



NPEC holds donation drive

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's (NPEC) Basic Needs Donation Drive is back and is ready to receive donations! Two drop-off locations are in the lobbies of our Cando and Carrington offices.

Items requested are hygiene products, such as shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, feminine products, soaps, dental care products and more. Household items, such as paper towels, tissue, toilet paper, laundry detergent, dishwashing liquid, garbage bags and other essentials, are also needed. We are also accepting baby

diapers and wipes and pet supplies, such as pet food and treats.

Last year, NPEC held the Basic Needs Donation Drive in November and collected more than 125 items. The items were distributed to the Hungry Free Food Pantry in New Rockford and the Leeds Community Food Pantry just before the holidays. This year, donations received will be distributed to two different communities served by NPEC. Donations will be accepted through Dec. 2. ■



Anyone who drops off a donation will be eligible to register for a drawing of a North Dakota bamboo cutting board and knife set compliments of NPEC.

NOVEMBER 2024

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Heat control exercise planned for December

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is announcing a load-control exercise for members with dual heat and off-peak storage heat systems. During December, we plan to exercise load control on all available off-peak heating systems. The control exercise(s) will consist of control periods between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. on one or more days. No exact test dates have been set for the month, as it will depend on the prevailing weather at the time.

The exercise provides valuable off-peak loading data for the cooperative, so we know how much heating load can be controlled. This also provides the opportunity for you, our dual heat and off-peak storage heat members, to operate your backup heat system to ensure it operates properly and provides adequate backup heat during control periods. This control will alert you whether or not your backup system will function adequately during an off-peak control period.

If you experience problems with your backup system during the control exercise or if you already know your backup heating system needs servicing, please contact your heating or electrical

contractor to schedule the work needed. The information below may help you determine what to do about a non-functioning backup heating system.

If you need our assistance before, during or after the control exercise or want to be removed from the off-peak heat rate and switched over to our non-controlled electric heat rate, please call 800-882-2500 to visit with one of our employees. We thank you for your cooperation during the control exercises.

Pointers to prepare for load control exercise on off-peak heating systems:

- Ensure you have an adequate supply of fuel oil, propane or natural gas for your backup heating system.
- Make sure your floor heat and/or brick storage heaters are preheated for several days to ensure an adequate supply of stored heat is available during the control periods.
- Set the thermostats for your backup heating systems so they operate in a comfortable temperature range. ■

PLAY TO WIN CONTEST

Congratulations to Beverly Parisien of Belcourt. Beverly is our latest winner of a \$25 bill credit for playing the September bill insert crossword puzzle contest. Members can regularly check bill inserts for future contests.

Maddock foreman teaches students about electrical careers, safety

In September, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's (NPEC) Maddock Foreman and Lineworker Doyle Schwanke visited the Leeds Public School to teach students about electrical careers and safety. Schwanke explained the responsibilities of electrical utility workers and demonstrated some of the tasks they perform on any given day.

The seventh- and eighth-grade students in the life skills and career exploration class enjoyed learning about the functions of the bucket truck and trying on the flame-resistant gloves lineworkers wear on the job. Schwanke brought excitement as he involved the students in difficult tasks, such as picking up a pencil while wearing the gloves and using a wire cutter to cut an underground cable. But most importantly, he encouraged them to think about their future – especially the stable and rewarding job providing power for rural North Dakota.

Would you like to see our lineworkers at your school?

NPEC has a long history of supporting educators and students in our 11-county region. If your school

is planning a career event in the coming school year, please contact our communications department at brittneew@nplains.com or call 800-882-2500. ■



HomeSpun Chick: peace, love & goats

BY BRITTNEE WILSON



Karey Wolfe, alongside her husband, **Todd**, owns and operates HomeSpun Chick, a goat milk skin care line created from their rural Esmond home.

Over the years, I've heard many adjectives to describe *North Dakota Living* – reliable, informational and dependable. But “matchmaker” was definitely a new one to hit my ear. That's just what the magazine did for Karey Wolfe – and so much more. It all started 16 years ago, when Wolfe was a newly single mother to three young boys and found herself moving to Buchanan to work for a farmer who had cattle and goats.

Wolfe wanted her sons to get involved with their community and meet new friends, so she suggested they join the local 4-H club. Her middle son, Jayden, who was 8 years old at the time, wanted to find a 4-H project that involved their beloved farm goats. With Karey's help, they researched and found one could make soap using goat milk. They purchased all the necessities to make soap and completed the project. Jayden submitted his goat milk soap bar in the Stutsman County Fair and won the reserve grand

champion ribbon. The grand champion winner just so happened to be his older brother.

“Witnessing my boys pursue their passions, lending a helping hand as needed, and seeing each of them earn those ribbons was a proud mama moment,” Karey said.

That same year, Karey made goat milk soap bars as Christmas gifts for family and friends using Jayden's recipe. They were a hit! Karey received many requests for more soap. How could she say no? She loved the process and working with the goats. With trial and error, she perfected the recipe.

It didn't take long for Karey to realize this is what she wanted to do full-time and launched her business, HomeSpun Chick in 2012, an all-natural goat milk skin care line of soaps and newly added lotions.

Now with a more extensive product collection, HomeSpun Chick was getting attention all over North Dakota and Karey was asked to be featured in the November 2016 issue of *North Dakota Living*.

The article caught the eye of an Esmond farmer, Todd Wolfe, who was taken aback by Karey and her story. A couple months later, fate found them in the same town, crossing the same street at the same time. Recognizing Karey from her photograph in the magazine, Todd struck up a conversation. A year and half later, they were married, and Karey moved her business and goat herd to rural Esmond. With Todd's support, they converted a section of their garage into a workspace for HomeSpun Chick.

“We spent most of the summer in 2018 recreating my soap studio. My commute to work is only like 12 steps, give or take, from the house through the garage,” Karey said.

In addition to the HomeSpun Chick, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members also raise cattle and chickens and are small grain farmers.

Benefits of goat milk

Why put goat milk in soaps and lotions? Goat milk is enriched with high amounts of protein, iron and vitamins A, B6, B12, C, D and E. These vitamins and minerals can slow aging, help the skin rebuild and retain moisture, and add elasticity. It can also help reduce inflammation and soothe dry and damaged skin. Since goat milk has a PH level similar to human



Over 50 varieties of handcrafted skin care products are available through soaps, lotions, lip balms and sugar scrubs. Raw and pure goat milk is the main ingredient in HomeSpun Chick's skin care line from their own herd of goats.

skin, it helps protect skin from daily bacteria and chemical invasions.

“People with sensitive skin or conditions like eczema and psoriasis benefit greatly from using our products,” Karey said. “They do not contain any detergents, alcohol or unhealthy preservatives, as many commercial lotions do.”

At HomeSpun Chick, the goats are bred, fed and milked right on the farm, so customers are getting all-natural ingredients with every product made. Not every bar has added fragrances, but those that do include essential oils and fine fragrances which are also beneficial for our skin.

The products

With knowledge and confidence, Karey added more goat milk products along the way, including signature sugar scrubs, lip balms and a Just for Men line of soaps and lotions with masculine scents.

HomeSpun Chick produces over 50 different kinds of soaps and lotions, including Cashmere, Vanilla Bean, Avocado & Sea Salt and Almond Joy. Some include natural exfoliator ingredients, such as coffee grounds, oatmeal and eggshells from the farm's chickens.

Collections rotate with the seasons, as the autumn and winter lines include Pumpkin Spice, Farmhouse Cider, Frosted Cranberry and Sugar Plum Fairy. The Just for Men line includes scents of hickory, suede and sandalwood.

Each handcrafted 6-ounce soap bar includes 1-ounce of raw goat milk, plus a ton of love, hard work and



In Karey's operation, small batches of goat milk soap bars take 4-6 weeks to cure before they are sculpted and packaged for resale.

creativity. The scents, colors and design of each soap bar are carefully considered and executed.

From start to finish, everything is made, packaged, labeled and shipped right from the premises of the Wolfe farm in rural Esmond. Karey receives help from her husband and her sister-in-law, Leigh. Although her boys are grown and have started their own life journeys, they help when they can. Together, they have propelled their business to new heights.

“I had no idea how life-changing that article would be, not only for me personally, but my family and our business as well,” Karey said referring to the 2016 *North Dakota Living* article. “One unexpected turn of events proved to be a tremendous blessing from God.”

You can find HomeSpun Chick products online at www.homespunchick.net as well as a list of stores that carry the products across North Dakota. You can also catch them in person at the Bismarck Event Center

with two upcoming craft shows, including The Big One Nov. 22-23 and the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase Dec. 6-7. ■



BE PREPARED FOR WINTER'S WRATH

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. NPEC wants you to remain safe during severe winter weather, so consider preparing now for the possibility of power outages this winter.

OPERATE GENERATOR SAFELY

If your standby electric generator has been in storage since last winter, make sure it is still operating properly – before an outage occurs.

And always follow the manufacturer's recommendations on how to use your generator. Most important is the transfer switch that disconnects the farm or home from the power line and connects it to the generator. It must be a double-throw transfer switch, which prevents the generator from feeding electricity back onto the power line. This protects the lineworkers who may be working to restore your service.

If you have additional questions, please call NPEC. We will be glad to work with you to make sure your generator is used properly.

STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED POWER LINES

Mother Nature isn't always kind to power lines. Winter winds, snow and ice often prove to be too much for utility poles and power lines. If you see a downed power line or utility pole, contact NPEC immediately.

Do not go near the line or the pole. Just because it's on the ground doesn't mean it's safe to approach.

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

Because power outages can't be totally eliminated, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative offers these steps to follow if an outage occurs:

Confirm the outage. Check your own fuses and circuit breakers first.

Check with a neighbor to confirm if he or she is also experiencing an outage before you call the cooperative. This will help your cooperative determine the extent of the outage.

Call the cooperative. If the outage is widespread, the phone lines may be busy, but keep trying. Your cooperative will send a line crew to find the problem and restore power as quickly as possible.

If you have additional questions about outages, please call NPEC.

DURING AN OUTAGE

To prevent an overload on the system while power is

being restored, take these steps:

Turn off every inside light except one.

Turn down your thermostat.

If the outage lasts more than 60 minutes, turn off your electric water heater.

Make sure your kitchen range is off, both the surface and the oven.

Turn off all unnecessary appliances and unplug sensitive electronic equipment.

When power comes back on, slowly switch your appliances and lights back on and gradually return your thermostat to its normal setting. ■



Members' cents go a long way



At its September meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) Operation Round Up board of directors approved grants totaling \$9,100 to help support worthy causes.

These charitable grants are made possible through the generosity of NPEC members who voluntarily elect to have their electric bills rounded up to the next dollar.

Since the program's beginning in October 1998, grants totaling \$962,562 have been awarded to 1,330 local charitable causes.

Grants approved in September include:

- Rugby Public School District, girls fastpitch softball field project
- James River Humane Society, Jamestown, septic and drain field project
- The Carrington Youth Center, projector battery backup project
- Leona Martin, Rolla, natural disaster
- Wanda Melchert, Manfred, natural disaster
- Benson, Eddy, Foster, Griggs, Kidder, Pierce, Rolette, Stutsman, Towner, Wells, Ramsey counties, backpack programs/food banks

If you would like additional information about this worthy program, please contact NPEC by calling 800-882-2500 or you may obtain guidelines or download applications at www.nplains.com.

The board will meet again in December to review applications. The application deadline is Nov. 20. ■



Attention snowbirds!

SIGN UP FOR SMARTHUB BEFORE HEADING SOUTH

Calling all snowbirds! Before you migrate south for the winter, sign up for SmartHub and leave the worries about your electric bill in North Dakota!

No matter where you choose to spend your winter, you can always manage your Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) account from anywhere you can access the internet. You can use SmartHub to manage your payments, update your contact information, notify customer service of

account issues, check your usage and receive special messages from NPEC.

To sign up for SmartHub, visit www.nplains.com and click on the SmartHub link to register at the top of our homepage. Or you can download the SmartHub app from the app store to access SmartHub from your iPhone or Android phone.

SmartHub is FREE to members. Need help signing up? Call our office at 800-882-2500 for assistance. ■

Need help with your energy bill?



Are you or someone you know having difficulty paying home heating bills? If so, a federal program could help. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps eligible low-income households with home energy assistance. Eligible households are encouraged to apply for assistance for:

HEATING ASSISTANCE

LIHEAP can pay for a portion of fuel or electricity used to heat your home between Oct. 1 and May 31. The amount of benefit depends on your income, the type and size of your home, and the type of fuel used to heat your home.

WEATHERIZATION SERVICE

The weatherization program helps low-income families make their homes and apartments energy efficient. Weatherization seals a home to keep warm air in and cold air out during the winter.

FURNACE AND CHIMNEY CLEANING

The program can pay (up to a certain amount of monies dependent on the service) to clean and inspect your furnace and/or chimney.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

LIHEAP funds are available when there is a home energy emergency that may threaten the life of your family.

ENERGY COST-REDUCTION DEVICES

Funds are sometimes available to help with installation costs of energy-reducing devise to qualify for lower electric heat rates.

Applications are accepted from Oct. 1 through May 31 of each heating season. For LIHEAP services, call your local human service center or contact the Energy Assistance Program at the N.D. Department of Human Services at 800-755-2716. ■

NORTHERN PLAINS

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

An equal opportunity provider and employer.

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