

# NORTHERN

L I G H T S

April 2016



**Beltrami Electric  
Cooperative Inc.**

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Volunteer for Project GreenTouch



**Invite your family and friends!**

**Saturday, May 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.,  
Lake Bemidji State Park**

*Tools, equipment, beverages and a grilled  
lunch provided*

For the 17<sup>th</sup> year, Beltrami Electric Cooperative and other Touchstone Energy® cooperatives throughout Minnesota will again join together to spruce up our state parks through a program called GreenTouch.

You're invited to volunteer your time to plant trees, clean up trails, rake leaves and complete other general projects, all to prepare Lake Bemidji State Park for the 2016 season!

Come join us! No park sticker will be needed that day for volunteers. For more information visit [www.beltramielectric.com](http://www.beltramielectric.com) or if you would like to volunteer, contact Angela at 444-3689 or [alyseng@beltramielectric.com](mailto:alyseng@beltramielectric.com).

## BELTRAMI ELECTRIC MULTIVENDOR INDOOR GARAGE SALE

*to benefit the United Way*

**Saturday, May 7, 2016**

**8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

**at Beltrami Electric (in the garage)**

*4111 Technology Dr NW, Bemidji (near Paul Bunyan Communications)*

- Access to 89 booths and the comfort of indoor shopping!
- Huge variety of NEW and USED merchandise!
- All fees (rent, entrance, food) go to the United Way!



**\$1 entrance  
fee (12 &  
under are free)**

**Beltrami Electric scholarship information – see page 3  
Operation Round Up – see page 8**

**United Way  
of Bemidji Area**



# NORTHERN L I G H T S

Northern Lights (USPS 016488), Vol. 63, No. 4 is published monthly by Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc., 4111 Technology Drive N.W., Bemidji, Minnesota 56619-0488. Subscription rate \$5. Periodicals postage paid at Bemidji, MN 56601.

**Postmaster:** Please send address corrections to Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc., P.O. Box 488, Bemidji, Minnesota 56619-0488.

**Office Hours:** 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Monday – Friday

**Customer Service:** 218-444-2540  
or 1-800-955-6083

[www.beltramielcric.com](http://www.beltramielcric.com)

## Board of Directors

President	Rick Coe, DISTRICT 6 (Square Butte Director)
Vice President	John Lund, DISTRICT 7
Secretary	Murl Nord, DISTRICT 1
Treasurer	Judy Honer, DISTRICT 9
Directors:	Lea Perkins, DISTRICT 2; Charles Parson, DISTRICT 3; Jerry Larson Sr., DISTRICT 4; Robert Wallner, DISTRICT 5; Terry Diffley, DISTRICT 8, (Minnkota Director)
General Manager	Lynette Nieuwsma
Editor	Angela Lyseng

## Minnesota State Electrical Inspectors

*Beltrami and Clearwater Counties*

**Davis Smid**

**507-227-2772 - [mntristate@gmail.com](mailto:mntristate@gmail.com)**

*Cass and Hubbard Counties*

**Steve Schauland**

**218-652-2213 or fax 218-333-0451**

*These are the inspectors covering the area served by Beltrami Electric. They can be reached by phone Monday through Friday between 7 and 8:30 a.m. or by fax or email as indicated.*

## Gopher State One Call

**1-800-252-1166 or 811**

Anyone who plans to dig is required by law to notify the state of their intentions at least 48 hours in advance.

All digging requires the 48-hour notification so that buried telephone line, television cable, pipelines, utility electrical lines, municipal water and sewer lines can be located to ensure that none will be severed or damaged.

**ON THE COVER:** Beltrami Electric will host two community events on Saturday, May 7. Volunteer at Lake Bemidji State Park for GreenTouch, and/or shop the garage sale to benefit the United Way.



# Across the MANAGER'S DESK

Lynette Nieuwsma, General Manager

## *A fond farewell to Beltrami Electric*

This is my last regular column for the *Northern Lights* as I will be retiring in early April. I will have a hand in penning the annual report, but that will not allow me to get as personal, so if you will allow me, I will take this opportunity.

I have been blessed with a great 40-year career. My first 10 years I spent as a county extension agent in Emmons County, N.D. It was very rewarding working with 4-H youth, farmers and ranchers. It came very natural for me as I grew up in 4-H, farming and raising Registered Herefords.

Although not as common today, many extension agents went on to be rural electric cooperative managers, as was the case with M.B. Taylor, Beltrami Electric's first manager. Even when they did not manage the cooperative, extension agents were very influential in organizing electric cooperatives as there was nothing that would change agriculture as much as rural electrification. With 10 years of county agent experience and a MBA behind me, I thought the rural electric cooperative industry would be a good fit. Little did I know both how interesting and challenging my next 30 years would be.

The first two electric cooperatives I worked for in North Dakota, KEM Electric Cooperative (marketing and member services manager, five years) and Slope Electric Cooperative (CEO for 15 years), were very rural cooperatives with about one meter per mile of line. My last several years at Slope were fast-paced and exciting as the cooperative grew with oil development. However, the heart of the cooperative remained its rural

members, many of whom remembered when the lights came on. My mantra there was to plan as if the oil loads will not be there forever (and that caution is paying off today), but they sure made things easier at the time. Oil growth, along with wholesale rate decreases, made raising rates almost a non-issue. With only about 1,700 members at each of these cooperatives and 15 years living in each area, I was fortunate to know most of the members personally.

In 2006, I moved here to a much larger, growing cooperative. Beltrami Electric was very fortunate in its growth for many years. Until the Great Recession hit in 2007, our growth always helped keep us ahead of most rate increases. Then as our growth slowed and we saw double digit wholesale rate increases, managing this cooperative became much more difficult. Many decisions were not easy to make. Raising rates is never easy to do, but it became inevitable as wholesale power makes up 70 percent of our cost to our members.

When I think that most electric cooperatives have just celebrated their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and I have been part of this program for 30 of those years, it is mind boggling. Cooperatives have been an important part of the communities they serve. Not only did they bring electricity to the countryside, they brought a more productive and convenient way of life. They brought economic development as more folks were willing to move to these newly developed areas.

What will the future of Beltrami Electric Cooperative look like? The production of energy may start to look different with the advent of

storage. How soon that will come will be dependent on technology advancements, particularly energy storage, as well as the complex challenges of regulation. However, I believe the poles and wires (overhead or underground) will not be disappearing anytime soon.

As I have watched the years go by, I have noticed that members increasingly take the cooperative for granted. Our success has put electricity off the radar until the lights go off, which fortunately isn't as often as it used to be. You may not think about electricity until you get your bill. Yes, it is a significant household expenditure, but it is still a great value. Compare your cell phone, Internet and other bills and then tell me where you get more value for the dollars spent. As you enjoy the benefits of electricity, I ask that you remember your part of this cooperative partnership, as a member you have responsibilities that come with the benefits.

I have enjoyed my 10 busy years here at Beltrami Electric. Some days were more demanding than others, but there was never a day that I didn't want to get up, go to work and meet the challenges. I'm looking forward to more time to travel and spend with the grandkids,

but I will truly miss my career as it has been such a big part of my identity. I will truly miss the many people who have worked in this industry with me as colleagues and as friends.

As I think about words of thanks, I realize I can't mention everyone who has helped me over my time here at Beltrami Electric. I would like to thank the board of directors, not only the diligent board we have today, but the others who no longer serve on the board who I have worked under. Some people say, it must be hard working for nine bosses, but as long as they are working for the real bosses (you the members), they will continue to make good decisions and be supportive of management, and for that I thank them.

I want to thank the dedicated employees who work here. I thank them for their hard work, professionalism and commitment to the cooperative and its members. They work hard for you!

I thank you the members. I have always realized who I ultimately work for and that I would not be here if it wasn't for your membership in this cooperative. It has been a great pleasure working for you and talking to you each month in this column. I sometimes hit a

nerve and hear from you, good or bad. This is a great membership. I only wish I had the opportunity to know more of you personally.

I thank my family for their support through my whole career, which started back in 1976, especially my husband, Gary, who often found himself at home with the boys as I needed to attend meetings over the years. I thank my sons, Shawn and Kyle, who sometimes missed their mom at events because she was too busy working. They grew up to be fine men with work ethics second to none. For that I am very proud.

I thank my parents for passing on to me what responsibility means, and ingraining a good work ethic within me. Work didn't end at 5 p.m. on the farm as it never has for me on the job. I hope they also passed on their good genes as they are now 91 and almost 95. God willing I might have 30 years of retirement to look forward to, so that should make all the years of work worthwhile. This truly has been a journey, a journey of joy and fulfillment.

As I sign off my last column, it's been good talking to you and I wish you all the best and God's blessings.

Cooperatively yours,  
*Lynette*

## Beltrami Electric Cooperative scholarship information

Once again, it is time for high school seniors to apply for Beltrami Electric's college scholarships. As we all know, a college education can be expensive. Beltrami Electric and its board of directors are proud to offer \$1,000 in scholarship money to deserving students attending seven area high schools to help with this ever-growing expense.

To be eligible to be awarded scholarship money this spring, parents and/or guardians of the students must be members of Beltrami Electric. Criteria and applications are available at specific high school's career guidance departments. For more information, you can also visit [www.beltramielectric.com](http://www.beltramielectric.com). The scholarship selection process is handled through the school's designated career guidance offices or scholarship committees. Please contact your high school for more information.



## Annual meeting notice

The 76<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the members of Beltrami Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held at the Bemidji High School, 2900 Division Street West, in Bemidji, Minn., at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 21, 2016, for the following purposes:

1. To pass upon reports covering the previous fiscal year;
2. To elect three (3) directors of the cooperative in accordance with the Bylaws, one each in Districts 1, 5 and 8, each for a three-year term;
3. To transact such other business as may come before the meeting.

In order for the member, corporation, etc., to nominate a representative to serve on the board of directors and participate in business matters, a form must be received by the secretary of Beltrami Electric Cooperative on or before the date of the members' meeting(s). To receive a copy of this form, please contact the co-op at **218-444-2540**.

Murl Nord, Secretary  
Beltrami Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Board of Directors



# A CAREER OF FIRSTS

## *Nieuwsma retires as Beltrami Electric CEO*

**A**t nearly every stop in her 40-year career, Lynette Nieuwsma has experienced a first.

She was the first female extension agent in North Dakota. She later became the state's first female electric cooperative manager. And when she moved to Minnesota, she became the first female electric cooperative manager in that state, too.

In April, Nieuwsma took the first step into the next chapter of her life by retiring from Beltrami Electric Cooperative after nearly a decade at the helm. Nieuwsma doesn't dwell on the firsts in her career, but she appreciates that more women are in electric cooperative management roles both regionally and nationally.

"It wasn't a big deal to me at the time I was hired, but now I kind of think that it is," Nieuwsma said. "I'm proud that there are now six other female (electric cooperative) managers in Minnesota. I'm really glad for whatever part I had in opening the door for other women managers in the state."

As an electric cooperative leader, Nieuwsma drew on the work habits she learned growing up on a farm and ranch near Durbin, N.D., about 25 miles west of Fargo.

After graduating from high school in Casselton, N.D., she earned a degree in animal science and agricultural economics from North Dakota State University.

She accepted a position as the extension agent in Emmons County at Linton, N.D., where she worked for 10 years with 4-H youth, farmers and ranchers. During that time, she returned to NDSU to earn a master's degree in business administration/organizational communications. With a desire to put her degree to work, Nieuwsma entered the electric power industry in 1986 as the director of marketing and member services for Linton-based KEM Electric Cooperative.

Learning the business didn't take long and not quite five years later Nieuwsma became general manager of Slope Electric Cooperative. Based in New England, N.D., Slope serves a four-county area in the southwest corner of the state.

"KEM and Slope were very rural cooperatives with about one meter per mile of line," Nieuwsma said. "But during my last few years at Slope, the cooperative roughly tripled in size due to oil development."

Bemidji, Minn.-based Beltrami Electric allowed her

**“You always try to do what's best for the membership as a whole. I've always prided myself on thinking from the members' perspective.”**

**— LYNETTE NIEUWSMA, General Manager/CEO  
Beltrami Electric Cooperative**

to be closer to her family and take on new challenges at a larger organization. She was hired in May 2006, replacing Roger Spiry. She became only the fifth manager in Beltrami Electric's 75-year history, following Spiry, Don Anderson, Earl Larson and founding manager M.B. Taylor.

### **Managing change**

Nieuwsma's time at Beltrami Electric didn't pass without challenges. The cooperative was steadily growing until the economic recession hit about a year into her tenure. Load growth stalled and the cooperative lost its largest member-consumer, the Ainsworth Lumber Mill, to closure. Increasing wholesale power costs also added pressure to the situation.

“It was a time when we were trying to tighten expenses and limit rate increases,” Nieuwsma said. “We did so without employee layoffs, which some cooperatives experienced, and we were still able to build our plant and keep the cooperative strong.”

Nieuwsma worked diligently to balance the needs of a diverse membership, which includes urban sprawl in the Bemidji area, rural farmsteads, lakes country and the Red Lake and Leech Lake tribal communities.

“You always try to do what's best for the membership as a whole,” Nieuwsma said. “I've always prided myself on thinking from the members' perspective.”

The members often had different viewpoints, and Nieuwsma worked with the board of directors to find solutions. For instance, when a segment of the membership wanted the option to purchase solar energy, the cooperative introduced the Northern Solar community solar garden project. Interested members will have the opportunity to purchase a portion of the output, while limiting the shifting of costs onto other members. The project is approaching 50 percent of its panels subscribed, which would allow construction to begin as early as this spring.

### **Community engagement**

In addition to managing the cooperative, Nieuwsma was engaged in the legislative and regulatory processes on behalf of the membership. She often spoke to key decision makers on issues that could impact the cooperative's operations and consumers at the end of the line.

Nieuwsma valued her role as a business leader in the community. She is a member of the board of directors for Greater Bemidji and the Bemidji Development



**Nieuwsma speaks with Beltrami Electric Board President Rick Coe in her office.**

Corporation. In the industry, she served on the boards of Cooperative Development, Common Enterprise Development Corporation (CEDC) and the Minnesota Rural Electric Association's Rural Electric Management Association.

As for the cooperative itself, Nieuwsma believes the dedicated employees, engaged board of directors and supportive membership will keep Beltrami Electric viable in a constantly evolving industry.

“There have been so many changes in the cooperative world in the past, but it's going to continue to change,” Nieuwsma said. “Future leaders will have to stay involved to keep the cooperative relevant. The cooperative may look differently because of the changes we're seeing, but it will still be here to meet the members' needs.”

In retirement, Nieuwsma plans to remain in the Bemidji area and spend time with her husband, Gary, visiting their sons, Shawn and Kyle, and grandchildren, Reagan (6), Reed (4) and Teague (5 months). In her spare time, she also wants to travel and pursue volunteer work. Taking a moment to relax is first on her list.

“We certainly want to enjoy a summer on the lake,” Nieuwsma said. “We live on the lake, but when you're working, you don't have as much time to enjoy it.”

As her career comes to a close, Nieuwsma is going out the way she came in, with a full plate right up to the end.

“You never know what the next challenge around the corner will be in this industry,” Nieuwsma said. “It's a busy, evolving cooperative in a busy, evolving community.”

## **RETIREMENT OPEN HOUSE**

*Join us for a retirement open house Friday, April 15, 2016, from 2:30-4:30 p.m. in the Community Room at Beltrami Electric to honor Lynette Nieuwsma's 40-year career.*

# Northern Lights CLASSIFIEDS

## For Sale:

Kirby Heritage 1HD vacuum w/5 bags. Attachments: Convenience Group, Rug Renovator, Handi Butler Group. \$180/obo, 612-618-0422.

Reclining love seat and sofa in excellent condition, futon and several chairs, 467-3457.

Fiberglass topper for a 6.5' box Chevy Silverado-color-pewter. Sliding windows, Thule rails, interior light. Lock does not work on back window. \$200, 987-2999.

Firewood, two cords dry popple firewood in various lengths, you haul. \$60, call 224-2836.

'96 Polaris Indy 500, starts and runs great, carbs just cleaned. Very clean sled \$1,300. Call Brian 760-4562.

Winchester Model 1400 12-gauge semi-auto, 28" barrel, 2/4" chamber, barrel needs bluing. \$175/obo, 224-2633.

Floor-length formal dresses, each worn once. Pewter gray chiffon with tiered skirt, size 16. Midnight blue shimmer, lace sequined top with full skirt, size 14. Mink brown shimmer, shawl type neck with ruffled bodice and full skirt, size 16, \$50 each. Knee-length formal dress in deep blue chiffon, tiered with small beaded edges, size 14, \$45. 759-2322.

Troy-Bilt rear-tine tiller, 15", excellent shape. \$350, 444-4725.

1993 Chevy Lumina Z34 for parts, all parts working, many new parts including: windshield, ignition, fuel regulator, blower motor, front wheel bearings, pan heater, AC pump, driver's door handle. Frame rusty, body good. Welcome salvage yards, all or parts. \$500, 209-5667.

Homemade crazy star block quilts: twin, \$35; full, \$40; queen, \$45; king, \$55; antique oak chairs, \$25 each; rockers, \$70; parlor table, \$75, sq. oak 44x44 dining room table, \$150; portable or cabinet sewing machines, \$15 each. Six matching oak chairs, \$150, refinished. Portable touch-n-sew machine, \$15. 243-2702.

14' Alumacraft boat with anchor, oars and cover. 1982 7.5 hp Evinrude with 6-gallon tank. 1969 Spartan Trailer (Lifetime license) \$1,500. Call 766-7052.

1984 Honda Shadow, great shape, runs great, 7,400 miles, \$2,000/obo. 2011 Road King Police, 5,400 miles, \$15,000/obo, 252-4750.

Small square hay bales, \$3.25. Call 444-0622.

Craftsman 6" jointer, \$100, DeWalt 10" radial arm saw, \$100, 75-gallon aquarium w/stand, cover, lights, water filtering system. \$100, 586-2362.

Weslo Momentum G 3.2 exercise bike, hardly used, \$150. Call 761-3965 or 766-3561.

2003 F350 Ford pickup, 108K, low miles, diesel, Lariat crew cab, some rust. \$9,000, 766-3591.

Honda 5000 generator in perfect condition, \$550. Old Town 14-ft canoe with paddles and life jackets, excellent condition, \$400. Clam 6' x 8' portable fish house with brand new cover, \$250. Call 224-3866.

Work bench 8'x3'x38" high, \$300. Martin Hatfield Takedown bow, 45# & 50# limbs, w/arrow and accessories, \$300. Trail FX side mount tool box, 6' long. \$200, 760-2254.

Woodworking gluing clamps on 5" pipes 3/4" diameter, \$18. Chess set, crystal, new in original box, \$14. Ten investment books, you pick, \$15. 501 Spanish Verbs book, \$2.50. Call 497-2491.

1998 32-ft bumperpull camper, with slide out, excellent condition. \$6,950, 766-0189.

50 straw bales for sale. \$3 each, 751-5730.

Concrete power troweling machine 36" w/11 hp Honda motor with extra blades. \$1,200/obo, 243-2316.

2010 Rockwood 1940 LTD Tent camper in excellent condition. Three-way fridge, furnace, gas stove, bike rack, heated bed mattresses, awning, used little, \$5,500. Call after 5 p.m. 444-8312.

Two computer monitors, \$20 ea. HP6700 3-1 printer + extra cartridge \$60. Great Escape swing/play-set, \$275. Kitchen Aid blender, \$20. 586-2496, leave message.

Stihl MS361 chain saw, excellent condition, 21" bar, extra chain, \$425. 854-7374 or 556-5454.

Mohawk fiberglass canoe, 16ft long 3ft wide 1ft deep, \$150. Call 335-7707 for more details.

E-Z-Go golf cart charger 36V, \$100. 2011 GMC front grill chrome, \$60. Herand figurine, \$50. Amager girl figurine, \$50. 751-9311 or 368-9034.

Humminbird Piranha Max 175 depth/fish finder. Never used. Still in carton. \$50. 854-7444.

Five large glass display cases, \$100 takes all. Call 751-4929 for details.

MEC 8000 shot shell re-loader. 25-lb bags #8 magnum shot. 16-ft boat & trailer, no motor. 497-0231.

Great 90ft. dock, sturdy, treated pine with poles and bases on Big Turtle Lake. 10 - 8ft sections, 1 - 10ft section. Easy to install w/2 guys. Can email pictures. \$600. 651-492-6709.

Billy Cook saddles, 16" seats, just like new, used only 3 or 4 times. King-size Tempur-Pedic bed, just like new, head and foot lift. Call 587-5571, if no answer, leave a message.

## Wanted:

Chicken nests, prefer metal. Also a smaller horse, not bigger than 14 hands. Bobsled for horse. 745-4800.

Four telephone poles, 586-2362.

Three-wheel Harley Davidson golf carts for parts, 556-1701.

Bolens lawn and garden tractor running or not, w/attachments or not, 835-6304 or 760-3184.

Will pick up for recycling: old appliances, pianos, LP bottles, light scrap, etc. FREE OF CHARGE. 75-mile radius of Bemidji. 712-369-3291.

## Free:

Free older upright Hamilton piano - you move, 751-5730.

## Classified ads rules

- All ads must be 50 words or less.
- Members may submit one **For Sale** and one **Wanted** ad per issue.
- No real estate, rental, personal or commercial ads will be accepted.
- Ads are published at no charge as space permits on a first-received, first-printed basis, with no guarantee your ad will appear.
- Ads are only allowed to be repeated for three consecutive months and must be resubmitted to run additional months.
- Ads are due by the first of the month prior to publication of the next issue.
- Editor reserves the right to edit or reject any ad.
- All telephone numbers are presumed to have a (218) area code unless otherwise noted.
- Include name and account number on all submissions.
- Ads may be submitted via our website at [www.beltramielectric.com](http://www.beltramielectric.com) (preferred).
- Mail ads to: Beltrami Electric Cooperative, P.O. BOX 488, Bemidji, MN 56619. If submitting by mail, ad must be printed clearly.

## Professional office space available for lease (Beltrami Electric's headquarters)

600-square-foot office suite – reception area with three separate office suites. Second floor location, elevator, meeting room, safe, clean, quiet, low-traffic area of well-maintained professional building. For further details contact Sam Mason, Beltrami Electric Cooperative, 218-444-3623.

## Classified ads announcement

There will be no classified ads in the May issue of The Northern Lights (2015 Annual Report) due to space constraints. However, ad listings will resume in June with a May 1 submission deadline. Thank you for your understanding.

## Cass County implementing 0.5 percent transit sales and use tax

Starting April 1, 2016, Cass County will have a 0.5 percent transit sales and use tax. The Minnesota Department of Revenue will administer this tax. The revenue will be used to fund:

- Roads Sales Tax Project Plan
- Reserves Project Plan List
- The Long Range Transportation Improvement Plan as defined by the County Board

This 0.5 percent sales tax applies to retail sales made within Cass County. Beltrami Electric members whose service(s) is in Cass County will see this tax beginning on their April bills as a line item called "Cass County Tax."

For more information, please visit the Minnesota Department of Revenue website at [www.revenue.state.mn.us](http://www.revenue.state.mn.us).



"Like" us on Facebook  
at [www.facebook.com/BeltramiElectricCoop](http://www.facebook.com/BeltramiElectricCoop).



Track your energy  
usage on My Meter



Follow us on Twitter  
for updates from your  
cooperative.

# 2016 Annual Meeting

**Thursday, April 21, 2016**

Bemidji High School, Bemidji, Minn.  
Commons Area and Auditorium

**Turkey and Beef Dinner  
5:30 to 7 p.m. Meeting to follow.**

**Please clip and return this coupon by April 8 with the number dining so we know how many to plan for. Thank you.**

**Number Attending** \_\_\_\_\_

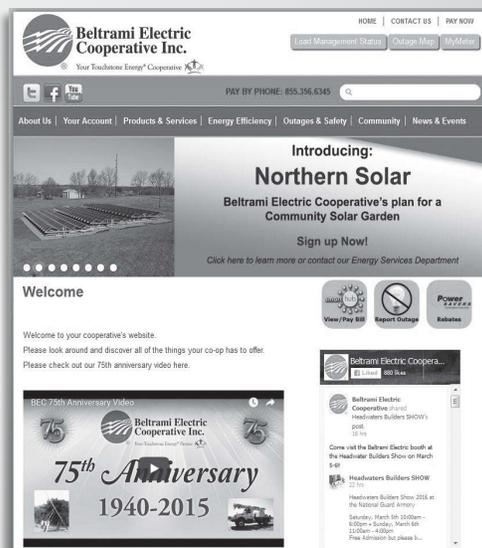
(Name and address not needed. This information appears on reverse side.)

**Please RSVP by Friday, April 8, 2016.**

Send this coupon to Beltrami Electric, PO Box 488, Bemidji, MN 56619-0488 or email [bgregg@beltramielctric.com](mailto:bgregg@beltramielctric.com) and include your account number or name, address and phone number along with the number attending. Members with special needs should please note this so we can provide appropriate accommodations.

## NEW WEBSITE!

We recognize the ways in which our members access information are changing due to advancements in technology and our lives becoming more mobile. In an effort to enhance member communications, we have recently renovated our website. Our website address will remain [www.beltramielctric.com](http://www.beltramielctric.com) but will offer many enhancements/features. Such features include icons to view/pay your bill through SmartHub, find rebates and check out our outage map. In addition, members will be able to find information on current events at the cooperative as well as follow our Facebook feed. Beltrami's renovated site launched the middle of March, and we will continue to work to ensure our members can access information easily. We welcome your feedback. Contact Angela at 218-444-3689 or email [alyseng@beltramielctric.com](mailto:alyseng@beltramielctric.com).



## Board Meeting Highlights

Beltrami Electric's board of directors conducted its monthly meeting Monday, Feb. 22, 2016. All directors were present. Also present were General Manager Lynette Nieuwsma, Director of Finance and Member Services Sid Stletten and Executive Secretary Kay Olson.

### The following reports were given:

- The CEO gave her monthly report, including discussion on legislative issues and area energy projects.
- Sid Stletten reviewed the January Financial and Statistical report, including work order inventories. He also presented the 2015 capital credit allocation worksheet.
- Rich Riewer discussed a project and FEMA Mitigation Grant application.
- Paul Garcia of Norbourne Associates discussed a cost of service study for the cooperative.
- Terry Duffley reported on the last Minnkota board meeting.
- District meetings and the annual meeting of the cooperative were discussed.
- Rick Coe, Charlie Parson, Judy Honer and the CEO discussed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association annual meeting.
- Murl Nord discussed the MPCA hearing he attended.
- Rick Coe and Jerry Larson discussed a recent town hall meeting they attended.

### The following actions were taken:

- Approved to enter into a sub-grant agreement for Hazard Mitigation Assistance and authorize the manager of engineering to execute all documents necessary on behalf of the cooperative.
- Accepted the Capital Credit Allocation Worksheet.
- Approved designing the rates with an objective of a 1.85 TIER.
- Nominated Rick Coe as the Minnkota Power Cooperative director and Murl Nord as the Square Butte Electric Cooperative director.
- Authorized Charlie Parson to attend the Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

The next board meeting will be March 30, 2016.



# THANK A LINEMAN ON APRIL 11, 2016!

America's electric cooperatives have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

Beltrami Electric Cooperative is proud of the dedicated men and women who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on. We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power flowing and protect the public's safety.

Beltrami Electric Cooperative invites members to

take a moment and thank a lineman for the work they do. Shake the hand of one of our linemen, give them a pat on the back or just extend a nice thank you greeting when you see them. You can help us celebrate National Lineman Day by thanking your local lineman by using **#NationalLinemanDay** and **#thankalineman** on Social Media.

National Lineman Day is an "official" holiday in the U.S. For more information, visit <http://www.linemanappreciationday.com/nladbill/>.



# Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

4111 Technology DR NW  
PO Box 488  
Bemidji, MN 56619-0488  
218-444-2540 • 800-955-6083  
www.beltramielctric.com

## Operation Round Up® program begins May 1

*Together, we have the **POWER** to make a difference ...*



Beltrami Electric Cooperative (BEC) will be joining 37 other Minnesota electric cooperatives and hundreds more around the nation who currently have an Operation Round Up program. Operation Round Up is a voluntary program that seeks to use small amounts of change from BEC members' electric bills to enact large, community-wide changes. This program's sole purpose is to improve the quality of life for our community.

### Here's how it works:

Members will see a separate line item on their billing statement showing the amount that their bill was rounded up. As an example, if your bill was \$129.60, it would be rounded up to \$130, with the extra 40 cents going into the Beltrami Electric Trust. The average amount a member will contribute will be 50 cents/month or \$6 per year. If you have more than one account, you can choose to have one, all or none of them on Operation Round Up.

### It's your choice to participate or not, no pressure and no questions asked.

This is a strictly voluntary program to help local organizations and programs. If you choose not to participate in the program, just call us and tell us you'd like to "opt out."

### Beltrami Electric Trust board appointed for Operation Round Up:

Your Beltrami Electric board of directors chose the following persons to be on the

Trust board. This board will meet quarterly to review applications and disburse funds. Michelle Sand, *Bemidji*; Sharon Lembke, *Laporte*; Randy Frisk, *Bemidji*; Sherry Billups, *Blackduck*; Robert Smith, *Red Lake*. Trust board members volunteer their time and receive no pay or compensation for serving on the board.

### Funding Guidelines and Eligibility:

The funding categories are as follows: Community Service, Economic Development, Education & Youth and Environment. For a complete list of the funding guidelines, please see our website at [www.beltramielctric.com](http://www.beltramielctric.com). Grants will not be made for lobbying, political and religious organizations, veteran, fraternal and labor organizations, fundraising dinners, raffles, capital fund campaigns, national fund drives, advertising or ongoing operational expenses.

Again, the Operation Round Up program is voluntary, and for those members who choose to not participate, there are several ways in which to opt out. You may contact our office at (218) 444-2540 or (800) 955-6083, send an email to [info@beltramielctric.com](mailto:info@beltramielctric.com) and place "Operation Round Up Opt-Out" in the subject line (please provide member's full name, address and account number(s)), or stop into our office at 4111 Technology Drive NW in Bemidji, Minn.

### **Lake Country Power - Grand Rapids, Minn.**

*"Operation Round Up is one of the most powerful, impactful and meaningful community programs that co-ops have the privilege to administer. Nearly 70 percent of our members participate and more than \$1.5 million has been raised to help senior citizens, kids and rural communities throughout the Lake Country Power service area since our board approved the program in 2004," said Mike Birkeland, director of member service and community relations at Lake Country Power. "We've always respected the fact that not all members want to participate, and not all members want to be automatically opted in – so it's not hard to opt out. And for those who benefit, it's hard to argue the results. After 11 years, co-op members have generated \$1.5 million that has been donated directly back to the people and communities we serve."*

### **Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative - Wadena, Minn.**

*"I think Operation Round Up is a great way for member-owners to be a part of a bigger giving program, and allows them to donate to a wider number of organizations than any individual could do for the same amount of money," said John George, communications specialist at Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative. "In the past year, TWEC's Operation Round Up program has given to: Todd County Sheriff's Department for first aid kits for their mounted posse that does search and rescue missions, Wadena Elementary School for a reading station, 4-H programs, Veteran's Clubs, Senior Centers and many other local organizations. Our Trust board (comprised of volunteer co-op members) does a great job of maximizing our contributions to as many in-need organizations as they can."*

### **Red Lake Electric Cooperative - Red Lake Falls, Minn.**

*"Since Red Lake Electric Cooperative began Operation Round Up in 1993, 746 Operation Round Up grants totaling \$453,000 have been gifted to area community organizations. Today, 94 percent of Red Lake Electric's members voluntarily "round up" their monthly bills for the Operation Round Up program." – Kelli Brateng, Red Lake Electric Cooperative, member services manager.*

### **Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative - Bagley, Minn.**

*"In 1996, Clearwater-Polk formed our Operation Round Up Trust board and introduced the program to our members," said Bruce Bjerke, general manager of Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative. "Today, 78 percent of our members contribute to the program. It's very rewarding to see how appreciative local organizations are, with a high percentage of funds going to programs supporting our kids and senior citizens. It's incredible, since 1996, 178 local qualifying organizations in our community have received more than \$335,500 in funds from Operation Round Up."*