IN THE APRIL 2018 RED RIVER VALLEY COOPERATIVE POWER ASSOCIATION

ALL IN THE FAMILY
Story page 4
Your cooperative's employees enjoyed visiting with the 150 or so members and guests who attended our 81st annual meeting March 22 in Halstad.

Besides great conversation, members enjoyed a complimentary supper and learned about the cooperative's performance in 2017 and what is planned for this year. Members learned the Board of Directors did retire $100,000 of capital credits from 1990 at its February meeting to give back to members with their April statements.

Attendees also heard that no rate increase is planned assuming kWh budgeted projections are met. Wholesale power rates should be stable for the near future. Cooperative staff also explained how new metering technology and office software will make for an extremely busy 24 months as the cooperative undertakes these necessary upgrades simultaneously.

But beyond all the indicators of your cooperative's health in terms of service, reliability and rates, it is the basic foundation of your cooperative in its 81st year I keep reflecting upon. Technology changes, but the importance of personal relationships does not. The members of this cooperative demonstrate every year the vitality of local control and grassroots democracy through participation and in the election of directors.

District 1 director opening
With the retirement of Kay Green, Ada, from the Board of Directors an opening for a director from District 1 is available. Interested members in District 1 (see map for a list of townships) can send in the bill insert from their April statements to learn more about being a director.

Interested members in District 1 have until May 18 to send back the insert. At that time, we will mail the member a director qualifications packet and the Board will begin considering applicants. Whoever is chosen will be up for re-election at the next annual meeting for a full three-year term per the co-op's bylaws.

Any interested member in District 1 may either call for the bill insert or print off the insert from our website, www.rrvcoop.com, under the Quick Links section of the homepage.

Outages: 800-788-7784

On the cover: Brothers Travis, Jesse and Adam Huot (top to bottom), along with their mother, Leslie, all work for different electric cooperatives in the Minnkota system. Adam works for Red River Valley Co-op Power.

Story on pages 4-5.
In-floor heat
A popular option for off-peak due to its comfort. The key is to install the proper heat storage base with sand and slab or install a dual-fuel system. Complete perimeter insulation is necessary for both styles. A $20 per kW rebate is available (max of $600).

Bonus option
Large capacity water heater on off-peak credit. Purchase an electric water heater 80 gallons or larger and get great upfront rebates, plus the option of an $11 recurring monthly credit for letting us control that water heater when energy demand is high.

For more information about off-peak, heat pumps and electric water heaters, contact Member Services at 800-788-7784 or email info@rrvcoop.com.

Geothermal heat pumps
Provide the highest efficiencies for space heating and cooling today. Geothermal heat pumps use the constant temperature of the earth to transfer heat. Energy efficiency rebates of up to $400 per ton are available as well as a separate rebate of $200 per ton ($600 max). Plus, 30 percent federal tax credits are now available!

When paired with a fossil fuel furnace backup, geo heat pumps get the off-peak rate for a heating price that is hard to beat when you combine efficiency with the 6.5 cents per kWh off-peak rate.

Steffes thermal storage room units
An electric thermal storage option that can receive the off-peak rate, these units are perfect for existing homes with cold spots.

Steffes room units convert electricity into heat and store that heat in specially designed bricks. Energy efficiency rebates of $20 per kW are available ($600 max).

Rebates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>Potential Rebates*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air heat pump</td>
<td>Up to $1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air heat pump w/mod. plenum</td>
<td>Up to $2,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geothermal heat pump</td>
<td>Up to $2,600 or greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric floor heat</td>
<td>Up to $600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric water heater &gt;80 gallons</td>
<td>Up to $450</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Example based on size, efficiency, off-peak options.

Price difference in heating fuels per million Btus of heat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fuel Type</th>
<th>Off-Peak 6.5 cents/kWh</th>
<th>Off-Peak 12.1 cents/kWh</th>
<th>Air-Source 6.5 cents/kWh</th>
<th>Air-Source 12.1 cents/kWh</th>
<th>Propane $1.67/Gal.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Off-Peak Air-Source Heat Pump</td>
<td>$7.24*</td>
<td>$10.02**</td>
<td>$13.48</td>
<td>$19.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Outside temperatures fluctuate affecting the heat pump’s efficiency. Efficiency and price per million Btus is estimated at 47 degrees F. Need additional heat like plenum heater in winter.

**Heat pump with modulating plenum assumes a coefficient of performance of 1.9 at 10 degrees F using information provided and reviewed by Electro Industries, Monticello, MN.
In the middle of the night when storms rage through northwest Minnesota, Leslie Huot can’t help but worry.

Her three sons – Travis, Jesse and Adam – are electric cooperative line workers in the region. If the lights go out, working day and night in treacherous conditions is just part of the job.

“I’m very proud as a parent to have line-men,” Leslie said. “It’s a dangerous profession, but it’s a good profession.”

Leslie knows firsthand the importance of what her sons do for a living. She’s worked the phone lines at Beltrami Electric Cooperative in Bemidji, Minn., for the last 17 years. Having line workers as sons helps her answer questions and relay information out to the membership.

“I feel I have a better understanding of the linemen I work with,” Leslie said. “When they get called out on storm jobs, I know what they’re going to be doing, because my boys do the same thing.”

While it is rare to have four immediate family members working for electric cooperatives, it is even more rare that each works for a cooperative in the Minnkota system. Travis is the line foreman at Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative in Bagley, Minn.; Jesse is a journeyman lineman at North Star Electric Cooperative in Baudette, Minn.; and Adam is an apprentice lineman at Red River Valley Cooperative Power.

The Huots were initially drawn to cooperatives because of the rural setting and their reputation of having a family atmosphere. They haven’t been disappointed.

“When I got hired, the one thing that was said to me was, ‘You don’t quit Beltrami Electric; you retire from Beltrami Electric,’” Leslie said. “That’s just the kind of company it is. And I think our sons’ co-ops are the same way.”

Growing up

Leslie and her husband, Mark, say there were no clear-cut signs that they were raising three future line workers. But when the family moved to Bemidji from western North Dakota in 1994, the tall trees in the
area provided a perfect training ground for pole climbing. In fact, on their first day in town, Jesse climbed so high he needed a ladder to get down.

“They were always climbing trees,” Leslie said. “They couldn’t stand to stay inside. So we knew they probably weren’t going to like sitting in an office someday.”

Even electrician work included too much time inside for Jesse, 30, who was the first in the family to enter the line trade. After sharing stories of a typical day on the job, his brothers followed the same career path.

As much as Jesse enjoys the fresh air and open spaces, the camaraderie on his crew may be his favorite part.

“You pretty much live with each other,” Jesse said. “A lot of other jobs, people come and go. When you get into a cooperative, people don’t leave too often.”

With a younger line crew at North Star Electric, he believes there is chance for his guys to be together for many years to come. Working on power lines in remote areas means everyone has to trust each other, he said.

“A guy might get ticked off here or there, but at the end of the day you gotta be buddies,” Jesse said.

Camaraderie is something Adam, 21, noticed right away, too. He’s had eight months on the job at Red River Valley Co-op Power and is starting to become comfortable with the processes and systems.

“I really like it so far,” Adam said. “The guys are really good to me. They take the time to teach me their way of doing things.”

Adrenaline rush

From one brother to the next, the Huots admit they are drawn to the adrenaline rush of line work and the satisfaction of doing something that makes a difference in people’s lives. One of the career highlights for the brothers is working together on a storm project near Bagley. Each of the Minnkota cooperatives routinely reach out to help each other when Mother Nature strikes.

“We’ll have outages when we’re working nonstop for days on end,” said Travis, 31. “When you turn the power back on and they’re appreciative, it makes a guy feel pretty good.”

Travis chased that feeling all the way to New York, where in 2012 he helped restore power after Hurricane Sandy. But with three young children at home, he’s happy sticking close to the area. He says the kids are getting used to the 24-hour demands of the job.

“If it’s suppertime and I gotta go to work, my kids will say, ‘Daddy, you gotta go fix power?‘ I say, ‘Yeah, daddy has to go fix power.’”

If the crews are in a safe area close to home, his wife, Kate, will drive near the job site so his 4-year-old daughter, Peyton, and 3-year-old son, Judson, can watch their dad work.

“There’s probably going to be another lineman in the family,” Leslie said with a smile.

Brothers Travis (Clearwater-Polk Electric), Adam (Red River Valley Co-op Power) and Jesse (North Star Electric) are line workers for cooperatives in the Minnkota system.

“They were always climbing trees. They couldn’t stand to stay inside. So we knew they probably weren’t going to like sitting in an office someday.”

– LESLIE HUOT
Notice to cogenerators

In compliance with Red River Valley Co-op Power’s adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, Red River Valley Co-op Power is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers whom satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility. Red River Valley Co-op Power is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by Red River Valley Co-op Power. Interested members should contact Red River Valley Co-op Power by calling 218-456-2139.

Plan ahead for new services

If you plan on upgrades or new services, especially if large fans for drying are involved, please contact your cooperative as soon as possible. This is helpful because the delivery time for large transformers can be lengthy. In addition, line crews already have a number of projects planned and the schedule gets especially tight later in the summer. As much as practical, the service upgrades will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call and ask for Engineering.

Installation of new meters to begin in May

Your cooperative will receive its first full shipment of meters for the new system later this month for deployment to begin in early May. Red River Valley Co-op Power employees will be installing the new meters. If you have an off-peak meter inside the house we plan to contact you prior to installation as much as possible. This is the first of many communications with the membership regarding the meter changeout.

Director Kay Green retires

Kay Green, Ada, recently retired as District 1 director for Red River Valley Co-op Power after serving in that capacity for 22 years. She received recognition from Lauren Brorby, Red River Valley Co-op Power CEO, for her dedication to the co-op at its 81st annual meeting last month.

Rebates for electric vehicle home chargers

Install a 240-volt charger and receive a $50 per kilowatt (kW) rebate (maximum $500) and the money-saving off-peak charging rate!

For more information, call
Red River Valley Co-op Power
218-456-2139 or 1-800-788-7784

$50 per kilowatt rebate for Level 2 chargers

6 April 2018 SPARKS
As farmers return to their fields for spring planting, Red River Valley Co-op Power urges them to be particularly alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines. Operating large equipment near these lines is one of the often overlooked, yet potentially deadly, hazards of working on a farm.

Start by making sure everyone knows to maintain a 10-foot clearance minimum from power lines. “Sometimes a power line is closer than it looks,” says Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council’s Safe Electricity program. “Helpful safety steps include using a spotter and designating preplanned routes that avoid hazard areas.”

Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Many tractors now have tall antennas extending from the cab that could make contact with power lines. Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators near power lines, and never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.

Simply working too close to a power line is dangerous as electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting objects, such as a ladder, pole or truck. Remember, nonmetallic materials such as lumber, tires, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.

“If your equipment does come into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call Red River Valley Co-op Power and 911 for help,” explains Hall. “If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground. Even if a line has landed on the ground, there is still potential for the area to be energized. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until help arrives.”

If exiting the cab is absolutely necessary because of fire, the proper action is to jump – not step – with both feet together, hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

Have a successful planting season rooted in safety

One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked AND helps protect you from injury and expense. Safe digging is no accident: always call 811 before you dig.

Visit www.call811.com for more information.

**COLOR CODING FOR MARKING UNDERGROUND UTILITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>Proposed excavation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PINK</td>
<td>Temporary survey markings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RED</td>
<td>Electric power lines, cables, conduit and lighting cables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YELLOW</td>
<td>Gas, oil, steam, petroleum or gaseous materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORANGE</td>
<td>Communication, alarm or signal lines, cables or conduit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLUE</td>
<td>Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURPLE</td>
<td>Reclaimed water, irrigation and slurry lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREEN</td>
<td>Sewer and drain lines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Call 811 before you dig; private and public lines must be located

Homeowners need to remember that every digging job first requires a call to 811 at least two business days before digging to get utility lines marked – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs.

The depth of utility lines varies and there may be multiple utility lines in a common area. Digging without calling can disrupt service, harm you and those around you and potentially result in fines and repair costs. Calling 811 before every digging job gets underground utility power lines marked for free, up to your main meter.

**Underground power lines from the main meter inward, however, are the responsibility of the member. Homeowners need to call their local electrician to have their private lines marked.**

Remember, before any digging project, large or small, you must call 811 to have utility lines marked. When you call 811, you’ll be routed to the local Gopher State One Call center where they will lead you step by step through the process and questions.
Power plant tour  

Come and travel with your friends to learn how your electricity is generated during this year’s cooperative power plant tour June 6-7. You’ll travel in comfort in an air-conditioned charter bus for a fun and informative tour of Minnkota’s Milton R. Young coal-fired generating plant and the BNI Coal mine. You’ll also see the Ashtabula Wind Energy Center near Valley City, N.D, and tour the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center.

At night you’ll relax for the evening at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck where you’ll also be served a delicious banquet and hearty breakfast.

Bus fare, meals and hotel are included in the $80 per person fee. The cost for children 14 and under is $45.

Space is limited, so reserve your spot by filling out and returning the form below, complete with your check.

Hundreds of Red River Valley Co-op Power members have enjoyed the tour through the years. Now it’s your turn!

Power Plant Tour Registration Form

Deadline: May 22, 2018

Names of Participants

_____________________________________________  _______________________________________________

_____________________________________________  _______________________________________________

_____________________________________________  _______________________________________________

_____________________________________________  _______________________________________________

Telephone Number _____________________________  Account Number _________________________________

Number Attending ______________________________

MAIL FORM AND CHECK TO: Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association, P.O. Box 358, Halstad, MN 56548-0358

You will be mailed a letter of confirmation with more tour information.