Alison Krein of Wing earns 2017 Youth Tour trip

In June, Alison Krein will tour Washington, D.C., with students from across the country, representing Capital Electric on the 2017 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

JUNE 2017
IN THIS ISSUE
• Youth Tour winner Alison Krein
• Welcome new employees
• Lincoln turns 40 in July
• Safety tips
• Meeting minutes and more
Alison Krein loves to travel! She has been to several states and simply enjoys seeing the country and what it has to offer. In fact, last year she won an essay contest relating to flag protection sponsored by the AMVETS Freedoms Foundation. Winners of this contest were sent on a trip to Valley Forge, Pa., to participate in a long weekend of youth-related activities.

Because of her love of travel and innate ability to write great essays, she was more than excited to write an essay for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour contest sponsored locally by Capital Electric.

Alison explains, “I saw the article about the contest in the North Dakota Living magazine and I knew I wanted to enter. Going to Washington, D.C., is something I’ve always wanted to do. I really want to see the U.S. Constitution and the history the city has to offer.”

Capital Electric sponsors a student from our service area in Burleigh and southern Sheridan counties for the Youth Tour each year. This year’s winner, Alison, the daughter of Darin and Ilene Krein from rural Wing, will represent the co-op on a trip to Washington, D.C., June 10-16 for the 2017 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Alison is a sophomore at Kidder County Steele High School.

Sponsored by electric cooperatives across the nation, the Youth Tour is an opportunity for 1,500 students to travel to our nation’s capital and experience history as they explore museums, memorials and monuments. The 16 students from North Dakota will meet others from nearly every state. They will be fortunate enough to gain life-long friendships and be part of a group that has more than 50,000 alumni in every walk of life, including U.S. senators and chief executive officers.

This year’s essay contest required students to answer the following question: “Democracy is the foundation of our American way of life and of cooperative enterprise. The fundamentals of democracy include voter participation, political party affiliation, and public debate of issues. Describe what you think makes our current democracy strong, and provide suggestions for ways our democracy can be made stronger and more effective.”

In her essay, Alison mentions that democracy is the very thing that binds us all together. It is the principle that our great nation was founded upon. She writes, “The fact that your voice can be heard no matter who you are is one reason why we continue to be one of the strongest nations in the world. Even if you are just a small-town girl from North Dakota, like me, you can play a part and contribute to the democracy.” She concludes her essay by reiterating how important it is that we keep the constitution close to our hearts, diligently follow the laws and keep the humble American spirit that our country was built upon.

Besides writing essays and going on exciting trips, Alison also has other varied interests. She and her family are avid deer hunters evidenced by trophy mounts hanging on many of the walls in their home. She is also a member of the Kidder County FFA program. “I am a huge fan of 1980s rock music, especially Def Leppard,” Alison adds with a smile. Along with her love of music, she would also like to learn how to play the guitar.

We congratulate Alison for writing such an insightful essay on the American idea of democracy and earning the opportunity to go on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour trip. We will follow up with her when she returns from Washington, D.C., and share the highlights of her experience.
Josh Bartsch has co-op experience

Following the retirement of longtime Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC) lineman Les Vietz earlier this year, the need for additional help on the line crew became apparent. Lead lineman John Frey was promoted to the position Vietz vacated, crew foreman. In addition, Matt Hagen moved into a lead lineman position, leaving a journeyman lineman position open. After a round of interviews with several qualified candidates, Josh Bartsch was chosen for that position.

Josh was a lineman with Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC) for the past five years, working out of the New Town office. His co-op experience is definitely a plus as he comes to us with a working knowledge of an electric co-op. Before working for MWEC, Josh graduated from the Bismarck State College lineworker program. Josh’s brother is also a lineman and works out of the same co-op in New Town that Josh just left. Working with electricity comes naturally to Josh, as his father, Ron, has been an electrician in Minot for quite a few years. He is currently working for Central Power Electric Cooperative in Minot as an electrician, so he is also in the co-op family.

“I really wanted to live in Bismarck because there is a lot to do here and I have friends here,” Josh explains. “Working at CEC is a perfect fit for me and I look forward to serving the members in this area.” Like most of our linemen, Josh enjoys hunting and fishing, so he will fit right in around here. We welcome Josh to our co-op! 🦃

Ryan Koenig joins CEC from Burke-Divide Electric

When a lineman position opened at the Wing outpost in February, Ryan Koenig was pleased to submit an application. Lineman Charles Atkinson was working in Wing with Jesse Goehring but decided to take a new position at headquarters in Bismarck as an apprentice meter reader/repairman. Ryan wanted to get back to our area, as he had lived here for several years prior to moving to Kenmare and working for Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative.

Ryan is a graduate of the Bismarck State College lineworker program. He is also experienced as a contractor who installed overhead and underground line for five years, four of which were working on McKenzie Electric’s system near Killdeer. He then did work for Burke-Divide as a contractor for one year, and when a full-time position opened at Burke-Divide, he decided to jump on board.

Ryan enjoyed living in Bismarck while he worked in Killdeer so moving back to this area made sense. According to Ryan, “I like to hunt and fish, snowboard and golf, so I can do all of that and more around here.” Ryan was raised in Lisbon and has two brothers and two sisters, the youngest of which is only 6 years old. That means there is a 23 year difference between the oldest and youngest in the family.

We are pleased to have Ryan working for Capital Electric and look forward to having him meet the members as he serves the area around Wing. 🦃
Technology has changed the way things work at Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC) over the years. Automated meter reading and monitoring has become commonplace, but it still requires qualified individuals to operate and understand the systems. Sean Kiesz of Bismarck has recently joined the engineering department at CEC as a technician. He will be working with Rich Dunn on the SCADA and TWACS systems which are in place to monitor member meter and electrical system data.

Sean has recently earned a degree in instrumentation and control at Bismarck State College and will be utilizing that expertise in his position here at CEC.

“I felt like my recent education was a good match for this job as the controls piece of it fit quite well,” he explains. Also, working for a cooperative was attractive to Sean, as his wife, Angela, works for a local credit union and the family has an appreciation for the member-owned aspect of a co-op.

Sean says, “I did some research on Capital Electric and I was impressed with their values and liked that they served member-owners in our local area.”

While Sean’s education has prepared him to work at CEC, his background has prepared him for much more than just this job. In fact he’s probably lived more in 37 years than most people will in a lifetime.

After graduating from Bismarck High School, Sean joined the National Guard and went through basic training. He then went back to school and earned an English degree with the intent of going to law school. Those plans changed when he signed up for an ROTC program in college, leading him into the Minnesota National Guard and a subsequent 22-month deployment to Iraq during the war.

In Iraq, he served as a mechanized infantry platoon leader, and was responsible for a group of more than 50 soldiers. It was a highly dangerous mission and several of his platoon members were either injured or killed while they cleared neighborhoods looking for enemy combatants.

Following his deployment, he returned to Bismarck and joined the Bismarck Police Department, where he served as a patrol officer for three years. He then took a full-time position with the N.D. National Guard and worked in the joint control center during the 2011 flood, monitoring flood recovery operations. Sean is still an active member of the National Guard and will be traveling to Ghana this summer for a two-week disaster response exercise through a state partnership program North Dakota has in place with this African country.

So we welcome Sean to the co-op and recognize that he has the skills needed to do a great job for the members in the engineering department. We also appreciate the service he has given and continues to give to our country as a National Guardsman and soldier in the war in Iraq.

Sean and his wife Angela live in Bismarck with their three children, Connor, 8, Miles, 6, and Evelyn, 4.
Members, thanks for attending YOUR annual meeting!

As we complete our 71st annual meeting June 6, it’s important to thank you, our members, for attending and helping us celebrate another year of service. Your involvement in the cooperative, along with the dedication and hard work of our 37 employees and nine board members, allows us to operate efficiently and keep electricity flowing to your homes, businesses and farms.

This year, our board of directors approved the retirement of capital credits in the amount of $1,291,000. This represents equity in the cooperative that was earned by members in the year 2000. Retiring this equity back to those members reflects our commitment to all co-op members.

See the July local pages for a full recap of the 2017 annual meeting, including the board election results, photos and more. You can also visit http://www.capitalelec.com/content/annual-meeting for this information.

Lincoln turns the ‘big 40’ in July

It’s been 40 years since the city of Lincoln was incorporated, and residents are in the mood to celebrate this anniversary. Starting as a housing development in 1972 and incorporating as city on July 12, 1977, Lincoln has grown into a thriving community.

Capital Electric has been privileged to serve the community of Lincoln during this time and continues to add services to the community as it grows. The co-op added a new substation on the east side of Lincoln seven years ago in anticipation of continued growth and the expected opening of Lincoln Elementary School a few years later.

Lincoln has been focused on beautification, tree planting, park improvements and much more.

“Our goal is to attract families and businesses to Lincoln,” explains tree board president Shannon Hedstrom. “There is a lot going on and we are growing quickly. We’d love to continue that growth over the next 40 years.”

A community celebration is being planned for the weekend of July 15. Preliminary plans include a hog roast at First Love Church, inflatables, a street dance and tentatively a parade. There will be a vendor show with jewelry, food and gifts. A beer garden will be scheduled in a secure area.

A local band known as the Small Town Boys will be part of the entertainment. They feature original music including rock, country classics and today’s favorites.

Lincoln is looking for more entries for the July 15 parade. If you are interested you can call the city office at 701-258-7969 or stop by and pick up an entry form. To learn more about Lincoln, visit the website at www.cityoflincolnnd.com.

Photo by Carmen Devney

PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Photo taken at the June 2015 meeting.
Consider new appliances

Purchase Energy Star appliances such as dishwashers and clothes washers. The biggest cost of washing dishes and clothes comes from the energy required to heat the water. You’ll significantly reduce your energy costs if you purchase and use an energy-efficient dishwasher and clothes washer.

Inefficient clothes washers can cost three times as much to operate than energy-efficient ones. Select a new machine that allows you to adjust the water temperature and levels for different loads.

Wash your clothes in cold water whenever possible.

Check the water heater

- Turn down your water heater’s thermostat to 120 degrees.
- If your water heater’s tank leaks, you need a new water heater. Purchase a more energy-efficient model.

Fix leaks

You can significantly reduce hot water use by simply repairing leaks in fixtures, such as faucets and shower heads. A leak of one drip per second wastes 1,661 gallons of water and can cost up to $35 per year.

Slow the flow

- Install low-flow faucets and shower heads, which can achieve water savings of 25-60 percent. For maximum water efficiency, select a shower head with a flow rate of less than 2.5 gallons per minute. You can purchase some quality, low-flow fixtures for around $10 to $20 a piece and achieve water savings of 25 to 60 percent.
- The aerator – the screw-on tip of the faucet – ultimately determines the maximum flow rate of a faucet. Aerators are inexpensive to replace and they can be one of the most cost-effective water conservation measures. For maximum water efficiency, purchase aerators that have flow rates of no more than 1 gallon per minute.
Stay safe on the farm

Capital Electric Cooperative reminds hardworking farmers and ranchers to stay safe, particularly during the busy seasons of haying and harvest. Here are some safety tips we hope you follow:

Be aware of power lines

Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity, but those same power lines can also be deadly if not treated with respect. Capital Electric Cooperative urges you to watch for electrical hazards around the farm or ranch.

Farmers and their equipment should always be 10 feet away from power lines on all sides. Field cultivators and sprayers can often reach as high as 12 feet in the air. Practice extreme caution and use a spotter to make sure you stay far away from power lines when you use tall equipment.

If you have purchased new equipment, be aware of antennas or other attachments that may pose new hazards. A newer, bigger piece of equipment may no longer clear a line. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year-to-year.

Power lines also may sag over the years. If power lines on your property are sagging, contact Capital Electric Cooperative to repair the lines. Never try to move a power line on your own.

Overhead power lines are not the only electric hazard on the farm. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can become charged with electricity. If you break a guy wire, call the cooperative to fix it. Don’t do it yourself.

ATV safety

• Always wear a helmet when driving an ATV.
• Only drivers over the age of 16 should operate an ATV. Then be sure the ATV is suited for the person driving. Passengers are not a good idea.
• Pay close attention to the terrain and ride at a reasonable speed to see what’s ahead.

Grain bin safety

• Entanglement in PTOs, augers and other moving equipment is one of the leading causes of injury and death. Keep guards in place and stay a safe distance away from moving parts.
• It can take as little as five seconds to become engulfed in grain. The majority of engulfments occur when unloading equipment is running. Turn off all equipment, use a harness and lifeline and enter a grain bin only as a last resort - or never.
Board minute excerpts

Friday, April 21, 2017

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Capital Electric Cooperative, Inc., was held on Friday, April 21, 2017, at co-op headquarters in Bismarck, North Dakota, pursuant to due notice to all directors. All the directors were present at that time.

Financial Review: Prior to the board meeting, Directors Eckroth and Vilhauer reviewed the March 2017 check register and expenditures. They reported that all checks were in order. It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve March expenditures in the amount of $3,846,746.31.

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 March 2017 was over budget by 7.18 percent. The actual monthly electric revenue is above budget by 6.96 percent. The total margin for March 2017 was $284,222 in comparison to the budgeted margin of $187,414, above budget by $96,808. CEC began billing 22 new services in March, bringing our active services to 19,855 versus 19,281 at this time last year, or a net increase of 574 over the last 12 months.

The Business Manager reviewed the comparison of actual to budgeted expenses, monthly power cost and cash flows for the month of March 2017. Accounts receivable balances as of April 20, 2017 were also reviewed.

2016 Financials: Following review of the options to properly account for utilizing margin stabilization dollars that were previously allocated, it was moved, seconded and carried to proceed to bring in the full $750,000 in margin stabilization funds into revenue, leave the G&T allocation at $2,419,565.10, change the co-op allocation to zero, apply $131,045.99 of 2016 allocation at $2,419,565.10, change the co-op stabilization funds into revenue, leave the G&T stabilization funds into revenue, leave the G&T stabilization funds into revenue, leave the G&T stabilization funds into revenue.

Debt Portfolio Opportunity: CEC has roughly $2 million of debt with CoBank that recently converted to variable. We will utilize available funds within our current FFB note to pay off the CoBank notes.

RUS Civil Rights Compliance Review: The RUS General Field Representative, Tim Bohan, was in the office on March 14 to complete the biennial civil rights compliance review. There were no findings to report.

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:

Scott Allstad $1,518.91
$7,258.46

Quarterly Write Offs: After discussion, it was moved, seconded, and carried to write off $7,044.11 for the First Quarter.

Engineering and Operations Report: The Manager reviewed the written report from the Engineering and Operations department. CEC completed 3 work orders this month, adding 1 new consumer to the system.

The April outage report was reviewed. Ryan Koenig began work for CEC as a journeyman lineman on April 3. He will be stationed in Wing.

A representative from Advanced Control Systems was on site to assist in the upgrade of the SCADA system. We transferred the system to our Virtual Machine stack (VM). At the same time a new sub group was designed on the network to isolate all the SCADA traffic from the corporate network.

Energy Services Department: The Manager reviewed the Energy Services report. CEC is continuing work with business members on the geothermal systems.

ERC Loans: There were no loans for Board review this month.

Peak Time Rebate: CEC will be offering a new peak time rebate (PTR) program to help members reduce their electric bills. The program rewards members for reducing electricity demand during peak hours (after being informed by their utility of an “event”).

Communications and Public Relations Department: Topics of interest were reviewed by the Communications Director.

Patrick Butler of Northland Health Centers was at the meeting to receive the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) grant. The grant will be used for operational support for the new community health care center in Bismarck.

Nominating Committee Results: The nominating committee met on April 18 and set forth a slate of 9 candidates for the 4 open positions:

District 1: Dave Charles and Terry Alveshere of Bismarck, Kayla Pulvermacher, Lincoln
District 2: Richard Koski of Wing
District 3: Brent Bogar, Tim Geiger, Glenn Mittzel, and Bill Patrie of Bismarck and Kyle Hilkens of Wilton

Know Your Co-op: The first meeting of the Know Your Co-op Program was held on April 17. Twenty-five members were in attendance with a great cross-section of our membership including newly appointed PSC Commissioner Brian Krozhus. The next meeting will be held in July and the topic will be G&T’s and may include a substation tour.

Safety Report: There were no lost time accidents this month.

Jeff Tweten, Safety Instructor from Statewide, was at CEC’s shop on April 5, 2017, to conduct CPR training.

Without objection, the Safety Report was approved.

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