

CURRENT ACTIVITIES



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
Website at www.clearwater-polk.com

Operation Round-Up awards nearly \$13,000 ...



The Clearwater-Polk Electric Trust awarded nearly \$13,000 in the latest chapter of Operation Round-Up on Dec. 17, sixteen entities were recipients.

On hand to receive the awards were (from left, front row): Lloyd Engen, Clearbrook-Leonard Sr. Citizens; Christine Musselman, Bagley Elementary School; Gladys Luecken, Community Christmas Dinner; Lorraine Brustad, Bagley Sr. Citizens; Linda Gulbranson, Clearwater Christmas Project; Amanda Everhart, Bagley Elementary; Tamara Edevold, Clearwater County Historical Society and Northern Exposure to Lifelong Learning; (row 2) Devin Aakre, Gonvick-Trail All School Reunion; Carol Torgerson, Gully 100; Brenda Rouland, Clear Waters Life Center; Cal Larson, Shevlin Fire Department; Sandy Gray, Clearbrook-Gonvick After-Prom Party; Kayla Nyegaard, Clearwater County 4-H; Cindy Benson, Clearwater-Polk Trustee who awarded the checks; Sara Tramm with son Micha in front, Bagley Elementary Sixth Grade STEM; Amy Kent, Bagley High School Prom. Benson encouraged the recipients to spread the word to other organizations that Operation Round-Up has money to share.

-- OFFICE HOURS: 7:00 AM-4:30 PM ... MONDAY-FRIDAY --

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2020

Phone 218-694-6241 - or - toll free (888) 694-3833



YOU COULD WIN



\$25

To reward our faithful readers, one member's name will be drawn at random each month and placed somewhere in the newsletter. If you should find your name, let us know before the 15th and win \$25 off your next bill.

SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING

Held at the Clearwater-Polk Electric board room at 8:00 a.m. on the last Wednesday of each month.

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

- Leroy Riewer, *President* Bagley
- Greg Spaulding, *Vice President*..... Bagley
- Robert Johnson, *Secretary* Bagley
- Greg Renner, *Treasurer* Shevlin
- Gary Mathis Gonvick
- Kim Solberg Gonvick
- Bill Lanners Shevlin
- Bruce Bjerke..... *General Manager*

SIGN UP FOR AUTO-PAY AND YOU WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO WIN \$25.00

EACH MONTH WE DRAW TWO MEMBER'S NAMES THAT HAVE CHOSEN TO PAY BY AUTO-PAY. THEY WILL RECEIVE A \$25.00 CREDIT TOWARDS THEIR ELECTRIC BILL.

CURRENT WINNERS

Doyle Fultz, Kevin Kehoe,
Lance Egnos & Frank Shereck Jr.

SWAP SHOP

RULES: Ads for Clearwater-Polk Electric members only. *Current Events* newsletter will only be published every other month. Ads must (Loren Johnson) be received by the 10th of the print month. Limit your ads to two items. No commercial ads, please.

FOR SALE: Approximately 100 bales of this years' grass hay, \$4.00 each. No rain. Call 218-266-3396.

WANTED: Standing white pine 8" to 24" diameter. Call 218-766-8176.

Notice of Annual Meeting

Clearwater-Polk Electric's 73rd Annual Membership Meeting is just around the corner. Mark your calendars and plan to attend your electric cooperative's annual meeting on Wednesday, April 15th at the Timber Event Center in Bagley with registration beginning at 9 a.m. More annual meeting details to follow in the March issue of the Current Activities newsletter.



CHEF'S CORNER

Easy Beef Stew
Linda Pettie (West Fargo)

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 lbs. meat, do not brown
- 4 medium carrots, sliced
- 2-3 celery, sliced
- 2 med onions, chopped
- 4 med potatoes, cut up
- 2-3 cans beefy mushroom soup

Preparation: Put meat and vegetables into a Dutch oven. Cover with soup, use enough to cover all ingredients. Cover. Bake 5-6 hours at 250°F. If you like a thicker stew, add thickening at the end. Other vegetables can be added. I got this recipe from a good friend of my dad's Elroy Alverson.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS:

Clearwater County Social Services
216 Park Ave NW
Bagley, MN 56621
218-694-6164

Polk County Social Services
240 SW Cleveland Ave
McIntosh, MN 56556
218-435-1585

White Earth Energy Assistance
PO Box 418
White Earth, MN 56591
218-473-2711

Inter-County Community Council
207 Main St
Okelee, MN 56742
888-778-4008

Red Lake CAP Program
15533 Main Ave
Red Lake, MN 56671
(218)-679-1880

MAHUBE-OTWA (For Hubbard Co.)
120 North Central
Park Rapids, MN 56470-0229
218-732-7204

Bi-County Cap
6603 Bemidji Ave N.
Bemidji, MN 56601
800-332-7161

Winter Demand

Ready to respond

Minnkota and its members prepare for winter demand response, estimate normal control hours.

Northerners remember the January 2019 polar vortex unkindly – cars that wouldn't start, wind that hurt the skin and dangerous overnight lows.

Fortunately for Minnkota Power Cooperative's service territory of eastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota, including Clearwater-Polk Electric, homes and businesses stayed warm as the power stayed on. Energy teams were able to balance overwhelming electricity needs across the region by leveraging the energy market and demand response – a technique that allows a cooperative to temporarily interrupt service to a member's off-peak loads (electric heating, large-capacity water heaters, electric vehicle chargers, etc.) in exchange for a lower electric rate.

"If you have a polar vortex where there's no wind, or the temperatures are so cold that the wind isn't generating, that is going to result in demand response," explained Todd Sailer, Minnkota senior manager of power supply & resource planning. Sailer added that wind generators start to shut down somewhere between 20 and 25 below zero, temperatures that the entire Midwest experienced for multiple days.

"The cold temperatures were over a wider area of the country, which put additional stress on our system. That led to higher electrical needs, which resulted in higher energy costs across the region," Sailer said. "Our demand response program was very helpful in the ability for us to not only manage our costs, but also our consumer electricity needs during widespread emergency weather conditions."

Every winter is different, but the planning team projects this year will bring a normal 200-250 hours of estimated demand response. Minnkota is typically able to cover its demand with its own energy resources. However, there are times during planned generator outages, extreme weather events or low wind supply that Minnkota must buy power.

"When the market prices are high, that's when we initiate demand response. We're doing it to keep costs down," Sailer said.

The demand response system was established to avoid building more

generation facilities for peak need that only comes a few times a year. That, in turn, keeps rates low for consumers. By being a part of the off-peak load control program, consumers can also take advantage of an even lower electric rate without any disruption in comfort.

Sailer says those on the off-peak program need to check their backup heating sources to make sure their fuel tanks are full and functioning. Minnkota will run a demand response test in early December, and members should reach out to their power providers with any questions or concerns before extreme weather hits.

"The polar vortex showed that you need to make sure your systems are working properly so that when we end up in those events, everybody is able to get through it safely and without too much inconvenience," Sailer said.

WHAT MAKES YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE BOARD POWERFUL?

By Shari Wormwood,
Communication Specialist,
Minnesota Rural Electric Association

Clearwater-Polk Electric is one of 895 electric distribution cooperatives across America that, collectively, deliver power to 56% of the nation's land mass. Electric cooperatives are private, locally operated electric utility businesses that are owned and regulated by their members to provide near-cost electric service and governed by democratically elected, local boards of directors.

There are currently 7,200 electric co-op board of directors in America who serve in the community where they live. Unlike investor-owned utilities, they address local electrical energy issues with hometown values — issues like community economic development and setting affordable, sustainable rates for rural residents and farms. Your local electric co-op board members also work alongside Minnesota Rural Electric Association lobbyists in St. Paul and Washington, D.C. to make sure our legislators are aware of how energy policy affects the rural community.

The Rural Electrification Act of 1936 established the cooperative governance model, and over the last 83 years, rural America has prospered. Then Texas-Congressman Lyndon B. Johnson founded Pedernales Electric Cooperative in 1938. During a speech to National Rural Electric Association (NRECA) directors on July 14, 1965, President Johnson said, "Nothing has been more gratifying to me than my association with the rural electrification program. That program stands today as one of the most successful enterprises ever undertaken anywhere, at any time, by anyone."

Electric co-op board members need education and training, just like line technicians and other energy professionals, to gain and maintain a deep understanding of this complex business. They are responsible for asking questions and seeking outside expert opinions, establishing systems to review current cooperative business information, and all board members must consent to the fiduciary duties of care, loyalty and obedience. The essential functions or your local electric cooperative board include:

- Setting the mission, vision and values
- Establishing, maintaining and assessing legal, regulatory and internal compliance programs to mitigate the cooperative's risk
- Setting electric rates
- Policy development including bylaw requirements and CEO selection, appraisal and compensation

Not only is training essential to a board's success, but having the right people at the table creates a powerful force, like any other workgroup with a solid and unified purpose. Former National Rural Electric Association (NRECA) President Phil Carson, touched on this in his NRECA 2018 annual meeting presentation. He said, "the right people committed to the right principles need stewards, who bring a measured, analytical and reasoned approach to matters and visionaries who like to dream about the possibilities before us, willing to take risks to try new ideas. Both roles are important at our co-ops, and when we get the mix right, stewards and visionaries bring out the best in each other."

The energy industry has seen unprecedented transformation since 1936. Today, the industry is changing faster than ever, and electric cooperatives are rising to the challenge. As electric cooperative boards forge ahead, they're exploring new issues like broadband, battery storage and effectively integrating new technologies. Fortunately, Minnesota's electric co-op board members have training opportunities to stay abreast of new opportunities and Clearwater-Polk Electric encourages diversity as new board members step forward to serve their community.



P.O. Box O
 315 Main Ave N
 Bagley, MN 56621-1001
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 Toll-free 1-888-694-3833
 Fax (218) 694-6245

PETITION FOR NOMINATION

The following Members wish to nominate [insert name] _____, for the three-year (insert District 1, or 2) _____ director position, or (insert name) _____ for the two-year District 2 director position, and to place such name on the ballot for the April 15, 2020 election, at the annual meeting of the Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative, in accordance with Article III, Section 8, of the bylaws.

	Printed Name	Signature	Account Number
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____

The Cooperative must receive the completed petition no later than close of business February 1, 2020. At the annual meeting scheduled for April 15, 2020, elections will be held for the following districts where Director's terms are expiring:

District 1

District 2

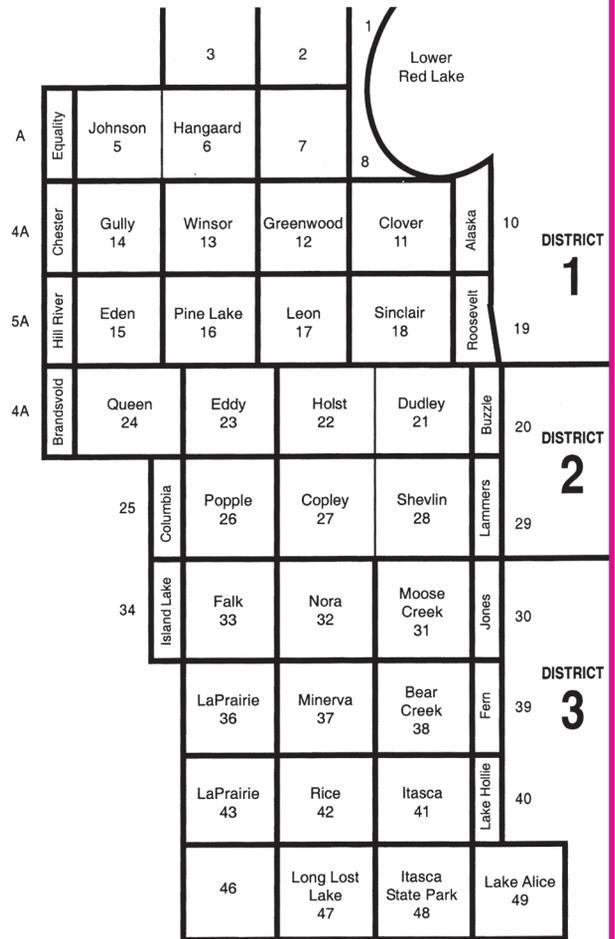
Any 10 or more members who reside in the district, up for election, may nominate an eligible member for a director's position. No member may be elected to a director position unless nominated in this manner. In the event of a joint Membership, only the signature of one member shall be acceptable.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF A DIRECTOR?

The bylaws of Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative establish certain qualifications that must be met in order to become a director. These are:

1. Be a member in good standing of the Cooperative, receiving electric service at the member's primary residence in the district from which the director is elected prior to being nominated for director; provided, further that "primary residence" is defined as the residence that is the chief or main residence of the person and where the person actually lives for the most substantial portion of the year;
2. Not be, nor within three (3) years preceding a director candidate's nomination have been, an employee of the Cooperative;
3. Not be, become, nor shall have been at any time during the five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination, employed by a labor union which represents, or has represented, or has endeavored to represent any employee of the Cooperative;
4. Not be a close relative of an employee or director, where as found in these bylaws "close relative" means any individual who is, either by blood, law, or marriage, including half, step, foster, and adoptive relations, a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, or sibling, or principally resides in the same residence;
5. Not be employed by, materially affiliated with, or have a

MAP OF DISTRICT 1, 2, & 3



material financial interest in, any director, individual or entity which either is:

- (i) directly or substantially competing with the Cooperative; or
- (ii) selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative; or
- (iii) possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative.

For purposes of this section, the terms "material" or "substantially" shall be interpreted as constituting a minimum of 5% of a member's total hours of employment, sales, or income on an annual basis;

6. Not be or become the full-time employee or agent of, or be or become the full-time employer or principal or, another director;
7. Not be absent, without being excused by the board, from three (3) or more regular meetings of the board of directors during any twelve (12) month period;
8. Be only one, and not more than one, member of a joint membership; provided, however, that none shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold a position of trust in the Cooperative unless all shall meet the qualifications hereinabove set forth;
9. If a representative or agent of a member is not a natural person, i.e. a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or similar, then the representative or agent designated as a nominee for director shall be an individual residing within the external boundaries of the district from which (s)he is nominated; and
10. Never have been convicted of a felony.

Manager's Message



Bruce Bjerke

We Want to Hear from You

We live in a device-driven world. Our smartphones, tablets, laptops and an assortment of other devices help us communicate and connect. Companies spend billions pushing out a steady drumbeat of messages and information, and we are constantly bombarded with one-way communication. But is anyone listening on the other end?

At Clearwater-Polk, we are not only listening, we are eager to hear from you. Whether you text us, respond to a survey or social media post, send an email or simply stop by and chat in person, we thrive on your feedback. Connecting with you helps us keep pace with our community's priorities and needs. Our plan is to conduct a survey early this year to gather feedback so that we can plan for new initiatives, technical upgrades and improvements on existing co-op programs and services. It's our hope you will take the time to fill out the survey and let us know what your priorities are and how we can serve you better. We can only improve, adapt and effectively plan if we have two-way communication.

Because we are a cooperative, we have a different way of operating. Clearwater-Polk exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op.

Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve. We hope you will consider us more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

We are amid significant changes in the energy sector, as technology and the drive for more renewables and a more balanced energy mix is impacting long-term planning. These are complex issues that we will be navigating in the coming months and years. Therefore, it's so important that we hear from you and other community members as we plot our course for the future.

As we wrap up 2019, we are very thankful that we avoided any major storms this year! The wet fall slowed down some of our projects, but most were complete before the cold weather set in. If you have driven between Leonard and Shevlin you likely noticed work being done on our distribution line. This is a much-needed upgrade to the original line built in the 40's, which has provided pretty (Leanna Skarsten) amazing service through all those years. The project should be complete by the end of January.

When time permits, right-of-way clearing continues to be a main focus. Tree trimming and clearing is a vital part in keeping our distribution system safe and reliable. Trees are the number one cause of outages. We need your help! Please be considerate when our linemen want to trim trees and clear the right-of-way. If you see trees that could be potential problems, give us a call.

In preparation for 2020, our budget is getting wrapped up and will be reviewed at the next board meeting. We are happy to inform you that a rate increase is not in the plan for the third consecutive year. Our board and employees are working hard to get the most out of

every dollar we receive from you. Minnkota's rates will continue to remain stable as well, which makes up nearly 65% of our expenses for the year.

Just like the two-way communication between you and the cooperative, our new metering system has two-way communication between the meter and the office. The project of installing new meters on our whole system was completed a year ago. We now have enough data from the new meters to work with CFC (Cooperative Finance Cooperation) on a new Cost of Service Study. This process will verify that the revenue requirements are distributed equitably throughout the rate classes and ensure the revenue is recovered from where the expenses incurred.

We have had comments coming from our members about our bill and the different line items on the statement. The board and management team will be considering those comments and looking at different options we may have on changing the billing statement. We will keep you informed during this process.

I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and were able to bring in the New Year with family and friends. On behalf of our hard-working Board of Directors and employees, thank you for your patronage, support and help through 2019! Together we all share in the success of your cooperative. We look forward to serving you and wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2020.

Bruce



CLEARWATER-POLK'S MEMBER ADVOCACY GROUP MET DECEMBER 3, 2019
As we welcome newly appointed members and say thank you to existing members who completed their terms

The Member Advocacy Group (MAG) was formed in 2013 to serve as an additional information link between Clearwater-Polk and a group of Member/Owners in an effort for the co-op to build a stronger relationship with its Members.

The MAG consists of nine members (three members from each of the three districts). They serve a 3-year term with one member from each district rotating off each year. They attend quarterly meetings, primarily held in March, June, September and December.



Clearwater-Polk Electric would like to thank the three members whose terms ended this December.

Standing from left to right: Pam Arneson from District 2, Pam Goebel from District 1, and Les Janssen from District 3.



2020 Member Advocacy Group Members

Pictured in the front from left to right: Robert Garland, Dennis Engebretson, Jeff Ness, Daniel Gaither. Back row, left to right: Joe Bronczyk, Pam Janssen, Fred Sundquist and Duane Hayes. Not pictured is Leroy Sundquist.

Clearwater-Polk Electric
 recently hired *Tara Webb*
 as the new **Member Services Representative.**



Tara joins our cooperative with a 12-year electric cooperative background that began in Parker, PA with Central Electric Cooperative (10 years) and Central Virginia Electric Cooperative (2 years) before accepting her current position and relocating to Bagley, MN.

She enjoys helping and working directly with the consumers, ranging from high bill concerns, off peak heat (Ripple), New services, Disconnects and anywhere she can be of assistance to make a difference.

Tara and her husband will reside in Bagley. They have 13 nieces and nephews and 1 great niece along with one great nephew.

She and her husband enjoy fishing, gardening, cooking, watching movies and spending time with family, friends and their pets.

Energy Efficiency
 Tip of the Month



Limit the use of lighting to evening hours with manual timers, or connection to smart devices, to keep costs down this winter season. In addition to saving with timers, switch to LED lights (Light-emitting diode). LED lighting uses about 70 percent less energy than traditional incandescent lights.

In addition, Let the sunshine in! For additional warmth, open drapes over windows that receive sunlight during the day. Close them at night, which can reduce heat loss up to 10%!

TROUBLE CALLS

DURING OFFICE HOURS

7:00 am - 4:30 pm, Mon. - Fri.

CALL 694-6241 or
 1-888-694-3833

AFTER HOURS OUTAGES CALL

1-877-881-7673

