

PROJECT FUNDING

Grants available to nonprofit entities

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) is excited to partner with CoBank in the Sharing Success matching grant program again this year.

NPEC's board of directors can decide to award up to four grants for a total of \$15,000. Matching funds will be requested through CoBank's Sharing Success program.

To qualify for the grant, an organization must be a certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, school or fire/ambulance department located within NPEC's service territory.

CoBank is a cooperative lending institution that provides loans and other financial services to vital industries throughout rural America, including agribusiness, water, communications and power providers. CoBank is headquartered outside of Denver, Colo.

The Sharing Success program was launched by CoBank in 2012 to celebrate the vital role cooperatives play in individual communities across the country.

Contact Cheryl Belle, business manager, at 800-882-2500 with questions or to request an application. The application deadline is June 16. ■

MAY 2025

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YOUR VOICE MATTERS: Help us shape your cooperative's future

On Monday, June 9, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) will host its annual meeting. We look forward to this event and the opportunity to visit with the members we proudly serve about their cooperative and our community's energy future.

At the annual meeting, co-op leaders will discuss opportunities and challenges, report on the cooperative's financial health and share our vision and priorities for the years ahead.

The energy industry is undergoing a significant transformation, with evolving member needs and advancing technology influencing nearly every aspect of how we deliver power to homes, farms, schools and businesses. As we navigate these changes, your perspective is valuable. We encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with us, as they help guide our decisions and set future priorities.

You may wonder if your opinion truly matters. Yes, it does! At our annual meeting, members vote on important matters, which may include bylaw amendments or resolutions. And your annual meeting is where you exercise one of the greatest benefits of being an electric co-op member – voting for your representation on the co-op's board of directors.

Your electric cooperative is not owned by faraway investors, and it is not overseen by an appointed board of directors. NPEC is overseen by a democratically elected board given the privilege to serve because of your vote. By casting a vote, you help decide the leaders who will make critical decisions for the cooperative's future and our local energy needs.

If this sounds like you (or someone you know), consider



running for the board (or encouraging a fellow member to run) in the future. We're always looking for dedicated individuals who care about our cooperative and our community and are eager to make a difference.

NPEC employees work hard to make the annual meeting enjoyable, and we warmly invite you to attend. While the food and prizes are always crowd favorites, the annual meeting offers so much more.

Your annual meeting is a special time for co-op members to gather, share experiences, hear directly from co-op leadership and, perhaps most importantly, shape the cooperative's future through the power of your vote. We hope you'll exercise the benefits of your co-op membership and join us for the annual meeting on June 9. We look forward to seeing you there! ■



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative **ANNUAL MEETING**

Join us
Monday, June 9
in Jamestown
at Farmers Union headquarters



Registration/Complimentary meal: 5:00-6:00 p.m.
Meeting: 6:00 p.m.

Scholarship opportunity for class of 2025



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) invites member dependents who are in the graduating class of 2025 to join us for our annual meeting. NPEC strongly believes in the future of area students and takes pride in helping develop future leaders. That is why the NPEC board approved three \$1,000 scholarships to be given away at this year's meeting in a luck-of-the-draw format.

Luck-of-the-draw scholarship qualifications:

- 1) Student must be a graduated senior, class of 2025, who will be attending college in the fall semester of 2025.
- 2) Student must be a dependent of an NPEC member. Student will need to register using a parent's or guardian's account information.
- 3) Student must be present to win.

The meeting will be held on Monday, June 9, at the Farmers Union headquarters in Jamestown. Registration and meal will be from 5-6 p.m., with the meeting starting at 6 p.m. ■



Lakynn Dietrich

Dietrich earns co-op scholarship

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) announces its 2025 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship winner, Lakynn Dietrich of Jamestown.

Lakynn is a senior at Jamestown High School and the daughter of NPEC members Kirk and Amy Dietrich. Lakynn has been involved in various school activities throughout her high school career, including volleyball, golf and National Honor Society. She plans to pursue her higher education at the University of North Dakota, where she will work toward a nursing degree, minoring in psychology and public health.

The scholarship is based on many factors, including academics, extracurricular activities, work experience, community involvement and a written essay on the topic, "How does the electricity provided by your electric cooperative improve the quality of life in your community?"

NPEC is honored to play a small part in the education of young adults. ■



*After falling in love with the process of growing and providing the flowers for their wedding, **Kirsten and Daven Dockter** launched a cut-flower garden business in 2024.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIZABETH STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

From farm roots to flower blooms

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

In the heart of Woodworth, a small town in Stutsman County, is a backyard bursting with life, color and beauty. This isn't just any garden, but a passion project that has blossomed into a flourishing cut-flower business. The venture for Kirsten and Daven Dockter thrives on hard work, love and family.

Growing up on farms themselves, Kirsten and Daven both learned the value of hard work, determination and the satisfaction of watching something grow. Those lessons have become the backbone of their lives today, from their full-time jobs in the agricultural industry to poultry farming, cattle ranching, their small business and raising their two young children. It's a balance of responsibility, dedication and care they navigate together.

The couple's small business, Blooms on 2nd, specializes in growing vibrant dahlias, tulips, gladiolas and more. They arrange breathtaking flower bouquets for the community of Woodworth and surrounding areas. The idea first sparked when the couple was planning their wedding.

Like any couple, Kirsten and Daven wanted their big day to feel personal, unique and full of love. They decided to grow the flowers for their wedding themselves. But what

started as a small idea quickly blossomed into something much bigger.

"The garden size quickly tripled and over 800 varieties of flowers were planted," Kirsten recalls.

The couple placed their special flowers everywhere at the reception, including a full dahlia wall as a blooming backdrop where their guests could take photographs.

The flowers were a hit and soon after the wedding, their guests reached out to the newlyweds asking how they could get their hands on those gorgeous blooms. The couple realized they had something special – something worth sharing with their community.

So, they took the plunge and officially launched their cut-flower business in February 2024, right from their backyard.

Family affair

Family is an integral part of their business, including their two young children, Luka and Dekker. Whether its planting in the spring, helping harvest flowers in the summer or just playing in the dirt, Luka and Dekker are right there with their parents learning the value of hard work.



Family is the backbone of the business, as their children are often in the garden with them.

"At the end of the day, we wouldn't want to raise our kids any other way," Kirsten says.

The Dockters also receive help from their extended family, friends and neighbors, who pull weeds, watch their children or help dig dahlia tubers in the fall.

"The business wouldn't be where it is today without those people, and they know who they are," Kristen says.

At the roots

While the business may have started as a small backyard project, it has grown in a way they never expected. In addition to selling beautiful bouquets, the Dockters use the winter months to sell dahlia tubers at home and garden shows across the state, giving North Dakotans the opportunity to grow unique dahlias in their own backyard.

Dahlia tubers are the underground, fleshing root that stores food and water, allowing dahlia plants to grow and bloom. They are planted instead of seeds. Underground, the tubers multiply each year, producing more tubers, similar to potatoes. The Dockters dig up, divide and store thousands of the tubers over the winter, so they can be replanted in the spring.

One of the biggest challenges they face is storing their dahlia tubers during the winter months. The tubers must be kept at a precise temperature between 40 and 50 degrees from fall to spring to ensure they're ready to grow again when the warmer months arrive. To manage this,

the Dockters rely on Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, which provides a steady, reliable source of power to keep their storage area at the perfect temperature.

Their reliance on electricity doesn't stop there, as they use commercial flower coolers to store their freshly cut flower bouquets for customers to purchase as a self-service pickup. The coolers are located in their garage and under surveillance, so customers can swing by to have their pick of a beautiful arrangement at any time.

"Electricity doesn't sound like a real important thing when it comes to flowers and gardening, But it is crucial for our business to have reliable electricity," Kirsten says.

What keeps the Dockters motivated?

"Being able to provide more for our family by doing something we can all do together as a family," Kristin says. "It's also witnessing the joy of how excited customers get when they see our fresh-cut flowers and the excitement when new tubers are available to plant in their own yard."

The business advertises selling dates and events on its Facebook page, Blooms on 2nd. ■



The Dockters offer specialty cut flower bouquets for purchase on an honor system at their location on Second Street in Woodworth.



5 STEPS TO DIY SAFETY

You might have the paint selected and the hammer in hand, but have you considered the safety of your next do-it-yourself (DIY) project?

Josh Eldridge, owner of Capital Inspections in Bismarck and a certified home inspector, offers five tips for staying safe during a DIY home renovation.

1. Leave wiring to the professionals.

Safety is a concern in any DIY project, but especially when the work includes a home's electrical system. Working on or near a home's electrical system can be hazardous if you don't know the rules. That's why it's a good idea to leave the installation or repair of your home's electrical system to licensed electricians.

"Calling an electrician is always the best," Eldridge says. If you are doing any electrical work yourself, shut off the appropriate breaker, then use an outlet tester to be sure the electrical circuit is de-energized.

2. Set the ladder properly.

Be sure the ladder's feet are on a solid, even surface and not on soft or frozen ground. Always have three points of contact going up and down the ladder, and extend the ladder four or five rungs above the roof line to help you get onto the roof. Always have a spotter. And look up when working outside, so the ladder does not contact power lines.

3. Remember your PPE.

Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as safety goggles and ear protection, when using power tools.

"Eye safety is huge," Eldridge says. ANSI-rated safety goggles should be used whenever you are working with power tools or where particles could be in the air.

4. Operate saws and power tools safely.

"Know the tool, know how to operate the tool and always wear protective eyewear, a good pair of gloves and steel-toe boots. And always use sharp saw blades. Sharp blades are always much safer than dull blades, because they cut easier and you don't have to force it," Eldridge says. "You have to be familiar with each tool you're operating and how it works."

Use ground-fault circuit interrupters with every power tool to protect against electric shock hazards. Unplug tools when cleaning or fixing, or while changing blades or bits. Do not use power tools with an extension cord that exceeds 100 feet.

5. If your project involves digging outside, call 811 first.

After providing your project details to North Dakota One Call, utility line owners will locate and mark their lines. These locates do not include any lines you may have installed to your private facilities, such as detached garages, wells or yard lights. Go online at ndonecall.com or call 800-795-0555 or 811. ■

Pennies make change

At its March meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) Operation Round Up board of directors approved grants totaling \$9,750 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 inception in October 1998, grants totaling \$982,812 have been awarded to 1,343 local charitable causes.

Grants approved in March include:

- Emma Miller, Carrington, medical expenses
- John Hickey, Cando, medical expenses
- Jodi Gefroh, Cando, medical expenses
- Gayle Schmidt, Medina, medical expenses
- New Rockford-Sheyenne Close Up, student educational trip to Washington, D.C.
- Jamestown Regional Entrepreneur Center, Jamestown, women's business conference

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 June to review applications. The application deadline is May 20. ■

NPEC hires lineworker

Congratulations to Denby Lueck, who was recently hired by Northern Plains Electric Cooperative as a journeyman lineworker joining the Cando line crew.

Originally from Hettinger, Lueck graduated from the lineworker program at Bismarck State College in 2015. For the last six years, Lueck has worked for an electric cooperative in the western part of the state, holding the role as a lead lineworker for the last two years.

In his spare time, Lueck enjoys fishing, hunting and driving his motorcycle. ■



Lueck





Discounts offered at Medora

In partnership with the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is again making excursions to Medora more affordable for families. This summer, our members are eligible for discounts on tickets, lodging and golf.

Touchstone Energy® members can simply call **800-MEDORA-1**, book online at medora.com or in person and provide the discount code of **"Touch 2025"** for a 15% discount off the following reservations:

- Tickets to the Medora Musical
- Pitchfork steak fondue
- Bully Pulpit Golf Course (Green fees discount will be applied at check-in for tee time.)
- Gospel Brunch tickets
- Old Town Hall Theater shows
- Lodging at Elkhorn Quarters, Badlands Motel, Rough Riders Hotel and Medora Campground ■

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