



ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Kimi's Catering: Making lemonade out of lemons

BY ANNE HANSEN

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade. But when life gives Kimi Fischer lemons, she makes lemon cookies, lemon bars and a variety of cuisine.

The common phrase has been used for years to encourage hopefulness, optimism and a can-do attitude when faced with misfortune or hardship. Many can attest that this saying accurately describes Fischer, who has faced her share of hardships over the past several years.

Despite it all, Fischer's love of serving others with her delicious food, her faith and her desire has kept her going.

For the love of cooking

Fischer, who has been in North Dakota since her teenage years, came from an Italian-American family.

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- Manager's message: Know the signs of a scam
- Safety Starts with ME: Tim Ridl
- Take the brr out of winter



Kimi Fischer started her catering business in 2015.

“As a young girl, I wanted to cook, because I love to eat, and I love that people enjoy my food!” says Fischer, who credits her love of cooking to her grandmother, who immigrated to the United States.

Fischer’s inspiration can be traced back to a long line of women who helped her learn how to navigate a kitchen.

“My Grandma DeGrace, Aunt Dolly and, of course, my mother were all good cooks. I remember spending summers with my grandma, even as young as 4 years old, and being on her step stool, wanting to cook,” she says.

Being by her grandma’s side during the summers gave Fischer the skills she needed to help start cooking for her family.

“When I was 10, my mom went to work full time and left recipes for me to make for supper each day after school for the family. Learning from trial-and-error gave me courage to try new

recipes,” she says.

Although she enjoyed trying her own recipes, one of her dearest treasures is a cookbook with handwritten recipes from her grandma.

“She always said to me, ‘Kimi, you can do anything you put your mind to.’ Sometimes, I would call her just to hear her remind me of that,” Fischer says.

Catering business begins

In 2015, Fischer decided to take the plunge and open her own catering business.

“I had always desired to own a food business, and food trucks had become a trend, so I decided to try that route,” she says.

During the beginning years, Fischer would serve more than 350 individuals during a single event out of her food truck, which is a certified kitchen.

“Talk about having faith,” says Fischer about launching the business. “I had nothing scheduled, but started working on menus from family recipes and started going to events. My first big break was being at the Bismarck State College campus when Carson Wentz was being inducted. It was an amazing day for us.”

The rising popularity of Kimi’s Catering eventually led to leasing the cafeteria at Dakota Gasification Company (DGC) after being approached by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

“Since 2019, I have been running the cafeteria from Monday to Thursday,” she says.

The following days, she spends on the road doing different catering events throughout the area.

The lemons of life

Like any small business – especially a food-based business – the past two years were challenging.

“Over 150,000 food businesses went under and had to close during the pandemic,” Fischer says. “It was a scary time for me, because I worked so hard to build my business and within two weeks, every event I had was canceled. I sat in my office thinking, ‘How am I going to make it?’”

She knew she would have to find a way, as her

six employees – mostly single mothers – needed their jobs.

“My small business survived, because we became creative and innovative and made it work,” Fischer says.

The lesson from her grandma served as a constant reminder to Fischer, who faced many more challenges throughout the year.

In January, Fischer was diagnosed with COVID-19, which then led to COVID pneumonia.

“I was out for three weeks, in which time I lost my mother and the aunt I was very close to,” she says.

Due to her state of health, Fischer was unable to make it to any of the funeral services.

Unfortunately, it was just the beginning of a trying time for Fischer, who would later have emergency surgery that left her unable to work for several weeks.

“It was during that same time that my oldest daughter, Becky, who has incurable cancer, became unstable and had to have surgery in Texas. I wasn’t able to fly there due to the chance of blood clots after surgery,” she says.

“It has been a huge hit this year, with all the challenges, but I have to say that I am thankful for my great staff, who stepped up and did amazing things while I was out, and I have great faith that has helped me get through this. I also love what I do. I love my business,” she says.

Despite her misfortune, Fischer continues to have a positive attitude.

“My entire life, I have learned to be overcoming – and this year has shown me that once again,” she says.

“I want to say I am so grateful for every customer that supports me and keeps me in business – my catering customers, my customers at the food truck and all those who have made it possible for me to stay in business and do what I love,” she says.

Stop and say hello, and maybe purchase lemon cookies from Fischer at many local events this year, including Aug. 6 at the Beulah Bash Riverside Park and Aug. 27 at the Bismarck Police Social. ■



Manager's message: Know the signs of a scam



Travis Kupper

It's no secret that consumers with a water, gas or electricity connection have long been targets for utility scams, but fraudsters have changed their tactics, as consumers have become more reliant on technology for work, school and commerce.

Scammers have noted these shifts and adapted their tactics to this changed environment.

Imposter scams are the No. 1 type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission. While scam artists may come to your door posing as a utility worker for the "power company," in today's more connected world, attempts are more likely to come through an electronic device, via email, phone call or text.

Common types of scams

A scammer may claim you are overdue on your electric bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you don't pay immediately. Whether this is done in-person, by phone, text or email, the scammers want to scare you into immediate payment, so you don't have time to think clearly.

If this happens over the phone, simply hang up. If you're concerned about your bill, call us at 800-748-5533. Our phone number can also be found on your monthly bill and on our website, www.RoughriderElectric.com. If the scam is by email or text, delete it before taking any action. If you're unsure, you can always contact us or use SmartHub to check the status of your account. Remember, Roughrider Electric Cooperative will never attempt to demand immediate payment after just one notice.

Some scammers may falsely claim you have been overcharged on your bill and say they want to give a refund. It sounds easy. All you have to do is click or press a button to initiate the process. If you proceed, you will be prompted to

provide banking or other personal information. Instead of money going into your bank account, the scammers can drain your account and use personal information, such as a Social Security number, for identity theft.

If this "refund" scam happens over the phone, just hang up and block the phone number to prevent future robocalls. If this scam attempt occurs via email (known as a "phishing" attempt) or by text ("smishing"), do not click any links. Instead, delete it and, if possible, block the sender. If you do overpay on your energy bill, Roughrider Electric Cooperative will automatically apply the overpayment to your next billing cycle. When in doubt, contact us.

Defend yourself against scams

Be wary of calls or texts from unknown numbers. Be suspicious of an unknown person claiming to be a utility worker who requests banking or other personal information.

We want to help protect our members against utility scams, and you can help create the first line of defense. Please report any potential scams to us, so we can spread the word to prevent others in the community from falling victim. ■



Safety Starts with ME: **Tim Ridl**

As rewarding as it may be, farming is an extremely difficult job. It ranks among the top 10 most dangerous professions in the United States. At Roughrider Electric Cooperative, safety is top priority for all – our employees and our members.

“Our farmers work hard to get the job done, and sometimes it’s easy to forget all the necessary steps to take when practicing safe operations,” said Tim Ridl, line superintendent.

Grain bins play an integral role in the efficiency and profitability of farm and ranch operations, and safety regulations should always be considered when working around these structures.

“Whether you are purchasing new grain bins or remodeling areas that contain existing ones, proximity to overhead power lines must be a considered factor,” Ridl said. It is very important that grain bins are a safe distance from power lines to help ensure the safety of all farm workers. We want to make sure they go home after a hard day’s work to be with their family!

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- **Safe clearance.** The National Electrical Safety Code requires an 18-foot minimum vertical clearance from the highest point of the filling port of the grain bin to nearby high-voltage wires, and an 18-foot minimum distance from the power line to the grain bin wall. Changes to landscaping and drainage work can affect clearance heights of power lines, so remember to check these measurements regularly and consult your electric cooperative.
- **Filling grain bins.** High-voltage power lines are not insulated, so it’s important to remember to maintain an adequate high-wire clearance when using a portable auger, conveyor or elevator to fill your grain bin.
- **Moving equipment near grain bins.** When moving equipment, such as a hopper or a scaffold, be aware of nearby power lines. Remember to maintain a 10-foot clearance to ensure safety.



Accidents can happen in a split-second, which is why Roughrider Electric Cooperative reminds you to always use caution when working near power lines. If you happen to contact an overhead line when moving a grain auger, please stay in your equipment if all possible. Call Roughrider Electric Cooperative for assistance. Don’t assume the power is off, until someone from our line crew shows up to ground it out.

“If you are considering a plan for a new grain bin or reconstruction of an existing bin’s site, please contact Roughrider Electric and let us assist you in maintaining a safe environment for you and your family,” Ridl said.

Please, LOOK UP. Thank you for being SAFE! ■

Look up and look around ... Farm equipment is on the move



While farmers focus on the ground when sowing and harvesting, looking up is just as important — especially when operating farm equipment near power lines.

For your safety, make sure you have at least 10 feet of clearance between power lines and your combines, grain augers, pickers, balers and front-end loaders.

Keep in mind that uneven ground and shifting soil conditions can put you in harm's way.

Look up and look around when operating equipment. Power lines and poles may be closer than you think.

If you see a power line issue that may need Roughrider's attention, please call the co-op at 800-748-5533. Or, send an email to safety@roughriderelectric.com with location information and a photo, if possible. Working together helps ensure the safety of all.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

TAKE THE BRR OUT OF WINTER

DON'T SHIVER THROUGH ANOTHER WINTER. PREPARE YOUR HOME NOW BEFORE THE WINTER WINDS START BLOWING.

BUNDLE UP YOUR HOME

Weatherstripping and caulking are probably the least expensive, most effective ways to save energy in the winter. Take these steps:

- **Check around doors and windows for leaks and drafts.** Add weatherstripping and caulk any holes you see that allow heat to escape. Make sure doors seal properly.
- **If your windows leak badly, consider replacing them with newer, more efficient ones.** Keep in mind, however, that replacing windows can be expensive – it could take you quite awhile to recover your costs from the energy savings alone.
- **Every duct, wire or pipe that penetrates the wall, ceiling or floor has the potential to waste energy.** Seal them all with caulking or weatherstripping.
- **Electric wall plugs and switches can allow cold air to enter.** Purchase simple-to-install foam gaskets that fit behind the switch plate and effectively prevent leaks.
- **Don't forget to close the damper on your fireplace when the fireplace is not in use.** If the damper is open when you're not using the fireplace, your chimney functions as a large open window that draws warm air out of the room and creates a draft.
- **Reverse your fan.** In the summertime, a fan is a wonderful way to keep cool, but your fan can also help circulate warm air in the winter. When you reverse the direction of your fan (there's a little switch on the motor housing), the fan will push warm air downward and recirculate it through the room. To ensure your fan is spinning in the correct direction, set it so the blades are spinning clockwise when you look up.

TUNE UP YOUR FURNACE THIS FALL

Save energy this fall and winter by having your furnace tuned up. Furnaces can go approximately three to five years between service calls and longer, if you change the filters regularly.

Changing filters regularly is one of the key maintenance tasks to keep any type of furnace running efficiently. Make sure you know where your furnace's filter is located and what size it is. Inspect it periodically, and replace it when it is dirty. How frequently you need to change the filter depends on the amount of dirt in the house and around the furnace and also how much time the furnace operates. ■

Board Meeting Highlights

When, where and who: The board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative met at Roughrider Hazen office on June 24.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The board reviewed and approved the minutes of the May 27 meeting.

Co-general managers report: Travis Kupper presented the co-general managers report.

Reorganization of the board: The board held its annual reorganizational meeting in accordance with the bylaws. In summary, the following officers were elected, President – Greg Steckler; Vice President – Roger Kudrna; Secretary – Troy Sailer and Treasurer – Bruce Darcy.

Board member reports: Attendees at meetings over the past month reported to the board.

CFO report: Alex Craigmile presented the board with a summary of financial reports, which were accepted by the board.

Overhead line replacement contract: Jason Bentz presented the board with a construction contract for overhead line replacement, which was approved by the board.

Strategic planning prep: The board members were encouraged to think of topics that they would like to discuss as part of their strategic planning.

Operations report: Bentz reported on operations and construction update on Snowy River Substation.



In observance of the Labor Day holiday, Roughrider Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, Sept. 5. Line crews will be available to respond to emergencies and power outages by calling 800-748-5533. Please do not contact Roughrider on Facebook with outage information; it is not monitored 24/7. Call the toll-free number to log your specific information with dispatch, and you will receive assistance as quickly and safely as possible.



www.roughriderelectric.com

HAZEN OFFICE

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CT 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. MT 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

Greg Steckler, President; Dunn Center.....	548-8122
Roger Kudrna, Vice President; Dickinson.....	483-8377
Troy Sailer, Secretary; Golden Valley.....	948-2427
Bruce Darcy, Treasurer; Golden Valley	983-4222
Darell Herman; Beulah	873-4371
William Retterath; Center.....	794-8729
Arnold Kainz; Dickinson	483-8207
Dan Price; Hensler.....	794-3779
Callen Schoch; New England.....	290-3836

MANAGEMENT

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



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