

Valley Electrification Project Allotted \$488,000.00 by Nat'l Administration

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\$125,000 For Construction of ... and \$363,000 ... Project

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND CITY COUNCIL HOLD JOINT MEETING WED.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

JOHN H. BARKER, JR., GA.
JOHN H. BARKER, JR., GA.
JOHN H. BARKER, JR., GA.
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KENNEDY F. REA, CLERK
JOHN W. R. SMITH, ASST. CLERK



Mr. A. Mark Bliss
County Agricultur
Willcox, Arizona

My dear Bliss:

I thank yo
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With kindest

Our first 80 years...

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CLASS OF SERVICE
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R. B. WHITE
PRESIDENT

WESTER
UNION
NEWCOMB CARLTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

A MARK BLISS

WASHINGTON DC MAY 2 1939

1938 - 2018

Dear Mr. Bliss:
Many of the Farmers
East of the power line
to cross the river from
copy of

McNEAL
OCT
14
P.M.

THIS SIDE OF



Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Owned by those we serve.

*This booklet is dedicated to and an appreciation
for the 113 men and women who have served on the
SSVEC Board of Directors over the past 80 years.*

R.R. Harbour • Mrs. C.M. Byrd • R.L. Burton • James H. Cunningham • Sam King, Jr.
Rufus R. Nelson • Mrs. John Saylor • J.B. Seale • H.W. Nichols • T. Lloyd Willis
Polly Carter • Rulon Skinner • Lea T. Burnett • Ben White • W.A. Batty • W.P. Haggard
A.R. Spikes • James Rundell • Frank Murphy • Silas F. Jarvis • Frank E. Lange
W.A. Gardner • Alfred Clifford • Tom C. Brown • Adolph Siek • Harry J. Saxon
E.C. Hill • Warner Mattice • Gilbert Thompson • W.N. East • J.A. Kartchner • H.C. Stolp
E.B. McAleb • Howard F. Atwood • Myer Stolaroff • Lewis Grizzle • Delbert Motes
Mark Bliss • Pete Keller • Chester Faulkner • Paul Keating • David Sulger • Marvin Davis
Harvey Thompson • Sam J. Fraizer • L.D. Small • William M. Gaskill • Joe Wasson
James Horstman • R. B. Grantham • A.H. Reinbothe • Sam Spittle • David V. MacCollum
W.M. Stitzer • Gail Price • John Gammon • Robert W. Spinney • John R. Nash
Allen P. Davison • Barry Bishop • John W. Shaver • Martha C. Elikor • Leonard M. Hanzlick
Charles H. Wade • David L. Emmert • Ralph K. Younger • Luvern "Red" Bauhs • Don K. Briggs
Robert P. Hand • Donald H. Wattles • Horace A. Huff • Marian S. Bauhs • T. Michael Heredia
Earl H. Moser • H. Wayne Peterson • Paul Lee • Andrew B. Mayberry • Edwin L. Elledge
Lee L. Sims • Stuart Carter • Miles H. Oldfather • Harvey Allen • Donald H. Henderson
Kenneth R. Symmes • D. Joe Thatcher • Dale Aughenbaugh • James W. Cooper • Bill Michaels
Curtis Nolan • Roy Lingo • Harold L. Hinkley • Donald G. Kyte • Gerald D. Williams
Kathy Thatcher • Dan Barrera • Gene Manring • Melissa Herrera-DiPeso • Chuck Marshall
Cecil Carlile • Lance Hoopes • Charles Brown • Pat English • Joe Furno • Ron Kline
David Luna • Joe Smith • Les Thompson • Sandra Huntington • Ed Molina • Tom Goodman
Lex Herron • Peter Gillespie • Gary Payne



Three incumbents and newly elected Curtis Nolan are sworn into their director positions at the Cooperative's 55th annual meeting in Benson, Arizona, on April 15, 1993.
Left to right: Directors Edwin Elledge, Harvey Allen, Curtis Nolan and Lee Sims.

Photo credit: Tim Brown, Arizona Electric Power Cooperative

How it all began

It started with a volunteer effort led by Cochise County Agricultural Agent Mark Bliss.

On May 6, 1937, Bliss directed a meeting of 68 people who were interested in forming their own electric cooperative. Bliss met earlier that year with representatives of large power companies in the area – Arizona Edison and Tucson Gas and Electric – only to learn that they were not interested in extending this vital service to rural southeast Arizona.

Undeterred and convinced of the benefits that electricity would bring to local agriculture, Bliss gathered a group of prominent ranchers and farmers to discuss the possibility of forming a member-owned cooperative. Everyone understood that it would require a monumental effort.

Volunteers would be needed to map where the lines would go, to prepare the loan application to the federal Rural Electrification Administration (REA) and to sign up neighbors and collect the \$5 membership fee, the equivalent of more than \$86 today.

It took three years and the commitment of numerous volunteers to extend service to the region. On January 11, 1939, Sulphur Springs Valley Electric received its articles of incorporation, establishing the first member-owned utility in Arizona. The initial \$480,000 REA loan paid for the construction of 138 miles of line to serve 266 members and included money to build a power generating plant in McNeal.

Today, thanks to its members, SSVEC is one of the largest cooperatives in Arizona with more than 59,000 meters in its service area of about 5,700 square miles. The utility maintains 32 substations, 4,100 miles of energized line and a fleet of 187 vehicles with a workforce of 161 employees. Total revenues topped \$110 million in 2017.

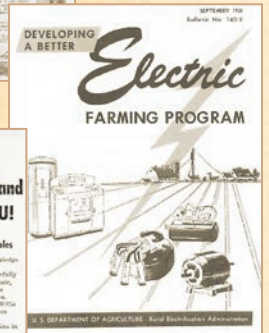
The 80-year story of that progress is a tribute to the power of a member-owned cooperative.

Lifestyles changed dramatically and almost overnight. REA took rural electrification on the road with a demonstration tour that promoted the conveniences of modern electric appliances and powerful farm machinery. Cochise County was one of the stops on a 27 state excursion that encouraged people to take advantage of all things electric, eliminating the drudgery of household tasks and embracing new equipment that increased agriculture production.

In the Sulphur Springs Valley, access to electricity allowed agriculture to prosper and thrive as never before. Cotton, beans, corn, lettuce, sage and chilies flourished under the hot sun with irrigated water delivered by electric pumps. Before electrical service was available, 6,500 acres were being farmed in Cochise County. By the year 2000, about 65,000 acres of farmland were in production.

Even entertainment changed with the advent of the radio. Farmers followed market and weather reports and families would gather after the sun went down to enjoy the broadcast of radio dramas and sporting events.

Founding and expansion



80 Years... and still full of energy.

Power sources

An evolution of power

From its humble beginnings in Murphy's Garden in McNeal to state-of-the-art power supplied by multiple sources, Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative has stayed ahead of a growing demand for electricity and fostered economic development throughout its service area for the past 80 years.

More than 5,000 people, including Arizona Governor R.T. Jones, attended the dedication of the Cooperative's new generating plant on Oct. 20, 1940. Construction of the plant began just over a year earlier and required 70 tradesmen to erect a 100-foot by 54-foot brick building located about four miles north of Double Adobe.

Inside the structure, five 450 horsepower Cooper Bessemer engines were installed, made available by the federal War Department. When Mrs. C.M. Byrd, the first secretary of the newly-created SSVEC Board of Directors, pulled the switch on a large control panel on that Sunday afternoon her action delivered electrical service to about 30 homes in the Elfrida and Double Adobe areas. A few days later lines were energized to Willcox and the Stewart District, north of Willcox.

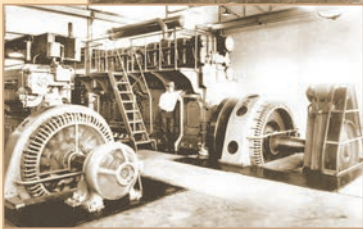
Today, SSVEC is one of six Class A members of Arizona G&T Cooperatives, a not-for-profit electric and transmission cooperative that provides service to more than 160,000 meters and 400,000 people in Arizona, California and New Mexico. The primary source of that power is the Apache Generating Station located near Cochise, Arizona, east of Benson and south of I-10. This impressive facility has a combined gross generating capacity of 605 megawatts and has continued to evolve its operations over the past 55 years.

At the same time, SSVEC has diversified its sources of electricity. The Cooperative became a "Partial Requirements Member" of Arizona G&T Cooperatives in 2008, allowing the utility to purchase electricity on the open market when prices are low and keeping its rates at competitive levels for its members.

SSVEC secured a 20-year Purchase Power Agreement with SunPower in 2015 for 20 megawatts of solar power and that same year Arizona G&T Cooperatives secured a long-term, low-cost Hoover Power allocation, allowing SSVEC to further diversify its sources of electricity to include hydro. In December, 2016, SSVEC dedicated the new SunPower solar plant.

On its 80th anniversary, the Cooperative estimates it will reduce the consumption of electricity produced from coal by more than half, from about 80 percent to 39 percent. For 2018, the Cooperative estimates 7 percent of its electricity will be generated by solar power, 5.8 percent from hydro, 11.4 percent will be natural gas, 39.4 percent will be from coal and the remaining 36.4 percent will be electricity purchased on the open market, mostly from natural gas.

SSVEC has also changed its message to members. After years promoting consumption, the Cooperative shifted its focus to energy conservation in the 1980s, embracing efforts to educate members on money-saving tips and steps they can take to reduce their electric bills. Today, SSVEC offers its members free energy audits and offers low-interest loans to encourage investments that save power and lower costs. The Cooperative works closely with participating irrigators to regulate pumps and avoid peak demand issues through radio-controlled devices.



Investments provide a long-term return

During the early years, it was back-breaking work.

Under the heat of Arizona's relentless sun, linemen would form a "tug-of-war" line and pull in unison to raise wires and poles along the path that brought electricity to homes and businesses within the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative service area.

It was a time before hydraulic "boom" trucks, before powerful hole-drilling equipment and long before anyone knew the science behind a Smart Grid. Extending electric service to a growing economy in southeast Arizona required digging holes by hand and assembling a team of "pullers" to put poles in place. Once erected, that same team added a few more men and lined up to string miles of wire across the rugged landscape. In 1940, SSVEC was proud to serve about 300 members along its 138 miles of line.

Today, the advent of modern equipment and the efficiencies realized through "Smart Grid" investments have allowed Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative to dramatically increase its service area. The Cooperative proudly provides 99.9 percent service reliability, electrifying more than 59,000 meters and operating with less number of employees than it had decades ago.

The Cooperative has a fleet of 187 vehicles of all shapes and sizes, ranging from all-terrain vehicles that transport linemen to remote spots, to a fleet of bucket trucks that put crews in a safe place to make repairs without the need for climbing poles.

A \$40 million investment in the Smart Grid project, initiated in 2013, dramatically improved its operational efficiency of the SSVEC distribution and transmission systems and the reliability for members. Within three years the Cooperative laid down 136 miles of fiber optic cable, constructed a Demand Side Management System, upgraded 10 line switches, installed 15 sectionalizing devices, and installed 10 voltage regulators as part of the project.

The investment included a significant upgrade to the Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, allowing SSVEC technicians to monitor power sources and achieve the lowest possible rates for members. The state-of-the-art SCADA system has generated more than \$18 million in savings since it first went into operation in 2008.

Keeping pace with equipment upgrades and investing in state-of-the-art technologies has benefitted SSVEC members by keeping electricity affordable. In the 1940s, the cost of one kilowatt-hour for a residential member was 9.75 cents, and today that cost is 11.4 cents.

These investments have also improved safety. Recently the Cooperative earned recognition for recording more than 1.3 million hours, more than 2.5 years, without a single workplace incident.

Equipment and Smart Grid project



and still full of energy.

Technology

Keeping up with the times for 80 years

Those familiar with SSVEC's history have fond memories of the "Wreck of the Hesperus."

Unlike the ill-fated ship in Longfellow's 1842 narrative poem, the Hesperus is remembered as the first service vehicle deployed by the Cooperative in 1938, assembling a drill rig on the back of a flatbed truck to help dig the holes needed for erecting poles. The open cab contraption was practically the only labor-saving device available to the crews of linemen needed to string some 130 miles of wire to about 30 homes in the Elfrida and Double Adobe areas when the first electric service was offered.



Today, hydraulic rigs quickly excavate holes when new poles are needed and a specialty truck equipped to string three lines simultaneously follows close behind, enabling linemen to accomplish in a single day what once took weeks to complete.

Service expectations have changed, too

Eighty years later optical fiber cables provide light-speed communication between substations, notifying technicians instantly when power is lost. Investment in "Smart Grid" technology has equipped Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative with automated meter reading, demand-side power management, and an entire room where monitors provide vital information from the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system.

Members have been empowered as well, thanks to state-of-the-art technologies

In 1938, bills were often paid in cash by stopping by the SSVEC office in Willcox. That practice was followed for generations. SSVEC added its first computer to the workforce in 1964, acquiring an IBM data processing machine that took up an entire room and required constant cooling. Today, members not only pay their bills online from the comfort of their home, they monitor their use of electricity with SmartHub, a software app available on their mobile devices.

In the 1980s, SSVEC added electronic automatic circuit reclosure devices (ACRs) to the distribution system, which restored power much faster after electrical storms or other events. These devices replaced older fuses, which cut off the power when a problem existed on the line and had to be replaced to restore power.

The results from investments in technology have been impressive. Compared to 80 years ago, today the utility boasts more than 39,000 members across a 5,700 square mile service area with about 4,100 miles of energized line.

Keeping up with the times has helped SSVEC improve its reliability and to respond to the needs of its members.



80 Years...

Some things don't change

Since its founding in 1938, Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative has always put a priority on being an important part of the community. Because a cooperative is only as strong as the members it serves, it makes good sense for SSVEC to invest in where people live, work and play.

On the first day that the power was turned on, October 20, 1940, the Cooperative demonstrated its commitment to improving the local quality of life. SSVEC hosted more than 5,000 people at a ceremony in McNeal that day, providing a barbecue picnic and featuring a community fair.

Soon after, SSVEC sponsored cooking classes and taught people how to use their new electrical appliances. A demonstration kitchen was developed in the Cooperative's headquarters in Willcox and exhibits were set up at the county fair, inside local schools and at homemaker clubs throughout the service area. Similar education efforts were underway for area farmers, offering opportunities to learn more about the advantages of electricity provided by labor-saving equipment.

During the 1950s, SSVEC worked with every high school in the service area to install new electrical appliances in homemaking classes. Classroom presentations that demonstrated and discussed the safe uses of electricity began in the 1950s and continue today at local schools.

In the late 1960s the Cooperative began its sponsorship of an annual Miss Rural Electrification beauty pageant. That contest was highlighted in 1971 when 20-year-old Sherry McPheeters, a Benson High School graduate, was crowned the local and the national winner of the pageant, earning a \$2,500 scholarship and a trip to the nation's capital.

Creating opportunities for young people has been an important part of SSVEC's efforts to serve the community throughout its 80-year history.

Every year since 1981 the SSVEC Foundation has provided all-expenses paid trips to Washington, D.C., for six or more students. This experience offers these outstanding young people an opportunity to meet their Congressional delegation and learn more about the remarkable history of our nation and how government works.

The establishment of the SSVEC Foundation in the 1980s has afforded the opportunity to further the Cooperative's role as a community leader. The Foundation disperses unclaimed capital credits and other donations for annual scholarships awarded to graduating high school seniors. The scholarship program started in 2000 and has awarded \$427,000 to the top students at each of the high schools in the Cooperative's service area.

Another Foundation program, the Youth Engineering and Science Fair, has recognized and honored students since its inception in 1984. Each year winners at the annual fair earn a financial reward and the opportunity to advance to competitions at the regional and national levels.

Sponsoring local events, recognizing and rewarding our youth, and investing in where we live, work and play have been consistent missions for SSVEC throughout its 80-year history.

A history of commitment to the community



and still full of energy.

JOHN H. OVERTON, LA.
JOHN H. BANKHEAD, ALA.
JOSEPH C. O'MAHONEY, WYO.
WILLIAM GIBBS MCADOO, CALIF.
HARRY S. TRUMAN, MO.
F. RYAN DUFFY, WIS.
EDWARD R. BURKE, NEBR.
HERBERT C. HITCHCOCK, S. DAK.
THEODORE F. GREEN, R. I.
KENNEDY F. REA, CLERK
JOHN W. R. SMITH, ASST. CLERK

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

312 Professional Building
Phoenix, Arizona

September 22, 1938

Mr. A. Mark Bliss
County Agricultural Agent
Willcox, Arizona

My dear Bliss:

I thank you for your letter of September 20, and I am certainly glad to learn that Sulphur Springs project has been placed on a temporary allotment arrangement. I hope you will not hesitate to call on me if I can be of any further assistance. With kindest personal regards, I am,

Yours very sincerely,

Carl Hayden

WESTERN UNION

NEWCOMB CARLTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt
J. C. WILLEY
FIRST VICE-PRES.

1201

SYMBOLS

1939



Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Owned by those we serve.