

# Annual membership meeting recap

## Universal Service Fund

During his speech at La Jicarita's annual meeting on September 10, 2016, Chairman Douglas Velarde discussed a significant issue facing the cooperative: the Universal Service Fund (USF). The following key points were made:

- In 2015, USF funds made up 80% of the cooperative's total wire line revenues
- The USF is a big part of what allows us to build these great networks in our area
- We rely on the USF to make network investments and keep prices as low as possible
- FCC is reducing the amount of USF revenues we will receive in the future:
  - The USF program will be changed to the "Connect America Fund" (CAF)
  - CAF will potentially place limits on the pool of funds available for rural cooperatives' universal service support

As more information is provided by the FCC, La Jicarita leadership will continue to evaluate the impact of these changes – with the goal to bring fiber connectivity to as many members as possible.

El Trio Los Gallos performing at Customer Appreciation 2016



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## How old is your surge protector?

### When to replace your surge protector

Surge protectors aren't like diamonds. They have a definite lifespan. At some point, your surge protector will stop protecting your gear from power surges and become a dumb power strip or worse. When worn out, a surge protector can actually start passing voltage incorrectly. It's difficult to tell exactly when a surge protector loses those protective powers, but, if you're still using an old surge protector you purchased ten years ago, it's probably long past time to replace it.

Every time it does its job, it takes a little more damage and wears out a little bit more. A surge protector is designed to catch power spikes (high voltage that could potentially damage your electronic equipment) before it does any harm to the equipment plugged into it.

When a voltage spike from the electrical outlet they are plugged into passes through one, your surge protector is designed to absorb that excess

voltage so your equipment doesn't. When this happens, it has to do something with that extra voltage to protect any devices connected to it. To do this, a surge protector uses a component called an MOV (metal oxide varistor). When the voltage spikes, the surge protector sends that extra voltage through the MOV. The MOV breaks down a little (or a lot, depending on the severity of the voltage spike) each time it is forced to do its job so the excess voltage doesn't damage your devices. Each time the MOV is forced to do this, whether from small increases in voltage or large ones, the surge protection offered by that MOV is lessened. In other words, your surge protector can only absorb so many surges before it stops functioning as a surge protector and starts functioning as a plain old power strip (or worse) which will allow everything through to your devices.

### How do you know when it's time to replace it?

It is very difficult, almost impossible, to tell when a surge protector has taken so many hits that it is time to replace it. There really isn't an exact lifespan (as measured in time) of a surge protector. As a simple precaution, in areas prone to high electrical variances, many people recommend replacing your surge protector every two years. Not a bad idea, some surge protectors have built in lights that are designed to alert you to this problem and inform you when the protector needs to be replaced and, in a perfect world, you could depend on that. But, that's not guaranteed. Remember that, depending on how highly rated your surge protector was when originally purchased, how many times it has taken a hit, how hard those hits were and how long it has been taking them is what really determines when it is time to replace it or not. And, do you really know all of those factors? Being aware of how your surge protector wears down over the years, and replacing it within a reasonable time frame will help keep you safe in your home or business.

## Congratulations to our scholarship winners



### Havenlee Sandoval:

Graduated from Mora High School, she is the granddaughter of Sharon Sandoval and attends Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque, NM and pursuing a degree in Nursing.



### Julia Olgua:

Graduated from Wagon Mound High School, daughter of Jose & Sonia Olgua, attends Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque, NM and pursuing a degree in Nursing.

## Low Income Telephone Assistance Program

### Are you eligible for discounted telephone service?

La Jicarita offers a Low Income Telephone Assistance Program (LITAP) to any customers who qualify. To be qualified for this program, you must be receiving support from one of the following:

- Medicaid
- VA Pension/Survivor Benefit
- Supplemental Nutrition Assist. Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance

La Jicarita is happy to provide this discounted program to our customers for a landline phone. The required recertification to be considered for this program passed in December. If you did not re-apply or apply for the first time, find the Lifeline application on our website, [lajicarita.com](http://lajicarita.com) or call the La Jicarita office at (575) 387-2216.

## We appreciate you

### Annual Customer Appreciation 2016

We hope you all had a chance to come by and take part in this year's Customer Appreciation Day! We enjoyed music provided by El Trio Los Gallos, food, fun and time with family and friends. If you didn't make it this year, please mark your calendar for next year and join us at the La Jicarita office, June 2017.