

Shaping the future by building trustworthy community partnerships as an innovative, forward-thinking industry leader, delivering excellence in our member-owned cooperative.

OCTOBER 2019



Jessica Matlock, LPEA CEO

LPEA's first female Chief Executive Officer in the cooperative's 80-year history

We are home! That is how my young family and I felt when we moved to Colorado this summer. Growing up on a ranch in Colorado provided me with perspective and appreciation for working hard and, equally important, for respecting and protecting our precious natural resources. As you can imagine, growing up on a ranch required the hard tasks of bailing hay and fixing equipment, and the fun tasks of going to stock shows and riding horses at events.

Bottom-line, I used what I learned in growing up in Colorado to venture out and spend time working in both our nation's capital and in the Pacific Northwest. I have experience working as a wetland's biologist, city planner, fish and wildlife manager, energy advisor to the U.S. Senate, power marketing specialist, government affairs advisor to leading the customer service division and "utility of the future" effort for one of the largest public utilities in the U.S. I now feel fortunate to use what I learned growing up in Colorado, and my experiences across the nation, to now apply this background and experience to my home state of Colorado.

I want to thank the LPEA community for welcoming me and my family to this great area and community. I have found an amazing blend of hard workers working the land, to those that are focused on protecting the natural beauty that surrounds us. The LPEA staff and line workers are some of the best I have seen, full of dedication and commitment. I have

also met many amazing LPEA members at community events, at our local college and schools, out hiking and biking, and at our member appreciation lunches. I hope to meet many more of you in the months to come.

As we all know, our community is rich in diversity of thought and we can and will leverage these perspectives to develop sustainable energy solutions. The cooperative utility model is one that I am proud to be a part of and to serve. While the rest of the nation is becoming more divided, I will strive to make certain that the family-cooperative model that we currently have stays intact at LPEA.

However, we must all be aware that the cooperative utility model must also be adaptive to change. I have developed successful programs and approaches for how energy companies can change the way they do business and acquire new energy sources while also staying true to the core mission of the utility. With your help and support, I would like to help LPEA transition to the new energy economy in a way that upholds our values and mission.

I look forward to getting to know more of you, whether that be at community events or out enjoying our great outdoors. You all have something to contribute to our shared success.

HUNTERS: SIGHT-IN DAYS SCHEDULED



In an effort to both assist hunters and protect valuable electrical equipment, LPEA will continue its support of “Sight-in Days” at the Durango Gun Club Outdoor Range in advance of the three big game seasons, Thursdays and Fridays, Oct. 10-11, 17-18, and 31-Nov. 1, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

During “Sight-in Days,” the Durango Gun Club on La Posta Road is open to the general public for rifle scope sighting, and hunters are encouraged to take advantage of the controlled environment to prepare their firearms for the season. LPEA has contributed \$500 to cover costs incurred by the club for the “Sight-in Days” events.

In past years, some 500-600 hunters have taken advantage of the complimentary service. Durango Gun Club staff will be on hand during “Sight-in Days” to answer questions, provide assistance and do minor repairs.

“We want to discourage sighting scopes in uncontrolled environments,” says Operations Manager Justin Talbot. “Taking aim at LPEA equipment is vandalism. Beyond the expense and inconvenience to our members if an outage occurs, the repair requires dangerous work by LPEA crews to get everyone back in power.”

For further information, contact Joseph Perino, Durango Gun Club secretary/treasurer, at (970) 749-3453.

Call for applications: 2020 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) is seeking applications from high school students for the leadership opportunity of a lifetime: The National Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

“As someone who worked for a US Senator in Congress, this is an excellent opportunity for high-school juniors to experience the nation’s capital,” said LPEA Chief Executive Officer Jessica Matlock. “Annually, LPEA and our statewide cooperatives select and sponsor high school juniors for this all-expenses paid experience. Don’t let this opportunity pass you by.”

The Youth Tour allows students to experience the nation’s capital and learn more about how they can make a difference as young adults. Students will learn about the cooperative business model and values, visit historic monuments and memorials, pay their respects at The Arlington National Cemetery, tour a variety of Smithsonian museums and meet elected officials, all while building a peer network with young leaders from across the country.

LPEA will sponsor five local students to join the June 17-25, 2020 Colorado Youth Tour delegation. The weeklong tour is hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. More than 1,900 students from 45 states are expected to participate in 2020, and Colorado’s electric cooperatives will send a delegation of about 45 students.

“If you’re a high school student who wants to grow as a leader, the Youth Tour is the perfect opportunity to build your skills, gain new experiences and form valuable relationships with others,” said LPEA Communications Coordinator Lonnie Tucker. “Youth Tour has something to offer to everyone and can help prepare you for future success on any path you pursue after high school.”

To be considered, students must complete a 2020 Youth Tour application and submit it to LPEA, along with a 500-1,000-word composition addressing the 2020 topic, ‘My Favorite Cooperative Principle.’

Information and applications are available at <https://lpea.coop/youth-tour>. Deadline for Youth Tour applications and compositions are Friday, December 20 at 5 p.m.



LPEA Youth Tour delegates, shown here while visiting Capitol Hill in 2019, will pass the torch of leadership to a new group of high school juniors this spring. Current delegates shown above, now high school seniors, include (L-R): Larissa Gallegos, Irie Sentner, Emma Happ, Diego Salinas and Helyny Zacamolpa.



More than 1,900 high school students from 45 states attended the 2019 National Youth Tour Conference in Washington, D.C. LPEA will sponsor and send five students in 2020.



Colorado Youth Tour delegates visited and toured the U.S. Capitol Building before meeting with their elected U.S. Senators and Representatives.

Future of Power Supply Information Series

The Future of Power Supply Information Series will continue with four meetings scheduled through October and November. “We are working to schedule dates, times and locations for these interactive and informational sessions,” said Jessica Matlock, LPEA CEO. “Once the event details have been confirmed, LPEA will publish the information in the local newspapers, on our LPEA website and social media platforms.”



La Plata Electric Association staff will discuss the future of LPEA’s power supply, explain the trends in the utility industry, as well as the next steps to ensure LPEA’s membership will continue to enjoy safe, reliable and affordable power.

Meet LPEA's New Billing Clerk

Dennis Garcia has joined the LPEA Finance & Accounting team as a Billing Clerk.

Working in coordination with LPEA's finance personnel and customer service representatives, Garcia assists members with billing concerns as well as troubleshooting meter reading and billing issues.

Originally from Montrose, Garcia discovered Durango as a student at Fort Lewis College, where he earned his bachelor's in mathematics. He has since served in sales and operations for five years in Denver, the last two with CT Electric in Durango as an electric apprentice.

"I'm very excited to be working for the cooperative members of La Plata Electric Association and serving the community," says Garcia, who resides with his wife in Durango.

LPEA offers a variety of apprenticeships and career opportunities. To explore employment, or for additional information, visit www.lpea.coop.



Dennis Garcia, LPEA Billing Clerk

Golf tournament raises over \$10,000 to benefit youth scout organizations

Each summer for the past 17 years, LPEA's line personnel, members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (Local IBEW 111 26A) based in Pagosa Springs, have hosted a charity golf tournament to raise funds for a variety of organizations. This year the employees presented \$10,000 to Boy Scouts of America Troop 807, Cub Scouts of America Pack 807, Girl Scout Troop 25075 and Daisy Troop 26237 in Archuleta County, as well as the local Scouts' Venturing Crew 612.

"Scouting organizations provide a comprehensive program for boys and girls that teaches and reinforces core values such as teamwork, citizenship, responsibility, self-confidence and peer leadership," said LPEA Equipment Operator Garrett Hammer, who organized the event with Journeyman Lineman Jeremy Matney. "Youth also learn practical outdoor skills and take an active role as stewards of the community and natural resources. We are proud to support the youth scout organizations here in Archuleta County."

Since the LPEA Golf Tournament's inception in 2003, the event has raised more than \$140,000 for a variety of non-profit organizations in Archuleta County, including local food banks, American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Archuleta County Search & Rescue, Pagosa Early Learning Center, Rise Above Violence and Foundation for Archuleta County Education (FACE).



LPEA linemen Garrett Hammer (second from left) and Jeremy Matney (far right) present \$10,000 to Boy Scouts of America Troop 807, Cub Scouts of America Pack 807, Girl Scout Troop 25075 and Daisy Troop 26237 in Archuleta County, as well as the local Scouts' Venturing Crew 612.

LIVE WIRES

Board meeting October 16, 9 a.m.

The next meeting of the LPEA Board of Directors is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 16, 9 a.m. at the LPEA headquarters in Durango (Bodo Park). The agenda will be posted 10 days in advance of the meeting at www.lpea.coop.

Round Up Grants

The LPEA Round Up Foundation Board awarded Round Up and Educational grants to Four Corners Rainbow Youth Center, Conservation Legacy — Southwest Conservation Corps, Professional Women's Network of Durango, Colorado Outdoor Learning School and Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary School. Visit lpea.coop/round-foundation for program information.

Save the Date for Sight-in Days:

Hunting season is right around the corner. Plan to sight your scopes at the Durango Gun Club, compliments of LPEA's sponsorship Oct. 10 and 11, Oct. 17 and 18, and Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., conditions permitting.

National Co-op Month Social Media Contests:

Each week during October, LPEA will celebrate National Co-op Month by giving our members a chance to win great prizes. How? Just follow LPEA's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts for your chance to WIN!



National Cooperative Month

BY LONNIE TUCKER | COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR
LTUCKER@LPEA.COOP



Ignacio and Pagosa Springs knowing the labor, product and profits are contributing to the success in these communities. The spirit of main street is embodied in these local businesses, just like La Plata Electric Association.

It is the responsibility and sole intent of La Plata Electric Association to serve its members in the most efficient and effective manner. I previously worked for the largest electric cooperative in Missouri for more than 11 years, and I moved to Durango two-years ago to continue my cooperative career. It shouldn't be too hard. All electric cooperatives are the same, right?

Not at all. La Plata Electric Association is truly the benchmark for what all cooperatives strive to achieve in excellence. It begins with an open invitation for our members to attend and participate in the LPEA Board of Directors meetings each month. Members have the opportunity to share their comments, concerns, or question the Board on cooperative business matters. This is not the case with a majority of electric cooperatives across the nation who operate behind closed doors.

Transparency. The LPEA Board of Directors meetings are broadcast live on the internet. One of the first electric cooperatives in the United States offering this service. The meetings are recorded and placed on LPEA's website, which also contains more than three years of annual, financial and statistical reports, board meeting agendas, minutes, resolutions and more. LPEA could not be more transparent!

I love working for La Plata Electric Association and our members. My co-workers share the same passion and common values of integrity, accountability, innovation, and commitment to community.

La Plata Electric Association is owned by you, our cooperative members. We have a vested interest in making sure our local community is a great place to live and work. I hope you do not view LPEA as just your utility provider, but a local-owned business that brings pride and prosperity to our community. Especially during October, National Cooperative Month, we celebrate this great form of business.

October is National Cooperative Month. This is the time of year when cooperatives, like La Plata Electric Association (LPEA), are recognized for their unique business model and celebrated around the world. This year's theme is "Cooperatives: By the Community, For the Community", which rings true with LPEA because we are community born, community led and focused on you, the member.

Together there are more than 40,000 cooperative businesses in the United States with over 350 million members. There are more cooperatives in our local community than most people realize. Like Southwest Colorado Federal Credit Union, Ace Hardware, True Value, Basin Coop, Durango Natural Foods, Southwest Farm Fresh, Spring Mountain Growers and of course, La Plata Electric Association.

As your local electric cooperative, we are a vital part of the community we serve. Our 107 employees work and live here in Southwest Colorado among LPEA's 34,000 members. Our community built this electric cooperative 80-years ago, and LPEA continues to power and empower our members today.

We are committed to providing safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost to our members while being environmentally responsible. LPEA recently adopted the long-term strategic goal of "LPEA will strive to reduce its carbon footprint by 50% from 2018 levels by year 2030 while keeping members' cost of electricity lower than 70% of its Colorado cooperative peers."

But we are more than just a power provider. We are invested in the local communities we serve. I see this when I walk into the shops or restaurants in Durango, Bayfield,



Mission Statement:

La Plata Electric Association provides its members safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost while being environmentally responsible.

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Davin Montoya (District 2)
Kirsten Skeehan (District 1)
Jack Turner (District 4)

Chief Executive Officer:

Jessica Matlock

Social Media:

La Plata Electric Association is on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

