Kilgore named District 2 Director

Conifer resident brings new experience, expertise to IREA board

IREA’s Board of Directors has appointed Mr. W. Ronald Kilgore, P.E., a Conifer resident and forensic investigative engineer, as its newest member representing Director District 2.

Mr. Kilgore holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in electrical engineering and has operated his own electrical engineering firm since 1995.

Mr. Kilgore has lived in Conifer since 1998. He and his wife, Raney, are parents to four children: Rylie, 25; Reisa, 23; Rhett, 21; and Ramsey, 19. His hobbies include fishing, backpacking, skiing and hiking.

“We are pleased to have Mr. Kilgore onboard,” IREA Board President Tim White said. “He brings a new perspective and new experience and expertise to the board.”

The District 2 board seat became vacant in March after the passing of longtime board member James “Duke” Dozier. More than a dozen applicants expressed interest in filling the vacancy. Applications were due June 12 and the board interviewed several candidates for the position, ultimately choosing Kilgore. Mr. Kilgore will fill the remainder of the term, which ends in 2023.

“I am thrilled to join a great team of board members and I look forward to helping IREA provide safe, reliable, and economic energy to its members for many years,” Mr. Kilgore said.

IREA Director District 2 includes Grant, Shawnee, Bailey, Conifer and Pine, as well as portions of Castle Rock, Sedalia, Franktown, and Park, Clear Creek, Jefferson, and Douglas counties.

IREA is governed by a board of seven directors, each of whom represents a geographic district within the association’s service territory. The board makes decisions regarding the association’s general policies and directs the CEO to implement those policies. Director elections occur every four years. Districts 3, 5 and 7 will have elections in 2021. Elections for Districts 1, 2, 4 and 6 will be held in 2023.

COVID-19: Extended pay arrangements, lobby precautions continue

IREA continues to be concerned about the financial impacts COVID-19 has on our customers. Extended payment arrangements are still available for customers who are having difficulty paying their IREA bill due to financial hardship related to COVID-19. These customers are encouraged to contact us as soon as possible to make payment arrangements. Customer Service can be reached at (800) 332-9540 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. We are also waiving disconnect notice fees and do not charge late payment fees.

To accommodate customers who need to make in-person payments or deliver engineering contracts, IREA’s lobbies are open for regular business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you need to visit a lobby, please be mindful of the following:

• Business is limited to bill payments and delivery of engineering contracts.
• Visitors must wear a mask in our lobby.
• Anyone with a cough, fever or other COVID-19 symptom should not enter the lobby. These customers can leave payment in the drop box of any IREA location.
• The number of visitors in each lobby will be limited. Please follow the posted signs and observe proper social distancing – a minimum of 6 feet of separation – if you visit.

We encourage customers to use the My Account feature at www.IREA.coop or call Customer Service at (800) 332-9540 for payments and other account management. Please visit www.IREA.coop for the latest information regarding IREA’s response to COVID-19.
IREA introduces volunteer program

IREA has established an employee volunteer program, IREA Cares, to support communities in our service area. The program will allow IREA employees to spend a workday volunteering at a local nonprofit or charity organization. The purpose of IREA Cares is to support volunteer activities that enhance and serve the communities in which we live and work.

“The intention of this program is to create community engagement opportunities for IREA employees that are meaningful, purposeful and help those in need,” IREA Public Affairs Director Josh Liss said. “IREA recognizes that we can make a bigger impact in the communities we serve and there’s no better time than right now to launch a program like this.”

IREA will identify eligible volunteer opportunities with local nonprofit organizations within IREA’s service area and solicit employee volunteers. For-profit organizations and activities, causes for specific individuals, and solely religious or political organizations and causes will not be considered.

Free shred event draws nearly 700

IREA saw a strong turnout for last month’s free shred event. Nearly 700 vehicles showed – almost double from last year’s event, which was IREA’s first. Over 12 tons of paper was collected by IREA employees and securely shredded by Shred-It.

Customers began arriving at 6:30 a.m. for the event’s scheduled start at 8 a.m. IREA’s two reserved trucks reached capacity by 10 a.m. Fortunately, IREA was able to work with Shred-It to get additional trucks. A third was filled before the event’s planned 12 p.m. end, and a fourth arrived shortly after noon so that we could continue serving customers who patiently waited in line. In comparison, last year’s volume filled one truck, with a second needed to meet some overflow capacity.

IREA is already planning possible future shred events for customers and will apply lessons learned from this event to make future events even better. Info for any future events will appear in Watts & Volts, as well as our website, www.IREA.coop, and social media channels: @IREAColorado on Twitter, and IntermountainREA on both Facebook and Instagram.

Pole attachment audit includes drone work

IREA contractors are using aerial drones to conduct a comprehensive audit of pole attachments, which will help us protect the integrity of our system, improve safety, and ensure standards compliance.

The audit will continue through October and identify and inspect non-IREA attachments on our poles, which typically include broadband, telephone, cable and other communications lines. Attachments that do not meet industry standards will be addressed by their respective owners.

Most inspections will be done using drones, but contractors will require access to some customers’ properties to complete the audit. They will provide IREA-issued documentation upon request.

Customers with questions or comments about the audit can call IREA Vertical Asset Coordinator Michael Surran at (720) 733-5590.
The My Power customer portal is expected to launch by the end of this month and will be accessible to customers who have new AMI meters. My Power will be available through the My Account portal at IREA.coop and will be accessible via computer, tablet or smartphone. Once you are logged in, intuitive features will let you easily view, manage and analyze your usage data.

You will be able to monitor consumption patterns, compare periods of energy use, and better understand how your energy habits affect your monthly bill. My Power includes easy-to-understand charts, tables and graphs that will give you a new way to look at how you use electricity and allow you to:

- View usage data in hourly, daily and weekly increments;
- Set up custom thresholds so that My Power will notify you if energy use has exceeded your specified amount;
- Identify your daily peak demand;
- Use weather tracking to determine if a period of high energy use corresponds to a day of high or low temperatures.

Get ready to harness My Power by enrolling in My Account. Visit www.IREA.coop, select “login” under the My Account box in the top right-hand corner, and on the next screen click the link for new account registration and follow the instructions.

Once available, My Power will be accessible through the main page on My Account under Additional Consumption Info for AMI Customers. Because My Power uses data from AMI meters, it is not available to customers who opt out of the AMI program.

The launch date for My Power will be announced through our website, www.IREA.coop, and social media channels: @IREAColorado on Twitter, and IntermountainREA on both Facebook and Instagram.

IREA rebuilding transmission line at Kenosha Pass

IREA is rebuilding 8.5 miles of transmission line in north Park County. The work is part of a long-term rebuild of the transmission line between Conifer and Park County to increase capacity and improve reliability.

The work will upgrade the existing 44-kilovolt line between the west side of Kenosha Pass near Jefferson and the Roberts Tunnel Power Generation Station near Grant to 115 kilovolts. A new Roberts Tunnel substation will replace both the Grant and existing Roberts Tunnel substations.

The area’s terrain requires the use of helicopters and track-mounted drill rigs. Much of the work will be visible along U.S. Highway 285.

The project required approval from the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Park County, and the Colorado State Land Board. It is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2021.

Next year’s annual meeting scheduled for April 24

The annual meeting of the membership of The Intermountain Rural Electric Association will be held at the Association’s headquarters building, located at 5496 N. U.S. Highway 85, Sedalia, CO 80135, at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 24, 2021, to transact the following business:

1. The presentation of reports covering the previous fiscal year.
2. Election of directors.
3. All other business that may properly come before the meeting.

Note: Registration is from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the day of the meeting.
Since 1988, IREA has awarded grants to graduating high school seniors who plan to continue their education.

This year we expanded the program to five recipients from each of our seven director districts. Recipients’ names were randomly drawn at the IREA Board of Directors’ June meeting. Each recipient will receive $2,000 to help with higher education expenses.

The application window for next year’s grants will open in January. Students from the class of 2021 can visit www.IREA.coop/education-grants now to request notification when next year’s application is available.

**District 1**
- Aiden Ingenthron
  - Colorado College

**District 2**
- Shannon Drotar
  - Colorado State

**District 3**
- Jordan Lowry
  - Embry-Riddle (AZ)

**District 4**
- Kendle Frank
  - Metropolitan State

**District 5**
- Brianna Hinchliffe
  - Colorado State

**District 6**
- Sidney Aldretti
  - Northern Colorado

**District 7**
- Seth Burgmann
  - Metropolitan State

- Jordan Jackson
  - Nebraska Kearney

- Laney Dugan
  - Georgia

- Garrett Park
  - Grand Canyon (AZ)

- Katelyn Glassman
  - CU Colorado Springs

- Madison Lett
  - Baylor (TX)

- Aizlyn Brunk
  - Arizona

- Carson Cramer
  - CO School of Mines

- Marissa Jimenez
  - Brigham Young-Idaho

- Brady Eitel
  - CO School of Mines

- Taw Paw
  - Northern Colorado

- Sarah Hitchings
  - Cal Poly

- Moriah Petree
  - Arapahoe CC

- Winnie Chiu
  - CU Boulder

- Cole Farynaz
  - Wyoming

- Noah Leonard
  - Grand Canyon (AZ)

- Eleigha Hamari
  - Colorado State

- Jackson Schubloom
  - Northern Arizona

- Grant Podhajsky
  - Fort Lewis College

- Alexa Swa
  - New Mexico

- Kathrine Larsen
  - CU Colorado Springs

- Sarah Sams
  - MIT

- Grace Whitacre
  - Baylor (TX)

- Joseph Salvatori
  - Colorado Mesa

- Emma Stenzel
  - CU Colorado Springs

- Eryn Wheeler
  - Colorado State

- Ryan Wild
  - Arapahoe CC

- Gabriella Owen
  - Western Colorado

- Tyler Seeley
  - Hastings College (NE)