



Heavenly Peace

On this silent night and every night,
sleep in heavenly peace.



What's inside:

Merry Christmas from Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative

Linden Graetz is the son of Mor-Gran-Sou members Cody and Kayla Graetz. Cody is a journeyman lineman who works out of the Mandan Service Center.

- Former director shares board experiences
- Cooperative seeks board candidates
- Student opportunities: scholarships, safety poster coloring contest, Youth Tour
- Meeting minutes ... and more!



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

After serving on the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative board of directors for 18 years, **Pam Geiger** reached her term limit and was unable to seek re-election. Board Chair **Leland "Judge" Barth** presented a gift to Pam from the board in October, to thank her for her dedication to the cooperative and its membership.

Former director shares board experiences, encourages members to serve

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

If you are thinking about serving on the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative board of directors, and wondering what you might contribute to the board with little to no experience, ask yourself this: "What will I gain from serving on the board?" Pam Geiger, a Morton County cooperative member who served on the board for 18 years, says if your experience is anything like hers, you will gain knowledge, friends, and a sense of fulfillment in knowing you helped guide the cooperative into the future.

After serving six consecutive terms as a board member, Pam had met the cooperative's term-limit status. When people ask her about her many experiences on the board, serving both as a director and as

the secretary-treasurer, Geiger says she feels she received more than she contributed to the organization because she learned from and worked with some very talented people.

"I had the opportunity to see the staff working from the inside, and I wish every member could see it because it's pretty phenomenal. They do it without regret and second thought, sometimes putting themselves in harm's way during adverse weather conditions," she says. "It's rare to have an outage when the sun shines. They spend many nights not having dinner with their families — and it is a great sacrifice."

Pam downplays her role on the board, which has had to make some difficult decisions over the years. One year when she attended an

annual meeting as a member, Pam remembers thinking the cooperative appeared to be asset-rich and cash-poor. As the lead tax specialist for Farm Credit Services in Mandan, Pam was correct in her financial assessment. By trying to maintain low rates for the member-owners, it had become difficult for the cooperative to meet daily needs.

When she was elected to serve on the board, one of her goals was to assist the directors in putting the cooperative in a stronger financial position. "Over time, we refinanced in the low-interest-rate environment, passed along rate increases that came from our power suppliers, and shored up our own rate that we had been holding off on for some time," she says. The cooperative later formed Innovative Energy Alliance, LLC, uniting the cooperatives of Mor-Gran-Sou, Slope Electric, Roughrider Electric and later KEM Electric.

"It brought the talents of many cooperatives together to share employees and resources that Mor-Gran-Sou alone couldn't sustain," she says.



Pam and Warren Geiger have three children and seven grandchildren, and they are blessed to have them all living in the Mandan area. Pam says being a grandparent puts life in a "different realm; an amazing place to be." She enjoys taking the grandkids to movies, riding the pontoon and supporting their oldest granddaughter, who attends North Dakota State University.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Pam Geiger grew up on a dairy farm, so she always knew the importance and value of electricity. Her husband, Warren, is a fourth-generation rancher, and the couple lives north of Mandan on the land homesteaded by his ancestors in the early 1900s. Pam says their work on the ranch has given her an understanding and empathy for the people Farm Credit serves. "What we are experiencing at home, whether it's drought or high calf prices or low calf prices, we bring that here," she says.

Through strategic planning, Mor-Gran-Sou was in solid financial position when the ice storms of 2010 crippled the electric transmission and distribution system. Pam says multiple weather incidents provided some of the biggest challenges during her years of service on the board.

“It’s rare to have an outage when the sun shines. They (Mor-Gran-Sou employees) spend many nights not having dinner with their families — and it is a great sacrifice.”

“I give kudos to Don and Chris and the whole team, how they pulled everybody together in those instances and made it happen. They worked like a SWAT team, and staff poured hours into working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency [to secure national funding]. It put a lot of stress on the employees and the linemen,” she continues.

“For the board members, the challenge of those storms was that while the power was back on, the financial burdens were yet to be met. The board had to look at how do we best do that. With management

providing us with the information we needed to make sound decisions, and with the support of the membership, we put on the monthly adder to pay down the debt.” While the cooperative continues to recover, the financial assistance received from the state and FEMA, along with other cost-containment measures, allowed Mor-Gran-Sou to remove the storm adder ahead of schedule.

“They were challenging times,” she reflects. “I’ve often said I wish every member could sit on that board for a while. I truly did get more from it than what I contributed. I feel that way because I grew so much as a person and in my professional career.”

Pam notes that Mor-Gran-Sou is currently seeking candidates to serve on the board of directors, and encourages members to learn more about the industry.

“It’s more than Mor-Gran-Sou. It’s a multimillion-dollar organization that reaches beyond Mor-Gran-Sou and North Dakota, and extends regionally and nationally. I learned a lot, and it has been a very rewarding experience,” she says. ■



Pam Geiger has dedicated her life to cooperative movements: both at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative and at Farm Credit Services of Mandan, where she works as lead tax specialist, providing work direction for a team of tax preparers and support staff. Pam also manages a portfolio of tax clients and helps farm families transition to the next generation or retire. Starting with Farm Credit in 1999 with the intention of working one tax season, Pam says her husband jokes it’s the longest extension she’s ever filed. Thankful for the time and encouragement she received from Farm Credit to serve on the Mor-Gran-Sou board, Pam says she is proud of the many ways Mor-Gran-Sou and Farm Credit Services of Mandan have supported rural communities.



Mor-Gran-Sou's annual meeting scheduled for July 21, 2017

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 Grant County position presently held by Casey Wells;
- The Mandan Area position presently held by Robert Leingang; and
- The Sioux County position presently held by Lance Froelich.

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 29, 2017. 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. 11, 2017.

The members of the Nominating Committee include Leslie Dirk, Mandan; Glenda Gross, Selfridge; Kathy Hoff, Leith; Jim Hopfauf, Flasher; Andrew Holle, Mandan; Rhonda Leingang, Solen; Garek Murphy, Fort Yates; Jim Neubauer, Mandan; and Travis Wilkens, New Salem.

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 Wednesday, March 8, 2017. 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 8 deadline will be included in the list the Nominating Committee will provide to the board. ■

Need Help with Heating Costs? LIHEAP can help.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps eligible low-income households with home heating costs.

- Heating assistance
- Weatherization services (insulation, weather stripping, etc.)
- Furnace and chimney cleaning
- Furnace repair and replacement
- Emergency assistance

Applications are accepted from October 1 through May 31 for each heating season. For help filling out and submitting the LIHEAP application, call 1-800-823-2417 ext: 158.



JUNE 10 to 16, 2017

North Dakota Electric Cooperative

YOUTH TOUR

HIGH SCHOOL
SOPHOMORES & JUNIORS

WRITE A WINNING ESSAY AND WIN A TRIP OF A LIFETIME!
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 a question, contact Jackie Miller, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, at the address listed below, or call 701-597-3301 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 31. Email entries to jlmler@morgransou.com or mail to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND 58535-0297.



ESSAY QUESTION:

Democracy is the foundation of our American way of life and of cooperative enterprise. The fundamentals of democracy include voter participation, political party affiliation, and public debate of issues. Describe what you think makes our current democracy strong, and provide suggestions for ways our democracy can be made stronger and more effective.

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.

CHECK OUT THE ESSAY-CONTEST GUIDELINES AT

www.ndyouthtour.com and www.youthtour.coop



Co-op scholarships available for high school graduates

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 four \$500 scholarships to qualifying seniors.

The scholarship program, sponsored by Mor-Gran-Sou and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, is designed to encourage and recognize the achievements of the children of cooperative members. To qualify, students must be enrolled or plan to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. They must be U.S. citizens and dependents of Mor-Gran-Sou members.

As in past years, Mor-Gran-Sou will offer four scholarships. Two of the four are designated for qualified applicants who plan to attend a certified vocational or technical school. We ask that the applicant specify which scholarship award he or she is requesting.

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.

The scholarship will be awarded during the 2016-2017 school year. Applications are available at area schools, co-op headquarters in Flasher, or online at www.morgransou.com.

Applications are due no later than 4:30 p.m. CT (3:30 p.m., MT) on Friday, Feb. 17, 2017. 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 Jackie at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212. ■



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® 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 Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2017.



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 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. ■



North Dakota's electric cooperatives celebrate National Apprenticeship Week

North Dakota's 16 electric distribution cooperatives and five generation and transmission cooperatives, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor, are celebrating National Apprenticeship Week Nov. 14 to 20, and highlighting the apprentice linemen and apprentice meter technicians who work for their local cooperatives.

Apprenticeship is an “earn-and-learn” training model that combines work-based learning with related classroom instruction using the highest industry standards. Apprenticeship is for those who aspire to be great, lead in innovation and creativity, strive to innovate in business and industry, and recognize the value of combining paid on-the-job learning coupled with a substantial educational component to build generational greatness in careers and commerce.

National Apprenticeship Week is an opportunity for the apprenticeship community to tell the story of apprenticeships and is encouragement to leaders in business and industry, education, career seekers, community-based organizations, students and workers to learn about the real-world advantages of developing careers through adoption of the apprenticeship model.

The United States currently has approximately 375,000 apprentices working with more than 150,000 employers. The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) reports there are 72 workers enrolled in the apprenticeship program in North Dakota. These apprentices are working toward a career as a line maintainer or a meter repair technician within the electrical utility industry. Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, currently has one apprentice: Brady Zachmann. He works at the co-op's service center in Mandan.

“Our apprentice program has had a large impact on our cooperative,” says Randy Ressler, manager of operations for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative. “We’ve employed many apprentices over the years, and in turn seen our co-op grow, our productivity skyrocket and our employee turnover significantly decrease. I highly encourage those in our business community to establish an apprenticeship program within their own organization.”

Companies that offer apprenticeship programs can diversify their workforce, improve productivity and profitability, standardize training, reduce turnover, receive tax credits and more. ■



Brady Zachmann, apprentice lineman, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative

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MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

board meeting highlights



Meeting date: Oct. 26, 2016

- Approved the Sept. 28, 2016 regular Board meeting minutes
- Approved a work order inventory and a special equipment inventory
- Approved capital credit refunds to estates and those age 80 and over
- Approved Innovative Energy Alliance (IEA) Cooperative Articles of Association
- Approved renewal of CoBank line-of-credit
- Heard report on reduction of Western Area Power Administration drought adder
- Approved rate increase for 2017 effective Jan. 1, 2017
- Passed Resolution to accept the Basin Electric Power Cooperative 2017 Load Forecast for years 2016-2035
- Set maximum refund amount for 2017 for estates and elderly capital credit retirements
- Reviewed and accepted IRS Form 990
- Reviewed preliminary 2017 Budget
- Heard concern from a member
- Appointed director and alternate to serve on the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors
- Set 2017 deadline dates for Declaration of Candidacy
- Appointed Board director to assist 2017 Nominating Committee
- Appointed three members to the 2017 Nominating Committee
- Approved attendance at upcoming meetings and selection of voting delegates/alternates
- Heard Co-General Managers/Chief Executive Officers (CEO)' update
- Reviewed and accepted director's expense report for September
- Heard reports and held discussion on meetings attended by Co-General Managers/CEOs and directors
- Reviewed department reports
- Held Executive Session

Upcoming regular board meeting dates:

Dec. 20 in the NDAREC Ulmer Center, Mandan, at 10:30 a.m. CT

Members are welcome to attend the board meetings at any time. Please contact Mor-Gran-Sou at 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, or call the office for a copy.

The holidays are just around the corner

Gift certificates are available at Mor-Gran-Sou.
Light up someone's holiday season!

How long is your Christmas list? If a certain someone on your list is a member of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative and you need a bright idea on what to buy for Christmas ... why not wrap up a gift certificate he or she can use toward an electric bill?

Call Mor-Gran-Sou
at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212
and ask for Julie or Jackie.

We can help you "lighten" up the holidays.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Our entire organization wishes our member-owners a very Merry Christmas, and a safe and Happy New Year! In observance of the holidays in December and January, Mor-Gran-Sou will be closed:

Friday, Dec. 23, and Monday, Dec. 26, for Christmas
Monday, Jan. 2, 2017, for New Year's Day

Members: Line crews will be available in case of an electrical emergency outage.

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

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Flasher, ND 58535-0297
Phone: 701-597-3301 Flasher
701-663-0297 Mandan
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..... 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

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative