

# Connections

March 2024

For the member-owners of Brown County REA



Volume 28, Issue 3

## Wanted: whereabouts of these former co-op members...a cash 'reward' awaits

Wanted! This is the only time it's good to be on a "wanted" poster! The electric cooperative is trying to reunite former members with unclaimed capital credits. Their "reward" is issued once we have a current mailing address.

These former cooperative members moved or died; we no longer have their current address or estate address. Yet, they are still owed capital credits or their share of a profitable year.

Help Federated Rural Electric and Brown County REA (BCREA) locate these wanted members and provide us new addresses. Their capital credits check was returned last year — address unknown. If you know the current location for any of these former members, please have them call or e-mail the appropriate cooperative with their new address and/or phone number. We'll then mail their capital credits check. In addition, BCREA's list also includes older, uncashed accounts payable checks.

If we do not receive new addresses on these missing members, their un-



claimed capital credits checks are donated to a tax-exempt organization. Brown County Rural Electrical Association and Federated Rural Electric donate unclaimed capital credits to their Operation Round Up programs. Brown County REA's Round Up Trust donates to charitable organizations, individuals and families in crisis and scholarships in the co-

op's service area. Federated's Round Up Trust Board awards nine high school scholarships and awards the rest to other Operation Round Up recipients. ☺

### Former Federated

**members:** Call Angie direct 507-849-7847 or 1-800-321-3520 (extension 2233) or e-mail [ziemer@federatedrea.coop](mailto:ziemer@federatedrea.coop).

Brandon & Jenna Anderson	Lakefield
Scott Behnken	Hayfield
James Bezdicek	Jackson
Gerald Boler	Truman
Andrew Burch	Wilder

June Cain	Welcome
Jolene Cazarez	Jeffers
Daniel H. Chester	Sherburn
Radena Christensen, c/o	M. Christensen
	Fairmont
Monica E. Correa	Sherburn
Barb Culbertson	Jackson
Ryan Eidhammer	Heron Lake
Bernice Fiala	Jackson
Merlin J. Flatgard	Windom
Nicolas Fonseca	Auburn, WA
Jeremy J. Gilb	Fairmont
Melissa M. Glynn	Fairmont
Lorraine Hulett	Fort Dodge, IA
Edward Kennedy	Sherburn
Truman Larson	Blue Earth
Sylvia Lawrence	Hamilton, MT
Pietu Lehtikuusi	Windom
Jody Majeski	Elmore
Roger May	Clear Lake, IA
Stacy McDonald	Jackson
Emmet McEleney	Kingman, AZ
Shyann L. Melugin	Okabena
Sarah Miller	Ceylon
Tim Mock	Sandusky, OH
Chris Muhvich	Northrop
Tim Nelson, c/o Julie Nelson	Jackson
Dustin Olson & Jamie McCord	Welcome
Steve Persinger	Truman
Bonnie Pomerence	Lakefield
Chris & Tonya Quiring	Meeker, CO
Norman Stender	Platteville, WI
Dustin Sweeney	Welcome
Dorothy Vanderwilt	Hospers, IA
Kathy Vos	Adrian
Consolidated Ready Mix Inc.	Tulsa, OK
Frontier Comm., c/o Engie Insight Serv. Inc.	Spokane, WA

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### At A Glance



### Seeking Advisory Council members

Interested in a behind-the-scenes look at Brown County REA, learning more about how things work and sharing your input with the directors and staff? Vacancies remain for a one-year term on the Member Advisory Council (MAC) in each of the nine districts. The MAC meets three times, starting in April after the Annual Meeting, September and the following January. Contact your district director or the office to learn more. ☺



# Spring into spring cleaning & jump up your home's energy efficiency as well

Spring is a great time to refresh, clean and enhance energy efficiency at home. By adopting simple, yet effective energy-saving strategies during spring-cleaning routines, you can create an efficient-living environment that may also lower utility bills and extend the life of our heavily used appliances.

## HVAC handy hints

Even though it's out of sight, don't leave it out of mind. Check the filter in your HVAC system. Your furnace worked hard during the winter. Ensuring your system has a clean filter is a low-cost and easy way to protect your equipment and maximize efficiency. A dirty furnace filter can cause your system to work harder than necessary, decreasing efficiency and shortening the system's life.

While the filter is easy to replace yourself, have your air conditioning serviced and professionally cleaned. Both the indoor and outdoor units should be cleaned. Dirty refrigerant coils reduce efficiency. This also applies to heat pumps and ductless heat pumps, also known as mini-split systems. The technician can check refrigerant levels and refill or repair, if necessary.

HVAC contractors are busy responding to calls for repairs during the summer heat. Scheduling cleaning services for your air conditioning in



**A spring air conditioner or heat pump tuneup beats a breakdown on the hottest days of summer.**

the spring — before the heat of the summer — can ensure the work gets done before the rush and even save you money. Some HVAC contractors offer special discounts for cleaning services in the milder months, which helps fill their schedules and keep their technicians working.

Window AC units can get dirty too. They can be cleaned with the proper tools, cleaning agents and know-how. Always unplug before cleaning; wait until completely dry to plug it back in again. Take the time to clean it properly in the spring before you need it in the summer.

## Bright idea lighting tasks

Cleaning light fixtures and fixture covers can brighten your space by removing dust and grime collected during the winter. While you are at it, check your bulbs and replace any incandescent or compact fluorescents

with energy-saving LEDs. Although they tend to cost a little more, LEDs last longer and use less energy.

Good-quality LED light bulbs are expected to last 30,000 to 50,000 hours, according to the Department of Energy. A typical incandescent lamp lasts about 1,000 hours, while a comparable compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) lasts 8,000 to 10,000 hours. As a comparison, if you have an LED light on for 10 hours a day, it can last 13 years versus about three months for incandescent bulbs

and about two-and-a-half years for CFLs.

## Make the windows sparkle

If cleaning windows is on the list, check the seals and sash locks to ensure they close tightly. Check for areas that need caulking or sealing to reduce drafts. Sealing around windows adds to year-round comfort in your home. Clean windows also allow more light into the home, reducing the need to turn on lamps and overhead fixtures.

A clean oven window allows you to see the food and how it's cooking without opening the oven door, which wastes energy. A clean oven heats more evenly and quickly, providing better results and lower energy use.

Spring is the ideal time to declutter, deep clean and implement practices that not only tidy our homes, but also reduce energy consumption. 

## LED low profile ceiling fans offer a new spin!

Elevate your home's cooling and lighting by giving it a new look and new spin! Make your room sleek, modern and so cool!

Upgrade to a low-profile, flush mount, ceiling fan with an LED light. Enjoy three light tones (warm, cool or neutral) and six speeds that can be changed using the remote control or a Smart phone app. While several designs exist, this is the Oaks Decor Cotti 20-inch model. Choose from black, white, coffee or gold. It is available from Home Depot, Lowe's and Amazon for approximately \$120. This nearly 20-inch diameter model is 6 inches high; it is sized for a 12x12-foot room. Directions state it can be installed in about 15 minutes.

This flush mount works well for bedrooms, the living room, kitchen and more! It features a direct current motor for quiet performance and powerful air flow. Some models feature the reversible motor for the winter time use too. Look for the Energy Star logo and U.L. listing.

You'll enjoy the minimalist, modern look. Plus, you can use the sleep timer option. The fan's housing consists of an aluminum sturdy frame. 



Move your ceiling fan from ordinary to extraordinary with a low-profile LED model. Control the speed and light with the cell phone app or the remote control.

## Safety

### Electrical safety goes with spring cleaning

It's time for spring cleaning! While dusting, decluttering, and organizing are essential tasks, electrical safety is even more important.

- Look for frayed cords, loose plugs or any signs of damage. If you spot any issues, refrain from using the appliance until it's repaired or replaced by a qualified professional. Additionally, clean appliances such as vacuum cleaners and hairdryers to remove dust and debris that can pose a fire risk.

- Examine all power outlets and switches in your home for signs of wear or damage. Loose outlets or switches can increase the risk of electrical shocks or fires. Ensure that outlet covers are in place and functioning correctly.

- Declutter areas around electrical fixtures such as light switches, outlets and circuit breaker panels.



**Can you spot the safety hazard here? The ground prong is missing on this vacuum plug. Replace the plug so it has the third prong.**

Remove any obstructions or flammable materials that could potentially ignite if they come into contact with heat generated by electrical components.

- As you rearrange furniture or tidy up your living spaces, pay attention to cord management. Avoid running electrical cords under carpets or rugs, as this can cause overheating and pose a fire

hazard. Instead, use cord covers or cable management solutions to keep cords organized and out of harm's way. Plus, refrain from overloading power strips or outlets with too many devices, as this leads to overheating and electrical fires.

- Consider scheduling a professional electrical inspection as part of your spring-cleaning routine. A qualified electrician can identify potential safety hazards, such as outdated wiring, overloaded circuits or faulty electrical components. Addressing these issues proactively can prevent accidents and ensure the continued safety and efficiency of your home's electrical system.

By implementing electrical safety with spring cleaning, you can enjoy a clean and safe living environment all year round. Vigilance and proactive measures are key. 

# Brown County Briefs

## No Community Health Day in Spring 2024

There will be no Community Health Day in Sleepy Eye this spring. Organizers are hopeful the event can be offered again in the future.

### Energy-efficiency tip

Lengthen the life of your clothes dryer with regular cleaning. Clean the lint filter after every load, which improves air circulation and safety. Check the lint trap opening to ensure it's clean. Use a vacuum to remove any lint that's fallen inside the opening. If you use dryer sheets, check the lint filter for residue buildup. Remove any residue with hot water and a nylon brush or toothbrush. Over time, dryer sheets leave a film on the filter, which can affect the performance of the motor.

### 2024 calendars available

There are still a few 2024 large, farm pocket calendars available to pick up at the office. Limit one per member please.

### Annual line patrol is underway

Just a reminder that Brown County REA crews are doing line patrol and will be coming onto yards and property throughout the service area. Work will continue until early spring. ☎



## Watch for 2023 Annual Report

A copy of the Brown County REA 2023 Annual Report will be arriving in members' mailboxes by mid-March.

Review the report to see the past year's financials and other cooperative happenings. Be sure to save the report and bring it along to scan your registration for the April 11 Annual Meeting.

Because there were no challengers for the 2024 director elections in Districts 6, 7 and 9, there will be no ballots, either via mail or at the Annual Meeting. ☎

## Operation Round up awards \$3,650



The Brown County Rural Electric Trust Board met for its first 2024 meeting February 13; we welcomed new members Rosie Schwartz and Bonnie Seidl.

Elected as this year's officers were President Ann Parker, Vice President Rosie Schwarz, Secretary Pat Roiger and Treasurer Bonnie Seidl.

At the meeting the trust board awarded \$3,650 to 11 organizations, one family in crisis and five area food shelves. Recipients included All Saints Area youth trip, Sleepy Eye Police Department youth safety education, 2B Continued suicide and mental health awareness event sponsorship of Dan and Marja Sowers, Brown County Farm Bureau Ag Trivia, and Junior Achievement programs serving New Ulm and Sleepy Eye. After prom activities at Sleepy Eye Public, Springfield, Sleepy Eye St. Mary's, GFW and Comfrey high schools received donations. In addition, March Foodshare Month contributions were made to Sleepy Eye Area, Springfield Area, New Ulm Emergency, We Care Project and Sibley County Foodshare food shelves.

Through the generosity of BCREA members who participate in Operation Round Up, more than \$250,000 has assisted organizations and individuals in the cooperatives' service area and provided scholarships to graduating high school seniors. Collectively, your change can make a difference!

If you do not already and are willing to contribute less than \$12 per year by rounding up your electric bill to the nearest dollar each month to help Operation Round Up, call the office at 800-658-2368 or 507-794-3331. ☎

## Deadline to apply for scholarships is April 8

High school seniors whose parents/guardians are Brown County REA members and non-traditional students who are REA members are encouraged to apply for Operation Round Up scholarships.

Six \$250 scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors planning to attend college after graduation. One \$250 scholarship is available to an adult REA member pursuing a degree. The deadline for submission is April 8; winners will be announced at the Brown County REA Annual Meeting April 11.

Scholarship funds come from members who choose to round up their electric bill to the nearest dollar each month. The difference is placed in the Brown County Rural Electric Trust. The trust is administered by a nine-member board, which meets four times each year to distribute funds to charitable causes, individuals and families in crisis and scholarships.

Scholarship guidelines and applications are available from area high school counselors and can be found on the REA website at [www.browncountyrea.coop](http://www.browncountyrea.coop). A copy of the student's high school transcript and one letter of recommendation are required. Non-traditional students will need to provide a transcript and recommendation letter. Scholarship funds will be awarded after successful completion of the first semester of college. ☎

# Meet your Board of Director candidates for the 2024 BCREA Annual Meeting



## District 6

Joel Christensen and his wife Monica live on the farm Joel grew up on in Eden Township. They have four children:

Dayna, Jon (Kindra), Tyler (Lydia), Jake (Jamie) and seven grandchildren.

Joel has a cattle operation with Jake. Joel is a graduate of Morgan High School and the University of MN-Waseca. He is on the Prairieville Cemetery Board and has served in many church board positions.

Joel is completing his fourth term as director for District 6. His goal is to ensure the long-term decisions being made are beneficial to the Cooperative as we strive to keep our rates affordable. "I welcome the opportunity to continue serving on the Brown County REA Board," Joel added.



## District 7

Greg Mages is a life-long resident of Brown and Nicollet counties. He raises corn, soybeans and

hogs in a family farm corporation together with his parents, Dan and Arlene, and brother, Tim Mages.

Greg manages farm employees, makes crop input and marketing decisions, monitors hog herd health, maintains equipment and makes asset purchasing decisions. He always looks for ways to conserve resources and improve farm efficiency.

Greg holds a Farm Management degree from South Central Technical College. He values people and is always eager to meet and learn from new acquaintances. He is a member of New Ulm's Farm-City Hub Club.

Greg and his wife, Mary Kay, live

on the Mages family farm in Home Township, Brown County, where they raise their four children: Grace, 18; Adam, 16; Anna, 13; and Martin, 11.

Greg was first elected to fill the remainder of a term on the BCREA Board of Directors in 2014 and is completing his third full term. He is interested in continuing to serve as a BCREA director because he values affordable and reliable electricity. His farm business experience, hometown common sense and management experience complement his fellow directors' capable and effective leadership.



## District 9

Tom Hayes, and his wife, Patti, live on the home Century Farm, east of Lafayette, where Tom grew up. Tom and his

family grow corn and soybeans and custom feed hogs. Tom and Patti have four children: daughter, Anna (Clay), and sons, Daniel, Father John Hayes, and David (Micaela), and grandchild, Sophia.

Tom has always been involved in community organizations. "With the experience of being on the BCREA board, I have become more appreciative of the things that REA is involved in and stands for. As a Board, we work to address issues such as the changes in generation and transmission of electricity, government policies, and maintaining a safe and reliable distribution system, all of which are going to affect our members and energy prices. With the experience I now have I feel I can work with my fellow board members to help this organization continue to run efficiently and effectively, keeping rates low and the lights on."

Tom has been a director of BCREA since 1997, serving as Board President from 2004-2014, and 2020-present. He is a past director for Cooperative Network and served six years on the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation Board of Directors. A self-employed farmer since 1973, Tom is a graduate of the Minnesota Agricultural Rural Leadership program, a member of the Farm-City Hub Club and Lafayette Lions. "I am asking for your support for another three-year term," Tom said.

## Brown County REA 87<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Thursday, April 11, Sleepy Eye Event Center  
110 12th Avenue NE, Sleepy Eye, MN

- Register: 4:30 p.m.
- Music by Dain's Dutchmen
- Meal: 5:30 p.m.
- Meeting follows
- Prize drawing



# Search party exists for 'most wanted' former members

— Continued from Page 1

**Former Brown County members:** Call 794-3331 or 1-800-658-2368. Otherwise, e-mail [bcreea@bcreea.coop](mailto:bcreea@bcreea.coop).

Susan K. Achman New Ulm  
 Eileen B. Achman New Ulm  
 Dorothy Almer Lake Wilson  
 Hobart H. Anderson New Ulm  
 Leilah Anderson Winthrop  
 Brian Anderson New Ulm  
 Robby L. Andrews Bartow, FL  
 Gary Baumberger Hutchinson  
 Jason & Jennifer Bejarano Hanska  
 Dr. John Bengtson Dassel  
 Arden Black Fairfax  
 Rick Black Winthrop  
 BOC Gases, Inc. Murray Hill, NJ  
 Marvin Boelter New Ulm  
 Leah Bouton Mosinee WI  
 Beverley A. Bowley Kingston, ON  
 Larry Boyum Franklin  
 Jerry Braam Fairfax  
 Shanna M. Bunce MD Eugene, OR  
 James A. & Robyn L. Bundy Hanska  
 Douglas Byro Madelia  
 Adolfo Carillo Garcia Comfrey  
 Cendant Mortgage Mt. Laurel, NJ  
 Lloyd C. Cochran De Forest, WI  
 Curless Flying Service Astoria, IL  
 David Daniels Marshall  
 D-D Money Inc. New Ulm  
 Manuel Z. Dehoyos Comfrey  
 Delite Outdoor Inc. St. Paul  
 Tania K. Domeier Sartell  
 Daniel Earl New Ulm  
 Jesse Elbert Staples  
 Brent Engel Lake Crystal  
 Eric Webster Family Trust St. Peter  
 Robert H. Evers Springfield  
 Exetare Partnership Gary, SD  
 Farmers Home Admin. Glencoe  
 First Preston/MN Spring Lake Park  
 Ray Flygare Worthington  
 Timothy J. Forster New Ulm  
 Steven H. Frederickson New Ulm  
 Arris Fredrickson Lafayette  
 Dennis H. Freitag Lewisville  
 John Jr. Gag Waldorf  
 Becky Geiger New Ulm  
 Norbert J. Gleisner Leesberg, FL  
 Steven T. & Tina Gleisner Austin  
 Michael D. Gohr Boyd  
 Jesus Gonzalez Hanska  
 Kay L. Haas New Ulm  
 Daniel Haggenmiller Winthrop  
 Steve Hall New Ulm  
 Jason J. Hansen New Ulm  
 Jerome A. Hanson Bellevue, NE  
 Douglas B. Harris New Ulm  
 Penny Hasse Franklin  
 Wayne Havemeier Nicollet  
 Robert Hazelton Ogema  
 Leslie & Pat Helget New Ulm  
 Scott E. Hendrycks New Ulm  
 Loraine Henning Morgan  
 Eric Hertling Sleepy Eye  
 David Heyer New Ulm  
 Kurt Heyer Wayne, MI  
 Kenneth L. Hicks Stewart  
 Vickie Higdem New Ulm  
 Charles J. Hillesheim Mankato  
 Jeanette Hillesheim New Ulm

Lois L. Hornick  
 Marilyn Hovland  
 Randall L. Huiras  
 Daniel C. Irlbeck  
 Shawn E. Jakes  
 Cody A. Jakes  
 Curt Jasper  
 Eric P. Jensen  
 Gary L. Johnson  
 Elaine Johnson  
 David G. Jones  
 Glen Kaup  
 Travis L. Kelley  
 Charles M. Kilmer  
 Victor R. Klassen  
 Dale J. Klimer, MD  
 Jerome J. Klingler  
 Klossner Klippers  
 Leroy A. Knoll  
 Stanley E., Koep  
 Andrea O. Konakowitz  
 Jerry & Renata Konopka  
 Anthony G. Kostecky  
 Tammy Kral  
 Roxanne Kraudy  
 Daniel J. Kuehl  
 Terrance Lade  
 Wilfred Landkammer  
 Michael R. Larochelle  
 Justin J. Larson  
 Steven M. Lawrence  
 Harriet Lee  
 Bernd Lehrke  
 Dennis J. Lenzen  
 Ryan J. Lewandowski  
 April M. Lewis  
 Seth M. Lorenzen  
 Gladys I. Lornes  
 Dale E. Lotherth  
 LP Triax Midwest Ass.  
 David E. Lueck  
 Lunda Construction Co.  
 Robert G. Manderfeld  
 Duane C. Marstone  
 Jayne & Kevin Mathiowetz  
 June M. Matter  
 Maureen J. McCarrier  
 Daniel L. Means  
 Nicholas Meine  
 Kevin Mellinggen  
 Karyl A. Meyer  
 Bryan J. Meyer  
 Thomas Meyers  
 Dean Miller  
 Leland L. Miller  
 Leeza Moe  
 Moe's Sandy Lane  
 John Claud Monro  
 Francisco Montaivo  
 Harry R. Montanye  
 Terry A. Moore  
 Joseph Morales  
 Brian Mueller  
 Brady Nelson  
 Richard D. Nelson  
 Larry A. Netland  
 Christopher Newman  
 Marilyn Novak  
 Carri J. Odegard  
 Diane Olson  
 Noel Olson  
 David E. Pace  
 George Pavelek  
 Peal I. Johnson Estate  
 Shawn Peters  
 Matthew D. Petersen  
 Dorothy Pfeiffer  
 Scott S. Pieper

Minnetonka  
 Battle Lake  
 New Ulm  
 Wabasso  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 Cedar  
 New Ulm  
 Gillette, WY  
 Hendricks  
 Sleepy Eye  
 Aberdeen, SD  
 Holiday Island, AZ  
 Lake Crystal  
 New Ulm  
 Loveland, CO  
 New Ulm  
 Lafayette  
 New Ulm  
 Shakopee  
 Noble, OK  
 Sleepy Eye  
 Perham  
 New Ulm  
 Claremont  
 Watertown, SD  
 Silver Lake  
 Chanhassen  
 Kingston, NH  
 Hanska  
 Suwanee, GA  
 Sleepy Eye  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 Las Vegas, NV  
 Hanska  
 New Ulm  
 Denver, CO  
 Madelia  
 Black River Falls, WI  
 Shakopee  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 Springfield  
 Singer, WI  
 Baxter, IA  
 Springfield  
 Sleepy Eye  
 Mankato  
 New Ulm  
 Faribault  
 Redwood Falls  
 New Ulm  
 Springfield  
 Springfield  
 Las Vegas, NV  
 Pasco, WA  
 Chaska  
 Rochester  
 Logan, UT  
 Madelia  
 St. Peter  
 Madelia  
 Willmar  
 New Ulm  
 Buffalo  
 New Ulm  
 Chanhassen  
 New Ulm  
 Grand Rapids  
 Lester Prairie  
 St. James  
 Winthrop  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 Hanska

Braylynn Pitschka  
 Allen E. Porter  
 Brad & Paul Portner  
 Nick & Kristin M. Psyck  
 Shirley Purrier  
 Christine Rasmussen  
 Richelle Reaser  
 Paulette L. Reighard  
 Daniel Reim  
 Viviana Rivera  
 Peggy Roberts  
 Lillian Roe  
 James A. Rogers  
 Dewayne Sadler  
 Robert W. Sahli  
 Fernando M. Santaella  
 Scherer Properties Corp  
 Darrel D. Schmidt  
 Steven J. Schoener  
 Rita K. Schoof  
 Gary Schreyer  
 Samuel E. Schuelter  
 Tara Schwartz  
 Todd S. Sherman  
 Thomas R. Sirovy  
 Eileen M. Siskel  
 Marilyn D. Smith  
 Michael W. Smith  
 Irina Soboleva  
 Patricia South  
 Russell Sperl  
 Debbie L. Spicer  
 Carol Steffl  
 Jason E. Stiernagle  
 Quinten L. Streich  
 Angeline Sturm  
 TCF National Bank  
 Douglas E. Tharp  
 Don Thedens  
 Linda D. Theis  
 Douglas Y. Thorson  
 John Tornow  
 Loen D. Troidahl  
 Phillip C. Turgeon  
 Twenty 1st Century Wireless  
 Paul & Pauline Van Nurden  
 Ray H. Van Wyngarder  
 Frank A. Vanderveur  
 Brittney Vasquez  
 Saimi Vogl  
 William H. Wall  
 Douglas Wall  
 William D. Walters  
 Rebecca Walz  
 Patrick R. Weber  
 David & Elizabeth Welsh  
 Pete Wersal  
 Carmen Wersal  
 Layn A. Westcott  
 Aaron Whitney  
 Steven D. Wilke  
 Cathy Williams  
 Richard O. Wilner  
 Bert Wilson  
 Dennis Yetter  
 Alice Murphy Trust

Winthrop  
 Cannon Falls  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 Lake Crystal  
 Eldora, IA  
 North Mankato  
 Sleepy Eye  
 New Ulm  
 Hanska  
 LaSalle  
 Winthrop  
 Mankato  
 New Ulm  
 Lafayette  
 Winthrop  
 Laporte  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 St. James  
 Madelia  
 Waupaca, WI  
 Pine River  
 Tokeland, WA  
 Tucson, AZ  
 Brainerd  
 Eden Prairie  
 Fargo, ND  
 New Ulm  
 New Ulm  
 Springfield  
 Garrison  
 Statesville, NC  
 Springfield  
 Minneapolis  
 Normal, IL  
 Lafayette  
 Elmore  
 Peoria, IL  
 Hurst, TX  
 Mankato  
 Hanska  
 Edina  
 New Richland  
 North Conway, NH  
 Osakis  
 North Mankato  
 New Ulm  
 Comfrey  
 Comfrey  
 Fort Worth, TX  
 St. James  
 Burns, OR  
 Hanska  
 Sleepy Eye  
 Sleepy Eye  
 Oakdale  
 New Ulm  
 Lewisville  
 New Ulm  
 Stacy  
 New Ulm  
 Max Creek, MO  
 Green Valley, AZ



**Yahoo! Thank you for your help! We appreciate your time to help us find these former electric co-op members to reunite them with their unclaimed capital credits. (U)**

**Spring means let the grilling season begin! Share favorite recipes**

Hot diggity dogs, grilled brats, chicken, chops and steaks! Share your favorite grilling recipes, whether you have a special marinade, BBQ sauce, roasted veggies or other grilled foods. Send your favorite grilling recipes to Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop by March 27. Add your name and phone number. Thanks for sharing with us! 📧

**Chocolate Caramel Brownies** by Terese Gruber, New Ulm

- 1 pkg. German Chocolate Cake mix (w/pudding)      2 eggs
- 1/3 c. evaporated milk      1 pkg. caramels
- 3/4 c. melted butter      1 pkg. chocolate chips

Mix together cake, butter and eggs; pour half of the mixture into a greased and floured 9x13" pan. Bake at 350° for 6 to 10 minutes. Sprinkle chocolate chips over mixture. Melt together the caramels and evaporated milk. Pour over chocolate chips. Pour remaining cake mixture over caramels. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes. 📧

**Snicker Candy Bar** by Barbara Sellner, Sleepy Eye

First layer: Melt together and pour into a prebuttered, foil-lined 9x13" pan. Cool.

- 1 c. milk chocolate chips      1/4 c. butterscotch chips      1/4 c. peanut butter

Second layer: 1 c. sugar      1/4 c. milk      1/4 c. butter

Boil five minutes from the time bubbles appear. Remove from heat.

- Add: 1 c. marshmallow cream      1/4 c. peanut butter      1 tsp. vanilla

Pour over first layer. Sprinkle with 1-2 c. peanuts. Chill.

Third layer: 40 caramels      1-2 T. water

Melt in microwave until smooth and drizzle over peanuts.

Fourth layer: Melt and spread over all other layers:

- 1 c. milk chocolate chips      1/4 c. butterscotch chips      1/4 c. peanut butter

Refrigerate. 📧

**Caramel Bars**

by Elizabeth Shimon, Granada

- 2 c. flour
- 1 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 c. oatmeal
- 2 1/2 sticks of butter, softened
- 1 tsp. baking soda

Mix the above ingredients and press half into a 9x13" pan. Bake 10 minutes at 350°.

Remove and sprinkle with 12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips and 1/2 to 1 c. pecans.

Unwrap 1 bag of caramels and melt with 1/2 c. evaporated milk in a double boiler or microwave. Pour the mixture over the oatmeal mixture.

Crumble and drop the remainder of the oatmeal crumbs on top.

Bake 20 minutes at 350°. Cool and cut into small bars. 📧



**Lineworkers power our lives!**  
**Lineworker Appreciation Day**  
**April 8**

Thank you for all you do...day or night, whether 20 below, sunny or in driving snow! Way to go!

**Just make the 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 and tiling. Register at [www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org) or call 811. Call a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. 📧

# Staff Notes



**Mike Heidemann**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

## Share your input at the 2024 Annual Meeting

Recently, a Brown County REA member reminded me of a conversation we had at our Annual Meeting a few years back. She provided a valuable, unique perspective on a project we were exploring at the time. Conversations like this are one of the many reasons I look forward to Brown County REA's Annual Meeting. You, the members we serve, always bring value to the discussion. I know our co-op team is energized by these interactions.

If you've never attended the Annual Meeting, I'd encourage you to participate. Why? Because input from members like you matters and helps drive the direction of the co-op.

At the Annual Meeting we report on current initiatives and discuss the financial health and priorities for the coming years. This year's items under consideration will include our recent cost of services study and a planned rate increase, upcoming projects and system upgrades. And equally important, this is an opportunity for Brown County REA to hear from you.

### You have the power.

This is also normally a time to vote for new directors who will represent you and our community's interests in the co-op. As a member of Brown County REA, you have the power to help shape our community's energy future. However, there will be no ballots at this year's meeting or in the mail, as the three incumbent directors are running unchallenged.

Brown County REA's Board members are community-minded individuals with different skill sets. We rely on them to help us make more informed decisions on long-term priorities and investments. Brown County REA has nine directors who live in the co-op's service area. We consider them the eyes and ears of the community because they provide their unique perspective on various local issues.

If you've never been to an Annual Meeting or it's been a while, we hope you'll stop by. We're bringing back live music and will have prize drawings for battery-powered electric yard tools, attendance gifts and of course a delicious meal.

Your Brown County REA team will be ready to answer any energy-related questions you may have, from electric vehicle options to ways to manage your home energy use. We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting on April 11 at the Sleepy Eye Event Center. ☺



Stop by the Heartland Security booth at the Annual Meeting; visit with Nate on medical alert, security for your home, farm or business



Brown County Rural Electrical Assn.  
24386 State Hwy 4, PO Box 529  
Sleepy Eye MN 56085

E-mail address: [bcrea@bcrea.coop](mailto:bcrea@bcrea.coop)  
Website: [www.browncountyrea.coop](http://www.browncountyrea.coop)  
Phone: 507-794-3331 or 800-658-2368  
Office hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

Mike Heidemann, Chief Executive Officer

### Board of Directors

Thomas Hayes, President — 228-8954  
William Berg, Vice President — 766-1497  
James D. Hanson, Sec.-Treasurer — 829-6756  
Brad Sprenger — 317-5576  
David Wendinger — 276-3166  
Greg Mages — 794-3540  
Joel Christensen — 828-4550  
James Mickelson — 794-6298  
Landon Sletta — 439-6559  
The Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of each month.

## Board meeting highlights

The BCREA Board of Directors held its monthly board meeting January 25. Discussion and/or action were taken on the following agenda items:

- Reviewed the December 2023 board meeting minutes, new membership applications, member cancellations, payments to estates and assignment transfers.
- Kristi Robinson of Star Energy Services LLC presented results of the cooperative's Cost of Services Study recently completed by Star Energy.
- Reviewed and approved the Cogeneration and Small Power Production schedule of rates for excess energy produced from member-owned Distributed Energy Resources less than 40 kW. Rates effective January 1, 2024.
- Reviewed the cooperative's 2023 Safety, Reliability and Service Quality Report.
- Reviewed and approved the OSHA 300 Summary of Work-Related Injuries for 2023.
- Discussed and approved an update to the cooperative's Capital Credits policy.
- Updated on operations activities including pole change outs and line patrol.

The next meeting is set for February 29 at the BCREA office in Sleepy Eye. ☺