

Newsline

March 2010



Do you operate a dairy farm?

REA would like to know!

Your farm is your business. We treat it that way as well. REA has rebate programs available that could apply to your farm just like any other business. The least expensive, quickest, and easiest way to save money on your farm is by using energy efficiently.

Dairy farms are a great candidate for our motor energy efficiency rebate program due to their large use of pumps. Upgrading motors can have a significant impact on the energy efficiency of the farm and provide significant savings.

Rebates are also available for refrigeration heat recovery (RHR) units, scroll compressors, plate-coolers, variable speed milk pumps, lighting, ventilation and more.

If you operate a dairy farm, we'd like to know. Please give us a call at (320) 762-1121 or (800) 473-1722 or send us an email at rea@runestoneelectric.com. We'd be happy to work with you to make your farm more energy efficient.

Youth Tour deadline approaching

Runestone Electric is seeking applicants for an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. for the 2010 Youth Tour, June 12 - 17.

To receive an application and essay details, please call (320) 762-1121 or (800) 473-1722. Applications are also available at www.RunestoneElectric.com. The entry deadline is Monday, March 15.



REA 74th Annual Meeting Saturday, March 27, 2010 Jefferson High School Alexandria

- 10:30 a.m. Registration & balloting opens
Entertainment by Dennis Zaviska in gymnasium
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch served in cafeteria
- 1:00 p.m. Annual Meeting with door prizes to follow - including
Ten-\$50 bill credits



Come to the Annual Meeting and receive a LED flashlight.

Director seats in Districts One and Four will be determined at the 2010 Annual Meeting. Nominated for election to the Board of Directors include:

District One

Wilbur Burquest, Spruce Hill Township

District Four

Ronald Holm, Holmes City Township
Learn about each candidate on page 3.

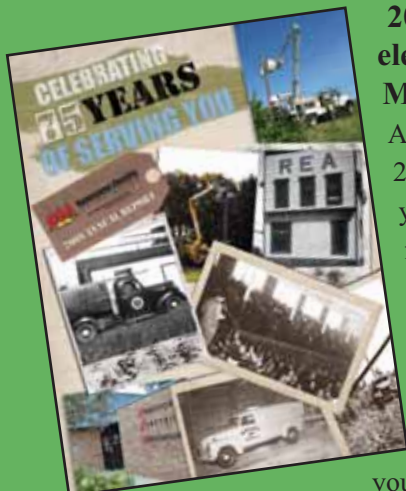
It's Annual Meeting time!

Come for lunch, stay for the meeting & door prizes!

2010 marks 75 years as your member-owned electric cooperative serving West Central Minnesota. Join us for the 74th Runestone Electric Association Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 27, 2010, at Jefferson High School in Alexandria. Bring your family for lunch and enjoy visiting with your friends and neighbors.

Watch your mailbox. In the coming days you will receive the Annual Meeting packet. In the packet you will find your 2010 Annual Report, a registration card, and ballot (if you are in a voting district).

Please bring your registration card and ballot with you to the Annual Meeting or if you are unable to attend the meeting, you can return the ballot in the envelope provided in the packet.



Board Meeting Highlights

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Runestone Electric Association was held on Thursday, January 28, 2010.

- Approved a \$1,500 donation to National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International Foundation's relief efforts to restore the electrical system in Haiti following the earthquake.

In addition to the regular board meeting, a joint board meeting was held with the Stearns Electric Board of Directors. This meeting represents our continuing efforts to look for ways the two cooperatives can work together.

- Richard Burud, a board member of the Mid-West Electric Consumers Association, provided a historical look at hydro power serving Minnesota.
- Mark Doyle, General Field Representative for Rural Utilities Service (RUS) highlighted programs offered by his agency.
- Lee Sundberg, Director of Government Affairs for Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) provided a legislative update.

The regular March Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 26.

February Heating Degree Days

2010	1,441
2009	1,433
2008	1,590
2007	1,573

January 2010 Statistics

Kilowatt-hours Sold

2010	26,409,748
2009	28,219,607

Cost of Purchased Power

2010	\$1,401,419
2009	\$1,372,933

Cost per Kilowatt-hour Purchased

2010	\$.053
2009	\$.049

Number of Accounts

2010	13,524
2009	13,451

Plan to attend the Annual Meeting

by Rick Banke, CEO

I would personally like to invite each and every member to our 74th Annual Meeting on March 27th. Come for lunch, visit with friends and neighbors as you enjoy the music of Dennis Zaviska and stay for the Annual Meeting. You might even be one of the lucky door prize winners.

Since 1988, the Pork Producers have prepared and served a wonderful meal for our Annual Meeting. Unfortunately, due to a change in state law, we are no longer able to have the Pork Producers serve our meal at the high school. We want to thank the Pork Producers for their dedicated service over the past 21 years. I encourage you to look for the Pork Producers at other events across are region. They grill an awesome pork chop!

Fortunately, the school district is able to help us out this year with the meal.

Director elections this year are being held in Districts 1 & 4. The Cooperative is divided into seven districts with rotating districts holding elections each year. Cooperative consumers are not just "customers" but are "member-owners" of the cooperative and have the right to vote for directors every three years.

In the coming days, all members in District 1 & 4 (see maps on page 3) will receive a packet of information that includes the Annual Meeting voting material. Director voting is available before the business meeting or through the mail-in process. If you have any questions on the voting process please give us a call. For members that are in



non-voting districts you will receive an Annual Report and a registration card.

As a Cooperative, we strive each day to provide you with service you can count on. Our Annual Meeting is our members' chance to let us know how we are doing at serving your needs.

Small change that changes lives!

That's the motto of Operation Round Up and we are seeing first hand the impact of this very important program in the communities we serve.

Since 2003, over \$410,000 in grants have been given to area non-profit organizations. Nearly 850 grants have been distributed to help fund area needs, such as first responders, fire departments, youth and senior activities, health programs, food shelves and more in our service territory.

Operation Round Up is administered by the REA Community Trust Board. This is separate board made up of volunteers from REA's seven districts. Board members include President Bruce Ferris, Osakis; Vice-President Jeff Dreier, Elbow Lake; Secretary/Treasurer Tom Burquest, Eagle Bend; Jerome Hagen, Cyrus; Gerald Johnson, Evansville; Carla Beem, Miltona and DeWayne Bisek, Nelson.



The Operation Round Up® Community Trust Board members include (front row, left to right): Jerome Hagen, Carla Beem and Gerald Johnson. (Back row, left to right): Bruce Ferris, DeWayne Bisek, Tom Burquest, and Jeff Dreier.

After serving two terms, **Tom Burquest** and **Gerald Johnson** were recently honored for their service on the Trust Board. We are so fortunate to have dedicated members willing to volunteer their time to make a difference in the communities we serve.

Board of Directors Candidate Profiles

Election results will be announced at the Annual Meeting on March 27.

Profiles are submitted by each candidate.



Wilbur Burquest

A resident of Spruce Hill Township, **Wilbur Burquest** was nominated at the District One Meeting. As

an incumbent director, he has served on the REA board for nine years.

Wilbur delivered milk for Ewald Dairy in Minneapolis for 27 years before retiring to the Alexandria area in 1984. He farmed and milked cows from 1984 until 1987. Wilbur has been a REA member for 25 years.

Wilbur and his wife, Colleen, just celebrated 53 years of marriage. The Burquest's have two sons and one daughter. His family attends Esther Lutheran Church of rural Parkers Prairie. He works part-time for Rose City Co-op.

Wilbur was a REA meter reader for 11 years and has served on the REA Member Advisory Council. He is a Credentialed Cooperative Director and is Secretary of the REA board and on the board of STAR Energy Services, a subsidiary of REA.

Honesty and integrity are important to Wilbur and he is committed to making sound decisions on issues affecting our members. "I encourage members to call me with concerns or questions."

Incumbent Director **Ronald Holm** of Holmes City Township was nominated at the District Four meeting. Ron



Ronald Holm

is a lifelong resident of the area and operates a grain and beef cattle farm near Farwell. Ron and his wife, Dorothy, have three daughters and one son.

Ron has been a REA member since 1960. He has served on the REA board since 1986 during which time he has completed the Credentialed Cooperative Director training program. Ron has also served on the Oscar Lake Church Board, Farwell Creamery Board, Nelson Creamery Board, Alexandria Technical College Advisory Committee, Holmes City Township Board and the Oscar Lake Cemetery Board.

"I will continue to support REA members and listen to your needs and concerns. I feel we need to continue pursuing renewable energy sources that keep costs affordable for everyone. I appreciate your past support and look forward to your continued support in the upcoming election."

SOMETIMES LIGHTING IT UP JUST *takes a better bulb.*

Outside or inside, CFLs can really raise your game. Floodlights produce broad beams of light, giving you greater safety and security. They last up to ten times longer than standard incandescent bulbs and are designed to better withstand outdoor weather conditions.



SAVE \$3

from February 1 – July 31, 2010

Look for a coupon in your statement on select GE Energy Smart® CFL light bulbs. Or get \$2 in instant savings at a participating Walmart store.

Because of the presence of mercury, CFLs must be recycled. In Minnesota, it is illegal to place them directly in the garbage.



ENTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A \$500 Energy Credit at mnbrighterideas.com

mnbrighterideas.com



I pulled the plug on my energy costs just by pulling a few plugs.

Learn more at www.togetherwesave.com

Having trouble paying your electric bill?

Steps to follow to prevent disconnection

If you are behind on paying your electric bill, please take the following steps to prevent disconnection:

1. Call us! We will work with you to set up payment arrangements, but it is extremely important that you **keep these arrangements**. Our number is 320-762-1121 or 800-473-1722.
2. Contact the fuel assistance agency for the county in which you live.
Douglas, Grant, Pope and Stevens Counties:
West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc. 1-800-492-4805 or (218) 685-4486
Todd County: Todd County Social Services (320) 732-4516 or 1-888-838-4066
Otter Tail County: Otter Tail County Social Services (218) 998-8230 or 1-800-450-2310
3. If you have used all of your fuel assistance funds, contact the agency again for emergency assistance (crisis fund).
4. Still need help? Call REA - the sooner the better and remember that the Cold Weather Rule ends April 15. We are here to help you work out a plan **before** it's too late!



Stay clear of dangers

Snow, ice and wind can cause problems with power lines and meters. Stay safe and avoid power interruptions by following these few steps:

- Clear snow and ice away from electric meters. Your electric service entrance and meter base can be damaged by snow and ice falling from the roof.
- For underground electrical services, keep snowplows and snow piles away from transformers.
- Stay clear of power lines when removing snow or ice off your roof or trees. Accidental contact with power lines can injure or kill you. **Look up and live!**

SUMP PUMP FAILURE!

Just when you thought it was safe to leave the house for two weeks...

Wish you knew when your sump pump wasn't keeping up? Wish you had known that your sump pump quit before seeing water all over your floor? A Heartland Security system with a water sensor can alert the homeowner when water levels get to a pre-determined level.

Sign up for a Heartland Security System by April 30 and receive a free H.S. sensor (\$120 value).

If you think security systems are just to keep burglars out, think again. Heartland systems can detect smoke, water and temperature changes. Furthermore, Heartland systems automatically notify the authorities in the event of an emergency. They can also be customized to fit a multitude of applications, including livestock, surveillance, medical and more. Call 1-888-264-6380 or visit www.heartlandss.com.



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Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday

24-hour outage & emergency service
(800) 473-1722

Underground cable locations
Gopher State One Call
(800) 252-1166

Board of Directors

Bill O'Brien, President
Mike Johnson, Vice President
Wilbur Burquest, Secretary
Ron Holm, Treasurer
Audrey Hjelle, Director
Bryan Withers, Director
Barbara Johnson, Director

Editorial Staff

Rick Banke, CEO
Sue Lundeen, Editor

In case of a power outage

- Make sure the problem is not on your side (Members may be billed for service calls if the problem is caused by their own equipment).
- Check your own fuses and circuit breakers in your home and by the meter pole (Call us for help if you are unsure of the location of your breakers).
- Check with your neighbors to see if their power is off and if they have reported the outage.
- If the trouble is not on your wiring, please call (800) 473-1722 for 24-hour service. Please report any tree branches in lines, twisted wires, broken poles and if your neighbors are also out of power.
- Be sure to have one corded phone in the house, because cordless phones won't work when the power is out.
- Program the number above into your cell phone for easy access.

REA is an equal opportunity provider