

FOREVER THANKFUL TO THOSE WHO SERVE

BY TOM WALCH CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



TOM WALCH

Many of us have the bad habit of taking for granted good things and good people that are always there for us. I'm guilty. Sometimes we need reminders to help get past this very human flaw. Veterans Day is such a reminder. The men and women of our armed forces are always there for us, and we should honor them.

Collectively, our veterans have defended American freedoms since before the birth of our country. We owe every one of them a debt of gratitude for their selfless service and sacrifices and for the liberties they secured that we can too easily take for granted.

In my family, I am grateful for the service of my own father. After surviving the attack on Pearl Harbor at the age of 21 aboard the USS Maryland, he fought the rest of the war in the Pacific Theater. He made sacrifices that I cannot begin to fathom, but even they pale in contrast to the ultimate sacrifice of the many who did not make it home to their families.

At Grand Valley Power, several among us are veterans. I am thankful for their service and am proud to have them on our team of dedicated employees and board members. We salute the sacrifices and effort of our veterans:

- U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Robbie D. Barela
- U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Cole Crider
- U.S. Army Specialist Joseph W. Foster
- U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Mike Gardner
- U.S. National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Tony Ippolito
- U.S. Army Pfc. Don McClaskey
- U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Thomas Wright

In honor of Veterans Day, we asked two of them to share some of their experiences. Our newest veteran is U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Cole Crider. He has been our

warehouse and facilities technician for about a year and demonstrates discipline and leadership skills from his time in the Corps. Cole chose the Marines to follow in his grandfather's footsteps, even after his grandfather expounded on the physical and mental demands required to fulfill the Semper Fi motto.

As a former saddle bronc competitor, Cole is not a stranger to physically demanding journeys. Still, he said, "I had no idea what I got into when I got off the bus." During his four years in the Marines, Cole served mostly with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, traversing the world from Southeast Asia to the Horn of Africa. While in Malaysia, Cole helped build a school and roads. He says his career has benefited from the skills he learned, and the experience put him on a positive path toward success.

One of GVP's service planners is U.S. Army Field Artillery Gun Chief Mike Gardner. Military service runs deep in his family roots and he enlisted in the Army at 19. Mike trained at Fort Lewis in Washington before heading overseas with the 3rd Infantry Division to Schweinfurt, Germany, for two years. His military journey didn't end there. He was called to serve in Operation Desert Storm with the 199th Infantry Brigade. When Mike returned stateside, he joined the National Guard that was stationed here in Grand Junction. Mike said what he most appreciates about his journey is the people he met and worked alongside. The skills he learned serve him well to this day.

Cole, Mike and the rest of our GVP veterans make us proud. They are a big part of why we, as an organization, have supported Operation Interdependence over

the last four years. The non-profit supplies care packages to soldiers on assignment and further supports veterans at home. The pandemic was a difficult time for the organization, as it was for most. GVP is pleased to have taken up the charge and, with our members' help, collected more than \$20,000 in donations, 3,500 care packages and 940 handwritten letters over the last four years to make a difference in the lives of our troops.

Later this month, as we sit down for our Thanksgiving dinners, include in your prayers of thanks a thought or two about the men and women of our armed forces and the way they have impacted our country and continue to preserve the freedoms we so enjoy.

From all of us at Grand Valley Power: Thank you, veterans, for your service.

COMMENTS TO THE CEO

You are a member of a cooperative and your opinion does count. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please let me know by writing to Ask the CEO, P.O. Box 190, Grand Junction, CO 81502, or send an email to me at twalch@gvp.org. Check our website at gvp.org.

BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Grand Valley Power board meetings are open to the members, consumers and public. Regularly scheduled board meetings are held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the headquarters building located at 845 22 Road, Grand Junction.

The monthly agenda is posted in the lobby of the headquarters building 10 days before each meeting and posted on the GVP website. If anyone desires to address the Board of Directors, please let us know in advance and you will be placed on the agenda.

A HUMBLING EXPERIENCE: GVP Lineman Brings Light to Guatemalan Village

BY DANA POGAR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Electric cooperatives have a long-standing tradition of bringing lights where there are none. More than 80 years ago, cooperatives brought power to rural America and its countryside. Given its origins, electric co-ops like Grand Valley Power are willing and well-positioned to help other areas that do not have access to electric power.

AN INTERNATIONAL MISSION

This year, 16 volunteer linemen, including GVP's Zeb Birch, were selected to participate in the Colorado and Oklahoma Energy Trails Foundation project. They traveled more than 2,500 miles for the international mission to bring electricity to La Montanita de la Virgen, a small village located east of Guatemala City in Central America.

To be a part of the program, applicants must be highly skilled experts in the line-worker trade. While knowledge is critical to the mission's success, it's the big hearts these individuals have that drive them to participate. "My 3-year-old daughter, Morgan, was my biggest inspiration," Birch explained. "One of her favorite things to do is turn the

lights on and off. The overwhelming joy this action brings her encouraged me to apply for the program."

Once Birch received word that he was selected, he began preparing for the mission. "All 16 linemen were given spec sheets to review before our departure to Guatemala. This allowed us to review the landscape and gather the proper materials and equipment needed to complete the project," Birch said. Not long after this, Birch and his teammates boarded the plane to Guatemala City with their hard hats and climbing hooks in hand.

After hours of nonstop travel, the Energy Trails team arrived in Guatemala City on Tuesday, Aug. 30. "As we're driving to the village, I see women carrying 50-pound bags of rice on their heads, children running with no shoes, and homes without power," Birch said. The locals live in extreme poverty without running water, plumbing or food refrigeration. In fact, many depend on farming corn, beans, rice and other commodities to provide for their family.



DANA POGAR

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

Shortly after arriving, the team huddled to discuss goals and assign crews and then went straight to work. "Each day started at the materials warehouse, which happened to be the front yard of one family's home. This is where crews gathered their equipment and tools for the day," Birch said.



GVP lineman Zeb Birch is hard at work bringing first-time light to rural Guatemalan village La Montanita de la Virgen.

The team's first mission was to finish framing the poles set by the villagers. While the local residents had no experience in electric linework, they were critical to the project's success and quickly turned 16 men into 32. The job was hands-on. Without bucket trucks and heavy machinery to aid in their work, crews employed pure strength and techniques from the 1930s and 1940s. Crews worked with the villagers, calling on their passion, power and determination to electrify the community.

Within the tight deadline of three weeks, crews set 77 poles, 5.5 miles of line, and six transformers. To bring electricity directly to the villagers, they also installed four lightbulbs, two light switches and two electrical outlets in every home. "The days were long and exhausting, but everyone was excited to better the lives of the villagers and their community," Birch said.



The Colorado and Oklahoma Energy Trails team and village locals recognize this powerful accomplishment when the lights come on inside the school.

TURNING ON THE LIGHTS

After weeks of hard work, crews were ready to turn on the lights. “Just before we flipped the switch, a little girl leaped into the arms of my crew member. He immediately picked her up and brought her to the light switch, where she turned on the lights for the first time. This moment brought me to tears as I saw the same joy that I see in my daughter’s eyes when she turns on the lights,” Birch said.

The linemen were celebrated with a hot meal, parade and traditional youth dance. In addition, the village mayor dedicated one hour each year to honor crew members for their service. This dedication will be observed annually on September 13.

Looking forward, Empresa Eléctrica Municipal de San Pedro Pinula, a municipal



After spending three weeks at the project site, the lights finally came on for village residents on Tuesday, September 13. The project consisted of building power lines and wiring 84 structures, including one elementary school and two churches.

utility, will be responsible for maintaining the newly built infrastructure.

A HUMBLING EXPERIENCE

As all 16 linemen traveled back home to the United States, each returned incredibly humbled by this experience. “This

mission trip showed me that humans are all the same, no matter our origin — we simply want what’s best for our family and kids,” Birch said. You can learn more about the Energy Trails Foundation and Birch’s experience by visiting GVP’s Facebook and Twitter page “@GVRuralPower.” Please join us in thanking the Energy Trails team for its dedication and the success of the project.

OFFICIAL DROP-OFF LOCATION
MON-FRI FROM 8 A.M. - 5 P.M.



Toys for Tots

Drop off new, unwrapped toys by
Tuesday, December 6

Grand Valley Power
845 22 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81505

gvp.org/hometown-partnerships



GVP
GRAND VALLEY POWER

COOPERATIVE YOUTH
**LEADERSHIP
•CAMP•**

JULY 15-20, 2023
APPLICATIONS ARE DUE
JANUARY 9, 2023

APPLY NOW

GVP.ORG/YOUTH-LEADERSHIP-PROGRAMS

Co-op Calendar



- DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS** - Sunday, Nov. 6
- VETERANS DAY** - Friday, Nov. 11
- TOYS FOR TOTS DRIVE BEGINS** - Monday, Nov. 21
- THANKSGIVING DAY** (Office Closed) - Thursday, Nov. 24
- DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING** (Office Closed) - Friday, Nov. 25



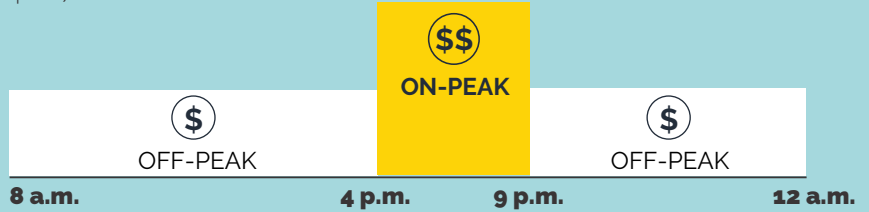


FALL INTO ENERGY SAVINGS

Ways to save energy during the fall season

The changing season brings cooler weather and new ways to save! With Grand Valley Power's Time-of-Use rate, members have the opportunity to save energy and money year-round. This harvest season, take advantage of lower pricing during off-peak hours by shifting your energy use **away** from peak periods (4-9 p.m.).

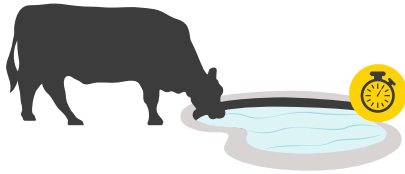
REDUCE ENERGY USE FROM **4-9 p.m.**



TOU SAVINGS ON THE FARM

Take control of your electric bill by shifting your energy use away from on-peak periods (4-9 p.m.). Consider purchasing an electrical timer to increase your energy savings.

Set a timer on your stock tank heater to turn off during **on-peak** times.

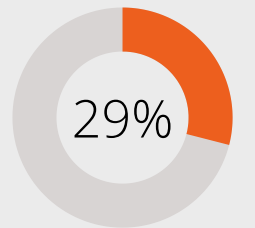


Take advantage of lower pricing during **off-peak** hours to heat stock tanks and other electrical equipment during the cooler seasons.



Did you know?

Did you know that home heating systems use more energy than any other system in your home? In fact, heating accounts for nearly 29 percent of your energy bill. Consider setting your thermostat to 68°F in the winter. You can save as much as 10% a year on heating costs by simply turning your thermostat back 7°F - 10°F for eight hours each day.



Heating costs account for 29 percent of your electric bill

TOP FOUR WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY



Set your programmable thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter and lower the set-point when you're sleeping or away from home. Consider pre-heating your home during off-peak hours for additional savings.



Be sure to clean warm-air registers, baseboard heaters, and radiators as needed; make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting or drapes.



Only use portable heaters in rooms that are in use and need additional heat. Remember to turn them off while the room is unoccupied.



During winter, keep the draperies and shades on your south-facing windows open during the day to allow the sunlight to enter your home and closed at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.

Source: energy.gov

ENERGY ASSISTANCE DURING THE WINTER

If you find yourself in need of help to pay your electric bill this winter, there are resources to help alleviate some financial cost and programs that can improve your home's efficiency for year-round savings. For more information, please call our office at (970) 242-0040 or visit gvp.org/energy-assistance.

GVP.ORG/ENERGY-ASSISTANCE

