



# NEWS *Lines*

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



**DECEMBER 2020**

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## ALL MEMBERS INVITED TO COMPLETE *Member Engagement Survey*

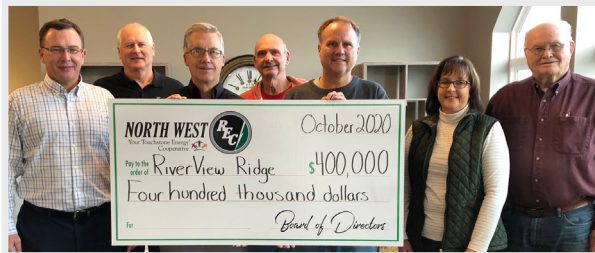
As a member owned cooperative, maintaining strong member engagement is one of our top priorities. Our board of directors and management team will be holding a strategic planning session in February and one of the key topics will be ideas on how we can continue to enhance engagement with our members. In preparation for this planning session, we have decided to conduct a survey of our members. We will be using these responses and comments in our planning of how we can continue to make improvements in the services we provide our members.

The survey will be available online, an e-mail was recently sent with a link to our website. We also included a bill insert with the bills that were mailed on November 20 with information about how to complete the survey. In the event you would prefer to complete a mail survey, please contact our office and we will send you a paper copy. All members are encouraged to take a few minutes to complete the survey and provide us with your input. We value your thoughts and suggestions.

A random drawing will be conducted after the completion date of December 31. There are some great prizes including a Green Mountain smoker grill, a YETI cooler, and eight \$100 bill credits.



### CONGRATULATIONS TO RIVERVIEW RIDGE SENIOR LIVING FACILITY



One of our newest services is for the new RiverView Ridge Senior Living Center in Rock Valley. We would like to congratulate the directors and members of this beautiful new facility. You may recall that this facility was nearing completion in July 2019, when a devastating fire

resulted in a complete loss. Through some strong leadership and perseverance by the RiverView Board, they recently completed the rebuilding project.

They provide both independent and assisted living options. The first residents have started moving in and are enjoying the comfort and maintenance free lifestyle that these leaders wanted to bring to their senior community when they began planning it several years ago.

North West REC is excited to be the electric service provider for RiverView. We helped to support this project with a loan from our revolving loan fund. Energy efficiency rebates were also provided for the geothermal heating and cooling system, energy efficient equipment, and lighting installed.

Your Cooperative has had a revolving loan fund for over 20 years, and it has been used to support over 70 community and economic development projects. Please contact us if you have any questions regarding this program.

**(Manager's Report continues on page 4-5)**

# SCHOLARSHIPS *Available*



North West REC and Basin Electric Power Cooperative will once again be sponsoring several scholarships to dependents of members of North West REC in 2021.

There will be two **\$1,000 scholarship winners** from each of the four districts of North West REC. The selection process for the \$1,000 scholarship winners will be based on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and overall grade-point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals and a written reference by a third party. The winners of these scholarships will be recognized and awarded at the district meetings in the spring.

In addition, there will be several randomly selected \$500 and \$250 scholarships awarded to scholarship applicants in each of the four districts of North West REC. The scholarships are designed to recognize and encourage the academic achievements of students in the eight-state region where Basin Electric of Bismarck, ND, supplies wholesale electric power.

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 for the 2020-2021 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 the application as provided by North West REC
- Return all completed forms no later than Friday, February 26, 2021

If you are interested in applying for this scholarship, send in the registration form below, and we will then send you an application form. You can also apply online by visiting our website at [www.nwrec.coop](http://www.nwrec.coop) or you can e-mail Renee at [rwynia@nwrec.coop](mailto:rwynia@nwrec.coop) and she will send you an application. If you have any questions, please call Renee at 712-707-4935 or 1-800-766-2099. All entries for the scholarship must be returned to the REC no later than **Friday, February 26!**

## 2020 BASIN SCHOLARSHIP REGISTRATION

*Yes*, I am interested in applying for the scholarship.

Please **mail** me the application form.

Please **email** me the application form.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO: North West REC • Attn: Renee • PO Box 435 • Orange City, IA 51041

# COMMITTEES ON NOMINATIONS *are Selected*

The Board of Directors has selected the Committee on Nominations, and they will be meeting in January to select nominees for election to the Board of Directors of North West REC. There will be a director election in Districts 1, 3, and 4 this year; there will not be a director election in District 2. They will be voted on and elected at the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative.

Contact one of the nominating committee members in your district if you have any interest in running for the Board of Directors or you know of any member that would be interested. For your information, please review the director qualifications listed below.

## COMMITTEES ON NOMINATIONS

### **District 1 – Sioux County**

Mike Thompson  
134 Sunrise Dr  
Hospers, IA 51238  
712-261-1142

Paul Van Ginkel  
2466 300th st  
Rock Valley, IA 51247  
712-470-5776

Gene Vermeer  
3248 420th st  
Sioux Center, IA 51250  
712-441-2833

### **District 3 – Plymouth County**

Gregg Ropke  
38724 C70  
Kingsley, IA 51028  
712-540-5971

Brooke Sitzmann  
41131 C44  
Remsen, IA 51050  
712-870-3296

Adam Schmidt  
17743 Jade Ave  
Le Mars, IA 51031  
712-540-2588

Gaylen Tapper  
20727 160th st  
Akron, IA 51001  
712-548-6050

### **District 4 – Ida County**

Jim Holst  
604 Burns st  
Ida Grove, IA 51445  
712-830-1681

Rod Jensen  
1966 Hwy 59  
Ida Grove, IA 51445  
712-369-8601



Left to right: Steve Brown, Dave Bosma, Jeff Rehder, Scott Feuerhelm, Dan Hoffman, Shirley Benson, Steve Abma, Doug Becker, Chad Dau, Dale Ullrich, and Tom Wagner

### **Your Current Board of Directors**

#### **District 1**

Steve Abma, Rock Valley\*  
Dave Bosma, Hospers  
Jeff Rehder, Hawarden

#### **District 3**

Doug Becker, Hinton\*  
Shirley Benson, Remsen  
Steve Brown, Merrill  
Scott Feuerhelm, Merrill

#### **District 2**

Chad Dau, Paullina  
Tom Wagner, Primghar

#### **District 4**

Dan Hoffman, Ida Grove  
Dale Ullrich, Arthur\*

\* Director whose term is expiring in 2021

## *Director Qualifications:*

The Cooperative's bylaws establish that a director must be a member, individually, and a bona-fide resident of the district from which they are elected to represent.

### **To do a competent job, a director is expected to:**

- Attend all regular monthly board meetings. The Board holds daytime meetings usually scheduled for the last Thursday of each month. Meetings last approximately six hours.
- Attend the annual meeting of the Cooperative.
- Attend meetings of related organizations such as Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, Federated Insurance, and others, when necessary.
- Read and be familiar with information, data and reports received from cooperative management, national, state and other local associations.
- Establish and maintain contact with members of the Cooperative in his or her locale.
- Work in harmony with the other members of the Board and employees for the good of all members of the Cooperative.
- Attend special meetings of the Board, or of committees to which assigned by the president.



Lyle D. Korver

# MANAGER'S *Report*

"Congratulations to these three directors. We are proud of your accomplishments and the leadership you provide!"

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR DIRECTORS

North West REC (NWREC) is fortunate to have eleven very dedicated and effective directors who do a great job of representing our members on the Board of Directors. This month, we recognize and congratulate three of them for some important accomplishments they have recently achieved.

### **Dale Ullrich completes Cooperative Credentialed Director program:**

*(pictured on right)*

Director Ullrich represents District 4 (Ida County area) and is from rural Arthur. He recently earned a certificate for completion of the NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) program. The CCD prepares directors to fulfill their fiduciary duty as elected officials serving on behalf of their membership. Congratulations Director Ullrich!



### **Tom Wagner re-elected as a Basin Electric Director:**

*(pictured on left)*

NWREC is a member of several associated organizations. One of those organizations is our power supplier, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which is headquartered in Bismarck, North Dakota. Tom Wagner, who represents District 2 (O'Brien County area) on the NWREC board and is from rural Primghar, was recently re-elected to a second three-year term on the Basin board. He represents Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO, one of our other associated organizations) on this board. Congratulations Director Wagner!



### **Jeff Rehder elected to the CFC board:** *(pictured on right)*

Another associated organization of NWREC is the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). CFC is our cooperative lender and is based in Sterling, Virginia. Jeff Rehder, who represents District 1 (Sioux County area) on the NWREC board and is from rural Hawarden, was recently elected to the CFC board. CFC has ten districts throughout the U.S. and Jeff will be representing District 5, which includes Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Congratulations Director Rehder!

Having dedicated and well qualified directors on the NWREC board is beneficial to the members. It makes them more effective in guiding the Cooperative and determining the strategic direction and priorities of NWREC, and it presents opportunities for them to represent NWREC on these associated organization boards. These directors share timely information with the board and management team on trends and issues that are impacting the rural electric industry. Congratulations to these three directors. We are proud of your accomplishments and the leadership you provide!





**The following is a brief summary of the discussions and decisions from the October board meeting:**

- Received monthly safety and operations reports from staff.
  - Derald Philips, Safety and Loss Control Director, shared that our RESAP observation went very well and our employees have worked safely for the first nine months of 2020.
- Darrin Lynch from CFC (our lender) reviewed the 2019 Key Ratio Trend Analysis results which were very favorable for NWREC. The operating and financial ratios provide a great benchmarking tool to compare NWREC's results with the other 815 REC's in the U.S.
- Approved a new Power Vision Loan with CFC that will help to finance new construction projects for the next five years.
- Manager Korver provided a COVID-19 update.
- Curt Ahrenholz, Finance Director, reviewed the monthly and year-to-date financial reports. Even though kWh sales are down for the year-to-date, margins are above budget.
- Doug Alons and Derrick Haak reported on new construction and maintenance projects completed year-to-date by our line crews. 2020 has been a record year of new line construction with over 80 miles of older overhead line replaced with new underground line.
- Manager Korver and Director Abma provided an update on the new Primghar service center building project. The building is nearing completion.
- Authorized management to proceed with plans to conduct a Member Engagement Survey.
- Approved annual donations in the amount of \$250 to each of the high schools in our four service areas.
- Approved plans for our 2021 High School Senior scholarships.
- Heard reports from Director Tom Wagner on the recent NIPCO and Basin Board meetings.
- Approved the Nominating Committee members for the 2021 Annual Meeting.
- Heard a report from Shirley Benson, Jeff Rehder, and Dale Ullrich on the recent NRECA and CFC District Meetings that were held virtually. Shirley reported that Jeff Rehder had been elected by the delegates as a Director on the CFC Board during the CFC meeting.
- Manager Korver reported on a few economic development projects that the staff has been working on.
- Approved Operation Round-Up donations to several charitable organizations and medical emergency situations and annual donations to our local fire departments.

**The next board meeting date is Wednesday, November 25.**



Left to right: Steve Brown, Dave Bosma, Jeff Rehder, Scott Feuerhelm, Dan Hoffman, Shirley Benson, Steve Abma, Doug Becker, Chad Dau, Dale Ullrich, and Tom Wagner



The holidays are upon us. For many, that means more celebrations with friends and family, travel, decorations, cooking and shopping. North West REC wants you to stay safe during the holidays, so here are a few tips to consider as you gear up for the season.

We can't guarantee that the hustle and bustle of the season won't leave you with a few frayed nerves, but we can certainly help you avoid frayed wires.

### **INSPECT YOUR SEASONAL ITEMS**

Take a few moments to carefully inspect all your holiday items to ensure everything is in safe, working order. A few things to look for include:

- Chafed, frayed or damaged wires.
- Cracked sockets, loose connections.
- Be sure to use only lights and other electrical decorations that have been certified such as UL.

### **DON'T OVERLOAD EXTENSION CORDS**

Extension cords are designed for temporary use and should never be used as a permanent or long-term solution.

- Don't run cords under rugs, carpet or baseboards. This can create a fire hazard.
- The tag at the end of an extension cord will tell you if it's rated for outdoor use; and similarly, holiday lights will tell you how many strings can be safely linked together.
- Make sure your plugs fit together. Rather than tampering with a safety feature, find a safe solution.

### **LOOK UP AND LIVE**

When working outside with a ladder, be mindful of the location of overhead power lines. Always carry your ladder so that it is parallel to the ground. Before placing your ladder in an upright position, look around to ensure you are a safe distance from any power lines.

- Avoid stringing lights in trees near power lines.
- Use only electrical decorations that are certified for outdoor use.

*We wish you a safe and happy holiday season!*



# Employees Recognized FOR YEARS OF SERVICE



Employee pictured: (left to right) Dustin Koele, Renee Wynia, Phil Elgersma, Doug Alons, Robin Maassen, Joe Penning, and Tracy Bahrenfuss.

Seven employees were recognized for their 85 collective years of service to the Cooperative at the end of October. North West REC is thankful for the many years of hard work and dedication these employees have done. Congratulations to all on their years of service!

## **35 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Doug Alons – Operations Director, Orange City

## **15 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Phil Elgersma – Lead Lineman, Orange City

## **10 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Tracy Bahrenfuss – Journeyman Lineman, Orange City

Dustin Koele – Journeyman Lineman, Orange City

## **5 YEARS OF SERVICE**

Robin Maassen – Journeyman Lineman, Orange City

Joe Penning – Journeyman Lineman, Le Mars

Renee Wynia – Executive Assistant/HR Coordinator, Orange City



**MOVE OVER  
SLOW DOWN**

## MOVE OVER OR SLOW DOWN

It's that simple, and it's the law in Iowa. By following these two rules of the road, you can help save lives and avoid receiving a traffic ticket – or even losing your driver's license. It's necessary to move over or slow down when approaching stationary emergency, maintenance, and utility vehicles with flashing lights activated. Help make sure our linemen always get home safely.

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**smart choices**



Plug into the power of Smart Choices!

Smart Choices is a FREE, monthly newsletter digest that is emailed directly to your inbox from North West REC. Articles feature local news from your cooperative, electric safety information, and energy efficiency tips to help you save money!

Subscribe by scanning the QR code with your mobile device or visit our website:

[www.nwrec.coop/smart-choices-sign-up](http://www.nwrec.coop/smart-choices-sign-up)

New subscribers from now until December 31, 2020 will be entered into a drawing for a gift prize from North West REC!



**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

# THE POWER QUIZ

NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

1. Name a director's who term is expiring in 2021: \_\_\_\_\_
2. The deadline to return the scholarship application is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Which North West REC Employee had 35 years of service? \_\_\_\_\_

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](mailto: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 January 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.

## HOLIDAY GREETINGS

The board of directors and employees of North West REC would like to wish all the members and their families a very blessed holiday season. We look forward to working with you and for you in 2021!

Our offices will be closed in observance of the holidays  
December 25 and January 1

*Please call 800-766-2099  
in case of an outage or emergency*

### 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  
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon, Mon-Fri

#### PHONE:

**ORANGE CITY** (712) 707-4935  
(800) 766-2099

**IDA GROVE** (712) 364-3341

**LE MARS** (712) 546-4149

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For After Hours Payments

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