



MARCH 2018

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

SAVE *the* DATE

06.19.18

73rd Annual Meeting

Watford City, N.D. / 5 p.m. Registration

MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW

**Closed
Good Friday**

**McKenzie Electric Cooperative offices will be closed
Friday, March 30, in observance of Good Friday.
For outages, dial: 800-584-9239.**

www.mckenzieelectric.com

McKenzie Electric Cooperative

Connections



Colten Herbert



Matt Hansen



Chad Cox



Brad Hueth

Milestones achieved – journeyman, substation technician and safety award

On Jan. 11 at the North Dakota AT&S Conference, Colten Herbert, Matt Hansen and Chad Cox were presented awards by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives.

Colten and Matt successfully completed the program requirements and are designated the trade title of journeyman lineworker under the sponsorship of McKenzie Electric Cooperative.

To graduate, journeyman lineworker apprentices must have 8,000 hours of supervised training on poles, tower and construction; line hardware and framing; overhead conductors; tools and equipment; transformers; oil-circuit reclosers; regulators and capacitors; metering and instrument transformers; rolling stock; engineering;

records; safety meetings; hot line maintenance; troubleshooting; underground; substations; lighting; and service. All apprentices are required to take and pass a series of tests throughout their coursework.

Chad has successfully completed the program requirements and is designated the trade title of substation technician under the sponsorship of McKenzie Electric Cooperative.

To graduate, substation technicians must pass a series of aptitude exams throughout their coursework.

Brad Hueth accepted the Safety Achievement Award for McKenzie Electric Cooperative. McKenzie Electric successfully worked for one year (Dec. 1, 2016–Nov. 30, 2017) without an OSHA recordable injury. ■



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.



From mercury, to sodium and now LED

McKenzie Electric Cooperative (MEC) members with yard lights will be seeing changes within the next two to three years as MEC begins changing sodium fixtures out to LED fixtures. MEC currently has around 2,618 yard lights. As the sodium lights need to be serviced, the fixture will be changed to an LED.

This is not the first time MEC has seen lighting changes. In the late 1990s, MEC changed from mercury to sodium. Mercury lights contained mercury which had to be disposed of properly, used an abundance of electricity to reach maximum illumination and was not cost-effective for members. MEC, being environmentally conscious and concerned about energy efficiency, progressed to the sodium light.

Currently, MEC has high-pressure sodium fixtures. Sodium fixtures light when electricity runs through a filament that creates an electric arc. That arc creates light by heating and vaporizing a combination of gases. Sodium lights give off a yellow color and can take several minutes to heat before reaching maximum potential. Sodium lights have a short lifespan and must be maintained frequently.

One of the most common calls that operations receives is that a yard light is not functioning properly. When an MEC lineworker receives the service call, more times than not it is a photocell. A photocell is what tells the light to turn on and off. The photocell in an LED is more reliable and will help eliminate service calls. LED fixtures do not contain a filament or any type of gas. LEDs are made up of semiconductors which makes LEDs durable and reliable. LED stands for light-emitting diode. The diode is a chip that has two conductive materials. When electricity passes through the diode, it releases energy forming a bright light. LEDs, unlike sodium lights, achieve full illumination immediately.

Benefits of LEDs include energy savings, longer lifespan and less maintenance. With an LED, there are no bulbs to change. LED lights can last up to 50,000 hours, whereas a sodium fixture can last up to 12,000 hours. One attribute of LEDs that make them ideal for outdoor applications is their extended temperature range. LED lighting has a longer lifespan than other bulbs, especially when exposed to North Dakota excessive weather changes.

For further pros and cons on LED lighting, please visit www.energy.gov/eere/ssl/articles/get-facts-led-street-lighting. ■



Making a splash: Watford City's new swim team excels in and out of pool

BY JESSIE VEEDER SCOFIELD

Watford City's Jamie Norstog never thought he'd be the head coach of a swim team. But then, if you had asked anyone living in the area 10 years ago, it would have been hard to believe there would ever be a team to coach.

But with the opening of the Rough Rider Center in 2016 came the opening of a new, six-lane swimming pool and a new opportunity for the youth of the community.

"When the Rough Rider Center opened, myself and three others got together to talk about the possibility of starting a swim team. We wanted to get an idea of who might be interested and put the word out, and we just organized from there," Norstog recalled. "I was the only one there who had the time and the swim experience, so I was elected coach."

That was a year ago. But according to Erin Langford, you might not believe it if you watched the kids compete.

"It's just amazing how fast they've improved," she said, explaining that the initial requirement for joining the swim team was to be able to swim one successful lap. "It didn't have to be pretty, but we could teach them from there."

Langford was one of the three community members that met that day for the initial discussion. Her daughter, Faith, 6, is the youngest member of a team of 29 swimmers who, like Faith, continue to progress each day. Her son, Will, 11, competes as well.

"When Faith started, I was walking down the side of the lane with her, making sure that her little head was going to pop back up," Langford laughed. "Now the 25 freestyle takes her 30.8 seconds. It's so fun to see how all of them have improved."

In the team's inaugural year, 20 kids signed up to participate. Because of the series of steps it takes to get certified through USA Swim, the

governing body for the sport, the team wasn't allowed to officially compete, so they spent the year focusing on learning what it takes to be a competitive swimmer.

And it seems they've learned quickly. In their first competitive season, which lasts from October to March, three kids have qualified for state and the boys team came in third at the Dickinson meet.

"It was fun to see them beat out some of the larger swim teams. Some of them are only first-year swimmers," said Norstog, who admits he was nervous when they first started competing, telling the team to focus on their technical skills and learn from mistakes. "They are far exceeding my expectations."

The team is currently fundraising to be able to buy the equipment needed to host their own swim meet next year. Norstog has sacrificed his burly beard for the cause. If they reach their goal, he'll shave it.

"Being able to compete has pushed the kids to do better," Langford said. "They are excited at the idea of being able to host their own meet so their friends and family can come and see how hard they've been working."

But the Sea Wolves have learned quickly that the sport of swimming isn't just about winning, but about being there for each other as a team, which is not only evident when you witness team members cheering each other on, but outside the pool as well.

When teammate Chris Ferry, 15, son of the board president, Laura Ferry, recently suffered complications



from a brain condition known as hydrocephalus, the team stepped up to help organize a breakfast silent auction and bake sale to help defray his medical costs. Since taking to swimming last summer, Chris, the oldest member of the Sea Wolves, has taken a leadership role, often guiding the team in stretches and serving as role model.

At a meet the weekend before his emergency surgery, Chris swam his personal best.

"Swimming has given him so much strength," Laura said. "I love that I'm able to be a part of it."

And according to Laura, during his recovery, it's the swim team that has been on his mind. He's been asking after his team and worried that coach Jamie will be mad that he's missing so much practice.

Of the fundraiser the team organized, Laura said they can't even wrap their minds around the generosity and support. "We are very, very blessed."

The new swimmers seem to be modeling the spirit of help they've received from the sport in North Dakota, receiving advice and support from teams in other communities as they continue to learn the ropes. Those teams have also offered prayers of healing for Chris as well.

According to Norstog, it's that

kind of encouragement that helps the swimmers to continue to dig deep and work hard to achieve their personal best.

"Not every kid wants to play a contact sport, but it's the best of both worlds," Norstog said. "In another sport, you can stop and take a break, but you can't do that in the pool or you'll sink. You're building physical strength, mental and emotional endurance and it's just phenomenal to watch."

Langford agrees.

"It's fun, but it's hard work. And having their team at the end of the lane cheering on their buddies, it's heartwarming. Everybody's backing each other up."

If you would like to support Watford City's swim team, visit the Sea Wolves on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WatfordCitySeaWolves. ■

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MAKES A DIFFERENCE!



Deadline: May 25, 2018



Rural Development Finance Corporation awards grant in McKenzie Electric Cooperative's service area

McKenzie Electric Cooperative is a member of the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC). As a result, communities in our service area were eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$2,000 for community-based projects. In 2017, RDFC made these funds available so more people become aware of its larger loan program that funds community-based projects and nonprofit entities with low-interest loans.

RDFC has recently awarded a \$2,000 grant to the Arnegard Rural Fire District. The Arnegard Rural Fire District is a 100 percent volunteer fire department serving the central part of McKenzie County and is located in the heart of the Bakken oil boom. There are currently 30 firefighters, with 12-15 active or front-line firefighters. The fire district has two large pumper/tenders, two, 1-ton

grass units and one, 2,000-gallon water tender. Its mission is to provide professional level fire, rescue and emergency response that people expect. The Arnegard Rural Fire District is committed to protecting the people and property of its members in the Arnegard Fire District, as well as in McKenzie County.

The RDFC grant funds will be used

to pay for a portion of construction costs to build a new fire hall with a meeting room and office space. Construction is planned to begin in the spring of 2018.

For an application, assistance, or questions concerning RDFC, please contact Lori Capouch at 701-667-6444 or lcapouch@ndarec.com. ■



Lynn Hovde (district secretary), **Rick Schreiber** (fire/med chief), **John Carns** (MEC special projects coordinator) and **Drake Collison** (medical officer).



With the start of spring comes a fresh opportunity to find ways to save energy and money. As you work around your home this spring, here are **10 easy ways** to also save on your energy bill as warmer temperatures arrive:

Service your air conditioner.

Easy maintenance such as routinely replacing or cleaning air filters can lower your cooling system's energy consumption by up to 15 percent. Also, the first day of spring could serve as a reminder to check your air conditioner's evaporator coil, which should be cleaned annually to ensure the system is performing at optimal levels.

Open windows.

Opening windows creates a cross-wise breeze, allowing you to naturally cool your home without switching on air conditioners. This is an ideal tactic in spring when temperatures are mild.

Use ceiling fans.

Cooling your home with ceiling fans will allow you to raise your thermostat four degrees. This can help lower your electricity bills without sacrificing overall comfort.

Vacuum refrigerator coils.

Dust that builds on refrigerator coils can cause the motor to work harder, using more energy.

Install window treatments.

Energy-efficient window treatments or coverings such as blinds, shades and films, can slash heat gain when temperatures rise. These devices not only improve the look of your home but also reduce energy costs.

Caulk air leaks.

Using low-cost caulk to seal cracks and openings in your home keeps warm air out – and cash in your wallet.

Bring in sunlight.

During daylight hours, switch off artificial lights and use windows and skylights to brighten your home.

Set the thermostat.

On warm days, setting a programmable thermostat to a higher setting when you are not at home can help reduce your energy costs by approximately 10 percent.

Seal ducts.

Air loss through ducts can lead to high electricity costs, accounting for nearly 30 percent of a cooling system's energy consumption. Sealing and insulating ducts can go a long way toward lowering your electricity bills.

Switch on bathroom fans.

Bathroom fans suck out heat and humidity from your home, improving comfort.

BOARD
OF
DIRECTORS



Monsen



Thompson



Hanna



Houghton



Wasem



Wahlstrom



Sanford



Tescher



Link

Board report

January 31, 2018

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, Glen Houghton, Tim Wasem and Ray Tescher. 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 DISCUSSIONS: The Board and management discussed member concerns which had arisen from their director districts.

ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS: Director Tim Wasem reported on the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) board meeting. The NDAREC annual meeting was also discussed.

POWER SUPPLY: Director Travis Thompson reported on the Upper Missouri board meeting. Basin Electric board summaries were reviewed. Director Ray Tescher briefly reported on Mid-West Electric Consumers Association details.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT: Attorney Dennis Johnson gave his report relating to collection of delinquent accounts and litigation.

CEO REPORT: CEO John Skurupey reported on several items including a recent Upper Missouri managers advisory meeting, Basin Electric managers advisory meeting, metering error, building issues, metering program documentation and wholesale power issues.

HUMAN RESOURCES: The Board reviewed the written report. MEC has added one new employee to the warehouse.

OFFICE REPORT: Financial and statistical reports for December were reviewed with the Board along with a budget-to-date comparison, the capital projects report and the comparative cash report. The Board approved the retirement of special capital credits as presented. An update was given on member account bankruptcy details. MEC's independent auditors will be on site beginning February 5th.

ENGINEERING REPORT: An update was given on the progress of unfinished items remaining on the headquarters building complex. The Board approved budget deviations as presented. System loading statistics were reviewed. An update was given on the steel pole that failed and caused the December 30, 2017 outage. Updates were provided on member issues, system outages, potential new loads, substations, SCADA, metering and reclosures.

OPERATIONS/CONTRACT MANAGEMENT/SAFETY REPORT: Written reports provided updates on projects currently being worked on by MEC contractors and a work order progress report. The Halliday transmission line has been repaired and will soon be energized. Crews have completed trailer inspections per DOT requirements and have begun retiring the old Horse Creek line. Crews have also been busy working on outages, maintenance projects, work orders, meter changes, retirements 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 has reviewed

and approved the Coordinated Functional Agreement with Basin Electric. Quarterly NERC reporting has been submitted to the Midwest Reliability Organization (MRO). Employees have completed recommended cyber security training. An update was also given on Member Service activities.

NEXT MEETING DATE: The next meeting date was set for February 21, 2018 at the Watford City Headquarters building.

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



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