

## In this issue

- Celebrating Co-op Month
- Need help with energy bills?
- Safety around substations
- Apply for Youth Tour



*Students take part in the Marketplace for Kids Inc. Education Day at Dickinson State University earlier this year.*

PHOTO BY ROBERT HEITKAMP

## GIVING BACK THE COOPERATIVE WAY: **Operation Round Up**

Cooperatives across the nation adhere to seven cooperative principles. These principles help guide decision making, from how the cooperative is operated to how the cooperative engages with local communities.

Concern for community is the seventh cooperative principle, and it is one everyone at Roughrider Electric Cooperative value. During Cooperative Month, which is celebrated in October, we are especially reminded of the important role of concern for community.

Electric cooperatives have a proud history of giving back. You may find Roughrider Electric present at events, such as county fairs, baseball games and other community gatherings.

But Roughrider Electric members help us give

back, too. Through our Operation Round Up program, members can round up their energy bills to the next dollar amount, and the extra change goes toward helping those in need, right here in the communities we serve.

### **Operation Round Up giving in 2024**

Operation Round Up has been in place for 22 years at Roughrider Electric. Twice a year, Roughrider Electric's Operation Round Up board members, who are also cooperative members, meet to review and distribute Operation Round Up funds to deserving recipients across our service area. In 2024, Roughrider Electric donated funds to 23 recipients, totaling \$38,785 going back to communities.

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## Center Community Pool

The Center Community Pool is a community staple, as an indoor pool open year-round to provide a safe and fun place for community members. The Center Community Pool requested funds to help maintain the pool facility, including repairing cracks and repainting the base of the pool. The pool is home to exercise classes, school swim lessons, recreational use and the swim team, the Barracudas. The Operation Round Up funds will help ensure the pool can stay open for the community to utilize and enjoy.

“Being able to repair these issues will help us continue to provide a safe recreational place for community members,” says Shandy Kraft, Center Community Pool Manager.

## Dunn County Sheriff's Office

In the heart of Dunn County is the Dunn County Sheriff's Office, which serves residents from Killdeer to Twin Buttes. Operation Round Up funds will be used to purchase stuffed dogs to be used in conjunction with the Dunn County Sheriff's Office therapy dog, Finn. Deputies take Finn to visit schools, nursing homes, day cares and other places where people find peace in the presence of a therapy dog.

“For some people petting a dog can help take some stress away and feel a sense of calm and comfort” says Gary Kuhn, Dunn County Sheriff. “The stuffed animals will help serve as a comforting reminder to community residents in times of need.”

Everyone enjoys Finn's visits and with the addition of stuffed toy dogs, they can help people around the county feel a sense of calm, even when Finn isn't there.

## Gladstone Consolidated Fire District

The Gladstone Consolidated Fire District serves approximately 1,500 residents from Stark and Dunn counties. Operation Round Up funds will be used to help purchase a tender tank fire truck. A tender tank fire truck is used to transport large amounts of water, foam and other solutions used to fight fires.

The updated tank truck will help the department increase firefighting capabilities to the people and communities we serve,” says Terri Thiel, Gladstone Consolidated Fire District Board Secretary/Treasurer.

## Marketplace for Kids Inc.

Marketplace for Kids Inc. is an organization that provides educational experiences for students, including North Dakota. Marketplace for Kids Inc. hosts various education programs geared towards entrepreneurship, kids within a 60 miles radius are invited to an event free of charge to learn more

about the career opportunities available locally. An educational day was hosted in March at Dickinson State University (DSU). The educational day at DSU provided insight to kids on entrepreneurship and career choices from careers in the region.

“Our vision is for every student to receive entrepreneurship education and encouragement to become a lifelong partner in building stronger communities,” says Robert Heitkamp, Marketplace for Kids executive director.

The next Operation Round Up application deadline is Jan. 1, 2025. For details and further information, visit <https://roughriderelectric.com/operation-round>. ■

## Operation Round Up 2024: \$38,785 given to local communities!

- Badlands Art Association** – Portable display monitor
- Badlands Ministries** – New high ropes equipment and jag rescue
- Belfield Booster Club** – Potable water and water heater in concession stand
- Belfield Parks and Recreation** – Baseball field construction
- Beulah Lions Club** – Playground equipment
- Boy Scouts of America Eagle Scout Service Project** – Materials to build expanded metal tables for Kiwanis Park
- Center Community Pool** – Pool refurbish
- Coal Country Animal Rescue** – Help with daily animal needs
- Dunn County Sheriff's Office** – Stuffed support dogs
- Gladstone Consolidated Fire District** – New tender tank fire truck
- Hazen Booster Club** – Training machine caddy for the baseball teams
- Hazen Public Library** – Egress windows
- Hill Top Heritage Foundation** – Tilt wheelchair
- Home On The Range** – Safety furniture
- Injured Military Wildlife Project of North Dakota** – Distribute bison and elk meat to veterans
- Marketplace for Kids Inc.** – Support Marketplace for Kids educational day at Dickinson State University
- Mercer County Historical Society** – Sidewalk addition
- Northern Lights Gymnastics Academy** – Competition floor
- Southwestern District Health Unit WIC Breastfeeding Program** – Materials for mothers
- Stark County Council on Aging Elder Care** – Home-delivered meal trays
- Trinity Catholic Schools** – World globe for geography lessons
- Ukrainian Cultural Institute** – Security system
- Youthworks** – Support for anti-trafficking in Dickinson

# MANAGER'S MESSAGE: Celebrating Cooperative Month



**Jason Bentz**  
Co-General Manager/CEO

As we celebrate Cooperative Month this October, we reflect on the remarkable strength that comes from working together. This month, we not only honor the cooperative principles that define our service, but also recognize the collaborative spirit that enhances our operations.

Roughrider Electric Cooperative is an owner of the Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative, which stands as a testament to the power

of partnership. Four cooperatives stand together for shared services, as we embrace the cooperative model to streamline operations, share resources and maximize efficiency. This collaborative approach ensures we provide you with the highest quality service, while maintaining our commitment to affordability and reliability.

Working together with other cooperatives allows us to leverage collective expertise and innovations that benefit all our members. By combining

resources and knowledge, we enhance our ability to address challenges and seize opportunities more effectively than we could alone. This unity of purpose strengthens our capacity to serve you better and fosters a sense of community that extends beyond our individual cooperatives.

Cooperative Month is a time to celebrate the unique value of our model, where mutual support and shared goals drive us forward. Your involvement and support are crucial to our success. Together, we create a cooperative environment that prioritizes your needs, values transparency and reinvests in our community.

We invite you to join us in celebrating Cooperative Month by participating in our upcoming events and activities. Experience firsthand how our collaborative efforts enhance our service and demonstrate the true spirit of cooperation.

Thank you for being an essential part of our cooperative family. Your support and engagement make our collective achievements possible and help us build a brighter future for all. ■

## HAPPY COOPERATIVE MONTH!

## PROUDLY BUILT, LED AND SHAPED BY OUR MEMBERS.



## NEED HELP WITH YOUR ENERGY BILLS? **LIHEAP is here to help**

As autumn arrives, Roughrider Electric Cooperative members are faced with cooling temperatures, and even colder temperatures in the coming months. For some, anticipation of the winter months causes stress and anxiety, as they wonder how to make ends meet. Thankfully, there are programs to help members.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can help low-income and eligible individuals with assistance when it comes to heating and insulation costs in the winter. Through the N.D. Department of Human Services, human service zone offices and Community Options, individuals can be helped with a variety of services when it comes to home energy assistance, including heating.

### Services offered

LIHEAP offers a variety of service assistance. Not only can the program help curb the costs of your heating and cooling bills, but it also helps households with weatherization services to make homes more energy efficient.

The assistance program may also help with the costs of furnace and chimney cleaning, emergency assistance and for devices to reduce energy costs. Homeowners and renters are eligible to apply for assistance.

### Apply for LIHEAP

LIHEAP eligible members can apply from Oct. 1 through May 31, 2025.

Upon applying for LIHEAP, an outreach specialist will enter your home and assist in gathering necessary documentation for the service. From there, an application will be sent to the state for review and the results will be provided within a few weeks.

Check with your local human service office for more information regarding these services.

Applications can be found online at [www.applyforhelp.nd.gov](http://www.applyforhelp.nd.gov) or by request at the local human service zone office or Community Options. ■

## Additional resources

### **Roughrider North Human Service Zone:**

Serving Billings, Dunn, Golden Valley, Hettinger and Stark counties

### **Billings and Golden Valley**

67 First St. SE  
P.O. Box 279, Beach, ND 58621  
Phone: 701-872-4121

### **Dunn County**

205 Owens St., Manning, ND 58642  
Phone: 701-573-5385

### **Stark County**

664 12th St. W., Dickinson, ND 58601  
Phone: 701-456-7675

### **Hettinger County**

309 Millionaire Ave., Mott, ND 58646  
Phone: 701-824-3276

### **Dakota Central Human Service Zone:**

Serving McLean, Mercer, Oliver and Sheridan counties

### **McLean County** (host county)

712 Fifth Ave.  
P.O. Box 70, Washburn, ND 58577  
Phone: 701-462-3581



# MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: LiDAR being utilized



**Shawn Olson**  
Chief of Staff/  
Operations Manager

Roughrider Electric Cooperative is continuously looking for ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its infrastructure for our members. Part of Roughrider Electric's 2024 work plan has been working with Innovative Energy Alliance (IEA) Cooperative's engineering department to use light detection and ranging technology (LiDAR) to patrol existing infrastructure.

IEA is a professional service cooperative owned by four electric distribution cooperatives in North Dakota, including Roughrider Electric.

## LiDAR technology

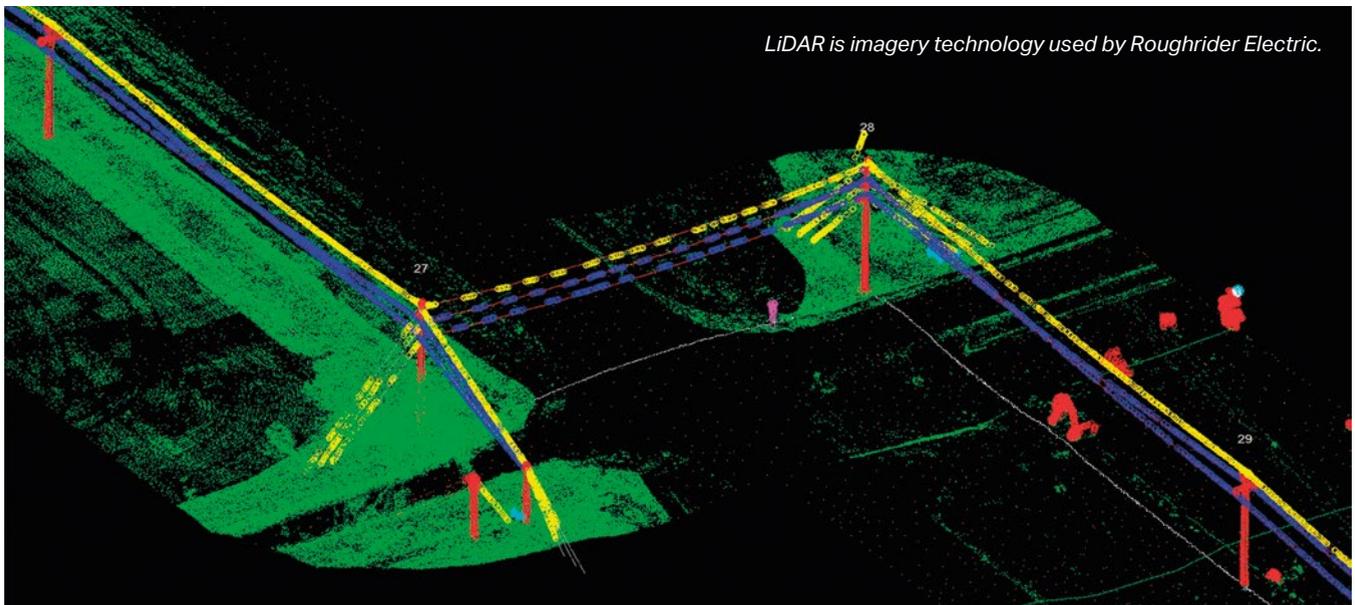
Each year, Roughrider Electric lines are patrolled overhead by helicopters who utilize this imagery technology with help from IEA's engineering department. IEA's engineering department examines the data provided and assesses how the current structures and power lines are performing. From the reviewed data, it works on how the infrastructure can be improved to withstand future

energy loads, weather conditions and foliage growth.

LiDAR uses thermal imaging, which helps identify what may be working well for the cooperative's infrastructure and what may need some improvements in the future. LiDAR can help the team detect if the infrastructure can hold future energy load growth, power line ground clearance, spacing of power poles and identifies areas where trees may be encroaching on the lines.

The software uses various colors to highlight certain results such as red for spots that need more immediate attention. Utilizing this technology helps our operations crew and IEA's engineering department work together to ensure our infrastructure is performing efficiently to continue delivering reliable electric services to our members.

These technologies and partnerships allow Roughrider Electric to utilize state-of-the-art technology in our service territory at a reduced cost to our members to help us ensure safe, reliable electric services to you, our members. ■



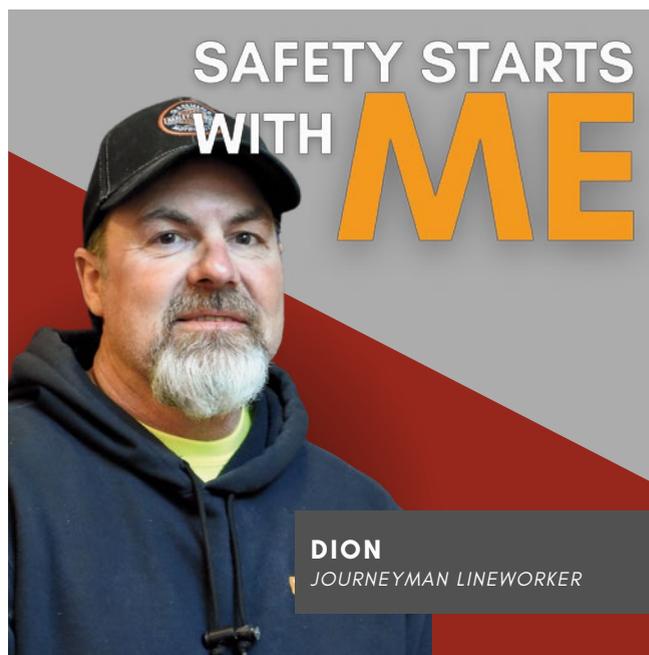
## SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Safety around substations

The electric grid is a complex system of power plants, transmission lines, substations and distribution lines that transmits electric power from the place where it's generated all the way to members at the end of the line.

When you are outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other electrical equipment Roughrider Electric Cooperative uses to send electricity to your home.

Roughrider Electric urges members to follow these tips to stay safe around substations:

- **Keep a safe distance:** Always maintain a safe distance from the substation. Substations are fenced for a reason, and only authorized personnel should enter. Teach children never to play near or attempt to enter a substation.
- **Report suspicious activity:** If you notice anyone in an unmarked vehicle or someone not wearing high-visibility clothing tampering with equipment or trying to enter the substation, report it to local authorities and Roughrider Electric immediately. Unauthorized access can be extremely dangerous.
- **Stay clear during storms:** After severe weather, avoid substations, since damaged power lines or equipment could pose significant risks. Wait for Roughrider Electric crews to assess and repair any damage.
- **Do not touch downed power lines:** If you see a downed power line near a substation, assume it is live and dangerous. Stay far away and contact emergency services and Roughrider Electric to report it.



"Substations are crucial in ensuring reliable power to our members," says Dion Gefre, a journeyman lineworker. "Keeping in mind the risks they pose when outdoors helps members take a part in ensuring electric services can continue to flow to homes and businesses in our community."

Remember, if you see anything suspicious around any electric equipment, please call local authorities or our office as soon as possible at 800-748-5533. ■



## ELECTRICAL SUBSTATION SAFETY TIPS



*Keep a safe distance.*



*Report suspicious activity.*



*Stay clear during storms.*

# ENTER YOUR YOUTH TOUR ERA



FIRED UP @ GETTYSBURG!



HONORING HEROES @ WWI 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](https://roughriderelectric.com/youth-tour)

## Roughrider Electric board meeting highlights: July 22

The meeting of the board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative was held on July 22 at the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Medora. The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. MT. A quorum was present. Also attending were co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Director of Key Accounts Leonard Hibl, Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz and Executive Assistant Connie Hill.

**Consent agenda:** There were proposed additions 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 Class A managers session, Guy Wire Marking Committee 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:** General housekeeping items were discussed.

**Department reports:** Craigmile provided the CFO report, which included preparation for the 2025 budget. Hibl provided a member services update. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar and Operations Manager Shawn Olson provided a written report for the board. Grosz provided the board with an update on the status of projects addressed in her written legal report.

**Executive session:** The board entered into an executive session.

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

**Next meeting date:** The next meeting is at 10 a.m. CT Oct. 25 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 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



**Read about Roughrider Electric Cooperative lineworker Mike Steier and his family on page 30, plus find favorite Steier family recipes on pages 32 and 33 of this issue!**



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