

# UNITED NEWSLINE

Information for the members of United Power, Inc.

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## No Rate Increase for Members in 2021

## IMPORTANT DATES

<b>DECEMBER</b> 24-25	<b>Christmas Holiday</b> Offices Closed
<b>DEC 31 -</b> <b>JAN 1</b>	<b>New Year's Holiday</b> Offices Closed
<b>JANUARY</b> 29	<b>Scholarship Apps Due</b> Details on pg. 7
<b>APRIL 14,</b> <b>2021</b>	<b>Annual Meeting &amp;</b> <b>Director Election</b>

## Cooperative Board of Directors Approves 2021 Budget at November Meeting

United Power is pleased to announce there will be no rate increase in 2021. The decision from the cooperative's Board of Directors was made in November upon approval of the 2021 budget and rate structure. For many members, who have had to endure a tumultuous past few months or have been impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the news could not have come at a better time.

Rates were able to remain steady thanks to the forethought of cooperative leadership, who recognized the potential financial impact the pandemic could have and took immediate action to reduce spending in

various departments. Just as businesses and homeowners adjusted spending, each team at United Power was tasked with evaluating initiatives that could either save money or be delayed without impacting service.

"United Power has been fortunate during this time," said Laurie Burkhart, the cooperative's chief financial officer. "We haven't seen the same level of impact as many other cooperatives, and that's due in large part to the actions our teams have taken, as well as continued growth we've seen. It's allowed us to keep our rates from increasing and provide some small relief to our members."

A variety of factors allowed the cooperative to keep rates steady, but perhaps chief among them has been the amount of growth seen throughout the service area, despite the pandemic. The slowdown United Power anticipated on its system never materialized. Instead, another strong year in residential and business growth, as well as load growth, helped fuel its ability to weather the storm. Other shifts in the ways our members interacted with us this year made small, but noticeable, changes to costs. Member enrollment in

services like online account management and paperless billing was also a factor, which helped the cooperative improve efficiencies and provided real savings.

While keeping the current rate structures may ease the burden for many residential members, it could be especially impactful for local organizations like school districts and businesses that may be facing tough budget years ahead as a result of slower sales or state budget cuts. Steady electric rates are one less thing for larger members to plan for when making end of year budget adjustments.

Many members may realize some small benefit from stable rates in the coming year, but United Power has also prioritized the pursuit of more affordable and competitive rates for several years. The cooperative has had ongoing discussions with its wholesale power provider, Tri-State Generation & Transmission, that would allow it to eventually lower rates as much as 15% to 25% in the next few years.

"United Power has worked closely with Tri-State for several years to provide reliable and affordable rates to our members," said acting CEO Bryant Robbins. "Efforts continue to be



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Report an Outage 303-637-1350  
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## We May Have Money For You

United Power is attempting to issue unclaimed capital credit refunds to members who received electric service from the cooperative prior to 2017. If you were a member up to December 31, 2016, you may be eligible to receive a capital credit refund.

### How Can I Find Out If I Am Due a Refund?

To find out if you are due a refund, visit [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com), click on 'My Cooperative' and look for the 'Capital Credits' page to view the entire list of unclaimed capital credit accounts.

If you find your name on the Unclaimed Capital Credits list, fill out the request form available on the website and return it to United Power.

**Forms must be received by United Power by May 1, 2021.**

#### Help us Find United Power Members

Do you have a relative or know of a neighbor who moved away in 2016 or earlier? They may be due a refund.

**A list of members who are due a refund is posted at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com).**



## ENERGY SAVERS

### Lower Water Heating Temperature and Save.

Turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting (120°F). You'll not only save energy, you'll avoid scalding your hands.



## Co-op Cares Fund Receives Additional Funding

United Power's Board of Directors approved an additional \$50,000 to add to the \$250,000 allocated earlier in the year to be earmarked for members financially impacted by COVID-19 through the remainder of 2020. The board has also generously authorized another \$250,000 to help members in 2021. The money for this fund is allocated from the cooperative's unclaimed capital credits. The Co-Op Cares Fund is designed to assist members who have been directly impacted by COVID-19 - particularly those who have been affected by illness or job losses.

"The Co-op Cares Fund has been an important pillar in our strategy to provide support to our members during this difficult time, and complements the many other ways United Power is helping our members weather this situation," stated Bryant Robbins, interim CEO. "Through this program, United Power is providing \$550,000 in direct assistance to our members who are being financially impacted by COVID-19. We are proud to have already provided more than \$270,000 in assistance to more than 1,500 members so far this year."

In addition to the Co-op Cares Fund, United Power has various means of helping members stay on top of their electric bills, including payment arrangements, extensions, prepay, budget billing and assistance from local agencies. United Power encourages members to contact us so we can connect them with the most appropriate assistance program for their situation.

"United Power has several ways to help members when they are having difficulty paying their electric bills," stated Robbins. "All we are asking our members to do is pick up the phone and call us if they are having difficulty paying their bill. We can't help you if we don't know you are struggling."

The Co-op Cares Fund will be available for assistance through the end of 2021, or when the fund is depleted. United Power members who are impacted by the current emergency or any other situation can reach our Member Services department at 303-637-1300.

## Annual Director Election Four Board Seats Up for Election

Four positions on United Power's eleven-member board are up for election at **the 2021 Annual Meeting which is scheduled for Wednesday, April 14, 2021**. The cooperative plans to livestream the meeting, and if conditions allow, will invite members to join us for an in-person meeting at Riverdale Regional Park. One seat in the East, West, South and Mountain districts will be up for a three-year term.

To be eligible to become or remain a director, a person must be a United Power member and receive electric service from United Power at the member's primary residence in the district he or she represents. United Power's bylaws (available at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com), any of our offices, or through mail) provide in-depth

information on director districts, qualifications, terms, elections, meetings and officers.

Each member's district is printed on their United Power statement. Nominations by written petition must state nominee's name and district, be signed by 15 or more United Power members, and be filed with the Board no less than 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

**The deadline for nominations by petition is 4 p.m. on Friday, February 12, 2021.**

Petitions are available at United Power's headquarters office in Brighton at 500 Cooperative Way. Additional information can be obtained by calling United Power's executive department at 303-659-0551 or by visiting our website at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com).

## Variety of Rates Available for a Variety of Lifestyles

made in looking at all of our options with Tri-State to reach our rate reduction goals. We are also looking at other power supply options should we not be able to come to an acceptable agreement. My hope is to provide our Board with a couple of great options so that they can make the decision that they feel is in the best interest of our membership.”

In a cooperative, we all share in the expense and prosperity, and members who were able to continue paying bills helped United Power maintain its positive financial condition. For those who were impacted by job loss or illness and unable to pay their bills, the cooperative established the Co-op Cares Fund to provide financial assistance and ease the burden on both members and the co-op. This year \$300,000 was allocated to the fund from unclaimed capital credits. In October, the Board approved an additional allocation of \$250,000 for members in 2021.

United Power understands our members have different needs and use electricity in vastly different ways. United Power’s residential rates are designed so members have the option to choose one that most closely fits how they use energy. When

the cooperative’s demand rate debuted in January 2019, it separated the energy and demand components and allowed the cooperative to more fairly charge members for both their energy use and impact on the grid. Along with it, the cooperative also rolled out the Smart Choice Rate, which provided two different peak demand charges and a much lower energy charge. Earlier this year, United Power added a Peak Time of Day rate, which encourages members to switch their usage to off-peak hours. The new rate charges a higher demand for on-peak usage, but does not charge for demand during off-peak hours. The cooperative’s standard and time of day rates also remain options for members.

However you use your energy, the flexibility of the cooperative’s residential rates should meet most members’ needs.

You can compare the demand and energy charges of each rate and choose the one that most closely fits how you and your family use energy on the website at [www.unitedpower.com/rates](http://www.unitedpower.com/rates).

## Is Your Contact Information Up to Date?

### Make Sure You’re Receiving Important Notices from United Power

United Power has been using recorded phone messages to let members know when a preplanned outage has been scheduled in their area for maintenance work. As new software becomes available, the cooperative may have more options to send important communications to members electronically.

Electronic communications are tied to individual member accounts and use the phone numbers and/or email addresses the cooperative has on record. If the contact information on record isn’t up-to-date or is entered incorrectly, you may be missing out on important notifications from United Power.

You can check your contact information and make necessary updates through your online account or the United Power app. To set up an online account, go to [www.unitedpower.com/myaccount](http://www.unitedpower.com/myaccount). Contact information can also be updated by calling the Member Services Team at 303-637-1300.



# 2021

## ANNUAL MEETING & DIRECTOR ELECTION

### WEDNESDAY APRIL 14, 2021

**12:00 p.m.** Mail-in ballots must arrive at P.O. Box  
**6:30 p.m.** Virtual Meeting Begins  
Registration details will be posted online

*If conditions allow, an in-person meeting will also be held at **Riverdale Regional Park & Fairgrounds** (9755 Henderson Road, Brighton, CO 80601).*

[www.unitedpower.com/annual-meeting](http://www.unitedpower.com/annual-meeting)

## BALLOTING DEADLINES

**Balloting in the 2021 Director Election will be conducted via MAIL-IN VOTE ONLY.**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2021**

Director Nominations by Petition Deadline at 4 p.m.

**MARCH 15, 2021**

Ballots are mailed to members

**APRIL 14, 2021**

Mail-in Ballots must arrive at the P.O. Box by 12 p.m.

## MEET THE CANDIDATES

Attend a Meet the Candidate Forum to learn more about each of the candidates vying to serve on the Board of Directors. The following events are free to members. RSVPs are not required..

**THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.**

Riverdale Regional Park, Rendezvous Room  
9755 Henderson Road, Brighton, CO 80601

**FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 2021 | 7:30 a.m.**

Coal Creek Canyon Community Center  
3158 Highway 72, Golden, CO 80403

**MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.**

Carbon Valley Service Center  
9586 E. I-25 Frontage Road, Longmont, CO 80504

**TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2021 | 7:30 a.m.**

Fort Lupton Recreation Center  
Multi-Purpose Room 3  
203 S. Harrison Ave, Fort Lupton, CO 80621

Meet the Candidate forums subject to change or cancellation.

# Decking the Halls Safely

The holiday season is quickly approaching, and with it the time to put up festive lights, both indoors and outdoors, to enjoy along with the holiday season.

According to Electrical Safety Foundation International, nearly 90 percent of Americans decorate their homes as part of winter holidays. While holiday lighting does contribute to the joy, appeal and splendor of the season, using them without following important safety precautions can increase the risk of fires and electrical injuries.

ESFI recommends holiday safety steps to ensure you and your family are able to enjoy the season comfortably and worry-free:

1. The best decorations are safe decorations, so when you're decorating, make sure not to run cords under rugs or furniture.
2. Always turn off your decorations when you leave your home and when you're sleeping.
3. Don't overload outlets or extension cords. If you're using extension cords or adapters that add receptacles, consider having a qualified electrician add more outlets to your home.
4. Only use electronics in dry areas. As tempting as it is, you just can't decorate your aquarium with icicle lights.
5. Every home needs a working smoke alarm in each bedroom, outside sleeping areas and on every level, including the basement.
6. Inspect your decorations and discard any that are damaged or worn out. Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, loose connections or frayed or bare wires. Plug light strings together as you inspect them but before hanging.
7. ESFI recommends buying your family Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupter breakers or outlets. Many electrical fires that occur every year could be prevented by AFCIs.

## READER REWARDS

DECEMBER  
2020



### Three Winners Every Month!

1<sup>st</sup> place: \$100 Bill Credit

2<sup>nd</sup> place: \$50 Bill Credit (two winners)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail entry form to: United Power • Reader Rewards  
500 Cooperative Way • Brighton, CO 80603

### Reader Rewards Online

[www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com)



Save a stamp! Visit [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) and click on 'News & Community' to enter Reader Rewards online. Answer the question below with your online entry:

### When are scholarship applications due?

By submitting this entry I agree to allow United Power to publish my name in subsequent issues of United Newsline if I am selected as a winner.

## UNITED POWER PRIDE



A little light reading on a family vacation. The Stark family, from Broomfield, swapped their planned vacation thanks to COVID for a fun camping trip in the Colorado mountains this summer.

### United Power Pride Photos

Snap a photo with the *United Newsline* and you'll get a \$100 bill credit if we print it. Submit your photo along with your name, address, email and a description of the photo online at [www.unitedpower.com/unitedpowerpride](http://www.unitedpower.com/unitedpowerpride).



## Why Members Round Up

When United Power founded Operation Round-Up in 1995 as a way for members to voluntarily help each other through a small monthly contribution built right into their billing statement, we envisioned being able to help vulnerable and struggling members in the communities we serve make ends meet. We couldn't have imagined then that a nationwide pandemic would stretch the foundation to its limits as we celebrate our 25th anniversary this year.

It hasn't been an easy year for anyone, and some have felt the impacts more than others. Although many more members are in need of assistance, the Round-Up board has remained committed to finding the most effective ways to help meet needs throughout this time.

For those not familiar with Operation Round-Up, it is a foundation funded entirely by members who "round up" their monthly billing statements to the next whole dollar. Participation is voluntary, and average yearly contributions are only \$6,

or approximately \$.50 per month. Those funds are then redistributed to nonprofits in various parts of the service territory to ensure as many members receive help as possible. The Round-Up Board selected these nonprofits because they have more resources and are better equipped to provide for members in need. The Board is made up of fellow United Power members who also live within the various parts of the service territory and are familiar with the specific needs of their respective areas.

This unusual year hasn't prevented the board from going above and beyond to meet increased needs, which created an added burden on the foundation. Without the generous contributions of more than 20,000 members who have elected to round up their bill, this wouldn't have been possible.

In November, we asked our members to tell us why they round up, and we received some tremendous responses:

"Yes, been rounding up for at least a decade. One of a list of gratifying things to give. Maximum of \$12 a year. A feel good thing!"

**Larry W., Commerce City**

"I haven't participated in Round-Up before, but I am signing up today. Sounds like a great program and I can see that even a little bit helps."

**Sam G., Firestone**

"Yes we do. We have dealt with hardships and want to contribute to help others in need."

**Brad L., Frederick**

"We participate in Round-Up to ensure that our little contribution helps members who are less fortunate, especially in these times of COVID-19."

**James D., Black Hawk**

"Yes! We do participate in the Round-Up program. We are grateful for the opportunity to assist members of our and the greater United Power community when the need arises."

**Michelle B., Golden**

"I haven't yet, I did not know what it was! But will be signing up now."

**Terry H., Brighton**

Members who are interested in enrolling in Operation Round-Up or increasing their contribution amount can do so at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) or by calling 303-637-1300.

## RECIPES



### Chewy Brown Sugar Cookies

- 14 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- 1 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar
- 3/4 tsp kosher salt
- 1 large egg
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda

Preheat oven to 350° and line two rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper. Stir butter, 1 1/2 cups brown sugar and salt in a large bowl until combined. Stir in egg and vanilla until combined. Add flour, baking powder and baking soda to bowl and stir until combined.

Scoop 1/4-cup sized balls of dough onto rimmed backing sheets (7-8 per pan). Add remaining brown sugar to bowl. Roll each dough ball into sugar, return to pan and press to about 1 inch thick.

Bake until tops have puffed and cracked and edges are golden (9-11 minutes), rotating from top to bottom and front to back halfway through. Let cool for 5 minutes and transfer to wire rack.

*Recipe from seriouseats.com*

### Share Your Recipes

Earn a free gift if we publish your recipe.

ONLINE: [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com)

MAIL: United Power Recipes  
500 Cooperative Way  
Brighton, CO 80603

# New Solar Project to be Energized in 2020

United Power has completed construction on its newest solar project, which is expected to be powered before the end of the year. The Rattlesnake Solar Farm, located adjacent to the cooperative's largest utility-scale solar farm near Platteville, will provide an additional 6 megawatts of energy to United Power's renewable portfolio.

"United Power set the stage for cooperative solar when it powered the community solar garden more than ten years ago," said New Business Director Joel Danforth. "This new expansion reinforces our commitment to bringing members alternative energy options that are both affordable and renewable."

The Rattlesnake Solar Farm was built in cooperation with Silicon Ranch, which has worked with United Power on several other solar projects in previous years, including the nearby Platte Solar Farm. The Platte Solar Farm, built and energized in 2017, has a capacity of 16 megawatts, enough to power approximately 3,000 homes. The cooperative has also partnered with Silicon

Ranch on the Fort Lupton and Mavericks Solar Farms, both powered in 2016.

With the addition of the Rattlesnake Solar Farm project, United Power now has more than 43 megawatts of utility-scale solar connected to its system, in addition to more than 5,500 residential rooftop systems.

United Power launched its first solar project in 2010 with the innovative community solar garden. A first of its kind in Colorado, the project allowed members who were unable to install rooftop solar to rent panels from the cooperative and receive a credit for the energy it produced. Two years later in 2012, the cooperative's first utility-scale solar farm — Hangar 160 — was powered.

"Time and again our members have shown us they would like to see us invest more in renewable resources like our solar farms,"



The Platte Solar Farm, energized in 2017, delivers 16 MWs of energy, enough to power 3,000 homes. The 6 MW Rattlesnake Solar Farm was built directly adjacent to this project.

Danforth said. "We are constantly looking for ways to add affordable and reliable renewable projects to our portfolio. But these projects aren't just for looks; they're also a means for us to be able to offer competitive rates to our members."

United Power has been a part of several innovative energy projects over the past few years. To learn more about the cooperative's energy projects, go to [www.unitedpower.com/innovative-energy](http://www.unitedpower.com/innovative-energy).

## The Diversity of Careers in Cooperatives

Whether it's a large investor-owned utility or a small, local cooperative like United Power, most people picture lineworkers when they think of the individuals who work at their electric utility. Lineworkers are highly visible around the communities we serve, working to ensure our members have safe and reliable power around the clock. They become all the more visible when the weather turns bad.

Our line crews are powered by hard-working employees who are passionate about the jobs they perform. When it comes to keeping your lights on, though, linemen don't do it alone. There are many who work behind the scenes day in and day out to assist them in their duties and serve our members in less visible, but equally important, roles.

United Power's system is a complicated infrastructure designed to deliver more than 500 megawatts of power to more than 95,000 members over nearly 1,000 square miles. Our engineers and operations staff coordinate to plan and design the system to ensure it runs effectively and efficiently. When the power does go out, this design

allows our line crews to restore it quickly.

The suburbs around Denver have become an attractive place to live, and because of this, United Power has seen tremendous growth over the past few years. When a new business or subdivision development moves into our territory, our project managers work closely with developers to review and design an electrical route that meets both the system's and members' needs.

Over the years, United Power has built a name for itself as an innovative and forward-thinking cooperative, due in large part to its willingness to adopt new technology to better serve our members, such as four utility-scale solar farms and the state's largest battery storage facility. Our New Business team helps coordinate these projects and also manages our diverse set of energy management tools, available free to our members.



Member Services Representative Julie V. helps a member with his bill.

These represent only a few of the many career paths one can choose to pursue with a cooperative. Opportunities exist in finance and accounting, information technology, communications, government relations and more. You could even assist members directly as part of our Member Services team. At a cooperative, you are more than an employee. Your work is valued because it directly benefits the members it serves. Check United Power's Careers page to see what opportunities are currently available at [www.unitedpower.com/careers](http://www.unitedpower.com/careers).

# 2021 Youth Scholarship Applications

Applications Must Be Postmarked by January 29



## Scholarships

United Power awards 17 academic scholarships to outstanding students served by the cooperative. Scholarships include awards for students attending an accredited university or college in Colorado or pursuing a specific degree program, as well as 10 book scholarships. Applications are now available.

**Applications must be postmarked by January 29, 2021**

Applications and more information for United Power's youth opportunities are available under the 'News & Community' tab at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) or call Julie Stewart, Community Outreach Specialist, at 303-637-1334.

**Update to 2021 Youth Trips: No Youth Trips Scheduled for 2021**

Each year, the co-op offers students in its service territory the opportunity to build leadership skills through summer youth trips. However, in an abundance of caution for our members and employees, United Power will not participate in either the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp or Youth Tour in 2021.

We value these opportunities for our local high school students and future leaders in our communities, and hope to be able to offer these trips again in 2022.

## Energy Efficiency During the Holiday Season

We spend all year thinking about ways to effectively monitor and reduce our energy usage, but that becomes more difficult during the holidays. We're often distracted with decorations and preparations, shopping, cooking and planning. It can be easy to let your guard down and start to see more excessive energy usage than you might have otherwise expected.

However you choose to celebrate this season, United Power has you covered with the most up-to-date energy efficiency tips and tricks to prevent holiday usage spikes. With a little forethought and diligence, it's easy to find a little savings during this time of year.

### Replace Christmas Lights with LEDs

Updating the lighting in your home is one of the quickest and easiest ways to reduce your energy usage and costs. Light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, are a well-known alternative to traditional lights, and are quickly becoming standard lighting. While many people are making the switch to these lights in their homes, they still might reach for the older, less efficient string lights they've always used when decorating for the holidays.

Depending on how festive your holiday display is, the cost of using these lights can really begin to add up – perhaps to the tune of hundreds of dollars! Christmas lights that utilize LEDs, however, are up to 90 percent more efficient and have a far longer life than traditional incandescent lights.

### Beware the Holiday Vampires

United Power has regularly talked about vampire loads, which are quickly becoming larger consumers of energy. Vampire loads come from devices that continue to use energy even when they appear to be off, such as TVs, gaming consoles or charging devices. Holiday lights can also contribute to these loads when they stay plugged in throughout the day while not in use. To avoid the additional energy usage, unplug lights during the day or before bed in the evening, or you can plug them into a power strip that can be turned off when not in use.

### Give the Gift of Energy Savings

Electronics have become a more common gift item over the past few years, many of which have the capability of using large quantities of energy. "Green gifting" is the practice of gifting electronics that are certified energy efficient, such as those marked by the ENERGY STAR label. These devices are at or better than federal standards for energy efficiency. This allows you to pass on the gift of energy savings to friends and family.

For more energy efficiency tips to help you save on usage throughout the year, visit our website at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com).



# Inside This Issue

DECEMBER  
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## Co-op Cares Funding

Board approves additional allocations to the fund for 2020 and 2021.

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## Why I Round Up?

We asked our members to tell us why they round up their statements.

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## No Rate Increases for Members in 2021

United Power is pleased to announce there will be no rate increase in 2021. For many members, who have had to endure a tumultuous past few months or have been impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the news could not have come at a better time. Read more inside.

Cover

### STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR CO-OP

- email**.....UnitedNewsline@UnitedPower.com
- online**.....www.unitedpower.com
- f**.....facebook.com/UnitedPower
- t**.....twitter.com/UnitedPowerCoop

- Member Services**..... 303-637-1300
- Outage Line**..... 303-637-1350

### CONGRATS READER REWARDS WINNERS

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place:** Judith Boedecker, Erie
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place:** Donessa Lee Gasper, Commerce City  
Sam Giammo, Firestone

See your name listed as a winner? Call 303-637-1325 to claim your Reader Rewards.

- Board of Directors** Ursula J. Morgan
- Chairman** Beth Martin
- Vice-Chairman** Tim Erickson
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- Government & Regulatory** Laurie Burkhardt
- Chief Financial Officer** Bryant Robbins
- Chief Operating Officer/Acting Chief Executive Officer** Ursula J. Morgan
- James Vigasaa**
- Dave Rose**
- Susan Petrocco**
- Richard Newman**
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- Ginny Buzcek**

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# UNITED NEWSLINE



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