

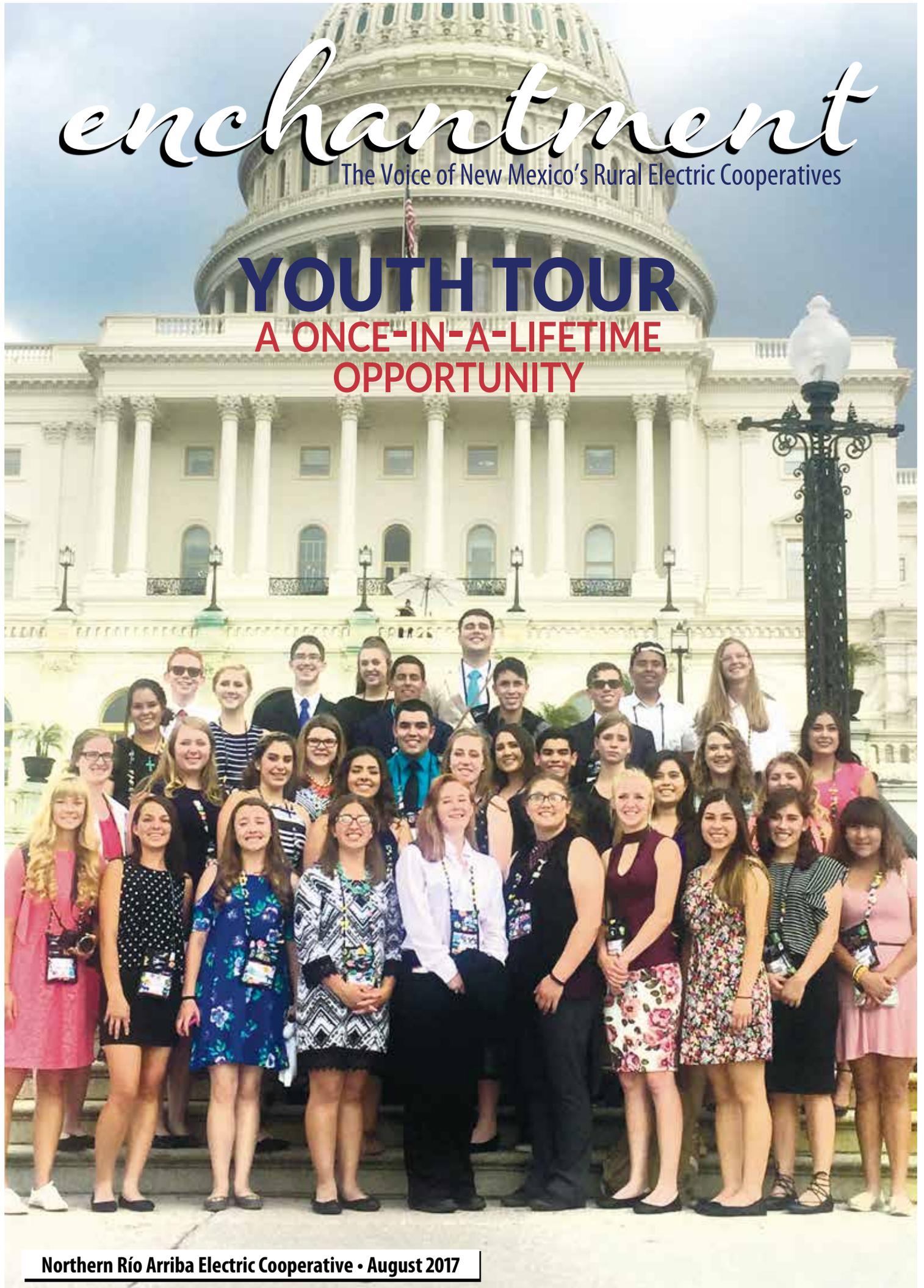


enchantment

The Voice of New Mexico's Rural Electric Cooperatives

YOUTH TOUR

**A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME
OPPORTUNITY**



Northern Río Arriba Electric Cooperative • August 2017

Introducing John Blea, NORA's Director of Operations

One of Northern Río Arriba Electric Cooperative's most valuable employees is its director of operations, John Blea.

After completing Hotline School through Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction, Colorado, Blea began his career at NORA on May 31, 1983, as an apprentice lineman. He worked his way up through the ranks advancing to journeyman lineman in 1989, and in 1998 he became the working foreman. Six years later, in 2004, Blea was promoted to NORA's director of operations/safety coordinator.

As director of operations, Blea has multiple duties and wears four to five hats on any given day. He is the direct supervisor of the line crew and responsible for oversight of the operations, maintenance, and construction of all projects related to the cooperative's distribution and transmission system.

As the engineer on site, he designs jobs which carefully consider safety and efficiency in construction and in use of all equipment. Although he is also responsible for a considerable amount of paperwork in the office, the duties described keep him working in the field two-thirds of the time.

One of the most challenging and exciting duties Blea has faced is troubleshooting during outages and in other situations. Deciphering what has gone wrong



and being able to find a solution to a problem that often has an impact on NORA's entire consumer-base is no easy task.

Overall, Blea has enjoyed his nearly three and a half decades of service at NORA. He credits this to having been able to work with great bosses and supporting staff over the years.

During his career, Blea has been recognized and awarded with numerous certificates for outstanding demonstration of safety including the prestigious NMRECA (New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association) Long Rope Safety Award in 2010. In 2009, he earned RESAP Safety Accreditation, and he has served as instructor of NMRECA sponsored training at the Doña Ana School in Las Cruces. There, he has been responsible for teaching and implementing safety procedures for the co-op.

Originally from Antonito, Colorado, Blea lives in Chama with his wife, Rachel. Together, they are the proud parents of three successful adult children: Amanda, Christopher and Gabriel; and they also have six beautiful grandchildren.

Virginia Maestas Attends the 2017 Government-in-Action Youth Tour

Local high school junior, Virginia "Ginger" Maestas spent the week of June 10-16 in Washington D.C., participating in the 2017 NRECA Government-in-Action Youth Tour. Maestas qualified for the all-expense paid trip after researching and submitting a 500-word essay on how an electric co-op is different from a commercial for-profit electric service company.

Thirty-five delegates were selected from cooperatives around New Mexico to attend the Youth Tour to meet with their state representatives and senators, to learn about rural electric cooperatives, and to get a first-hand look at "government-in-action."

One of the most memorable moments of her trip, Maestas was selected to participate in a very special experience. She was given the opportunity, as one of four students, to take part in the Wreath Laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery. The Changing of the Guard and Wreath Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns are very sacred rituals performed in honor of America's Missing Servicemen.

As a result of the trip, Maestas has much more respect for the privileges we enjoy in our country and for the things she only just read about in school such as the National Monuments. She highly recommends more students take advantage of this enriching opportunity in the future. Her words of advice to next year's applicants are to, "Just do it! It's a great experience where you'll meet new people and make life-long friends." Maestas is the eldest daughter of Timo and Jewell Maestas of Chama. She will begin her senior year at Escalante High School this fall.



Virginia Maestas in front of the U.S. Capitol.

Important Upcoming Dates

The following important dates are approaching soon. For more details, please contact Victoria Gonzales at the NORA office at 575-756-2181.

Monday, August 14

Deadline for Golf Tournament Player Registration and Sponsorship

Saturday, August 19

18th Annual Chama Valley Open Golf Tournament, Cattails Golf Course, Alamosa, Colorado

Monday, September 25

NORA's 67th Annual Meeting for Members, Chama

Safety Tip: Power Line Hazards

If a power line falls on a vehicle, you should stay inside the vehicle. This is the safest place to stay. Warn people not to touch the vehicle or the line. Call or ask someone to call Northern Río Arriba Electric Cooperative and emergency services.

Board of Trustees

Steve Rendon	President	Chama	District 2
Antonio Manzanares	Vice President	Canjilon	District 4
Gilbert Martinez	Secretary	Los Ojos	District 3
Leroy Martinez	Treasurer	Canjilon	District 4
Tony Casados, Jr.	Trustee	Ensenada	District 3
Michael Gomez	Trustee	Lumberton	District 1
David M. Martinez	Trustee	Tierra Amarilla	District 3
Thomas G. Rivas	Trustee	Chama	District 2

Board Meeting

The board of trustees meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. in the cooperative boardroom.

NORTHERN RIO ARRIBA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. NORA NEWSLETTER

Benjamin Leyba
Executive Vice President
and General Manager

Post Office Box 217
1135 Camino Escondido
Chama, New Mexico 87520

Hours
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday

Telephone
575-756-2181

Website Address
www.noraelectric.org

Email Address
nora@noraelectric.org



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative