



# 'Soul' survivor



PHOTO BY J.C. BALCOM

## What's inside:

*It's a long, cold winter for all of God's creatures seeking food and shelter among the piles of snow. While Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative member and photographer J.C. Balcom has many pheasants taking shelter in the brush on his property, he captured this shot of a sole rooster trying to warm itself in the morning sun. Balcom notes it takes soul to persevere through a North Dakota winter.*

- The lights and linemen went out on Christmas day
- Mor-Gran-Sou seeks board director candidates
- Bylaw/resolutions meeting set
- Mor-Gran-Sou earns Safety Award
- Deadlines for youth opportunities fast-approaching
- Meetings minutes and more



# ‘We have electricity! It’s a blessing!’

Co-op members share gratitude following  
Christmas blizzard and power restoration efforts

BY CARMEN DEVNEY



PHOTO BY JESSE KUHN

PHOTO BY GARY FITTERER



In some parts of the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative service area, the lights went out on Christmas day — and so did the linemen.

An epic snow and ice storm started with freezing drizzle, which froze to the electric distribution and transmission system. It quickly turned to heavy snow, and strong winds created blizzard conditions that made travel dangerous. The North Dakota Department of Transportation alerted residents to road closures, and a no-travel advisory was issued for nearly the entire state. It remained in effect until noon on Dec. 26, when the snow finally stopped. The U.S. National Weather Service Bismarck, N.D., reported the Mor-Gran-Sou service area received 8 to 12 inches of snow. In many areas, drifts exceeded a foot.

Travel was treacherous for the linemen who were dispatched to repair power outages caused by a combination of frost, and in some areas, ice on power lines, snow on cross-arms and blasts of wind. Poor visibility and clogged roads slowed the restoration process, so Mor-Gran-Sou worked with local road crews to gain access to cleared roads. The safety of the employees and membership is always a priority at your cooperative. Once able to access downed power lines and poles, the linemen reported the damage to management and proceeded with restoration where possible.

Line crews worked long hours to restore electric service in difficult conditions. Blizzard-related outages affected approximately 1,000 members, at one time or another, during the storm-restoration process. All power was restored in the Mor-Gran-Sou service area mid-afternoon on Dec. 27.

KEM Electric Cooperative in Linton continued to have power outages in its service area at that time, so the electric cooperative network lended a hand. Mor-Gran-Sou sent a four-man crew to provide manpower and supplies, including General Foreman Doug Nagel, Leadman Clint Begger, and Journeymen Linemen Brady Zachmann and Blake Reis. Capital Electric Cooperative in Bismarck and 3C Construction also sent three-man crews, and other contract crews helped KEM to reduce outage times. All substations were energized on Dec. 28, and individual outages were repaired on Dec. 29.

Many member-owners took to Facebook to learn the status of power outages and thank the line crews for their efforts. Barbara Hintz, a Mor-Gran-Sou member from the Carson area, noted, “We do have electricity! It’s a blessing! It’s ugly out there, so stay warm and safe!”

The weather conditions, clogged roads and the widespread locations of the power outages lengthened the restoration process, and Mor-Gran-Sou would like to thank our member-owners for the patience,

understanding and support shown — especially to your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative linemen and cooperative staff, who worked with integrity and accountability on Christmas day and during the holidays, so our members and their families could celebrate with comfort and cheer. ■

## CONNECT GENERATORS SAFELY TO AVOID A DANGEROUS CONDITION

Standby electric generators can provide you with an extra sense of security in our unpredictable weather and occasional power outage. We ask that for the safety of you and others, the generator be installed and used safely. Improperly connecting a generator or installing without the proper double-throw or transfer switch can produce a “back-feed” condition. This can feed current back out onto power lines, creating an ELECTRICAL DANGER to you, lineworkers and others. Please contact an authorized generator dealer and or an electrician for standby generator questions and installations to ensure everyone’s safety.

## KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE FROM DAMAGED POWER LINES AND POLES

If you see a downed power line or pole, don’t assume it is de-energized. Stay away from electrical infrastructure and call Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative at 800-750-8212, 701-597-3301 or 701-663-0297, or email [safety@morgransou.com](mailto:safety@morgransou.com) with a location and description of the damage.



## FOLLOW MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC ON FACEBOOK!

Become a fan of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative on Facebook, and receive updates on power outages, youth opportunities, the annual meeting, *North Dakota Living* stories featuring our member-owners, and much more! The link is [www.facebook.com/morgransouelectric](http://www.facebook.com/morgransouelectric).



# *Snowmobile with care*

Sledding across the snow in a roadside ditch is how many snowmobilers find their fun. But remember, power lines and poles are located along those same roadside ditches. Often, poles are reinforced with guy wires that extend some distance from the poles. They may not be easy to see from a speeding snowmobile; especially on a dark, winter night or when they are buried under snow.

- While you are snowmobiling this winter, always ride at a speed at which you can stop quickly. Ease up on the throttle; especially when near any objects.

Know your riding area, too. Watch for guy wires, fences, underground junction boxes or other hazards.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative cares about your safety.

## Bylaws and resolutions for the annual meeting

Under the bylaws, any bylaw amendments or resolutions must be presented to the members in writing in advance of the annual meeting scheduled for July 21, 2017. The board of directors has now charged the Nominating Committee with reviewing and advising the board of any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions. Therefore, any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions should be submitted in writing no later than March 16, 2017, and/or they can be presented in-person at the following meeting of the Nominating Committee:

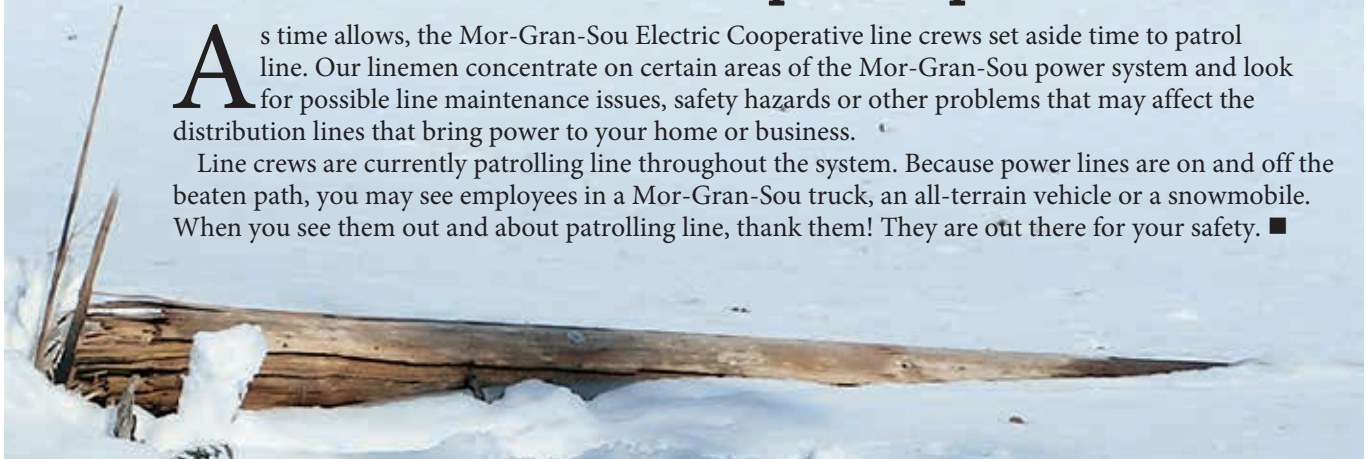
**March 16 in the Mor-Gran-Sou office board room in Flasher at 7 p.m. CT**

If you do wish to submit a bylaw amendment or resolution in writing, please forward it to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Inc., Attn: Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297, before March 16. Thank you.

## 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. ■





## 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 met for the first time on Jan. 11. 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. 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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. ■



# DIAL THE HELPLINE

DISABILITY UTILITY ASSISTANCE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PASS IT ON 211 MILITARY SUPPORT ADDICTION FINANCIAL COUNSELING SHELTER EMERGENCY SERVICES MENTAL HEALTH

WE ARE STANDING BY 24 HOURS A DAY 7 DAYS A WEEK HERE

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOOD BANKS GRIEF ASSISTANCE GAMBLING ABUSE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE UNITED WAY FRIENDS OF THE YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION

FirstLink's 2-1-1 helpline is a free phone service available 24/7 to the public. Call specialists offer supportive, non-judgmental listening ears and information about community programs statewide. To reach the helpline dial 2-1-1 or 701-235-7335.

In 2016, First Link handled  
 49,353 calls, and  
 5.1 percent of those calls  
 were suicide-related.




[www.myfirstlink.org](http://www.myfirstlink.org)

Helpline: 2-1-1 OR 701-235-7335(SEEK)

Suicide Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255(TALK)








# Mor-Gran-Sou earns Safety Award

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) hosted the 53rd annual REC Apprenticeship Training and Safety (AT&S) Conference Jan. 11-13 at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck. The conference is sponsored by the NDAREC AT&S program, with cooperation from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship.

The conference drew about 200 representatives of NDAREC member-cooperatives, students of the Bismarck State College lineworker program and the electric industry for classroom sessions, equipment evaluations and awards ceremonies. Training topics included incident investigation, working in severe weather, temporary protecting grounding and bonding, preparing for dog encounters and more.

Christina Roemmich, director of safety services for NDAREC, says the AT&S conference provides an opportunity to reflect what is going on in the industry, and to recognize the accomplishments the students have made in training and safety throughout the year.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative employees who attended this year's conference included General Foreman Doug Nagel; Leadmen Clint Begger and Jason Jahner; Journeymen Linemen Cody Graetz and Joe Michael; and Senior Engineering Technician Jason Helgeson.

At the conference awards banquet, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was one of six distribution cooperatives in North Dakota to be presented with a Safety Award. These cooperatives were recognized for having zero OSHA-recordable injuries for one year, between the dates of Dec. 1, 2015, to Nov. 30, 2016. This was the seventh year in a row Mor-Gran-Sou has received the award. ■



PHOTOS BY NDAREC/JOHN KARY

Journeyman Lineman **Joe Michael** accepted the Safety Award on Mor-Gran-Sou's behalf, from the NDAREC safety services team including, from left: **James Neether**, **Steve Homes** and **Jeff Tweten**.

# Zachmann honored as graduating apprentice

During the banquet of the Apprentice Training and Safety (AT&S) Conference, Mor-Gran-Sou Journeyman Lineman Brady Zachmann was recognized for having successfully met the requirements of the AT&S program administered by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives. This four-year program is approved by the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Apprenticeship and sponsored by the co-op, which covers the costs of the program.

Apprentices must have 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. All apprentices are required to take and pass a series of tests throughout their coursework.

Zachmann completed his bookwork and hours of training in May 2016, when he reached journeyman status. Congratulations, Brady, on this milestone achievement. ■



Journeyman Lineman **Brady Zachmann** accepted his certificate from **James Neether**, **Steve Homes** and **Jeff Tweten**.



## Co-op scholarships available for high school graduates

**M**or-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](http://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. ■

# MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## *board meeting highlights*



### Meeting date: Dec. 20, 2016

- Approved the Nov. 30, 2016 regular Board meeting minutes
- Approved three work order inventories and a special equipment inventory
- Approved capital credit refunds to estates and those age 80 and over
- Held annual legal counsel evaluation, per policy
- Approved legal counsel to attend National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Legal Seminar in 2017
- Heard alliance election results for Innovative Energy Alliance Board of Directors
- Approved attendance at upcoming meetings and selection of voting delegates/alternates
- Heard Co-General Managers/Chief Executive Officer's update
- Reviewed and accepted directors' expense report for November
- Reviewed department reports
- Held Executive Session

### Upcoming regular board meeting date:

*Feb. 22 in Flasher at 10:30 a.m. CT*  
*March 29 in the NDAREC board room 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](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.

**Holiday closing for Presidents Day: Monday, Feb. 20**

In observance of Presidents Day, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, Feb 20. Line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.

**Happy Valentine's Day**  
**Tuesday, Feb. 14**

**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](mailto: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](http://www.morgransou.com)**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative