



A LOCAL MUST-SEE: **Slope County Dinner Theater**

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

With holidays wrapped up and the winter weather still in full force, North Dakotans can start to get a bit antsy around the house. Snow forts and watching movies are a great way to take in the winter weather but sometimes getting out of the house is just what a person needs. Events like the Slope County Dinner Theater give residents something to look forward to during the cold, wet months of winter.

“The dinner theater is a nice break for people in our community to step away from reality for a bit and enjoy themselves,” notes Lynelle Jacobson, Slope County Farmers Fair treasurer.

The highly anticipated event brings in a diverse crowd from around the state, including current and past residents, family

members and more. Regardless of where they drive from, the event is a fun filled night for all. The Slope County Dinner Theater is a fundraiser for the Slope County Farmers Fair which hosts the Slope County Fair each year. The funds raised then benefit the Slope County Fair, the longest continuous running fair in North Dakota. This year’s play is a murder mystery comedy *Poetic License to Kill* by Edith Weiss and is scheduled for Feb. 10, 16 and 17.

“The audience can expect a laugh-out-loud comedy while trying to figure out whodunnit,” says Lyndsey Erickson, director of the Slope County Dinner Theater.

For those who purchase tickets, the evening out begins with a play, where the cast is filled with many familiar faces. The actors and

continued on next page

Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

OUTLOOK

116 E. 12th St. • New England, ND 58647 | 701-579-4191 • www.slopeelectric.coop

In this issue:

- Board position open
- Scholarships available
- Apply for Youth Tour

continued from previous page

actresses also serve playgoers their prime rib dinner and dessert. The demand to see the show is so well received that they put on three shows spanning over three evenings in February.

The play's production is cast with local talent in the Slope County area. Many of the cast members have been part of the dinner theater and the summer's fair show for over 10 years. Erickson says they have a strong crew of returning talent and try to work in new members each year to help with retention of the event. The cast is co-directed by Erickson and Donald Nordby.

"We are grateful for the dedication of the cast and all the laughs, the cast has just as much fun on stage as the audience does watching them," says Erickson.

The event is a prime example of getting all hands-on deck to make the evening go as smoothly as possible. Everyone volunteers their time from the cast to community members who get together to bake, cook and serve the meal. The Amidon Fire Department cooks and prepares the main meal, a prime rib supper.

"We live in a small community, but everyone steps up and helps where it is needed," says Jacobson.

Tickets go on sale for this year's Slope County Dinner

Theater in early January and are only advertised on the Slope County Fair Facebook page. ■



Slope Electric wants to hear from you!

Slope Electric Cooperative will be conducting a member engagement survey from February through March. This member engagement survey aims to gather feedback and insights from members of Slope Electric regarding their experiences, satisfaction levels and suggestions for improvement.

There are multiple ways to participate:

- Watch for the printed survey enclosed with your February bill.
- Access the survey online via our social media channels or website.

- Opt for a phone survey, scheduled for March.

Rest assured, your privacy is our priority. Your responses will remain confidential, anonymized and aggregated for analysis purposes only. Your valuable input will help us improve without compromising your privacy. No information will be shared externally.

As a gesture of appreciation for your valuable input, participants who choose to provide their contact information will also be entered into a giveaway for a chance to win a set of high-quality jumper cables. ■

Slope Electric makes saving money easy!

Slope Electric Cooperative is now making it even easier to save on your electric bill with SmartHub! All members who receive paperless statements only will receive a \$1 credit for each month enrolled. In addition, members who sign up for an automatic withdrawal

through their bank account will also receive a \$1 credit for each month enrolled. The savings will show up once a year on your bill. To learn more about the benefits of SmartHub, visit www.slopeelectric.coop/ways-pay. ■



MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Reliable power for today and tomorrow



Travis Kupper

Ring in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the co-general manager/ CEO of Slope Electric

Cooperative, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we are going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at Slope Electric is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering – and empowering – our service area at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across Slope Electric's territory. You may not realize it, but Slope Electric doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy providers, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Upper Missouri Power Cooperative and the Western Area Power Administration. From there, we distribute power to homes and businesses throughout our communities.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but

we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power is available to our members whenever they need it.

Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) enables two-way communication between the co-op and members. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps Slope Electric save money with real-time data and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire area.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is by monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric cooperatives in North Dakota and across the country. Learning from other cooperatives is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model, because it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we begin 2024, Slope Electric will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve – for today and tomorrow. ■

POWERING ON: SLOPE ELECTRIC'S CALENDAR

JAN. 5	POPCORN NIGHT Hettinger/Scranton vs. Bowman County basketball game 7 p.m., Scranton High School	
JAN. 16	NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING 10:30 a.m., New England office	
JAN. 18	OPERATION ROUND UP APPLICATION DEADLINE Scan QR code for more information	
JAN. 19	YOUTH TOUR APPLICATION DEADLINE Scan the QR code for more information.	
JAN. 24	MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENING Slope County fairgrounds, Amidon	
JAN. 31	SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE Scan QR code for more information.	
FEB. 1	MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY BEGINS Watch for your February bill, Slope Electric social media and future <i>North Dakota Living</i> issues.	
FEB. 15	MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENING Senior Center, Regent	
FEB. 29	NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING 9 a.m., New England office	
MARCH 8	PETITION NOMINATIONS DEADLINE Petitions are due to the New England office by end of day.	

HELP POWER THE FUTURE:

Join the Slope Electric Board of Directors

Slope Electric Cooperative, is seeking a director to fill a vacancy come June 2024 specifically for Slope County. Ensuring representation across all the counties Slope Electric serves is essential to the success of our cooperative, and we're eager to ensure your county and communities are well represented in this vital role.

As a potential board member, you'll have the opportunity to contribute to the direction and decisions of Slope Electric. Some of the responsibilities include:

- **Monthly board meetings:** The board convenes once a month to discuss and decide on matters crucial to our cooperative's operations, development and growth.
- **Ongoing training opportunities:** Continuous learning is crucial. Board members have access to additional training sessions to enhance their knowledge and skills in governance and utility management.

We highly value the commitment of our board

members. To show our appreciation, we compensate them for their time and travel expenses.

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity or know someone who might be a perfect fit, we invite you to attend our upcoming membership appreciation event from 5 to 7 p.m. Jan. 24 in Amidon. This event will provide an excellent platform to meet with our current directors, ask questions and gain a deeper understanding of the responsibilities and expectations associated with serving on the board.

Your engagement and participation are vital to the success and representation of Slope County within Slope Electric. Join us in making a difference in our cooperative and community.

For further details or inquiries, please do not hesitate to reach out to Brooke Waltner at 701-579-4191, the Nominating Committee or current directors. Thank you for your dedication and support for Slope Electric. We look forward to seeing you at our membership appreciation event. ■

You're Invited

MEMBER APPRECIATION OPEN HOUSE



At Slope Electric, we believe in the power of membership and this event is a way for us to say thank you for being part of ours.

Come enjoy food prepared by the Amidon Fire Department and visit with our board of directors, CEOs, staff as well as other members. Members will also receive a FREE gift.



5 - 7 P.M. ON JAN. 24, 2024



SLOPE COUNTY FAIRGROUND, AMIDON



**CAN'T MAKE IT? JOIN US IN REGENT ON FEB. 15, 2024.
MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW.**



SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Snow removal

As winter weather continues, we want to remind Slope Electric Cooperative members to stay safe around electrical equipment. You've seen the "big green boxes" in your area, but have you wondered what they are? These boxes are known as pad-mounted transformers and are crucial for converting electricity to a voltage that is safe for use in homes and local businesses.

"Pad-mounted transformers are crucial for power, but they can pose a dangerous risk if appropriate precautions are not taken," says Cody Braaten, a line technician at Slope Electric.

"Think of it like this: Just as there are power lines above the ground, there are also power lines below the ground. These underground lines connect to transformers, which are like power hubs. The transformers get power from high-voltage lines and then send it in different directions to homes and businesses through secondary lines. When clearing snow, be careful around underground cabinets and transformers, because messing with them could damage the hidden power lines," he says.

It is important to carefully remove snow around the pad-mounted transformers.

"Snow can sometimes make these pieces of equipment hard to detect, making snow removal more dangerous," Braaten says. "Be sure to know the location, if near one, to make snow removal safe and easy."

Safety Starts with Me (and YOU)!

Use these tips to keep you and your family safe around pad-mounted transformers:

- **Mark the location of pad-mounted transformers.** If you have a pad-mounted transformer in your area, mark its location with a flag or reflector to alleviate accidents when removing snow.
- **Carefully remove snow around pad-mounted transformer.** Snow piled on electrical equipment can impact your safety and electric service to your home. In the event of an outage, having the pad-mounted transformers cleared of any snow will make it easier for lineworkers to restore power.
- **Never touch, climb or play near or on a pad-mounted transformer.** It is important to inform children to never play on "the big green box."



- **Keep the area around a pad-mounted transformer clear of any obstructions.** A 10-foot radius is recommended. This includes trees, shrubs or other obstructions. This distance allows for lineworkers to maneuver around the transformer with their equipment if needed.
- **Do not dig around a pad-mounted transformer.** Always call 811 before you dig. Below the transformers are pad-mounted lines that can cause damage to you and the electrical system if hit.
- **Report any damaged or unlocked transformer to your local cooperative.** If you notice anything odd about the equipment, call Slope Electric at 800-559-4191.

"At Slope Electric, we want to provide you with electricity as well as protect your livelihood," Braaten says. We hope you and your loved ones will take these tips into consideration when removing snow to stay safe this winter. ■

APPLY FOR A TRIP OF A LIFETIME

WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

- An all-expense-paid trips to Washington, D.C., paid for by Slope Electric Cooperative.
- A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world class museums, learning about electric cooperatives and meeting elected officials.
- Developing lifelong friendships with delegates from across the country!



JUNE 15 TO 21, 2024
TWO ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIPS TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

HOW TO APPLY

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school, and you and your parents or guardian must be served by Slope Electric Cooperative.
- Email entries to Brooke Waltner at bwaltner@slopeelectric.coop or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, 116 E. 12th St., P.O. Box 338, New England, ND, 58647-0338.
- Questions? Call Brooke at 701-579-2252 during regular business hours.
- **The deadline is Jan. 19, 2024.**

LEARN MORE AT NDYOUTHTOUR.COM





2024 SCHOLARSHIPS

DEADLINE: JAN. 31

Download Application

\$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship

Slope Electric will award a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Basin Electric. The scholarship will be awarded to a high school senior or college freshman already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program, and who is a dependent of a Slope Electric member. The student must attend an accredited two- or four-year program, university or vocational/tech school. A completed application is required.

Luck-of-the-draw scholarship

Slope Electric will award two \$500 and three \$1,000 luck-of-the-draw scholarships at the annual meeting. Anyone enrolled or planning to enroll

part time or full time at an accredited two- or four-year program, university or vocational/tech school and is in attendance at the annual meeting is eligible. If a student is under 18 years old, his or her parent or guardian, who is a Slope Electric member, must be in attendance.

Lineworker scholarship from 3C Construction

Slope Electric will award a \$500 scholarship sponsored by 3C Construction. Eligible students are high school seniors who are enrolled in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a lineworker and who are dependents of a Slope Electric member. A completed application is required.

Mechanic scholarship from West Dakota Utility Services

Slope Electric will award a \$500 scholarship sponsored by WDUS. Eligible students are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a mechanic, and who are dependents of a Slope Electric member. A completed application is required.



**Applications can be filled out online and emailed to comments@slopeelectric.coop, or printed and mailed to:
Slope Electric Cooperative
Attn: Scholarship Committee, 116 East 12th St, P.O. Box 338
New England, ND 58647**

All applicants must have a parent or guardian who is a Slope Electric member.

Slope Electric board meeting highlights: **Oct. 26, 2023**

The October meeting of the board of directors of Slope Electric Cooperative was held on Oct. 26, 2023, at the cooperative's headquarters in New England. President Steven Wegner called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Slope Electric's Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz was designated as the meeting recorder. A board quorum was met. Also present were Co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar, Operations Manager Dean Volk, Manager of Member Relations Brooke Waltner, and Executive Assistant and Board Liaison Connie Hill. The meeting commenced with a review of the mission statement, followed by an invocation.

Consent agenda: There was an addition to the consent agenda. The agenda was approved as amended. The Sept. 28, 2023, meeting minutes were also approved.

Strategic/action: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates from Upper Missouri Power Cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships Program. Reports from West Dakota Utility Services, 3C Construction and the Basin

Electric CEO were also provided for the board to review.

Department reports: Craigmile reviewed the September 2023 financial reports with the board. Volk provided a report, with details on line maintenance, new service requests and getting equipment ready for the winter season. Waltner presented a report, which included member engagement opportunities over the month, future member appreciation meetings and annual meeting options. Dunbar provided a report and discussed updates being worked on with the board as well as cybersecurity tips. Grosz gave a legal counsel report, which included projects she is working on for the cooperative.

Action items: The board reviewed and approved the 2023 capital credit general retirement.

Discussion/general information: Board member reports, a preliminary 2024 annual budget, a Nominating Committee appointment reminder and upcoming meetings and events were shared.

The meeting concluded with the adjournment. Secretary Angela Carlson certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting date is set for Nov. 16, 2023, at the cooperative's headquarters in New England. ■



116 E. 12th St. - PO Box 338
New England, ND 58647-0338

Phone: 701-579-4191
or 800-559-4191
Fax: 701-579-4193

Email us:
comments@slopeelectric.coop
UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES
800-795-0555 or 811

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Steven Wegner, President
Anthony Larson, Vice President
Angela Carlson, Secretary
Henry "Chip" Fischer, Treasurer
Jerome Caron, Director
Dale Hande, Director
Lauren Klewin, Director
Charlotte Meier, Director

MANAGEMENT

Jason Bentz
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper
CO-GM/CEO

www.slopeelectric.coop



Become a fan of Slope Electric Cooperative to learn timely co-op news!

*Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.
is an equal opportunity provider.*

Heads up!

The 2023 capital credit retirement checks from Slope Electric have been mailed. Be sure to cash them before March 31. Time's ticking!