



McKenzie Electric  
COOPERATIVE

**DECEMBER 2018**

3817 23rd Ave. NE Watford City, ND | Outpost - Killdeer, ND | 701-444-9288 | 800-584-9239



## DECEMBER OFFICE CLOSURES

**McKenzie Electric Cooperative offices will be closed  
Dec. 24-25 for Christmas and Jan. 1 for New Year's Day**

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year  
from all of us at McKenzie Electric Cooperative.*



### FOLLOW MCKENZIE ELECTRIC ON FACEBOOK

Become a fan of McKenzie Electric Cooperative on Facebook, and receive updates on power outages, youth opportunities, the annual meeting, *North Dakota Living* stories featuring our member-owners, and much more! Just search McKenzie Electric Cooperative Inc.

[www.mckenzieelectric.com](http://www.mckenzieelectric.com)

McKenzie Electric Cooperative

# Connections

# An orange in your Christmas stocking

## Cherishing our rural traditions

BY JESSIE VEEDER SCOFIELD

**W**hen I was growing up, my dad used to tell us about the orange he and his brother and sister would get from Santa on Christmas morning, always right there waiting for them in the toe of their stockings bright and early.

I'm not sure I heard of any other gifts he received for Christmas, now that I think of it. I doubt I ever really asked, but I always liked the idea of my dad as a little kid on Christmas morning under the roof of that tiny old house that used to sit in the barnyard. I always imagined him in cowboy pajamas and wild curly hair, hoping maybe for a slingshot or BB gun, but happy enough regardless, as kids tend to be on Christmas.

There are a few gifts I remember as a child. A doll I desperately wanted. A pair of fuzzy cow slippers. A fast sled that matched my younger sister's, which I wrecked with my best friend during an unfortunate run-in with a frozen cow turd on a trip down one of the biggest hills on the place. She's never let me forget that mistake, but I've forgotten a



great deal of the material gifts I've been given throughout my life.

What I do remember about our family holidays is how much the ranch, the animals and the landscape played a part in the celebration, making the magic of the season more special and meaningful against the backdrop of our family ranch. It was like the place became its own character in our holiday story and even as a kid I understood it was special to live here, especially on Christmas. Special like

loading up in the pickup with my dad and little sister, all bundled and excited to find the best Christmas tree in the draws. Special like the little branches he would cut for my sister and I to put in a coffee can and decorate with lights for our room. Special like Christmas Eve night service in our country church, all dressed up singing “Silent Night,” borrowing my neighbor’s flame to light the candle in the dark. Special like hosting a party for the neighbors and helping Mom make and package her homemade fudge for gifts. Special like feeding the cows and horses first, and a little extra, Christmas morning. Special like the whole family heading out to the sledding hill up the road after a mid-day meal to blow off steam and laugh together.

Oh, I know these holiday traditions aren’t particularly unique to those of us who grew up in rural North Dakota, and I’m glad for it. Because it’s these common rituals, these customs, which help us tell the story of generations, build community and bind family. I smell a cedar tree and I’m 9 years old again, tucked into our corner of the world feeling safe and loved and so much like myself. It’s why, almost every year since I moved back to the ranch with my husband, even before the babies came, we’ve taken the time to cut our own cedar Christmas tree. Because, really, it’s less about the way it looks under all those lights and bulbs and more about the process, the adventure and the hunt to find it among the deadlines and noise of the rest of our lives. It’s ceremonious, just like the extra scoop of grain for those holiday horses.

And it’s what my grandparents did out here for their kids.

And my great-grandparents.

And there’s something to be said about being the “so on and so on” in these stories. It means that we’ve been given



the opportunity to not only carry out holiday traditions on the ranch, but to also carry the weight of what it means to take care of a place that happens to look a lot like a storybook on Christmas.

Especially when the snow falls enough to cover the frozen cow pies, which has always been my excuse about the whole “broken-sled” incident. Because we can’t always pick what still matters all these years later, all we can do is remember it, cherish it and maybe choose to continue the tradition, like an orange in the toe of your stocking on Christmas morning. ■



### Mom’s Holiday Fudge

Hand-delivered in fancy containers to every person who has touched her family’s life, made her laugh or needs a hug during the holiday season.

#### Ingredients:

- 4-1/2 cups of sugar
- 1 can evaporated milk
- 1 12-oz. package semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 12-oz. package milk chocolate chips
- 3 tsp. vanilla
- 1 pound butter

#### Directions

Butter an 8×12 baking dish. Bring sugar and evaporated milk to a boil, stirring constantly. Continue to stir and boil for 7 minutes. Remove pot from heat and stir in chocolate chips, vanilla and butter. Stir until smooth and pour into the buttered baking dish. Refrigerate until set. Cut the fudge into squares. Spread holiday cheer!



## Need money for college?

McKenzie Electric scholarship application due March 1

The McKenzie Electric Cooperative scholarship program will award two scholarships in the amount of \$500 each. One of these scholarships will be geared toward students with an interest in an electrical-related curriculum at an accredited college, university or technical school. The other \$500 scholarship will go to a student attending any accredited college, university or technical school.

### Basin Electric and subsidiaries scholarship application due March 1

Applicant must be a dependent of a McKenzie Electric member or a member themselves for this scholarship. The individual may be a high school senior planning to enroll or someone currently enrolled in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

Visit [www.mckenzieelectric.com](http://www.mckenzieelectric.com) for scholarship applications and instructions. Applicants can also stop in to the McKenzie Electric office and pick up an application. ■

## Operation Round Up funds disbursed

Fifty-seven percent of McKenzie Electric Cooperative members participate in Operation Round Up and have their electric bills rounded up to the nearest dollar. The amount donated averages 50 cents a month for each participating member and totals nearly \$13,000 each year. The few cents each member contributes every month goes to help local organizations or individuals.

The McKenzie Electric Cooperative Operation Round Up board of directors met Nov. 9 and approved grants totaling \$8,000 to help support worthy causes. Since the program's beginning in October 2000, grants totaling \$210,350 have been awarded to 195 local charitable causes. The following donations were approved:

- Bakken Oil Rush Ministry, \$2,500 toward HVAC installation
- Hill Top Heritage Foundation, \$500 toward recreational equipment for residents
- Lake Ilo Kids Fishing Day, \$1,000 toward kids fishing event
- Marketplace of Ideas, \$1,000 toward children's educational events
- Watford City Swim Team, \$2,000 toward timing equipment
- Farm Rescue, \$1,000 toward helping farm and ranch families in need

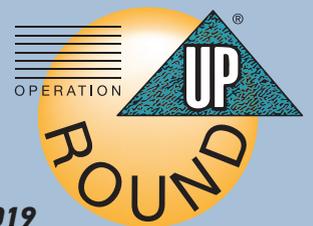
Operation Round Up charitable grants are making a

difference in the lives of people right here in our region. The Operation Round Up board meets twice a year to disburse funds to worthy individuals and organizations.

The board will meet again in May to review applications. If you would like additional information about this worthy program, please contact McKenzie Electric Cooperative by emailing [jcarns@mckenzieelectric.com](mailto:jcarns@mckenzieelectric.com) or calling 701-444-9288; or, you may obtain guidelines or download applications at [www.mckenzieelectric.com](http://www.mckenzieelectric.com). ■

### Operation Round Up board members:

Doreen Orf  
Betty Bruins  
Nikki Darrington  
Maureen Moe  
Ardyce Alveshere  
Mary Johnson  
Misty Powell  
Kim Neprash  
Janene Knutsvig



**Next deadline: May 17, 2019**

# Don't let the chill affect your bill

When cold weather approaches, you can keep your home comfortable and still keep your energy bills from escalating with these winter tips from McKenzie Electric Cooperative:

## BUNDLE UP YOUR HOME

- Weather stripping and caulking are probably the least expensive, most effective ways to save energy in the winter. Improperly sealed homes can waste 10 to 15 percent of the homeowner's heating dollars. Take these steps:
- Check around doors and windows for leaks and drafts. Add weather stripping and caulk any holes you see that allow heat to escape. Make sure doors seal properly.
- If your windows leak badly, consider replacing them with newer, more efficient ones. Keep in mind, however, that replacing windows can be expensive – it could take you quite awhile to recover your costs from the energy savings alone.
- Every duct, wire or pipe that penetrates the wall, ceiling or floor has the potential to waste energy. Seal them all with caulking or weather stripping.
- Electric wall plugs and switches can allow cold air to enter. Purchase simple-to-install, foam gaskets that fit behind the switch plate and effectively prevent leaks.
- Don't forget to close the damper on your fireplace when the fireplace is not in use. If the damper is open when you're not using the fireplace, your chimney functions as a large open window that draws warm air out of the room and creates a draft.

## CHANGE A LIGHT BULB TO LED

- Lighting our homes can represent 20 percent of home electricity bills and is one of the easiest places to start saving energy.

## CHECK YOUR HEATING SYSTEM

- Get a routine maintenance and inspection of your heating system each autumn to make sure it is in good working order.
- Check furnace filters. Be sure to clean or replace your system's air filter. At a minimum, change the filter every three months; a dirty filter clogs the system, making the system work harder to keep you warm.
- Reverse the switch on your ceiling fans so they blow upward, toward the ceiling.
- Make sure all heating vents are opened and unblocked by furniture or other items. This will ensure that the air is evenly distributed through the home.
- Duct air leakage is one of the largest energy-wasters in your heating system. Heating contractors can check your ducts for air leakage, and seal the biggest leaks. Believe it or not, duct tape is not a good choice for sealing ducts because its adhesive usually fails after a short time. Duct mastic, available in cans or buckets, is an effective and permanent material for sealing duct air leaks.

## CHECK YOUR INSULATION

- Insulate your attic. In an older home, that can be the most cost-efficient way to cut home heating costs. Before energy efficiency standards, homes were often built with little or no insulation. As a result, large amounts of heat can be lost through walls, floors and ceilings.
- Insulate your attic hatch or door to prevent warm air from escaping out the top of your house.

**JUNE 15-21, 2019**

**WRITE A WINNING ESSAY AND**

# WIN A 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 McKenzie Electric Cooperative.
- If you have a question, contact John Carns, McKenzie Electric, at the address listed below, or call 701-444-9288 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 31, 2019. Emailed entries should be directed to [jcarns@mckenzieelectric.com](mailto:jcarns@mckenzieelectric.com), and hard-copy entries mailed to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, McKenzie Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 649, Watford City, ND 58854-0649.

## TOP 3 REASONS

**TO ENTER THE ESSAY-WRITING CONTEST**

1. All-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., compliments of McKenzie 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.



## ESSAY QUESTION:

*Electric cooperatives are member-owned and controlled. As a future member-owner of your cooperative, describe ways that smart technologies and social media might be used to communicate with young adults. How might they be used to increase awareness and interest in the many career opportunities with electric cooperatives?*

**HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES & JUNIORS**

**CHECK OUT THE ESSAY-CONTEST GUIDELINES AT  
[www.ndyouthtour.com](http://www.ndyouthtour.com)**

North Dakota Electric Cooperative

# YOUTH TOUR

# Holiday Safety Crossword Puzzle

This holiday season, remember to keep safety in mind!  
Complete the crossword puzzle below.

**Tip:** Use the word bank if you need help.

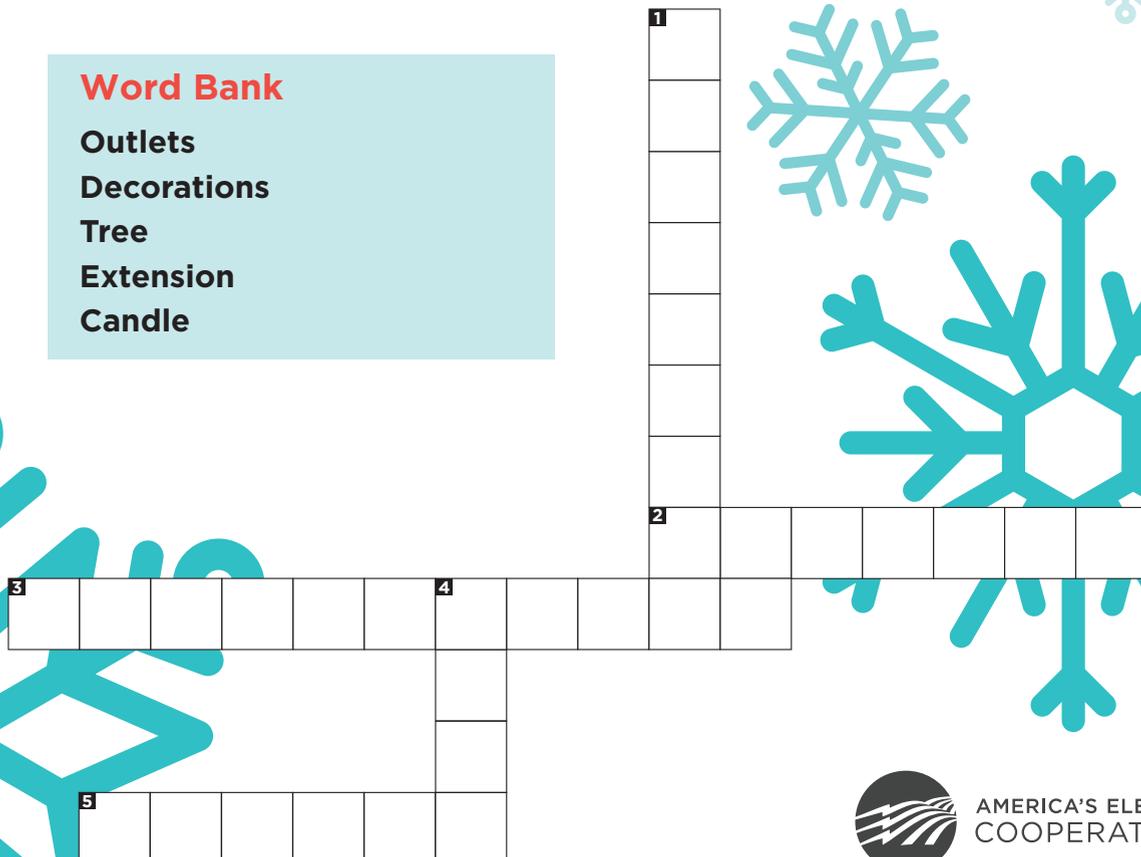


## Clues

- 1 Down:** \_\_\_\_\_ cords used for holiday decorations should be checked for damage or exposed wires.
- 2 Across:** Do not overload electrical \_\_\_\_\_ with too many decorations or appliances.
- 3 Across:** Turn off all electrical \_\_\_\_\_ before leaving home or going to sleep.
- 4 Down:** Make sure your Christmas \_\_\_\_\_ is watered daily.
- 5 Across:** Never leave a \_\_\_\_\_ burning if you're not in the room.

## Word Bank

Outlets  
Decorations  
Tree  
Extension  
Candle



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES

## October 31, 2018



Monsen



Thompson



Hanna



Kershnik



Wasem



Wahlstrom



Sanford



Tescher



Link

The regular meeting of the McKenzie Electric Board of Directors was held at the Headquarters Building in Watford City, North Dakota. Directors present were: Clayton Monsen, Travis Thompson, Rondee Hanna, Cameron Wahlstrom, Ken Sanford, Chris Link, Tim Wasem, Ray Tescher and Stephan Kershnik. CEO John Skurupey, Attorney Dennis Johnson and staff personnel of McKenzie Electric were also present.

**PRELIMINARIES:** The agenda for the meeting and minutes of the previous board meeting were approved by the Board of Directors. Expenses were also approved.

**DIRECTOR ISSUES:** The Board discussed issues that had come up in their districts since the last board meeting. The Board also discussed right-of-way and installed large power transformers.

**ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS:** Director Tim Wasem reported on a recent North Dakota Association of Rural Electrics (NDAREC) board meeting indicating NDAREC officially opposes North Dakota's Measure #1. The NDAREC proposed budget was reviewed. Chris Link and Stephan Kershnik reported on the Credentialed Cooperative Director training they attended, Financial Decision Making.

**POWER SUPPLY:** Director Travis Thompson indicated there was no Upper Missouri meeting on which to report. Upper Missouri General Manager Claire Vigesaa met with the Board of Directors and gave a report from the wholesale power industry. Ray Tescher indicated there was no Mid-West Electric meeting on which to report. Tim Wasem was selected as alternate delegate to the Mid-West annual meeting to replace Cameron Wahlstrom.

**ATTORNEY'S REPORT.** Attorney Dennis Johnson reported several items he is working through with MEC staff. The Board approved proposed easement language concerning the

Schafer substation approach.

**CEO REPORT:** CEO John Skurupey reported on several items including MEC staff initiatives for 2019, transmission issues and member concerns.

**HUMAN RESOURCES.** The Board reviewed the written report noting recent staffing changes. The Board approved the Labor Agreement negotiated with IBEW Local 1593.

**OFFICE REPORT:** Financial and statistical reports for September were reviewed with the Board along with a budget-to-date comparison, the capital projects report and the comparative cash report. The 2019 proposed budget was reviewed with the Board and will be discussed/considered at the next meeting. The Board approved a CFC resolution regarding paying agent services and a depreciation request relating to the headquarters project closeout. The Board approved special capital credit retirements as presented.

**ENGINEERING REPORT:** Updates were provided on the headquarters building issues which are moving toward resolution. New substations are nearing completion and scheduled to be commissioned yet this fall. Updates were provided on system outages, potential new loads, cyber security, SCADA, metering, substations, Pelco pole inspections and line loss. The outage report was reviewed.

**OPERATIONS/CONTRACT MANAGEMENT/SAFETY REPORT:** Written reports provided updates on projects currently being worked on by MEC contractors and a work order progress report. A three-mile line rebuild SE of Keene has been completed. MEC crews are busy with outages, maintenance projects, work orders, meter changes, conversions, retirements, tree trimming and high loads. The written safety report was reviewed by the Board.

**SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR:** An update was given

on NERC (North American Electric Reliability Corporation) compliance activities. MEC will be required to begin self-certification in 2019. The Board approved a budget deviation for costs associated with the five and ten year long range engineering plans. A report was given on Member Service activities.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** The next meeting date was set for November 28, 2018 at the Watford City Headquarters building.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



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**OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS:**

- Clayton Monsen, President  
Director, District 2B, Arnegard..... 586-3336
- Travis Thompson, V. President  
Director, District 1C, Charlson..... 675-2373  
Upper Missouri Power Cooperative Director
- Rondee Hanna, Sec.-Treas.  
Director, District 2C, Watford City..... 675-2516
- Cameron Wahlstrom, Director At Large  
Director, District 1A, Alexander..... 770-6631
- Tim Wasem, Statewide Director  
Director, District 3C, Halliday..... 938-4376
- Ken Sanford  
Director, District 1B, Watford City..... 842-2581
- Ray Tescher, Midwest Director  
Director, District 3A, Beach..... 565-2342
- Chris Link  
Director, District 2A, Alexander..... 651-6524
- Stephan Kershnik  
Director, District 3B..... 690-0317

CEO:  
John Skurupey  
701-570-3542

