

Care close to home

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

The words “miles matter” have been repeated over and over again around the Jamestown area. The “miles” refer to the travel oncology patients endure when they need treatment away from home.

“Those miles matter,” said Mike Delfs, CEO of Jamestown Regional Medical Center (JRMC). “Studies show cancer care is better close to home.”

In Stutsman County, cancer is the leading cause of death for individuals ages 45 to 84, according to the N.D. Department of Health. JRMC serves 55,000 people from nine counties, including Griggs, Wells, Logan, LaMoure, Eddy, Foster, Kidder, Barnes and Stutsman. More than 350 people in this region are diagnosed with cancer each year. Those same people travel more than 200 miles round trip for chemotherapy infusions and other cancer treatments. This may be a monthly, weekly or even daily trip.

“People in rural communities deserve access to state-of-the-art care close to home,” said JRMC’s Foundation Director Lisa Jackson.

The community voiced its opinion. The people wanted a cancer center and between 2016 and 2019, they donated the funds to make it happen, Jackson said.

Jamestown and the surrounding communities are not unlike the rural people of the late 1930s and early 1940s. Back then, rural America lived without electricity. Power companies were convinced they couldn’t make money serving the rural countryside, thus declining to power rural areas. So, across the country and North Dakota, rural people banded together to form electric cooperatives.

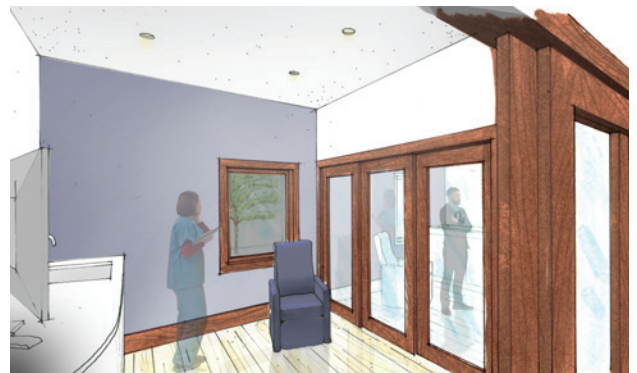
The tradition of working cooperatively to support a greater cause continues today in rural North Dakota.



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF JRMC

That's evident in JRMC Cancer Center's leading gift – a \$150,000 donation from another cooperative, North Dakota Farmers Union and Farmers Union Insurance.

The Care Journey

When JRMC built its new location in 2011, it dreamed of the day it could provide oncology care to the area, Delfs said.

Back then, Jamestown Hospital was landlocked in its 1929 building located in the city's downtown. For the hospital to offer services, including oncology, as well as orthopedics, urology, wound care and podiatry, it would have to move. It would also require the community's support.

Among the many donors was Northern Plains Electric Cooperative. Northern Plains and Basin Electric Power Cooperative

each made significant gifts in 2011. Today, JRMC resides on Touchstone Energy® Blvd.

Powered by Northern Plains Electric, JRMC is a 49,200-square-foot facility. Of those, 3,200 square feet is the new cancer center. The cancer center includes a welcome

center, two exam rooms and six infusion rooms for chemotherapy and other types of infusions. The JRMC Cancer Center has a multidisciplinary team of five health professionals with specific training in the most advanced techniques available for treating cancer. The center expects to serve





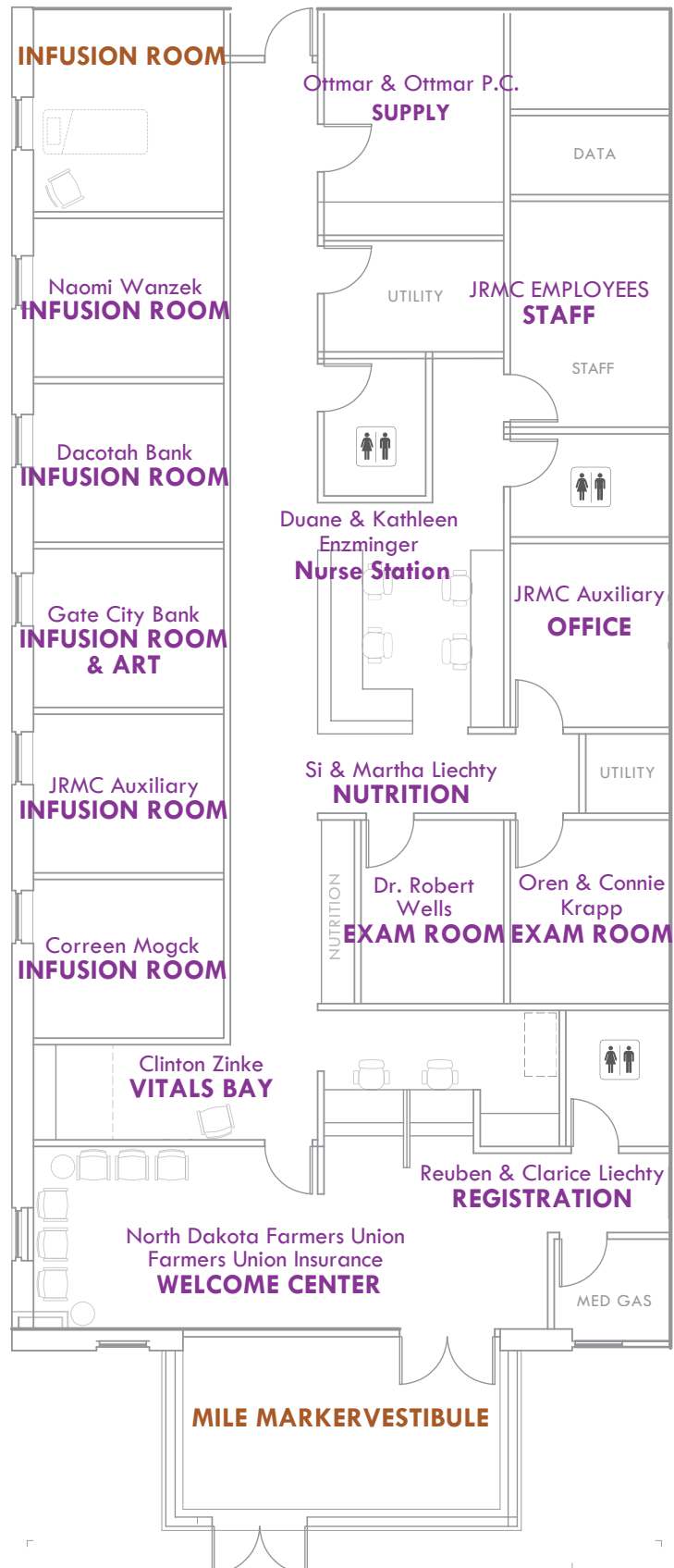
more than 100 patients a month, saving 160,000 miles of travel a year, according to JRM.

The JRM Cancer Center improves the quality of life for patients and their loved ones. This shows in the comfort of the welcome center and the thoughtfulness in the nutrition area available to patients and family. Of the six infusion rooms, one is equipped with a bed and the other five with a comfortable infusion chair.

“We deliver services in bright, welcoming infusion bays,” Jackson said. “Each room offers luxury sit-to-stand chairs for patients and comfortable seating for guests. Entertainment options include smart TVs with more than 150 TV and radio channels. Our naturally lit rooms are separated with sliding doors, so patients have the choice of socializing with others or receiving care in private.”

The JRM Cancer Center will open its doors in June 2019. A ribbon-cutting celebration is set for noon, Thursday, June 13, at JRM. This event is free and open to the public. It includes a light lunch, hope rock painting and self-guided cancer center tours.

To learn more about the JRM Cancer Center, call 701-952-1050 or visit www.jrmcnd.com/cancer. ■





These two students know why electric co-ops rock! **Sylvie Pate** (left) and **Kayla Nyhagen** were recognized at the meeting for both winning a Northern Plains/Basin Electric \$1,000 scholarship.

Northern Plains holds 23rd annual meeting

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

Annual meetings are all about uniting neighbors and friends to have an open conversation about ways we can work together to improve the quality of life in rural North Dakota. This meeting is a time to voice your opinions and also time to ask questions. YOUR involvement is important. Yes, we talk numbers and give reports to keep our members informed, but we mostly look forward to meeting our members face-to-face.

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members, their families and guests met at the Rocklake Community Center on Tuesday, April 23, for

the co-op's annual meeting. Those attending enjoyed a delicious roast beef meal prepared by Kim Krumwiede and staff from Rocklake Café.

To start the meeting, Jalin Haadem from Rolla High School sang the national anthem. A letter was read on behalf of Sen. Kevin Cramer by Randy Richards, northeast regional representative and policy advisor for Sen. Cramer.

Ross Myers, secretary of Operation Round Up, gave the members a year overview on grants distributed throughout our service area to

local charities and individuals of need. Myers shared that \$46,650 of grants were given in 2018. He



The Northern Plains board of directors took turns at the podium, addressing different aspects of 2018 Northern Plains affairs. Left to right: Treasurer **Randy Simon**, Vice President **Curtis Wiesz** and Director **Mark Brehm**.

thanked members for contributing and making a difference in our communities.

Members enjoyed hearing from this year's featured speaker, Josh Kramer, executive vice president and general manager at the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC). Josh touched on the services that NDAREC provides to the state's network of electric cooperatives, including Northern Plains. Some of those services include a monthly safety classes taught right at the cooperatives, employee training classes and conferences, government relations, economic development and the publishing of the *North Dakota Living* magazine.

Three Northern Plains directors took turns at the podium, giving updates on the 2018 year in different aspects of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative. Vice President Curtis Wiesz addressed a summery on sales, revenue and operations, which concluded on a successful year for Northern Plains.

Treasurer Randy Simon gave a brief overview of the financial reports. He reported that the cooperative has current assets of \$122,058,723, which includes our net electric plant of \$79,938,503. In 2018, the cooperative received revenues of \$42,604,961 from 11,699 meters. After expenses, the cooperative posted margins of \$6,173,736.

Director Mark Brehm, Northern Plains' representative on the Central Power Electric Cooperative board of directors, gave a power supply report. He updated members on Central Power's efforts to improve reliability and reduce cost. He shared that in 2018 Northern Plains received \$41,481 in capital credits from Central



Door prizes are always a highlight for members. Northern Plains billing assistant, **Shauna Olson** (right), helped hand out more than \$500 in cash prizes. Each member who attended the meeting also went home with a complimentary Northern Plains tote.

Power, as well as \$406,681 in a year-end rebate/bill credit from Central Power.

Wiesz concluded the meeting by giving a special recognition to the Northern Plains employees who retired this past year. He also thanked all Northern Plains employees for

their hard work and dedication. Lastly, he expressed a huge thank you to those members who attended the annual meeting, for their voices and their continued support.

Thank you for attending our annual meeting!



Guest speaker, **Josh Kramer**, executive vice president and general manager of the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC), addressed Northern Plains members on the services that NDAREC provides.

Northern Plains hires journeyman



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative welcomes Jamie Harrington to the team. Jamie, originally from Wing, attended lineworker school at

Bismarck State College, graduating with his lineworker certificate in 1999.

From college, Jamie worked as an apprentice lineworker and then journeyman lineworker for city-owned utilities in Litchfield, M.N. and Groton, S.D. Jamie found his way back to Bismarck, where he owned and operated an overhead and underground trenching and boring business for six years.

Jamie is excited to join Northern Plains Electric and to start this new chapter in his life as a lineworker at the Cando outpost. He enjoys being outside and working with good people. Self-described as laid back, you can find him on the weekends camping, on the pontoon, playing

softball and spending time with his four kids and wife, Darielle.

Jamie follows a long heritage of lineworkers. His grandfather, Earl Harrington, and his uncle, Scott Harrington, both worked for Tri-County Electric Cooperative in Carrington as lineworkers. Scott, who also worked in dispatch, was a part of the transition when Tri-County Electric and Baker Electric combined in 1997 to form Northern Plains Electric. His dad, Steve Harrington, also a lineworker, currently works for Capital Electric Cooperative in Bismarck.

With 20 years of power line industry under his belt, Jamie brings a lot of knowledge and experience to the cooperative. ■



Pole testing to take place

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative has contracted RAM Utilities LLC to do pole testing this spring. The company will be working around our Belcourt service territory for several weeks.

“Approximately 7,200 of our poles will be tested,” says Northern Plains Engineering and Operations Manager Ashten Dewald. Testing distribution poles is one of the many ways Northern Plains maintains the system, reinforcing reliable electrical service to our members.

The inspection will consist of RAM team members accessing all cooperative distribution lines using pickups and ATV’s, and testing each pole for rot or other damage. Any compromised poles will be changed later this year by Northern Plains Electric.

We thank our members for their understanding as we work to make the system as reliable as possible. ■



Summer safety on the farm

Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity to hardworking farmers and ranchers, but those same power lines can also be deadly if not treated with respect. While you need to focus on the field and your machinery, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative urges you to also watch for electrical hazards around the farm or ranch.

Here, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative offers some tips for electrical safety this summer:

Be safe using irrigation equipment

Irrigation systems are important to farms. However, they carry many risks that farmers should know how to manage. Safe Electricity has the following information for farmers to keep in mind.

- Do not raise irrigation pipes into the air near power lines. Look up and be aware of your surroundings. Position irrigation pipes at least 15 feet away from power lines.
- Remember, water and electricity are a dangerous mix. Do not allow irrigation water nozzles to spray onto power lines. A water stream hitting a power line could energize the entire system.
- Take some time to survey your surroundings before moving equipment. Always know the location of nearby electrical lines when working with irrigation equipment.
- Make sure that irrigation system wiring is properly grounded. Before the start of each irrigation season, have a qualified electrician check the pump and wiring.
- If an irrigation pipe comes into contact with a power line, never try to remove it yourself. Stay away from it and call Northern Plains Electric Cooperative for help.

Follow these other tips

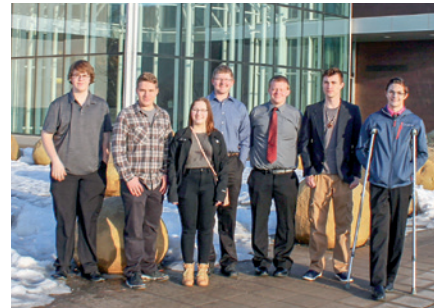
Regardless of what technology is used on the farm, keep the following electrical safety guidelines in mind:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines. A driver's vantage point from the cab may not be sufficient.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines, at all times, in all directions.
- Look up and use care when raising any equipment such as ladders, front-end loaders or augers.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact Northern Plains Electric Cooperative.

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A group of 27 junior and seniors from North Star High School visited our state capital and North Dakota Heritage Center on March 11.



Seven juniors and seniors from Wolford High School pose in front of the North Dakota Heritage Center on March 27 after visiting the state capital.

Students visit the Legislature

Rural electric cooperatives were born in government. More than 75 years later, with the assistance of government agencies, programs and officials, we continue to power the countryside today.

Understanding of, and involvement in, government is critical to our success and the successes of the communities we serve. That's why Northern Plains Electric

Cooperative's board of directors encourages our local students to visit the state capital and view the North Dakota Legislature.

Recognizing that school budgets are often tight, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative donates \$100 to any high school in the cooperative's service area that takes a group of students to the state Capitol to view North Dakota's legislative process in action.

This year, two area high schools took the trip to Bismarck to view the 66th Assembly of the House and Senate – North Star High School and Wolford High School. Each school toured the state capital, meet with their district representatives and toured the North Dakota Heritage Center. A few students from each school were even selected to sit on the Legislature floor during the session. ■

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