



MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

CURRENT

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

JUNE 2017

NEWS

Taste the goodness



These vibrant apple blossoms north of Mandan are sure to deliver juicy apples this fall. Mor-Gran-Sou once again thanks member J.C. Balcom for sharing this work of art.

PHOTO BY J.C. BALCOM

What's inside:

- Hydraulic issues? WDUS can help.
- Member publishes medieval fantasy book
- Safety on the farm
- Highway 21 Treasure Hunt
- Meeting minutes and more



Hydraulic issue? WDUS can help.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Has your truck ever had an issue with hydraulics, and you tried to fix it yourself? After you started taking it apart, ran to town for parts, came home to a mess, and spent countless hours fixing and putting it back together — when you could have been doing 100 other chores — did you ask yourself, “Why didn’t I just take the truck to town and get it fixed?”

Maybe you didn’t know West Dakota Utility Services can help.

West Dakota Utility Services, or WDUS, was started by Joe Meier in 2004. Created as a subsidiary of 3C Construction, WDUS was formed to service utility vehicles. It is now an independent business owned by Mor-Gran-Sou, Roughrider and Slope Electric Cooperatives.

A former employee with Ditch Witch® for 28 years, Meier saw people taking vehicles to Billings, Watertown and Minneapolis for service. Knowing a local business could fill the niche, and having the knowledge and skills to start one, Meier opened a shop in the garage attached to the 3C Construction and Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative office building located in northwest Mandan at 4001 30th Ave. N.W. Now with a staff of five certified technicians, WDUS services utility trucks, in addition to contractors and customers who have vehicles that need hydraulic repairs or N.D. Department of Transportation certification. They also repair welders, engines and utility tools including crimpers and hydraulic tamps.



SAFETY TIP by Joe Meier

When we get busy, we get careless. It only takes one minute to walk around your vehicle and check the lights to make sure they work. When you’re driving a dusty gravel road, how visible are your tail lights? If a light is out, make it a priority to fix it as soon as possible. Simple actions that take less than five minutes can save someone’s life.

Joe Meier can be reached by calling WDUS at 701-663-4365 or emailing wdus@btinet.net.



WDUS Mechanic Zachary Koper

Joe Meier says there are a lot of farmers using old trucks. “The trucks cost a lot of money and probably gets used regularly one month out of the year,” he says. “If farmers would bring the trucks in to get serviced regularly, it could help make the vehicles last a few years longer. That’s the goal.”

Also a distributor, WDUS can also order hydraulic tools and generators. Meier says most homeowners don’t think about ordering stand-by generation until the power goes out and there is an immediate electrical need. With the summer storm season on the horizon, now is a great time to assess your needs and have a plan in place, before lightning storms or high winds have the potential to cause damage to the electric distribution and transmission system.

Growing up on a farm near Venturia, Meier knows the importance of owning and maintaining a stand-by generator, as well as having specialized equipment serviced by qualified professionals.

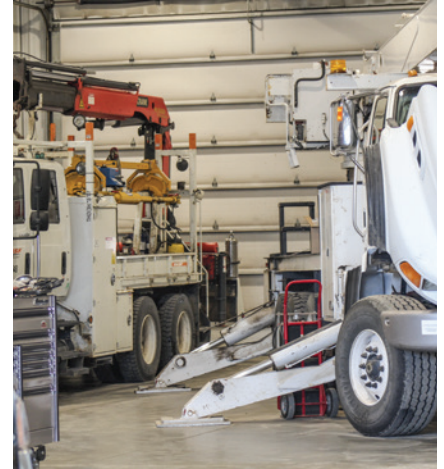


Joe Meier is the chief operations officer for WDUS. A former employee of Ditch Witch for 28 years, he started WDUS in 2004. When he retires one day, he wants to look back on how the business has grown and evolved over the years, and say, "I accomplished this. I did this."

"Dealerships know the ins and outs of brand-name vehicles, but may not be experts on the working mechanisms of a utility truck and other large vehicles, including those used on the farm and in a commercial businesses," says Meier, who is WDUS's chief operations

officer. "When my mechanics go into the field to service a vehicle, or a customer brings one here, we go through its operations and often find simple things that if repaired at that time, can save the customer a lot of money down the road."

WDUS is a cooperative-owned



WDUS charges \$100 to do a vehicle inspection and distribute a sticker that indicates DOT certification. If the vehicle doesn't pass inspection, Meier and his certified technicians make a list of issues that need to be fixed, and either WDUS or the customer can make the required repairs.

business that is providing a community service. If you have a vehicle or tool that could use a hydraulic inspection or repair, Meier says to give him a call at the office.

For information on WDUS, call 701-663-4365 or email wdus@btinet.net. ■

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

The pursuit to earn a board seat begins for four Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members vying for one of three board director positions up for re-election in July. In 2017, the three board positions sought include: one for the Grant County position, one for the Mandan Area position, and one for the Sioux County position.

The board of directors set March 8 as the deadline for receiving members' completed declaration of candidacy forms. The Nominating Committee met for a final time on March 16. 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 29, the Mor-Gran-Sou board of directors approved the following list of candidates:

Grant County:
Casey Wells, Carson

Mandan Area:
Thomas Anseth, Mandan
Bob J. Leingang, Mandan

Sioux County:
Lance Froelich, Selfridge

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



William Heinzen, a Mor-Gran-Sou member and NISC employee, wrote and published the book, *Warrior of Light*. Technology and talent — and a supportive employer — have helped make his success possible.

Local author earning trust base with fans

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Every writer dreams about publishing a book, in knowing it can be a long process of submitting to various publication houses, waiting, and eventually receiving one rejection letter after the next. William Heinzen, a member of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, fast-forwarded through the process and is selling his first novel, medieval fantasy *Warrior of Light*, both online and in book stores. Now, he’s sharing how technology and talent — and a supportive employer — helped make his success possible.

Heinzen jokes that he pursued a degree in English for fun, and a degree in accounting to get a job. A University of Jamestown graduate, he studied writing and literature, but was advised that getting a good job and turning it into a career would be a challenge. Heinzen added accounting and economics to his studies, and figured having excellent communication skills would be an asset to any job. He was right.

National Information Solutions Cooperative, an information technology company that develops

accounting, billing and engineering products for its member-owners, hired Heinzen as an intern. After doing a good job of writing training manuals for a new accounting product, Heinzen was offered a full-time job in the accounting and business solutions (ABS) division. He traveled to member sites across the United States and taught co-op employees how to use customized software for years, before transitioning to NISC’s cyber-security department. He’s been with the cooperative for six years.

“I enjoy the company

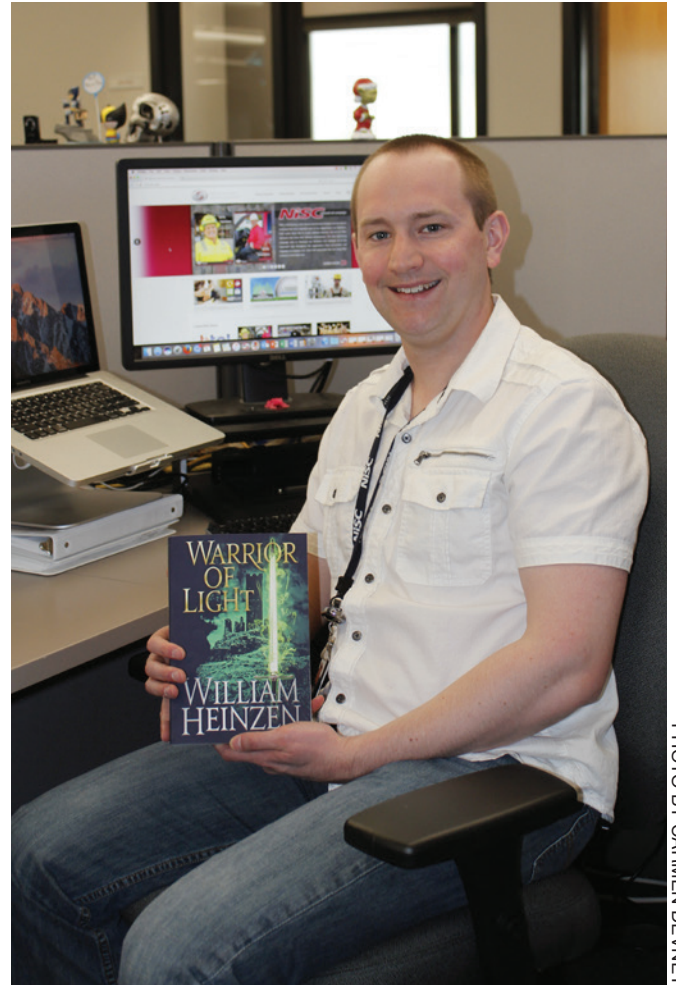


PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

and culture,” he says. “It’s been fun to see how my career has evolved from starting as an intern writing training manuals, to working on ABS implementations, to managing products for the cyber security team.”

His pursuit to earn a good job, starting in accounting, had paid off. And he was still writing on the side, for fun.

Heinzen started writing his first novel in college, as part of his senior capstone project for the University of Jamestown. He received guidance from several advisers, wrote the core version, graduated, and shelved the book for a few years to study and pass the CPA exam. A couple years ago, he pulled it out and decided it was time to turn it into a working manuscript.

A fan of fantasy books since childhood, Heinzen reflected on the various plots and characters he had read about over the years. His goal was to take all the things he liked about those stories and put them into his novel. *Warrior of Light’s* storyline is about a group of refugees who have been forced out of their home by an evil sorcerer, and they have to raise an Army to take back the land.

After writing and editing, reviewing and much more editing, Heinzen felt the book was ready to publish.



While reading and writing will always be favorite hobbies, William Heinzen looks forward to fall every year, when he can sit in a deer stand, drink coffee and read — and eventually shoot a deer.



COURTESY PHOTOS

William Heinzen says book signings have helped him promote and sell his book. He's attended a number of science fiction and fantasy conventions throughout the state and nation. At events like the Fargo-Moorhead Comicon and the Minot Magicon, people walk by his booth, see an appealing cover and are happy to support an area author who has written an interesting and well-crafted book.

Bypassing the traditional method of publishing a book, in which a person sends a manuscript to a publishing house and the company either sends a rejection letter or a contract, Heinzen studied some online options. The one that most appealed to him was CreateSpace, an Amazon-owned platform for designing both print books and e-books. Using CreateSpace, he prepared the book for publication, and through them, the book subsequently became available through other platforms such as an Amazon print listing, an e-book listing (through Kindle Direct Publishing), and distributors like Barnes & Noble® and independent bookstores.

Partnering with CreateSpace to help edit and format the book, and design the cover and help distribute, was a good option. Heinzen notes it wasn't necessary to enlist the help of others, but he felt it would improve the look — and ultimately the sales — of the book.

"It was like going into business for myself, and working with all these different resources to bring my product to market," he says.

Released in November 2016, *Warrior of Light* is sold both online and as a hard-cover book in stores across the state, nation and overseas. Heinzen notes he has sold copies to people who live as far away as Germany and the United Kingdom.

The book sold well in December, likely because booklovers were browsing new books on the market and shopping for Christmas gifts. Sales slowed after Christmas

as expected, but Heinzen says the book continues to sell well at the book-signing events he attends.

Heinzen takes time off from work to travel and promote the book. In the past year, he's had a booth at the Fargo-Moorhead Comicon and Minot Magicon, and volunteered during an event held at the Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library. Future trips will include going home to Grand Rapids, Minn., to do a book signing there, and attending conventions in Nebraska and Florida in July. Heinzen notes that his employer, NISC, is supportive of his personal achievements and subsequent need to travel.

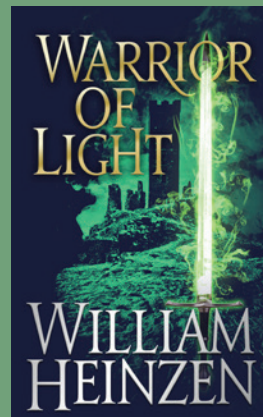
"I'm very happy to be where I'm at right now. Writing a book has been very satisfying," he says. "I'm really pleased to live in a community that has been very supportive, like the local library and the Young Professionals network. My employer at NISC has been very supportive, too, as well as my co-workers, community and family. I'm very grateful."

Heinzen is two-thirds done with his next book. He says that while it features the same characters in the first novel and the plot takes place after the *Warrior of Light* storyline, it should not be considered a series.

"It works as a single, stand-alone book that has its own story and challenges," he says. While many fantasy books on the market are written as a series, Heinzen says that as a first-time author, he wanted to develop a trust base with readers and demonstrate that he can deliver a story with a beginning, middle and end.

"To readers, picking up the first book or two can be frustrating because they don't know if it will take 2 years or 20 years for the author to write the next installment in the series," he says. "I want them to know they can rely on William as a writer. He can develop a finished product."

For more information on William Heinzen and *Warrior of Light*, visit <http://williamheinzen.com/> or <http://williamheinzen.com/warrior-of-light/>. ■



**Order the book
and support
a local author.**

Browse the Amazon bookstore and download the book, or visit your local bookstore and purchase a copy. To order a signed copy, email william@williamheinzen.com.



From left: Journeyman Lineman **Blake Reis** (operating digger-derrick), Leadman **Clint Begger** (holding plumb bob), Journeyman Lineman **Brady Zachmann** (tamping dirt) and Leadman **Jason Jahner** (waiting to reattach power line, from bucket) worked the line hot to avoid disrupting power to the member.

What happens when you have an accident in the field and hit a power pole — and don't report it to your electric cooperative?

This compromised distribution pole would have eventually toppled and caused a power outage — or even worse — caused an injury. Thankfully, no one was hurt this time. A Mor-Gran-Sou lineman discovered the damage during routine line patrol and a four-man crew replaced the pole.

Members, your safety matters! If you see a damaged or downed power line or pole, do not assume it is de-energized. Keep a safe distance, and report it to Mor-Gran-Sou by calling 701-663-0297, 701-597-3301 or 1-800-750-8212, or emailing safety@morgransou.com. Please include location information and a photo, if possible.



**Mor-Gran-Sou
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Working together helps ensure the safety of all!



Highway 21 Treasure Hunt rummage sale event June 16-17

Discover treasures and have fun during North Dakota's 16th annual 100-mile rummage sale, the Highway 21 Treasure Hunt. It will be held Friday and Saturday, June 16 and 17, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. MT.

"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.

The event attracts visitors from across the state and country. Calls have been received from those living in Oregon, Iowa and Canadian provinces.

During the event, communities along Highway 21 in southwestern North Dakota host citywide rummage sales. Participating communities include Flasher, Carson, Heil, Elgin, New Leipzig, Mott, Regent and New England. Rural residents host sales, too, so watch for signs along the route for additional sales. Also watch for sales along Highway 6 in the St. Anthony area.

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.

"Anyone who enjoys rummage sales will love this event," Dart says.

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

"Hundreds of people have discovered the treasures along Highway 21 during the annual Highway 21 Treasure Hunt," Dart says. "We encourage everyone to plan to attend the 2017 event."

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



Annual Meeting
2017

JULY 21, 2017

Fort Yates, N.D.

Prairie Knights Casino & Resort

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



**Mor-Gran-Sou
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

board meeting highlights



Meeting date: April 27, 2017

- Approved the March 29, 2017 regular Board meeting minutes
- Approved two work order inventories and a special equipment inventory
- Approved capital credit refunds to estates and those age 80 and over
- Accepted the 2016 Audit Report prepared by Brady Martz & Associates, P.C.
- Accepted the 2017 overhead charges as set by management
- Approved the Contract For Services between Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Co-op, Inc. and Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative
- Approved purchase of acreage near Hebron, N.D. for a substation
- Directors completed the annual IRS Form 990 forms
- Assigned a voting delegate and alternate for WRT Annual Meeting
- Heard Co-General Managers/Chief Executive Officers' update and report on several meetings attended
- Heard and accepted the March financial report
- Reviewed and accepted director's expense report for March
- Reviewed department reports
- Held Executive Session

Upcoming regular board meeting date:

- June 29 in the NDAREC Board room, Mandan, at 9 a.m. CT*
- July 21 at Prairie Knights Casino in the Prairie View Room, Fort Yates*

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.

Fifteen 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



Members also receive 20 percent off at the Cowboy Hall of Fame by providing the discount code TOUCH2017 at the door.

Mor-Gran-Sou members, if you travel to beautiful Medora anytime this summer, call 1-800-MEDORA-1 for reservations and use the code TOUCH2017 to receive your 15-percent savings.



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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

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