



District meeting overview

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative held three district meetings in February. In his address to the membership, General Manager Seth Syverson reported on local and national issues affecting the cooperative.



Seth Syverson

Financial condition

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's energy sales were slightly down in 2018, compared to 2017. Sales decreased 1 percent, primarily related to irrigation and pipeline accounts. Northern Plains is projecting to have similar energy sales in 2019 as 2018. However,

Northern Plains has seen increased year-to-date sales due to the colder temperatures.

Northern Plains did implement a small rate increase to the majority of the membership that was effective January 2019 as a result of an increase in our wholesale power costs. The membership can see this increase reflected in the monthly facility charge. As mentioned in the past, Northern Plains had implemented a deferred revenue program to help with

rate stabilization, and the cooperative is utilizing this deferred revenue in 2019 to lessen the impact of the rate increase.

Affordable Clean Energy Rule

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released its proposed Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) Rule to replace the 2015 Clean Power Plan and regulate carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from coal-based power plants in August 2018. The ACE Rule would instruct the EPA to provide guidance, but leave the implementation of the plan to the states. Each state would be required to develop standards of performance for individual power plants by applying a list of technologies that constitute the best system of emission reduction.

The proposed rule would recognize the investments made by Basin Electric Power Cooperative in its coal-based facilities to improve both efficiency and reduce

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MARCH
2019





Vice President of the board, **Curtis Wiesz**, gave the members in Rugby a couple laughs.

emissions, and would allow its membership to continue utilizing these facilities in a carbon-constrained future. The commenting period on the ACE Rule concluded in October 2018 and the final rule is expected around March 2019, although litigation of a ruling may take up to two years.

Power supply resource portfolio

Basin Electric's total energy portfolio includes a diverse mix of generation, with the majority coming from coal, natural gas and renewables. At the end of 2018, 21 percent of the resources Basin Electric owns or purchases came from renewable resources such as wind and waste heat. Natural gas encompassed 20 percent and coal-based generation, the largest portion, makes up 44.6 percent of the generation. The remaining 14 percent consists of hydro, nuclear and oil.

In an effort to continue to balance its portfolio, Basin Electric has committed to an additional 400 megawatts of wind generation that is expected to come online in 2019. Overall, the mix of generation helps Basin Electric keep power costs down and provide reliable and affordable electricity to the membership. ■



Teigen



Brehm



Hanson

Teigen, Brehm, Hanson re-elected to NPEC board

Three directors were re-elected to their seats at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's district meetings held Feb. 19, 20 and 21. Each director candidate ran unopposed.

David Teigen, Rugby, was re-elected to serve District 2. Mark Brehm, Cando, was re-elected in District 1 and Curtis Hanson, Pettibone, will continue to represent District 3. Each director will serve a three-year term. ■

ATTENTION KIDS! ENTER OUR POSTER CONTEST!

Deadline is Monday, March 18.

Contest open to children in grades Kindergarten through sixth grade and must be a dependent of a current Northern Plains member.

For full details and contest rules visit our website: www.nplains.com – under News And Events.



Attend your annual meeting!

April 23

Rocklake Community Center
Rocklake

5:30-6:30 p.m. – Registration and
complimentary dinner

6:30-7:30 p.m. - Meeting

- Door prizes!
- More than \$500 in cash drawings!
- Free dinner!

Your voice and involvement are important. The Northern Plains Electric Cooperative annual meeting unites neighbors and friends, so we can work together to improve the quality of life in rural North Dakota.

We look forward to seeing you there!

**“PERFORM my
job safely always!”**

— Devan Schuler

PERFORM

my job safely always

ACCOUNT

for my actions and those taken by my crew

COMMIT

to speaking up, and responding
to reported hazards

ENGAGE

in job briefings, focus on the task at hand
and take the time to do it safely, always!



NDARECs
North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives

— left to right, Devan Schuler,
Stan Pierson, Randy Thomson

**NORTHERN
PLAINS** Electric Cooperative

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Count your lucky 'northern lights'

BY BRITTNEE WILSON



Photo taken by Rick Craig in Towner County on Jan. 4.

Many of us who live in North Dakota have had the pleasure of experiencing the dancing of the northern lights. It is a spectacular view that many “outsiders” may only have on their bucket list, but will never experience. For some, a sighting is as rare as spotting a shooting star.

Growing up in northern North Dakota, much gets taken for granted, with the northern lights being one of them. I’ve never stopped to contemplate, “What is the science behind something so beautiful?” Until now.

The northern lights, also known as Aurora borealis, are actually collisions between electrically charged particles from the sun that enter the earth’s atmosphere. The lights are seen above the magnetic poles of the northern and southern hemispheres. They are known as “Aurora borealis” in the north and “Aurora australis” in the south. Scientists have learned that, in most instances, the northern and southern auroras are

mirror-like images that occur at the same time.

The lights appear in many colors, although a pale yellowish-green is the most common color. The lights appear in many forms, from patches or scattered clouds of light to streamers, arcs, rippling curtains or shooting rays that light up the sky with an eerie glow.

To catch this phenomenon, skies must be dark and clear. Winter in the north is generally a good season to view the lights, with the best time around midnight in a three-hour window. Smaller communities in the north tend to be the best viewing, as they are less likely to be subject to “light pollution.” Some years are better than others to view the aurora. Scientists have discovered that aurora activity is cyclic, peaking roughly every 11 years. The next peak is expected in year 2025.

Count yourself as a “lucky one” if you have ever experienced the dancing of the northern lights. ■

Carrington student earns \$1,000 scholarship



Sylvie Pate

Sylvie Pate has earned a \$1,000 scholarship from Northern Plains Electric Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

She is a senior at Carrington High School and the daughter of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members Jeff and Julie Pate of Carrington.

Some of Sylvie's hobbies and interests include mentoring, singing in choir, kayaking, hiking, traveling and meeting new people from around the country. She is involved in various school activities such as Future Business Leaders of America, Student Council, concert choir, Sources of Strength, one-act play, Knowledge Bowl and Science Olympiad.

Sylvie plans to pursue her higher education at either the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks or the University of Minnesota Twin Cities of Minneapolis where she plans to major in biology and minor in biochemistry.

The scholarship is based on many factors, including an essay on how a cooperative can build a culture to best serve its members. Sylvie's winning essay was one of 31 applicants. Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is honored for the opportunity to play a small part in the education of young adults. Congratulations, Sylvie! ■

Youth Tour winner announced

Riley Grove, a sophomore at Rugby High School, has earned a seat on the 2019 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, a learning experience sponsored by the National Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives.

Riley is the daughter of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members Brandon and Julie Grove of Rugby. She will participate in an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. this summer, compliments of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative.

During the week-long tour, Riley 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 office in the

Washington, D.C., area. The students will learn about electric cooperatives and discuss issues facing their community and the nation.

Her award-winning essay described ways to connect with young adults through social media to increase an awareness and interest in many career opportunities with electric cooperatives.

Riley is active in volleyball, basketball, golf, band and theater. She is a member of National Honor Society, Future Business Leaders of America and Mathletes. She is the current holder of Miss Coal Country's Outstanding Teen 2019. We know she will represent our cooperative well.

Congratulations, Riley! ■



Riley Grove

Community rallies for new aquatic facility

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

Public swimming pools hold a special place in the hearts of small communities. During the summer, swimming pools are a hub for community activity, playing a crucial role in helping young people learn about water safety and opening up job opportunities for many local teenagers.

In 2016, the nearly 60-year-old outdoor pool in Maddock was in desperate need of funds to update safety requirements and to be ADA compliant. The city of Maddock hired an engineering firm to find different options for the community. On the table was the idea of no longer using the outdoor facility and building a new indoor aquatics facility. The Maddock Park Board and Maddock Pool Fundraising Committee held an informative open session to the public that ended in a vote. The initial majority vote was to rehab the old outdoor pool. The community members rallied together, fundraising more than \$250,000 for the outdoor pool. However, plans changed when the Benson County Event Center board came to the Maddock Park Board with plans to make the indoor pool project happen.

In the winter of 2017, the contracts were signed and Maddock was officially getting a new indoor aquatics facility, with the location inside the Benson County Event Center. The space, a sand-based, cold storage area that was previously used as open arena would now host a 60x25 saltwater pool, complete with basketball hoops, an ADA compliant chair lift, an eight-person hot tub, a 20x15 splash pad and 85-foot waterslide.

Now the small community of only 400 people that had raised more than \$250,000 had to come up with more funds, as \$600,000 was needed to build and facilitate this small-town dream. Many donations and fundraisers took place. Among them was help from Northern Plains Electric Cooperative. Northern Plains donated \$1,000 to the fund and got its financial partner, CoBank, to support as well. Through a Sharing Success Grant Program from CoBank, Northern Plains got its donation matched, totaling \$2,000 toward the new pool renovations.

The new facility opened in June 2018, offering



swimming lessons, water aerobic classes and pool parties, as well as daily open swim. The community ended up raising more than \$500,000, an amount shy from the goal, but an amount impressive in the least. The community had many volunteers to make this dream possible and still many continue to donate their time and money to keep the facility running. ■



CHARGE IT!

Many times, it seems as though the chargers that come with your phone, digital camera or other electronics seem to disappear as often as a sock mate.

As a solution, many people reach for the low-cost, generic plug-in USB chargers and charging cables found in the sea of impulse items that flank the checkout line at your favorite convenience store.

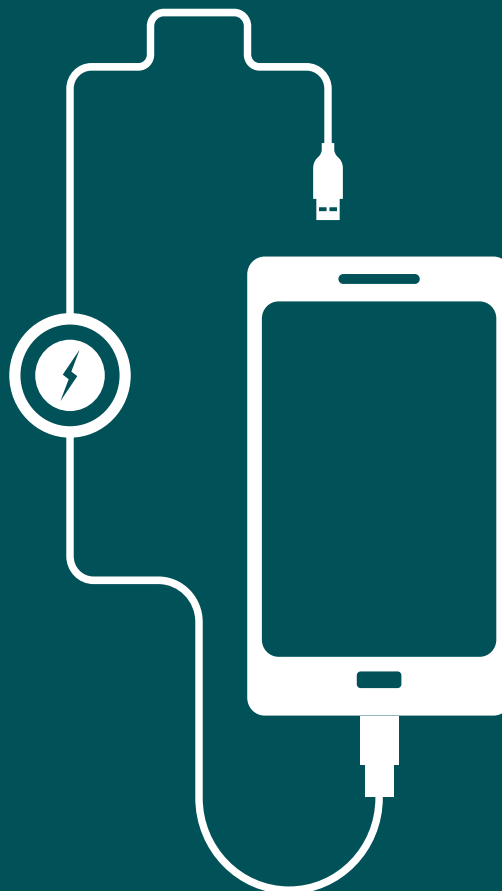
They're also popular items on numerous online shopping sites and cheaper than dishing out money to replace them with their original maker's version.

But inexpensive charging components may be one area you don't want to cut corners and for a variety of reasons. Amazon recalled 26,000 AmazonBasics portable lithium-ion battery chargers and power banks after a massive online retailer learned the units could overheat and ignite, causing fire and burn hazards.

According to the U.S. Consumer Safety Product Commission, the products were sold between December 2014 and July 2017.

Along with being a potential fire hazard, using cheaply made charging components and devices can also cause electrocution. Dangers aside, they may cost you more in the long run since they can cause damage to whatever is on the other end of the cable. To stay safe around electrical devices and charging gear, Safe Electricity recommends:

- Don't leave items that are charging attended.
- Always keep charging items away from flammable objects, especially bedding, and do not take them to bed with you. Tell kids and teens to never place any charging device under their pillow. The heat generated cannot dissipate and the charger will become hotter and hotter. This could lead to the pillow or bed catching fire.
- Don't touch charging electronic devices with wet hands or while standing in water.
- Makes sure charging components are certified by a reputable third-party testing laboratory.
- Only buy product-approved chargers and cables (those made or certified by the manufacturer). Using cheaper devices can cause damage to the USB charge chip. Although it's tempting to save money, this can have lasting impact on how quickly and effectively your device charges in the future.



The bottom line is this: Don't buy charging equipment with pieces that seem too good to be true or from companies you've never heard of. And even if you've heard of a company, be leery of fakes. In 2016, Apple sued a company that sold counterfeit wall chargers with Apple's name on them for less than \$10 each. Say no to cheap chargers!

**NORTHERN
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