

currents



WWW.GCSECA.COOP



Grand Canyon State
Electric Cooperative
Association, Inc.



@GCSECA



602 286 6925



2210 S. Priest Dr. | Tempe, AZ 85282

Good Cheer, Celebrations, Family and Traditions



David Lock, GCSECA CEO

Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year. I love the lights, the songs, the decorations, the food, the good cheer, the celebrations with friends and family and the traditions.

In our family, a long-standing tradition is watching four particular Christmas movies, in order. They are:

Christmas Vacation, – “I don’t know, Margo” is an almost daily joke between my wife and me.

A Christmas Carol with George C. Scott as Scrooge – “Mr. Scrooge, I presume? Indeed, you do sir”.

It’s A Wonderful Life – “You call this a happy family? Why do we have to have all these kids?” is another favorite family joke.

A Christmas Story – “You’ll shoot your eye out!”.

It’s a Wonderful Life especially resonates with me. It’s really not a Christmas movie, per se. It’s about a guy, George Bailey, who grows up in the same town he can never escape. He becomes somewhat bitter and depressed as he sees his friends, classmates and brother all go out and achieve “success.” Meanwhile, George is left behind to tend to a “penny ante” savings and loan and live a routine life of raising kids and paying

bills. He can’t even fight in World War II because of hearing loss suffered as a child.

You probably know the rest of the story. George, through no fault of his own, faces financial ruin – the cherry on top of the sundae of his miserable life. He decides he’s better off dead than alive, because at least he can leave his family a \$5,000 life insurance policy. The intervention of an angel allows George to see what the world would have been without him – and George discovers he indeed has had a wonderful life.

It seems as we go about our routine lives, problems abound. COVID continues to mess with what we knew as “normal.” Housing costs are going crazy and home ownership seems unattainable for young people. Inflation is on the march. Natural disasters seem like daily occurrences. Political discourse has been replaced by screaming, recrimination and one-upmanship. The dog tracked mud through the house.

We humans sometimes focus on these things, and not the wonderful things we do have in our lives. As George finds out, we all make incredibly positive impacts on people – whether we know it or not. And we’re all blessed in so many ways, even though it may not seem like it some days.

In the final scene of the movie, on Christmas Eve, George discovers how his seemingly mundane life has been anything but. Friends and family shower him with gifts and money so he can escape his financial predicament. He watches in astonishment as the generosity unfolds before him. George’s angel, Clarence, leaves behind a copy of “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.” In it, Clarence writes: “Dear George, remember no man is a failure who has friends.” I cry every time.

Amen, and Merry Christmas!

Dave Lock

GCEC Gives Back

Cooler weather has arrived, which always reminds us we are nearing the holiday season and the end of another year. Thanksgiving Day is November 25. It is a time to give thanks and be with family and friends.

We also have an opportunity to reflect and give thanks to those who served our country on Veterans Day, November 11. The freedoms we enjoy as a country came at a price, and we would like to thank the veterans in our community. We also appreciate active service members for their patriotism and sacrifice to serve our country.

This time of year can be challenging for our members who have been affected by employment and health issues. Graham County Electric Co-op’s utility assistance program provided much-needed help in 2020 to several cooperative members’ families. Graham County Electric Cooperative Foundation Inc. (GCECF) also donated gift certificates and money to local charities in 2020.

We would like to expand the program to help more members in need this holiday season and throughout the year. GCECF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that administers multiple community-based programs through donations to local food banks, utility-assistance programs and scholarships. GCECF is a registered participant in a national cooperative program called Operation Roundup. As members of GCEC and/or GCU, you can sign up to round up your monthly utility bill to the nearest whole dollar or more. All contributions are remitted to GCECF, which uses donations to fund the program year-round. All monetary donations should be made payable to the Graham County Electric Co-op Foundation Inc. these donations may qualify as tax-deductible contributions.

Southeastern Arizona Community Action Program also helps community members. If you are unable to pay your utility bill, contact SEACAP at 928-428-4653.

GCECF’s programs are designed to align with the Seventh Cooperative Principle, which states, “While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.”

There is much need in the communities we serve. We greatly appreciate the participation and generosity of our member/owners.

The board of directors and employees of Graham County Electric Co-op, Graham County Utilities and Graham County Electric Co-op Foundation sincerely wish you and your families a blessed holiday season.

Phil Cook
CEO and General Manager of GCEC



Nolan Team Wins Triathlon



Curtis Nolan (above, right), president of the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative Board of Directors, and NRECA Board Representative for Arizona's Co-ops, was joined by two teammates October 9 at the Huntsman World Senior Games in St. George, Utah. The team of Curt Mayberry (above, left), Stuart Baird (above, center) and Nolan earned a first place finish in their age group and in the overall triathlon.

The event involved swimming 500 yards, biking 13.3 miles and running 3.1 miles, with 12 relay teams competing for the title.

The Games is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that provides seniors a venue of international sports competition and education on active aging with the mission to foster worldwide peace, health and friendship and lead the world in active aging.



NEC Trunk or Treat

Navopache Electric Cooperative always likes to participate in fun events within the communities that they serve. This year they had fun partnering with the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside for their Annual Trunk or Treat. This year the team decided to go with the Monster Incorporated Theme since, well, Monster Inc. IS a power company after all!

NEC embraced both the scare side as well as the laugh side. Trick-or-treaters had the option to go through the "Scare-Door" that was decorated like Sully the top 'Scarer' from the Monsters Inc. movie, or they could go through the "Laugh-Door" that was decorated like Mike the top "Jokester" from Monsters at Work. Once inside the booth, they spun a wheel for a prize and a candy treat!

The PNK Sorority from Monsters University was on hand to man the booth and they are already working with Cutter from MIFT crew from Monsters at Work to make improvements to next year's booth!

If you have the opportunity we would love to see you at the event next year and as an added bonus, the weather is great and the fall colors are beautiful!



Keeping Our Support Consistent

AzGT continues to use CoBank's Sharing Success program for county education and arts programs

The challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic over the last 18 months have restricted access to education in the classroom and support from donations at times; however, Arizona Generation and Transmission Cooperatives (AzGT) and CoBank have recognized this period as crucial to maintain the support they provide. In fact, last year CoBank, a financial institution that specializes in providing loans to cooperatives, doubled the donation amount it provides in matching funds through its Sharing Success program from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Therefore, AzGT has been able to provide a total of \$20,000 by combining its donations with CoBank's. The program allows the matching funds for up to four recipients. AzGT chose three: Willcox Theater and Arts (WTA), Cochise Education Foundation (CEF), and Cochise College Foundation.



J.D. Wallace, AzGT communications, social media and marketing administrator, and Denise Hoyos, Cochise College Foundation executive director, hold two checks for \$5,000 each from AzGT and CoBank.

"Even through thick and thin and everything that's been going on, two of them have been such great sponsors for us, to be able to know that I can rely on them, now, back when we first started, and in the future, means so much to not just me, but I know that if I had a chance to explain this to the kids, and to the parents, I guarantee you that they, too, would say thank you very much," said Gary Clement, executive director of WTA, which received two \$2,500 checks, one from AzGT and one from CoBank, for a total of \$5,000.

WTA not only shows first-run movies in Willcox; it provides a variety of programs that promote the arts. Two programs that the donations support are Matinee My Way and ArtRageous. Matinee My Way provides movies once a month in a lights-up, volume-down environment that is more accommodating to children with autism. ArtRageous provides art programs to local youth.

"It made my life a whole lot easier because it lets me schedule in movies," Clement said about the donations. "It lets me know that I can go out and get the supplies to do credited, real programs and not have to go looking around and scrounging around for stuff for one of those things where the kids come in and go, 'Ooh, we're going to color on a coloring page.'"

"To have organizations other than ourselves come together to encourage and to validate our citizens, our future leaders, and those who are creating our future leaders, which are our teachers, what a wonderful mix that is," said Jacqui Clay, Cochise



Jacqui Clay, Cochise County school superintendent, and J.D. Wallace hold two matching \$2,500 checks from AzGT and CoBank through its Sharing Success program to support Cochise Education Foundation.

County school superintendent, about the matching \$2,500 checks that CEF received from AzGT and CoBank. "I think it's powerful."

For years, CEF has used the donation for its Teacher of the Year awards and its classroom mini-grants, which are \$200 grants to help teachers with projects they don't have the funding to do otherwise. But this year, CEF has also started its New Crossroads Academy, which accommodates 16 to 22 year-old students who have dropped out of school or who have been in jail or a detention center. As these students finish classes, the program will then begin assisting them with trade classes at Cochise College.



Eric Petermann, Cochise Education Foundation(CEF) board president; Cindy Morales, CEF secretary and administrative assistant to the Cochise County school superintendent; Jacqui Clay, Cochise County school superintendent and CEF board member; Christine Rhodes, CEF board member; Ben Reyna, Cochise County Schools outreach coordinator and CEF board member; Nikki Madden, Cochise County Schools chief deputy; Debbie Prow, Cochise County Schools office business manager and CEF treasurer; and J.D. Wallace gather with the two \$2,500 checks from AzGT and CoBank through Sharing Success.

"So, this money, we're stretching it a long way, but without it we wouldn't be able to serve the community and also we wouldn't be able to validate those who need to be validated which are our high-risk kids because they're our future and they need to know that life isn't over because they made a mistake," Clay said. "When they see that these two organizations have helped, they can see that there is someone other than our office saying the same thing."

"Education is important. That's how you move ahead. It opens the door to a lot of things once you have acquired some. And, so, for those two organizations to support scholarships, it really underscores where the thinking of your leadership is," said Denise Hoyos, executive director of the Cochise College Foundation, upon receiving two, \$5,000 checks from AzGT and CoBank for a total of \$10,000.



J.D. Wallace and Gary Clement, executive director of Willcox Theater and Arts, hold two \$2,500 checks from AzGT and CoBank through the Sharing Success program.

The donation helps the foundation provide scholarships to Cochise County high school graduates and non-traditional students. Non-traditional students are students who have been away from college for a year or more, or who are county residents who want to return to school to improve their skillset and job outlook. Hoyos estimates the donation will provide scholarships for 10 to 20 students.

"The core student population that Cochise College serves resides here in Cochise County, and so support provided by sponsors and donors really is helping to support the local economy and the local businesses who are going to end up hiring those graduating high school seniors as they come out of Cochise College and those non-traditional students," Hoyos explained. "It really underscores the commitment to the communities that you're serving."

GRICUA Selected for NRECA's President's Award



This past month, the NRECA Board of Directors unanimously selected Gila River Indian Community Utility Authority (GRICUA) to receive the prestigious President's Award.

The President's Award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding continuing leadership contributions to rural electrification, the nation or their states or communities.

GRICUA has helped to inspire young people within their territory for over 15 years through various outreach programs which involve them in the life of the community it serves. The Washington Youth Tour, high school and college summer internship programs, and the GRICUA summer STEAAAM program all create opportunities for early engagement in its community-focused mission. This emphasis on inclusion has immense value to creating the next generation of leadership, which is a wonderful example of how GRICUA provides much more than electricity to the people it serves.

Co-ops and community utility members strive to provide their communities with the best opportunities and resources available for economic development, education, and community engagement. GRICUA has exemplified this well, and the national recognition for GRICUA's efforts is well-deserved.

The President's Award will be presented to GRICUA during the 2022 NRECA PowerXchange in Nashville, TN.

Representative Gail Griffin Wins Regional Award for Outstanding Service

At the recent NRECA Region 8 and 10 meeting in Dallas, Texas, Rep. Gail Griffin received the Regional Award for Outstanding Service. This award recognizes individuals, be they directors, co-op staff or elected officials, who go above and beyond in providing outstanding service to rural electric cooperatives. In the formal nomination process, Rep. Griffin received commendations from GCSECA, Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Arizona Municipal Power Users' Association and Arizona Farm Bureau.

Rep. Griffin is serving in her 8th term at the Arizona Legislature. First elected in 1996, she served two terms. Then elected once again in 2010, she has been in Phoenix fighting for rural and our electric cooperatives ever since.

Rep. Griffin's legislative accomplishments are many, but chief among them would be when she:

- Worked tirelessly to pass legislation to protect the co-ops capital credits program – and by extension the Washington Youth Tour – in 2018.
- Rep. Griffin was also instrumental in helping get SB1460, the legislation that granted co-ops the authority to launch broadband service, passed in the House during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Being a longtime chair of both the Senate and House Natural Resources and Energy Committees, Arizona's co-ops can be sure that the door is always open to discuss energy policy and how we can work together to position electric cooperatives for the future.
- Rep. Griffin is always ready to roll up her sleeves, dig in and help Arizona's co-ops solve our toughest policy problems.

One of the requirements to receive the Regional Award for Outstanding Service is to demonstrate that the nominee has achieved the advancement of electric cooperatives in a region or state through a remarkable accomplishment of leadership, development or distinguished service. With Rep. Griffin, it was clear that she excelled at this requirement.



2021 Show Low Film Festival



NEC is excited to be a sponsor of the Show Low Film Festival for the past 3 years which has been held at the WME Village 8 in Lakeside, AZ from generally in mid-October. The Show Low Film Festival has been very successful and has shown tremendous growth since its inception in 2018. The first year 90 filmmakers traveled to our beautiful area to present 52 films helping the first festival to be wonderful success by all attendees. The next year in 2019 the festival grew to an impressive 165 filmmakers attending to present 65 films. In 2020 the festival still went on (as we all know – “The show must go on!”), but was limited due to local COVID restrictions. 2021, as expected, brought an even larger group of filmmakers from all over the globe to showcase their latest films.

When Martina Webster reached out to NEC to see how they could possibly partner up in the community, the thought of offering a membership incentive for the festival tickets through the Co-Op Connections Program came to life, as well as sponsoring this cultural and artistic event. It also happens to occur during one of the most beautiful times of the year here in the White Mountains, so it is a win/win. As a bonus this year and part of our sponsorship, Martina had the NEC CEO, Chuck Moore and his wife, Ann Moore, walk the red carpet during the opening night main event.

The festival is brought to life each year by three dynamic and energetic ladies Martina Webster, Stephany Borders and Dalea Faulkner. They work with a wonderfully creative team to put together the festival each year. Tedy Croney and her team at White Mountain Village 8 Theatres partner with the ladies to bring the Show Low Film Festival event to our local area. The four of them, along with their teams manage to make executing such a huge undertaking seem easy.



Martina Webster is the CEO of DarMar Production and ColoRiffic, as well as being a Producer of the Show Low Film Festival. She partners with the Arizona Film Office to bring more filming into Arizona. Her goals include becoming a funding source for movie makers and producing “Movies with Meaning”. She has served on the boards of various film festivals and is the Owner of the Show Low Film Festival. Martina’s Current projects are “Hashtag Blessed The Movie” (coming out this winter!), Christmas Witch Movie and Coffee & God. Past projects of hers include Justin Haywards’ Music Video “The Wind of Heaven”, “Turnover the Movie,” “Evie’s Christmas Gift”, and “Sis”.

Stephany Borders is a Producer of the Show Low Film Festival, and is the owner and Producer of Party Planners, a well-established event planning business. She has catered countless movie sets, has been on the staff of other film festivals and has coordinated many very successful car shows, festivals, parades, County and State events! Stephany recently stepped into Co-Producing Films.


Dalea Faulkner is a Producer of the Show Low Film Festival as well as being a whimsical fantasy author, creating adventures for you to unwind and escape into. Fans of her work experience poetic movement and colorful realms, as they learn more about themselves, and her characters. Creator of the Amberlight Valley Series, Dalea is an accomplished Writer, Song Writer, Creative Artist, Screen Writer, Business Mentor, and Speaker. Dalea is also Writer and Producer of Hashtag Blessed the Movie (filmed right here in the White Mountains!) Her other projects include a YA Fantasy novel, “The Christmas Witch”, a Children’s book, “The Magic of Night”, and adding stories to The Amberlight Valley Series.

Martina shared with us that the Show Low Film Festival is beginning much in the same way that film festivals such as Sedona and Sundance got started. One differentiating aspect of the Show Low Film Festival over many of the other festivals is the ability to be held in an actual theater rather than some other location. This allows filmmakers to see what their finished project looks like on the big screen. As with all film festivals, the movies being showcased are independent and have not been rated. Due to this, this is not an event for children. The festival is planning to add a children’s category in the near future.





GRAND CANYON STATE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives 

Want to know more about your Arizona Legislators and how to contact them?

For a full Arizona Legislative directory, visit

<https://www.gcseca.coop/services/publications-communications/>

2210 S. Priest Drive
Tempe, Arizona 85282

Address Service Requested



Do you want to see different content? Do you want to see more co-op stories? We want to hear from YOU! Type the link below into the address bar on your computer for our reader satisfaction survey. You can also open the camera app on your phone and hover over the QR code to the right. This will ask you to follow a link from your phone to complete the reader satisfaction survey as well. Thank you for being a reader of Currents magazine!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FFQ9DCG>

