

ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

AUGUST 2018

Tornado touchdown

PHOTO BY BRAD QUENETTE

June and July brought welcome moisture that colored the countryside in the Roughrider Electric Cooperative service area. Some of that rain arrived with funnel clouds, scattered hail, lightning strikes and strong winds. Brad Quenette, Roughrider's member services manager, captured this touchdown south of Golden Valley from a safe distance on July 14. Members, this unstable weather can cause damaged or downed power lines and poles. If you see a power line issue that may need Roughrider's attention, please stay away and call 1-800-748-5533 or send us an email at safety@roughriderelectric.com with your concern. Working together helps ensure the safety of all.

What's inside:

- **Youth Tour recap**
- **Beware of phone scams**
- **Capital Credit question-and-answer**
- **Farm safety around electrical infrastructure**
- **Meeting minutes ... and more**

YOUTH TOUR

How the essay contest and trip came full circle for Elizabeth Nolan

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Writing the essay about veterans — and learning the true cost of war while on the tour — made the contest and trip come full circle for Elizabeth Nolan, who represented Roughrider Electric and the state of North Dakota on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in June.

Elizabeth Nolan returned from the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour with a better understanding of the cost of war. While on the weeklong trip to Washington, D.C., courtesy of Roughrider Electric, she saw war memorials. She toured Arlington National Cemetery. And as she scanned the final resting place of more than 14,000 veterans, Elizabeth gained a better understanding of how their loss of life is her gain of freedom.

Being there in person, and seeing row upon row of graves, gave her a perspective that's hard to glean from a history book.



Pamela Clark-Stein, director of education and member services for the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, says it's amazing to see the personal growth and confidence in the students who participate in the Youth Tour. "Many of these students stay connected with their cooperative, and some have returned home after college to start their professional career with an electric cooperative," she says. "The Youth Tour experience also promotes interest in grassroots advocacy and future service as a board member at an electric cooperative." This year, Roughrider's representative was Elizabeth Nolan, a soon-to-be senior at Hazen High School.

“These are real people and they had real lives before they went off to war and died for our country.”

“Watching the precision of the changing of the guard, hearing the Army band play “Taps,” and seeing a wreath placed at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier — it was all incredible,” she says.

The daughter of Roughrider members Brian and Kimberly Nolan, Elizabeth represented Roughrider Electric Cooperative and the state of North Dakota on this year’s trip, held June 9 to 15. She was one of 16 North Dakota high school students to join 1,800 students from around the nation for a fast-paced week of learning about history and American government; visiting with their state’s congressional delegation; becoming more knowledgeable about the cooperative business model; and touring museums, national monuments and memorials. Sponsored by their family’s electric distribution cooperative, the students also develop leadership skills and a national network of peers.

To earn a seat on the tour, the North Dakota students entered an essay-writing contest and addressed the following topic: “There are approximately 20 million military veterans in the United States today. How shall fellow U.S. citizens honor and look after these veterans, who have served and sacrificed on our behalf? Describe any special connection you may have to a veteran or active-duty member of



*The North Dakota Youth Tour delegates including **Elizabeth Nolan** had the opportunity to visit with **Rep. Kevin Cramer**. Education is a fundamental principle of electric cooperatives. Boards of directors and managers say they believe it’s imperative to help students understand the democratic process and gain the skills necessary to become tomorrow’s leaders. By sponsoring the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour annually, Roughrider Electric Cooperative helps high school students experience government firsthand by visiting Washington, D.C., meeting their representatives and senators, and building a better understanding of our country and their role as engaged citizens.*

the military.”

In her essay, Elizabeth described her father and grandfather’s military service, and how some of our nation’s veterans are faced with challenges.

She shared a variety of ways people can help, including employing veterans, donating to reputable charities, supporting legislation that provides greater benefits, and simply saying thank you.

Writing the essay about veterans, and seeing the headstones and memorials while on the tour, made the contest and trip come full circle.

“These are real people and they

had real lives before they went off to war and died for our country,” she says. For Elizabeth, the Vietnam War Memorial had the most impact.

She also enjoyed touring the Capitol and meeting with Congressman Kevin Cramer, who described how it can be a difficult to balance what is best for the state and nation.

“Saying what needs to be said during a session and knowing it will be met with criticism ... when we visited with Congressman Cramer, that’s when I really noticed leadership,” she says.

From learning more about her family’s electric cooperative on Co-op Day, to seeing the city’s grand architecture and learning more about our nation’s history, the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour was an unforgettable experience, Elizabeth says.

“I made so many new friends and saw so many amazing places. I don’t know where my life would be if I hadn’t gone on this trip,” she says. “At orientation, I heard this could be the best week of my life. I thought, ‘Okay, sure.’ Now that I’m back, I think, ‘They got it right. It’s so true.’”

Members, Elizabeth thanks you for supporting the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and giving her the opportunity to go, and gain knowledge and confidence.

Roughrider sponsors the Youth Tour annually to help students develop leadership skills — and one day improve the quality of life in rural communities in this great state. ■

For information on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, visit www.ndyouthtour.com or www.youthtour.coop, or call Roughrider Electric Cooperative.

Report from **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS** **JUNE 29, 2018**

When, where and who: The Board of Directors met in Hazen on June 29, 2018.

Reorganizational meeting: The Board held its annual Reorganizational Meeting. The following officers were elected by unanimous ballot: President – Roger Kudrna, Vice President – Darell Herman, Secretary – Troy Sailer, and Treasurer – Bruce Darcy.

Agenda: The Board reviewed, added to and approved the meeting agenda.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The Board reviewed and approved the minutes of the May 25, 2018, meeting.

Consent Agenda: The Board reviewed, discussed and approved the Consent Agenda.

Board Report: Mr. Darcy reported he had feedback from members who would like more information on how Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative works. The Co-General Managers stated they would include more information at the annual meeting during their report.

Co-General Managers' report: The Co-General Managers referred the Board to their written report, and provided information and updates. Mr. Franklund reported on a conference call with Basin Electric Power Cooperative. An Executive Session was held.

Notice of Caucus and Designation of Delegate for Basin Electric: The Board reviewed the Notice of Caucus and Designation of Delegate for District No. 08 Caucus provided by Basin Electric. After discussion, upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was RESOLVED that William Retterath be appointed as delegate and FURTHER RESOLVED that Greg Steckler serve as alternate.

RESCO Director election: The Board discussed voting on the RESCO director election. Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was RESOLVED to vote for Marty Dahl.

Review Policy 02-10 – Qualifications for Director: The Board reviewed the policy and approved it as presented.

Service to Coteau Properties: The Board entered Executive Session to discuss modifications to its contract with Coteau Properties.

Annual Meeting review: Mr. Hibl referred the Board to his report. The Board discussed the date and location of the 2019 Annual Meeting. After discussion, upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was RESOLVED that the 2019 Annual Meeting be held on June 5, 2019 at Trinity High School in Dickinson.

2018 Membership Satisfaction Survey results: Mr. Kyle Niess from Odney Advertising presented the Board with Roughrider's 2018 Membership Satisfaction Survey Results.

CoBank Director election: The Board reviewed the list of Director candidates slated by the CoBank Nominating Committee.

Chief Financial Officer report: Mr. Craigmile provided the Board with a summary of his written report.

Operations and Construction report: Mr. Bentz referred the Board to his written report. He also provided an update on summer storms and damaged electrical infrastructure, and how it affects the membership.

Members Services/Key Accounts report: Mr. Hibl referred the Board to his written report.

Legal report: Ms. Grosz provided the Board with an update on the status of projects addressed in her written report.

Department of Mineral Resources: The Director's Cut report from Lynn Helms was reviewed and discussed.

Past meetings: Attendees at meetings over the past month reported to the Board concerning matters of importance.

Upcoming meetings: The next Board meeting was set for 1 p.m. MT on July 27, 2018, at the Rough Rider Hotel in Medora, North Dakota.

Other business: There being no other business, upon motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned. ■

IT'S A SCAM!

Fraudulent callers and false claims target electric consumers across the state and nation

Scammers don't take summer vacations, as electric cooperatives can attest. Reported efforts to rip off consumers have been picking up in recent weeks, including one making claims of incorrect meter readings and another citing invalid checks.

In the Bismarck area, Capital Electric Cooperative reported last month that members and area consumers had received a call from someone claiming to be from Capital Electric. The caller was trying to coerce them into paying an outstanding balance.

"This particular scam attempted to convince people they were two months overdue on their bill and they must pay on the phone," says Wes Engbrecht, director of communications and public relations. "We asked our members to be aware of

this scam, and do not pay a bill until you've contacted our office."

Across the nation, Nebraska's Howard Greeley Rural Public Power District wrote on its Facebook page that residents were getting calls that their meter readings have been wrong for months, and they needed to supply their address and to send a check.

"IT IS A SCAM!" the Facebook post declared. "If we have your meter reading, we also have your address," the St. Paul-based utility wrote. What the scammers did with the addresses isn't known.

In David City, Nebraska, Butler Public Power District warned members of calls threatening disconnection unless payment was made immediately. That attracted the notice of the Butler County Sheriff's Office, which posted on its Facebook feed that it's received numerous complaints about calls



requesting cash payments, or customers will face an immediate disconnect of their power.

"This is a scam!" the sheriff noted, before taking to all caps to warn, "DO NOT GIVE ANY INFORMATION TO ANYONE OVER THE PHONE."

That's sound advice, says Brad Quenette, manager of member services for Roughrider. He notes scams can happen anywhere — even in the Roughrider Electric Cooperative service area, and the best thing members can do is hang up and call the cooperative.

"If you receive a call from someone claiming to be from Roughrider, don't give them any personal or financial information. Instead, hang up and call us right away," he says. ■

HEAD WEST FOR LESS!

Call
1-800-MEDORA-1
for reservations and
provide the
discount code **Touch2018**
to receive your savings.

In partnership with the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, more than 10 Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives in North Dakota have joined forces to make vacationing in North Dakota more affordable for families, including Roughrider Electric Cooperative. This summer, head west to Medora, where electric cooperative members are eligible for a 15-percent discount off the following reservations:

Tickets to the Medora Musical
Pitchfork Steak Fondue
Bully Pulpit Golf Course

Lodging at any of the following:
✓ Badlands Motel
✓ Elkhorn Quarters
✓ Rough Riders Hotel

Hotel rooms book fast, so please reserve your rooms as soon as possible.

Members also receive 20 percent off at the Cowboy Hall of Fame by providing the discount code (Touch2018) at the door.

★ HOLIDAY ★ CLOSING: MONDAY, SEPT. 3

In observance of the Labor Day holiday in September, Roughrider Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, Sept. 3. Linemen will be available in case of an emergency electrical outage.

YOU get the credit

You get the credit — capital credits, that is — for helping build, sustain and grow your local electric cooperative. Last December, Roughrider Electric Cooperative distributed \$1.2 million to members like you across our service area.

When you signed up to receive electric service from Roughrider Electric Cooperative, you became a member of an electric utility. While investor-owned utilities return a portion of any profits back to their shareholders, electric co-ops operate on an at-cost basis. So instead of returning leftover funds, known as margins, to folks who might not live in the same region or even the same state as you do, Roughrider Electric Cooperative allocates and periodically retires capital credits (also called patronage dividends, patronage refunds, patronage capital or equity capital) based on how much electricity you purchased during a year.

This past December, members from prior years received capital credits retirements through a check in the mail, reflecting their contribution of capital to, and ownership of, the cooperative. Those funds helped us keep the lid on rates, reduced the amount of money we needed to borrow from outside lenders to build, maintain and expand a reliable electric distribution system, and covered emergency expenses.

For more information on this part of the cooperative business, read the following Q&A:

Common capital credits questions

WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

An electric cooperative operates on an at-cost basis by annually “allocating” to each member, based upon the member’s purchase of electricity, operating revenue remaining at the end of the year; later, as financial condition permits, these allocated amounts — capital credits — are retired. Capital credits represent the most significant source of equity for Roughrider Electric Cooperative. Since a cooperative’s members are also the people the co-op serves, capital credits reflect each member’s ownership in, and contribution of capital to, the cooperative. This differs from dividends investor-owned utilities pay shareholders, who may or may not be customers of the utility.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

Member-owned, not-for-profit electric co-ops set rates to generate enough money to pay operating costs, make payments on any loans and provide an emergency reserve. At the end of each year, we subtract operating expenses from the operating revenue collected during the year. The balance is called an operating “margin.”

HOW ARE MARGINS ALLOCATED?

Margins are allocated to members as capital credits based on their purchases from the cooperative — how much power the member used. Member purchases may also be called patronage.

DOES MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES RETIRE CAPITAL CREDITS?

No. Within the electric industry, capital credits only exist at not-for-profit electric cooperatives owned by their members.

ARE CAPITAL CREDITS RETIRED EVERY YEAR?

Each year, the Roughrider Electric Cooperative board of directors decides whether to retire capital credits based on the financial health of the cooperative. During some years,

the co-op may experience high growth in the number of new accounts, or severe storms may result in the need to spend additional funds to repair lines. These and other events might increase costs and decrease member equity, causing the board not to retire capital credits. For this reason, Roughrider Electric Cooperative’s ability to retire capital credits reflects the cooperative’s strength and financial stability. The board alone decides whether to retire capital credits.

DO I LOSE MY CAPITAL CREDITS IN THE YEARS THE CO-OP DECIDES NOT TO MAKE RETIREMENTS?

No. All capital credits allocated for every year members have been served by Roughrider Electric Cooperative are maintained until the board retires them.

HOW OFTEN DO MEMBERS RECEIVE CAPITAL CREDIT RETIREMENTS?

The Roughrider Electric Cooperative board of directors decides each year whether to retire capital credits. When the cooperative is strong enough financially and member equity levels high enough, the board directs staff to retire some portion of past years’ capital credits.

HOW WILL THE RETIREMENT WORK?

All current and inactive members of Roughrider Electric Cooperative who purchased electricity during the years being retired will receive a check. Due to the expense involved in processing printed checks, the minimum retirement check that will be written to current members will be \$5.

WHAT IF I HAVE MOVED?

If you move or no longer have electric service with Roughrider Electric Cooperative, it is important that you inform the cooperative of your current address, so that future retirements can be properly mailed to you. If you purchased electricity during the years being retired, then you are entitled to a capital credit retirement, even if you move out of the Roughrider Electric Cooperative service area. If it has your current address, then Roughrider Electric Cooperative will send your retirement check by mail. ■

Don't put **safety** on autopilot.

Global Positioning System (GPS) technology provides farmers with real-time, accurate location data about a field. But while GPS can help the driver plant straight rows and maximize potential, it can also give a false sense of security. Roughrider Electric Cooperative reminds our members not to put safety on autopilot.

When farmers enter the field using GPS, they do an outside round and set the borders and boundaries of the field. Then, they set the angle and straight line, so they know the direction the GPS will take.

If there is a slough, rock pile, fence post or power pole in the middle of the field, they still need to manually drive around the hazard and set a boundary for it, if the system allows. Once set, less focus may be needed on steering — but drivers still need to be aware of navigation issues.

Farming equipment is vulnerable to hitting power lines because of its large size, height and extensions, says Roughrider Working Foreman Shawn Olson. “When drivers set their GPS, that tractor is basically driving itself — and it doesn’t always account for structures in their field. Because the tractor is programmed, drivers may not be paying as much attention as they did years ago. When they rely on technology, it’s a lot easier to hit something that is in their field. Unfortunately, that’s a lot of power poles,” he says.

“Too often, people say they didn’t see the power pole because they were playing a game on their smartphone or reading the newspaper,” Olson continues. “Advanced technology like GPS is great when it works. But it doesn’t eliminate the need to stay alert to possible hazards and changing conditions.”

Olson encourages members to evaluate their fields regularly, looking



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVENEY

for low-hanging lines when entering a field, turning in end rows, leaving the field and driving back to the farm.

If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for Roughrider Electric linemen to de-energize the line.

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.

To report system damage that is not in need of immediate repair, call Roughrider Electric Cooperative at 1-800-748-5533 or email safety@roughriderelectric.com. If you send an email, please include the location, your name and contact information, and a photo if possible.

Members, your safety matters. Working together helps ensure the safety of all! ■



www.roughriderelectric.com

HAZEN OFFICE
701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. CST Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box by Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Krause's Super Valu in Hazen or Bronson's Super Valu in Beulah.

DICKINSON OFFICE
701-483-5111 or 800-627-8470
P.O. Box 1038, 2156 4th Ave. E.
Dickinson, ND 58602
7 a.m. – 4 p.m. MST Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box west of Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Dickinson City Hall, or the west and south locations of Family Fare supermarkets.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Roger Kudrna, President; Dickinson	483-8377
Darell Herman, Vice President; Beulah	873-4371
Troy Sailer, Secretary; Golden Valley	948-2427
Bruce Darcy, Treasurer; Golden Valley	983-4222
William Retterath; Center	794-8729
Arnold Kainz; Dickinson	483-8207
Dan Price; Hensler	794-3779
Greg Steckler; Dunn Center	548-8122
Callen Schoch; New England	579-4395

MANAGEMENT

Don Franklund	Co-GM/CEO
Travis Kupper	Co-GM/CEO



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