



# GCEA NEWS



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THE GUNNISON COUNTY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

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Member Owned  A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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## GCEA Supports Local Youth Through Scholarships

*By Dan McDonough and Alantha Garrison*



*Alantha Garrison, Member Services Representative (l) and Dan McDonough, Customer Services Supervisor (r)*

Every year, Gunnison County Electric Association (GCEA) provides scholarships to high school students to help with their college tuition costs. The intent of the scholarship program is to support youth in the GCEA service territory as they pursue an education beyond high school. Any student living in the GCEA service territory is eligible if they are a GCEA member or the dependent of a GCEA member.

Returning college students are eligible for continued funding throughout their college career if they meet certain academic requirements. This article will cover how the scholarships are funded and what types of scholarships are awarded.

### There are seven main sources for the student scholarships. These include:

1. The GCEA Board of Directors Scholarships are individual scholarships funded by contributions made by members of the GCEA Board of Directors, and a certain dollar amount and number of scholarships are specifically earmarked for the student scholarships.
2. Tri-State Generation & Transmission generously donates two \$500 scholarships each year. A big thank you to Tri-State for their donations!
3. Basin Electric Power Cooperative also donates one \$1000 scholarship each year – again, a big round of applause is due to Basin Electric for this generous donation!
4. The Jim Somrak Memorial Scholarship was started in 2007 and funds are allocated from this memorial contribution at the discretion of the GCEA Board of Directors.
5. The Carol Drake Memorial Scholarship is also managed by the Board of Directors and provides memorial contributions to students.
6. Operation Round-Up® donates funds from contributions members make by rounding up their electric bill to the next highest dollar.
7. Unclaimed capital credits that contribute to the GCEA Scholarship Fund come from members who have not claimed their capital credits or capital credit checks that have been returned to the GCEA Office.

### The GCEA Board of Directors awards the following student scholarships:

1. Employee Dependents
2. Jim Somrak Memorial Scholarship
3. WSC One -year Student Scholarship
4. WSC Four-year Allen Memorial Scholarship
5. Academic Achievement
6. Helping Hands
7. Well Rounded
8. Out of State Member Dependent
9. Electric Lineworker

*(continued page 2)*

## Scholarships (continued from page 1)

It is with great pleasure that GCEA announces the following students who have been awarded scholarships this year.

Kabel Skelton  
Michael Costello  
Ashley Peterson  
Hillari Spencer

Carson Grogg  
Luke Schumacher  
Alison Turner  
Chloe Eskew

Karter Skelton  
Scott Murtaugh  
Christopher Schmalz  
Eric Brown

David Vader  
Sydney Loyed  
Matilda Tredway  
Douglas Lennon

*Congratulations and best wishes to all of the recipients as they move forward in pursuing their goals and ambitions!*

Each year GCEA honors the scholarship recipients at the Annual Meeting. The students, their families, and all our members are invited to join in the celebration on June 22, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. where we will take pictures and acknowledge their hard work and success.



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## Annual Meeting

The date for Gunnison County Electric Association's Annual Meeting is rapidly approaching. Please mark your calendars for **Tuesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>** and join us for an enjoyable evening of food, the year in review, and election of directors in Districts 2 and 3. Registration begins at 5:00 p.m.

We are hosting the traditional barbeque dinner at 5:30 p.m. and the business meeting will begin at 6 p.m. There will be lots of door prizes, every member will receive a free gift, and one lucky member will receive the \$300 grand prize...but you must be present to win.

## Operation Round-Up<sup>®</sup>

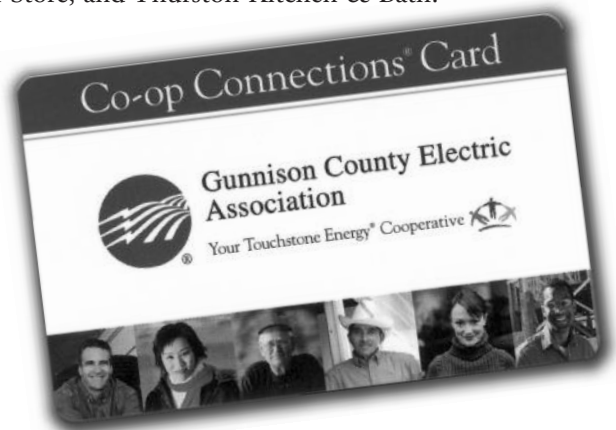
GCEA's Operation Round-up<sup>®</sup> Program was created to help support the educational needs of our youth. As a GCEA member you can participate in this worthy cause by rounding up your electric bill to the next highest dollar.

The maximum contribution would be \$11.88 if your bill were rounded up by 99 cents every month in the year. But this is unlikely and the average annual contribution of our members ends up being just \$6.00. Of course, you may contribute more than the "round-up" amount if you like.

All Operation Round-up<sup>®</sup> contributions are deposited in the GCEA Scholarship Fund discussed in our cover story. If you want to sign up for Operation Round-up<sup>®</sup>, GCEA would be happy to assist you. Please call us at 970-641-3520 for more information.

## Cooperative Connections<sup>®</sup> Saves Members Money

When planning your summer vacation, don't forget that your Cooperative Connections<sup>®</sup> card can bring you big savings on hotels, restaurants, rental cars, amusement parks, and more! Check out the discount offers at [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop). You can also save money when you shop locally at the following businesses: Dove Graphics; GL Computer Service; Healthy Smiles Dental Hygiene Care; Paragon Computers/Peak Internet; QT Cabins & Western Store; and Thurston Kitchen & Bath.



## Member Services Welcomes Alantha Garrison

Many of you already know Alantha as the friendly voice that has greeted you for the past three years when you called GCEA or came in to the headquarters building. Recently, Alantha joined the Member Services Department where she will be assisting with energy efficiency programs and providing energy audits to our members. Please give Alantha a call at 970-641-7319 to find out how to use energy more efficiently in your home or business.



# See the Light on Energy Efficiency Lighting

By Vicki Spencer, Energy Use/Communications Specialist

With all the publicity about energy efficiency, most of our members have heard about CFL and LED bulbs as alternatives to traditional incandescent light bulbs. Even though these energy-efficient bulbs are gaining in popularity, a lot of people are still concerned about making the transition. This was evident in our Women's Weatherization Workshops where some participants said they had tried CFL bulbs and didn't like them because they were not bright enough, or the color was too blue, or they took too long to come on. But after seeing our light bulb demonstrations, these women decided it was worth giving CFLs and LEDs another chance.

Although CFLs have been around for a long time and are the standard throughout Europe, they have just recently been introduced in the United States. Fortunately, this broader usage has led to improvements in the technology, and more people are finding that energy-efficient lighting can be just as good as that provided by the familiar incandescent bulbs. But customer satisfaction is really based on the customers' knowledge of the products they are purchasing.

Most people readily associate the term wattage with lights and have developed preferences for certain wattages. For example, many customers say they like the softer look of a 60-watt bulb in an overhead fixture, but prefer the brightness of a 100-watt bulb in their reading lamps.

It is a common mistake to assume that watts are a measure of the amount of light produced. But wattage is actually a measure of the energy usage of the bulb. The amount of light output given by a bulb is measured in lumens. Improving the efficiency of a bulb requires using less energy (watts) for a given level of light output (lumens). A bulb with a lower wattage can actually have a much higher lumen output.

So how do you decide which CFL bulb will serve as the most desirable replacement for the incandescent bulb in your light fixture or lamp? Today, bulb manufacturers must provide labels on their packages to help you decide. The labels must provide the light output (lumens), the amount of energy used (watts), and the lifetime (hours). If you want to improve your energy efficiency, you will want to choose the bulb that gives you the most lumens for the least amount of watts. This measure of efficiency, called efficacy, is lumens divided by watts. But to determine the cost-effectiveness of a bulb you will also want to take into consideration how much you pay for the bulb and its lifetime in hours.

Finally, everyone has a preference for a certain color of light. Light quality is measured in Color Rendering Index and Correlated Color Temperature (CCT). CCT, which is measured on the Kelvin temperature scale, provides an indication of how the light will look. Cooler lights (those with more blue) are those with higher temperatures. A CCT higher than 2,800 typically indicates a cooler light and will look whiter than a standard incandescent. Bulbs with CCTs below 2800 will appear reddish to the naked eye.

CRI measures how objects will look under the light. Most people say they want a light that mimics natural sun light which has a CRI of 100. But the standard incandescent light is in the range of 85-95. So if you choose a CRI of 100, you may find that the "color is wrong" because it is not what you are used to seeing from an incandescent light.

All of this seems complicated, but it does explain why some people are satisfied with CFLs and some are not. There are many options out there. Now that CFLs have come down in price, the best approach might be to try CFLs with different lumens and different CRI measures until you find the one that you like.

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## Green Power Purchases Support Clean Energy

Did you know that GCEA has a program that allows members to contribute to the production of energy from renewable sources? It is called the "Green Power Program." If you are interested in renewable energy, but it's not practical for you to install solar panels, wind turbines, or a micro-hydro system, then this program is for you.

You can join the Green Power Program for as little as 50 cents per month. That is the premium added to your electric bill when you purchase 100-kilowatt hours of renewable energy to offset your energy use.

The program requires that you purchase renewable energy in blocks of 100 kilowatt hours, but you have the option of purchasing just one 100-kilowatt hour block or you can

purchase as many blocks as you need to offset 100% of your electricity use. For the average household that uses 750 kWh or electricity a month, it would add an additional \$3.50 to your electric bill to buy 7 blocks of green power.

Currently, GCEA members purchase 3156 blocks per month for a total of 315,600 kWh of electricity – that's enough energy to power nearly 316 average GCEA member's homes per month! If you want to join other members supporting renewable energy, please call 970-641-3520 to sign up. We would be happy to calculate your average electric bill for the year and assist you in choosing how many blocks you would like to purchase.

**Whether you are planning to do it yourself or hire a professional, smart digging means calling (8-1-1) or (1-800-922-1987) before each job.**

Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call — even small projects like planting trees and shrubs. The depth of utility lines varies and there may be multiple utility lines in a common area. Digging without calling can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm you and those around you and potentially result in fines and repair costs. Calling (8-1-1) or (1-800-922-1987) before every digging job gets your underground utility lines marked for free and helps prevent undesired consequences.

*Remember, know what's below. Always call before you dig.*

[www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com)

## *Safety Is First At GCEA – An Overview Of The High Voltage Demonstration Trailer*

*By Alantha Garrison and John Stoeber*

May is Safety Month at Gunnison County Electric Association, though many of you reading this newsletter probably see an article or suggestion about safety in almost every newsletter we print. Safety is the top priority for all employees of GCEA, and we extend our knowledge of safety to the community through demonstrations and classes. If you've been to a GCEA Annual Meeting, you may have seen the high voltage demonstration trailer that the GCEA Line Crew provides to educate members about powerline safety.

GCEA built the trailer with the assistance of the City of Gunnison and Electrical Apparatus Service Company. The GCEA Line Crew has been educating the public about the dangers involved with electrical equipment that exists in everyone's backyard. The crew has traveled to Mesa State College in Grand Junction, Rocky Mountain Line School in Colorado Springs, Colorado Department of Transportation in Montrose, the Arrowhead subdivision, and the Fire Departments in Lake City, Gunnison, and Crested Butte. They demonstrate safety by helping people understand the clearance distances they need to maintain to stay safe and to recognize the hazards of power lines and equipment. GCEA encourages the public to "look up and live," meaning that before you put a ladder or another object up to access your roof, chimney, or any other high area, look up and be aware of what electrical equipment is around you.

GCEA invites you to attend our Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 22, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. The demo trailer will be set up as part of GCEA's Safety Awareness Program for the evening.



*This arc is generated when you get too close to a power line.*

*John Stoeber, Journeyman Lineman, operating the high voltage demonstration trailer.*

Corrections and comments are always welcome. Please contact the editor, Vicki Spencer, Energy Use/Communications Specialist: [vspencer@gcea.coop](mailto:vspencer@gcea.coop) or 800-726-3523 or 970-641-7359.

Customer Service 970.641.3520 or 1.800.726.3523 or email us at [gcea@gcea.coop](mailto:gcea@gcea.coop)