



# CAPITAL ELECTRIC COMMENTS

Capital Electric Cooperative • Bismarck, N.D.  
(701) 223-1513 or (888) 223-1513  
[www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com)

## *Is it Friday yet?*

*In this issue, find out how Operation Round Up helps feed hungry children in the co-op's service area — and why volunteers like these are precious gems.*



### APRIL 2010 IN THIS ISSUE

- Operation Round Up supports kids
- Cost comparison: electricity vs. propane
- Scholarship winners announced
- Annual meeting notice
- Meeting minutes ... and more!



Volunteers and one client from Enable stuffed 427 backpacks on March 10. Reinhart says volunteers are a vital part of Community Action's ability to sustain the Backpacks for Kids program.

## HELPING HUNGRY CHILDREN

# Operation Round Up supports 'Backpacks for Kids'



Mother and youth program coordinator for Community Action, Mandy Reinhart says when she goes home to cook for her two children, the hardships some students face help her keep life in perspective.

Story and photos by Carmen Devney

It's difficult to believe and nearly unbearable to think about ... but children go hungry in our own backyards, right here in the Capital Electric service area. That's why the co-op's Charitable Trust recently awarded Community Action a second generous Operation Round Up grant, in support of its Backpacks for Kids program.

The program, initially created out-of-state, is intended to provide nourishment for children at risk of not being fed over the weekend. Mandy Reinhart, youth program coordinator for Community Action, says children in the Bismarck-Mandan and area communities may not have food on the weekends for various reasons. Some include the depressed economy, job layoffs, a lack of quality jobs, or a parent who is dealing with an addiction or disability. Reinhart indicates some families are struggling to make ends meet, and they may not have enough money to purchase food.

In December 2006, Community Action started the Backpacks for Kids program locally. First, Reinhart worked with the Burleigh County Extension Service to identify foods that were nutritious and easy to prepare, like a loaf of bread, box of cereal and fruit cups.

"We needed to pack foods that would sustain the kids through the weekend, but it had to be food that didn't need



*The backpacks are stuffed with bread, cereal, granola bars, fruit cups, pudding and other non-perishable items.*

to be refrigerated or cooked. We also wanted to pack a snack — because they are kids, and snacks are fun,” she continues.

Next, Community Action worked with school counselors and teachers to identify students who appeared to struggle on Monday mornings. Initially, 50 backpacks were filled and distributed, along with a note to let moms and dads know where the food came from, and why their child or children were chosen to receive the backpacks. Community Action never asks parents to fill out paperwork or to send reimbursement; Reinhart says they simply ask for the backpacks to be returned so Community Action can refill them and help other hungry children.

Today, Community Action fills 427 backpacks and delivers them to 19 Bismarck schools and six Mandan schools each Friday. Each backpack contains \$8 to \$10 worth of groceries, which costs Community Action anywhere from \$1,200 to \$2,500 each week of the school year, based on what is

received through donations.

To help cover the costs associated with the food and the continuation of the program, Community Action applies for grants and receives various donations. While churches, civic organizations and others tend to support this specific program because kids hold a special place in many people’s hearts, Reinhart says more grants and donations are always needed to ensure the continuation of Backpacks for Kids.

“Through the Operation Round Up program, Capital Electric helped us feed hungry kids for a week,” Reinhart reveals. “That’s huge.”

Thinking about hungry kids can be a bit overwhelming at times, and Reinhart admits, every now and again she cries. But as an employee of Community Action, she feels good in knowing her work with the program is making a difference in so many lives. And as a mother of two, her work helps her put life into perspective.



*The safety and well-being of the children in our local communities has always been, and will be, a top priority for Capital Electric Cooperative.*

## **For more information**

Located in south Bismarck, Community Action enriches lives by supporting and promoting self-sufficiency, education, housing and youth. Some of its offered services include a clothing closet, food pantry, shelter plus care, money management, emergency services and more.

**For more information on Community Action, call (701) 258-2240, (800) 223-0364 or visit [www.cap7.com](http://www.cap7.com).**

# Operation Round Up awards special second grant



The Capital Electric Charitable Trust doesn't often award an Operation Round Up grant to a specific person or organization twice. Its goal is to lend a helping hand to grant recipients based on a one-time, specific need.

That makes Community Action a bit special. During the February Operation Round Up check presentation ceremony, the program was awarded a second grant for its "Backpacks for Kids" program. The Charitable Trust recognized the importance of the program, which provides nourishment for children in the Capital Electric service area who are at risk of not being fed over the weekend.

Prior to the check presentation, the Charitable Trust's board of directors met Feb. 9 to review grant applications. The five co-op members who serve on the board include Dennis Burrer, Jerry Doan, Ed McCarty, Pat Ryberg and Quirina Schmidt.

The board approved 12 grants for the total of \$8,750. In October 2009, the Charitable Trust also awarded \$2,500 to a family for medical expenses.

The 12 grants were handed out in a check presentation ceremony on Feb. 18 at co-op headquarters in Bismarck. The recipients included:

- **The Banquet:** for equipment and supplies;
- **Bismarck Law Enforcement Chaplaincy:** for education;
- **Community Action Program:** for its Backpacks for Kids program;
- **End of the Trail Saddle Club:** for playday awards;
- **Golden Wing Club:** for building repairs;
- **Highland Acres Elementary:** for field trips;
- **MVFA/4H Youth Rodeo:** for helmets/protective vests;
- **ND Assoc. for the Disabled:** for the Escape to the Lake program;
- **Prairie Rose State Games:** for the 2010 games in Bismarck;
- **Ruth Meiers Hospitality House:** for men's emergency shelter;
- **Wing Centennial Fund:** for celebration expenses; and
- **Wing School Robotics Team:** for competition expenses.



*On behalf of Community Action, Mandy Reinhart (right), youth program coordinator, accepts a special second grant from Quirina Schmidt, board member of the Charitable Trust. The grant money will be used for the Backpacks for Kids program.*

## How does Operation Round Up work?

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program set up for Capital Electric Cooperative members. Consumers agree to have their monthly electric billings "rounded up" to the nearest dollar each month. Those rounded-up pennies are then placed in the Capital Electric Charitable Trust and awarded to various groups and organizations. Almost 6,000 electric customers participate in Operation Round Up, generating almost \$3,000 a month in funds for the trust. Since its inception in August 1997, more than 31 million pennies in Operation Round Up funds have been donated to various organizations and individuals in the Capital Electric service area.

Wes Engbrecht, director of communications and public relations for the co-op, says any person in the counties of Burleigh and Sheridan may submit an application to receive an Operation Round Up grant. The next application deadline will be July 31.

## Every member can make a difference!

If you're a Capital Electric member and you do not currently round up your bill, please consider participating in the Operation Round Up program! Your donation is tax deductible and members who give will receive a summarized statement in their last billing statement of the year.

Thanks to the pennies awarded through the latest batch of grants, students in need are receiving backpacks stuffed with food. They greatly appreciate the Operation Round Up program, and co-op members made this possible. You, too, can make a difference, for less than a dollar each month.

To have your utility bill rounded up, please call Capital Electric Cooperative at (701) 223-1513 and tell our staff you'd like to support Operation Round Up. Or to download an application, go to [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com) and click on "Member Services" and then "Operation Round Up." Every member can truly make a difference.

# Reduce your propane **pains** with **ELECTRIC HEAT**

The dreaded propane fill this summer is fast-approaching. Are you ready for another whopper of a bill? If you currently use propane or natural gas as your primary source of heating, you can add an electric heat product to your home or place of business and qualify for the co-op's dual-fuel and straight electric heat programs. While there are a number of products to choose from, one of the most simple and efficient may be a plenum heater. If you have a propane tank and an adequate circuit panel, you can add a plenum heater to your furnace. Visit Capital Electric's Web site at [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com) and click on "Energy Efficiency" to learn more about the plenum and other electric heat products.

The costs associated with installing a plenum heater include buying the equipment and hiring an electrician. Co-op members can purchase the equipment from Capital Electric for \$800 to \$1,000, depending on the size of the unit. The wiring may cost anywhere from \$600 to \$1,500, depending on the panel size and accessibility of the existing equipment. Based on current prices, homeowners can expect to see a full return on their plenum heater investment within four years.



Once the plenum insert is operational, members will qualify for one of the cooperative's electric heat programs. The first program is dual-fuel, which requires our members to have a backup heat system during load control periods. Capital Electric's dual-fuel rate

is 3.5 cents per kilowatt-hour (KWH). The chart to the right compares the cost of electric heat and propane, showing members would pay 3.5 cents per KWH for electric heat on the dual-fuel program versus 85 cents per gallon of propane, which costs approximately \$1.50 per gallon. Electric heat can nearly cut your costs in half! The second program is straight electric heat, which does not require a backup system.

Capital Electric's straight electric heat rate is 4.7 cents per KWH. That is approximately equal to paying \$1.10 per gallon for propane. While not as cost-effective as the dual-fuel rate, this straight rate can still save money in comparison to current propane prices.

While prices for propane and natural gas have fluctuated significantly over the past few years, electric heat rates have remained stable and reliable. If you invest in an electric heat

product, you may still use your silver bullet to heat your hot water heater, or gas stove or fireplace—but you will still save money and energy. Last month, \$200 of heat on propane would have cost about \$110 on off-peak electric heat. That's a 55 percent savings!

If you dread the biannual massive propane bill, it's time to stop heating your home with propane and start using an electric heat product. Call Josh or Doug in the member services department at Capital Electric Cooperative today at (701) 223-1513. They can help find an electric heat product that works for your lifestyle and budget.



Josh Schaffner



Doug Mork

**ACTUAL COST COMPARISON:**  
\$200 of heat on propane  
would cost about \$110  
on off-peak electric.

If you're a Capital Electric member and want to save money by utilizing the off-peak co-op rate, call Josh and Doug in the member services department today.  
**(701) 223-1513 or (888) 223-1513**

## WHEN IS ELECTRIC HEAT COMPETITIVE?

Off-Peak Rate (cents/KWH)	LP, Std (\$/Gal)	LP, 90+ \$/Gal)	Fuel Oil \$/Gal)	Nat. Gas, 90+ (\$/Therm)
3.5	0.56	0.85	0.81	0.92
4.0	0.64	0.97	0.91	1.05
4.2	0.68	1.01	1.02	1.36
4.5	0.72	1.09	1.11	1.19
6.0	0.97	1.40	1.47	1.49

## Scholarship winners chosen

Capital Electric congratulates Michael McGrath, who recently applied for and received a \$1,000 scholarship from the co-op, in partnership with Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Michael is the son of Michael and Diane Paul, Bismarck, who are members of Capital Electric.

Michael will graduate from Century High School this spring. He participates in the jazz band, Science Olympiad and student council. He is also an Eagle Scout and member of the National Honor Society.

Elizabeth Kraft, daughter of Michael and Jean Kraft of Bismarck, was awarded a \$500 scholarship from the Capital Electric Charitable Trust. Elizabeth, also a senior at Century High School, is involved in the Environmental Club, Knowledge Masters and several other high school activities.

The charitable trust administers Operation Round Up funds collected from Capital Electric members who elect to round their electric bill up to the nearest dollar.

## Co-op holds MAC meeting

Consumer ownership is a trademark of electric cooperatives. The input of our consumer-members is vitally important to Capital Electric, and part of that input is given at the annual Member Advisory Committee meeting in February. This year's meeting, held Feb. 9, was attended by 15 members who heard updates on the co-op's rates, state property tax changes, the cooperative construction work plan for 2010, this year's annual meeting and much more. Electric heat and new products were also discussed, as were energy efficiency tax credits. Jerry Doan, a member from southeast Bismarck, was elected to serve a three-year term on the Capital Electric Charitable Trust board.

## Co-ops educate consumers at Home Show

The annual Bismarck-Mandan Home Builders Association Home Show was held March 19 to 21 at the Civic Center in Bismarck. Co-ops working at the Touchstone Energy® booth included Capital Electric, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric and Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Geothermal heating and cooling was a hot topic, and Jon Olds, a regional Geo-Rep for ECONAR, was on hand to answer consumers' questions. Along with Olds, co-op employees educated consumers on energy efficiency, conservation and electric heat products including geothermal systems, air-source heat pumps, plenum heaters, garage heaters and fireplaces.

For more information on heat rates, cost comparisons and electric heat products, call Josh Schaffner, member services assistant for Capital Electric Cooperative, at (701) 223-1513.

## Capital sponsors Great American Bike Race

For the fourth year in a row, Capital Electric Cooperative will sponsor a team in support of the Great American Bike Race. On April 10, the Medcenter One Rehabilitation Center will host the 14th annual Great American Bike Race at the Century High School gym. This event raises awareness and funds for cerebral palsy and related disabilities. Cerebral palsy is a physical disability caused by a lack of oxygen to the brain usually occurring before, during or shortly after birth. Employees from Capital Electric and the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives will participate on Capital's "High Voltage" team.

## Directors represent your interests

Capital Electric Cooperative is overseen by a board of directors which is elected by you—the members and owners of the electric cooperative. Each director represents the members of the cooperative on the board; and each director is a cooperative member.

Directors have a unique duty. They represent the consumers' interests. Directors know what consumers expect from their cooperative, and what consumers' expectations will be in the future so they can help the cooperative progressively work toward the future.

Directors also have a fiduciary responsibility to the cooperative. They exercise care, time and responsibility in reviewing cooperative matters. Directors treat cooperative business as if the business is their own.

Directors devote a certain amount of time to the cooperative. At a minimum, a director attends each monthly board meeting. Directors learn about the industry as a whole by reading other materials and by attending state and national meetings. An understanding of the issues facing the industry is vital.

To help directors with their responsibilities, training is offered through the electric cooperative's statewide association. Five courses must be completed to earn a certificate. Those courses cover director duties and liabilities, understanding the electric business, board roles and relationships, strategic planning and financial decision-making.

Most directors currently serving their cooperative find the duty extremely rewarding. Directors are able to help their cooperative and community remain strong.

## SAVE THE DATE!

**WHAT:** Capital Electric's annual meeting

**WHEN:** Thursday, June 3

**WHERE:** Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck

**WHY:** To learn about co-op issues; to cast your vote and elect three members to serve on the board of directors; to collect a capital credit claims check if you qualify; and to enjoy entertainment and eat a hearty meal.

# Spring **SAFELY** into fieldwork

Crops are not the only thing sprouting in the spring. The rate of agricultural injuries increases during the planting season, brought on by the press of machinery preparations and fieldwork.

“Although the maintenance work on equipment and preparation for the planting season may seem routine, precautions need to be taken to complete those tasks safely,” advises George Maher, an agricultural safety specialist with the North Dakota State University Extension Service.

During the spring rush, don’t overlook the power lines that bring electricity to your home or farm.

“Watch out for power lines and poles,” Maher warns. “Turning the equipment at the end of the fields can be dangerous. Don’t snag the equipment on the tractor’s rear wheels in tight turns.”

Your electric cooperative offers these other safety tips for the farm:

- Make sure you, your family and your employees know the location of overhead power lines, and map out routes to avoid the lines when moving equipment.
- Maintain at least a 10-foot clearance between the power line and the top of any equipment. Don’t guess. Know the height of the lines and the transport height of your equipment.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting larger, modern tractors with higher antennas.



*Graphic courtesy of the Farm Safety Program, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development*

- In the field, watch for electric cooperative equipment, including guy wires. Leave plenty of distance between your machinery and these hazards.
- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level before

- moving or transporting; use care when raising them.
- Avoid placing new storage bins near overhead power lines.
- Avoid moving large equipment alone. Have someone watch as you move equipment to

- ensure that you are clear of any power lines.
  - Use qualified electricians for work on grain drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.
- Electricity doesn’t allow mistakes. And neither should you.



**Wrangham**



**Olson**



**Liuska**



**Mund**



**Hawkins**



**Eckroth**



**Hollenbeck**



**Hilken**



**Vilhauer**

**CAPITAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** *board minutes report*

**Feb. 26**

The regular meeting of the board of directors of Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC), Inc., was held Feb. 26 at co-op headquarters in Bismarck.

**Regular session:** Chairman Dwight Wrangham called the regular session of the meeting to order.

Tom Meland and Mick Kossan from Central Power Electric Cooperative met with the board to discuss Central Power's 2010 non-consolidated rate structure.

**Financial review (January 2010):** Prior to the board meeting, the January 2010 check register and expenditures had been reviewed, it was reported that all checks were in order, and approval was recommended. It was moved, seconded and carried to approve January expenditures.

**Business department report:** The manager reviewed the January financial and statistical report with the board. Total kilowatt-hour (KWH) sales reported for January 2010 were below budget by 4.5 percent. The actual monthly electric revenue is down 3.5 percent from budget.

The margin for January is \$112,569, down \$177,602 from budget. The final year-to-date margin is \$2,781,603.

In January, 13 new services were billed, bringing active services to 15,185 versus 14,726 at this time last year. This is a net increase of 459 accounts over the last 12 months.

It was moved, seconded and carried to invest in a six-month federally guaranteed CD with First Community Credit Union and to authorize corporate signature thereon.

National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) offers a free service to make bank wires from our daily fund directly to CEC vendors. Not only is it free, but we would keep our money invested in the daily fund up to the point of payment. It was moved, seconded and carried to approve the resolution attached hereto as "Minute Exhibit I."

The manager reviewed the com-

parison of actual-to-budget expenses for the month of January. Accounts receivable balances as of Feb. 25 were also reviewed.

**Capital credits:** Following review of the financial condition of the cooperative and recommendation by management, it was moved, seconded and carried to authorize payment of capital credits to the following deceased members' estates:

Olivia Nigrin .....	\$668.19
William Hanson .....	257.74
Loretta Dawson .....	167.48
Rae Bloom .....	781.45
Thomas Saragosa .....	427.76
Ted Thorson .....	1,585.74
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$3,888.36</b>

**Engineering and operations report:** The manager reviewed the written report from the engineering and operations department. With 13 work orders completed this month, 11 new consumers were added to the system.

The safety accreditation process for the next three years has started.

The engineering and operations manager attended a FEMA meeting at Statewide on Feb. 4. CEC does not qualify for FEMA funds, but CEC's costs from the storm will help the bottom line for the cooperatives that do qualify.

Lipp attended an Avian Protection Plan Workshop in Pierre, S.D., on Feb. 23 and 24.

All of the TWACS meters that are served out of the new Apple Creek Substation have been transferred from the 41.6-kilovolt (KV) injection to the 7.2-KV injection.

**Member services department:** The manager reviewed the written report from the member services department.

It was moved, seconded and carried to accept the BENCO quote for the replacement of the shop truck lift.

**Communications and public relations department:** The manager reviewed the written report from the communications and public relations department.

**Central Power:** Mund was elected as the director and Olson was elected as the alternate to Central Power.

All directors were certified as delegates to Central Power's annual meeting on March 24 and 25, and Mund was selected as CEC's voting delegate.

**North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives:** Liuska was elected as the director and Eckroth was elected as the alternate to Statewide.

**Annual meeting:** It was moved, seconded and carried to appoint the following persons to the Nominating Committee for the 2010 annual meeting:

- Brian Bitner
- Bernard Falkenstein
- Scott Harris
- Craig Heuer
- Arliss Koski
- Duane Lasher
- Shelly Peterson
- Bob Reikow
- Sanford Williams

**Central Power Resolutions Committee:** Hilken was appointed to the Central Power Resolutions Committee.

**Rural Development Finance Corporation:** The Rural Development and Finance Corporation's annual meeting will take place March 12.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the meeting, without objection, the meeting was adjourned.

**CAPITAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

- Dwight Wrangham, Pres. ....Bismarck
- Arlene Olson, V. Pres. ....Wing
- Ervin Mund, Sec.-Treas. ....Bismarck
- David Liuska, Asst. Sec.-Treas. ....Wing
- Jim Hawkins .....Bismarck
- Rodney Eckroth .....Bismarck
- Kyle Hilken .....Wilton
- Rex Hollenbeck.....McClusky
- Deon Vilhauer .....Bismarck
- Ordean "Lars" Nygren, Mgr. ....Bismarck

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