



*Sherry Ebert trains a dog in the field.*

## Sherry Ebert: 60 years of training pointers

BY ANNE HANSON

From the point of its tail to the tip of the nose, there is no second guessing what a pointer dog breed is meant to do. A Mott resident and Slope Electric Cooperative member, Sherry Ebert's passion in life is to help the pointing dogs reach their full potential.

The breed of dog she trains is known to have a devoted personality, with a competitive spirit, which coincidentally could be used to describe Ebert, who has been devoted to training pointing dogs for over 60 years. During this time, she has grown to become a worldwide authority in training pointing breeds, which has earned her credentials and an outstanding reputation.

### Early beginnings

From a young age, Ebert felt training came as second nature.

"There is a part of me that has always known I have the ability to get through to animals, and I can get through to them and bring out the good in them. That's my forte," Ebert said.

She began her training career in New Jersey with horses. Seven years later, Ebert met her then husband, Harold Ray. Together, they

Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

# OUTLOOK

116 E. 12th St. • New England, ND 58647 | 701-579-4191 • [www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop)

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spent 32 years as professional trainers, developing the renowned English setters for Elwin Smith in Waynesboro, Ga., which resulted in three hall of fame bird dogs. This included four-time American Kennel Club Champion of Record winner, Tomoka, seven-time American Field Champion of Record winner, The Performer, and six-time American Field Champion of Record winner, Destinare.

During her training for the Smiths, Ebert was recognized as the first woman to handle a winning dog in a major open shooting dog championship with 75 contenders.

### **Building her reputation**

In addition to the titles won, Ebert's philosophy on training animals has built her a reputation worldwide.

"Each dog is an individual. Just the way that each one of us is unique and different, so is each dog," she said.

This philosophy has helped open opportunities for her. One of those opportunities was to train across the world, Ebert said.

"At one point, I was able to train dogs from Japan, and I was able to do seminars there as well as judge field trials, which is very rare for being a woman in the industry," she said.

Ebert was one of the first females to ever judge a field trial, with her reputation earning her the ability to do so.

"Within the American Kennel Club, you have to be licensed to judge, but in the American Field Trials, you go by your reputation," she said. For two consecutive years, Ebert was the top finalist in the American Field Trial Hall of Fame nominations.

### **Training in the field**

Today, Ebert leaves the competition to the owners of the dogs.

"I spend a lot of time with people on how to work with their dog," she said. "I am passionate about giving the ability to the owners to go out and get that blue ribbon for themselves."

Ebert trains from puppies to adult shooting dogs, each requiring various training.

"Each day, I have a goal for the dogs or puppies that I train," she said.



**Sherry Ebert** began her career training horses, and continued on to train championship dogs.

For the adult dogs, her training includes endurance, as the breed has to be able to point and stand still throughout the process of flushing, shooting and walking back to the owner during a competition.

"Those dogs must be able to train for well over an hour, as the competitions last that long, and we want to ensure that our dogs are not tired after one competition," Ebert said.

The training not only occurs in North Dakota, but Ebert, with her husband, Kyle, travels across the country to ensure the dogs are able to perform in any climate and geographical location and for any type of game birds.

"The big pines in Georgia are much different than the open prairie of North Dakota, or the grouse woods of the Northeast," she said.

In North Dakota, she trains from June 1 through Oct. 1, with the training occurring in her own yard until they can hit the fields in mid-July. Then, they head to Texas in October to train for quail, and they go to Georgia in November. ■

# AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP 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. All-expense-paid trip 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](mailto: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>

## Safety Starts with ME: Brooke Waltner

Fraudsters are always on the prowl to see who they can scam out of money and valuable information. A common group of victims they target are consumers of essential day-to-day utilities, such as electricity, water and gas.

“As technology evolves, so do fraudsters’ tactics,” said Brooke Waltner, Slope Electric Cooperative’s manager of member relations. “It is important to recognize these tactics to prevent yourself from being the next victim of a scam.”

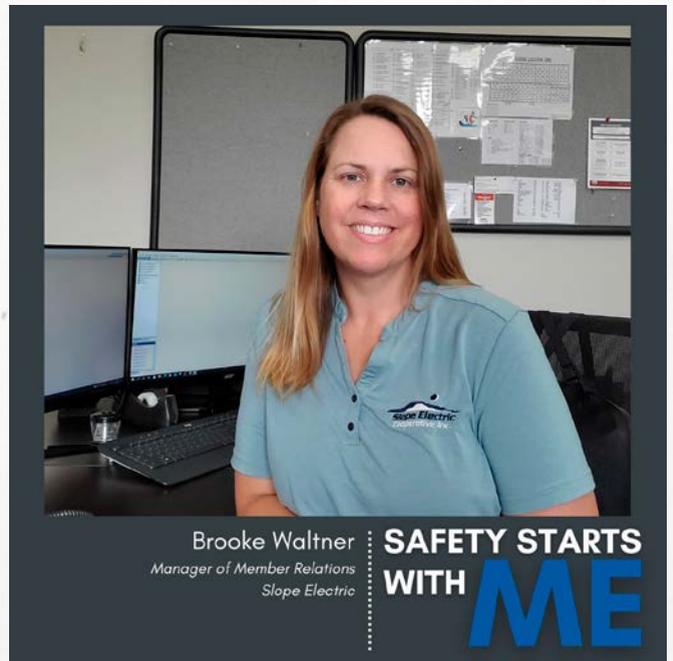
### Common types of scams

Imposter scams are the No. 1 type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission. A scammer may claim you are overdue on a bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you do not provide payment information immediately. This type of scam can be via phone call, text, email or even in person.

Another common scam, known as the “refund tactic,” is when an imposter claims you were overcharged on your previous bill and needs your information to “refund you.” They make it sound easy. With just a click of a button, you will be prompted to input financial and personal information. Rather than being refunded, however, the scammer will drain your bank account and use any valuable personal information for identity theft.

“If this happens to you via phone call, simply hang up,” Waltner said. “If a fraudster attempts to reach you via text or email, delete the message immediately before taking any action. And if you feel you are being scammed by a Slope imposter, give us a call at 800-559-4191.”

If you have any concerns or questions with your bill, you can also check your account on the SmartHub app. You can download SmartHub on a smartphone or access it through our website.



### Defend yourself from scams

- Be wary of texts and calls from unknown numbers.
- Be wary of unfamiliar or suspicious-looking emails.
- Be suspicious of an unknown person claiming to be a Slope Electric employee who is asking for personal or financial information.
- Never let anyone into your home, unless you have a scheduled appointment or reported a problem. When in doubt, call 800-559-4191 if you have concerns.

“At Slope Electric, we want to provide you with electricity, as well as protect your livelihood,” Waltner said. “Please take this information into consideration to avoid being the next victim of a utility scam.” ■

Manager's message:

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



Travis Kupper

ACE Hardware, State Farm, REI, Land O'Lakes and Slope Electric Cooperative all share something in common: We're all cooperatives.

We may be in different industries, but we all share a passion for serving our members, and helping our communities to thrive. In fact, all cooperatives adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values of honesty,

transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater community good.

October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time, but also provide a framework for the future. Let's take a look at the first three cooperative principles.

## Voluntary and open membership

Just like all co-ops, Slope Electric Cooperative was created out of necessity – to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. So, a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op, so everyone in our community could benefit. For a modest membership fee to the co-op, any farmer could get electricity brought to the farm. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem they all had, but couldn't solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community, and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in our community.

While this history may be forgotten, key parts of that heritage remain – the focus on our mission and serving the greater good. In this, we include everyone to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the entire community. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective or socioeconomic status.

## Democratic member control

Our co-op is well suited to meet the needs of our members, because we are locally governed. Each member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is operated, and each voice and vote are equal. Slope Electric's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our directors, who help set long-term priorities for the co-op, also live locally along co-op lines. These board members have been elected by neighbors just like you. We know our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we are continually seeking your input and encourage you to weigh in on important co-op issues and participate in co-op elections.

Our close connection to this community ensures we get a firsthand perspective on members' priorities, enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments.

## Members' economic participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op, we are also motivated by service to the community, rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of Slope Electric. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for co-op programs, initiatives, capital investments and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Because we are guided by seven cooperative principles, it's not just about dollars – it's about opportunity for all and being fair when engaging with our members. The cooperative way is a values-based business model.

Slope Electric is a reflection of our local community and its evolving needs. We view our role as a catalyst for good and making our corner of the world a better place.

And by the way, that sums up the seventh co-op principle, "concern for community," which I'll elaborate on in next month's column. ■



## Serve your cooperative by serving on the Nominating Committee!

The Slope Electric Cooperative board of directors will appoint the Nominating/Resolutions Committee at the December 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 Cooperative's local pages of *North Dakota Living*. The Nominating/Resolutions Committee meets twice:

- The first meeting will be held at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 18 to explain the functions of the committee, including policies that will aid you in selecting qualified members to be nominated.
- The second meeting will be held at 8:30 a.m. Feb. 23. The purpose of this 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.

The cooperative will pay you a per diem, along with reimbursing you for mileage for both meetings. 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](mailto:comments@slopeelectric.coop) prior to Nov. 17. To serve on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee, you must be an active member of Slope Electric with your name listed on the membership. ■

**Heating season is here!  
Is your electric meter  
breaker on?**



**Members, if your home has a sub-meter for the separately metered electric heat rate, please make sure your heat meter breaker is turned on inside your electric panel.** If you have a heat meter, please make sure the breaker to the meter is turned on all year, to ensure we receive meter readings. If the breaker is off, your electric heat kilowatt-hour usage will not be billed correctly. The separately metered heat rates run Oct. 1 through April 30.



## 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 in the 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," noted 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 noted.

"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.

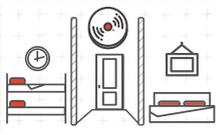
Applications will be accepted from Oct. 1 through May 31 and can be found online at [www.applyforhelp.nd.gov](http://www.applyforhelp.nd.gov) or by request at the local human service zone office or Community Options office. ■

## SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

According to the **National Fire Protection Association**, an average of **1,450 fire deaths** occur every year in homes with missing or non-functioning smoke alarms.

   **2/3** fire deaths occur in homes with missing or non-functioning smoke alarms.

### INSTALL SMOKE ALARMS IN:

<p><b>Every bedroom</b></p> 	<p><b>Outside each sleeping area</b></p> 	<p><b>On every level of your home, including basement</b></p> 
<p><b>On levels without bedrooms, install in living room, den or family room</b></p> 	<p><b>Install near stairways leading to upper levels</b></p> 	<p><b>Install smoke alarms 10 feet from cooking appliances to minimize false alarms</b></p> 

-  Use **interconnected smoke alarms** for additional safety and early warning
-  **Low pitch sound and vibration smoke alarms** are available for those who are **hard of hearing**
-  **DO NOT INSTALL** near windows, doors or ducts
-  **NEVER** paint smoke alarms

### REMEMBER TO:

**TEST** smoke alarms **monthly**   **CHANGE** battery yearly   **REPLACE** alarm every **10 years**



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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
- Lauren Klewin, Director
- Jerome Caron, Director
- Dale Hande, Director
- Charlotte Meier, Director

### MANAGEMENT

Donald A. Franklund  
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper  
CO-GM/CEO

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

## 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 July 28
- Heard co-general managers/CEO update
- Heard CFO report
- Heard operations report
- Heard member relations summary
- Heard the attorney report
- Reviewed board member reports
- Discussed strategic planning