

ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

DECEMBER 2023

Hazen Public School LEGO League



PHOTO BY BRAD QUENETTE

What's inside:

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PHOTO BY BRAD QUENETTE

Making a difference a few cents at a time: **Hazen Public School LEGO League**



BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

Each year, Roughrider Electric Cooperative members have the opportunity to round up their electric bills to the next highest dollar. The difference gets deposited to Roughrider Electric's Operation Round Up fund.

Twice a year, the Operation Round Up board of directors meets and distributes grants to a variety of worthy causes in Roughrider Electric's service area. Since its inception in 2002, Roughrider Electric's Operation Round Up has been able to give back \$685,000 to its service area.

Hazen Public School LEGO League

One of the community programs Operation Round Up funds assisted is the Hazen Public School (HPS) LEGO League. The Operation Round Up funds helped the club with expenses for student competitions.

"The funds helped purchase new LEGOs, materials for presentations, as well as shirts for competitions," says Alison Peterson, HPS LEGO League advisor.

The LEGO League is an after-school robotics program for students in grades five through eight.

The HPS LEGO League is part of FIRST LEGO League, which is a worldwide STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning experience for students. Each year, FIRST LEGO League unveils the theme for the season. The 2023-24 theme is "MASTERPIECE," which focuses on creative arts.

"These competitions are a chance for students to work together and be challenged," Peterson says.

About 20 HPS students take part in the after-school activity of LEGO League, which is enough students for two teams, including a fifth-grade team and a team for the other grades. Students work together to decide who is going to take on the roles of designer, builder, coder or creator.

"There is a lot of collaboration and teamwork that goes into these activities," Peterson notes.

Each team receives a base model robot and gets to work, choosing the mini missions from the season's theme. HPS LEGO League will attend a regional competition in early 2024, where the students will not only have a robot ready for a mission, but will also have a skit ready to aid in the presentation of the

robot design to judges.

“Seeing the students’ faces when we go to competitions, and they are able to interact with students their age who have the same interests as them, is really rewarding,” Peterson says.

More than building

“LEGO League gives HPS students additional opportunities to work as a team and build lifelong skills,” Peterson says.

LEGO League is a hands-on learning experience for students to learn teamwork, problem-solving, researching, coding and countless other skills that will assist them in their high school and young adult years.

“We live in a rural community and getting these STEM skills in front of students as soon as possible is important to building future careers in our community,” Peterson says. ■



PHOTO BY BRAD QUENETTE

Operation Round Up 2023 giving

The Hazen Public School LEGO League was one of the many organizations receiving funding from Roughrider Electric Cooperative’s Operation Round Up. Others include:

- Badlands Art Association
- Beulah Elementary School
- BIO Girls
- Dickinson Trinity Catholic Schools
- Elks Camp Grassick
- Energy Capital Cooperative Child Care
- Girl Scouts – Dakota Horizons
- Hazen Public Library
- Hill Top Heritage Foundation
- Hope’s Landing WEM

- Mercer County Fair
- Oliver County Fair
- Oliver County Rural Fire Protection District
- Richardton Baseball Club
- Richardton Healthcare Foundation
- Stark County Fair Association
- Zap Rural Fire Protection District



For more information on Operation Round Up, scan the QR code or visit <https://roughriderelectric.com/operation-round>.

Manager's Message

A look to 2024



Jason Bentz

As we approach the most wonderful time of the year, we wanted to take a moment to extend our warmest holiday

greetings to each and every one of you. The Christmas season is a time for reflection, gratitude and joy, and I hope you find the space to enjoy these moments with your loved ones.

This holiday season also marks the beginning of a new year, filled with fresh possibilities and exciting opportunities. As we embrace the festive spirit and bid farewell to this year, let's also look forward to the challenges and achievements awaiting us in the next.

In the coming year, we will have the chance to make a significant impact on our organization by selecting members for our board of directors. Our board plays a crucial role in shaping the direction of our cooperative, and I encourage you to consider taking on this important responsibility.

Serving on the board of directors is not only a great way to contribute to the growth and success of our organization, but it's also an excellent opportunity to develop leadership skills, broaden your horizons and work closely with a dedicated

group of individuals who share your passion for our mission.

In the weeks ahead, Roughrider Electric Cooperative will be sharing more information about the nomination and election process. I encourage you to reach out to current board members if you have any questions or would like to learn more about what it entails. Whether you decide to run for the board or support your fellow members in their pursuit, your engagement in this process is vital to our collective success.

As we celebrate the holiday season and prepare to welcome the new year, I want to express my gratitude to the current directors and our employees on their hard work, dedication and unwavering commitment to our cooperative. Your contributions are what make us a great team. I have no doubt we will continue to achieve remarkable things in the year ahead.

May this holiday season be filled with laughter and cherished moments, and may the coming year bring us all the success and growth for which we aim. We look forward to what lies ahead and the incredible journey we will embark on together.

Warmest wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy New Year! ■



POWERING ON: ROUGH RIDER ELECTRIC'S CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2023

HEATING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE
LIHEAP APPLICATIONS OPEN NOW THROUGH MAY 31, 2024.
SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION.



DEC. 25-26

ROUGH RIDER ELECTRIC OFFICES CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF CHRISTMAS.
THE LINE CREWS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.



JANUARY 2024

OPERATION ROUND UP DEADLINE IS JAN. 1
LAST DAY TO SUBMIT OPERATION ROUND UP APPLICATIONS. SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION.



JAN. 1

ROUGH RIDER ELECTRIC OFFICES CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF NEW YEAR'S DAY.
THE LINE CREWS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.



JAN. 19

YOUTH TOUR APPLICATION DEADLINE



FEB. 1

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE



HAPPY
Holidays



2024 SCHOLARSHIPS

DEADLINE: FEB. 1, 2024

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



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.

\$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.

Lineworker scholarship from 3C Construction

Roughrider Electric is offering one \$500 scholarship sponsored by 3C Construction, LLC. 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.

Luck-of-the-draw scholarship

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

High school scholarship outside service area


Roughrider will award one \$500 scholarship.

Mechanic scholarships from West Dakota Utility Services

Roughrider Electric is offering one \$500 scholarship sponsored by West Dakota Utility Services, LLC. 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.

Students can call the Hazen office with questions. Applications can also 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 

All applicants must have a parent or guardian who is a Roughrider Electric member.

Safety Starts with ME: Holiday lighting tips

Amid the cheer that defines the holiday season, holiday lighting is one tradition bringing warmth and radiance to our homes. As we prepare to deck the halls and string those festive lights, it's vital to remember safety is the true star of the show.

"We know this is an exciting time for people to get ready for the holidays, but we want members to take a couple of things into account when decorating, including safety and light selection," says Anthony Schaff, meter technician at Roughrider Electric Cooperative.

Most holiday decorations involve some installation at heights, so it is important to keep the following in mind while decorating indoors and outside:

1. Have a ground crew (one or two people) to steady your ladder and pass up the decoration, which is an invaluable part of safety and to keep you supplied with untangled light strings, fasteners and encouragement.
2. Remember to keep a safe distance from your overhead electric service.
3. Don't overreach. If you cannot get to a point with your body completely centered between the sides of the ladder, get down and relocate the ladder.
4. Don't overextend the ladder. If your ladder is too short, rent or borrow a longer one. A ladder extended beyond its working limits is dangerous, as is standing on rungs too close to the top.
5. Do not overload circuits by stringing more light sets together than the manufacturer recommends. Check the packaging for details.



6. Check your wires for breaks and cracks in the insulation that can lead to shorts.

Safety Starts with ME (and YOU)!

Make this holiday season unforgettable with your lighting inside and out, while staying safe for you and your family and making memories all will cherish for years to come. During this holiday season, Roughrider Electric wants to thank you for being a part of our cooperative family and hope you and your loved ones have a merry Christmas and happy New Year! ■

Stay connected wherever you go!

Planning to soak in the sun this winter? Be sure to sign up for SmartHub and complete the notification section to receive important cooperative updates, like planned power outages, while you are away!

You will receive a notification of important information related to your electric service. If you do not have a SmartHub account, set one up by going to www.roughriderelectric.com and select the SmartHub link in the top right corner. From there, you will be able to enroll as a new user.

Now is a good time to also make sure Roughrider Electric has your current contact information. To verify your telephone number or email address, or request an update, call 800-748-5533, 701-748-2293 (Hazen office) or 701-483-5111 (Dickinson office). Members can also login to their SmartHub account to update your information.

Roughrider Electric also has a Facebook page. Please like and follow to learn timely cooperative and community news. Members, thank you for staying in touch and helping us keep you informed. ■

APPLY FOR A TRIP OF A LIFETIME



WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

An all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., paid for by Roughrider Electric Cooperative. A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world class museums, learning about electric cooperatives and meeting elected officials. Developing lifelong friendships with delegates from across the country!



JUNE 15 TO 21, 2024

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?

HOW TO APPLY

To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school, and you and your parents or guardian must be served by Roughrider Electric Cooperative.

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.

Questions? Call Brad at 701-748-2293 during regular business hours.

The deadline is Jan. 19, 2024.

EMPOWER



LEARN MORE AT
ROUGHRIDERELECTRIC.COM/YOUTH-TOUR

Roughrider Electric board meeting highlights: Sept. 29, 2023

The September meeting of the board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative was held on Sept. 29 at Roughrider Electric's Dickinson office. President Greg Steckler called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Roughrider Electric's general counsel, Jennifer Grosz, was designated as the meeting recorder. Board quorum was met. Also present were Roughrider Electric Co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Alex Craigmile, Director of Key Accounts Leonard Hibl and Board Liaison Connie Hill. The meeting commenced with the board reviewing Roughrider Electric's mission statement.

Consent agenda: Amendments were proposed to the consent agenda. The agenda was approved as amended. The Aug. 25 meeting minutes were also approved. Capital credit estate retirements, proposed member applications and cancellations were presented and approved.

Strategic/action: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Region 5-6 meeting and a Basin Electric Power Cooperative update.

West Dakota Utility Services, 3C and Basin Electric's CEO reports were presented by Bentz and Kupper.

Action items: The board reviewed and approved the 2024 capital budget and a few annual financial items.

Department reports: Craigmile reviewed the August financial reports. Craigmile also stated the 2024 budget is being drafted. Shawn Olson, line superintendent, provided a written report, which included load inquiries, line inspections and new services. Hibl presented a report, which included an update on the *North Dakota Living Study* Committee meeting. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar and Grosz provided reports, which were also reviewed.

Discussion/general information: Upcoming meetings and events were shared.

The board then entered into an executive session.

The meeting concluded with the adjournment. Troy Sailer, secretary, certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting date was set for Oct. 27 at Roughrider Electric's office in Hazen. ■



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 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
Jesse Flath, Hazen.....	880-0386
Darell Herman; Beulah.....	873-4371
Arnold Kainz; Dickinson.....	483-8207
Dan Price; Hensler.....	794-3779
Callen Schoch; New England.....	290-3836

MANAGEMENT

Travis Kupper.....	Co-GM/CEO
Jason Bentz.....	Co-GM/CEO



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Roughrider Electric Cooperative's offices will be closed Dec. 25 and 26 in observance of Christmas. Our offices will also be closed Jan. 1, 2024, in observance of New Year's Day.

The line crew will be available in case of an emergency. We hope that everyone has a safe and merry holiday season!