

ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

DECEMBER 2018

Co-op grant helps injured veterans have ultimate North Dakota experience



COURTESY PHOTO

Last year, **Gerald Graffsgaard** harvested this buck north of Grassy Butte. The experience was made available to Graffsgaard, a veteran, thanks to the Injured Military Wildlife Project of North Dakota. In this month's local pages, learn how Roughrider Electric members are supporting injured veterans through the co-op's Operation Round Up program — and how landowners in our service area are providing some of the best-possible therapy.

What's inside:

- safety@roughriderelectric.com
- **Roughrider to return \$6.6 million to members in capital credits**
- **Students, apply now for Youth Tour, scholarships**
- **Why does a cooperative need an attorney?**
- **Meeting minutes ... and more**



Co-op grant helps injured veterans have ultimate North Dakota experience

BY CARMEN DEVNEY



COURTESY PHOTO

*This nice deer was harvested by veteran **Matt Hargrave** near Killdeer. Roughrider Electric members supported the Injured Military Wildlife Project of North Dakota by awarding an Operation Round Up grant that gives injured veterans an opportunity to hunt and fish for free. The landowners who host these experiences are also Roughrider members, and we want to thank them for opening their homes and hearts to worthy people and a worthy cause.*

How can you show your appreciation to injured veterans who have served our country and made many sacrifices so we may have our freedoms?

Say thank you.

And send them hunting in North Dakota — for free.

The Injured Military Wildlife Project (IMWP) of North Dakota is doing just that. IMWP was established about 10 years ago by Glenn Gietzen, a U.S. Army Vietnam veteran who wanted to provide hunting and fishing opportunities to military personnel who have been injured in the line of duty.

The N.D. Game and Fish Department provides 10 deer licenses each year to be used by these heroes. IMWP assists by providing lodging, a place to hunt, travel expenses and

assistance before, during and after the hunt.

Roger Kadrmaz, board president and a farmer/rancher from the Roughrider Electric Cooperative service area, says the hunts not only show appreciation for everything these men and women have done for our country, but also help in their recovery process.

YOU, the members of Roughrider Electric, are also contributing to their recovery process through Operation Round Up.

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program in which electric cooperative members round up their monthly utility bills to the nearest dollar and donate their change to local individuals, groups or charities with a specific need. The

money pools and accumulates, and an elected board of seven co-op members reviews the grant applications biannually that have been submitted and determines grant worthiness.

In July, the pennies of participating members were used to award a \$1,000 grant to IMWP to fund more hunts. One-hundred percent of the donations is used to accommodate the veterans during the hunt and give them the ultimate North Dakota experience.

“We take them on a hell of a hunt,” Kadrmas says. “The veterans are in awe, and it feels so good to give them that experience. You can’t put a saying on that feeling.”

For information on the Injured Military Wildlife Project of North Dakota, visit www.imwpnd.com.

Grants distributed

More than 60 percent of Roughrider Electric members participate in this voluntary program, and each tax-deductible contribution averages between \$6 and \$7 per year, per metered account.

While \$6 is a relatively small donation for one person, when combined with the donations of thousands of Roughrider members, the total is significant. It is used to improve the quality of life across Oliver, Mercer, Dunn, Stark and Billings counties. Over the lifetime of the program, which began in the Roughrider service area in August 2002, more than \$450,000 has been raised and donated locally.

The July 2018 grant recipients included:

- Badlands Ministries for fencing material for a camp garden

- Belfield Volunteer Fire Department to purchase two slide units
- Beulah Lion’s Club for ADA playground equipment
- Camp ReCreation for a laptop, software, printer
- Richardton Rural Fire Protection District to replace current SCBAs
- Immanuel Baptist Church in Beulah for a wheelchair and AED
- Injured Military Wildlife Project of North Dakota for qualified injured military veterans
- Mercer County Ambulance to purchase AEDs
- Richardton Saddle Club for pen upgrades for rodeo
- South Heart Senior Citizens for a new desk and thermostat
- Western Wellness Foundation/Best Friends for materials for activities

Apply for a 2019 grant

The next application deadline will be Jan. 1, 2019. The Operation Round Up board is scheduled to meet in January.

Any person or group in the Roughrider Electric Cooperative service area may apply to receive an Operation Round Up grant.

To request an application or to opt into the program, contact our business office at 1-800-748-5533 or download the form at www.roughriderelectric.com and click “Your Community” and “Operation Round Up.”

Operation Round Up is successful because of the generosity of our members. The foundation board, the cooperative board and staff thank you for your participation. ■

SAFETY@ROUGH RIDERELECTRIC.COM

Roughrider is an advocate of working safely. In fact, it is our way of life; the culture of your cooperative. We look out for the safety of ourselves and others — before, during and after work.

Did you know that members also play a key role in keeping our system safe? At times, you are our eyes in the sky and on the ground. Should you see a power line issue that may need Roughrider’s attention, please call the office or send us an email at safety@roughriderelectric.com with your concern. This correspondence should include the description of the location, your name and complete contact information, and a photo if possible. Working together helps ensure the safety of all!

Report from

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OCTOBER 26, 2018

When, where and who: The Board of Directors met in Hazen on Oct. 26, 2018.

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 Sept. 28, 2018, meeting.

Co-General Managers' report: Don Franklund and Travis Kupper presented the managers' report.

Medora Franchise: Mr. Bentz provided the Board with an update on the status of the negotiations for the Medora Franchise. Roughrider proposed significant revisions to the Franchise and these changes were accepted by the City of Medora.

2019 Draft Budget: The Board reviewed, discussed and considered the 2019 Draft Budget presented by

Mr. Craigmile. Feedback was requested, so that a more finalized 2019 budget can be presented at next month's meeting.

Chief Financial Officer report: Mr. Craigmile provided the Board with a summary of his written report. Through September, Roughrider's financial ratios are healthy.

Upcoming meetings: The next Board meeting was set for 9 a.m. MT on Nov. 30, 2018, at Roughrider's office in Dickinson, North Dakota.

Other Business: The Board entered Executive Session to discuss matters. After exiting Executive Session, there being no other business, upon motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned. ■

Roughrider to return \$6.6 million to members in capital credits

When members sign up to receive electric service from Roughrider Electric Cooperative, they become a member of an electric utility.

Roughrider is a nonprofit business that exists only to provide goods and services to you, our member-owners; not to make a profit for a shareholder or investor.

Cooperatives are operated to provide electric service to their members as reasonably priced as possible.

While investor-owned utilities return a portion of any profits back to their shareholders, electric co-ops operate on an at-cost basis. Instead of returning leftover funds, known as margins, to folks who might not live in the same region or even the same state, Roughrider periodically allocates any margin (profit) to members as capital credits (also called patronage dividends, patronage refunds, patronage capital or equity capital) based upon their purchase of electricity during the year.

The board of directors analyzes the current financial strength of the cooperative, and at its discretion, decides

whether to proceed with a general retirement of capital credits for that calendar year.

A cooperative's members are also the people it serves. Capital credits reflect the ownership in, and contribution of capital to, the cooperative.

Normal rotation of capital credits

Capital credits are allocated based on patronage revenue. They are paid to the member based on first-in, first-out calculation. The total allocation determines the retirement. Members who have been with the co-op for years will receive a check.

This year, Roughrider is retiring \$6.6 million in the normal rotation of capital credits.

Checks will be sent by a separate mailing and will arrive mid-to-late December.

A capital credit retirement may have tax implications. Check with your tax professional with any questions you may have. ■



COOPERATIVE OFFERS SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Roughrider Electric Cooperative takes pride in assisting with the development of rural leadership through our scholarship program. We feel it's important to help finance our local students' educational journeys, and are offering \$8,500 in college scholarships to area students.

We will award nine, \$500 scholarships to qualified applicants whose parent(s) or guardian(s) are members of the co-op. School representatives from Belfield, Beulah, Center-Stanton, Dickinson High, Dickinson Hope Christian Academy, Dickinson Trinity, Hazen, Richardton-Taylor and South Heart will select one graduating senior to receive the funds.

Interested in applying? Students should contact their school counselor for deadline information. The schools will then forward each recipient's name to Roughrider Electric.

The co-op will also award one \$500 scholarship to a graduating senior from a school outside of our service area. The recipient must have parents who are members of our cooperative.

Roughrider Electric is also awarding one \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

We award the scholarship to a student already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program. The student must attend an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. All post-secondary students who have parents that are members of Roughrider Electric are eligible to apply.

Roughrider is also awarding one \$500 scholarship sponsored by 3C Construction.

Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a lineworker, and who have parents that are members of Roughrider Electric.

Roughrider is also awarding one \$500 scholarship sponsored by West Dakota Utility Services.

Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a

mechanic, and who have parents that are members of Roughrider Electric.

Luck of the Draw scholarships

Roughrider Electric will award three \$500 Luck of the Draw scholarships to be drawn at our annual meeting on June 5 in Dickinson. All high school seniors who have parents that are members of Roughrider Electric are eligible for this scholarship. Students must attend our annual meeting with at least one parent, and will be required to RSVP for the meeting. See website listed below for RSVP form.

Students can find the applications on our website, roughriderelectric.com. Forms are also available at our local offices in Hazen and Dickinson.

Fill out our online application or mail paper applications to Roughrider Electric Cooperative, Attn: Scholarship Committee, 800 Hwy. Dr., Hazen, ND 58545.

Return completed applications to Roughrider Electric Cooperative before Feb. 4, 2019. ■



Jen Grosz represents the Roughrider membership during monthly board meetings. She compares her role to bumpers in bowling, and says she is there to keep the business within the lanes. "Cooperatives have lawyers to make sure the corporate rules and corporate formalities are being followed. This protects the interests of the members at all times," she says.

JENNIFER GROSZ

Protecting the interests and investments of the members

STORY AND PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Roughrider Electric Cooperative members may only see Jennifer Grosz at the cooperative's annual meeting, but she holds a regular presence in the board room every month. An attorney for Ebeltoft . Sickler . Lawyers PLLC in Dickinson, Grosz was hired by the Roughrider board in 2008 to provide legal counsel to the board of directors.

Roughrider is overseen by a board of nine directors who are electric cooperative members. Elected by the member-owners they represent, directors take questions, concerns and suggestions into the board room. During monthly meetings, they exchange information and

strategize for the cooperative's progressive growth.

Directors have a fiduciary responsibility to the cooperative. They exercise care, time and responsibility in reviewing co-op matters. Because they are also owners of the cooperative, they treat the business like their own.

Grosz attends board meetings, reports what she's been working on, and listens to the issues the directors are discussing. She compares her role to bumpers in bowling, and says she is there to keep the business within the lanes.

"Cooperatives have lawyers to make sure the corporate rules and corporate formalities are being

MEET JENNIFER GROSZ

Jennifer Grosz is a 2005 graduate of the University of Nebraska College of Law. She focuses her practice primarily in the areas of business solutions, personal planning, real estate, and mineral and environmental. Jen has a particular interest in working with businesses, from creation, day-to-day matters from contracts to human resources issues, through succession planning. She also enjoys working with individuals in the area of estate and personal planning, and serving on the board of non-profit entities and giving estate planning seminars.

followed. This protects the interests of the members at all times," she says. "When board members come up with ideas, they discuss them and receive my feedback right away, to make sure their decisions do not have unintended consequences. My job is to say, 'Here is something you might want to think about to determine whether or not you want to proceed. Are the risks worth the rewards?' My job is to outline that for everybody right at that time. Ultimately, they are the ones who make the decisions."

She also serves as a resource for employees, who regularly answer members' questions ranging from capital credits and easements to high bills and more.

"The employees are the front lines, and they address some key member issues. In my experience, the employees want nothing more than to do what is best for the members. They want to make sure they are doing it in a way that is equitable

and correct,” she says. “Management and the board have made my counsel available to them, so they can do their jobs to the best of their abilities.”

Grosz doesn’t mind those questions, and in fact, encourages them. The cooperative business model is unique in that it’s not a profit-driven model, unlike an investor-owned utility.

“It’s not about, ‘What is the return going to look like this year?’

It has a much more personal, holistic approach. It’s really about creating the best environment for our members to thrive both in their personal lives and in their professional lives, because cooperatives are rural electric cooperatives for a reason; we are rural. Many of our customers are business owners of some sort, if they are farmers and ranchers,” she says.

The Dickinson area provides an urban check-and-balance within the Roughrider membership that is unique among cooperatives. The members who live in apartment complexes and residential areas served by Roughrider learn the cooperative business model and receive the benefits while living in a city.

“One of the many benefits of being an electric cooperative member is capital credits. We can show them if we are prudent with the money they pay for their electric service, then they eventually get some of it back,” she says.

The oil load adds an interesting mix to the Roughrider membership. Grosz says the board members are mindful of making sure the cooperative has enough plant in place to serve these larger business consumers, yet careful to balance the needs of members of all sizes so there are no deficiencies in service.

The directors play an important role at Roughrider, and members do, too. Grosz says it’s equally important for members to ask, “How can I help my cooperative?” One way to be active and involved is to attend your annual meeting. This year’s annual meeting will be held June 5 in Dickinson.

“Annual meetings give you a really good idea of what your cooperative is doing. You have an opportunity to talk to other members, as well as the co-op board of directors, co-general managers and employees, and provide feedback so they can learn what is important to you, and you

can learn what is important to them,” she says. “I know from personal experience, they want to make sure the members’ interests are their guiding philosophy and principles. The annual meeting is a great place to have that communication and make sure everyone is on the same page.”

Grosz encourages members to stay in touch with Roughrider throughout the year, by calling or stopping by the Dickinson or Hazen offices, reading the local pages of *North Dakota Living*, checking the website www.roughriderelectric.com and following the cooperative on Facebook.

“There are a lot more resources available than you ever thought possible,” she says. “There are loans available for energy efficiency. There are people who will make sure that you are doing things in an energy-efficient way. If you have a question about your bill and spikes that don’t seem right, they are going to make sure you didn’t do anything that has an unintended consequence. They are there to make sure you are getting the most low-cost and reliable energy possible, in the safest manner.” ■



Holiday closings

Our entire organization wishes our member-owners a very Merry Christmas, and a safe and Happy New Year! In observance of the holidays in December and January, Roughrider Electric will be closed:

**Monday, Dec. 24, and Tuesday, Dec. 25, for Christmas
Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2019, for New Year’s Day**

Line crews will be available in the case of an emergency power outage.

JUNE 15-21, 2019

WRITE A WINNING ESSAY AND

WIN A TRIP OF A LIFETIME!

AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Roughrider Electric Cooperative.
- If you have a question, contact Brad Quenette, Roughrider Electric, at the address listed below, or call 701-748-2293 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 25, 2019. Emailed entries should be directed to bquenette@roughriderelectric.com, and hard-copy entries mailed to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, Roughrider Electric Cooperative, 800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545-4737.

TOP 3 REASONS

TO ENTER THE ESSAY-WRITING CONTEST

1. All-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., compliments of Roughrider Electric Cooperative.
2. A whole week to visit unforgettable historic monuments, museums and the U.S. Capitol.
3. A learning experience you'll never forget.

ESSAY QUESTION:

Electric cooperatives are member-owned and controlled. As a future member-owner of your cooperative, describe ways that smart technologies and social media might be used to communicate with young adults. How might they be used to increase awareness and interest in the many career opportunities with electric cooperatives?

CHECK OUT THE ESSAY-CONTEST GUIDELINES AT www.ndyouthtour.com

HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES & JUNIORS

North Dakota Electric Cooperative

YOUTH TOUR

**Local jobs. Local commitment.
National network to make sure
issues that affect electricity are
decided in your best interests.**

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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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