



It pays to be a co-op member! \$720,000 in capital credits refunded to members

At the August meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) board of directors approved the retirement of more than \$720,000 in capital credits. The capital credits will be paid to members who earned patronage by doing business with the cooperative in 2006 and 2007. Unless the member participated in one of the cooperative's early payment capital credit buyout programs, a check is in the mail!

The amount of the check depends on a member's "patronage," or how much electricity the member purchased during those years. To date, the co-op has also paid \$228,993 to member estates and former members who requested an early buyout when they left the system.

How do capital credits work?

As a nonprofit cooperative, NPEC's mission is to provide service to member-owners at cost, while also maintaining the co-op's financial strength. If the co-op earns revenues in excess of its expenditures, it returns those profits to members. Those profits are called capital credits.

Capital credits are the most significant source of equity for most electric cooperatives. This equity is used to help meet the expenses of the co-op, such as paying for new equipment and repaying debt. Capital credits help keep rates at a competitive level by reducing the amount of funds that must be borrowed.

For more information on capital credits, call 800-882-2500. ■

If you cease to purchase energy from Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, please keep us informed of your forwarding address. This will enable us to forward payments when the capital credits are refunded in years to come.

OCTOBER 2022

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Focused on **YOU.**

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL
CO-OP MONTH**

Celebrating membership

October is National Co-op Month

BY SETH SYVERSON, GENERAL MANAGER



Seth Syverson

Autumn is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month, with school, community and sports activities in full swing. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

When Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) celebrates Co-op Month, it means we are celebrating you! After all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you, our members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions, because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

NPEC works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our

employees and a local board comprised of neighbors who live right here in our community. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique needs and strive to help meet them.

We're proud to support local youth through our Youth Tour and scholarship programs. With your help, we offer the Operation Round Up program to provide aid to our community's most vulnerable.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning people working together toward a common goal, mutually benefiting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community where they live and serve.

Above all, we put our members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you.

We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, I encourage you to take a moment and download our app, SmartHub. Through the app, you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. And we're here to help, so give us a call if you have questions about your energy bills.

NPEC is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently, while continuing to provide the highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve. I encourage you to take the time to enter our gift card giveaway contest in celebration of Co-op Month using the form located on this page. ■

PLAY TO WIN
\$25 CREDIT
From Northern Plains Electric Cooperative

Congratulations to our latest winners Larry & Jill Tarang from Leeds! Thank you for entering the August bill insert word scramble.

Regularly check bill inserts and the Northern Plains News inside the ND Living magazine for future contests.

ENTER OUR GIVEAWAY FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

\$50 TO A LOCAL BUSINESS!



In celebration of Co-op Month, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative will benefit 10 locally owned businesses and 10 NPEC members through a giveaway contest of 10 gift certificates in the amount of \$50 each.



Return this completed form with your October payment or mail to:

*Northern Plains Electric Cooperative
 P.O. Box 608 Cando, ND 58324*

Deadline: Oct. 20, 2022

NAME: _____

NPEC ACCOUNT #: _____

List your favorite locally owned business & reason why: _____

**By submitting, winners are in acknowledgment that their name and city will be published. NPEC employees, trustees, contractors and members of their households are ineligible.*



Ben and Kristin Schlenske, owners of the Historic Webster School, pose in the gathering area uniquely decorated with the original schoolbooks from the Webster school days above the original chalkboards.

Historic Webster School **A place to gather, eat, play and remember**

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

The historic Webster schoolhouse has been a prominent landmark located off Highway 20 in Ramsey County since 1905. Even though the school closed its doors in 1970, the community's nostalgia for the building is strong. Past students, teachers and even relatives of those who attended the school have an attachment and sentimental connection to the property.

The schoolhouse sat empty for years. When the property went on the market, a couple with strong ties to Webster purchased it and completely restored it, while beautifully preserving its rich history. A few modern necessities were added to make the property livable, while still maintaining the historic charm. The renovation was awarded the 2003 North Dakota

Preservation Success story. The couple mainly used the school for family gathering and reunions, before putting it back on the market.

New beginnings

Ben and Kristin Schlenske have called many places in the West and Midwest their home. The couple had hopes of someday relocating their family back to the Upper Midwest, as they previously lived in North Dakota when Ben was stationed at the Minot Air Force Base.

That someday was July 2021, when the Schlenske family seized the opportunity to become the new owners of the renovated historic Webster schoolhouse, with big plans in mind.



The schoolhouse bakery, Breadster at Webster, offers a variety of hand-kneaded breads and fresh-baked goods.

Ben, a military veteran and past law enforcement officer, holds a master's degree in illustration, and Kristin is a music teacher with over 20 years of experience. Both wanted a property that could double as a business and a home. The couple agreed the Webster schoolhouse was the perfect place to start a business dedicated to connecting families and communities through visual and performing arts. In their new adventure, they intend to work as a family, involving their five kids between the ages of 9 and 17. The family of 10 also includes three older children who have moved out.

In October 2021, Let's Go Webster (which has recently been renamed the Historic Webster School) was open for business. The business includes a bakery, music lessons and a variety of community events utilizing the charm of the schoolhouse.

The grand opening and initial presentation to the community was a family-centered autumn carnival, CarniFall. The attraction included a straw maze, zipline, pumpkin patch, Nerf battles, face painting and more! More than 1,000 people attended the weekend carnival during a five-week period. Plans for their second annual CarniFall are set for this October.

A cottage bakery, dubbed Breadster at Webster, provides the Lake Region with hand-kneaded breads and a variety of freshly baked goods. The Schlenkses welcome the community to "enjoy a little taste of history," with the schoolhouse bakery open every Thursday through Saturday. Customers can grab and go or relax in the gathering area with seating and a piano.



The Historic Webster School offers music lessons and hosts events.

This area still has the original chalkboards from the old school days filled with white signatures of those who have visited over the years. Some of those signatures are from past students and teachers at the Webster school, usually leaving the years attended and a little message or memory.

Throughout the week, the couple offers music lessons in piano and vocal by Kristin and percussion by Ben. This past holiday season, the family hosted a Christmas event that included a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Claus and elves, complete with cookie decorating and live music.

"It is a blessing to work together as a family, exchange creative ideas, plans and implement those into a business environment," Ben said.

The family continues to implement new ideas involving the community to be a part of the schoolhouse. Just this summer, they started hosting free movies three days a week in a small theater space they created. The theater comfortably seats 36 people, and attendees can purchase concessions of popcorn, sodas and homemade ice cream, along with a variety of freshly baked goods.

As time progresses, so does the Schlenkses' business plan. They are continuously brainstorming ways to involve the community in the schoolhouse.

"Feedback has been favorable and positive," Ben said. "People usually express gratitude to us for preserving the school and our community-based mission."

You can connect with the Schlenkses family by social media under "Historic Webster School" or "Breadster at Webster," or by phone at 701-395-4347. ■

WIN A TRIP OF A LIFETIME!

ESSAY QUESTION:

If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate, you will be traveling to Washington, D.C. to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?

TOP 3 REASONS

1. All-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., compliments of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative
2. A whole week to visit unforgettable historic monuments, museums and the U.S. Capitol
3. A learning experience you'll never forget

JUNE 18 TO 23, 2023



AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Northern Plains Electric Cooperative.
- If you have any questions, please contact Brittnee Wilson, Northern Plains Electric, at 701-968-3314 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 20, 2023. You can email entries to Brittnee Wilson at brittneew@nplains.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, PO Box 608 Cando, ND 58324-0608.

HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES & JUNIORS



CHECK OUT THE ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES AT
<https://ndyouthtour.com>

Northern Plains and partners award \$30,000 in grants

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) recently teamed up with CoBank and Basin Electric Power Cooperative to donate \$30,000 to nonprofit organizations that contribute to the communities NPEC serves.

At the July board meeting, NPEC's board of directors approved a donation of \$10,000 to be split among four nonprofit organizations in NPEC's service area. The Leeds Ambulance Service, Maddock Rural Fire Protection District, Robinson Fire Department and Rock Lake Rural Fire District were awarded \$2,500 each.

By teaming up with CoBank and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, NPEC helped the nonprofits receive matching donations, resulting in a total of \$7,500 for each organization.

CoBank, a cooperative lending institution headquartered in Denver, Colo., makes these funds available through its Sharing Success matching grant program. The program was designed to celebrate the vital role cooperatives play in individual communities across the county.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is a wholesale electric generation-and-transmission cooperative headquartered in Bismarck that provides electricity to electric cooperatives in nine states, including NPEC.

NPEC is thankful to have partners like CoBank and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, who contribute to the communities we serve. ■



Representatives of the Leeds Ambulance Service are, left to right, **Tony Kitzman**, **Kyle Vanderbeek** and **Josh Haagenon**. The funds will go toward purchasing three AED units which will be stocked in high-risk areas around the community.



NPEC General Manager **Seth Syverson**, left, presents checks to **Kraig Subart**, with the Robinson Fire Department. Funds will be used to purchase a generator that can cover all needs in case of power outage. The fire hall serves as a gathering location for the community in times of need.



Rock Lake Rural Fire Protection District representatives, left to right, **Danny Krumwiede**, **Jordon Stenson**, **Gerald Stenson** and **Craig Leas**. The funds will go toward the purchase of a new fire truck-pumper grass unit.



NPEC board director **Randy Simon**, right, presents checks to **Chad Gellar**, representative of the Maddock Rural Fire Protection District. Funds will go toward purchasing new radios to comply with federal changes.

SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

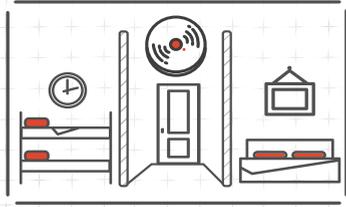
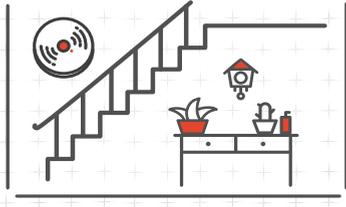
According to the **National Fire Protection Association**, an average of **1,450 fire deaths** occur every year in homes with missing or non-functioning smoke alarms.



2/3 fire deaths occur in homes with missing or non-functioning smoke alarms.



INSTALL SMOKE ALARMS IN:

<p>Every bedroom</p> 	<p>Outside each sleeping area</p> 	<p>On every level of your home, including basement</p> 
<p>On levels without bedrooms, install in living room, den or family room</p> 	<p>Install near stairways leading to upper levels</p> 	<p>Install smoke alarms 10 feet from cooking appliances to minimize false alarms</p> 

NORTHERN PLAINS Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

An equal opportunity provider and employer.

CANDO OFFICE:

609 4th Ave.
Cando, ND 58324

CARRINGTON OFFICE:

1515 West Main
Carrington, ND 58421

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

www.nplains.com
justask@nplains.com
800-882-2500

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