

# Nodak Neighbor

March-April 2008

Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative

[www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com)

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



*Make plans to attend your Cooperative's*

## 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

**Saturday, April 12, 2008**

**Alerus Center, Grand Forks, N.D.**

**Registration,  
coffee & cookies at 9:30 a.m.**

**Entertainment by Prairie Rose Band  
9:30 -10:30 a.m.**

**Meeting at 10:30 a.m.**

**Election of directors  
2007 operating report  
Lunch following meeting**

**Each registered  
voter will receive  
a free compact  
fluorescent light bulb!  
Cash prizes!**



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Official Publication of the  
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

746-4461 or 800-732-4373

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Volume 58, No. 2  
March-April 2008  
Officers and Directors

Chairman of the Board..... Doug Lund  
Vice Chairman..... Roger Diehl  
Secretary/Treasurer..... David Kent  
Directors..... Donna Grotte, David Hagert,  
Lee McLaughlin, Paul Sigurdson,  
Steve Smaaladen and Harvey Tallackson  
President & CEO..... George Berg  
Editor..... Duane Hafner



## Have you checked it out?

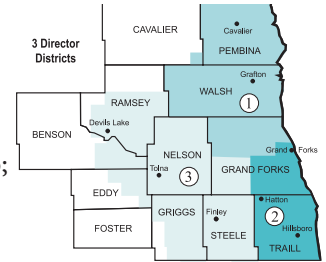
Learn about our e-bill option by visiting our Web site at [www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com), or call 701-746-4461 (toll-free 1-800-732-4373) and ask how to get signed up for our e-bill service.

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## Notice of nominating committee

In accordance with the Bylaws of Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc., Grand Forks, N.D., the nominating committee, consisting of the following: Frieda Baldwin, Hope; John Bata, Adams; Clark Becker, Inkster; Tony Davis, McVile; Julie Lemm, Hillsboro; Kit Midgarden, Hoople; Duane Petsinger, Arvilla; Hugh Ralston, Crystal; and Paul Retzlaff, Aneta, appointed by the board of directors of the cooperative at its regular meeting held on Dec. 4, 2007, assembled at the offices of the cooperative at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2008.



The Committee nominated the following for the three director positions (one from District 1, one from District 2 and one from District 3) to be voted upon at the annual meeting on Saturday, April 12, 2008:

- 3-year term: Lee McLaughlin, Lankin – District 1**
- 3-year term: Roger Diehl, Hillsboro – District 2**
- 3-year term: Steven Smaaladen, Aneta – District 3**

In addition to the above, nominations may be submitted by petition of no less than 15 members to be submitted to the office of the cooperative no less than 45 days prior to the annual meeting.



Left to right: Jay Welsh, auditor; Tom Edwards, Nodak finance manager; and Josh Enger, auditor.

## Annual financial audit completed

"A place for everything and everything in its place." That could be the catch phrase of our annual financial audit. Recently, Jay Welsh and Josh Enger from Brady Martz and Associates completed their 2007 audit of Nodak Electric. During their one-week audit, they thoroughly check all phases of our finances, ranging from capital credits, loan funds, cash receipts, accounts payable and everything in between. We are pleased to report that our audits of this year and past years have never revealed any discrepancies or omissions, which should be a good feeling for all of our members. The 2007 year-end financial statement of your cooperative will be published in the annual report, which will be coming to your mailbox soon.



*George Berg  
President & CEO*

## Perspective

# Load control and wind energy

**B**y the time you receive this issue of the *Nodak Neighbor*, hopefully we will be past the subzero weather for another winter.

For everyone, this winter has put a strain on the cost of heating homes and businesses. For those who have off-peak heating systems, there is always concern about how often we implement load management and require you to switch to a backup heating system.

As it turned out, we had a rough time out of the chute this heating season. Scheduled power plant maintenance didn't go well, and an eight-week planned maintenance project turned into an 11-week project. Worse yet, the power plant was out of service when the heating season was getting into full swing, and we had to use load control much more than expected during that period.

Some of you who have off-peak heating systems may have noticed that the amount of load control dropped substantially after the first of the new year. You may also be aware that our power supplier, Minnkota Power Cooperative, brought a large wind farm online about the same time. I have been asked more than once whether or not there is a correlation between the wind farm and less load control. The short

answer is, yes, the addition of the 100-megawatt wind farm definitely helped to reduce the need for load control. The next question, obviously, is why don't we build more wind generation and reduce the need for so much load control further. Minnkota will, in fact, build more wind generation, but it can't be for the purpose of reducing load control hours. The problem with that logic is price.

While we are getting wind energy delivered at a very good price from the Langdon Wind Energy Center, it is still higher priced than what we are charging you for off-peak heating. Wind energy isn't valuable to Minnkota because we can resell it as interruptible power; it is valuable because it is often less costly than what can be purchased from the regional market.

It is also valuable if the wind turbines happen to be generating during peak conditions. There is much more likelihood this will happen during the winter season than the summer season. We often experience peaks in the winter when it is cold and the wind speed is high. In the summer, we often experience peaks when it is hot, humid and no wind.

Prior to the first of the year,

we had a lot of load control related to power plants being out of service. The Langdon Wind Energy Center was not online and not available to help us out. However, even if it had been online, it may not have helped because power plant downtime has nothing to do with wind conditions.

The good news is that our total amount of load control this

**"Wind energy isn't valuable to Minnkota because we can resell it as interruptible power; it is valuable because it is often less costly than what can be purchased from the regional market."**

season – even with the rough start – will be pretty much as expected. The projection from Minnkota for load control this heating season was approximately 350 hours for a dual heating system. Even though things didn't go as planned, it doesn't appear the total hours will be much higher and will likely be around 400 hours for the heating season.

With that level of load management, a typical homeowner is still getting about 85 percent of his/her heating requirements from electricity at a very low rate.

# Nodak line worker named Outstanding Apprentice of the Year

BY CLARICE L. KESLER



**Chad Honek was named Outstanding Apprentice of the Year at the AT&S annual awards banquet recently in Bismarck, N.D. Congratulations, Chad!**

**T**hese days when Chad Honek glances at his watch, he's reminded of how hard work and dedication pay off.

For the past four years when Honek, then an apprentice line worker with Nodak Electric Cooperative, went to work each day, each minute of supervised work counted toward his goal of 8,000 hours. On nights and weekends, he did his course work and studied for one test after another amounting to about 144 hours per year. As it turns out, it was time well spent. Because of Honek's high academic test scores and through the evaluations from his supervisor and peers, he earned the Outstanding Apprentice Award from the Apprenticeship, Training and Safety Program (AT&S) – a service provided by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC).

In addition to the watch he received from the North Dakota Line Superintendents' Association at the annual AT&S Conference awards banquet, Honek also received a plaque from the North Dakota Managers' Association.

This four-year apprenticeship program is approved by the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Apprenticeship. It is administered through Sandy Leingang, safety coordinator for NDAREC. "Achieving journeyman status is not a small undertaking: it requires a lot of perseverance on the part of the apprentice line workers, but it is well worth their time to further their knowledge and their careers," Leingang says.

Honek was honored with six other graduating apprentices who have earned their status as journeyman line workers: Dustin Peterson, Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative; Josh Cabler, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative; Christopher Backhaus, Slope Electric Cooperative; and Tom Bailey, Jonathan Boehm and Jesse Carter, all with 3C Construction.

Because of their commitment to safety, regular self-audits and thorough recordkeeping, five co-ops earned national safety accreditation in 2007. At the banquet, Wally Kalmbach, safety director for NDAREC, presented certificates to Capital Electric Cooperative, KEM Electric Cooperative, Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative, Nodak Electric Cooperative and West Plains Electric Cooperative.

The Safety Accreditation Program, administered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, establishes criteria for effective safety programs. It includes field observations and evaluations conducted by AT&S staff and trained observers every three years.

With stringent criteria, achieving national safety accreditation requires dedication on behalf of the cooperatives. "It takes a cooperative effort on the part of the employees, the management team and the board of directors," says Kalmbach.

The banquet was part of the annual AT&S Conference sponsored by NDAREC Jan. 16 to 18. This year, more than 120 line workers attended.

# Helping out Kansas

## Nodak crew shares cooperative spirit

On Dec. 13, 2007, Nodak Electric line superintendent Ken Quanrud received a call requesting help for Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative in Ellsworth, Kansas, which is located 200 miles west of Kansas City, Kansas. Rolling Hills Electric serves 10,700 customers, and 3,000 of those customers were out of service due to 700 broken poles from a massive ice storm that swept through the region.

Seven Nodak Electric line workers teamed up with 200 additional line workers from six different states to assist with repairs. Nodak line workers Tim Kiemele, Devils Lake; Jeff Sloan, Finley; Mel Nagel, Hillsboro; Wade Haman, Hillsboro; Nathan Lorenz, Grafton; Chris Hovland, Grand Forks; and Nolan Buchner, Grand Forks, worked 14-hour days for 10 days to help restore service.

Nodak is proud of its employees who shared the cooperative spirit to help those in need.



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## Quarterly Operation Round Up® meeting held



The Operation Round Up® board held its regular quarterly meeting on Thursday, Jan. 10, 2008, at the headquarters building of Nodak Electric Cooperative. Vice Chairman Bruce Ellertson called the meeting to order. Directors Bruce Ellertson, Sheryl Kjelland, Harvey Puppe and Roger Windjue were present, as well as ex-officio member Duane Hafner. After the board reviewed the financial report and discussed the balance available to be disbursed, the applications were reviewed and the following applicants were granted funding at the levels indicated:

Ali's Boundless Playground	\$500
Gerald Byron	\$1,500
Cavalier Robotics Team	\$500
Dress for Success Grand Forks	\$200
Hillsboro Medical Center Foundation	\$500
Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota	\$500
Mayville Senior Citizen's Assn., Inc.	\$500
Mr. Lorne McEwen	\$1,500
Energy Share of North Dakota	\$1,000
North Dakota 4-H Foundation, Inc.	\$500
Northwood City Park District	\$500
Park River Volunteer Fire & Rescue	\$1,000
Mr. Darrin Peterson	\$1,500
Special Olympics North Dakota	\$250
Sugar Bowl Senior Citizens	\$500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,950</b>

## New employee

Chris grew up in Watford City and graduated from high school in 2004. After high school, he attended Bismarck State Linemen School for one year and has worked for Nodak on a part-time, seasonal basis for the past three years with the underground crew. Chris has now been hired as a permanent apprentice journeyman line worker on the underground crew and will be working to complete his course work to become a journeyman line worker. We welcome Chris to the Nodak family.



**Chris Hovland**  
Apprentice Journeyman  
Line Worker

# Power interruption checklist

While Nodak Electric Cooperative hopes you or your business never have to experience a power outage, the following information will help you cope with an outage if one should occur. Keep a power outage kit on hand, and make sure you, your family members and employees know where your “power outage” kit is located. Kit items should include:



- ✓ **Nodak Electric Cooperative telephone number**
- ✓ **Flashlight with fresh batteries**
- ✓ **Matches**
- ✓ **Candles**
- ✓ **Spare fuses**
- ✓ **Portable radio with fresh batteries**

## Things to do when an outage occurs

- ✓ **STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED POWER LINES** and broken utility poles. Please note the location of the downed line or pole and call Nodak immediately. Even lines that look harmless can be dangerous.
- ✓ Check your breakers and the yard pole disconnect switch to determine if it has tripped off due to a power overload. If fuses or breakers are okay, call Nodak Electric Cooperative 746-4461 or 800-732-4373. A 24-hour dispatch service will answer your call after normal working hours.
- ✓ Check with your neighbors to determine if they are also without service. Even if your neighbors’ lights are on, don’t hesitate to call Nodak.
- ✓ Turn off all electrical appliances that were on, especially air conditioners or electric heating. However, you will want to leave a light on so you will know when your power has been restored.
- ✓ Turn on your portable radio and listen for messages from Nodak Electric. This will occur only when there has been a major planned outage or catastrophic conditions.
- ✓ Leave doors closed on refrigerators and freezers as much as possible during outages. Food will keep much longer if the doors are left closed.
- ✓ If any member of your family is on a life-support system, please notify Nodak today so their name and address can be placed on a priority service list.

## **ZAP** those power surges

**H**as lightning or other power surges ever zapped your electronic gadgets? Computers, modems, fax machines and other electronic equipment should be



protected by a surge suppressor. Electrical surges can be caused from nearby lightning or from sudden changes in power needs. An electrical surge from lightning is able to travel through phone, electrical and cable lines up to half a mile and still cause harm. Surge-related damage can also be caused by everything from changes in seasonal energy demands to the use of large appliances like refrigerators, electric dryers and air conditioners.

A good way to protect your electronics is to get a surge protector to fit your needs, whether it is to protect the whole house or a few appliances. Normally, a surge protector allows the electricity to flow through it to the appliance. Once a higher voltage is detected, the surge protectors are able to divert the voltage quicker, within a nanosecond.

Ordinary power strips don’t provide adequate protection. Uninterruptible power supply systems are battery-backed devices that keep electricity flowing in the event of an outage. They are useful devices, but do not act as surge suppressors unless they are certified as such.

You need a true surge suppressor, which looks like a power strip but which provides much greater protection.

Whole home surge protectors are also available. The system should be hard-wired into your electrical system by a licensed electrician. Separate suppressors are recommended for your cable and phone lines. Those will protect your phones, TVs and fax machines. If you have questions about protecting your electronic equipment from power surges, contact Nodak Electric Cooperative.

# New wind farm operational

The Langdon Wind Energy Center south of Langdon, N.D., is now operational. Our wholesale power supplier, Minnkota Power Cooperative, will be purchasing approximately 10 percent of Nodak Electric Cooperative's annual power requirements from this new facility under a long-term Power Purchase Agreement.

The FPL Energy-owned portion of the project was completed by Dec. 31, 2007, as originally planned. All 66 of the 1.5 megawatt (MW) turbines assigned to Minnkota are commissioned. The Otter Tail Power Company portion was completed in mid-January. A total of 106 turbines now dot the prairie landscape.

While the energy produced is based on the availability of strong wind speeds, this project represents the largest addition to the Minnkota generation resource base since the Coyote Station came online in 1981.

The Langdon substation, Hensel substation and Langdon-Hensel 35-mile 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line work has been completed by Minnkota and Otter Tail, along with subcontractors. The project is a joint effort between FPL Energy, Minnkota and Otter Tail Power.

A formal dedication of the Langdon Wind Energy Center is planned for May 14, 2008.



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