



**MOR-GRAN-SOU**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

## THIS ISSUE:

- Reflecting on 2024
- Scholarships available
- Help shape co-op's future
- Apply for Youth Tour

**DECEMBER**  
2024

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# A high five for co-op giving



*Children greet Smokey Bear during the summer reading program's closing celebration of the Morton Mandan Public Library, which received an Operation Round Up grant from Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative this year.*



## GIVING BACK THE COOPERATIVE WAY: **Operation Round Up**

Cooperatives across the nation adhere to a handful of principles. These principles help guide decision-making, from how the cooperative operates to how it engages with local communities. Concern for community is one of the seven principles all of us value at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative.

Electric cooperatives have a proud history of giving back. You may find Mor-Gran-Sou Electric present at events like parades, fairs and other community gatherings.

But Mor-Gran-Sou Electric members help us give back, too. Through our Operation Round Up program, members can round up their energy bills to the next dollar amount and the extra change goes toward helping those in need, right here in the communities we serve.

### **Operation Round Up giving in 2024**

Operation Round Up has been a beacon of the cooperative principles for six years at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric. Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's charitable foundation board members, who are also Mor-Gran-Sou Electric members, meet three times a year to review and distribute Operation Round Up funds to deserving recipients across our service area. In 2024, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric donated funds to five recipients totaling \$2,750 going back to local communities.

### **Morton Mandan Public Library**

Mandan is home to the Morton Mandan Public Library, which offers library resources to all communities in Morton County. This includes about 15,000 active library users. The library is a hub of activity with various events and classes. The library also offers a mobile library, known as Mortie the Bookmobile, which is busy traveling to various Morton County towns such as Almont, Flasher, Glen Ullin, Hebron, New Salem and St. Anthony.

The Morton Mandan Public Library received Operation Round Up funds which were used toward its Curtain Call: Summer Reading Program Closing Celebration, where over 150 community members gathered.

"When you have community members, kids and Smokey Bear at an event, there is a lot of enthusiasm," says Kayla Schmidt, community engagement associate at the library.

The celebration was a wrapup to the summer

reading program hosted by the library. The neighboring Mandan's Dykshoorn Park played a role in the event as well as the Mandan Police Department, Mandan Fire Department and North Dakota State University Extension Morton County office.

"We want people of all ages to interact at events we host, and having it as an outdoor, barbecue-style event helped," Schmidt says.

The end of the summer reading program celebration was an opportunity for the library staff to interact with community members and partners. Those who participated in the reading program also were able to redeem incentives earned through Beanstack, an online avenue to log reading minutes, books and participate in reading challenges.

"Outside community partners are essential to continuing robust entertaining events for the community. Our staff is incredible, but the community partners help ensure continuation of the library programs," Schmidt says.

The Morton Mandan Public Library offers a variety of events throughout all seasons. Over the holiday season, it offers interactive movie opportunities, mosaic nights and family balls. For a full list of activities and programs, visit [www.cityofmandan.com/library](http://www.cityofmandan.com/library). 

### **In 2024, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative granted \$2,750 to local community entities, including:**

- **Almont Rural Fire District**
- **Bio Girls of Mandan**
- **Flasher Science Research**
- **MSA United Way**
- **Grant County Dolly Parton Imagination Library**
- **Morton Mandan Public Library**



## MANAGER'S MESSAGE: Reflecting on 2024



**Jason Bentz**

Co-General Manager/CEO


As December unfolds and we approach the end of the year, it's a fitting time to pause and reflect on the past months. This year has been one of growth, challenges and achievements, and we are deeply grateful for your continued support and partnership.

In a year filled with both triumphs and trials, your unwavering trust and engagement have been the

cornerstone of our success. Because of you, our dedicated members, we can continue to provide reliable service and work toward a brighter future. Your involvement in our cooperative, whether through feedback, participation in events or simply being a valued member, makes a significant difference in our journey.

We also want to extend our gratitude to our dedicated team members who work tirelessly behind the scenes. Their commitment and hard work ensure we meet our goals and address your needs with the utmost care and professionalism.

Looking ahead to the new year, we remain committed to serving you with dedication and enthusiasm. May this season bring you joy, peace and time to enjoy with loved ones. Thank you for being an essential part of our cooperative family. Your trust and support mean more to us than words can express.

We wish you a wonderful holiday season and a bright start to the new year. 





**ENTER YOUR  
YOUTH TOUR ERA**  
**JUNE 15-21, 2025**

**1,800 students.**  
**7 days.**  
**1 unforgettable trip.**

**Join us on the adventure of a lifetime.** On the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, you'll do it all. You'll explore monuments and museums, meet with members of Congress and get an up-close look at where our country's laws are crafted. You'll stand on the Gettysburg Battlefield, walk the halls of George Washington's iconic 18th-century mansion and witness ceremonies honoring the men and women who fought in uniform for this great nation. For one jam-packed week, you'll be immersed in the cooperative spirit that built and sustains our great nation. And all expenses are paid by your local electric cooperative!

*Yeah, Youth Tour hits different.*



**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.

**Essay question:**  
Why is it important to be involved in your community, and how does that prepare you to be a future leader?

**The application deadline is Jan. 17, 2025.**

Email entries to Julie Armijo at [jarmijo@morgransou.com](mailto:jarmijo@morgransou.com) or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297.

Questions? Please contact Julie Armijo, Mor-Gran-Sou, at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 1-800-750-8212 during regular business hours.



**Learn more at**  
**[ndyouthtour.com](http://ndyouthtour.com)**



# 2025 SCHOLARSHIPS

**DEADLINE: FEB. 14, 2025**

## Download Application



### **Area high school scholarship**

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative will award nine \$500 scholarships to qualified applicants. School representatives from Elgin-New Leipzig, Flasher, Glen Ullin, Hebron, Mandan, New Salem-Almont, Selfridge, Solen Public Schools and Standing Rock Community School will select one graduating senior. Contact your school counselor for more information. 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.

### **\$500 lineworker scholarship from 3C Construction**

Owned in part by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, 3C Construction employs lineworkers who travel, plowing cable and assisting with projects as needed. 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.

### **\$500 mechanic scholarship from West Dakota Utility Services**

Owned in part by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, WDUS employs various mechanic positions. 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.

### **Luck-of-the-draw scholarships**

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric will award two \$500 luck-of-the-draw scholarships to be drawn at our annual meeting June 12, 2025. All high school seniors who are dependents of members and have not previously been chosen for a co-op scholarship are eligible and must RSVP and attend the annual meeting with a parent or guardian.


### **\$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship**

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric will award a \$1,000 scholarship to a student who is already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program. The student must attend an accredited two- or four-year program, university or vocational/tech school.

Students can download the applications from our website, [www.morgransou.com](http://www.morgransou.com), or call the office. Applications can be filled out online and emailed to [bkroh@morgransou.com](mailto:bkroh@morgransou.com), or printed and mailed to: Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Attn: Beth Kroh, P.O. Box 1090, Mandan, ND 58554-7090.



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**All applicants must have a parent or guardian who is a Mor-Gran-Sou Electric member.**

# MESSAGE FROM MEMBER SERVICES: Help shape co-op's future



**Julie Armijo**

Chief of Staff/Member  
Services Manager

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 director for the cooperative?

## Director elections

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 June 12, 2025, the following three board positions will be elected:

- **Grant County** – Ryan Petrick (currently serving his first three-year term)
- **Mandan Area** – Pam Geiger (currently serving her second three-year term)
- **Morton County** – Mark Doll (currently serving his first three-year term)

Under the bylaws and due to 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 Feb. 26, 2025. This date has been set so there is adequate time for each candidate's biographical information to be included with the meeting notice sent to the members in May, along with the mail-in

## NOMINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jennifer Bonogofsky, St. Anthony  
Jackie Buckley, Mandan  
Rosie Erhardt, Mandan  
Garek Murphy, Fort Yates  
Jim Neubauer, Mandan  
Toby Olin, New Salem  
Donald D. Roth, New Leipzig  
Jeff Striegel, Carson  
Kathy Tokach (board liaison), Mandan  
Katie Wirt, Selfridge


ballot for those who are unable to attend the annual meeting in-person.

## Director nominations

The Nominating Committee will meet for the first time at 6:30 p.m. CT Dec. 10, and another meeting has been scheduled for 6:30 p.m. CT Feb. 20, 2025.

For a person to be nominated, the member running for a board seat must submit the completed declaration of candidacy form to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric by 4 p.m. CT Feb. 13, 2025. All qualified and willing candidates who have completed the forms required by the 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 June 12, 2025. 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 Feb. 13, 2025, and/or they can be presented in-person at one of the Nominating Committee meetings. 

## MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC ANNUAL MEETING DEADLINES

**Dec. 10** – 6:30 p.m. CT, Initial Nominating Committee meeting, Flasher

**Feb. 13, 2025** – 4 p.m. CT, deadline for declaration of candidacy, bylaw amendment and resolutions. Forms must be submitted to the Flasher or Mandan office.

**Feb. 20, 2025** – 6:30 p.m. CT, Final Nominating Committee meeting, Flasher

**June 12, 2025** – Mor-Gran-Sou Electric annual meeting, Mandan

## Contact info

For board nominations, bylaw amendments or resolutions, contact a member of the Nominating Committee or Julie Armijo at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric.

Completed board declaration forms, bylaws and resolutions can be mailed to: Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297 or P.O. Box 1090, Mandan, ND, 58554-7090. Forms can also be emailed to Julie at [jarmijo@morgransou.com](mailto:jarmijo@morgransou.com).

For additional information or questions, call Julie at 800-750-8212, 701-663-0297 or 701-597-3301.





## MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: Recap of 2024



**Gary Fitterer**

*Manager of Operations*

Throughout 2024, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative crews worked to improve system reliability by maintaining and upgrading electrical infrastructure, such as poles and substations. Each year, the engineering staff at Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative, a cooperative we are member-owners of, develops a work plan using historical information as well as priorities from our operations team.

This year, crews completed substation upgrades, installed underground cable and installed reclosure technology.

During the winter months, crews prepared for spring construction and stayed ready for outage restoration and mutual aid. Over the 2023 holiday and into 2024, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric sent crews to assist KEM Electric Cooperative and Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative in ice storm restoration efforts. Our service territory was also impacted by the ice storm. The area most affected was south of Raleigh, where a few broken poles and conductors were located.

Once the ground thawed and crews are able to dig, spring construction season begins. Mor-Gran-Sou Electric was able to complete the upgrade to the Roughrider substation in northwest Mandan. This project was delayed due to ongoing supply chain issues. Three new circuits were constructed out of the Roughrider substation to help shed power load from our northwest Mandan substation that supplies power to the Industrial Park.

Substation work continued south of Carson at the Grant substation, and over three miles of overhead power lines were replaced with over three miles of underground cable. The New Salem substation east of New Salem saw upgrades as well, as crews replaced three miles of single-phase overhead power line with three miles of two-phase underground cable. Three miles of overhead power line also transitioned to three miles of underground cable from the North Almont substation. Transitioning overhead power lines to underground cable helps reduce outages due to the cable being underground and not exposed to weather elements as well as animals that cause blinks and often outages.

Crews also installed new reclosures known as TripSavers across the service area. TripSavers are oil-free and require less maintenance when compared to the traditional oil-circuit reclosures, ultimately reducing outages as well as truck rolls for the operations crews.

Looking into the next few weeks of 2024, you may spot Mor-Gran-Sou Electric line crews conducting annual line inspection. If you see them, feel free to give them a wave or say hello, but keep a safe distance as they may be working on energized line.

Also, if you see any cooperative equipment that looks unsafe and should be assessed by the cooperative, be sure to call the office at 701-597-3301, 800-750-8212 or 701-663-0297. We hope outages are few and far between this winter, but want to encourage you to report outages by calling the office.

Thank you for your support throughout 2024. We look forward to ensuring safe and reliable electric services for you all in 2025! 



**Wayde Eckroth**, journeyman lineworker grabs tools from the line truck while working on a project in northwest Mandan.

## SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Holiday safety

As the holiday season progresses, we will soon be joining our family and friends to celebrate the final holidays of the year. This time of year brings joy and warmth, but as the weather gets cooler and we spend more time indoors, the holidays can also bring increased energy use and a higher risk of electrical and fire hazards.

“As your local electric cooperative, our team at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative cares about your wellbeing,” says C.J. Pesicka, journeyman lineworker. “With that in mind, here are a few practical tips to help you stay safe and efficient during the holiday season.”

### Safety first

- Before decorating begins, remember to always check electrical cords and light strands to make sure they aren't frayed or damaged.
- It is recommended to double check the holiday lights used outside are rated for outdoor use.
- Remember to test your smoke alarms often due to increased cooking and candle enjoyment this time of year.


### 'Tis the season for savings

- The thermostat is one of the best places for savings, since heating and cooling make up the majority of home energy consumption. Lower the thermostat a few degrees, especially when you have family or friends stopping by.
- Decorate with LED holiday lights. LEDs are the



most energy-efficient lighting options available, and they last much longer than traditional bulbs.

- When cooking this holiday season, remember smaller countertop appliances, such as air fryers and slow cookers, consume a fraction of the energy used to heat an oven.

From your friends at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, we hope your holiday season is merry and bright. 



## Need a bright idea for a holiday gift this year?

Energy gift certificates are available  
at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative!

Call Mor-Gran-Sou Electric at 800-750-8212 or 701-597-3301.



## MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS Sept. 25

The board of directors meeting of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was held on Sept. 25 at the Mandan Service Center in Mandan. Chair Steve Tomac called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. CT A quorum was present. Also, present were Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Manager of Operations Gary Fitterer, Chief of Staff/Member Services Manager Julie Armijo, Interim General Counsel Andrew Fergel and Executive Assistant Connie Hill. Alison Deelstra with the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) was present as a guest.

**Consent agenda:** There were no proposed additions to the agenda. The consent agenda was approved as presented.

**Strategic agenda:** Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on the North Dakota Industry Summit, Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Region 5-6 meeting and more. Several Basin Electric reports, and West Dakota Utility Services and 3C Construction updates were available for review.

**Action items:** Action items were discussed and resolved.

**Department reports:** Craigmile provided a financial report. Fitterer reviewed the operations report, which included updates on the 2024 construction season. Armijo provided a member service report on upcoming member events and the 2025 annual meeting. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report for the board. Fergel provided a general counsel report on projects.

**Discussion/general information:** Deelstra presented a CFC update to the board. The board conducted an annual review of board policy and discussed strategic planning.

**Executive session:** The board entered an executive session.

The meeting concluded with the adjournment. Secretary-Treasurer Pam Geiger certified the accuracy of the minutes.

**Next meeting date:** The next meeting is at 10 a.m. Dec. 18 in Mandan.



MOR-GRAN-SOU  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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

### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Chair.....Steve Tomac  
Vice Chair.....Chad Harrison  
Secretary-Treasurer..... Pam Geiger  
Directors.....Mark Doll, Rodney Froelich,  
Bob J. Leingang, Ryan Petrick,  
Kathy Tokach, Casey Wells

### MANAGEMENT

Co-GM/CEO .....Travis Kupper  
Co-GM/CEO ..... Jason Bentz

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

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