

Connections

August 2017

For the member-owners of Federated Rural Electric



Volume 21, Issue 8

Co-op Youth Tour and Washington, D.C. described by participants



Isaac Hedstrom, Lakefield, and Katelyn Hauth, Springfield, represented Federated and Brown County REA on Youth Tour 2017. Read what they thought about the trip to Washington, D.C. They learned more about our nation's history with 1,700 students sponsored by electric co-ops nationwide June 10-16.

Isaac Hedstrom, Lakefield, shared highlights about Youth Tour. He will be a senior and is the son of Dale & Mary.
Capitol visit

Visiting the Capitol was awesome. I met Representatives Tim Walz, Jason Lewis, Tom Emmer, Collin Peterson, Rick Nolan and Senator Al Franken. We discussed politics, energy, education, bipartisanship, as well as what it is like to be a member of Congress.



The Minnesota Youth Tour delegation pauses for a group photo. The Federated and BCREA delegates are circled.

Memorials

It was amazing to see all the memorials from the Jefferson Memorial to where Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his "I have a Dream" speech. One thing that really stuck out to me was seeing the sign, "Freedom is not Free" at the Korean Memorial, to remember what past generations suffered during the fight for freedom.

Seeing Arlington Cemetery was another highlight. I don't think pictures can explain what it is like to see all the white gravestones, row after row, symbolizing the price of freedom. It is so huge and so many, I don't think any picture can grasp what it was like.

Museums

The Marine Corps Museum was

probably the best. We saw the flag that the Marines raised over Iwo Jima and talked with one of the Marines who fought on Iwo Jima.

The National Archives was also fascinating. We saw the original Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, as well as the Magna Carta and the Gutenberg Bible.

Mount Vernon

While at Mount Vernon, I saw a temporary display of George Washington's slaves. Hearing their stories and perspectives, as well as Washington's many attempts to free them, taught me a lot about our first president. At the end of his life his will stated that his slaves were to be freed so Washington

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At A Glance



**Brown County
Rural Electrical
Association**

Looking for ways to save on summer utility bills? We have some great tips on reducing energy use. See Page 4.

Are you expanding your home or business? If so, you might need an electrical upgrade. See Page 5.



Energy Wise

Wring the most savings out of your dehumidifier

Home humidity often requires dehumidifiers to run daily, which can increase utility bills. Invest in the most efficient dehumidifier possible. Energy Star dehumidifiers have more efficient refrigeration coils, compressors and fans than conventional models. They remove the same amount of moisture, but use nearly 15 percent less energy. The annual energy saved by an Energy Star dehumidifier over a conventional model could be approximately \$15. The average dehumidifier costs \$8-\$10 a month to operate.

Here are some tips to keep your dehumidifier running with maximum efficiency.

- Dehumidifier capacity is measured in pints per 24 hour. This is determined by two factors: the space that needs to be dehumidified and the conditions that exist in the space. The energy efficiency of dehumidifiers is then measured by its energy factor, in liters of water removed per kilowatt-hour (kWh) or L/kWh. In general, a higher energy factor means a more efficient dehumidifier. You can figure out the size of a dehumidifier needed using the chart at right.

- Most dehumidifiers have top-mounted air discharge vents, but if you do not have top-mounted discharge, make sure the dehumidifier is located away from walls and furniture, so that air can circulate freely around the unit.

- Doors and windows to the space being dehumidified should be closed while the unit is running.

- Locate the dehumidifier away from sources of dust and dirt (like woodworking equipment), which can clog coils and grills.

- Many dehumidifiers include a built-in humidistat, a device that allows you to

Conditions without dehumidification	Area (Sq. Feet)				
	500	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,500
Moderately damp (space feels damp and has musty odor only in humid weather.)	10	14	18	22	26
Very damp (space always feels damp and has musty odor. Damp spots show on walls and floor.)	12	17	22	27	32
Wet (space feels and smells wet. Walls or floor sweat or seepage is present.)	14	20	26	32	38
Extremely wet (laundry drying, wet floor, high load conditions.)	16	23	30	37	44

This chart shows the size of dehumidifier (in pints) needed for a variety of spaces and conditions. Sizing a dehumidifier is important. Otherwise, the dehumidifier could fill up and shut itself off before the space is properly dehumidified.

set the desired humidity level that you would like for the room. Once the room reaches the desired humidity level, the dehumidifier will cycle on and off automatically to maintain this level.

- If the space being dehumidified has temperatures that fall below 65 degrees F, you may want to buy a product that is specified for use at lower temperatures. Frost

can form on the condensing coils if the air temperature drops below 65 degrees. This may negatively affect the performance of the product by causing the compressor to cycle on and off repeatedly without removing moisture from the air. Some dehumidifiers come with an anti-frost sensor, which will automatically turn the unit off if the air temperature drops below a certain point. (E)

Energy Tips

Observe dehumidifier safety & drainage tips

- Observe all manufacturer warnings regarding dehumidifier electrical safety. In particular, never set up water drainage or disposal near electrical circuits or devices. Make sure the dehumidifier is connected to a properly grounded outlet. Keep drain hoses away from electrical cords and connections.

- Most dehumidifiers use a removable plastic bucket and warning lights to indicate when the bucket is full and needs to be emptied. An automatic shutoff indicates when the bucket is full, so you won't worry about the bucket overflowing. Most dehumidifiers come with a fitting that allows you to hook a hose directly to the bucket, which can then be directed into a floor drain or sump pump, so there is no need to empty it. (E)

LED bathroom mirror offers looks and efficiency

“Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?”

You will be when brightening up your bathroom with a new LED lighted mirror. The Decoraport Vertical LED Bathroom mirror had a clean modern look and enables you to reflect on things with its touch-button LED lights.

Other features include:

- Aluminum frame on the back of the LED mirror with a silvered reflection layer guarantees clear and real reflection
- Top and back lacquers, environmental and waterproof.
- Easy to install. The mirror requires wiring. Make sure you cut off the power before installing.
- Screw mount option included
- Power: 18 watts
- Color temperature: 5500-6000K (white light)
- Mirror size: 2 x 24 x 32 inches and 21.6 pounds.

Decoraport is one of the biggest mirror sellers in North America. Their LED model is available on Amazon.com for approximately \$230. 

Update your bathroom decor with a new LED mirror. Its elegance and energy efficiency provide a modern look for lighting your bathroom vanity area.



Safety

When the thunder roars, get indoors!

Summer activities take us outdoors for athletic events and other family fun. Maybe you are watching your favorite team, watching your child play or taking the field yourself. If you are participating in an outdoor sport, beware of lightning. Baseball, football, lacrosse, swimming, soccer, tennis, track and field events...all of these and other outdoor sports have been visited by lightning.

Follow these steps to stay safe!

- Observe local weather forecasts — from The Weather Channel, NOAA Weather Radio or local TV stations — 24 hours prior to events.
- A plan for the suspension and resumption of athletic activities should be in place before the games begin. The availability of safe shelters is essential. Evacuation sites include: fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows up, substantial buildings and areas of low ground. Unsafe shelter areas include open pavilions and all outdoor metal objects like flag poles, fences, gates, light poles, metal bleachers, golf carts, machinery, etc... You should also



avoid trees, water, open fields and areas of high ground.

- Lightning's distance is easy to calculate: if you hear thunder, the associated lightning is within striking distance. The rule of thumb: when thunder roars, go indoors. Another good lightning motto is: “If you can see it (lightning), flee it; if you can hear it (thunder), clear it.”
 - If you feel your hair standing on end, and/or hear “crackling noises,” you are in lightning’s electric field. Immediately drop to a crouching position. Remove metal objects (including baseball cap) and with feet together, duck your head and crouch down low in baseball catcher’s stance with your hands on your knees.
 - Wait a minimum of 30 minutes from the last observed lightning or thunder before resuming activities.
 - If someone is struck by lightning, administer first aid immediately and get emergency help promptly. People who were struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to approach. 
- Information courtesy of safeelectricity.org

Brown County Briefs

Member Advisory Council



The second meeting of the current Member Advisory Council will be held Monday, September 18, at 7:30 p.m. in the BCREA Auditorium.

Energy Tip of the Month

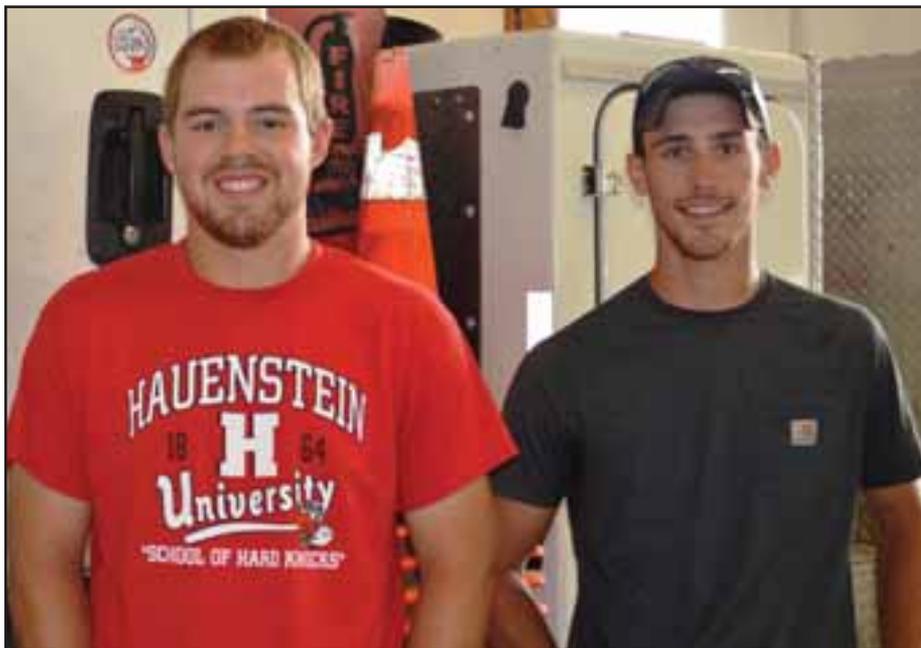
While it may not seem like it now, cooler temps will be here soon! No matter what kind of heating system you have in your home, you can save money and increase your comfort by properly maintaining and upgrading your equipment. Contact a licensed professional to inspect your system before the winter chill arrives.

Contractors in area

Brown County REA again contracted with Southwood 2000 to perform pole inspections. You may see their vehicles while they are testing poles in Stately, Bashaw, Mulligan and Albin townships. Pole inspection involves visually inspecting the pole, checking for cracks, equipment damage and burn marks from ditch fires. If the pole passes that part of the inspection, they dig down 18 inches to inspect the base of the pole. The base of the pole is visually checked for decay and they drill into the core of the pole to check for internal decay. If the pole does not pass inspection, it is rejected and will be replaced. The poles are also inspected for ground resistance on the driven ground rods and also guy guards are added, as needed. Poles are tested regularly to improve service reliability and to meet requirements of the Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

Carr's Tree Service will also resume work in Lake Hanska and Linden townships. (C)

Temporary lineworkers helping BCREA crews



David Surprenant (left), Sleepy Eye, and Collins Rewitzer, New Ulm, are assisting BCREA line crews with projects during this construction season. Both are recent graduates of the Power Lineworker program at Minnesota West Community & Technical College in Jackson. (C)

Summer energy saving tips



- Set your air conditioner thermostat as high as comfortable — we recommend 78°F or higher when you're home. Use a smart thermostat to automatically adjust the temperature.
- Have your central air conditioner tuned up; clean or replace filters monthly for more efficient operation.
- Keep the blinds and windows closed during the day and open at night. This is a no-cost way to keep your home a little cooler.
- Window, ceiling and whole-house fans are low-cost ways to be comfortable.
- Minimize indoor heat: run the dryer and dishwasher at night on hot days and let your dishes air dry. Avoid heat-generating incandescent lighting and use a microwave, toaster oven or outdoor grill instead of the oven. It's best to avoid the use of major appliances between 2-8 p.m.
- Set your water heater to 120°F.
- Wash clothes in cold water and clean lint filter in the dryer after every use.
- Unplug appliances and electronics when not in use. Plug home electronics, such as TVs, DVD players and computers into power strips and turn off the power strips when the equipment is not in use.
- Eliminate or deactivate extra freezers or refrigerators if you can, especially if they spend the summer outdoors or in a garage. (C)

BCREA hosts district 5 meeting



Senator Bill Weber of Luverne (front center) was a guest and spoke to those in attendance at the MREA District 5 meeting held at Brown County REA. Weber was the chief Senate author of the Local Democracy Legislation, which reduces duplicate regulation on electric cooperatives. About 60 rural electric cooperative directors and staff from throughout southwest Minnesota and eastern South Dakota were in attendance. (C)

Is your power out? Send us a text!

Follow these steps to set up Outage Texting:

- Call the cooperative office to make sure we have your cell phone number(s) recorded in our system.
- Go to www.browncountyrea.coop and register. Click on *Links* under the *Resources* tab, then select *Outage Texting Registration*.
- You will be given an outage "texting number." Add this number to your contacts on your cell phone so it's ready when an outage occurs. (C)



Heartland Security can help you protect your home or business with a variety of options that range from alarms that automatically notify the police to surveillance cameras. Call us today at 888-264-6380. (C)

Adding electrical load this fall?



Are you planning to install, modify or replace electric equipment this fall at your home, business or farm? If so, please contact BCREA with the details of your project as soon as possible. By contacting the co-op, we can ensure:

- Our equipment is sufficiently sized to handle your new project.
- You and your neighbors will not experience power quality issues as a result of the additional load.
- The work to be completed is efficiently scheduled to eliminate delays.
- Your project costs are kept to a minimum.

By working together we can help your project go as smoothly as possible. If you have questions regarding your electrical installation or modification, please call us at 794-3331 or 800-658-2368. (C)

Youth Tour makes impression on co-op representatives

— Continued from Page 1

did eventually get his wish. It was also interesting to see his gardens, cropland and his beautiful house.

Musical and dance

It was amazing to see a Broadway edition of “The Sound of Music” in the majestic Kennedy Center. The acting and singing were beautiful. I think all of us agreed that it was much better than even the movie.

The dinner and dance were also fun. I met some other kids from Texas. I had a lot of fun trying to explain to them what lutefisk is and they in turn, explained to me what chicken-fried steak is.

Youth Tour speaker

The main Youth Tour Speaker was Mike Schlappi, Paralympic gold medalist, who has been handicapped from the waist down since high school. He was very funny and reminded us that even though we all have bad days and bad things happen to us, we can still accomplish great things. As he said, “Even if you cannot stand up, you can stand out.”

New friends

At the beginning, I didn’t know any of the others, and at the end I was friends with half of them and knew all the rest. We had political discussions, scientific discussions and even set up our own presidential cabinet. I hope to stay in touch with my new friends.

Thanks and recommendation

I would like to thank Federated for sending me on this trip. Plus, I would like to thank our wonderful chaperones and my parents for supporting me during this trip. It was an honor to go and was extremely memorable. I learned a lot about government and cooperatives. I strongly suggest everyone in high school apply for Youth Tour. It is a trip of a lifetime: from meeting an Iwo Jima vet, to talking to your Representatives and Senators, to seeing the Star Spangled Banner, to meeting kids from all over Minnesota and the USA. This is an incredible experience that will not be quickly forgotten.

Katelyn Hauth, Springfield shared highlights about Youth Tour. She is a senior at Springfield High School and the daughter of Roger and Diane Hauth.

Capitol

I really enjoyed the Capitol visit. I met with Collin Peterson, Rick Nolan, Jason Lewis, Tom Emmer, Tim Walz, and Al Franken. We talked about the divide between the Democrats and Republicans and some bills that are in progress, such as the Farm Bill.

Memorials

What stuck out the most to me was the common theme found throughout several of the memorials — reflection. My favorite was the 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon. Visiting these memorials really put into perspective all that people have sacrificed for this country.

While we were at the memorials, three helicopters flew directly above us. They were so close we could read the



small print that said United States of America. Apparently, if three of those helicopters are together, then the president is in one of them. Sure enough, we saw one of them land at the White House.

Museums

I really enjoyed the Early Human Exhibit in the National Museum of Natural History.

Mount Vernon

I learned that Washington was retired for four years before he became president. What stood out was the many people that were acting as if they were still in the same time period as Washington. We could ask them any question and they would reply as if still in that era.

Musical and dance

I loved the musical. I’ve seen it before in Colorado, but this production of “The Sound of Music” was dramatically better. The All-States dance was very fun. There were so many people that people danced on the carpet outside the wooden dance floor. Teens from the southern states even led line dances and did swing dancing.

Youth Tour Speaker

The speaker was Mike Schlappi, an Olympic medalist in wheelchair basketball. The topic he discussed was “If you can’t stand up, stand out.” I learned that most of the time the only thing getting in our way in achieving our goals is ourselves.

New friends

I made many new friends. We exchanged numbers and social media account information. We’re also trying to plan a reunion of some sort.

Thanks and recommendation

I would like to thank BCREA, the group chaperones and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association for organizing this event, plus the representatives that spoke with us at the Capitol. I would absolutely recommend this trip to others because I’ve learned so much and met so many great people from Minnesota and all around the country — all without any expense to me. ☺

How do you like to dip it? Spice up summer with salsa recipes!

Summer garden produce makes great fresh, frozen or canned salsa. Share your family favorites! Do you savor the flavor with corn, tomatoes, peppers, onions or what ingredients? Mail to: Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop by August 24. Add your name and phone number. Thanks for sharing with us! ☺

Your electric cooperative is closed Labor Day, September 4

Crews will be on-call in case of any outages! Have a fun & safe holiday!



Pick up the phone before the shovel; call before digging!

1-800-252-1166



Call Gopher State One Call before doing any digging more than 12" deep — 48 hours before digging for foundations, trees, tiling & more. You can

also register at www.gopherstate-onecall.org. Call a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. ☺

Summer weather affects TV channels

While the folks at CTV can't control the weather, they can attest that it may cause issues with your TV's UHF signal through co-channeling interference.

A UHF signal, whether it's the old analog signal or new digital signal, is subject to interference over the airwaves with heat and humidity causing more trouble than anything — especially this time of year. On a clear day your TV may be picking up signals from not only the CTV towers, but also other TV towers in different locations as UHF signals travel farther than normal. This co-channeling interference involves two channel frequencies in different locations invading one another's territory. As a result, your antenna may be unable to pick up a clear signal on certain channels with all the commotion so your TV ends up transmitting nothing for that channel. You then end up seeing the dreaded "No Signal" message.

Clear, sunny days with higher dewpoints are prime conditions for this to happen, as are drastic temperature



changes in the mornings and evenings. Basically, if you get a channel some of the time and then not at other times, it's normally weather. Cable, radio, satellite, cell phones and other technology experience similar weather-related issues.

If you are ALWAYS without reception on all or most of your channels, then the culprit is usually a problem

within your own antenna system. If equipment fails and channels go out at the tower, normally they will be back up and running within a few hours or less.

Because there isn't any real fix to the co-channeling interference problem, it is suggested you try to avoid doing a channel re-scan while experiencing missing channels. When people re-scan during troubled times (high heat and humidity), they risk losing other channels too. Please feel free to call if you seem to be experiencing other problems with your CTV signal. We are glad to help any way we can. Be patient...cloudy, colder weather will return soon, which usually causes reception to improve too. ☺



Brown County Rural Electrical Association

Brown County Rural Electrical Assn.
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Office hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

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Board of Directors

James Mickelson, President — 794-6298
William Berg, Vice President — 354-4895
James D. Hanson, Sec.-Treasurer — 829-6756
Brad Sprenger — 877-2633
Allen Hanson — 276-0691
Thomas Hayes — 228-8954
Reuben Kokesch — 359-2112
Greg Mages — 794-3540
Joel Christensen — 828-4550
The Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of each month.



Mike Heidemann
Chief Executive
Officer

Staff notes

Understanding energy demand & purchasing

You may not think you need to have an understanding of energy demand and purchasing, but do you ever look at your energy bill and wonder what it all means? If your answer to that question is “yes,” then you might be interested to learn how demand impacts your utility bill.

For starters, it is important to understand how electricity is made and how it is delivered to your home. Before Brown County REA can

send electricity to your home, that electricity needs to be generated by a Generation and Transmission cooperative (G&T). Great River Energy (GRE) is the G&T that provides power to Brown County REA. Once the electricity has been generated, it travels over high-voltage transmission lines to substations, where the voltage is reduced to a lower level. The electricity then travels over distribution power lines and finds its way into your home. So, while you pay your bill to us — your electric distribution cooperative — we don’t actually generate the electricity you use.

We do help determine how much electricity our members need to power their homes and businesses and you play a big part in determining how much electricity the G&T needs to create to keep the lights on in our community. That is where these terms “consumption” and “demand” apply.

Consumption is measured in kilowatt hours (kWh). Demand is measured in kilowatts (kW). A lightbulb “consumes” a certain number of watts, let’s say 100 watts per hour. If that lightbulb stays on for 10 hours, it “demands” a certain number of kilowatts (in this case 1 kW) from the generation station producing electricity. Now, if you turn on 10, 100-watt lightbulbs in your home for one hour, you are still consuming the same number of kW. However, you are placing a demand on the utility to have those kW available to you over the course of one hour, instead of ten. This requires the generation and transmission plant to produce more power in less time in order to meet your demand.

Brown County REA purchases kilowatt hours from GRE based on the average demand of our members. Peak demand refers to the time of day when the demand for electricity is highest. This is typically during the evening when families return home from work or school, cook dinner and use appliances the most. Using electricity during this peak demand period often costs more to both Brown County REA and to our members.

Demand costs to Brown County REA fluctuate season to season and even year to year. Generating and distributing power can be a complicated business, but rest assured Brown County REA will always meet the necessary demand to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to your family. (u)

Board meeting highlights

The Brown County REA Board of Directors held its monthly board meeting July 31 at the Brown County REA headquarters in Sleepy Eye. Discussion and/or action were taken on the following agenda items:

- Reviewed and approved June 2017 payroll and May 2017 financial statements.
- Discussed implementation of the Local Democracy Legislation and related documents. No members were present for discussion. The matter will go before the full board for a vote at the August meeting.
- Updated on progress with development of portal allowing members access to their 15-minute interval meter data for commercial and industrial accounts.
- Updated on summer load control activities and performance.
- Informed of the need for an additional meter data collector, for redundancy.
- Reviewed recent safety meetings and employee training.
- Reviewed staff meeting reports, director meeting reports and individual director reports.

The next meeting will be August 31 at the BCREA headquarters in Sleepy Eye. (u)