



Sarsland wins trip to Washington, D.C.

BY ANNE HANSEN

For Caleb Sarsland, a student at Bowman County High School, an opportunity to travel and learn about our nation's capital persuaded him to apply for the Youth Tour.

"I was interested in the Youth Tour, because I've never been to the nation's capital and it is an opportunity of a lifetime," Sarsland said.

His knowledge, research and time spent writing an

essay won him an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., through the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Each year, Slope Electric Cooperative holds a contest to select one local high school sophomore or junior to attend the Youth Tour. The winner travels with other North Dakota teens, and joins 1,400 students from across the

Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

OUTLOOK

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

In this issue:

- Highway 21 Treasure Hunt June 17-18
- Manager's message: Safety above all else
- Safety Starts with ME

nation during the Youth Tour. Participants will learn about cooperatives, visit with legislators at the Capitol, see the national monuments and make memories that will last a lifetime.

"I am looking forward to meeting new people and just bringing in everything the experience has to offer. I'm so excited. I can't wait to bring it all in!" he said.

Meet Caleb

Caleb is the son of Slope Electric Cooperative members Curt and Jennifer Sarsland.

"We live kind of in the middle of nowhere on a ranch – and I love it," Caleb said.

Caleb stays involved in his community and in many extracurricular activities, including cross-country, wrestling, and track and field. In addition, he coaches baseball in the summer. In his free time, Caleb stays busy, too.

"I love going camping with my family in the summer and skiing in the winter. I also enjoy helping on the ranch and helping my mom at her dentist office," he said.

Winning essay

Caleb wrote the winning essay, centered around the question: If you were asked to help promote your cooperative's annual meeting, what ideas do you have for increasing attendance among your member-owners and students? Here is what Caleb wrote:

There are a couple of ways to improve attendance of young members and students for events such as the cooperative's annual membership meeting. I think by having three simple steps, providing a free meal, having a speaker and finishing it off with door prizes, your attendance will improve in great measures, not only with young members and students, but all members.

First, you must make sure everyone knows the specifics and when the meeting is, because if nobody knows about it, they definitely aren't going to show up. Not many young people read the newspaper anymore, so by spreading the message on email, Facebook and Twitter, you

can reach a lot of young people. By making posts, the news will spread fast. Emailing cooperative members about the meeting and what's taking place at the meeting would probably be the best way to get people to know about the meeting and actually show up.

Also, make eye-catching fliers and drop them off in local businesses around town. A great business to drop the fliers off would be the grocery store; you could ask them to hand them out at the checkout lines to make sure people get them. However, personal contact is still one of the most effective ways to get to people, so by telling workers/members to bring a friend to the meeting will also improve attendance. This leads to the three simple steps to get more people to attend the meeting.

You must keep it somewhat simple; you can't go overboard with ideas. That's what led me to my three simple steps. First, by having a free meal, parents are going to take their kids/students to the meeting for supper. You can't have a horrible meal; it has to be something good and simple. Make hamburgers or roast beef, and have some sides like potatoes or salads. Don't forget dessert; have cookies or something like that. People love a free meal and will be hooked right away.

Second, have a comedian or a guest speaker talk during the supper for entertainment. People will be able to enjoy their food and have a good laugh. People won't want to miss out on what jokes the comedian has.

Third, as people walk in the doors, have them put their name on a card and into a box. Then, at the end of the meeting, draw names for door prizes. People will want a chance to win, and they will stay for the whole meeting to see if they win anything. Make the door prizes simple, too, like local gift cards, discounts on their cooperative memberships, and have one big final one, such as a gun or something big.

Lastly, you'll want to make sure people keep coming every year. During the meeting, you won't want to be boring. Make good points on what you're telling people about and have a

good representative speak on your behalf. Make sure to thank everyone for coming at the end of it all and tell them to come back next year. Overall, I think these are the best, and yet, still

simple ways to get more people to come to your annual membership meeting and want to keep coming back. ■

Highway 21 Treasure Hunt celebrates 20 years

For over 20 years, people from near and far have been discovering treasures and supporting local businesses along the Highway 21 Treasure Hunt, a 100-mile rummage sale spanning from St. Anthony to New England. The event draws hundreds of visitors into the area each summer and has received national attention.

This year, it will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. MT Friday and Saturday, June 17-18. The route features over 100 rummage sales, many of which are being hosted by Slope Electric Cooperative members.

“With 100 or more rummage sales along the 100-mile route, this unique rummage sale event was the first of its kind in North Dakota,” says Luann Dart, Elgin, who coordinates the event.

Participating communities along Highway 21 include St. Anthony, Flasher, Carson, Heil, Elgin, New Leipzig, Mott, Regent and New England.

“A small group of volunteers



from each community spearheads the event each year, with advertising expenses covered with donations from local, civic-minded organizations,” Dart said. “Most recently, expenses were covered by the Hettinger County Job Development Authority and West River Telecommunications Cooperative.”

Rural residents host sales, too, so watch for signs along the route for additional sales. Also watch for sales along Highway

21 in the St. Anthony area. Listings for each community’s sales will be available at certain locations in that community, such as restaurants or gas stations, as well as on the Highway 21 Treasure Hunt Facebook page and www.elginnorthdakota.com prior to the event.

“We always have some great rummage sales, so visitors are sure to find some treasures,” Dart said. For more information, contact Dart at 584-2172. ■

RDFC grant awarded to Rhame Fire Department

BY ANNE HANSEN



The funds were put toward building a new 2021 Ford F-550 grass fire truck, noted Jess Getz.

“The funds will help our organization by being able to replace aging equipment with up-to-date replacements in order to protect the public’s interest,” he said.

“On behalf of all of us at Slope Electric, we would like to thank all our volunteer firefighters who play a vital role in protecting our communities,” said Dean Volk, operations manager for Slope Electric Cooperative. ■

To apply for funding:

If you are interested in RDFC funding, call Slope Electric Cooperative at 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191 or email comments@slopeelectric.coop to visit about a specific project and determine eligibility.

If the project meets the qualifications, the member should complete an application and submit to Slope Electric Cooperative for consideration. From there, the application will be presented to the board of directors for approval. If approved, the grant application will be submitted to RDFC for final consideration.

Each year, \$2,000 is allotted to Slope Electric Cooperative from the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) to be used to support community-owned entities, nonprofits and community-based projects.

In 2021, four Slope Electric Cooperative community organizations received funds, including the Rhame Volunteer Fire Department.

Report from THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regular meeting held at the Enchanted Castle in Regent.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved the agenda. • Approved minutes of the Feb. 17 board meeting. • Heard co-general managers/CEOs updates. • Heard CFO report. • Reviewed Basin Electric Power | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperative update. • Reviewed board member reports. • Heard operation report, including line patrol and thermal inspections. • Heard member relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> summary, including member satisfaction survey and annual meeting. • Approved Wildfire Mitigation Plan. • Heard board reports. |
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Manager's message:

Safety above all else



Travis Kupper

May is Electrical Safety Month. While we all depend on electricity to power our lives, accidents can happen when electricity is improperly used.

That is why safety is the top priority at Slope Electric Cooperative. Over time, Slope Electric Cooperative has created

a culture of safety by putting our employees' safety and that of the community above all else. Slope Electric Cooperative's mission is to provide safe, affordable and reliable electric service to its member-owners. At the end of the day, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to our member-owners. But, more importantly, we want to return our employees home safely to their loved ones and keep our members safe. To do this requires ongoing focus, dedication and vigilance.

Following leading national safety standards

Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous job, especially for lineworkers. Slope Electric Cooperative has a safety coordinator whose focus is keeping employees and the community safe around electricity. We established and follow safety protocols when dealing with electricity, based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry. We also require our lineworkers to wear specialized equipment when working next to or with power lines.

As important, we encourage all our crews to speak up and hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving with regard to safety. We examine the information and data gleaned from near misses and accident

reports to discern patterns and use safety metrics to improve in those areas where we have fallen short.

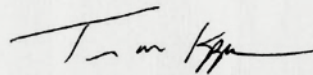
Keeping the community safe

Because we live and work in the community we serve, we care about our neighbors and their safety. We continue to share safety information with our members through our social media, website and our monthly "Safety Starts with ME" articles, which can help members learn what they can do to stay safe.

With it being National Electrical Safety Month, we want to encourage you to keep electrical safety in mind. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation, thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes each year. Many of these accidents are preventable. There are many things you can do to keep yourself and your community safe around electricity, including:

- Do not attempt to do electrical projects that could overload your outlets.
- Do not use any extension cords that are cracked, frayed or damaged.
- Report downed power lines, unlocked substations or pad-mounted transformers that look amiss.
- If you see anything that does not seem quite right, give us a call at the office or send us a photo at safety@slopeelectric.coop.

Be mindful when it comes to electrical safety. Pause and take the extra time to plug into safety. ■



Safety Starts with ME: **Mark Frank**

BY ANNE HANSEN

Last year in North Dakota, over 100,000 acres burned from grassfires and wildfires – a dramatic increase from previous years. The effects of a drought cycle have left North Dakotans more susceptible to fire.

“As your local cooperative, Slope Electric takes these growing threats seriously,” said Mark Frank, a journeyman lineworker based in New England, as well as a volunteer fireman. “Our cooperative has continuously embraced a proactive approach to fire prevention.”

Slope Electric Cooperative’s goal is the safety of its members and the protection of the communities where they live. In 2021, Slope Electric Cooperative began implementing a fire mitigation plan, which included many practices and strategies to minimize the possibility of fire.

The line crew routinely receives hazard recognition and fire extinguisher training. In addition to training, the trucks are equipped with fire extinguishers and flappers, and water sprayer that can be used in extreme drought situations.

“We receive training from the statewide organization that creates a fire simulation, and we are required to put it out firsthand, using proper techniques,” Frank said.

Slope Electric Cooperative also works with other utilities and regional transmission operators to avoid fire issues, which includes not automatically reclosing the transmission line and breaker operations.

“Slope Electric employees are advised to be cautious and on the lookout for smoke and fire hazards while working, in addition to performing routine line patrols on the system to avoid any issues of trees or brush that may be near the distribution lines,” Frank said.

Members can also help reduce the risks of fires:

- Do not stack hay or other materials under power lines.
- If you see an unattended fire, immediately call 911 or your local fire department.
- Report any trees that appear to be too close



to power lines, and keep your own trees and bushes regularly trimmed.

- Completely extinguish all campfires and fire pits after use. Follow all local ordinances to make sure burning a fire is allowed.
- Never throw cigarettes outside a moving vehicle or on the ground. ■



Attend Slope Electric Cooperative's annual meeting!

It's that time of year again; Slope Electric Cooperative is gearing up for the 2022 annual meeting. The meeting will begin with registration at 4:45 p.m. June 2 at the Slope County Fairgrounds in Amidon.

The annual meeting is a special time for co-op members to gather, share experiences, hear from co-op leadership and, perhaps most importantly, vote to elect your board members.

Slope Electric Cooperative employees work hard to host this fun event, and we encourage you to attend and exercise some of the many rights you have as a member of an electric cooperative. We know the food, and prizes are the best parts of the meeting, but there is so much more to the event.

Your annual meeting is also the occasion to exercise one of the greatest benefits of being an electric co-op member: voting for the upcoming year's board of directors.

Your electric cooperative is not owned by faraway investors, and it is not overseen by an appointed board of directors. Your electric cooperative is operated by a democratically elected board that is given the privilege to serve because of your vote.

At this year's annual meeting, not only will you have a blast (and maybe win a prize!), but you will feel good knowing that you had a voice in an important decision that impacts one of our most vital resources, electricity.



Anthony Larson



H.J. "Chip" Fischer



Jerry Caron

Nominating Committee

The Nominating/Resolutions Committee connected on March 24 to make nominations and approve resolutions. Names to be placed on the annual meeting ballot are:

Anthony Larson, Adams County

H.J. "Chip" Fischer, Bowman County

Jerry Caron, Bowman County ■



POWER
FOR GENERATIONS

SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 2, 2022
SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ANNUAL MEETING
AMIDON, NORTH DAKOTA

Steve Wegner receives Gold Credential



Travis Kupper, left, presents **Steve Wegner** with the Gold Credential certificate.

Steve Wegner, Slope Electric Cooperative board president who represents Adams County, recently received the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Director Gold Credential.

The Director Gold Credential has been created to recognize directors committed to continuing their education

and who desire a tangible credential that demonstrates their ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty to the best of their ability.

NRECA's director certificate programs are specifically designed to help electric cooperative directors, at every stage of their service, understand their roles and responsibilities, stay up-to-date on the key issues and trends in the industry and prepare them to meet the challenges facing electric cooperatives now and in the future.

NRECA offers director education courses throughout the year in conjunction with a variety of NRECA educational conferences and events across the country, in partnership with statewide associations and onsite at individual cooperatives. ■



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

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Henry "Chip" Fischer, Treasurer
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