

Member Appreciation Days

We were pleased with the turnout at our eighth annual Member Appreciation Days. We had four kids and 211 adults register at Baudette and 22 kids and 162 adults register at Littlefork for a total of 399. The winners of the electric cart grill were Gloriann Fisher at Baudette and Milford Gustafson at Littlefork. The Lock-N-Go grill winners were Carol Davis at Baudette and Rose Leerssen at Littlefork. The winners of the \$25 gift card for the kid's drawing were Cameron Kruse at Baudette and Evan Peterson at Littlefork.



Members register for prizes at Baudette.



(Above) Members keep the linemen busy cooking and serving brats at Baudette.



Robyn Sonstegard explains the benefits of the Co-op Connection Card to some members.

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JUNE 2011

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1-888-6OUTAGE (1-888-668-8243)
or 634-2603
e-mail us at nsec@wiktel.com
Visit our website at
www.northstarelectric.coop

**North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Mission Statement**

To improve the lives of our member-owners and community by responsibly providing electric energy and other beneficial services while maintaining the very highest standards of performance.

Members' corner

We added a section called members' corner. What we would like is for members to send in questions about your electric cooperative, and we will answer them for you. Please give us your name and a phone number in case we need to clarify the question, and send them to North Star Electric, PO Box 719, Baudette, MN, 56623, Attn: Wayne.

Highlights from the **BOARDROOM**

These are the highlights from the board of directors' May 12 meeting. In addition to routine business, the board voted to purchase a triple-axle trailer, to approve the IRS 990, to update check-signing authority, to update the board policy regarding idle large-power accounts, to approve the REDLG (Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant) Revolving Loan Fund Plan and to accept the safety meeting minutes.

Staff reports included load control, energy audits, high-use calls, electrical safety demonstrations provided at local schools, the power plant tours, scholarship winners, member appreciation days, the financial report, cost saving changes, revitalizing the Co-op Connection Card, security at the offices, pole attachments, legislative activity and meetings, graduation of the first

class of 28 apprentice line workers from the Baudette campus of MState and dates for the strategic planning session.

Minnkota President & CEO Mac McLennan was a guest at the meeting, as he was in the service territory to meet with members at the open houses and the informational meeting held the night before. He reported on the most recent developments with Minnkota's emission control upgrades.

Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month. If you wish to speak with the board, or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact Manager Dan Hoskins at least one week in advance to be included on the agenda.

ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked AND helps protect you from injury and expense. Safe digging is no accident: always call 811 before you dig. Visit call811.com for more information.

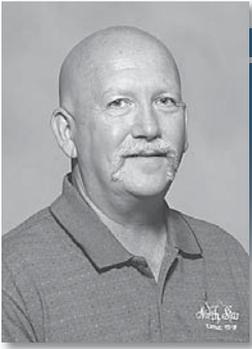


•••• Current electrical inspectors ••••

State law requires that every new electrical installation in any construction, remodeling, replacement or repair shall file a certificate for inspection with the State Board of Electricity and be inspected by a Minnesota electrical inspector.

- **St. Louis and Koochiching counties:**
Bob Orgon
10111 Roosevelt Rd. S.E.
Bemidji, MN 56601
Phone: (218) 556-3829
Fax: (218) 333-0451
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

- **Roseau and Lake of the Woods counties:**
Scott Stenvik
16409 State Hwy 1 N.W.
Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Phone: (218) 689-5406
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)



Dan Hoskins
General Manager

Manager's Report

In this issue I am not going to talk about politics and our state and federal legislators (who are now messing with the state constitution), any kind of a rate increase (I feel you have been through enough lately), whether or not wind energy is worth the cost (only when the wind blows), how the down economy is affecting our sales (this is true), what I really think about global warming (or climate change as "they" now refer to it), the great carbon issue (dead things emit carbon, live ones like us need it), the EPA (which I think stands for "Enough Political Assistance") or any other topics that we have discussed in the last five years.

Well, that takes care of this issue of the *Enlightener*; ya'll have a great month! Just kidding, sit down and let's talk about a real issue: safety. Our employees are celebrating more than 385,000 hours of no lost time safety record, and that is a tremendous effort on behalf of our employees and they should be commended for this. Congratulations team!

But now it's your turn; "Look Up" or "Call Before You Dig." Those are the words that are associated with our power lines and with safety. Safety is our biggest concern for our employees, our members and the general public. Let's look at some of the areas of power line safety.

"Look Up." This means look for those overhead power lines that bring that wonderful product called electricity to you. A power line that has electricity flowing through it is very dangerous because you can't see the electricity, you can't smell it and most of the time you can't hear it. But it's there, and believe me, you don't want to touch it. Every member of your family should be made aware of the dangers of electricity and taught to respect it.

If you look in the newspaper or listen to the news on the TV or radio, you will hear or read of someone putting up an antenna, moving a grain auger or other farm implement, trimming a tree, roofing a building or any other type of work where they have to stick objects into the air or climb onto an object, and they end up sticking something into an overhead power line. Then, you also will read or hear in that same article, that they were either killed or badly burned with severe injuries. We don't like it when our power lines are over the top of your building or in one of your trees. In fact, our easements state that once the power line is constructed, we do not want you constructing any building or planting any type of tree under an existing overhead line or on top of an underground line.

So, you see, it's not that you know it is there or it's not that you are unsafe; it is a fact that accidents happen, and it only takes a split second to have the mind go blank, and boom, it's lights out (121-19-009-05, Steve Nieminen). And believe me, from talking with some of the lucky survivors of an electrical shock, it's one experience you don't want. So, when considering building or planting under our lines, please consider, first of all,

your safety and the safety of others. If that doesn't work, then consider the bill I'm going to send you when our linemen find this hazard, and we have to change the location of the line.

Now, let's look at those other words, "Call Before You Dig." Not only is this law, but it's smart and safe. These words not only refer to our underground power lines, but also there are other utilities under the ground such as gas, water, telephone, cable TV, sewer, fiber optic lines and so on. (A map of your yard would be a very valuable document to add to your property folder for future reference.) Let's focus on underground power lines.

Almost every member likes underground power lines because you can't see those ugly old poles, there are no wires to mess up the beautiful view of the sunset and the underground transformer is hidden under a fake well or behind a large patch of flowers or bushes. We don't want trees cut down, so put the line in underground. Whatever the case may be underground, if people could afford it, would be the power line of choice.

You do have to remember that anytime you are going to dig in the yard, whether it is planting trees, digging in a fence post, digging up the broken water line or anytime you decide to dig, call the Gopher State One Call number before you dig. We will give you free locations of our underground power line facilities that are located in the area of your digging. If the electric shock doesn't get you, the shock from the bill that I'm going to send you for repairs will. You see, it is not only a safety concern of ours, but it also costs money. Just like the sign says in the local store, "You break, you pay."

Just remember, all of us here at North Star Electric Cooperative try to bring you the best, most reliable product at the lowest cost and all of this is wrapped around safety. So, with our professionals in the field and with your assistance, we can maintain and distribute electricity safely for many years to come. And if you have a power line situation right now in your yard or you know of where one exists, please call us immediately.

Here are some numbers for you to call. For underground locates before you dig, call Gopher State One Call **1-800-252-1166** or **811**. To report an overhead power line situation, please call North Star Electric Cooperative at **888-634-2202** in Baudette or **218-278-6658** in Littlefork.

June 19 is Father's Day and I would like to wish all dads (and future dads) and granddads a Happy Father's Day! My dad passed away in 1983, but I can still see that smile, hear that infectious laugh and remember that face and all the good times we had. If you are one of the fortunate to still have your dad, call him or, better yet, go see him. Some of us don't have that pleasure any longer!

God Bless You
and Our Troops,
Dan

Safety

remains top priority after a storm

Article courtesy of Safe Electricity

There may be a mess in your yard and your home has been damaged, but safety remains the top priority in the wake of a severe storm. Make sure you and your family are aware that hazards could be hidden by tree limbs and debris, dangers such as down power lines or electrical equipment in contact with the wet ground.

Stay away from and report any downed or sagging lines. They should be considered energized and dangerous, until utility linemen can assure they are de-energized and the area is safe.

A downed power line that's energized can cause other things around it to be potentially hazardous. A fence or guardrail touching a downed power line can be energized for several thousand yards, and poses a threat to anyone coming into contact with these structures. Also, stay away from puddles of water that could be in contact with downed lines. Encountering these can be as hazardous as coming into contact with the downed power line itself.

Do not attempt to drive over a downed power line, and if a storm causes your vehicle to be draped in power lines, do not attempt to drive away or get out.

Call for help and stay inside until utility crews say it's safe to do so.

Be alert to potential hazards from flooding or standing water. If using electric yard tools in clean-up efforts, do not operate them if it's raining or ground is wet, or while you are wet or standing in water. Keep all electric tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from wet surfaces. Make sure outdoor tools are plugged into outlets with ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection. If your outdoor outlets don't have GFCIs, use a portable GFCI cord.

Inside your home, never step into a flooded room or other area if water is covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Be alert to any electrical equipment that could be energized and in contact with water. Never touch electrical appliances, cords or wires while you are wet or standing in water.

"Cleaning up and using water-damaged appliances also carries safety risks," says Jay Solomon of the University of Illinois Extension, and a member of the Safe Electricity Advisory Board. "Electric motors in appliances that have been drenched or submerged should be thoroughly cleaned and reconditioned

before they are put back into service. Repair or replace electrical appliances or tools that have been in contact with water. Do not use any water-damaged appliance until a professional has checked it out."

During an outage, Safe Electricity also recommends turning off electrical appliances and unplugging major equipment, computers and televisions. This will help protect equipment that could be damaged by electrical surges, and prevent circuit overloads when power is restored. Leave one light on to indicate that power has been restored. Wait a few minutes then turn on other appliances and equipment one at a time.

If you use a standby generator, make sure a transfer safety switch is used, or connect the appliances directly to the generator output through an extension cord (362-20-041-02, Chad Beckel). This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines, what's known as "back feed." Back feed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

Learn more about operating generators safely and safety in the wake at www.SafeElectricity.org.

The North Star Electric Cooperative annual meeting of the members is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 7, at the Littlefork/Big Falls High School. The Board of Director position up for election is District 7 for a four-year term.

Your district number is printed on your electric bill. If you are interested in a position on the Board of Directors, you may pick up a petition form at our North Star Electric Cooperative office in either Littlefork or Baudette.

Please be advised that each membership of the North Star Electric Cooperative is allowed one signature, and in the case of joint membership, only one signature is allowed. (A husband and wife are not joint members unless they have completed a joint membership application.)

SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS.

All persons eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative shall:

(a) be a member in good standing of the Cooperative receiving electric service at the member's primary residence in the district from which the director is to be elected prior to being nominated for director;

For purposes of these bylaws, "primary residence" shall mean the residence that is the chief or main residence of the person and where the person actually lives for the most substantial portion of the year;

(b) have voting rights within the district from which the director is to be elected;

(c) not be employed by, materially affiliated with or have a material financial interest in any director, individual or entity which either is:

(1) directly or substantially competing with the Cooperative; or

(2) selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative; or

(3) possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative;

For purposes of this section, the terms "material" or "substantially" shall be interpreted as constituting a minimum of 5 percent of a member's total hours of employment sales or income on an annual basis:

(d) not be an employee or not have been an employee of the Cooperative within the last three (3) years;

(e) not be a close relative of an employee, where as found in these bylaws

"close relative" means any individual who is, either by blood, law, or marriage, including step, half, foster and adoptive is either a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, brother or sister.

(f) be only one, and not more than one, member of a joint membership; provided, however, that none shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold a

Nomination process for director election

As approved, with a Bylaw amendment by the membership, the Nominating Committees will not be used to identify candidates for director elections. Anyone interested in running for the North Star Electric Cooperative Board of Directors should review the following information from the North Star Electric Cooperative Bylaws Article IV, Board of Directors, Section 3, Qualifications, as well as the new nomination procedure, Article IV, Section 5, Nominations.

position of trust in the Cooperative unless all shall meet the qualifications hereinabove set forth;

(g) if a representative or agent of a member is not a natural person, i.e. a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or similar, then the representative or agent designated as a nominee for director shall be an individual residing within the external boundaries of the district from which (s)he is nominated; and

(h) agree to regularly attend all board, annual and special members' meetings, and in no case have more than four (4) unexcused absences within a twelve (12) month period of time.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board of directors.

(i) Exceptions. In regard to the restrictive provisions of this section that are based upon close relative relationships, no incumbent director shall lose eligibility to remain a director or to be re-elected a director if, during a director's incumbency, a director becomes a first kindred relative of another incumbent director or of a Cooperative employee because of a marriage or an adoption to which the director was not a party.

(j) Disqualification. After the board of

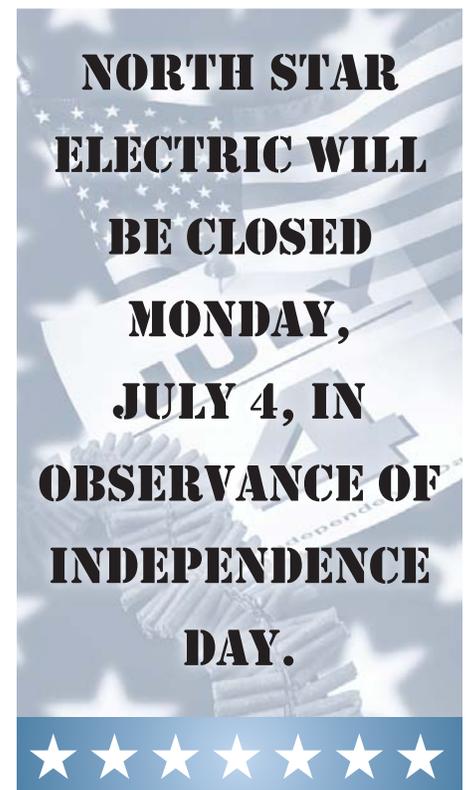
directors determines that a director or a nominee for director lacks eligibility under the provisions of this section or as may be provided elsewhere in these bylaws, it shall be the duty of the board to promptly make a disqualification. After the board of directors determines that any person being considered for or already holding a directorship lacks eligibility under this section it shall be the duty of the board of directors to withhold such position from such person or to cause a director to be removed therefrom, as the case may be.

SECTION 5. NOMINATIONS.

The procedures and methods of nominating candidates for election as a director of the cooperative are hereby established:

Nominations by Petition. Any twenty (20) or more members of a district of the cooperative may make nominations in writing over their signatures not less than sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting, and the Secretary of the board of directors shall post the petition at the principal office

of the cooperative, Baudette, Minnesota; such listing of nominations by petition may be mailed to each member through the medium of the cooperative newsletter.



STAFF REPORT

Work plan

Crews have been busy working on our underground line replacement along County Road 33 on the edge of Littlefork next to our substation. The new cable is in the ground and energized and most of our electric load has been transferred over to them, but we still have some small taps to switch over before we can retire the old cabinets, transformers and poles. Our main underground power line that feeds Happyland and Hwy 65 crosses under County Road 33 and will have to be lowered so we will maintain a 4-foot depth after the new ditch cuts are made. As soon as we finish the road job, our crews will concentrate their work on the NOVA project down the Ash River Trail. Voltage regulators, 25-kV OCRs and fault indicators on the 3½ miles of underground power line are still left to do.

New services/upgrades

New services and service upgrades to homes have been



Allan Baumgartner
Littlefork District
Operations Supervisor

coming in this spring and our crews have started building some of them. Right now we are a little behind on them because of the road job. We do have new services to build to three MnDOT towers up in our service area. Also, the new tower west of Big Falls will be close to a 9-mile long service (556-45-030-01, Harvey Lehman). I have been working on right of way and getting permits from the MN DNR and Koochiching County and some material has also been ordered. Last year, crews built 53 new services and 53 service upgrades between both east and west ends.

ROW clearing

Crews have been clearing and trimming trees in the town of Littlefork, as this needs to be done about every five years. Next they will move up to Rainy Lake and Kabetogama Lake for more right-of-way work that needs to be done. Central Applicators will also be back up to finish some right-of-way clearing they started last winter, but deep snow shut them down in early January.

Outages and line loss

Outages have been pretty low so far this year. In May we had only five as of the 26th; four individual and one mainline outage caused by a delivery truck snagging a telephone wire and breaking off a pole on the Ash River Trail.

Member Appreciation Days continued from pg. 1



(Above and right)
We had a good sized crowd at both the Baudette and Littlefork locations.



Carol Davis from Baudette is the winner of the Lock-N-Go grill at Baudette.

North Star Electric Cooperative's
**Co-op
 Connection Card**
is being revitalized

New businesses are being added weekly. Here are just a few of the businesses participating in the Co-op Card. See more online at www.nse.coop or www.connections.coop



- The Furniture Gallery
- Salon 71
- Wheeler's Point Resort
- Hardee's Restaurant
- LaValla's Antique & Gift Shop

Watch for a new Co-op Card and discount list going out to all of our 5,400+ members. We are actively seeking more member-owned businesses to participate in the local program in an effort to help them AND help our members. Contact North Star Electric for more information.



Co-op Connections Card
 Business Spotlight
NAPA Falls Supply

830 3rd Ave., International Falls

National Automotive Parts Association
 "NAPA Know How - we'll help you get the job done"

Show your Co-op Card and save **10% off** any purchase over \$100.

www.napaonline.com



**Problems paying
 your electric bill?**

Energy assistance may be available!

If you are receiving a low income or suffering from a temporary financial shortfall, the following agencies may be able to assist you with your electric bill. We urge you to contact them immediately to avoid disconnection if you feel you are eligible for aid.

**Lake of the Woods County
 Community Services**
 P.O. Box G-0200
 Baudette, MN 56623
 634-2642

**Northwest Community
 Action Council**
 P.O. Box 67
 Badger, MN 56714-0067
 800-568-5329

**Koochiching County
 Community Services**
 1000 5th St.
 International Falls, MN 56649
 283-7000

**Kootasca Community
 Action, Inc.**
 2232 2nd Ave. E.
 P.O. Box 44
 International Falls, MN 56649
 283-9491 or 800-559-9491

**Kootasca Community
 Action, Inc.**
 1213 SE 2nd Ave.
 Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3984
 800-422-0312

**Arrowhead Economic
 Opportunity Agency**
 702 3rd Ave. S.
 Virginia, MN 55792-2797
 800-662-5711

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE POLITICAL LEADERS

Federal legislators

Senator Al Franken
 320 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510
www.franken.senate.gov
 202-224-5641
 Fax: 202-224-0044

Senator Amy Klobuchar
 302 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510
www.klobuchar.senate.gov
 202-224-3244
 1-888-224-9043 (Minnesota office)
 Fax: 202-228-2186

Congressman Chip Cravaack
 508 Cannon House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
www.cravaack.house.gov/
 202-225-6211
 Fax: 202-225-0699

Congressman Collin Peterson
 2211 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
www.collinpeterson.house.gov
 202-225-2165
 Fax: 202-225-1593

State of Minnesota legislators

Senator Tom Bakk 651-296-4936
 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
 Capitol Building, Room 147
 St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
 651-296-8881
sen.tom.bakk@senate.mn

Representative David Dill
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 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
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 888-682-3205
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Senator LeRoy Stumpf
 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
 Capitol Building, Room 145
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 651-296-8660
sen.leroy.stumpf@senate.mn

Representative Tom Anzelc
 307 State Office Building
 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
 St. Paul, MN 55155

Unclaimed capital credits donated to local nonprofit organizations



Jim Thompson accepts a check for the Grand Theater of Baudette from Mike Trueman, board member from District 2.



Julian Brzoznowski, board member from District 7, presents a check to the Lake Kabetogama EMS. Front row from left to right: Rusty Lehto, Margie Anderson and Harlon Schauer. Back row from left to right: Julian Brzoznowski, Ellen Hart, Sandy Moyer, Kari Nevalainen, Bob Nevalainen, Gail Nevalainen, Hedi Schauer, Paul Kiner and Kevin Grossheim.

Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

Does your home have a window air conditioner? Make sure that your unit is properly weather stripped, and clean the filter monthly. Keep “fresh air” vents on window A/C units closed.

Source: Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Lorraine Nygaard, board member from District 6, presents a check to Shirley Davis from the Big Falls American Legion Auxiliary as Larry Pocrnich, 8th district commander, looks on.