

# KEM Country LINES

KEM Electric Cooperative, Linton, N.D.

SEPTEMBER 2011



John J. Knox  
CEO/General Manager

*Manager's report...by John Knox, CEO/General Manager*

## Plan ahead with expansion projects

This was still a challenging month in battling Mother Nature and her consistent barrage of storms in the area. However, our crews and staff came through again for you, the members, by restoring power and repairing the damages. Moreover, a big thank you to everyone, especially those members who have been affected by the storms, for your understanding and patience.

You will find lots of good articles and information in this month's *North Dakota LIVING*. One issue I will address affects all members and their power availability and reliability. New growth, with new electric services, is great, but new loads (large loads such as grain drying and new shops) must be planned with the cooperative way before a member is ready for the service to be energized. It's more than just putting in a new meter. KEM needs to analyze the projected load growth in the area to assure system reliability.

Also when adding additional load, such as large grain drying motors, to your present service, KEM needs to evaluate the extra load to make sure the wire and transformer size can handle the additional load. Services are growing, which is good, but farmers may need to start looking at three-phase services to handle these increased loads. When services are oversized, it may lead to problems all the way back to the substation, which may affect the quality and reliability of the service not only for you, but for your neighbors as well.

What this means is that you will need to contact KEM Electric early on in your planning stages for your new or additional loads. It also means that we will be evaluating what will be best for the system in general and the other members on that circuit.

KEM Electric is also excited to provide e-bill to our members starting Oct. 1. E-bill is an

online service that allows the members to view and pay their electric bills online. A great feature of e-bill is the option to pay your electric bill with a credit/debit card. Presently, members have the option to have their electric bill automatically withdrawn from their checking/saving account or by mail. Please read the following article to understand this great service.

The story following is a testament of what an idea and a passion can lead to. The Soaring Spirits Riding Center is all of that and more. My visit there really opened my eyes as to what our area has to offer. I have known for many years what animals can do for us, helping us in many different ways, especially in the ways they help us heal. So enjoy this special story on the Soaring Spirits Riding Center.

I would also like to welcome two new members to our team here at KEM Electric. Ryan Bosse, a native of Cogswell, is a journeyman lineworker and will be based at our Steele outpost. Dale Nagel is an apprentice lineworker who just recently graduated from Bismarck State College's lineworker program and is a native of Linton. They are introduced further in the following pages.

As always, enjoy family and friends. Be safe while working around the farm, and if working near our power lines with augers and other high-profile pieces of equipment, remember to look up and stay alive.

### INSIDE

- Spirits soar at riding center
- Just another storm
- E-bill is available!
- Meet KEM's new employees
- And more



Lori Schmidt, Hazelton, foreground, and Leigh Jensen, Bismarck, encourage 4-year-old Ben Enzminger as he rides Blondie at the Soaring Spirits Riding Center near Hazelton.

## *Spirits soar at riding center*

by Luann Dart

**D**ropped atop an old pro, 4-year-old Ben Enzminger gently taps the horse and the quiet 26-year-old mare ambles forward, surrounded by volunteer staff of the Soaring Spirits Riding Center. With the horse's first step, a smile sweeps across Ben's face.

Born with cerebral palsy, Ben's spirit soars during the therapeutic riding session at the Soaring Spirits Riding Center near Hazelton. Sessions at the riding center focus on hippotherapy which promotes the use of the movement of the horse as a treatment strategy in physical, occupational and speech-language therapy for people living with disabilities.

"I really believe the spirit of the horse has a lot to do with it," says Vanessa Graham, who operates the center with her mother-in-law, Sherry Graham, on the family ranch served by KEM Electric Cooperative.

The riding center, after all, was a vision from God, Vanessa explains.

### **The vision comes true**

Vanessa envisioned the Soaring Spirits Riding Center during a quiet moment last winter.

"Last February, I was looking out the picture window, having a conversation with God," she says. "What do you have for me?" she asked. At that moment, the ranch's horses sauntered past her view.

"I've always loved horses," she says, describing herself

as a "city girl" from Mandan who grew up riding horses with friends.

"I've always had a love for individuals with special needs," she describes. "I started thinking, 'Why not put the loves of mine together?' ... We have such a beautiful ranch and I was thinking what better way to share what we've been given."

"I bought in immediately, because I have a soft spot in my heart also for individuals with special needs and to be able to share what we've been fortunate enough to have and hopefully make a positive influence, it was an easy sale for me," says Vanessa's husband, Kent, with a laugh.

Vanessa and Sherry became certified riding instructors through the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship and the Equine Assisted Philosophies with the OK Corral Series.

By August 2010, they had constructed an indoor riding arena with offices, a conference room and living quarters for future campers.

"Our goal is to give people empowerment and allow individuals to become as independent as possible," Vanessa says. "If they can pick up their helmet and get the clasp closed, that might be one thing that they did that day that they were never able to do before."

Therapeutic riding, which is one of four programs at the center, allows individuals with special needs to use the gait of the horse as therapy, Vanessa explains. Each session lasts one hour each week for six weeks.

The three-dimensional movement astride a horse simu-

lates a person's walk and helps improve balance and strengthen muscles.

"We know it's a slow process, but it has been very good," says Ben's mother, Nicole. "It's helping with his balance."

As Ben rides around the arena with just a pad between him and the horse, he completes tasks to build other skills, such as opening a mailbox from horseback and grabbing the toys inside. Lori Schmidt, Hazelton, and Leigh Jensen, Bismarck, encourage him with words and brace him with their hands, while Tracy Reich, Hazelton, leads the horse.

Saddles are not used so the rider feels the direct movement of the horse and must balance using their own bodies.

The center's horses are carefully screened not only for disposition, but confirmation and gait, Vanessa says.

"Our goal is to fit the client to the horse," she says.

"So even though they might be a kid-friendly horse, to run a 15-minute therapeutic riding session with them might not be their skill," she says.

Most of the 32 volunteers meld their love of horses and kids at the center.

"I have a lot of people to be thankful for," Vanessa says of the advisory board and volunteers assisting her.

"I like working with the kids," says Reich, who grew up with horses.

"What it gives you is amazing," Schmidt adds. "The feeling you get is absolutely amazing."

While Ben rides in the arena, Christina Menge, 18, Bismarck, waits with Patch. Christina, who has autism, mutters reassuring whispers to Patch, stroking his shoulder.

"Christina absolutely loves horses and has wanted to ride all her life," says her mother, Beth Stroup-Menge. "This has just been wonderful for her."

"When she got here last fall, her legs were shaking when we tried to get her on that horse, she was so nervous and now she is trotting on a horse independently and it's just



*Above: Assisted by Vanessa Graham, Ben Enzminger has been participating in the therapeutic riding program at the center since it opened last fall. Below: Christina Menge, 18, Bismarck, gets instructions from Vanessa Graham as Kent Graham and Leigh Jensen assist.*





*Vanessa Graham, right, and her mother-in-law, Sherry Graham, operate the Soaring Spirits Riding Center on the family ranch served by KEM Electric Cooperative.*



*Kent and Vanessa Graham warm the offices, lobby and conference room in the Soaring Spirits Riding Center with off-peak, in-floor heating using an electric boiler.*

amazing to see how far she's come," Vanessa says.

Now, Vanessa hopes to form an equine team from North Dakota to compete in the Special Olympics.

In addition to the physical therapy sessions, the Soaring Spirits Riding Center also offers emotional therapy through a program called CINCH or Conflict Interventions Needed to Corral Hope.

"Every one of us has crisis and conflicts," Vanessa explains. "A lot of times they find that children can tell their stories to animals better than they can to people."

So, the center is partnering with professionals to use horses to treat mental health issues, such as grief, bullying, depression, abuse or other issues.

"We're hoping to provide another tool in the community where these individuals can come and try something different," she says.

The center also hosts corporate team building retreats and leadership training for youth to help build communica-

tion skills, leadership, confidence and other skills.

"I think the spirit of the horse and the connection the kids make with that horse is unbelievable," Vanessa says.

## **KEM helps with indoor arena**

When Vanessa and Kent Graham began contemplating the type of heating system needed for an indoor riding arena, they turned to KEM Electric Cooperative for assistance.

The 80- by 176-foot building with 1,600 square feet of office, conference room and living quarter space, serves as the Soaring Spirits Riding Center on the Graham ranch near Hazelton.

The building is warmed with off-

peak, in-floor heating using an electric boiler. Hot water is provided by a Marathon water heater.

"Without a doubt, it will pay for itself," Kent says. The cleanliness and general feeling of the electric heat made it a "no-brainer," Kent

says. "We wanted to go with it."

KEM Electric's staff explained the economics and requirements for the system, then worked closely with the family to get the work completed so the business could open quickly.

### **To learn more:**

To schedule an appointment or to learn more, contact Vanessa Graham at (701) 782-4516 or (701) 400-1735.

Visit [www.soaringspiritsridingcenter.com](http://www.soaringspiritsridingcenter.com) or e-mail [ssrcvgraham.vg@gmail.com](mailto:ssrcvgraham.vg@gmail.com).

# E-BILL WILL BE AVAILABLE OCTOBER 1

Everyone's life is busy. KEM Electric understands this. That is why KEM Electric is excited to announce that e-bill will be accessible for members on Oct. 1! You will have the availability to view your bill online, at your convenience. With e-bill, you can instantly view information about your electric bill, view payment history, electric usage and monthly cost comparisons as well as make a payment from your computer, at any convenient time.



## How does it work?

Simply log onto our Web site at [www.kemelectric.com](http://www.kemelectric.com), where you will see a link to our secure site. The first time you use e-bill, you will need to click on the underlined bullet item, "Click here to sign up for online account access."

NOTE: If you have multiple accounts, you will need to register each account separately, using the SAME e-mail address and password. This will tie these accounts together to view.

Also when registering, please note the option: "Discontinue Mailing My Printed Statement." When this box is checked, you will NOT receive a printed electric bill in the mail. Instead, you will receive an e-mail each month stating your new billing statement is available to view.

Once you have registered your account, you will be able to view your current billing and pay online with pay-by-bank, credit/debit card option, or e-check.

## How does the pay-by-bank option work?

With your authorization, KEM Electric will make regularly scheduled payments from your checking or savings account. Your payment will be made automatically on or around the due date printed on your electric bill. There is no check to mail, no postage to pay – pay-by-bank takes care of this for you. Presently, more than 503 KEM members use pay-by-bank each month. If you are on budget billing, the pay-by-bank option will work perfectly for you also. You can view your account daily with e-bill and make sure your account is current.

To sign up, just call the cooperative office and ask for the pay-by-bank application, or print the application from the KEM Web site, [www.kemelectric.com](http://www.kemelectric.com), and submit it to the cooperative office.

## How does the credit/debit card option work?

As of Oct. 1, KEM Electric will be accepting VISA, Master-

Card and Discover personal credit/debit cards as a form of payment on residential members' electric bill as long as the total amount due is below \$1,000. Due to the fees associated with processing the credit/debit cards, KEM elected to accept only VISA, MasterCard and Discover personal credit/debit cards.

The ability to have the option of recurring credit/debit card is also available. An authorization form will need to be signed and mailed to the cooperative office before this feature is available. To sign up for recurring credit/debit card, call the cooperative office or print the application from the KEM Web site, [www.kemelectric.com](http://www.kemelectric.com), and submit it to the cooperative office.

## What is e-check?

E-check is very similar to our pay-by-bank option. With e-check, you can make a one-time monthly payment with your checking account. E-check is a convenient way of paying your bill on time without mailing in a check and no postage is necessary!

## Keep in mind that with e-bill, you will be able to:

- view an image of your monthly bills
- view payment history
- view charts showing your monthly costs, average cost, monthly usage and average usage

## FEATURES of e-bill:

- Fast, informative and simple.
- Provides you with all the information you receive with a paper bill and more.
- Instant access to your account 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.
- Can pay your bill on time. • It's free, fast and convenient.



A transmission pole was broken, but fell onto its broken half. This line was still energized until crews were told of its location. The crews de-energized the line and replaced the broken pole.



Lineworkers Dave Twardoski, on the ground by trailer, Tim Dockter, on the trailer, Jake Zink, driving the tracked vehicle, and Paul Hewitt, on the tracked vehicle, prepare to straighten out one of six transmission poles that were pushed because of the high winds.

## Just another storm!

KEM Electric and our members cannot get a break this summer with storms and storm damage. KEM had damage from the storm that hit on the evening of July 10, but this time damage was limited. Members did go without power for an extended period due to our power supplier who experienced severe damage near the Hazelton area.

Please remember to be careful of downed power lines during and after severe storms. KEM might not know of all the damage until a few days later as more damage is reported.



From left to right, lineworkers Ken Schneider, Gary Hulm, Jeff Geffre, and new apprentice lineworker Dale Nagel frame up the replacement pole.



Apprentice lineworker Dale Nagel installs the insulator onto the pole. This was Dale's second day on the job with KEM Electric.

# FARM SAFELY around POWER LINES



**A**s we observe National Farm Safety and Health Week Sept. 18-24, KEM Electric Cooperative reminds you to work safely on the farm and ranch. We care about your safety.

The following tips will help keep everyone on the farm safe:

- Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles.
- Make sure there are ample clearances of power lines when moving large machinery such as combines, grain augers, sprayers and tractors. Do this every year as equipment sizes or soil

conditions may change. A newer, larger piece of equipment may no longer clear a line. And shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year to year.

- When planning new construction, consider existing power lines.
- Be extra careful when working around trees and brush that often obstruct power lines.
- Train all farm workers on how to properly operate machinery to avoid overhead power lines.

# New employees join KEM Electric

## RYAN BOSSE

Ryan Bosse joined KEM Electric July 22 as a journeyman lineworker. He is joined by his wife, Shawna, to whom he's been married for nine years, and two children: son Mason, 6, and daughter Bradey, 4. He formally worked at Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, Estherville, Iowa, for eight years.

Ryan is originally from Cogswell. He loves sports, such as softball and basketball. He also enjoys pheasant hunting, which he is looking forward to this year. Ryan will be stationed in KEM Electric's outpost in Steele.

## DALE NAGEL

Dale Nagel joined KEM Electric July 11 as an apprentice lineworker. Dale is from Linton; his parents are David and Diane Nagel. Dale graduated from Bismarck State College in May 2011.

He is very excited to be able to work in his hometown. He looks forward to gaining the experience and knowledge from his coworkers. When not working, Dale enjoys pheasant hunting, fishing and riding horse.



Ryan Bosse



Dale Nagel

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



### July 26, 2011

- Reviewed report from the Voucher Review Committee
- Approved some capital credit estate retirements
- Approved the special equipment summary
- Adopted revised Policy 11-7, Collection of Electric Bills
- Adopted revised Policy 6-3, Meeting Room Facilities
- Adopted Rural Utilities Service resolution

## THE MARATHON WATER HEATER

*will be the last water heater you'll ever buy!*

### FEATURES:

- Polybutene tank that is guaranteed not to leak, rust or corrode for as long as you own your home.
- One of the most efficient water heaters on the market.
- To save money, ask about placing your Marathon water heater on one of KEM Electric Cooperative's load-management programs.



**Call KEM Electric Cooperative today!**  
**(701) 254-4666 - (800) 472-2673**

## KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

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**Report outages to the following toll-free number: (800) 472-2673**  
**Hazleton, Linton and Strasburg exchanges' phone number: (701) 254-4666**

### OFFICE HOURS:

Monday through Friday,  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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