



Capital Electric

COOPERATIVE

MAY 2024

Sheridan Memorial Home resident Emma Boehm, left, and Activity Director Carrie Foley proudly display one of the many blankets residents created for the annual Easter bazaar. Proceeds from the sale of these blankets, as well as cookies and other items, add more to the activity fund.



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Activities Director **Carrie Foley**, left, and **Missy Axt**, a registered nurse, proudly display the bingo prize cabinet. The prizes bring joy to those fortunate winners who wait for the best numbers to be called.



Tom utilizes string art to create these beautiful eggs. Balloons are wrapped and then removed so Easter gifts can take their place. It's a popular gift community members love to purchase.

Co-op member donations bring smiles to Sheridan Memorial Home residents

BY WES ENGBRECHT

We sometimes forget how important life is to people of all ages. Sheridan Memorial Home impacts the lives of family members who have lived a long and productive life and require care as they age.

It is extremely gratifying to watch these folks enjoy each other's friendship and share moments while enjoying the activities available at the home. If they are playing bingo, decorating birdhouses, dying Easter eggs, watching movies on their smart TV, playing cards or anything else, the smiles are always there. The absence of social isolation keeps them young and happy.

In the summer, they plant a garden on the north side. They then tend the garden through weeding and harvesting. It's a project molded from their many years of small-town and rural living.

Emma Boehn, age 96, exudes a positively engaging attitude we should all emulate.

"This is our home and we love it here. We keep ourselves busy, which helps keep everyone going strong," she says with a smile. Emma left Odessa, Ukraine, in 1945, traveled to Germany and then to America. You can't help but laugh at her German/Russian accent, as she loves to entertain the staff with it. She is obviously loved and appreciated.

Registered nurse Missy Axt keeps the home operating smoothly. Residents appreciate her commitment to them and the facility.

Sheridan Memorial Home has received Operation Round Up grant funds from Capital Electric Cooperative to assist with resident activities.

"We apply for Operation Round Up grants and use the money solely for our activity center. The grants serve as a significant boost for the emotional well-being of those participating in the activities. We are fortunate to have our activities director, Carrie Foley, to make this all work so well," Axt says.

Sheridan Memorial Home, a basic care facility in McClusky, serves 16 residents from the area, who thrive in the positive environment created for them. The home is supported by community members who represent friends and family of those receiving care.

"These wonderful people are so happy to be close to their families and we love to provide that opportunity," Axt proudly explains.

Since 1997, Capital Electric members like you have brought joy and assistance to many worthy recipients. These funds are providing much-needed aid to people in the Capital Electric service area and surrounding communities. We should all be proud to bring smiles to the Sheridan Memorial Home's residents! ☺

Members continue to help others through Operation Round Up



A community is only as strong as the support it provides in a time of need. Capital Electric Cooperative's members help others all the time. Those members inspired Capital Electric to launch its Operation Round Up program in 1997.

Operation Round Up is a program that allows Capital Electric members to round up their monthly utility bill to the nearest dollar and donate their pennies to a charitable trust. The money accumulates, and an elected board of five co-op members reviews grant applications to determine the best use of those pennies. Over the last 26 years, co-op members have contributed more than \$900,000 to the program, supporting their communities and local nonprofits, and assisting with medical expenses for those in need.

In March, Capital Electric presented its most recent round of grant checks, totaling \$37,000, to the following organizations:

- Rebuilding Together
- BIO Girls
- Circle C Ranch
- Dream Center Bismarck
- Law Enforcement Administrative Support
- Youthworks
- Tracy's Sanctuary House
- AID Inc.
- Freedom Riders of North Dakota
- Sheridan County Park Board
- Volunteer Caregivers Exchange
- Sheridan Memorial Home
- Sheridan County Historical Museum
- Wilton Food Pantry
- Gateway to Science
- CPABLE
- Heartview Foundation
- Bismarck Youth Baseball
- St. Mary's Central High School Robotics
- Girl Scouts – Dakota Horizons

The next application deadline is Aug. 31. Any person residing in Burleigh or Sheridan counties may apply to receive an Operation Round Up grant. To request an application, call Capital Electric at 701-223-1513 or visit the co-op's website, www.capitalelec.com. To download the application from the website, click on "News and Community" and "Operation Round Up."

Your spare change could save lives

Join others in rounding up your monthly utility bill to the nearest dollar and make an impact in the communities in which you live, work and play. To opt into Operation Round Up, call Capital Electric at 701-223-1513. ☺



Lang awarded \$1,000 co-op scholarship

BY WES ENGBRECHT

As part of its commitment to community and area youth, Capital Electric Cooperative awards a \$1,000 scholarship every year to a student who demonstrates academic and extracurricular achievement.

Funded by Basin Electric Power Cooperative, the scholarship is available to children of electric cooperative members. Capital Electric is proud to announce the recipient of this year's scholarship is Jamison Lang, a senior at Legacy High School.

Jamison is a member of Legacy High School's 2024 graduating class. He has spent his high school career balancing a variety of activities, both academic and musical. His focus on music has led him to proficiency in piano, trumpet and cello.

"I have always loved music and my experience with the trumpet has been especially fulfilling. I currently give trumpet lessons to students and will continue to do so in college. In fact, I learned about this scholarship opportunity from my mom's friend, as I give her son trumpet lessons," he says. Jamison also plays the cello in the Bismarck-Mandan Symphony Orchestra.

Beyond music, Jamison is an accomplished student. "I love physics and have already earned college credits through completion of Advanced Physics 1 and 2. I plan to utilize this interest while attending NDSU to earn a mechanical engineering degree," he explains.

Jamison has an admirable outlook on life. Through his experience with the National Honor Society, he has developed a passion for helping others. This focus prompted him to volunteer regularly at Heaven's Helpers Soup Café. He also participates in the Grace Point Church worship team, playing trumpet and cello.

Jamison is looking forward to the college experience.



Jamison Lang


"I have been assigned roommates in a four-person suite at NDSU's Seim Hall. I'm looking forward to living college life and getting to know everyone better," he says.

Jamison lives in Bismarck with his parents, Randy and Diana. His brother, Bryce, previously graduated from NDSU with a mechanical engineering degree and is employed as an engineer with a Fargo company.

"This scholarship will provide a great start for my first year in school and I am very thankful," he says.

We congratulate Jamison on his achievement and wish him the best as he begins this new chapter in life.

The Basin Electric Power Cooperative and member-cooperative scholarship program is designed to encourage and recognize the achievements of the children of member-cooperative consumers.

Each year, the program awards more than 130 scholarships to these students. Capital Electric has been proud to participate on an annual basis for many years. For more information, visit www.capitalelec.com/basin-scholarship. 



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The member advisory committee intently listens to Manager of Engineering Services **Greg Owen** explain the availability of government grants to ensure system reliability.

Member input provides value to co-op operations

BY WES ENGBRECHT

We've heard it many times, "Membership has its privileges." Members of Capital Electric Cooperative's Member Advisory Committee (MAC) probably find this to be true. They have the privilege of joining co-op staff to share ideas and information to help the co-op operate smoothly.

The members serving on the MAC represent the rest of the co-op membership, and they take this role seriously. The co-op has much to be proud of, but also faces issues that are not pleasing nor glamorous, thus requiring discussion. For example, rate increases elicit a considerable number of questions and concerns. We do our best to explain the reasons for the changes, while listening to concerns. Our goal is to leave the meeting with questions answered and a commitment to move forward in a positive and productive manner.

This year's primary topics included communication and engagement with members; rate structure changes and how you can reduce your individual energy costs via available programs; rebuilding the rural distribution system, which includes retirement of aging poles and lines; the near completion of wireless meter change-outs; system reliability and available grants; and details regarding our annual meeting June 11.

New members are joining the MAC regularly, learning about co-op success, as well as challenges we face. Members ask in-depth questions and bring fresh and innovative ideas to the table. Conversations move from supportive to serious, and there are even a few laughs enjoyed by those attending.

Attendees have various reasons for membership,

and they often have different reasons why they feel the way they do about the outcome.


Member Karen DaSilva was pleased with the meeting format and the information provided.

"I appreciated Jeff Holzer's explanation of the equipment being used, and the maintenance required to keep our electricity flowing. It was very interesting to see the aging lines, poles and meters and how they require replacement to operate effectively. I take for granted the lights will fire up when I hit the switch. I now have a true appreciation for the complexity of this task," she says.

While serving on MAC, Blake Hager appreciates what is being done at the co-op.

"The Capital Electric staff is doing a great job and should be proud to work for an amazing organization," he says.

The terms of MAC members are staggered, so they are limited to three years. This method has changed in the past few years, as previous members often served on the committee for many years. We greatly appreciate their service, however, we felt the need to give more members the opportunity to be part of what we aim to accomplish. As our membership grows, so does the number of members interested in being involved.

As a member-owned cooperative, Capital Electric encourages member engagement. If you have an interest in serving on the Member Advisory Committee, please contact Wes Engbrecht, manager of communications and IT, at 701-712-7923 or wese@capitalelec.com. 



Apprentice lineworker **Jared Crutchfield** joins the co-op to serve those members in the areas around Wing.



New to the co-op's operations department is lineworker **Zach Scalzo**, who will be working out of the Bismarck office.

New lineworkers join crew

BY WES ENGBRECHT

The most recent addition to Capital Electric Cooperative's line crew is apprentice lineworker Jared Crutchfield, who joins the already experienced and valued group of lineworkers employed at the co-op.

Operations Manager Jeff Holzer plans to get Crutchfield involved quickly.

"We strive to hire for excellence and with a focus on safety. Jared's lineworker experience will be very helpful moving forward," he says.

Crutchfield will be working at the Wing outpost with lead lineworker Jesse Goehring. He gained experience as an apprentice lineworker with McKenzie Electric Cooperative in Watford City, where he worked for the last two years. We are certain he has the skills to get going quickly.

Crutchfield graduated from Legacy High School in Bismarck in 2020 and from Bismarck State College's (BSC) lineworker school two years later. He started with Capital Electric on Feb. 12 and has been immersed in training on our system since that time.

We welcome Jared to the Capital Electric team and know he will do a great job for you, our members.

Lineworkers with co-op experience are a valued asset to the team at Capital Electric. Our newest lineworker, Zach Scalzo, joined our Bismarck crew after spending seven years at Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative in Williston.

After graduating from Bismarck High School in 2014, Scalzo completed the lineworker program at BSC. This career suits him well.

"I'm excited about this opportunity and things are already going well working with the other guys," he says.

"Zach is an experienced addition to our already extremely qualified lineworker crew. His co-op experience allows him to hit the ground running as we move into the summer season," Holzer says.

When addressing the reason for moving to Bismarck, Scalzo explains, "My wife, Trista, and I are expecting a baby in July. My parents and hers both live in Bismarck and we wanted to be close to them. We have already received an incredible supply of onesies."

We are looking forward to Zach's long and successful career serving our co-op members. ☺



Representing Capital Electric Cooperative at this year's Bismarck-Mandan Home Builders Association's annual home show are Communications and IT Manager **Wes Engbrecht** and Energy Services Technician **Jared Nygaard**.

Another home show in the books

Co-op employees have become a staple representing local Touchtone Energy® Cooperatives at the annual home show, which is held in March at the Bismarck Event Center.

You may ask, "What is the purpose for a co-op booth at the home show?" Jared Nygaard, representing Capital Electric's energy services department explains, "We have a ton of co-op specific information to share with our members who attend this event. From our water heaters to our rates, there are a significant number of questions asked and answers given. It's fun to talk to our members and make that connection we will both benefit from in the future."

Bismarck Motor Company provided an electric vehicle to display at this year's show. The Hyundai Ioniq 5 is one the newest and most affordable EVs on the market today. Capital Electric maintains a close relationship with vehicle dealerships in our area regarding EVs.

"As communications manager, I enjoy visiting with co-op members and other community members about many topics. Capital Electric focuses on being available to those who own the cooperative. Jared and Energy Services Manager Josh Schaffner run

this show, as they possess great knowledge and experience in their field," Wes Engbrecht explains.

We appreciate the opportunity to attend public events such as the home show and look forward to seeing you there again next year! ☺

Join us for Capital Electric Cooperative's annual meeting June 11

Capital Electric Cooperative is excited to welcome members to its 78th annual meeting, which will be held at the Bismarck Event Center on June 11.

During the meeting, members will enjoy a free meal and entertainment, learn about co-op issues and elect three members to serve on Capital Electric's board of directors. The nine-member board, which is elected by Capital Electric members, sets policies and makes decisions that guide the cooperative into the future.

High school and college students are encouraged to attend the meeting and register for a chance to win a \$500 scholarship. The scholarship will be given away to a dependent of a Capital Electric member.

We look forward to seeing you at this year's annual meeting! ☺

Board minute excerpts **MARCH 27**

The regular meeting of the board of directors of Capital Electric Cooperative was held on Wednesday, March 27.

Also present were: Manager Paul Fitterer, Business Manager Luke Steen, Operations Manager Jeff Holzer, Engineering Services Manager Greg Owen, Energy Services Manager Josh Schaffner, Manager of Communications and IT Wes Engbrecht and Attorney Zachary Pelham of Pearce Durick PLLC, who acted as recording secretary.

Financial Review: Prior to the board meeting, the financial review committee reviewed the February check register and expenditures. The financial review was approved as presented.

Management Reports (Business Department, Operations Department, Engineering Services, Energy Services and Communications/IT):

Business Department Report: Steen presented the February financial and statistical report to the board.

Revenue was behind the budgeted amount for February, as \$3,456,891 was generated in comparison with the budgeted figure of \$3,668,848 (unfavorable variance of \$211,957 or 5.8%).

Capital Electric's February load factor of was behind budget by 3.89%.

The operating margin for February was \$107,006, ahead of the budgeted amount of \$-12,118. The total margin for February was \$113,666, which was ahead of the budgeted \$-4,496.

Capital Electric began billing 36 new services in February, bringing our active services to 22,269 versus 21,979 at this time last year, or a net increase of 290 accounts over the last 12 months.

Total cash on hand and accounts receivable balances were reviewed.

Estate Retirements: Following review of the financial condition of the cooperative and recommendation by management, payment of capital credits was approved to five member estates totaling \$3,550.49.

McLean Sheridan Rural Water: The annual rate adjustment as presented for McLean Sheridan Rural Water District was approved.

Western Area Power

Administration Wheeling Rate: The annual rate adjustment as presented for the Garrison Diversion and Conservancy District was approved.

Revenue Deferral: Approval was made to utilize \$891,000 of Capital Electric's revenue deferral fund for the 2023 financial year.

2023 Capital Credit Allocation: The allocation of 2023 capital credits was approved, pending final review by auditors:

G&T	\$2,719,804.55
Co-op	\$289,505.19
Total	\$3,009,309.74

Building Addition Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Form 219: The RUS Form 219 Inventory of Work Orders for the building addition was approved.

Operations Report: Holzer reviewed the written report from the operations department. Holzer reported crews have made significant progress on installing the remaining meters with under 100 left to change before May 1, meetings with all departments have been held on Capital Electric's storm response plan, and the new TEREX digger derrick truck was delivered.

Safety Report: No-lost time accidents. Jeff Tweten, safety instructor with the North Dakota Association of Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC), held a safety meeting on March 14 on CPR and first-aid training.

Engineering Services Report: Owen reviewed the written report from engineering services.

Contractor Price Quotes: Contractors and their price quotes were approved as presented.

Energy Services: Schaffner reviewed the energy services report. Seventy-three service orders were completed in February. Schaffner reported on energy services covering the Touchstone Energy® booth at the 2024 Bismarck-Mandan Home Show, continued work to develop video resources explaining the new rate structures and attendance at the annual township officers meeting.

Physical Inventory: The 2024 energy services material inventory adjustments were approved as presented.

Communications and IT: Engbrecht reviewed the communications and

IT report. Engbrecht reported on the upcoming Nominating Committee meeting in April, Operation Round Up awarding 20 grants totaling \$37,000, and the selection of Legacy High School's Jamison Lang as Capital Electric's scholarship recipient for 2024.

Policy III-5 Vacant Services: Owen reviewed revisions to the vacant services policy, which was approved as presented.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative: Fitterer reported on Basin Electric matters.

Central Power Electric Cooperative: Fitterer reported on annual meeting materials. Charles reported on Central Power Electric matters.

Industry Update: Fitterer reviewed materials related to power markets and general cooperative news.

NDAREC: Vilhauer reported updates on NDAREC and Rural Development Finance Corporation grants.

NRECA: Fitterer reported an update on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association PowerXchange conference. ☺

CAPITAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

7401 Yukon Drive
Bismarck, ND 58503

Website: www.capitalelec.com

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OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday : 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Office phone: 701-223-1513

Toll-free: 888-223-1513

Pay-By-Phone: 1-877-853-5928

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