



CURRENT

Three generations of farmers learn and play at Agri-International



PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVENEY



What's inside:

The 42nd-annual KFJR Agri-International was held Feb. 12 and 13 at the Event Center in Bismarck. Mor-Gran-Sou and other area Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives sponsor the Living Ag Classroom, to help students learn how their food is planted, grown and harvested. It's also an opportunity to visit with co-op members from across the state, and learn what's important to them and their families. We loved visiting with the family in the top photo and seeing three generations spending time together and having fun. If you stopped by the co-op booth to play the bean-bag toss or visit about an electric heat product or service, we thank you for being active and involved cooperative members.

- **Lineman Fleck receives journeyman certificate**
- **Manager Franklund earns Cooperative Leadership Award**
- **Mor-Gran-Sou seeks board director candidates**
- **RDFC awards grant to Grant County Fair Board**
- **Meetings minutes and more**



Respect seals Brett Fleck's decision to become a lineman

BY CARMEN DEVNEY



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you “grew up?” How many times did that answer change until you settled on a career? When Brett Fleck was in the fourth grade, he said he wanted to be a lineman. His answer never changed.

Fleck, a Flasher-area native who

works as a lineman out of the Mandan Service Center, was honored in January at the annual Apprenticeship Training and Safety Conference for reaching journeyman status. Hosted by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, the conference was held Jan. 16 to 18. Mor-Gran-Sou's linemen attend on a

rotational basis to learn about changes in the electric utility industry, meet vendors and handle new technology, attend workshops that focus on procedures and safety — and bring the training back to Mor-Gran-Sou to implement in the field.

During the conference banquet, Fleck received his journeyman lineworker certificate. As a graduate, he has logged 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. Apprentices are also required to take and pass a series of tests throughout their coursework.

Fleck, who has an interest in ranching, says his grandfather offered him advice based on his own experiences with the market's highs and lows. Like all grandparents who know the challenges of ranching, he said Brett could always ranch on the side, or return to ranching. First, he should go to school and get a job with steady pay and benefits.

Fleck remembers Mor-Gran-Sou employees coming to his elementary school and presenting the “Story Behind the Switch,” a presentation that describes how electricity is generated and distributed, and how to stay safe around electricity in a potentially dangerous situation. Over the years he also saw linemen climb poles, and had the opportunity to try on their rubber gloves and sleeves at various cooperative events.

“That really interested me,” he says.



PHOTO BY NDAREC

Brett Fleck practiced a task on a simulated energized power line during NDAREC's Hotline School last summer.

When two snow and ice storms hit the Mor-Gran-Sou service area in 2010, collectively damaging more than 13,000 poles, Fleck remembers his family was out of power for a week after the April storm. Living south of Flasher, he saw linemen working long hours to rebuild the system. He knew many of those linemen, and respected their hard work and dedication in getting area families back online. It

solidified his decision to get a job in the utility industry.

After he graduated from high school, he took a summer job with Boldt Power, Inc. Boldt is a family owned and run electrical construction business that provides services in North Dakota and four surrounding states. Mor-Gran-Sou hires Boldt for specialized projects.

Having scaled grain bins at his grandpa's place as a kid, and having no fear of heights, Fleck quickly transitioned to learning how to climb poles with hooks, and assisting Boldt with various projects.

"That's how I got a taste for it, and I really enjoyed it," he says.

Fleck enrolled in the Bismarck State College lineworker program that fall, and continued working for Boldt for another year. One of his unique experiences included climbing 115' bare transmission poles in the Black Hills of South Dakota, and dressing them from the top down. It took the linemen around three hours to frame one H structure.

The projects were interesting and the work was enjoyable, but he was looking to get closer to home. A friend and former lead lineman for Mor-Gran-Sou advised Fleck to

continue his career with an electric cooperative. When an opportunity presented with Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative in Williston, he applied and was hired. Fleck had worked there one year, when Mor-Gran-Sou posted two job openings for a lineman. He applied and was hired in April 2018.

One learning curve at Mountrail-Williams was the service area. He didn't know the roads and landmarks, and he relied on maps. At Mor-Gran-Sou, not only does he know the service area well, he also knows many of our members — and he's thankful for the opportunity to serve them.

"I'm just happy that I got back home. Being able to serve the community that supported me in sports and growing up, it's nice that I can give back to what they gave me. Even though I work for the co-op, I still work for them," he says. "If they have a question about something, it's easy for them to ask and I can relay the message, or I can point them in the right direction. It's nice just to be able to help the people who helped me out."

Thank you, Brett, and congratulations on reaching journeyman status. ■

SAFETY@MORGRANSOU.COM

Mor-Gran-Sou is an advocate of working safely. In fact, it is our way of life; the culture of your cooperative. We look out for the safety of ourselves and others — before, during and after work.

Did you know that members also play a key role in keeping our system safe? At times, you are our eyes in the sky and on the ground. Should you see a power line issue that may need Mor-Gran-Sou's attention, please call the office or send us an email at safety@morgransouelectric.com with your concern. This correspondence should include the description of the location, your name and complete contact information, and a photo if possible. Working together helps ensure the safety of all!



PHOTO BY LIZA KESSELE/NDAREC

Mor-Gran-Sou Member Services Reps II **Deb Haugen** (left) and **Patty Kluge** accepted the Safety Award on behalf of the cooperative, from NDAREC Safety Instructors **Jeff Tweten** (left) and **Brian Lakoduk**.

Mor-Gran-Sou earns Safety Award

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) hosted the 55th annual REC Apprenticeship Training and Safety (AT&S) Conference Jan. 16 to 18 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 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 understanding reclosures, winter survival, underground cable preparation and splicing, leadership and more.

Christina Roemmich, director of safety services for NDAREC, says the AT&S conference provides an opportunity to reflect on current issues in the industry and to recognize

the accomplishments the students have made in training and safety throughout the year.

Mor-Gran-Sou employees who attended this year's conference included Senior Engineering Technician Jason Helgeson; General Foreman Doug Nagel; Lead Men Jason Jahner and Cody Maher; Journeyman Linemen Brett Fleck and Cody Graetz; Apprentice Lineman Kale Ohlhauser; and Member Services Representatives II Deb Haugen and Patty Kluge.

At the awards banquet, Mor-Gran-Sou was one of six distribution cooperatives in North Dakota, as well as 3C Construction, LLC, to be presented with a Safety Award. They were recognized for having zero OSHA-recordable injuries for one year, between the dates of Dec. 1, 2017, to Nov. 30, 2018.

This was the ninth year in a row Mor-Gran-Sou has received the award. ■

Mor-Gran-Sou receives RESAP re-certification

Also during the banquet, Mor-Gran-Sou was awarded a RESAP certificate of safety achievement.

To achieve and maintain high safety standards for the protection of employees and the community, Mor-Gran-Sou applied for and achieved safety accreditation through the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program. Founded by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, RESAP strives to promote the highest standards of safety among electric cooperatives. The program was described in detail in the November 2018 local pages of *North Dakota Living*.

Mor-Gran-Sou's RESAP audit was conducted July 30 and 31, 2018. Steve Homes, safety services instructor with the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, inspected office sites in Mandan, Flasher and Fort Yates. He also toured a substation and pole yard, and supervised some field work. During the field visit, he watched line crews change out poles near Hebron.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative thanks its employees for taking a team approach to safety and its continuous improvement. ■



PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVENEY

The RESAP site visit was conducted by NDAREC Safety Instructor **Steve Homes**.



“PERFORM my job safely always!”

— Lead Men Gary Fitterer (left) and Jason Jahner



NDARECS
North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives

PERFORM

my job safely always

ACCOUNT

for my actions and those taken by my crew

COMMIT

to speaking up, and responding to reported hazards

ENGAGE

in job briefings, focus on the task at hand and take the time to do it safely, always!



Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 



Franklund earns Cooperative Leadership Award

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) bestowed this year's Cooperative Leadership Award to Don Franklund, one of Mor-Gran-Sou's two co-general managers and chief executive officers, on Jan. 15 during its annual meeting. Franklund brings nearly 25 years of leadership and experience to Mor-Gran-Sou and the rest of the Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative (IEAC) family. He earned the award for handling industry challenges with a firm hand and quick resolve — and innovative mind.

Franklund was instrumental in the formation of the alliance. Established in 2008, IEAC is a professional management and services company that provides support for four electric cooperatives in North Dakota including Mor-Gran-Sou, KEM, Roughrider and Slope Electric Cooperatives, as well as the WDUS Holdings, LLC family including 3C Construction, West Dakota Utility Services and other subsidiaries. The alliance was formed with the intention of reducing costs and gaining efficiencies, while allowing the respective boards of directors to retain local control.

A decade ago, alliances among cooperatives were a relatively new concept. Franklund embraced the spirit of an alliance, which supports the sharing of employee skills and equipment to experience significant savings.

His support of the alliance remains strong today, as he serves beside partner Travis Kupper, Mor-Gran-Sou's



PHOTO BY LIZA KESSELENDAREC

Every year, NDAREC recognizes individuals for their generous contributions to North Dakota's electric cooperatives and the communities they serve by awarding a Cooperative Leadership Award. **Don Franklund** (center), one of Mor-Gran-Sou's co-general managers, earned this prestigious award. It was bestowed by **Josh Kramer** (left), executive vice president and general manager of NDAREC, and **Bob Grant**, president of the NDAREC board.

other co-general manager and chief executive officer.

Over the years, Franklund has earned the respect of many of his peers, and many look to him for advice and counsel. He is an effective spokesperson and leader, and a strong representative of North Dakota's electric cooperatives.

On behalf of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, we congratulate Don Franklund on earning Statewide's Cooperative Leadership Award. ■

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 19, 2019. The board of directors has 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 21, and/or they can be presented in-person at the following meeting of the Nominating Committee:

- March 21, 2019, 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 21. Thank you.



RDFC awards grant in Mor-Gran-Sou's service area

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is a member of the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC). As a result, communities in our service area are eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$2,000 for community-based projects. RDFC makes these funds available in order that more people become aware of their larger loan program that funds community-based projects and non-profit entities with low-interest loans.

In 2018, RDFC awarded one grant totaling \$2,000 to the Grant County Fair Board, located in Carson. The funds will be used to pay for the dirt work related to the construction of a small animal building.

RDFC is a non-profit organization owned by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives and North Dakota's electric and telephone cooperatives including Mor-Gran-Sou. Created with the goal of assisting local development organizations and political subdivisions to leverage additional capital to finance business and community economic development activities, RDFC utilizes a revolving loan fund totaling nearly \$4.3 million that can bring affordability to projects in communities.

Potential uses of funds could be construction costs, renovations, or facility acquisition of new or expanding businesses; the establishment of revolving loan funds;

infrastructure; essential services and more. The funds can be used as matching funds for state, federal or other sources of funding. The RDFC funds must be matched dollar-for-dollar and must be repaid over 10 years or less.

For loan guidelines, applications or more information on RDFC and the revolving loan fund program, visit www.ndarec.com and click on Rural Development and RDFC. To request an application or ask questions concerning RDFC, please contact Lori Capouch at 701-667-6444 or lcapouch@ndarec.com. ■



Members of the Grant County Fair Board include (back row, left to right) **Michael Schmid, Trampis Brenner, Robert Campbell, Jody Fuchs, Dillon Fuchs and Darrell Hartman**; and (front row, left to right) **Donna Vandenburg and Karen Scholes**. Also on the board but not present are Kathy Hoff, Jim Maier, Owen Wells, Dick Woodbury and Ty Zingg.

Annual Meeting
2019

JULY 19, 2019

Fort Yates, N.D.

Prairie Knights Pavilion

Learn about co-op issues;
cast your vote and elect four 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: Jan. 28, 2019

- Approved the Dec. 19, 2018, regular Board meeting minutes
- Reviewed the December financial report, which will be approved after the annual audit
- Reviewed and accepted the director and attorney expense reports for December
- Approved physical inventory adjustment for 2018
- Approved five work order inventories and a special equipment inventory
- Approved capital credit refunds to estates and those age 80 and over
- Approved a Purchase Agreement with Roughrider for a lot at the Long Butte Subdivision
- Approved CoBank line-of-credit amendment and associated resolution
- Heard update on Southwest Power Pool
- Reaffirmed the Mutual Aid Agreement
- Accepted the annual Red Flag Rule report from IT
- Reviewed updated Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace management policy
- Approved renewal of Ternes as Acting Secretary for the Board of Directors
- Reviewed notices of Annual Meetings for Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative and Maintenance Solutions Co-op (MSC)
- Reviewed Basin Electric Power Cooperative financial forecasts for 2019 to 2028
- Heard report from the first Nominating Committee meeting
- Designated various Board representatives as voting delegates and alternates for upcoming meetings
- Approved attendance at various training and meetings
- Reviewed Mor-Gran-Sou senior staff department reports
- Heard the Co-General Managers/CEOs update, and reports on meetings attended
- Heard reports from various meetings and training the directors had attended
- Held Executive Session

Upcoming regular board meeting date:

March 27, 2019, at Mor-Gran-Sou in Flasher 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 1-800-750-8212 or 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 701-597-3301 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 Flasher office to request a copy.



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SPRING AHEAD!

ON SUNDAY,
MARCH 10, DAYLIGHT
SAVING TIME BEGINS.



MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

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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..... Lance Froelich
Directors Mark Doll,
Vernard Frederick, Robert Gaebe,
Chad Harrison, Jay Larson, Bob J. Leingang

MANAGEMENT

Co-GM/CEO..... Donald A. Franklund
Co-GM/CEO..... Travis Kupper

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