SE Celebrates 75th Anniversary

At 7:30 pm on April 24th 1941, Salem Electric began receiving power from the Bonneville Power Administration. Soon we will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of that event. SE’s founders used the electric cooperative model for their new utility which would be “owned by those we serve.” While our founding was an important event for the co-op’s first members and for the community in general, it did not share the same drama as rural electrification.

Five years earlier in 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Rural Electrification Act which authorized low interest loans for rural electrification. REA’s, as the resulting cooperatives were known, were also given preference with the public agencies to the output of federal power resources; for us most notably, power from the Columbia River dams. Due in great part to the Act, rural America was literally brought out of the dark and farmers and their families were lifted out of the drudgery of endless hard work. The day didn’t end at sunset anymore. Families didn’t have to crowd around a coal oil lamp to do homework, read or sew, and machines greatly reduced the work of washing and drying clothing, cooking and cleaning. Seemingly endless uses were found for machines to aid in farm work. Radios brought live entertainment into the home, motors pumped water out of wells, and the lives of millions of people were changed overnight.

When Salem Electric was energized, the private power company’s meters were removed and replaced with the co-op’s meters. It may sound like a small thing but it wasn’t. The change that took place in Salem in 1941 brought benefits to all Salem residents in the short term, as the private utility lowered area rates in an attempt to drive out the co-op. Salem Electric survived and has been providing its members with the benefits of low rates and reliable service for three quarters of a century.

Throughout the year we will provide some historical context to explain, for example, why it took nearly three years from the co-op’s incorporation on July 23rd 1938 for BPA to begin supplying it with power. We will also discuss how an electric cooperative came to be founded in a densely populated area already being served by a private utility. Your cooperative has a unique and interesting history and we look forward to sharing it with you.
Be Prepared!

Winter weather has arrived! We’re prepared if the power goes out, are you? Here are three easy steps to get prepared if you experience an interruption in your electric power:

1. **Report an Outage**: Call 503 362-3601 to report a power outage 24 hours a day.

2. **Access Power Outage Information**: To access the most up-to-date information during a power outage, you have the following options:
   - Online: Visit SalemElectric.com — click the Outage & Safety tab
   - Mobile: Visit SalemElectric.com on your smartphone
   - Phone: 503 362-3601

3. **Prepare an Emergency Outage Kit**:
   - Your emergency kit should include a battery-powered flashlight or lantern, easy to prepare food (and a can opener) and a car charger or portable power bank for your cell phone or mobile device.

For more ideas on preparing your emergency outage kit visit SalemElectric.com and click on the Outage and Safety tab.

Outage Updates & Information

In outage situations we encourage you to contact our office with any details you have regarding the outage. Unfortunately, in large scale outages you may experience a busy signal when you dial in. Another option during large scale outages is to visit SalemElectric.com for the most up-to-date outage information.
Be cautious when using an online search engine to locate the Salem Electric website. Third party payment sites will appear in your search and can be deceiving when they use the Salem Electric logo and information from our website. While these are legitimate companies, they often charge a fee for their service and Salem Electric cannot guarantee when your payment will be received.

To pay online visit SalemElectric.com and click on the 'Account Login' or 'Pay Now' buttons. Online bill pay is offered at no charge and payments are immediately applied to your account.

Keep units 3 feet away from combustible materials such as bedding, drapes, clothes and rugs. Space heaters can also have parts that can spark, so avoid using them in areas where you store flammable liquids.

Uneed specifically certified for that purpose, do not use heaters in wet or moist places such as bathrooms.

Be sure the plug fits snugly into the outlet to avoid the plug from overheating.

Unplug and store the space heater in a safe place when you’re not using it.

Never use the space heater to dry clothes or shoes, or to thaw pipes.

Do not hide cords under rugs or carpets.

SPACE HEATER SAFETY TIPS

If you choose to use a space heater to supplement your home’s heating system, be sure to purchase a safety-certified model that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing laboratory and read the safety instructions before using the heater.

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Plugging space heaters directly into a wall outlet is safest. If you use an extension cord, do not use a lightweight household cord, it needs to be a heavy duty cord that is adequate for the space heater load.

Be sure children are well supervised around space heaters.

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Salem Electric’s Customer Service Supervisor Britni Davidson-Cruickshank received the Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s 2015 Paul Revere Award at their Annual Meeting held at the Salem Conference Center on December 3. The award is presented to individuals who assist ORECA in accomplishing their mission in legislative and regulatory affairs.

Britni was invaluable in helping ORECA address the threat of utility disconnection legislation during the 2015 Oregon legislature. She testified before legislators and later helped craft a reporting form template for all Oregon co-ops to use to comply with the reporting requirements.

LEDs are the Right Choice

Over the last several years, light bulbs have evolved from standard incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescent lights (CFL) and now we have light emitting diode (LED) bulbs. LEDs might cost a little more initially, but they are worth it in the long run.

Pricing for LEDs continues to come down, making them a very efficient and affordable option for indoor and outdoor lighting needs. For more information on LEDs visit EnergyStar.gov.
November 24, 2015

Presented by:
Jeff Anderson
Secretary/Treasurer

Board Meeting Summary

Board Action: Budget — After a presentation and discussion with staff during October, the board unanimously approved the 2016 proposed budget.

Donation — In cooperation with Douglas Electric Cooperative, the board approved a donation to the Umpqua Community College Victim Relief Fund.

New Attorney — Ray Kindley was appointed as general counsel for Salem Electric. Bill Sheridan, SE’s corporate attorney for the past 33 years, will retire at the end of the year. Kindley specializes in co-op law and also represents other Oregon co-ops.

Annual Inventory: This year’s annual inventory is complete and an adjustment of approximately $28,000 was made to the balance sheet. The accuracy goal improved by 60%; the success was attributed to warehouse organization and improved detail when recording materials.

Heating Assistance: The Salem Electric Heating Assistance Program is underway with over 520 applications mailed to senior and disabled members. For many years the program focused on in-home or office visits. Offering a mail-in option has increased member participation.

Information Technology: During a recent outage there were over a thousand page views on Salem Electric’s website, up from an average of less than a hundred during non-outage situations. We were also reminded that cyber criminals are hyper-active during the holidays and to “think before you click.”

Advanced Metering Infrastructure: A total of 432 AMI meters have been installed. It has provided a good opportunity for staff to work through the daily processes with AMI meters, as well as deal with the more unique situations like net-metering and co-generation.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS
January 26     February 23     March 16
Dave Bauer
Carl Beach

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Jerry Berger
President
Joe Van Meter
Vice-President
Jeff Anderson
Secretary/Treasurer
Dave Bauer
Carl Beach
Alicia Bonesteel
Paul Ennor

All board meetings are held at 7 PM at Salem Electric, 633 Seventh Street NW, Salem, Oregon

Salem Electric understands that sometimes you need a hand and we’re here to help. We offer a variety of payment options, such as average pay and custom payment arrangements to help meet your needs. There are several local and state agencies that may also be able to assist you with your monthly bill. Contact our Customer Service Department at 503 362-3601 for referrals to financial assistance agencies or to make payment arrangements on your account.

At Salem Electric our goal is to keep your lights on, let us know how we can help.
From a director...

Simple process can get you a scholarship

With nearly 40 years in the education field, I understand the value of a college degree. While college isn’t for everyone, for those who choose to continue their education, Salem Electric wants to help. For more than a decade Salem Electric has partnered with the Oregon Student Access Commission (OSAC) to administer our scholarship program. The process is simple, you can apply online or mail in a printed application. OSAC evaluates all applications based on academic promise, quality of application, community involvement, school activities and essay submitted. OSAC then selects 10 recipients. Recipients are notified in April and invited to attend the Salem Electric Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 10, 6 p.m. at Roth’s in West Salem to receive their award certificate. All Salem Electric members are also invited to attend.

The information below outlines eligibility requirements, application options and the application timeline.

Scholarship Eligibility:
• Applicants’ primary residence is served by Salem Electric
• Applicants may be high school graduates, home-school graduates, or GED recipients planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate program
• Salem Electric staff, board members and their immediate family members are ineligible

Application Information:
• Visit SalemElectric.com and apply online
• Applications can be printed and mailed with required attachments
• Contact OSAC at cheryl.a.connolly@state.or.us or call OSAC at 1-800-452-8807 ext. 7387

Timeline:
• November 2015
Applications available online at www.OregonStudentAid.gov
Start early and save your application until you’re ready to submit
• February 15, 2016
Early bird application deadline
• March 1, 2016 – 5 pm
Final application deadline for all required materials

As a Salem Electric member since 1972, it pleases me that our cooperative supports the communities that it serves.