



## Hoskins retires as North Star Electric GM

*Head of Minnkota member-owner distribution co-op says being a line worker is like no other job*

**D**an Hoskins climbed the utility ladder to general manager at North Star Electric Cooperative. Yet the love for climbing poles for a utility has never left him.

Unbeknownst to many who worked with him at North Star, Hoskins has a good-size tattoo of a line worker and an American flag on his right upper arm.

"If I have one thing that's the highlight of my career, it's having been a lineman," Hoskins said on his last day as North Star general manager on June 3. "I loved my job as the CEO, but . . ."



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## Operation Round Up helps local programs



**T**he North Star Electric Community Trust Board met July 15 to review the 30 applications, which they received requesting funding for various programs. The total amount requested was more than \$52,000. The board had about \$9,000 to work with, so it was not an easy task selecting which group would get funding and what amount they would receive.

Many local programs and organizations benefit from Operation Round Up, a voluntary member-driven fundraising program of North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., that is designed to provide financial assistance for worthwhile projects and charities in the area. Donations are given to organizations to help make the area a more pleasant and safe place to live. All funds for Operation Round Up are contributed by the member-owners of North Star Electric and the money is put into a trust fund that is separate from electric accounts. The trust is administered by its own board of directors comprised of people from across the area.

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## 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.



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

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

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

## Highlights from the **BOARDROOM**

These are the highlights from the board of directors' July 1 meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine motions, the board voted to remove outgoing General Manager Dan Hoskins from the check signing authority, to approve additional funds if needed for the 2015 right-of-way clearing budget, approve voting delegates at the NRECA Region VI meeting and approve the revenue deferral plan for the sale of service territory to the city of Warroad.

Staff reports included the financial report, below budget sales, staffing changes within the Baudette office, local propane prices, solar demonstration unit output for the first year of operation, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the June power plant tour, upcoming fair booths, local safety demonstrations, work underway in the Pelland Junction

area, bids for right-of-way clearing out of the Kabetogama substation, upcoming safety and pole-top rescue training, union negotiations, grassroots news, balloting options for upcoming elections, the competitive bids policy, a recent Emergency Response Plan exercise and the July strategic board meetings.

Board reports included an update from Square Butte Electric Cooperative's board meeting, as well as Minnkota Power Cooperative's board meeting.

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 General Manager Ann Ellis at least two weeks in advance to be included on the agenda.



## Fixing up your home? We can help.



Minnesota Housing partners with Border State Bank to provide loans for repairs, remodeling, installation of electric off-peak heat, and energy saving improvements. The Minnesota Housing Fix Up loan program offers affordable fixed interest rates with loan amounts up to \$50,000.

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218.283.5556







**Ann Ellis**  
General Manager

# MANAGER'S REPORT

## Strategic planning

A few weeks ago the board and I devoted time to review last year's Strategic Plan. The objectives continue to focus on keeping your electricity affordable and reliable, as well as developing a membership that is engaged. Probably the most concerning obstacle is what the much-anticipated federal/EPA Clean Power Plan rules will truly be once all the dust settles. We are asking our elected officials in Washington, D.C., to support the proposed Ratepayer Protection Act (which was introduced by Rep. Collin Peterson and friends, thank you very much). If approved, this legislation would prevent unnecessary, and really expensive, irrevocable decisions by allowing us to not have to comply until the ensuing legal battles are decided and the direction is more clear. There's more than one fork in this road, and we want to make sure we go down the right one the first time.

## Annual meeting plans

While we plan for your Oct. 2, 2015, annual meeting, we hope you will mark your calendar to join us that evening at the Littlefork/Big Falls School. Come to find out how things are going at the electric utility you own.

You will hear that sales in 2014 were wonderful, but sales of electricity across the region so far this year, including here, are not. This reduction in sales is why there will not be a capital credit retirement this fall.

## Democratic control

It's one of the seven cooperative principles. The annual meeting is your chance to exercise your right to vote for your representative on the board. This year the member-owners of District 7 are electing their representative to the board, and as of this writing, it appears that Julian Brzoznowski will be running unopposed.

## County/district fairs

First off, it was great to visit with many of you as you passed by North Star Electric Co-op's fair booth. Secondly, food at the fair is always a treat. When I walked out of the Lutheran food booth in Littlefork, I actually wondered how much my taco salad weighed – very generous and good to the last crumb! Lastly, I'd like to thank all the

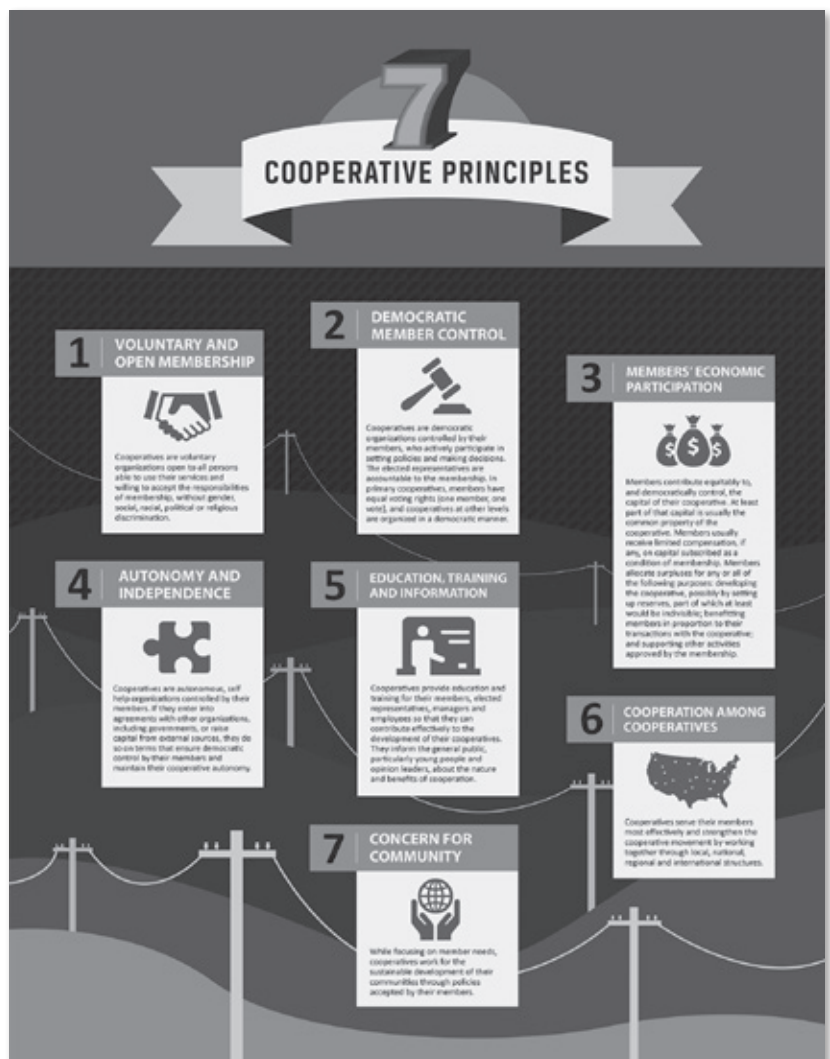
volunteers and fair board members for their hard work to pull these off year after year. With so many opportunities pulling people in multiple directions, it's so good to see the crowds at the fairs.

## Communicating

Technology has changed socializing, but there's no replacement for communicating face-to-face, complete with body language and tone-of-voice, like at the fair (Timothy Watson, 795-22-002-08). Similarly, if you need to call us, you will immediately get a live person on the phone. And yes, Facebook and automated calls for planned outages are great ways to reach many member-owners all at once.

It's important to us that we are accessible to you AND communicate effectively. We are here for just one purpose – to serve you.

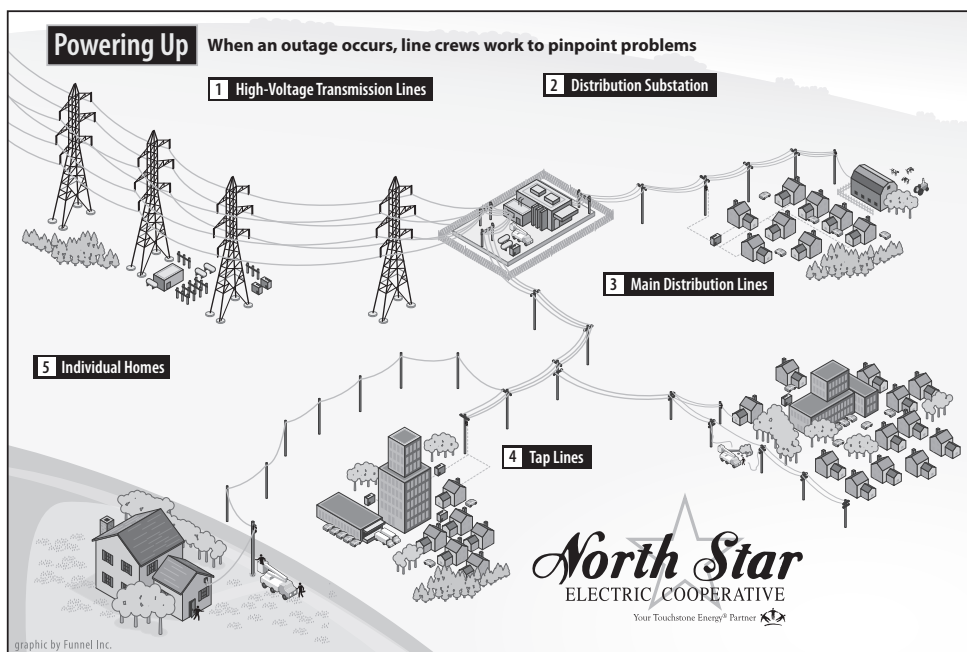
At your service we remain ... Ann Ellis



# Powering up

## When an outage occurs, line crews work to pinpoint problems

In today's world, electricity is essential. That's why your cooperative invests so much time and infrastructure in power reliability. However, outages still can occur. When electricity does go out, most of us expect power restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of members in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.



### 1. High-voltage transmission lines

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of consumers) rarely fail. But when damage occurs, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

### 2. Distribution substation

Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself or if problems exist down the line.

### 3. Main distribution lines

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments. **SAFETY TIP:** If a power line falls across or near your vehicle while you are in it, stay inside until help arrives!

### 4. Tap lines

If local outages persist, supply lines, called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

### 5. Individual homes

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate these local issues.

*Sources: Illustrations, Funnel Inc.; Text, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association*

## What to do if your power goes out

1. Wait a few minutes to see if the power will come on by itself.
2. If it does not, call your neighbors to see if they are off too.
3. If they are off, report that when you call North Star Electric Cooperative about the outage.
4. If your neighbors still have power, make sure to check your fuses or circuit breakers. This is important because if you call the cooperative and the problem causing the outage is on your side of the meter, you will be billed for the service call. Calls after regular business hours will be billed at the overtime service call rates.
5. If the fuses or breakers are good, report the outage by calling the 24-hour outage number 1-888-668-8243. If you have some idea of what caused the outage, please give this information also. Please be patient but check back after a couple of hours if the power hasn't been restored.



# Don't sacrifice safety for speed during harvest

**F**or many farmers, the harvest season is a flurry of activity with long hours and little rest. The pressure to harvest as much as possible – in combination with fatigue and looming deadlines – can result in too little attention being paid to potential hazards. Safe practices should never be compromised for the sake of speed. Doing so could potentially end in tragedy.

Farmers and agricultural workers have one of the most dangerous occupations in the country, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. One of the causes of injury and death in the agricultural industry is electrocution. Of those injuries, overhead power lines are the most common cause of electrocution.

According to KWCH 12 News from Wichita, Kansas, a 24-year-old central-Kansas farmer was harvesting a soybean field when a piece of farming equipment came into contact with overhead power lines. While

attempting to extinguish an electrical fire caused by the power lines, he nearly lost his life when he came into contact with an electrified grain cart. While he did survive, he suffered severe burns and had to have partial amputation of both legs.

If you are a farm operator or worker, be aware of the location of power lines and keep the following safety guidelines in mind during the harvest season:

- Always use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines – at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions to the lowest setting

when moving loads.

- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, call the local utility immediately.
- If your equipment does hit a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is very rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

If you or someone you know would like more information on electrical safety, visit **SafeElectricity.org**.

## Current electrical inspectors

*State law requires that every new electrical installation in any construction, remodeling, replacement or repair shall file a certificate for inspection and be inspected by a Minnesota electrical inspector. For more information go to Minnesota Department of Labor and Industries' website ([dli.mn.gov](http://dli.mn.gov)) and go to the electrical page.*

### • Lake of the Woods, St. Louis and Koochiching counties:

Curt Collier ([cgcollier67@gmail.com](mailto:cgcollier67@gmail.com))  
Phone: (218) 966-5070  
Call to set up an appointment between  
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

### • Roseau County:

Scott Stenvik  
Phone: (218) 689-5406  
Call to set up an appointment between  
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)





# Hoskins retires as North Star Electric GM *(continued from page 1)*

He never finished the sentence. There was no need. Hoskins came to Baudette, Minn., home of North Star, in 2002 after 23 years at Mor-Gran-Sou Cooperative in Flasher, N.D. When he spoke about his days as a line worker for Mor-Gran-Sou, the excitement in his voice revealed his passion.

One morning at Mor-Gran-Sou he received a 2:30 a.m. call about an incident in which a yard light had broken off a pole, fell and burned out a transformer. With bitter cold and a stiff wind, the wind chill was 90 degrees below, and Hoskins was forced to climb the pole three times to get the job done. "You couldn't stay out there; it was just too cold," he said.

"When the lights came on, I could hear the kids in the trailer screaming and hollering," he continued. "They were excited. This was at 3 o'clock in the morning. After I got down, I walked over there and knocked on the door and asked if everything was fine and they said, 'Yes, but you have to come in. The kids want you to come in.'"

"So my co-worker and I went in and had cookies and hot chocolate. I sat and had one of their kids on my lap and we were just chatting. It was 3:30 in the morning.

"I just love being a lineman."

Hoskins also loves working for cooperatives.

"I will miss just the family part of it," he said. "The employees are great people and they take care of the members and the members are so devoted to their cooperative. It's a good combination between the two of us and our board of directors."

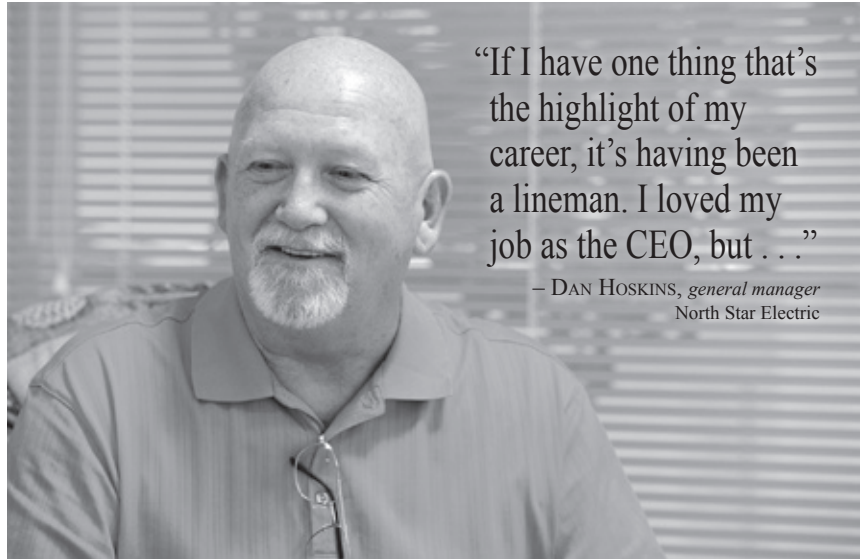
Hoskins started as a field technician dragging a steel tape through the prairies of North Dakota. He also worked in right of way and was operations manager among other Mor-Gran-Sou duties before coming to North Star.

He has a similar love for golf as he does for line work. While in Flasher, he and a friend, Lee Fitterer, were instrumental in getting the sand greens golf course converted to grass greens and installing an irrigation system. For one fundraiser, Hoskins contacted musician Johnny Holm and convinced him to have the popular Johnny Holm Band play outside of Flasher in the middle of the prairie.

"I worked at Mor-Gran-Sou so we built a power line back into the prairie, about a half mile out there, and put lights up," Hoskins said.

Hoskins was a key behind the fundraisers and getting a couple of grants from the United States Golf Association to help pay for the course improvements. He also helped Baudette upgrade its golf course from 9 to 18 holes with an irrigation system.

"He's a go-getter," Fitterer said. "That man never, ever backs down from anything. If there was a will to do it, he



would find a way."

Hoskins proved this again in Baudette, when he became frustrated with a multiyear waiting list to enroll in the line workers' program at the Wadena campus of the Minnesota State Community and Technical College. He came up with the idea to start a line worker school branch in Baudette, located next to the co-op.

First he contacted the Minnesota Rural Electric Association to get the statewide organization's thoughts. "They thought I was nuts."

"We have enough line schools; we don't need another one," Hoskins said he was told. "I said, 'Well I'm not really trying to start a new line school, I'm trying to help out with the overflow.' We met with the Wadena people, and the dean of academics down there, Monty Johnson, who was really instrumental, put it together."

Hoskins was instrumental as well, though he likes to deflect credit for what turned out to be a big economic-development booster.

"He's the main reason it's here," said Mike Hanson, North Star Electric board member.

Hanson said Hoskins is a doer. "He did a tremendous amount not only for the community here, but for the whole system," Hanson said.

In retirement Hoskins plans to spend time on the golf course and with his family. He and wife Sharon have two children: son Sharbee (wife Michelle) and daughter Brittany (husband Scott) and two grandchildren, Hudson and Harper.

Grandpa has many stories to tell his grandchildren, including the time he and others safely rescued an ultralight and its pilot after finding them hung up in a power line and when, as a young operations manager at Mor-Gran-Sou, he led a team of line workers and others to repair damage after 1,200 poles went down in a bow echo windstorm.

Better yet, maybe Grandpa will build them a golf course.

# Cold weather disconnects and the law

*The cold weather law does not totally forbid winter cutoffs. If you receive a disconnection notice this winter, you must act promptly.*

**A**n electric cooperative must not disconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between Oct. 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit when the following conditions are met:

(1) the customer has declared inability to pay on forms provided by the utility. For the purposes of this clause, a customer who is receiving energy assistance is deemed to have demonstrated an inability to pay;

(2) the household income of the customer is less than 50 percent of the state median income. All income documentation must be returned along with your Inability To Pay form unless you have verified income eligibility with an energy assistance provider in clause (3);

(3) verification of income may be conducted by the local energy assistance provider or the utility, unless the customer is automatically eligible for protection against disconnection as a recipient of any form of public assistance, including energy assistance that uses income eligibility in any amount at or below the income eligibility in clause (2); and

(4) the customer receives referrals to energy assistance programs, weatherization, conservation or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

## The cold weather law provides you with these options

The RIGHT to declare your inability to pay. If you do so and if your household income is less than 50 percent of the state median income, the service affecting your primary heat source cannot be disconnected for nonpayment of your bill. However, we

have the right to accept or reject your request based on information supplied or other supporting documentation.

The RESPONSIBILITY, if you choose to declare inability to pay. You must complete an "Inability to Pay" form and return it to us within fifteen (15) days of the notice to disconnect. You must contact us immediately to arrange a payment plan.

## Local energy assistance providers

Lake of the Woods County	218-634-2642
Koochiching County	218-283-7000
Northwest Community Action	800-568-5329
Kootasca Community Action	877-687-1163
Arrowhead Economic Opportunity	800-662-5711

The RIGHT to a mutually agreeable payment schedule with us. The schedule will cover your existing arrears plus the estimated usage during the payment schedule period.

The RIGHT not to be involuntarily disconnected on a Friday or on a day before a holiday, or until at least twenty (20) days after the postmark on the notice to disconnect or until fifteen (15) days after the notice and information has been personally delivered.

The RIGHT not to be disconnected until the utility investigates whether the residential unit is actually occupied when a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice. If the unit is found to be occupied, the utility must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, the utility must give seven days' written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before making a disconnection.

The RIGHT to appeal the disconnection of service to the North Star Electric Cooperative board of directors. If you choose to

appeal, you must deliver or mail a personal letter stating your situation and issues in dispute. Your letter must be in our hands before the date of disconnection. You will be notified when the board of directors will review your appeal and you may be present at the review. No disconnection of service will take place during the appeal process.

**If you do not meet all the conditions of the cold weather law as outlined on this notice, you do not qualify for winter shutoff protection.** However, you still can continue to receive electric service if you call us to set up a mutually acceptable payment arrangement. Call North Star Electric at 218-278-6658 or 888-258-2008, BEFORE the due date on your disconnection notice.

**If you meet all the conditions of the cold weather law, can't pay your electric bill, and need cold weather protection from utility shutoff,** call North Star Electric to have an Inability to Pay form sent to you. Complete the form and return it to North Star Electric Cooperative immediately along with your income documentation.

## DIGGING SOON?



One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked AND helps protect you from injury and expense. Always call 811 before you dig.

Visit **www.call811.com** for more information.

# Operation Round Up *(continued from page 1)*



Operation Round Up directors are appointed by North Star's board members and must be members of the cooperative. The cooperative's general manager is a non-voting member of the board.

Organizations from the area may apply for a donation from the Operation Round Up Trust. The applicant must be charitable in nature and be working to meet a need in our area. The Operation Round Up board meets twice a year and decides if an application meets the guidelines of the trust and if funds are available.

If a member chooses to be part of Operation Round Up, their bill is "rounded up" to the next highest dollar. For example, if a bill is \$96.47, the computer will round up the bill to \$97. The additional 53 cents will be placed in the trust and distributed to local charitable and

community-based programs.

About 80 percent of North Star's members have chosen to participate in Operation Round Up and it is expected that contributions will be about \$18,700 each year. That money goes right back into our community.

The average annual contribution from a member is about \$6. The most that could be contributed in a year by a member is \$11.88 (12 months x 99 cents).

If a member of North Star Electric or a nonmember of the cooperative would like to make an additional contribution, please give our office a call.

## 2015 winners



**Front row from left to right:** Joanne Fieldseth, LSS Baudette Senior Program; Rachele Nelson, Northwest Community Action Little Brother/Little Sister; Gretchen Thompson, North Star Electric Community Trust Board. **Second row:** Nancy Jewell, Williams Senior Citizens Day Center; Sandy Johnson, Lake of the Woods Food Shelf. **Third row:** Larry Larson, Lake of the Woods Senior Citizen Council; Gerald Levasseur, Northwest Community Action Reach Out for Warmth; Arlyn Stewart, Roosevelt Arena Association.



**Front row from left to right:** Russ Woodling, Lost Path Stables; Julie Lepisto, North Star Electric Community Trust Board; Tom Iffert, Servants of Shelter; Kevin Adey, Koochiching Aging Options; Mary C. Johnson, Big Falls Seniors; Lewis Louis, Indus School ProStart; Laura Wicklund, Big Falls Playground; Amy Sautter Jonson, Littlefork/Big Falls School; Mary Ellen Lehman, North Star Electric Community Trust Board. **Second row:** Glen Wright, Lost Path Stables; Rolf Westphal, Koochiching Historical Society; Gary Kaunonen, Koochiching Aging Options; Bill Boelk, Northland Amateur Radio Association; Tom Donahou, Littlefork Ambulance Service.

*At the July meeting, \$8,911 in Operation Round Up funds was distributed to various qualifying programs and organizations throughout the area including:*

<b>Lake of the Woods Food Shelf</b>	Food stocking
<b>LSS Senior Program</b>	Senior meals
<b>Koochiching Aging Options</b>	Alzheimer's resource library
<b>Big Falls Seniors</b>	Senior meals
<b>Servants of Shelter Koochiching County</b>	Temporary shelter for homeless
<b>Lake of the Woods Enrichment Program</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> grade Math Masters
<b>Northwest Community Action</b>	Little Brother/Little Sister program
<b>LOW Senior Citizen Center</b>	Ceiling and lighting upgrade
<b>Moose Creek Quilters</b>	Warm the Body to Warm the Heart
<b>Sanford Health Community Service</b>	Psychosocial rehabilitation service
<b>Williams Senior Citizens Day Center</b>	Senior meals
<b>International Falls School Trap Team</b>	Dryfire indoor shooting simulator
<b>Koochiching County Historical Society</b>	Preserving and sharing history
<b>United Way of Northeastern Minnesota</b>	Imagination library
<b>Northland Amateur Radio</b>	Koochiching County Repeater System
<b>Littlefork/Big Falls School</b>	3-wheeler bike for special needs kids
<b>Northwest Community Action</b>	Reach out for Warmth
<b>Littlefork Ambulance Service</b>	New LifePack 15
<b>Indus School ProStart Program</b>	Culinary youth education
<b>Lost Path Stables</b>	PTSD creating a normal life
<b>Big Falls Playground Committee</b>	Playground improvement
<b>Roosevelt Arena Association</b>	Community Center improvement



# *Shedding light on safety for* **solar installations**



**I**n an increasingly popular trend, many people are turning to solar power for electricity. While it is important to consider if solar energy can help meet your goals, be cost-effective and if it is even possible for your location, it is even more important to look into solar panel electrical safety issues before installing the system.

Make sure to hire a qualified installer of the system. Improperly installed solar panel systems increase the chance of a faulty unit, which could cause shock or fires.

One of the most common types of solar systems in the U.S. is a photovoltaic (PV) system. PV devices convert sunlight into electrical energy. These solar panels use both direct and scattered sunlight.

For homeowners, these are commonly mounted on the roof for easy access to the sun and to save space. Make sure your roof's structure is strong enough to hold the additional weight of a solar system.

These systems are exposed to outdoor weather conditions, which increase the aging process (Anthony Dahl, 363-08-003-03). According to the Fire Protection Research Foundation (FPRF), heavy wind can stress the panel, hail can cause cracking on the panel and snow and debris can affect the energy performance.

Therefore an ongoing maintenance schedule should be

developed to ensure the safe operation of these systems. The FPRF suggests maintenance procedures to help prevent fire or damage, including:

- Visually inspect the equipment and connections for signs of damage or degradation.
- Visually inspect electrical junction boxes and raceways to see if conductors are damaged and in need of repair or replacement.
- Visually inspect string conductors to identify physical damage that is in need of repair.

It is important to provide easy and safe access to the roof in order to allow for effective inspection, maintenance and repair for the PV system.

It is also important to be aware that roof-mounted panels could cause problems for first responders during

a fire. It can be a challenge for firefighters to properly extinguish a fire without putting themselves at risk for electric shock. On roofs where solar panels take up a large amount of space, these installations can inhibit emergency responders from being able to use vertical ventilation to save lives and increase visibility of victims. The solar panel equipment can also pose tripping, slipping and snagging hazards, and broken panel glass can cause cutting hazards to first responders and equipment.

For more electrical safety information, visit **SafeElectricity.org**.





**Robyn Sonstegard**  
Finance Manager

# Staff Report

## Personnel

As most of you are aware, there have been some changes in personnel around the Baudette office, which even spills over into the Littlefork office. With Ann Ellis taking over the helm as general manager, you could say there's been a lot of

shuffling around in the rest of the ship! It is amazing how one job opening can cascade down, creating a number of opportunities throughout our organization! I have assumed Ann's previous position as finance manager, and Tessa Strohl has moved up to take the bookkeeping coordinator job (Jennifer Johnson, 353-15-004-06). This left her work order clerk position open, which will be filled by Glen Marcotte, a lineman from our Littlefork office. So now, we're looking for a lineman in Littlefork. We hope to have Glen's replacement onboard by late summer or early fall.

## No fall capital credit retirement

The board has opted for no capital credit retirement this fall. Fuel prices going up, the cost of materials rising or weather-related problems can all play into the cooperative not having a "good" year. With mild winter weather and more member conservation, our sales have been less than projected, meaning less margin for North Star in 2015. The decision to not retire capital credits this year is not a concern, it just means things are tight right now. We're doing the responsible thing; we won't further stretch our cash flow with a large retirement distribution in an already lean year.

## Unclaimed capital credits

Speaking of capital credits, you may have noticed the unclaimed capital credit listing in our June *Enlightener*. These former members have unclaimed funds that are about to be donated to local tax-exempt organizations within our service area. This is our last-ditch effort to find these former members who have changed addresses. If you

know anyone on this list, encourage them to give us a call to claim their capital credits.

## Annual meeting

Mark your calendars for our membership annual meeting, to be held this year in Littlefork on Friday, Oct. 2. This is your opportunity to hear about what is going on with your cooperative! Members in District 7 will elect their director for the next four-year term, and we will all enjoy a dinner, entertainment and prizes! Watch for more information in our next *Enlightener* issue.



## Your refrigerator doesn't keep food cold. Electricity does.

Work is over. It's time to relax. Nothing sounds better than a cold drink and a quick snack. When you look inside the refrigerator, remember that electricity has been working another 24-hour shift to keep your food fresh and beverages cool.

You don't have to lift a finger, just open the door, grab what you want and enjoy the powerful value delivered by North Star Electric Cooperative – each and every day.



North Star Electric Cooperative

218-634-2202 or 1-888-634-2202  
[www.northstarelectric.coop](http://www.northstarelectric.coop)

## THE VALUE IS ELECTRIC!

One tank of gas for your car

20 gallons at \$2.79/gallon = **\$55.80**

More than 16 days of electricity for your entire home = **\$55.80\***

\*Based on North Star Electric average residential usage of 875 kWh per month at the residential rate of \$.117/kWh + Minnkota surcharge of \$.004/kWh (Does not include the \$38 basic service fee)



# Fun at the fairs!



**W**e had a good turnout this year at both of our fairs. At the Lake of the Woods County fair we had 399 members sign up for our drawing. The winner of the cart grill/roisserie and cover was Lori Gubbles; David Wiersma won the Lock-N-Go grill. The nightly winners of a Kill-O-Watt meter were Roger Dorow, Marla Hasbargen, Leo Brule and Sarah Betterman.

At the Northern District fair in Littlefork we had 272 members sign up for our drawing. The winner of the cart grill/roisserie and cover was Melody Kimball; Harvey Lehman won the Lock-N-Go grill. The nightly winners of a Kill-O-Watt meter were Julie Lepisto, Dan Koestner and Colleen Boyum.

## NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE POLITICAL LEADERS

### Federal legislators

#### President Barack Obama

The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
www.whitehouse.gov  
president@whitehouse.gov  
202-456-1111

#### 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 Rick Nolan

2447 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
www.nolan.house.gov  
202-225-6211  
Facebook: US Rep Rick Nolan  
Twitter: @USRepRickNolan

#### Congressman Collin Peterson

2109 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
www.collinpeterson.house.gov  
202-225-2165  
Fax: 202-225-1593

### State of Minnesota legislators

#### Governor Mark Dayton

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Capitol Building, Room 130  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606  
800-657-3717  
mark.dayton@state.mn.us

#### Senator Tom Bakk

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Capitol Building, Room 226  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606  
651-296-8881  
sen.tom.bakk@senate.mn

#### Senator Rod Skoe

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Capitol Building, Room 235  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606  
651-296-4196  
sen.rod.skoe@senate.mn

#### Senator LeRoy Stumpf

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Capitol Building, Room 122  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606  
651-296-8660  
Email: Use mail form

#### Representative David Dill

571 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-2190  
800-339-0466  
rep.david.dill@house.mn

#### Representative Dave Hancock

575 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-4265  
rep.dave.hancock@house.mn

#### Representative Dan Fabian

307 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-9635  
888-727-0979  
rep.dan.fabian@house.mn



## 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 Social Services

206 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Suite 200  
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 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
International Falls, MN 56649  
283-7000

### Kootasca Community Action, Inc.

2232 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. E.  
P.O. Box 44  
International Falls, MN 56649  
283-9491 or 800-559-9491

### Kootasca Community Action, Inc.

Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3984  
Toll free 1-877-687-1163  
Direct 1-218-999-0800  
Fax 218-999-0220

### Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency

702 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. S.  
Virginia, MN 55792-2797  
800-662-5711

# College dorm room essential: **SAFETY**

*Furnishing a college dorm room comes with a lot of options for personalization – from bedding and décor to kitchen supplies and electronics. One essential for the college residence is safety. According to a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), U.S. fire departments responded to an annual average of 3,810 structure fires in college housing between 2007 and 2011, causing an average of 2 deaths, 30 fire injuries and \$9.4 million in direct property damage. Safe Electricity offers the following safety tips for college students to help reduce the risk of electrical fires in their student housing:*



- Only purchase and use electrical products tested for safety. The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) publishes a list of approved testing laboratories. Some common approved safety labels include: UL, CSA and MET.
- Avoid overloading extension cords, power strips or outlets.
- Use power strips with an over-current protector that will shut off power automatically if too much current is being drawn.
- If use of an appliance frequently causes power to trip off, or if its power cord or the outlet feels hot, the appliance should be disconnected immediately and the condition reported to the landlord or campus housing staff.
- Never tack or nail an electrical cord to any surface or run cords across traffic paths or under rugs where they can be trampled or damaged.
- Use the correct wattage light bulbs for lamps and fixtures. If no indication is on the product, do not use a bulb with more than 60 watts. Use cooler, compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs).
- Keep all electrical appliances and cords safely away from bedding, curtains, papers and other flammable material.
- Make sure outlets around sinks are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) before use. If they are not, contact the resident assistant, campus housing staff or landlord.
- Unplug small appliances when not in use and all electronics when away for extended periods.
- Always use microwave-safe containers. Metal and aluminum foil can damage the microwave or start a fire. If the microwave is damaged in any way, do not use it.
- Smoke detectors should never be disabled, and fire alarms should never be ignored or taken casually as a drill. Every time a fire alarm sounds, residents should calmly and quickly follow practiced procedures and immediately exit the building.

For more electrical safety information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary green coffee mugs

We had a few members who have returned the coffee mug they received at our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary on June 23. All the mugs that were returned were green and the handle had broken away from the mug. If you did get a mug at our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, please check the handle to be sure that it is firmly

attached to the mug. If the mug you received does break, please return it to either North Star office to get a replacement mug. We gave out around 600 mugs that day and we have only heard of about two dozen that have broken.