

Happy anniversary, Slope Electric Cooperative!

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc., held its first organizational meeting on March 15, 1945. About 400 people were present. Nine members were selected as incorporators. Their job, with support from county agents, was to contact each family in their area, and if possible, have them sign an application for electric service.

Developing maps, requesting loans, purchasing supplies, hiring staff and building the system took time. Oct. 22, 1948, was a significant day for the cooperative and its members! The Haynes Substation was energized, and linemen began hooking up individual farms.

In this month's local pages, celebrate Slope's milestone 75-year anniversary, and learn more cooperative history shared by former Board Member Jon Elwood "Woody" Andersen.

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc.

OUTLOOK

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

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Craig Turner takes passion for line work and safety to next level

BY CARMEN DEVNEY



Craig and his wife, **Sara**, enjoy riding motorcycles, camping and going to motocross races. Their children are **Alecia** and **Hayden**.

Safety is not a task you do or a job you perform. It's a mindset; it's a way of life. When you cross the street, you look both ways. Why? It's the safe thing to do.

Building and maintaining the power system is one of the top-10 most dangerous jobs in the nation. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, lineworkers face a wide range of serious and potentially fatal injuries, including electrocutions, falls from elevation, and injuries from falling objects. Major causes of non-fatal injuries include overexertion, electrical shock burns, sprains and strains, cuts and lacerations, and contusions.

Craig Turner believes in safety and survival. After 20 years of being

a brother's keeper and working as a line technician for Slope Electric Cooperative in New England, his quest to improve safe work practices will take a new role. At the end of December, he resigned from Slope Electric to accept the job of safety coordinator for Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative. Established in 2008, the alliance is a professional management and services company that provides support for four electric cooperatives in North Dakota including Slope.

Line work and safety is in his blood. Born in Seattle, Wash., Craig and his family moved to New England in 1978 when his father, a lineman, accepted a job with Montana-Dakota Utilities (MDU) as a district representative.

Craig was in elementary school when he started learning the trade from his dad, who worked on a line crew in Wolf Point, Mont. Exposed to outage calls and weather reports, he learned to count the power blinks and anticipate a road trip. When he was in high school, when the power blinked for the third time — and the oil circuit recloser was unable to clear a fault on the line — he closed his book and started packing. After the lights blinked a fourth time and the power went out, the principal would call for Craig over the intercom, asking him to come to the office. From there, he'd get in the truck with his dad and start to patrol line, looking for a cause of the outage.

"That's where it all started," he says.

Craig graduated from high school and went to Boot Camp. He spent four years serving in the U.S. Navy in San Diego, Calif., doing submarine salvage-and-rescue.

While still in the service, he came home on leave and applied for the lineworker program with Bismarck State College. After his military service ended, he attended and graduated from the lineworker program. He began his apprenticeship with MDU, working in Glen Ullin. When the seasonal job ended, he started driving semi for Cross Country Courier, before getting a job as a lineman for Cimarron Electric Cooperative in Kingfisher, Okla.

"I always liked the co-op because it's more like a family than a business," Craig says.

His brother, Steve, ended his career with the U.S. Air Force after nine years, and followed in the family footsteps to attend line school. After Steve graduated, Craig asked his employer to give his brother a chance on the line crew. The brothers worked together for a couple years before Steve moved back to North Dakota to take a job with MDU in Hettinger.

"Two weeks later, I moved home to work for Slope Electric in New England," Craig says.

Craig replaced a foreman who retired a few months before he was hired. Considered one of the lead linemen based on seniority, Craig

held the tailgate sessions that brief the linemen on the task at hand. He helped oversee the people and projects, fill out paperwork, and ultimately mentor his peers. A couple years ago, he and Line Technician Chris Backhaus hosted a trench-box safety training session in which employees from Slope, Roughrider Electric, 3C Construction and Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative attended to learn how to lower a metal frame into the ground that prevented a trench from caving so the linemen could work safely.

“Safety is one of those things most people do and don’t think about it. They just act,” he says. “It’s something that keeps spinning in the back of my mind all the time. I’m always asking myself, what if? If I do this, what will happen?”

When the position of safety coordinator opened with the alliance, Craig reflected on his career.

“I always said I like this line of work. I’ve been around it my whole life. I enjoy it and the work is honest; you sleep good at night. You’ll never be rich, but you’ll lead a good life,” he says. “I enjoyed that aspect of it, but I told my wife, ‘This is an opportunity for me to further my passion for safety and linework.’ So I applied.”

As safety coordinator for the alliance, currently stationed out of Bismarck, Craig will plan, implement and oversee all aspects of employee safety at Slope, Roughrider, Mor-Gran-Sou and KEM Electric Cooperatives. He’ll take over the regular safety committee meetings, and lead employees on various safety-related topics.

Craig’s last day with Slope Electric was Dec. 28. He says the best part about being a line technician was seeing someone smile because he helped get their lights back on, or did something to help them out, like standing in the corral for a few minutes for a farmer who was sorting cows.

“You could see their gratitude, and know they appreciated it,” he says.

Thank you, Craig, for 20 years of dedicated service to Slope Electric Cooperative and our members. ■

Meet the Turner family of lineworkers

Larry: Former lineman; retired as a district representative for MDU in New England. He is the father of Craig and Steve.

Craig Turner: Former lineman for Slope Electric; now the safety coordinator for Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative. He is the father of Hayden.

Steve Turner: Former lineman; now a district representative for MDU in Hettinger. He is the father of Cole.

Cole Turner: Lineman for MDU in Bismarck.

Hayden Turner: Will attend line school starting this summer.



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEWEY

In the spring of 2017, Slope Electric Cooperative hosted trench box training with area cooperatives. **Craig Turner** (in trench), former line technician for Slope and current safety instructor for the alliance, served as one of two resident experts who provided guidance on assembly and use. A trench box is a steel or aluminum structure that is used to protect utility workers while performing their duties within a trench. Customarily constructed with sidewalls of varying thickness held apart by steel or aluminum spreaders, the box can withstand a collapse without buckling.

Nominating/Resolutions Committee

Slope Electric Cooperative's 75th Annual Meeting will be held June 4 at Four Seasons Pavilion in Bowman.

Three directors' terms will expire in 2020 - one director from Adams County and two directors from Hettinger County.

Board members will be elected to serve three-year terms. The bylaws of Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc., state in Article IV, Section 4, directors can be nominated one of three ways:

1. Through the Nominating Committee.

The committee's first meeting will be held Feb. 19 to review procedures, responsibilities

and qualifications for directorship. The second meeting will be held March 26 to nominate candidates for the ballot and to approve resolutions.

- 2. Members can also be nominated by filing a petition with 15 signatures.** Filing must be done 30 days prior to the annual meeting on June 4 and posted at the office of Slope Electric.
- 3. Members can also be nominated from the floor at the annual meeting.** This method means your name will not be preprinted on the ballot, but it can be written in by your supporters. ■



Feel the love this Valentine's Day!

Sign up for SmartHub choosing ACH and receive a \$10 bill credit.

If you haven't already signed up for SmartHub, download the app and open an account in the month of February, choosing Automated Clearing House (ACH) as a payment preference. You will receive a \$10 bill credit from Slope Electric Cooperative! ACH is an electronic payment that withdraws funds directly from your checking account.

Or, if you already have a SmartHub account and are paying with a credit card, switch to an electronic check as your ACH form of payment and you will also receive a \$10 bill credit.

Innovation is one of four Touchstone Energy® Cooperative values, and we are proud to offer this service to our members.



WHAT IS SMARTHUB?
SmartHub is a web and mobile app that allows you to take control of all aspects of your utility account. Pay your bill, manage your use and contact us with service issues quickly and easily online or on your mobile device.

- 
Manage Your Account
- 
View and Pay Your Bill
- 
Monitor Usage 24/7
- 
Report Service Issues
- 
Receive Important Updates



HISTORIC ANNUAL MEETING

JUNE 4, 2020
FOUR SEASONS PAVILION,
BOWMAN



LINEMEN, NOVEMBER 1962

Report from

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEC. 19, 2019

- Approved minutes of the Nov. 21, 2019, Board meeting, capital credit estate retirements, and special equipment.
- The Co-General Managers/CEOs gave an update, and reported on several meetings they attended with cyber security being a topic of discussion at all meetings.
- Heard reports from Directors who attended various meetings throughout the month, and selected voting delegates and alternates to upcoming meetings.
- Approved RUS Form 219 Inventories of Work Orders, which will now be submitted to RUS so Slope can draw funds from its loan.
- Approved 2019 write-offs of electric accounts and miscellaneous receivable accounts.
- Approved enrolling in the 2020 NDAREC Education Program for directors and employees.
- Approved a donation to each of the ambulance and first-responders in the Slope Electric's four-county service area, noting it benefits our entire membership.
- The Board was reminded to be thinking about committee members to serve on the 2020 Nominating/Resolutions Committee, which will be selected at the January Board meeting.
- Heard reports from senior staff, including the financial report for November, which was accepted as submitted.
- Discussion took place on several possible bylaw changes, with the Attorney to bring the proposed changes to the Board next month for approval, which will then be brought before the membership at the 2020 Annual Meeting for approval.
- Approved a base charge adjustment for the GS1A, GS2A and LCU rate classes, which will be implemented in 2020.
- The next Board meeting is set for 10 a.m. MT on Jan. 27, 2020.
- Held Executive Session.



PHOTO BY BRETT OBRITSCH

Jon Elwood "Woody" Andersen and his wife, **Gerry**, enjoy driving their 1953 Pontiac Chieftain two-door hard top.

Former director shares board room memories

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Editor's note: As we reflect on Slope Electric's 75th milestone anniversary, we will highlight some former co-op directors and members over the course of the year, who will share some cooperative history and knowledge. This month, meet Jon Elwood "Woody" Andersen, a current Slope member who served on the board of directors from 1972 until 1985.

Born on the family farm north of Scranton that his father homesteaded in 1906, Jon Elwood "Woody" Andersen learned how to farm and ranch at a young

age. The youngest of four children by 15 years, he worked as a farmhand before and after school.

Woody attended country school a couple miles from home. When the weather was miserable, the neighbor took him in a horse-drawn wagon. Otherwise, he walked.

Woody attended grade school in Woodberry Township, before finishing his education at Scranton High School.

After graduation, he moved to Wahpeton to attend the N.D. State College of Science and take auto-mechanic classes. Every spring, he

had to quit mid-quarter to go home and help his father farm.

"That's why a two-year course took three years," he shares.

His father was 55 years old when Woody was born, so after Woody finished college, he assumed the management of the farm. He became an official Slope Electric Cooperative member in 1960. He and his wife, Gerry, raised three daughters, and continued building the family's farrowing business.

In the spring of 1961, Woody was interviewed for a local pages article in the *North Dakota Living* magazine, formerly known as



Jon Elwood "Woody" Andersen served on the Slope Electric board of directors from 1972 until 1985.

North Dakota Rural Electric Magazine! He stated he had 20 sows that produced nine pigs per litter, on average. Agriculture experts at the time estimated the worth of each piglet to be \$8 the minute it was born.

The success of the operation was based on many things, including housing, equipment, feed and management. Wood shavings and heat lamps were utilized to keep the pigs comfortable and warm.

Woody quickly learned the value of electric service as a member. Years later, he would learn to value it from a new perspective: as a director in the Slope Electric board

room. He was appointed in 1972 to fill a vacancy mid-term, and then re-elected by the membership at an annual meeting. He served four full terms, and remembers hiring Richard Selinger when Norman Cross retired. Woody also recalls discussing how electric heat prices compared to propane; Slope would later add an electric heat rate after Woody's service on the board had ended.

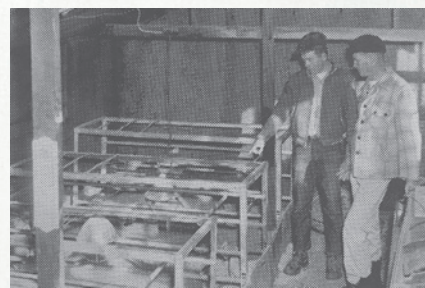
He recently shared with Slope Electric staff that the construction of the power system intrigued him. He understood the concept of transformers stepping voltage up or down. But when he looked at the skinny power lines moving large amounts of electricity, he says it is mind-boggling to think how electricity was developed and how much is being used today.

Still interested in the electric utility industry today, Woody says he is interested to see how coal will be used in the future, as advancements in renewable energy and technology change the way power is generated and delivered.

Woody and Gerry still live on the family farm. The last few years, he farmed about 290 acres and says he may farm by himself for one

more year. The couple have two grandsons living in Minnesota, and enjoy visiting family in-state, Minnesota and Nevada.

Woody, we thank you for sharing these memories with Slope Electric members, and helping us celebrate our milestone 75th anniversary. ■



In the April 1961 North Dakota Rural Electric Magazine Slope local pages called the "Sign Post," Slope member **Jon Elwood "Woody" Andersen** and Slope County Agent **Fred Fleener** are shown discussing the advantages of using farrowing pens.

Kilowatt Club

Herman Gion	4180
Robert Peterson	3960
Charley Pekas	3900
Henry Gatzke	3380
Winston Markegard	3340
Henry Roen	3140
J. Elwood Andersen	3110

In the Sign Post, Slope Electric Cooperative published a section called the Kilowatt Club. It noted who used the most kilowatts for that month. In the April 1961 issue, member Jon Elwood "Woody" Andersen used the seventh-largest amount of electric service.

SAFETY@SLOPEELECTRIC.COOP

Slope is an advocate of working safely. In fact, it is our way of life; the culture of your cooperative. We look out for the safety of ourselves and others — before, during and after work.

Did you know that members also play a key role in keeping our system safe? At times, you are our eyes in the sky and on the ground. Should you see a power line issue that may need Slope's attention, please call the office or send us an email at safety@slopeelectric.coop with your concern. This correspondence should include the description of the location, your name and complete contact information, and a photo if possible. Working together helps ensure the safety of all!

2-1-1 HELPLINE

FirstLink's **2-1-1 helpline** is a free phone service available 24/7 to the public. Call specialists offer supportive, non-judgmental listening ears and information about community programs statewide.

Text your zipcode to 898-211 or **Dial 2-1-1** or **701-235-7335** to get connected to help & hope.

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Fax: 701-579-4193

Email us:
comments@slopeelectric.coop

UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES
800-795-0555 or 811

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Lauren Klewin, President
Steve Wegner, Vice President
Anthony Larson, Secretary
Jerome Caron, Treasurer
Angela Carlson, Director
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Charlotte Meier, Director

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Donald A. Franklund
CO-GM/GEO

Travis Kupper
CO-GM/GEO

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

Holiday closing for Presidents Day: Monday, Feb. 17

In observance of Presidents Day, Slope Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, Feb 17. Line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY THURSDAY, FEB. 14

A phone survey may await you

Members: Slope Electric Cooperative will be completing a random residential telephone Member Satisfaction Survey. Performed by Odney Advertising and conducted by the University of North Dakota, this survey will take place in March.

If you receive a call from Odney Advertising or UND on behalf of Slope, please take time to answer the questionnaire. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes. By participating in the 2020 Member Satisfaction Survey, Slope receives better insight into how we can better serve you, the member-owner.