

ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

JANUARY 2022

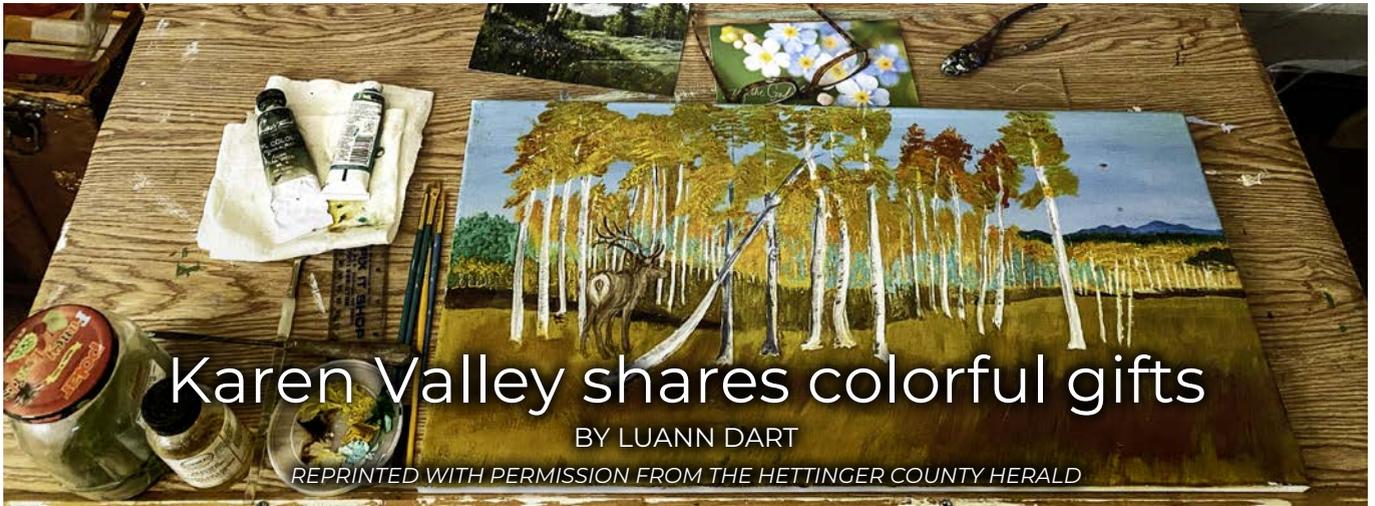


What's inside:

- Karen Valley shares colorful gifts
- Manager's message: Happy New Year!
- Co-op offers scholarships
- Prepare for tax season with SmartHub!
- Statement of nondiscrimination

Colorful gifts

Karen Valley stands amidst her artistic pursuits in her Lefor home.



Karen Valley shares colorful gifts

BY LUANN DART

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Whether it's with pencil or paintbrush, Karen Valley is an artist. Her home brims with creativity. Nearly every inch of wall space is neatly squared off with framed paintings. Notebooks of penciled stories lean against each other in a box. On the shelf above are the novels born from those handwritten manuscripts.

A half-finished oil painting rests on a table, its creator admitting her mojo is missing.

"I have to be inspired and if I'm not, well, forget it," she says of the unperfected painting.

Scattered across the table are tools of the trade – brushes, a palette of yellows and greens, and a cornucopia of oil paints stored in a wooden painter's box.

"It's a gift," she says of her artistic flair. Valley, who is 87 years old, certainly has a gift. As a storyteller. A painter. A musician.

"My friends call me glib. My son calls me eccentric," she says with a smile.

The Lefor resident and a member of Roughrider Electric Cooperative may be all of that. And more.

Coloring her world

Valley hopes to inspire others to be creative through her hand-drawn children's coloring books, most nature-inspired.

Her pencil drawings have been reproduced into seven coloring books: "Don't Bug Me," "Birds of a Feather," "Observe the Lilies," "Color the Big Horns," "On the North 40," "Horses in Fact and Fantasy" and "Foxes Have Dens."

Her first was "Foxes Have Dens," which she created for the state of Wyoming during an oil boom to help teach urban children about the native wildlife.

"They didn't know a cow from a bear. So, Wyoming decided they needed a book of native wildlife so they could teach these kids what really is here," she says.

"Horses in Fact and Fantasy" is more fanciful, including horses with butterfly wings.

"Birds of a Feather" was the most difficult, she says. "There's a whole lot more to a bird than I ever imagined. I struggled with this. ... This was one tough book."

"On the North 40" took her about five months to create, as she captured different types of rural barns and structures in the coloring book, driving the countryside to find barns with character.

Her 48-page, spiral-bound coloring books cost her \$7 to self-publish in small volumes and she sells them for \$7.

"I just want to share my gift. I want to prompt other people to use whatever talent they have," she says. "Let's let these kids use their imaginations. ... If you want your children to have ideas, let them do it themselves."

Next, she wants to do a coloring book about fish, retrieving a volume from a set of encyclopedias printed when President Franklin Roosevelt was president to show hand-drawn illustrations of fish like those she would like to draw.

"I enjoy drawing. I would rather draw. Just give me pencil and paper and I'm a happy artist," she

says. "I dream about drawing pictures. I can draw horses in my sleep."

Sharing her story

Valley is a musician, writes novels and paints, too, recalling writing songs and singing them at school when she was in second grade in Iowa.

She began writing novels when "I found out what a pencil was for," she says, completing her first when she was 11 years old.

But her artistic talents weren't appreciated by her family.

"My parents tried to stop it from the beginning. My mother's idea of what a successful woman is you marry a rich man," she says.

Valley describes her mother as suffering from clinical depression. "This prevented her from using all the talents she had, because she was really talented. ... Because of depression, she was dysfunctional. She never went anywhere," Valley says.

And upon her birth, Valley was rejected by her mother. Valley lived with an aunt and uncle until she was about 5 years old, then returned to her family. The family, with five children, lived in South Dakota in poverty through the 1930s.

But Valley persevered, continuing her art by enrolling in college in Wyoming.

"I wanted to know what was going on in the writing and art world and I thought if I went to school, I would find this out," she says. But in college, she found critics and what she describes as further disappointment, too.

"We talented people, we live right along the edge between sanity and the abyss," she says. "I just wanted to be better at what I was doing and I didn't find that."

She did, however, find her voice.

"Of making books, there is no end," she says, quoting scripture.

So, Valley has written 32 novels, all by hand, then self-publishing them in small quantities with a printer in Rapid City, S.D. She even illustrates them, too.

"The very best books are written by hand, pencil, ink," she says, "because there's a relationship between your brain and your hand. Whereas, if you sit at a computer, that's a disembodied voice. You can write it, but it doesn't have the essence of a person who

is gifted."

She does remember a professor's advice from college: Never write about anything you don't know about.

"Even God loves variety, beauty, color. Every person is a different variety, color, shade, weight, strength, so when you're writing a book or I'm drawing coloring books, you become that person," she says.

Writing books about ranch life and big-game hunting, she cooked at a hunting camp near Yellowstone National Park, then wrote two books from that experience, "The Last Hunt," and a sequel, "Credence Creek."

Her favorite novel is "Aurora Drifting," she says. While working for the *Cheyenne Tribune* in Wyoming, she met a woman whose husband tested recreational vehicles, such as snowmobiles, for companies.

"I thought, 'Why couldn't a woman do that?'" she says, which is the premise for the novel. Now, she is researching an idea to write a book that incorporates nanotechnology, researching the basics by reading "Nanotechnology for Dummies."

Widowed four times, Valley has five grown children, and arrived in Lefor by happenstance after living in her car for two years following the death of her fourth husband about 20 years ago. Now, she contentedly surrounds herself with her artistic pursuits.

She markets her books out of the backseat of her 30-year-old station wagon, selling her novels to libraries with a personal visit.

"There are typos in them, but if it's a good story, who cares?" she says. "I read about 200 books a year. If you do not read, you cannot write. I have never read a book that didn't have a typo in it. I even have a Bible that has a typo in it. We're imperfect, see. We just can't do it."

The last novel she wrote, "The Inconvenient Child," appeared on her front porch in November.

Arthritis is slowing her painting and has forced her to lay aside the guitar.

"To give up my music, it was the hardest thing I ever did," she says.

But that unfinished painting on her table will soon summon her back.

To order one of Valley's books, call her at 701-290-0382. ■

Manager's message: Happy New Year!



Travis Kupper

Happy New Year! We wish you and yours a safe, healthy and prosperous new year!

It is this time of year that evokes comfort and nostalgia, recalling family gatherings and traditions and often is a time for us to reflect on the past year.

Today and every day, I'm grateful for my own family as well as my co-op family.

At Roughrider Electric Cooperative, our team feels a strong connection to our community and our members, because we live here, too. This past year, we were driven by the motto, "Together we make a powerful difference," which was also the theme of our annual meeting.

The motto shines a light on how together we not only make a difference, but we accomplish more than we would independently and do so in a safe manner. We continued to work in our new normal and placed a heavy focus on the safety of our employees to ensure our workforce was able to be there for our members.

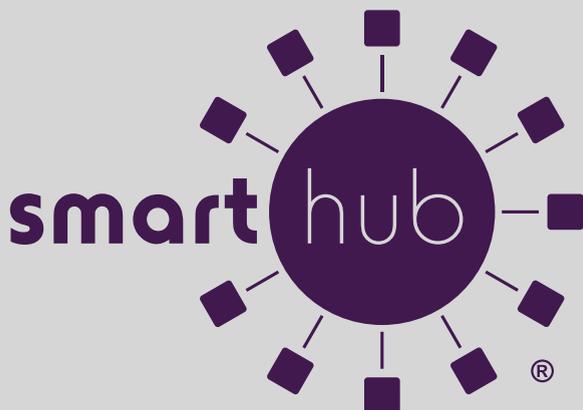
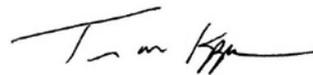
We are aided by the use of technology, which continues to play an important role. Holding virtual board and annual meetings is just one way we continue to find the beneficial use of technology can help our cooperatives.

In addition to helping members today, we're focusing on the future. We continued to have a reliable and financially sound year and expect the same for the future. At the end of the day, we are committed to you and the communities we serve.

At the heart of all we do is you – the members we proudly serve. Looking back, I'm grateful for so many wonderful community partners and for the positive impact we can continue to make.

Speaking on behalf of our team at Roughrider Electric, we know the future will be bright, because of you. During this new year, we wish you and your loved ones peace, joy and prosperity.

We look forward to serving you in 2022. ■



Prepare for tax season with SmartHub!

Print copies of your monthly utility bills for your tax records by logging into SmartHub! Visit www.roughriderelectric.com and click SmartHub to proceed to your billing history. If you have not signed up for SmartHub, you can set up a new, secure account.

Call 800-748-5533 with questions. ■

Co-op offers scholarships

Roughrider Electric Cooperative is offering \$8,500 in college scholarships to area students. The co-op 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.

Interested in applying?

Students should contact their school counselor for deadline information. The schools will 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 offering a \$1,000 scholarship from Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

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

Roughrider Electric Cooperative is also offering one \$500 lineworker scholarship from 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, and whose parents are members of Roughrider Electric.

Roughrider Electric is also offering one \$500 mechanic scholarship from West Dakota Utility Services (WDUS).

Also owned in part by Roughrider Electric, WDUS services utility vehicles, farm trucks and machinery, and equipment that needs hydraulic repairs or N.D. Department of Transportation certification.

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 whose parents are members of Roughrider Electric.



Roughrider Electric will award three \$500 luck-of-the-draw scholarships at our annual meeting on June 1.

All high school seniors whose parents 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. Students can find the applications and RSVP form on our website: www.roughriderelectric.com/scholarships.

You may also call 800-748-5533 to request an application. ■

**Mail applications to:
Roughrider Electric Cooperative
Attn: Scholarship Committee
800 Highway Dr.
Hazen, ND 58545**

The due date to apply is Feb. 1.

What to do during an outage



Roughrider Electric Cooperative strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. Roughrider Electric Cooperative wants you to remain safe during severe winter weather, so consider these tips.

To report an outage

- Confirm the outage. Check your own fuses and circuit breakers first.
- Check with a neighbor to confirm if he or she is also experiencing an outage before you call the cooperative. This will help your cooperative determine the extent of the outage.
- Call the cooperative. If the outage is widespread, the phone lines may be busy, but keep trying. Your cooperative will send a line crew to find the problem and restore power as quickly as possible.

Operate generator safely

- If your standby electric generator has been in storage since last winter, make sure it is still operating properly – before an outage occurs.
- Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations on how to use your generator.
- Most important is the transfer switch that disconnects the farm or home from the power line and connects it to the generator. It must be a double-throw transfer switch which prevents the generator from feeding electricity back onto the power line. This protects the lineworkers who may be working to restore your service.
- Do not operate a portable generator in your home, basement or garage. Generators can

quickly produce high levels of carbon monoxide, which can be deadly.

Assume downed lines are energized

- Always assume fallen power lines are energized. Stay at least 10 feet away from a downed power line and any nearby objects it may be touching, such as a fence or a tree limb.
- Contact your electric cooperative immediately to report downed power lines outside your home.
- Never attempt to move a downed power line. Call your local electric cooperative.

During a power outage

- Only use flashlights for emergency lighting. Candles can cause fires.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Most food requiring refrigeration can be kept safely in a closed refrigerator for several hours. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours.
- Never burn charcoal for heating or cooking indoors.
- Turn off or disconnect appliances and other equipment in case of a momentary power "surge" that can damage computers and other devices. Consider adding surge protectors. ■

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ELECTRIC SERVICE PANEL



Electricity plays an essential role in how your home operates. Whether watching TV, powering heating and cooling systems or charging a cellphone, we rely on our home's electrical system to provide us with power when and where we need it.

Let's take a look at one of the components of your home's electrical system, the electrical service panel.

Every home has a service panel that distributes electricity to switches, outlets and appliances. The service panel is usually found in the basement, garage or utility area.

When a short or overload shuts down power to a circuit, this is where you can restore the flow. It is also where you will shut down power to a circuit before starting a project or repair.

Fuses and circuit breakers

All service panels are equipped with fuses or circuit breakers that protect the wires in each circuit from overheating and causing a fire. In general, older service panels use fuses, while more modern systems rely on circuit breakers.

Fuses and circuit breakers are safety devices that help prevent overloading of your home electrical system and prevent fires. They stop the electrical current if it exceeds the safe level for some portion of your home's electrical system.

Fuses

Service panels installed before 1965 use fuses to protect each individual circuit. Each fuse is marked with a code, which provides information about the type of base and the degree of time delay, if any.

Once a fuse is blown, it must be unscrewed and thrown away. When replacing fuses in your service panel, always make sure the replacement fuse matches the amperage rating of the circuit.

Circuit breakers

All newer homes are protected by circuit breakers. Unlike a fuse that must be replaced when it blows, a circuit breaker that has "tripped" can be mechanically reset to resume operations once the problem has been resolved. A tripped breaker is likely the result of too many appliances overloading the circuit and should be fixed immediately.

Instructions for resetting a tripped breaker:

- Unplug or turn off appliances in the room.
- Find your main breaker panel and open the cover.
- Locate the tripped breaker. A tripped circuit breaker will be in the off position or in a middle position between on and off.
- To reset the breaker, switch it to off position and then back to on. This may restore power to the room. If the problem continues, there may be more serious issues. Contact an electrician to diagnose the problem.

Main breaker

Your home also includes a main breaker, which serves as the on and off switch for electricity to your entire home. During an emergency, you can turn off power to your entire home with this switch. Everyone in your home should know where this is located. ■

Statement of nondiscrimination

Roughrider Electric Cooperative Inc. is a recipient of federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410; 2) fax: 202-690-7442; or 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. Roughrider Electric Cooperative Inc. is an equal opportunity provider.

Report from THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OCT. 29, 2021

When, where and who: The board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative met at the Hazen headquarters on Nov. 19, 2021.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The board reviewed and approved the minutes of the Oct. 29, 2021, meeting.

Capital credit estate retirements: A list of capital credit estate retirements was provided to the board.

Co-general managers' report: Travis Kupper presented the co-general managers' report. He noted that the Western Area Power Association project 2022 rates continue to remain the same.

Basin update: A Basin update was provided by the co-general managers where it was noted that DGC's financials are faring better than budgeted.

NISC director election: The board

approved a ballot being casted in favor of Paul Fitterer for NISC Region 6 director.

Certification of NDAREC director: Arnold Kainz was elected.

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

Operations report: The board was directed to Jason Bentz's written report. He updated the board on material equipment contracts and pole contracts and purchases.

Upcoming meetings: The next board meeting was set for 9 a.m. MT on Dec. 17, 2021, at a location to be determined.

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

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. 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

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; Henster.....	794-3779
Greg Steckler; Dunn Center.....	548-8122
Callen Schoch; New England.....	290-3836

MANAGEMENT

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





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