

# ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

OCTOBER 2023

COOPERATIVE MONTH



## What's inside:

- Krebs Family Pumpkin Patch
- Manager's message
- Apply for Youth Tour



## Harvesting memories: **Krebs Family Pumpkin Patch**

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

As the cool, crisp air moves in and leaves begin to change color, it can only mean one thing: Fall has arrived in North Dakota. For many families, visiting a pumpkin patch is on top of the fall activity list. In Gladstone, you will find a “pick-your-own” pumpkin patch operated by the Krebs family.

For a decade, community members have been visiting the Krebs farm to pick pumpkins and create lasting memories.

“It all started when my brother, Kyle, and his wife started planting our pumpkin patch,” says Brittney Krebs, one of the many family members who contributes to the Krebs Family Pumpkin Patch. Along with Kyle and Brittney, their sisters, BreeAnn and Tammy, and their parents, Lilah and Alan, all have some hand in the pumpkin patch.

In the beginning, people who were interested could reach out to the Krebs family and schedule a time to pick pumpkins, squash and gourds. Now, the system is more streamlined, with a handful of weekends when individuals can explore the pumpkin patch, play games and

see the Krebs family’s petting zoo.

### **The pumpkin patch**

The Krebs Family Pumpkin Patch has grown throughout the years to include four acres of 30 different varieties of pumpkins. The pumpkins are popular, and people enjoy coming out and being part of the pumpkin-picking experience.

“People like the abnormal colored pumpkins, like blue and white, and some of the different looking gourds,” Brittney notes.

Just like the idea of starting the pumpkin patch, the Krebs family used some ingenuity to make some adaptations to their corn planter to plant the pumpkin fields. They can plant two rows of pumpkins at a time now by using a no-till method. This is their first year using the method, as previous years were planted one row at a time.

Each year, attendance has grown for the family pumpkin patch. They see returning faces and new faces as well. Sometimes, they even see faces more than once a season.

“There is a family who comes out a couple of



times and they try to find the biggest pumpkin, ugliest or something like that,” Brittney says.

The pumpkin patch visits begin at the end of September and continue until the end of October, all of which is weather dependent. Once frost is in the forecast, the Krebs family picks the pumpkins they can and puts them on a trailer, so people can continue to come out and pick pumpkins, even though it may not be in the field. For the Krebs family, nothing goes to waste.

“Once the season is over, and the pumpkins in good shape are sold, any leftovers are fed to their pigs, sheep and chickens,” Brittney says. “The cows even get to graze the pumpkin patch and clean up whatever is left.”

One highlight for Brittney is the educational aspect. “People don’t get to see farm and ranch things anymore. Getting to visit with the families about agriculture is exciting. It opens up a bigger conversation,” she says.

### **Krebs farm and ranch**

Besides planting pumpkins, the Krebs

family is busy year around with their farm and ranch operation.

The Krebs family has dairy and beef cows, sheep, chickens and hobby farm animals. Each sibling has their niche on the farm.

“Kyle manages the beef cattle, I manage the sheep, BreeAnn manages the poultry and mom and dad work with the dairy,” Brittney says.

Each family member has a passion for informing people about agriculture. The petting zoo available at the pumpkin patch also makes its way around the state, allowing the family to share their message. This includes traveling with the animals to nursing homes, Kids Day on the Farm and other events.

This fall, the Krebs family has also decided to do farm tours separate from the pumpkin patch. During the farm tours, guests will be able to learn more about agriculture and ask any questions they may have.

More information regarding the farm tours and pumpkin patch will be posted on the Facebook page, “Krebs Family Pumpkin Patch.” ■

## MANAGER'S MESSAGE: Celebrating membership



**Jason Bentz**

Fall is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month, with school, community and sports activities in full swing. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

When I say Roughrider Electric Cooperative celebrates Co-op Month, it really means we are celebrating you! After

all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you, our members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles all co-ops share.

Similar to how our lines run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions, because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

Roughrider Electric works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and local board that's comprised of neighbors who live right here in our community.

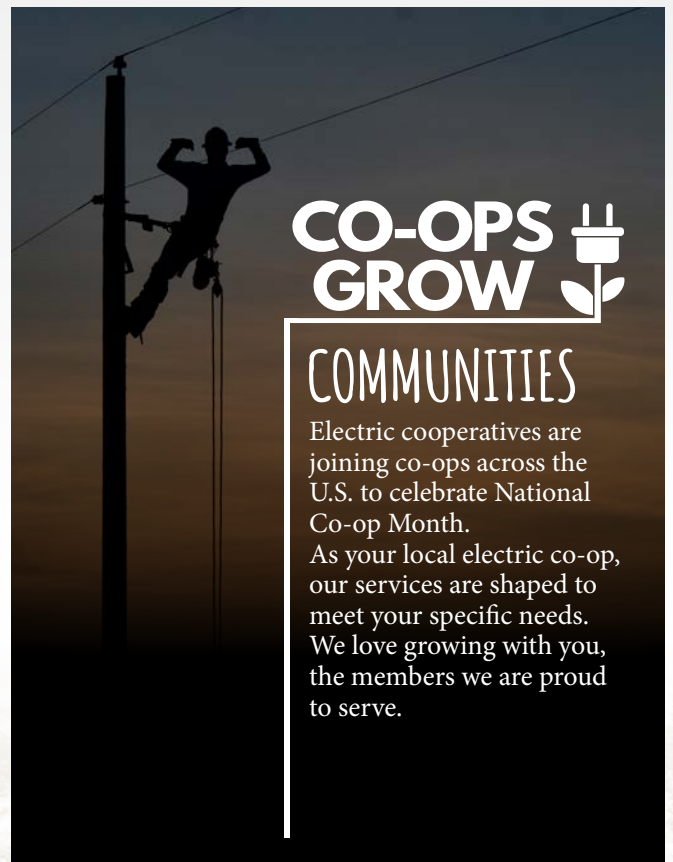
We're proud to support local youth through our Youth Tour and scholarship programs. With your help, we offer Operation Round Up to provide assistance to our community.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning people working together toward a common goal, mutually benefiting one another and the larger area. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community where they live and serve.

Above all, as a co-op, we put our members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know saving energy and money is important to you. We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, I

encourage you to take a moment and download our SmartHub app. Through the app, you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. And we're here to help, so give us a call if you have questions about your energy bills.

Roughrider Electric is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently, while continuing to provide the highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve. ■



# 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](mailto: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.**



LEARN MORE AT  
[ROUGHRIDERELECTRIC.COM/YOUTH-TOUR](http://ROUGHRIDERELECTRIC.COM/YOUTH-TOUR)

## Safety Starts with ME: Use caution near cooperative equipment

Although the fall season has brought cooler temperatures, the weather is inviting us to spend time outside and enjoy the changing foliage, pumpkin patches, corn mazes and hayrides. While enjoying the cool, crisp weather, Roughrider Electric Cooperative reminds you to exercise caution near electrical equipment maintained by the co-op.

“Whether you have children running on hay bales or flying a kite this fall, it is important to be aware of your surroundings and be sure to stay clear of substations and power lines,” says Kyle Irwin, a journeyman lineworker at Roughrider Electric. “This equipment carries extremely high voltages, and if contact is accidentally made, the results can be very serious.”

Roughrider Electric urges you to take into consideration the following safety tips if you are near any power equipment:

1. **Maintain a safe distance:** It is vital to remember the “safe zone” around power lines and substations. A general rule of thumb is to stay at least 10 feet away from power lines and farther away from substations. If you encounter an animal trapped in a tree near power lines or inside a substation, do not attempt to remove it.
2. **Respect warning signs:** Pay attention to warning signs, barriers and caution tape indicating areas with electrical equipment. These signs are there for your safety and should be taken seriously.
3. **Avoid flying objects near power lines:** Activities such as flying kites, drones or releasing balloons should be avoided in areas close to power lines, as they can easily get entangled in the lines, creating a dangerous situation. Remote-controlled toys should never be flown near power lines, substations or other electrical equipment. If contact is accidentally made with a power line or a transformer inside a substation, members of your community could be left without electricity.
4. **Stay clear during emergencies:** In case of



accidents or emergencies involving power lines or substations, it is essential to call emergency services immediately and wait for professionals to arrive. Do not attempt to handle the situation yourself.

5. **Inform children:** Children should be informed about the dangers of power lines and substations. It is important to remind them to never climb trees near power lines. If contact is made with a tree that is touching a power line, your body could become the path of electricity from the line to the ground.

Lineworkers have gone through extensive training to be able to work around electrical equipment and want to remind the public to stay clear.

“Safety around the equipment is always important to us when we are working. We use the appropriate personal protective equipment, and attend certification courses and monthly safety meetings to ensure confidence in our work,” Irwin notes.

Here at Roughrider Electric, your safety is important to us. We hope you will share the message of electrical safety, so you and others can enjoy fall days filled with fun! ■

# Safely use standby generators

An emergency source of power is important during a winter storm for homes and farms, when a power interruption occurs.

"A standby electric generator could prevent costly losses during a power failure," says Ken Hellevang, North Dakota State University Extension Service agricultural engineer. "However, you need to follow some basic safety rules when using a standby generator."

Do not operate the generator in an enclosed or partially enclosed space. Gasoline or diesel engines may produce deadly levels of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. Carbon monoxide can accumulate in a building even with a large door, such as an open garage door. Wind blowing into an attached garage can push the carbon monoxide into the house. If a generator is operated in an enclosed building, the engine exhaust must be vented outdoors away from the building using engine exhaust ducting.

Choose a generator that provides the power at the same voltage and frequency as the power lines supply, according to Hellevang. Most power lines supply 120/240-volt, single-phase, 60-cycle alternating current to homes and farms.

To help you buy the proper size generator, you need to decide what you must keep operating, such as a sump pump and furnace or certain farm equipment, Hellevang says.

Motors typically require four times the power to start as they do to run. Estimate power requirements from equipment nameplates when possible. As a guide, electric motors require approximately 4,000 watts of power to start and 1,000 watts of power to run for every horsepower of output. A typical home operating a water pump, refrigerator, freezer, furnace blower and a few lights will require around 5,000 watts of peak usage for starting and 2,000 watts for continuous operation.

Electrical equipment normally is plugged into a smaller generator. Extension cords must be properly sized based on the electrical load and distance from the generator. The proper voltage may not be provided to a motor at the end of a very long extension cord, which will cause damage to the motor.

Do not connect the generator to a home or farm electrical system without a transfer switch that disconnects the farm or home from the power line and connects to the generator. The wiring system must be isolated from the power lines

using a double-throw transfer switch to prevent the generator from feeding electricity back into the power line. This protects lineworkers who may be working to restore your service. Also, without a double-throw switch, the generator can be ruined due to overload.

Follow the operator's manual to properly provide electrical power. Instructions might include:

- **Turn off or disconnect all electrical equipment.**
- **Start the unit and bring the generator up to proper speed.** The voltmeter will indicate when the generator is ready to carry the load.
- **Check the voltmeter frequently.** If the voltage falls below 200 for 240-volt service or 100 for 120-volt service, reduce the load on the generator by shutting off some electrical equipment.

For more information, including a video that walks you through the safety protocols of using a portable generator for emergency power, visit <http://bit.ly/NDSUgeneratorsafety>. ■



# Board meeting highlights July 28

The July meeting of the board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative was held on July 28 at the Harold Schaefer Center in Medora. President Greg Steckler called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. Roughrider Electric's General Counsel Jennifer Grosz was designated as the meeting recorder. Board quorum was met. Also present were Roughrider Electric's Co-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:** There were no additions to the consent agenda. The agenda was approved as presented. The June 30 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 on the Basin Electric Power Cooperative Manager Advisory Committee meeting, Basin Electric manager meeting and

other topics. The report also included an update from West Dakota Utility Services and Basin Electric.

**Department reports:** Craigmile reviewed the June financial reports in the CFO report. Bentz provided the operations report on behalf of Shawn Olson, operations manager at Roughrider Electric, which included the Federated Insurance's Safety and Loss Division site visit. Hibl presented the member services report, which included events Roughrider Electric participated in over summer, as well as an Operation Round Up donation summary. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar and Grosz provided reports, which were also reviewed.

**Action items:** The board approved the proposed meeting dates for 2024 and appointed delegates for the Basin Electric annual meeting.

Upcoming meetings and events were shared before the board 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 Aug. 25 at Roughrider Electric's office in Hazen. ■



[www.roughriderelectric.com](http://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
Jesse Flath, Hazen.....	880-0386
Darell Herman; Beulah.....	873-4371
Arnold Kainz; Dickinson.....	483-8207
Dan Price; Henster.....	794-3779
Callen Schoch; New England.....	290-3836

#### MANAGEMENT

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



Become a fan of Roughrider Electric Cooperative to learn timely co-op news!

[facebook.com/RoughriderElectric](https://facebook.com/RoughriderElectric)