

ENERGY & CO

ADVANCING POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

By Tammy Langerud

Growth from energy development

impacts communities of all sizes. Some of those impacts are challenging, but many more provide new, positive opportunities and cutting edge resources for smaller, rural communities that, without the growth, may not have been able to develop them.

Cooperatives like Upper Missouri Power Cooperative, a Basin Electric Class A member, and its distribution co-ops continue to work to meet the energy needs of the growth in the Williston Basin. Though that growth has slowed, it hasn't stopped, and the communities are reaping its benefits.

Upper Missouri's membership consists of 10 cooperatives: five located in North Dakota and five in Montana. All told, they serve nearly 71,000 meters in 33 counties spanning 51,000 square miles.

Because of these co-ops' dedication to serving their members, communities like Watford City, Bowman and Williston, ND, are able to grow. The growth has come in the form of a resurgence of people to the area, new amenities and a new way of life for many. Behind it all is a solid energy infrastructure – generation and transmission systems that provide electricity for the cooperatives and their members.



The Lantern Coffee Company, Williston, ND

The Lantern Coffee Company has brought a new definition of coffee to Williston: organic specialty coffee. Popular on the east and west coasts, specialty coffee is grown in ideal climates like that of South and Central America, and the beans take on distinctive flavors and tastes due to the soil they're grown in. Barista Kristy Bundt (pictured) says a lot of science goes into a good cup of coffee, everything from the water temperature to the grind. "We don't just push a button on our grinder. We calibrate our coffee grinder every few hours to ensure it produces the best flavor from the bean," she says.

OPERATIVES: IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



Taking flight in Bowman, ND

A 10-year project of getting a new airport in Bowman, ND, came to a close May 25 with the grand opening of the new Bowman County Municipal Airport. It's the first new-field construction of an airport in North Dakota since 1980. The new airport's runway – the longest in the state for a small general aviation airport – is 5,700 feet long. The runway also supports more weight, meaning larger aircraft like private jets visiting the area can use the airport. The previous airport couldn't accommodate large aircraft. Four private hangars and a T-hangar are also on site. They currently house 18 private aircraft.

Attracting and retaining teachers with affordable housing in Lambert, MT

As a way to attract and retain teachers, the Lambert, MT, School District used money from a special oil revenue fund to build teacher housing. This benefit played a huge role in attracting elementary teacher Katie Clausen, an Indiana native, to the school district. Most importantly, it means Clausen, her husband Casey and their dog can live together. Casey, a Montana native employed with ONEOK, is required to live 30 miles from his work site. Before the teaching job at Lambert, the Clausens lived 90 miles apart: Casey in a camper in Sidney, MT, and Katie in Wolf Point, MT. Their dog KiKi was sent to live with relatives in Indiana.



The Connie Wold Wellness Center, Watford City, ND

Michael Johnson, a native of Yelm, WA, exercises at the Connie Wold Wellness Center, built in 2012. Johnson works various shifts in the oil industry. The wellness center's 24-hour access allows him to use the facility when it works for him. The two-story, 20,000-square-foot wellness center boasts an indoor running track; a variety of workout equipment ranging from rows of elliptical machines, treadmills and bikes to weight lifting machines; two indoor endless pools; two classrooms; a children's play area; onsite coffee bar; and the Physical Therapy Department of the McKenzie County Healthcare System.



<http://www.conniewoldwellnesscenter.com/>