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Art by Sara Jean

Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

OUTLOOK

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

In this issue:

- Apply for the Youth Tour!
- Safety Starts with ME:
Dean Volk
- Serve your cooperative

Art by Sara Jean

BY ANNE HANSEN



Schank with one of her horses.

Riding a horse on the wild, open prairie is where you can find Sara Schank most days.

“I couldn’t live without them,” she says about her beloved horses.

As a child, her world focused on her horses.

“I grew up outside of Riverdale, and we always had horses,” she says. “Our time consisted of competing in horse shows, rodeo, team roping and barrel racing.”

When Schank wasn’t riding, she was drawing, says her mother, Wanda Erhart.

During this same time, if the question was asked, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Schank would simply state, “I want to ride horses and draw.”

Her childhood dreams soon became a reality, as she trained herself to become a commissioned artist while living on a ranch in western North Dakota.

“My artwork is very important to me, and I spend a lot of time working on personal and commissioned drawings, when I am not chasing a toddler around,” Schank says.

Through the years, Schank refined her skillset through trial and error.

“My mom would critique my work, and she wouldn’t admit it, but she was a good artist as well,” Schank says, crediting her mom.

Erhart recalls the first time Schank asked for her mom’s help as well.

“I remember one day, she asked me to critique her work, but the feedback I gave wasn’t some that she was totally happy with, which ended up in me drawing a picture for her,” Erhart says.

Through lots of practice, and trial-and-error,

Schank began her business, Art by Sara Jean.

Today, her process looks very different than it did in her younger days, as she now works around her toddler and helps on her own ranch. She mostly works in the evenings and during her son’s naps, but says she has to be in the right state to work on her drawings.

Working with graphite, Schank draws commissioned pencil drawings, with the main focus on ranch and performance horses, as well as dogs.

“Many pieces I work on are memorial pieces of those horses or dogs that have passed away,” Schank says. The reaction is typically tears of joy, and for her, that is the most important thing.

“I love hearing that I nailed the eyes, or the way the animal looked,” she says.

Her favorite piece she has created is something she recently completed of her own personal horse that died three years ago,

“Every time I tried to draw it, I couldn’t bring myself to do it, but I was finally able to finish it,” she says.

You can find out more about Schank’s artwork by visiting Art by Sara Jean on Facebook or visiting artbysarajeans.com. ■



Manager's message:

It's a matter of (co-op!) principles



Travis Kupper

For me, this is a time of year for reflection, and topping my list of things for which I'm grateful are our wonderful communities. I know I speak for all Slope Electric Cooperative employees when I say we are thankful to be in such an incredible place.

You may recall last month, when my column touched on the first three cooperative principles.

This month, I'd like to

tell you about the remaining four principles. The cooperative principles are essential to the co-op business model and benefit all members of the co-op.

Autonomy and independence

The fourth principle, autonomy and independence, means the co-op operates in an autonomous way that is solely directed and guided by its members, reflecting the values and needs of our local communities. This means the co-op is not being influenced by leaders or shareholders several states away. Instead, the co-op is led by the local members it serves.

Education and training

The fifth principle, education and training, focuses on enhancing the knowledge of co-op employees and board members, which enables them to contribute to the development of the co-op.

By investing in continuous learning for our employees and board members, our co-op is making a commitment not just to individual, professional and personal growth, but to the future of the co-op and the high quality of service our members expect and deserve. It's a win-win situation.

We also strive to inform our members (that's you!) and the public about the mission and operations of the co-op. In fact, that's why you receive this magazine every month, so we can share the latest co-op news and updates, as well as energy efficiency and safety tips.

Cooperation among cooperatives

Cooperation among cooperatives is the sixth principle and fosters the way co-ops work together to address bigger challenges. While this principle applies to all types of cooperatives, it is especially relevant in the energy industry. In our case, we put this principle into action after major storms and disasters that cause widespread power outages. When this happens, we call on nearby co-ops to come to our aid and assist with restoration efforts. And we extend the same help to them when they need us. I can't think of a better example of cooperation among cooperatives.

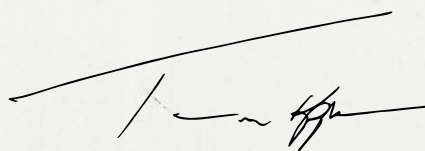
In addition, because we are part of the national electric co-op network, we can connect and collaborate with other electric co-ops to tackle industry-related challenges, like cybersecurity and an ever-changing energy landscape.

Concern for community

The seventh principle, concern for community, is essential to who we are as cooperatives. We serve our community not only by being an essential service, but by helping to power our local economy.

I think you'll find most cooperatives bring good people together to make good things happen in the community. We hope you feel that way about us, your local electric co-op.

On behalf of everyone at Slope Electric Cooperative, we're thankful for your membership, and we hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving. ■



Safety Starts with ME: **Dean Volk**

The beautiful season of lights is officially upon us, as the holidays approach and the year draws to a close.

“Here at Slope Electric, we want to remind you that before decking the halls, remember that safety should always come first,” said Dean Volk, Slope Electric Cooperative’s chief of staff and operation manager.

When decorating with lights this holiday season, Volk recommends these few tips to take into consideration:

1. Have a ground crew (one or two people) steady your ladder and pass the decorations to you. This is an invaluable part of safety, keeping you supplied with untangled light strings, fasteners and encouragement.
2. Remember to keep a safe distance from your overhead electric service.
3. Don’t overreach. If you cannot get to a point with your body completely centered between the sides of the ladder, get down and relocate it.
4. Don’t overextend the ladder. If your ladder

is too short, rent or borrow a longer one. A ladder extended beyond its working limits is dangerous, as is standing on rungs too close to the top.

5. Do not overload circuits by stringing more light sets together than the manufacturer recommends. Check the packaging for details.
6. Check your wires for breaks and cracks in the insulation that can lead to shorts.

Most of these tips apply equally to inside and outside decorating activities.

In addition, Volk suggests investing in LED lights this season.

“Why go the LED route? Longevity and cost of operation are the two key reasons. Unlike incandescent lights, whether the large or mini bulbs, LEDs will last for many, many years. LEDs have no filaments to burnout. Aside from physically destroying the bulb, the LED is amazingly robust,” he said.

To our valued members, on behalf of everyone at Slope Electric, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season. ■

Celebrating National Apprenticeship Week

Slope Electric Cooperative is celebrating National Apprenticeship Week Nov. 8-14, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor. Apprenticeships provide demand-driven education, allowing apprentices to earn while they learn – helping to close the gap between the skills job creators seek and jobs seekers need.

National Apprenticeship Week provides an opportunity to spotlight how apprenticeships can help employees grow in knowledge

and skill to succeed in today’s workplace. In exchange, these employees have the opportunity to learn from veteran employees and mentors, and earn wages and benefits that sustain families. Those family members work, go to school, purchase goods from area businesses, volunteer in our communities, and ultimately sustain our smaller towns and improve our quality of life.

Slope Electric Cooperative is proud to highlight apprentice lineworkers Brad Schmitt and

Shay Olson. We thank all the apprentices who are helping electric cooperatives provide safe, reliable and affordable electric service. ■



TWO ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIPS TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

ESSAY QUESTION:

If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate, you will be traveling to Washington, D.C., to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?

TOP 3 REASONS

1. Two all-expense-paid trips to Washington, D.C., compliments of Slope Electric Cooperative
2. A whole week to visit unforgettable historic monuments, museums and the U.S. Capitol
3. A learning experience you'll never forget

JUNE 18-23, 2023



- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Slope Electric Cooperative.
- If you have any questions, please contact Brooke Waltner, Slope Electric, at 701-579-2252 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 20, 2023. You can 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.



CHECK OUT THE ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES AT
<https://ndyouthtour.com>

Serve your cooperative by serving on the Nominating Committee

The Slope Electric Cooperative board of directors will appoint the Nominating/Resolutions Committee at the Dec. 15 board meeting. Each director shall appoint one member from his/her district, and the board at large will select up to two additional committee members from the district(s) with director elections.

The committee member names are then published in Slope Electric's local pages of *North Dakota Living*. The Nominating/Resolutions Committee meets twice. The first meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Jan. 18, 2023, to explain the functions of the committee, including policies that will aid you in selecting qualified members to be nominated. The cooperative will pay you a per diem, along with reimbursing you for mileage for both meetings. The second meeting will be held at 8:30 a.m. on Feb. 23, 2023.

The purpose of this second meeting will be to make the actual nominations for the election to be held at the cooperative's annual meeting,

and to approve resolutions to be printed in the annual meeting report. If you or someone you know is interested in serving on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee, please notify the office at 701-579-4191 or email comments@slopeelectric.coop prior to Dec. 1.

To serve on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee, you must be an active member of Slope Electric Cooperative, with your name listed on the membership. Directors' terms from Hettinger County and Adams County will expire. Those positions are currently held by Angela Carlson, Charlotte Meier and Steven Wegner.

Members can also be nominated to serve as a director by filing a petition with 15 members' signatures. Filing must be done 60 days prior to the annual meeting and be posted at the office. To serve on the Slope Electric board, you must be a bona fide resident receiving service from Slope Electric at your primary residence, and you must be a named member of the cooperative. ■

Need help with your energy bills? LIHEAP is here!

While the fall weather settles in, Slope Electric Cooperative members will be faced with cooling temperatures, and even colder temperatures in the coming months. For some, anticipation of the winter months causes stress and anxiety, as they wonder how to make ends meet. Thankfully, there are programs to help members.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can assist Slope Electric's low-income and eligible individuals with heating and insulation costs this winter. Through the N.D. Department of Human Services, human service zone offices and Community Options, individuals can be helped with a variety of services when it comes to heating assistance.

Services offered

LIHEAP offers a variety of service assistance. Not only can the program help curb the costs of your heating and cooling bills, it can also help households with weatherization to make homes more energy efficient.

"For example, if someone lives in a 100-year-old home, with outdated windows, we might be able to help them with the costs of installing new windows, therefore making the home more energy efficient, and reducing their electricity bill," said Shannon Rolandson, outreach specialist at Community Options.

The assistance program may also help with the costs of furnace and chimney cleaning,

emergency assistance and energy cost-reduction devices.

It is important to remember this program is not only for homeowners, Rolandson said.

“This program not only helps low-income homeowners with energy costs, but renters as well,” she said.

Apply for LIHEAP

LIHEAP-eligible members can apply from Oct. 1 through May 31.

“Some individuals can be referred to the program, but anyone is welcomed,” Rolandson said. Upon applying for LIHEAP, an outreach specialist will visit your home and assist you in gathering necessary documentation for the service. From there, an application will be sent

into the state for review, and the results will be provided within a week or two.

“I wish more people knew the program was available,” Rolandson said. “We often hear, ‘This won’t apply to me’ or ‘I will just get denied,’ but if you need help, please contact us and we will work with you. It doesn’t hurt to apply.”

Last year, Community Options processed a total of 548 applications, with 433 approved for LIHEAP. If you, or someone you know, would like to apply, visit your local human service office for more information.

Applications will be accepted from Oct. 1 through May 31 and can be found online at www.applyforhelp.nd.gov or by request at the local human service zone office or Community Options office. ■

Co-op 101: What are capital credits?

Did you know electric cooperatives return money to their members in the form of capital credits? While you may like receiving those capital credit refunds from Slope Electric Cooperative, you may not be sure exactly why you get them. It’s simple, really.

When you establish service with your electric cooperative, you become a member.

Capital credits reflect each member’s ownership in the cooperative. Electric cooperatives do not earn profits. Instead, any margins or remaining revenue after all expenses have been paid are allocated to the cooperative’s members in proportion to their electrical usage.



If you move and are no longer served by the local electric cooperative, please be sure to leave your new address with us, so we can return your capital credit payments from the years you were a member.

**If you have questions about capital credits,
contact Slope Electric Cooperative.**



Holiday closings

Slope Electric Cooperative will be closed Friday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veterans Day, and Thursday and Friday, Nov. 24 and 25, for the Thanksgiving holiday. Line crews will be available in the case of an emergency or power outage. We thank all veterans and members of the military for their service and sacrifice!

Report from **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Regular meeting held at the Slope Electric office in New England

- Approved agenda
- Approved minutes from previous meeting on Sept. 29
- Heard co-general managers/ CEO update
- Heard WDUS/3C update
- Heard CFO report
- Heard operations report
- Approved 2023 capital expenditures
- Heard member relations summary
- Heard the attorney report
- Reviewed board member reports



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SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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Anthony Larson, Vice President
Angela Carlson, Secretary
Henry "Chip" Fischer, Treasurer
Lauren Klewin, Director
Jerome Caron, Director
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MANAGEMENT

Donald A. Franklund
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper
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