

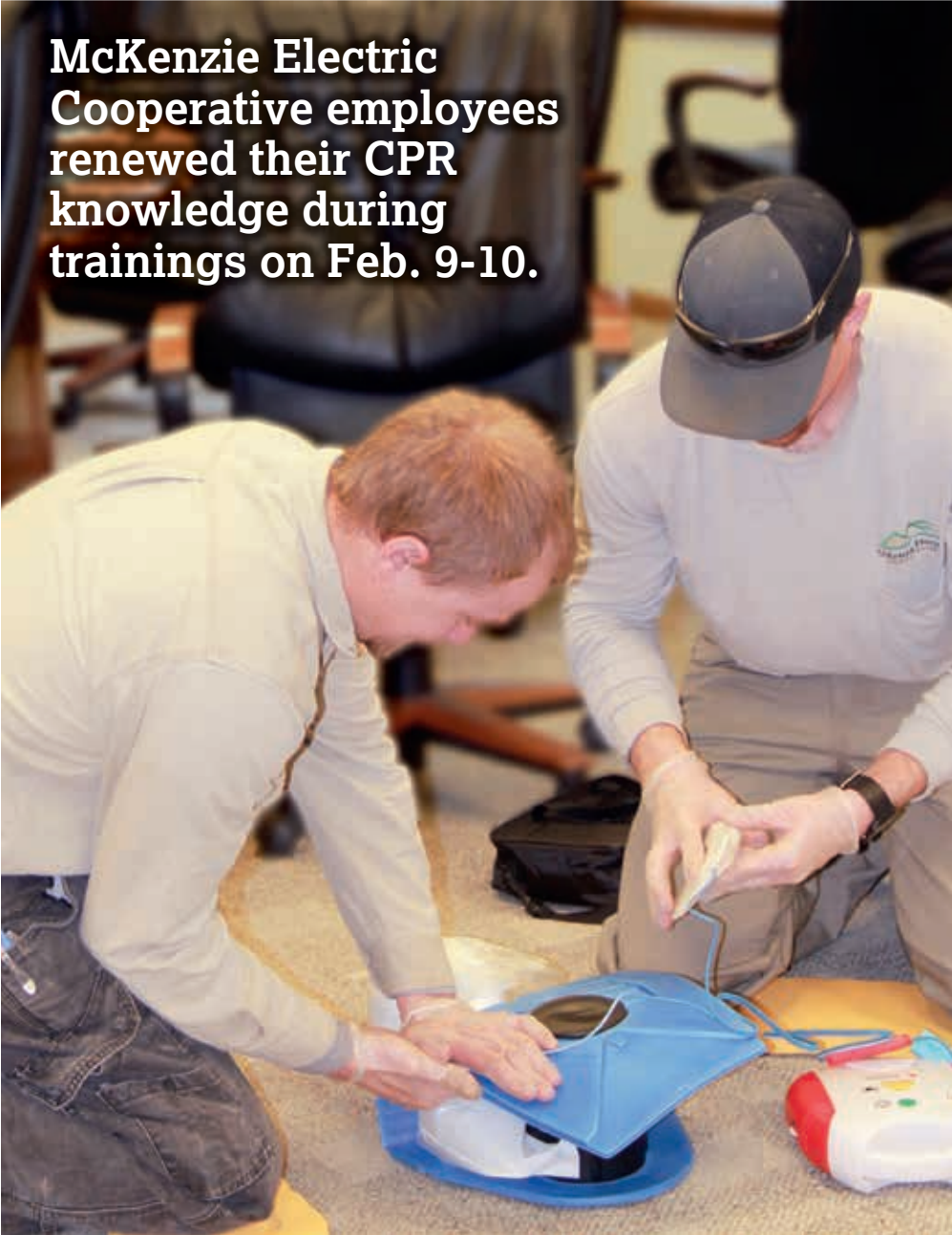


**McKenzie Electric**  
COOPERATIVE

**MARCH 2016**

908 4th Ave. NE Watford City, ND  
Outpost - Killdeer, ND  
701-444-9288 | 800-584-9239

**McKenzie Electric Cooperative employees renewed their CPR knowledge during trainings on Feb. 9-10.**



McKenzie Electric Cooperative

*Connections*

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



# Spring into \$AVING\$

**W**e'll soon be celebrating the first day of spring. With the start of a new season comes a fresh opportunity to find ways to save energy and money.

Here are a few simple tips from McKenzie Electric Cooperative to improve the energy efficiency and comfort of your home as warmer temperatures arrive:

1. **Service your air conditioner.** Easy maintenance, such as routinely replacing or cleaning air filters, can lower your cooling system's energy consumption by up to 15 percent. Also, the first day of spring could serve as a reminder to check your air conditioner's evaporator coil, which should be cleaned annually to ensure the system is performing at optimal levels.
2. **Open windows.** Opening windows creates a breeze, allowing you to naturally cool your home without switching on air conditioners. This is an ideal tactic in spring when temperatures are mild.
3. **Use ceiling fans.** Cooling your home with ceiling fans will allow you to raise your thermostat four degrees. This can help lower your electricity bills without sacrificing overall comfort.
4. **Cook outside.** On warmer spring days, keep the heat out of your home by using an outdoor grill instead of indoor ovens.
5. **Install window treatments.** Energy-efficient window treatments or coverings such as blinds, shades and films can slash heat gain when temperatures rise. These devices not only improve the look of your home but also reduce energy costs.
6. **Caulk air leaks.** Using low-cost caulk to seal cracks and openings in your home keeps warm air out – and cash in your wallet.
7. **Bring in sunlight.** During daylight hours, switch off artificial lights and use windows and skylights to brighten your home.
8. **Set the thermostat.** On warm days, setting a programmable thermostat to a higher setting when you are not at home can help reduce your energy costs by approximately 10 percent.
9. **Seal ducts.** Air loss through ducts can lead to high electricity costs, accounting for nearly 30 percent of a cooling system's energy consumption. Sealing and insulating ducts can go a long way toward lowering your electricity bills.
10. **Switch on bathroom fans.** Bathroom fans suck out heat and humidity from your home, improving comfort.

# Journeyman milestone achieved



Hayes Feilmeier

Another McKenzie Electric Cooperative apprentice lineworker reached a milestone in his career, after graduating from the lineworker program in January. Hayes Feilmeier received his journeyman certificate during the January North Dakota AT&S Conference.

To graduate, apprentices must have 8,000 hours of supervised training on poles, tower and construction; line hardware and

framing; overhead conductors; tools and equipment; transformers; oil-circuit reclosers, regulators and capacitors; metering and instrument transformers; rolling stock; engineering; records; safety meetings; hot-line maintenance; troubleshooting; underground; substations; lighting; and service. All apprentices are required to take and pass a series of tests throughout their coursework.

## WAY TO GO HAYES!



# 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting

*“Serving with a Strategy”*

JUNE 21ST, 2016 ~ 5 P.M. ~ OUTLAWS LOWER BALLROOM ~ 120 N. MAIN ST. ~ WATFORD CITY, ND





# Old Barn Woods creates new out of old

BY KATE RUGGLES



Not everyone can see promise lying in the rubble and purpose in that which has run its course. But Josh Skoglund of Old Barn Woods does. He sees beyond a dilapidated barn and then goes a step further and actually creates something new from what most people would throw away.

Josh Skoglund was raised in McKenzie County and left the area shortly after graduating from Watford City High School in 1998. He moved to Wyoming where he worked as a carpenter's apprentice, honing the skills he had already learned growing up on his parents' farm.

He also worked off and on as a commercial fisherman in Alaska.

"I really fell in love with Alaska," Skoglund states. So, in 2003, he made Alaska his home. While there, he put his carpentry apprenticeship to use, working in the field of construction management for some smaller companies and a large design and build firm.

Skoglund also started his own production company, doing marketing for large corporate companies in the construction and extreme sports world. While Skoglund is thankful to have those experiences, they became somewhat unsavory.

"I became burnt out," Skoglund states. "In the end, I found that what these companies cared most about was money. They were the types of companies that would consume your life, then dump you if someone came along at a lower cost. They lied and did things to make their companies grow and look better than they actually were, and I just got tired of working for them."

The stress of working for the corporate machine, and the distance from his family began to weigh on Skoglund. Then, a booming oil economy presented Skoglund with another dilemma.

"I saw these old buildings and barns being destroyed by the oil industry. Companies would just doze them over or burn them to the ground," Skoglund states. "Once they are gone, they are gone forever, and the history, the uniqueness



and beauty of them is destroyed along with them."

Skoglund was not sure he wanted to move back, but as he began to finish his contracts in Alaska and completed his commitments, he started to see an opportunity to do something different, to be self-employed, to make a living doing what he loves and to be closer to his family.

"It took me about three or four years to finally decide to move back," Skoglund says.

And even then, he did not just up and quit, but finished the work he had committed himself to doing. Soon after, Old Barn Woods was created. In 2014, Skoglund moved back to his hometown. He returned with a passion for salvaging as many old buildings and barns as he could before they were destroyed.

He spent the following summer tearing down barns. Last summer, Skoglund tore down five barns, and he says that he

has 10 to 20 already lined up for this coming summer.

He has engaged in projects from dining room tables, entertainment centers and shuffleboards to completely renovating the back room of Meyer's Department Store and designing and building the space that has become the Door 204 Coffee Bar.

"I had been planning on renovating my back room for some time," states Beth Veeder, owner of Meyer's Department Store. "I have known Josh for a long time, but we caught up at RibFest last summer and he agreed to look at the space and let me know what he thought."

Veeder says that Skoglund not only built the wall of her back room out of old barn wood, but he gave her ideas to help her better organize her space.

"He is just so good to work with. He is highly professional, he has a lot of vision and ideas, and he cares very much about the work that he does," Veeder states.

Soon after completing the work for Meyer's Department Store, he began working on the space next door for Door 204. Veeder says that Skoglund drew out a plan, complete with renderings, and that he oversaw the project. She was highly complimentary of his work, but also of his timeliness.

"We purchased the space next door around the end of October, and Josh began working it shortly after Thanksgiving," Veeder says. "We had the open house for Door 204 at the end of January and he was done about three weeks before that."

In under two months time, Skoglund built the coffee bar, which included the bar itself, along with shelving, cabinets and the entryway. He included intricate wood designs, and thought-out decorative hardware pieces. He thought about details such as where to hide cords and ensuring that all the designs matches and flowed together well. But Skoglund also helped renovate the interior space, beyond the coffee bar. He designed and helped create a warm and inviting environment, including seating spaces and decorative art pieces.

"Josh is very talented and has a very artistic eye," Veeder says. "I would tell him what I wanted and give him my ideas, then he would take those ideas and give me some of his ideas. I didn't worry one minute about this project and I get comments daily about the work he did."

Skoglund has loved carpentry for as long as he has been practicing it, almost 20 years.

"Wood is a great product and great to work with. It can be used to make so many different things," he says. "Sure, reclaimed and repurposed wood is in right now, but it's not like the trend is going to go away. Barn wood has so much character. Back in the old days, it was cut different sizes, not factory produced like today's wood. Also, it is weathered and the nails used to build the barns have rusted and created black circles in the wood, all of which add to its character."



Plus the wood has a story. These old barns are the places that someone's grandfather or great-grandfather built, where someone broke a leg or the backdrop in an old family photograph. Though they have taken a different shape, the stories are still there, and thanks to Old Barn Woods, can continue to be passed down.

"With Old Barn Woods," Skoglund says, "we are able to see history and beauty where most people see junk." ■





# Project Ignite Light speaks for children



For the past five years, Pebbles Thompson of the Project Ignite Light organization has considered this area's residents some of her biggest supporters. She has brought the Watford City community some of the organization's toughest projects, which two years ago included cutting and tying 1,000 fleece tie-blankets. And the people of Watford City have always accepted the challenge with pleasure.

This is mostly because what Project Ignite Light does is speak and stand up for children and teenagers affected by physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

"A child is the most precious thing in this world, and to have an opportunity to invest in and help a child through the most difficult moment in their life is such an honor," Rachel Lawrence says. "This even is extremely significant for each of these hurting children and I love being a part of something so powerful. This 'hands-on' opportunity to dedicate the life of a hurting child, through prayer, while tying a blanket or packing a bag is an investment I want to make sure to be a part of it every chance I get."

This year's event, which took place Jan. 17 at the Watford City Civic Center, involved a project of a different sort than in previous years. In the past, project supporters have given up time on Saturday and Sunday to cut and tie fleece tie-blankets. This year,

however, area residents assembled to pack backpacks.

"This time, we are making the event about the whole child," Thompson shares.

Project Ignite Light supporters have always known that the blankets they tie go into a backpack with other items, and that those backpacks are then distributed to child advocacy centers across North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota. But their involvement has never gone past blankets until now.

This year, Project Ignite Light packed its 48-foot trailer with 400 blankets, backpacks, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, fruit snacks, pajamas, underwear, journals and copies of the book, "You are Special." They then brought the trailer across the state, parked it in the Watford City Civic Center, and unloaded the items.

"On a good day, by myself, I can pack 50 backpacks," Thompson says. "Today, we are asking you to help us pack 400 backpacks. We have never attempted a project like this before, but we knew that if we were going to try something new, Watford City was the place to do it."

Oftentimes, people are impacted to the point of wanting to help, but they don't know what to do or how to get involved. The Project Ignite Light event gives the people of Watford City a way to get involved, to effect change. And through the event, Thompson speaks for the children that Project Ignite Light impacts.

"Oftentimes the kids who receive our bags have no idea that what they have been through is not normal," Thompson says. "They have been through so much and they feel worthless. Then, they are put through even more humiliation when they are evaluated."

Thompson states that the children

are stripped down and photographed, and oftentimes their clothes are confiscated. And if the Child Advocacy Center does not have clothes available, the children are sent home in a hospital gown.

"Here at Project Ignite Light, we believe that no child should have to go home in a hospital gown," Thompson says.

Everything that goes into a Project Ignite Light backpack is intentional. Each item is given thought and care, and is designed to let the child know they are important. It is for this reason that Project Ignite Light uses only new items, because it is important that each child know that they are valued, that they are worth each new pair of pajamas, the new blanket that was handmade, the new toiletry items, and the new book and journal they receive.

The event is also a coming together of the community to do something bigger than one person, church or organization. At this year's event, the Watford City Assembly of God Church and CrossPoint Church combined together to hold one service in the Watford City Civic Center. Members from both churches got together on Saturday to help set up for the event, then on Sunday, more than 500 people, from the churches and the community, came and participated.

"I really like the community aspect of this event," states Gordy Houser of CrossPoint. "I like bringing other churches together, worshipping together and doing something beyond ourselves. That aspect really demonstrates community."

Project Ignite Light was started over nine years ago by Pebbles and Darren Thompson. Since the organization's beginning, more than 10,000 bags have been distributed. For more information on Project Ignite Light, visit [www.projectignitelight.org](http://www.projectignitelight.org). ■

## ... The Power of a Few Pennies



Apply today for the Spring Distribution of Operation Round Up  
*Deadline for Applications is April 29, 2016*

# Go AutoPay



# Get \$10

**\*Sign-Up Today**

## January 27, 2016



Monsen



Link



Hanna



Thompson



Wahlstrom



Sanford



Tescher



Houghton



Wasem

The regular meeting of the McKenzie Electric Board of Directors was held at the Headquarters Building in Watford City, North Dakota. Directors present were: Clayton Monsen, Rondee Hanna, Travis Thompson, Ray Tescher, Glen Houghton, Cameron Wahlstrom, Tim Wasem, Donald Link and Ken Sanford. CEO John Skurupey, Attorney Dennis Johnson and staff personnel of McKenzie Electric were also present.

**PRELIMINARIES:** The agenda for the meeting and minutes of the previous board meeting were approved by the Board of Directors. Director expenses were also approved.

**DIRECTOR DISCUSSIONS:** The Board engaged in a lengthy review, discussion and revision of Board policies. Policies will be updated with discussed changes and brought back to the next board meeting for approval.

**HEADQUARTERS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT.** The Board met with Garry Ford and Chris Cooper, HDR Constructors, the general contractor for the headquarters project. Several issues and concerns were discussed.

**ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS:** Director Donald Link reported on the recent North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) board meeting. The NDAREC Board approved its 2016 Budget and will begin a new manager search in anticipation of Dennis Hill's retirement.

**POWER SUPPLY:** Travis Thompson reported on the recent Upper Missouri Power Cooperative (UMPC) board meeting and discussed several issues. Cameron Wahlstrom was selected as Chairman of Delegates and Clayton Monsen as alternate Chairman of Delegates to Upper Missouri's Annual Meeting. Travis Thompson was re-elected as Trustee to Upper Missouri's Board of Trustees and Ray Tescher was re-elected as alternate Trustee.

**ATTORNEY'S REPORT:** Attorney Dennis Johnson reported on several items including an ongoing easement issue and discussion of a letter that has been circulating to many rural electric across the nation alleging violations of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) with cooperative websites. A review of MEC's website is in progress and efforts will be made to ensure

compliance. MEC is exploring the possibility of trademarking the logo that had been designed for MEC several years ago due to unauthorized use by others.

**GENERAL MANAGER/CEO REPORT:** CEO John Skurupey reported the discussions with McKenzie County and Dunn County regarding right-of-way and cost responsibility for road moves went well. Skurupey also reported on MEC's WAPA allocation, MEC's new metering program that is being developed and the Basin Rate Subcommittee and Manager Advisory Committee meetings

**OFFICE REPORT:** Financial and statistical reports for December were reviewed with the Board along with a budget-to-date comparison and the comparative cash report. A review of the headquarters project and project to date expenses were provided to the Board. The Board approved special capital credit retirements and the write-off of non-electric delinquent accounts.

**ENGINEERING REPORT:** A report was given on the progress of the headquarters building, fleet management, asset management, cybersecurity, generation interconnect inquires, substation issues, and SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition).

**OPERATIONS/CONTRACT MANAGEMENT REPORT:** An update was given on the projects currently being worked on by MEC contractors and a work order progress report. The report also indicated the following: MEC received a new bucket truck, energization of the J9 Substation and Apprentice Hayes Feilmeier graduated to Journeymen at the recent Apprentice Training & Safety program. Crews continue to respond to outages, maintenance issues and work order projects.

**SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR:** An update was given on the continuing process to develop policies and programs for MEC to become NERC (North American Electric Reliability Corporation) compliant – staff is reviewing substation commissioning data from HDR and finalizing policy documents to make sure all programs are ready for registration. The Asset Management program is being set up and populated with data. An update was given on the

status of substation land acquisition and the progress of right of way acquisition for transmission projects. The Board approved selling 0.56 acres of land to McKenzie County for the Northern Bypass road improvement.

**MEMBER SERVICE REPORT.** The Youth Tour essay contest deadline was January 29. The annual meeting date is scheduled for June 21, 2016, at Outlaws' Bar & Grill in Watford City.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** The next meeting date was set for February 25, 2016, at the Watford City Headquarters building.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. ■



908 4th Ave. NE  
Watford City, N.D. 58854

Phone: 701-444-9288  
Toll-free: 800-584-9239

Web page:  
<http://www.mckenzieelectric.com>  
Email:  
[mec@mckenzieelectric.com](mailto:mec@mckenzieelectric.com)

**OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS:**

Clayton Monsen, Chairperson  
Director, District 2B, Arnegard..... 586-3336

Donald Link, Vice Chairperson  
Statewide Director  
Director, District 2A, Alexander..... 828-3427

Rondee Hanna, Sec.-Treas.  
Director, District 2C, Watford City..... 675-2516

Travis Thompson, Director-At-Large  
Director, District 1C, Charlson..... 675-2373  
Upper Missouri G&T Director

Cameron Wahlstrom  
Director, District 1A, Alexander..... 770-6631

Ken Sanford  
Director, District 1B, Watford City..... 842-2581

Ray Tescher  
Director, District 3A, Beach..... 565-2342

Glen Houghton  
Director, District 3B, Grassy Butte ..... 863-6606

Tim Wasem,  
Director, District 3C, Halliday..... 938-4376

**GENERAL MANAGER/CEO:**

John Skurupey  
701-570-3542

