

Attention Seniors!

2017

Would You Like \$1,000 to help pay for your post-secondary education?

**You don't have to be an
honor student, just come
and take the test!**

To qualify, your parent/guardian must be an active member of North Star Electric Cooperative and you must take a test about your Cooperative that provide's electricity to your home. North Star Electric will be awarding five scholarships, one \$1,000 and four \$400, plus a chance to win one of eight \$100 cash awards just for scoring over 60% on the test. Most of the test answers will be included in the study material that North Star provides. A few hours of study time could pay off with a \$1,000 scholarship!

Where else can you make money like that?



*North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc.
PO Box 719 – 441 St. Highway 172 NW
Baudette, MN 56623*

Phone (218 or 888) 634-2202
Fax: 218-634-2203
Email:
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North Star Electric Cooperative

PO Box 719
Baudette, Minnesota 56623
Phone 218/634-2202
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PO Box 371
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Phone 218/278-6658
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MANAGEMENT STAFF

Ann Ellis
Robyn Sonstegard
Wayne Haukaas
Marty Mollberg

POSITION

General Manager
Manager of Finance & Administration
Member Service Manager
Operations Manager

DIRECTORS

Steve Arnesen, Pres.
Mike Hanson, V. Pres.
Lorraine Nygaard, Sec/Treas.
Julian Brzoznowski
Tom Smith
Mike Trueman
Randall Bergan

Roosevelt, MN 56673
Birchdale, MN 56629
Big Falls, MN 56627
Orr, MN 55771
International Falls, MN 56649
Baudette, MN 56623
Williams, MN 56686

Total Consumers: 6457

Employees: 21 full time 1 part time

Miles of Line: 987.16 overhead

Miles of Line: 450.04 underground

Total Plant Investment: \$44,002,455

Annual Meeting: October

Board Meetings: first Wednesday of the month

*Counties served: Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Koochiching,
Saint Louis*

Wholesale Power Source: Minnkota Power Cooperative

Date System Organized: 1940

Date Energized: 1940

Monthly Newsletter: Enlightener

January 2017

***Would YOU like \$1,000
To Help with College Expenses???
(or Qualify for One of Eight \$100 Cash Prizes)***

This year ***North Star Electric Cooperative*** will award five scholarships (One \$1,000 and four \$400's) plus eight \$100 cash random drawing prizes. Students must be high school seniors and have parents or guardians who are active members of North Star Electric Cooperative. This means that most students who attend the following schools would be eligible:

- Warroad High School (and live east of the City of Warroad)
- Lake of the Woods High School (and do not live in the City of Baudette)
- International Falls High School (and do not live in the cities of Int'l Falls or Ranier)
- Indus High School
- Littlefork-Big Falls High School
- North Wood High School (Ash Lake area and north)
- Northome High School (Big Falls area)

Students not living in one of the above areas could also be eligible if their parents or legal guardian are members because they own other property that is served by North Star, such as a business or a summer home.

North Star participates in this program because it gives us an opportunity to acquaint you with who we are and what the co-op is all about. Knowing the information in this handout will help you do well on the test. This test is not about electricity it is about electric cooperatives like North Star.

***Facts About North Star Electric Cooperative and
America's Other Rural Electric Systems***

RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES (REC) ARE ... consumer-owned utilities that were established to provide electric service to rural America when investor-owned utilities would not. To become a member you must **sign a membership application, pay a \$5 membership fee, and buy electricity from the electric cooperative.** Three of the main cooperative principles are **open membership, democratic control, and the profits belong to the members.** Consumer cooperatives owned and controlled by the people they serve, are nonprofit enterprises, but pay more than \$1 billion in state and local taxes each year. Each member (consumer-owner) receives one vote and all margins (profits) are returned to the members in the form of **capital credits**. Electric cooperatives retire over \$974 million in capital credits annually.

Electric cooperative are an integral part of the \$393 billion electric utility industry. They play a critical role in our nation's economy, in local communities and employ 70,000 people in the

United States. They own assets worth \$169 billion, own and maintain 2.6 million miles, or **42%**, of the nation's electric distribution lines covering three quarters of the nation's landmass but distribute only about **11%** of the nation's electricity. There are **901** rural electric systems which form a rural electric network across the United States. Most are distribution systems that deliver electricity to residential and other consumers. Rural electric systems serve about 19 million farms, homes, schools, churches, commercial enterprises, and other establishments in 2,500 (80%) of the 3,141 counties or county-type areas of the United States.

Although America's rural electric systems serve more than 42 million people, they average only **7** consumers per mile of line and collect annual revenues of approximately \$16,000 per mile of line. Investor-owned utilities (such as Minnesota Power and NSP – Northern States Power) average 34 customers per mile of line and collect \$75,500 per mile of line annually, and publicly owned utilities (such as the City of Baudette) average 48 customers and collect \$113,000 per mile of line annually. For this reason, rural Americans were denied access to central station electricity (electricity generated in a central location and distributed to many customers via power lines) until the creation of REA (the Rural Electrification Administration). Co-op goals are not to make a profit. Their goal is only to make enough money to maintain their system and serve their members with an adequate supply of electricity.

A typical rural electric system is about 77 years old with 2,900 miles of line and 13,000 consumers in portions of three counties. **North Star Electric Cooperative has 1437.20 miles of line and 6457 consumers, which is 4.5 consumers per mile. North Star serves most of Lake of the Woods and Koochiching Counties, plus portions of Roseau and St. Louis Counties.** North Star's service territory stretches from Warroad to Orr, and south to Margie (excluding the cities of Baudette, International Falls, and Ranier).

Cooperatives, such as North Star Electric Co-op, are **non-profit** organizations. Any margin (profit) left at the end of the year is credited to the capital credit accounts of the consumer-owners (also known as the members) based on how much electricity each consumer-owner purchased during that year. North Star generally returns a portion of the accumulated capital credits in September of each year. **North Star Electric Cooperative has returned \$11,357,268 to its consumer-owners. Investor-owned utilities and municipal systems do not return their profits to their consumers.**

The Cooperative has **7** districts and the **members from that district elect a director to represent them.** The directors serve a 4 year term. Each family purchasing electricity from North Star **has a membership in the co-op and one vote.**

Since 1961, RUS (Rural Utility Services) borrowers have helped start and expand new commercial, industrial, and community facility projects, producing new jobs and helping to strengthen the economy in their communities. The M-State Lineworker Training Facility in Baudette is an example of North Star's economic development efforts.

Some co-ops are called G&T's because they both generate and transmit electricity to meet the power needs of distribution co-ops. Nationwide, there are 65 generation and transmission cooperatives, owned by their member systems. 50% of the power distributed by rural electric systems is generated by rural electric generation and transmission (G&T) cooperatives. All of the wholesale power purchased by North Star comes from Minnkota Power Cooperative, a G&T,

headquartered in Grand Forks. **Most of this power is generated in North Dakota at the Milton R. Young coal-burning plant located efficiently on the coal fields.** Once the coal has been mined, the land is restored to near-original condition at a cost of about **\$60,000** per acre. More than **30%** of the cost of producing lignite coal goes towards reclaiming the land to be at least as productive as it was prior to mining. Minnkota Power Cooperative operates this coal-fired plant and owns most of it. They also have an agreement with the coal supplier to provide coal until the year **2042**. Because Minnkota is also a cooperative owned by those it serves, North Star is a part-owner of the generating plant along with **10** other rural cooperatives in Minnesota and North Dakota. Any margins (profits) earned by Minnkota are passed on to members, such as your parents/guardians.

Minnkota Power generates 1,335,771 MW of electricity from several different sources. **55% comes from lignite coal, 8% from hydro, 34% from wind, and 3% from a mixture of diesel & biomass.**

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

In the United States, Minnkota Power is one of the nation's leaders in renewable energy when compared with other G & T in the nation. Of the total electricity they generate, **34%** is generated from wind and **8%** from hydro power. Their coal fired power plant is located in Oliver County along with five of the state's seven coal fired power plants and has received an **A** rating from the American Lung Association's "State of the Air" Annual Report.

Minnkota Power is committed to 100 percent compliance with all environmental regulations. Proactive leadership and emission control equipment enable the cooperative to meet strict state and federal environmental standards. Minnkota Power made a major investment of more than **\$425 million** in environmental upgrades from 2006 to 2011 at the Young Station. The results from these upgrades were a **95% reduction in sulfur dioxide (SO₂)**, **60% reduction in nitrogen oxides (NO_x)**, **60% reduction in mercury**, and **99.9% removal efficiency in fly ash.**

RENEWABLE ENERGY

In 2007, Minnesota mandated that **25 percent of our electric energy must come from a renewable resource by 2025.** Minnesota has also stated that our existing Hydro plant (**109MW**) cannot be counted as renewable energy. Minnkota Power, our G&T, was very aggressive in finding these renewable sources early. Minnkota has contracts ranging from **25 - 35 years** for purchasing **457MW** of wind capacity with NextEra Energy Resources which is one of the largest owner/operators of wind turbines in the United States. By doing this, we not only met but exceeded the required mandate 15 years ahead of schedule.

On the Federal level, the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) announced quick and very aggressive mandates in 2015 to reduce carbon dioxide outputs. The electric cooperatives are asking for adequate time to make sure the very expensive and irrevocable decisions are made wisely because the cost and reliability of electric service will be affected.

ASSOCIATIONS

STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS In 38 of the **47 states** where rural electric systems are located, there are statewide organizations that represent members' interests and coordinate such services as communications, training, purchasing, billing and research. Statewide organizations are financed through dues from member cooperatives and revenues from services. They vary in size and resources.

NRECA, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, **formed in 1942**, represents the national interests for rural electric systems. NRECA provides legislative services and programs in management training, insurance, public relations, and advertising – all designed to help rural electric systems serve their consumer-owners effectively and efficiently. NRECA and its members also support supplemental energy and environmental research and administer a program of technical advice and assistance in the development of rural electric systems in **37 countries**. NRECA is also financed by dues and revenues.

Rural Utility Service (RUS, but formerly REA-Rural Electrification Administration) is a federal agency in the US Department of Agriculture that administers insured and guaranteed loan programs and provides technical assistance for rural electric systems.

MILESTONES

Rural Americans were denied electrical service due to the low volumes in rural areas. No one wanted to make the large investment to bring power to a limited number of consumers. They were in it for the money, not for the people.

REA On May 12, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, by Executive Order 7037, created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA). In May 1936, the Rural Electrification Act was passed by Congress. It also established a loan program to finance qualified entities willing to provide electric service in rural areas, with preference to nonprofit enterprises. Under the provisions of the Rural Electrification Act, the REA made direct loans to rural electric cooperatives, such as North Star Electric Cooperative. Power to rural areas became a reality due to the availability of financing and the desire of local leaders to form rural electric cooperatives. In 1995, the REA was renamed the **RUS** (Rural Utility Services). Other sources of financing are now the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (**CFC**), CoBank, and the Federal Financing Bank (**FFB**).

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

In August **1986, the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC)** was formed to foster the development and growth of satellite technology in rural America. NRTC, based near Washington, DC, is a joint venture of NRECA and CFC with support of the National Telephone Cooperative Association (NTCA). NRTC began their mission with large-dish, C-Band satellite

television programming. NRTC is also involved with Wild Blue internet service which provides high speed internet service by satellite.



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives
The power of human connections®

TOUCHSTONE ENERGY

North Star Electric Cooperative is a Touchstone Energy Cooperative. We've joined with more than 700 electric cooperatives from 46 states to form this nationwide alliance and a new brand of energy: **Touchstone Energy**. The core values associated with Touchstone Energy® are **integrity, accountability, commitment to community, and innovation**. We've combined forces because we all agree that providing outstanding customer service and being active in and committed to our local communities is our number one job. You see this new name and logo on our materials, as well as on TV. We will continue to offer the same great, reliable service and affordable rates. Only now, they will be backed by the strength of a national identity.

OPERATION ROUND UP

North Star Electric Cooperative started Operation Round Up in July 2006. Many local organizations benefit from Operation Round Up. It is a **voluntary** member-driven fund-raising program of North Star Electric Co-op, which is designed to provide financial assistance for worthwhile projects and charities in the area. 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. If a member chooses to be part of Operation Round Up, their electric bill is "rounded up" to the next higher 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. About **80 percent** of North Star members have chosen to participate in Operation Round Up and have donated about **\$185,618** to 397 local charitable and community-based programs.

WHY DO WE OFFER THESE SCHOLARSHIPS?

Older members have remained active in the co-op by attending the annual meetings and participating in the decision making process, but the younger generations have not taken as active a role. We feel that it is extremely important that young people continue to take an active interest in their co-op, a business they own.

North Star Electric Cooperative is pleased to offer you this chance to help with your college expenses while at the same time become acquainted with the utility that your parents own and control. There's a good chance that one day you will also be a member-owner of the Cooperative.

In the spring we deliver these study materials to students who are interested in competing for the scholarships. The test is about a week later. Winners of the top 5 prizes will be contestants with the top 5 scores. The eight cash prizes will be awarded to eight randomly drawn contestants who score at least 60% correct. All winners will be notified of the results shortly after all of the tests have been checked.

If you have any questions about eligibility or anything else concerning this contest, you may contact Wayne Haukaas at 634-2202 or 1-888-634-2202.

GIVE IT A SHOT – WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO LOSE?

Thank you for participating and *Good Luck!*

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC SCHOLARSHIPS 2016

School where test was given	Information meeting	Students tested	62 Questions	
			high Score	low Score
WARROAD	0	5	52/84%	22/35%
LAKE OF THE WOODS	16	7	56/90%	20/32%
INDUS	2	2	49/79%	45/73%
LITTLFORK/BIG FALLS	18	10	61/98%	30/48%
INTERNATIONAL FALLS	1	1	60/97%	60/97%
NORTHOME	0	0	NA	NA
NORTH WOOD	0	0	NA	NA
TOTAL	37	25		

20 students scored over 60% and were eligible for the eight \$100.00 cash prizes.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS 2016

FIRST PLACE	\$1,000	SCORE
Emily Knaeble	Littlefork/Big Falls	98%
SECOND PLACE	\$400.00 each	
Jacob Hufnagle	Home school	97%
Breann Larson	Littlefork/Big Falls	96%
Karly Swenson	Littlefork/Big Falls	92%
Matthew Johnson	Lake of the Woods	90%

EIGHT - \$100.00 CASH PRIZES 2016

Jacob Stephani	Lake of the Woods
Olivia Lien	Warroad
Ethan Novacek	Greenbush-Middle River
Lanie Krause	Lake of the Woods
Chanaya Wheelock	Indus
Darian Erickson	Littlefork/Big Falls
Jonah Schmisek	Lake of the Woods
Elizabeth Julson	Littlefork/Big Falls