

The blessing and curse of moisture



PHOTO BY STEVEN GUSSEY

Bountiful rains grew some beautiful hay and crops that became difficult — if not impossible — to harvest and move off the fields, when the ground became oversaturated. In this month's local pages, a Slope member shares ag-related challenges and highlights, and NDSU Extension provides tips on how to manage stress. Member-producers ... we are thankful for you!

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc.

OUTLOOK

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

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- Are you interested in serving on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee?
- Youth opportunities: student scholarships and Youth Tour
- Save the date for your annual meeting BASH!
- safety@slopeelectric.coop
- Meeting minutes ... and more

New year, new outlook?

Trying to stay positive amid farm and ranch challenges

BY CARMEN DEVNEY, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SEAN BROTHERSON, PH.D., FAMILY SCIENCE SPECIALIST, NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE



Bountiful rains produced some beautiful crops that became difficult to get off the field.

The rain was a blessing and curse in 2019 for many farmers and ranchers in the Slope Electric Cooperative service area. Some days went well and crops were bountiful and high-quality. And then the rains kept coming, and turned to snow in early October.

“The rain challenged all of harvest,” says Steven Gussey, a Slope member who lives on the family farm southwest of New England. “It was too wet before, during and after harvest.”

From trying to bring the crop in and not getting the combine stuck, to hauling hay home, it was a frustrating and challenging year for producers across the region and state.

“We finally hauled bales during the freezing rain and snow around Thanksgiving,” Gussey says. The farm was purchased by his

grandfather, William Gussey, in 1943. Steven farms with his father, Gary, and brother, Bill. They plant durum, wheat and canola, and also produce hay for sale.

Farmers and ranchers, and their family members, experience pressure from all directions, says Sean Brotherson, Ph.D., Family Science Specialist, NDSU Extension Service. While all of us contend with economic ups and downs or family concerns, farmers have added uncertainties such as the weather and commodity prices that directly influence their lives and operations.

Farm and ranch families often experience pressure, conflict and uncertainty; especially during harvesting and planting. If feelings of frustration and helplessness build, they can lead to poor decisions, costly accidents, strained relationships, health concerns and deaths.

Extension offers these ways to manage stress

Control Events

- Plan ahead. Replace worn machinery parts during the off season.
- Before key tasks, discuss who can run for parts, care for livestock, etc.
- Set priorities and manage time. Decide what has to be done today and what can wait until tomorrow.
- Say no to extra commitments you do not have time to do.

Control Attitudes

- See the big picture: “I’m glad that tire blew out here rather than on that hill.”
- List all the stresses you have. Identify those you can change; accept the ones you cannot.
- Shift your focus from worrying to problem-solving.
- Think about how to turn your challenges into opportunities.
- Focus on what you have accomplished rather than what you failed to do.
- Set realistic goals and expectations daily. Give up trying to be perfect.
- Take care of your body. Exercise regularly and eat well-balanced meals.
- Think positive thoughts, like, “I can and will succeed.”
- Look for the humor in things you do.
- Balance work and play. Give time and energy to both.

Seek help

All of us have times when we can benefit from professional help or support.

- Call 211: statewide 24-hour crisis intervention, health and human services information and referral.
- Mental Health America: www.mentalhealthamerica.net
- National Suicide Hopeline Network: 800-SUICIDE
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 800-273-TALK
- Refer yourself or anyone you have concerns about to a local healthcare provider or local mental health professional. If you run into difficulty or resistance, accompany the person to a trusted professional you know such as clergy



Slope member Steven Gussey ended up hauling hay bales home during the freezing rain and snow around Thanksgiving, because the ground was too saturated earlier in the season. Steven farms in partnership with his father, Gary, and brother, Bill. They plant durum, wheat and canola, and also produce hay for sale.

members, medically trained personnel, nurses or other healthcare professionals, law enforcement agencies or personnel, and local counselors, social workers or other mental health professionals.

Many of our farming and ranching friends are members of Slope Electric Cooperative. Your work is vital to our region, state, nation and beyond, and we are thankful for you and all you do.

Please take good care of yourselves. Your safety matters. ■

WHERE TO GET HELP

- NDSU Extension offers resources for dealing with farm/ranch stress: www.ag.ndsu.edu/farmranchstress
- Abound Counseling at LSSND offers in-person and statewide telehealth counseling services. Payment options include sliding fee, health insurance and no-fee options through LSSND's Abundant Care fund: (701) 223-1510
- In an emergency, call 9-1-1
- For First Link Help Line, call 2-1-1
- National suicide-prevention hotline (available 24 hours/day): (800) 273-8255

For non-emergency situations, speak with your health care professional about mental-health services in your area.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO IT ALONE.



Lutheran Social Services
of North Dakota



NDSU

EXTENSION



Are you interested in serving on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee?

The Slope Electric Cooperative board of directors will appoint the Nominating/Resolutions Committee at their Jan. 30, 2020, board meeting. Each director selects a member from his or her respective county, and those directors who are up for election select an additional committee member from their county. The committee will consist of not less than five, nor more than 11 members. The committee member names are then published in Slope Electric's local pages of the *North Dakota Living* magazine.

The Nominating/Resolutions Committee meets twice. The first meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020, at 10:30 a.m. to acquaint the committee with the responsibilities of a director of the cooperative, which will aid you in selecting qualified members to be nominated. The cooperative will pay you a per diem, along with reimbursing you for mileage for both meetings. The second meeting will be held on Thursday, March 26, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. The purpose of this meeting will be to make the actual nominations for the election to be held at the cooperative's annual meeting, and to approve resolutions to be printed in the annual meeting report.

If you or someone you know is interested in serving on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee, please notify Lynn Klein in the office at 701-579-4191 or at lynnk@slopeelectric.coop prior to **Jan. 30, 2020**. To serve on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee, you must be an active member of Slope Electric and your name must be listed on the membership.

Three directors' terms will expire in 2020 – two directors from Hettinger County and one director from Adams County.

Members can also be nominated to serve as director by filing a petition with 15 members' signatures. Filing must be done 30 days prior to the annual meeting and posted at the office. Members may also be nominated to serve as director from the floor at the annual meeting. To serve on the Slope Electric board, you must be a resident receiving service from Slope Electric at your primary residence, and you must be a named member of the cooperative. ■

SAFETY@SLOPEELECTRIC.COOP

Slope 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 that 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's attention, please call the office or send us an email at 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!



HISTORIC ANNUAL MEETING

JUNE 4, 2020
**FOUR SEASONS PAVILION,
BOWMAN**



Report from **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

NOV. 21, 2019

- Approved minutes of the Oct. 31, 2019, Board meeting, capital credit estate retirements, and special equipment.
- Heard reports from senior staff, including the financial report for October, which was accepted as submitted.
- Heard reports from Directors who attended various meetings throughout the month, and selected voting delegates and alternates to the meetings.
- Approved the 2020 Budget.
- Approved to recognize 2019 funds from deferred revenue.
- Approved RUS Form 219 Inventory No. 850 & 851 of Work Orders, which will now be submitted to RUS so Slope can draw funds from its loan.
- Reviewed and approved Board Policy No. 02-02.
- The Board was reminded to be thinking about committee members to serve on the 2020 Nominating/Resolutions Committee, which will be selected at the January Board meeting.
- The co-general managers gave an update, and reported on several meetings they attended.
- The next Board meeting is set for 10 a.m. MT on Dec. 19, 2019.
- Held Executive Session.

Cooperative offers scholarship opportunities



Slope Electric Cooperative is offering \$6,000 in college scholarships to area students whose parent(s) or guardian(s) are members of the co-op.

Slope Electric will award two \$500 Luck of the Draw scholarships to be drawn at the annual meeting. All area high school seniors who are dependents of a Slope Electric member are eligible for this scholarship. Students must attend Slope's annual meeting, accompanied with at least one parent or guardian, and are encouraged to RSVP prior to the meeting. No application is required.

Slope Electric will also award six \$500 scholarships through area high schools to seniors who are dependents of a Slope Electric member. One graduating senior will be selected from each school in Slope's service area: Bowman, Hettinger, Lemmon, Mott-Regent, New England and Scranton. Students should contact the school counselor for requirements.

Slope continues to award a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

Scholarships are awarded to a high school senior or college freshman already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program, and who are dependents of a Slope Electric member. The student must attend an accredited, two-year or four-

year college, university or vocational/technical school. Completed application is required.

In addition, Slope Electric is awarding a \$500 scholarship sponsored by 3C Construction.

Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a lineworker, and who are dependents of a Slope Electric member. Completed application is required.

Plus, Slope is awarding a \$500 scholarship sponsored by West Dakota Utility Services.

Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a mechanic, and who are dependents of a Slope Electric member. Completed application is required.

Students can get the applications from our website, slopeelectric.coop, or at our office in New England.

Applications can be filled out online and emailed to lawannaw@slopeelectric.coop, or printed and mailed to Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc., Attn: Scholarship Committee, PO Box 338, New England, ND 58647.

Please return completed applications to Slope Electric Cooperative by **Jan. 31, 2020**. ■



JUNE 20 TO 26, 2020

HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES & JUNIORS

Win the Trip of a Lifetime!

AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Slope Electric Cooperative.
- If you have any questions, please contact LaWanna Wilhelm of Slope Electric at 701-579-4191 (office) or 701-290-4102 (cell).
- The deadline is Jan. 31, 2020. You can e-mail entries to LaWanna Wilhelm at lawannaw@slopeelectric.coop or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 338, New England, ND 58647-0338.

ESSAY QUESTION:

If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate, you will travel to Washington, D.C. to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?

CHECK OUT THE ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES AT
www.ndyouthtour.com

TOP 3 REASONS

TO ENTER THE ESSAY-WRITING CONTEST

1. All-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., compliments of Slope Electric Cooperative
2. A whole week to visit unforgettable historic monuments, museums and the U.S. Capitol
3. A learning experience you'll never forget



Small donations make big difference

Slope Electric Cooperative held an Operation Round Up board meeting on Nov. 4 by conference call. The board reviewed 10 applications, and awarded a total of \$6,050 to five individuals and five organizations — all within the Slope service area.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 4. If you know of a person, family or community projects needing a helping hand,

please fill out an application and submit it by Jan. 28.

To download the application, visit www.slopeelectric.coop and click Your Community and Operation Round Up. Or, call the cooperative at 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191 and request an application, or stop by headquarters in New England and pick one up. ■

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc., is a recipient of federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: 202-690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

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



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800-795-0555 or 811

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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

MANAGEMENT

Donald A. Franklund
CO-GM/GEO

Travis Kupper
CO-GM/GEO

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