

ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

JULY 2020

New transmission line adds capacity, reliability

In May, Roughrider Electric installed bird flight diverters on our new 115,000-volt transmission line that runs about 13 miles between the Hebron wind towers and Richardton area.

Built by Boldt Construction, the line will better serve our members in the Richardton and Lefor areas. Installing the diverters was the final part of the project.

Required by Rural Utilities Service, the diverters were placed every 50 feet to serve as a visual and deter birds from flying into the line. The line was energized when a pilot, mechanic and two linemen from Air2 installed the 1,517 diverters.

Roughrider Working Foreman Shawn Olson says the work was completed in four working days, versus doing the same job on a de-energized line in three weeks using two bucket trucks and four linemen.

Helicopter installation was the most safe and cost-effective way to meet the obligation and do our part.



PHOTOS BY SHAWN OLSON

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OLD RED OLD TEN SCENIC BYWAY

Slow down, take time and enjoy the drive

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

PHOTO BY BEN KUBISCHTA

Ben Kubischta has been to the top of mountains and had his foot in the ocean. While they were amazing experiences, he'd prefer to go to Hebron and have a burger at the Brick City Bar and Grill on Thursday nights. The real draw for him is driving the Old Red Old Ten Scenic Byway, and supporting local businesses along the way.

"When we take the time to absorb the beauty and wonder, and farms and towns along Old Red Old Ten, we shouldn't be surprised to learn this is a place that people would want to visit," says Kubischta, who serves as board president of Old Red Old Ten.

Running 108 miles through much of Roughrider Electric Cooperative's service area, Old Red Old Ten is North Dakota's most important and historic road, according to Kubischta, who managed the scenic byway program through the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT).

Stretching between the anchor cities of Dickinson and Mandan, travelers will see spectacular views of buttes, creeks and farmsteads.

In 1912, the American Automobile Association hired Anton Westgard to go on a pathfinding tour and identify routes across the United States. He made three transcontinental trips from New York through North Dakota to Seattle, down to San Francisco, back to New York, and then to Los Angeles marking the route in a five-

month period.

Westgard called the northern route Northwest Trail. By 1914 it became known as Red Trail, most likely for the red paint that was used in marking it. To encourage tourist travel, it became known as National Parks Highway. And in the 1920s when the state started marking highways, it was first ND 3 and then US 10.

Early automobile travel in the United States was tourist-related, because wealthy people had cars and could go on longer trips. Towns and entrepreneurs worked to secure the business tourists were bringing to their areas. Kubischta says the east-to-west roads across the United States were really important because that's where most of the commerce was going.

The Interstate system in North Dakota was developed to take the least amount of time and effort to build. It avoided rougher country when possible, and perhaps that's why some people say the view along the Interstate-94 is bland.

In comparison, just a short distance from the Interstate, Old Red Old Ten brings travelers close to buttes, streams, and the roadway geometrics of a time when travel was slower.

"When you drive this road, you can go back in time and get a feel for what the main highway was like prior to the Interstate," Kubischta says.

While it's a two-lane road rather than the Interstate's

four lanes, most of Old Red Old Ten is paved and it doesn't take much longer to get from Dickinson to Mandan driving the scenic route.

There are many attractions and unique businesses in the towns along the byway including Almont, New Salem, Glen Ullin, Hebron, Richardton, Taylor and Gladstone. One of them is Dacotah Clayworks, a pottery store in Hebron.

Owner Robin Reynolds spearheaded the application process of getting Old Red Old Ten registered as a scenic byway. It is the tenth, and last, scenic byway to have been accepted into NDDOT's program. She was motivated to take on the role, because she's an enthusiast for blacktop, backroad driving, and she owns a business within striking distance of the Interstate — and travelers weren't stopping.

Her philosophy is similar to the cooperative business model. "What's good for one is good for all," she says. "This byway helps all the area communities — and my business."

Robin grew up in North Dakota and moved out of state for 20 years, before returning in 1996. One day she decided to take a road trip, starting in Mandan and making her way west on Old Red Old Ten, just to see where it would go. At that time the blacktop had heaved and was broken in areas. While the drive wasn't ideal, she saw many unique attractions, like Lovers Cliff near Almont, Fort Sauerkraut in Hebron and the Little Badlands near Glen Ullin.

"The attraction for me is just being off the Interstate. That's number one on my list," she says. "Number two, I pull into some of the towns to see what is happening. If I need gas, I get gas, or get something to eat or do some shopping."

Rural residents in the Roughrider service area may travel to the anchor cities of Dickinson and Mandan for many of their needs.

"It's a good-neighbor act for the folks who live in the bigger cities to come to our towns, and do the same," she says.

The Byway Committee organizes two events to encourage people to drive Old Red Old Ten, and stop and support businesses and communities along the way.

The first is a bus tour of rural churches that have cultural and architectural interests along the byway. The second is the Old Red Trail rummage sale, which is held annually the first Saturday in June. Both were cancelled this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kubischta says early churches in North Dakota were built with love and paid for by people who did not have much money. The churches were gathering spaces for

communities, and were an important part of the North Dakota prairies, where people lived and visited.

"Not only will you see the beauty of the churches on the outside, but if you stop and close your eyes and listen, you can hear conversations that went on in 1932. Farmers talked about their crops on Sunday mornings after the service, and wondered if it was going to rain. Wives organized potlucks and children played, and families celebrated births and grieved deaths. The romance of our lives is held in these churches," he says.

During the Old Red Trail rummage sale, residents in the small towns along the byway offer sales, as well as some rural families along the way.

"It's a good way to experience small-town North Dakota," Kubischta says. "Drive the scenic byway, stop in the small towns, and visit the local cafes and stores. You might have so much fun, you decide to come back and end up somewhere you've never been — like the Muddy Creek Saloon in Almont."

To learn more about Old Red Old Ten events, visit www.oldredoldten.com, like and follow Old Red Old Ten Scenic Byway on Facebook, or call 701-878-4060. ■



COURTESY PHOTO

Robin Reynolds is the owner of Dacotah Clayworks in Hebron. She wanted to encourage Interstate travelers to take the more scenic byway route between Mandan and Dickinson, and stop and support small-town businesses along the way. She worked with the Hebron Economic Development Corporation and other community supporters to write an application for Old Red Old Ten to become the tenth scenic byway in the state. A non-profit board was established, and Reynolds currently serves as secretary.

ANNUAL MEETING / JUNE 3, 2020, HAZEN HIGH SCHOOL, HAZEN



POSTPONED

The Annual Meeting of Roughrider Electric Cooperative will be rescheduled due to the coronavirus.

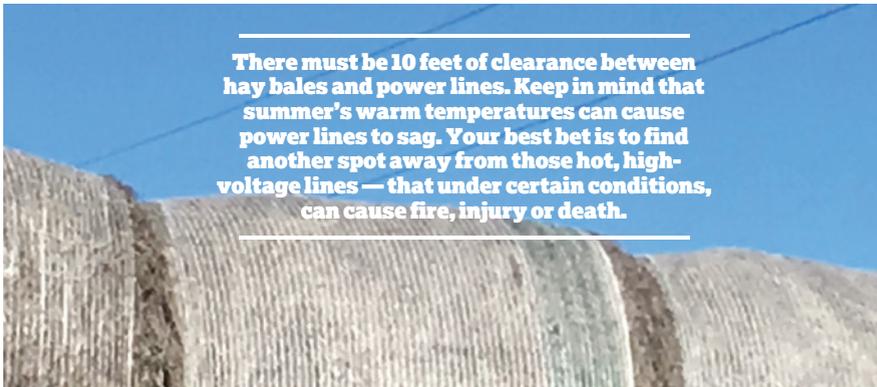
More information will be shared as it becomes available.

Annual Meeting **POSTPONED**

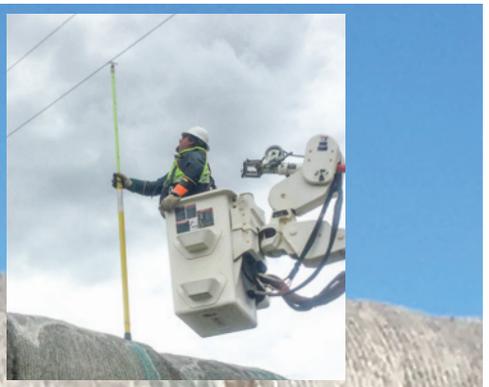
Members, your annual meeting of the membership scheduled for June 3 in Hazen was postponed. We do not know the future of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are doing everything we can to keep members, communities and employees safe.

Roughrider Electric Cooperative will provide an update as alternate plans develop. Until then, know we look forward to visiting with you in person when the time is right.

Thank you for your support. ■



There must be 10 feet of clearance between hay bales and power lines. Keep in mind that summer's warm temperatures can cause power lines to sag. Your best bet is to find another spot away from those hot, high-voltage lines — that under certain conditions, can cause fire, injury or death.



Protect your livelihood — and your life

Stacking hay under electrical infrastructure can be dangerous, if not deadly. Imagine up to 115,000 volts of electricity running through the power lines directly above the hay you just stacked. Highly loaded, those aluminum wires get hot — and the warmer the temperature — the more the lines sag. There needs to be at least 10 feet of clearance between the neutral line and the top of your hay bales. Did you plan for sag and leave adequate space?

As amps travel the circuit, the wires get warm. If you back your equipment into a guy wire and a pole bends or breaks, or if you hit an overhead line with the loader, the line could fall on the hay and ignite. The hay you need to feed your cattle — and the provisions you made to feed your family — just went up in smoke.

And that could be the best-case scenario. If you or your equipment comes into contact with a power line, you could receive an electric shock that could cause injury and even death.

Protect your livelihood and your life, and stay away from power lines and poles. If you do make contact with a power line, call 911. Remain seated, warn others to stay away, and wait for Roughrider Electric linemen to de-energize the lines. Do not move from the equipment.

To report system damage that is not in need of immediate repair, call Roughrider Electric Cooperative at 1-800-748-5533 or email safety@roughriderelectric.com. If you send an email, please include the location, your name and contact information, and a photo if possible.

Members, your safety matters. Working together helps ensure the safety of all! ■

Report from **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS** **MAY 22, 2020**

When, where and who: The Board of Directors met via conference call May 22.

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 April 24, 2020, and the May 8, 2020, meetings.

Consent Agenda: The Board reviewed, discussed and approved the Consent Agenda, including proposed membership applications, service connects and assignments, proposed cancellations of membership, and requests for retirement of capital credit accounts.

Co-General Managers' report: Don Franklund and Travis Kupper presented the managers' report. Mr. Kupper and Mr. Franklund gave an update on the latest happenings regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. They have no plans for an opening of the lobby, and have received no concerns from Roughrider members regarding this. Documentation of cleaning and safety measures will be very important when the lobbies are reopened.

All National Rural Electric Cooperative Association-related meetings have been cancelled through the fall, as far as

in-person meetings go, and they may transition to virtual meetings of some sort.

Lance Rambousek – Audit Report: Mr. Rambousek provided the Board with Brady Martz's Independent Auditor's Report.

Chief Financial Officer report: Mr. Craigmile provided the Board with a summary of his written report. He noted that usage is below what was budgeted.

Operations and Construction report: Mr. Bentz referred the Board to his written report. Pole testing has been completed, and approximately 40 poles will be replaced by Roughrider personnel.

Member Services/Key Accounts report: Mr. Hibl referred the Board to his written report. Project Tundra is drilling just south of Center, and this is a CO₂ sequestration project.

Upcoming meetings: The next Board meeting was set for 9 a.m. CT on June 26, 2020, to be held via conference call.

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



LIHEAP offers emergency crisis program

Assistance may be available to those having trouble paying their heating bills due to the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in household income.



The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) offers heating assistance until May 31, and a year-round crisis program to assist qualifying households.

- Assists with unpaid heating costs associated with read dates that are no more than 90 days prior to the application date
- Qualifying households can receive Emergency Assistance more than once
- Costs must have been incurred from the current residence

- Can assist with reconnection fees
- CANNOT assist with deposits

In addition, the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services will provide additional LIHEAP funding through the CARES Act.

Households can contact the human service zone office, formally known as county social services, to request an application. Anyone who needs help completing and submitting an application can contact Community Options at 800-823-2417 ext. 140.

Congratulations, Steve, and thank you for your service

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Before Steve Hildebrand retired from Roughrider Electric Cooperative in April, after serving our member-owners for 40 years, he reflected on his career. He initially thought the biggest change in four decades was technology, and how tasks that were once completed with pencil and paper had transitioned to computer and cloud. But it didn't take long for him to change his mind.

Steve, the former member services representative in Hazen, saw dramatic changes in his last two months of service. While technology evolved steadily over time, the COVID-19 pandemic changed nearly everything about the way Roughrider Electric did business overnight.

To protect members and employees from contracting and spreading the coronavirus, Roughrider closed its lobby doors in March. Members no longer stopped to visit and pay their utility bills. Co-workers kept a safe distance. Meetings were held by video conferencing. Steve says he came to work, did his job and went home again. His retirement party was planned — and postponed.

A greeter in church, who is used to giving handshakes and hugs, physical distancing wasn't the way Steve planned to end his career. So members, when you see him working in his yard or volunteering with Sakakawea Medical Center Hospice, please share your well wishes! And when it's safe, give him an elbow bump. He greatly advanced Roughrider's efforts in promoting electrical safety, energy efficiency



*When **Steve Hildebrand** started working at Oliver-Mercer Electric Cooperative in May 1979, he kept track of everything with pencil: payroll, material tracking, work orders and more. Roughrider's first billing machine had a magnetic strip "with a brain." When the cooperative upgraded to IBM machines and programming was done in-house, Steve says, "That was progress!"*

and careers in energy, and we are grateful for his service to you and our cooperative.

Career highlights

A Hazen native, Steve started his cooperative career with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, working in the warehouse at Leland Olds Station near Stanton. After three years, he accepted a work order clerk position with Oliver-Mercer Electric Cooperative in Hazen in 1979. Oliver-Mercer and West Plains Electric Cooperative, Dickinson, consolidated in 2008 to become Roughrider Electric Cooperative.

Steve worked a variety of jobs ranging from accounting and inventory to work orders and payroll. Eleven years ago, he transitioned to his final role in member services. In this capacity, he helped plan the annual meeting, represented the cooperative at trade shows, brought students "The Story Behind The Switch" program, and advised members on electric heat products and services.

Well wishes

Brad Quenette, Roughrider's member services manager, worked closely with Steve over the years. They planned and organized the annual meeting, and co-op participation in county fairs, parades, community events and other tasks they performed on a daily basis. He says Steve is a "people person" who made members feel comfortable, whether they stopped by the office to ask a question or accept a door prize at the annual meeting.

"When Steve joined the member service department, it took a load off of me," Brad shares. "Steve was fun to be around, and his knowledge of the co-op will surely be missed. Anytime someone with that many years of service leaves, so does a lot of information that is gone forever. I wish Steve the best, and I know he is very excited for what the future brings."

Laurie Miller, Roughrider's mapping/database manager, echoes Brad's sentiments.

"I am not sure what we are all going to do after Steve leaves,

when we need to know who lived at a certain farm years ago, who is married to whom, or what is the name of so-and-so's children or parents. He has lived in this community his entire life and is very familiar with the history," she says. "We don't have to look up information when we can just walk to his office and get it."

Laurie worked with Steve for 37 years, and says he'll be missed around the office.

"I wish him the best in his retirement, and know he and his wife, Sheila, will make the best of it!"

Retirement plans

Steve and Sheila plan to stay in Hazen where Sheila will continue working for Sakakawea Medical Center Hospice. Their daughter, Sarah, graduated in May from North Dakota State University, completing an internship in radiological studies.

Steve says he chose to retire because it felt like the time was right. He had invested 42 years in cooperative and community, and was ready for less schedule and more fun. He and Sheila like to take road trips and attend concerts with family, so they hope to travel more. Roughrider Electric members from southwest of Hazen, Steve and Sheila have a substantial shelterbelt around their home, and Steve plans to plant and care for new trees.

While his job didn't end the way he envisioned, he is ever so grateful for the time he spent working at Roughrider Electric Cooperative and helping our members.

"It's been a good run! It's definitely been a blessing," he says.

Thank you, Steve, and congratulations on your retirement! We were honored to call you colleague and friend. ■



Steve Hildebrand was instrumental in bringing "The Story Behind The Switch" electrical safety program to students in the Roughrider Electric service area. During the presentation, kids learned how electricity is made, how it travels, and how to stay safe.



Steve Hildebrand worked for electric cooperatives for 42 years because, in part, he believed in the business model of serving the member-owner. He worked the brunt of those years at Roughrider Electric because he enjoyed most everything he did, and who he did it with. Last year in September, some Hazen employees celebrated Homecoming with area schools. Toasting Hawaiian Day were, from left: **Brent Hysjulien, Kayla Fandrich, Laurie Miller, Brad Quenette and Steve Hildebrand.**

KX/CO-OP DAY at the N.D. State Fair cancelled

In mid-May, it was announced on <https://ndstatefair.com/> that the 2020 North Dakota State Fair would be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A statement read: “This decision is in the best interest for all involved. It is impossible to predict the scale of this pandemic, and our concern is for the health and safety of our community, our attendees, exhibitors, vendors, staff and all involved with the North Dakota State Fair.”

Every year, North Dakota’s electric cooperatives are proud to take part in KX/Co-op Day at the Fair. This is only the second cancellation since the flood of 2011, and we regret that we won’t be able to see members from across the state taking part in the pancake breakfast, stopping by the co-op tent and getting a free ice cream cone.

Thank you for your understanding, and we hope we can continue the tradition during safer times next year.



Spend the day in Medora — and save

In partnership with the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, more than 10 Touchstone Energy Cooperatives in North Dakota have joined forces to make vacationing in North Dakota more affordable for families, including Roughrider Electric Cooperative. This summer, head west to Medora, where electric cooperative members are eligible for a 15-percent discount off the following reservations:

- ✓ Tickets to the Medora Musical
- ✓ Bully Pulpit Golf Course

Lodging at any of the following:

- ✓ Badlands Motel
- ✓ Elkhorn Quarters
- ✓ Rough Riders Hotel

Members also receive 20 percent off at the Cowboy Hall of Fame by providing the discount code **Touch2020** at the door.

Roughrider members, if you are traveling to beautiful Medora this summer, call 1-800-MEDORA-1 to provide the discount code **Touch2020**, make reservations and receive your savings.

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. 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	290-3836

MANAGEMENT

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



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