



Published monthly for the member-owners of North West Rural Electric Cooperative

## PLAN NOW TO ATTEND DISTRICT AND ANNUAL MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

### District 1 Sioux County

Tuesday, March 21  
Unity Christian High School in Orange City  
Registration & Dinner 5:30-7:00 pm  
Business Meeting 7:00 pm  
Entertainment - REZA

### District 2 O'Brien County

Tuesday, March 14  
South O'Brien School in Primghar  
Registration & Dinner  
5:30 7:00 pm  
Business Meeting  
7:00 pm  
Entertainment  
South O'Brien Jazz Band

### District 3 Plymouth County

Wednesday, March 22  
Le Mars Community High School  
Registration & Dinner 5:30-7:00 pm  
Business Meeting 7:00 pm  
Meeting held in  
Middle School Auditorium  
Entertainment - REZA

### District 4 Ida County

Thursday, March 16  
Skate Palace in Ida Grove  
Registration & Dinner 5:30-7:00 pm  
Business Meeting 7:00 pm  
Entertainment - Jill Miller

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# NOTICE OF ANNUAL & DISTRICT MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

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The District Meeting of Members in District 1 will be held at the Unity Christian High School, Orange City, Sioux County, Iowa at 7:00 o'clock in the P.M. on Tuesday, the 21st day of March, 2017; and

The District Meeting of Members in District 2 will be held at the South O'Brien School, Primghar, O'Brien County, Iowa at 7:00 o'clock in the P.M. on Tuesday, the 14th day of March, 2017; and

The Annual and District Meeting of Members in District 3 will be held at the Middle School Auditorium of the Le Mars Community School, Le Mars, Plymouth County, Iowa at 7:00 o'clock in the P.M. on Wednesday, the 22nd day of March, 2017; and

The District Meeting of Members in District 4 will be held at the Skate Palace, Ida Grove, Ida County, Iowa at 7:00 o'clock in the P.M. on Thursday, the 16th day of March, 2017, to take action on the following matters:

- The reports of officers, directors and committees.
- The election of one director in District 1, one director in District 3 and one director in District 4, each for a four-year term.
- All other business that may come before the meeting or any adjournments thereof.

Dated this 8th day of March, A.D., 2017.

*Shirley Benson*

Shirley Benson, Secretary

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## FOR SALE

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### **2004 Oldsmobile Silhouette Van**

V6 3400 SFI engine  
White ext. paint w/gray int.  
Power windows, locks, and doors  
138,324 miles



### **John Deere 1972 model**

2020 Utility Tractor  
2,850 hours  
Loader and rear blade attachment, chains & heat houser included

The van and tractor will be sold on a bid basis and "as is". Please call our office for a bid form if interested and mail bids to North West REC, PO Box 435, Orange City, IA 51041, or bids will be accepted at any of the three cooperative offices until 4:00 pm, March 31, 2017. We reserve the right to accept or reject any bid. The sales will be on a cash basis only.

The van can be seen at the Le Mars office and the tractor can be seen at the Ida Grove office. To view either, please call 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099.

# CHANGES TO SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

In addition to constructing and maintaining North West REC's distribution lines, our line crews from time to time provide services such as assisting with house moves, wind and other projects in our service territory. The Management Team recently reviewed North West REC's Schedule of Charges and developed a recommendation for the board's consideration, which the Board of Directors approved at their monthly board meeting on January 26, 2017. The following is the changes to the Schedule of Charges that will become effective April 1, 2017.

Basket/digger trucks, 2 men per hour, one hour minimum, single day		
Member		\$225.00
Non-Member		\$275.00
(for house moves, we need one week notice to notify members – cashier check or cash)		
Basket/digger trucks, 2 men per hour, multi-day commercial projects		
Member and Non-Member		\$350.00
Pick-up truck, one hour minimum, charge per hour		
Member		\$125.00
Non-Member		\$175.00
Setting member's pole		\$175.00
Sell used pole to member – any size		\$125.00
(We will not set poles for gate posts, basketball hoops, etc.)		
Locate members fault on member's side, charge per hour		\$125.00
(electrician needs to be present)		
Service calls	- during hours	\$150.00
	- after hours	\$225.00

If an electrician finds a problem with the North West REC equipment, we will reimburse the member for the electrician's call, up to \$125.00.

## COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS SELECTS DIRECTOR NOMINEES

The Committee on Nominations met Wednesday, January 18, to select nominees for election of the Board of Directors of North West REC. They will be voted on and elected at the Annual/District Meetings of the Cooperative in March.

Members of the Committee on Nominations: (l-r) Hank Van Der Waal, Boyden; Bill Schroeder, Kingsley; Larry Van Veldhuizen, Hull; Brad Harvey, Akron; Shirley Schroeder, Le Mars; John Burk, Ida Grove; Brian Cronin, Holstein; Adam Schmidt, Le Mars; and Dave Heuer, Rock Valley.





Lyle D. Korver

*“We will be using these responses and comments in our ongoing planning of how we can continue to make improvements in the services we provide our members.”*

# MANAGER’S REPORT

## *Member Engagement Survey Results*

In connection with our continuing efforts to enhance our engagement with our members, we conducted a mail survey in the fourth quarter of 2016. We have completed tabulation of the returned surveys, and we wanted to share a summary of the results. The participation level of our members was very good with over 2,500 completed surveys. This represents a 35% response rate which is excellent for a mail survey.

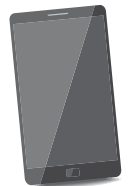
What did we learn?

- Over 86% of our members read the monthly newsletter and feel it is informative
- 58% prefer to continue to receive the Annual Report through the mail and 42% prefer reviewing it on our website
- 79% read the Living with Energy magazine that is published by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives
- Regarding Social Media use - 89% of our members use Facebook and only 1% use Twitter
- 35% indicated they have attended an Annual District meeting within the last five years
- What is important in decision to attend a District Meeting
  - o Information – 29%
  - o Meal – 28%
  - o Door prizes – 24%
  - o Entertainment – 19%
- 81% indicated they are familiar with our Beat the Peak program
- 91% said they are familiar with our energy efficiency rebate programs and 69% indicated it impacted their decision to buy
- 53% indicated they are aware that we offer energy assessments



As we continue to use technology to try to serve our members more efficiently, we asked a couple of related questions.

- 14% said they are using SmartHub (program that gives our members the ability to pay their bill from their Smart phone or computer) and 97% are satisfied with this program
- 40% indicated they are interested in the SmartHub option that will send a text message to members after outage restoration



Since we have been involved with the solar demonstration project for a couple of years and have worked with some of our members who have interconnected renewable energy installations to our distribution system, we asked some questions relating to renewable energy.

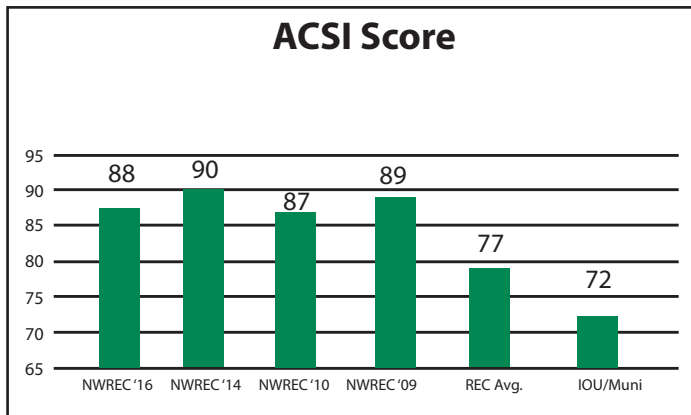


- Regarding the question of how our members would rate our current involvement with renewables, 74% said about right; 2% said too involved; 13% said not involved enough and 11% didn't respond

- How much would you be willing to pay on your monthly NWREC bill to support renewables? 68% indicated nothing; 17% said \$10 per month; 2% said \$20 and 13% didn't respond
- Would you be interested in personally investing in a community solar project? 13% said yes; 76% indicated no; 3% said maybe and 8% didn't respond

This is a summary of the responses and input we received. We also received some great comments on the various topics. We will be using these responses and comments in our ongoing planning of how we can continue to make improvements in the services we provide our members.

We also asked the four questions that are used by many industries, including electric utilities, to gauge the level of satisfaction of our members. This is called the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). The ACSI is an index that ranks businesses according to customer expectations, perceived quality, perceived value and customer loyalty.



I'm pleased to report that we received a very good overall score of 88. This is on a scale of 0 to 100. While this is down slightly from the ACSI score we received in 2014, which was the last time we conducted a survey of our members, this is an exceptional score when compared to other organizations

and utilities. This was the fourth time North West REC has conducted a survey to obtain our ACSI score. The graph below shows the NWREC scores – 88 this year; 90 in 2014; 87 in 2010 and 89 in 2010 – and the REC and other electric utilities averages. For example, the average ACSI score for the Touchstone Energy REC's around the U.S. is 77 and for investor owned utilities is 72.

We appreciate the loyalty and support we receive from our members, and we are very pleased with this very high ACSI score. There is always room for improvement, and we will continue to work hard at improving our overall level of service for our member-owners.

### Annual District Meetings Scheduled

One of the most important things we do each year is to have annual district meetings. This gives us the opportunity to engage with our members and to share information about the Cooperative's operations. Once again, we are having four meetings – one in each district – and the last one is our official Annual Meeting. We serve a meal, have a short business/information meeting and then have entertainment that we hope appeals to all age groups. We recently mailed our annual report and information about the meetings to each of our members. Please take a few minutes to look it over and learn about your Cooperative's operations this past year.

We also encourage you to attend one of the meetings this year. As a member-owned organization, the more engaged our members are with the Cooperative, the more successful we will be. We look forward to seeing you!

North West REC and Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative invite you to join us for one of two Energy Trail Tours being offered this summer. This 3-day adventure will allow you to view, first-hand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind, and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are, then, returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Learn how the energy industry is evolving to become more dependent on renewable power generation and glimpse into the future of carbon capture technology. Enjoy the fellowship of other cooperative member-owners on a comfortable motor coach journey to North Dakota's Energy Loop. \$100 per couple covers your lodging, meals and entry fees. The remainder of your tour costs are covered by NWREC. Twelve lucky couples from NWREC will be selected at random from those who sign up.

YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip. We understand that if our names are drawn, we will be billed \$100.

Our first and second choice of dates:

July 12-14 1st 2nd (please circle)  
 Aug 2-4 1st 2nd

I/we  have  have not participated in this tour in the past.

First Person \_\_\_\_\_  
 Second Person \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*Clip coupon and return to REC office by May 26, 2017*



# BOARD OF DIRECTOR NOMINEES

## DISTRICT 1 - Sioux County



Steve Abma

- Married to Lavon, two children, four grandchildren
- Farms near Rock Valley; raises corn and beans, feeds cattle and nursery for custom feeding pigs
- Current board member of North West REC
- Past member of the Sioux County Extension Council
- Past member of Consistory in Church
- Past member of school board



Mike Vonk

- Married to Shelly, three daughters and one son
- Lives in Rock Valley
- Co-Owner of Valley Plating
- Hobbies include spending time with family, sports and riding motorcycle

## DISTRICT 3 - Plymouth County



Doug Becker

- Wife Peg, Son David & Daughter-in-law Steph, Daughter Alexis, Dog Reba
- Farmer/Cattle Feeder
- Current Assistant Secretary/Treasurer of North West REC (NWREC)
- Past board member of Farmers' Coop Co, Floyd Valley Grain LLC, Plymouth Co Farm Bureau, Plymouth Co Local Options Sales Tax (LOST)
- Successful completion of Iowa Institute of Cooperative Training and Farm Bureau Leadership Forums
- I would be honored to continue to serve the member-owners of NWREC by continuing to work with the current NWREC board and staff, various state and national legislators and creating economic development opportunities



Gregg Roepke

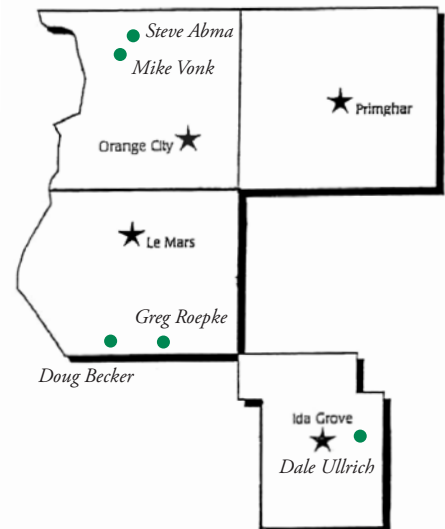
- Gregg & wife Rhonda live east of Kingsley; have two daughters, one son and six grandchildren
- Active member of First Lutheran Church, currently elder of church
- Currently President of Kingsley-Pierson CSD Foundation
- Former member of Plymouth Co Fair Board, Kingsley-Pierson school board and Kingsley Coop Board

## DISTRICT 4 - Ida County



Dale Ullrich

- Married to Sandy, two sons & three grandchildren
- Farms NE of Ida Grove, raising corn & beans
- Serves as director of Ida Co Veterans Affairs
- Member of Horn Memorial Hospital Foundation Board
- Serves on the Skate Palace Board of Directors
- Serves as Trustee at St Paul Lutheran in Ida Grove
- Past board member of Ida County Ag Society
- Past board member of Ida County REC during consolidation
- Enjoys camping, boating, farming & time with family



*You will note that there is only one name on the ballot. The incumbent director, Raymond Drey, notified the Nominating Committee that he did not plan to run for re-election, and they had originally nominated two members for this position. Just prior to the printing deadline, one of the candidates decided to have his name removed. While the goal is to have two names on the ballot, this is still in compliance with our By-Laws that call for no more than two names on the ballot for each director position that is up for election.*

# YOUTH TOUR CONTEST 2017

*Want to visit Washington, D.C.? Who wouldn't? It's FUN, it's FREE and you'll make lots of FRIENDS!*

North West REC is sponsoring the 2017 Youth Tour Contest with two students receiving an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. The trip is scheduled for June 9-15, 2017. There is a \$1,000 scholarship for the Iowa representative on the Youth Leadership Council.



All sons and daughters of North West REC member-consumers, who are presently juniors in high school, are eligible and encouraged to participate.

If you are interested in applying for the youth tour, send in the registration form below, and we will then send you an application form. The application is available on our website at [www.nwrec.coop](http://www.nwrec.coop) or you can e-mail Lorraine at [legdorf@nwrec.coop](mailto:legdorf@nwrec.coop) and she will mail you an application. If you have any questions, please call Lorraine at 712-707-4935 or 1-800-766-2099.

The Youth Tour Contest application should be returned to the REC no later than Friday, March 24, 2017.

The Board of Directors and management encourage all who are eligible to enter the Youth Tour Contest for an exciting educational experience.

## 2017 YOUTH TOUR CONTEST REGISTRATION

YES, I am interested in entering the contest. Please send me the application form.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

## REMINDER ABOUT MAILING . . .

*Watch your mail for your Annual District Meeting mailing which will include your registration card. Please bring this card with you when coming to the meeting. It will be used for the drawing of door prizes.*

*You will also receive your "ballot for director" in this mailing if you are a member in Districts 1, 3 and 4. Be sure to vote and mail your ballot to the cooperative in the envelope included in the mailing. Note to District 2 members: There will not be an election for directors in District 2.*

# NORTH WEST REC OFFERS POWERLINE SCHOLARSHIPS

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 \$500 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 (Ida, Plymouth, O'Brien and Sioux Counties)
- Be a member or the child 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
- File a scholarship application with North West REC by **Friday, March 31, 2017**

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 and school activities, potential for success and grade point average.

A check will be made out to both the recipient and Northwest Iowa Community College and will be sent to the recipient prior to the beginning of the second semester of course work.

**For an application or more information, contact:**

North West REC • Attn: Lorraine  
PO Box 435 • Orange City, IA 51041 • 800-766-2099  
legdorf@nwrec.coop



## 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

Outside Depository Available  
for After Hours Payments

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*CEO & General Manager*

**Curt Ahrenholz**  
*Finance & Office  
Services Director*

**Lorraine Egdorf**  
*Editor*