



NEWS *Lines*

PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE MEMBER-OWNERS OF NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

FEBRUARY 2023

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Scholarships Available



North West REC and Basin Electric Power Cooperative will be sponsoring several scholarships to dependents of members of North West REC in 2023. Last year we awarded \$30,000 in scholarships to 75 students!

There will be two \$1,000 scholarship winners from each of the four districts of North West REC (Ida, O'Brien, Plymouth, and Sioux). The selection process for the \$1,000 scholarship winners will be based on a combination of SAT/ACT scores, overall grade-point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals, and a written reference or appraisal by a third party.

Scholarship applicants, who are not awarded a \$1,000 scholarship award, will be asked to watch an educational video on North West REC and the cooperative model and then complete a questionnaire. This will then enter applicants into a random drawing for a \$500 or \$250 scholarship. All applicants will receive at least a \$250 scholarship. Details of this video and questionnaire will be communicated at a later date.

North West REC members may qualify if their dependent meets the following criteria:

- Must be a U.S. citizen.
- Are current North West REC members.
- Must be a senior in high school in our service territory for the 2022-2023 school year and planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school.
- Submit an application as provided by North West REC.
- Return all completed forms no later than Friday, February 17, 2023.

You can apply online by visiting our website at www.nwrec.coop or you can e-mail the scholarship committee at scholarships@nwrec.coop and they will send you an application. If you have any questions, please call us at 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099. All entries for the scholarship must be returned to the REC no later than Friday, February 17, 2023!

Annual Meeting

Tuesday, March 28, 2023
Le Mars Convention Center

SAVE! the DATE!

Apply Now for the 2023 Youth Tour Trip to D.C.

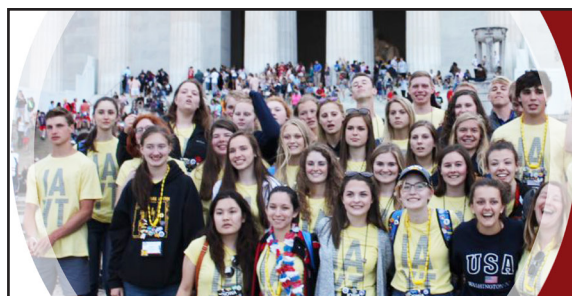
North West REC will send two high school juniors on an all-expenses paid Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. on June 17-23, 2023!

At North West REC one way we invest in the next generation of rural Iowa leaders is by participating in the national Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program. We're looking for high school junior students with a passion for government and public service to apply for a once-in-a-lifetime trip to our nation's capital in June.

Two students will be selected from eligible candidates to attend the 2023 Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., from June 17-23, along with 40 other student leaders from Iowa. The Iowa Youth Tour group will join with hundreds of students from across the country as they learn more about electric cooperatives and American history and come home with a greater understanding of their role as an American citizen. Students will also learn about U.S. government and meet with their members of Congress. On the trip, students take in the sights of D.C. as they visit monuments, museums, and historical landmarks. Students who go on Youth Tour will often call it the trip of a lifetime!

We are accepting Youth Tour applications from now through February 10, 2023. Dependants of North West REC member-consumers are eligible to apply. The student must be a current junior high school student. You can download our youth tour application at www.nwrec.coop. You can also call 800-766-2099, email nwrec@nwrec.coop, or stop by our office and we can get you a copy. Contact the office for more info.

For more than 60 years, Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives have been sending deserving students to D.C. This program is a great resume builder for student leaders and a wonderful opportunity to kickstart one's passion for government affairs or advocacy. **Make sure to apply for Youth Tour 2023 by Friday, February 10, 2023!**



Students can apply now for a trip to Washington, D.C., from June 17-23!

High school students interested in public service and government are encouraged to apply! Learn more at IowaYouthTour.com



Powerline Scholarship Available

North West REC is again sponsoring a powerline scholarship. This program is designed to assist persons enrolled in a course of powerline training at Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon.

A \$1000 scholarship will be awarded to an individual who has met the eligibility requirements. To be considered for the scholarship, applicants must meet the following criteria:

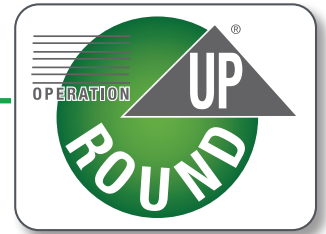
- Reside in the four county area served by North West REC (Ia, Plymouth, O'Brien and Sioux Counties).
- Be a member or the child/dependant of a member of North West REC.
- Be accepted as a full time student in the powerline program at Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon.
- Submit a scholarship application to North West REC by Friday, February 17, 2023.

All applicants are required to submit an application form as well as their most recent academic transcript. The criteria for the award will be based upon community involvement, school activities, essay questions, and grade point average.

You can apply online by visiting our website at www.nwrec.coop or you can e-mail the scholarship committee at scholarships@nwrec.coop and they will send you an application. If you have any questions, please call us at 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099. All entries for the scholarship must be returned to the REC no later than Friday, February 17, 2023!



Operation Round Up Report



Disbursements made from North West REC's Operation Round Up (ORU) Trust in the fourth quarter of 2022 totaled \$14,650. This brings the total disbursements made from Operation Round Up since its inception in June of 1999 to \$652,895. Many people and organizations have been helped thanks to our members.

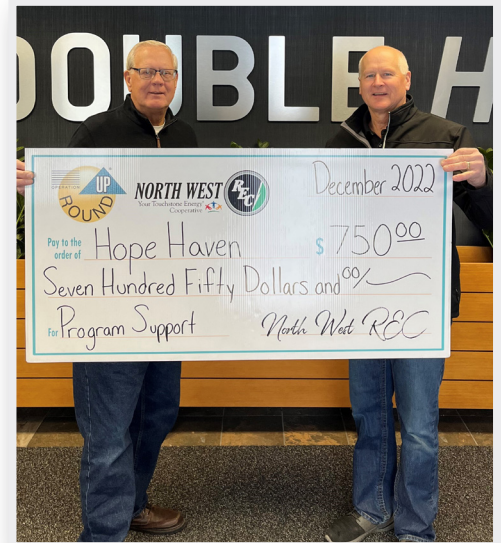
\$4,250 Medical Emergencies – assist families with unusual expenses resulting from serious health problems and accident related injuries

\$4,500 Nine area hospitals

\$5,900 ATLAS, Autumn's Center, Food Bank of Siouxland, Hope Haven, Life Skills Training Center, Orange City Daycare & Preschool, Primghar Junior Women's Club, Siouxland Youth for Christ, Trivium Life Services, Village Northwest

Operation Round Up funds are generated through a voluntary rounding up of cooperative members' electric bills to the next nearest dollar, and dollars are used to assist worthy causes and organizations right in your local area.

If you are currently not participating in Operation Round Up and would like to become a part of this worthwhile program, please call our office for information or fill out the form available on our website. To receive an application for assistance, please call the office at 707-4935 or 800-766-2099.



Below are a few thank-you notes from those who have received an Operation Round-Up donation.

"I am humbled to have been considered and received this check from Operation Round-Up. When I contracted West Nile Virus in September I didn't know what it was, let alone what to expect. I've lost the use of my right leg and it looks like recovery can take months or even years. These funds you have so generously given to us will certainly fill gaps that have resulted from my inability to work. We greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness and assistance and can not express adequately our gratitude, except to say THANK YOU from the bottom of our hearts. May God bless all of you who contribute to and administer this program" - ORU recipient

"We want to express our sincere gratitude for your recent credit donation through this difficult health issue. The kindness and thoughtfulness will never be forgotten. Again thank you very much" - ORU recipient



ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

Load Management is one of the easiest ways for members to become active in their cooperative and save some money on their electric bills. The program assists your cooperative by deferring the need to construct additional power plants or purchase power from external sources to meet the energy needs of our members. Load management programs give

cooperative members the power to become partners in the effort to positively influence electricity rates.

The Switch Makes Cents program:

- Helps stabilize future power costs to your coop
- Reduces power plant emissions for a cleaner environment
- Shifts the energy used by electric heating systems, electric water heaters, and other electric appliances to off peak times
- Saves North West REC members money by providing more stable rates



Lyle D. Korver

MANAGER'S *Report*

Rate Stability Continues

During these high inflationary times, I'm pleased to share some good news with our members regarding electric rates. Following the review of our 2023 operating budget and ten-year financial forecast, the board of directors has decided to keep our electric rates stable again this year. With the last rate increase having gone into effect in May of 2015, this marks the eighth consecutive year of stable rates. We believe this is a significant accomplishment.

We actually have a slightly lower rate for our members this year than we did in 2015 as we are passing along a \$700,000 refund through our power cost adjustment (PCA). This is the result of receiving a bill credit at the end of 2022 from our power supplier. Our PCA will be a one mill credit on your bill each month during 2023.

8 years of stable rates

\$700,000 refund - credit PCA

How have we been able to maintain stable rates?

There are three key factors that have enabled us to have this long period of rate stability.

- 1. Power supply costs have been stable.** Wholesale purchased power costs account for nearly 80% of our total expenses. Our power suppliers have done a good job with developing an "all-of-the-above" portfolio mix that continues to serve our members well. The current mix is 32% coal, 24% hydro, 19% wind, 16% natural gas, 9% blend of market purchases, oil and waste heat recovery. (See article below regarding the importance of "all-of-the-above".)
- 2. Kilowattour sales growth.** We have a very good service area, and we have been proactive with economic development. This has enabled us to experience a significant increase in our kilowattour (kWh) sales over the last 20 years. In 2022, our sales approached 700 million kWh's and this compares to 245 million in 2000, an increase of 185%. The benefit to our members from this sales growth is that we are able to spread our fixed costs over more kWh's and this has a very favorable impact on our rates.
- 3. Savings and efficiencies from the consolidation.** 2023 marks the 25th anniversary since the consolidation that brought Ida County REC; O'Brien County REC; Plymouth Electric Cooperative; and Sioux Electric Cooperative together to form North West REC.

The savings and efficiencies that have been gained through the consolidation have far exceeded the original projections. This is another key factor in helping us to keep our rates stable and competitive.

We pledge to continue to work hard to keep our rates as low as possible for our members. We believe this demonstrates the real cooperative difference our members enjoy by being a member of North West REC.



We need an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy

Thank you Rep. Feenstra for writing this joint Op-Ed with Chuck Soderberg from the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Protecting America’s abundant supply of reliable, affordable electric power



By Congressman Randy Feenstra, representing Iowa’s 4th Congressional District, and Chuck Soderberg, Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives

In today’s world, electricity is essential. American families rely on electricity daily to heat and cool their homes, wash their clothes, cook their meals, charge their phones, turn on the lights and connect to the world. And while it might seem like magic, electricity is not generated out of thin air. We expect the lights to turn on when we flip a switch and our phones to charge when we plug them into an outlet. Our energy policies must reflect these expectations and ensure that our families, businesses and communities have access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

Over the last few years, green-energy absolutists and federal policy makers have prioritized an untenable, unrealistic and costly energy agenda over commonsense policies to power our country and provide American families with reliable, affordable energy. This detrimental agenda for American-made energy at the highest levels of government has caused gas increases and volatile electricity costs. Even worse, these policies have the potential to be particularly catastrophic for our rural communities, farm families and main street businesses.

As opposed to states like California, whose one-size-fits-all energy policies impose production restrictions that lead to blackouts and high costs, Iowa is home to 48 locally owned, community focused electric cooperatives that prioritize reliability and affordability for the more than 650,000 Iowans and 210,000 businesses, homes, and farms that they serve. Thanks to local governance and diversified power generation

sources, the average co-op member household in Iowa pays about \$5 a day for electricity and Iowa electric cooperatives have returned more than \$300 million to their member-owners in the form of retired capital credits. These low costs and attractive returns are only possible due to a commonsense management approach that empowers electric cooperatives to invest in the most productive and cost-effective power sources for their member-consumers. We urge national policymakers to do the same.

To support a robust cooperative ecosystem and expand abundant supplies of affordable electricity, lawmakers must prioritize economic and energy certainty for electric cooperatives by advancing an all-of-the-above American energy strategy that prioritizes permitting reform and provides low-interest capital for community development projects.

First, reliable and affordable electricity generation requires source flexibility and policy malleability. In other words, Congress should embrace an all-of-the-above energy agenda that ensures that Iowans can access affordable electricity when and where they need it, while simultaneously investing in renewable energy sources that are abundant in Iowa, like wind power. To date, Iowa electric co-ops have invested in 33 wind farms, over a dozen utility-scale and community based solar projects, 4 landfill gas projects, 5 methane digesters and multiple hydroelectric stations to complement more traditional power sources like natural gas and coal. Some co-ops are also looking at small-scale nuclear technology as another dispatchable power generation option. Additionally, Iowa electric co-ops have interconnected roughly 2,200 member-owned generation installations as a demonstration of support for an all-inclusive generation mix, even from non-utility locations. By allowing local cooperatives to determine the best, most comprehensive energy strategy for their consumers, our families, farms and businesses benefit from lower costs, energy security and vital investments in our rural communities.

Second, Congress needs to prioritize federal regulatory and permitting reform. While a great deal of buzz was generated during the end of September over this issue, we are confident that a serious debate is needed over how the federal government can facilitate the development of critical energy and transmission projects.

Continued on page 6

continued "Protecting America's abundant supply of reliable, affordable electric power"

As firm believers in local control, we believe the value of energy infrastructure is best determined by those who will benefit from a particular project. Allowing utilities and the people they serve to have a voice in where a transmission line might be located and who might pay for it is important. The federal government isn't always in the best position to tell the American people what is in their best interests locally.

Finally, we need to protect and strengthen the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program, which powers economic and community development and keeps families and good-paying jobs in rural Iowa. This program provides zero-interest loans of up to one million dollars to local utilities and cooperatives, which are then tasked with passing this funding along to small businesses and community organizations to support initiatives that create jobs, enhance economic opportunity, revitalize main streets and aid small businesses in rural America. Ensuring that our rural communities have access to the capital and credit

they need to strengthen long-term economic vitality and attract new residents and businesses to populate small, vibrant towns must be a top priority of the 118th Congress and the upcoming Farm Bill reauthorization.

Electric cooperatives play a crucial role in delivering safe, affordable and reliable electricity to hundreds of thousands of Iowans and tens of millions of Americans. In both the long and short-term, the largest threat to our nation's energy producers and electricity distributors remains federal overreach and unrealistic mandates. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Congress to eliminate red tape that hinders their ability to power our businesses, homes, hospitals, and farms and to instead provide them with the flexibility to streamline baseload power generation and diversify their power sources. Our laws must allow electric cooperatives to do what they do best: power our local economies and provide our thriving communities with reliable, affordable electric power that we all rely on every day.

Statewide Outage Map

Information about power outages effecting homes, businesses and farms served by North West REC is available online at www.iowarec.org, the website of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

This web resource, developed by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, provides a statewide view of power outages at electric cooperatives that deliver electricity in each of the state's 99 counties to approximately 650,000 Iowans. When you log onto the power outage tool, you will see a map of Iowa, and you can view the information from a county-by-county view of Iowa or electric co-op-by-electric co-op view, including North West REC. At the website, you also will be able to obtain safety information as well as link to North West REC. In addition to going to the statewide association's website to view the maps, you can check out the information at <http://outages.iowarec.org>.

When there are widespread power outages in Iowa or isolated power outages impacting large numbers of Iowans, North West REC will enter information onto the website. The map will automatically refresh every 15 minutes, so it will reflect the most recently entered information from the electric co-ops. When only a few North West REC member-consumers are without power, the website may not necessarily reflect that information.

OUTAGE MAP

25 Electric Cooperative Member-Consumers Without Power

This map refreshes automatically every 15 minutes. For information regarding specific outages or to report your outage, contact your local electric co-op directly. This map simply shows outage data that is reported by IAEC member cooperatives. Some electric co-ops report outages automatically at all times while other co-ops report their outages manually every few hours only during major outage events.

Map | Satellite

Service Area Layer: Counties

County: Select...

Highlight

Reset

Weather Layer:

Legend:

- 1-99
- 100-499
- 500-999
- 1000+

Details By County

Outages by County Alpha | Highest Outages by County

Chickasaw County
1 member-consumers without power.
• MI Energy Cooperative: 1

Clinton County

Details By Cooperative

Outages by Co-op Alpha | Highest Outages by Co-op

Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative
Updated Jan 06, 9:16am
24 member-consumers without power.
• Clinton: 12

Employee Highlight

Get to know your cooperative's employees



Name: Debra Herzberg

Title/Position: General Accountant

Years at NWREC: 38 years

Family: husband - Mark; daughter - Brook & Kevin White, grandsons - Bodi (4) and Leo (2), son - Judd, and son - Joe

Interests/hobbies: I like taking care of flowers, golfing, walking and spending time with family and friends.

What I enjoy about working at North West REC: I've been working at the REC longer than I've been married and I've been married to the same guy for 35 years. I guess I like my job!

Name: Derrick Haak

Title/Position: Assistant Operations Director

Years at NWREC: 20 years

Family: wife - Coby; sons - Lincoln (12) and Wyatt (10)

Interests/hobbies: We enjoy spending time with friends, family, outdoor activities, and youth sports.

Why I enjoy working at NWREC: My favorite part of working at NWREC is being part of a great team that works together to accomplish our goals as safely and as efficiently as possible so we can provide the best service possible for our member/owners.



Name: Luke Lathrop

Title/Position: Journeyman Lineman

Years at NWREC: 15 years

Family: wife - Emily; son - Everett (12) and daughter - Adrianne (8)

Interests/hobbies: Boating, hunting, and riding motorcycle

What I enjoy about working at North West REC: I enjoy working outside and the diversity of work I get to do.

Name: Brandon Bonnema

Title/Position: Journeyman Lineman

Years at NWREC: 9 years

Family: wife - Jessica; daughters - Bentley and Saylor

Interests/hobbies: Hunting & Fishing

What I enjoy about working at North West REC: Working outdoors and being able to do something different everyday



THE POWER QUIZ

NORTH WEST REC

1. What is one reason we have been able to maintain stable rates?
2. When will the Washington D.C. Youth Tour take place?
3. What website provides a statewide map of outages going on?

Name _____ Acct. # _____

Find the answers within the content of this newsletter, our website or Facebook posts and you could win a prize of \$10 off your electric bill. Send your answers to powerquiz@nwrec.coop or you can send your written answers to North West REC, PO Box 435, Orange City, IA 51041. You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember the deadline is March 10. Each month, ten names will be randomly drawn from all correct entries for a \$10 bill credit. Members who answer the questions correctly and participate at least three times throughout the year will be eligible for 2 - \$250 bill credits, through a random drawing, at the end of the year.

POWER QUIZ *Winners*

DECEMBER 2022

Robert Book - Akron
 James Streck - Schleswig
 Jim McDonough - Schaller
 Mary Jane Holck - Merrill
 Kent Mouw - Ireton

Alan Loutsch - Remsen
 Teresa Hoekstra - Sheldon
 Don Muecke - Hinton
 Robert Vondrak - Merrill
 Maynard Ravensborg - Sioux City

\$250 winners for 2022: Anita Heitritter, Archer & Jay Bolkema, Orange City



ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

Name one of the benefits the Switch Makes Cents program helps with:

Answer: _____

Name _____ Acct. # _____

What do you know about the Switch Makes Cents program? Find the answers within the content of this newsletter, our website or Facebook posts and you could win a prize. Send your answers to switchsmart@nwrec.coop, fill out the question form online, or send your written answers to North West REC, PO Box 435, Orange City, IA 51041. You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember the deadline is March 31. At the end of the quarter one name will be randomly drawn from all the correct entries for a prize. With a new question every month, you can participate up to 3 times in each quarter!

North West Rural Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 435
 1505 Albany Place SE
 Orange City, IA 51041-0435

OFFICE HOURS:
 Monday through Friday
 7:30 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.

Orange City office open during noon hour

Le Mars office closed 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Ida Grove office open 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 Wednesdays only

PHONE:
 (800) 766-2099

24/7 outage reporting using the SmartHub app or nwrec.smarthub.coop Or call 800-766-2099 anytime

Pay your bill online any-time using SmartHub



Outside Depository Box Available For After Hours Payments

This institution is an equal opportunity employer, provider, and lender.

Lyle D. Korver
 CEO & General Manager

Curt Ahrenholz
 Finance & Office Services Director

Emily Vander Velde
 Editor



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