



Do your part to make this harvest season a safe and healthy one!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Keep poles free of attachments
- A moment of freedom
- Grants awarded
- Check that breaker!

SEPTEMBER 2019

It's easy to get distracted or caught up in the whirlwind of harvest. Northern Plains Electric Cooperative wants to remind farmers during this harvest to rest and take breaks. For you to stay safe, you must remain alert. When doing fieldwork:

- Take short breaks throughout the day. Get out of the tractor/combine to stretch.
- Stay hydrated and pack nutritious snacks or meals so you have energy to complete the day's work.
- Stay off electronics that can easily distract you when operating machinery.
- Always know the width and height of your equipment, including antennas.
- Look up and pay attention to overhead power lines.
- Stay at least 10 feet away from all electrical equipment and power poles.

NDAREC hires Koenig as safety instructor

Twenty-three years of climbing poles and restoring outages will serve as valuable experience for this former employee.

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) hired Mike Koenig in 1996 as a lineworker for the Woodworth outpost. He moved to the Glenfield outpost before he landed in Carrington, where he has been on the line crew for the past 15 years.

Recently, he joined the staff at the co-op's statewide organization, the North Dakota Association of Rural

Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC). He will work as one of NDAREC's safety instructors. Safety instructors visit electric cooperatives throughout the state, sharing best safety practices and teaching them how to use new equipment.

"Mike has represented the co-op well and has always held job safety as the highest priority," said NPEC's Operations and Engineering Manager Ashten Dewald. "I believe he will do very well as a safety instructor and be a great representative for NDAREC." ■



Mike Koenig

Petersen named line crew foreman for Carrington West

Shannon Petersen has been named line crew foreman for the Carrington West outpost at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC).

Petersen, a journeyman lineworker, has worked for Northern Plains for eight years out of the Carrington West outpost. Petersen will resume duties held by Mark Frost, who retired in July. In his new position, Petersen will

be responsible for providing field supervision and assuring safety practices for himself and the Carrington West crew.

"Shannon will step into this role with ease. He knows the area well and has shown he will be a good leader," said NPEC's operations supervisor Danny Schuchard.

Congratulations, Shannon, and good luck in your new position! ■



Shannon Petersen

DON'T WAIT!

If you are in need of new services or would like to upgrade your line, please get your request into Northern Plains Electric sooner than later to ensure fitting it into our short construction season. Call **1-800-882-2500** today.

**NORTHERN
PLAINS** Electric Cooperative
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

KEEP POLES FREE OF ATTACHMENTS!

Put yourself in their boots. It's windy, raining and dark. And lineworkers have to climb a power pole with nails imbedded into it. Or a birdhouse or another obstacle hangs from the pole, creating another hazard for a lineworker.

Signs, satellite dishes, flags, deer stands or other attachments to power poles create serious safety hazards for lineworkers. Attached objects make the poles extremely hazardous – and sometimes impossible – for lineworkers to climb to restore power or to perform routine maintenance.

Staples, nails and tacks used to hang items pose dangers to lineworkers, too. Sharp objects like nails, tacks, staples or barbed wire can puncture rubber gloves and other safety equipment, making lineworkers vulnerable to electrocution.

It only takes a nail partially driven into a pole to cause serious injury to a lineworker. Nail holes also allow moisture to enter wooden poles, causing premature decay and the expense of early replacement.

Lineworkers climb utility poles at all hours of the day and night, in the worst of conditions. Signs, posters, basketball rims, birdhouses or deer stands attached to utility poles can create serious hazards for our line personnel.

Step into the lineworker's boots! Please be respectful of co-op equipment and property. ■



CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!

Planting a tree? Installing a fence? Remember to contact North Dakota One Call first! The first step to any project is safety, and damaging an underground facility while you dig can cause injury or even death.

Numerous utility lines may be buried on your property, ranging from electric and telephone lines to water and sewer lines, but North Dakota One Call will help you locate these lines before your project begins.

Contact North Dakota One Call and utility line owners will locate and mark their lines. These locates do not include any lines you may have installed to your private facilities, such as detached garages, wells or yard lights.

Go online at www.ndonecall.com or call **800-795-0555** or **811**.

It's free, it's simple and it's the law.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS BY B. A. PHOTOGRAPHY

Side walking alongside a young rider is president and founder **Annie Keffeler** (left) and barn manager **Tracey Trapp** (right). Program director **Kelli Connolly** (front right) leads the horse.

A moment of freedom

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

After many years of persistence, training and a lot of support from their community, Annie Keffeler and Kelli Connolly's dream of providing an equine-assisted riding program in the Jamestown area is finally a reality.

It started back in 2013, when Keffeler was working at a residential and school facility for individuals with special needs. She recognized the area's need and her desire to start an equine riding program

that would benefit individuals with special needs. As a published children's author, Keffeler has always been ingrained with the need to help others, especially children. She couldn't ignore what was pulling her into philanthropy.

"I had this incredible urge to start looking into riding programs and I started finding contacts and asking questions," Keffeler said.

Connolly, who has been involved with horses her entire life, happened to contact Keffeler's

place of work, looking to volunteer with an equine riding program, then finding out there wasn't one. However, Connolly's contact information was passed along to Keffeler. Shortly after they met, they joined forces.

"We clicked from the beginning," Keffeler said.

Together, they operate "A Moment of Freedom" (AMOF), a nonprofit 501c3 program that utilizes the therapeutic benefits of horses, along with a volunteer support staff, in an attempt to provide a sense of freedom, relaxation and happiness for their riders with special needs.

Bringing together their own expertise, president and founder Keffeler has many years of experience working with individuals with special needs and program director Connolly has a lifelong love and understanding of horses.

The program is located a mile east of Buchanan, using the farm of Keffeler and her husband Ryan as a resource. The program is open to individuals as young as 4 years old.

Getting the program operating has been a long time coming. Both Keffeler and Connolly spent multiple summers working alongside the people of the SPURS Therapeutic Center in Aberdeen, S.D., gaining knowledge and experience about how the classes operate and the behind-the-scenes details.

Keffeler and Connolly did not rush the process. It took years of fundraising and time to ensure all proper protocols were taken and every avenue was ventured. Connolly has logged many teaching hours, and attended courses and schooling to become certified as a riding instructor.

After countless hours of planning,

preparing and training, AMOF's first rider got into the saddle Aug. 1. For now, classes will be kept small until they get a rhythm and fluidity with the classes, volunteers and horses. Currently, AMOF has five horses that all have been trained by Connolly, barn manager, Tracey Trapp, and the volunteers.

"We have been blessed with a wonderful group of volunteers that do the behind-the-scenes work and a great group of folks who side walk and work with our riders and our horses," Keffeler said.

Each hour-long lesson requires at least three volunteers: one horse handler and two side walkers to guide the rider through courses, trails and tasks. When riders are in the saddle, they must focus on balance and controlling the horse, which uses almost every muscle in their body. Dependent upon the rider's skill level, they may be tasked with tacking the horses, which can help develop and refine fine motor skills. The hope is for the rider to continually learn safety, responsibility, improve coordination and boost self-esteem.

Equine-assisted services help with not only sensory issues and muscle control, they help balance one physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually as well.

Keffeler explained, "Horses have an incredible ability to know our needs. They are humble enough to allow their four legs to carry those who may or may not be able to use their two. A lot of people just connect to a horse's presence, their smell, their eyes, the noises they make. You could be having the worst day, but just being near them can ground you. Sometimes, the healing powers of horses are hard to describe, it just simply is."

Connolly added, "Horses are highly alert to human emotions.

It wasn't until I got involved with AMOF, did I really think about how much the horses have helped me. When I ride, I usually go out with the intent of getting the horse to move in a certain way with my cues. And it usually goes as planned, but when it doesn't, it makes me stop and think about what I am doing wrong, not necessarily what the horse is doing wrong."

"They have helped me think more about my actions toward others and also how my mood can have a big effect on how things will go," she added.

Alongside directing AMOF, Connolly is a wife and mother, works part time in a dental office and at a soil conservation district, while she still has time to provide equine massage and lessons through her personal business, On Tap Equine Services LLC.

AMOF looks to continually grow and hopes by 2020 to have sessions from June through September,

depending on the waiting list and volunteer numbers. One of their goals is to establish an endowment fund for families who may not be able to afford services. This would give families an opportunity to apply for a scholarship or a "ridership" program for assistance.

It takes continuous fundraisers, donations and volunteers to keep AMOF operating and it would not be possible without the support of the community. Many supporters turned out for their second annual barn dance that included a meal, silent auction and deejay. On Nov. 23, they will be holding their third annual home-crafter and vendor show at the Larson Center on the University of Jamestown campus. Anyone interested in hosting a booth can contact amomentoffreedom@outlook.com or 701-320-3543.

To follow along with their journey, like "A Moment of Freedom" on Facebook. ■





The Bisbee Rural Fire District received \$7,500 toward the purchase of a Polaris Ranger equipped with firefighting apparatus to attack wildland grass fires.

Northern Plains and partners award grants totaling \$20,000

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is proud to announce the recipients of the 2019 CoBank's Sharing Success matching grant program and Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Charitable Giving Program.

Three nonprofit organizations which contribute to the communities of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative service area

were awarded:

- Bisbee Rural Fire District, \$7,500
- Maddock EDC, \$7,500
- Metigoshe Ministries, Bottineau, \$5,000

All three organizations received \$2,500 from Northern Plains and a matching \$2,500 from CoBank. Maddock EDC and Bisbee Rural Fire District also received a matching \$2,500 from Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

The Sharing Success matching grant program is a partnership among Northern Plains Electric Cooperative and CoBank. CoBank is a cooperative lending institution that provides loans and other financial services to vital industries throughout rural America, including agribusiness, water, communications and power

providers. The Sharing Success program was designed to celebrate the vital role that cooperatives play in individual communities across the country.

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 Northern Plains Electric Cooperative. Basin Electric Power Cooperative's charitable giving program exists to distribute funds to a wide range of programs for the greatest social and economic benefit for the cooperative's membership, employees and communities. With restrictions, churches and/or religious groups do not qualify under the purpose





The Maddock EDC received \$7,500 toward building a new concession stand with bathroom facilities located at the Maddock baseball diamond. Pictured are some T-ball players taking a break on the newly poured cement slab before construction started.

of the program being available toward organizations that serve a broader community.

The Bisbee Rural Fire District was awarded \$7,500 toward the purchase of a 2007 Polaris Ranger equipped with firefighting apparatus to attack wildland grass fires. The Ranger will be a mutual aid with other fire departments in Rolette and Towner counties.

The Bisbee RFD is made up of 18 volunteer firefighters. About 80 percent of its fire calls are grassland fires. Its service area covers roughly 450 square miles, including the towns of Bisbee and Perth.

The Maddock EDC was awarded \$7,500 toward the construction of a 32x32 concession stand with bathroom facilities located at the Maddock baseball diamond that will also serve the football field.

This past summer, 45 children, ages 4 through 13, participated in the Maddock baseball program that hosted many games against visiting towns from around the Northern Plains service area.

The main goal of the Maddock EDC is to improve the economic wellbeing of its community by assisting with job creation and the retention of existing businesses,

while improving the quality of life for everyone. It looks to engage in projects that enhance the community. The new facilities will be a major upgrade from the previous concession stand that was an old building with marginal utilities and no indoor plumbing.

Metigoshe Ministries was awarded \$5,000 toward

construction to expand its facilities due to an increasing demand for conference space and retreat group accommodations and a larger numbers of summer campers.

Metigoshe Ministries provides opportunities for all ages to participate in outdoor ministry, retreats and conferences, both at Camp Metigoshe and at the Lakeside Christian Center on Lake Metigoshe. Each summer, more than 2,500 youth and families participate in camp programs and nearly 8,000 guests participate annually in events and retreats. The majority of campers and guests who attend Metigoshe Ministries events come from the area Northern Plains Electric Cooperative serves, such as Rugby, Belcourt, Rolla, Cando, Fessenden and many other communities. These new spaces will allow Metigoshe Ministries to serve people for generations to come.

Congratulations to these deserving organizations! ■



The Metigoshe Ministries received \$5,000 toward construction to expand its facilities due to an increased number of summer campers and an increasing demand for accommodations and conference spaces.



Do you have electric heat? Check that breaker!

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members with a separate electric heat meter will receive a special rate on their heat from Oct. 1 through April 30. All electric heat registered within this timeframe will be at a cheaper rate. However, to take advantage of the special rate, the breaker must be turned on to record kilowatts. Often, members turn off their breaker to their heat meter through the summer months and forget to turn it back on heading into fall. If the breaker is

off to the meter, the meter will not register, therefore the member will not be credited for the electric heat and will not get the special rate.

To get the special rate, the heat system must be hardwired into your load center by a qualified electrician. If your main source of heat is electric and you are interested in the special rate, please contact our office. For the members already receiving the special rate, don't forget to check your breaker! ■

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