



Field Trip Fun at REA

REA welcomed Nate Lund (back, far right) and the kids with Challenge Academy. REA linemen Brian Hoppe, Matt Bade, and Cody Blakeman demonstrated the workings of a bucket and digger truck, and the importance of personal protection equipment. The kids also learned about electrical safety, energy production, and solar panels.

Save the Date

## 25th Annual Member Appreciation Pancake Feed

Saturday, August 18 7:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
REA Operations Center

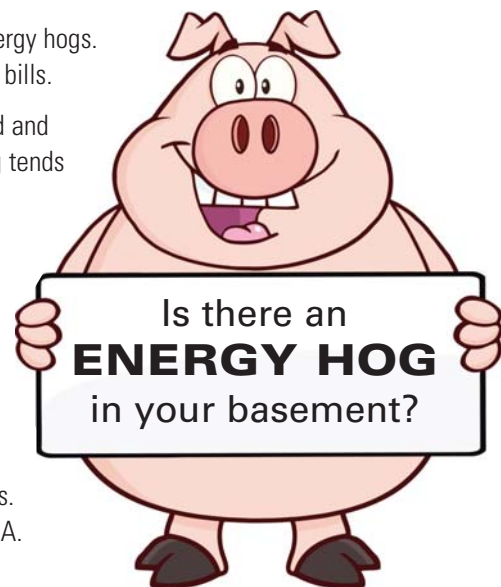
Dehumidifiers

Anyone who uses a dehumidifier regularly knows that dehumidifiers are among the biggest energy hogs. Using a dehumidifier to suck moisture out of the air can cost more than \$100 a year on electric bills.

Yet, it's often seen as an unavoidable cost. Too much humidity in a home or business risks mold and mildew problems that can damage property and be costly to clean up. Moreover, dehumidifying tends to make a room more comfortable.

Here are two ways to minimize dehumidifying costs and still remove excess moisture:

1. Use fans and windows to circulate air. As much as possible, get fresh air moving around in damp areas. A prime reason basements and other rooms get dank is because water vapor amasses in the air and has no escape.
2. If you use a dehumidifier, consider replacing a standard dehumidifier with an energy efficient Energy Star® model. According to [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov), an Energy Star model uses 30% less energy. The cost for Energy Star models is comparable to standard models. Replace your old dehumidifier with an Energy Star unit and receive a \$25 rebate from REA. Contact REA at 800-473-1722 for a rebate form or visit [www.RunestoneElectric.com](http://www.RunestoneElectric.com).



Dehumidifiers can use a lot of electricity  
Purchase an Energy Star® dehumidifier and receive a \$25 rebate from REA

# REA Supports Local Businesses

Kristin Dolan, CEO, Runestone Electric Association



Kristin Dolan, CEO

At Runestone Electric Association (REA), we are committed to supporting our members and local businesses. Here are some ways we work to support local business expansion, business efficiency and renewable energy.

### Efficiency Rebates

REA's business members have taken advantage of established rebates for lighting and motor upgrades over the years, but may be unaware of some

of the other incentives available for efficiency and electrification upgrades. Rebates are available for applications such as commercial food service, electric forklifts, HVAC, and agricultural installations including lighting, ventilation, robotic milking systems, and other custom applications. Let us be your energy advisor. If you are considering building, expanding, or making an investment in the efficiency of your business, REA is ready to work with you. Contact REA's Energy Services department for details.

### Revolving Loan Funds Available

REA has established a Revolving Loan Fund from proceeds of a Rural Development Grant, along with supplemental funds provided by REA. The purpose of the Fund is to relend repayments from original loans in an effort to promote rural economic development, community infrastructure, community facilities and to create or retain local jobs. This fund was established in 2008 to provide a low-cost funding source for the construction of Forada's waste water system. The goal of the program is to provide gap funding to projects that do not align with traditional lending requirements. To date we have funded two other projects, supporting a small town, and a business expansion. Loan funds are currently available, and we are actively searching for projects that meet the qualifications of the program. You can contact Ryan Rooney, REA's Manager of Energy Services and Business Development for details on the application and qualifications for participation.

### Considering Renewable Energy Options For Your Business?

Businesses today may have a personal or corporate interest in maximizing renewable energy sources. REA can support your renewable energy interest with programs like Wellspring Wind Energy, interconnection coordination, or through the REA Community Solar program. We are proud to recognize Carlos Creek Winery having achieved 100% renewable energy through our Wellspring Wind Energy program.

### Annual Meeting Gift Certificates

In addition to rebates, loan funds, and renewable energy, REA has also supported REA member businesses by distributing gift certificates, redeemable at participating REA member businesses, at the 2018 Annual Meeting. By the end of June, participating businesses had submitted 69 gift certificates for reimbursement. The owner of Lake Reno Bar & Grill, Laurie Trainor, tells us over half of the gift certificates she redeemed were from first-time customers. That's exactly what we wanted to hear - REA members supporting REA-member businesses! A reminder that the gift certificates expire 12/31/18.



### Congratulations to Audrey Hjelle!

I'm pleased to share with you that REA Director Audrey Hjelle was elected to serve as Secretary on the Great River Energy Board of Directors. Audrey lives near Barrett and has represented District 3 on the REA Board of Directors since 1996. We are fortunate to have local representation on the executive board of our power supplier. Audrey will do a great job and we thank her for her service to Runestone Electric and Great River Energy.



Audrey Hjelle

## REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - May 2018

- Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for April 2018, reporting April's margin was above budget, mainly due to an increase in the gross margin for the month. Expenses were under budget, as well.
- Mr. Haman reviewed REA's right-of-way clearing program explaining that RUS (Rural Utility Service), and Federated Insurance stress the importance of maintaining a ten-year rotation through the service territory. Contractors bid by substation, cutting a 15-foot clearance on either side of the center of the powerline. Right-of-way spraying is also done following tree cutting.
- Mr. Rooney reviewed the Electric Vehicle Drive and Learn Event at the ATCC on May 5. The event drew about 90 attendees from the community. He also reviewed the Exploring Your Renewable Energy Options class held at REA on

May 10. Eight member accounts (15 total guests) attended. The presentation was designed to inform members of all renewable options available to REA members.

- Approved John & Carol Seim, Alexandria, to serve on the Member Advisory Council representing District 2.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be on July 31, 2018.

### June Cooling Degree Days

2018	..... 133 (estimate)	2016	..... 108
2017	..... 84	2015	..... 72

# Traveling Tree House Visits REA

Operation Round Up Grant Recipients Gather Around the Bus



Representing some of the organizations receiving Operation Round Up® grants in May (front row l to r): Carson & Parker Tauber (MAHS Clay Target Association); Arlene Bowen (Pope County Triad); Michelle Seidel (West Central Communities Action); Maxine Prchal (Lake Mary Cemetery Association); Rhonda Blaser (Vikingland Band Festival); Lola Anderson (Life Source); Shirley Jacobs (Oscar Lake Cemetery Association); Iris Stark (Smokey Timber Foundation); Sharolyn Sievert & dog, Rafah (Central Lakes Search & Rescue) and Cindy Townsend (Alexandria Area High School Clay Target Team). (back row l to r): Dale Buchholz (Let's Go Fishing with Seniors); Dan Douvier (Glenwood Fire Department); Kris Chisholm (United Way of Douglas & Pope County); Chris Dahlke (Glenwood & Beyond); Grant Haugen (Marine Corps League "Toys for Kids"); John Loken (Trysil Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery Association); Rod Borden & Vern Lorsung (Operation Round Up Board).

REA's Operation Round Up® has distributed over **\$873,000** in grants to community-minded groups and organizations throughout the Cooperative's service territory since its inception in 2003. Over 65% of REA's members allow their bills to be rounded up to the next dollar with the average yearly contribution of \$6.

The following twenty-nine area organizations shared \$11,100 in grants from Operation Round Up.

### Fire Departments - First Responders

- Villard Fire Department (\$500)
- Glenwood Fire Department (\$500)

### Seniors

- Pope County Triad (\$300)
- Let's Go Fishing with Seniors (\$500)

### Youth

- Alexandria Area High School Clay Target Team (\$200)
- Vikingland Band Festival (\$500)
- Glacial Hills Elementary (\$300)
- United Way of Douglas & Pope County (\$500)
- MAHS Clay Target Association (\$200)
- Community Preschool (\$300)

- Minnewaska Post Prom (\$200)
- Prairie Rivers Baseball Association (\$400)
- Brandon/Evansville Summer Rec (\$300)
- Marine Corps League "Toys for Kids" (\$500)

### Community

- Central Lakes Search & Rescue (\$1000)
- Smokey Timber Foundation (\$500)
- West Central MN Communities Action (\$1000)
- Lake Mary Cemetery Association (\$250)
- Stevens County Relay for Life (\$200)
- Thorson Memorial Library (\$300)
- RUSC Kinship Mentoring (\$300)
- Forada Days (\$200)
- Garfield Community Club (\$200)
- Life Source (\$500)
- Stevens County Area Food Drop (\$200)
- Starbuck Depot & Museum (\$500)
- Trysil Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery Association (250)
- Oscar Lake Cemetery Association (\$250)
- Glenwood & Beyond (\$250)

Participation in Operation Round Up is strictly voluntary. If members want to opt-out of the program, they simply call REA to be removed from the program.

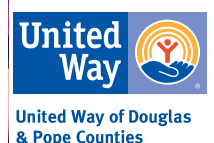
The deadline for the next round of funding is **August 13**. Application forms are available by calling Runestone Electric at (800) 473-1722. Applications can be downloaded at [www.RunestoneElectric.com](http://www.RunestoneElectric.com).



## TRAVELING TREE HOUSE

The traveling Tree House is a mobile learning center that provides FREE summer learning opportunities for local children. At each visit kids experience 75 minutes of reading, crafts, and activities.

To find out when the Tree House will be near you, **contact the United Way at 320-834-7800 or [www.uwdp.org](http://www.uwdp.org).**



# REA rolls out new farm energy management program

Agricultural producers are the focus of a new energy audit program that is now available to members of Runestone Electric.

Qualified participants will receive one-on-one assistance in identifying and prioritizing energy efficiency opportunities to ultimately come away from the experience with an energy management plan to implement.

"We understand that each operation is unique and requires personalized assistance," said Ryan Rooney, REA's Energy Services & Business Development Manager. "This program will take the guesswork out of where you should spend your time, money and efforts when it comes to energy management."

Audit outcomes will provide information ranging from simple, no-cost operational changes that can save you money to an analysis of your energy use, which equipment is using the most energy and what can be done to decrease your energy costs.

REA is able to offer this opportunity with assistance from its wholesale power provider Great River Energy, which was recently awarded a \$100,000 grant from the United States

Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy for America Program (USDA-REAP) to conduct these audits. Program participants will only need to pay 25 percent of the cost of their agricultural audit, with the other 75 percent being covered through grant funding. Average audit costs are approximately \$2,500 but can vary based on operation size.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

- Step 1** Call GDS Associates at 800-441-8525 to verify eligibility and costs.
- Step 2** GDS Associates will conduct a site visit and complete an energy audit that includes an in-depth analysis and recommendations via a comprehensive written, energy management plan.
- Step 3** If you choose to implement energy efficiency upgrades as a result of the audit, contact REA, as rebates may be available.



## Summer Energy-Saving Tips

Costs associated with cooling your home can make up a large portion of your summer electric bills. Stay cool and save money with these energy efficiency tips!



**NO-COST TIPS**

Close blinds and drapes during the day to keep heat out.



Set your thermostat to 78 degrees when you are home. Set it to a higher temperature when you're away.



Turn off lights and ceiling fans when you leave a room.



**LOW-COST TIPS**

Plant trees and shrubs to shade the exterior of your home.



Replace disposable air filters (or clean permanent filters) once a month to maximize efficiency.



Use solar lighting to brighten up your outdoor space. Solar lights are easy to install, low maintenance and provide free electricity.

**For more cost saving tips visit**  
[www.RunestoneElectric.com](http://www.RunestoneElectric.com)

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**Office Hours**  
 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Mon - Fri

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

**Board of Directors**  
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 Clif Patrick, Vice President  
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 Gary (Andy) Anderson, Secretary  
 Audrey Hjelle, Director  
 Steve Pederson, Director  
 Mike Loken, Director

**Editorial Staff**  
 Kristin Dolan, CEO  
 Sue Lundeen, Editor

### In case of a power outage

- 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.
- Never assume we know you are without power. Always call to report an outage.

▶ (651)454-0002 ▶ (800)252-1166

**Click or Call Before You Dig!**

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



**811 Know what's below. Call before you dig.**

Gopher State locates utility-owned underground facilities. REA will locate wires to the main meter. Wires from the meter to home and out buildings are private property and need to be located by a private contractor. **Private locators list:**  
<http://www.gopherstateonecall.org/private-facility-locators>

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