

# Once part of a co-op business, always part of a co-op family



Slope Electric former employees  
**Rex Sadler** (left) and **Arlin Reindel**



Slope Electric former director  
**Dennis Beyer** and former manager  
**Lynette Nieuwsma**



Former Slope Electric director  
**Lyle Narum**



Former Slope Electric director  
**Terry Jacobs**

**Rex Sadler, Dennis Beyer, Terry Jacobs and Lyle Narum** spent nearly 100 combined years taking care of Slope's member-owners and our local communities. In this month's local pages, learn how they have reconnected as snowbirds, and how their lasting friendship proves that the power of human connections transcends time and place.

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc.

# OUTLOOK

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

## In this issue:

- Are you interested in serving on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee?
- Updated member addresses needed
- April 13: Lineworker Appreciation Day
- Save the date for the annual meeting ... and more

## Co-op 'family' reunites as snow birds in Arizona

BY CARMEN DEVNEY



From left: **Rex Sadler, Terry Jacobs, Lyle Narum and Dennis Beyer.**

It's a small world after all, for one former employee and three former directors, whose Slope Electric Cooperative roots continue to strengthen in Arizona.

Rex Sadler, Dennis Beyer, Terry Jacobs and Lyle Narum spent nearly 100 combined years taking care of Slope's member-owners and our local communities. Rex was employed for 37 years, starting as an apprentice lineman. He learned the trade on the job, and was promoted to line superintendent, operations manager and finally chief of staff, the position he held when he retired.

In their role as directors, Dennis, Terry and Lyle helped set policies, approve major purchases, learn industry updates, and set goals and objectives for the cooperative. Dennis served for 11 years, from 1983 to 1994; Terry served for 21 years, from 1996 to 2017; and Lyle

served for 30 years, from 1985 to 2015.

Like so many North Dakota residents who have persevered through some brutal winters, the four alumnus and their spouses started heading south for the winter upon retirement. They chose to settle in Arizona, and while they live in different areas, they meet on a regular basis. It is often said that the people who work for electric cooperatives become like family, and this friendship is proof that the power of human connections transcends time and place.

On Saturday afternoons, they meet at Desert Hills Lutheran Church in Green Valley for a country gospel service. Afterward, they often stay for fellowship, and it doesn't take long before someone mentions Slope Electric.

"Something always comes up," Rex says with a laugh. "Last time we

visited, we talked about the annual meeting and who is going to go."

Slope Electric is celebrating a milestone 75-year anniversary at this year's annual meeting, scheduled for Thursday, June 4 in Bowman. We hope many former directors and employees plan to attend and reunite — and hope you, our members, have saved the date!

### Rex Sadler



Retired since 2012, Rex and his wife, Jackie, travel back to North Dakota every year to visit friends and family, including his

mother, who lives in Scranton.

When they are in New England, Rex makes a point to stop by the co-op around quitting time, to visit with staff and learn changes in technology and processes since he left.

After working 10 years as a lineman, Rex recalls when he was promoted to line superintendent and started working in an office. Everything was documented on paper at that time, and a major transition began, as employees learned to use computers.

"From year to year, it got more efficient and better," he says.

"When I think about Slope Electric, I remember the change I saw in 37 years. We went from a small, little cooperative to one of the fastest-growing co-ops in the state when there was

oil development. There was tremendous change," he says.

Rex highly recommends retirement! In Arizona, he and Jackie stay busy hiking, traveling and touring area attractions.

"We've enjoyed every minute of it," he says.

## Dennis Beyer



Living in Rhame in the 1980s, Dennis Beyer was approached by his neighbor to run for a seat on the Slope

Electric board. Former director Howard Buchholz was retiring, and he hoped Dennis would take his place. Dennis says he was always intrigued by the cooperative, so he ran for the seat and was elected by the membership.

Dennis served four terms, before he moved and John Lee Njos was appointed to serve in his place.

During his time on the board, Dennis says he served alongside a diverse group of directors who worked to keep rates stable as the cooperative grew.

"What I most enjoyed was the feeling of doing something to help everybody," he says.

One of the board's biggest tasks at that time was replacing Manager Dick Selinger, who was retiring. After much discussion, some of it being contentious, they hired his replacement: Lynette Nieuwsma, the first female electric cooperative manager in North Dakota.

"I felt she was the most qualified, but not everyone agreed," remembers Dennis, who was

serving as board chair at the time. "One of the directors said, 'Can you imagine what I'm going to go home and tell my wife, that we hired a woman?'"

Lauren Klewin, current chairman of the Slope board, says she was a great manager. She was so effective, she was recruited to work at Beltrami Electric Cooperative in Bemidji, Minn.

"She had top-notch ideas and did a wonderful job for Slope Electric; especially in investing money in infrastructure to serve the oil companies and managing the contracts," Lauren says. "She worked the midnight oil to make sure this cooperative, at 12 megawatts at the time, was paying for itself and serving the membership."

Under her leadership, business carried on as usual.

A lot of industry regulations and changes were happening in Washington, D.C., during the 1980s. Dennis recalls feeling anxious about borrowing large sums of money and wondering how the cooperative would pay it back. The low interest rates helped him feel better about using the funds to improve the power system and were a low cost to the membership.

Dennis and his wife, Sara, now live south of Tucson. High school classmates with Lyle Narum, another former Slope Electric director, Dennis knew his longtime friend was spending North Dakota winters in Arizona.

"We were here one day and the doorbell rang, and it was Lyle and Bonnie coming to say, 'Hi and welcome,'" Dennis says. He later reconnected with Terry Jacobs and Rex Sadler in church.

## Terry Jacobs



In the late 1990s, Terry was the lone female serving on the Slope Electric board. She was direct, tenacious, and committed

to the member-owners, who re-elected her to serve seven terms during some challenging times.

In addition to serving on the Slope Electric board, Terry was elected to serve on the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) board. She was the first board member from Slope to hold this prestigious position, and to this day, there have only been two. Anthony Larson, a current director from Hettinger, now holds this position.

In 2014 during a work trip, Terry was diagnosed with Guillain-Barré Syndrome, a rare disorder in which the body's immune system attacks its nerves. She has been recovering ever since.

Spending winters in a warmer climate has been good therapy. She and her husband, Francis, built a home that is handicap-accessible. She does water therapy and uses the gym, and continues to make progress.

"I'm still not where I'd like to be. It is getting better," she says. "I've never worked so hard at anything in my life. I have good people around me who are supportive and helpful."

When she reflects on her time in the board room for Slope Electric, Terry says, "There's so much that goes into flipping that switch. I never anticipated the in-depth knowledge that serving on the

board requires, and how important it is to have good fellow board members and staff to help.”

While she misses the conversations and camaraderie she found with fellow directors, Terryl and Francis are enjoying this stage of life — entertaining guests, going sightseeing, taking in concerts, and visiting with the many Midwesterners who come and go.

## Lyle Narum



Before Jon Elwood “Woody” Andersen retired from the Slope Electric board, he visited his neighbor, Lyle Narum, and

asked him to consider running for his seat. A lifelong farmer from northeast of Bowman, Lyle agreed, and his cousin Harold nominated him for the position. He was elected.

Lyle served for 30 years as a Slope board director and chairman. He also represented Slope for 10 years on the Upper Missouri Power Cooperative board of directors.

During his time with Slope, Lyle

says he found it remarkable that the cooperative only had three managers prior to entering into a shared management agreement with neighboring co-ops.

When Lynette Nieuwsma resigned, the board needed a new manager. Representing Slope at a national meeting in Orlando, Fla., directors Lyle and Terryl visited with various directors who offered their thoughts on sharing employees and resources. Lyle and Terryl brought their feedback home to the board, and visited with cooperative colleagues across North Dakota including Dennis Hill, the manager at the time of the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives. Dennis encouraged Slope to pursue an alliance.

The concept was presented to the membership, and while some people did not support hiring managers who were not local, the board did what it felt was best for the membership.

“My feeling was, our job was to look at many options, and do what we felt was best for the members. I always tried to live up to that philosophy,” Lyle says.

When he retired from the board in 2015, he considered the alliance to be quite successful. Today, Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative employs 24 people who split their time and talents among four distribution cooperatives including Slope, Roughrider, Mor-Gran-Sou and KEM.

Lyle and his wife, Bonnie, started taking cruises to escape the North Dakota winters. In 2010, they decided to try a VRBO, Vacation Rental By Owner, in Arizona. They were hooked, and bought their own home in 2014. While they appreciate the warmer weather, they stay in Arizona from October to April because of their network of healthcare, friends and social life.

Reconnecting with Dennis, Terryl and Rex has been a joy; they sit in the same pew in church and often go to lunch together afterward, along with their spouses.

“It’s been fun. We certainly have had some discussions about our years that we served together and worked together,” Lyle says. “We’ve had a lot of good times together — and now they go on.” ■

## EASTER HOLIDAY CLOSING

**In observance of the Easter holiday, Slope Electric Cooperative will be closed on Friday, April 10. Line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.**



## Co-op member addresses needed

Slope Electric Cooperative, Inc., needs new addresses to mail members their capital credit allocation statements and/or capital credit check written last year.

The following list of Slope Electric Cooperative members and their current address on file (last known address) were mailed allocation statements and/or checks that were returned from the Post Office because it was, “not a deliverable address,” “unable to forward” or “attempted not known.”

If you know of a current address, please call the Slope Electric Cooperative office at 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191.

Raymond Austby, Wibaux, MT  
Robert W. Crawford, Prescott Valley, AZ  
Mark K. Erickson, Mandan, ND  
Suzanna C. Erickson, Mandan, ND  
David Foltz, Mott, ND  
Getz Contracting, Bowman, ND  
Joseph Goldade, Lemmon, SD  
Gerry & Nola J. Goode, Kalispell, MT  
Tom E. Gunderson, Pollock, SD  
Don & Fran Hagel, Bowman, ND  
Nurine Hanson, Rhame, ND  
Brigitte Hintz, Bismarck, ND  
Jim Huggins, South Heart, ND

James I. Jahner, Mott, ND  
C R Kadrmas, Fargo, ND  
Bruce G. Klein, Garrison, ND  
Lawrence J. Luger, Jr., Hettinger, ND  
Eileen Meggers, Rapid City, SD  
Michael D. Merwin, Hettinger, ND  
Betty Jean Mesling, Bismarck, ND  
Ronda Miller, Bowman, ND  
H A Multhaup Trustee, New England, ND  
Peggy Murphy, Bowman, ND  
Nelson Farms % Lelyn Nelson, Spokane, WA  
Derek Nordahl, Dickinson, ND

Preston T. & Joyce Peterson, Tucumcari, NM  
Jordan Rustad, Bowman, ND  
Chris & Becky Saylor, Hettinger, ND  
Ron Schmalz, Bowman, ND  
Robert E. & Mary A. Shear, Scranton, ND  
Duane L. & Virginia Siewert, Las Vegas, NV  
Dave & Tana Smolnikar, Bowman, ND  
Clara Tews, Cheyenne, WY  
Leonard Torpen, Bowman, ND  
Tri State Comm Inc., Bismarck, ND  
Gary White, Reeder, ND

## What are capital credits?

Slope Electric Cooperative is a nonprofit business. We exist only to provide goods and services to you, our members; not to make a profit for a shareholder or investor. Cooperatives are operated to provide at-cost electric service to their members.

When all the expenses are paid, the cooperative’s margins are credited to you in the form of capital credits. As the financial condition of your cooperative allows, you are paid these capital credits. In the meantime, your capital credits are your equity in the cooperative.

Refunds are allocated based on the amount of business a member does with the cooperative — the more electricity used, the larger the capital credit check.

## Members, do we have your current contact information?

Please make sure Slope Electric Cooperative has your updated mobile phone number, email address and mailing address on file! If you plan to move, let us know your forwarding address. Your updated information will help us confer a capital credit check when the time is right.

Please call 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191, or log into your SmartHub account, to update your information. If you do not have a SmartHub account, set one up at [www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop).

## 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 was held Feb. 19. Members reviewed procedures, responsibilities and qualifications for directorship. The

The following members have been appointed by the board of directors to serve on the Nominating/Resolutions Committee for 2020:

Robert Yohe .....	804 9th Ave. N.W., Hettinger, ND 58639.....	701-853-2413
Kevan Stafne .....	1106 7th St. N.W., Hettinger, ND 58639.....	701-853-2207
Todd Fink.....	301 4th St. S.E., Hettinger, ND 58639.....	701-567-4464
Michael Schneider.....	7501 156th Ave. S.W., Rhame, ND 58651 .....	701-279-6927
Lavonne Wegner.....	7507 142nd Ave. S.W., Bowman, ND 58623 .....	701-523-5558
Trevor Steeke .....	8506 162nd Ave. S.W., Rhame, ND 58651.....	701-279-6859
William Freymiller.....	13606 84th St. S.W., Bowman, ND 58623 .....	701-275-8776
Sandra Hoffman .....	8649 82nd St. S.W., Mott, ND 58646.....	701-824-2016
Raymond Greff.....	6035 88th Ave. S.W., Mott, ND 58646 .....	701-823-2494
James Pahlmeyer.....	10540 57th St. S.W., Regent, ND 58650 .....	701-563-5123
Robert Martin.....	9309 Hwy. 21, Mott, ND 58646 .....	701-824-2485

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 Cooperative.
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.



## HISTORIC ANNUAL MEETING

**JUNE 4, 2020**  
**FOUR SEASONS PAVILION,**  
**BOWMAN**





# Bin there, done that Adding a bin site or other new load?

If so, it pays to plan ahead. Members can save time, money and aggravation by consulting with Slope Electric Cooperative before locating new grain bins or adding new load.

## New or upgraded service

When adding electrical loads, such as bin fans or shop heat, Slope Electric encourages members to contact the cooperative first. Representatives will design a service adequately sized for the proposed electrical load. Existing services will be inspected to determine if an upgrade in service is required.

Whether you are adding a new service or expanding an existing service, Slope Electric needs to study the effect the added load will have on the cooperative's electric distribution system to determine the co-op's ability to serve that load.

## Bin placement

When placing a primary electric service at a grain bin site, Slope Electric adheres to the requirements set forth in the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC). The NESC specifies the minimum distance between a grain bin and the nearest overhead power line and has two sections that apply to grain handling systems.

Adequate clearance between grain bins and overhead power lines reduces the risk of accidental contact between the power lines and tall farm equipment such as portable grain augers, elevators or grain-probing devices. Also, a grain bin or shop built too close to an overhead power line may mean the bin or power line would need to be relocated, most times at the member's expense.

Members considering a new bin site or added load are encouraged to contact Slope Electric. We are available to provide assistance in planning for a safe, reliable environment for everyone. ■

### GRAIN BIN SAFETY

**DANGER: HIGH VOLTAGE!**  
FOLLOW FARM SAFETY RULES AROUND POWER LINES

Height of grain storage structure	D=Minimum distance from line to bin wall*
15 ft.	55 ft.
20 ft.	68 ft.
25 ft.	80 ft.
30 ft.	93 ft.
35 ft.	104 ft.
40 ft.	118 ft.
50 ft.	143 ft.
60 ft.	168 ft.
70 ft.	193 ft.
80 ft.	218 ft.

\*Based on a typical power line having a vertical clearance of 18.5 feet above the ground and a supply line phase to ground voltage of more than 0V to 22KV; National Electrical Safety Code Rule 232.

## Report from

# THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FEB. 27, 2020

Approved minutes of the Jan. 27, 2020, Board meeting and capital credit estate retirements.

Heard reports from department heads including the Financial Report for January, which was accepted.

Heard the Co-General Managers/CEOs' updates, and reports on several meetings they attended the past month.

Heard reports from Directors who attended various meetings throughout the month.

The Board reviewed policies regarding capital credits, functions of the Nominating Committee, financial policy, and discussed

what rate philosophy they would like to follow.

Attorney Grosz reviewed the proposed Bylaw amendments and asked the Board to review the changes in preparation for the next Board meeting.

Board members were asked if they wish to attend several upcoming meetings, with delegates and alternates selected for those meetings needing voting delegates.

The next Board meeting is set for 10 a.m. MT on March 26, 2020.

Held Executive Session.



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Fax: 701-579-4193

Email us:

[comments@slopeelectric.coop](mailto:comments@slopeelectric.coop)

UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES

800-795-0555 or 811

## Lineworker Appreciation Day is Monday, April 13



PHOTO BY LYLE KOVAR

Slope Line Technician **Mark Frank**

National studies consistently rank power line installers and repairers among the most dangerous jobs in the nation. Laboring high in the air wearing heavy equipment and working with high voltage creates the perfect storm of a dangerous and

unforgiving profession.

Electric lineworkers are up to the task, because they are committed to safety.

Slope Electric Cooperative's linemen build and maintain the power system that keeps electricity flowing to your farm, home or business.

In addition to their years of specialized education and training, it takes internal fortitude and a mission-oriented outlook to be a good lineman. This service-oriented mentality is a hallmark characteristic of linemen who focus on serving and supporting their local communities.

Monday, April 13, is Lineworker Appreciation Day. Given the dedication of Slope's operations and support staff who keep your power flowing, let's thank them for their many contributions. They are here to serve you, our member-owners. ■

### SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Lauren Klewin, President  
Steve Wegner, Vice President  
Anthony Larson, Secretary  
Jerome Caron, Treasurer  
Angela Carlson, Director  
HJ "Chip" Fischer, Director  
Dale Hande, Director  
Charlotte Meier, Director

### MANAGEMENT

Donald A. Franklund  
CO-GM/GEO

Travis Kupper  
CO-GM/GEO

[www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop)



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