

# 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*



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Brett Knott

#### Family members

- **Wife:** Amber
- **Children:** Jett (7½), Oklei (5½), Genevieve (4)



Brett Knott and his wife Amber pose for a photo with their children, Oklei (far left), Jett (standing), and Genevieve (far right).

#### Job title

- Lead Lineman

#### Years of service

- 15 years

#### Favorite part about working at RLEC

- Seeing how thankful people are after restoring their power

#### Education

- **High School:** Lafayette High School, Red Lake Falls
- **College:** Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Wadena

#### Hobbies/interests

- Hunting, fishing, anything outdoors

#### Favorite sport (watch or play)

- Hockey, football and youth soccer

#### Volunteer/member of organizations

- Red Lake Falls Fire Department
- Youth hockey coach for Red Lake Falls Blue Line Club

#### Favorite food

- Pasta

#### Favorite beverage

- Pepsi

#### Favorite restaurant

- Red Lobster

#### Family tradition

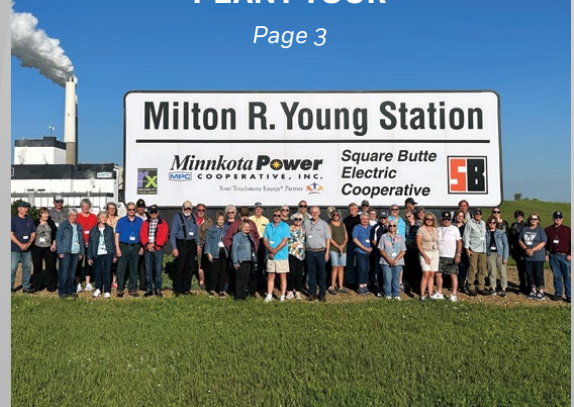
- Going to Montana every September

#### Favorite TV show/movie

- Yellowstone

### COOPERATIVE MEMBERS ENLIGHTENED BY THE POWER PLANT TOUR

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**OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

President ..... Stacy Blawat  
Vice President ..... Peter Mosbeck  
Secretary-Treasurer ..... Mark Hanson  
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Colette Kujava, Jennifer Linder, Randy Versdahl  
*Stephanie Johnson ..... General Manager*  
*Steve Conely ..... Manager of Electric*  
*System Operations*  
*Kelli Brateng ..... Manager of Member Services*

**OFFICE HOURS**

Monday-Friday  
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Phone: (218) 253-2168  
Toll-Free: 1-800-245-6068  
Fax: (218) 253-2630



**AFTER HOURS/OUTAGE CALLS  
(218) 253-2200**

Website: [www.redlakeelectric.com](http://www.redlakeelectric.com)  
Email: [info@redlakeelectric.com](mailto:info@redlakeelectric.com)

**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG  
1-800-252-1166 or 811**

**MINNESOTA STATE  
ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS**

Pennington and Marshall Counties:

**Ronald Ditsch: (218) 779-6758**

Red Lake and Polk Counties:

**Todd Knaack: (763) 516-0344**

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 in-  
spection 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](http://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.*



**Factors That Impact  
Electricity Prices**

by Stephanie Johnson

The daily cost of living seems to have increased across the board. Just as inflation has impacted everything from the price of gasoline to the price of eggs, costs for the fuels required to produce electricity have also risen. This is a timely topic, so I wanted to help explain some of the factors that impact electricity prices (and energy bills).

While there is no short answer, there are a few key elements that impact electricity (30030 Amy J Reznicek) prices and rates. Some of these factors Red Lake Electric can manage, some of them you can impact and other factors are beyond our control. So, let me break it down.

There are two primary parts to your monthly electric bill: a facilities charge and an energy consumption/kWh charge. To understand your total energy costs and what impacts your bill, let's unpack each of them.

The first is a fixed monthly facilities charge, which covers the costs associated with providing electricity to your home. This includes equipment, materials, labor and operating costs necessary to serve each meter in Red Lake Electric's service territory, regardless of the amount of energy used. In order to ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local system, including power lines, substations and other necessary equipment. Like many other businesses, we've experienced supply chain issues and steep cost increases for some of our basic equipment. For

example, the cost for a 15kVA distribution transformer (which looks like a long metal can at the top of a power pole) went from \$825 in 2021 to \$1,240 this year, and wait times to receive this essential equipment could be up to a year. Because we are a not-for-profit cooperative, some of these expenses must be passed on to our members.

Another component of your monthly bill is the kWh charge (usage charge), which covers how much energy you consume. You've likely noticed the amount of energy you use can vary from month to month (20924 Darrell M Voytilla) and is typically impacted by extreme temperatures. When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling and heating equipment run longer, which increases your home energy use. Regardless, energy consumption is an area that you have some control over, and you can lower your monthly bill by actively reducing energy use. Your thermostat is a great place to start, so be sure to keep it close to 74 degrees during summer months.

I hope this information sheds light on some of the factors that impact electricity prices. While we can't control the weather or the rising costs of fuels, please know Red Lake Electric is doing everything possible to keep internal costs down.

We're here to help you, too. Contact us if you have questions about your energy bill or for advice on how to save energy at home.

**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.

**COOPERATIVE MEMBERS ENLIGHTENED  
BY THE POWER PLANT TOUR**

On June 27 and 28, members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative and Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative participated in a tour that included visiting Fort Mandan, Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and the Milton R. Young Station.

The tour started with a stop at Minnkota Power Cooperative's headquarters in Grand Forks, N.D. Tour participants heard from Minnkota Communications Manager Ben Fladhammer, viewed the control center and took a tour of the warehouse. Minnkota's control center staff monitors Minnkota's transmission lines (30141 Roger Lappegaard) and load levels throughout northwestern Minnesota and eastern North Dakota.

The second stop on the first day included a visit to Fort Mandan and the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, Washburn, N.D. The historic site of Fort Mandan is located on privately owned land along the northeast banks of the Missouri, about 12 miles west of the city of Washburn. The exact location is unknown and may be partially submerged by the river. A modern reconstruction of Fort Mandan and the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, managed by the North Dakota Department of Parks and Recreation, is located about 10 miles downriver.

The final destination of the first day was Comfort Inn and Suites in Mandan, N.D. Tour participants were treated to a delicious evening banquet, courtesy of Minnkota. The evening program consisted of a presentation on the role Minnkota plays in the generation and transmission of electricity for Red Lake Electric, Clearwater-Polk

Electric and nine other electric cooperatives in the region.

The second day of the trip included a tour of the Young Station. The station includes two coal-fired electric plants. Minnkota receives about 250,000 kilowatts from Young 1 and 355,000 kilowatts from Young 2.

The next segment of the tour included a visit to the open-pit lignite coal mines of BNI Coal. BNI has the contract to supply the lignite for the Young Station. Combined, the two electric generating plants consume over 4 million tons of lignite coal annually. BNI has very large equipment that is used in the lignite mining process. Equipment used for stripping the overburden is called a dragline.

Mother Nature was very cooperative, allowing an excellent visit/tour of the open-pit lignite coal mines and BNI's dragline, Liberty, which is equipped with a 77-cubic-yard bucket.

Being able to see the process first-hand gives participants a much better understanding and often a better appreciation (23163 Gale Schmitz) of what is involved in the generation and transmission of electricity. It is a complex process to get energy from a coal field in southwest North Dakota to an appliance in northwest Minnesota.





# SCHOLARSHIPS

## 2023 Recipients

Each year, Red Lake Electric Cooperative provides scholarships for graduating seniors at each of the high schools operating throughout the cooperative's service area. The recipients are selected by the scholarship selection committee of the recipients' high schools. There were 14 recipients this year with each student receiving \$500. The funds for these scholarships come from unclaimed capital credits. **Congratulations and best wishes to these scholarship recipients!**



**Sadie Anderson**  
Goodridge High School  
Brent and Stacy Anderson



**Jennifer Buck**  
Warren Alvarado Oslo  
Grandparents: David and Judy Lokstad



**Anna Funk**  
Crookston High School  
Curtis and Kristin Funk



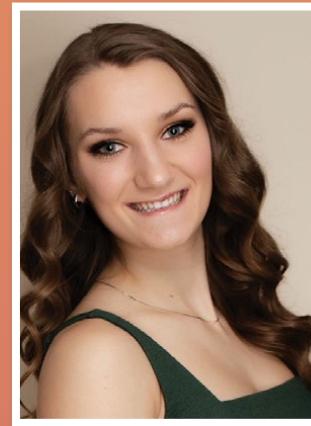
**Caitlyn Jacobson**  
Goodridge High School  
Jenny and Jason Woods & Darin and Jamie Jacobson



**Destiney Krueger**  
Lincoln High School  
Louis and Nicole Krueger



**Alaina Lunsetter**  
Lincoln High School  
David and Nicole Lunsetter



**Shawna Majeres**  
Red Lake County Central  
Greg and Sylvia Majeres



**Paige Schafer**  
Lafayette High School  
Brian and Teresa Schafer



**Olivia Schmidt**  
Lincoln High School  
Warren and Rebecca Schmidt



**Jennah Henrickson**  
Goodridge High School  
Paul and Kristy Henrickson



**Gavin Hockstedler**  
Marshall County Central  
Richard and Pam Hockstedler



**Jackson Hoefler**  
Lafayette High School  
Josiah and Brooke Hoefler



**Nevaeh Shaffer**  
Grygla - Gatzke High School  
Matt and Dayna Shaffer



**Molly Smith**  
Red Lake County Central  
John and Sue Smith



# 6 things you might not know about coal mining



Baseload generation plays a vital role in the diverse energy portfolio needed to supply Red Lake Electric Cooperative members with safe, reliable (23417 Todd Johnson) and affordable energy. Minnkota’s Milton R. Young Station is a mine-mouth generation facility that is powered by the abundant supply of lignite coal mined in western North Dakota. There are many misconceptions about coal, so here are a few North Dakota mining facts that may be new to you.

1.

Before mining takes place in North Dakota, extensive geological surveys, drilling and sampling must be completed to determine the quality and quantity of coal deposits in an area. By understanding the geology of the area, efficient and cost-effective mining plans are developed to maximize coal recovery while minimizing environmental impacts.

2.

Coal mining has a significant impact on the local economy. It provides jobs for thousands of people in North Dakota and contributes to the overall energy production of the United States. The lignite energy industry also supports other crucial occupations such as transportation, manufacturing and construction.

3.

Open-pit mining is used to remove layers of soil and rock to expose the coal seams. Large machinery, such as draglines and bucket wheel excavators, are used to extract the coal from the open pits and transport it to the Young Station.

4.

BNI Coal, Minnkota’s lignite coal provider, recently commissioned the world’s newest 757 dragline to its fleet in 2022. Named Legacy, it operates alongside two other draglines in Center, N.D. – Liberty and Big Sandy. Draglines operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and can weigh more than 6,000 tons.

5.

Raw lignite coal undergoes various processes to remove impurities and prepare it for use at the Young Station. This can include crushing, screening, washing (24277 Arlen Marquis) and sorting the coal to meet specific quality requirements.

6.

Once mining activities are completed in a specific area, the land is reclaimed and restored to its natural state – or better. This involves leveling the land to allow for proper water drainage, replacing topsoil, and reestablishing native vegetation to promote ecological recovery. Ongoing monitoring and maintenance are conducted to ensure success of the reclamation efforts.

# Can you help us locate any of the following?

The following people have refunds due to them. Checks mailed to their last-known address have been returned by the Postal Service. If you can provide a current address (25589 Gary Rahioer) for someone who is listed or the name and address of an heir if they are deceased, call or write Red Lake Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750; 218-253-2168 or 800-245-6068.

ABRAHAMSON, TIMOTHY J.	DUHAIME, PATRICIA	JOHNSON, DEAN	MEEKMA, RONALD	RU-TAN INC.
ALTEPETER, DOROTHY	DUMMER, RICHARD L.	JOHNSON, DAVID L.	MELVIE, GAYLAN G.	SAFE KEY, STORAGE
ANDERSON, SARAH R.	DUPAY, PATRICIA	JOHNSON, ALAN N.	MERRITT, SCOTT	SANDEN, CINDY
ASP, JOSEPH L.	DUPONT, ALLEN L.	JOHNSON, ERICK C.	MESABA AIRLINES	SANDS, JEFFREY E.
AUBOL, DUAINE	DURHEIM, MONA R.	JOHNSON, VICKIE	MEYER, MARK	SCHMITT, STEVE P.
AUBOL, JANICE	DYBEDAHL, JASON L.	JOHNSON, JUDY	MEYER, JOANNE	SCHMITZ, KAREN
BACON, DAN	ECKERT, MIKE	JOHNSON, BERNICE	MICKE, RONALD	SCHULTZ, ORISSA
BAIRD, JAMES	ELLISON, JOHN F.	JOHNSON, JESSICA	MOORE, DARRIN	SEAVERSON, JOHN L.
BAKER, KRIS	ENGELSTAD, JEFF	JONES, CARMEN	MOSTROM, MERLE	SEBENALER, MAURINE
BARBER, CURT	ENGVAL, JIM	JONEAU, JOSEPH	MURPHY, DEREK	SELZLER, DARIN
BARNICK, ANNE C.	ERICKSON, JASON OR JACQUELINE	KALSNES, DIANE	MURRAY, JOHN M.	SHEFLAND FLYING SERVICE
BASKI, CHARLIE C.	FAIRBANKS, ANTHONY	KAPPEDAL, LAVERNE	MYERS, AARON J.	SHERETTE, NANCY L.
BATES, A. J.	FALDET, ALVINA	KARP, CHARLES J.	MYERS, ROBIN	SHERWOOD, DAWN M.
BAUER, PETER	FAYETTE, TERRY M.	KIENE, JENNIFER	MYERS, AARON	SIGERUD, OTTO
BAYNE, TERRY	FINLEY, ROBERT L.	KIM, VICKI	NARVESON, ANDREW	SJOSTROM, MATTHEW D.
BENSON, JOSEPH	FINSETH, PATRICIA	KIMBRO, RALPH	NASON, STEPHANIE	SLYT, JEREMIAH
BLACKBERG, MORRIS C.	FLORES, SYLVIA	KING, BOBBIE JO R.	NELSON, JAMES D.	SMITH, PAULA
BLOMQUIST, JASON	FOGARTY, SCOTT	KLASEN, LOUISE	NELSON, SARINA	SMITH, CATHY
BONDY, ERIC OR LAURIE	FOSTER, MICHAEL	KLITZKE, WILLARD	NELSON, MARVIN D.	SMITH, RYAN E.
BOUTAIN, NAN L.	FULLER, ERMA H.	KONICKSON, RON	NESS, ARNOLD	SNYDER, JANE
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BREKKE, NICOLE	GILL, TIMOTHY J.	KOSTRZEWSKI, RANDY	NORWEST MORTGAGE INC	SOLHEIM, JERRY
BROAD, FRANK	GOODHALL, RUSSELL	KROGSTAD, CHARLES E.	NOVAK, STEVE R.	SORVIG, TIM OR DEANNA
BRUGGEMAN, CLARE	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH	KRUEGER, SALLY	OLSEN, TODD OR PAULA	SPAUDLING, MICHAEL
BRULE, CHERYL	GREEN, COREY D.	LAMBERSON, GOLDIE	OLSON, EMMA C.	STATELY, RAMONA
BRUSKI, JEFFREY A.	GREER, THOMAS	LARO, AARON	OLSON, JOYCE L.	STEN, MARGARET D.
BURDICK, BYRON D.	GREISEN, JEFFREY S.	LARSON, TONIA	OSBORNE, ROYAL D.	STENVIK, LYNN E.
BURIAN, MARLIS A.	GROVE, KYLE	LEAS, CARY A.	PANEK, DARREN B.	STOCKWELL, CINDI
BUSS, TIM OR MARY	GUILLEMETTE, LES A.	LEEPER, JACK	PARADIS, ROGER	STRAM, DAWN
BUSSE, LEROY	GUNSTAD, ROBERT W.	LEGG, KAY M.	PAULING, WADE	STRANDBERG, RYAN
CAMARA, AUNDREA	HAAVEN, ALICE	LEWIS, BILL	PAULSON, CORIANN	SURCLIFF, STEVEN H.
CAMERON, TROY	HAHN, JULIE L.	LICHTSINN, NORMAN W.	PAULSON, RICHARD	SWANSON, WELDON
CARLIN, SETH	HALVORSON, DARWYN M.	LIEN, JEFF A.	PEDERSON, MARY	THODE, LONNIE R.
CARLSON, SHAUN OR BECKY	HANSON, SUSIE L.	LILL, PAM	PEDERSON, ALDER L.	THOMAS, MARTI
CARTER, CYNTHIA	HANSON, RANDY J.	LOGAN, VENITTA	PERREAULT, ANN E.	THOMPSON, ROGER C.
CASSAVANT, TAMMY J.	HANSON, SHERMAN	LUND, DENNIS D.	PETERSON, MICHAEL	THUNE, ALICE
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CONDOR, LINDA	HERMANSON, PHILIP	MAGNER, GENE	REED, PAT A.	VANROOY, MARVEL
CURREY, ROLLAND	HODGSON, BRUCE L.	MAGNER, DONALD L.	REESE, AMBROSE N.	VATTHAUER, ERIC
DAHLEN, OLGA	HOFF, MELISSA	MAGNER, ERIC	REESE, GEORGE	VEZINA, LOIS
DAHLIN, DANIEL	HOGLO, TODD R.	MAIDMENT, ELAINE	REIERSON, VERNON O.	WAGNER, DAN
DAHLSTROM, MICHELLE	HOILAND, MIKE	MARTELL, TANNER	REMME, MARY	WAGNER, MATT S.
DAILEY, THELMA	HONEYCUTT, LORRIE B.	MARTINEZ, RICARDO	RICHARDS, PAUL	WALHAUG, WAYNE
DELANEY, RITA	HOUGHTALING, THOMAS	MASLOWSKI, SCOTT	RIEDER, SHANNON	WALISER, LEROY
DEMPSEY, RANDY	HUOT, THOMAS J.	MATEHS, JOSH	RINKENBERGER, ANTHONY M.	WALTER, SRAPPIER ELAINE
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DONNELL, LYLE	ISAAK, RALPH A.	MAY, GREG	ROSEEN, JOSHUA M.	YOUNGMAN, PAUL
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DREGER, KAY	IVERSON, CLARA	MCGRAW, WILLIAM	RUE, ELAINE	
DUFFY, LONNA	JOHANSON, JEAN	MECKLE, DAWN	RUSTAD, MARK D.	





## Operation Round Up® Grant Applications due **Wednesday, September 20**

Organizations involved in community projects and charities are encouraged to apply for funds from Operation Round Up at this time. Completed grant applications are due in the Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) office by Wednesday, **Sept. 20, 2023**.

Operation Round Up is a program adopted by RLEC headquartered in Red Lake Falls. Members choosing to "round up" their monthly electric bill payment provide funds (29908 Erling Moran) for this effort. Today 98% of RLEC members now choose to contribute pennies each month to enhance their communities.

Funds will be donated primarily to nonprofit organizations to help fund specific projects or programs. Since the program began in 1993, \$647,991 has been granted to community organizations and charities. Money is donated for the betterment of the community within the outside service area boundaries of RLEC.

The Red Lake Electric Trust Board of Directors determines grants. Board members are Laura Kasproicz, Thief River Falls; Stacy Bierman, Thief River Falls; Diane Kolstoe, Oklee; Stephanie Johnson, Gatzke; and Bonnie Christians, Crookston.

To apply for an Operation Round Up grant, organizations (12337 Anita J Nelson) should contact the RLEC office in Red Lake Falls at 218-253-2168 or 800-245-6068. A short application must be completed and submitted along with a financial statement from the organization.

Grant application forms are available on the cooperative's website: **redlakeelectric.com**. For more information contact Stephanie Johnson, General Manager of RLEC, at **218-253-2168** or **800-245-6068**.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*