sorensen and son both win gold and silver



Big Flat Electric Lineman Leif Sorensen stands with his kids, Knox, left, and Remi. Leif and Knox competed recently at the Montana State Pro-Am Arm-wrestling tournament and both brought home gold and silver medals. | COURTESY PHOTO

Big Flat Electric Lineman Leif Sorensen and his son Knox recently competed at the Montana State Pro-Am Arm-wrestling Tournament in Billings. Leif and Knox both brought home the gold in right arm and silver in the left.

When visiting with Leif, Knox and daughter Remi, I asked Knox what got him interested in arm-wrestling. Knox told me that he always watched his dad, and then he decided he wanted to do it, too. Leif started competing approximately 3 years ago, but wasn't sure exactly why he started, other than he has always had strong hands and decided to give it a try. Remi is a great supporter of her dad and brother, and thinks she will be arm-wrestling in the future.

For Leif, this sport doesn't require a lot of exercise, but he does practice arm-wrestling weekly. I asked Knox if he exer-



Knox Sorensen poses with his medals. | COURTESY PHOTO

cises. He said he does once in a while and occasionally does push-ups, but that is only when he gets into trouble.

Leif competes mainly in Montana, but will occasionally travel to North Dakota and South Dakota. The competitions are a double-elimination bracket.

Big Flat Electric would like to congratulate Leif and Knox, and wish them the best of luck in their future competitions. **RM**



Big Flat Electric's monthly newsletter wins six awards

The Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association recently held its annual meeting in Great Falls. Big Flat Electric Cooperative was awarded Excellence in Communications for Small Cooperatives, Best Small Cooperative Newsletter and Best Feature Photograph.

Congratulations to newsletter editor Shawna Myers on receiving First and Second place for Small Cooperative Feature Stories. We are proud of the efforts of Shawna and staff contributors in making great publications for our members! **RM**



BIG FLAT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

75th ANNUAL MEETING WAS A BIG SUCCESS

Big Flat Electric Cooperative held our 75th Annual Meeting on October 8, 2022. There was a great turnout and we would like to thank those who attended. All three incumbent directors were re-elected to another term.



2022 Big Flat Electric Cooperative Board of Directors from left: Vice President Roger Solberg, Duane Klindworth, Patty Quisno, Secretary/Treasure Betty Campbell, President Alan Wasson, and Alan VanVoast. Not pictured is Kevin Koss. | **BIG FLAT PHOTO**



Big Flat Electric Cooperative Office Manager Kari Hammond, right, with 2022 \$300 grand-prize winner Von Holzhey. | **BIG FLAT PHOTO**



Big Flat Electric Line Superintendent Darren Demarais, right, with 2022 \$50 Young Member grand-prize winner Jamie Stanley. | **BIG FLAT PHOTO**



Big Flat Electric Line Superintendent Darren Demarais, center, hangs out with long-standing member Rosemary Peak and Nanette Peak during the 2022 Annual Meeting. | **BIG FLAT ELECTRIC PHOTO**

Youth Tour essays due Dec. 2

ATENTION high school sophomores and juniors: Here's your chance to win a free trip to Washington, D.C., from June 16 - 23, 2023.

The student and/or parent or guardian must be served by Big Flat Electric Co-op. Contest rules can be found at bigflatelectric.com, your school counselor or stop by the Big Flat Electric office in Malta. The topic for the 2023 Washington, D.C., Youth Tour is:

"If you could witness one historical moment firsthand, what would it be and why?"

Orientation will be on Friday, June 16, in Great Falls.

The group will fly to D.C. on Saturday, June 17, and return June 23. RM



2022 Youth Tour essay winners got a free trip to Washington, D.C. | FILE PHOTO

UNDERSTANDING ENERGY DEMAND

In early 2016, Big Flat Electric Cooperative (BFEC) began showing the energy demand (Kilowatt) usage on all electric bills. Demand measures the maximum amount of power you require each billing period. Historically, we've only billed demand on three-phase services such as irrigation and large commercial accounts. Displaying the demand on residential and other single-phase services is an opportunity to show members their true use of the electrical system. Currently, the demand charge for residential services is captured in the kilowatt-hour (KWh) rate, and no demand charge is needed.

It is important to understand how electricity is made and delivered to your home. Before BFEC can send electricity to your home, that power needs to be generated by a Generation and Transmission Cooperative (G&T). In our case, the G&T is Basin Electric Cooperative, which has generating

assets locally in Montana, North Dakota and Wyoming. Our members also get power generated by federal hydroelectric power plants marketed and transmitted by Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). Once the electricity has been generated, it travels over high-voltage transmission lines to substations, where the voltage is reduced to a safer level for distribution. The electricity then travels over distribution powerlines and finds its way into your home. So, while you pay your bill to us – your electric distribution cooperative – we don't actually generate the power you use.

We do help determine how much electricity our members need to power their homes and businesses, and you play a big part in determining how much electricity the G&T needs to create in order to keep the lights on in our communities. That is where the terms "consumption" and "demand"

come in.

Consumption is measured in kilowatt-hours (KWh). Demand is measured in kilowatts (KW). A lightbulb "consumes" a certain amount of watts, let's say 100 watts per hour. If that lightbulb stays on for 10 hours, it "demands" a certain number of kilowatts (in this case, 1 KW) from the generation station producing electricity. Now, if you turn on 10, 100-watt lightbulbs in your home for one hour, you are still consuming the same number of KWh's. However, you are placing a demand on the utility to have those KWh's available to you over the course of one hour, instead of ten. This requires the G&T plant to produce more power in less time, in order to meet your demand.

Understanding your demand usage is important, as your Board of direc-

See DEMAND, next page

PHOTO BY
BUCKSHOT NELSON

PHOTO BY KEVIN KOSS



SEND BIG FLAT YOUR PHOTOS

Big Flat Electric Cooperative welcomes pictures from our service area. Please feel free to submit photos that you have taken so that we can publish them in the Big Flat Electric news section of *Rural Montana* magazine. Photos can be emailed to shawna@bigflatelectric.com, along with an explanation or description of your photo.

DEMAND

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tors and staff are exploring different rate structures, which may incorporate a demand charge to all rate classes. One reason why is due to a

change in the way BFEC is charged for the power we purchase. In January 2019, our wholesale energy provider, Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative, began charging BFEC for peak demand usage that is more than 85 percent of our historical peak demand average. Peak demand is the point in

time when the demand for electricity is the highest during the month. While no decision to change our rate structure has been made yet, we want our members to know different rate structures are being reviewed as our goal is to fairly allocate costs among all our membership rate classes. RM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- District 2 Alan Van Voast
- District 3 Alan Wasson, President
- District 4 Betty Campbell, Sec. /Treas.
- District 5 Roger Solberg, Vice President
- District 6 Patty Quisno
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