The Season of Giving

The father was very worried.

He had four children at home, and an elderly parent with dementia requiring constant care. A large medical bill had thrown the family’s budget into near collapse, and it was winter. How would he pay for heat?

Fortunately, there were emergency funds available when this man’s family needed them. Too often, other parents, seniors, and disabled people need help this time of year, and funds aren’t available. Project Care is one way you can help those with unanticipated emergencies, by adding a donation on your payment coupon:

Or by signing up for Round Up for Project Care. Customers who donate using Round Up volunteer to have their bills rounded up to the next dollar every month. The average Round Up donation ends up being 51 cents a month. Even if the highest Round Up donation was made (99 cents a month) the most one would donate in a year would be $11.88. If half of our customers donated to Round Up, nearly $10,000 a month would be raised to help people in desperate financial need. How to sign up? Check the Round Up box in Smart Hub, or send us a “Sign me up

Here’s What We Have Cooking to Wrap Up Our 75th Anniversary!

Our employees decided to put together a special cookbook, “Electrifying Eats & Treats,” with our favorite recipes, and to sell the cookbooks for $10 each, which will go directly to Project Care.

Some 45 contributors submitted 262 family favorite, potluck all-star, or recipes passed down from previous generations, in eight categories: Appetizers and Beverages; Soups and Salads; Vegetables and Side Dishes; Main Dishes; Breads and Rolls; Desserts; Cookies and Candy; and This and That. Recipes range from elegant, like Oysters with Mignonette Sauce, to fun such as, Mexican Corn Soup, Jambalaya, and Blueberry Cornmeal Pancakes, and a Double-Chocolate Layer Cake recipe from famed baker Karen R. in Reedsport; and Toledo Cross-Country Cookies, which fuelled Toledo High School alumnus Ty and his teammates.

Our cookbooks, benefiting Project Care, should be available for sale at our offices in Florence, Newport, and Reedsport starting Monday, December 17th.
Introducing... Prepaid
An easier way to pay.

As we close out our 75th anniversary year, and our theme of “Power. People. Progress,” we have another ‘progress’ item to introduce: Prepaid!

Imagine buying electricity like you buy gas—you fill your tank, keep an eye on how much is in it, and when the tank gets low, you buy more. That’s an easy way to think of Prepaid—customers pay into their accounts before using their electricity, and when the balance on the account gets low, SmartHub emails or texts an alert, letting the customer know more funds are needed to keep the lights on. Customers can then “fill” their accounts by making a payment with a debit or credit card, or by check or cash payment at one of our offices.

Prepaid customers don’t have to put down a deposit to open an account, and they are exempt from late, disconnect or reconnect fees, and no longer receive messy paper bills. Other utilities offering Prepaid tell us Prepaid customers are more likely to conserve electricity, and to keep a closer eye on their electricity use. As a not-for-profit electric utility, we’re very supportive of customers saving money, and conserving electricity.

To qualify for Prepaid, customers must have a smart phone, an email address, and the ability to use SmartHub and/or download and use the SmartHub app. We recommend customers keep a minimum balance of $5, and the minimum payment accepted is $5. Prepaid customers can choose their alerts—texts, emails or SmartHub notifications—to let them know when their balance falls below a set amount. While the minimum payment is $5, customers can, of course, choose to prepay much larger amounts based on their budgets.

To sign up, call us at 541-265-3211 and hit “4” or stop by and talk with a CSR. (Unfortunately, Budget Billing and AutoPay customers can’t use Prepaid).

One Last Bit of History for Our 75th

The February, 1891 article in the West Side newspaper is startling.

To market electricity to Oregonians, the Electric Light Company asked 16-year-old Lulu Miller of Newport to be a light model of sorts. At an opera house event in Independence, Lulu “stepped forward and suddenly was enveloped in a flood of light from incandescent lamps, fastened to her clothing and on a [sash she wore]. Copper plates on the stage and in the soles of Miss Miller’s shoes caused the electric current to flash through the wires concealed in the folds of her clothing. It was a beautiful sight. The audience was so enthusiastic, a recall [encore] was necessary.”

The tale makes our Safety Coordinator, Cody Christian, shudder. “Lulu’s shoes soled with copper, and her stepping on energized copper plates, completing the circuit, was a real risk,” he says. “If a tailor had accidentally nicked one of the wires stringing the lightbulbs together with a needle or scissors, or if the wiring had been frayed or cut, she could have been injured!” Thankfully, that didn’t happen, and Lulu later married a member of the Nye family, for which Newport’s Nye Beach is named.

Outreach, like Miss Electricity’s appearance, and the convenience of electric light caught on in Oregon, and now most of us can’t imagine life without electric power. We want you to know we never take our customers for granted, and are constantly working to improve our service to you. Our mission “to ensure our communities have access to reliable and affordable energy products and services,” isn’t just a mission statement, it guides our work every day. Thank you for being our customer!