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Karges returns from Youth Tour

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNES

Each June, Washington, D.C., comes alive with youth from across the country during the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. To select a delegate, Roughrider Electric Cooperative holds an annual essay contest for high school sophomores and juniors.

This year, Cora Karges from Hazen was chosen as Roughrider Electric's delegate and joined other youth sponsored by electric cooperatives in Washington, D.C., for a week of learning about electric cooperatives and our nation's rich history, and to expand their leadership skills.

A great experience

The days spent in Washington, D.C., on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity are jam-packed with memorable experiences. Students from across North Dakota, who were also chosen by their electric cooperatives, had the chance to get to know each other during an orientation event before traveling together throughout Washington, D.C.

From visits to monuments, museums and even a musical at the Kennedy Center, students are

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immersed in an unforgettable experience from the beginning.

Karges says some of the places she enjoyed were the U.S. Capitol, Kennedy Center and seeing a performance of “Moulin Rouge.”

“I liked seeing the behind-the-scenes people,” Karges says. “That was eye-opening, because I never really had that perspective of how the government functioned and operated in D.C.”

Another highlight was meeting and visiting with other students.

“I liked that we got to spend a lot of time with the other states and get to know them a little bit and compare where we live and how we grew up,” Karges says.

Youth Tour also helps foster growth and spark inspiration in students. Karges will be a junior at Hazen High School and plans to use the skills she gained.

“Making friends and talking to people are skills that I learned that will very much help after high school,” Karges says.

The Youth Tour is a unique trip for the students



“There's such a good community with the Youth Tour,” Karges says. “It's such a great experience.”

awarded the opportunity, but its potential expands beyond the trip itself.

Apply for Youth Tour

Supporting the youth of our members is one of the many ways Roughrider Electric delivers value beyond electricity. These opportunities help instill life-long skills in students and bring them a chance to build their resumes. Each year, one student is chosen through an application process to represent Roughrider Electric on the Electric Youth Tour. Visit our website for more information and to apply. The application deadline is Jan. 19, 2027. ■





MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Careers in energy



Jason Bentz

Co-General Manager/
CEO

October is a special time for electric cooperatives as we celebrate National Cooperative Month and Careers in Energy Week. It is an opportunity to recognize the people, partnerships and shared values that make cooperatives unique. While members see the end result every time they flip a switch, a dedicated team is working behind the scenes every day to deliver reliable power and exceptional service.

You've likely heard the phrase, "Not all heroes wear capes." In our industry, many wear hardhats, harnesses and safety gear. Our lineworkers demonstrate their commitment every day in maintaining the electric system, responding to outages and working in challenging conditions to keep power flowing to homes, farms and businesses. Their dedication and willingness to answer the call, no matter the time or weather, reflect the cooperative spirit of service and commitment to the members we serve.

Equally important are the member services professionals who serve as the connection between

the cooperative and its member-owners. Whether answering billing questions, helping members understand programs and services or providing information during outages, they ensure members receive the support they need. Their work helps strengthen relationships and reinforces our commitment to putting members first.

These roles represent just a portion of the many career opportunities available within the energy industry. Behind every reliable electric system are employees in engineering, operations, information technology, accounting, communications and administration who work together to support our mission. Each position plays an important role in delivering safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

As we celebrate Cooperative Month and Careers in Energy Week, we recognize and thank the employees and industry partners whose hard work makes a difference every day. Their expertise, teamwork and dedication help power our communities, support local economies and improve the quality of life for the members we proudly serve. ■



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD: **Powered by purpose**



Greg Steckler
President

In October, electric cooperatives across the country take time to celebrate National Cooperative Month and reflect on the unique advantages of being part of a cooperative. It's also the perfect time to thank you, the members who make it all possible.

As a director for Roughrider Electric Cooperative, I have the privilege of helping guide an organization truly different from other utilities. Unlike

investor-owned utilities, our cooperative doesn't exist to generate profits for distant shareholders. We exist to serve you, our members, our neighbors and our communities. That mission is at the heart of everything we do.

Being a cooperative means we are member-owned and locally governed. That's more than a slogan. It's the foundation of our business model. As members,

you have a voice in the direction of our co-op through the board members you elect. Your directors live and work in the communities Roughrider Electric serves, and we understand the unique challenges and opportunities facing our region.

Decisions about your electric service aren't made in corporate boardrooms hundreds of miles away. They're made locally by people who share your values and have a vested interest in our communities.

As board members, our responsibility is to ensure the cooperative remains focused on what matters most: providing reliable, affordable electricity and delivering value to our members. We work closely with our management team to set strategic priorities, oversee long-term planning and ensure the co-op continues operating in the best interests of the members we serve.

That's the power of the cooperative difference. That's what it means to be powered by purpose. On behalf of the board of directors, thank you for the trust you place in us. We're proud to serve as your locally owned and governed electric cooperative. ■



MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: **Powering together**



Shawn Olson

*Chief of Staff/
Operations Manager*

As the seasons change and communities settle into a busy time of year, we also take the opportunity to celebrate National Cooperative Month. It's a time to reflect on what it means to be part of a member-owned organization committed to serving our members and strengthening our communities. As an electric cooperative, we are guided by seven cooperative principles, including cooperation among cooperatives, which is a principle that plays an

important role in the work we do every day.

Our cooperative has a unique story. Years ago, our board of directors recognized the value of working together and joined a cooperative that partners with other cooperatives every day. By sharing expertise, resources and services, these cooperatives can operate more efficiently, control costs and better serve the members who depend on them.

Through ownership of Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative (IEA), Roughrider Electric Cooperative works closely with three neighboring electric cooperatives, KEM Electric, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric and Slope Electric. It's a perfect example of how cooperation among cooperatives strengthens everyone involved.

Reduce costs

Through IEA's services, Roughrider Electric works alongside other cooperatives to help improve efficiency and better serve members. While IEA's engineering department assists with system analysis, maintenance planning and future expansion, the collaboration extends far beyond engineering.

IEA also supports information technology and supervisory control and data acquisition systems, works with accounting teams on budgeting and financial planning, and partners with member services departments to help communicate outage information and other important updates to members. By sharing resources, expertise and services, participating cooperatives can accomplish more together than they could individually while keeping costs manageable for the members they serve.

A recent example of collaboration is the joint

purchase of 115 kV breakers. Several cooperatives needed this equipment for upcoming projects but could not meet supplier minimum order requirements individually. By combining orders, the co-ops were able to secure the equipment, reduce costs and shorten lead times.

Another exciting partnership is purchasing a safety demonstration trailer. The trailer will travel throughout each Roughrider Electric, KEM Electric, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric and Slope Electric's service area, providing valuable safety education and outreach to schools, first responders, farm organizations and community members.

Providing mutual aid

A well-known value of cooperatives is the willingness to help when others are in need. When a storm hits and a co-op is in need of additional crew members or equipment, we call each other for assistance. Because we are neighboring cooperatives, we are often familiar with the service area and may use the same technology to make the process a bit smoother during urgent situations.

Through these partnerships, we can better serve you with cost savings while maintaining quality of service to our members. By working together, sharing resources and supporting one another, we build a stronger cooperative. This month, we are proud to not only celebrate what we have accomplished, but who we have accomplished it with! ■



MESSAGE FROM MEMBER SERVICES:

Make sure heat meters are working



Larissa Eslinger

Manager of
Member Services

As temperatures begin to drop, now is the time to make sure your heat meter is turned on and ready for the heating season. Keeping your heat meter active helps ensure your electric heating system is ready when you need it, while also ensuring you get the proper heat discount. It is a simple step that can save time, money and inconvenience during the colder months.

Roughrider Electric Cooperative offers a

discounted electric heat rate for members who heat their homes with electricity. By installing an electric heat meter, members can take advantage of reduced energy costs throughout the heating season. A separate sub-meter records the discounted rate from Oct. 1 through April 30, helping eligible members lower their heating expenses. This special rate is

available only for homes that use electric heat.

Keeping your heat meter active also helps protect and maintain your heating system. If your heat meter is not turned on, then no discount for that heat usage will be given. An active meter allows the cooperative to monitor and maintain service, identify potential issues early and ensure members continue receiving the appropriate rate and billing benefits associated with their electric heating system.

Maintaining active heat meters helps the cooperative efficiently manage electric demand and support reliable service for all members. Disconnecting power to a heat meter can impact connected heating equipment and may require maintenance or system checks before being placed back into service.

If you have questions about sub-metered heat, eligibility requirements or other cooperative programs, please contact the office. We are happy to help and ensure you are getting the most from the programs and services available to you. ■



Need heating assistance? Apply for LIHEAP.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can help cover heating and weatherization costs for eligible residents.

Check with your local human service office for more information regarding these services. Applications are now being accepted year-round and can be found online at applyforhelp.nd.gov or by request at the local human service zone office.

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Generator safety



Brock Swensrud
General Foreman

When the lights go out, a generator can provide peace of mind by keeping essential appliances and equipment operating. Generators can be used as backup power source during outage situations, but they need to be used in a responsible way.

When generators are used incorrectly, they can pose threats to the user as well as Roughrider Electric Cooperative employees. If misused, generators can

cause carbon monoxide poisoning. If they are not connected properly, electricity can backfeed onto the line, causing harm to lineworkers while they are restoring power. To ensure generators are used correctly, follow the manufacturer's instructions and keep these tips in mind:

- Install and regularly test carbon monoxide alarms. Keep generators at least 25 feet from doors, windows and vents.
- Never operate a generator indoors, in a garage or in any enclosed or partially enclosed space.
- Keep children and pets away from generators while they are running.
- Use properly rated, three-pronged extension cords and inspect them before use.
- Never connect a generator directly to household wiring unless a transfer switch has been installed by a qualified professional.

Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

Before winter weather arrives, be sure your generator is ready to provide backup power if needed and keep these tips in mind. If you have questions about the proper use of portable generators, give us a call at our office. ■



Roughrider Electric board meeting highlights July 31

The meeting of the board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative was held on July 31 at the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame in Medora. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. MT. A quorum was present. Also attending were co-General Manager/CEO Jason Bentz, CFO Alex Craigmile, Operations Manager Shawn Olson, Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz and Board Liaison Connie Hill.

Consent agenda: The consent agenda was approved as presented.

Strategic items: Bentz presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on donation opportunities, a power supplier update and upcoming industry meetings. Several Basin Electric Power Cooperative updates and documents were available for review.

Department reports: Craigmile provided a financial report that included a review of the financials, highlighting items in the executive summary. Olson provided an operations report that

included the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library opening, recent commission meetings and line crew projects. Olson expanded the written member services report, which included employee updates, community events and program updates. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report, which included firewall updates. Grosz provided an update on legal matters, including board policies.

Action items: The board discussed and appointed representatives for Basin Electric's annual meeting, 2027 voting delegates and other items.

Discussion: No other items were discussed.

Executive session: The board entered an executive session during the meeting.

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

Next meeting date: The next meeting is at 9 a.m. MT Oct. 30 in Dickinson. ■



roughriderelectric.com

HAZEN OFFICE

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7 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 Fourth 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

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Troy Sailer, Secretary, Golden Valley 948-2427
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Jesse Flath, Hazen 880-0386
Darell Herman, Beulah 873-4371
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Callen Schoch, New England 290-3836

MANAGEMENT

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

ELECTRIC CO-OPS PROVIDE POWER WITH PURPOSE.

HAPPY CO-OP MONTH!



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