



Ostlie's Sunnyside Acres invites visitors

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

Nestled along the Pipestem Creek, just nine miles south of Carrington, is a farm. But this farm is not your typical North Dakota family farm. This farm invites all those who want to explore Mother Nature and to feel a sense of peace. Here, they grow crops other than the typical barley, wheat, beans or corn. Instead, they host arts and crafts workshops while growing a family. This place is known as Ostlie's Sunnyside Acres.

Sunnyside Acres was a dream between two North Dakota farm kids who met and married at college and chased dreams in Colorado, but found their way back home.

Mike Ostlie, who grew up in Northwood, received more than a degree in plant sciences while attending North Dakota State University (NDSU). He found the love of his life. Lindsay Ostlie, a farm kid from Watford City, met Mike while pursuing a degree in apparel and textiles, and they married during her junior year.

After time spent in Colorado, Mike finished graduate school at Colorado University, while Lindsay was working and designing at an outerwear company. Then, the Ostlies set a goal to get back to North Dakota to live and work.

In 2012, Mike was hired at the NDSU Research Center in Carrington. They were ready to get back to North Dakota with dreams of owning a farm. They started looking for properties, but it was a seller's

PHOTOS BY DUKE PHOTOGRAPHY

The Ostlies offer the public a chance to "pick your own" in the berry patches every June.



The Ostlies operate a quaint Sunnyside Goods store on the farm. The store sells an array of items, including garlic raised on the farm.



Three varieties of hops are raised on Sunnyside Acres, owned by Mike and Lindsay Ostlie.

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Mike and Lindsay Ostlie sell their Sunnyside Acres goods at a Pride of Dakota show.

market at the time. On their way back to Colorado from an unsuccessful trip to Carrington to look for housing, the Ostlies stumbled upon a real estate ad for a rural property. They immediately turned around to look at the farmstead and fell in love with it. They purchased the property and turned it into what's now known as Sunnyside Acres.

The Ostlies started to farm while still pursuing their daytime jobs. "The farm business was a way to keep me busy while spending time at home with the kids," says Lindsay, who also has a sewing and design business. The Ostlies, who now have two boys, ages 6 and 4, started farming slowly, adding different crops year-by-year. They have a small acreage, so they selected crops that would do well in the area market, with staggered harvest dates. While they have many intriguing things happening on the farm, their main crops include hops, garlic and berries.

Hops

Ostlie's Sunnyside Acres, which is powered by Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, grows a half-acre of hops of three varieties. A hop is a

perennial plant that dies back to the ground in the winter and comes back every spring. The Ostlies grow their hops, known as a bine, up 14 feet of twine supported by poles. "They grow fast, sometimes one foot in a day," Mike says.

The Ostlies work closely with three breweries in North Dakota: Fargo Brewing Co., Laughing Sun Brewery Company and Kiltstone Brewing. "Having a good relationship with local breweries is key. There is only one market for hops, and that's beer," Mike says.

Fargo Brewing Company makes a specific fresh hops beer, made from the Ostlie hops, that has to be brewed within 24 hours of the hops harvest, called Farm Fresh IPA. As soon as the hops are harvested, usually around Labor Day, they are delivered to the brewery within hours. In 2017, the brewery even helped harvest the hops with the Ostlies.

On the farm, the Ostlies have a licensed food processing facility. Here, they produce hops pellets to sell. They also offer custom pelleting, in which other hops growers can drop off their crop for the Ostlies to pellet for their future brewing.

Garlic

The farm grows more than 5,000 bulbs of garlic of 12 varieties. Planted in the fall, garlic keeps warm under a layer of hay and is then harvested the end of July or in early August. The garlic, as well as other farm items, are sold in their quaint farm store called Sunnyside Goods. Selling their products at their farm store and at shows like Pride of Dakota are two ways they get their products out into the community, but just last year they stumbled into selling garlic online.

"It was kind of an accident," Lindsay laughs. She shares how people from all over the county

found their website and then sent emails wanting to purchase their garlic. Without an online market setup, Lindsay rolled with it and started shipping garlic and taking online payments.

"This year, one of my goals is to beef up our online presence with the garlic, hopefully opening us up to a bigger customer base," Lindsay says.

Berries

In the Ostlies' berry patch, you can find nutritious and delicious Juneberries, haskap and yellow raspberries. You can also find these berries in locally made products, as they sell their haskap berries yearly to a local winery. Just last year, a local gelato company made fresh gelato with their Juneberries and haskap berries.

The Ostlies only harvest and sell a portion of their berries, as they invite the public to "you pick" every year. "It's a fun family outing to pick berries and visit the farm," Lindsay says. For current picking dates and times, be sure to visit the Ostlie's Sunnyside Acres Facebook page or website.

Come for a visit

Each year, the Ostlies get a few more things fixed up, and a few more things planted. The Ostlies invite you to grow your family with theirs, as they strive to provide healthy local food for local people while mixing in the arts. The farm will be hosting a barn quilt painting workshop as well as a cyanotype quilt square sun printing workshop open to all ages.

There are many reasons to visit Ostlie's Sunnyside Acres this summer. For the best possible experience, appointments are recommended. Call 701-285-3344 or contact them online to set up a visit. ■



Exterior view of Antelope Valley Station.

Students tour power plant

As part of its youth education programs every year, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative offers its assistance to local school districts in scheduling tours of the Antelope Valley Station, the Coteau Freedom Mine and the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. All three plants are in the same complex near Beulah. To help defray costs, the co-op also offers financial assistance to schools located within Northern Plains Electric's service area.

This field trip is an interesting and educational supplement to science courses and will educate students on the fascinating electric generation and coal industry in North Dakota. The hope is for the students to come away with an understanding of the complexity of electric generations and learn about the many job opportunities available in North Dakota's energy industry.

For more information or to schedule a school tour, call 800-882-2500 and ask for Brittnee. ■



Twenty-six sixth-grade students from Harvey Public School listened to the tour guide speak on the large engineering model (behind guide) used during construction of the generation station.



Thirteen students from North Star High School, grades 10 and 12, pose in front of a large bucket on a piece of machinery used at the Freedom Coal Mine.



Seventeen seventh- and eighth-graders from Maddock Public School received a lesson on how electricity is made before touring the facilities.



A young **Mark Frost** started working for Tri-County Electric in 1984.

Foreman Frost retires

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

Life is full of surprises and unexpected events. When Mark Frost graduated from Harvey High School, it wasn't his plan to go into the electrical utility business. Fast-forward to 2019, and Frost is hanging up his foreman's hardhat and retiring from a job that spanned more than 35 years.

Frost was attending University of North Dakota for wildlife management when the draft was taking place in 1971.

"I thought for sure my number was going to be called, so I quit school to prepare," Frost says.

While his number was not called, he had already quit school, so he found a new path in construction.

A couple years later, Frost and his wife, Corrine, found themselves moving to Carrington after Corrine took a job with the Carrington Public School as a

speech pathologist. Frost relooked at his future and decided to go back to school. This time, he attended Bismarck State College to become a lineworker.

After graduation, he was hired by Tri-County Electric Cooperative as a lineworker at the Woodworth outpost in 1984. He worked from Woodworth for 12 years until a position on the Carrington West crew became available in 1995. He later became the foreman of the Carrington West crew in 2012 until his retirement. Tri-County Electric Cooperative and Baker Electric Cooperative combined in 1997 to form Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC).

What drew Frost to a career as a lineworker was the benefit of working outdoors and the unknown of what each day will bring. "I've always enjoyed working outdoors,

even in the cold. It doesn't bother me," Frost says. "Every day here is different; you never know what will come up."

Frost could tell many stories of unexpected things that happened in the field during his many years as a lineworker. He shared the time when he and his crew were working on a line retirement in the winter a couple years back. They were removing poles on the ice when his truck broke through ice while he was inside.

"I got out through the window, just in the nick of time," Frost says. "That day could have turned out way worse than it did. I'm just thankful my crew was safe."

Frost is known for his sense of humor and for being a great teacher. He has enjoyed passing his knowledge to the apprentice lineworkers and crew over the years while always giving them a laugh. Frost added, "I wasn't just teaching. I was also learning. I would learn something new every day from the crew. The young guys really helped me on the new technologies, especially with the tablets we use today."

Teaching wasn't part of his career plan, but it always seemed to find him. Frost's love of hunting and fishing drew him into another avenue of teaching over the years for the N.D. Game and Fish Department. Frost served as a volunteer instructor teaching North Dakota hunters education to children and adults for more than 30 years. It was a volunteer career almost as long as his time with the cooperative.

As far as plans for his retirement, Frost is looking forward to spending more time with his wife, Corrine, who also just retired this May, and

their three sons and their families. He will also spend his time hunting, fishing and doing house projects, as he also enjoys carpentry.

"I knew what I was signing up for when I became a lineworker, but I'm really looking forward toward not having to worry if I will have to leave a family gathering because of an outage," he says. "But I will miss the satisfaction of putting on the lights, that's for sure."

Frost says he enjoyed his time with the cooperative and the friendships he has made over the years. "The camaraderie, that's what I will miss the most," he shares.

"His hard work and his sense of humor will be missed," said Ashten Dewald, engineering and operations manager of Northern Plains Electric. "He has been a go-to reference within the cooperative and he's always willing to lend a helping hand. He has been a leader and role model not

only for his Carrington crew, but for everyone he interacts with. He has represented the co-op well."

Thank you, Mark, for your years of service and good luck in your retirement! ■



Frost (right) works with the crew in all types of weather.



HEAD WEST FOR LESS

In partnership with the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, more than 10 Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives in North Dakota have joined forces to make vacationing in North Dakota more affordable for families, including Northern Plains Electric Cooperative. This summer, head west to Medora, where electric cooperative members are eligible for a 15-percent discount off the following reservations:

- ✓ Tickets to the Medora Musical
- ✓ Pitchfork Steak Fondue
- ✓ Bully Pulpit Golf Course

Lodging at any of the following:

- ✓ Badlands Motel
- ✓ Elkhorn Quarters
- ✓ Rough Riders Hotel

Members also receive 20 percent off at the Cowboy Hall of Fame by providing the discount code **Touch2019** at the door.

Northern Plains members, if you are traveling to beautiful Medora this summer, call 1-800-MEDORA-1 to provide the discount code **Touch2019**, make reservations and receive your savings.

DIY now, so you don't sweat this summer

Summertime usually means air-conditioning systems are working overtime, and regular maintenance of your unit will keep it running smoothly.

Annual maintenance can help improve your comfort and the efficiency of your air conditioning, while prolonging the life of your unit, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

An air conditioner's filters, coils and fins require regular maintenance for the unit to function effectively and efficiently throughout its years of service. Neglecting necessary maintenance ensures a steady decline in the unit's performance, while energy use steadily increases.

Follow these tips:

Check those filters

Replace or clean air filters every month. Clogged, dirty filters block normal airflow and reduce a system's efficiency significantly.

For central air conditioners, filters are generally located somewhere along the return duct's length. Common filter locations are in walls, ceilings, furnaces or in the air conditioner itself. Room air conditioners have a filter mounted in the grill that faces into the room. Some types of filters are reusable; others must be replaced. Filters may need more frequent attention if the air conditioner is in constant use, is subjected to dusty conditions or you have fur-bearing pets in the house.

Straighten the fins

If the coil's fins are bent, use a "fin comb" to straighten them. A "fin comb" tool will comb these fins back into nearly original condition.

Clean the coils

Check your air conditioner's evaporator coil every year and clean it as necessary. Minimize dirt and debris near the condenser unit. Your dryer vents, falling leaves and lawn mower are all potential sources of dirt and debris. Cleaning the area around the coil, removing any debris and trimming foliage back at least 2 feet allow for adequate airflow around the condenser.

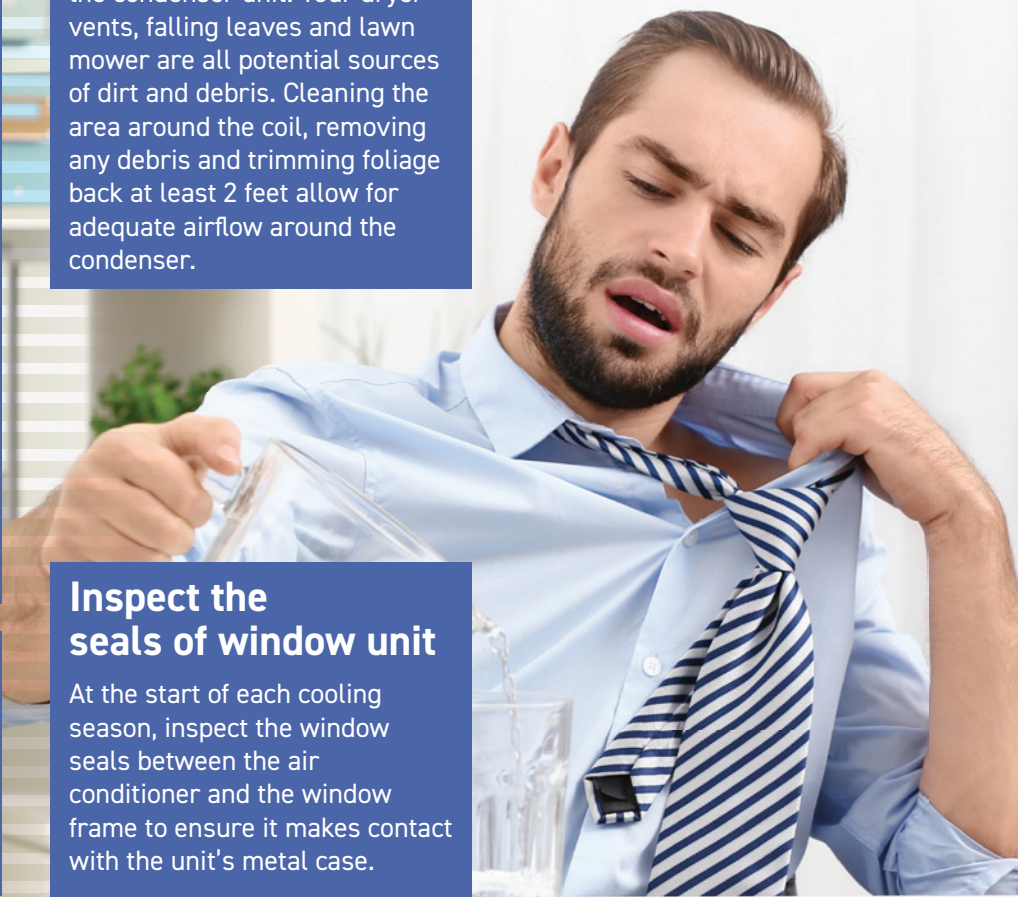
Inspect the seals of window unit

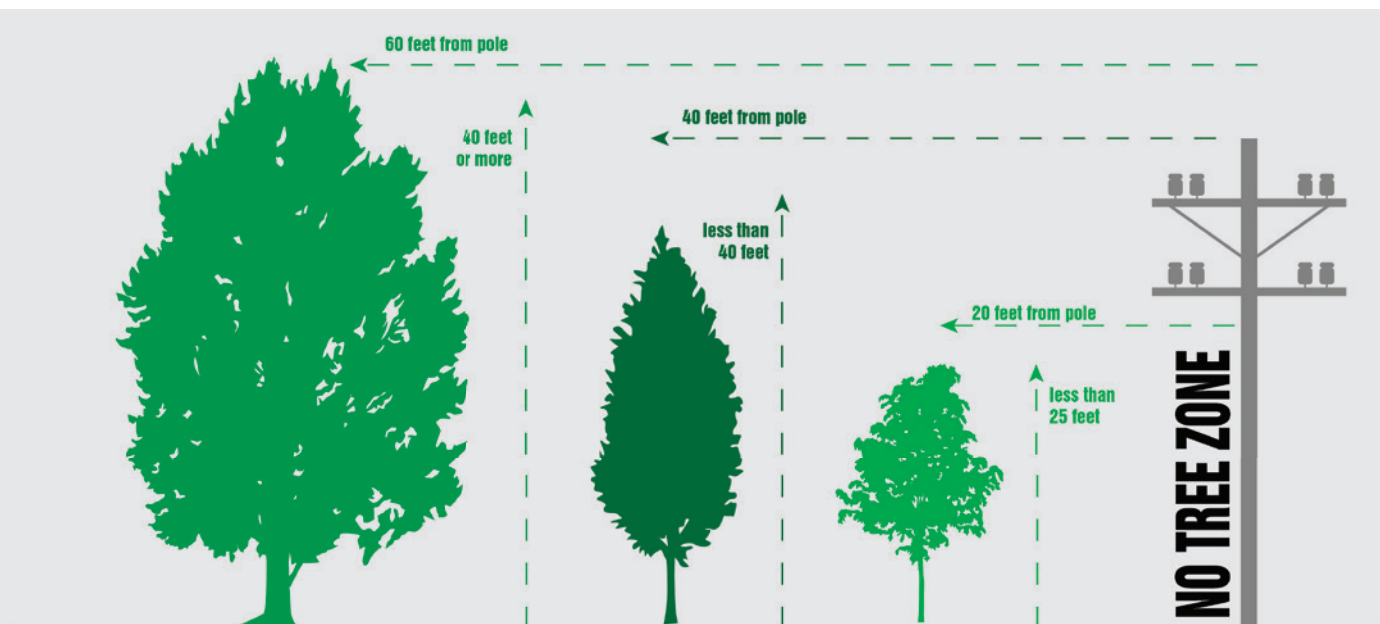
At the start of each cooling season, inspect the window seals between the air conditioner and the window frame to ensure it makes contact with the unit's metal case.

Hire a professional

When your air conditioner needs more than basic or regular maintenance, hire a professional service technician. The technician should:

- Check for correct amount of refrigerant.
- Test for refrigerant leaks.
- Capture any refrigerant that must be evacuated from the system.
- Check for and seal duct leakage in central systems.
- Measure airflow through the evaporator coil.
- Verify the correct electric control sequence and make sure that the heating system and cooling system cannot operate simultaneously.
- Inspect electric terminals, clean and tighten connections.
- Oil motors and check belts for tightness and wear.
- Check the accuracy of the thermostat.





Be safe!

**Always call 811
before you dig
to locate any
buried utility
lines.**



Tree trimming and clearing season is underway

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

Trees beautify our yards and neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard, especially to power lines.

Have you ever noticed your lights flicker or blink? This could be due to an overgrown tree branch swaying from the wind into a power line. When planting new trees, be aware of their predicted height/spread dimensions. Avoid planting within at least 20 feet of power lines for small trees and bushes such as crabapple or lilac. Plant medium trees such as dogwoods or Washington hawthorn at least 40 feet away and large trees like maple, oak or pine at least 60 feet from poles.

Every year, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) conducts tree trimming and

clearing maintenance along the right of way of distribution lines to provide safe and reliable electricity.

Bob David, who serves on NPEC's tree crew, has a busy schedule controlling the overgrowth under primary and secondary power lines. It is David's job to clear the right of way when the trees are at an early stage of development before tree limbs interfere with electrical service.

"Doing this also makes it possible for the linemen to get their maintenance truck to the line during winter outages," David says.

Keeping the trees trimmed will decrease outages and keep members safe.

Please **DO NOT** attempt to trim, prune or cut trees that are near overhead power lines. To report trees interfering with NPEC power line, please call our office at 1-800-882-2500. ■

Operation Round Up awards \$8,700 in grants



Operation Round Up wouldn't be possible without you, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members who generously elect to have their electric bill rounded up to the next dollar. The donated amount averages about 50 cents a month for each participating member, and raises approximately \$37,000 each year.

Since the program's beginning in October 1998, grants totaling \$768,462 have been awarded to 1,047 local charitable causes. Northern Plains is proud to serve the communities that come together to help one another in times of need.

At its June meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Operation Round Up board of directors approved 10 grants totaling \$8,700 to help support local worthy causes.

Grants approved in June include:

- Edward and Janet Hintz, Woodworth, to assist with medical expenses.

- Roger Lauckner, Carrington, to assist with medical expenses.
- Mandy Hoyt, McHenry, to assist with medical expenses.
- Tim and Nancy Krause, Bowdon, to assist with medical expenses.
- Harvey Volunteer Fire Department, expenses toward replacing SCBA/air packs
- Eventide Senior Living Communities, Jamestown, expenses toward purchasing power lift chairs for memory unit
- James River Figure Skating Club, Jamestown, expenses toward rental skates and annual ice show
- Jamestown Area Grief Support Team, expenses toward widows retreat
- American Legion 236, Wimbledon, expenses toward structural building update/converting to handicap accessible
- Cando Baseball organization/Association, expenses toward outfield repairs

Any person or group in the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative service area may apply to receive an Operation Round Up grant.

To request an application or to opt into the program, contact our business office at 1-800-882-2500 or download the form at our website www.nplains.com. The next applications are due Aug. 26. ■

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