

SPARKS

Park Electric Cooperative, Inc.
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PARK

TERRAN BROWN \$500 MECA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT



Terran Brown is the daughter of Larry and Kim Plaggemeyer of Big Timber. She is a student at Rocky Mountain College, boasting a 4.0 GPA in pursuit of a degree in Psychology and Sociology.

Terran's scholarship essay focused on community. She wrote of the influence her small community had in shaping her as a strong, confident individual, student and competitor. It was the support and encouragement she received from her teachers, peers and employers, Terran notes, that steered her toward a career choice of helping others.

Upon graduation from Rocky, Ms Brown hopes to be accepted into a Master's program followed by employment with a private practice working with troubled youth.

Well done Terran!!!

New Trustee District 3

The Board of Directors of Park Electric Cooperative are pleased to announce that Craig Yost has been chosen to fill the District 3 director position left vacant by the untimely passing of Robert Olmstead. Mr. Yost was one of several candidates to apply for the seat. With an extensive background in the power industry, Craig is a welcome addition to the board and well qualified to serve the PEC membership.

SAFETY IS **EVERYONE'S** **RESPONSIBILITY!**

If your spring chores include planting or fencing projects, be sure to **CALL BEFORE YOU DIG**. Dial 811 at least 48 hours before you plan to dig.

If you are moving large equipment, be aware of your surroundings. **LOOK UP AND AROUND** to avoid snagging overhead power lines.

If you intend to burn weeds or stubble, **AVOID BURNING** near power poles and equipment.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

A simple, once a year cleaning of your refrigerator coils may save you expensive repair costs and will certainly result in more efficient operation and lower energy bills. Your fridge is one of the largest and most used appliances in your home. If the coils are covered with dust, gunk or pet hair, they cannot diffuse the heat properly.

Locate the refrigerator's coil, a grid-like structure or fan. Coils are generally located at the back of the fridge or concealed by the front toe plate. Some newer models have internal coils to protect them from the build up of greasy kitchen dirt.

If the coil is in the back, slide the refrigerator away from the wall, allowing enough room to work. Be sure to unplug from the electrical outlet and if you have a water dispenser or icemaker, disconnect the supply line.



DIRTY FRIDGE COILS



Gently vacuum and clean the coils using a brush or crevice attachment. Wipe down the sides and back of the fridge and the floor with hot soapy water.

When you slide the refrigerator back into place make sure to rearrange the power cord and supply lines so that they don't get kinked or stuck under the weight of the fridge. Replace the toe kick panel if it was removed.

GENERAL MANGER COMMENTS

By Tim Stephens

I frequently write about our relationship with Central Montana Electric Cooperative (CMEPC) and Basin Electric Cooperative (Basin). CMEPC purchases power on behalf Park Electric and seven other distribution cooperative members. That power is generated by Basin as well as Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). I rarely talk about WAPA, this month they are getting a little more of the spotlight.

WAPA delivers the power generated by the dams along the Missouri River and Yellowtail Dam. The amount of hydro power Central purchases on our behalf varies from month to month but normally accounts for about 65% of CMEPC's total annual needs. The energy purchased from WAPA is non-carbon emitting hydro power and is very economically priced. Obviously, a major factor in producing hydroelectric energy is water flow. Several years ago there was a relatively long term drought that reduced water levels to a point that WAPA was unable to generate enough electricity to meet their contract obligations. When that happened they were forced to purchase power from others at market price. That energy was had a higher cost than what they were contracted to sell it for thus creating a deficit. That is repaid through an addition to the wholesale power rate called a "drought adder." That deficit has taken almost 30 years to repay and should be finished in 2017. At about the same time the drought adder comes off of the rate WAPA charges they are anticipating a small increase in the

normal rate. The end result is expected to be an overall lower rate from WAPA.

With the good news from WAPA comes some not so good news from Basin. Due to rising costs and very low sales, Basin is likely to increase their wholesale power cost. At the same time, CMEPC has been doing a fantastic job of searching out and implementing opportunities to save on wholesale power. CMEPC's understanding all of the moving parts of power supply and developing short term and long range plans for the future has paid off for all of its members. CMEPC will likely get by with passing on little to no increase to its members, including Park Electric.

If you attended the Annual Meeting last October, you would have heard me say that we are continuing to examine the rates we charge you. We are currently doing an in depth examination of all of our rates and rate classes to ensure we are being fair and equitable to all of our members. At the beginning of this process we discovered the need to adjust the timeframe for those members eligible for the discounted. The notification of those changes were in the last issue of the Park Sparks. If you are on the electric heat rate and missed that information, please contact the office or check out our website at parkelectric.coop for details. Should we find it necessary to make changes to any other rate or rate class, we will let you know well in advance of making that change.

1 cup fresh shelled green peas (or frozen, thawed)
6 green onions, chopped
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 large garlic clove, chopped
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
Juice of fresh lime
1 large ripe avocado, mashed
1 large tomato, finely chopped
2 tablespoons packed cilantro leaves, chopped

SWEET PEA GUACAMOLE



Note: Adding peas to guacamole gives it a lighter, sweeter flavor. Peas also intensify the color and the dip stays green longer than the traditional version.

DIRECTIONS:

If using fresh peas, blanch them by placing in a large pot of boiling water for 1 minute, then immediately place into colander to drain.

In a food processor or blender, combine peas, onion, cumin, chili powder, garlic, red pepper flakes, olive oil and lime juice. Process until smooth.

Transfer to serving bowl. Stir in mashed avocado, tomato and cilantro. Season with kosher salt and fresh ground pepper to taste. Garnish with cilantro.

Makes 8 Servings