



CURRENT

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

JANUARY 2021

NEWS

More volunteers + more donations = more opportunities for small-town communities



PHOTOS BY SHAWNA MARION

Dave Ternes Jr. with Ternes Construction expanded the ice rink in Flasher on Dec. 9. Shawna Marion, president of Flasher Park Board, says the larger size will accommodate more skaters and small team sports. With the addition of a bench, and the existing warming house, the Park Board hopes it will entice community members to venture outdoors. In this month's local pages, learn how the Flasher community has persevered through the pandemic, thanks in part to an Operation Round Up grant from Mor-Gran-Sou, and a labor donation by Mr. Ternes. "The spirit of generosity has been abundant," she says.

Also in this issue:

- Operation Round Up brings people together
- Youth opportunities: student scholarships, safety posters
- Prepare for tax season with SmartHub!
- Line crews are patrolling power lines
- Meeting minutes ... and more



OPERATION ROUND UP

Helping to bring people together

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Community is everything in a small town; people helping neighbors, sharing rides, making meals — doing what they can do to ease someone’s load and make life a bit easier.

For many Flasher-area residents, the pandemic changed that close community feel. Families stuck together, some businesses closed, indoor activities were cancelled.

Shawna Marion, president of Flasher Park Board, says prior to COVID-19, some area highlights included Summerfest, county fairs, rodeos, Sunday markets in the courtyard, annual events with meals organized by the Flasher Commercial club including Santa Days — many of which the Flasher Park Board co-hosted by organizing vendors, scheduled entertainment and provided food.

“We were unable to provide many activities in 2020 due to COVID-19,” she says. “The Flasher Park Board has had to revise or cancel fundraisers since mid-March. County taxes decreased, and further impacted the financial status and availability to host any kind of event. It hurt the Park Board.”

In November, Governor Doug Burgum turned the state orange, the color used to represent a “high-risk” level for COVID-19 in North Dakota. It prompted Flasher Park Board members to become creative in finding ways to bring the community together while also raising funds to plan for 2021 events.

They reached out to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative for help.

Shawna and her husband, Dave, are Mor-Gran-Sou members from Flasher. They had read about the cooperative’s Operation Round Up program in the local pages of the *North Dakota Living* magazine, and Shawna wondered if the Flasher Park Board would qualify for a grant.

Operation Round Up is a program in which Mor-Gran-Sou members can choose to round up their monthly utility bills to the next dollar and donate their pennies to the Mor-Gran-Sou Charitable Foundation,



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHAWNNA MARION

From left, **Dave and Shawna Marion, and Jeannie Fitterer**, bundled up for the cold but successful luminary walk. The path, a half-mile stretch of Louse Creek Golf Course, was lit with lights provided in part by Mor-Gran-Sou, through an Operation Round Up grant to support the community.

Inc. The Foundation Board, who are also Mor-Gran-Sou members, meet and disburse funds in the form of grants to non-profit corporations, organizations or agencies. All of the money raised by members stays in our local communities.

Last fall, Shawna applied for a grant to purchase supplies for a luminary walk held Nov. 11. The event, “United We Stand, Together We Walk,” was organized to bring community members together outside and recognize veterans, while raising funds for next year’s events.

The board members of the cooperative’s Charitable Trust reviewed the Operation Round Up application and conferred a grant.

Funds were used to purchase hand sanitizer, battery-operated tea lights, flags, cups, hot chocolate and cider, and snacks.

The night of the event, the weather was miserably cold — and the walk was still a success. About 35 people attended, including veterans Vernard Frederick and Leonard Gerhardt. Vern, a board member for Mor-Gran-Sou who served during the Cuban missile crisis from 1962 to 1964, walked the half-mile stretch of Louse Creek Golf Course.

“It humbled us that they came out to walk in that weather,” Shawna says.

Some people appreciated the chance to reconnect so much that they returned in the evening to walk the loop again before cleaning up.

“It was something new that gave people a chance to be together again, as they socially distanced,” she says. “You could tell people were looking for options to be outdoors physically again and not feel so isolated.”

Mor-Gran-Sou was pleased to have an opportunity to play a small role in bringing people together, on behalf of our members who contribute to Operation Round Up.

“The ability to provide viable, safe recreation for Flasher is critical during this time. Although we are encouraged to remain socially distant due to Covid, encouraging physical activity outdoors with our family members is crucial for



overall wellness; physical, mental and social-emotional health. During winter, it is so easy to feel melancholy, and this year in particular, isolated, as we have revised traditional activities with friends and family. Mor-Gran-Sou recognizing this too, through their support, demonstrated they understand and recognize the importance,” she says.

Shawna, a Title 1 teacher at Flasher Public School, says the Park Board’s mission continues as they work to raise money for future activities.

They are currently seeking funds to resurrect the outdoor ice rink south on Main Street across from the Flasher ALC church to the east. The rink has been extended 10 feet in length and width to accommodate more skaters and allow for small team sports such as broomball. With the addition of a new bench, and the existing warming



Vernard Frederick was one of two veterans who participated in the walk, which was held Nov. 11 to honor veterans. Vern, a Mor-Gran-Sou board director, served during the Cuban missile crisis from 1962 to 1964.

house, the Park Board hopes it will entice community members to venture outdoors.

“We need more outdoor options for families and kids, to give them things to do together,” she says. “Winter is hard on a lot of people. We have to find creative ways to be with people outside of our family units. In a small town, people feel so isolated. If we can find ways to bring people together outside, that’s what we need to do.”

The Flasher Park Board is seeking donations to purchase ice skates, snowshoes and sticks for broomball. To donate or for more information, contact Shawna Marion at 701-301-9399 or shawna.marion3989@gmail.com.

Send donations to: Flasher Park Board, PO Box 34, Flasher, ND 58535. Find and follow Flasher Park Board on Facebook to learn timely news and events. ■

Carson Food Pantry receives Operation Round Up grant



PHOTO BY BARB HINTZ

Located on Main Street in Carson, the pantry is supported and stocked by Great Plains Food Bank.

The shelves are once again stocked — and pandemic supplies replenished for volunteers — at the Carson Food Pantry.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative member and pantry director Barb Hintz applied for a grant on behalf of the pantry last fall and was approved. The pantry, located on Main Street in Carson, had served 1,251 households, 2,277 adults and 685 kids at the end of October. That provided the equivalent of 49,849 pounds of food and basic necessities.

Hintz estimated as many as 75 percent of those customers live in the Mor-Gran-Sou service area and are likely members.

The grant money was used to re-stock the shelves and buy supplies associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Hintz noted the pantry was helping more people because of loss in work hours and income.

For those interested in shopping at the pantry, they must make a list and give it to a volunteer, who will collect and bring out the items.

Hints says a huge thank-you to Mor-Gran-Sou and all the members who are helping this local community.

For more information, contact Barb Hintz at 701-622-3256 or bhintz@westriv.com, or Gequita Edinger at 701-622-3193. ■



Opt into Operation Round Up

Operation Round Up is a program in which Mor-Gran-Sou members can voluntarily choose to round up their monthly utility bills to the next dollar and donate their pennies to the Mor-Gran-Sou Charitable Foundation, Inc. The Foundation Board, who are also Mor-Gran-Sou members, meet and disburse funds in the form of grants to non-profit corporations, organizations or agencies. All of the money raised by members stays in our local communities.

On average, participating members donate about \$6 a year. The most a member would contribute a month is 99 cents. The donation is tax-deductible, and members

who participate will receive a summary on their last billing statement of the year.

All rounded-up funds flow directly into the Mor-Gran-Sou Charitable Foundation, Inc., and are overseen by the board of directors. Mor-Gran-Sou personnel administer the program as a service to the foundation.

If you have any questions, please call the office at 663-0297, 597-3301 or 800-750-8212.

If you haven't already signed up, please opt into the program and support your friends and neighbors in area communities. Please fill out the form below and return it to the co-op. ■



I wish to participate in Operation Round Up at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Inc.

- Yes, I agree that Mor-Gran-Sou, through the Operation Round Up program, has my permission to round up my monthly electric bill to the nearest dollar. I understand I have the option to opt out with a 30-day written notice to the co-op.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Account #(s): _____

Email the form to jarmijo@morgransou.com; or mail to:
Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. Box 297 / Flasher, ND 58535

Signature

Apply for a grant

Do you have a specific need and could use a boost?

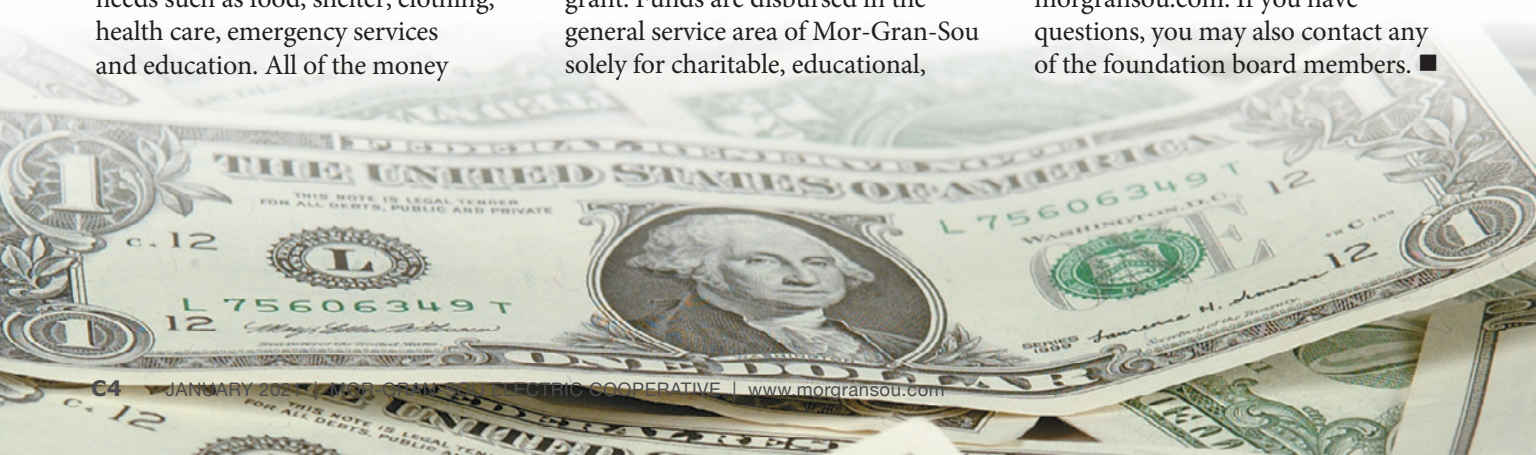
Operation Round Up grants may be awarded to any non-profit corporation, organization or agency for charitable causes and crucial needs such as food, shelter, clothing, health care, emergency services and education. All of the money

raised by members stays in our local communities.

Any person or group in the Mor-Gran-Sou service area, or providing a service to the area, may apply to receive an Operation Round Up grant. Funds are disbursed in the general service area of Mor-Gran-Sou solely for charitable, educational,

scientific, health or safety purposes.

To request an application, contact Jackie Miller or Julie Armijo by calling Mor-Gran-Sou at 663-0297, 597-3301 or 800-750-8212, or email jlmiller@morgransou.com or jarmijo@morgransou.com. If you have questions, you may also contact any of the foundation board members. ■





Mor-Gran-Sou's annual meeting scheduled for July 16, 2021

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 At-Large position presently held by Mark Doll;
- The Morton County position presently held by Kathy Tokach; and
- The Sioux County position presently held by Chad Harrison.

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 24, 2021. 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. 14, 2021. The members of the Nominating Committee include Bryce Allen, New Salem; Jennifer Bonogofsky,

St. Anthony; Jackie Buckley, Mandan; Curtis Feland, Almont; Glenda Gross, Selfridge; Garek Murphy, Fort Yates; Jim Neubauer, Mandan; Donald D. Roth, New Leipzig; 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 Thursday, March 11, 2021. 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; to download the form electronically, visit our website at www.morgransou.com and click Home/Your Power in Membership/Forms and Applications/Declaration of Candidacy Form. Candidate qualifications can be found at www.morgransou.com and 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 11 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 16, 2021. 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 18, 2021, and/or they can be presented in-person at one of the following in-person meetings of the Nominating Committee:

- Jan. 14, 2021, to be held by conference call at 7 p.m. CT
- March 18, 2021, in the Mor-Gran-Sou office board room in Flasher at 7 p.m. CT or by conference call.

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 18. Thank you. ■



MOR-GRAN-SOU ANNOUNCES annual safety poster contest

Kids, we need your help!

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 Friday, Feb. 19, 2021.

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

Mor-Gran-Sou line crews patrol power lines

As time allows, the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative line crews set aside time to patrol line. Our linemen concentrate on certain areas of the Mor-Gran-Sou power system and look for possible line maintenance issues, safety hazards or other problems that may affect the distribution lines that bring power to your home or business.

Line crews are currently patrolling line throughout the system. Because power lines are on and off the beaten path, you may see employees in a Mor-Gran-Sou truck, an all-terrain vehicle or a snowmobile. When you see them out and about patrolling line, thank them! They are out there for your safety.

Prepare for tax season with SmartHub!



Print copies of your monthly utility bills for your tax records by logging into SmartHub! Visit www.morgransou.com and click SmartHub, and proceed to your billing history. If you have not signed up for SmartHub, you can set up a new, secure account. Please call 701-663-0297, 701-597-3301 or 1-800-750-8212 with questions!



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. With this in mind, we are happy to continue offering our program and supporting graduating seniors in our service area. The applicants must be U.S. citizens and dependents of Mor-Gran-Sou members. All scholarships will be awarded during the 2020-2021 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 Electric 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, co-op headquarters in Flasher, or online at www.morgransou.com.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric 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 2020-2021 school year. Applications are available at area schools, co-op headquarters in Flasher, 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, co-op headquarters in Flasher, 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 16. 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. 12, 2021.

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 Beth at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212.

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

board meeting highlights



Meeting date: Nov. 18, 2020

- Approved the Oct. 28, 2020, Board meeting minutes
- Approved a special equipment and two work order inventories
- Approved capital credit refunds to estates and those age 80 and over
- Reviewed the monthly director's financial report
- Confirmed Board review of the financial report for October
- Reviewed senior staff department reports
- Heard legal counsel report
- Heard update on Southwest Power Pool
- Reviewed update on WDUS Holdings, LLC
- Reviewed the Co-General Managers/CEOs update, and heard reports on meetings they attended
- Heard reports on meetings and events in which directors had participated
- Reviewed and approved the 2021 Budget
- Approved 2020 recognition of revenue deferral
- Authorized a delegate and alternate to serve on the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives' (NDAREC) Board of Directors
- Approved an NDAREC Resolution regarding their virtual 2021 Annual Meeting and voting requirements
- Confirmed director members to serve on a Building Committee
- Reviewed request for participation in a Mandan street improvement
- Reviewed upcoming virtual meetings
- Reviewed annual legal training on Board governance Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Reviewed safety newsletter from NDAREC
- Held Executive Session

Upcoming regular board meeting date:

Jan. 27; time and location to be determined

Members may be welcome to attend board meetings. Due to COVID-19, plans can change quickly. Please call the office at 1-800-750-8212 or 597-3301 to confirm the meeting status you wish to attend.

To place an item on the agenda, please contact Co-General Manager/CEO Donald Franklund at 701-597-3301 or Chair Casey Wells 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.morghransou.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.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint 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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800-795-0555 OR 811

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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

MANAGEMENT

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

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