Circle C Ranch and Capital Electric Cooperative are working together to bring back a part of western history and provide for new opportunities for youth to learn and share their faith.

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The first time Sam and Sara Coleman drove under the wooden Circle C Ranch arch, it felt like home. Since they were first married, they dreamed of living in the country, and they both felt called to operate a youth camp. Now, their dreams were beginning to look like a reality, and it seemed too good to be true.

“We met with Trish Lenihan, who owned the ranch and the surrounding acres and told her our vision for the area. Everything we talked about matched up with her vision, and we instantly knew this would be the answer to our prayers,” remembers Sam.

Sam is now the executive director at Circle C Ranch, which rests in a scenic valley ten miles north of Bismarck along Highway 83. He leads a board of directors committed to bringing life back to the ranch, and according to Sam, “creating a win with the community, with organizations like Capital Electric, and most importantly, with the Lord.”

Founded by Trish Lenihan in the 1970’s, Circle C Ranch was an interdenominational horse and rodeo youth camp that engaged area youth in horsemanship camps, trail rides, wagon trains and more. The Christ-centered camp provided young people with training in rodeo events like calf roping, bronc riding, barrel racing and bull riding. It also brought kids together to talk about their faith. Unfortunately, in the 1980’s, the ranch experienced a period of dormancy and fell into disrepair.

Recently, the founding vision of the camp was reignited, and there has been a rebirth at Circle C Ranch. Sam is leading the way to bring back something Trish and the new board of directors believe in strongly – a Christ-centered experience like no other. And, he has big plans. Circle C Ranch will be home to a variety of activities, including day camps and Christmas festivities, and Sam hopes to plant
a memorial orchard and build a ropes course. He also
dreams of offering mission trips and other adventures, like
backpacking.

Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC) has provided
electricity to the ranch since its inception. When asked
to do its part in the rebirth of the ranch, the co-op stepped up.

After a visit with Ranch Foreman Mitch Griess, CEC’s
Assistant Staking Engineer Beau Townsend started the
wheel rolling toward some much needed electrical repairs.
First on the list was an old transformer that needed to be
replaced. Mitch’s other request was for some help setting
four light poles in the north parking lot behind the big barn. The parking lot would be used in December for
the Circle C Christmas event that is held the first three
weekends in December. Operations Supervisor Rick
Dressler arranged for a bucket truck and some lineman to head out to the ranch to set the poles and hook up the
electricity to the lights.

“It was an easy job for our guys, but meant the world
to the ranch and to those people using that parking lot on
those dark winter evenings in December. We had been
looking for some great community projects for our guys to
work on, and this one seemed to fit very well,” says Rick.

It didn’t stop there. CEC’s membership in the Rural
Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) enabled the
co-op to provide a $1,000 grant to the ranch, which is
being used to beef up other electrical facilities. Owned
by North Dakota’s electric and telecommunications
cooperatives, RDFC is a nonprofit finance and
development corporation that encourages economic
diversification and community vitality through the
generation of funding that supports sustainable
asset building.

CEC hopes these efforts will help revitalize Circle C
Ranch and provide families with a place to worship, learn
and play.

One of the seven cooperative principles that guides
CEC is ‘Concern for Community.’ Circle C Ranch could
improve the quality of life for many co-op members. That’s
why CEC and Circle C Ranch are working together, in
cooperation, to bring back a part of western history and
provide for new opportunities for youth to learn and share
their faith. CEC

Visit the Circle C Ranch web site at
www.circlecanchnd.com to learn more
about their mission and upcoming events.

Horses are an integral part of Circle C Ranch’s ministry. They are utilized for workshops, clinics, trail rides, lessons and more.
One of the primary benefits of owning an electric vehicle (EV) is the fuel cost savings when compared to a gas or diesel-powered vehicle. And now, EV owners can save even more money thanks to Capital Electric Cooperative’s (CEC) new off-peak charging rate. For all off-peak usage, members will receive a 3.5 cents per kWh bill credit. This translates to a 40 percent reduction in cost when compared to CEC’s normal urban rate.

According to Energy Services Supervisor Josh Schaffner, “Our members with electric vehicles will see an increased benefit beyond the fuel savings, as they will be able to charge their electric vehicles at a much-reduced rate. We already have six members who are taking advantage of this rate, and we expect more to come.”

The cooperative will benefit from the off-peak charging as it will reduce the overall demand charges. “CEC is looking for ways to reduce our peak monthly demand, and this is another method of ensuring we have a more level demand,” says Schaffner.

In order to take advantage of the off-peak rate, a co-op member must possess a hard-wired, level-two charger (240 volts/3.3 kW or higher). They must also install a separate sub-meter and a load controller. A $3 per month meter charge will be added to their monthly bill.

The electric vehicle charging program is a pilot program and is limited to 50 participants. If you are interested in learning more about the program, call Josh Schaffner at (701) 712-7920 or Jared Nygaard at (701) 712-7922.

Capital Electric Cooperative is offering a $1,000 student scholarship, in partnership with Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

To qualify for the scholarship, seniors must be enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Their parents or guardians must be members of Capital Electric.

Our cooperative will assemble a panel of impartial judges to review all applications. The judges will select the winning application based on academic performance, potential to succeed, leadership and participation in school and community activities, honors, a statement of education and career goals, work experience and an outside referral. The scholarship will be awarded without regard to other awards, loans or financial assistance the applicant may have obtained.

Application forms may be downloaded at www.capitalelec.com or picked up at co-op headquarters at 4111 State St. N. in Bismarck. Applications need to be completed and returned to Capital Electric on or before Friday, Feb. 15.
Peak Time Rebate Program reaches one-year mark

The first year of Capital Electric Cooperative’s (CEC) peak time rebate program is in the books. Nearly 5,000 co-op members participated in both the winter and summer seasons, making efforts to reduce the co-op’s system peak as peak events were called.

The co-op calculated its summer season rebates in the fall. Participants who received a rebate would have noticed a line item with a bill credit on their November bill, which they received in early December. Congratulations to those who earned rebates!

Equally as important for the co-op, all participants helped to reduce peaks during those months and throughout the entire twelve-month year ending on Sept. 30, 2018. CEC can only control demand charges associated with those peaks with the help of its members, and the members came through!

The total amount of peak time rebates paid to members over the past twelve months was $43,802. The winter season (October – April) yielded a rebate total of $16,020, and the rebate total from the summer season (May – September) equaled $27,782.

CEC is more than pleased with the engagement of its members in this program. It proves that members care about saving money and being more efficient for the benefit of the co-op. It makes a difference when members use electricity, not just how much they use.

One co-op member who may be considered a “PTR Superstar” is Doug Johanson of Bismarck. Doug and his wife, Karla, earned a fairly substantial rebate over the summer season.

“I have a ground-source heat pump, a 40-gallon buffer tank and an Andover control system. I would turn off the heat pump during the peak event and let the tank take over. I had the fan running, and it kept the temperature fluctuation to a minimum. Of course, we didn’t use electricity for other appliances during this time either. I was surprised at the rebate amount that we earned,” says Johanson.

CEC will continue to call peak time events in the upcoming months and will calculate earned rebates on a semi-annual basis for the winter and summer seasons.

Remember, there is no risk to signing up for the program, as there is no way to lose money. Reduce your electric usage and earn a rebate. It’s as simple as that.

If you would like to sign up for the program, it’s not too late. Visit our www.capitalelec.com and click on the home page link to Peak Time Rebate Program. To learn more about how the program works, contact Wes Engbrecht at (701) 712-7923 or wese@capitalelec.com.
WHAT TO DO DURING AN OUTAGE

Capital Electric Cooperative strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. Your electric cooperative wants you to remain safe during severe winter weather, so consider preparing now for the possibility of power outages this winter.

To report an outage

Because power outages can’t be totally eliminated, Capital Electric offers these steps to follow if an outage occurs:

- **Confirm the outage.** Check your own fuses and circuit breakers first.
- **Check with a neighbor to confirm if he or she is also experiencing an outage before you call the cooperative.** This will help your cooperative determine the extent of the outage.
- **Call the cooperative.** If the outage is widespread, the phone lines may be busy, but keep trying. Capital Electric will send a line crew to find the problem and restore power as quickly as possible.

Operate generator safely

If your standby electric generator has been in storage since last winter, make sure it is still operating properly—before an outage occurs.

And always follow the manufacturer’s recommendations on how to use your generator. Most important is the transfer switch that disconnects the farm or home from the power line and connects it to the generator. It must be a double-throw transfer switch which prevents the generator from feeding electricity back onto the power line. This protects the lineworkers who may be working to restore your service.

Before a power outage

- Build or restock your emergency preparedness kit, including a flashlight, batteries, cash and first-aid supplies and medications. Have a water supply and nonperishable food on hand. Use a battery-operated radio and make sure your cellphone is always fully charged before a storm or make sure you have alternative charging methods for your phone.
- Know where the manual release lever of your electric garage door opener is located and how to operate it.
- If someone in your home is dependent on electric-powered, life-sustaining equipment, remember to include backup power in your evacuation plan.
- Keep a non-cordless telephone in your home. It is likely to work even when the power is out.

During a power outage

- Only use flashlights for emergency lighting. Candles can cause fires!
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Most food requiring refrigeration can be kept safely in a closed refrigerator for several hours. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours.
- Never burn charcoal for heating or cooking indoors.
- Turn off or disconnect appliances and other equipment in case of a momentary power “surge” that can damage computers and other devices. Consider adding surge protectors.
Lock your home against cyber criminals

Electric co-ops protect the private information of members and ensure hackers don’t tamper with the reliability of the electric grid, but member-owners have a lot at stake, too. Think about losing all the photos on your smartphone or having bank or credit card information stolen from your computer. Cyber criminals all over the world are on the prowl through the internet.

Just like washing your hands to keep you from getting bacteria, there are simple things you can do to protect yourself online. Here are tips for protecting yourself from internet dangers at work and home:

Create a strong password
Creating and remembering complex passwords can be daunting. To help make this easier to manage, think of a passphrase rather than a password. ILove!ceCr3am would be a good passphrase/password. And avoid using the same password for all your online accounts.

If it’s difficult to keep up with all the passwords for the different software and applications you use, at least focus on the main passwords that allow primary internet access, such as the ones that open your computer, phone and wireless router. Make it complicated, with a mix of upper-case and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters. Remember to change the password at least every six months.

Keep software updated
Updates often add security patches to protect against new threats. Updates usually come automatically from the software company. But take a level of caution on updates by checking regularly for updates.

Don’t click on a link or attached file unless you know where it will take you
A lot of the computer hacking problems result from people clicking on links or attached files that infect their computers or mobile devices. An email can even be disguised to look like it’s coming from your best friend, so simple diligence can be extremely beneficial. Take a moment and move your cursor over a link to reveal the full address before clicking it.

Install and use virus protection
Buy your anti-virus software from one of the recognized major companies, and make it a subscription-type service that regularly sends automatic updates.

Don’t use flash drives
Those little drives you insert into your USB port may be handy ways to share lots of photos or other large documents, but you don’t know where they’ve been. These portable memory devices have been another common way computers get infected with damaging software. Instead, learn to use software solutions for transferring large files.

Back up your devices
Make sure you have a current copy of everything on your computer or mobile device. Every few weeks, transfer your contents to an external storage system that you then unplug from your computer.

If you suffer a ransomware attack, you might need to take your computer to a professional to wipe everything off your hard drive and start over. But with a backup, you will be able to restore your most valuable documents.

Secure all your internet-connected devices
Hackers have started invading wireless printers and baby monitors that work through the internet. Read the instructions carefully, set good passwords, keep the devices updated and make sure any wireless routers in your home are secure as well. Any internet-connected device is vulnerable – smart TVs, cameras, voice-activated speakers, thermostats, video games, fitness bracelets, internet-connected refrigerators and even light bulbs.

Protect the kids
Don’t forget that children also need to be aware and practice good cyber hygiene. They should know not to share information such as birthdates and other ID numbers. Learn to use age-appropriate parental control options on your hardware and software, too.

CEC seeks applicants for manager of engineering services position
Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC) is now accepting applications for the position of manager of engineering services. The successful applicant will be responsible for all engineering foundations within the cooperative and oversee long and short-range distribution system planning, design, inspection and reliability. Other responsibilities include overseeing engineering services department personnel, managing mapping and system engineering software operations, and analyzing opportunities and new technologies to improve overall system reliability and operations.

Applicants must have a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and at least five years of engineering experience in an electric utility or closely related industry. PE accreditation is preferred.

A complete job description and application instructions can be found at www.capitalelec.com/content/job-opportunities. The application deadline is Feb. 18, 2019. CEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
Minutes and Agenda:
The board approved the minutes from the Nov. 21, 2018 board meeting without objection. The board also approved the agenda for the Dec. 21, 2018 meeting without objection.

Financial Review:
Prior to the board meeting, Directors Dave Charles and Sheri Haugen-Hoffart reviewed the November 2018 check register and expenditures. Charles reported that all checks were in order. It was moved, seconded and carried to approve November expenditures in the amount of $3,145,875.19.

Management Reports (Business Department, Operations and Engineering, Member Services, and Public Relations/Communications):
Business Department Report: The business manager presented the financial and statistical report to the Board. The total kWh sales for November was over budget by 17.5 percent. The actual monthly electric revenue is ahead of budget by 10.5 percent.

CPEC Financial Transactions:
Cushion of Credit Activity:

Deposits were made into the Cushion of Credit Account in preparation to pay off higher rate 31, 2052.

RUS/FFB AL8 Loan Advance:
CEC drew $2 million from the AL8 loan on Dec. 17, amortized to maturity which is Dec. 20, 2018, were reviewed.

Temporary Investment Detail:
The cooperative ended November with a temporary investment at Basin Electric Power Cooperative of $2,000,000 which was liquidated Dec. 7.

CPEC Financial Transactions:
The Central Power Electric Cooperative (CEPC) Board of Directors approved a capital credit retirement (CEPC pass-through) and a bill credit. An Estate Retirements:
Following discussion, it was moved, seconded and carried to select Guernsey Engineers to conduct the co-op’s rate study.

Estate Retirements:
Following review of the financial condition of the cooperative and recommendation by management, it was moved, seconded and carried to authorize payment of capital credits to the following deceased members’ estates:

Clarence Morris $1848.48
Jack Were 34.50
Wendell E Albert 711.55
John Scherf 682.74
Quentin Balkowitsch 123.98
Harold Bailey 935.54
Luella J Banek 511.69
Sandra Moran 356.03
Richard Hoge 116.58
$5,401.09

Engineering and Operations Report: Lipp reviewed the written report from the engineering and operations department. CEC completed 39 work orders this month, adding 31 new consumers to the system.

CEC crews finished switching line for CPEC’s OPGW installation and rebuilding CPEC transmission line by Fisher Corner.

VPI has rebuilt CEC’s budgeted 25-miles of overhead line. In December, the co-op had 71 total outages. Sixty-five were caused by frost build up on overhead lines. Annual inventory audit started on Dec. 17, 2018.

Thirty-two service orders were completed in November. Schaffner met with Basin Electric’s facilities manager on Nov. 11-13, 2019. Vilhauer was elected as delegate with Charles elected as alternate.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the meeting, without objection, the regular meeting was adjourned.

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