

Slope Electric Cooperative members gather in New England for annual meeting



Slope Electric members gather for supper and bingo after the annual meeting on June 6.

Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

OUTLOOK

116 E. 12th St. • New England, ND 58647 | 701-579-4191 • www.slopeelectric.coop

In this issue:

- Scholarship winners named
- Overhead vs. underground line
- Message from power supplier
- Enjoy the State Fair



Slope Electric lineworkers welcome members as they register for the meeting.

Slope Electric Cooperative members participate in annual meeting

Slope Electric Cooperative members gathered in New England for the cooperative's annual meeting on June 6. The meeting began promptly at 5 p.m. with a roast beef dinner, and bingo was played upon adjournment of the business meeting. Members were also welcome to visit with Slope Electric's CEOs, directors, special guests, staff and other members.

Slope Electric President Steven Wegner welcomed and thanked members for attending the annual meeting. The membership voted to fill two board positions representing Slope County. The new directors representing Slope County are Scott Bachmeier, Rhame, and Ryan Jacobson, Rhame, and Cheryl Van Daele, Rhame.

Members listened to cooperative updates from co-General Managers Jason Bentz and Travis Kupper along with CFO Alex Craigmile. Operations manager, Dean Volk and manager of membership relations, Brooke Waltner also addressed the membership. Bill

Gion, a Slope Electric member and president of the Operation Round Up board of directors, highlighted the Operation Round Up 2023 giving.

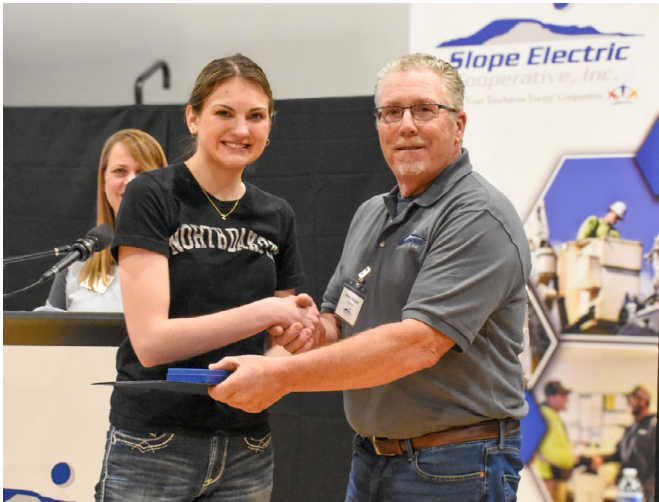
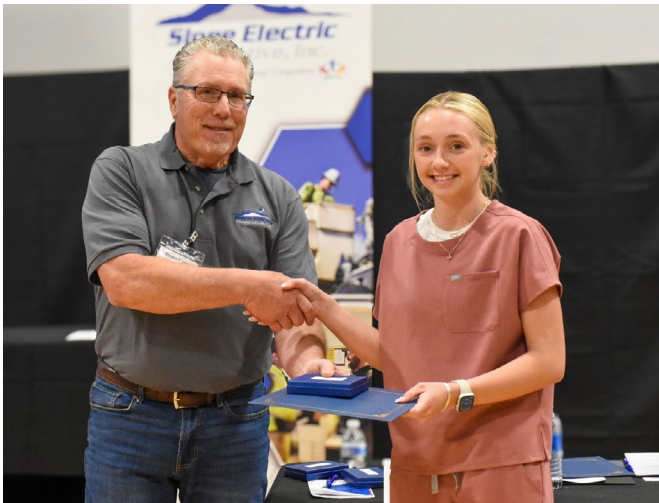
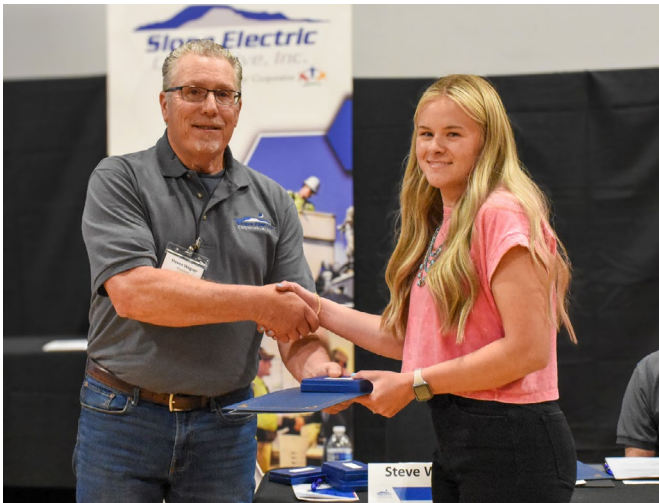
Students were also recognized for being awarded scholarships and the Youth Tour winner was recognized. This year five Luck-of-the-Draw scholarships were awarded to three full-time and two full-or part time students who are Slope Electric members or dependents of. Three students were chosen for a \$1,000 scholarship: Jaren Rafferty, New England, ND; Jayda Seim, Lemmon, SD; and Emberly Van Daele, Rhame, ND. While two students were selected for a \$500 scholarship: Julia Dalley, Hettinger, ND and Megan Monke, Regent, ND.

The board of directors, co-general managers and staff at Slope Electric thank members for participating in the annual meeting of the membership and look forward to meeting your electrical needs in the future. ■

Congratulations to luck-of-the-draw winners

Annually, Slope Electric Cooperative awards scholarships to students in its service area. This year, five luck-of-the-draw scholarships were awarded to three full-time and two full- or part-time students who are Slope Electric members or dependents of members.

Three students were chosen for a \$1,000 scholarship: Jaren Rafferty, New England, Jayda Seim, Lemmon, S.D., and Emberly Van Daele, Rhame. Two students were selected for a \$500 scholarship: Julia Dalley, Hettinger, and Megan Monke, Regent. ■



MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Overhead and underground lines



Travis Kupper

and underground power lines to better understand their respective strengths and limitations.

Overhead power lines

Pros

- **Cost-effectiveness:** One of the most significant advantages of overhead power lines is their lower initial installation cost compared to underground lines. The materials used for overhead lines, such as poles, conductors and insulators, are typically less expensive than those required for underground installation.
- **Accessibility and maintenance:** Overhead power lines are more accessible for maintenance and repairs, as they are visible and easily reachable. This accessibility translates to faster response times and lower maintenance costs, contributing to overall reliability.
- **Scalability:** Overhead power lines offer greater flexibility for expansion and upgrades. Additional wires can be added to existing poles or new poles can be erected without the need for extensive excavation work, making it easier to accommodate growing energy demands.

Cons

- **Susceptibility to weather:** Overhead power lines are exposed to the elements and are susceptible to damage from severe weather events, such as storms, high winds and lightning strikes. This vulnerability can lead to power outages and safety hazards for both utility workers and the public.
- **Height clearance concerns:** Despite their visibility, overhead power lines pose a risk of accidental contact, particularly when moving tall equipment or large machinery. Farmers must remain vigilant and adhere to recommended height clearance guidelines to avoid striking power lines, which can

result in serious injury, equipment damage and power outages.

Underground power lines

Pros

- **Enhanced reliability:** Underground power lines are less susceptible to weather-related outages and external interference, as they are protected from elements, such as wind, ice and falling debris.

Cons

- **Higher initial cost:** The primary drawback of underground power lines is their significantly higher upfront installation cost compared to overhead lines. Excavation, trenching and cable-laying processes are labor-intensive and require specialized equipment, increasing project expenses.
- **Limited accessibility for maintenance:** Underground power lines are more challenging to access for maintenance and repairs, as they are buried beneath the ground. Locating and accessing faults or damaged cables can be time-consuming and costly, leading to longer outage durations and increased operational challenges.
- **Technical challenges:** Underground power lines are subject to technical limitations, such as heat dissipation, cable capacity and voltage regulation. These factors can impact system performance and may require additional engineering considerations during design and installation.

The choice between overhead and underground power lines involves weighing various factors, such as cost and reliability. While overhead lines offer cost-effectiveness and scalability, underground lines provide enhanced reliability, aesthetic improvement and reduced environmental impact.

Ultimately, the selection of the most suitable transmission and distribution method depends on the specific requirements and priorities of each project, community or cooperative. By carefully evaluating these factors and considering long-term implications, stakeholders can make informed decisions to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of electricity for generations to come. ■



SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Protecting members against utility scams

In today's interconnected world, millions of Americans face the persistent threat of utility scams, which manifest through various channels, such as phone calls, emails and text messages. Remaining vigilant against these evolving tactics is crucial for safeguarding oneself and one's community from financial harm and identity theft.

"Staying informed and cautious is the best defense against utility scams," says Brooke Waltner, manager of member relations. Here is how you can be better prepared:

- **Awareness is key:** Stay updated on the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets and utility companies to recognize potential threats.
- **Watch for red flags:** Be wary of common scam tactics, such as overpayment tricks and smishing (SMS phishing) attempts and question any suspicious communications.
- **Take control:** Take time to assess the situation, being suspicious of unusual requests, and verify the legitimacy of any communication with the utility company directly.

"If the request seems strange or urgent, you're likely being targeted by a scammer," Waltner says. "If someone calls you on behalf of Slope Electric Cooperative and it sounds like a scam, hang up and call the office immediately."

As we navigate the digital landscape, it's imperative




to remain vigilant and proactive in protecting ourselves and our communities from utility scams. By staying informed, exercising caution and reporting suspicious activities, we can collectively work toward a safer environment, shielding our friends and neighbors from falling victim to fraudulent schemes. ■

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM UTILITY SCAMS

Stay Aware

Watch for Red Flags

Take Control



MESSAGE FROM BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE

BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND GENERAL MANAGER TODD BRICKHOUSE AND BOARD PRESIDENT WAYNE PELTIER

Editor's note: Basin Electric Power Cooperative supplies much of the power distributed to Slope Electric Cooperative members throughout the tri-county area. We asked Todd Brickhouse and Wayne Peltier to update our members on what is happening at Basin Electric.

In 2023, Basin Electric Power Cooperative continued to provide reliable and affordable power to our members. We understand the quality of life of our members depends on our efforts, and we value the trust our members place in us to provide electric service.

Today's reliability and affordability is the result of careful planning and prudent investments that occurred years and even decades ago. We are striving to continue this tradition of stewardship. Over the next five years, we expect to invest as much as \$4 billion in our utility system. This is in addition to the \$470 million we invested in 2023, which was our highest single year of capital expenditures since 2015.

These investments are required due to the robust growth of Basin Electric's members. In 2023, Basin Electric's megawatt-hour sales to members increased 7.5%, which is on top of 7.8% growth in 2022. We expect strong growth to continue over the next decade, driven by healthy agricultural, petroleum and technology sectors of the economy.

Growth presents both opportunities and risks. The biggest opportunity is for our members to experience higher standards of living from economic growth. With respect to risks, many of these loads can materialize faster than Basin Electric can build generation, which impacts both reliability and affordability. To mitigate some of the risks, we work with our members throughout the year to develop innovative rates for cryptocurrency and large loads.

Our 2023 consolidated margins were consistent with our targeted margin of \$150 million, although we achieved these margins by utilizing a portion of our rate stability fund. Our utility margins were well above what was budgeted. However, results at Dakota Gasification Company, our for-profit subsidiary, were below budget due to weak commodity prices and lower-than-budgeted plant capacity factors.

Dakota Gasification's results will always be impacted by commodity prices, but we made great progress toward de-risking a portion of this volatility in 2023. By the end of the year, construction related to Dakota Gasification's carbon dioxide (CO₂) sequestration



Wayne Peltier and Todd Brickhouse

project was largely complete, and CO₂ sequestration commenced in mid-February 2024.

During 2023, our senior leadership team and board updated Basin Electric's strategic plan. This included a new mission statement: We are a safe, environmentally responsible cooperative that provides reliable, affordable power, products and services to sustain the quality of life for our member-owners across rural America. This mission statement provides us with a unifying sense of purpose and is supported by eight strategic objectives designed to increase the value we provide to our members. While achieving all of our strategic objectives is important, we put particular emphasis on safety, reliability and affordability by making them cooperative-wide goals.

In closing, we offer our thanks to our members and stakeholders for your trust and support. ■

KX/Co-op Day at the North Dakota State Fair

Wednesday, July 24
10 a.m. - 3 p.m. CT

Drawings for cash & prizes throughout the day

Sponsored by:

- North Dakota Coordinating Council of Cooperatives (NDCCC)
- KX News
- North Dakota State Fair

Discounts available by calling Slope Electric Cooperative:

- \$1 off daily admission
- \$5 off unlimited ride wristband
- \$1 off Ranch Rodeo

Free breakfast 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.
Ice cream social 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.



Mark your calendar for Co-op Day at the State Fair!

Experience KX/Co-op Day at N.D. State Fair on July 24 in Minot. As a valued member, we are pleased to extend exclusive benefits to enhance your experience.

By attending the North Dakota State Fair on July 24, you gain access to a special offer on gate admission, where you can save \$1 off the regular price. Additionally, maximize the thrills of the carnival rides with a \$5 discount on daily unlimited-ride wristbands and \$1 off admission to the ranch rodeo.

You're also invited to join us for a free pancake breakfast from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. and ice cream social under the KX/Co-op tent from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

To secure your tickets and take advantage of these offers, simply reach out to our dedicated team at the office. Give us a call today at 701-579-4191 and allow us to facilitate a memorable experience for you at the N.D. State Fair. ■

SAFETY TIP

DON'T STACK HAY BALES UNDER POWER LINES. STAY 10 FEET CLEAR OF POWER LINES.



Slope Electric board meeting highlights: April 25

The regular meeting of the board of directors of Slope Electric Cooperative was held on April 25 at the cooperative's headquarters in New England. President Steven Wegner called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. A quorum was present. Slope Electric's General Counsel Jennifer Grosz was appointed recorder for the meeting. Also present were Slope Electric's co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Member Relations Manager Brooke Waltner, Board Liaison Connie Hill and Manager of Member Support Anne Hansen.

Consent agenda: There were a few proposed amendments to the consent agenda. The consent agenda was approved as amended.

Strategic/action: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report. The report included updates on Upper Missouri Power Cooperative, Western Area Power Administration and Basin Electric Power Cooperative meetings. Kupper also reported on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Legislative Conference. Bentz and Kupper also presented the March reports

for West Dakota Utility Services, 3C Construction and Basin Electric's CEO report.

Department reports: Craigmile provided the board with March's financial reports. Volk's written report for the board was provided, including new projects on which the crews have been working and maintenance. Waltner reviewed her member relations report, which included the new bill layout, social media update and annual meeting information. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report for the board. Grosz provided her legal report.

Action items: Action items were resolved.

Discussion/general information: Hansen presented the board with Slope Electric's 2024 member survey results. Hansen also provided a report on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The board discussed details of the upcoming Basin Electric annual meeting.

The meeting concluded with the adjournment. Secretary Angela Carlson certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is at 9 a.m. July 23 in Bowman. ■



116 E. 12th St. - PO Box 338
New England, ND 58647-0338

Phone: 701-579-4191
or 800-559-4191
Fax: 701-579-4193

Email us:
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
Jerome Caron, Director
Ryan Jacobson, Director
Charlotte Meier, Director
Cheryl Van Daele Director

MANAGEMENT

Jason Bentz
CO-GM/CEO

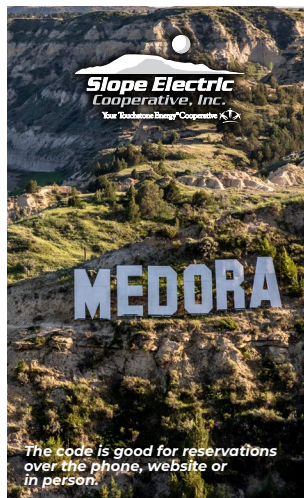
Travis Kupper
CO-GM/CEO

www.slopeelectric.coop



Become a fan of Slope Electric Cooperative
to learn timely co-op news!

*Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.
is an equal opportunity provider.*



EXPLORE IT, ADORE IT AND SAVE:

Medora discounts

Slope Electric Cooperative is excited to offer Medora discounts for some unforgettable family summer fun! Slope Electric is able to offer its members a discount by being a Touchstone Energy® member.

Simply call 1-800-MEDORA-1 and give the discount code "TOUCH2024" for a 15% discount on all of the following during any night of the season.

DISCOUNTS OFFERED FOR MEDORA VACATION INCLUDE:

- Medora Musical
- Pitchfork steak fondue
- Bully Pulpit Golf Course
- Gospel Brunch tickets
- Old Town Hall Theater shows

LODGING AT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Elkhorn Quarters
- Badlands Motel
- Rough Riders Hotel