

Volts & Jolts

Published monthly for the members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.
SERVING THE FOUR-COUNTY AREA OF MARSHALL, PENNINGTON, RED LAKE AND POLK
and a portion of the lands of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Brett Knott

Family members

- **Wife:** Amber
- **Children:** Jett (7½), Oklei (5½), Genevieve (4)



Brett Knott and his wife Amber pose for a photo with their children, Oklei (far left), Jett (standing), and Genevieve (far right).

Job title

- Lead Lineman

Years of service

- 15 years

Favorite part about working at RLEC

- Seeing how thankful people are after restoring their power

Education

- **High School:** Lafayette High School, Red Lake Falls
- **College:** Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Wadena

Hobbies/interests

- Hunting, fishing, anything outdoors

Favorite sport (watch or play)

- Hockey, football and youth soccer

Volunteer/member of organizations

- Red Lake Falls Fire Department
- Youth hockey coach for Red Lake Falls Blue Line Club

Favorite food

- Pasta

Favorite beverage

- Pepsi

Favorite restaurant

- Red Lobster

Family tradition

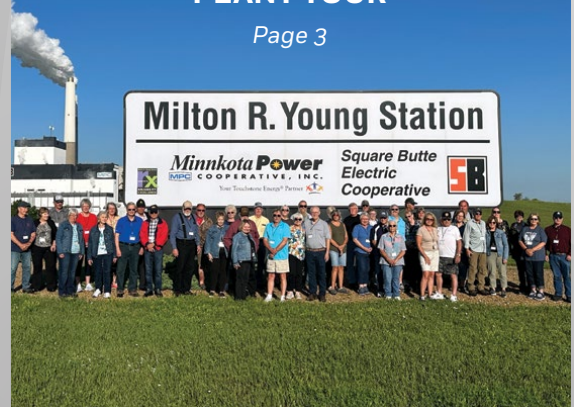
- Going to Montana every September

Favorite TV show/movie

- Yellowstone

COOPERATIVE MEMBERS ENLIGHTENED BY THE POWER PLANT TOUR

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OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President Stacy Blawat
Vice President Peter Mosbeck
Secretary-Treasurer Mark Hanson
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Colette Kujava, Jennifer Linder, Randy Versdahl
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Steve Conely Manager of Electric
System Operations
Kelli Brateng Manager of Member Services

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Monday-Friday
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Phone: (218) 253-2168
Toll-Free: 1-800-245-6068
Fax: (218) 253-2630



**AFTER HOURS/OUTAGE CALLS
(218) 253-2200**

Website: www.redlakeelectric.com
Email: info@redlakeelectric.com

**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG
1-800-252-1166 or 811**

**MINNESOTA STATE
ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS**

Pennington and Marshall Counties:

Ronald Ditsch: (218) 779-6758

Red Lake and Polk Counties:

Todd Knaack: (763) 516-0344

Any time you or an electrician does wiring
or other electrical work at your home or
farm, Minnesota state law requires a state
wiring inspector to conduct a proper in-
spection of the work. A rough-in inspection
must be made before any wiring is covered.
A final inspection is also required. Please
visit www.dli.mn.gov for more information.
The inspectors can be reached weekday
mornings between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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



**Factors That Impact
Electricity Prices**

by Stephanie Johnson

The daily cost of living seems to have increased across the board. Just as inflation has impacted everything from the price of gasoline to the price of eggs, costs for the fuels required to produce electricity have also risen. This is a timely topic, so I wanted to help explain some of the factors that impact electricity prices (and energy bills).

While there is no short answer, there are a few key elements that impact electricity (30030 Amy J Reznicek) prices and rates. Some of these factors Red Lake Electric can manage, some of them you can impact and other factors are beyond our control. So, let me break it down.

There are two primary parts to your monthly electric bill: a facilities charge and an energy consumption/kWh charge. To understand your total energy costs and what impacts your bill, let's unpack each of them.

The first is a fixed monthly facilities charge, which covers the costs associated with providing electricity to your home. This includes equipment, materials, labor and operating costs necessary to serve each meter in Red Lake Electric's service territory, regardless of the amount of energy used. In order to ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local system, including power lines, substations and other necessary equipment. Like many other businesses, we've experienced supply chain issues and steep cost increases for some of our basic equipment. For

example, the cost for a 15kVA distribution transformer (which looks like a long metal can at the top of a power pole) went from \$825 in 2021 to \$1,240 this year, and wait times to receive this essential equipment could be up to a year. Because we are a not-for-profit cooperative, some of these expenses must be passed on to our members.

Another component of your monthly bill is the kWh charge (usage charge), which covers how much energy you consume. You've likely noticed the amount of energy you use can vary from month to month (20924 Darrell M Voytilla) and is typically impacted by extreme temperatures. When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling and heating equipment run longer, which increases your home energy use. Regardless, energy consumption is an area that you have some control over, and you can lower your monthly bill by actively reducing energy use. Your thermostat is a great place to start, so be sure to keep it close to 74 degrees during summer months.

I hope this information sheds light on some of the factors that impact electricity prices. While we can't control the weather or the rising costs of fuels, please know Red Lake Electric is doing everything possible to keep internal costs down.

We're here to help you, too. Contact us if you have questions about your energy bill or for advice on how to save energy at home.

NOTICE OF NAMES

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of *Volts & Jolts* are the names and account numbers of some Red Lake Electric Cooperative members. They will appear within the articles in parentheses as such (9999999.99 Willie Ray 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.

**COOPERATIVE MEMBERS ENLIGHTENED
BY THE POWER PLANT TOUR**

On June 27 and 28, members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative and Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative participated in a tour that included visiting Fort Mandan, Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and the Milton R. Young Station.

The tour started with a stop at Minnkota Power Cooperative's headquarters in Grand Forks, N.D. Tour participants heard from Minnkota Communications Manager Ben Fladhammer, viewed the control center and took a tour of the warehouse. Minnkota's control center staff monitors Minnkota's transmission lines (30141 Roger Lappegaard) and load levels throughout northwestern Minnesota and eastern North Dakota.

The second stop on the first day included a visit to Fort Mandan and the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, Washburn, N.D. The historic site of Fort Mandan is located on privately owned land along the northeast banks of the Missouri, about 12 miles west of the city of Washburn. The exact location is unknown and may be partially submerged by the river. A modern reconstruction of Fort Mandan and the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, managed by the North Dakota Department of Parks and Recreation, is located about 10 miles downriver.

The final destination of the first day was Comfort Inn and Suites in Mandan, N.D. Tour participants were treated to a delicious evening banquet, courtesy of Minnkota. The evening program consisted of a presentation on the role Minnkota plays in the generation and transmission of electricity for Red Lake Electric, Clearwater-Polk

Electric and nine other electric cooperatives in the region.

The second day of the trip included a tour of the Young Station. The station includes two coal-fired electric plants. Minnkota receives about 250,000 kilowatts from Young 1 and 355,000 kilowatts from Young 2.

The next segment of the tour included a visit to the open-pit lignite coal mines of BNI Coal. BNI has the contract to supply the lignite for the Young Station. Combined, the two electric generating plants consume over 4 million tons of lignite coal annually. BNI has very large equipment that is used in the lignite mining process. Equipment used for stripping the overburden is called a dragline.

Mother Nature was very cooperative, allowing an excellent visit/tour of the open-pit lignite coal mines and BNI's dragline, Liberty, which is equipped with a 77-cubic-yard bucket.

Being able to see the process first-hand gives participants a much better understanding and often a better appreciation (23163 Gale Schmitz) of what is involved in the generation and transmission of electricity. It is a complex process to get energy from a coal field in southwest North Dakota to an appliance in northwest Minnesota.



SCHOLARSHIPS

2023 Recipients

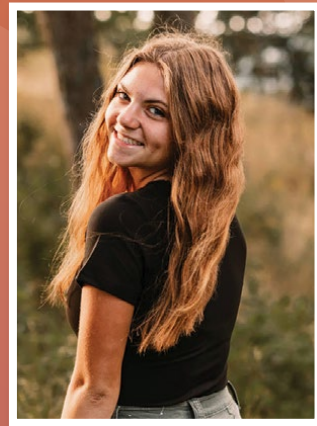
Each year, Red Lake Electric Cooperative provides scholarships for graduating seniors at each of the high schools operating throughout the cooperative's service area. The recipients are selected by the scholarship selection committee of the recipients' high schools. There were 14 recipients this year with each student receiving \$500. The funds for these scholarships come from unclaimed capital credits. **Congratulations and best wishes to these scholarship recipients!**



Sadie Anderson
Goodridge High School
Brent and Stacy Anderson



Jennifer Buck
Warren Alvarado Oslo
Grandparents: David and Judy Lokstad



Anna Funk
Crookston High School
Curtis and Kristin Funk



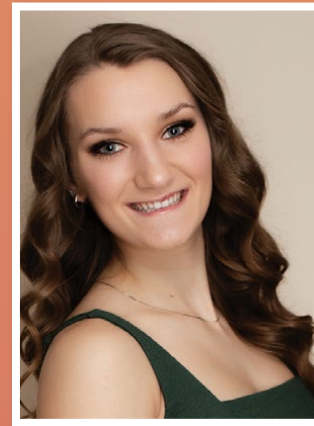
Caitlyn Jacobson
Goodridge High School
Jenny and Jason Woods & Darin and Jamie Jacobson



Destiney Krueger
Lincoln High School
Louis and Nicole Krueger



Alaina Lunsetter
Lincoln High School
David and Nicole Lunsetter



Shawna Majeres
Red Lake County Central
Greg and Sylvia Majeres



Paige Schafer
Lafayette High School
Brian and Teresa Schafer



Olivia Schmidt
Lincoln High School
Warren and Rebecca Schmidt



Jennah Henrickson
Goodridge High School
Paul and Kristy Henrickson



Gavin Hockstedler
Marshall County Central
Richard and Pam Hockstedler



Jackson Hoefler
Lafayette High School
Josiah and Brooke Hoefler



Nevaeh Shaffer
Grygla - Gatzke High School
Matt and Dayna Shaffer



Molly Smith
Red Lake County Central
John and Sue Smith

6 things you might not know about coal mining



Baseload generation plays a vital role in the diverse energy portfolio needed to supply Red Lake Electric Cooperative members with safe, reliable (23417 Todd Johnson) and affordable energy. Minnkota’s Milton R. Young Station is a mine-mouth generation facility that is powered by the abundant supply of lignite coal mined in western North Dakota. There are many misconceptions about coal, so here are a few North Dakota mining facts that may be new to you.

1.

Before mining takes place in North Dakota, extensive geological surveys, drilling and sampling must be completed to determine the quality and quantity of coal deposits in an area. By understanding the geology of the area, efficient and cost-effective mining plans are developed to maximize coal recovery while minimizing environmental impacts.

2.

Coal mining has a significant impact on the local economy. It provides jobs for thousands of people in North Dakota and contributes to the overall energy production of the United States. The lignite energy industry also supports other crucial occupations such as transportation, manufacturing and construction.

3.

Open-pit mining is used to remove layers of soil and rock to expose the coal seams. Large machinery, such as draglines and bucket wheel excavators, are used to extract the coal from the open pits and transport it to the Young Station.

4.

BNI Coal, Minnkota’s lignite coal provider, recently commissioned the world’s newest 757 dragline to its fleet in 2022. Named Legacy, it operates alongside two other draglines in Center, N.D. – Liberty and Big Sandy. Draglines operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and can weigh more than 6,000 tons.

5.

Raw lignite coal undergoes various processes to remove impurities and prepare it for use at the Young Station. This can include crushing, screening, washing (24277 Arlen Marquis) and sorting the coal to meet specific quality requirements.

6.

Once mining activities are completed in a specific area, the land is reclaimed and restored to its natural state – or better. This involves leveling the land to allow for proper water drainage, replacing topsoil, and reestablishing native vegetation to promote ecological recovery. Ongoing monitoring and maintenance are conducted to ensure success of the reclamation efforts.

Can you help us locate any of the following?

The following people have refunds due to them. Checks mailed to their last-known address have been returned by the Postal Service. If you can provide a current address (25589 Gary Rahioer) for someone who is listed or the name and address of an heir if they are deceased, call or write Red Lake Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750; 218-253-2168 or 800-245-6068.

ABRAHAMSON, TIMOTHY J.	DUHAIME, PATRICIA	JOHNSON, DEAN	MEEKMA, RONALD	RU-TAN INC.
ALTEPETER, DOROTHY	DUMMER, RICHARD L.	JOHNSON, DAVID L.	MELVIE, GAYLAN G.	SAFE KEY, STORAGE
ANDERSON, SARAH R.	DUPAY, PATRICIA	JOHNSON, ALAN N.	MERRITT, SCOTT	SANDEN, CINDY
ASP, JOSEPH L.	DUPONT, ALLEN L.	JOHNSON, ERICK C.	MESABA AIRLINES	SANDS, JEFFREY E.
AUBOL, DUAINE	DURHEIM, MONA R.	JOHNSON, VICKIE	MEYER, MARK	SCHMITT, STEVE P.
AUBOL, JANICE	DYBEDAHL, JASON L.	JOHNSON, JUDY	MEYER, JOANNE	SCHMITZ, KAREN
BACON, DAN	ECKERT, MIKE	JOHNSON, BERNICE	MICKE, RONALD	SCHULTZ, ORISSA
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BARBER, CURT	ENGVAL, JIM	JONEAU, JOSEPH	MURPHY, DEREK	SELZLER, DARIN
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BLOMQUIST, JASON	FOGARTY, SCOTT	KLASEN, LOUISE	NELSON, SARINA	SMITH, CATHY
BONDY, ERIC OR LAURIE	FOSTER, MICHAEL	KLITZKE, WILLARD	NELSON, MARVIN D.	SMITH, RYAN E.
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BRUSKI, JEFFREY A.	GREER, THOMAS	LARO, AARON	OLSON, JOYCE L.	STEN, MARGARET D.
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BURIAN, MARLIS A.	GROVE, KYLE	LEAS, CARY A.	PANEK, DARREN B.	STOCKWELL, CINDI
BUSS, TIM OR MARY	GUILLEMETTE, LES A.	LEEPER, JACK	PARADIS, ROGER	STRAM, DAWN
BUSSE, LEROY	GUNSTAD, ROBERT W.	LEGG, KAY M.	PAULING, WADE	STRANDBERG, RYAN
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CARTER, CYNTHIA	HANSON, RANDY J.	LOGAN, VENITTA	PERREAULT, ANN E.	THOMPSON, ROGER C.
CASSAVANT, TAMMY J.	HANSON, SHERMAN	LUND, DENNIS D.	PETERSON, MICHAEL	THUNE, ALICE
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DREGER, KAY	IVERSON, CLARA	MCGRAW, WILLIAM	RUE, ELAINE	
DUFFY, LONNA	JOHANSON, JEAN	MECKLE, DAWN	RUSTAD, MARK D.	



Operation Round Up® Grant Applications due **Wednesday, September 20**

Organizations involved in community projects and charities are encouraged to apply for funds from Operation Round Up at this time. Completed grant applications are due in the Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) office by Wednesday, **Sept. 20, 2023**.

Operation Round Up is a program adopted by RLEC headquartered in Red Lake Falls. Members choosing to "round up" their monthly electric bill payment provide funds (29908 Erling Moran) for this effort. Today 98% of RLEC members now choose to contribute pennies each month to enhance their communities.

Funds will be donated primarily to nonprofit organizations to help fund specific projects or programs. Since the program began in 1993, \$647,991 has been granted to community organizations and charities. Money is donated for the betterment of the community within the outside service area boundaries of RLEC.

The Red Lake Electric Trust Board of Directors determines grants. Board members are Laura Kasproicz, Thief River Falls; Stacy Bierman, Thief River Falls; Diane Kolstoe, Oklee; Stephanie Johnson, Gatzke; and Bonnie Christians, Crookston.

To apply for an Operation Round Up grant, organizations (12337 Anita J Nelson) should contact the RLEC office in Red Lake Falls at 218-253-2168 or 800-245-6068. A short application must be completed and submitted along with a financial statement from the organization.

Grant application forms are available on the cooperative's website: **redlakeelectric.com**. For more information contact Stephanie Johnson, General Manager of RLEC, at **218-253-2168** or **800-245-6068**.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.