



## All aboard!

During Watermelon Day in July, the North Dakota State Railroad Museum in Mandan served free watermelon to guests, who came to tour the spacious grounds, watch demonstrations and visit with volunteers. In this month's issue, learn why the museum is vital to preserving North Dakota's railroad history — and why this interesting and educational facility is fun for people of all ages to explore.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative member **Kathy Odegaard** brought grandson **Owen**, who enjoyed a ride on the live steam mini-train engine thanks to conductor **Ed Duke**, from the Hensler area. Owen is the son of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members Leland "Judge" and Suzie Barth of Mandan. Judge represents the Mandan area on the Mor-Gran-Sou board of directors.

## What's inside:

- **Railroad museum preserves history**
- **Board election update**
- **Meet Miss Indian World**
- **Capital credit allocation**
- **Meeting minutes and more**



PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVENEY

During Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's annual meeting, **Vern Frederick** (left, representing Grant County) and **Judge Barth** (right, representing the Mandan area) were re-elected to the board of directors. Members elected **Jay Larson** (center, representing Morton County) to fill the board seat previously held by Pam Geiger, who was unable to seek re-election.

Vernard Frederick, Flasher, retained their positions on the board. Barth is the Mandan area representative and Frederick is the Grant County representative. New to the board is Jay Larson, who will serve his first three-year board term as a representative for Morton County. He fills the position previously held by Pam Geiger, who reached her term limit of six 3-year terms. We thank Dennis Dutke, Mandan; Cody Hatzenbuhler, Mandan; Clyde Howe, Mandan; Delwin Petrick, Elgin; and Travis Wolf, Mandan; for campaigning to serve their electric cooperative, and for being active and involved cooperative members.

To learn more about the annual meeting, read a complete summary in the September local pages of *North Dakota Living*. ■

# Thanks, members!

BY JACKIE MILLER

The Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative board of directors, management staff and employees thank you, our member-owners, for attending the 69th annual meeting of the membership held July 15. We appreciate the interest you continue to show in your

electric cooperative!

This year, Mor-Gran-Sou members were asked to vote for three board directors: one for the Grant County position, one for the Mandan area position, and one for Morton County position. Incumbents Leland "Judge" Barth, Mandan, and



## Thank you, Director Geiger!

Board Director Pam Geiger has reached her term limit of six 3-year terms. We would like to thank Pam, who served as a Morton County director for the past 18 years, for her energetic, genuine concern and undeniable dedication to the membership. Pam served a number of terms as secretary-treasurer to the board, and her focus on the cooperative's fiscal health was obvious to those who worked with her. Mor-Gran-Sou thanks you, Director Geiger, and wishes you well.

Watch for a story on Pam Geiger in a future issue of the *North Dakota Living* magazine. ■

Showing respect and support for **Pam Geiger** (center) and the contributions she's made on the Mor-Gran-Sou board over the years are, from left: Facility Technician **Tony Stegmiller**, Journeyman Lineman **Cody Graetz**, Leadman **Clint Begger**, Manager of Operations **Randy Ressler**, Journeyman Lineman **Blake Reis**, and Journeyman Lineman **Brady Zachmann**.



# Look up and look around ... Farm equipment is on the move



*Journeyman Lineman  
Joe Michael, Flasher*



While farmers focus on the ground when sowing and harvesting, looking up is just as important – especially when operating farm equipment near power lines.

For your safety, make sure you have at least 10 feet of clearance between power lines and your combines, grain augers, pickers, balers and front-end loaders.

Keep in mind that uneven ground and shifting soil conditions can put you in harm's way.

Look up and look around when operating equipment. Power lines and poles may be closer than you think.

If you see a power line issue that may need Mor-Gran-Sou's attention, please call the co-op at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212. Or, send an email to [safety@morgransou.com](mailto:safety@morgransou.com) with location information and a photo, if possible. Working together helps ensure the safety of all.

*Leadman  
Cody Maher,  
Fort Yates*



*Journeyman Lineman  
Blake Reis, Mandan*



**Mor-Gran-Sou  
Electric Cooperative**

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PHOTO COURTESY OF NDSRM

Before the bridge was built for trains to cross the Missouri River, tracks were laid on the ice. This photo was taken during the winter of 1881.

## Aug. 28 is Railroad Day at the NDSRM

A favorite annual event for museum supporters, Railroad Day will be held Aug. 28 this year at the NDSRM in Mandan. From 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., guests can enjoy a hobo banquet of brats, hot dogs and beans; watch telegraph demonstrations; participate in the Railroad Photo Contest; take a live steam mini-train ride on the "Sky Line Railway" and more.

Volunteers, dressed in conductor hats and bibs, will be on-hand to give informal tours and demonstrations, and answer questions.

Admission is free and donations are welcome.

# Museum preserves North Dakota's railroad history; offers family fun

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVNEY

When railroad service came to North Dakota in the late 1800s, it brought supplies, settlers and jobs to some desolate areas. Towns and communities thrived along the railroad, thanks in large part to trains that provided freight and transportation.

As the automobile industry developed and people began traveling in personal vehicles, the need to use the railroad as a passenger service decreased. As the decades passed and people stopped riding trains, depots were no longer needed as a hub for passengers to purchase tickets and wait for rides.

Trains still play an important role for electric cooperative members who know the importance of coal — which still provides the most reliable and affordable form of baseload generation in North Dakota. Trains transport our

state's lignite coal from mine to plant, where it is pulverized and burned. The heat that is created turns water into steam, which drives the turbine generators to produce electricity.

Railroads played an important role in North Dakota's history — and they are still valued as freight transporters today. To learn more about the history and see a variety of rolling stock including a tank car, box car, refrigerator car, passenger car and more, visit the North Dakota State Railroad Museum (NDSRM) in Mandan. Established in 1986 as the Railroad Museum Historical Society, the NDSRM is a business member of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative.

### Donations and volunteers make the museum possible

In 1985, Kenneth and Darlene Porsborg donated four acres of land in northwest Mandan, to be used as a site

for the museum. Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway donated its yard office from Mandan. With assistance from the Morton County Historical Society, the yard office was moved to the current location.

In 1989, the North Dakota Legislature designated the museum as the NDSRM. Since that time, the museum has acquired a variety of cars, engines, cabooses and industry artifacts that have been donated or purchased.

Wes Wenger, the current president of the 11-member board of directors for NDSRM, says the railroad industry threw old anchors and spikes that were no longer in use. People pulled them out of the garbage and took them home.

"Now, we are getting some of it back to display at the museum — for a price," he says.

Wenger started working for Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway



**Tom Hansen**, a museum volunteer for the past decade, holds a message hoop. When a train went by a depot, an agent would hang instructions from the hoop for the conductor to grab while the train was moving. The notes may have contained information on the location of other trains using the track, to avoid a head-on collision, or if one of the rail cars or track needed a repair.

in 1976. Starting as a laborer, he worked his way up the corporate ladder, earning truck rights, machine rights, and he eventually became a foreman and track inspector. He knows many of the challenges of the railroad and its employees firsthand, as he describes helping to pull 1,000 ties in one day.

"We worked hard and got body sore," he describes. "We met some wonderful people — but it was not a family life." Wenger retired in 2002.

Now one of the volunteers at the museum, Wenger says visitors come to explore the spacious grounds and bridge, climb the rail cars, view a variety of historical displays and have fun. The NDSRM hosts a variety of free events each year, including a pancake breakfast fundraiser in March, Father's Day in June, Watermelon Day in July and Railroad Day in August.

The museum also has a gift shop



While visiting the North Dakota State Railroad Museum, visitors can explore the spacious grounds and bridge, climb the rail cars, view a variety of historical displays and more. Open 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day, the museum is an ideal place for families to learn and have fun. Visitors may also tour the property during daylight hours when the museum buildings are not open.

for visitors to purchase an assortment of railroad memorabilia including shirts, caps, books, belt buckles, mugs, T-shirts, pins, magnets and more.

With great assistance from volunteers, the museum is open from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. daily in between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The grounds and museums are free to tour, but the board of directors welcomes donations of any size.

Longtime volunteer Tom Hansen grew up as a "railroad brat," as his father worked for the railroad. He took some student trips as a teenager, and just before he turned 18 years old, he tried to get a job. With many other men looking for work, the railroad declined to hire Tom — likely because he was not 21.

The museum is a special place for Tom to give his time. Visitors who tour the grounds often ask him questions, and on occasion, someone will share that they knew his father and tell a story.

"It's neat to visit with them," he says. "Any time you visit with somebody, you pick up knowledge. And that's purely what I love."

Preserving the history of the railroad,

showing the industry's challenges and accomplishments, and teaching future generations why people came to this great state are some of the goals of the museum.

The North Dakota State Railroad Museum is located at 3102 37th St. N.W. in Mandan. For more information, call 663-9322 or visit [www.ndsrm.org/](http://www.ndsrm.org/). ■



During Watermelon Day in July, museum volunteer **Chris Heim** gave demonstrations on primitive forms of railroad communication including Morse code and the train's whistle. He explained that each whistle conveyed a specific message, which was often related to safety.



# Porcupine woman makes history, inspires others

STORY BY CARMEN DEVNEY



*Danielle Ta'Sheena Finn, from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, was named Miss Indian World this spring. Shown here, she greeted family members, friends, community members and others at a powwow in Porcupine in June.*

History was made when she became the first woman to represent the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe as Miss Indian World, and earn a seat at the table at the nation's largest powwow.

During the week of April 26 to 30, Danielle Ta'Sheena Finn competed against 23 Native American women who represented their families, communities and tribes in the Miss Indian World Pageant, held in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

One of her favorite sayings by W.C. Fields is, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." And she did. During her second attempt in competing in the prestigious cultural pageant for young Native American women, Danielle claimed the crown this spring and was named Miss Indian World.

A third-year law student at Arizona State University in Phoenix, Ariz., Danielle will spend her 1-year term traveling throughout the United States, Canada and the world, representing the beauty and diversity of Native American, Aboriginal and Indigenous cultures and the Gathering of Nations, Ltd., Powwow.

As a role model for all young women and girls of all ages, Danielle proudly tells all who inquire that she is from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

## Preparing all her life for the title

The daughter of John and Brenda Finn, Danielle and her family are from the Porcupine district, a community of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, located north of Selfridge. Porcupine is served by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative. Educated in Bismarck, Danielle spent many weekends and summers visiting her grandparents and other family members who reside in the Porcupine district. The Porcupine community was founded in part by her ancestors, and generations of her family have called Porcupine their home. Danielle still does, too.

Growing up, Danielle says she had a lot of self-drive and motivation.

"I was a really tough kid in everything," she recalls. "I rode horses, and I was the one who took chances. After five bucks



**Danielle Ta'Sheena Finn** encourages children of all ages to follow their dreams and consider competing in future Miss Indian World pageants. As the current crown-holder, she also speaks to them about the importance of suicide prevention, higher education and language revitalization.

off a horse, I would get back up.”

Brenda describes her daughter as having grit. Even back then, she remembers Danielle had a way of calmly justifying what she wanted.

Danielle says she grew in confidence by watching and learning from her parents. Witnessing her father give “millions of speeches,” Danielle quickly learned how to make and hold eye contact, and speak well in public.

After she graduated from high school, Danielle attended Minot State University, where she earned a degree in criminal justice with a minor in international business. She continued her education at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law in Phoenix, where she will continue through December. While she can't see herself defending clients in the courtroom, Danielle knows her work will involve public policy, because the work can affect a lot of people through legislative drafting and through laws in general. Regardless of what she chooses to do after she graduates from law school, Danielle has a desire to help all indigenous people, and plans to return to Standing Rock.

This year's pageant competition coincided with the university's final exams. The school graciously deferred Danielle's exams, which allowed her to compete and ultimately win.

Each contestant competed in the areas of:

- Public speaking
- Personal interview
- Traditional presentation
- Dance, and
- Essay

The categories were judged based on the contestants' own cultural knowledge. Competing against many exceptional women, Danielle, age 25, won the two top awards for public speaking and best personal interview.

The judges asked her a handful of questions including, “What would it mean to you to become Miss Indian World?” Danielle spoke from the heart when she replied, “It will mean the world to my people, because we've never had a Miss Indian World from Standing Rock. I would be the first.” Then, they asked her how long she's been preparing for the Miss Indian World competition. Without hesitation, she stated, “All my life.”

Since winning the title, Danielle says she's been living on adrenaline, coffee, Airborne® and Emergen-C®. Juggling school and travels, Danielle is sharing important messages with people of all ages via her platforms including suicide prevention, higher education and language revitalization.

“I encourage people to learn their language. Every 14 days, an indigenous language dies. That's a terrible statistic,” she shares. “They need to start practicing it and utilizing it more.”

She also encourages young women to consider competing in future Miss Indian World competitions.

“That's one of the best parts [of holding this title],” she says. “Girls come up to me and say they want to be Miss Indian World. And I say, ‘Yes!’ This is why I wanted to do it.”

Porcupine holds a special place in Danielle's heart. During a community meet-and-greet at the Porcupine Community Center in June prior to the three-day powwow, Danielle couldn't hold back the tears.

“I could barely say thank you,” she says about those who attended the gathering, including family members. “I'm so overwhelmed with joy and pride and happiness that they are so proud of me, and I'm proud to be one of them and here.”

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative congratulates Danielle Ta'Sheena Finn on making history with this career milestone, and know she is already making a difference by inspiring others and sharing important messages. ■



During a meet-and-greet gathering in June, three women from Porcupine celebrated each other's pageant milestones. From left, **Mary Louise Defender Wilson** served as Miss Indian America, **Danielle Ta'Sheena Finn** is the current Miss Indian World, and **Elaine McLaughlin** served as Miss Standing Rock.

PHOTO BY CARMEN DENVEY

# MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## board meeting highlights



### Meeting date: June 29, 2016

- Approved the May 25, 2016 regular Board meeting minutes
- Approved two work order inventories and a special equipment inventory
- Approved capital credit refunds to estates, and corrected amount for Age 80+ from May
- Reviewed and accepted the May financial report
- Discussed Basin Electric Power Cooperative rate increase
- Approved allocation of 2015 margins per the audit report
- Reviewed several requests for director candidates from associated entities
- Heard results from the 2016 Member Survey conducted by Odney Advertising
- Approved a three-year extension on a service agreement for auditing services
- Appointed a voting delegate and alternate for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Region 6 meeting
- Accepted members to serve on the 2016 Election Committee, and assigned director to assist Election Committee
- Heard Co-General Managers/Chief Executive Officers' update and reports from meetings attended
- Heard update on Innovative Energy Alliance, LLC
- Heard updates on all entities of WDUS Holdings LLC
- Reviewed director's and attorney's expenses report for May
- Heard director reports and held discussion on meetings attended
- Reviewed department reports
- Confirmed attendance at various upcoming events
- Held Executive Session

### Upcoming regular board meeting dates:

Aug. 31 in the NDAREC board room in Mandan at 9 a.m. CT

Sept. 28 at the Fort Yates Service Center at 9 a.m. CT

Members are welcome to attend the board meetings at any time. Please contact Mor-Gran-Sou at [cternes@morgransou.com](mailto:cternes@morgransou.com), or call 800-750-8212 or 701-597-3301 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](http://www.morgransou.com), or call the office for a copy.

**ATTENTION MEMBERS:** The billing statement you received on or around Aug. 5 contains a line item indicating your 2015 capital credit allocation. The information shown on that billing statement is not the retirement, but the allocation. This is the only statement you will receive concerning your 2015 capital credit allocation. Please retain the August billing statement as a permanent record of your 2015 allocation.

### What is a capital credit allocation?

This information is provided each year as an official record of your capital credits. Since Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is a member-owned cooperative, at the end of each year we allocate all our profits (the money left over after all expenses are paid) to you, our member-owners, based on how much energy you bought during the year. These allocations are called capital credits. By allocation, we mean that we assign your share of the margins to a holding account in your name. Capital credits are used by your cooperative for operating funds, and at some later date, paid back to members as the financial condition of the cooperative permits. These amounts are not payable at this time and do not represent cash, but rather your equity in our cooperative.



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### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Chair..... Leland "Judge" Barth  
Vice Chair..... Casey Wells  
Secretary-Treasurer..... Bonnie Tomac  
Directors ..... Mark Doll,  
Vernard Frederick, Lance Froelich,  
Chad Harrison, Jay Larson, Bob J. Leingang

### MANAGEMENT

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

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

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**HOLIDAY CLOSING:  
MONDAY, SEPT. 5**

In observance of the Labor Day holiday in September, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, Sept. 5. Members, line crews will be available in case of an emergency electrical outage.