

MWEC

Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

WILLISTON
577-3765

STANLEY
628-2242

NEW TOWN
627-3550



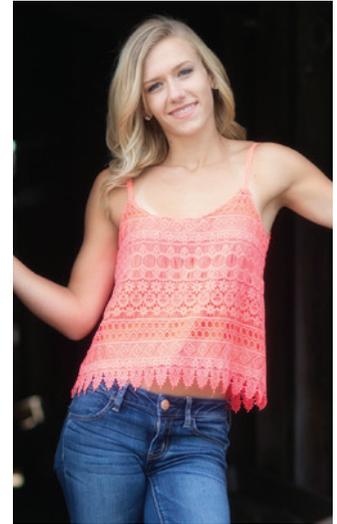
Jayden Okeson



Megan Jorgenson



Miranda Barraza



Kinley Peterson

MWEC awards 2018 scholarships

This year, Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC) awarded four scholarships to area high school seniors.

Each year, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, on behalf of MWEC, provides a student with a \$1,000 scholarship. This year's winner is Jayden Okeson. She is a senior at Surrey High School and plans to major in dietetics at the University of North Dakota. She is the daughter of Larry Okeson and Julie Vachal-Okeson.

Three other recipients received scholarships through MWEC.

Megan Jorgenson is the recipient of a \$500 scholarship. She is a senior at Williston High School and plans to major in criminal justice at Minnesota State University-Moorhead. She is the daughter of Blaine and Jennifer Jorgenson.

Miranda Barraza is the recipient of a \$250 scholarship.

She is a senior at Williston High School and plans to major in accounting at Arizona State University. She is the daughter of Frank and Allison Barraza.

Kinley Peterson is the recipient of a \$250 scholarship. She is a senior at Grenora High School and plans to major in biology (pre-dentistry) at Minot State University. She is the daughter of Brent and Jennie Peterson.

MWEC would like to congratulate this year's scholarship winners on their accomplishments and wish them the best in their future endeavors. ■

Scholarship application information becomes available each fall and the deadline is mid-February. If you would like more information, check www.mwec.com or contact Jessica George at jessicam@mwec.com.

In this issue:

- **Outage management technologies improve reliability**
- **Ownership of company**
- **Meeting minutes ... and more!**



Outage management technologies improve reliability

BY TOM TATE

“The only things certain in life are death and taxes,” as the old saying goes. Well, we can add another to the list: power outages. An outage can range from annoying to dangerous, depending upon its timing and length.

Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative’s (MWEC) primary goal is to deliver the highest possible quality of electric service to its members. Perhaps the key measure of quality in the eyes of members is the number of times their lights blink or go out.

Let’s talk a bit about how the grid is designed as a backdrop to how technology is improving reliability by reducing blinks and outages. Along the power lines that bring electricity to your home, MWEC installs protective devices in the form of fuses and reclosers (high-voltage circuit breakers). Fuses and reclosers serve the same purpose as the fuses and circuit breakers in your home.

A fuse is a one-shot device. When a fault occurs, the fuse blows and everyone downstream from it loses power. Reclosers are multi-shot devices, meaning they can operate a certain number of times before they stay open and an outage occurs. A common setting is what’s known as a triple-shot. Here’s how that works. A tree limb contacts the power lines and creates a fault. The recloser senses it and opens, creating the first blink.

Here’s where a recloser differs from your home circuit breaker. It waits a certain amount of a time (typically a few seconds), then recloses to try and complete the circuit. If the fault is still there, it opens again. This creates the second blink. Triple-shot settings allow the device to reclose a third time and if the fault is still there, it stays open and the members downstream experience a power outage.

Blinks are a nuisance, but they eliminate a lot of extended outages by protecting wires and equipment from serious damage.

So, what kind of technology is improving service reliability? The smart grid is spawning an amazing array of equipment and software that are already improving reliability. When combined with field construction practices, like building multiple ways to feed power loads and the deployment of advanced metering systems (AMI),

the future of reliability is bright – pun intended.

Electric co-ops are starting to use more of what are called intelligent electronic devices. “Intelligent” basically means a co-op can program the device to behave a certain way when a specific event occurs. It also means the co-op can remotely command the device to take an action, either preprogrammed or ad hoc.

Eventually, there will be a power outage despite the best efforts of MWEC. That is where AMI and outage management systems (OMS) earn their keep. The basic element of an AMI is a meter that can communicate with your electric co-op. The OMS maps system data and meter locations into a piece of software that models the electric grid. When a device on the grid reports loss of power, the OMS runs calculations to determine the exact location of the fault and the number of members impacted.

Now, the whole suite of systems your co-op uses comes into play. The co-op dispatcher can call out or redirect a crew to the exact location of the problem. A map of the outage and number of impacted members is generated and member service reps are notified that an outage is in progress. For members who have signed up for it, they might receive a text stating there’s an outage and another when power is restored.

The end result of all this technology is the minimization of outages and their length, plus more availability of up-to-date information for the consumer.

Mother Nature is a tough opponent, and it’s impossible to eliminate outages and blinks altogether. But with the way technology is advancing, we can expect to see some remarkable improvements. ■

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



MWECC employees partake in annual cleanup duties

Each year, Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative (MWECC) employees go out to their local areas and clean up the roadways. Thank you to all of the MWECC staff who took the time to help make our communities a better place.



COMPANIES THAT CARE

Ownership of the company matters

BY ADAM SCHWARTZ

Studies have shown that communities where owners occupy the majority of homes are more successful academically, are more physically fit and have a stronger sense of community. While owning a home may not be possible or desirable for everyone, ownership does matter. It just seems to make sense that we treat things we own with greater care.

Chances are you probably don't think too often about your ownership role with your electric cooperative. Every member of Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative can take pride in the fact that you are an owner of your electric co-op. While at times it may seem easy to take the provision of electricity for granted, we are working 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to make sure you, the member-owners of the co-op, are well taken care when it comes to your electricity needs.

Locally based cooperatives believe this special bond and obligation to be an integral part of the community. MWEC understands that you can't sell electricity to a business that has closed its doors, or to people that have left the community because there are not enough local opportunities. Electricity is a critical need, but it takes

more than poles, wires and kilowatt-hours to make a community.

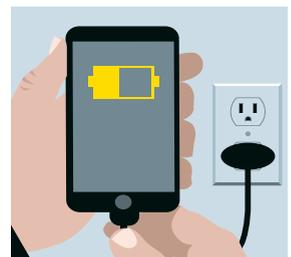
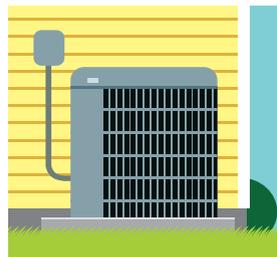
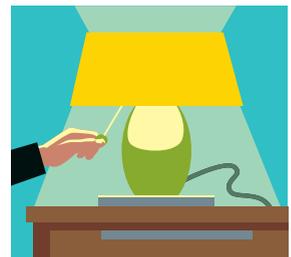
We are owners of our co-op, and in a real sense, we are owners of our community. Our community is strong. Think about how much greater it can be when we work cooperatively to tackle our future challenges. If we act like owners on a consistent basis, we will put even more care and attention into our community, and we will look locally for solutions. Finding local solutions can help keep money – and people – right here in our community.

We all have a role to play. As your local electric cooperative, we promise to do our part for the community. If you have thoughts about how we can do a better job, please contact Jessica George. You are the owners of the co-op, and we welcome your active participation. ■

Adam Schwartz is the founder of The Cooperative Way a consulting firm that helps co-ops succeed. He is an author, speaker and member-owner of the CDS Consulting Co-op. You can follow him on Twitter @adamcooperative or email him at aschwartz@thecooperativeway.coop

We're Proud to Power YOU.

Local, Safe, Reliable Electricity.
For all the ways you live.



SHOPPING FOR NEW WINDOWS?

Whether the glare of the summer sun or the chill of winter winds is the problem, inefficient windows can affect the energy bills of a home or business. But going shopping for windows might not be necessary just yet.

"Replacing windows is an expensive process," says Ken Hellevang, a North Dakota State University Extension Service agricultural engineer. "Look at how much you're going to spend on the windows. If it's strictly heat loss that you're experiencing, how much difference will it make? How long will it take to pay for the windows with the amount being saved?"

"It's difficult to justify replacing windows based just on the conductive heat loss," he adds. "If you've got air leakage around the window or rotting wood, then you could go ahead and make the switch, but realize it's going to take a long time to get a payback."

Here are some budget-saving ideas that will improve existing windows:

CONTROL CONDENSATION

Condensation on windows occurs when air inside the house touches the cold surface of the windows and turns into condensation.

"That problem can be solved either by warming the window surface or lowering the humidity," Hellevang says.

Keep the inside humidity level below 40 percent during the winter, he advises. An air exchanger will help with the overall air quality inside a building and control humidity. More information about window condensation and controlling indoor humidity can be found in an NDSU publication titled "Keep Your Home Healthy." It is available at <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/ageng/structu/ae1204.pdf>.

If your windows are cold, one good option for warming the glass surface is to place a plastic window film over the window with an air space between the plastic and window. A wide variety of window films that will reduce heat leaks and air infiltration around windows is available.

ADD EXTRA COVERINGS

Insulated window treatments are another way to save a few dollars on heating and cooling bills.

Installed properly, window coverings can reduce heat loss significantly. The advantage of the window treatments is that they can be opened on the sunny side of the house to allow the sun to add free heat to the home. In the evening when the sun goes down, simply shutting the blinds retains the heat.

Window treatments also can aid in reducing heat gain during the summer. Close the covering when the sunshine is coming through the window.

DECIDING TO REPLACE

Single-pane windows, rotting wooden frames and leaking window seals are indications that windows should be replaced. That's when a window is inefficient and costing money.

As you shop for new windows, choices about materials, style and installation will all have an impact on your energy bill.

But consider all your options first.

"Replacing the windows may be the correct choice, but sometimes there are other options, such as caulking and weather stripping to reduce infiltration, that you should consider when making a decision," Hellevang says.

If replacing a window, select one rated by the National Fenestration Rating Council. The rating will list the following factors that should be considered when selecting a window:

- U-factor measures the rate of heat transfer from inside a room. The lower the number, the lower the potential for wasted heating expenses.
- Visible transmittance measures how much natural light can come into a room. A high number means more natural light.
- Solar heat gain coefficient measures the amount of outdoor solar radiation heat that can enter a room. The lower the number, the lower the potential for wasted cooling expenses.
- Air leakage measures how much air will enter a room through the window. The lower the number, the lower the potential for draft through the window. ■

STAY SAFE ON THE FARM



Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity to hardworking farmers and ranchers, but those same power lines can also be deadly if not treated with respect. While you need to focus on the field and your machinery, Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative urges you to also watch for electrical hazards around the farm or ranch.

BE AWARE

Farmers and their equipment should always be 10 feet away from power lines on all sides. Field cultivators and sprayers can often reach as high as 12 feet in the air. Practice extreme caution and use a spotter to make sure you stay far away from power lines when you use tall equipment.

If you have purchased new equipment, be aware of antennas or other attachments that may pose new hazards. A newer, bigger piece of equipment may no longer clear a line. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year-to-year.

Power lines also may sag over the years. If power lines on your property are sagging, contact your electric cooperative to repair the lines. Never try to move a power line on your own.

Overhead power lines are not the only electric hazard on the farm. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can become charged with electricity. If you break a guy wire, call the cooperative to fix it. Don't do it yourself.

FOLLOW THESE OTHER TIPS:

- Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles. Make sure you, your family and employees know the location of overhead power lines, and use routes to avoid the lines when moving equipment. Do this every year, as equipment sizes and soil conditions may change.
- Be aware of increased heights of equipment, especially new equipment with higher antennas.
- Avoid moving large equipment alone. Have someone watch as you move equipment to ensure you are clear of power lines.
- Be extra careful when working around trees and brush; they often make it difficult to see power lines. ■

WHAT IF YOU CONTACT A POWER LINE?

Imagine that you are driving a tractor to the field when things come to a screeching halt. You look back to see what's stopping you, only to discover that you're tangled in an overhead power line! What do you do?

- First, DON'T climb out. If your equipment does contact a power line, stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others to stay away and wait until the electric cooperative arrives. Most utility lines are uninsulated, bare wires. Do not let your body become a direct link between the power line and the ground.
- If you must leave the tractor due to immediate danger, such as a fire, jump as far away as you can, making sure that no part of your body touches the tractor and the ground at the same time. Land with both feet together and hop or shuffle your feet a few inches at a time, making sure to never break contact with the ground or cause separation between your feet.
- Once you're off the tractor, do not go back until your local electric co-op disconnects the power line.

Unofficial minutes
of regular board meeting
April 25, 2018

Directors present: Hartsoch, Johnson, Lynne, Jorgenson, Lalim, Ludwig, Lahtinen and Grant.

Directors absent: Sorenson.

Others present: Manager Haugen, in-house counsel Johnson Ellis, attorney Foust and staff members.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. The agenda was approved as presented. Minutes of the March 28 board meeting were revised to change the June board meeting date to June 28. The minutes were approved as revised.

OPERATING AND FINANCIAL REPORT: Jay Lux presented the operating report for the year to date and for March. The total margins and capital credits for the year to date was \$7,650,295.00. OTIER is 2.85; MDSC is 2.53; cooperative equity is 24.69 percent; and SPP equity is 35.85 percent.

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT/
WORKORDER CLOSEOUTS:**
The board approved the closeout of the following special equipment/
work order:

Closeout 700.....	\$2,117,954.36
Closeout 701.....	\$651,956.78
Closeout 702.....	(\$1,016,047.96)
Closeout 703.....	(\$721,403.69)
TOTAL.....	\$1,032,459.49

**CAPITAL CREDIT
RETIREMENTS (March 2018
revised):** The board approved the retirement of the following capital credit accounts:

Harriet Jensen estate.....
Lawrence Urban estate.....
Joyce Thunshelle estate.....
Betty Shobe estate.....
Almeda Baker estate.....
Deanna Wells estate.....

The capital credit retirement for the month of March was revised. The board approved revised March capital credit retirements.

**CAPITAL CREDIT
DISCUSSION:** Manager Haugen discussed how the cooperative currently retires capital credits other options. The board asked that different scenarios be run on a report and brought back to the board for further consideration.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:
The updated policies were made available. The new language for these policies was approved at the March board meeting.

**MANAGER'S REPORT:
RELIABILITY AND OUTAGE
REPORT** – Jerry Rehak presented the reliability and outage report for March. There were 139 outages in March, with most being weather related. The cooperative has a goal of 99.99 for reliability. Reliability for the month of March was 99.98.

**CONTINUING BOARD
EDUCATION** – The board participated in education concerning SPP billing and congestion.

EASEMENT COMPENSATION – Chris Brostuen discussed with the board the current easement policy.

SPP – The SPP/MWEC annual meeting will be held July 12.

MWEC BUILDING UPDATES – Jerry Rehak provided the board with an IT update on the new office building. The FCI meeting minutes from April 17 and the April 12 PIE report were made available.

There was discussion on the Basin Electric Power Cooperative heat program.

**CONTINUING BOARD
EDUCATION** – The board participated in NERC compliance and cyber education training. The board agreed to postpone the FERC director responsibilities and liabilities continued education to the May board meeting.

SAFETY – A bird was electrocuted on a Williams County line.

EMPLOYEE UPDATE – Manager Haugen gave a brief employee update.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Board members met in executive session to discuss employee issues.

MEETING REPORTS:
UPPER MISSOURI – Director Jorgenson gave a report on the Upper Missouri annual meeting.

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) – Director Lynne and Director Grant gave a report on the 2018 Legislative Conference in Washington D.C.

Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) – Steve Kettler, senior vice president, strategic services of CFC, was present at the meeting. He discussed the Integrity Fund.

The board approved a one-time donation to the Integrity Fund.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. ■

**All MWEC offices
will be CLOSED July
4 in observance of
Independence Day.**

**MOUNTRAIL-WILLIAMS
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

P.O. Box 1346
Williston, N.D. 58802-1346
P.O. Box 129
Stanley, N.D. 58784-0129

DIRECTORS

Roger Sorenson.....Chairperson
Robert Grant.....Vice-Chairperson
Cheryl Hartsoch.....Treasurer
Blaine Jorgenson.....Secretary
Larry Johnson.....Director
Aaron Lynne.....Director
Garrett Lalim.....Director
Luke Lahtinen.....Director
Dick Ludwig.....Director
Neff, Eiken
& Neff, PC.....Project Attorney
Dale Haugen.....General Manager

OFFICE PHONE NUMBERS:

Williston.....(701) 577-3765
Stanley.....(701) 628-2242
New Town.....(701) 627-3550
WATS.....(800) 279-2667

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 