



MOR-GRAN-SOU
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

THIS ISSUE:

- Poster contest announced
- Line patrol begins
- Mor-Gran-Sou Electric wants to hear from you!

JANUARY
2024

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Owen Nelson,
the son of
Mor-Gran-Sou
Electric
Cooperative
members Benjamin
and Jayre Nelson,
will compete in
curling at the Youth
Olympics.

A THRILLING JOURNEY: The Winter Youth Olympic Games

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

While high school seniors have started counting the days until graduation, Owen Nelson, a senior at Mandan High School, is sweeping toward another goal. His countdown isn't for graduation, rather the days until he steps onto the ice at the Winter Youth Olympic Games in Gangwon Province, South Korea.

Nelson earned his spot on the United States curling team last fall at the Denver, Colo., Youth Olympic Trials. Nelson, along with his teammates, Zach Brenden (Bismarck), Teagan Thurston (Poynette, Wisc.) and Kenna Ponzio (Savage, Minn.), swept a 5-4 score, earning them their spot on Team USA.

The road to the Youth Olympics

At 10 years old, Nelson never imagined he would represent his country as he began his curling journey by attending KidzCurl, a program hosted by the Capital Curling Club in Bismarck.

During his time at the curling club, he gained valuable insight from mentors. One mentor Nelson credits is Roger Smith, who visits with Nelson about curling and offers valuable tips to improve his game in the rink.

"Roger has taught me all the fundamentals of curling and has helped me improve over the years and always has tips to improve my strategy on the ice," Nelson says.

Curling is not just a physical game, but it is also a mental one. While on the ice, curlers must be able to make quick decisions and think on their feet for up to two hours. Nelson says one of his favorite parts of curling is the competition and the discipline that comes with the game.

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“Being able to focus and concentrate for long periods of time isn’t easy, but it is something I have embraced, as well as making decisions during high-pressure moments that will help me and my team during matches,” Nelson says.

During his years in curling, Nelson has continued to grow and improve through opportunities to compete at various levels, including on the national stage. Although the Youth Olympics will be the height of his accomplishments in the curling rink, he is not a stranger to competitions. Nelson has qualified for national competitions in the past and has experience playing against various levels of talent.

“I think that gives me an advantage. I know who is going to be our competition as well as how they may play,” Nelson says.

Throughout his participation in curling tournaments, Nelson has not only broadened his skillset, but also cultivated an extended circle of friends.

“It’s one of the things I enjoy about curling, getting to play against other teams and meet new people,” he says.

In fact, he met his current Team USA teammates through competitions over the years.

“We got to know each other over the years at competitions and know that our skills work well together, so we decided to form a team and register for the trials,” Nelson says.

The trials took place in the fall of 2023 in Denver, Colo. The team has been traveling to Chaska, Minn., since July to practice together to prepare for the games.

With the Colorado trials, the team faced their most pressured experience yet, but the experience helped Nelson shape his mindset going into the Youth Olympic Games in South Korea.

Representing Team USA

For many, the opportunity to participate in a sporting event at the highest level is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and Nelson feels the same. Nelson credits his hard work and dedication over the years to getting to the level where he is currently competing.

“If you’re willing to work for it, your dedication will pay off,” Nelson says.

This isn’t just a chance to represent the United States, but also North Dakota. Nelson feels proud and excited to represent North Dakota and looks forward to putting the state on the map for curling success.

His support system has also helped him through this journey, reminding him to keep going until the last game is played.

The Winter Youth Olympic Games will take place in Gangwon Province, South Korea, Jan. 19-Feb. 1. 



Owen Nelson
and his
teammates
prepare for the
Winter Youth
Olympics.

MANAGER'S MESSAGE: Reliable power for today and tomorrow



Travis Kupper

Ring in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the co-general manager/CEO of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we are going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering – and empowering – our service area at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's territory. You may not realize it, but Mor-Gran-Sou Electric doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy providers, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the Western Area Power Administration. From there, we distribute it to homes


and businesses throughout our communities.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power is available to our members whenever they need it.

Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) enables two-way communication between the co-op and consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps Mor-Gran-Sou Electric save money with real-time data and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire area.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is by monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric cooperatives in North Dakota and across the country. Learning from other cooperatives is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model, because it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we begin 2024, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve – for today and tomorrow. 



POWERING ON:

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC'S CALENDAR

JANUARY

HEATING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE!

Scan the QR code for more information.



JAN. 12

OPERATION ROUND UP APPLICATION DEADLINE

Scan the QR code for more information.



JAN. 19

YOUTH TOUR APPLICATION DEADLINE

Scan the QR code for more information.



FEB. 1

MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY BEGINS

Watch for your February bill, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric social media and future *North Dakota Living* issues.



FEB. 13-14

KFYR AGRI-INTERNATIONAL Bismarck Event Center



FEB. 15

DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY DEADLINE

Forms must be submitted by 4 p.m. CT to the Flasher or Mandan office



FEB. 20

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Flasher office, 7 p.m. CT



FEB. 29

POSTER CONTEST DEADLINE

Posters are due to the Flasher or Mandan office by 4:30 CT



March 4

MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY BEGINS VIA PHONE

Members who have completed the survey via print or digitally will not be contacted.





Mor-Gran-Sou Electric line crews begin line patrol


Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's dedicated line crews are actively patrolling the power lines and poles across our entire service territory. This year's focus is on the Cannon Ball, Cedar, Glen Ullin, Grant, Harmon, Plainsview and Solen substations.

"Our lineworkers are looking for possible line maintenance issues, safety hazards and other problems that may affect the distribution lines that bring power to your home or business," says Gary Fitterer, operations manager at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric. Depending on weather and road conditions, members may see lineworkers patrolling line in a cooperative-marked truck, all-terrain vehicles or snowmobiles.

Completing maintenance, such as replacing insulators and tightening bolts on a sunny day, rather than fixing an outage in the middle of the

night, benefits you and your cooperative.

"Line patrol helps us find these issues and reduce unplanned outages," Fitterer says.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric ensures items are in working order to prevent unplanned outages and is committed to providing safe, affordable and reliable electric service. Preventative maintenance, including line patrol, is one of many proactive ways we are strengthening our power system. 

Heads up!

The 2023 capital credit retirement checks from Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative have been mailed. Be sure to cash them before March 31. Time's ticking!

APPLY FOR A TRIP OF A LIFETIME

WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

- An all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., paid for by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative.
- A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world class museums, learning about electric cooperatives and meeting elected officials.
- Developing lifelong friendships with delegates from across the country!

HOW TO APPLY

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school, and you and your parents or guardian must be served by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative.
- Email entries to Julie Armijo at jarmijo@morgransou.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297.
- Questions? Call Julie at 701-597-3301, 800-750-8212 or 701-663-0297 during regular business hours.
- **The deadline is Jan. 19, 2024.**

ESSAY QUESTION

If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate, you will be traveling to Washington, D.C., to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?



JUNE 15 TO 21, 2024

LEARN MORE AT
NDYOUTHTOUR.COM





SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Snow removal

As winter weather continues, we want to remind Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members to stay safe around electrical equipment. You've seen the "big green boxes" in your area, but have you wondered what they are? These boxes are known as pad-mounted transformers and are crucial for converting electricity to a voltage safe for use in homes and local businesses.

"Pad-mounted transformers are crucial for power, but they can pose a dangerous risk if appropriate precautions are not taken," says Jason Jahner, area foreman at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric.

"Think of it like this: Just as there are power lines above the ground, there are also power lines below the ground. These underground lines connect to transformers, which are like power hubs. The transformers get power from high-voltage lines and then send it in different directions to homes and businesses through secondary lines. When clearing snow, be careful around underground cabinets and transformers, because messing with them could damage the hidden power lines," he says.

It is important to carefully remove snow around the pad-mounted transformers.

"Snow can sometimes make these pieces of equipment hard to detect, making snow removal more dangerous," Jahner says. "Be sure to know the location, if near one, to make snow removal safe and easy."

Safety Starts with Me (and YOU)!

Use these tips to keep you and your family safe around pad-mounted transformers:

- **Mark the location of pad-mounted transformers.** If you have a pad-mounted transformer in your area, mark its location with a flag or reflector to alleviate accidents when removing snow.
- **Carefully remove snow around pad-mounted transformer.** Snow piled on electrical equipment can impact your safety and electric service to your home. In the event of an outage, having the pad-mounted transformers cleared of any snow will make it easier for lineworkers to restore power.
- **Never touch, climb or play near or on a pad-mounted transformer.** It is important to inform children to never play on "the big green box."



- **Keep the area around a pad-mounted transformer clear of any obstructions.** A 10-foot radius is recommended. This includes trees, shrubs or other obstructions. This distance allows for lineworkers to maneuver around the transformer with their equipment if needed.
- **Do not dig around a pad-mounted transformer.** Always call 811 before you dig. Below the transformers are pad-mounted lines that can cause damage to you and the electrical system if hit.
- **Report any damaged or unlocked transformer to your local cooperative.** If you notice anything off about the equipment, call Mor-Gran-Sou Electric at 800-750-8212.

"At Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, we want to provide you with electricity as well as protect your livelihood," Jahner says. We hope you and your loved ones will take these tips into consideration when removing snow to stay safe this winter. 

SAVE THE DATE

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric annual meeting June 13

To better meet the needs of our members, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is moving our annual meeting to June in Mandan! We will have more information about the annual meeting soon. Mor-Gran-Sou Electric currently has board of director nominations open, as well as bylaw amendments and resolution proposals being accepted.



Mor-Gran-Sou Electric board of director nominations

A Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative director term is a three-year commitment. Directors are limited to serving six consecutive three-year terms. A director then is not eligible for another six consecutive three-year terms until one year has elapsed.

The following board positions will be elected at the upcoming annual meeting:

- The At-Large director position presently held by Steve Tomac
- The Morton County director position presently held by Kathy Tokach
- The Sioux County director position presently held by Chad Harrison


Floor nominations are not accepted at the annual meeting, according to the bylaws.

Instead, the Nominating Committee will provide a list of qualified and willing candidates to the board for approval and inclusion on the ballot at the board meeting scheduled for Feb. 28.

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 on Thursday, Feb. 15. The Nominating Committee will meet for the final time at 7 p.m. CT Feb. 20 at the Flasher office.

Bylaw amendments and resolution proposals

Any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions need to be presented to the members in writing before the annual meeting on June 13. Please submit any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions in writing or present them in person by the Feb. 20 deadline to the Nominating Committee to be considered at the annual meeting.

If you or someone you know is interested in being nominated for a board position or submitting a bylaw amendment or resolution, please refer to the information at right for deadlines and further information. 

Deadlines

Feb. 15 – Declaration of Candidacy deadline. Forms must be submitted by 4 p.m. CT to the Flasher or Mandan office.

Feb. 20 – Final Nominating Committee meeting, 7 p.m. CT, Flasher

June 13 – Mor-Gran-Sou Electric annual meeting, Mandan

Contact information:

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



MOR-GRAN-SOU
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Oct. 25, 2023

The October meeting of the board of directors of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was held Oct. 25, 2023, at the Mandan Service Center in Mandan. Chair Steve Tomac called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Connie Hill, executive assistant, was designated as the recording secretary. A quorum was present. Also present were Mor-Gran-Sou's Co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Interim General Counsel, Andrew Fergel, Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar, Operations Manager Gary Fitterer, Member Services Manager Julie Armijo and Administrative Assistant Samantha Fischer. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance and invocation led by Director Robert Leingang.

Consent agenda: A few amendments were proposed to the consent agenda. The agenda was approved as amended. The Sept. 27, 2023, meeting minutes were also approved.

Strategic/action: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships Program. Bentz and Kupper also reviewed the 3C Construction

and Western Dakota Utility Services updates with the board.

Action items: The board reviewed and approved the 2024 capital budget and the annual financial items.

Discussion/general information: Board member reports, 2024 preliminary budget and upcoming meetings and events were shared. The board also discussed a career opportunity, Youth Tour and cybersecurity training.

Department reports: Craigmile reviewed the September 2023 financial report. Fitterer provided a report, with details on maintenance activities and service upgrades. Armijo presented a report, which included a Nominating Committee, bylaw compliance dates and member appreciation event dates for 2024. The board reviewed Dunbar's report. Fergel provided a general counsel report.

Executive session: The board entered an executive session.

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

Next meeting date: The next meeting date was set for Nov. 15, 2023, at the Mandan Service Center.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric wants to hear from you!

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative will be conducting a member engagement survey from February through March. This member engagement survey aims to gather feedback and insights from members of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric regarding their experiences, satisfaction levels and suggestions for improvement.

There are multiple ways to participate:

- Watch for the printed survey enclosed with your February bill.
- Access the survey online via our social media channels or website.

- Opt for a phone survey, scheduled for March. Rest assured, your privacy is our priority. Your responses will remain confidential, anonymized and aggregated for analysis purposes only. Your valuable input will help us improve without compromising your privacy. No information will be shared externally. As a gesture of appreciation for your valuable input, participants who choose to provide their contact information will also be entered into a giveaway for a chance to win a set of Medora Musical tickets.



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Toll-free: 800-750-8212 Fax: 701-597-3915
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

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