



ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

DECEMBER 2022

Franklund retiring from Roughrider Electric

BY ANNE HANSEN



Don Franklund receives a leadership award.

After more than 46 years in the industry, and 15 years as co-general manager and CEO of Roughrider Electric Cooperative, Don Franklund has announced his retirement.

Franklund announced his intentions of retirement to the board of directors and will serve as co-general manager/CEO until the new co-general manager/CEO begins in 2023.

Early beginnings

Sleeves rolled up and ready to work, Franklund, 16 years old at the time, received his first taste of serving cooperative members by trenching cables for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative. Little did Franklund know he would be returning to the cooperative several years later, but in a much different capacity.

For Franklund, the energy industry was always a passion, stemming from his father, who was an electrician. After graduating from Mandan High

School, he obtained a degree as a lineworker. A year into the field, during a stormy night changing crossarms in the hail, he vividly remembers asking himself if he wanted to do this for the rest of his life.

After that experience, Franklund found another field in the energy industry and went back to school to pursue a degree in electrical engineering from North Dakota State University. His new degree led him out of state to Denver, Colo. Although he traveled to a few more states for employment opportunities, his heart returned him home to North Dakota to raise his family.

In 1991, Franklund was hired as general manager/CEO for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative. Franklund reflected that his first day of work would serve as an omen for his career.

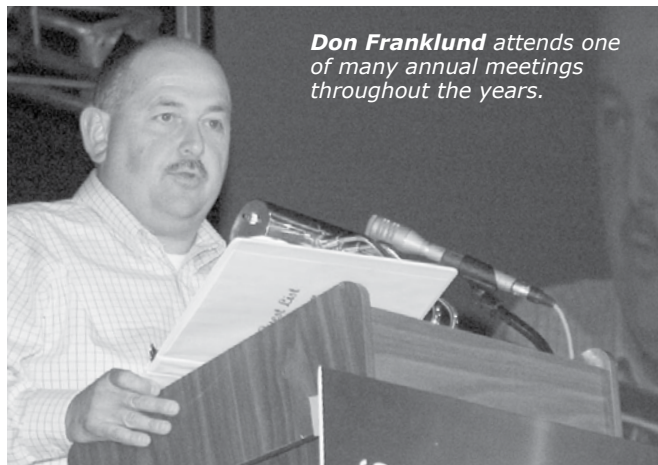
“On my first day as general manager, I was driving from Bismarck to Flasher, and Highway 6 was under construction, which resulted in no pavement and a little bit of a bumpy ride. On the way home that night, I received a flat tire,” he said. “The road isn’t always smooth, and it is likely to have rough patches and stops along the way, but it’s all about the people that are along on the journey with you, and that is how you determine the quality of your journey.”

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What's inside:

- Archery team aims to improve skills
- Apply for Youth Tour
- Scholarships available

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Don Franklund attends one of many annual meetings throughout the years.

Innovating along the way

In 2007, many electric cooperatives were struggling with a declining membership and an increased cost of doing business. To survive, they needed to find innovative ways to prepare for the future. When Slope Electric Cooperative's general manager resigned, the Slope Electric board approached the boards of Mor-Gran-Sou and Roughrider and suggested they form a temporary management alliance.

"It was a bold step toward managing all of our cooperatives' futures," Franklund said.

The alliance would allow the cooperatives to remain as separate businesses with their own identities, assets and obligations, and retain their authority. Franklund embraced the spirit of an alliance, which supports the sharing of employee skills, equipment and more.

During his time serving as co-general manager/CEO of KEM Electric, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, Slope Electric and Roughrider Electric, Franklund has seen many changes and challenges along the way.

"I remember as a new manager in 1994, a manager in his mid-60s approached me and told me he was jealous of all the things I was going to be able to see and do during my career," he said. "I never understood that until recently, and now I am the one jealous of all the things the cooperatives will get to see in the coming years as we face a changing industry. Yet, some of my

fondest memories are happening now, as I see the fruits of my labor mature and see employees who we have hired as young individuals grow into what they are today."

Lasting impact

Over the years, Franklund has attended over 1,000 board meetings and 73 annual meetings, along the way meeting countless members and mentors.

"Along the way, I have found it best to always focus on the mission on why we exist – to provide affordable, reliable and safe energy for our members," Franklund said.

"Don's focus has always been on what best serves the member," said co-general manager/CEO Travis Kupper. "He has a knack for evaluating every situation and making sure that every option has been explored to find the best solutions for the cooperative member."

That focus throughout the years earned Franklund the respect of many of his peers, and many look to him for advice and counsel.

"While having a co-manager is a unique situation, it has served as a peer sounding board. I will be forever grateful for the years I have been able to work with him in this capacity," Kupper said.

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives recognized Franklund as an effective spokesperson and leader, and a strong representative of North Dakota's electric cooperatives, when he was awarded the Cooperative Leadership Award.

Franklund credits those who have mentored him throughout the years.

"I had so many colleagues along the way who didn't think they were mentors, but were," Franklund said. "That included people like Bob McPhail, Ron Harper, Vern Dosch, Paul Sukut, Jeff Nelson and so many more."

Roughrider Electric wishes Franklund the best of luck in his retirement and future endeavors, and thanks him for the years he has spent serving our members. ■

Operation Roundup helps archery team reach goals

BY RACHEL NEFF



The Mercer County archery team.

At the signal of a whistle, young archers in Mercer County let go of the bowstring, with hopes of hitting a bullseye. The 4-H archery team, consisting of kids ranging from 8 to 13 years old, practice weekly, putting their patience, steadiness and most importantly, listening to the test.

Although learning archery skills is the goal, the Mercer County archery team is about more than learning how to fling arrows at targets. It also teaches kids valuable lessons.

“You would be surprised at the amount of teamwork these kids have learned,” said Lindy Suelzle, a certified Level 1 instructor for the Mercer County archery team. “They love to see each other do well and cheer everyone on. It’s really cool to see.”

Early beginnings

The 4-H Youth Development program is known to support learning environments for all youth, while fostering leadership and volunteerism, as well as strengthening families and communities. It is no surprise when Suelzle started the team through 4-H that it would become a family affair.

Suelzle had noticed a rising interest in archery among kids in the local community, yet nothing allowed them to come together to practice

and compete.

“I had thought if anyone is going to do this, it is going to be me,” she said. The archery program came to fruition with her persistence and the expertise of her husband, Allen.

“He is a big help, being able to size the bows correctly and make sure their sight is at the right height,” Lindy said. “It is a group effort, and I could not do it without him or the help of other parents.”

In addition to her husband, two of her children, Brielle, 12, and Brody, 9, especially had a peaked interest, as the Suelzles are avid bowhunters. Now, both are on the team and able to perfect their skills and compete in the near future.

With the club forming in the fall of 2021, Lindy had no idea what to expect, as the team’s numbers doubled the next year.

“It was nerve-wracking right away to see how the kids would respond to instruction and commands, but they caught on to everything fast,” she said, noting the young archers must abide by their instructor’s whistle system at each practice to know what to do and to ensure safety.

“They are very good listeners with a true passion for the sport,” Lindy said.

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Emma Rasch, a student at Hazen Middle School, practices drawing her bow at the Buffalo Valley Archery Club in Hazen.

Manager's message: May your holiday season be merry and bright



Travis Kupper

The holidays are a time of year many of us eagerly anticipate. The season is marked by special foods, seasonal decorations and lots of festivities. In our service area, many members look forward to annual traditions.

We cherish carrying on old family traditions and enjoy creating new ones. For me personally, I look forward to more time spent with family and friends.

However, given the hustle and bustle of the season, the holidays can also offer an opportunity to slow down and reflect. All of us at Roughrider Electric Cooperative are grateful for you, the members of the co-op.

You see, one of our founding principles as a co-op is "concern for community." While our main focus is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we want to give back. We want to help our membership thrive.

Reflection

In looking back at this past year, I'm grateful we were able to make a positive impact in our local area. Through programs such as Operation Round Up, we collected close to \$40,000, thanks to your contributions. As a result of your

generosity, we were able to help worthy charities in our service territory. We continue to work closely with our local high schools to award college scholarships. In 2022, we awarded \$8,000 to local scholars.

There are other ways we can help, including finding ways to save energy at home. We want you to know we're here to help.

Looking ahead

Looking ahead to 2023, we hope you will share your opinions with us. We recognize our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we continually seek your input. Whether through community events, our social media channels or the annual meeting, we want to hear from you. We are led by you – the members of the co-op – and we depend on your feedback.

As we prepare for next year, we look forward to the opportunity to serve you and the greater community. On behalf of the Roughrider Electric family, we hope your holidays are indeed merry and bright! ■



Board meeting highlights

When, where and who: The board of directors at Roughrider Electric Cooperative met at Roughrider's Hazen office on Oct. 28.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The board reviewed and approved the minutes of the Sept. 30 meeting.

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

WDUS/3C updates: The board was provided with a September report for WDUS and its subsidiaries.

Board member reports: Attendees at the 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.

Operations report: Jason Bentz provided the board with additional information on his written report.

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

ESSAY QUESTION:

If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate, you will be traveling to Washington, D.C., to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?

TOP 3 REASONS

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



- 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 any questions, please contact Brad Quenette, Roughrider Electric, at 800-748-5533 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 20, 2023. You can email entries to Brad Quenette at bquenette@roughriderelectric.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, 800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545-4737.



CHECK OUT THE ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES AT

<https://www.roughriderelectric.com/youth-tour>

Roughrider Electric supports students with scholarships

Roughrider Electric takes pride in assisting with the development of rural leadership through our scholarship program.

We are happy to continue our scholarship program and offer scholarships to qualifying seniors, who must be dependents of Roughrider Electric members.



Visit our website for applications and more detailed information.
www.roughriderelectric.com

Complete applications and send to: bquenette@roughriderelectric.com or by mailing to:

Roughrider Electric Cooperative
Attn: Scholarship Committee
800 Highway Dr.
Hazen, ND 58545

Return completed application before Feb. 1, 2023.

Area high school scholarship

Roughrider Electric Cooperative will award nine \$500 scholarships. Each school in our service area chooses one recipient. School representatives from Belfield, Beulah, Center-Stanton, Dickinson High, Dickinson Trinity, Hazen, Richardton-Taylor, South Heart and Dickinson Hope Christian Academy choose a graduating senior to receive the funds. Contact your school counselor for more information. The deadline to apply is Feb. 1, 2023

\$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship

Roughrider Electric will award a \$1,000 scholarship to a student who is already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program. The student must attend an accredited two- or four-year program, university or vocational/tech school. All applicants must have parents or guardians who are members of the co-op.

Lineworker scholarship from 3C Construction

Owned in part by Roughrider Electric, 3C Construction employs lineworkers who travel, plowing cable and assisting with projects as needed. 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 whose parents are members of Roughrider Electric.

Luck-of-the-draw scholarship

Roughrider Electric will award three \$500 luck-of-the-draw scholarships to be drawn at our annual meeting. All applicants will need to RSVP for the meeting.

High school scholarship outside service area

Roughrider will award one \$500 scholarship. See roughriderelectric.com/scholarships for details.

Mechanic scholarships from 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 are dependents of a Roughrider Electric member. A completed application is required.

Students can get the applications from our website, www.roughriderelectric.com, or call the office in Hazen. Applications can be filled out online and emailed to bquenette@roughriderelectric.com, or printed and mailed to: Roughrider Electric Cooperative, Attn: Scholarship Committee, 800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545-4737.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Safety Starts with ME: Tyler Phelps

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards.

"During the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators," said Tyler Phelps, a journeyman lineworker for Roughrider Electric Cooperative.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates 47,700 home fires occur each year in the United States due to electrical failure or malfunction. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

1. **Don't overload outlets.** Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections. They should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.
2. **Never leave space heaters unattended.** If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least 3 feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.
3. **Inspect heating pads and electric blankets.** These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads – look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or



electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

4. **Use portable generators safely.** Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system, without having an approved transfer switch installed by a licensed electrician. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Operate it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

"In addition to the tips from the National Fire Protection Association, we also remind everyone to check their fire alarms to ensure their families safety in case of an emergency," Phelps said. ■

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Operation Round Up

“Archery is an expensive sport, with bows costing anywhere from \$300 to \$400,” Lindy said. “On our team, each kid has to provide their own bow, which not everyone is able to do.”

Through the help of Roughrider Electric Cooperative’s Operation Round Up, Lindy and her Mercer County archery team received a grant of \$1,000 to help cover some expenses in the up-and-coming club.

Operation Round Up is a community service through Roughrider Electric that allows members to round up their electric bill to the next highest dollar. The remaining cents go into a fund, which then can be given to a variety of worthy causes throughout the service area. By giving a few cents each month, Roughrider Electric Cooperative members are making a big impact. The program is voluntary, so call us or email info@roughriderelectric.com if you would like to participate in this wonderful program.

We have distributed over \$600,000 since inception in 2002.

“Operation Round Up has allowed kids an opportunity and given them a chance,” Lindy says. “With this extra money, we are able to invest in our youth and purchase the equipment we need. We are so grateful and have a couple ways in which we will use the money. We hope to purchase two bows that kids can use if they do not have a bow of their own. We are also in need of targets similar to those used at competition.”

Competition for members of the Mercer County archery team is expected to start in January and continue throughout the spring.

If you or someone you know may be interested in applying for Operation Round Up, an online application can be found at roughriderelectric.com/operation-round, along with guidelines. Deadlines to apply for Operation Round Up donations are July 1 and Jan. 1. ■



www.roughriderelectric.com

HAZEN OFFICE

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7:00 a.m. - 3:30 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 800-748-5533
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; Henster	794-3779
Callen Schoch; New England	290-3836

MANAGEMENT

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



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facebook.com/RoughriderElectric

Holiday closings

Roughrider Electric Cooperative wishes our members a very merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year! In observance of the holidays, we will be closed Dec. 23-26 and on Jan. 2 for New Year’s. Line crews will be available in the case of an emergency or power outage.