



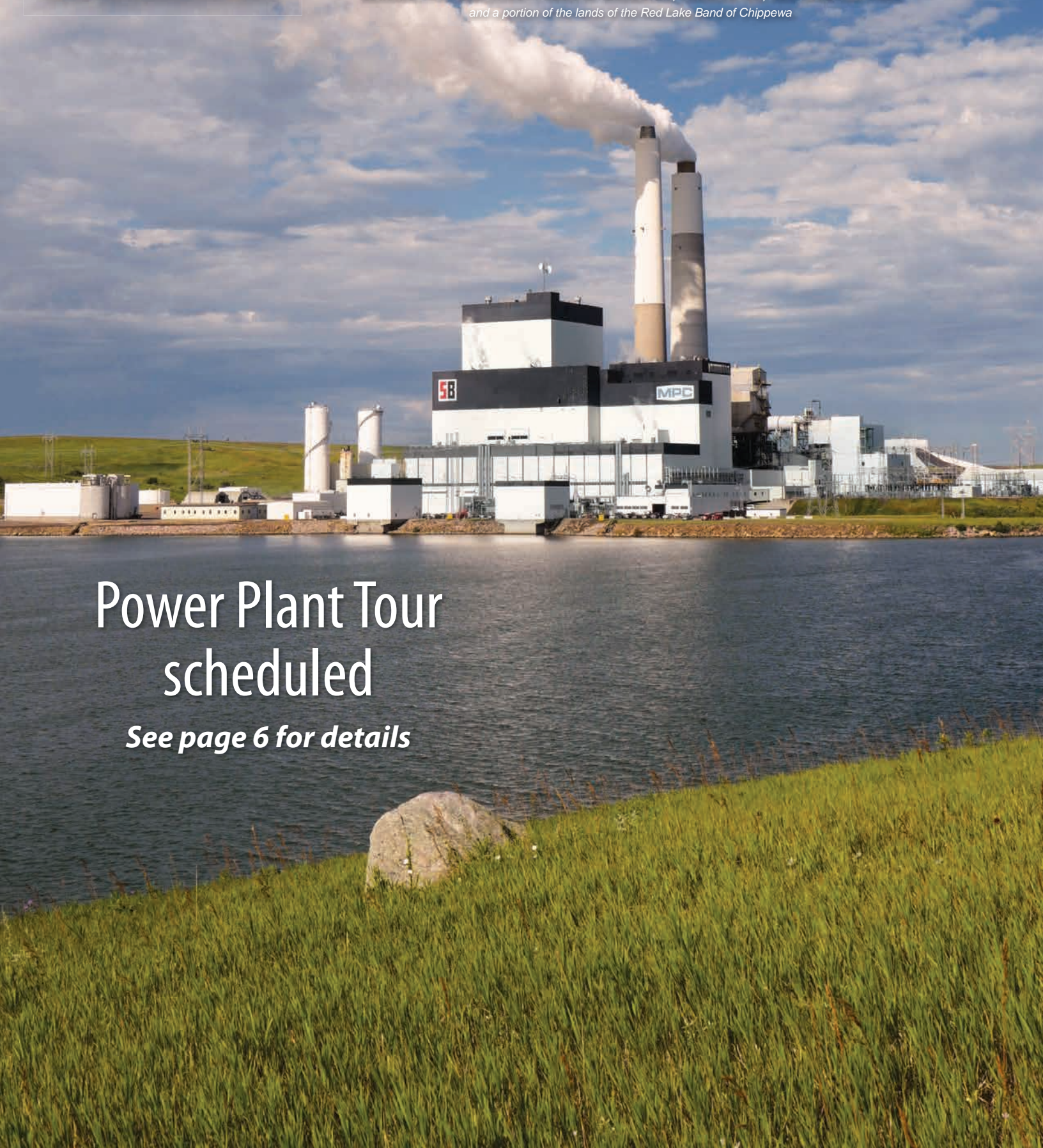
APRIL 2021

Volts & Jolts

Published monthly for the members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.
SERVING THE FOUR-COUNTY AREA OF MARSHALL, PENNINGTON, RED LAKE AND POLK
and a portion of the lands of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa

Power Plant Tour scheduled

See page 6 for details



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MINNESOTA STATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

Pennington and Marshall Counties:

Ronald Ditsch – 218-779-6758

Red Lake and Polk Counties:

George Stage – 701-306-3511

Any time you or an electrician does wiring or other electrical work at your home or farm, Minnesota state law requires a state wiring inspector to conduct a proper inspection of the work. A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Please visit www.dli.mn.gov for more information. The inspectors can be reached weekday mornings between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Red Lake Electric Cooperative to enhance the quality of life for people of our service area by safely and consistently providing quality electric service and other valued services while holding our employees, our community and our environment in high regard.



From your manager

by Stephanie Johnson

Annual meeting

I want to thank the cooperative members and guests who attended Red Lake Electric's annual meeting held on March 31. Our plan was to take care of the required business, yet keep the meeting short, informative and enjoyable. I want thank David Lee Catering for the delicious to-go meals, the line crew for turning our warehouse into a meeting area, and Kelli Brateng for all her organizing, planning and ideas that made the annual meeting go smoothly.

Look up – be aware!

With the warmer weather comes field work. As you gear up for working in your fields, I remind you to be cautious. Planting and harvest seasons are times when accidents are more likely to happen, either by people getting injured or property getting damaged.

Be sure to take time for tailgate sessions with those who will be helping with field work and discuss (31232 Tyler Temple) where overhead power

lines, power line poles, anchors, electrical equipment and other hazards are located. Just a few minutes can make a difference for you, your family and co-workers.

Melcher completes two terms as Trust Board director

At the Red Lake Electric Trust board meeting held in March, Tishara Melcher of Middle River finished the second of two three-year terms as director of the Red Lake Electric Trust Board, most recently serving as its president. Because the Trust bylaws limit director terms to two consecutive three-year terms, Melcher's time serving on the board as a director is completed. It was a privilege to serve on the board with Tishara. She did a wonderful job evaluating the fund applications during her six-year tenure; her fairness to all the organizations seeking grants served the Trust Board and the cooperative members who participate in Operation Round Up well. Thank you again, Tishara, for accepting the invitation to serve.

Lignite Energy Council to offer Teacher Education Seminar

Registration is now open for the Lignite Energy Council's Teacher Education Seminar: Energy, Economics and Environment. The free seminar gives teachers a firsthand look at lignite mining and related energy production. The seminar will be held June 14-17, 2021, at Bismarck State College's National Energy Center of Excellence, Bismarck, N.D. Teachers from all grade and subject levels (25161 Andy Knott) should apply as soon as possible, as space is limited due to COVID-19.

Teachers who attend and complete a lesson plan can choose from one of three North Dakota institutions from which to receive their graduate credits:

University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University and Minot State University. Free lodging, meals and mileage reimbursement are provided.

The seminar provides instruction on history, geology, land reclamation, environmental protection and economics of the lignite industry, the need for more workers, energy conservation and transmission. If COVID-19 restrictions allow, tours of a mine, power plant and the Great Plains Synfuels plant will be provided as part of the seminar. Teachers will take home handouts, videos, coal samples and activities that can be used in the classroom.

For more information and an online application go to: www.lignite.com/teachers

KEEP FARM FOCUS

FOR A SAFE PLANTING SEASON

Spring is planting season for the farmers of Red Lake Electric's service area. Although everyone is eager to get their crops growing as soon as possible, we want to take a moment to remind our members and neighbors to slow down and be aware of the electrical dangers surrounding the farm and field.

According to the National Ag Safety Database, an average 62 farm workers are electrocuted every year. Even if you are not in harm's way yourself, your tractor or equipment could cause an inconvenient, dangerous or deadly situation for others. Here are a few things to keep in mind as you head out this month:



TODAY'S LARGER EQUIPMENT MEANS MORE DANGER when driving around power lines. In the past few years, incidents with power poles and lines have risen in our local rural areas, as taller and wider machinery is integrated into farm fleets. If you have new equipment, don't assume you can follow your usual route to the field.

REMEMBER THE 10-FOOT CLEARANCE RULE when moving large equipment like sprayers and planter arms that can tangle up in overhead lines. Keep a 360-degree minimum of 10 feet from power lines in all directions (above, below and to the sides), and have a spotter available to help get the right perspective.



BE MINDFUL OF LINE SAG that happens as power lines age – a line you drove under last year may not have the clearance you need this year. If you believe a line is sagging low enough to affect the safety of your work, call us at the cooperative to find a solution to the problem. **NEVER** try to fix a line yourself.

LOOK OUT FOR GUY WIRES when you are tilling or planting crops. They are the grounded wires that help to stabilize power poles. If they are broken, they can become extremely dangerous. If you're unsure if a guy wire is damaged, contact the cooperative right away to have an expert examine it.



DON'T FORGET THE ARC OF ELECTRICITY when working around overhead lines. Just coming too close to a live power line can cause the electric energy to jump to any conductive material. It's not just metal objects like ladders and poles that can conduct electricity. Tree limbs, ropes and hay can become conductive in certain situations as well.

KEEP YOUR CREW EDUCATED from the beginning of planting season to the end of harvest. It's easy to forget the dangers of the farm when the days are long and exhausting. Urge your family and employees to stay vigilant and to avoid taking risks with electricity.



IF ELECTRIC CONTACT HAPPENS, CALL 911 immediately. It's critical that you do not leave your equipment or vehicle until help arrives and you are sure the line is de-energized. If you must leave because of a fire, jump off and away from your equipment, being sure to land with your feet together and touching. With your feet still touching and never leaving the ground, shuffle as far away as you can (at least three tractor lengths). Don't touch any machinery or people that have been in contact with electricity.

If you have any concerns about the power lines or guy wires around your planting route, please don't hesitate to call your cooperative at 218-253-2168.

83rd Annual Meeting

Red Lake Electric Cooperative's 83rd annual meeting continued to look a bit different than normal. The meeting was held in the warehouse at Red Lake Electric Cooperative on March 31, 2021. While still following social distancing guidelines, we were able to seat 120 members. To protect the attendees, we spaced the chairs six feet apart in sets of two, which allowed family members to sit together.

The meeting was opened with the playing of the national anthem, followed by the invocation and introduction of the board of directors and special guests by board president Randy Versdahl.



Blawat was presented with the Red Lantern award for serving 10 years on Red Lake Electric's board of directors at Minnkota's annual meeting recently. Blawat also received the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) for completing the cooperative director training program.

The meeting agenda included: approval of 2020 annual meeting minutes by secretary/treasurer Mark Hanson, president's report, election of directors and bylaw amendment by Versdahl, and general manager's and financial reports by Stephanie Johnson. Door prizes were awarded, and a to-go meal was provided.

Congratulations to our reelected directors: District 2 – Stacy Blawat of Thief River Falls; District 7 – Aaron Chervestad of Oklee; and District 8 – Cecil Anderson of Thief River Falls. Blawat was also elected to serve as board president with Versdahl not seeking reelection.

But that wasn't the only change for Blawat. On March 26, she attended the Minnkota Power Cooperative and Square Butte Electric Cooperative annual meetings in Grand Forks. At the meetings, Blawat received the Red Lantern award for reaching 10 years of service to Red Lake Electric. She was also elected to represent her cooperative on the Square Butte Electric Cooperative board, as fellow director Steve Linder chose not to seek reelection. Square Butte owns Unit 2 at the Milton R. Young Station – a coal-based power plant (23727 Carolyn Haugen) that provides a portion of Red Lake Electric's energy needs.

Blawat will be up to the challenge of these new roles after recently completing coursework to earn the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Completing this training provides Red Lake Electric members with a director who has expanded knowledge in cooperative governance, fiduciary responsibilities and other essential skills.

Congratulations, Stacy, on these outstanding accomplishments!

Directors Reelected to Red Lake Electric's Board



Stacy Blawat
District 2



Aaron Chervestad
District 7



Cecil Anderson
District 8



Herbert Spindler of Crookston was the winner of the iPad.



Albert Mehrkens of Thief River Falls won the 32" Samsung smart television.

Winners of Scheels gift cards:

Allen Remick, Red Lake Falls
Jerome Novak, Brooks
June Mosbeck, Red Lake Falls
Don Adamson, Thief River Falls



A to-go meal provided by David Lee Catering was handed out to members as they exited the meeting.

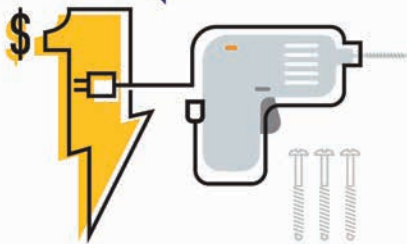


Michael Riendeau of Brooks won the 2200-watt Briggs & Stratton portable generator.



A crowd of 120 members gathered in Red Lake Electric's warehouse to hear reports about their cooperative.

What can you get for \$1?



600 hours of electric drill use

Electricity helps power your project for just pennies. Did you know you can use an electric drill for about 600 hours with just \$1 worth of kilowatts? Imagine all the shelves you can hang, the furniture you can fix and the sheds you can build. That's cost-effective home improvement!

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

2-3

3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Source: call811.com

NOTICE OF NAMES

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of *Volts & Jolts* are the names and account numbers of some Red Lake Electric Cooperative members. They will appear within the articles in parentheses as such (9999999.99 Willie Ray Member). If you find your name and account number, clip it out and send it with your next payment. You will be credited with \$5 on your electric bill.

Power Plant Tour

**Wednesday-Thursday
June 16-17, 2021**



Red Lake Electric Cooperative and Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative plan to co-sponsor a tour of the Milton R. Young Station power plant June 16-17.

The first day of the trip will include a stop at Minnkota Power Cooperative's headquarters in Grand Forks. An afternoon stop (20171 Randy Anderson) will be taken at the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and a relaxing evening will be spent at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Mandan, N.D., which will include a banquet sponsored by Minnkota Power Cooperative.

The second day of the tour includes visiting the Milton R. Young generation station near Center, N.D. It will also include a drive through the open-pit lignite mines (weather permitting) to see the mining operation firsthand. You are guaranteed to have a better understanding of the process involved with generating the electricity that serves you.



BNI Coal mine

The cost to participate in the tour is \$80 per person double occupancy, \$100 single occupancy. This includes transportation, meals and lodging. The tour is open to all Red Lake Electric Cooperative (24329 John Lessard) members and/or spouses.

The tour group will depart from Red Lake Electric Cooperative's headquarters in Red Lake Falls at 7 a.m. Wednesday, June 17. The approximate time of return is 7 p.m. Thursday, June 18.

Registrations and payment are due by June 1. If you have not taken this tour, sign up today for a learning experience.

Power Plant Tour Registration June 16 and 17, 2021

Sign up deadline is June 1, 2021

NAME OF PARTICIPANT(S)

ADDRESS(ES)

Phone Number _____ Number of Participants _____

Account No. _____ Amount Enclosed _____

\$80 Per Participant Double Occupancy – \$100 Per Participant Single Occupancy

Return to RLEC, P.O. Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750, along with your check. RLEC will contact you later with details. Your check or deposit will be returned if the tour should be canceled for some reason. If it becomes necessary for you to cancel out on the trip, it is required that you notify RLEC at least 48 hours before departure to be eligible for a refund. Registration for the trip is on a first-come, first-served basis with a limited number of openings. If you have previously taken the trip, you will be put on a space availability standby.



Operation Round Up® grants total \$11,500

The Red Lake Electric Trust Board met recently and awarded 14 grants to area nonprofit and community organizations that totaled \$11,500. Since its inception in 1993, 970 Operation Round Up grants totaling \$599,000 have been gifted to area community organizations. The Red Lake Electric Trust receives money for grants from the Operation Round Up program administered by (30920 Dorene Myers) the Red Lake Electric Cooperative. Today, 98% of Red Lake Electric's members voluntarily "round-up" their monthly bill for the Operation Round Up program.

The following organization was awarded Round Up funds to help the disadvantaged:

- TRF Area Food Shelf: \$1,000 to help support the expansion of a community garden to distribute to those in need.

Five area emergency service providers were given grants:

- Red Lake Falls Volunteer Ambulance: \$2,000 to help purchase two electronic tablets for new system and replacement of AED machine.
- Newfolden Volunteer Fire Department: \$2,000 to help purchase saw conversion kits to cut holes in structures during a fire.
- Oklee Volunteer Ambulance Service: \$1,000 to help purchase lifesaving equipment for the ambulance.
- Polk County Mounted Posse Search & Rescue Unit: \$500 to help purchase backpacks that will contain first-aid supplies and other items for a rescue.
- Polk County Sheriff's Office K9 Association: \$500 to help fund the training of the K9 and handler as well as purchase necessary equipment.

One grant was given to a historical organization:

- Goodridge Area Historical Society: \$500 to help continued restoration of the Woodrow School House.

Two grants to benefit the general public were awarded to:

- Thief River Falls Area Community Theater: \$300 to help provide radio shows performed with equipment, sheet music and advertising.
- NCH Trails to Treatments: \$1,000 to help those affected by cancer in our area with out-of-pocket expenses and supply grants.

Three grants were given focusing on senior care:

- Inter-County Nursing Service of TRF: \$500 to help with the cost of maintenance care home health for seniors.
- Middle River-Thief Lake Living at Home/Block Nurse Program: \$1,000 to help fund medical transportation expenses for area seniors.
- Goodridge Senior Citizens Center: \$500 to help replace old heating system to be able to use it year-round.

Two organizations received funds focused on youth programs:

- Crookston Youth Foundation: \$500 to help provide activities for youth outside of school and promote life skills.
- Middle River Veterans Outdoors, Inc.: \$200 to help (20999 Russell Erickson) fund event for youth waterfowl hunt.

The Red Lake Electric Trust Board of Directors determines grants two times per year, in March and September. Serving on the board are Tishara Melcher – president, Middle River; Diane Kolstoe – vice president, Thief River Falls; and Julie Stennes – secretary-treasurer, Oklee. Ex-officio directors are Bonnie Christians of Crookston and Stephanie Johnson of Gatzke, representing Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

Grant applications are available at the Red Lake Electric Cooperative office or by visiting its website at www.redlakeelectric.com. The next deadline for Operation Round Up grant applications is Sept. 20, 2021.



Submit your recipes to be published in *Volts & Jolts*. Email to info@redlakeelectric.com or mail to: Red Lake Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750.

Soft Batch Salted Caramel Chocolate Fudge Cookies

Thick and ultra fudgy chocolate cookies stuffed with a pocket of gooey salted caramel – these are epic!

12 salted caramels
2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
2½ cups all-purpose flour
6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
2 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup granulated sugar
¾ cup light brown sugar, packed
4 large eggs, at room temperature
4 tablespoons whole milk
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 cups milk chocolate chips
2 teaspoons flaky sea salt

Unwrap the caramels, roll each one into a ball, and place them on a freezer-safe plate. Place the plate in the freezer for 20 minutes. In the meantime, prep your cookie dough.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper, lightly spray them with nonstick spray and set aside.

Place the semisweet chocolate chips and butter in a small, microwave-safe bowl. Heat them in the microwave for 15-second increments, mixing in between each, until butter and chocolate are completely melted and can easily be whisked smooth. Set aside.

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

In a separate medium-sized bowl, whisk together the sugars, eggs, milk and vanilla. Add the dry (27864 Duane Jenson) ingredients into the wet ingredients and stir to combine – do not overmix!

Fold in the chocolate/ butter mixture and the milk chocolate chips into the batter, stirring until everything is just combined.

Scoop two tablespoon-size portions of batter onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving an inch in between each cookie for inevitable spreading. Press a caramel in the center of each cookie, then top with an additional tablespoon of dough. Lightly press the edges together using your fingers.

Place pans in the oven one at a time. Reduce heat to 300 degrees, and bake for 18-20 minutes. Sprinkle the top of each cookie with a pinch of flaky sea salt. Completely cool on the baking sheet before serving.

EARTH DAY 2021

YOUR COOPERATIVE & ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Electric cooperatives have a history of environmental stewardship. Our co-op delivers power generated by the earth's resources – like wind, water and coal – so it's important that we do everything we can to take care of our natural environment. This Earth Day, we're celebrating all of the steps our cooperative system is taking to keep the air clean, preserve our green spaces and promote conservation.



Carbon-free energy – Approximately 42% of our electricity generation capacity is derived from carbon-free sources in North Dakota. Our wholesale power supplier, Minnkota Power Cooperative, understands the need for a diverse energy mix that includes generation such as wind and hydro power.



Project Tundra initiative – Additionally, Minnkota is evaluating the construction of the world's largest power-plant focused carbon capture and storage facility – Project Tundra – at its coal-based Young Station near Center, N.D. The goal of the project is to remove 90% of the carbon dioxide (CO₂) from either of the plant's two generation units, and then store that CO₂ safely and permanently thousands of feet underground. Learn more at ProjectTundraND.com.



Infinity Renewable Energy Program Members of Red Lake Electric can take part in the Infinity Renewable Energy program to integrate more wind power into their electricity. By enrolling in the program, you choose the kilowatt-hours or percentage of electricity you would like to be derived from renewable resources. Give us a call to find out more.

Earth Day is April 22, so join us in marking the occasion by picking up trash in your neighborhood, finding ways to use energy wisely in your home or planting a new tree in your yard – away from power lines, of course!



Incentives for driving electric – Red Lake Electric is promoting electric vehicle (EV) use in our region to help lower transportation emissions, strengthen our electric grid and save our members money. You can drive a little greener by taking advantage of our EV charging station rebate (up to \$500) and our low off-peak charging rate. Contact us for more information.



Rebates for energy efficiency – For years, Red Lake Electric has been your source for expertise on using electricity wisely. On top of sharing energy-saving tips with our members, we offer impressive rebates on energy-efficient appliances and technology for your home, farm or business. Check out our website for details on how you can save energy – and money.



GreenTouch state park cleanup – Several cooperatives in our system take part in Touchstone Energy Cooperatives' annual GreenTouch event, in which co-op employees and member-consumers volunteer to clean up and beautify local state parks. GreenTouch volunteers have given more than 35,800 hours of service over the past two decades of the program!

