

**POWERING OUR
COMMUNITY WITH COBANK**

PAGE 4

**STAFF REPORT – UPCOMING
PROJECTS/STAY SAFE**

PAGE 6

**CORN MAC N' CHEESE
RECIPE**

PAGE 7



THEIR COMMUNITY knows them for their pole climbing skills, their bucket trucks, their hard hats.

THEIR COWORKERS know them for their selflessness, their courage, their resilience in harsh environments.

THEIR FAMILIES know them for their muddy boots, their ringing phone during the storm, their suntanned faces.

**HOWEVER YOU KNOW THEM - TAKE
TIME TO THANK A LINWORKER TODAY.**

Lineworker Appreciation Day
Monday, April 13

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. MISSION STATEMENT

Providing safe, reliable electric services to improve the quality of life in communities we serve.

THANK A NORTH STAR ELECTRIC LINEWORKER

National Lineworker Appreciation Day – April 13, 2026

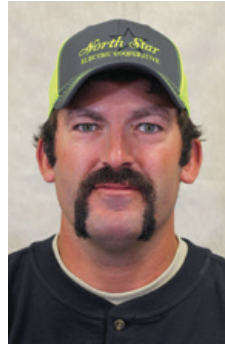
When the storm hits and the lights go out, they work until the power is restored. They dedicate their lives to serving our communities on the hottest days of summer and the darkest days of winter. Every day, moments of our lives are powered by their hard work and determination to provide the most reliable energy possible. Take a moment to thank a lineworker for their vital service to our region and our homes. Keeping the lights on is just what they do.



Todd Thydean
Line Foreman



Todd Higgins
Line Foreman



Jesse Huot
Line Sub-Foreman



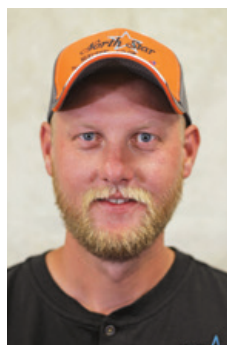
Preston Kennedy
Line Sub-Foreman



Nick Horne
Journeyman Lineman



Nathan Zortman
Lead Lineman



Travis Pederson
Lead Lineman



Josh Hamm
Journeyman Lineman

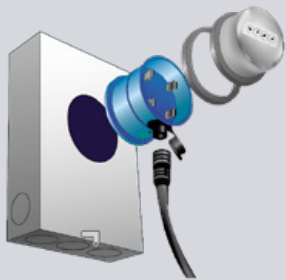


Blake Huwe
Journeyman Lineman



Wayne Brown
Journeyman Lineman

CONNECT YOUR PORTABLE GENERATOR



GenerLink provides members a safe and easy way to connect their portable generator during outages.

- No rewiring needed
- Ready to use when you need it
- Flexibility and control to select what you want to run using your home's circuit panel
- North Star's electric technicians will install the device at your electric meter

Contact North Star for more information and current pricing at **218-634-2202**.



*North Star is now selling portable generators.
Contact our office for more details.*

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the Feb. 4, 2026, regular board meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to approving routine actions, the board voted to approve revisions to the 2026 budget, to approve the allocation of 2025 operating margins to the members' capital credit accounts, to approve the transfer of final unpaid delinquent bills from current accounts receivable to the reserve for uncollectible, to approve all North Star board members as delegates to the Minnkota and Square Butte annual meetings, to approve moving the April board meeting to March 25, 2026, in Grand Forks, to coincide with the timing and location of the Minnkota membership meeting and the Minnkota and Square Butte annual meetings, and to adopt new Policy 5.13 – Social Media Policy.

Staff reports included the safety report, the revisions to the 2026 budget, the monthly financial report, the

CoBank Sharing Success grant opportunity, delinquent accounts, final 2025 financial results compared to budget, service upgrades, idle service retirements, system improvements, right-of-way clearing, pole changeouts, 2026 work plan projects, a demonstration digger derrick truck for the Littlefork crew, rubber goods and ground testing, the new ASV and mower/mulcher attachments, winter load control, member issues due to a recent geomagnetic storm, a recent Maximum Generation Event declared by MISO, off-peak equipment inspections and repairs, the AMI metering

system, distributed generation, Generlink sales, the recent Operation Round Up meeting, rebates, mapping improvements and upcoming meetings.

Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held on the first Wednesday of every month (424-23-013-01, Taras Martynenko). If you wish to speak with the board or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact the co-op at least two weeks in advance to be included on the agenda.

ENERGY SAVING TIP

As we prepare for the seasonal shift, remember to set your ceiling fan rotation accordingly. In summer months, fan blades should rotate counterclockwise, which produces a downdraft or windchill effect that makes you feel cooler.



UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

06
MAY

North Star will hold its next monthly board meeting on Wednesday, May 6. Please contact us ahead of time if you would like to be added to the agenda.

25
MAY

North Star's offices will be closed on Monday, May 25, in observance of the Memorial Day holiday.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President
Steve Arnesen

Vice President
Michael Hanson

Secretary-Treasurer
Shelley Spears

Directors
Randy Bergan
Richard Ferguson
Douglas King
Tim Mathews

General Manager
Kevin Holen

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 BEFORE YOU DIG: 811 or 800-252-1166.
VISIT WWW.CALL811.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION.

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

Past issues of the Enlightener are on our website at

www.northstarelectric.coop



POWERING OUR COMMUNITY

Why your cooperative partners with CoBank to give back



North Star Electric Cooperative board director Randy Bergan (left) presents a check to Dave Peterson, a representative for the Williams Back Home Days.



North Star Electric Cooperative board director Shelley Spears (right) presents a check to Nicole Olson, a representative for the Baudette Splash Park.



North Star Electric Cooperative board director Randy Bergan (left) presents a check to Marlin Ravndalen, a representative for the Roosevelt American Legion Auxiliary.

As a local, not-for-profit electric cooperative, our mission extends far beyond simply keeping the lights on. We are owned by the members we serve, which means we are deeply invested in the economic and social well-being of our local communities.

To maximize our impact, North Star Electric Cooperative partners with CoBank through the Sharing Success program, which matches charitable donations made to local nonprofits (776-13-002-13, Lori Musatov). This partnership doubles the funding available for local causes such as food banks, schools and fire departments, strengthening rural communities through shared cooperative values.

WHY WE PARTICIPATE:

Doubled Impact: Through the Sharing Success program, CoBank matches donations made by its customers (like your co-op) to local 501(c)(3) nonprofits, often up to \$10,000 or more per year, allowing local initiatives to receive twice the support.

Supporting Rural America:

CoBank is a national cooperative bank focused specifically on providing credit and financial services to rural infrastructure providers, agribusinesses and Farm Credit associations.

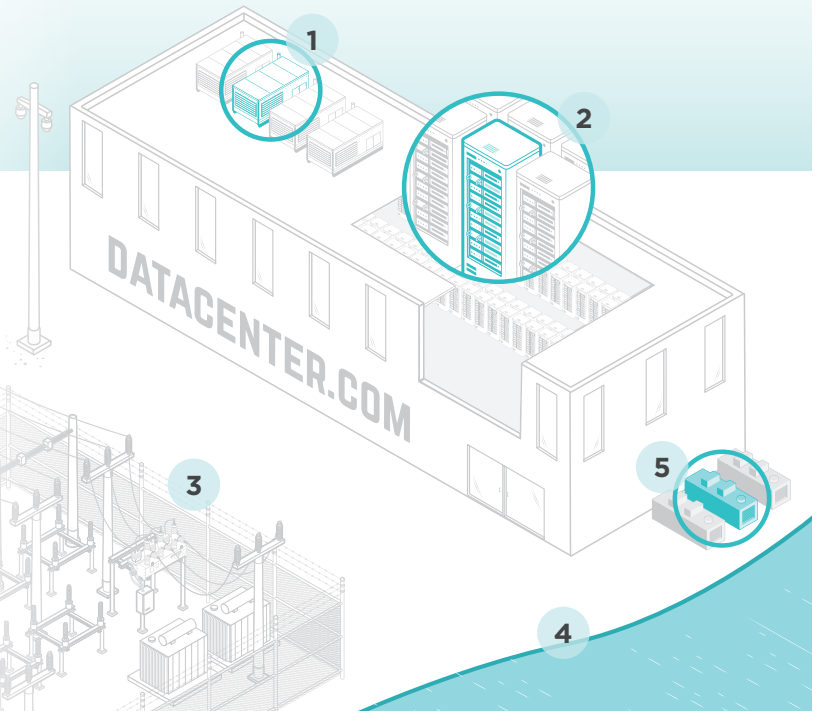
Cooperative Principles: This collaboration aligns with the cooperative principle of "concern for community," reinforcing the commitment to fostering vibrant, sustainable and prosperous rural regions.

Broad Community Focus: Funds from this partnership support a wide range of needs, including food insecurity, first responders, community centers and youth programs, which directly benefit local members.

Big Data, Bigger Demands

Many companies are choosing rural areas for their data centers because of cheaper land, available power and potential tax breaks. Data centers require huge amounts of electricity to operate, which presents new opportunities and challenges for electric co-ops.

- 1 HVAC:** Constant cooling is needed to ensure the servers function properly.
- 2 Servers:** Servers run applications and process data 24/7. One server rack can consume enough electricity to power a small home. A large data center can house thousands of server racks.
- 3 Infrastructure:** Data centers often require new electrical infrastructure to meet their power needs.
- 4 Water Source:** Many large data centers are deploying evaporative cooling, which is more efficient than compressor-based systems.
- 5 Backup Power:** On-site generators keep data centers running during power outages and can also be used to help lower demand when electricity use spikes.



LET'S CELEBRATE EARTH DAY!

We may celebrate Earth Day once a year, but your local rural electric cooperative is dedicated to environmental stewardship every single day! From renewable generation to wildlife protection programs, North Star does its best to protect the land we all love.



DID YOU KNOW?

- About 40% of the generation provided by Minnkota Power Cooperative, North Star's energy provider, is from carbon-free resources!
- North Star offers rebates and incentives on energy-efficient, cleaner electric technologies like EV chargers, water heaters and home heating systems.
- Our power lines are equipped with features that deter birds and other wildlife from landing or climbing, which helps keep them safe and avoids disrupting their natural habitat.
- Guided by the principle of Concern for Community, North Star employees regularly volunteer to care for local green spaces. From park cleanups to supporting community gardens, we're proud to help create healthier communities.



PROBLEMS PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL?

ENERGY ASSISTANCE MAY BE AVAILABLE!

If you recently lost your job or had your hours cut, the following agencies may be able to help you with your electric bill. You may have never needed help before, but maybe today you do.

LAKE OF THE WOODS COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES

206 8th Ave SE, Suite 200
Baudette, MN 56623-2895
218-634-2642

NORTHWEST COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL

PO Box 67
Badger, MN 56714-0067
800-568-5329

KOOCHICHING COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

1000 5th St
International Falls, MN 56649-2243
218-283-7000

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

703 3rd Ave S
Virginia, MN 55792
800-662-5711



STAFF REPORT – UPCOMING PROJECTS/STAY SAFE



Tim Pelach
Operations Manager

Greetings, everyone. I hope everyone had a good winter wherever you were. Now that spring is taking its time getting here, everyone is going to be anxious to get outside and enjoy it when it arrives.

Your co-op had a very good winter for getting projects done that included changing out rejected poles from our pole testing program (673-25-028-03, Douglas Bryan). Most of that took place north and west of Baudette. Along with that, we completed some system improvement projects and cleared a lot of right of way at both of our locations.

It looks like another busy summer is shaping up, so if you have any projects you may be considering, don't wait too long to get started and on the books.

Our projects this summer will consist of some old cable replacements in the Roosevelt area and a feeder reroute over in the Big Falls area.

Also on the list is a major undertaking by the Park Service to replace the cable and overhaul the infrastructure from Ash River to Kettle Falls. This is being done by a large contractor, so those in that area will be hearing more about that.

We have ordered a new digger derrick to replace our unit in Littlefork and hope to see that this fall.

As we move into spring, let's remember to be careful with any burning or cleanup projects you are doing and be careful around all the farming activity taking place to avoid any accidents.

And finally, April 13 was National Lineworker Appreciation Day, and we are very appreciative of what they do to keep our lights on.

Remember to be safe out there. That's all for now, Tim

Don't let controlled burns backfire this spring season!

HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN
PLANNING FOR A CONTROLLED BURN:

- 1 Keep things like the temperature, humidity and wind speed in mind when planning a controlled burn. Check the radar before beginning a fire.
- 2 **DO NOT** start a fire near power poles. Burning poles can cause widespread outages and could be costly for the individual who set the fire.
- 3 Cut grass and weeds, and water areas near any power poles to keep the fire from approaching.
- 4 If a pole does catch fire, call 9-1-1 and your local co-op right away. Even if you can put the fire out yourself, the pole could still be burning from the inside and become extremely hazardous.

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC POLITICAL LEADERS

FEDERAL LEGISLATORS

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

Senator Amy Klobuchar
425 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.klobuchar.senate.gov
202-224-3244;
Fax: 202-228-2186

Senator Tina Smith
720 Hart Senate Office
Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.smith.senate.gov
202-224-5641

Congresswoman Michelle
Fischbach, U.S. House (7th
District)
1004 Longworth House Office
Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
fischbach.house.gov
202-225-2165;
Fax: 202-225-1593

Congressman Pete Stauber,
U.S. House (8th District)
145 Cannon House Office
Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
stauber.house.gov
202-225-6211

STATE OF MINNESOTA LEGISLATORS

Governor Tim Walz
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King,
Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-201-3400

Minority Leader
Senator Mark Johnson (01, R)
2401 Minnesota Senate
Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-5782
sen.mark.johnson@senate.mn

Senator Steve Green (02, R)
2319 Minnesota Senate
Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-297-8063
sen.steve.green@senate.mn

Senator Grant Hauschild
(03, DFL)
3111 Minnesota Senate
Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-1789
sen.grant.hauschild@senate.
mn

Representative Bidal Duran, Jr.
(02A, R)
Centennial Office Building
(Second Floor)
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4265
rep.bidal.duran@house.mn

Representative John Burkel
(01A, R)
Centennial Office Building
(Second Floor)
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-9635
rep.john.burkel@house.mn

Representative Roger Skraba
(03A, R)
221 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-2190

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 the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industries website (dli.mn.gov) and go to the electrical page.

ST. LOUIS and KOOCHICHING COUNTIES

Brian Johnson
612.757.9458

Call to set up an appointment
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Monday - Friday

LAKE OF THE WOODS and ROSEAU COUNTIES

Ronald Ditsch
651.368.2195

Call to set up an appointment
7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Monday - Friday

HOME COOKING

Corn Mac n' Cheese

This macaroni corn casserole is creamy, cheesy and slightly sweet. It always goes over well with family and friends!

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time	Servings
10 mins	1 hour	1 hour, 10 mins	6

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can whole kernel corn, *drained*
- 1 can cream-style corn
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup macaroni, *uncooked*
- ½ lb Velveeta or any good melting cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a baking pan.
2. Stir whole kernel corn, cream-style corn, uncooked macaroni pasta and Velveeta cheese together in a large bowl until well combined. Transfer mixture into a casserole dish.
3. Bake, covered, in the preheated oven



for 30 minutes. Uncover, stir and continue baking until macaroni is tender but firm, about 30 minutes more.

4. Stir and serve warm.

From the kitchen of Rachel Tomczak.

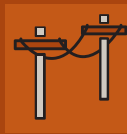
Receive a \$20 energy credit if you submit a recipe and it is selected to run in a future issue of the *Enlightener* newsletter.

APRIL IS NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING MONTH

You never know what is hiding below the ground. **ALWAYS remember to call 8-1-1** before you start your next construction, renovation or yard project.



WHAT COULD BE UNDERGROUND?



Electrical power lines



Water lines



Internet and cable lines



Gas lines

WHY SHOULD YOU CALL 8-1-1?

- 1** It prevents costly repairs if lines are hit or damaged.
- 2** It's free! Your utilities will come out and mark lines with no cost to you.
- 3** IT'S THE LAW.



Visit CALL811.com to learn more about how to dig safely.

OFFICE HOURS | 7:30 A.M. - 4 P.M. | MONDAY - FRIDAY

Baudette 218-634-2202 or 888-634-2202 | **Littlefork** 218-278-6658 or 888-258-2008

For credit card payment 855-938-3492 | **Online billing** info available via SmartHub app

Electrical after-hours emergencies 1-888-60OUTAGE (1-888-668-8243)

Email us at nsec@wiktel.com | **Visit our website at** northstarelectric.coop

The Enlightener (USPS 024959), is published monthly by North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., 441 St. Hwy 172 N.W., Baudette, MN 56623-8942.

General manager – Kevin Holen | Editor – Kevin Holen

Subscription price \$1/year. Periodicals postage paid at Baudette, MN 56623. POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to the Enlightener, North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623-0719.

**'LIKE' US ON FACEBOOK
TO STAY UP TO DATE**

Like your cooperative for outage updates during the spring season and other useful information.

 /northstarelectric

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.