



# news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

## Low and slow aloft is ultra-freedom

Story and Photos  
By Marita Tolentino-Combs

The headliner deaths of amateur private pilots such as John F. Kennedy, Jr., in 1999, folksinger John Denver in 1997 and New York Yankees catcher Thurman Munson in 1979 failed to leave a lasting negative impact on flying. Thousands still take to the skies, motivated by the exhilaration of flying like a bird. One such is Bob Greene.

In 2003, seven years into early retirement, Bob built a one-seater, open cockpit ultralight RANS S-17 nicknamed the Stinger in his hangar out at Lincoln County Airport north of Eureka.

It's easy to understand when Bob says, "Flying an ultralight is a sense of being one with nature, being free." The open-air, welded-steel cockpit is an understatement; the air is the cockpit. No doors, no floor or ceiling. The downward-sloping windshield is narrow and long, which retains a panoramic view and extends flying time. Certainly it helps avoid involuntary in-flight meals.

There are two classes of flying people: the fearful and the fearless. I'm disappointed Bob cannot take me along. But then, one seat defines an ultralight. The



*The Stinger Ultralight RANS S-7 kit. All parts fabricated. Some drilling and riveting. No welding, painting of fabric work required. Bob Greene coated the fabric with an ultraviolet protector.*

narrow seat is similar to that of the recumbent bicycle, which RANS also builds. It places the pilot in a laid-back reclining position. It has all the adjustments in title, fore and aft positions just like a Mercedes Benz. Extra security, of course — the Hooker harness.

The fuselage to which the wings and tail assembly are attached and accommodate the pilot is one simple aluminum tube: 10 feet long, six inches in diameter. This defines the lightness of the ultralight. The heaviest equipment is the power plant 42-horsepower 3-blade pusher engine mounted behind and above the wings.

The "skin" of the Stinger is made of pre-sewn polyester that Bob and his wife Sheri pulled tight over the

aluminum frame. "It's fitted over the frame like a glove," he says as he pulls open a zipper to reveal the aluminum structure and single nine-gallon plastic fuel tank. The craft is not big. Wings span only 29.5 feet and come up to my chin. As we make a quick walk-around, we both remind each other about smashing our heads into the wings.

Flying ultralights have the most lenient rules of the

Federal Aviation Administration. You don't need a pilot's license, aircraft registration, annual aircraft inspection or medical examination every two to three years depending on the pilot's age. Bob, however, takes his fun seriously. As Wilbur Wright—inventor and builder of the world's first successful airplane and the first to control, power and sustain

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# Construction update for Lincoln Electric

Hard to believe that school is starting and that summer is almost over already. Although construction of new services is about 50 percent of what it was last year, we have had a busy summer working on a number of maintenance and replacement projects.

I wanted to thank all the members for being so understanding when we are required to take planned outages, such as the system wide outage in mid-July. That particular outage was required by the Bonneville Power

Administration (BPA) to allow them to work on their transmission line, which delivers all of our power to our substations. BPA does a great job of doing most of the maintenance with the line energized, but there are just certain tasks that cannot be performed safely without having an outage. LEC crews took advantage of the outage to perform similar work on our system. So if we notify you of a planned outage, please understand we are only doing this as a last resort so our crews can perform the work safely.

This summer LEC crews, in conjunction with a contractor, completed periodic testing on all three of our substations. The testing is done as part of our aggressive preventative maintenance program. I am pleased to report that all tests came back positive.

If you have stopped by the office lately, you have noticed major changes. First our neighbor, Eureka Prompt

Care, purchased additional property from us and is constructing a second building. As part of the construction, the driveway serving the cooperative has been modified to make it safer. Paving of the new driveway is scheduled for this fall. In addition we are just completing an updating of our office by re-painting and re-carpeting.

Another major project that we kicked off this summer is the Lake Koocanusa Cable Replacement. The existing cable was installed prior to filling the reservoir in 1972. Since then one of the four cables has failed and we have been operating the cable at reduced voltage for a number of years

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Manager's Notes  
by Mike Henry



**Lincoln Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.**

## News & Views

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Lincoln Electric's board of trustees meets monthly at the Eureka office. The regular meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. Members with items of interest are encouraged to contact the general manager in advance of the meeting.

### Board of Trustees

**George Elam** — President, Dist. 1, Flathead

**Marianne Roose** — Vice President, Dist. 3,

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Call 889-3301 or 1-800-442-2994

Anytime day or night

After hours voice-mail for

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### Visit us on the Web at:

[www.lincolnelectric.coop](http://www.lincolnelectric.coop)

e-mail: [info@lincolnelectric.coop](mailto:info@lincolnelectric.coop)

## Business and Boardroom Briefs

The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted July 20, 2009.

A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:

- Approved a proposed bylaw change for Section 2. Term of Office that will be presented to the members at the 2010 annual meeting.
- Approved a direct mail CFL/Showerhead program for residential members.
- Approved a new contract with auditor Summers, McNea & Company.
- Approved a \$250 donation to the Prostate Cancer Awareness organization and a \$1,275 line extension donation to Friends of the Shelter.
- Approved a bid for window coverings for the office remodel.
- Approved a bid to install a sidewalk along the north side of the office.
- Approved an Agreement for Purchase of Power with Eureka Prompt Care.
- Approved bringing three-phase power into the Tobacco Valley Business Park.
- Approved Tammy Lawler as a new member to the LEC Revolving Loan Fund committee.

	Year to Date 6/30/2009	Year to Date 6/30/2008
YTD Kwh Sales	65,365,802	66,032,138
YTD Revenue	\$4,337,206	\$3,906,246
YTD Cost of Power	\$1,727,145	\$1,813,243
YTD Operating Exp	\$2,093,536	\$1,840,949
YTD Margins	\$566,441	\$271,893
# of Members	3,880	3,793
# of Meters	5,158	5,048
Miles of Line	907	884
Total Utility Plant	\$25,791,760	\$24,835,253
Member Equity	\$6,897,657	\$6,555,200
Avg Residential Usage (kWh)	849	937
Avg Residential Billing	\$65.68	\$62.60

# Low and slow

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heavier-than-air human flight—once said, “It is possible to fly without motors, but not without knowledge and skill.”

Bob trained 15 hours with retired Navy Commander Allan “Al” Carpenter. Commander Carpenter was twice shot down while piloting the A-4 Skyhawk, the second time resulting in an enforced stay at Hanoi Hilton prison camp (November 1966 – March 1973). Bob also flew five hours solo under instructor supervision. Ultralights are harder to fly because they are more sensitive to wind; a 45-minute flight in the Stinger is more like two hours in a more conventional aircraft. “Flying ultralights and whatever aircraft requires good pilot skills.”

Bob took and passed a written exam, though the test was not required. He also registered the aircraft, though registration is also not required. Bob is also trained in gliders and holds a Sport Pilot’s license.

Bob’s insurance policy on the Stinger is a medium-sized canister securely attached to the airframe below the engine. In the case of a catastrophic event, a rocket fires out of the canister and deploys the parachute to float aircraft and pilot down to earth.

He’s taken the Stinger skyward about 72 hours to date, never flying at high altitudes. Instead, he prefers towering low and going slow. In this way, the connection to earth is still apparent while above it all. “I’m having fun soaring like a bird.” Bob has become so serious about sharing his fun that he built a tandem 29.5-foot wingspan



Top: The Courier tandem seat RANS S-17. Bob and Sheri Greene attended a three-day workshop of the Experimental Aircraft Association, learning how to plasticize and stiffen a soft and thin polyester fabric that is the skin of the aircraft wings and fuselage. Above: Bob Greene on his homebuilt RANS S-7 ultralight. “I’m into simple and fun flying, without the gadgetry.”

RANS S-7 as well.

(If you have a local topic of interest to Lincoln Electric Cooperative members, contact Tim Engleson 889-3301.

Author is co-owner of the multimedia company Applied Visions Media LLC in Eureka.)

## Construction

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to help prolong its useful life. With the growth we have experienced in the West Kootenai area, the time has come to replace the cable. We have hired a consulting engineering firm to evaluate options and to help us make the best decision on how to go about replacing the cable. This will be an interesting project, and I’ll keep you updated on it.

As I mentioned earlier, school is starting so I want to urge all of you to drive safely and to watch out for children headed for school. Please feel free to call or stop in if you would like to visit about any of these or other issues.

## Investing in Education

Lincoln Electric board approves more than \$3,000 in unclaimed capital credit funds to area schools

Schools and service organizations throughout LEC’s service area got an educational boost after LEC trustees approved releasing over \$13,000 in unclaimed capital credits at a recent board meeting. The funds come from unclaimed capital credits, dollars members have earned from their equity in LEC, but have not cashed or claimed for any number of reasons.

The largest sum of



just over \$6,000 will be set aside in a special account to be used for a new scholarship program the Co-op plans to roll out next year around the annual meeting. Eureka Elementary School was awarded \$1,500 to support the purchase of a new wireless mobile computer lab. Fortine School requested monies to support their summer recreation program and received \$2,500. This program also benefits students in the Trego area.

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## Education

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Olney-Bissell School requested funds to upgrade the school's electric furnaces with geothermal heat pumps. The school recently received stimulus money and is on a fast track to get heat pumps in by Sept. 30. Lincoln Electric contributed \$2,500 to this effort. The Sunburst Foundation was the final recipient of \$500 to assist in bringing the Missoula Children's Theatre to Eureka this fall. This week-long residency allows 50-60 local students to participate in a full-scale musical and provides the development of life skills in children through participation in the performing arts.

Each year LEC solicits schools to submit proposals for use of the funds that become available. This year \$13,078 was available from unclaimed capital credits that have been on our books for over five years. Since 1996, over \$108,000 has been given to schools to support education under this program. From electrical safety demonstrations, to our support of the Youth to Washington D.C. Tour, this is one more way that Lincoln Electric supports our communities' schools.

## Shipping out savings

*Co-op members to receive 48,000 free energy-saving light bulbs and showerheads*

Lincoln Electric offers a wide variety of programs to assist our members in using energy wisely and efficiently, and beginning this month, we will be providing another 48,000 ways for you to save. That's the number of Compact Fluorescent Light (CFLs) bulbs the Co-op will ship to residential members starting mid-September.

A package of 14 bulbs will be shipped to each residential member that receives their electric bill from one of seven post offices located within our service area. This includes: Eureka, Rexford, Fortine, Trego, Stryker, Olney and Whitefish. If your LEC bill is sent to California or Calgary, or anywhere

else for that matter, you're still eligible for the program, we just ask that you stop at the office to pick up your package of bulbs when you're in town. We are doing this to ensure the energy savings stay within the service area. Offer good while supplies last.

The package will include a variety of bulb types so you can try CFLs in various light sockets within your home. In addition to the familiar "twister" style, members will receive three-way bulbs, globes for bath vanities, reflector lamps for use in recessed lights, and A-lamps for use where the familiar "light bulb" shape is desired. We encourage you to give these bulbs a try in all the light sockets in your home.

CFLs use about 75 percent less energy and last up to seven times longer than standard bulbs. If every American home replaced one light bulb with a CFL, we would save enough energy to light over three million homes for a year and prevent greenhouse gases equal to the emissions of over 800,000 cars.

But wait, we're not done helping you save energy yet. Inside each package will be a pre-paid postcard offering you two free energy and water saving showerheads if you heat your water with electricity. We will send you two free energy saving showerheads just for mailing this postcard back to us. Can't beat that deal.

So look for your package in the mail soon and start soaking up the savings with this great deal from your electric co-op. The savings are on us. If you have any questions about your CFLs, please call toll-free (888) 393-6668 for customer service. Enjoy the savings.



## WE NEED YOUR HELP.



**Our Energy, Our Future™**  
A Dialogue With America

Senators are drafting climate change legislation NOW, and you can impact the outcome. Climate change legislation should be:

**Fair.** Climate change legislation needs to recognize regional differences in how electricity is produced.

**Affordable.** Any climate change plan must keep electricity affordable for all Americans.

**Achievable.** Climate change legislation must be realistic to ensure long-term success.

▶ Go to [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop) to make your voice heard.