

# F E R G U S

## FEATURES

Member Newsletter ♦ Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc., Lewistown, MT ♦ [www.ferguselectric.coop](http://www.ferguselectric.coop)



## MANAGER'S MESSAGE

From Carson Sweeney

## ANNUAL MEETING 2025

### Attend the Annual Meeting of the Membership June 5



**D**EAR Members, I hope to see you at our upcoming annual meeting on June 5. Every year we look forward to seeing many of you there. The annual meeting is a time for face-to-face conversations between neighbors and friends and to make new acquaintances. Our office staff began planning and preparing for the annual meeting early this year, so that when the day arrives, they will be ready to greet you.

During the meeting, members will hear a report from our Board President. I will be providing a detailed update on our operational activities as well as our financial standing. Members will vote to elect two trustees to the Board of Directors.

Two of our journeyman linemen will be sharing their fascinating experience of traveling to rural Guatemala to install powerlines to a community that had never experienced the benefits of electricity.

We will be giving away many door prizes as well as several \$1,000 schol-




arships for students and our Central Montana Cattle Women will provide everyone with an excellent lunch.

## Construction and safety addressed

So far this season our construction schedule is busy with crews installing member requested upgrades. This time of year, our schedule is booked several weeks in advance so please add that wait time into your plans if you have not yet contacted our engineers about a project.

Safety and downed powerlines are a safety concern I should mention more often. To date, in 2025, we have had 16 incidents where members have damaged our lines or poles, or damaged

their own electric facilities thus causing an outage. This typically occurs when members are plowing snow with a tractor, farming a field with new and larger equipment, transporting grain augers down the highway, or operating tractors with GPS guidance systems. I urge everyone to be mindful of poles, the energized conductors above them, and the dangers of downed conductors. Always stay 10 feet or more away from electric utility lines. Never assume that downed wires are de-energized or safe. Contact emergency services to help assist you if an accident occurs.

Enjoy the warm weather, green grass, and pleasant evenings. I hope to see you June 5 at the Fergus County Trade Center for our annual meeting. 

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR  
FOR FERGUS ELECTRIC CO-OP

Despite enduring a major storm and celebrating a significant retirement, the future looks bright

By **PAUL DESCHEEMAKER** | *Fergus Electric President*



**I**t is my pleasure to report that 2024 was a very successful year for Fergus Electric Cooperative. Thanks to the dedication of our employees, leadership team and loyal members, we navigated challenges and made important strides for the future of the co-op.

One of the biggest tests we faced was a major spring storm that impacted much of our service area. It challenged the patience of our members, and the skills and endurance of our line crews. I am proud to say that the team at Fergus Electric rose to meet this challenge with determination and professionalism, restoring service safely and efficiently under difficult conditions.


We also celebrated a major milestone this year as Dale Rikala retired after 33 years of service to the cooperative — 12 years as a lineman and 21 years as our line superintendent. Dale's leadership, knowledge and work ethic helped shape Fergus Electric into what it is today. We are grateful for his service and wish him all the best in retirement.

In the fall of 2024, the board of directors completed another strategic planning session. Strategic planning is critical to the co-op's long-term success, providing a roadmap for future projects and helping us budget, identify equipment and resource needs, and uphold our

commitment to safety, efficiency and reliability. Topics discussed included pole replacements, rate structures, continued tree trimming efforts and operational improvements.

A good example of the importance of strategic planning is the fact that we ordered a large bucket truck and a line truck — each valued at approximately \$400,000 — back in 2020. Due to ongoing supply chain delays, we expect to receive one of these trucks in 2025 and the other in 2026. Planning ahead for large investments such as this ensures that we have the necessary equipment to maintain high service standards for our members, even in a changing market environment.

Looking ahead, I am pleased to share that Fergus Electric will be serving a significant new large load in 2025. We have contracted with Rocky Mountain Contractors, Inc., to build approximately 2.2 miles of 100 kV transmission line and a new substation to serve a Cenex Harvest States oil pumping station. This three-megawatt load is expected to come online by early fall of 2025, representing a major growth opportunity and a strong addition to our cooperative's financial future.

As always, Fergus Electric remains committed to delivering safe, reliable and affordable electricity to our members, while planning thoughtfully for continued success. Thank you for your ongoing support and trust in Fergus Electric Cooperative. 



# AROUND FERGUS ELECTRIC THE LAST YEAR



Luck of the Draw winners at last year's Annual Meeting.





## ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

ASSETS	2024	2023
ELECTRIC PLANT	\$87,470,956.92	\$80,167,949.86
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(\$33,980,119.71)	(\$31,820,725.38)
Net Utility Plant	\$53,490,837.21	\$48,347,224.48
Investments in Associated Organizations	\$9,918,314.77	\$8,208,067.68
Current Assets	\$6,385,427.77	\$6,271,215.78
Deferred Debits	\$252,132.00	\$382,356.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$70,046,711.75</b>	<b>\$63,208,863.94</b>
LIABILITIES & MEMBERS' EQUITY		
Total Margins and Equity	\$45,419,045.92	\$43,357,146.37
TOTAL LONG-TERM DEBT	\$19,003,326.30	\$14,474,978.01
CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$4,868,271.42	\$4,846,416.10
DEFERRED CREDITS	\$756,068.11	\$530,323.46
<b>TOTAL EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$70,046,711.75</b>	<b>\$63,208,863.94</b>

## COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES DECEMBER 31

Operating Revenues	\$27,961,405.94	\$28,929,381.03
VARIABLE EXPENSES		
Power purchased for Members	\$17,622,236.00	\$18,102,808.29
Lines Cost	\$3,697,221.01	\$3,696,003.82
Administrative and Other	\$2,113,281.12	\$1,973,197.05
<b>TOTAL VARIABLE EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$23,432,738.13</b>	<b>\$23,772,009.16</b>
FIXED EXPENSES		
Depreciation	\$2,270,413.56	\$2,132,732.32
Interest on Long-Term Debt	\$904,080.42	\$477,630.32
<b>TOTAL COST OF ELECTRICAL SERVICES</b>	<b>\$3,174,493.98</b>	<b>\$2,610,362.64</b>
Operating Margins	\$1,354,173.83	\$2,547,009.23
Non-Operating Margins	\$1,941,484.19	\$2,107,793.50
<b>NET MARGINS</b>	<b>\$3,295,658.02</b>	<b>\$4,654,802.73</b>

## SECRETARY/TREASURER'S STATEMENT

The balance sheet and comparative statement of revenue and expenses were taken from complete financial statements. Copies of the complete financial statements may be examined at the cooperative headquarters in Lewistown.

— Jason Swanz, secretary/treasurer



## IDENTIFY ACCOUNT NUMBER\*

## WIN A \$34.00 CREDIT

If one of the following account numbers is yours, call Fergus Electric (406-538-3465) and identify yourself and your account number, and you will receive a \$34.00 credit on next month's statement.

**Account 387155, Account 398322**  
**Account 320151, Account 396606**  
**Account 317278, Account 319893**

## CONGRATULATIONS!

**Linda Petersen** of Lewistown, **Broyles Farms** of Rapelje, **Becky Cushing** of Grass Range, **Laura Barker** of Roundup, **Cory Wickens** of Lewistown and **Peggy Gore** of Lewistown were last month's winners.

\*NUMBERS ARE DRAWN MONTHLY



## 2025 EMPLOYEES

**Carson Sweeney**, General Manager  
**Bret Ophus**, Line Superintendent  
**Tyson Ruff**, Assistant Line Superintendent  
**Bret Nellermeoe**, Assistant Line Superintendent, Roundup  
**Sally Horacek**, Office Manager  
**Janine Rife Didier**, Payroll Administrator  
**Erika Mattaliano**, Senior Billing Clerk  
**Denise Jennings**, Billing Clerk  
**Debby Petersen**, Cashier  
**Louie Hould**, Foreman  
**Mark Schwomeyer**, Foreman  
**Owen Thatcher**, Foreman, Roundup  
**Ryan d'Autremont**, Serviceman  
**Brian Godbey**, Serviceman/Meter Tech  
**Darek Dygert**, Journeyman Lineman  
**Jacob Grensten**, Journeyman Lineman  
**Brock Pyrah**, Journeyman Lineman, Roundup  
**Andrew Reuterskiold**, Journeyman Lineman, Roundup  
**Danyon Rice**, Journeyman Lineman  
**Dakota Wahl**, Journeyman Lineman  
**Jason Deffinbaugh**, Apprentice Lineman  
**Dylan Rickman**, Apprentice Lineman, Roundup  
**Travis Sura**, Apprentice Lineman  
**Jake Derosier**, Row Groundman  
**Jason Mills**, Mechanic  
**Daniel Balster**, Staking Engineer, PE  
**Melanie Foran**, Staking Engineer, PE  
**Scott Olson**, Staking Engineer