

## The power behind your power

BY ANNE HANSEN

National studies consistently rank power line installers and repairers among the most dangerous jobs in the country, and for good reason. Laboring high in the air wearing heavy equipment and working directly with high voltage creates the perfect storm of a dangerous and unforgiving profession. But electric lineworkers are up to the task. These brave people are committed to safety, as well as the challenges of the job.

Slope Electric Cooperative's lineworkers are responsible for

keeping power flowing day and night, regardless of national holidays, vacations, birthdays or other important family milestones. Beyond the years of specialized training and apprenticeships, it takes internal fortitude and a mission-oriented outlook to be a good lineworker. In fact, this service-oriented mentality is a hallmark characteristic of lineworkers. The job requires lineworkers to set aside their personal priorities to better serve their local community.

### Get to know our dedicated lineworkers:

#### ANDREW SONSALLA, senior staking technician 16 years



The best part of my job is all of the great co-workers I get a chance to work with, and working with our members to assist them with their electrical needs. When I am not working, I could be found hunting, trapping, snaring, buying fur and spending time with my family and friends.

#### JEFF BOYNTON, outpost foreman 16 years



The best part of my job is working outside and being able to provide electricity to our members. When I am not working, I could be found wrestling, bowling, golfing, hunting, fishing and spending time with family.

CONTINUED ON PAGE C2

Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

# OUTLOOK

116 E. 12th St. • New England, ND 58647 | 701-579-4191 • [www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop)

### In this issue:

- Manager's message: Thank a lineworker
- Grants available
- Safety Starts with ME

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1



**DUSTY HOFF, New England foreman**  
12 years

The best part of my job is the good co-workers and being in the outdoors.

When I am not working, I can be found spending time with my family, snaring, hunting, & working around my place.



**CODY BRAATEN, journeyman lineworker**  
12 years

The best part of my job is working in the area where I grew up.



**MARK FRANK, journeyman lineworker**  
9 years

The best part of my job is working outside.

When I'm not working, I can be found spending time with friends and family.



**JOHN LAWHEAD, journeyman lineworker**  
8 years

The best part of my job is restoring power during an outage.

When I'm not working, I can be found watching my kids' sports.



**BRADLY SCHMITT, apprentice lineworker**  
1 year

The best part of my job is having Dean Volk as a boss.

When I'm not working, I can be found playing with my kids.

Manager's message:

# Thank a lineworker April 11



**Travis Kupper**

If you were asked to associate an image or a person with Slope Electric Cooperative, I bet you would picture a lineworker. One of the most visible employees of the co-op, lineworkers work tirelessly to ensure our members receive uninterrupted power 24/7.

"Lineworker" is listed as one of the top 10 most

dangerous jobs in the United States. This is understandable, as they perform detailed tasks near high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day, having to brave stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers must climb high in the air, often carrying heavy equipment to get the job done.

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous or easy profession. It takes years of specialized training, ongoing education, dedication, and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of their home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions, when most are sheltering comfortably at home?

This dedication and sense of service to the community is truly what sets them apart. That's why we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize those who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

While lineworkers may be the most visible employees at Slope Electric Cooperative, it's important to note there is a team of highly skilled professionals working behind the scenes. Engineers provide ongoing expertise and guidance on the operations side of the co-op. Member service representatives are always standing by to take your calls and answer your questions. Our information technology experts are continuously monitoring our system to help

safeguard sensitive data. And these are just a few of the folks who work together to ensure we can deliver the service and reliability you expect and deserve. Without them, our lineworkers wouldn't be able to "bring the light" to our community.

Our dedicated and beloved lineworkers are proud to represent Slope Electric Cooperative, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 11, and any time you see a lineworker, I hope you'll join me in thanking them for their exceptional service. I also hope you'll remember that you have a dedicated team of professionals working behind the scenes at the co-op, whose commitment to service runs just as deep. ■

**HAPPY EASTER!**

In observance of the Easter holiday, Slope Electric Cooperative will be closed on Friday, April 15.

*Line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.*

## RDFC approves 2022 grants

**T**he Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) has approved a 2022 grant allotment of \$2,000 on behalf of Slope Electric Cooperative to be used to support community-owned entities, nonprofits and community-based projects.

**Eligible projects:** Community-owned businesses (café, grocery store, motel, other); community facilities (ambulance services, fire districts, recreation, hospital/clinic, community center, other); or community-based projects (school/youth projects, other) that benefit rural areas and lead to community betterment.

Please note the RDFC does not provide funds for medical fundraisers or general operating costs.

**Matching funds:** \$4 of other funds to every \$1 of RDFC funds. The matching funds DO NOT need to come from the utility cooperative.

**Timeframe:** Now through Dec. 31

**Process:** Call Slope Electric Cooperative at 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191 or email [comments@slopeelectric.coop](mailto:comments@slopeelectric.coop) to visit about a specific project and determine eligibility.

If it meets the qualifications, the member should complete an application and submit to Slope Electric Cooperative for consideration. From there, the application will be presented to the board of directors for approval. If approved, the grant application will be submitted to RDFC for final consideration.

The RDFC board gives final approval on grant requests. Once approved, a check will be made out to the recipient entity listed on the application and mailed to the contact person listed on the application. ■



**POWER**  
FOR GENERATIONS

**SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 2, 2022**  
SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ANNUAL MEETING  
AMIDON, NORTH DAKOTA

# Safety Starts with ME: **Cody Braaten**

BY ANNE HANSEN

**G**rowing up on a family ranch near Rhame, Cody Braaten has always enjoyed and appreciated the outdoors. His love for the outdoors is what attracted Braaten to a career at Slope Electric Cooperative as a lineworker.

Like many ranchers, Braaten has taken part in soil conservation and tree planting practices for the ranch.

“We appreciate the trees that offer shade and a habitat for all sorts of birds and protection for our cattle,” Braaten said. “But as a lineworker, I understand the importance of keeping power lines clear of vegetation, ensuring a reliable power supply, and most importantly, a safe system for our members.”

Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines, and that is why Slope Electric Cooperative lineworkers take note of overgrown vegetation and trim to ensure reliability.

“One of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability,” Braaten said. “Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages.”

A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

More so, vegetation management also helps keep our members safe. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members’ yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like

a tree.

“We care about our members and put their safety and that of my co-workers and line workers above all else,” Braaten said.

Braaten noted that members can help by:

- Planting new trees and vegetation away from the power lines and pad-mounted transformers to avoiding future issues
- Call the co-op if you notice that you have vegetation growing near the power lines. ■

*Safety Starts with ME is a monthly column showing what our employees do to help keep members, co-workers and themselves safe.*



## Help us with safety at Slope Electric

Slope Electric Cooperative is an advocate of working safely. In fact, it is our way of life; the culture of your cooperative. We look out for the safety of ourselves and others – before, during and after work. Did you know members also play a key role in keeping our system safe? At times, you are our eyes in the sky and on the ground.

Should you see a power line issue that may

need Slope Electric Cooperative’s attention, please call the office or send us an email at [safety@Slopeelectric.coop](mailto:safety@Slopeelectric.coop) with your concern. This correspondence should include the description of the location, your name and complete contact information, and a photo if possible. Working together helps ensure the safety of all! ■

## Co-op member addresses needed

Slope Electric Cooperative needs new addresses to mail members their capital credit allocation statements and/or capital credit check written last year.

The following list of Slope Electric Cooperative members and their current address on file (last known address) were mailed allocation statements and/or checks that were returned

Steven Aubrey, West Plains, MO  
Best Assets Inc., Minneapolis, MN  
Sheri L. Breen, Bowman, ND  
Burlington Resources, Midland, TX  
Luckey Cameron, Sheridan, WY  
Joe Carpenter, Hobson, MT  
L.C. Cassell, Bowman, ND  
Robert W. Crawford, Prescott Valley, AZ  
L.D. Crooker, Rapid City, SD  
Debbie L. Doest, Bowman, ND  
Wilma J. Doll-Beckman, New Salem, ND  
David Foltz, Mott, ND  
Getz Contracting, Bowman, ND  
Joseph Goldade, Lemmon, SD  
Tom E. Gunderson, Pollock, SD  
Keith E. Hagen, Reeder, ND  
Bruce Halleen, Scranton, ND  
Robert W. Hanson, Rozet, WY  
Edward A. Haugen, Sturgis, SD  
Donovan Hollis, Soap Lake, WA  
Steve Holloway, Bottineau, ND  
Chism Holt, Cordel, OK

Tara Jung, Dickinson, ND  
C R Kadrmas, Fargo, ND  
Dellroy Kalina, Yuma, AZ  
Francis A. Kathrein, New England, ND  
Bruce G. Klein, Garrison, ND  
Deanna Kramer, Langford, SD  
Brett Kramer, Langford, SD  
Forrest D. Lanchbury, Sedona, AZ  
Burnell Lutz, Lenexa, KS  
Gabriel Maliske, Fargo, ND  
Sandra May Scranton, ND  
Loren E. Mayer, Minot, ND  
Chelsea McCreery, Kiowa, KS  
Michael D. Merwin, Hettinger, ND  
Ragna Mesling, Bismarck, ND  
Ronda Miller, Bowman, ND  
Eileen M. Mosbrucker, Bowman, ND  
Nelson Farms % Lelyn Nelson, Spokane, WA  
Victoria Nelson, Rapid City, SD  
Derek Nordahl, Dickinson, ND  
Bruce W. Olson, Minot, ND

from the post office, because it was “not a deliverable address,” “unable to forward” or “attempted not known.”

If you know of a current address, please call the Slope Electric Cooperative office at 701-579-4191, 800-559-4191 or email comments @slopeelectric.coop.

Paulson Premium Seed, Bowman ND  
Jacki Price, Hettinger, ND  
Florene L. Quamme, Hettinger, ND  
Paul Reimer, Bowman, ND  
Jordan Rustad, Bowman, ND  
Steven J. Saylor, Bowman, ND  
Eugene Schultz, Wickenburg, AZ  
Sequel Energy, LLC, Billings, MT  
Robert E. & Mary A. Shear, Scranton, ND  
Edith Steier, Dickinson, ND  
Alex Stockert, Dickinson, ND  
Martha J. Stuber, Bowman, ND  
Dr. R.C. Thom, Bowman, ND  
Allan Tomac, Buffalo, SD  
Tri State Comm Inc., Bismarck, ND  
Brad Wahl, Huntington Beach, CA  
Robert Warbis, Hettinger, ND  
Kathleen R. Walsh, Larimore, ND  
Todd Wentz, Sheridan, WY  
Gary White, Reeder, ND  
Shawn Zrowka, Morristown, SD



# Call before you dig!

**Planting a tree?** Planning construction work? Remember to contact North Dakota One Call first! The first step to any project is safety, and damaging an underground facility while you dig can cause injury or even death.

Numerous utility lines may be buried on your property, ranging from electric and telephone lines to water and sewer lines, but North Dakota One Call will help you locate these lines before

your project begins.

Contact North Dakota One Call and utility line owners will locate and mark their lines. These locates do not include any lines you may have installed to your private facilities, such as detached garages, wells or yard lights.

Go online at [www.ndonecall.com](http://www.ndonecall.com) or call **800-795-0555** or **811**.

It's free, it's simple and it's the law.

## The 811 process:

### 1. NOTIFY

Notify the North Dakota One Call center by calling 811 or making an online request at least two full business days before work begins, excluding weekends and holidays. You'll give the operator information about how to contact you, where you are planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing, or go online to [www.ndonecall.com](http://www.ndonecall.com) to enter this information. Utility companies who have potential facilities in the area of your dig site will be notified about your intent to dig.

### 2. WAIT

Wait the required amount of time for affected utility operators to respond to your request.

### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utility operators have responded to your request and marked underground utilities. Compare the marks to the list of utilities the One Call center notified. You can also view your ticket online and see each utility's response for your dig site.

### 4. RESPECT

Respect the marks. The marks provided by the affected utilities are your guide for the duration of the project. The marks are valid for 21 calendar days.

If you are unable to maintain the marks during your project, or the project will continue past your request's expiration date, please call 811 or go online to file a RESPOT request.

### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

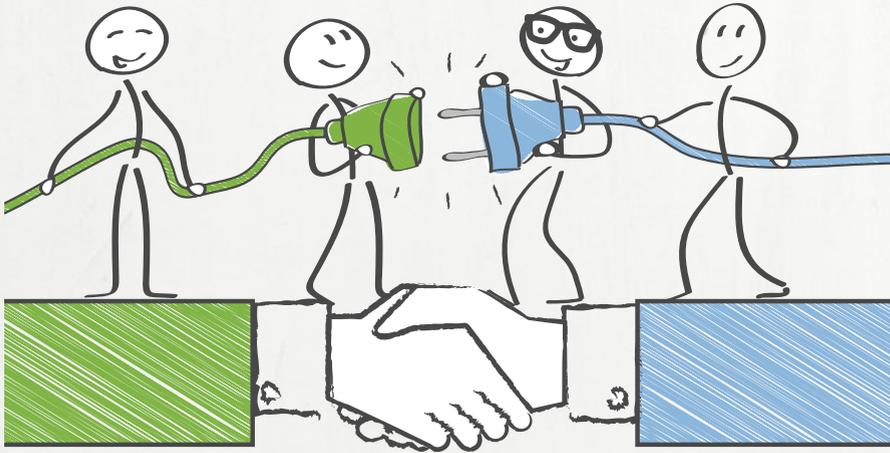
Dig carefully around the marks. No mechanical excavating can take place within 24 inches on either side of the marked location of the underground facility. If you plan on digging within that 4-foot-wide area, hand digging is allowed, but please dig carefully and cautiously.



## Report from THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Regular meeting held at the Enchanted Castle in Regent.*

- Approved the agenda.
- Approved minutes of the Jan. 27 board meeting.
- Heard co-general managers/ CEOs updates.
- Reviewed Basin Electric Power Cooperative update.
- Reviewed board member reports.
- Heard operation report, including line patrol and thermal inspections.
- Heard member relations summary, including Operation Round Up awards, and annual meeting.
- Reviewed the legal counsel report
- Approved wholesale power contract.



CO-OP 101:

## Co-ops need member involvement!

**The most important part of an electric cooperative is YOU!**

Electric cooperatives exist to meet the needs of their members. And members are the owners, too!

Electric cooperatives are owned and democratically controlled by their members – the people who use the electricity.

### Use your voice!

By attending your cooperative's annual meeting, you learn more about your electric cooperative's financial standing, its past accomplishments and future plans. An informed member can be a valuable asset. And members also elect their representatives to the board of directors.

Cooperatives operate on the principle of "one member, one vote." So, each member of a cooperative has the same voting power. And as

a member, you have a voice in how your co-op operates, by electing directors to represent you.

### Get involved!

Those directors are your representatives on the board. Without their involvement, your electric cooperative would not be able to operate!

Members who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions are vital to a cooperative. They help decide how active an electric cooperative will be in the community, such as providing scholarships or sponsoring other activities to develop young leaders in our communities.

We encourage you to become involved in your cooperative. Attend your annual meeting, cast a ballot for directors and consider serving on the board of directors. YOU are the electric cooperative! ■



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or 800-559-4191

Fax: 701-579-4193

Email us:

[comments@slopeelectric.coop](mailto:comments@slopeelectric.coop)

UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES

800-795-0555 or 811

## SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Steven Wegner, President  
Anthony Larson, Vice President  
Angela Carlson, Secretary  
Henry "Chip" Fischer, Treasurer  
Lauren Klewin, Director  
Jerome Caron, Director  
Dale Hande, Director  
Charlotte Meier, Director

## MANAGEMENT

Donald A. Franklund  
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper  
CO-GM/CEO

[www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop)



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