

for this and other decisions.

This year the co-op paid its members \$3.6 million in capital credits. Martin said this year 38,330 checks were sent out to people who were members in 1998, 1999 and 2012. The minimum amount mailed was \$10.

Martin said the 2014 audit by CliftonLarsenAllen, LLP was "clean" and that the co-op is in really strong financial condition.

Operation Round-Up is a voluntary program for co-op members to help neighbors pay for their electricity. Martin said 59 percent of members participate in the program so that their bills are rounded up to the nearest dollar each month, for a maximum of 99 cents a month donated to the fund. Over \$1.7 million has been distributed since 1999.

CEO's report

Chief Executive Officer Jim Herron's comments included:

The board will do a study to learn more about how advanced meter (smart meter) technology might be used to improve service and save money. Possible advantages include the ability for staff to read meters automatically, connect and disconnect service remotely, decrease miles traveled and increase efficiency for staff, improve reliability and do outage management, reducing spikes in power, and provide detailed usage data to members so they can see how to use energy more efficiently.

Herron explained the government's impact on power bills. Local, state, and federal regulations add a required 10-15 percent to costs, he said, and the EPA-proposed "clean power plan" could increase costs an additional 10-50 percent. Herron said members who were interested could contact or join the Action Committee for Rural

Electrification (ACRE) political action committee.

Scholarship winners

Tri-Lakes area high school students were among the winners of \$1,000 scholarships awarded by MVEA, Tri-State Generation and Transmission, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, and the E.A. "Mick" Geesen Memorial schol-



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