



MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

CURRENT

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

JUNE 2015

NEWS



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Dream it, do it

Kat Perkins visited Flasher Public School, and talked to students about the power of being positive.

In this issue:

- **Flasher community hub remains open**
- **Nominating Committee approves candidate list for board of directors**
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- **Eckroth earns journeyman status**
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- **Meeting minutes and more!**



***Todd Hoff**, one of the bar's new co-owners, likes to help make steaks. He says they've switched to certified Angus brand beef and are serving pre-seasoned steaks.*

his wife, Steph, had always thought owning a bar would be kind of neat — and Ron knew it. Talking together about the possibility one day in the parking lot, Ron threw Todd the keys and said, “Make me an offer.” Todd found a business partner and sold some livestock. The rest is history.

Todd and Dennis Berger became the new owners on March 30. Dennis, also a Mor-Gran-Sou member, owns a cement business north of Saint Anthony along with wife, Tammy. Originally from Flasher, Dennis went to school with Todd and they are longtime friends.

Initially, they didn't plan on changing much about the bar. But with the purchase, they learned the name My Place Bar was a corporation, and the sale required a name change. Manager Sharlene Kvarness came up with 1 More: a phrase she hears often while on the job.

1 More offers lots more

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVNEY

New name, new owners, new menu; My Place Bar — now known as 1 More Bar & Grill — will continue to be a mainstay of the Flasher community.

Ron Polensky, Flasher resident and Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative member, managed the bar for 42 years. A family business, his father founded the bar in 1947. Ron and

his late wife, Linda, decided to retire and sell the business, and the bar and Highway 21 Café & Steakhouse were listed for sale — for quite some time. Many folks were wondering about the future of the establishment.

Then, Todd Hoff had a lucky catch in the parking lot.

Todd, a Mor-Gran-Sou member who farms north of Flasher along with

1 More Bar & Grill

- **Location:** Highway 21, Flasher
- **Hours:** 9 a.m. to 10:30 or 11 p.m. week nights and weekends until around 12 a.m.
- **Specials include noon meals, Margarita Mondays, half-price appetizers on Wednesdays, and Beer & Burger Baskets on Thursdays**
- **Pool and dart leagues and tournaments**
- **Banquet room available for reservations and catering**
- **Smoke-free**



Finding good employees to cook and serve is a challenge. **Kristina Perdew**, a Flasher-area resident, cooks for the bar and restaurant, which is now offering noon specials.

Another change came when they bought and installed a char broiler. “We switched to certified Angus brand beef and are serving pre-seasoned steaks,” Todd describes.

After listening to feedback from families including his own, Todd updated the menu. “We added a kids menu, and put together baskets for the middle price range. Everyone seems to be happy with that,” he shares.

Cleaning and renovating are also in progress, and Todd says he hopes to make the bar more energy-efficient. At some point, they plan on lowering the ceiling, and adding insulation and sheet rock to retain more heat. They are currently working on updating the restaurant, which they hope to re-open in the fall.

Finding good help is the major challenge. Todd and Dennis agree that they can buy and serve a good-quality steak, but they need good employees to grill and cook, and to serve the patrons. He says they are always looking for trustworthy employees so Todd can keep farming and Dennis



The current manager at 1 More Bar & Grill, **Sharlene Kvarness** was hired by Ron Polensky before he retired. When an employee didn't show up for work one night, he called and asked Sharlene to come and help serve a Corvette club with 20-some people. She had never worked there before, and she jumped right in. She's been there ever since.

can continue his cement business.

“The bar business has some challenging hours,” Dennis adds. “We could always use more help; especially when people want time off.”

A lot may have changed, but the same, much-needed service of a banquet hall is still there. They rent it for dinners, dances, funerals, weddings, school events and more, and can cater the events.

There is always activity at 1 More Bar & Grill. Todd says there are still pool and dart leagues and tournaments. In addition, they've added specials including Margarita Mondays from 4 p.m.-7 p.m., half-price appetizers on Wednesdays from 4:30-6 p.m. (dine-in only), and Beer &

Burger Baskets on Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. for \$8.50 (dine-in only).

It's been a couple months now since the change in ownership. With guidance from Ron, who stops by the bar every now and again to see how it's going and if they need help, Todd and Dennis have learned a lot about the business. Dennis says there's a lot more to it than he could have anticipated. It's been a challenge, but so far, Todd says he hasn't regretted making that great catch.

“The community needs and supports this business,” he says. “We've got some stuff to learn yet, but it's been going pretty good.” ■



Mor-Gran-Sou announces candidates seeking board of director positions

The pursuit to earn a board seat begins for six Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members vying for one of three board director positions up for re-election in July. In 2015, the three board positions sought include: the At-Large position, one for the Morton County position, and one for the Sioux County position.

The board of directors set March 5 as the deadline for receiving members' completed declaration of candidacy forms. The Nominating Committee met for a final time on March 10. At that meeting, the committee declared that the candidates' names they received be forwarded to the board of directors for approval. Upon confirmation of eligibility at its regular board meeting on March 25, the Mor-Gran-Sou board of directors approved the following list of candidates:

At-Large:

- Mark Doll, New Salem
- Kevin Fishbeck, Mandan
- Clyde Howe, Mandan

Morton County:

- Richard C. Tokach, St. Anthony
- Bonnie Tomac, St. Anthony

Sioux County:

- Chad Harrison, Fort Yates

A full biography of each candidate will appear in Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's annual report, scheduled to be mailed in late June. ■



SAVE THE DATE!

WHAT:

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's annual meeting

WHEN:

Friday, July 17, 2015

WHERE:

Prairie Knights Casino and Resort, Fort Yates

WHY:

To learn about co-op issues; to cast your vote and elect three members to serve on the board of directors; and to enjoy a hearty meal.

Idle services to be retired

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative continues to retire idle services throughout the co-op's service area. What does Mor-Gran-Sou consider to be an idle electrical service? It is a service that is not making any payment to the cooperative, but continues to receive regular maintenance. Your cooperative's procedure is to post a detailed list (to the right) in our communications material to keep members informed of those idle services that will be retired. This is the second notice of this particular group of idle services to be retired.

Prior to this detailed listing,

Mor-Gran-Sou personnel have already contacted, or tried to contact, the property owner and affected property owners based on the information available. If someone comes forward and is willing to pay the line retention fee, we no longer consider it an idle service. However, if no one comes forward, the line is then put on a list and will be retired. The following idle services will be retired at the cooperative's convenience:

Grant County

- T135N R90W SECTION 34 NE 1/4
- T136N R89W SECTION 10 NE 1/4

Morton County

- T134N R84W SECTION 03 SW 1/4
- T135N R79W SECTION 14 SW 1/4
- T136N R81W SECTION 06 SE 1/4

- T137N R80W SECTION 08 NE 1/4
- T138N R82W SECTION 05 NW 1/4
- T139N R82W SECTION 08 SW 1/4
- T140N R89W SECTION 10 SW 1/4
- T140N R89W SECTION 15 SE 1/4
- T140N R83W SECTION 23 NE 1/4

Sioux County

- T130N R80W SECTION 12 SE 1/4
- T130N R80W SECTION 13 NE 1/4
- T130N R80W SECTION 25 SW 1/4
- T130N R80W SECTION 26 NW 1/4
- T130N R81W SECTION 33 SE 1/4
- T131N R80W SECTION 02 NE 1/4
- T131N R80W SECTION 27 NW 1/4
- T132N R79W SECTION 17 SW 1/4
- T132N R82W SECTION 16 SE 1/4
- T133N R79W SECTION 08 NE 1/4
- T133N R79W SECTION 14 SW 1/4
- T134N R79W SECTION 27 SE 1/4
- T134N R79W SECTION 34 SE 1/4



Eckroth earns journeyman status

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVNEY



PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVNEY



atmosphere and opportunities. When he's not setting poles and patrolling line for Mor-Gran-Sou, he helps his parents on the family farm, and likes to hunt and fish.

Eckroth finished the books and tests needed to complete the AT&S program in January. As a graduate, he has logged 8,000 hours of supervised training on poles, tower and construction; line hardware

and framing; overhead conductors; tools and equipment; transformers; oil circuit reclosers, regulators and capacitors; metering and instrument transformers; rolling stock; engineering; records; safety meetings; hot-line maintenance; troubleshooting; underground; substations; lighting; and service.

Since graduation, Eckroth has experienced an increase in duties and expectations at Mor-Gran-Sou. He says he feels comfortable with the tasks, thanks to his education and on-the-job training. He's also come to know the co-op's service area better over the years, as well as the member-owners who greet the linemen when they are in the neighborhood, working on lights, locates, meters and substations.

Even though he's completed the AT&S program, Eckroth says learning is lifelong for a lineman. This spring and summer, linemen across the state and nation will be implementing a fall-restraint system that requires linemen to reposition their belts before taking steps up or down the pole.

"We have to relearn how to climb," he says. "It's going to be good; just different. If it saves one person from a fall, it's worth it."

When needed, a Mor-Gran-Sou leadman still travels from Mandan to Flasher to help the two-man crew perform long or intensive jobs. But for the most part, Eckroth and Michael are taking care of the electrical system in the Flasher area, and appreciating what this small town has to offer.

Mor-Gran-Sou thanks these dedicated men for making the Flasher area their home, and congratulates Wayde on earning journeyman status. ■

Finding a lineman to work in a small town — and choose to keep working in that small town — is a challenge many electric cooperatives face. Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is fortunate to have two dedicated men who have made the Flasher area their home and community.

Journeyman Linemen Wayde Eckroth and Joe Michael work out of Flasher headquarters, building and maintaining electrical services in the area. Eckroth, who recently graduated from the Apprenticeship Training and Safety (AT&S) lineworker program administered by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, says Flasher has been a great fit.

Hired in January 2012, Eckroth grew up on a farm north of Flasher and says he appreciates the small-town



Kat Perkins:

Use social media in a positive way

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Social media helped Kat Perkins rise to the semifinals on season six of *The Voice*, an American reality television singing competition broadcast on NBC. Perkins, a Scranton native who started singing when she was 3 years old, says 60,000-some followers used sites including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat and more to send encouraging messages about performing and winning.

“I felt like the whole state of North Dakota was behind me,” she says. “I experienced so much positivity and kindness over social media every single day.”

And then, she experienced the other side. Anonymous followers sent her nasty messages about her voice or a performance. One particular follower used Snapchat to send her an image that shocked and disgusted her. The image disappeared in 10 seconds ... but Perkins says it hasn't left her mind.

“I can't unsee that. It didn't go away,” she says.

“If you can change somebody's day, do it in a positive way. Instead of sending a nastygram that won't do anybody any good, think about who you are and what you're putting online,” she advises. “Someday you'll want to look back on it and say, ‘I did alright.’ You don't want to look back and think you've made bad decisions. You'll never say you were too nice.”

That's the message Perkins brought to Flasher Public School on Tuesday, April 28. She's currently touring the state and nation, in partnership with EduTech on the Positive Social Media Tour, to visit schools and discuss social media with students and give a

live performance.

Perkins also touched on the following messages:

Dream it, do it. Perkins credits her father with teaching her that she can do whatever she wants and loves to do — but she has to work hard to achieve that dream.

Be brave. Perkins has been singing in front of people since she was a toddler. But to sing in front of 15 million people every week while on *The Voice*? “I wanted to be the best I could possibly be. I wanted to compete. I wanted to be a top contender,” she says. “That took a lot of bravery.”

Work hard. Perkins has experienced many bumps in the road during her career. She says she's experienced success because she's worked really hard, loves what she does, and has people who support her. She says her work ethic comes from her hometown and the people who live there.

Be nice. Adam Levine, Perkins' coach while on *The Voice*, always says please and thank you. Perkins reveals he was genuinely kind, and one of the nicest people she's met. He told her he's successful because he gives, so he gets a lot in return.

Try music. Perkins encouraged the kids to sing songs or learn to play an instrument. She said music can teach discipline and hard work, and a special song can be therapeutic.

Nancy Malm, Flasher Public School Title 1 teacher, says the discussion and performance brought excitement to the school and its students. “It was something fun and different,” she says. While the teachers have talked with students



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

about social media and safety, Malm says she felt the students were more receptive to hearing the message from an area celebrity.

Perkins' appearance was part of Flasher's annual Family Fun Night. She also spoke and performed in Elgin on April 29; students attended from Elgin, Carson and Mott-Regent. ■

Top 5 things that require electricity that Kat Perkins can't live without:

- Her phone
- Her microphone
- Her flat iron and blow dryer
- Her stove



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVENEY

Several area Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives gave a donation to the Family Wellness project to support health and wellness in our local communities. Representatives at a check-presentation ceremony included, from left: **Don Franklund**, co-general manager and chief executive officer (CEO), Innovative Energy Alliance (on behalf of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative); **Mike Eggl**, senior vice president of communications and administration, Basin Electric Power Cooperative; **Bill Bauman**, executive director/CEO, Missouri Valley Family YMCA; **Vern Dosch**, CEO, National Information Solutions Cooperative; and **Dennis Hill**, executive vice president and general manager, North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives. The co-op donation was matched by CoBank, as part of the bank's matching grant program.

Family Wellness coming to Mandan in the fall 2016

Sanford Health and the Missouri Valley Family YMCA have partnered to bring a Family Wellness to the Bismarck-Mandan community. Construction will begin this month, and the estimated completion date is spring 2016. Mor-Gran-Sou played a small role in the public fund-raising campaign.

This 41,000-square-foot facility will be located at 2620 46th Ave. S.E. in Mandan, south of Raging Rivers Water Park. Mandan Parks & Recreation and the City of Mandan Visitors Fund have purchased land worth \$1.7 million to make this community project possible.

There will be full reciprocity between the Missouri Valley Family YMCA in Bismarck and this new Family Wellness in Mandan providing convenience and better access for members.

Family Wellness will offer:

- Child care

- Fitness studios
- A gymnasium
- A wellness center with workout equipment
- A walking track

"Family Wellness will increase opportunities for families to be healthy together, and make health and wellness more accessible to the Bismarck/Mandan community," said Bill Bauman, Missouri Valley Family YMCA executive director and chief executive officer. "We are also addressing critical community needs by offering additional child care, meeting the needs of an aging population, increasing social connection and building a healthy, vibrant community."

For more information about Family Wellness, visit familywellnessbisman.com. ■

Highway 21 Treasure Hunt rummage sale event June 19-20

Discover treasures and have fun during North Dakota's 14th annual 100-mile rummage sale, the Highway 21 Treasure Hunt, which will be held June 19 and 20 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Communities along Highway 21 in southwestern North Dakota host the event including Flasher, Carson, Elgin, New Leipzig, Mott, Regent and New England. Rural residents host sales, too, so watch for signs along the route. Also watch for sales along Highway 6 in the St. Anthony area.

"With approximately 100 rummage sales along the 100-mile route, this is the most unique rummage sale event in North Dakota," says Luann Dart, Elgin, who coordinates the event.

Listings for each community's sales will be available at certain locations in that community, such as restaurants or gas stations, as well as on the Highway 21 Treasure Hunt Facebook page prior to the event.

A small group of volunteers from each community spearheads the event each year, with advertising expenses covered with donations from local, civic-minded organizations.

"Anyone who enjoys rummage sales will love the annual Highway 21 Treasure Hunt," Dart says. "We encourage everyone to plan to attend the 2015 event."

For more information, contact Luann Dart at 701-584-2172. ■

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

board meeting highlights



Meeting date: April 29, 2015

- Approved the March 25, 2015 regular Board meeting minutes
- Approved a special equipment inventory
- Approved applications for refund of capital credits to those age 80 and over
- Heard Co-General Managers/CEOs update and reports from events attended
- Heard update on Innovative Energy Alliance (IEA), LLC
- Heard updates on all entities of WDUS Holdings, LLC
- Accepted financial report from the Chief Financial Officer
- Heard and accepted the 2014 Audit report given by Brady Martz & Assoc.
- Approved the updated Interconnection & Common Use Agreement
- Reviewed the CoBank Special Meeting of Stockholders Ballot
- Reviewed and discussed senior staff department updates
- Heard update on activities of the NERC Compliance Team
- Reviewed safety meeting and safety committee meeting minutes
- Accepted director's financial report for March
- Heard reports and held discussion on meetings attended
- Held Executive Session

Upcoming regular board meeting dates:

June 24 in the NDAREC Ulmer Center in Mandan at 9 a.m. CT

July 17 at Prairie Knights Casino & Resort in Fort Yates at 2 p.m. CT

Members are welcome to attend the board meetings at any time.

Please contact Mor-Gran-Sou at cternes@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 Leland "Judge" Barth or Co-General Manager/Chief Executive Officer Donald Franklund 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 call the office for a copy.

Mor-Gran-Sou will be closed to honor the July 4th holiday

Mor-Gran-Sou line crews will be available in case of an emergency on Friday, July 3.

HEAD WEST FOR LESS!

More than 10 Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives in North Dakota have joined forces to make vacationing in North Dakota more affordable for families, including Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative. This summer, head west to Medora, where electric cooperative members are eligible for a **15-percent discount** in association with:

- Tickets to the Medora Musical
- A Pitchfork Steak Fondue
- Lodging at the Bunkhouse

Motel, Badlands Motel or Rough Riders Hotel

- Bully Pulpit Golf Course

Mor-Gran-Sou members, if you travel to beautiful Medora anytime this summer, call 1-800-MEDORA-1 for reservations and use the code TOUCH2015 to receive your 15-percent savings. Members also receive 20 percent off at the Cowboy Hall of Fame by providing the discount code TOUCH2015 at the door. ■

Our Condolences...

The board of directors and staff of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative extend our condolences to Co-General Manager/Chief Executive Officer Don Franklund and his family on the loss of Don's mother, Frances Franklund.



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OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Chair..... Leland "Judge" Barth

Vice Chair..... Casey Wells

Secretary-Treasurer..... Pam Geiger

Directors Mark Doll,

Vernard Frederick, Lance Froelich,

Robert Gaebe, Chad Harrison,

Bob J. Leingang

MANAGEMENT

Co-General Mgr./CEO..... Chris Baumgartner

Co-General Mgr./CEO.... Donald A. Franklund

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