



Volts and Jolts

Published monthly for the members of
RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc.

One of the Minnkota Power Systems

SERVING THE FOUR-COUNTY AREA OF MARSHALL, PENNINGTON, RED LAKE AND POLK

VOL. 43 – NO. 5

RED LAKE FALLS (RED LAKE COUNTY), MINNESOTA 56750

MARCH 2008

Director nominees to be elected March 26

Director nominees Bonnie Christians, Steve Linder and Mark Hanson will be officially re-elected to the Red Lake Electric Cooperative Board of Directors at the Cooperative's annual meeting. The meeting will be held Wednesday, March 26, in the Imperial Room at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.

All three nominees were selected as candidates at their respective district meetings that were held in February. There were no nominations by petition; therefore, the nominees will be elected to three-year terms.



Bonnie Christians

Bonnie Christians lives in the Gentilly area with her husband, Scott. Together they have five children and 11 grandchildren. Scott works at American Crystal Sugar Company as a shift supervisor.

Working with Stenshoel-House Funeral Home, Christians assists families with preplanning and pre-funding funeral arrangements. Additional part-time employment includes her work with New Horizons, providing services, including mediation, for people addressing issues of custody of minor children, parenting time schedules, divorce, division of marital assets and workplace conflict.

Community involvement for Christians includes being an active member of the Polk County Sheriff's Mounted Posse Search and Rescue. She also serves as treasurer of the Gentilly Merri-Mixers Homemakers group. Christians will be completing her second term as a Red Lake Electric Cooperative director currently serving as vice president.

"It has been an honor to be a part of such an outstanding Cooperative," Christians said. "I look forward to continuing my association and serving the members of Red Lake Electric."



Steve Linder

Steve Linder is a native to the Oklee area and lives with his wife, Donna, on their farm north of Oklee. They have three children: Amber, Ben and Levi.

The Linders are engaged in grain farming, which includes raising wheat, soybeans and corn. During the winter months, Steve spends a good share of his time doing farm equipment maintenance in his farm shop.

Linder has served as a Red Lake Electric Cooperative director for six years. He also serves as secretary of the Oklee Elevator Board of Directors, president of the Red Lake County Farmers Union and is a supervisor on the Garnes Township Board.

"I find it very interesting to serve as a director of Red Lake Electric Cooperative," Linder said. "I will continue to do my best in serving the Cooperative and its members."



Mark Hanson

Mark Hanson lives east of Thief River Falls with his wife, Audrey. They have four children: Ehren, Seth, Ingrid and Kjell, and seven grandchildren.

Hanson is engaged in dairy farming, raising replacement dairy heifers. Audrey works as a registered nurse.

Hanson has served as a director of Red Lake Electric Cooperative for three years. He also serves as vice chairman of the Pennington County Township Officers Association and as clerk of Silverton Township. The Hansons are members of Evangelical Free Church of Thief River Falls.

"Electricity plays a vital role in everyone's life, whether in our work, our homes or in our recreation," Hanson said. "Much of the quality of life as we live it today relates directly to the use of electricity."

"I look forward to serving another three years as director of the Cooperative and thank the people of the district for their continued support," Hanson said.



Langdon Wind Energy Center

Welcome

to the **70th** Annual Meeting of the Membership of

Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Wednesday, March 26, 2008

Imperial Room, Ralph Engelstad Arena

Thief River Falls, Minnesota

9:00 a.m.	Registration begins Free coffee and doughnuts	
10:00 a.m.	Entertainment	Vern Rogalla
10:30 a.m.	Call to order	Kelly Lundeen, President
	National Anthem	Amelia Schmitz
	Invocation	Roger Johanneck
	Introductions	Kelly Lundeen

BUSINESS SESSION

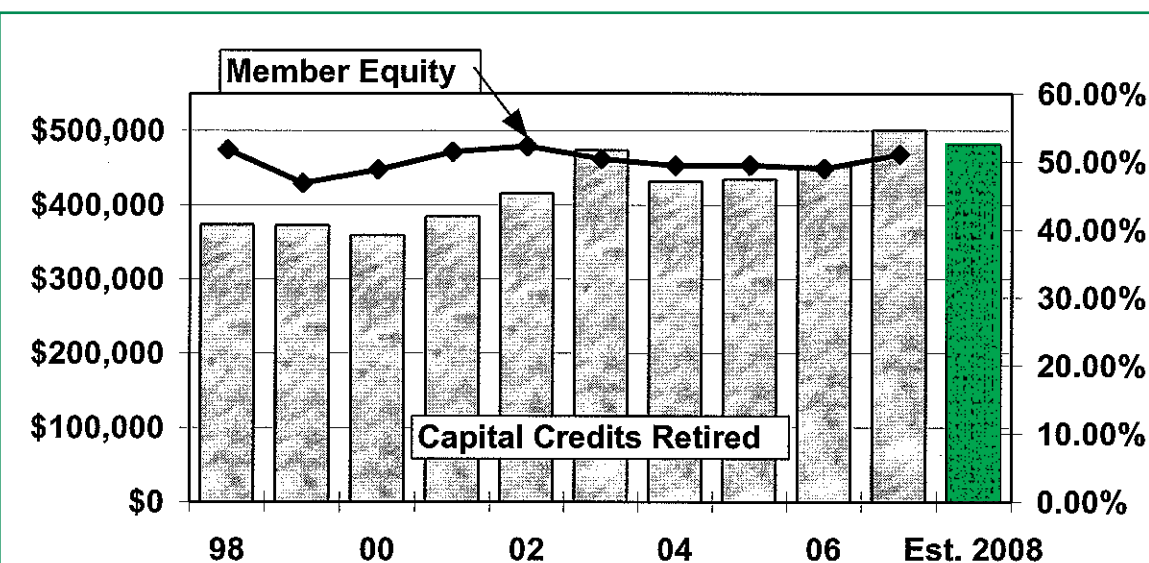
Notice of meeting and affidavit of mailing	Henry Wieland
Establishment of quorum	Henry Wieland
Minutes of 2007 meeting	Henry Wieland
President's report	Kelly Lundeen
General manager's report	Ron Kennedy
Financial report	Roger Johanneck
Minnkota report	Dave Loer, CEO, Minnkota Power
Election of directors	Kelly Lundeen
Question and answer session	
Adjournment of business session	
Award Presentations	
Awarding of prizes	
Lunch and entertainment	

The Ralph Engelstad Arena is handicap-accessible and equipped accordingly. Any annual meeting attendee requiring any other special needs should contact Red Lake Electric Cooperative in advance.

QUICK TAKES

A look at some statistics from your Red Lake Electric Cooperative

This month, customers will experience one of the benefits of membership or ownership in their Red Lake Electric Cooperative business. Included on your March billing statement, is the General Capital Credit allocation for 2007 and retirement of customer equity (Capital Credits) information for 2008. This graph shows the level of member equity or ownership in the Cooperative over the past 10 years and the amount of Capital Credits returned to customers annually over the same period. Since the Cooperative began business in 1938, the Cooperative has retired \$7.6 million of Capital Credits to its members.



Energy conservation kits given at annual meeting

Each member attending the Red Lake Electric Cooperative annual meeting March 26 in Thief River Falls will be given an energy conservation kit. The kit contains three CFL light bulbs, a night light, a furnace filter whistle, a refrigerator/freezer thermometer, 12 switch/outlet draft stoppers and useful tips on ways to conserve electricity. Red Lake Electric encourages energy conservation in many ways and distribution of these kits will further assist members in their conservation efforts. Since distribution of these kits is a sizeable expense used to meet Minnesota Conservation Improvement Program requirements, only one kit will be given to each member, or spouse, if the member doesn't attend the annual meeting.



Manager's Comments

by Ron Kennedy



Climate change ... how much are you willing to pay?

The climate scientists and researchers who scoff at the notion that man is causing the earth to warm are not heard much in the halls of Congress. Those predicting catastrophic events due to man's affection for fossil fuels grab the attention of politicians and the press.

Since it appears a foregone conclusion that Congress will adopt legislation soon to curb the emission of carbon dioxide (CO2), the obvious question is, "How much?"

How much CO2 needs to be reduced? How much will global temperatures drop if CO2 is reduced? Finally, how much will all this cost America and Americans?

Generally, when the government wants to decrease the use of something, like gasoline or electricity, they raise the price through direct or indirect taxation. Taxation normally produces the intended effect and there's more tax revenue available for various government programs. This concept is under consideration right now.

It seems reasonable that we ask our legislators, "How much?" before CO2 reduction legislation is passed. Will it raise the price of

driving to work 10 percent, 30 percent, 100 percent? How about my electric bill and cost of heating my

'Consumers served by electric co-ops across America must understand that poorly conceived climate change legislation or regulation could enormously impact their monthly electric bills and have a disastrous effect on the economy.'
— Glen English, CEO, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

home: 10 percent, 50 percent, 100 percent?

In a recent public opinion survey commissioned by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), a sampling of Americans were asked, "How much are you willing to pay to combat climate change?" Thirty-

five percent said they would accept no increase in electric rates, 31 percent said they would accept a rate increase of less than 10 percent and 20 percent of those surveyed said they would accept an increase between 10 percent and 20 percent.

There are likely Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) customers with opinions in each response category and that's fine. My hope is if CO2 reduction legislation is passed it is done so with some rational thought and the (3830007.05 Clare Bruggeman) input of scientists on both sides of the issue. We don't need legislation that could cripple our economy and provide nothing in return.

So what's your opinion? If you haven't formed an opinion on CO2 reduction to alleviate global warming, you should. And if you haven't communicated your opinion to your legislators, you should do that also.

RLEC annual meeting

I encourage you to attend the annual meeting March 26 if you can. We have a program lined up that should be informative, interesting and short. I hope to see you there.

RLEC closed Good Friday

In celebration of Easter, Red Lake Electric Cooperative's headquarters will be closed Good Friday, March 21. In case of electrical outage or emergency call the after-hour phone number: 218-253-2200. Have a joyous Easter celebration.

Commercial lighting rebates continue at RLEC

Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) wants its members to get the most value possible from every dollar they spend on electricity. Various programs have long been in place to help members conserve electricity. Frequent messages in print and on radio encourage energy efficiency and conservation. The Energy Star appliance rebate program has rebated more than \$141,000 to members to encourage (1208003.06 Mark Peterson) purchase of energy-efficient appliances. The appliance rebate program continues in 2008.

A rebate program for commercial customers began Jan. 1, 2007. RLEC will pay rebates to commercial customers that replace old, inefficient lighting systems with

new, more efficient light fixtures.

RLEC will pay various rebate amounts, depending on the light fixture installed and replaced. In no event will the rebate paid exceed 50 percent of the replacement cost. A \$10,000 maximum annual expenditure for the program has been set so it is important for commercial customers to act quickly.

Rebates are only given for fixture replacement, not new or additional light fixtures. An RLEC representative must inspect the lighting system before and after the fixture replacement work is done.

For more information on RLEC's commercial lighting rebate program contact Kevin Reich, manager of member services, at 800-245-6068 or 253-2168.

Tip of the Hard Hat

Thank you to Brad Naplin for pulling one of the Red Lake Electric Cooperative's line trucks out of the snow.

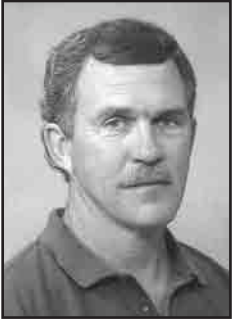


Mark the date – Ag Day is March 29 in RLF

The annual Ag Day celebration will be March 29 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Red Lake Falls Community Hall. Seven speakers will give presentations on a variety of topics.

A free lunch, sponsored by the Merchants' Committee and Ag Day vendors and sponsors will be served by the Women of Today at noon.

An evening banquet will be at the Red Lake Falls American Legion Club at 6 p.m. with entertainment by the Lafayette High School drumline.



Member Service Department

by Kevin Reich

Electric heat issues

Hours of load control

Before the onset of this heating season, Minnkota Power Cooperative, Red Lake Electric Cooperative's wholesale electric supplier and the one who implements the control of off-peak electric heat, estimated control hours for long-term controlled electric heat to be about 375 hours for the season. This estimate was based on several variables including projected power plant availability and normal winter weather conditions.

One of Minnkota's coal-fired plants near Center, N.D., was out of service last fall for a planned outage/overhaul. The outage was planned to span eight weeks but actually lasted 11 weeks due to issues beyond Minnkota's control. This extended outage carried into the heating season, which was cause for several hours of load control early.

The winter we have experienced has been more of an old-fashioned one than a normal winter. We have experienced some very cold temperatures throughout the season starting in early December, which was cause for electric heat load control. Load control did subside after the first of the year but has continued due to colder-than-normal temperatures carrying into March.

Long-term load control hours through March 13 totaled 420 hours. This is more than what was estimated but less than the 552 hours of load control experienced during the 2006-07 heating season.

Portable electric heaters

This heating season there has been a lot of promotion and advertisement of specific space heaters. Generally, the promotional materials are not false but the material does not tell the whole story.

There is not "magic" in a portable electric heater. A heater advertised as 5100 BTU is the same as a 1500-watt heater. Any 1500-watt heater is going to use 1.5 kilowatt hours for every hour of operation (1,000 watts operated for one hour uses 1 kilowatt hour of electricity).

Often the advertisements have stated, "reduce your heating costs up to 50%." Fifty percent of what? They fail to state that using the portable heaters will greatly increase the bottom line of your electric bill. We have entertained many phone calls from members using portable heaters asking why their electric bills are so much greater.

In my opinion, these space heaters are overpriced, glorified heaters. Instead of investing \$1,200 or \$1,600 for portable heaters, one could put that kind of money toward an off-peak electric heating (7420001.03 John LaRochelle) system and truly reduce one's heating costs. As one of my counter-

parts stated, if you really want or need a portable electric heater, buy a \$59 one at a hardware store and save more than \$300 in the purchase. Use the \$300 for insulation or weatherization measures that will help reduce your heating costs each heating season.

Farm shop heating

In talking with suppliers, contractors and members, there are plans for several farm shops to be built this construction season. The means of heating a shop is the owner's choice but if you are considering electric floor heat may I suggest the "storage concept."

There are three different ways of heating a floor electrically. Two of them provide the storage concept in the installation design. This is accomplished with the installation of either underfloor heat cable or heat panels where the heat source is placed in a bed of sand.

The third option is using an electric boiler heating the floor hydronically with tubing. Often this option only provides a warm floor because the tubing is placed either in the concrete or at the base of the concrete. This option can also provide a storage setup if the tubing is placed in a bed of sand.

Case studies have proven that storage systems are more economical to operate. As an owner you can also take advantage of longer control options that will yield the best off-peak electric heat rate helping control heating costs.

NOTICE

Hidden within the text of the articles on pages 1, 2, 3 and the back page of this issue of the Volts & Jolts are the names and account numbers of five RLEC members. They will appear within the articles in parenthesis as such (99-99-99-999-99 Roger P. Member). If you find your name and account number, clip it out and send it with your next payment. You will be credited with \$5 on your electric bill.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of Red Lake Electric Cooperative to enhance the quality of life for people of our service area by consistently providing quality electric service and other valued services while holding our employees, our community and our environment in high regard.



Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

One of the Minnkota Power Systems



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Things you should know about your electric service

BILLINGS AND COLLECTION

You will receive your energy bill on or near the 20th of each month.

Payment of your monthly energy bill is due on the 20th of the month. You may pay your bill in person at RLEC during office hours, use the 24-hour drive-up drop box located next to the RLEC office, by Auto Pay, or by mail. Payment must be in the office, drop box, Auto Pay, or in the mail, as evidenced by the postmark, by the 5th day of the following month to avoid a late payment charge. A 1 1/2% monthly late payment charge will be computed on delinquent energy bills, the minimum late payment charge will be \$1.00.

If your payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a final notice of disconnection statement will be included on your following bill. The final notice statement will notify you when your electric service will be disconnected if the delinquent amount remains unpaid. If an employee is sent to disconnect your electric service, a \$50 collection fee will be charged to your account, even if you pay the collector.

To have a disconnected service reconnected, all amounts owing, a \$50 reconnection fee, and a security deposit must be paid. If the service must be reconnected after normal working hours, a \$100 reconnection fee must be paid.

BAD CHECKS

A \$15 charge will be levied each time a check is returned because of nonsufficient funds, account being closed or payment stopped.

OUTAGES

In case your electricity goes out, please do the following:

1. Check your fuses or breakers at the yard pole or meter pedestal.
2. Call your neighbor to see if they are out of electricity also.
3. Call the RLEC office (218-253-2168 or 1-800-245-6068) during working hours or 218-253-2200 after hours. We will accept collect calls for outages only.

METER TESTS

RLEC has a schedule in place to have its meters periodically tested for accuracy. Results from these tests show that meters generally slow down with age; however, if you think that your meter is recording too much usage, RLEC will test it for accuracy. You must pay a test fee in advance of the test. If the meter test shows that the meter was inaccurate, the test fee will be refunded to you.

STOPPED METERS

If you find your meter has stopped and you are using electricity, please contact the office immediately so we can replace it. Average consumption will be billed to the member for the time the meter was stopped so there is no advantage in not reporting a stopped meter.

METER READINGS

An automated meter reading system is utilized to obtain monthly meter readings. Although the system is normally reliable, there is always a chance that the correct reading has not been transmitted to the office for billing. Customers should periodically read their meter and compare it to the reading on the billing statement. If the actual reading is not close to the billing statement reading, please call the office.

GENERAL SERVICE RATES

Facilities charge variable \$15 to \$21 month
First 500 KWH8.0¢ Kwh
Over 500 KWH (April-Dec.)5.7¢ Kwh
Over 500 KWH (Jan.-Mar.)6.5¢ Kwh
Multiphase users add \$16/month cost of service charge.

Standby, \$8/month (meter disconnected but the power line retained; standby is not available on services larger than 15 KVA transformer capacity).

Security light, \$6/month, high pressure sodium, \$7/month, mercury vapor; water heater flat credit, \$5/month (on January-April billing); off-peak equipment charge, \$3.50/month per heat meter; off-peak electric heat rate, 3.5¢/kWh long-term control, 5.0¢/kWh short-term control.

WE PROUDLY PRESENT TO YOU

The Red Lake Electric Cooperative Customer Service Guarantee



It's short and simple! Red Lake Electric Cooperative employees will meet or exceed your expectations of friendly, courteous service and will meet any commitments they make to you. If your expectations of the service provided by our employees is not met, please contact me at the Red Lake Electric Cooperative office, 253-2168. You will receive \$5.00 for your inconvenience and our promise to serve you better in the future. Our employees' commitment to quality customer service makes this guarantee possible.



Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

One of the Minnkota Power Systems

RONNIE M. KENNEDY
General Manager

RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc. VOLTS & JOLTS

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VOLTS AND JOLTS FEATURE OF THE MONTH

Thief River Falls FFA chapter offers an array of opportunities for students

By Destiny Harmoning

In Thief River Falls, the FFA chapter has been running consecutively for the last 10 years. There are 73 members involved in the program for the 2007-08 school year and 317 total students enrolled in the agricultural education program.

FFA used to be known as "Future Farmers of America" but has since resigned the title because it now offers a wide spectrum of curriculum.

About 12 years prior to 1998, there was an FFA chapter but it faded out, possibly due to lack of funding. The FFA was brought back in 1998 as a direct result of a referendum in 1997.

When the curriculum was reintroduced, ADawn Melbye became the agricultural education teacher and the FFA advisor.

Melbye studied at the University of Minnesota, Crookston, and then received her master's degree at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul. She achieved her teacher's license and completed a master's degree in agriculture with an emphasis in education.

ADawn Melbye

The agricultural education consists of 10 different, nontraditional classes. "We look at all aspects of the industry," Melbye explained.

Small animal 1 and 2 covers information about dogs, cats, birds, rabbits and other pet-type animals. The animal's nutrition, anatomy/ physiology and reproduction are studied and jobs and careers available in the field are looked at.

In wildlife resources 1 students learn about the large game in Minnesota such as whitetail deer, elk, bear and wolves. They again study anatomy/physiology but also cover current event situations such as the concern of tuberculosis and other diseases.

Wildlife resources 2 covers outdoor survival, GPS orienting, population control, conservation measures and water quality issues.

Animal science, which can be taken for a science credit and follows state science standards, is an applied biology focusing on the anatomy/physiology of animals. Plant science is the study of plants. In floriculture, students learn about floral design.

Exploring agriculture is a class that covers 25 different topics from integrated pest management to exotic animals such as buffalo, llamas and emus.

Equine science is a class where students study about horses. Natural resources covers forestry, soils and water topics.

Classes are every day like other high school classes. The average class size is about 20 to 30 students. Not all the students enrolled in agricultural education are a

part of FFA. There are currently 73 members of FFA.

FFA gives students the ability to expand on the knowledge they learn. "It's the hands-on extension of the classroom," Melbye explained.

FFA members participate in career development contests, which cover specific topics. There are 27 different topics available. An example of a contest would be horse judging, where a student interested in horses could learn more about confirmation, breeds, parts and skeletal structures. This gives the student the ability to become a better horse owner or assist a career they are pursuing.

Lian is in her second year in FFA and is the chapter secretary. She has been involved in horse judging, job interview, parliamentary procedure and Agriscience fair contests. Lian enjoys the class because there are no try-outs; its open to everyone and "there is always something to do," she said. Lian hopes to manage a horse ranch. She said FFA has taught her numerous skills that will help her achieve her career goal. She learned maintenance, sanitation, grooming and nutrition. Lian also learned what makes a "good horse" with confirmation and muscle balance.

Another student, Jill Solberg, is in FFA because it

small animals classes because she hopes to be a veterinarian.

Kelsey Spilde, a student in the animal science class, joined to further her career goals of attending college for something with animals and horse training. She enjoys doing experiments in the class.

Another student in the animal science class is Alie Dorn. Dorn loves animals and wanted to learn as much as possible about them. She hopes to study animals in college as well. She wants to become a horse trainer. Her favorite part of the class is experiments and reports.

Roshan Pederson, senior president of the FFA, said

Members of the Thief River Falls FFA are, front from left, Megan O'Connell, April Bruggeman, Eva Bruggeman, Jako Phillion, Cydnee Peterson, Breanna Sanner, Travis Dagen, Anthony Martin, Amber Sanders, ADawn Melbye; second row, Kaine Jablinske, Casey Braastad, Whitney Lian, Michael Holmer, Angela Franks, Natalie Brekkestran, Whitney Jacobson, Christine Daniels, Kira Spaulding, Caitlyn Nelson; third row, Stephanie Amiot, Danelle Burton, Jason Bitzer, Mike Tunheim, Kevin Nelson, Adam Hutton, Andrew Miller, Richard Holland, Alie Dorn; fourth row, Aaron Schneider, Johnnie Phillip, Kenton Johnson, Kolton Kilen, Josh Skalsky, Raina Pederson, Bryan Rambeck, Nathan Lindom; back, Donovan Rupprecht, Kelsey Spilde, Jacie Miller, Krystal Roy and Jill Solberg.

FFA members meet once a month. The also have two officer teams, a junior and senior team, who meet once a week to make decisions. Students on the officer team have specific duties from president to reporter.

The senior team members this year are Roshan Pederson, president, Johnnie Philipp, vice president, Whitney Lian, secretary, Whitney Jacobsen, treasurer, Jill Solberg, reporter, Natalie Brekkestran, sentinel, and Kaine Jablinske, officer-at-large.

The junior team consists of Erik Bratneg, president, Allen Abercrombie, vice president, Angie Franks, secretary, Aaron Schneider, treasurer, Kelsey Spilde, reporter, and Jacob Malwitz, sentinel.

FFA is involved in a wide variety of events. Recently they helped the AgriWomen with Project Pizza, had a display at the Farmers-Merchant Mixer and participated in the Agriscience fair. "Just about every event there is, we have a team for," Melbye said.

FFA allows students to participate in a multitude of things such as horticulture, landscaping, mechanics, environment, outdoors, recreation, food fiber systems, small animals, horse judging, farm system management and leadership contests.

They also have a "very strong" parliamentary procedure team that has learned Robert's Rules of Order and can demonstrate them well. They won the regional competition and are going to state.

One of the FFA members, Whitney Lian, got into the program because "I have several animals and I wanted to expand my knowledge." Lian enjoys FFA because it provides leadership skills. She also said there is no "clique" involved in FFA. "A person makes new friends that they normally would not have had," Lian said.

runs in the family. Her father and oldest sister were involved in it. "The rest of us followed suit," Solberg explained.

For Solberg, FFA has opened her eyes to a whole new perspective. She explained it helped her see that agriculture entails much more than the stereotypical "hick farmers" idea. Solberg's favorite part of FFA is going on trips. In October she went to the national convention in Indianapolis, Ind. "It's so cool to meet kids from all across the nation and make connections," Solberg stated.

Currently the FFA reporter, Solberg has also previously been president as a junior. She was a reporter as a sophomore. She has been involved in FFA for four years.

This year, Solberg is participating in floriculture and novice parliamentary procedure contests. In prior years, she participated in creed speaking, Agriscience fair and parliamentary procedure. Solberg is unsure of her career goals but has learned a lot from FFA. "I've discovered that I really like floral design, something I'd probably never have discovered otherwise," Solberg said. She said FFA has opened up a lot more options for her careerwise.

Jacie Miller, another FFA member is taking small animal management because she enjoys learning about the animals. She is unsure of her college plans but thinks it will probably be something with animals. "Melbye is an awesome teacher and it's fun learning with her," Miller said.

Another student, Krystle Ramsey, enjoys FFA and the floriculture class. There she learned how to make corsages, boutonniere and arrangements. She also takes

she's always been interested in everything that agriculture entails. She plans to attend the University of Minnesota, Crookston, to achieve a degree in natural resources or horticulture in hopes of working for the Department of Natural Resources or being a florist. Pederson said FFA gives her a "head start" on her career.

Whitney Jacobson joined FFA to learn more. Her favorite part is meeting new friends and meeting up with old friends. She hopes to become a veterinarian.

Kaine Jablinske, FFA officer-at-large, enjoys the outdoors. He hopes to be a fish and game wildlife manager. His favorite part of FFA is going on trips. He has been a member for two years and says, "FFA is a great organization."

Erik Brateng has been in FFA for two years and is the junior president. He enjoys participating in contests. He wants to be a wildlife manager.

FFA will host their annual banquet and FFA reunion May 4 with the theme "Blue Jackets - Bright Futures." The program will run from 3 to 4 p.m. at the Lincoln High School auditorium, followed by an ice cream social from 4 to 5 p.m. in the LHS cafeteria. All FFA alumni from the area are invited and are asked to bring their jacket and memorabilia or pictures.

For more information on FFA visit the national Web site at ffa.org, the Minnesota site at ffa.umn.edu or contact Melbye at 218-681-7432, ext. 112, or email amelbye@trf.k12.mn.us.

More Photos on Page 5

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Students extracting DNA from cheek cell samples are, from left, Phillip Olson, Chase Bakke, Brian Hruby and Kolton Kilen.



Ag students texturing soil are, from left, Whitney Jacobson, Kelsey Spilde, Shelby Johnson, Blake Halbasch, Melda Nelson and Brandon Housey.



Ag students Kira Spaulding, left, and Kevin Nelson were responsible for planting and maintaining the flowerbeds at Lincoln High School during the summer.



Roshan Pederson working on a floral arrangement in floriculture class.



Matt Audette, left, and Chris Compeau scoring antlers.



Chapter delegates sent to the national FFA convention in Indianapolis, Ind., are, from left, Jill Solberg, Kelsey Spilde, Roshan Pederson and Whitney Jacobson.



Members of the senior FFA officer team are, front from left, Whitney Lian, Whitney Jacobson, Jill Solberg; back, Natalie Brekkestran, Kaine Jablinske, Johnnie Phillip and Roshan Pederson.



Ag students who helped with bird banding at Agassiz Wildlife Refuge are, from left, Ashley Compeau, Lora Fipula, Becca Aaland, Anthony Martin, Royce Muzzy, Katrina Peterson and Reggie Cummings.

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When to turn off computers

If you're wondering when to turn off personal computers for energy savings, here are some general guidelines.

While a small surge in energy consumption occurs when a computer starts up, this hardly compares with the amount used when a computer runs for a long time. For energy savings and convenience, consider turning off the monitor if you aren't going to use your PC for more than 20 minutes and switch off the CPU and monitor if you're not going to use a PC for more than two hours.

Make sure monitors, printers and other accessories are plugged in to a power strip/surge protector. When not using equipment for extended periods, turn off the switch on the power strip to prevent any power drain. If you don't use a power strip, unplug extra equipment when it's not in use.

Most PCs today reach the end of their useful life due to advances in technology long before any negative effects of being switched on and off multiple times can be seen. But as a general rule of thumb, the less time a PC is on, the longer it will "last." PCs also produce heat so turning them off reduces the need for air conditioning.

Many PCs come with a power-down or sleep mode feature for the CPU and monitor. Energy Star® computers consume 15 watts or less in this mode – about 70 percent less electricity than a computer without power management features. Ener-

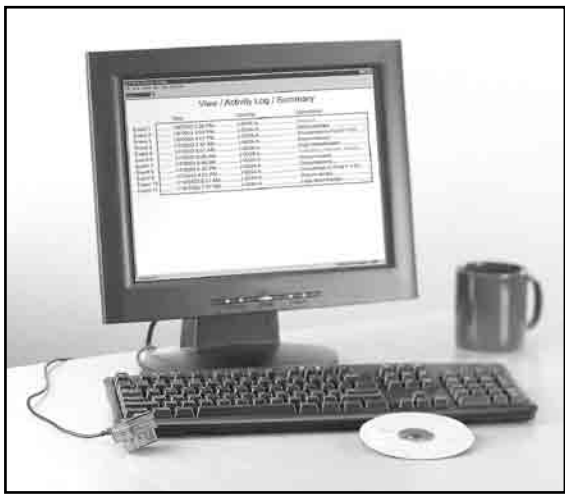


Photo by Davis Instruments

gy Star monitors also have the capability to power down into two successive sleep modes, first to 15 watts and then to eight watts – less than 10 percent of its operating power consumption.

Keep in mind screen savers are not energy savers. Using a screen saver may, in fact, require more energy than not using one and your power-down feature may not work if you have a screen saver activated. In fact, modern LCD color monitors do not need screen savers.

– Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

Horticultural spring workshop is March 29

The 13th District Horticultural Society spring workshop, "Hats off to spring!" will be held Saturday, March 29, at the Badger Community Center, hosted by the Gro-rite Garden Club.

"Garden Jeopardy" will be given at 11:15 a.m., hosted by Karen Andol, master gardener and owner of L&E Greenhouse. Jackie Erickson, master gardener and landscaper, will present a lesson at 1:15

p.m., "Starting a new garden bed."

Registration is at 9 a.m. A meeting of the executive board and all district presidents will be held at 9:15 a.m. The business meeting convenes at 10 a.m. and lunch will be served at 11:45 a.m.

A country store will begin at 12:45 p.m. with the day's wrap-up with door prizes and silver tea at 2:30 p.m.

The event is open to the public.

Top dairy herds for February DHIA

Randy and Margaret Rasmussen, supervisors of the Red Lake-Pennington

Name	Cows	% in milk	lbs. milk	test	lbs. fat	lbs. protein
Todd, Kathy Johnston	60	88	73	3.9	2.9	3.1
NW Research & Outreach Ctr. 113	89	72	3.7	2.4	3.1	2.2
Northstar Dairy, LLC, 3X	896	90	67	3.8	2.6	3.2
Walter Bros. Farm	298	90	67	3.8	2.5	3.1
Beyer Bros. Farm	69	88	65	3.5	2.3	3.1
Wayra Dairy	221	90	64	3.7	2.4	3.1
Robert and Terri Dahlen	55	85	64	3.5	2.2	3.0
Tom and Diane Kolstoe	37	95	64	3.7	2.4	3.0
Spring Prairie Colony	357	88	62	3.9	2.4	3.0
Paul Duray	45	91	62	3.8	2.4	3.2

The herd averages are affected by the number of dry cows in the herd. The amount of milk or butterfat is averaged out over all the cows. This gives the farmer a record of the earning power of the herd for the month. If too many cows are included in the herd, then the average for the month may be low, even though the cow that is milking produces a lot of milk.

DHIA, put the following herds at top 10 in the association for February.

Minn. deer hunters donate 78,000 pounds of venison

In the first year of a new venison donation program, Minnesota hunters donated 1,977 deer, creating the opportunity for 97 food shelves located throughout Minnesota to distribute 78,000 pounds of venison.

"Overall, I think we had a very successful first year," said Lou Cornicelli, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) big game program coordinator. "Most of the deer donated came from areas with overly high deer population densities, and the venison from those deer was put to very good use."

The donations were made possible by a new venison donation program that allows hunters to donate harvested deer without having to pay processing costs. Managed by the DNR and Min-

nesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), the program's goal is to provide a sought-after food source to those in need while encouraging hunters to harvest additional animals to help manage the deer herd.

"Hunters always could donate harvested deer," Cornicelli said. "But without funding, only a few deer were donated annually. The infusion of new money allowed us to greatly expand the program." The program is funded by a legislative appropriation, a nonresident license fee increase and voluntary donations when resident hunters purchase a deer license.

Cornicelli said the hunting portion of the program is designed to allow hunters to harvest extra deer in areas where deer populations are

above wildlife management goals. In 2007, permit areas that allowed individual hunters to take more than one deer provided 95 percent of the donations. Nearly 70 percent of donated deer came from permit areas that allowed the harvest of five or more deer.

The program requires that hunters donate deer only to processors certified by the MDA and deer be free from signs of illness, field dressed with the hide intact, free of visible decomposition or contamination and properly identified with a DNR registration tag. In 2007, 72 certified processors distributed the venison to 97 Minnesota food shelves.

Manufactured exports hit \$4.3 billion in fourth quarter

Minnesota's manufactured exports reached a record \$4.3 billion in the fourth quarter of 2007 – 14.5 percent ahead of the same period a year earlier, according to data released by the state Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). The state outpaced the U.S. export market, which expanded 12.1 percent in the quarter.

Minnesota's export growth was strong in the second half of 2007 and finished at an overall pace of 6.5 percent for the full year. U.S. export growth averaged 10.4 percent in 2007.

Transportation equipment, computers and electronics, and food products led the surge in the state's export growth in the final three months of 2007, with each sector jumping by more than \$100 million.

The biggest increase in demand for Minnesota products came from Canada, the Philippines and Mexico.

Canada was Minnesota's largest trade partner in the fourth quarter, buying \$1.2 billion worth of the state's manufactured exports, nearly 33 percent more than in the fourth quarter of 2006. China (\$298 million), Ireland (\$247 million), Japan (\$191 million) and Germany (\$190 million) rounded out the state's top five export customers during the period.

Three South American countries posted strong growth, with state exports to Chile increasing 134 percent to \$35 million; Argentina, 71 percent to \$29 million; and Brazil, 37 percent to \$67 million.

Among other highlights of the quarter:

Computers and electronics were Minnesota's largest export, accounting for \$1.1 billion in fourth

State's 2007 fishing licenses are good until end of April

A legislative change effective Aug. 1, 2007, extended the expiration date of 2007 fishing licenses for resident and nonresident anglers through April 30, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Any stamps or tags to harvest particular species also are valid through April 30.

Angling licenses, stamps and tags for 2008, which will be effective from March 1 through April 30, 2009, went on sale Feb. 18.

Fishing licenses are required for resident anglers age 16 and older and all nonresidents. Non-residents younger than 16 may fish without a license if a parent or guardian who is licensed accompanies them.

Licenses can be purchased in person at one of 1,750 statewide Electronic License System agents, online at mndnr.gov or by phone at 1-888-MNLICEN (665-4236). There is a \$3.50 convenience fee for telephone or online purchases.

Dead animal collection cancelled due to bovine TB

The 15th annual dead animal collection service for 2008 in northwestern Minnesota is officially cancelled due to the bovine tuberculosis outbreak, according to the Pembina Trail RC&D.

The trucking company that picks up the animals and hauls them to the rendering facility in Blue Earth has received word from the rendering facility they will not accept any animals from northwestern Minnesota due to the outbreak.

For more information on bovine tuberculosis visit the Minnesota Board of Animal Health Web site at

<http://www.bah.state.mn.us/> or contact your local large animal veterinarian.

Pembina Trail RC&D is a non-profit organization operating under the IRS 501(c)3 regulations. Local sponsors are the boards of county commissioners and the SWCDs from Red Lake, Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk and Roseau counties.

For more information about RC&Ds in Minnesota visit the Minnesota NRCS Web site at www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov.

New signs signal Minnesota's sesquicentennial celebration

Signs that herald Minnesota's sesquicentennial celebration are now being installed at state entry points and other locations by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

The signs read "Minnesota 1858 -2008, 150 Years of Statehood."

In addition, special signs are being posted at the entrances of five Minnesota cities, which will serve as honorary Capitals for a Day this spring.

The cities are Bemidji, Detroit Lakes, New Ulm, Thief River Falls and Winona.

Activities in those cities will join celebrations that will occur statewide during the rest of the year.

Minnesota's early transportation history will be recreated by a Gatzke family who will drive an oxcart down the historic trade route from Pembina, N.D., to St. Paul and a week-long wagon train trip in May. The History Center's "MN

150" exhibit explores transportation and many other facets of the state's history in St. Paul.

Major celebration sponsors



include the Minnesota Sesquicentennial Commission and the Minnesota Historical Society.

The historical society paid Mn/DOT for the cost of making and posting the signs. The signs will be removed at the end of the year and recycled.

More information about the state's sesquicentennial is available on the history center's Web site: www.mnhs.org/exhibits/mn150/.

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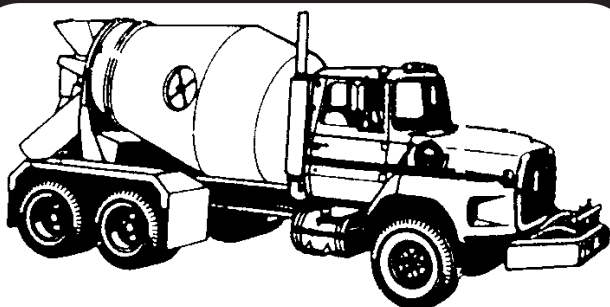
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Minutes of the annual meeting held Wednesday, March 28, 2007, at the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls

The 69th annual meeting of the members of the Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held on Wednesday, March 28, 2007, in the Imperial Room of the Ralph Engelstad Arena in Thief River Falls.

President Veral Mosbeck called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Approximately 325 members and guests were in attendance.

Mosbeck thanked Vern Rogalla for the premeeting musical entertainment he provided. Lacey Voecks, an eighth grader in Thief River Falls, next sang a song she wrote entitled "Proud of You." She wrote the patriotic song after her cousin was deployed to Iraq. Kelly Lundeen gave an invocation and current board members were introduced.

President Mosbeck called the business meeting to order. Secretary Henry Wieland read the affidavit of mailing and quorum declaration.

Mosbeck entertained a motion that the 2006 annual meeting minutes be approved as they were printed in the March *Volts and Jolts*. It was duly moved, seconded and carried to do so.

Mosbeck next gave the president's report. He said service reliability was at an all-time high in 2006, the result of good system maintenance and few thunder-

storms. Capital credit payments, he said, continued to be a priority of the board and \$383,000 had been paid out in March 2007. He said even after the 5.7 percent retail rate increase that would go into effect in the summer, the Cooperative's rates would still be very competitive with other regional electric utilities. Mosbeck noted this would be his last annual meeting as a director since he did not seek re-election. He thanked fellow directors, employees and the membership for their work and support of Red Lake Electric during the course of his 30 years of service on the board.

The general manager's report was then given by Ron Kennedy. He briefly reviewed some of the positive results of 2006, noting the Cooperative's service reliability, competitive rates and community service. He explained the annual meeting theme, "Demands on Electricity," referred to member usage of electricity, legislative mandates and wholesale power rate increases.

Kennedy explained members' annual usage of electricity was not increasing but members' use of electricity during the cold winter peak periods was increasing. He said this would increase rates because the system was becoming less efficient. Kennedy said the 25 by 25 renewable energy mandate

recently passed in Minnesota would likely increase costs, as well as potential carbon dioxide restriction legislation.

He reviewed the retail rate increase that would take effect with the July 2007 billing and said the rate would be higher during the three cold winter months to offset higher cost of service then and, hopefully, encourage more energy conservation at that time. He said use of portable electric heaters during cold periods was bad for the Cooperative and resulted in higher rates for everyone. Kennedy said although retail rates would increase significantly over the next five years, members could continue to expect the Cooperative to provide them reliable service, competitive rates and service to the community.

Roger Johanneck, manager of finance and administration, gave the 2006 financial report. He said 2006 revenue was \$7.6 million from energy sales of 116 million kilowatt hours. He said the cost of wholesale power was \$4.7 million and other operating expenses totaled \$1.7 million, with a total net margin of \$711,126.

Johanneck also reviewed the Cooperative's balance sheet, which included electric plant of \$23.7 million, long-term debt of \$8.1 million and member equity of \$10.1 mil-

lion.

The Minnkota Power report was given by Dave Loer, president and CEO of Minnkota. Loer talked about the current and future challenges of generating electricity. He said existing and potential environmental laws and regulations on coal-fired generation would have a large effect on the cost of generating electricity. He said a large wholesale rate increase would be necessary in the 2010 through 2012 timeframe to start paying for \$150 million in emission control equipment additions at Minnkota's Young 1 unit. Loer said Minnkota would purchase wind-generated electricity from a 100-megawatt wind farm near Langdon, N.D., when it was completed in early 2008. He explained the contract purchase price for the new wind generation was close to the regional power pool market price so this purchase would likely not have a negative effect on rates.

President Mosbeck asked for a motion to accept the preceding reports and it was duly moved, seconded and carried to do so.

Election of directors took place. Secretary Wieland verified the nominees elected at the district meetings and said there had been no nominations by petition. Mosbeck then declared the following three people duly elected as directors for three-year terms: District 3, Joyce Johnson; District 6, Henry Wieland; and District 9, Peter Mosbeck.

Mosbeck asked for any new business or questions from the audience. A member asked whether or not it was good to use portable electric heaters over peak times and Kennedy said that was not in the

best interest of the Cooperative. It was then duly moved, seconded and carried to adjourn the business session.

Kennedy said Cooperative employees had now completed more than four years without any lost-time accidents. He presented safe worker awards to Steve Conely and Ira Cota, five years; Mike Wavra, 25 years; Shirley Bregier, 35 years; and Bev Schmitz, 40 years.

Vice president Kelly Lundeen presented retiring president Veral Mosbeck with a plaque in gratitude for his 30 years of service as a director and the past 16 years as board president. Mosbeck thanked Lundeen and the members in attendance and said he was very proud of his involvement with Red Lake

Electric Cooperative.

Kennedy also presented Mosbeck with a plaque in appreciation of his 14 years of service on the Red Lake Electric Trust Board.

Kim Swanson, president of the Red Lake Electric Trust Board, presented a \$500 grant check to Karla Stavnes of the Pennington/Red Lake Counties Victim Services. Stavnes thanked the members for their participation in the Operation Round Up program and said the grant would be used to provide essential help for victims of crime.

Kevin Reich awarded door prizes and lunch was served by St. John Lutheran Church of Red Lake Falls.

Henry Wieland,
Secretary

\$395,000 capital credit payment given in March

The Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) Board of Directors approved payment of capital credits totaling more than \$395,000. This payment continues a strong tradition of equity revolvment at RLEC.

The balance of capital credits assigned to members in 1990 will be paid out, as well as 66 percent of the capital credits assigned in 1991. (5402001.05 Gerald J. Helle) Active members, if they received service in those years, will see a credit adjustment on their March billing statement. Inactive members (those no longer receiving service from RLEC) will be mailed a check.

The difference between annual revenues and annual expenses (termed a margin) is assigned to members' capital credit accounts each year based on their annual billings for electric service. The Cooperative retains those capital credits for a number of years for financial security and to reduce debt. If the Cooperative's financial health is good, as it is today, some of those capital credits assigned are paid out to members.

At RLEC, capital credits are paid out on a "first in, first out" basis. Capital credits are also paid out in the event of the death of a member or their spouse.

To Our Eggstra-Special Customers and Friends

Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Celebrating Our Ag Community

Ag Day in Red Lake Falls is Saturday, March 29 at the Community Hall

STOP BY OUR BOOTH SATURDAY
AND SEE OUR FINE DISPLAY OF MOBIL PRODUCTS

A CUT ABOVE CONVENTIONAL OIL!

Hanson Oil and Fuel, Inc.
ANDY MORAN, OWNER
GIVE US A CALL FOR GAS, DIESEL AND OIL DELIVERIES
Red Lake Falls 218-253-2787 • Crookston 218-281-4102

AUTO PAY OFFERED BY RLEC

Red Lake Electric Cooperative is pleased to offer you Auto Pay. Now you can have your monthly energy bill paid automatically from your checking or savings account. You can receive the Auto Pay service by completing the Auto Pay sign-up sheet and returning it to Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

The Auto Pay service is free of charge. Not only is this service free, you will eliminate the expense of writing a check, postage to mail your payment and no more late payment penalties because your bill will be paid on time, every month, for you.

Your payment will be automatically made for you on the 5th of each month. If the 5th falls on a week-

end or holiday, the payment will be made on the next business day. You will continue to receive your monthly energy bill as you have in the past, indicating the amount that will be withdrawn from your bank account. The proof of your payment will appear on your bank statement and your next month's energy bill statement.

Continue to pay your monthly bill until you are notified on your bill that the Auto Pay has been set up for you.

If you have any questions about the Auto Pay please call RLEC at 800-245-6068 or 218-253-2168.

AUTO PAY SIGN-UP SHEET

I authorize Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) and the bank listed below to initiate variable entries to my checking or savings account. This authorization remains in effect until I notify RLEC in writing to cancel it in such time as to allow RLEC to act on it.

RLEC ELECTRIC ACCOUNT # _____

NAME (PRINT) _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE # _____

NAME OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTION _____

CHECKING ACCOUNT # _____

SAVINGS ACCOUNT # _____

SIGN HERE TO AUTHORIZE _____

Please return this authorization form with a blank, voided check to:
Red Lake Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750



Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.

One of the Minnkota Power Systems

Phone	218-253-2168
Toll-free	1-800-245-6068
Fax	218-253-2630
After-hour outage	218-253-2200
Office hours	Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:30
E-mail:	redlake@minnkota.com
Web site	www.redlakeelectric.com

P. O. Box 430 • 412 International Drive SW • Red Lake Falls, MN 56750-0430