



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

NOVEMBER 2024

## In this issue

- Veterans power you
- Serving up savings
- Scholarships arriving
- Apply for Youth Tour

*Roughrider Electric journeymen lineworkers, **Russell Walters** and **Kyle Irwin**, visited with kids about lineworker equipment and gear. Member Services Manager Brad Quenette visited with students as well and handed out goodies.*



# Roughrider Electric Cooperative participates in Beulah Vehicle Career Fair



PHOTO CREDIT BRAD QUENETTE

VETERANS POWER YOU:

# Roughrider Electric recognizes employee veterans

Military veterans are known for their leadership and discipline, which are valuable assets to bring to a cooperative. Roughrider Electric Cooperative is fortunate to have two crew members who have served our country and now are working to serve our communities. This month, we thank the veterans on our crew for their work, not only to ensure safe, reliable electric services to our members, but to ensure our communities, state and nation remained safe. Thank you, veterans!

## Joe Hebertson

Coming from a military family, Roughrider Electric Staking Technician Joe Hebertson was no stranger to military life, so enlisting felt like a family tradition. His father was in the U.S. Air Force and his grandfather was in the U.S. Army. Hebertson enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 2004 and was on active service for nine years. He was in the infantry and then reenlisted to finish his active duty as an instructor at a cold weather survival school in northern California. While teaching at the school, Hebertson got a call from a construction engineering company and was recruited to North Dakota. He later began working at Roughrider Electric as a staking technician and has been at the cooperative for 11 years.

"Dickinson is a great community and is very family-oriented," Hebertson says about the values he appreciates. "Roughrider Electric is that way as well; they have a good family outlook."

When Hebertson isn't working for the cooperative, he is spending time with his family and community. The family enjoys camping and dirt biking in the summer and skiing in the winter months. The Hebertsons are active in their church community, and he also coaches little league baseball in the summer for his kids.



*The Hebertson family is active in the Dickinson community.*

PHOTO CREDIT JOE HEBERTSON

## Mike Steier

From a young age, Mike Steier, Roughrider Electric journeyman lineworker, felt the call to serve his country. Steier enlisted in the Army National Guard in 2002 during his junior year of high school and recently retired in May 2023. During Steier's time in the National Guard, he worked as a combat engineer, heavy equipment operator and retired as a military policeman. He was deployed to Iraq in the early 2000s. Steier was able to take advantage of the G.I. Bill and complete his generals at Dickinson State University before earning his electric lineworker certificate from Bismarck State College. Being from the area made it easy for Steier to accept a lineworker position at Roughrider Electric in 2009 and remain close to his family and community.

"Serving the community and people I know and have a connection to is impactful," Steier says. His wife, Sara, jokes they can't go anywhere without someone knowing him from Roughrider Electric or the Army National Guard.

Steier has stayed busy over the last 20 years active in the National Guard and is now enjoying time being at home with Sara and their three kids, Treyten, Tenli and Taysli. When Steier isn't ensuring safe, reliable electric services for Roughrider Electric members, he is watching his kids' sports teams from football to gymnastics and dance. Besides the kids' activities, he says most of their time lately has been spent at home or hanging out with family and friends.

Roughrider Electric would like to recognize and thank all those who have served in the armed forces, protecting our country. Thank you for your dedication and commitment! ■



*Treyten, Tenli, Taysli and Sara gather around Mike at his retirement ceremony from the National Guard.*

PHOTO CREDIT SARA STEIER

## MANAGER'S MESSAGE: Serving up savings



**Travis Kupper**  
Co-General Manager/CEO

The holiday season is just around the corner and festive music will soon flood the airwaves, sparkling lights and decorations will adorn homes and businesses, and good tidings will abound.

The holidays also bring a frenzy of decorating, cooking and family gatherings. Amid the hectic hustle and bustle, you may receive higher-than-usual energy bills.

So, I thought this would be a good time to share

some tips with Roughrider Electric Cooperative members to help lower your monthly energy use.

Winter months typically bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. Making minor low-cost improvements, such as weatherstripping exterior doors and caulking around drafty windows, can make a positive impact on energy bills

### Be festive without breaking the bank

My wife, Crissie, insists I bring the Christmas decorations down from the attic faster than we can finish the Thanksgiving turkey. With holiday lights adorning our home for well over a month, we decided to make the switch to LEDs to save energy.

LED holiday lights use 88% less energy than incandescent holiday lights. To put that into perspective, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates standard holiday decorations using LED lights typically increase energy bills by about \$5 to \$7. But with incandescent lights, energy bills will typically increase by \$33 or more. For homes that go above and beyond with incandescent holiday lighting (think Clark Griswold), energy bills could increase by as much as \$350.

Beyond energy savings, LEDs provide additional benefits, such as being shock-resistant, shatterproof and cool to the touch, making them safer for the home.

You can also lower energy use by conveniently managing holiday lighting. Smart light timers can help you save energy by connecting to a smartphone app or voice assistant to program lights to turn on and off at set times. If you don't use smart home technology, you can still save energy by using

traditional timers.

Additional easy ways to save during the holiday season include turning off overhead lights and using your Christmas tree to illuminate your home. If you have a fireplace, remember to close the flue when you're not burning a fire to ensure heat doesn't escape through the chimney.

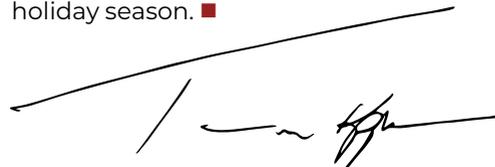
### Cook up energy savings in the kitchen

If you plan to have family and friends over this holiday season, you can cook up energy savings by using small countertop appliances, such as microwaves, air fryers and slow cookers, when possible, as they use much less energy than the stovetop or oven.

When using the oven, bake multiple dishes at once for maximum efficiency. After all, it takes as much energy to cook one dish as it does to cook several. Turn the oven off a few minutes before the recipe's end time and allow the residual heat to finish baking the dish. Once the food is done, leave the stove door ajar to allow the residual heat to warm the room. When using the stovetop, match the pan size to the burner to maximize efficiency.

I hope a few of these tips will be helpful as we approach the holiday season. Remember, we're here to answer any questions you have about managing energy use or your monthly bills. With a little planning upfront, you can find efficient ways to save on everything from holiday decor to your favorite soup recipes.

From your friends at Roughrider Electric Cooperative, we hope you have a wonderful holiday season. ■



## MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: **Celebrating National Apprenticeship Week**



**Shawn Olson**

Chief of Staff/  
Operations Manager

Roughrider Electric Cooperative is celebrating National Apprenticeship Week Nov. 17-23 in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor. Apprenticeships provide demand-driven education, allowing apprentices to earn while they learn and helping to close the gap between the skills job creators seek and job seekers need.

National Apprenticeship Week provides an opportunity to spotlight how apprenticeships

can help employees grow in knowledge and skill to succeed in today's workplace. In exchange, these employees have the opportunity to learn from veteran employees and mentors. In turn, those apprentices work, purchase goods from area businesses, volunteer in our communities and ultimately sustain our smaller towns and improve our quality of life.

The apprenticeship program requires lineworkers to complete 8,000 hours of on-the-job training and 40 tests. Once the program is completed, the lineworkers advance from apprentice to journeyman.

Roughrider Electric is proud to highlight apprentice lineworkers Alex Frederick, Conner Kuntz and Colton Walters. Additionally, Roughrider Electric hires apprentice lineworkers to join its crews each summer to get additional experience in the field. This summer, Clay Gerhardt and Mason Olander joined the Roughrider Electric crews for a few months.



Apprentice lineworker **Alex Frederick**, left, works on energized lines at the Hotline School.

We thank all the apprentices out there who are helping electric cooperatives provide safe, reliable and affordable electric service to communities! ■



Apprentice lineworker **Colton Walters**, works in the field.



Apprentice Lineworker **Conner Kuntz**, right, visits with Line Superintendent **Tyler Phelps** on a job site.

# Scholarships arriving soon!

High school students, watch for upcoming scholarship opportunities! More information will be available soon on Roughrider Electric Cooperative's Facebook page, website and future issues of *North Dakota Living*. You can also visit with your school counselor for more details.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



## NEW DROPBOX LOCATION

Hazen Members: We've recently added a dropbox to the southwest corner of our parking lot for your convenience.

# ENTER YOUR YOUTH TOUR ERA



FIRED UP @ GETTYSBURG!



HONORING HEROES @ WWII MEMORIAL



**JUNE 15-21, 2025**

**1,800 students.**  
**7 days.**  
**1 unforgettable trip.**

Join us on the adventure of a lifetime. On the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, you'll do it all. You'll explore monuments and museums, meet with members of Congress and get an up-close look at where our country's laws are crafted. You'll stand on the Gettysburg Battlefield, walk the halls of George Washington's iconic 18th-century mansion and witness ceremonies honoring the men and women who fought in uniform for this great nation. For one jam-packed week, you'll be immersed in the cooperative spirit that built and sustains our great nation. And **all expenses are paid** by your local electric cooperative!

*Yeah, Youth Tour hits different.*

### 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.

### Essay question:

Why is it important to be involved in your community, and how does that prepare you to be a future leader?

The application deadline is Jan. 17, 2025.

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? Please contact Brad Quenette, Roughrider Electric, at 701-748-2293 during regular business hours.



Learn more at  
[roughriderelectric.com/youth-tour](http://roughriderelectric.com/youth-tour)

## SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Winter generator safety

As the winter weather arrives, Roughrider Electric Cooperative is preparing to deal with whatever weather hits us this season. Although we don't anticipate any outages, it is important for members to be prepared and have a plan in place in case Mother Nature throws us an unexpected curveball.

One tool that can help ease extended outages for your family and any animals in your care is a portable generator. With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous to both you and us!

"While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous – even deadly – if improperly operated," says Lance Peterson, an electrician. "Before you operate a portable generator, please become familiar with it and keep the following safety tips in mind."

If you have questions about the proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. Give us a call at 800-748-5533. ■



## Here is what YOU can do

The do's and don'ts  
when using portable generators

### Do's:

- ✓ Keep children and pets away from portable generators.
- ✓ Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances.
- ✓ Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow carbon monoxide to enter the home.
- ✓ Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground-fault circuit interrupter to prevent electric shock injuries.
- ✓ Use three-pronged extension cords rated to handle the generator's load. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.

### Don'ts:

- ✗ Do not operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of carbon monoxide, which can be deadly.
- ✗ Do not open windows or doors while the generator is running.
- ✗ Do not rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.
- ✗ Do not overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.
- ✗ Do not connect generators directly into household wiring, unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute lineworkers making repairs.

## Roughrider Electric board meeting highlights: Aug. 30

The meeting of the board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative was held on Aug. 30 at the cooperative's Hazen office. The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. CT. A quorum was present. Also attending were co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Operations Manager Shawn Olson, Director of Key Accounts and Member Services Leonard Hibl, Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz and Board Liaison Connie Hill.

**Consent agenda:** There were proposed amendments to the agenda. The agenda was approved as amended.

**Strategic/action:** Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on the Basin Electric Power Cooperative annual meeting, North Dakota managers meeting, Cooperative Finance Corporation and more. Several Basin Electric reports, and

West Dakota Utility Services and 3C Construction updates were available for review.

**Action items:** Action items were reviewed and resolved.

**Discussion/general information:** The board discussed CFC and other matters.

**Department Reports:** Craigmile provided the July financials. Olson provided an operations report, which included an update on pole testing and construction projects. Hibl provided a member services and key accounts update. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report for the board. Grosz provided the board with an update on the status of projects.

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

**Next meeting date:** The next meeting is at 12:30 p.m. MT Nov. 22 in Dickinson. ■



[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 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

Our offices will be closed  
**Monday, Nov. 11**  
for Veterans Day



Our offices will be closed  
**Thursday, Nov. 28**  
and  
**Friday, Nov. 29**  
for Thanksgiving



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

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