

# SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC *Cooperative*



PO BOX 369, EKALAKA, MT 59324 • PH 406-775-8762 • WWW.SEECOOP.COM

## Annual Meeting 2025

**S**OUTHEAST Electric Cooperative held the 2025 Annual Meeting on June 13th. 140 members attended and 280 meals were served. The Wagon Wheel Café catered the event, serving delicious roast beef, roasted potatoes and carrots, green beans and chocolate brownies. The Kalbach Family provided wonderful entertainment before the meeting, and shared a few favorite tunes during the meeting as well.

President Albert Paul was touring Europe this year with his family, so Vice-President Mike Hansen stepped in and did a great job. He gave a short report and introduced the staff. Secretary Karen Kreitel gave us a look at the financial statement and reported that SECO is in good financial standing, and that the audit found all operations to be secure.

Manager Tye Williams reported that energy sales are up and will continue to climb as we add the new substation. The board has approved the replacement of the transmission line between Baker and Ekalaka. This project is slated for 2027. He also stated that we will continue to be aggressive with our pole-testing program. Crews have spent a great amount of time this winter inspecting the 1,700 miles of line and 28,000 poles through the system. More than 500 poles have been changed this year. Tye also touched on the wildfire liability bill, HB490. Southeast Electric is currently working with MECA and other state agencies to develop a wild-



Pictured is Lane & Sharon Carroll and their grandson, Niko. Lineman, Adam Kuntz, purchased and restored the above Power Wagon that was purchased by Southeast Electric in the early 1950's. Although Niko was looking forward to seeing the "big trucks" he was okay to get his picture taken in front of this classic. | **COURTESY PHOTO**

fire mitigation plan.

Special speakers included Ryan Hall of Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association and Jeremy Mahowald, Upper Missouri Power Cooperative. Ryan updated the members on the legislative session for 2025. Jeremy gave a report on what Basin has been doing and will be doing to ensure that Southeast Electric has reliable and affordable electricity.

Kids of all ages were given colored chalk and spent the meeting decorating the cement at Southeast Electric. They were also entered into a drawing for door prizes. Charlee Lindell won a cute activity backpack donated by

BOSS Office Products; Wyatt Brown won \$50 in cash; Clover Beach won headphones donated by West River Cooperative and Grand Electric Cooperative; and Rianne Kawecky was the winner of \$50 in cash.

Many door prizes were given this year, thanks to our vendors: Irby Utilities, RESCO, Red Rock Power, Electrical Consultants, Inc., and Border States. The **BIG WINNERS** of the \$500 cash prizes were Randall Harris and Wayne & Deb Yost. Congratulations!

Hope to see you all next year. Let's make it a goal to get more than 200 members for our 80th year as a cooperative! **RM**

# Prevent grass and brush fires

**G**RASS and brush are excellent fuels for fire, making fires involving ground cover and foliage extremely dangerous and destructive.

Grass and brush fires, which are often referred to/generalized as wildfires in the U.S., can travel up to 15.5 miles per hour and can spread to tens of thousands of acres within a few hours of ignition. In North America, the peak season for grass and brush fires is between June and August, but they can occur year-round.

While they are most common in desert areas and locations experiencing prolonged drought, grass and brush fires can occur anywhere that weather conditions are dry and winds are high.

Grass and brush fires can occur naturally when lightning strikes the ground or when high winds bring down powerlines, both of which

can cause a spark and ignite a fire. However, 85 percent of wildfires are caused by humans. The more common causes include burning debris, using hot equipment on grass, improperly discarding cigarettes, leaving campfires unattended and intentionally setting a fire.

To keep your family safe from grass and brush fires, follow these safety tips:


- Be aware of any Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches issued by the National Weather Service.
- Never build a campfire, shoot fireworks, burn debris, use a barbecue pit or initiate a controlled burn when warnings are in effect. Before engaging in any of these activities, check local ordinances.
- If engaging in these activities, never leave the area unattended and keep a shovel, bucket of water, fire

extinguisher or other fire suppression tools on hand.

- If you see a downed powerline or other damaged electrical equipment, notify Southeast Electric Cooperative immediately. Never approach a downed powerline or try to move one; stay at least 50 feet away from the area and warn others to do the same.

- Do not park cars, trucks, boats or recreational vehicles on dry grass or shrubs. Always keep vehicles properly maintained to avoid sparking and overheating.

- Use an approved spark arrester on all internal combustion engine-powered equipment used on your property, such as lawnmowers, chainsaws, tractors and trimmers. Check and replace spark arresters periodically.

For more information about electrical safety, go to [SafeElectricity.org](https://SafeElectricity.org). 



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## Labor Day CLOSURE

Southeast Electric Cooperative's  
office will be closed Monday,  
September 1

## UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS

Abraxas Petroleum  
Marvin Brown  
Joy Duffield, deceased  
Brenda Herman  
Jack Krueger  
Mike Krueger, deceased  
Jimmy D. & Erna L. McClure  
Dale A. Radke, deceased  
Virginia Richardson  
Emily Shelton  
Clint & Amy Ueker  
John Woods, Jr.



If you know how to get in touch with the above people/estates, please have them call us at 406-775-8762 or email [info@seecoop.com](mailto:info@seecoop.com) with information.

**COMING  
SOON**

**2025**

CARTER COUNTY

**DAYS OF '85  
FAIR & RODEO**

AUGUST 8, 9, 10  
EKALAKA, MT

