

# KEM Country

KEM Electric Cooperative, Linton, N.D.

## LINES

April 2010

## Mother Nature continues to test co-op

by John Knox, general manager

It's hard to believe that my first month has passed as KEM Electric's chief executive officer/general manager. It's been very busy around here, as we are still dealing with issues from the first ice storm which did some major damage to the distribution system. Then Mother Nature decided to try us again with more fog and ice. Thank goodness it was not as bad as the first time, but bad enough. We had numerous lines down with many associated outages.

Our lineworkers and office staff did some incredible work again to get everyone back on as quickly as possible. We called in Capital Electric Cooperative and J&B Construction to provide additional help in restoring power to the members. This ice/fog combination we are having is just unbelievable; I've never seen anything like it before, and don't care to see any more of it anytime soon. The next threat we will be facing again this year is flooding; it's being predicted that spring flooding could be bad again, so be prepared to act quickly.

Everything that has happened or could potentially happen will make the next several weeks a very busy time at KEM Electric. We will have a lot of hard work in store for the cooperative and its employees. Working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be one of the most important jobs we will be doing, but that work won't be visible to you, the members. The paperwork is tremendous, but it so important that it is done correctly so KEM Electric gets reimbursed for every dollar it can for the damages that were done to the distribution system.

A question which has been asked by many members is "How can I help? Can I go out and hit the power lines like the linemen are doing?" When we are restoring power to the members, it's done in a precise and safe way that lineworkers are trained to do. The best thing a member can do is to report the outage to the office. Our lineworkers are trained and they have the tools to do this job safely. You, the member, do not know if the line is energized or not; the distribution lines have 7,200 volts going through them. Among the equipment we use, the hot stick is insulated at 100,000 volts per foot of stick, and the rubber gloves our lineworkers use are tested at 20,000 volts and visually inspected daily to make sure they are protected while working on the distribution lines.

It's very important that members do not, at any time, attempt to clear electric lines of debris and ice. Under the right

conditions, electricity can pass through any object and go to ground; items such as PVC, rope and wood are very dangerous when used around electricity. Please leave the line work to the lineworkers.

An upcoming and important event for the cooperative will be the annual meeting to be held June 17 at the Linton High School, starting with registration and dinner at 5:30 p.m., then onto the meeting at 7 p.m. I am looking forward to meeting you (our members) at this important meeting.

One of the most important parts of an annual meeting is the election of a director to represent your district. This year, the director seats up for election are those of Milton Brandner in District 3, Dean Hummel in the District at Large, and to fill the remaining term in District 4. The District 4 seat is vacant due to the retirement of Willie Piatz. You will find more information in the preceding pages about the annual meeting and elections.

One more important item is to recognize former Interim General Manager Ken Berreth. Ken stepped in from retirement to help the members of KEM Electric in a period of transition. Ken was a valuable asset to the cooperative during the last 18 months. So, to Ken I say thank you from KEM Electric, its board of directors, and from the members.



John J. Knox  
CEO/General Manager

### MORE INSIDE

Director elections set.....	C2
Operation Round Up awards grants .....	C3
Youth Tour winner named .....	C4
Scholarships awarded .....	C5
Co-ops pay taxes, too .....	C6
Spring safely into fieldwork.....	C7
Board highlights .....	C8
And more	



District 1-Adolph Feyereisen



District 2-Carter Vander Wal



District 3-Milton Brandner



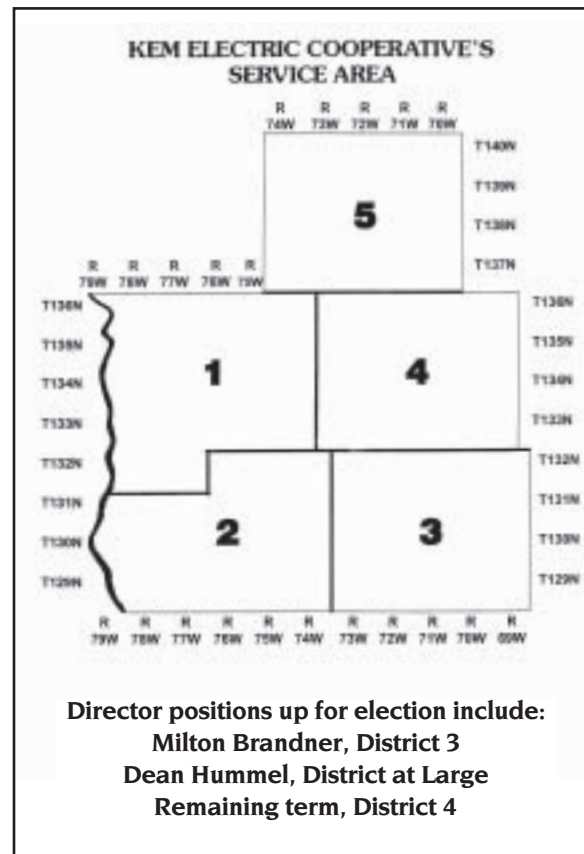
District 5-Dean Dewald



At-large director-Dean Hummel



At-large director-Carmen Essig



ONE MORE BENEFIT OF BEING A COOPERATIVE MEMBER:

## Director elections

The seven-member board of directors of KEM Electric Cooperative is elected by the membership of the cooperative. This is one of the distinct foundations of cooperatives — the governance comes from the membership.

KEM Electric Cooperative is overseen by the board of directors which is elected by you — the members and owners of the electric cooperative. Each director represents the members of the cooperative on the board; and each director is a cooperative member.

The cooperative is divided into five districts with one director representing each district and two at-large board seats. The current board of directors includes: District 1, Adolph Feyereisen; District 2, Carter Vander Wal; District 3, Milton Brandner; District 5, Dean Dewald; at-large directors, Dean Hummel and Carmen Essig. The District 4 seat is vacant due to the retirement of Willie Piatz.

This year, the director seats up for election are those of Milton Brandner in District 3, Dean Hummel in the District at Large, and to fulfill the remaining term in District 4.

Members will elect directors during the 2010 annual meeting June 17 at Linton.

## How to get on the ballot

Do you want to run for the board of directors? It is quite simple. You need to pick up a petition at the KEM Electric headquarters in Linton and secure 25 signatures of members from within your district. You can start circulating the petition 90 days before the petition filing date, which is not less than 45 days before the annual meeting.

For 2010, you can pick up a petition now, and you

must have it filed by May 3. Nominations can also be made from the floor during the annual meeting.

According to the bylaws, any member of KEM Electric Cooperative, who is a natural person in good standing and who receives electricity at his or her primary residence, may circulate a petition to become a candidate for the board of directors, or nominations can be made from the floor. If elected, the term is for three years.

# Operation Round Up funds awarded

**K**EM Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up program continues to donate funds to worthwhile causes in KEM Electric Cooperative's service territory.

Since the first grant was awarded in 2003, Operation Round Up has donated \$47,978 to individuals and organizations in the area.



## Operation Round Up officers and board include:

Tony Schaffner, Zeeland, chairman  
Viola Gefroh, Hague, vice chairman  
Jean Schoenhard, Steele, secretary/treasurer  
Bernie Schiermeister, Hazelton  
Pam Gross, Napoleon  
Dan Schuler, Wishek  
Gerard Meier, Ventura

## Get an application

If you have a worthy cause in your community, write or call KEM Electric Cooperative for an Operation Round Up application. If you have a question about qualifications, we'll be glad to answer your questions!

For more information, or to request an application, call KEM Electric Cooperative at (701) 254-4666 or (800) 472-2673 or e-mail kem@kemelectric.com.

## Deadlines

In 2010, applications are due by:  
June 30  
Sept. 30  
Dec. 31

## The Operation Round Up board will meet:

7 p.m. April 21  
8 p.m. July 21  
7 p.m. Oct. 20  
7 p.m. Jan. 19, 2011

## Guidelines for funding

Funds are disbursed in the general service area of KEM Electric Cooperative solely for charitable, educational, scientific, health or safety purposes. Organizations must be exempt from federal income tax under s501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. Funds cannot be used for political purposes.

## Recent recipients include:

- Five individuals received assistance with major medical expenses
- Ashley Public School to purchase an elliptical machine
- Harry L. Petrie Public Library in Linton to purchase new books
- Linton Senior Citizens for the Meals on Wheels Program
- Ashley Sports Club for a football scoreboard

## How it works

With 62 percent of KEM Electric Cooperative members participating in Operation Round Up, the pennies donated to the fund quickly add up.

Through the program, cooperative members voluntarily "round up" their electric bills to the next whole dollar each month. For example, a participant in Operation Round Up with an electric bill of \$38.63 would actually pay \$39 and the extra 37 cents is placed into the Operation Round Up fund.

The average member donates 50 cents a month, or \$6 a year. The most any member would donate is 99 cents a month, or less than \$12 a year. But with thousands of electric cooperative members participating, the pennies quickly add up and are used to benefit organizations and individuals throughout KEM Electric Cooperative's service territory.

A board of directors representing the members reviews Operation Round Up applications during the year and determines where the funds will be donated.

## ***Give a gift that only costs pennies!***

Join KEM Electric Cooperative members who support Operation Round Up by "rounding up" your monthly bill to the nearest dollar.

If you would like to enroll in Operation Round Up to donate

funds, call KEM Electric Cooperative at (701) 254-4666 or (800) 472-2673 or e-mail kem@kemelectric.com. You can also complete this form and return it to KEM Electric Cooperative. Remember, just pennies a month can add up!

## CLIP AND SEND

Return the completed form to:  
**KEM Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 790, Linton, ND 58552**

### ***I want to support Operation Round Up:***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Account number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



Kaitlyn Ebel

## Kaitlyn Ebel wins trip to Washington, D.C.

KEM Electric Cooperative has selected Kaitlyn Ebel, a 16-year-old sophomore at Zeeland High School, as the winner of the cooperative's Youth Tour essay contest and a trip to Washington, D.C. She is the daughter of Ordeen and Kristi Ebel, Zeeland.

Kaitlyn will represent KEM Electric Cooperative during the all-expense-paid Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., in June. During the Youth Tour, nearly 1,400 students sponsored by electric cooperatives from across the country converge on the nation's capital. They visit national monuments and historic sites, tour federal offices, and spend time with their congressional delegations. During the Youth Tour, students also learn about electric cooperatives and discuss issues facing their communities and the nation.

Kaitlyn has four brothers and sisters: Eric, 15, Hope, 12, John, 10, and Jacob, 8. She and her family live on a farm east of Zeeland where they farm organically and own a hay moving business.

"My favorite times of the year are calving season because I love working with cattle and summer because I love the warm sun," she says. "A few of my hobbies include gardening, watching movies with family and friends, spending time with friends, reading, cooking, baking and helping out on the farm." After graduation, she plans to study veterinary medicine.

### THE WINNING ESSAY

*To earn a trip to Washington, D.C., Kaitlyn wrote an essay on the topic:*

*"Touchstone Energy® cooperatives have launched the 'Together We Save' campaign to promote energy efficiency and conservation nationwide. Why do you think energy efficiency and conservation are important priorities for electric co-ops and how can co-op members and communities achieve the savings in resources these priorities are intended to accomplish?"*

### **Here is Kaitlyn's winning essay:**

Imagine a day somewhere in the future in which all the natural resources our society depends on have vanished. We have consumed them all. The world would be dark and utter chaos would break out because we'd have no energy sources to run our daily lives. With the "Together We Save" campaign, we can help prevent this. I believe energy efficiency and conservation are important priorities for electric co-ops so we can conserve our natural energy resources for the future. Co-op members and communities can achieve this goal by using the alternative resources along with present day natural energy resources, and by using energy more efficiently.

First of all, we need to find ways to use fossil fuels more efficiently to help keep costs down and to prevent our natural resources from running out. Clean coal technology is going to play a very important role in the future, if we can master the technology at a reasonable cost. We need to conserve natural resources for future generations because if we don't, they will have to pay outrageous rates for their energy – energy necessary to turn on a light or to heat a house. Because of its rareness in the future, natural energy resources may be considered as precious gold. If we conserve and use our energy wisely today, we can keep it more affordable for the future.

We can also use more alternative resources like solar, wind and hydroelectric energy, along with oil and coal. By developing alternate energy sources, our natural resources such as coal, oil and gas will last into the future, and will be able to make use of renewable power sources.

Co-op members and communities can help conserve energy. If everyone just turns off the lights in empty rooms, we can make a huge difference. By working together, we can save our precious natural resources. Each person needs to

take conservation seriously because in the end, little changes will add up.

My family, for example, had our oil furnace replaced with an electric furnace this past summer. We have already noticed a huge savings in our heating bill because of its efficiency. It's also safer because there's less incomplete combustion and no release of carbon monoxide.

Another way to conserve energy is to buy energy-efficient appliances that use much less energy than those older appliances. Replacing your refrigerator or even your microwave will cause a decrease in energy intake, and in the long run, save more energy for the future. Because televisions and several other appliances have instant-on, they are always using energy. If you unplug your television when it is not in use, you'll save a lot of energy and decrease your electric bill. Taking short showers instead of baths, drying your clothes outside on a clothes line when the weather permits, and changing the light bulbs in your house from incandescent to compact fluorescent lights or LED bulbs are other great ways to save energy. Having an energy audit done on your home or business by a professional or even by yourself is another great way to find where you can save energy.

In conclusion, if we don't work together to save energy now, our future generations won't have the conveniences we do today. Energy efficiency and conservation are important priorities for the electric co-ops. With the "Together We Save" campaign, we can help preserve our natural resources for the future by using alternative energy resources, and by using energy more efficiently. It's the responsibility of each one of us to save energy for a better tomorrow.



Carlene Ternes



Kimberly Hulm

## SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH

### KEM Electric Cooperative awards scholarships

KEM Electric Cooperative strongly believes in the future of area students. To help students prepare for their future journey, KEM Electric Cooperative, along with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, has awarded two college scholarships for the 2010-2011 school year, one in the amount of \$1,000 and one for \$500, to qualifying dependents of a KEM Electric member.

Carlene Ternes, Strasburg, is the recipient of the \$1,000 scholarship, and Kimberly Hulm, Strasburg, is the \$500 scholarship award recipient.

#### CARLENE TERNES

The \$1,000 scholarship winner is Carlene Ternes, a senior at Strasburg High School. She is the daughter of Joanne and Duane Ternes. Next fall, she plans to attend North Dakota State University to study architecture.

Carlene is the youngest of five siblings, including Deanne, Paul, Sarah and Leanne. The family are dairy farmers and Carlene's mother also works at Sheila's Country Cafe in Strasburg.

Carlene's hobbies include drawing, writing, riding horse, spending time with friends, helping on the farm, hunting and going to the lake. She works at TJ Foods and the Welk Pool. At school, she participates in sports and works on the school annual.

#### KIMBERLY HULM

The \$500 scholarship winner is Kimberly Hulm, a senior at Strasburg High School.

The 18-year-old senior attends Strasburg Public School is the daughter of Gerald Hulm and the late Catherine Hulm. She is enrolled at the University of Mary and was recently pre-accepted into the physical therapy program.

During the last four years, she has been very involved in her school's extracurricular activities such as band, choir, annual staff, drama, basketball, volleyball, Close-Up, school accompanist, and she is an active member in her church.

The youngest of five children, she has three sisters, Renee, Laurie and Lisa, and one brother, Eric. Her father, Gerald Hulm, is a farmer/rancher in the Strasburg/Hague area.

## Keep those structures away from power lines

As you plan your spring and summer construction projects, such as building a garage, storage shed or possibly a grain bin, you may visualize how the structure will fit into your yard. You might even check for obstacles in every direction—but up. And that could be a major problem.

A state law, called the proximity law, limits activity close to a power line. It states nothing should be



built under a power line and there should be no activity within a certain distance on either side of a power line.

Your electric cooperative

urges you to keep this law in mind when planning future construction projects, including planting trees. If it appears your building project

will be within close proximity of a power line, please contact your electric cooperative. We can visit with you to review the matter.



## COOPERATIVES COUNT

# Yes, your co-op pays taxes, too!

**D**oes KEM Electric Cooperative pay taxes? Yes! Just like our hardworking members, your local electric cooperative pays taxes each year.

As a nonprofit business, your electric cooperative does not pay income taxes, but pays a 2 percent gross receipts tax and property tax.

In addition, co-ops pay real estate taxes on the unimproved value of the land they own for offices and facilities.

This year, your electric cooperative will pay more than \$126,000 in taxes to the counties in which KEM Electric Cooperative has power lines.

The following counties received gross revenue tax money and property tax money from KEM Electric Cooperative:

Burleigh County	\$ 61
Emmons County	\$51,171
Kidder County	\$23,659
Logan County	\$24,554
McIntosh County	\$26,642

So, be assured that KEM Electric Cooperative does pay taxes. It's all part of being a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative. KEM Electric Cooperative is here to serve you with the Touchstone Energy core values: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

## Co-op facts....

North Dakota's electric cooperatives contribute to the state's economy in other ways, too. The facts are:

- Sixteen distribution cooperatives serve 230,000 North Dakotans through 147,000 meters
- They sell nearly 50 percent of all retail electricity in North Dakota
- They own 61,000 miles of distribution power lines
- They have a \$1 billion investment in distribution facilities
- They employ more than 6 00 people
- All operate as nonprofit, member-owned enterprises

### Generation and transmission cooperatives:

- Invested more than \$5 billion in North Dakota's energy industry
- Represent nearly 90 percent of all coal-based generation
- Own 4,200 miles of transmission line
- Directly employ more than 2,100 people in North Dakota
- There are five generation and transmission cooperatives in North Dakota
- North Dakota's electric cooperatives have invested more than \$800 million in environmental equipment and controls.

It can perhaps be said that nobody likes to pay taxes, but it cannot be said that electric cooperatives do not pay their fair share. The facts show otherwise!

# Spring **SAFELY**

## into fieldwork

Crops are not the only thing sprouting in the spring. The rate of agricultural injuries increases during the planting season, brought on by the press of machinery preparations and fieldwork.

“Although the maintenance work on equipment and preparation for the planting season may seem routine, precautions need to be taken to complete those tasks safely,” advises George Maher, an agricultural safety specialist with the North Dakota State University Extension Service.

During the spring rush, don’t overlook the power lines that bring electricity to your home or farm.

“Watch out for power lines and poles,” Maher warns. “Turning the equipment at the end of the fields can be dangerous. Don’t snag the equipment on the tractor’s rear wheels in tight turns.”

Your electric cooperative offers these other safety tips for the farm:

- Make sure you, your family and your employees know the location of overhead power lines, and map out routes to avoid the lines when moving equipment.
- Maintain at least a 10-foot clearance between the power line and the top of any equipment. Don’t guess. Know the height of the lines and the transport height of your equipment.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting larger, modern tractors with higher antennas.
- In the field, watch for electric cooperative equipment, including guy wires. Leave plenty of distance between your machinery and these hazards.
- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level before moving or transporting; use care when raising them.
- Avoid placing new storage bins near overhead power lines.
- Avoid moving large equipment alone. Have someone watch as you move equipment to ensure that you are clear of any power lines.
- Use qualified electricians for work on grain drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

Electricity doesn’t allow mistakes. And neither should you.

### Know what to do if an accident happens

It’s important for operators of farm equipment or vehicles to know what to do if a vehicle comes into contact with a power line. It’s almost always best to stay in the vehicle and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives to make sure power to the line is off.

If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result. Even if a power line has landed on the ground, there is still the



Graphic courtesy of the Farm Safety Program, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

potential for the area nearby to be energized.

Stay inside the vehicle unless there’s fire, imminent risk of fire or it is not likely that anyone else will know of your accident.

If you must leave the machinery before the power line is de-energized, do this:

- Avoid touching any other part of the machinery;
- Jump — not step — with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Jump clear of the machinery, land on your feet, keeping them together and without touching the ground with your hands. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time;
  - Keeping your feet together, jump or hop to move away from the machinery;
  - Keep people and animals away from the machine until you are absolutely certain the power has been turned off. Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Many electrocutions occur when the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment.
  - Contact your local power provider immediately to de-energize the power line so that the machinery can be cleared safely.

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

### KEM Electric Cooperative Inc. Board meeting highlights Feb. 26



- Heard reports on various meetings
- Reviewed report from the Voucher Review Committee
- Reviewed monthly financial reports
- Approved the special equipment summary



## Be aware of storm debris

**K**EM Electric Cooperative continues to urge snow-mobilers and ATV operators to take extra caution when riding in power line right of ways, which may contain leftover debris from this winter's storms.

Drivers are asked to slow down and use exercise caution when traveling in the ditch. Because of the widespread damage which scattered conductors, cross-arms, poles and wire, some of the debris may not be collected until spring.

Snowmobilers and ATV operators should be on the lookout for broken pole stubs and other debris that may still be partially covered by snow.

## 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**  
**(701) 254-4666**  
**(800) 472-2673**

### KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

107 S. Broadway - Linton, N.D. 58552

### DIRECTORS:

Dean Dewald, Chairman.....Steele  
Milton Brandner, Vice Chairman...Zeeland  
Carmen Essig, Secretary.....Lehr  
Adolph Feyereisen, Director .....Braddock  
Dean Hummel, Director.....Hague  
Carter Vander Wal, Director .....Pollock  
Bair, Bair and Garrity, Atty. ....Mandan  
HDR Engineers Inc.,  
Consulting Engr.....Bismarck

John Knox, CEO/General Mgr.....Linton

**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.

Web site: [kemelectric.com](http://kemelectric.com)

email address:

[kem@kemelectric.com](mailto:kem@kemelectric.com)