

SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



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IT'S CO-OP MONTH

By **TYE WILLIAMS** | *Manager*

OCTOBER is National Cooperative Month, and has been since 1948. This is not only for electric co-ops, but all co-ops, which include farming, fishing, food, broadband, etc. Co-ops allow like-minded people to band together to increase their economic power. When I was just out of college, I worked for an appliance store that belonged to a purchasing cooperative so they could buy products for a better price.

Growing up in Ekalaka, I saw first-hand the cooperation of the local populace. When I was younger, I would go with my father to different brandings in the area. We moved to Ekalaka when I was 8, so my first branding was either that spring or after I had turned 9. I can still remember my first job at the brandings. I was one of the young kids who had the privilege of preparing the freshly “harvested” Rocky Mountain Oysters. Looking back, those were fun times. I was able to do a little work, hang with my dad and usually see some of my friends.

The most important part of those brandings was that the local ranchers were working together to get these big jobs done. After the work was done, everyone would sit down and enjoy a great meal together, with maybe a few libations. Sometimes there were more than a few, but how can you blame them after a long winter and calving season — sometimes we all just need to unwind with good friends. This cooperative spirit is seen all over in our communities, in the volunteer firefighters, chamber of commerce work, our healthcare association, 4-H, sporting events, and



on and on.

It is nice to live in a community where so many people give their time to work with others toward our common goals. I do greatly appreciate your work, and I know the community appreciates the work all of you do also. There have been countless times over the years where community members have helped our linemen in the field. Whether it has been pulling a stuck bucket truck out, fueling up equipment or just providing kind words to the employees, I want to thank you all for everything you do to help Southeast Electric Cooperative succeed.

Over the last 20 years, Southeast Electric has seen significant industrial growth due to the pipelines going through our area. This growth has enabled Southeast to modernize equipment, rebuild the home office and continuously rebuild our distribution plant. Southeast has seen a lot of change, and will continue to into the near and distance future. To help us stay on top of the issues that may affect us the most, we continuously work with our neighboring co-ops, statewide association and our national cooperative association.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you again for the contributions and aid you have given to Southeast and its employees. The membership is the reason why Southeast has been able to be a sustainable and successful company throughout the years. I hope everyone has a wonderful fall, and continues to live the cooperative spirit to continue to make this community a nice place to live, work and raise a family. RM

YOUTH TOUR 2023

Win a free trip to Washington, D.C.

ATENTION high school sophomores & juniors! In June 2023, high schoolers from rural America will be boarding airplanes and buses and heading for Washington, D.C.

Don't miss the bus! Join them and learn about the political process, meet elected officials and gain an up-close understanding of U.S. history.

It's all part of the FREE National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Tour. In 1957 while addressing NRECA Annual Meeting in Chicago, Senator Lyndon Johnson inspired the Youth Tour. The senator and future president declared, "If one thing comes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital, where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents."

In the next few years Texas, Illinois and Iowa loaded up young people for a weeklong study tour of our nation's capital. The idea grew and, by 1959 the "Youth Tour" had grown to 130 young people.

NRECA began to coordinate joint activities among the state delegations and suggested that co-op representatives from each state arrange to be in Washington, D.C., during Youth Tour week. Youth Tour directors from each state association arrange their delegation's visits to their U.S. representatives' and senators' offices, and educational and sightseeing activities. That first year there were approximately 400 young people from 12 states. Word of the program has continued to spread



and today, more than 1,500 students and more than 250 chaperones participate in the Youth Tour every year.

Former Youth Tour participants now play a larger role in the Youth Day program. Each year, Youth Tour organizers select about a dozen to return as staff assistants

— known as "blue shirts" — to help with logistics. That group helps shape the Youth Day content, from writing the scripts to keeping things moving onstage.

Nearly 50,000 students from rural areas and small towns across America have participated in this program. Some of our Youth Tour alumni have gone on to design airplanes, lead companies and serve in the highest ranks of our government, including the U.S. Senate. Don't be surprised if you run into a former Youth Tour participant who is a congressional aide on Capitol Hill. While several of the alumni work in Washington, you will find even more alumni in your own community.

Southeast Electric Cooperative along with the Montana Electrical Cooperative Association pays fees, travel and lodging costs. If you want to be part of this FREE fun week in Washington and your parents are members of Southeast Electric Cooperative, contact us today. You can check out our webpage at www.seecoop.com/youth-tour for more details, the application and essay topic. You can also email vfx@seecoop.com for more information. RM

SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

VALUES

self-responsibility

democracy

solidarity

self-help

equality

equity



Photo by Joni Hendricks



Watch for Trick or Treaters on Monday, October 31st