



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

Restoring power ... and comfort and cheer

In some parts of the Slope Electric Cooperative service area, the lights went out on Christmas Day — and so did the linemen. In this month's local pages, learn about their power-restoration efforts — and how cooperative members expressed thanks to those on-call.



PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE KAHRS

What's Inside

- The lights and linemen went out on Christmas Day
- Nominating/Resolutions Committee
- Slope Electric earns Safety Award
- Operation Round Up lightens the load
- Safety poster coloring contest ... and more



PHOTO BY JESSE KUHN

PHOTO BY GARY FITTERER

‘God’s blessings on all your hard work!’

Co-op members share gratitude following Christmas blizzard and power restoration efforts

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

In some parts of the Slope Electric Cooperative service area, the lights went out on Christmas Day — and so did the linemen.

An epic snow and ice storm started with freezing drizzle, which

froze to the electric distribution and transmission system. It quickly turned to heavy snow, and strong winds created blizzard conditions that made travel dangerous. The North Dakota Department of Transportation

alerted residents to road closures, and a no-travel advisory was issued for nearly the entire state. It remained in effect until noon on Dec. 26, when the snow finally stopped. The U.S. National Weather Service Bismarck,

N.D., reported the Slope Electric Cooperative service area received 12 to 18 inches of snow, with drifts exceeding 18 inches.

Travel was treacherous for the linemen who were dispatched to repair power outages caused by a combination of frost, and in some areas, ice on power lines, snow on cross-arms and blasts of wind. Poor visibility and clogged roads slowed the restoration process, so Slope Electric worked with local road crews to gain access to cleared roads. The safety of the employees and membership is always a priority at your cooperative. Once able to access downed power lines and poles, the linemen proceeded with restoration where possible.

Line crews worked long hours to restore electric service in difficult conditions. Blizzard-related outages affected approximately 100 members, at one time or another, during the storm-restoration process. All power was restored in the Slope Electric service area mid-afternoon on Dec. 28.

Many member-owners took to Facebook to learn the status of power outages and thank the line crews for their efforts. Juanita Aase, a Slope Electric member from the Scranton area, noted, “God’s blessings on all your hard work. We don’t say thank you enough. May the crews always have God at their side when they go out to work. Happy New Year!”

The weather conditions, clogged roads and the widespread locations of the power outages lengthened the restoration process, and Slope Electric would like to thank our member-owners for the patience, understanding and support shown — especially to your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative linemen and cooperative staff, who worked with integrity and accountability on Christmas day and during the holidays, so our members and their families could celebrate with comfort and cheer. ■

KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE FROM DAMAGED POWER LINES AND POLES

If you see a downed power line or pole, don’t assume it is de-energized. Numerous downed power lines were found to be energized lying in the snow and ice. Stay away from electrical infrastructure and call Slope Electric Cooperative at 800-559-4191 or 701-579-4191 with a location and description of the damage.

CONNECT GENERATORS SAFELY TO AVOID A DANGEROUS CONDITION

Standby electric generators can provide you with an extra sense of security in our unpredictable weather and occasional power outage. We ask that for the safety of you and others, the generator be installed and used safely. Improperly connecting a generator or installing without the proper double-throw or transfer switch can produce a “back-feed” condition. This can feed current back out onto power lines, creating an ELECTRICAL DANGER to you, lineworkers and others. Please contact an authorized generator dealer and or an electrician for standby generator questions and installations to ensure everyone’s safety.

FOLLOW SLOPE ELECTRIC ON FACEBOOK!

Become a fan of Slope Electric Cooperative on Facebook, and receive updates on power outages, youth opportunities, the annual meeting, *North Dakota Living* stories featuring our member-owners, and much more! The link is www.facebook.com/slopeelectric.



PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE KAHRS

Nominating/Resolutions Committee

Slope Electric Cooperative's 72nd annual meeting will be held June 1 at the Enchanted Castle in Regent. Director's terms that expire in 2017 are:

- Terryl Jacobs, Hettinger County
- Angela Carlson, Hettinger County
- Steven Wegner, Adams County

Three 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 is Feb. 21 to review procedures, responsibilities and qualifications for directorship. The second meeting will be held March 15 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 1 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.

The following members have been appointed by the board of directors to serve on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee for 2017:

1.	Douglas Freymiller, 8501 133rd Ave. S.W., Scranton, ND 58653	701-275-8871
2.	Randall Gaebe, 8410 149th Ave. S.W., Bowman, ND 58623	701-523-3410
3.	James Thomas, RR 3 Box 57, Mott, ND 58646	701-824-2392
4.	Catharine Barnes, 701 22nd St. N.E., Lemmon, SD 57638	701-376-5102
5.	Myron Olson, 7304 139th Ave. S.W., Bowman, ND 58623	701-523-5590
6.	Faye Burke, 7308 149th Ave. S.W., Bowman, ND 58623	701-523-5363
7.	Robert Yohe, 804 9th Ave. N.W., Hettinger, ND 58639	701-853-2413
8.	Morris Wanek, 903 17th St. N.W., Reeder, ND 58649	701-853-2417
9.	Allen Schmidt, P.O. Box 285, New England, ND 58647	701-579-4102
10.	Kent Maershbecker, 11685 12th St. Dr. E., New England, ND 58647	701-579-2869

Slope line crews patrol power lines

As time allows, the Slope Electric Cooperative line crews set aside time to patrol line. Our linemen concentrate on certain areas of the Slope power system and look for possible line maintenance issues, safety hazards or other problems that may affect the distribution lines that bring power to your home or business.

Line crews are currently patrolling line throughout the system. Because power lines are on and off the beaten path, you may see employees in a Slope truck, an all-terrain vehicle or a snowmobile. When you see them out and about patrolling line, thank them! They are out there for your safety. ■

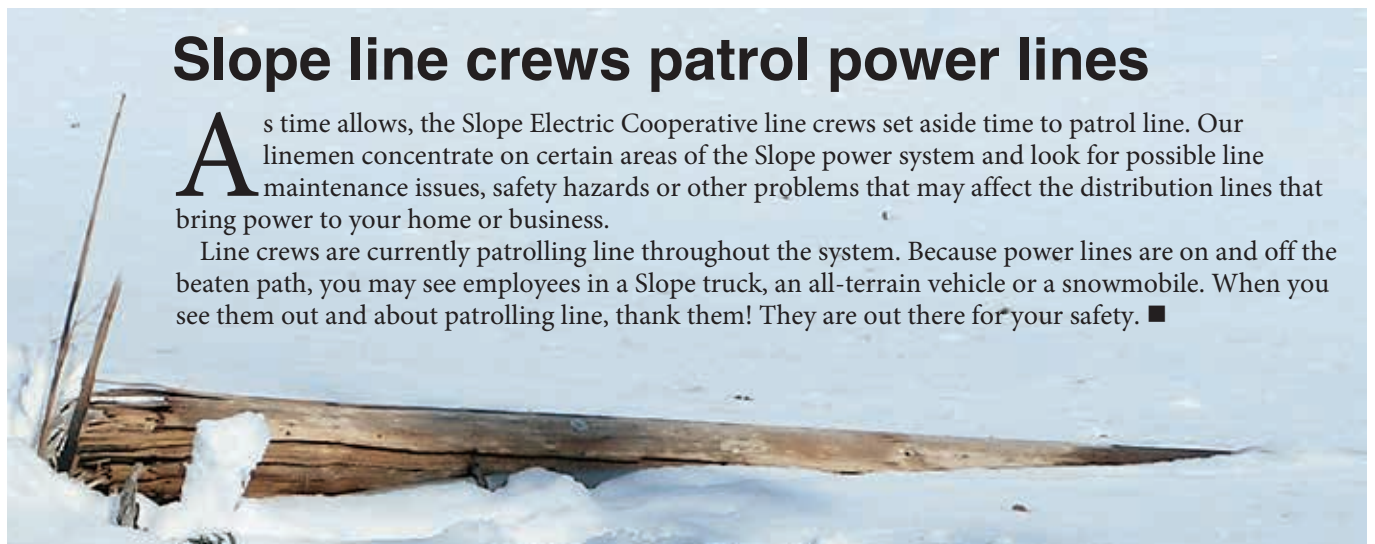




PHOTO BY NDAREC/JOHN KARY

Slope Electric Cooperative Line Technician **Logan Seifert** accepted the Safety Award from the NDAREC Safety Services team including, from left: **James Neether**, **Steve Homes** and **Jeff Tweten**.

Slope Electric earns Safety Award

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) hosted the 53rd annual REC Apprenticeship Training and Safety (AT&S) Conference Jan. 11-13 at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck. The conference is sponsored by the NDAREC AT&S program, with cooperation from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship.

The conference drew about 200 representatives of NDAREC member-cooperatives, students of the Bismarck State College lineworker program and the electric industry for classroom sessions, equipment evaluations and awards

ceremonies. Training topics included incident investigation, working in severe weather, temporary protecting grounding and bonding, preparing for dog encounters and more.

Christina Roemmich, director of safety services for NDAREC, says the AT&S conference provides an opportunity to reflect what is going on in the industry, and to recognize the accomplishments the students have made in training and safety throughout the year.

Slope Electric Cooperative employees who attended this year's conference included Operations Manager Dean Volk; and Line Technicians Jeff Boynton, Dusty

Hoff, Logan Seifert and Andrew Sonsalla, and Apprentice Technician Mark Frank.

At the conference awards banquet, Slope Electric was one of six distribution cooperatives in North Dakota to be presented with a Safety Award. These cooperatives were recognized for having zero OSHA-recordable injuries for one year, between the dates of Dec. 1, 2015, to Nov. 30, 2016. This was the third year in a row Slope Electric has received the award. ■

Operation Round Up helps lighten the load

“Illness is a burden — but your actions have lightened the load.”

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

This statement reflects the gratitude of one recent Operation Round Up grant recipient, who wanted to thank Slope Electric Cooperative members for supporting a charitable program that helps local people and communities in need. In this instance, the grant was used to pay some medical expenses — and ultimately help a patient focus on healing and not on paying for treatment.

Operation Round Up is a program in which Slope Electric members voluntarily choose to round up their monthly utility bills and donate their pennies to a Charitable Trust. The money accumulates, and an elected board reviews applications and awards grants based on need.

Many of the applications Slope Electric receives have a similar request — assistance is needed to pay bills associated with medical expenses.

Lynn Klein, executive assistant at Slope Electric, says the Operation Round Up board of directors prioritizes and awards grants starting with specific needs first. Organizations that do not have other financial resources available to them are also considered a priority.

“The board wants the funds available to do as much direct good as possible,” she shares.

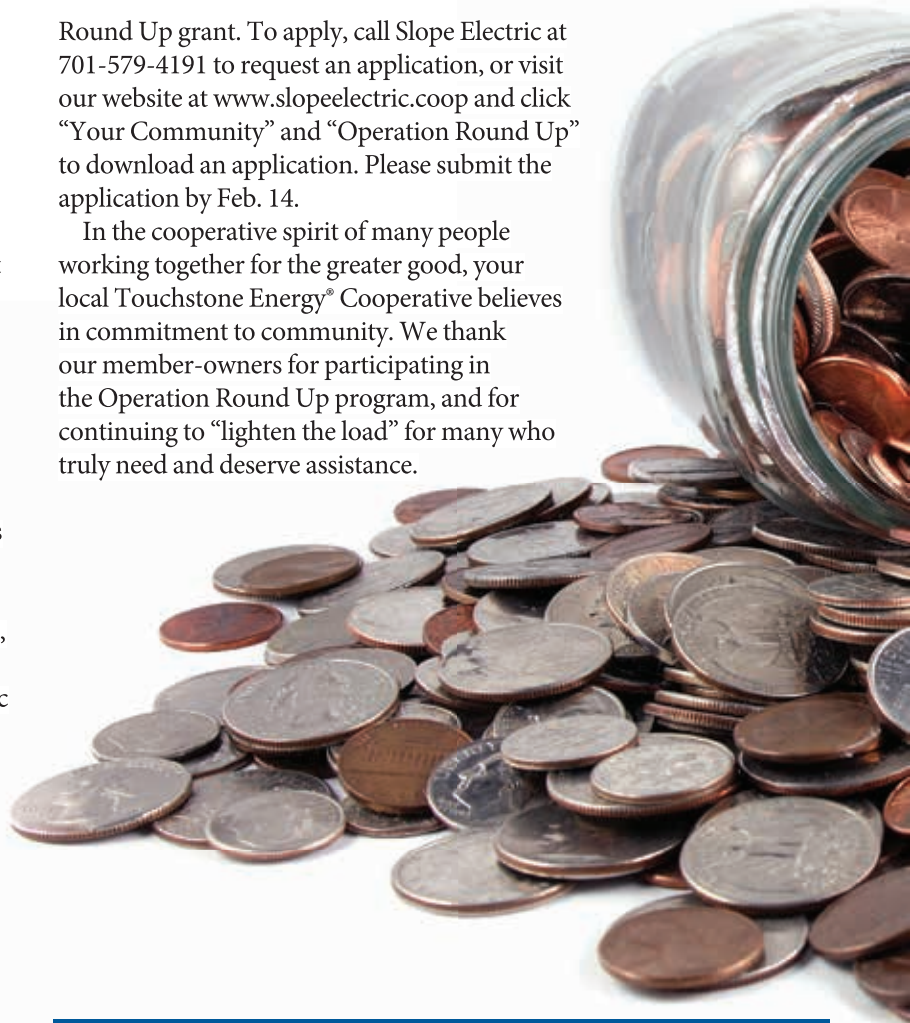
More than 70 percent of Slope Electric’s member-owners participate in this cooperative-based program that generates a little more than \$600 monthly. The cooperative matches the amount, coordinates the meetings and awards the monies.

The five Slope Electric members who serve on the Operation Round Up board include Denise Lorge, John Lee Njos, Harvey Oase, Kim Paulson and Patricia Thomas. They met on Nov. 7 to review applications, and awarded 10 grants. A total of \$8,100 was given to seven individuals, one community and two schools.

The next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 21. Any person living in Adams, Bowman, Hettinger and Slope counties may apply to receive an Operation

Round Up grant. To apply, call Slope Electric at 701-579-4191 to request an application, or visit our website at www.slopeelectric.coop and click “Your Community” and “Operation Round Up” to download an application. Please submit the application by Feb. 14.


In the cooperative spirit of many people working together for the greater good, your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative believes in commitment to community. We thank our member-owners for participating in the Operation Round Up program, and for continuing to “lighten the load” for many who truly need and deserve assistance.



Opt into the Operation Round Up program today!

Members, if you do not participate in the Operation Round Up program, please call Slope Electric Cooperative at 701-579-4191 and choose to opt in. ALL the money raised by our member-owners stays in our local communities. On average, participants donate about \$6 a year. It may be pocket change to you — but to someone else, the change adds up to pay a medical bill, buy books for a library, repair a fire engine or purchase equipment for an ambulance. Your small donation truly does make a big difference.

These thank-you notes are from some of the recipients who received monies.



"Thank you so much for your generous gift of money for my medical expenses I appreciate your generosity! What a surprise! I have completed treatment and life is returning to normal"

"Thank you so much for selecting us to receive funds from Operation Round Up. We realize there are many people who are facing tough times, and we are very humbled that you chose our family. All the funds will go directly to medical bills. Thank you so much."

"We can't begin to express what your gift means to our family. The money is most definitely helpful and will go to extremely good use. There's no doubt about that! But more than the monetary value, we so greatly appreciate the thought behind the gift. Illness is a burden, but your actions have lightened the load. This time has been difficult for us, but knowing we have the support from home helps. Thank you again, from the bottom of our hearts"

THANK YOU,
Slope Electric members,
for participating in Operation Round Up!

Deadline fast-approaching for Slope's safety poster contest

Kids, we need your help! Grab your art supplies and draw a poster that tells our readers how you play and work safely around electricity. This poster should display a clear, creative picture of this year's theme: "How do you stay safe at your home or farm when around electricity?" All posters should display the Touchstone Energy® logo on their entries. No matter what you draw, have fun! We can't wait to hear from you. Cash prizes will be awarded in each division.

DIVISIONS:

- Preschool to kindergarten
- First grade to third grade
- Fourth grade to sixth grade

DEADLINE:

Posters must be received at the New England office no later than 4:30 p.m. CT (3:30 p.m., MT) on Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2017.

RULES:

- Posters must be on white, 8.5- by 11-inch paper.
- Posters must depict the theme, "How do you stay safe at your home or farm when around electricity?" and display the Touchstone Energy logo. Be creative!

- Print the child's name, address, age and parent's names on the back of the posters.
- Only dependents of current Slope members are eligible for this contest.

PRIZES:

Each division will be awarded three prizes (nine prizes total): three first-place prizes of \$15; three second-place prizes of \$10; and three third-place prizes of \$5.

WINNERS:

Winning posters will be featured in the Slope local pages of the *North Dakota Living* magazine. ■



Holiday closing for Presidents Day

Monday, Feb. 20

In observance of Presidents Day, Slope Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, Feb 20. Line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.

Happy Valentine's Day

Tuesday, Feb. 14



INNOVATIVE ENERGY ALLIANCE, LLC STAFF

DONALD FRANKLUND
Co-General Manager/CEO
CHRIS BAUMGARTNER
Co-General Manager/CEO
TRAVIS KUPPER
Chief Financial Officer
LINDA PETERSON
Accountant II
SANDI WADE
Accountant II
CHARLIE DUNBAR
Chief Information Officer
ADAM BLOMS
Systems Administrator
ROB KELLY
Manager of Engineering Services
TRISHA SAMUELSON
Assistant Engineering Manager
TAYLOR VAN DYKE
Civil Engineer I
DARREN STASTNY
Safety Coordinator
TERESA BAUER
Human Resources Manager
KRYSTAL ECKROTH
Human Resource Assistant
JOE VOLK
Transmission/Substation Maintenance Mgr.

SLOPE ELECTRIC STAFF

LaWANNA WILHELM
Chief of Staff/Key Accounts Executive
DEAN VOLK
Operations Manager
ROD BENZ
AMR/SCADA Technician
LYNN KLEIN
Executive Assistant
DANIELA HOWIE
Operations Coordinator/Consumer Repr.
DARLENE HERBERHOLZ
Plant Accountant
BROOKE WALTNER
Bookkeeper
ROGER WIPF
Warehouse/Materials Coordinator
DARWIN WILKE
Outpost Foreman
LYLE KOVAR
Line Technician
CRAIG TURNER
Line Technician
CHRIS BACKHAUS
Line Technician
JEFF BOYNTON
Line Technician
ANDREW SONSALLA
Line Technician
CODY BRAATEN
Line Technician
DUSTY HOFF
Line Technician
JON LAWHEAD
Line Technician
LOGAN SEIFERT
Line Technician
MARK FRANK
Line Technician
DREW MADLER
Apprentice Line Technician