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OCTOBER 2021

NEWS

Pheasant business takes flight

Christy Finck holds a baby pheasant which is among the chicks she's raising as a business. Beside her is a Surrogator box where the pheasants are raised. Read more about her business inside.

PHOTOS BY LUANN DART

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Pheasant business takes flight

BY LUANN DART



With warmth, food and water inside a Surrogator, the pheasant chicks are raised to 4 weeks of age, then released into the wild.

Christy Finck scoops a tiny chick into her hands, momentarily cradling the bit of fluff before returning it to its box.

The pheasant chick is one of 1,200 Christy raised this summer for release into the wild to repopulate Grant County's fall hunting prospects.

"Having pheasants around here is a big attraction. During pheasant season, that's all you see is pheasant hunters, so having the population is important for the town, because we get a lot of business here, too," she said.

Christy, the daughter of Velvet and Perry Finck, Elgin, who are members of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, is a freshman at North Dakota State University obtaining a double major in animal science and veterinary technology. She started raising pheasants in 2019 after receiving an FFA grant to launch her business. She obtains day-old chicks from hatcheries in South Dakota or Wisconsin, raises them to four weeks, then sells the pheasants to farmers or ranchers who hope to increase their fall hunting prospects, either for themselves or visiting hunters.

"They feel their pheasant population is not where they want it to be, so they want to increase it a little bit," she said of her customers.

Christy isn't new to raising birds.

"I started out with chickens and I really liked raising chickens," she said. "My grandma always had poultry and I thought that was kind of cool. When I was younger, I remember having chickens."

As a sixth-grader, she purchased an incubator, then started hatching her own chickens. She's also raised ducks, turkeys and guinea hens.

"Turkeys, I kind of struggled with. It was kind of a challenge," she said. "They were difficult to raise. You had to have special lighting for them. I learned a lot from them, so I knew how to raise the pheasants using lights."

"I thought I should have a bigger challenge, so I started raising these pheasants," she said.

With her FFA grant in hand, Christy obtained one Surrogator, and borrowed others, to house the pheasants. With the dimensions of a pickup box, the Surrogator has lids on the top to allow her to place food and water without interacting with the chicks.

"The biggest thing with pheasants is you don't want them to lose their survival instinct and this box helps prevent that," she said.

Last year, she obtained 800 pheasants, with the chicks arriving

the end of May, and she intends to continue with the business by obtaining chicks next May again.

"You have to be here every day. It's something you just can't leave. The first week is pretty much you're trying to get them out of the stress of traveling here," she said.

With propane heaters and red heat lamps on the birds inside the Surrogators, she made sure the lights and heat remained intact night and day, checked for pecking and made sure the birds didn't overcrowd and trample each other.

"I pretty much live with them. I'm out there checking them every two hours at night, just to make sure that they're not crowding. A lot of things can happen," she said.

Her birds came out with a 90 percent survival rate.

When the birds are four weeks old, the batch of 75 birds inside a Surrogator is loaded onto a pickup and delivered to the release area, where they are freed into the wild. She sells them in flocks of 75 for \$6.50 a bird, preselling most before they are raised. With a second FFA grant, she had two more Surrogators constructed, and will be able to offer birds in smaller flocks with those boxes.

"The best part is the release. You can grab one and throw it up in the air and watch it fly for a long time. It's so crazy how fast they grow and how fast they can fly," she said.

Christy would like to expand her business. With a 300-egg incubator, she wants to start hatching pheasants also.

She currently has 20 chickens, two ducks and three guineas, along with her pheasant business.

"I want to do this as long as I can. I've put a lot of money into it, so I don't see why I should stop," she said. ■

(This story originally appeared in the Grant County News/Carson Press.)



Two Boy Scouts who helped **Wyatt Landeis**, left, with his Eagle Scout project were **Isaac Muth**, center, and **Kyler Reile**, right. As part of their project, the Scouts helped place interpretive signs at Dakota Zoo.

Scout soars like an eagle with zoo project

As Wyatt Landeis strides through the Dakota Zoo in Bismarck, the 16-year-old Mandan High School junior points to the structures he helped incorporate into the grounds.

A member of Boy Scout Troop 1054 in Mandan, Wyatt completed his Eagle Scout project at the zoo by building a Medicine Wheel, placing interpretive signs and installing two benches. Wyatt is the son of Kim and Jason Landeis, who are Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members.

About a year ago, Wyatt reached out to Dakota Zoo Director Terry Lincoln, asking if the zoo had any projects for the Scouts.

“Terry had a couple options, but he wanted us to walk around and give our insight to what we thought

would be a cool idea,” Wyatt said. Adding benches to a platform was one idea from the Scouts. Lincoln also suggested the Scouts help with some new signs being added.

The Sacred Pipe Resource Center had earlier acquired grant funding to create 10 interactive signs at the zoo that explain the relationship between Native Americans and animals. When a button is pressed, visitors hear the name of the animal in the native dialect of the Mandan, Arikara, Hidatsa, Dakota, Lakota and Chippewa.

Wyatt also worked with the Sacred Pipe Resource Center Director Cheryl Kary to develop a Medicine Wheel at the zoo, with the Scouts providing the labor to install the new addition to the zoo.

“We started planning out how everything should get done,” he said. “Once we had a design, we put our steps in play.”

At the Medicine Wheel, the Scouts prepped the site and laid landscaping fabric, then installed the colored landscaping rock to represent the black, yellow, white and red of the wheel.

A six-week delay in getting the concrete poured was the biggest challenge of the project, Wyatt said.

“It’s pretty amazing. It’s a very unique project,” Lincoln said. “The appreciation from the Native American people is amazing. All the ties with Boy Scouts and Native Americans, it’s pretty amazing, if you think about it.”

Under Wyatt’s supervision, the



Scouts also installed two metal benches supplied by the zoo, drilling them onto a platform. And they placed the 10 interpretive signs, digging in the posts in early January.

Other Scouts helping with the project included Isaac Muth, Austin Ness, Austin Arne and Kyler Reile. Adults assisting were Wyatt's family, including his brother, Elliott, and his parents, Kim and Jason Landeis, along with Diane Ness, Todd Muth, and Chris and Elise Kraft.

"I helped Wyatt dig to put in the concrete slab," said 14-year-old Kyler Reile.

"I helped put down all the gravel," added 17-year-old Isaac Muth.

Both are also working on their own Eagle Scout projects. Isaac's project is developing a kiosk area at Cross Ranch State Park and Kyler's is a project for his church.

"Eagle projects are one way we can give back to our community. They're also an opportunity for the Scout to practice leadership," said Isaac,



Boy Scout Troop 1054 in Mandan works on placing the Medicine Wheel at Dakota Zoo last winter.



For his Eagle Scout project, **Wyatt Landeis** helped install a Medicine Wheel at Dakota Zoo.

whose parents are also Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members.

To become an Eagle Scout, a Scout must be in a leadership position and complete a community project. Upon the project's completion, an application is reviewed by a local board for approval.

"They want to see your planning and processing and how you can get all the logistics set up and how you adapt," Wyatt said.

Through the project, Wyatt learned about communicating, organizing and adapting, he said.

"A lot of it, whatever you plan on, is just not going to happen. Schedules will change a lot. It's good to be flexible and figure what you can, so when everything else comes into play, you're ready to get it done," he said.

Wyatt joined Scouts in elementary school when he was in first grade and his brother, Elliott, was in third grade.

"We were super excited. We told our parents we have to do this," Wyatt said. Elliott, who is now 20

years old, also went on to become an Eagle Scout.

Scouts can be active in the troop until they are 18 years old, then can transition to being an adult leader.

"I like being with my friends, going out on campouts with my friends," Wyatt said about his Scout experience. The troop goes on weekend campouts throughout the year and has attended Camp Wilderness campouts in Minnesota.

"I've done that a couple years and that's a lot of fun," he said.

On his shirt, Wyatt wears his Scout badges with honor, including an Order of the Arrow, a correlated organization that recognizes those who best exemplify the Scout oath.

"There are a lot of leadership positions in Scouts and they value that a lot, because you're leading your other Scouts to try to be an Eagle Scout and follow the Scout law," he said.

"I think it's a really good thing. They learn leadership and skills for life," added Wyatt's father, Jason. ■

JUNE 19 TO 24, 2022



WASHINGTON, D.C.

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 any questions, please contact Julie Armijo, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, at 701-597-3301 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Dec. 10, 2021. You can 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.

TOP 3 REASONS TO ENTER THE ESSAY- WRITING CONTEST

1. All-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., compliments of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative
2. A whole week to visit unforgettable historic monuments, museums and the U.S. Capitol
3. A learning experience you'll never forget

ESSAY QUESTION:

If you were asked to help promote your cooperative's annual membership meeting, what ideas do you have for increasing attendance among young member-owners and students? Please provide specific examples for unique communications strategies, scheduling and special activities for member-owners and their families.



CHECK OUT THE ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES AT
<https://ndyouthtour.com/>



Hear the **BEEP** where you **SLEEP**

Every Bedroom Needs a Working Smoke Alarm!

Half of home fire deaths happen between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m., when most people are asleep.



Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement. Larger homes may need more alarms.

For the best protection, install interconnected smoke alarms in your home. When one sounds, they all sound.



Test alarms at least once a month by pushing the test button.



Some people, especially children and older adults, may need help to wake up. Make sure someone will wake them if the smoke alarm sounds.



Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or if they do not sound when tested.



When the smoke alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside. Go to your outside meeting place.



Call the fire department from a cellphone or a neighbor's phone. Stay outside until the fire department says it's safe to go back inside.

www.usfa.fema.gov
www.nfpa.org





Member Services Reps II **Patty Kluge**, left, **Beth Kroh**, center, **Deb Haugen**, right, volunteered for the United Way Day of Caring.



Member Services Rep II **Patty Kluge** washes windows during the volunteer day. Day of Caring was established to promote the spirit and value of volunteerism, increase the awareness of local human service agencies and demonstrate how people working together for the good of the community can accomplish great things.

A Day of Caring

Three of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's member services representatives washed windows and raked the yard, among other tasks, during the United Way Day of Caring Aug. 11. They volunteered at Bismarck's Frances Leach High Prairie Arts and Science Complex, where the Gateway to Science is located.

Member Services Representatives II Beth Kroh, Deb Haugen and Patty Kluge washed all the gallery windows, inside and out, cleaned the window screens and vacuumed the window sills. Then, they did yard work in the main outdoor space, raking and picking weeds.

"That community connection is really important," Kroh said. "A lot of our membership in this area may have been or may be interested in checking it out. It's a little hidden

gem in our community."

The Gateway to Science has broken ground on a new stand-alone facility overlooking the Missouri River, estimating a November 2022 completion date for the new location. The Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives and the National Information Solutions Cooperative are sponsoring major portions of the new building, which will feature energy education exhibits.

"We're excited to see they have that energy education exhibit in the plans for the new building. I think that will just be great for the community to have some more exposure to what goes into having power at their homes," Kroh said.

"That new location is going to be impressive, looking over the river. They're excited about that, but equally excited to spruce up their existing location," Kroh said.

"There's a lot of kids moving through there and they can definitely use that refresh before they go into the fall and winter and not have their small staff shift gears and do all of that."

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative staff volunteered alongside employees from Bremer Bank and Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services. ■



Member Services Representatives II **Beth Kroh**, left, and **Deb Haugen** work in the yard at the Frances Leach High Prairie Arts and Science Complex during the United Way Day of Caring.

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

board meeting highlights



Meeting date: Aug. 25, 2021

- Approved July 28 board meeting minutes
- Approved work order inventories and a special equipment capitalization
- Approved capital credit refund applications to estates and those age 80 and over
- Reviewed the monthly directors' financial report
- Reviewed the Mor-Gran-Sou financial report for July
- Reviewed senior staff department reports and heard general counsel report
- Reviewed co-general managers/CEOs update and report on meetings attended
- Reviewed board meeting minutes from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and subsidiaries
- Heard update and reviewed diagrams of new Mandan office remodel
- Adopted Wildfire Mitigation Plan
- Approved Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) loan
- Approved trustee and alternate for N.D. REC Benefit Trust for three-year terms
- Approved amendments to Innovative Energy Alliance (IEA) articles of association
- Chair assigned directors to specific Mor-Gran-Sou committees
- Approved 2021 budget increase for refunds to estates and those age 80 and over
- Reviewed history on capital credit refunding to elderly
- Reviewed 2022 IEA budget
- Elected voting delegates and alternates for specific upcoming meetings
- Assigned delegate to cast the CFC ballot
- Heard statistical report on 2021 Mor-Gran-Sou annual meeting
- Reviewed North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives awards program
- Heard directors' recap on meetings attended
- Reviewed WDUS/3C Construction update
- Heard update on Southwest Power Pool

Upcoming regular board meeting date:

Oct. 27 - time TBA - Bismarck

Members are welcome to attend board meetings. Due to COVID-19, plans may change. Please call the office at 800-750-8212 or 597-3301 to confirm the meeting status if you wish to attend. To place an item on the agenda, please contact Board Chair Casey Wells or Co-General Manager/CEO 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.

Heating season is here. Is your electric meter breaker on?

Members, if your home or business has a sub-meter for the separately metered electric heat rate, please make sure your heat meter breaker is turned on inside your electric panel.

If you have a heat meter, please make sure the breaker to the meter is turned on all year, to ensure Mor-Gran-Sou receives meter readings. If the breaker is off, your electric heat kilowatt-hour usage will not be billed correctly.

The Separately Metered Heat rates run Oct. 1 through April 30. ■

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Focused on YOU.**

October is
National Co-op Month



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