

F E R R I G U S

FEATURES

Member Newsletter ♦ Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc., Lewistown, MT ♦ www.ferguselectric.coop

Glamping in Paradise

Montana Cowgirl Camp offers a luxury adventure vacation



Jeana Morrison-Noel (third from right) hosts Montana Cowgirl Camp every summer. She's enjoyed entertaining ladies from all over the country with help from her neighbors, who include wrangler John Clark, center, and art director Mary-Kate French (far right). The land is owned by Todd Kissner, far left.

Story and photos by
Charlie Denison
Contributing Writer

Looking out at the Little Belt Mountains from her newly built cabana, Jeana Morrison-Noel takes in the view and smiles. She turns and looks left, switching her view to the cowboys on their horses a few yards away. The cowboys and the mountains remind her once again why she came out to Judith Basin country from Kentucky in the first place.

"This is my passion," she said.

The land belongs to Todd Kissner and Joy Travis, but this week it belongs to Morrison-Noel, as she hosts another Montana Cowgirl Camp on the outskirts of Utica, Montana. Now in its second year, her "luxury adventure vacation" is picking up steam, as women from around the country come by to go horseback riding, hiking, fly fishing, bird watching and more. Each day includes a group gathering, with activities such as jewelry making,

beauty makeovers and the Ramblin' Rodeo show.

Morrison-Noel originally came up with the idea for the camp after attending jewelry workshops in Tucson, Texas and San Diego.

"I thought, 'wait a minute. I have land. I have a place. Why can't I put together my version of the jewelry workshop, but as a cowgirl workshop?'" she said.

A kitchen designer by trade, Morrison-Noel looked at Cowgirl Camp as an opportunity to "accessorize" the West, creating a comfortable, fun experience for women of all walks of life.

"Cowgirl Camp is a combination of a women's retreat, a ranch experience and 'glamping,' or glamorous camping," Morrison-Noel said. "It incorporates iconic scenes of the West, accessorizing and designing, and a little bit of roughing it."

Morrison-Noel said the camp has generated a good response so far, and she's just getting started, as this is only

her second summer hosting the camp.

"My plan is to have 10 girls per camp," Morrison-Noel said. "It's six nights and five days."

Middle-aged women are Morrison-Noel's target demographic, she said. So far, women are taking her up on the opportunity.

The cast

Sisters Michelle Olson of Wisconsin and Stephanie Fullerton of Minnesota fully embraced cowgirl camp in July.

"It's a lot of fun," Olson said. "I've loved the horseback riding, especially going through the trees and over the hills. I'm a novice rider, so I've been getting lessons along the way. Everyone has been great to work with."

Wrangler John Clark helped make riding a memorable and fun expedition, Morrison-Noel said, and she couldn't be happier with him.

"Wranglers need to be entertaining and also need to look out for the girls," she said. "John Clark has been a dream. He's a real cowboy, he's capable,

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE

From Scott Sweeney

Black Butte Copper Project

Earlier this year, I shared that the co-op is working to get power installed to the Black Butte Copper Project, the proposed copper mine north of White Sulphur Springs. The co-op looks forward to providing the future power needs for the copper mine. The new transmission line to the Black Butte Copper Project will provide additional capacity for ranchers and homeowners north of White Sulphur Springs to add new electrical loads and for new members of Fergus Electric Cooperative to build houses and other projects in the area.

Montana DEQ oversight

In my report, I stated that the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has stringent rules on new mines to ensure that an environmentally friendly mine will be constructed and that our valuable water resources will be protected.

I think it is safe to say that the DEQ feels they are doing a good job to protect Montana's environment. In fact, in a 2017 news release, DEQ Director Tom Livers was quoted as saying, "this environmental review will be extensive, and we take it very seriously."

Sandfire Resources is working diligently with the Montana DEQ to develop a very low-impact underground mine that is designed to meet or exceed all state and federal requirements with respect to impact to water, air and the land, and will not treat water in perpetuity.

Vote NO! on Initiative No. 186

Nonetheless, an initiative will be on the ballot in November 2018 that will make it difficult for the Black Butte Copper Project to become a viable mine. Initiative No. 186 (I-186)

contains vague, undefined terms that would likely result in targeting mining industry projects with huge delays through litigation. Initiative No. 186 poses large risks and delays for future projects all across Montana.

With the strong oversight of the Montana DEQ and the strict guidelines set by the team managing the Black Butte Mining Project, I-186 is not needed for this project and others to be held to the highest standard. Fergus Electric shares the mine's concerns and encourages our members to vote NO! on I-186.

Important element

Copper is an important element for the entire electric industry, including electric vehicles, wind turbines, solar panels and new battery technology. Because of its properties, it is an excellent conductor of electricity. Having high malleability and a resistance to corrosion, copper has become a major industrial metal with building construction as the single largest market, followed by electronics and electronic products, transportation, industrial machinery, and consumer and general products. In addition, copper products are readily recycled.

Opportunity

White Sulphur Springs and Meagher County will benefit from the mine's ability to create 200-plus new jobs and generate a larger tax base for the community. In addition, large loads help stabilize costs that our members pay, and we look forward to the opportunity to serve the mine for years to come.

Assistant Manager's Message

By David Dover



Fall work schedule

Typically, fall is the co-op's busiest time for new construction. It is the time of year when "to-do" lists are reviewed and members decide which jobs they want to get done before the weather changes. If your list includes having a new power line constructed, converting your overhead service to underground or upgrading your service, I encourage you to contact the engineering staff now and set up an early consultation while the project is still in the development stage. Planning and working together will lead to a successful outcome of the project. Please call our Lewistown office at 406-538-3465 and speak to one of our staking engineers, or call our Roundup office at 406-323-1602 and discuss your plans with Don Criswell, assistant line superintendent.

I also want to stress the importance of placing a call to 811 to request an underground locate two business days in advance of any project that requires digging. When digging, please keep in mind that locating any member-owned non-utility underground wire that is buried on your property is your responsibility, as the underground locating service will not locate that for you, unless you are able to entice them with a plate of brownies.

Construction to begin on transmission line north of Lewistown

Included on the co-op's schedule for fall is for our contractor to begin construction on our transmission line rebuild north of Lewistown in September. Seven miles of the existing 50 kilovolt transmission line from Carters Substation north towards Hilger will be rebuilt and upgraded with larger conductor and a static wire for lightning protection, and shorter span lengths.

Tree trimming

To keep tree branches a safe distance from power lines, periodic tree pruning is necessary. Power interruptions, outages or fires can result from tree branches getting too close to power lines. Trimming trees near power lines is extremely hazardous and should be done by qualified trimmers. If you have trees near power lines that need trimmed or removed, please stay safe and contact Bret or Dale at 406-538-3465.

Hunter safety

Hunting season is arriving soon. Many of the co-op's members and employees are avid hunters who look forward to hunting season with great enthusiasm and take the responsibility of hunter

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Glamping *Continued from page 3*



The “Shabby Chic Cowgirl Tent” features a neutral palette with custom bed linens and rugs of elk and cow hide. The Ramblin’ Rodeo show was a big hit at this year’s camp. Casey Anderson, left, did some volunteer calf roping, while wrangler John Clark assisted. Both shot guns and had fun “cowboying” for the group. Tent photo courtesy Jeana Morrison-Noel.

trained, safe and professional.”

A former Texas wrangler, Clark, a farrier in Windham, humbly accepted his role at Cowgirl Camp.

“She finally had to break down and go for the sorry help,” he said.

Jokes aside, the girls felt comfortable with Clark, be it assisting them with riding or firing a pistol.

“I was a little nervous about the kick when I shot, but it wasn’t bad,” Fullerton said. “I hit my target!”

Fullerton met Morrison-Noel at the Midwest Sportsman Show in Minneapolis in March. At the time, she was looking to book some cabins in northern Minnesota for a getaway, but the more she heard about Cowgirl Camp, the more intrigued she got.

She told her sister about it, and they signed on.

“This was our first ‘glamping’ trip, and we’d definitely come back,” Fullerton said. “It’s been so much fun. I got a lot more out of it than I could have imagined.”

When trying to come up with Cowgirl Camp highlights, Olson and Fullerton essentially summarized the whole weekend: playing pool at the Oxen Yoke, making Western art with Mary-Kate French, taking glam shots with stylist Kelsi Hoversland and photographer Kate Loose, catching fish during Dan Peterson’s fly-fishing lesson, eating gourmet meals, singing along to cowboy ballads and winding down by the campfire each night.

“It was great being up here with other women, relaxing and talking about girl stuff,” Fullerton said. “I enjoyed comparing notes on motherhood, and

sharing how we relax and live life.”

The scenery also contributed largely to Fullerton’s experience.

“Seeing the openness is amazing,” she said, “even when it’s stormy, like it was Monday. Seeing the clouds come in is incredible, and the stars are fabulous.”

Fullerton and Olson also loved the rodeo, which included a calf-roping demonstration, pistol shooting and roping lessons.

“Roping kind of reminded me of bowling once I got the hang of it,” Olson said. “You get in a groove and just try to stay there.”

Geena Marcuzzo of Monterey, California — who also signed up for Cowgirl Camp — said the highlight for her was watching Olson and Fullerton come to life during their five days at camp.

“It was so cool to see their expressions change,” she said. “They loved the activities every day and really got into it.”

A blogger for *Cowgirl Magazine*, Marcuzzo spends a lot of her time going to events that celebrate the West, be it rodeos or fashion shows. She’s seen a lot, and Montana Cowgirl Camp impressed her.

“I think (Morrison-Noel) has done a great job and I can’t wait to see what else she does,” Marcuzzo said.

Morrison-Noel is excited for Cowgirl Camp’s future, adding that she’s grateful to be out in Judith Basin country.

“It might be a little off the beaten path, but the scenery and the neighbors can’t be beat,” she said.

For more information on Montana Cowgirl Camp, go to www.montana-cowgirl.camp.

Assistant Manager’s Message *Continued from page 4*

safety very seriously. We appreciate hunters keeping clear of electrical equipment and not shooting at or near power lines or insulators. We thank you for staying safe and keeping our line crews safe by not placing deer stands on the co-op’s power poles.

A stray bullet can cause damage to equipment and cause power outages immediately, or it can weaken the power line and an outage can occur during the winter months, when it can take linemen much longer to locate the problem. Repairing damaged equipment and power lines is an expense shared by all of Fergus Electric’s members. We are grateful to all of the hunters who show respect to our power lines. Stay safe and good luck with your hunt.

Equipment and power lines

When operating heavy equipment or during planting, harvesting or completing other field work, please use care when working near overhead power lines. Always keep equipment a safe distance from overhead electric lines and when operating backhoes, raising augers or grain truck beds be mindful of where power poles and lines are located. If necessary, use a spotter to help guide equipment safely.

If contact is made with the co-op’s equipment or power line, stay inside the equipment and call 9-1-1. Warn others to stay away. Stay inside your equipment until the co-op’s line crew says it is safe to exit. Look up, look out and stay alive!

Mechanic Retires

After 26 years with the Aco-op, Tom Simons packed up his toolbox and bid farewell to his colleagues. A skilled mechanic with a degree in diesel mechanics from Montana State University - Northern, Simons was responsible for keeping



a fleet of 30 vehicles and miscellaneous equipment — backhoes, skid steers and trailers — running both in Lewistown and at the satellite facility in Roundup. Smiling, Tom said, “My grandchildren will be a big part of my retirement life.”

Truck garage on its way

Construction on the 80’ x 120’ truck garage is moving right along. The building, located on the north side of the cooperative’s headquarters in Lewistown, will be a steel structure. Pictured is a portion of the stem wall that was constructed after the foundation was laid. Plans are to complete the garage before the snow flies. Birdwell Builders is the contractor.



Too wet for a line truck

Storms and runoff sometimes create problems for the linemen to respond to outages. Realizing a truck could not traverse the wet ground, Fergus Electric Cooperative’s backhoe was brought into service. However, the wet ground, again, inhibited progress. To restore power, crews hiked to the outage and made temporary repairs. Later, when the backhoe was in operation, it was used to replace poles and wire.

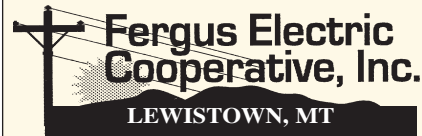


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- Account 319808 • Account 321935
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You will receive a \$32.50 credit on next month’s statement.
*Numbers are drawn monthly.
This month’s winner is **Kim Williams** of Musselshell.



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- Second:** Check the breaker below the meter.
- Third:** If electricity is still out, call a neighbor to see if they have electricity.
- Fourth:** Call 406-538-3465 day or night or:
 - Dale Rikala406-366-3374
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