

# The Nodak Neighbor

May-June 2015

Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



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Official Publication of the  
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

746-4461 or 800-732-4373

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Editor..... Blaine Rekken

## Three new employees



**Graham Anderson**  
Apprentice Lineman  
Construction crew



**Alex Spitsberg**  
Electrical Engineer



**Travis Vathauer**  
Apprentice Lineman  
Grand Forks crew

**Graham Anderson** started with Nodak as an apprentice lineman with the construction crew. Graham is a Cooperstown, N.D., native and graduate of Griggs County Central High School. He also is a graduate of the Bismarck State College lineman program. Graham enjoys being outdoors: snowboarding, riding motorcycle, hunting and fishing.

**Alex Spitsberg** was hired as an electrical engineer in the Grand Forks office. He is an East Grand Forks, Minn., native and graduate of East Grand Forks Senior High. He attended St. Cloud State University and is a recent graduate of University of North Dakota in electrical engineering with a minor in math.

Alex enjoys hockey, golf and tennis. He also likes being outdoors hunting, camping and fishing (he was a deckhand on a fishing boat in Alaska for three summers). He plans to spend time at the lake with family and friends this summer.

**Travis Vathauer** joined Nodak's Grand Forks crew as an apprentice lineman. He started with Nodak as a seasonal apprentice last summer and recently moved to full time. Travis is a Crookston, Minn., native and Wadena State College graduate in the lineman program. Travis enjoys sports, hunting and fishing.

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on Facebook!**

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**On the cover:** Woodland Resort owners Karin and Kyle Blanchfield stand near the front entrance of their new lodge on Devils Lake as it nears completion. *Story page 4.*



**Kirsten Whaley**

## Youth tour winner to visit Washington, D.C.

Kirsten Whaley was selected to represent Nodak Electric Cooperative at the 2015 Washington, D.C., Youth Tour. Kirsten is the daughter of Lowell and Leza Whaley of Fordville, N.D., and is an active junior at Park River Area High School. She will join other North Dakota Youth Tour contestants and more than 1,600 other students from across the country in D.C. the week of June 13-18. The Youth Tour educates students about electric cooperatives, the cooperative business model and the legislative process. She will have an incredible experience visiting unforgettable historic monuments, museums and the U.S. Capitol.



*Mylo Einarson  
President & CEO*

# Seeing 'the light'

**H**ave you had a hard time finding incandescent light bulbs in your local store lately? Since 2007, the United States has been phasing out these inefficient bulbs in favor of more energy efficient models. As part of a move toward reduced energy usage, the Energy Independence and Securities Act of 2007 required approximately 25 percent greater efficiency for light bulbs, which effectively banned the manufacture and importation of the most common incandescent light bulbs. Higher wattage bulbs were phased out in 2012, and as of the end of 2014, 40- and 60-watt bulbs are no longer brought into the United States.

By regulating the incandescent bulb out of use, the government has forced consumers to move toward alternatives that are initially more expensive, but use less energy and are more economical to operate. Compact fluorescent lights, halogen lamps and light emitting diodes or LEDs use considerably less energy than the old workhorse incandescent, so they ultimately pay for themselves over time through reduced energy cost.

When these regulations were imposed, they caused quite a stir among folks who did not want the government dictating their choices in the local hardware store. Now that the phaseout is complete, the general consensus is that the regulators got this one right. Incandescent bulbs will go the way of leaded gasoline and high flow toilets and be looked upon as a low-tech product of a bygone era. Consumers, as a result, ended

up with a product that works equally as well and is better for the environment.

As I said, regulators got that one right, but one place regulators got it wrong is with electric water heaters. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recently implemented regulations that ban the manufacture of large capacity electric water heaters of 55 gallons or more in favor of a technology that does not work well in colder climates. What the DOE missed is that when used as part of a demand response program, these water heaters become an extremely valuable tool that helps consumers save money, promotes grid reliability, and helps integrate renewable energy. These large capacity water heaters become an energy storage device by heating the water during off-peak hours for use during peak usage times, thereby reducing the need for additional power plants. Grid enabled water heaters truly are an environmental benefit.

Across the Minnkota service territory, cooperative members have approximately 41,300 total electric water heaters in service. Of that number, approximately 8,300 are large capacity units that operate under a demand response or off-peak program. Thanks in part to the three members of North Dakota's congressional delegation, on April 30 President Obama signed a new piece of legislation that allows us to continue to use these energy efficient tools in this win-win way. Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., recently said in a statement "consumers save money, rural electric cooperatives optimize their energy management and, because the water heaters in the program are energy efficient, the environment benefits."

Many thanks to our congressional delegation for all their hard work in helping the DOE see the "light" on this important piece of legislation.

**811**  
Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

**KNOW WHAT DANGERS LIE BELOW.  
DIG SAFELY.**  
Accidents can happen to anyone.



The new \$3.5 million, 25,000-square-foot lodge at Woodland Resort on Devils Lake opens in June. (Inset) Brick fire pits line the shores of Devils Lake at Woodland Resort.



# Going with the flow

## *New lodge opens at Woodland Resort*

When Woodland Resort owner Kyle Blanchfield looks out over Devils Lake, he no longer sees the force of nature his family has battled for the last two decades.

The view looks much better from the top-floor balcony of the resort's new lodge. The \$3.5 million facility is now the centerpiece of a business that has been retreating from the lake since it opened in 1988. Blanchfield and his wife, Karin, have twice been forced to move cabins and other amenities away from the water as it slowly swallowed campground space.

"It's brutal," Blanchfield said. "The worst part is that there isn't much you can do about it. You just have to get good at hauling dirt, hauling rock and moving buildings."

An extended wet cycle has caused Devils Lake to rise more than 30 feet since the early 1990s. While the gradual flooding has consumed much of his original site, Blanchfield is quick to point out the positives. Higher water levels have brought the area world-class fishing and

waterfowl hunting.

"As the fishing and hunting have gotten better, we've been getting busier and busier," Blanchfield said.

The 25,000-square-foot lodge will be ready this June for the steady stream of summer customers. It includes 10 lakeside luxury suites ranging from 850 to 1,400 square feet. Each room is equipped with a full kitchen, living room, appliances, cooking utensils and "all the things you'd have when you walk into your home," Blanchfield said. The lodge also features space for guest services, a boat showroom, a public meeting room and retail goods.

"It's like a Christmas present under the tree that I've been waiting to open," Blanchfield said.

Nodak Electric Cooperative, which provides electric service to Woodland Resort, helped support the facility expansion by installing three-phase power to the site. The additional energy capacity is needed to run an elevator and other commercial-scale equipment.

"I can't say enough about the people at



New cabinets are installed inside one of 10 suites at the lodge.

Nodak,” Blanchfield said. “Whenever we need something, they’re on it right away – especially the linemen in the trenches. They’ve been great to work with.”

Other accommodations on site include nine cabins with full kitchens, five deluxe lodging units, 15 motel-style rooms and camping areas. All rooms at the resort have access to cable television and wireless Internet.

Prices range from \$72 per night for a two-person motel room to \$349 per night for a four-person suite. Blanchfield said that the trend is toward modern rooms rather than the more rustic lodging units.

“The taste of the customer has really changed,” Blanchfield said. “People want roomier, nicer accommodations. That’s one of the reasons we built the lodge.”

### **On the water**

On average, the resort hosts about 9,000 guests each year. Many of them travel from around the country in search of the newfound hotbeds of walleye, perch and northern pike. Guided fishing is provided through the resort by Mitchell’s Guide Service during the summers and turn-key ice houses are set up when the lake freezes.

Blanchfield also runs a full-service marine shop on site that sells, rents and repairs boats and pontoons. Tackle, bait and other fishing equipment is available on site.

After a long day on the lake, the Proz Lakeside Restaurant and Bar is open to provide a hot meal and cold drink next door to the lodge. The patio and nearby fire pits are popular for families and fishermen alike.

In the fall, Blanchfield suits up in camouflage and heads out to the vast North Dakota prairie. He is part owner of Northern Flight Guide Services, which specializes in field hunting for ducks, snow and blue geese, Canadian geese and sandhill cranes over decoys.

### **Family business**

To provide these services, Blanchfield credits his 26 full-time employees, ranging from boat maintenance personnel to housekeepers.

“We’ve been really fortunate to have a

quality staff all these years,” Blanchfield said. “It’s really like a family atmosphere here.”

Family is where the business got its start. Blanchfield opened Woodland Resort with his parents in 1988 after a stretch of tough years on the farm. The lake has since pushed the business all the way back onto land Blanchfield’s grandparents farmed in the 1940s.

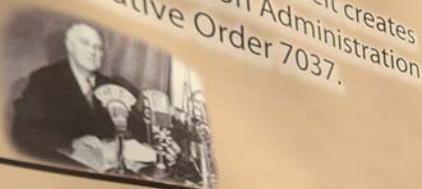
“We’re basically the third generation out here,” he said. “We think that there is another generation behind us.”

The Blanchfields have two teenage children who work at the resort. His hope is that they will carry on the tradition at Woodland Resort.

“We’re not going to push them one way or another,” Blanchfield said. “This is a labor of love. You have to love it, or it’s not worth doing.”



*The Proz Lakeside Restaurant and Bar is open year-round to provide guests with food and drinks after a long day on the lake.*



... Administration  
... Order 7037.

## December 23, 1939

Percy Donelly "throws the switch" at Grafton to energize the first customer.



**January 1940**  
Nodak Rural Electric Cooperative is incorporated.  
formed from a merger of Walsh Electric Cooperative,  
Grafton; Five Star Electric Cooperative, Whitman;  
Red River Electric Cooperative, Hillsboro;  
and Forks Electric Cooperative, Grand Forks.

## March 1940

Minnkota Power Cooperative is formed to supply power to Nodak and four Minnesota distribution cooperatives.

## November 1970

Wilton R. housing generating station starts producing power commercially. It's NREC's first in-house generating station with a generating capacity of 234,000 kW.

## 1977

Nodak Electric Cooperative is formed from the merger of Nodak Rural Electric Cooperative and Minnkota Power Cooperative.



1940-2015



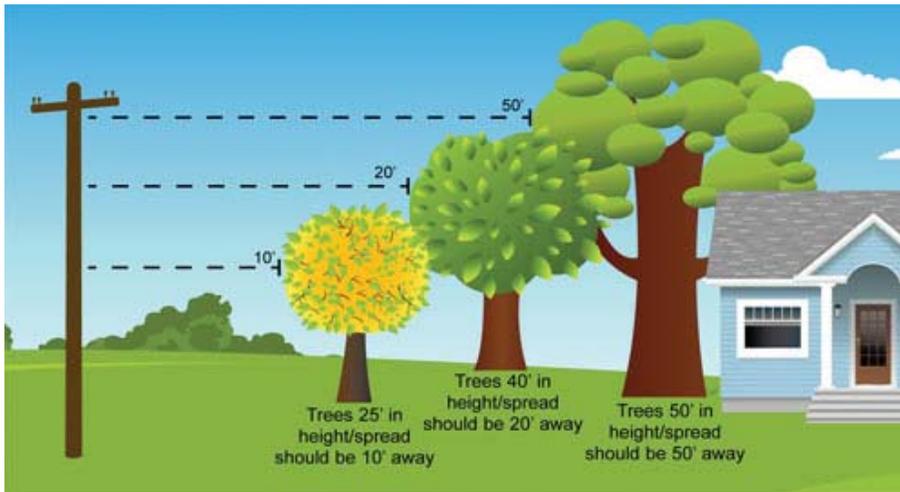
Guest speaker  
Dennis Hill

# Annual meeting *Highlights*

More than 300 members and guests attended Nodak Electric Cooperative's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and annual meeting March 31 at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks. Members enjoyed a turkey dinner served by the Alerus staff, entertainment and a historical display of Nodak memorabilia. A 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary video was also shown and can be viewed on Nodak's website.

During the meeting, the cooperative's board of directors was seated for the upcoming year, including the selection of officers and three director elections. Paul Sigurdson was re-elected to represent District 1, David Hagert was re-elected to represent District 2 and Doug Lund was re-elected to represent District 3. Following the meeting, Nodak's board of directors elected David Hagert as its chairman. In addition, Paul Sigurdson was named vice chairman and Luther Meberg was named secretary-treasurer. Guest speaker was Dennis Hill, executive vice president and general manager of NDAREC.





## Tree planting safety

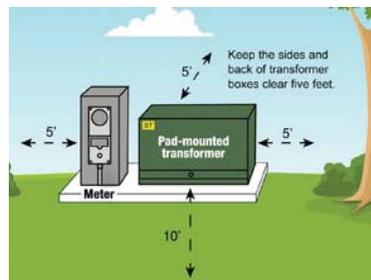
When landscaping property, remember that trees can grow into electric lines and cause power interruptions. The best way to prevent problems is to plant the right tree in the proper location. Before planting, consider the mature size, height and crown characteristics of trees. For example, a 4-foot-tall, 2-foot-wide tree could grow to 60 feet tall and 30 feet across at maturity. Knowing this information before you plant can help you choose the best location for your tree.

Important: Do not allow trees, bushes or plants of any size to grow directly under electric lines. This foliage could interfere with Nodak crews performing maintenance or repair.

### Planting near pad-mounted transformers

In areas with underground electric service, do not plant shrubs or other foliage around pad-mounted transformers. This foliage will make repair or maintenance work difficult for Nodak crews. Dense growth around these transformers can also provide a home for undesirable wildlife and insects.

Ten feet of clearance is needed in front of equipment so crews can safely open it. Some larger pad-mounted switchgear will require 10 feet of clearance in the front and back.



### Wise tree choices

Plant trees that will grow up to 25 feet tall at least 10 feet from power lines. Trees up to 40 feet tall should be planted 20 feet from lines. Those over 50 feet tall should be planted 50 feet away.

The soils in this area of the state are tricky, so the varieties you choose depends greatly on the soil itself.

Here is a list of trees the North Dakota Soil Conservation recommends for planting around here:

#### For saline soils:

- 15-20 feet: Buffaloberry or Silverberry
- 25-50 feet: Russian Olive
- 60-100 feet: Cottonwood or Golden Willow

#### For other soils:

- 15-20 feet: Amur Maple, Pear, Plum, Apricot or Crabapples
- 25-50 feet: Ohio Buckeye, Laurel Willow or Boxelder
- 60-100 feet: Cottonwoods, Golden Willow or Bur Oak



# Coming soon

## to general service and residential members

Nodak will offer its members a pay-by-phone option that will be available 24/7 for those who wish to call in to make a payment using a credit or debit card. More information, along with a special telephone number, will be provided in the next issue of *The Nodak Neighbor*, as well as at [www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com) and on Nodak's Facebook page. Please stay tuned for more information on this payment solution.

## Is your name on the Unclaimed Capital Credits list?

### Check our website

## *Celebrating 75 Years*

### **I remember when the lights came on ...**

*It was 1940 for us, but it all goes back to 1936 when Congress created rural electric cooperatives – much credit goes to Andy Freeman.*

– Ardeth Jensen  
Bismarck, ND (Pick City, ND)

*It was 1948, and I was 5 years old. What an exciting day! My dad bought a refrigerator and a radio. And when they came on, we knew we had electricity.*

– Carol Kurtz  
Sheyenne, ND

*There was so much excitement as we ran through the house, snapping on the light switch in each room.*

– Cecilia Durand  
Grafton, ND

*What a change it was from having a gas lantern hanging from the ceiling in the kitchen, and carrying a kerosene lamp from room to room wherever we needed light.*

– Cecilia Durand  
Grafton, ND

**75**  
Years Of Positive Energy  
1940-2015

## **Nodak's electric heating rebate program!**

### ***Incentives available for installation of an off-peak electric heating system***

- Receive a \$20/kW rebate for the installation of a qualifying electric heating system that is on off-peak.
- Air-source heat pump incentive is \$100/ton – heating mode must be controlled on off-peak.
- Ground-source heat pump incentive is \$200/ton – heating mode must be controlled on off-peak.
- Equipment must be new and off-peak systems must have a qualified backup.
- Homeowner will receive a rebate check after a visit from a Nodak Electric technician.
- Maximum incentive per off-peak meter is \$600.

**Homeowners adding new off-peak heating systems qualify for these rebates.**

**Contact our Energy Services Department for details at 701-746-4461 or 800-732-4373**