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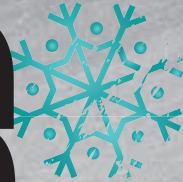
Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

MARCH 2016

NEWS

Remembering the

BLIZZARD '66



In this issue:

- What members remember
- Annual meeting notification
- A phone survey may await you!
- Skip the service fees
- Meeting minutes ... and more

Clearing mammoth drift in central North Dakota, early March 1966.



PHOTO FROM THE ELWYN B. ROBINSON SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UND



Frollicking in a massive snow pile in eastern North Dakota, early March 1966.



PHOTO FROM THE ELWYN B. ROBINSON SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UND

Two major snow and ice storms in 2010 made history for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, when heavy ice and blustery winds damaged more than 13,000 utility poles combined — and left some members in Grant County without electric service for weeks in April until broken poles and lines could be replaced.

The Blizzard of 1966 won't be remembered by the Mor-Gran-Sou membership for extensive electric distribution and transmission damage, lengthy power outages and massive price tags associated with the 2010 storms. As we approach the 50th anniversary of what was been labeled the "Storm of the Century," many of our members reflect on what they *do* remember: the severity and length of the storm, and lessons learned.

In this month's local pages, Paul Huncovsky, Vern Frederick and Arlene Wells share memories of this particular blizzard — and how they and their families coped during dangerous, deadly conditions.

Paul Huncovsky

Spring blizzards are known for often-crippling weather conditions: Mild temps plunge, rain freezes, winds gust and snow accumulates. Paul Huncovsky, a Flasher resident

Mor-Gran-Sou members remember the

BLIZZARD '66

BY CARMEN DEVNEY



PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVENEY

Paul Huncovsky, line superintendent for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative during the Blizzard of 1966.

who had taken a job at Mor-Gran-Sou in 1948 unloading poles, knew the havoc a strong storm could wreak. He had worked his way up the cooperative ladder to lineman, lead lineman and eventually line superintendent, and was anticipating what was to come.

On the afternoon of Wednesday, March 2, 1966, Huncovsky was working at cooperative headquarters in Flasher when the storm began. Having listened to the radio and weather forecasts, he knew the storm would be bad so he told the linemen to go home, ride it out and come back to work when it was safe.

When the visibility became so poor Paul could hardly see down the street, the cooperative closed and the employees headed for home. A coworker offered Paul a ride in his truck, but the truck couldn't maneuver the town's side streets due to snow accumulation, so Paul got out and walked.

"I didn't get far before I became exhausted, and I had to stop and rest. I saw a light in a house, and asked if I could come in and rest, and warm up," he says. "The snow was so high, I had to crawl. It wore me out."

Once he made it home, he

remained there for days. He says he remembers one of the cooperative's members calling from the Saint Anthony area, saying he was out of power and heat to his home. He kept asking, "Are you coming? Are you coming yet?"

"I told him, we just can't see a thing!" The N.D. State Highway Department also called Paul, indicating that a group of men had become stranded on the road and asking if linemen lived in the area and could help. "I said, 'We sure would if we could, but we can't see, either!'" Serving as the line superintendent came with the huge responsibility of balancing the membership's needs with the safety of the line crews. "I would never send them out if I didn't think it was safe," he concludes.

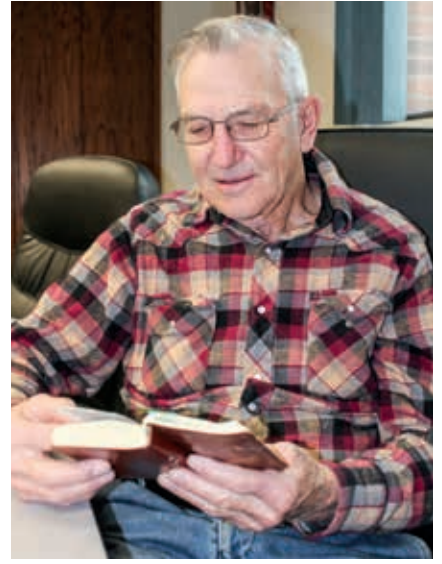
Paul retired from Mor-Gran-Sou in 1991.

Vern Frederick

A current Mor-Gran-Sou board member who lives west of Flasher with his wife, Bonnie, Vern Frederick has kept a detailed journal for about 85 percent of his adult life. Through his notes, he can recall each day of the storm as if he lived it last week.

Farming at the time alongside his parents, Fritz and Elizabeth Frederick, Vern helped prepare for the storm. They loaded silage, fed cows and pigs, brought some cows home, put up temporary corrals and separated some heifers that were ready to calf. "Storm brewing!" his notes clearly read. "Bowling called off. Lenten services called off."

The morning of Thursday, March 3, the temp was 26 degrees. Deep snow drifts had already accumulated by the barn. The Fredericks sorted more cattle and fed hay in the barn. School was closed, no travel was advised, and the wind shifted overnight from northeast to northwest. It would later be learned that the change in wind would



Vern Frederick, board member for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, reads pages from the journal he kept in 1966 that documented the blizzard.

greatly contribute to the loss of cattle across North Dakota. The Fredericks did not record a loss.

On Friday, March 4, conditions were so poor they were unable to go outside and feed the cattle. The blizzard was as bad as ever, and the front door of Vern and Bonnie's trailer was nearly snowed closed. They had a 1955 Buick in the yard that was nearly covered in snow. Vern says he and Bonnie played games with their 3-year-old daughter, Darla, to pass the time.

"We didn't do much of anything; we couldn't. It was just too bad," he says.

In the afternoon they made it out to the corrals. They pulled a calf that was already dead, but the cow was, "A-ok." The family could tell the storm was starting to clear.

The weekend was spent moving snow with their 2010 John Deere tractor, clearing pens and feeding cattle — some of which hadn't eaten since Wednesday. They also filled a sprayer tank with water and hauled it to sections for other cows that had been eating snow and were thirsty.

On Monday, March 7, life returned mostly to normal, although chores



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

The secretary-treasurer of the Carson Historical Society and former board member for Mor-Gran-Sou from 1981-1987 and 1988-1991, Arlene Wells lives south of Carson with her husband, Delbert. They went in search of their cattle following the blizzard — and found them by the steam of their breaths.

still consisted of unloading silage and hauling water for cattle. Vern writes, “Went to town for John Deere day and won the record prize drawing. Ate at the hall, got groceries. Bowling again.”

Vern Frederick served on the Mor-Gran-Sou board of directors from 1990 to 1999, and from 2004 to present.

Arlene Wells

The blizzard just kept coming and coming. Living 28 miles south of Carson on a ranch nestled among hills and a creek, Arlene and Delbert Wells feared the eventual flooding would be worse than the tremendous amount of snow, which the N.D. National Guard would help remove later.

On the first day it was decent following the storm, Arlene and Delbert, and one of their sons, Owen, saddled up horses and rode the hill tops, looking for their cattle. They found one group in the creek, alive, and decided to continue.

When Arlene crossed the creek, her tall saddlehorse “disappeared” into the snow. He was able to climb out, but about a mile and a half down the path he started snorting and wouldn’t go further. Arlene recalls seeing a big bank of snow, and a “funny, dark-colored spot” and puff of air escaping from the snow. She rode closer and realized a cow was under the snow, alive, and the horse was seeing its breath.

“The cows were laying along the fence line, eyes froze shut,” she says. The Wells had packed shovels and they started to dig.

The cattle had scattered with the changing of the wind, and the Wells just kept riding and pulling the cattle out, one by one.

“Some of the ones we saved, we made the mistake of feeding them and shouldn’t have. They bloated and died,” she says. Arlene estimates they lost between 10 and 12 head.

When the Wells got home for the night, they were dog tired. Arlene says she remembers walking into the house and finding water dripping from the ceiling. The house was only 6 years old.

On one side of the house stood a snow bank that was 6 to 8 feet high; on the other side it was completely clear. The wind had cross-sucked the snow through the house’s ventilation system and the attic was full of snow.

“We crawled up there with gunny sacks and starting taking the sloppy snow out,” she says. “We had a guy come in and redo the roof, after we got over the shock and disgust.”

Arlene also remembers two of her children, Janice and Casey, giving her a scare when they went outside to play and ended up on top of a snow bank — just a couple feet under an energized power line. She quickly ran out and hollered at them not to touch it.

Arlene shared that as a child, she used to ride 5 ½ miles to school on horseback one way, opening

five gates each way. Growing up a resilient North Dakotan, she knows how challenging rural life and winters can be.

“We knew that particular storm was coming because of the radio, but we didn’t expect that much snow or for the snow to last that long,” she concludes.

Perspectives

The Blizzard of 1966 was a national event that caused loss of life across North Dakota and the United States. Many parts of North Dakota lost electric service, but the vast majority of the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative service area did not.

The snow and ice storms of 2010 hit the Dakotas the hardest. While it caused severe damage to the Mor-Gran-Sou electric system, thousands of power outages, and weeks of inconvenience and expense for some members who were forced to run generators, the casualties didn’t compare to those recorded in ’66.

Randy Ressler, operations manager for Mor-Gran-Sou, offers this perspective on behalf of the cooperative.

“I don’t have firsthand knowledge of the system damage during the ’66 event, but in listening to the old-timers back when I started here, it wasn’t too bad,” he says. “There was lots of snow, but snow doesn’t usually bother us too much. The spring 2010 events by far surpassed anything Mor-Gran-Sou had ever experienced, and I believe it also set a historical high mark for damage to any individual co-op in the state, ever.”

Regardless of what storm was worse for whatever reason, we hope to never experience the likes of any of the three again. ■

Mor-Gran-Sou thanks Paul Huncovsky, Vern Frederick and Arlene Wells for sharing their stories.



**Mor-Gran-Sou
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Annual Meeting 2016

**FORT YATES, ND
PRAIRIE KNIGHTS CASINO & RESORT**

JULY 15, 2016

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



Springtime is a great time for yard work, playing outside and many other outdoor activities. No matter what's on your agenda, electrical safety should be an important part of your plans.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative offers 10 tips to help you play and work safely around electricity when you're outdoors this spring.

1. Always keep power cords and electrical equipment away from water or other wet areas. Avoid damp conditions – including wet grass – when using electricity.
2. Look up and look out for overhead power lines.
3. Call 811 before you dig.
4. Keep materials, tools and all parts of your body at least 15 feet away from any overhead power lines at all times, including during the installation of antennas or satellite dishes.
5. Never fly kites or model airplanes near power lines or radio or TV antennas. If your kite does get tangled with overhead lines, don't try to get it down yourself. Call the utility for assistance. Never use any metallic material in your kite.
6. Before every use, inspect power tools and electric lawn mowers for frayed power cords, broken plugs and weathered or damaged housings. Don't use damaged equipment until it has been repaired properly. Keep tools unplugged and stored in dry areas when they are not in use.
7. Before you trim tree limbs and shrubs, watch out for power lines that could be hidden by foliage. Contact Mor-Gran-Sou if there are concerns about tree limbs growing into or around overhead power lines on your property.
8. Keep vegetation and permanent structures away from the large, green ground-level boxes that house components of an underground electrical system. Cooperative workers may need to access the underground lines and equipment near these boxes during unplanned outages and routine maintenance.
9. Always use an insulated extension cord designed for outdoor use with the correct power rating for that equipment.
10. Ladders – even those made of wood – that come into contact with a power line can prove fatal. Keep all ladders at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines.

SKIP THE SERVICE FEES

If you're paying your utility bill online, bypass third-party payment services

A third-party bill payment service called Doxo has gained unfavorable attention with electric cooperatives across the state and nation. Some cooperative members have been reporting that they felt misled after stumbling upon the service while searching for their co-op's own bill-payment service. Doxo's payment pages often feature specific company logos and use the company's name in the header of the webpage, giving it the appearance of an official payment site.

Doxo is known to charge an additional service fee for bill payments, which has come as a surprise to members who missed the rather-subtle notice of non-affiliation with the co-op. There have also been reports of payments being delayed and due dates being missed when paying through Doxo.

Aside from these issues, the actual payments to electric

cooperatives work fine through Doxo, and the service seems as effective as any other. However, the use of a specific electric cooperative name and logo is unauthorized and makes it appear as if the service is affiliated with the respective cooperative, when indeed, it is not. This has caused confusion and created a hassle for some users.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's official online payment services are located at www.morghransou.com and through our SmartHub mobile app. There are no fees to use these services, and payments made through them are secure and are reflected on your account immediately.

If you make online payments using any other services, we urge you to use caution. Investigate before paying to make sure the service is legitimate, and inquire about any additional fees you may be required to pay. ■



A phone **SURVEY** may await YOU

Members: Mor-Gran-Sou will be completing a random residential telephone Member Satisfaction Survey. Performed by Odney Advertising, this survey will take place in April. If you receive a call from Odney Advertising on behalf of Mor-Gran-Sou, please take time to answer the questionnaire. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes. By participating in the 2016 Member Satisfaction Survey, Mor-Gran-Sou receives better insight into how we can better serve you, the member-owner. ■

Former Mor-Gran-Sou employee passes away

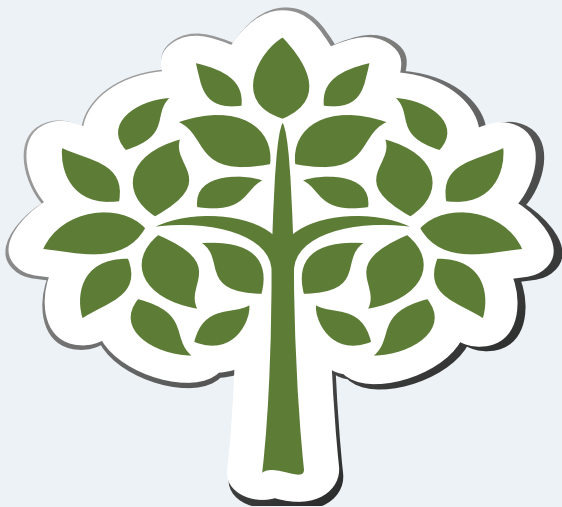
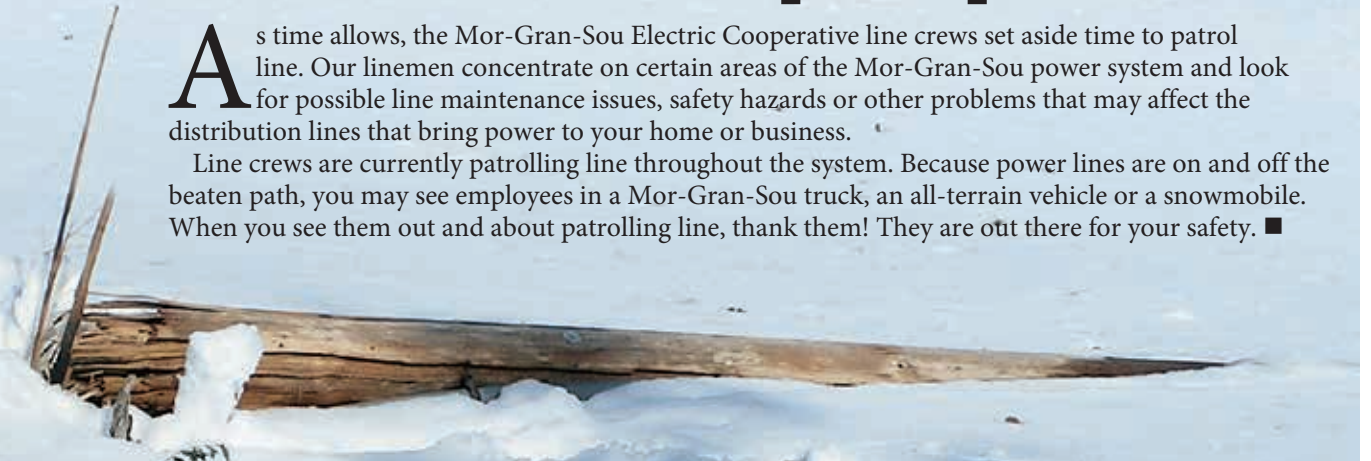
Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was saddened to learn of the death of **Jeffrey Evenson**, who passed away on Jan. 16. Evenson worked as a meter reader/serviceman from May 1979 to November 1985. The board of directors and staff of Mor-Gran-Sou extend their condolences to the family and friends of Jeffrey Evenson.



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. ■



Keeping our electric system as reliable as possible

Tree trimming is a regular part of your electric cooperative's operations.

Mor-Gran-Sou, like all electric utilities, is required to maintain appropriate clearance between trees and electric transmission and distribution lines. Trees need to be trimmed, and in some cases removed, to minimize potential power outages and to eliminate fire and safety hazards due to trees contacting energized electric lines.

Mor-Gran-Sou typically uses local contract tree-trimming crews to perform this task. Bullinger Tree Trimming will have crews operating within our service area again this year.

Please know that they are working on your cooperative's behalf to help keep our electric system as reliable and safe as possible. ■

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

board meeting highlights



Meeting date: Jan. 27, 2016

- Approved the Dec. 21, 2015 regular Board meeting minutes
- Approved a work order inventory and special equipment inventory
- Approved capital credit refunds to estates and those age 80 and over
- Approved the annual Mutual Aid Agreement
- Approved physical inventory adjustment for 2015
- Reviewed December financial report
- Discussed Operation Round Up
- Approved amended resolution for 2015 revenue deferral
- Approved WDUS Holdings LLC resolution on updated Operating Agreement
- Met with auditor for explanation and discussion on upcoming audit process
- Reviewed annual Red Flag Rule from IT department

- Had invited Nominating Committee members for lunch and discussion (none able to attend)
- Reviewed Innovative Energy Alliance, LLC (IEA) Strategic Planning schedule and Official Notice of IEA Annual Meeting
- Appointed voting delegates and alternates for various upcoming meetings
- Heard Co-General Managers/CEOs update and reports from events attended
- Heard update on IEA
- Heard updates on all entities of WDUS Holdings LLC
- Reviewed and discussed senior staff department updates
- Reviewed safety report and monthly incident report
- Reviewed and accepted director's and attorney's financial report for December
- Heard director reports and held discussion on meetings attended
- Held Executive Session

Upcoming regular board meeting dates:

March 30 in the NDAREC board room in Mandan at 10:30 a.m. CT (also is the annual Bylaws/Resolutions meeting)

April 27 in the NDAREC board room in Mandan 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, or call 1-800-750-8212 or 597-3301, to confirm the meeting date and location 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 contact the office for a copy.

BYLAW/RESOLUTION MEETING SET

A bylaw/resolution meeting will be held in conjunction with the regular board meeting scheduled to start at 10:30 a.m. CT (9:30 a.m. MT) on Wednesday, March 30. The meeting will be held in the board room of the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, located at 3201 Nygren Dr. N.W., Mandan.

If you have a bylaw/resolution to propose at the 2016 cooperative's annual meeting in July, but cannot make the scheduled meeting on March 30, please submit your information in writing to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative before March 30. Thank you. ■

SPRING AHEAD!

On Sunday, March 13 at 2 a.m., Daylight Saving time begins.



HAPPY EASTER

HOLIDAY CLOSING
In observance of the Easter holiday, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative will be closed on Friday, March 25. Mor-Gran-Sou line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.



MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

202 6th Ave. W. - PO Box 297
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..... Pam Geiger
Directors Mark Doll,
Vernard Frederick, Lance Froelich,
Chad Harrison, Bob J. Leingang,
Bonnie Tomac

MANAGEMENT

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

www.morgransou.com

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