



SAVE THE DATE

June 14

WHAT:

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's annual meeting

WHERE:

North Dakota Farmers Union headquarters in Jamestown

WHY:

- Learn about cooperative news and activities
- Elect three members to serve on the board of directors
- Enjoy a free meal and door prizes!

MARCH 2022

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Interested in running for the board of directors?

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's (NPEC) annual meeting will be held June 14 at the North Dakota Farmers Union headquarters in Jamestown.

Nine board members make up the NPEC board of directors that sets policies and makes decisions that guide the cooperative into the future. With the annual meeting just a few short months away, now is the time for members to start thinking about whether they have the time and desire to serve their electric cooperative.

The board meets on the fourth Monday of each month to make decisions regarding budget, policy, rates and other co-op business. Meetings alternate between the Carrington and Cando offices and typically last a good share of the day. In addition to monthly meetings, NPEC directors often attend meetings and conferences of the statewide association. Directors are compensated for their time.

To run for director, members must:

1. Receive NPEC electric service at your primary residential abode, and you may only run in the district in which you reside.
2. Obtain a petition from our offices in either Carrington or Cando, or call for one to be mailed.
3. Obtain at least 15 signatures from NPEC members.
4. Submit a petition by April 8.
5. Attend the annual meeting.

For more information, call **800-882-2500** or email justask@nplains.com.



Spring into energy savings

We'll soon be celebrating the first day of spring. With the start of a new season comes a fresh opportunity to find ways to save energy and money.

Here are a few simple tips to improve the energy efficiency and comfort of your home as warmer temperatures arrive:

- 1. Service your air conditioner.** Easy maintenance, such as routinely replacing or cleaning air filters, can lower your cooling system's energy consumption by up to 15%. Use the first day of spring as a reminder to check your air conditioner's evaporator coil, which should be cleaned annually to ensure the system is performing at optimal levels.
- 2. Open windows.** Opening windows creates a breeze to naturally cool your home without using air conditioners. This is an ideal tactic in spring when temperatures are mild.
- 3. Use ceiling fans.** Cooling your home with ceiling fans will allow you to raise your thermostat four degrees. This can help lower your electricity bills without sacrificing overall comfort.
- 4. Cook outside.** On warmer days, keep the heat out of your home by using an outdoor grill instead of an indoor oven.
- 5. Caulk air leaks.** Using low-cost caulk to seal cracks and openings in your home keeps warm air out – and cash in your wallet.
- 6. Set the thermostat.** On warm days, setting a programmable thermostat to a higher setting when you are not at home can help reduce your energy costs by approximately 10%.
- 7. Seal ducts.** Air loss through ducts can lead to high electricity costs, accounting for nearly 30% of a cooling system's energy consumption. Sealing and insulating ducts can go a long way toward lowering your electricity bills.
- 8. Switch on bathroom fans.** Bathroom fans remove heat and humidity from your home, improving comfort. ■

Danny Schuchard retires after long co-op career

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

Danny Schuchard held many roles at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) in his 32-year career. Years on the line, in dispatch and as a supervisor made him a well-rounded employee.

“Danny brought a wealth of experience to the table,” NPEC General Manager Seth Syverson said about Schuchard, who retired from the co-op on Jan. 7.

Schuchard, a native of both Courtenay and Carrington, began his career with Tri-County Electric Cooperative as an apprentice lineworker after graduating from Bismarck State College’s lineworker program in 1990. He first worked on the line with the Bowdon and Robinson crews, while earning his journeyman certificate, before becoming Woodworth’s line foreman in 1997.

In 2006, after working as a foreman for nine years, the dad of four and husband to Denise, Danny and his family decided to move back to his hometown of Carrington, taking a lineworker position with the Carrington outpost. In that same year, he switched career paths, moving into dispatch after a position became available. In dispatch, in addition to responding to consumer requests concerning power outages, Danny worked with the line crews, equipment and fleet vehicles. From 2015 to 2018, Danny was the senior dispatcher for both NPEC and Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative when the two cooperatives held their cooperative alliance. Between the two cooperatives, over 12,000 members across 18 counties would reach Danny and his team if they found themselves without power.

In 2019, after a retirement named Seth Syverson as NPEC’s new general manager, Danny received a promotion to operations supervisor. In this position, he was responsible for the supervision of line crews and contractor personnel, along with overseeing dispatch and fleet vehicles. He held this title until his retirement.



Danny Schuchard



In 1990, **Danny Schuchard** began his career with the co-op as a lineworker for Tri-County Electric Cooperative.

“I would like to thank Danny for his years of service and dedication to the cooperative,” Syverson said.

Reflecting on his 32-year career, Danny said his fondest memories were being on the line and working with the members.

“It was just neat to see how grateful people were to have their power restored,” Danny said. “I will miss working with the rural people the most.”

Danny, who is known for his infectious smile and laugh, was willing to help where needed, especially when the co-op was contacted to teach students about electric safety. Danny enjoyed traveling to schools and fairs, performing safety demonstrations, and preaching the dangers of electricity to younger minds. Danny commented that he really enjoyed using the miniature farm model, complete with working electricity, to show students a real electrical contact.

Danny Schuchard enjoyed teaching area students about the dangers of electricity.



“I liked watching the kids’ faces, in complete shock and amazement, when they saw the arcs and heard the sounds from the contact,” Danny said.

Danny was active in the community of Carrington, volunteering his time and serving on the Carrington City Council. But maybe what he is best known for are the novelty blenders he builds in his garage. As a hobby, Danny started building portable gas-powered blenders customized with sports teams’ colors and logos for friends and family, but then he started getting calls for orders from strangers.

“It was kind of an accident how this all got started. Through word of mouth, I kept receiving orders. I have blenders down in Louisiana and in Chicago. But I think I’m also ready to retire my blender building days,” Danny said.

In retirement, Danny is looking forward to spending more time hunting, fishing, playing in the sun and attending his grandchildren’s activities. He and his wife have four children and seven grandchildren.

From everyone at NPEC, good luck in your retirement. ■

Plant Trees Safely

Before you dig, call 811 to locate buried utility lines.

LOW TREE ZONE

Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.



Youth Tour winner announced



Alliana Freund

Alliana Freund, a junior at North Star High School, has earned a seat on the 2022 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, a learning experience sponsored by the National Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives.

The daughter of Northern Plains

Electric Cooperative members Patrick Freund and Angela Freund of Cando, Alliana will participate in an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., this summer, compliments of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative.

During the weeklong tour, Alliana and other students from across North Dakota will travel with the Montana youth delegates in the day-to-day touring of the sites, attractions, monuments and congressional offices in the Washington, D.C., area. The students will learn about electric cooperatives and discuss issues facing their community and the nation.

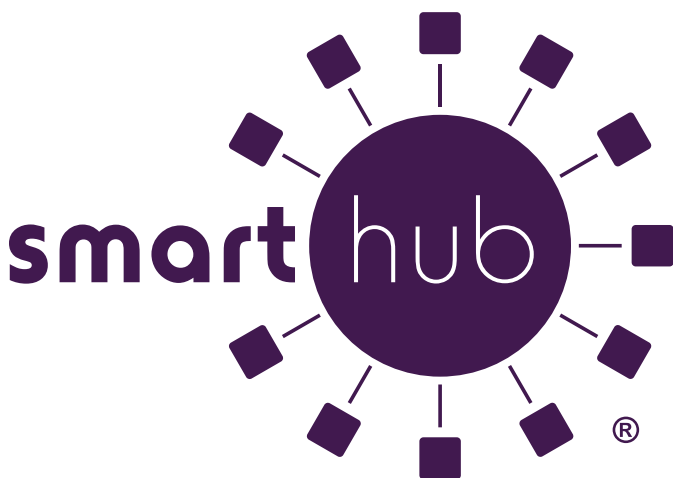
Applicants were asked to write an essay on ways to help promote their cooperative's annual membership meeting, and what ideas they

had for increasing attendance with young member-owners and students. Alliana's winning essay described a handful of ideas, including a virtual approach to advertising that would target the younger generation, and a location change to a local park, complete with activities geared toward families with children.

Alliana is active in speech, choir, yearbook and is a statistician for volleyball and basketball. She is a member of National Honor Society, SADD and is a volunteer teacher for Worship Wednesday and a local dance studio. She enjoys participating in musicals and attending Farmers Union camps in the summer.

Congratulations, Alliana! We know she will represent our cooperative well. ■

Simplify the way you pay



Don't worry about your payment being lost in the mail. Avoid the hassle of late fees, save money every month on stamps and check blanks, and save valuable time with any of our simple and secure payment options:

1. Pay by telephone at 844-749-3052. Be sure to have

your account number handy.

2. Pay online with just your account number and last name using the "Pay Now" option on our website.
3. Log into SmartHub to view your bill as soon as it is available to make a payment or set up automatic payment from a credit card or bank account.
4. Download the SmartHub app on your iPhone or Android device. Log into your SmartHub account to view your bill as soon as it's available to make a payment or set up automatic payment.
5. Call us at 800-882-2500 or visit our website to set up recurring automatic payment from your bank account via ACH.
6. Use VanillaDirect Pay, a new service that allows you to pay cash at participating retailers by using your personal barcode found on your monthly utility bill.

More information can be found on our website under "Payment Options" or give us a call at 800-882-2500. ■

Don't fall victim to utility scams

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online or in-person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

Just last month, several Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members were targeted through a phone scam in which the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- Take your time. Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation

before acting.

- Be suspicious. Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- Confirm before you act. If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent Northern Plains Electric Cooperative or another utility, but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 800-882-2500 to verify the situation.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, so we can let others in our community know. Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized. ■



- Our employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let us know as soon as possible.



ATTENTION KIDS!

ENTER OUR POSTER CONTEST!

Annually, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative sponsors a safety poster contest for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. The purpose of the safety poster contest is to help make children aware of the dangers of electricity. At Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, safety always comes first, and we are dedicated to doing our part to teach children how to be safe around electricity.

Winners will be announced on our Facebook page and featured in the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative local pages of *North Dakota Living*. So, grab your art supplies and be creative!

RULES

- Posters must be on white, 8.5x11-inch paper.
- Posters must depict the theme: **“How to stay safe around electricity.”**
- Print the child’s name, school grade, address and parents’ names on the back of the poster.
- Child must be a dependent of a current Northern Plains Electric Cooperative member.
- Submit entries to a Northern Plains Electric Cooperative office (Cando or Carrington) or mail to:
Northern Plains Electric Cooperative
Attn: Brittnee Wilson
P.O. Box 608
Cando, ND 58324

Entry categories

- Kindergarten-first grade
- Second-third grade
- Fourth-sixth grade

Prizes in each category

- First: \$20
- Second: \$15
- Third: \$10



CANDO OFFICE:
609 4th Ave.
Cando, ND 58324

OFFICE HOURS:
Monday-Friday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

CARRINGTON OFFICE:
1515 West Main
Carrington, ND 58421

www.nplains.com
justask@nplains.com
800-882-2500

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