



The Pavilion has received many updates, including a restored floor, windows and a new roof. A small kitchen addition and exterior paint are on the horizon.

CANDO PAVILION: Rebirth in community spirit

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

On the edge of Cando, something extraordinary is happening for Towner County residents. It started with a whisper, the kind of talk that ripples through coffee hour – the old Pavilion at the Towner County fairgrounds might be torn down.

Built in 1919, the Pavilion had seen generations come and go, including county fairs, blue-ribbon pies, lively dances and 4-H exhibits. But time had not been kind. The roof needed replacing, the windows were falling apart and the structure's future looked bleak.

Although the grounds have not hosted a county fair since the late 1980s, the Pavilion continued to be home for town dances and wedding receptions until 10 years ago. Yet, it remained a symbol of the good old days.

That's when three old friends stepped in. Mark Fox, a retired photographer with a deep love for local history, couldn't bear the thought of losing the building. He teamed up with Doug Beck, a retired Northern Plains Electric Cooperative lineworker with hands skilled from years of labor, and Brad Bergdahl, a retired investment broker known for his organizational skills and get-it-done attitude.

"We saw something worth saving," Fox says. "Structurally, the bones of the building were good – really good."

They made their case to the city council in early 2023, pledging their time and energy to bring the Pavilion back

to life. It was a long shot. But sometimes, all a community needs are a few sparks to reignite a fire.

Once the foundation was cleared by inspectors, the trio got to work. The first step was patching the roof to keep out the elements. Next, they brainstormed ideas of how to fund such a project. Grants were written, and a Facebook page kept the citizens of Cando past and present informed of their progress and ways to donate.

Word spread fast. The people of Cando showed up, not just with donations, but with paintbrushes and tool belts. Volunteers rolled up their sleeves and started with a deep clean. It was no small feat.

"I think we took 100 years of dust off those rafters," Fox says with a laugh.

By summer 2024, the entire roof had been resingled. The building is notable for its unusual roof truss system,

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AUGUST 2025

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Thanks to the dedication and efforts of volunteers, the historic Pavilion located at the Towner County fairgrounds is undergoing a full restoration.

a hybrid of Howe and Pratt truss design and an admirable architectural design and craftsmanship.

That fall, the team invited the community to gather under that historic roof for a barbecue fundraiser. The space filled with laughter and good conversation once again. The plans of the restoration were presented, and the community came alive with purpose.

With more funds and volunteers, next came the unglazed windows. Each was removed by hand, rotten wood replaced and carefully sanded and primed. The floors were sanded smooth and lovingly coated with linseed oil until they gleamed like they had in the Pavilion's heyday. Salvaged wood from the long-closed Egeland School, just 15 miles away, found new life inside the building.

The State Historical Society of North Dakota recognized the effort, and in December 2024, the Pavilion was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places – a proud moment for a proud town.

By spring, the Pavilion was buzzing with activity. The refinished stage was ready for music again, and the bar gleamed under newly hung lights. Already, three weddings had been booked for the summer. For the first time in a decade, the Pavilion was ready to host new memories.

On Aug. 2, Cando will throw open the Pavilion doors for its grand reopening, coinciding with the 50th high school reunion of the class of 1975. There will be live music, laughter and dancing under those unique rafters and newly restored floors.

"The Pavilion will come alive with Auto Drive," Fox says with a grin, referencing the name of the local band set to play. "We're bringing back the soul of this town."

But there's still more to do. The crew hopes to add a small kitchen, paint the exterior and continue general upkeep. Donations and volunteers are always welcome.

"The old guys got it done," Fox says. "Now, it's up to the younger generation."

The short-term goal is to get the community interested in renting the space for any type of event or celebration, boosting the local economy.

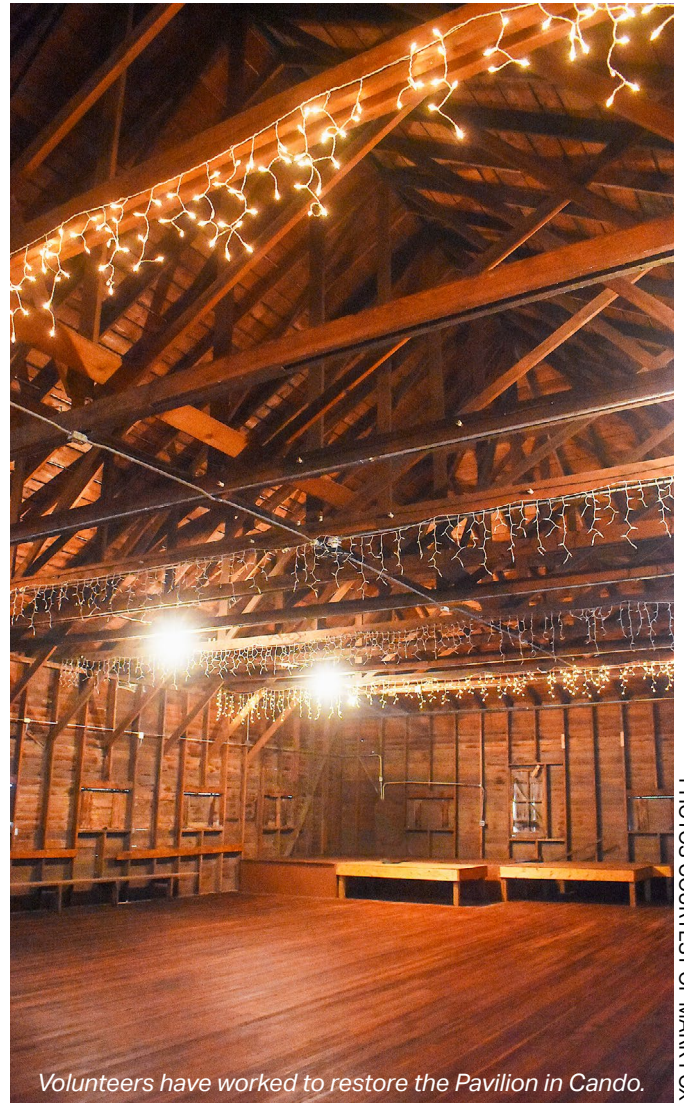
"If the Pavilion could be the choice venue for weddings instead of locals heading out of town, that would be huge," Fox says.

In the long term, they dream bigger.

"One can only dream, but wouldn't it be great to get the fair back again?" Fox says, looking out over the now-quiet grounds where horse races once thrilled the crowds and children ran between lemonade stands and 4-H barns.

For now, the Pavilion stands not just as a building, but as a symbol of resilience, pride and what a community can do when it believes in something.

In Cando, they're not just restoring a building. They're restoring history. They're restoring hope. They're proving "Cando" isn't just a name, it's a way of life. ■



Volunteers have worked to restore the Pavilion in Cando.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARK FOX

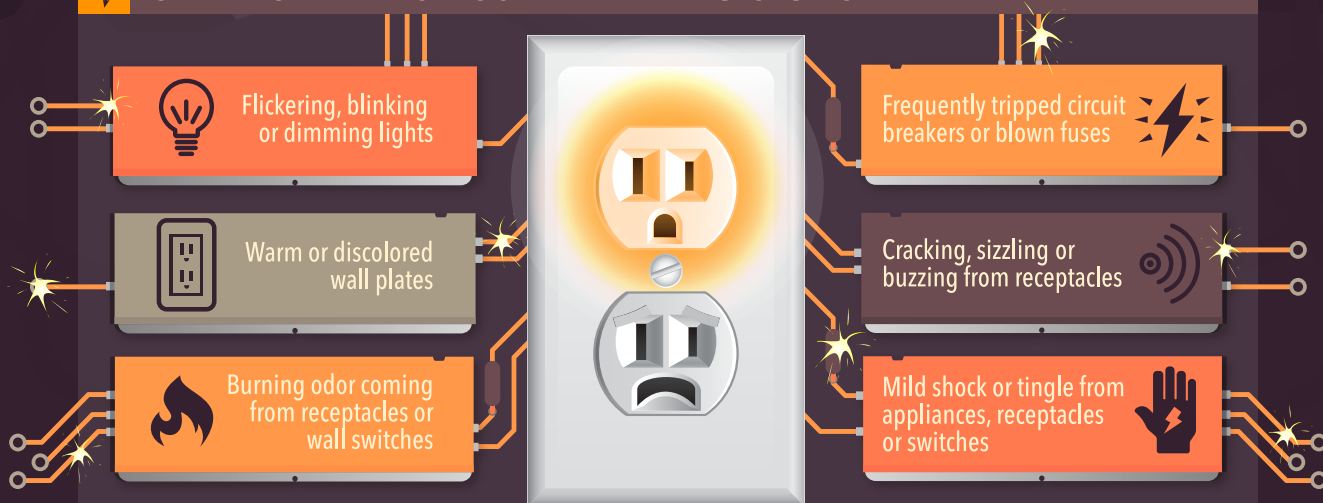
DON'T OVERLOAD YOUR HOME!

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According to the National Fire Protection Association, **47,700 home fires** in the U.S. are caused by electrical failure or malfunction each year. These fires result in **418 deaths**, **1,570 injuries** and **\$1.4 billion in property damage**. Overloaded electrical circuits are a major cause of residential fires. Help lower your risk of electrical fires by not overloading your electrical system.



OVERLOADED CIRCUIT WARNING SIGNS



HOW TO PREVENT ELECTRICAL OVERLOADS

Never use extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliances.



All major appliances should be plugged **directly** into a wall receptacle outlet. Only plug one heat-producing appliance into a receptacle outlet at a time.



A heavy reliance on extension cords is an indication that you have **too few outlets** to address your needs. Have a qualified electrician inspect your home and add new outlets.



Power strips **only** add additional outlets; they do not change the amount of power being received from the outlet.



50%

The CPSC estimates **more than 50%** of electrical fires that occur every year **can be prevented** by Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs). To learn more about AFCIs, visit ESFi.org.



Only use the **appropriate watt bulb** for any lighting fixture. Using a larger watt light bulb may cause a fire.



29th annual meeting highlights



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) held its 29th annual meeting June 9 at the North Dakota Farmers Union headquarters in Jamestown.

Ninety members registered and received a kneeling/seat pad gift for attending. A pork chop and mashed potato meal was prepared by Snack Attack, catering to 180 members and guests.

The business portion of the meeting reflected on highlights through 2024, including cooperative finances, reliability, system improvements, upcoming projects and updates from our power suppliers. Reports were presented by President Tracy Boe, General Manger Seth Syverson and Treasurer Randy Simon.

One of the primary purposes of the business meeting is the election of three board members. The cooperative received three qualified petitions, including one for each district. Since no competing petitions were filed, ballots were not mailed to the membership. Congratulations to incumbents Mark Brehm, District 1, and David Teigen, District 2, as they were reelected to the board. Candidate

Jacob Ryun was elected to serve as director for District 3, replacing Curtis Hanson, who retired from the board after serving 15 years. Each will serve a three-year term.

Following the election, two students were recognized for their achievements. Lakynn Dietrich is the winner of a Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship and Annabelle Staus is the winner of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

Three member dependents received \$1,000 luck-of-the-draw scholarships. Congratulations to winners Abby Ryun, Woodworth, Jorie Ahlberg, Wolford, and Camilynne Walters, Cando.

After adjournment, cash door prizes totaling \$550 were randomly drawn and awarded to members in attendance.

NPEC directors, management and employees thank all members and guests for attending this year's annual meeting. We value your interest, and participation is a key element to the co-op's success. We hope to see you at next year's meeting! ■



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative President **Tracy Boe** congratulates **Abby Ryun**, **Jorie Ahlberg** and **Camilynne Walters**, whose names were randomly drawn for \$1,000 luck-of-the-draw scholarships.

Hanson retires from board



Hanson

After 15 years of dedicated service to Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's (NPEC) board of directors, Curtis Hanson has retired.

Hanson was first elected to the cooperative's board in 2015, representing District 3. Hanson lives and farms near Pettibone, specializing in corn, soybeans and wheat crops. He and his wife, Zee, have six children and

16 grandchildren and have been NPEC members for over 40 years.

"I found this time to be very interesting and at the same time challenging. Thank you to the members for your support over the years," he says.

"On behalf of our entire team, we thank Curtis for his dedication to the cooperative and its members. Curtis exemplified leadership, concern for community and a commitment to the cooperative's values," stated NPEC General Manager Seth Syverson.

Nine board members make up the NPEC board of directors, setting policies and making decisions to guide the cooperative into the future. The board meets monthly to make decisions regarding budget, policy, rates and other co-op business. ■

Meet your new director



Ryun

Jacob Ryun, Woodworth, was elected by the membership to serve on the board from District 3 for Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC).

Retired from the U.S. Air Force after 24 years of service, Ryun is now using his time to focus on family and becoming more involved with his community. Ryun and his wife, Kristine, have been NPEC members for over 13 years and are raising four children.

"While my professional background is in information technology, my personal life has always been in rural/agricultural communities," Jacob says. "North Dakota has been our home since 2009. This is a wonderful place to live, and NPEC makes it possible for people and families like ours to thrive. I feel that serving as a regional director for the board would align well with my knowledge, skills and abilities."

Jacob works as a cattle rancher and a part-timer welder. He loves anything outdoors, which includes hunting and dirt bike racing. He has served as a past archery coach for the Medina school and is currently the clerk/treasurer for his township and a church council member. ■



Schroeder



Olson



Omlie

Employees recognized for years of service

Every year, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative expresses appreciation to employees who have achieved a significant work anniversary. This year, we recognize three employees who have put in a collective 40 years of service to the cooperative.

We thank these employees for their commitment to our cooperative and the role they each play in providing

our members with safe, reliable and affordable electric service. Please join us in expressing appreciation for their many years of dedicated service:

- **Chris Schroeder – 25 years**
- **Shauna Olson – 10 years**
- **Jordan Omlie – 5 years** ■

NPEC hires summer help

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) has hired a temporary apprentice lineworker as summer help during the busy construction season.

Calvin Sisson, a Carrington native, started working with the Carrington West line crew in June under Foreman Shannon Petersen. Sisson, who graduated from lineworker school at Bismarck State College in 2024,

worked for an electrical contractor in western North Dakota before moving back home.

In his spare time, he enjoys fishing, hunting and the outdoors. He is most looking forward to helping power those in his hometown and surrounding areas.

NPEC is excited to have Sisson join the team. ■

Co-op employees step up to the challenge

In May, 171 electric cooperative employees from 14 co-ops across the state participated in a wellness step challenge sponsored by the ND REC Benefit Trust. Over a four-week challenge, participating employees were tasked with racking up as many steps as possible to benefit their health, while winning prizes and earning money for charity. A whopping \$2,950 was donated to great causes on behalf of participants.

Twenty-five Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) employees totaled over 7.6 million steps equaling about 3,800 miles. Three NPEC employees were chosen to donate \$50 to their charity of choice:

- Carrington Youth Center donated by Justin Kollman
- Cando Arts Council donated by Brittnee Wilson
- The Hope Center, Devils Lake, donated by Travis Triepke ■

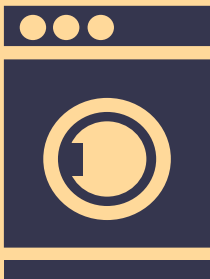


BEAT THE PEAK

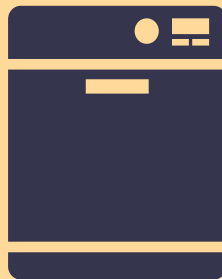
Did you know electricity costs more during peak hours of usage? That's why we encourage members to use less electricity during peak demand hours from **2 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

If you can lower your use of electricity during these peak hours, you can help your electric cooperative keep rates stable.

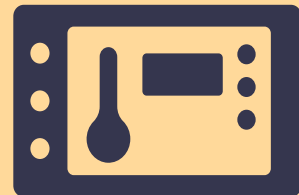
DURING SUMMER PEAK HOURS:



Do laundry during the day or later at night.



Avoid using the dishwasher or other major appliances during these hours.



Turn up the thermostat by 2 to 5 degrees.

WITH YOUR HELP, WE CAN ALL "BEAT THE PEAK!"

Operation Round up grants support causes

At their June meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) Operation Round Up board of directors approved grants totaling \$7,725 to help support worthy causes.

These charitable grants are made possible through the generosity of NPEC members who voluntarily elect to have their electric bills rounded up to the next dollar. The donated amount averages about 50 cents a month for each participating member and raises approximately \$37,000 each year. Since the program's beginning in October 1998, grants totaling \$990,537 have been awarded to 1,354 local charitable causes.

Grants approved in June include:

- St. John's Academy, Jamestown, middle school tech project
- Rolla United Methodist Church, roof project
- Father's Farm, Wolford, window project
- James River Senior Citizens Center, Jamestown, new facility
- Maddock PTO/School, outdoor sports court project
- Cando Park Board, ice arena roof project
- Can-Do Senior Citizens/Towner County Public Transit, bus barn
- Sheyenne Rodeo Club, playground project
- Peggy Shipley, Cando, medical expenses
- Steven & Marsha Belgarde, Belcourt, medical expenses
- Amber/Aaliyah Smith, Cando, medical expenses

If you would like additional information about this worthy program, please contact NPEC by calling



800-882-2500 or you may obtain guidelines or download applications at nplains.com. The board will meet again in September to review applications. The application deadline is Aug. 20. ■

**NORTHERN
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