

# NORTHERN NOTES

News from Northern Plains Electric Cooperative

MARCH 2017



## Save the Date


### Northern Plains Electric Cooperative 2017 Annual Meeting

5:30 p.m. | complimentary supper  
6:30 p.m. | meeting

**Tuesday, April 18, 2017**  
*Jamestown Farmers Union Building*  
*Jamestown*

*Powering communities.*

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## Carlson, Wiesz, Olsen re-elected to NPEC board

Three directors were re-elected to their seats at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's district meetings held Jan. 31, Feb. 1 and Feb. 2. Each director candidate ran unopposed.

Russell Carlson, Jamestown, was re-elected to serve District 3. Curtis Wiesz, Heaton, was re-elected in District 2, and Bruce Olsen, Cando, will continue to represent

District 1. Each director will serve a three-year term.

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's annual meeting is set for April 18 at the Farmers Union building in Jamestown. The complimentary meal is set for 5:30 p.m. with the meeting to begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call 1-800-882-2500.

## DISTRICT MEETING UPDATE



### Members learn about cost-saving measures

General Manager Bruce Garber reported on Basin Electric's recent move to join the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), an important cost-saving move.

Headquartered in Little Rock, Ark., SPP, a nonprofit organization, oversees the bulk electric grid and

wholesale power market in the central United States.

SPP's task is to ensure an adequate transmission infrastructure and reliable power supply to 18 million people in a 575,000 square-mile region, including more than 60,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines in 14 states. To do this, SPP has a staff of about 600 professionals.

Garber explained, besides ensuring energy reliability, SPP is also committed to maintaining competitive wholesale electricity prices. "For instance, SPP projects it will save its members – in the end, that's us – \$100 million annually by using something they call the real-time Integrated Marketplace," he said.

Established in 2014, this "marketplace" enables SPP to coordinate next-day energy generation across the region, provide greater access to reserve energy, improve the regional balancing of electricity supply and demand and the integration of renewable resources, like wind and solar. All these efforts combine to reduce the cost of electricity, Garber explained.

### EPA compliance could cost \$5 billion

"We'll need that \$100 million annual savings to help offset some of the cost of the Environmental

Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan. As it stands today, complying with EPA's plan will cost Basin Electric more than \$5 billion," he reported.

EPA's requirements for each state are different and North Dakota was particularly hard hit. "In North Dakota, for example, we are required to reduce emissions by 45 percent, compared to what they were in 2005," Garber said.

"It's not like Basin – that's you and me – hasn't already invested millions, and millions of dollars to protect our environment," he stated.

Through 2016, Basin Electric and its subsidiaries have invested more than \$1.6 billion in emissions control technology. Unfortunately, in its plan, the EPA has chosen to disallow many of these previous emission reductions, when calculating the additional 45 percent reduction.

"Make no mistake, Basin Electric is committed to a clean environment. Basin and all its subsidiary facilities are 100 percent environmentally compliant. Basin supports the spirit of environmental protection laws. Always has, always will!" Garber explained.

Where does the Clean Power Plan stand today?

In February 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court granted a stay, halting the implementation of the EPA's Clean Power Plan. The stay is pending a decision on legal challenges being reviewed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

The Appeals Court heard arguments in September, and whatever its decision, it's almost certain that the case will be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"And to make things even more interesting," Garber explained, "the new Trump administration has vowed to make EPA's controversial Clean Power Plan one of the first rules to be



Northern Plains Electric General Manager **Bruce Garber** reports to the membership.

scrapped. So, we'll have to wait and see how this all plays out."

### Life in a carbon-restricted world

But while the Clean Power Plan plays out in the courts and the political world, regardless of the ultimate decision, Basin Electric understands it must evolve to continue growing in a carbon-constrained world.

One technology it is working on, that shows potential for economical carbon reduction, is a process called the Allam Cycle.

The Allam Cycle consists of gasifying lignite to produce synthetic natural gas, which would then be used, along with oxygen and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), to drive a turbine generator. If successful, this technology could provide Basin's subsidiary, Dakota Gasification, with another source of marketable CO<sub>2</sub> and provide a more efficient and CO<sub>2</sub> emission-free way of generating electricity with lignite.

### ALLAM Cycle shows promise

Recently, Basin Electric, the Energy

& Environmental Research Center, 8 Rivers and ALLETE Inc., along with its subsidiaries BNI Coal and Minnesota Power, were granted \$1.48 million toward a \$3.18 million one-year research project devoted to studying Allam Cycle technology and its use with lignite.

Basin Electric and ALLETE have each committed matching funds and in-kind services supporting this research.

This year, a "first-of-its-kind" Allam Cycle generating plant will start up in Texas, and more in-depth research using lignite to make synthetic natural gas will be completed in North Dakota. If this plant proves out, it could be an economical means of using lignite in a CO<sub>2</sub> emissions-constrained future.

To sum it up, Basin is working every day to hold the line on wholesale power costs. The ultimate goal of its move to the Southwest Power Pool and its participation in Allam Cycle research is to hold the line on future electric generating cost increases required by EPA's burdensome rulings. ■

# Rolla student to attend 2017 Youth Tour

## Co-op sponsors week-long trip

Sixteen-year-old Grant Munro's understanding of the fundamentals of democracy helped him earn a seat on the 2017 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, sponsored by the National Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives.

As the 2017 winner, Munro will participate in an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 10 to 16,

compliments of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative.

During the week-long tour, Munro and other North Dakota students will meet local legislators, learn about the cooperative business



**Grant Munro**

model, and visit memorials and museums.

A sophomore at Rolla High School, Grant Munro is the son of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members Paul and Paula Munro.

His award-winning essay, entitled "The Strength of Democracy," states that citizen participation is the key to a strong democracy. We have included it below:

### Grant's winning essay: The strength of democracy

As Abraham Lincoln once said, "Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people." Even one-and-a-half centuries later, this still rings true.

Today, our representative democracy in both the United States and cooperative enterprise is strong in many ways, one of these being that democracy gives every American citizen power. This power is not like that of the dictator in North Korea. Instead, it is equal and allows for all American citizens, whether man or woman; back or white; gay or straight, to have the "privilege and duty" of participating in democracy.

It is a privilege to live in a country where every person has a voice and an impact on the decisions made in governing the county.

It is the duty of "the people" to actually use their voice and participate within the democracy. Therefore, participation is the key to a strong democracy.

As American citizens, we can participate in democracy in many different ways, such as: voting, communicating with government officials, running for a political position, working for the government, or even protesting our disappointment and dissatisfaction.

As members of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, we can participate in much the same way.

Although decisions in a representative

democracy are not made directly by the people, it is the people's vote, voice, and involvement that give them the power to change the outcome of a certain situation or decision. As citizens, we vote for representatives who will make decisions in favor of our ideas and beliefs.

Likewise, as Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members, each year, we elect our leadership by voting on directors that we think will make the right decisions regarding budget, policy, rates and other aspects of the co-op business.

When we disagree with decisions or have certain issues we would like to draw attention to, we have the right to voice our concerns by contacting our local, state and federal government officials that represent us. Correspondingly, in the cooperative we can contact and meet with the board of directors.

Often, when many people call attention to the same issue, representatives will see what they can do for the betterment of the people they represent. This communication and understanding between representatives and the people is essential to a strong democracy.

The largest form of participation in democracy is the act of involving oneself above and beyond the basic duties of voting and communicating. This is when a person works for or actually holds a position, and gives of their time and talents to help serve their nation, state, county or community.

The United States, as well as our local cooperative, has built a strong and

successful democracy on the foundation of the vote, voice, and involvement of the citizens. In order for this foundation to become even stronger and withstand the storms of change, we must remember that it is the duty and responsibility of all members to participate and strengthen the democracy.

As citizens, we can strengthen the foundation of democracy by using the building blocks of education and hard work. Education will lead to an increase in participation. Well-educated citizens have the ability to more clearly understand both sides of an issue, more effectively voice their concerns, and will be more willing to involve themselves in the processes of democracy.

As well-educated people, we must work hard and listen to the concerns of others, work together to make necessary changes, and realize that everything will not always go as we would like. In a democracy there must be balance in order for it to be effective.

Strengthening the democracy is not an easy task, but a necessary one. It is up to every citizen to help make a difference, through educating, voting, voicing, communicating, and involving themselves for the betterment of democracy.

We must strive to do our part and encourage others to do the same. This is what Abraham Lincoln had in mind more than 150 years ago. ■

## Co-op recognizes employees for years of service

**N**orthern Plains Electric Cooperative expressed appreciation for these employees at the co-op's annual employee meeting held Feb. 8. Their milestones range from five years to 20 years.

Together, these employees have dedicated 65 years of service to the cooperative.

Congratulations! We appreciate the work you do! Those recognized are:

### Five years

Blaine Hulbert, IT/network technician Justin Kollman, dispatcher Blaine and Justin both work out of the Carrington office, but perform their duties for both Northern Plains and its sister co-op, Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative.

### 15 years

Beau Bredahl, foreman – Jamestown outpost



From left, Employees recognized for time of service are **Blaine Hulbert, Beau Bredahl, Justin Kollman, Trevor Wick** and **Doyle Schwanke**

### 20 years

Doyle Schwanke, lineworker – Maddock outpost  
Trevor Wick, foreman – Woodworth outpost ■



## ASSISTANCE OFFERED FOR SCHOOL-SPONSORED TOURS

Recognizing that school budgets are often tight, and to help defray trip expenses, Northern Plains Electric directors have approved a \$100 donation to any high school in the cooperative's service area that takes a group of students to the state Capitol to view North Dakota's legislative process in action.

On Jan. 18, instructors Rick Christianson and Jeff

Ringstad took 19 students from Midkota High School in Glenfield to Bismarck to observe the N.D. Legislature. Students sat in committee hearings in the morning, in the N.D. House and Senate after lunch, and even had an opportunity at question and answer with Supreme Court Justice Tufte. The students are pictured with Justice Tufte.



## What are capital credits?

An electric cooperative operates on an at-cost basis. Annually, the co-op allocates capital to each member. The amount of that capital depends on how much that member spent on electricity. It also depends on how much operating revenue the co-op has at the end of the year. If the co-op's financial condition permits, these capital credits are retired. Since cooperative members own the co-op, the extra capital at the end of the year is returned to them.

This list includes the names of people to whom we owe money. The capital credit checks we mailed to these former members were returned unclaimed because we don't have current addresses. If you, or someone you know, is on this list, please give us a call at 1-800-882-2500.

### 2016 UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS

Adolph, Sannon	Irvine, Calif.	Guntenspergen, Glenn	Dunkirk, Md.	Nelson, Ronald J.	Grafton
Albright, Lee	Upham	Gustafson, Keith	Bottineau	Nording, Angela	Buchanan
Allery, Laisee L.	Belcourt	HC Price Co.	Dallas, Texas	Oakland, Gary	Bismarck
Allied Group Mortgage	West Des Moines, Iowa	Hackman, Dale	Robinson	Olson, Truman R.	Yucaipa, Calif.
Alto, Dan	Cando	Harding, Kent	Bowman	Ouellette, Korina	Saint John
Anderson, Robert A.	Mesa, Ariz.	Harrington, June	Moorhead, Minn.	Patzner, Calvin	Robinson
Arpan, Darin	Belcourt	Hartwig, Lonnie	Ypsilanti, Mich.	Peltier, Amy	Minot
Baker, Elaine	Dunseith	Holien, Bill	Cando	Peltier, Richard J.	Dunseith
Baker, Francis Sr.	Belcourt	Houser, Ellen	Jamestown	Peterson, Laverne C.	Carrington
Barron, Tammy	Belcourt	Johnson, Linda	Mosinee, Wis.	Phillips, Dan	Fargo
Belgarde, Alfred	Belcourt	Keefe, Kevin	Penn	Poitra, Debbie	Fargo
Belgarde, Christine	Belcourt	Keehn, David	Wahpeton	Robinson Grocery Store	Robinson
Berg, Edna	Fargo	Key, R.S.	Waco, Texas	Roy, Susan	Rolla
Black, Anita	St. Michael	Kieffer, James	Casselton	Satchell, John	Lake City, Iowa
Black, Cragi	Fort Totten	Kettle K Korner	Robinson	Sauer, Laverne	Bismarck
Black Gold Farms	Grand Forks	Kresel, Julie	Jamestown	Schwind, Jeff	Jamestown
Bonn, Ann	Bisbee	Lafromboise, Freyja	Belcourt	Seil, Lila	Grand Forks
Boyer, Susan	Grand Forks	Lafromboise, Reggie	Turtle Lake	St Germaine, Robert A.	Belcourt
Brandt's Furniture	Carrington	Landsem, Sarah	Grand Forks	Thomas, Robert	Belcourt
Brockman, Martin	Angleton, Texas	Larocque, Candace	Dunseith	Trottier, Ray Jr.	Rolla
Brown, Mike	Carrington	Larson, Andrew	Velva	Vetsch, Jana	Garrison
Caldwell, Bruce D.	Jamestown	Lavallie, Rose	Bismarck	Vig, Larry	Bismarck
Carlson, Hjalmer Jr.	Minot	Lesmeister, Gary	Marshfield, Wis.	Walkingeagle, Kari A.	Fort Totten
Charette, Duane	Belcourt	Libis, Deb	Mott	Walette, John	Belcourt
Coppick, Bruce	Chester, Vt.	Liechty, Jon	Jamestown	Warren, Candus	Belcourt
Cornelius, Chrystel	Belcourt	Lockhart, Marie	Roswell, Ga.	Weigel, David	Stockton, Calif.
Corpus, Eduardo Jr.	Harvey	Longie, Gerald	Belcourt	Wilkie, Laurie D.	Belcourt
Davis, Crystal	Belcourt	Lulay, Tim	Fargo	Wilkie, Nick	Belcourt
Decoteau, Connie	Devils Lake	Mallard, Isaac	Fort Totten	Wilson Brothers	Jamestown
Decoteau, Gloria L.	Belcourt	Marcellais, Brian	Belcourt	Wilson, Kenneth	Bismarck
Delong, Judy	Belcourt	Marcellais, Charlotte	Bismarck		
Doreen's Corral	Robinson	Martell, Nancy	Belcourt		
Ellan, Gene	Devils Lake	Massie, Mary	Cando		
Emerald, Tim	Ponderay, Idaho	Mathiason, Marjorie	Sanborn		
Evans, Daniel	Everett, Wash.	Matrious, Lauren	Hinckley, Minn.		
Falcon, Virginia	Belcourt	Matson, Nancy	Sedro Woolley, Wash.		
Feather, Sharon	Fort Totten	McClain, Steven	Carrington		
Fedorenko, Shawn	Cando	McDonald, Fran	Fort Totten		
Fischer, Patricia	Bismarck	McKenzie, Linda	Gackle		
Flaten, Michael S.	Lakota	Messer, Alan	Richardton		
Frederick, David	Belcourt	Mielke, David	Jamestown		
Gehlhoff, William	Rogers	Mikkelson, Steve J.	Sanborn		
Grant, John	Belcourt	Moilan, Arne V.	Minot		

# SPRING INTO ENERGY SAVINGS

March brings the beginning of spring and the start of a new season.  
And spring cleaning can bring a fresh opportunity to find ways to save energy and money.

Here are just a few simple ideas from Northern Plains Electric Cooperative to improve the energy efficiency and comfort of your home as warmer temperatures arrive:

- 1. Service your air conditioner.** Easy maintenance such as routinely replacing or cleaning air filters can lower your cooling system's energy consumption by up to 15 percent. Also, the first day of spring could serve as a reminder to check your air conditioner's evaporator coil, which should be cleaned annually to ensure the system is performing at optimal levels.
- 2. Use ceiling fans.** Cooling your home with ceiling fans will allow you to raise your thermostat four degrees. This can help lower your electricity bills without sacrificing overall comfort. In the winter months, ceiling fans should go clockwise to push rising warm air downward. In the summer, however, the fans should circulate counterclockwise for the opposite effect.
- 3. Caulk air leaks.** Using low-cost caulk to seal cracks and openings in your home keeps warm air out – and cash in your wallet.
- 4. Seal ducts.** Air loss through ducts can lead to high electricity costs, accounting for nearly 30 percent of a cooling system's energy consumption. Sealing and insulating ducts can go a long way toward lowering your electricity bills.
- 5. Dust off electronics, light bulbs and vents for efficient use of energy.**
- 6. Open windows.** Creating a breeze allows you to naturally cool your home without using air conditioners. This is an ideal tactic in spring when temperatures are mild. If it's warmer during the day, open the windows in the evening and close them during the day.
- 7. Cook outside.** On warmer spring days, keep the heat out of your home by using an outdoor grill instead of the indoor oven.
- 8. Set the thermostat.** On warm days, setting a programmable thermostat to a higher setting when you are not at home can help reduce your energy costs by approximately 10 percent.
- 9. Switch on bathroom fans.** Bathroom fans suck out heat and humidity from your home, improving comfort.
- 10. Clean out your fridge.** It's one of the biggest energy hogs in your whole home, with the average fridge using nearly 14 percent of a household's energy. By properly cleaning out your fridge, you can reduce its energy consumption and cut down your electricity bill. Start by rolling your refrigerator away from the wall and using a duster or vacuum hose to clear the dirt and dust from the coils. Remove unneeded and old food from your fridge to allow air to circulate and increase efficiency.



# You've planned every acre HAVE YOU PLANNED FOR YOUR SAFETY?

As spring planting nears, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative reminds hardworking farmers and ranchers to stay safe.

Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity, but those same power lines can also be deadly if not treated with respect. While you need to focus on the field and your machinery, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative urges you to also watch for electrical hazards around the farm or ranch.



## Be aware

Farmers and their equipment should always be 10 feet away from power lines on all sides. Field cultivators and sprayers can often reach as high as 12 feet in the air. Practice extreme caution and use a spotter to make sure you stay far away from power lines when you use tall equipment.

If you have purchased new equipment, be aware of antennas or other attachments that may pose new hazards. A newer, bigger piece of equipment may no longer clear a line. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year-to-year.

Power lines also may sag over the years. If power lines on your property are sagging, contact Northern Plains to repair the lines. Never try to move a power line on your own.

Overhead power lines are not the only electric hazard on the farm. Guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can become charged with electricity. If you break a

guy wire, call the cooperative to fix it. Don't do it yourself.

## Follow these other tips:

- Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles. Make sure you, your family and employees know the location of overhead power lines, and use routes to avoid the lines when moving equipment. Do this every year, as equipment sizes and soil conditions may change.
- Be aware of increased heights of equipment, especially new equipment with higher antennas.
- Avoid moving large equipment alone. Have someone watch as you move equipment to ensure you are clear of power lines.
- Be extra careful when working around trees and brush; they often make it difficult to see power lines.

# NORTHERN NOTES

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