



The blessing and curse of moisture

Bountiful rains grew some beautiful hay and crops that became difficult — if not impossible — to harvest and move off the fields, when the ground became oversaturated. In this month's local pages, Mor-Gran-Sou Board Director Mark Doll shares some ag-related challenges and highlights, and NDSU Extension provides tips on how to manage stress. Member-producers ... we are thankful for you!



PHOTO BY KELLY RODRIGUEZ

What's inside:

This photo was shot by Kelly Rodriguez near Dickinson. She says the crop was ready for harvest this summer, when several inches of rain destroyed it. An amateur photographer, Kelly refers to this photo as the harvest that never came. She says her heart aches for the producer. Thank you, Kelly, for capturing and sharing this photo that speaks 1,000 words.

- **Youth opportunities: student scholarships, Youth Tour, safety posters**
- **safety@morgransou.com**
- **Need help with heating costs? LIHEAP may help.**
- **Meeting minutes ... and more**



*Mor-Gran-Sou Board Director **Mark Doll** finally got to combine his corn on Dec. 18 in 40-degree weather. His wife, Kristi, says they've been farming on their own for 36 years, and they've never had better yields — or more problems.*

New year, new outlook?

Trying to stay positive amid farm and ranch challenges

BY CARMEN DEVNEY, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
SEAN BROTHERTON, PH.D., FAMILY SCIENCE SPECIALIST,
NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE

Moisture was a blessing and a curse in 2019 for many farmers and ranchers in the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative service area. It started with a cold, wet spring that delayed the planting of some crops. Summer was cooler than average, and some crops didn't get the heat they needed to finish properly. Bountiful rains were initially welcome in a service area that is typically dry — but then they just kept coming, and turned to snow in early October.

"With the wet weather, we couldn't get in the fields to finish the harvest. Here we are, the middle of December, and I'm still combining corn," says Mor-Gran-Sou Board Director Mark Doll. "I have about 450 acres to do yet. With limited daylight hours, it's a slow process. We have to dry all the corn. The most we can get done is 30 to 40 acres a day."

Mark, a farmer and rancher from the New Salem

area, says the rain and snow pushed back more than the harvest. He and his wife, Kristi, still hadn't worked cattle or weaned calves.

"I don't think we're going to get 2019's work done in 2019," he says. He did hope to be done with his corn by the end of the year.

Excessive moisture delayed corn and sunflower harvests across the state. The National Agricultural Statistics Service released a National Crop Progress report on Dec. 9 that showed a stark contrast to harvest completion just one year before.

According to statistics listed on the USDA website, in December 2018, 87 percent of the corn crop was harvested in North Dakota, compared to only 36 percent on Dec. 1, 2019. The sunflower harvest was also remarkably low this year; in December 2018, 86 percent of the crop was harvested, but on Dec. 1, 2019, only 51 percent of the flowers were off the field.

Farmers and ranchers, and their family members, experience pressure from all directions, says Sean Brotherton, Ph.D., Family Science Specialist, NDSU Extension Service. While all of us contend with economic ups and downs or family concerns, farmers have added uncertainties such as the weather and commodity prices that directly influence their lives and operations.

Farm and ranch families often experience pressure, conflict and uncertainty; especially during harvesting and planting. If feelings of frustration and helplessness build, they can lead to poor decisions, costly accidents, strained relationships, health concerns and deaths.

Extension offers these ways to manage stress

Control Events

- Plan ahead. Replace worn machinery parts during the off season.
- Before key tasks, discuss who can run for parts, care for livestock, etc.
- Set priorities and manage time. Decide what has to be done today and what can wait until tomorrow.
- Say no to extra commitments you do not have time to do.

Control Attitudes

- See the big picture: "I'm glad that tire blew out here rather than on that hill."
- List all the stresses you have. Identify those you can change; accept the ones you cannot.
- Shift your focus from worrying to problem-solving.
- Think about how to turn your challenges into opportunities.



- Focus on what you have accomplished rather than what you failed to do.
- Set realistic goals and expectations daily. Give up trying to be perfect.
- Take care of your body. Exercise regularly and eat well-balanced meals.
- Think positive thoughts, like, “I can and will succeed.”
- Look for the humor in things you do.
- Balance work and play. Give time and energy to both.

professional you know such as clergy members, medically trained personnel, nurses or other health-care professionals, law enforcement agencies or personnel, and local counselors, social workers or other mental health professionals.

Many of our farming and ranching friends are members of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative. Your work is vital to our region, state, nation and beyond, and we are thankful for you and all you do.

Please take care of yourselves. Your safety matters. ■

Seek help

All of us have times when we can benefit from professional help or support.

- Call 211: statewide 24-hour crisis intervention, health and human services information and referral.
- Mental Health America: www.mentalhealthamerica.net
- National Suicide Hopeline Network: 800-SUICIDE
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 800-273-TALK
- Refer yourself or anyone you have concerns about to a local healthcare provider or local mental health professional. If you run into difficulty or resistance, accompany the person to a trusted



Mark Doll relies on electric service to power his grain-drying system and make this late-season harvest possible.

WHERE TO GET HELP

- NDSU Extension offers resources for dealing with farm/ranch stress: www.ag.ndsu.edu/farmranchstress
- Abound Counseling at LSSND offers in-person and statewide telehealth counseling services. Payment options include sliding fee, health insurance and no-fee options through LSSND's Abundant Care fund: (701) 223-1510
- In an emergency, call **9-1-1**
- For First Link Help Line, call **2-1-1**
- National suicide-prevention hotline (available 24 hours/day): **(800) 273-8255**

For non-emergency situations, speak with your health care professional about mental-health services in your area.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO IT ALONE.



Lutheran Social Services
of North Dakota



NDSU

EXTENSION





Mor-Gran-Sou's annual meeting scheduled for July 17, 2020

Are you looking for a way to serve the people of central southwestern North Dakota? Look no further, as Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative can help you fulfill that desire. Why not serve as a board director for the cooperative? The initial commitment is a three-year term, with provisions in the bylaws limiting a director to serving six consecutive three-year terms, after which time the director is not eligible for another six consecutive three-year terms until one year has elapsed.

At the annual meeting, the following three board positions will be elected:

- The Grant County position presently held by Casey Wells;
- The Mandan-Area position presently held by Robert Leingang; and
- The Sioux County position presently held by Lance Froelich.

Under the bylaws and due to the use of a mail-in ballot, no nominations are accepted from the floor at the annual meeting. Instead, the bylaws require the board of directors to appoint a Nominating Committee of five to nine members who geographically represent the cooperative. These members will provide a list of qualified and

willing candidates to the board for approval and inclusion on the ballot at the board of directors' meeting scheduled for March 25, 2020.

This date has been set so there is adequate time for each candidate's biographical information to be included with the notice of meeting sent to the members in June, along with the mail-in ballot for those who are unable to attend the annual meeting in person.

The Nominating Committee has been appointed by the board and will meet for the first time, set for Jan. 13, 2020. The members of the Nominating Committee include Bryce Allen, Mandan; Jennifer Bonogofsky, St. Anthony; Jackie Buckley, Mandan; Glenda Gross, Selfridge; Alan Malm, Flasher; Garek Murphy, Fort Yates; Rodney Nelson, Almont; Jim Neubauer, Mandan; and Shari Striegel, Carson.

For a person to be nominated, the member vying for a board seat must submit the completed declaration of candidacy form to Mor-Gran-Sou by 4 p.m. CT (3 p.m. MT) on Tuesday, March 10, 2020. The completed form must be mailed to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Attn: Jackie Miller, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297. If you or someone you know is interested in being

nominated, please contact one of the Nominating Committee members or Jackie at Mor-Gran-Sou by calling 800-750-8212, 701-663-0297 or 701-597-3301. You can also email Jackie at jlmler@morgransou.com.

The Nominating Committee members or Jackie can provide you or the potential candidate with the declaration of candidacy form. It is also located on Mor-Gran-Sou's website at www.morgransou.com; click Home/Your Power in Membership/Forms and Applications/Declaration of Candidacy Form. Candidate qualifications can also be found at www.morgransou.com; click Your Cooperative/Articles and Bylaws/Board of Directors/402 Director Qualification or on the declaration of candidacy form.

If you have questions about the process, give Jackie a call. All qualified and willing candidates who have completed and forwarded the written declaration of candidacy form to the Mor-Gran-Sou office by the March 10 deadline will be included in the list the Nominating Committee will provide to the board. ■

Bylaws and resolutions for the annual meeting

Under the bylaws, any bylaw amendments or resolutions must be presented to the members in writing in advance of the annual meeting scheduled for July 17, 2020. The board of directors has charged the Nominating Committee with reviewing and advising the board of any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions. Therefore, any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions should be submitted in writing no later than March 19, 2020, and/or they can be presented in-person at one of the following in-person meetings of the Nominating Committee:

- Jan. 13, 2020, in the Mor-Gran-Sou office board room in Flasher at 7 p.m. CT
- March 19, 2020, in the Mor-Gran-Sou office board room in Flasher at 7 p.m. CT

If you do wish to submit a bylaw amendment or resolution in writing, please forward it to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Inc., Attn: Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297, before March 19. Thank you.



JUNE 20 TO 26, 2020

HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES & JUNIORS

Win the Trip of a Lifetime!

AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative.
- If you have a question, contact Julie Armijo at Mor-Gran-Sou at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 31, 2020. You can e-mail entries to Julie Armijo at jarmijo@morgransou.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND 58535-0297.



CHECK OUT THE ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES AT
www.ndyouthtour.com

MOR-GRAN-SOU ANNOUNCES annual safety poster contest

Grab your art supplies and draw a poster that tells our readers how you play and work safely around electricity. This poster should display a clear, creative picture of this year's theme: "How do you stay safe at your home or farm when around electricity?" All posters should display the Touchstone Energy® Cooperative logo on their entries. No matter what you draw, have fun! We can't wait to hear from you. Cash prizes will be awarded in each division.

DIVISIONS:

- Preschool to kindergarten
- First grade to third grade
- Fourth grade to sixth grade

DEADLINE:

Posters must be received at the Flasher office no later than 4:30 p.m. CT (3:30 p.m., MT) on Thursday, Feb. 20, 2020.

RULES:

- Posters must be on white, 8.5- by 11-inch paper.
- Posters must depict the theme, "How do you stay safe at your home or farm when around electricity?" and display the Touchstone Energy Cooperative logo. Be creative!

- Print the child's name, address, age and parent's names on the back of the posters.
- Only dependents of current Mor-Gran-Sou members are eligible for this contest.

PRIZES:

Each division will be awarded three prizes (nine prizes total): three first-place prizes of \$15; three, second place prizes of \$10; and three third-place prizes of \$5.

WINNERS:

Winning poster will be featured in the Mor-Gran-Sou local pages of the *North Dakota Living* magazine.





COOPERATIVE OFFERS STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative takes pride in assisting with the development of rural leadership through our scholarship program. We feel it's important to help finance our local students' educational journeys by offering scholarships to qualifying seniors. We are happy to continue our updated scholarship program of offering more scholarship opportunities to our graduating seniors. The applicants must be U.S. citizens and dependents of Mor-Gran-Sou members. All scholarships will be awarded during the 2019-2020 school year.

The co-op will award nine, \$500 scholarships to qualified applicants whose parent(s) or guardian(s) are members of the co-op. School representatives from Elgin-New Leipzig Public School, Flasher Public School, Glen Ullin Public School, Hebron Public School, Mandan Public School, New Salem-Almont Public School, Selfridge Public School, Standing Rock Community School, and Solen Public School will select one graduating senior to receive the funds. Interested in applying? Students should contact their school counselor for deadline information. The schools will then forward each recipient's name to Mor-Gran-Sou.

The co-op will also award one \$500 scholarship to a graduating senior from a school outside of our service area. Please contact our office if interested.

Mor-Gran-Sou continues to award a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

We award this scholarship to a student already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program. The student must attend an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Recipients will be chosen on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and overall grade point average; activities, achievements and honors; work experience; a personal statement of career goals; an essay question centered on local cooperatives and how they serve the area; and an appraisal from a high school or college counselor or adviser, instructor or a work supervisor who knows the student well. All post-secondary students who have parents that are members of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric are eligible to apply. Applications are available at area schools, in the Flasher or Mandan offices, or online at www.morgransou.com.

Mor-Gran-Sou is awarding one \$500 scholarship sponsored by 3C Construction.

Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a lineworker. The scholarship will be awarded during the 2019-2020 school year. Applications are available at area schools, in the Flasher and Mandan offices, or online at www.morgransou.com.

Mor-Gran-Sou is also awarding one \$500 scholarship sponsored by West Dakota Utility Services.

Eligible applicants are high school seniors who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a certified vocational or technical school pursuing a career as a mechanic. Applications are available at area schools, in the Flasher or Mandan offices, or online at www.morgransou.com.

Luck of the Draw scholarships

Mor-Gran-Sou will award two \$500 Luck of the Draw scholarships to be drawn at our annual meeting on July 17. All high school seniors who are dependents of Mor-Gran-Sou members **and have not previously been chosen for a Mor-Gran-Sou scholarship** are eligible for this scholarship. Students must attend our annual meeting and be accompanied with at least one parent or guardian, and will be required to RSVP before the meeting.

**Applications are due no later than
4:30 p.m. CT (3:30 p.m., MT) on
Friday, Feb. 14, 2020.**

**Please deliver or mail all necessary
information to Mor-Gran-Sou
Electric Cooperative at P.O. Box 297,
Flasher, ND 58535-0297.**

**If you have questions or would like
further information, please call Julie or
Jackie at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297
or 800-750-8212.**



Need Help with Heating Costs?

LIHEAP can help.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps eligible low-income households with home heating costs.

- Heating assistance
- Weatherization services (insulation, weather stripping, etc.)
- Furnace and chimney cleaning
- Furnace repair and replacement
- Emergency assistance

Applications are accepted from October 1 through May 31 for each heating season.

For help filling out and submitting the LIHEAP application, call 1-800-823-2417 ext: 140.



www.communityoptionsnd.com



SAFETY@MORGRANSOU.COM

Mor-Gran-Sou is an advocate of working safely. In fact, it is our way of life; the culture of your cooperative. We look out for the safety of ourselves and others — before, during and after work.

Did you know that members also play a key role in keeping our system safe? At times, you are our eyes in the sky and on the ground. Should you see a power line issue that may need Mor-Gran-Sou's attention, please call the office or send us an email at safety@morgransou.com with your concern. This correspondence should include the description of the location, your name and complete contact information, and a photo if possible. Working together helps ensure the safety of all!

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

board meeting highlights



Meeting date: Nov. 20, 2019

- Approved the Oct. 30, 2019, Board meeting minutes
- Approved a special equipment capitalization
- Approved four work order inventories
- Approved capital credit refunds to estates
- Reviewed and accepted the director and attorney expense reports
- Reviewed and accepted the financial report for October
- Heard update on Southwest Power Pool
- Reviewed update on WDUS Holdings, LLC
- Reviewed senior staff department reports
- Heard the Co-General Managers/CEOs update, and reports on meetings they attended
- Heard reports from various meetings and events the directors attended
- Heard reports from several trainings legal counsel attended
- Confirmed director attendance at upcoming meetings
- Appointed voting delegates and alternates for upcoming meetings
- Approved Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative/Mor-Gran-Sou property purchase agreement
- Approved to recognize 2019 funds from deferred revenue
- Approved 2020 Budget
- Approved rate class adjustments
- Discussed proposed Bylaw amendments for 2020
- Approved a luncheon meeting invitation to the Nominating Committee
- Held Executive Session
- Held Strategic Planning session

Upcoming regular board meeting date:

Jan. 29 in the board room at the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, Mandan

Members are welcome to attend the board meetings at any time. Please contact Mor-Gran-Sou at ctermes@morgransou.com, or call 1-800-750-8212 or 597-3301 to confirm the meeting date and location if you wish to attend.

To place an item on the agenda, please contact Board Chair Casey Wells or Co-General Manager/Chief Executive Officer Donald Franklund at 701-597-3301 at least one week in advance.

Members may obtain a copy of approved board minutes by completing and returning the "Request for Information or Data" form. You can find this form at www.morgransou.com, or contact the Flasher office to request a copy.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Inc., is a recipient of federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY)

or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: 202-690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider.



MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

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Email us: info@morgransou.com
UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES
800-795-0555 OR 811

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Chair..... Casey Wells
Vice Chair..... Chad Harrison
Secretary-Treasurer..... Lance Froelich
Directors Mark Doll, Vernard Frederick,
Pam Geiger, Jay Larson,
Bob J. Leingang, Kathy Tokach

MANAGEMENT

Co-GM/CEO..... Donald A. Franklund
Co-GM/CEO..... Travis Kupper

www.morgransou.com

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