

## 2017 Annual Meeting Highlights



Miley Davis of Littlefork wins the \$500 College Savings Account at North Star's annual meeting!



Nick Horne and Sue Williams register 33 kids for the \$500 drawing for the 529 College Savings Account.



Steve Arnesen, North Star Electric board president, welcomes everyone to the North Star Electric Cooperative 77<sup>th</sup> annual meeting.



All the Littlefork/Big Falls pom-pom girls perform as the high school band plays in the background.

### EPA moves to repeal Clean Power Plan



As the Trump administration proposes to withdraw the Clean Power Plan, electric cooperatives will work with the Environmental Protection Agency toward "sound regulation" with the durability and flexibility necessary to provide affordable and reliable electricity to their millions of members, NRECA CEO Jim Matheson said.

"We look forward to working with the administration and other stakeholders on solutions that protect our environment, promote the diversity of our energy supply and bolster rural America," Matheson said. "America's not-for-profit electric cooperatives need flexibility and a common-sense regulatory framework that provides long-term certainty to meet their members' energy needs."

[\(article continued on page 5\)](#)

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NOVEMBER 2017

The Enlightener (USPS 024959), Vol. 62, No. 10 is published monthly by North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., 441 St. Hwy 172 N.W., Baudette, MN 56623-0719. Subscription price \$1/year. Periodicals postage paid at Baudette, MN 56623. POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to The Enlightener, North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623-0719.

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Monday through Friday

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For credit card payment, call 855-874-5354.  
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[www.northstarelectric.coop](http://www.northstarelectric.coop)

**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.*

**DIGGING SOON?**



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.**

# Highlights from the BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the board of directors' Aug. 23, 2017, meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine motions, the board voted to approve the State of Minnesota Memorandum of Understanding regarding outage restoration charges at Norris Camp and to take action regarding assuming the authority from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and become the regulatory commission for the cooperative's distributed generation rates, rules and dispute resolution (556-10-007-03, Keith Barstad). The consensus of the board was to also seek applicants to fill the upcoming vacancies in Districts 2 and 7 by publishing the process in the September and October *Enlightener* issues, due to the approaching retirements of Directors Trueman and Brzoznowski on Oct. 6, 2017.

Staff reports included the financial report, unclaimed capital credits to be donated, group insurance benefits, increased member interest

in air-source heat pumps, dual heat, member high use inquiries, Operation Round Up, new services for the Rainy Lake sewer project, work plan projects, the recent successful Rural Electric Safety Accreditation Program (RESAP) inspection, right-of-way spraying, pole testing, safety, outages, the upcoming annual meeting, a job opening in the Baudette office, the Lake of the Woods County broadband survey to be mailed to county residents with their electric bills and service territory.

Board reports included an update from the Minnkota and Square Butte board meetings.

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

## Reliable backup system a must!

Electric off-peak heating systems must be capable of 300 hours or more of interruption each winter season, although this year we are expecting less than 140 hours of control. "In order to realize the full benefits of the load management program, it is very important that our members work with a qualified heating contractor to ensure that they have an automatic, adequate and well-maintained backup heating system," said Wayne Haukaas, manager of compliance and member service.

The electric off-peak heating program continues to provide great value to members today, just as it did when it was first utilized in the late 1970s.

The winter heating season is here, and North Star Electric

stands ready to assist our members with their electric heating options.



## VETERANS DAY

North Star Electric Cooperative will be closed Friday, Nov. 10, in observance of Veterans Day.





**Ann Ellis**  
General Manager

# MANAGER'S REPORT

## Annual meeting highlights

We were thrilled with the nearly 50 percent increase in members attending the annual meeting and seeing all of the kids with their parents! The little pom-pom girls were ADORABLE, the LF/BF

band brought a lively and fun atmosphere to the gym before the meeting and presentations were given to show the positive financial position of your cooperative, to discuss issues at our generation and transmission cooperative (Minnkota Power) and what we can all do to help keep rates stable – and that is, when we have an energy choice, choose electric. The members re-elected directors Lorraine Nygaard and Tom Smith and were informed about the vacancies in Districts 2 (Mike Trueman) and 7 (Julian Brzoznowski), as well as the application process the board has been following to fill these positions.

I have only two regrets – I called someone the wrong name, and there seems to be a misunderstanding about the two energy bill credit winners. The \$500 winner was drawn first so everyone had a chance at it, and we set it aside to be announced last. Then the \$100 winner was drawn. You have to be present to win, so if the person/name set aside for the \$500 prize had left, the \$100 winner would have advanced to the \$500 winner, and we would have picked a new \$100 winner. The \$500 College Savings Account was won by 9-year-old Miley Davis of Littlefork, so she has a few years to let it grow before heading off to college or tech school!

The meeting wrapped up in less than 90 minutes, and members were given their Minnesota-shaped cutting board gift on their way out. Thank you to ALL who attended to learn more about the value of **The Cooperative Difference!**

## Renewable energy credits/wind

If you are interested in being able to use 100 percent certifiable wind energy, often referred to as Green Tags or RECs (Renewable Energy Credits), we have offered this opportunity for about 15 years. A member at the annual meeting suggested we advertise this more, so here it is. About a year ago there was a company marketing “Minnesota’s first Community Wind Program.” They wanted to take over your electric billing so you could have access to wind energy for “just” \$15 more per 1,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh). Well, did you know you can do the same thing right here with your electric cooperative for \$3 more per 1,000 kWh? Plus, you can buy our blocks in smaller increments of just 100 kWh, each block at 30 cents, or \$.003 more per kWh. This is a good example of something we talked about at the annual meeting – North Star is your **Trusted Energy Partner**. If someone brings you a “deal,” we would be happy to help you evaluate it. If their “deal”

is a good one, we will tell you that, but if it’s not, we will give you information to save you from some heartburn.

## Safety

Last month at Baudette’s M-State Line Worker Training Facility, MREA (Minnesota Rural Electric Association) offered



its annual Hot Line school where line workers work side-by-side with students, practicing proper methods to allow them to work safely on energized (hot) power lines. Hot work allows members to continue to use electricity

as if nothing unusual is going on, as opposed to line workers having to kill the line with a planned outage while work is done.

Safety is so important, and a safety culture at work has benefits that also migrate to everyday living after hours. We hope our safety culture, and the messages we share with you, help you and your family make wise choices.

## Local Democracy

Recent ‘Local Democracy’ legislation clarified that the member-elected board of directors is responsible for regulating their electric cooperative. As your locally-owned, and governed, electric cooperative, we can provide the products and services you desire at competitive rates and eliminate costly, duplicative regulation (556-10-037-01, Richard Merklings). After seeking member comments, the board of directors took the final step to adopt the resolution to assume this authority and adopt the rules, all in compliance with the law.

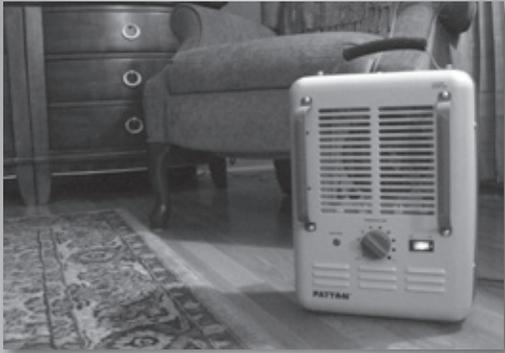
## Veterans Day

Last, but certainly not least, Veterans Day is coming up, and I am so grateful for and proud of all the men and women who have served our country so honorably. To all of our veterans and their families, thank you for protecting us and our many freedoms! At your service we remain ...*Ann*

## COMMENTARY

Listen to what your mother told you;

*If it sounds too good to be true,  
it probably isn't true*



I am sure that you have heard radio ads or have seen ads in newspapers and magazines that claim they can cut your heating bill by **UP TO** 50 percent by just buying their electric space heater. With the high price of heating in northern Minnesota, who wouldn't like to do that; I know I would, but the key wording in these ads is **UP TO**. There is a lot of difference between 50 percent and **UP TO** 50 percent. The ad that I read explaining the way you could do this was to turn the heat down in your house to as low as 50 degrees and move the space heater into the room which was occupied. The savings are not in the heater; it is the fact that you turned the heat in your house down to 50 degrees. They claim the space heater will not reduce humidity or oxygen, which is true, but it is also true that the space heater you buy at the local hardware store doesn't either. There are 3,413 Btus for each kilowatt-hour, and the only way to get more is with heat pump technology. I have not seen nor heard of anything like that with portable electric heaters. In northern Minnesota, during the winter, one plug-in space heater is not going to heat a 1,000-square-foot home. My advice is that if you have a cold spot in your house and \$200 burning a hole in your pocket, go to your local hardware store, buy a space heater for \$50 and use the other \$150 to reinsulate your home or give it to your favorite charity.

## GIVE SAFETY A SHOT WHEN PREPARING FOR HUNTING

Hunters have their sights on wild game when preparing for hunting season; however, including thoughts of electrical safety can help prevent an accident with utility equipment. Safe Electricity urges hunters to take precautions and be aware of potential electrical hazards while hunting.

- Before leaving for a hunting trip, make sure that you have safety items to signal for help in case of an emergency. Always carry emergency supplies in the event of an accident. A cellphone, whistle and flashlight are necessary items to carry with you throughout a hunting trip.
- Never shoot nearby power lines or other electrical equipment. A single shot can cause vast damage to the electrical system. Damage to electrical equipment can result in power interruptions and physical risks to those nearby.
- Note the location of power lines and other electrical equipment before you begin a hunt. Be especially careful and observant in wooded areas where power lines are easy to overlook.
- Obey all signs or postings that advise electrical safety, especially when selecting the location for a tree stand. Tree stands are the leading cause for hunting injuries. If you are using a tree stand, make sure you read the manufacturer's instructions and inspect the stand for wear before use.
- Never use power poles to support a tree stand. Look for an ideal tree for your stand, one that is sturdy and alive. While going up to the stand, keep at least three points of contact while you climb.
- When setting up and taking down the stand, make sure you do not make contact with any overhead electrical equipment.
- If you are using a portable electrical generator on your hunting trip, make sure that you do not run it in a confined area. Do not use it inside a cabin or RV. Make sure that it is used outside.



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

# *Minnkota projects lower-than-average control hours*

In the world of load control, timing is everything. What are the prices when you are purchasing energy from the energy market? What resources are available during peak load conditions? What are the weather impacts during the cold-weather months.

“Market price volatility is driven by weather and generator outages. These events drive the majority of the control hours,” said Todd Sailer, Minnkota Power Cooperative senior manager power supply and resource planning.

Sailer said Minnkota, your cooperative’s wholesale energy supplier, estimates 140 hours of dual-heat load control this winter. This compares to the 10-year average of 180 hours and last year’s total of 62 hours.

The low number of control hours in 2016-17 show that moderate temperatures and low market conditions result in lower hours of control.

“The market conditions are very similar to last year and we do expect the temperatures to be a little colder than they were last year,” Sailer said.

The longest scheduled outage at the Young Station is just four days in winter 2017-18, which helped to keep this year’s forecast lower than the 2016-17 projections. During outages and periods of peak electric demand, Minnkota’s first option is to purchase energy from the power market.



“Right now we have some scheduled outages for the first part of December and then again in the spring,” Sailer said. “So we typically do not schedule maintenance in the January and February time frame when we’re at peak conditions. That’s where the unplanned or forced outages come into play.”

If the timing is not right and affordable power is not available, off-peak loads are temporarily controlled. The savings are passed on to retail consumers through the lower off-peak heating rate.

“Controlling load during these periods protects consumers from the volatility of the market and prevents the need to build new power plants just to serve peak loads,” Sailer said.

Minnkota has the ability to control up to 350 megawatts through its demand response system. This includes temporarily controlling storage heating systems, large-capacity water heaters, home vehicle chargers and large industrial consumers with backup generators. Millions of dollars have

been saved due to the successful operation of Minnkota’s load management system for nearly 40 years.

An off-peak system consists of an electric heating source as its primary component. A supplemental heating source must operate several hundred hours or more during the winter season (121-42-031-06, Darrel Bauer). Sailer said members with a well-maintained backup heating system should not notice a difference in comfort level when their off-peak heating system is controlled.

## **EPA moves to repeal Clean Power Plan** *(continued from page 1)*

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt issued a notice of proposed rulemaking on Oct. 10 in an attempt to repeal the Obama administration’s Clean Power Plan. The regulation, never implemented, sought to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from coal-based generation as a means to control climate change.

Once published in the Federal Register, EPA’s proposal will commence a 60-day public comment period and begin a new rulemaking process. The agency said that it has not determined whether it will draft another rule under the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from existing power plants. EPA’s effort to replace the CPP must culminate with a final rule.

The repeal notice includes legal arguments, policy implications and a summary of a cost-benefits analysis of the proposed repeal plus an in-depth regulatory impact analysis.

The administration is taking “a critical step toward replacing the Clean Power Plan with a sound regulation that adheres to decades of EPA precedent while providing much-needed flexibility and certainty,” Matheson said.

NRECA data shows that electric co-ops across the country have been decreasing their carbon footprint while meeting growing demand. Since 2005, co-ops have increased generation by 15 million megawatt-hours yet reduced carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 10

percent through billions of dollars in investments in renewable technology, energy efficiency and other practices.

“Electric co-ops are dedicated to a healthy environment, vibrant rural communities and prioritizing the needs of their members. These factors, along with market forces, are driving co-ops to enhance the diversity of their electric generating portfolio to affordably and reliably meet their members’ energy needs,” Matheson said.

NRECA, along with several states and industry interests, challenged the Clean Power Plan before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in 2016. Matheson said the rule would result in many premature coal plant retirements and hit “not-for-profit, consumer-owned electricity providers and their members especially hard.”

Matheson on National Public Radio (NPR) Oct. 10 underscored that point and the need for the administration to allow co-ops the flexibility to do what is right by their members and to uphold regulations that protect the electric grid. “We want clarity and certainty in the long run,” he said.

*Written by Cathy Cash, a staff writer at NRECA.*



# Celebrate with savings

Buy energy efficient Christmas lights and decorations

## LED Rebate

### How to apply:

1. Purchase LED Christmas plug-in (not battery operated) lights and decorations in 2017.
2. Complete this rebate form and submit it to North Star Electric Cooperative by Dec. 31, 2017, with a copy of your sales receipt and the packaging showing the number of lights per string. ENERGY STAR® LEDs recommended.
3. Select appropriate rebate in the box below. Rebate cannot exceed 75 percent of cost. Maximum of 5 strings per customer.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Strings	Rebate per String	Total Rebate
Less than 99 lights	\$3	
100-199 lights	\$6	
200-299 lights	\$9	
Greater than 300 lights	\$12	

Mail to: North Star Electric Cooperative • P.O. Box 719 •  
441 St. Hwy. 172 NW • Baudette, MN 56623



Our offices will be closed

**Thursday, Nov. 23,**

– and –

**Friday, Nov. 24,**

*in observance of Thanksgiving.*

## Operation Round Up application deadline is Nov. 30



The deadline to submit Operation Round Up® grant applications is Nov. 30. Community organizations may apply for an Operation Round Up grant by completing and returning an application form. Forms are available on North Star's website, at the Baudette office, the Littlefork office or from a director of the North Star Electric Community Trust Board. The directors are Gretchen Thompson, Margie Sporlein, Zelpha Crawford, Mary Ellen Lehman, Julie Lepisto, Larry Warrington and Tony Radniecki.

Grants will be awarded to nonprofit or community-based organizations that demonstrate a commitment to enhancing the quality of life in our region.

We would like to say **THANK YOU** to all the North Star members who are participating in the Operation Round Up program. About 80 percent of the membership is contributing to this great cause to help our local communities.

## Off-peak heat repair rebate



North Star Electric has an off-peak repair rebate for our members. In addition to the \$20/kW rebate for newly installed or replaced electric heating systems, we offer up to \$10/kW to repair existing systems (parts only) when you have a contractor make the repairs. Here are the guidelines:

- North Star Electric Cooperative will pay up to \$10/kW to repair existing off-peak systems, (parts only) if installed by a professional contractor.
- A copy of the dated **itemized receipt** for the parts and professional contractor's labor is required.
- The rebate will be applied to the member's electric bill.
- All requests for rebates must be received at North Star by June 30, 2018.

If you have any questions about this or any other rebates from North Star, please feel free to give us a call at **218-634-2202**.



# LED lighting rebate form



ENERGY STAR® bulbs highly recommended

**(Rebates will not exceed 75 percent of purchase price)**

Complete this form, attach a copy of your purchase receipt and mail to: North Star Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623 Attn: Wayne

*(Rebates will be in the form of a credit on your electric account)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

North Star Electric account number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of retailer: \_\_\_\_\_

Replacing 40-60W bulb: (\$4/bulb rebate)  
Number of bulbs: \_\_\_\_\_

Replacing 75-100W bulb: (\$8/bulb rebate)  
Number of bulbs: \_\_\_\_\_



## 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 877-687-1163  
Direct 218-999-0800  
Fax 218-999-0220

**Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency**  
702 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. S.  
Virginia, MN 55792  
800-662-5711



## 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:

Bryan Holmes  
Phone: (218) 686-1413  
Call to set up an appointment between 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

## Energy saving comparison

*(Incandescent vs. LED light bulbs)*



Incandescent	LED
100-watt	15-watt
8 hours/day	8 hours/day
31 days/month	31 days/month
Equals 24,800 watts (24.8 kWh)	Equals 3,720 watts (3.7 kWh)
At 12.2 cents/kWh + 6.875% sales tax	At 12.2 cents/kWh + 6.875% sales tax
<b>Equals \$3.23 per month</b>	<b>Equals \$0.48 per month</b>
<b>Savings per bulb per month with LED = \$2.75</b>	
Cost of LED bulb after rebate = \$4 <i>(at either North Star Electric Cooperative office)</i>	

*If you know of any other energy-saving device that will pay for itself this quickly, please let North Star know about it and we will have it in a future Enlightener.*

# 2017 Annual Meeting Highlights (continued)



North Star members listen to a presentation during the annual meeting.



Some of the Littlefork/Big Falls pom-pom girls do a dance number.



One hundred seventy-seven members register at the meeting.



Ann Ellis, North Star general manager, presents a certificate to William Breeton, \$100 energy credit, and Dennis Jensen, \$500 energy credit.

(Right) Before the annual meeting, about 360 attendees enjoy an excellent chicken Kiev dinner prepared by the Littlefork Lutheran Church.

