

# EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

*Echoes of the Empire*

DECEMBER 2022

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## GIVING BACK

BY ANDY CARTER MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



ANDY CARTER

December is here at last. Thanksgiving celebrations are still fresh in our minds and the holiday season is in full swing. It is a time of year when we reflect on what we accomplished in 2022 and the hopes and dreams we have for 2023. It is also a time of year when we think about how we can help support our community in taking care of those in need and providing opportunities for our community to grow.

You may not realize it, but as a member of Empire Electric Association, you play an important part in supporting our community. Beyond the obvious part of paying your monthly bill, which helps EEA invest and upgrade our distribution system to safely and reliably meet your electrical energy needs, you also help support community groups and organizations, fund learning opportunities for our youth and provide assistance to those in need.

Each year EEA's board of directors approves requests for donations and sponsorships as part of the budgeting process. In 2022, EEA funded over \$90,000 of these requests for a wide variety of organizations in our community. Below is a partial list of the groups that EEA donated to:

- Eight fire departments
- Five libraries
- 4H livestock sales in Montezuma and Dolores counties in Colorado and San Juan County, Utah
- The Bridge Shelter
- Four Corners Child Advocacy Center
- San Juan BOCES Science Fair
- Hospice of Montezuma
- K-9 Search and Rescue
- School Community Youth Collaborative
- Montezuma School to Farm Project
- VFW Stand Down for Veterans
- Monticello and Dolores Christmas lighting contests

One of the largest budgeted donations EEA makes is for matching gifts to Energy Outreach Colorado, whose mission is to ensure that all Coloradans can afford their energy needs through bill payment assistance, energy-efficiency improvements and emergency repair of heating systems. Energy Outreach Colorado works with partner agencies in our service area to assist those who cannot pay their heating bill. You can help our community by donating to Energy Outreach Colorado at [energyoutreach.org/donate](https://energyoutreach.org/donate). You also have the option to sign up for a monthly donation that will be added to your EEA power bill. Donations made through a bill addition will be matched by EEA to double your impact. Any funds budgeted for Energy Outreach Colorado that are not used in matching other donations are donated annually to the Piñon Project.

EEA also believes in the value of education and provides scholarships to active members and their dependents. Five different categories of scholarships are available:

- Student scholarships for high school seniors attending accredited two-year community colleges or four-year college and university programs.
- Continuing education scholarships for student scholarship winners that are continuing their two- or four-year program.
- Adult scholarships for individuals who are attending accredited two-year community colleges or four-year college and university programs.
- Lineman scholarships for individuals pursuing a vocational/technical certificate as a lineman.

## YOUR CO-OP NEWS

- Electrical-related trade scholarships for individuals pursuing a vocational/technical certificate in an electrical related trade.

The scholarships vary from \$500 to \$1,000 per school year and require submitting an application that will be reviewed and ranked to determine the winners. EEA awarded \$39,000 in scholarships for the 2022–2023 school year. Applications for the 2023–2024 school year scholarships are available December 1 with the exception of the continuing education scholarships which open May 1, 2023.

The funds used for donations, sponsorships and scholarships come from unclaimed capital credits and are limited by EEA board policy. EEA is a member-owned rural electric cooperative that provides power to our membership. Any revenue EEA has after paying expenses in a year are called margins, and all margins are allocated each year to active members as capital credits. Allocated capital credits are held by EEA and used to fund cooperative operations instead of borrowing money and paying interest on loans.

Capital credits are retired and paid to members each year as long as EEA



▲ EEA and Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association were two of several sponsors of the 12 Hours of Mesa Verde bicycle race held in May 2022 at Phil's World east of Cortez, CO. The race begins at the Montezuma County fairgrounds with a Le Mans start where racers run a short course to where their bicycles are waiting in the arena shown above. Racers must find their bike and mount up to begin the bicycle portion of the race. All proceeds of the race are donated to youth organizations in our community.



▲ 12 Hours of Mesa Verde racers entering the tunnel that goes under Highway 491 from the fairgrounds to the Phil's World race course.

remains in good financial standing as determined by our board. EEA targets an approximate 20-year retirement cycle, so members with allocated capital credits from 2002 and 2003 received over \$1.6 million in 2022 capital credit retirements. Active members can choose to have their capital credit retirement paid as a bill credit or by check. Inactive members are paid by check.

Each year EEA has capital credit checks returned because the mailing address we have for inactive members is not correct. EEA uses these unclaimed capital credits to fund our donations, sponsorships and scholarships. It's important to maintain an accurate mailing

address with EEA so that you receive your future capital credit retirements.

Unclaimed capital credits can be paid to an inactive member if they can provide proof of their membership. If you know someone who has moved from our area and may be missing capital credits they are owed, they can review the list EEA publishes on its website that is updated each year. The list can be found at [eea.coop/capital-credits](http://eea.coop/capital-credits). You can contact EEA at (970) 565-4444 or email us at [contactus@eea.coop](mailto:contactus@eea.coop) for more information.

Concern for community is one of the seven cooperative principles that guide EEA as we work to serve our community. Thanks for your support of EEA as we continue to use our member-owned cooperative to make today a little easier for those in need and help grow a brighter future through education.



▲ Co-op Photo Contest Winner December 2022 – “Snow on the Ranch” by Carrie Hawkins



## Monthly Calendar

**December 1** – Scholarship applications are available on our website at [eea.coop](http://eea.coop).

**December 9** – EEA's board meeting beginning at 8:30 a.m. at its headquarters in Cortez. The agenda is posted 10 days in advance of the meeting at [eea.coop](http://eea.coop). Members may attend in person or remotely. Instructions to attend remotely are included in the agenda.

**December 12** – Youth Tour applications are due.

**December 23** and **December 26** – EEA office closed in observance of Christmas holiday.

# APPLY NOW FOR YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP 2023

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO



Apply online at  
[eea.coop](http://eea.coop)

CONTACT EMPIRE ELECTRIC at 970.565.4444  
APPLICATION DEADLINE: 12/12/2022

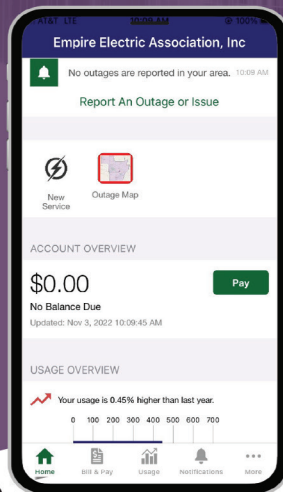


## MY CO-OP EMPLOYEES

April Willbanks accepted a part-time consumer services representative position with EEA and started in October. April is a graduate of Fort Lewis College and was a high school math teacher in Mancos. She lives on a farm south of Dolores with her husband Tyler where they raise Clydesdale horses. When you are in the office, please say hello to April and join us in welcoming her to our co-op family.



# SMART NOTICE



### Staying informed just got easier.

Receive power outage notifications by email or text and report outages using SmartHub. You can also access EEA's outage map using SmartHub ... all in the palm of your hand or online.

SMART MANAGEMENT. SMART LIFE. SMARTHUB.

## Give Everyone the Chance They Deserve.

Today, someone in your community is struggling to pay their utility costs. Energy Outreach Colorado is dedicated to helping fixed-income households afford their home energy needs. Together, we can help our neighbors stop worrying and get back to living.

Donate today.  
[energyoutreach.org/donate](http://energyoutreach.org/donate)



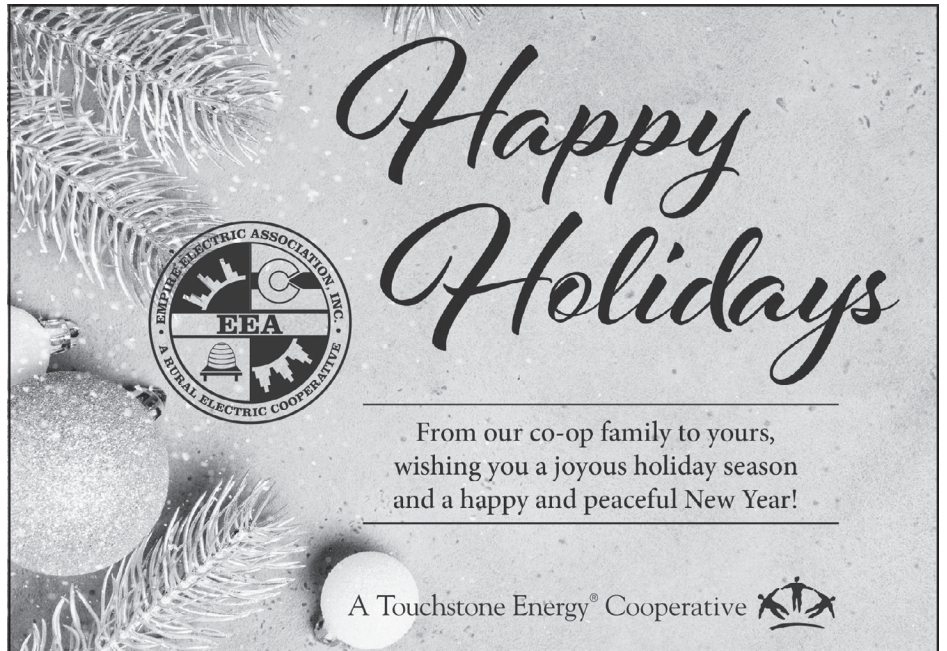
**ENERGY  
OUTREACH  
COLORADO**  
Together We Power Stability

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in your ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form.

Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)



Power Outage Notifications Are Available Through SmartHub

## Empire Electric Scholarship Applications Available

December 1, 2022 - due February 15, 2023



**\$1,000 Student**

**\$1,000 Adult**

**\$1,000 Lineman**

**\$500 Electrical Trade Related**

*EEA provides education scholarships to its members from an unclaimed patronage capital credit fund.*