

## *In Our Community*

# Big Bend's Mike Ballard Hits 20-Year Milestone

Mike Ballard, Big Bend Electric Co-op's staking engineer in the Mesa office, reached the 20-year mark with Big Bend on January 4. Mike and about 15 co-workers celebrated his milestone with pizza and cake in December.

Mike was born in Mankato, Minnesota. His family moved west to Salem, Oregon, when Mike was 5 years old. He graduated from North Salem High School in 1969.

After high school, Mike worked for his dad in a surveying business, which gave him a solid background. He went to work for Matanuska Electric in Alaska, which gave him an understanding of public utilities.

Mike came to Big Bend Electric Co-op in January 1988. He and his wife, Polly, live near Mesa. They have two children, both now married. Nicholas lives in Pasco. Rosemary lives in Eltopia and has two daughters and a son.

Mike likes to ride his 750 Honda and enjoyed four-wheeling in the past. He loves old cars. His pride and joy is a red 1966 Ford Mustang he rebuilt from the ground up.

Mike says he really enjoys his co-workers at Big Bend Electric Co-op.

### **Pasco Ag Show**

The 2008 Pasco Ag Show was filled with new vendors and good crowds during some interesting January weather. The snow that fell may have added to this year's attendance because many farmers were unable to do anything in their fields.

Big Bend Electric Co-op was pleased to again be an exhibitor at the January 8-9 event at the TRAC facility. This show gives us the opportunity to visit with many of our members and answer questions



*Mike Ballard enjoys a slice of pizza during a celebration of his 20 years with Big Bend Electric.*

about irrigation and residential conservation, the annual meeting, Ruralite, capital credit checks and electrical rates.

We were able to sign up several irrigators for participation in the irrigation conservation program at the Ag Show. It was a good time for our members to meet some of our staff and board members.



*Big Bend Director Lyle Holt, left, and Manager of Operations Duane Johnson man the co-op's booth at the Pasco Ag Show.*

We appreciate the kind comments about Big Bend's service and commitment to our communities. For those members who had specific concerns, we will do our best to rectify any shortcomings.

Board members Curtis Dahl, Jim Person and Lyle Holt took time out of their busy schedules to help out at the Big Bend Electric booth.

Thanks also to Duane Johnson, manager of operations, and Dale Anderson, manager of member services, for working in the booth and answering questions.

### **Scholarship and Youth Tour**

Big Bend Electric Co-op scholarship and Youth Tour programs received a lot of interest this year.

Students growing up on Big Bend's system have taken the time to research the topics for each program. It is amazing how involved each student is with their families, church, school and community.

### **Energy Star Appliance Rebate**

When buying new appliances it is always good to look for the Energy Star® label. Energy Star refrigerators, dishwashers and washing machines qualify for a conservation rebate through Big Bend Electric Co-op.

Unfortunately, if your appliance is not Energy Star-rated, we cannot accept rebate applications.

If you have any questions, please call Dale at (866) 844-2363 or (509) 659-1700.

For those of you who have taken advantage of Big Bend Electric Co-operative's conservation program, we appreciate that you are making investments and changes that add up to a real boost in electric savings. ■