

SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



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

SECO ANNUAL MEETING

2025 Annual Meeting of the Members is Friday, June 13

BRING the family and enjoy an evening of friends, food, and wonderful music. 2025 Southeast Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting has been set for Friday, June 13, 2025, in the Southeast Electric Truck Shop.

Registration and a free roast beef supper will begin at 4:30 p.m., the Kalbach Family will be playing music at 5 p.m., and the business meeting will begin at 6 p.m. Manager Tye Williams and Vice Chairman, Mike Hansen will update members on cooperative activ-

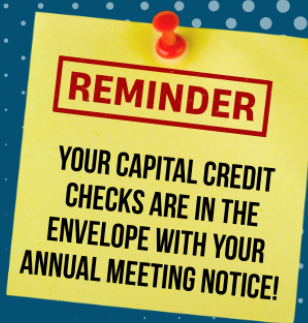
ities. Board Chairman Albert Paul will call for any questions that the membership may have.

Directors from Districts 2 and 8, currently held by Doug Gardner and Dave Hayden, are up for re-election. Members will also be voting on a bylaw change regarding the election of directors in the future. This proposed bylaw change has been mailed to all active members along with the Annual Meeting Notice and capital credit checks.

Attendees will enjoy door prizes

and attendance prizes. There will be two grand prizes of \$500 cash. This meeting provides you an opportunity to make a difference in your cooperative. All members attending the meeting are asked to bring the registration materials they receive in the mail. This includes your registration card and sometimes a voting credential form for organizations and ranch corporations. These documents allow you to vote and be part of the door prize drawings. RM

We hope to see you at the **2025**
ANNUAL MEETING
FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 2025



REGISTRATION & MEAL - 4:30 PM
ENTERTAINMENT - 5:00 PM - THE KALBACH FAMILY
BUSINESS MEETING - 6:00 PM



Southeast Electric Truck Shop, Ekalaka, MT



THE MONTANA DINOSAUR TRAIL

20-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION KICKING OFF THIS SUMMER

By **DR. SABRE MOORE** | Executive
Director of Carter County Museum

ON April 12, staff, volunteers, and board members from 14 museums got together for the annual meeting of the Montana Dinosaur Trail at the Fort Peck Interpretive Center. This location was no accident — 20 years ago, on May 7, 2005 the Center celebrated its grand opening as well as the kick-off to the Montana Dinosaur Trail program!

The idea for the trail was conceived in Malta, where two *Brachylophosaurus* — one nearly complete specimen named Elvis, and the other, Leonardo, which is in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the best preserved dinosaur — were unearthed in the 1990s. These finds were donated to the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum, which thought that people would be interested in seeing these dinosaurs in the community in which they were discovered. This sentiment, as we learned in last month's newsletter, was also true of the Carter County Museum, as well as many others across the state.

Today, the Montana Dinosaur Trail is made up of 14 museums, from the Montana Dinosaur Center in Bynum to the Carter County Museum in Ekalaka.

We will add a new facility to the trail in 2026, the Musselshell Valley Historical Museum in Roundup, Montana. Local finds exhibited at this museum include Ava the Triceratops, as well as fossils, including *Tyrannosaurus*, *Anky-*



The *Edmontosaurus annectens* is the Carter County Museum's flagship dinosaur. Each trail facility has one, and you can find them listed on the stamp page in the passport.

UPCOMING EVENTS

To celebrate our 20-year anniversary, many facilities are hosting events:

- **June 7:** Hill County History at the H. Earl Clack Museum (Havre)
- **June 13-14:** Buzzard Days at Makoshika State Park (Glendive)
- **June 21:** Fossil Fun Fest at the Depot Museum (Rudyard) and Dino Days at the Fort Peck Interpretive Center (Fort Peck)
- **June 28:** The summer speaker series kicks off at Frontier Gateway Museum with Victor Bjornberg and the Montana Dinosaur Trail (Glendive)
- **July 2:** Opening of the Cretaceous Crossroads Exhibit at Museum of the Rockies (Bozeman)
- **July 12:** Roar & Explore at Great Plains Dinosaur Museum (Malta)
- **July 26-27:** 13th Annual Dino Shindig at the Carter County Museum (Ekalaka)


This is only a small selection of the events, please visit <https://mtdinotrail.org/events/>, or individual facility websites for more. All museums along the trail are featuring new exhibits and items on display, so be sure to visit often!

Continued next page

From previous page


losaurus, Hadrosaurus, gar fish, clams and more.

Since the Trail's inception, more than 6 million people have visited museums along the Montana Dinosaur Trail! Visitation to the partner facilities has increased by 64 percent since 2005, including a 38 percent increase in rural communities. About 40 percent of those visitors journey from out of state to come face to face with dinosaurs in the communities from which they have been unearthed. In total, 615 people have completed their passports in that 20 year period!

To follow the Montana Dinosaur Trail, you can purchase a passport online at mtdinotrail.org. Once you get your first stamp, you have five years to complete the trail and earn your very own dirt shirt! 




In April 2025, staff from each of the facilities returned to Fort Peck as part of the Trail's annual meeting. | **COURTESY PHOTO**

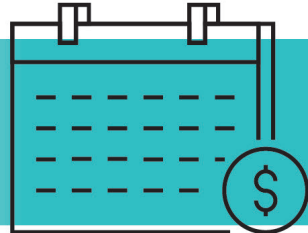


HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK


Electric co-ops are not-for-profit and operate at cost. Capital credits are a financial benefit of co-op membership.




- 1.** Members pay their electric bills, and we track their business with us each month.



- 2.** The co-op pays operating expenses throughout the year and allocates any leftover operating revenue as capital credits.



- 3.** When financial conditions permit, the co-op board votes to retire (pay) capital credits to the members.



- 4.** We send members their share of capital credits as a bill credit or check.

Remembering Francis J. Hayes

FRANCIS J. Hayes passed away on January 28, at the age of 93. Francis lived his entire life in Ridge, except when he attended middle and high school in Belle Fourche, SD. After high school he returned to the family ranch, while working there he received his private pilot's license before he received his "real" automobile license, and bought an airplane before he ever owned a car. He went on to earn his instructors and commercial flying license in his early 20s.

He and Elsa Loken were married in September 1955. After Francis and Elsa were married, they continued to live and work on the family ranch, where in the early years of their marriage Francis was a crop duster and played music for local dances. They brought four children into the family, and lived a very full and busy life.

Francis was an accomplished oil artist. He won numerous awards for his paintings, several of which were published in various magazines, including the *Western Horseman*. Not only was Francis an exceptional painter, but he also made furniture in his later years when life slowed down. He made unique coffee tables, as well as shelves, corner handkerchief tables, three-legged stools and lamp stands. He was also a blacksmith, welding and shaping metal into whatever creative design he deemed necessary for his project, often combining his metal creations with his wood work.


Francis' true passions were God, family, ranch life, art and airplanes. Besides God and family, we truly believe airplanes were his absolute favorite. He never tired of talking about them. But his family was his greatest treasure. He was happiest when his house was full of kids — his kids, grandkids, great-grandkids or other people's kids. I believe his motto in life was, the more the merrier.

He was a member of St. David's Catholic Church in Broa-



Francis and Elsa Hayes.

dus. He served as a Brand Inspector for 60 years or more, was an active School Board Member, and was involved in Meat Promoters and the Toastmaster Club. He served as a Board Member for Southeast Electric Cooperative from 1976 to 2016, including a tenure as president from 1984 through 1998. Francis also represented Mid-West Electric Consumers Association (1983-2000), which serves a nine-state region, traveling annually to Washington, D.C., lobbying for hydroelectric power initiatives, advocating for maintenance and upkeep of hydroelectric dams and related infrastructure. He also represented Southeast Electric at Upper Missouri Power Cooperative.

While his physical presence will be deeply missed, the legacy of his love for life, his community and his family will live on in the hearts of those who were lucky enough to know him. We will all miss Francis, his humor and his unwavering love for life. 

SECO revamps energy assistance program

WITH the mandate for large loads to contribute to the cooperative Universal System Benefits (USB) program or self-report, Southeast Electric receives extensive funds beyond our mandatory spend of \$37,000. As such, we are always looking for further programs to spend our USB funds, and we would like to do what we can to help our low-income families as much as possible. One way is to increase our low-income energy assistance program,

which is funded by the mandatory USB spending.

LIHEAP is still available to members, however SECO's program would be separate and run from January 1 through December 31 each calendar year. Because SECO's program will affect only the electricity bills, we encourage members to use LIHEAP funds for their propane heating and water/sewer costs.

If members qualify for LIHEAP they

can bring their approval letter in, and we will approve low-income assistance based on that document.

Members may also apply through Southeast's application for electric bill assistance. If a member qualifies for energy assistance through Southeast Electric, funds will be credited directly to the applicant's account.

The applicant will also receive additional funding in July if needed. 