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# Ripples

**APRIL 2024**

## SREC helping out the library

Story by **CHRIS CHRISTENSEN**

\$8,000 donation to go toward shelving project

**T**HE Friends of the Fairfield Library recently reached out to Sun River Electric in search of some assistance to redo a portion of the shelves to accommodate younger readers.

The redesign of the shelves makes it easier for young readers to see the covers and browse through the books. It is also needed because the current design allows books to sometimes fall out, which is a safety concern.

The staff at the library are very proactive and understand the importance of reading, especially with young children.

Sun River Electric is glad to support the local Fairfield library. This is the kind of request that falls in line with our educational funds.

An open house is planned at the library upon completion of the new shelves. **RM**



From left: Chris Christensen, Sun River Electric; Marla Holmquist, Fairfield Library; Agnes Kolste, Friends of the Fairfield Library; and Brad Opheim, contractor

### HIDDEN NUMBER

If you find your account number hidden in this issue, it is worth a \$50 credit on your next statement. There is one number hidden in every issue. Give us a call if you are the lucky consumer. 366050

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# Lineman, not just a job, a lifestyle

Guest column by **ROBBIE DOCKTER** |  
SREC Line Foreman – Conrad, MT.

**G**ROWING up, I fully understood what it meant to be a lineman. You see, my dad went to line school in 1987, when I was just 10 years old. So I grew up knowing a little about the job. In 1994, my brother would follow in dad's footsteps by going to line school and getting hired as a lineman. Family dinner conversations often revolved around linework and line school. As a kid, I knew if a big storm hit, my dad could be gone for days.

When I graduated high school in 1997, I wasn't ready to give up my wrestling dreams. So off to college I went. After a year of college, I decided it wasn't the life for me! I spent the summer looking into many options regarding my future. One day my dad mentioned line school, and I decided maybe that would be the way to go, I'd follow in the family footsteps.

Then I hit a snag. Line school was full that fall. I would have to wait a year. Then, chatting on the phone with my brother, he suggested I apply for a groundman job with a line contractor in the town where he lived in Kansas.



Sun River Electric Cooperative Line Foreman, Robbie Dockter.

I told my brother to have the guy call me. However, I thought to myself no way this guy would call a kid some 900 miles away and hire him over the

phone! Well, to my surprise, the next day he called and when we hung up, I had myself a job. So, a few weeks later, in the summer of 1998, I loaded up a U-Haul and moved to Dodge City, Kansas.

It only took a couple days of work and I found myself bitten by the lineman bug. I would spend the next two-and-a-half years working all over Kansas and Oklahoma, building power-line and repairing tornado damage. It was a great place to cut my teeth and learn the trade, but I missed Montana. I put in for several Montana-based jobs over the next few years, but never got offered a job. Then Sun River Electric Cooperative had an opening in April 2001. I came up for an interview, and the rest is history. I have been a lineman at the Conrad outpost ever since.

I can't imagine being anything other than a lineman! In fact, it is something I recommended to my son well before he graduated high school. He is now in his fourth year as a lineman with Red Rock Power Inc., here in Montana.

With three generations of linemen, my family's legacy has a combined 92 years in the trade. To us, it's not just a job... it's a lifestyle! RM

## Lineworker Safety Gear

A look at the evolution of line equipment

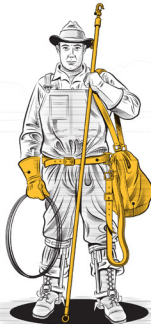
1875-1900

Electrification begins



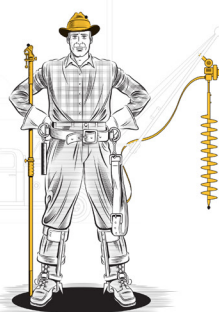
1901-1925

Safety beginnings



1926-1950

Safety training improves



1951-1970

New heights and faster communication



1971-1990

New law of the land



1991-present

Watching out for workers

