

We hope during this time of uncertainty, you and your family are staying safe and healthy. REA would like to remind you of these three things:

We are working to meet the needs of our members.

REA's internal operations are continuing as usual, but our lobby is closed.

Please contact us if you are facing a financial hardship.

We will work with you to find a solution.

As always, REA is just a call away!

We are available 24/7:
800-473-1722

NEWSLINE

May 2020

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REA 2020 Election Results: Director Election Goes On Despite Postponed Annual Meeting

At the REA Board of Directors Meeting held on April 30, 2020, the Board voted to postpone the 84th Annual Meeting until a later date when the meeting can be conducted safely and within the guidelines of the Governor's Executive Orders. We hope to hold a scaled-back version of a meeting sometime in 2020 to approve minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting, the financial report, confirmation of directors in District 3 and 6 and officer reports.

On April 16, 2020, Pemberton Law representatives counted the ballots for the District 7 election, and REA's attorney, Paul Johnson, certified the results. In District 7, Matthew Mattson received 121 votes prevailing over incumbent Brad Burklund with 94 votes. The director elections for District 3 served by director Audrey Hjelle and District 6 served by director Clif Patrick were uncontested, so balloting for those positions was not required. The Board appointed Director Hjelle and Director Patrick to continue to serve until confirmation can be made at the Annual Meeting.



A reorganization meeting was held on April 30, 2020, to elect officers for the cooperative. Elected were Barbara Johnson - District 2, President; Audrey Hjelle - District 3, Vice President; Gary (Andy) Anderson - District 1, Secretary; and Mike Loken - District 4, Treasurer. Other directors on the board include David Staples - District 4, Clif Patrick - District 6, and Matthew Mattson - District 7.



REA Board of Directors are pictured from left to right: District 1: Gary (Andy) Anderson, Parkers Prairie; District 5: Mike Loken, Alexandria; District 6: Clif Patrick, Alexandria; District 4: David Staples, Kensington; District 2: Barbara Johnson, Miltona; District 3: Audrey Hjelle, Barrett and District 7: Matthew Mattson, Kensington (pictured above).

COVID-19 may influence your home energy usage

The daily activity in your once-quiet home has maybe changed due to recent world events. If there are more people in the house you may see increased:

- Cooking and Cleaning
- Laundry (about \$1.50 a load with hot water)
- Showers and water usage
- Gaming activities
- Plugged in electronics of all kinds (iPad, iPhone, laptops, monitors, etc.)
- Use of a space heater in a cooler part of the home (this can add another \$1.44 per eight-hour day - or an extra \$43 a month).

Keep in mind the electric bills you receive in April and May reflect usage during colder time periods. Your electric bill normally reflects usage from the past 30 days.

Tips to help you monitor energy usage:

- Monitor your usage with SmartHub, REA's free tool for account management. SmartHub can help you take control of your REA account and give you the chance to focus on smart energy choices for your household.
- Check out all the various features to manage your account. You can schedule payments, set up alerts, recurring payments, view billing history and see your current bill, along with statements from the previous month or even the previous summer, if you want to compare costs. You can view your actual usage by the hour, day, month or year and see how your usage is trending over time, which will allow you to take steps to lower your bill.

Access SmartHub at www.runestoneelectric.com or by downloading the app on your mobile device through the App Store or Google Play. SmartHub can be easily accessed on your computer, phone or tablet.

Give us a call if we can help you set up SmartHub!
Call 800-473-1722 or visit runestoneelectric.com.



**Al Haman,
Interim CEO**

About Al Haman...

Al grew up in Bluffton, Minnesota, and graduated from Wadena Deer Creek High School (formerly Wadena Senior High School) in 1986.

After receiving a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering at NDSU, Al was hired by Otter Tail Power and began his engineering career in Fergus Falls.

In the summer of 1999, Al accepted the position of CEO for STAR Energy Services, a subsidiary of REA. STAR provides a variety of services to electric utilities.

In addition to serving as CEO of STAR, Al has been the Manager of Operations and Engineering for REA since 2008.

A Note from the Interim CEO: Here to serve you

Al Haman, Interim CEO, Runestone Electric Association

Greetings from REA! The last few weeks have been very challenging, particularly for those with school age children and anyone impacted by the Stay At Home Order. Since REA owns, operates, and maintains critical infrastructure, we continue to do so with a few changes in our work practices. Those employees who can work from home have been authorized to do so. Employees who must report to the office practice social distancing and best cleaning procedures as recommended by the CDC. Our line crews work outdoors in teams of two or three and try to limit exposure to each other. If we have necessary work that requires a planned power outage, every effort is made to contact those members impacted so we can coordinate a time when children's distance learning or those working from home will be least inconvenienced. So far, our business is proceeding as usual except for limiting access to our lobby. Thank you for understanding and being so patient!

Even though our lobby remains closed to the public, serving our members remains a top priority. Our goal is to provide excellent customer service while taking precautions to protect our members and employees. Internal office operations will continue as usual, so give us a call if you have any questions or if we can help you with an issue. Billing due dates will remain the same and we encourage any member who is facing financial difficulty to call us at 800-473-1722 or email us at rea@runestoneelectric.com.

Working to keep the lights on

Decent spring weather and an early thaw has allowed our crews to work on maintenance projects throughout our service territory. In addition to building new services, crews have begun replacing overhead lines with underground cable, replacing decayed power poles, changing out insulators and other necessary work to maintain the reliability of our system. Over the last few weeks we've had a large increase in new service requests and the continuing operation of the cooperative will allow us to address new construction in a timely manner.

We have been very fortunate to have had very few outages over the winter. In fact, our outage duration is trending below the five-year average. Outage statistics are a leading performance indicator at REA;

some things we can control, such as tree clearing, and others can't be controlled such as major storms. Year to date, various types of equipment failures have been the leading cause of outages. Many of the failures are due to age that makes a particular item susceptible to extreme cold and heat/cool cycles around freezing temperature. One of our key strategies to prevent outages due to equipment failure is to perform annual line patrols to visually inspect equipment and dispatch line crews to make repairs before an outage occurs. This makes up a significant portion of our work during winter and early spring.

As always, if you experience a power outage or other emergency, please call REA at 800-473-1722. We have a 24-hour service to take your call.

This spring, REA crews have been busy maintaining the system by replacing power poles and plowing underground. This photo was taken on the northeast side of Lake Miliona.



REA crews install a new service on the south side of Turtle Lake.

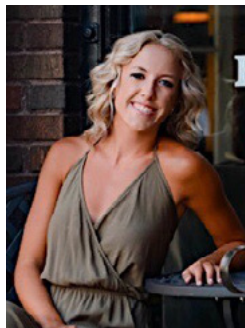
REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - March 2020

- » Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for February 2020 noting February kWh sales were 2.1% lower than budgeted. The 2020 winter weather has been warm, lowering year-to-date revenue and power cost below budget and the most recent two years. The margin is ahead of budget due to lower operating expenses to date.
- » 86 students applied for the REA Scholarship Program. One name from each district was randomly drawn. After seven names were drawn, the remaining 79 names were combined into one bowl, and the final five names were selected for a total of twelve \$1,000 scholarships. (See page 3)
- » Approved \$1,200 donation to the West Central Initiative Resiliency Fund.
- » CliftonLarsonAllen LLP presented the 2019 Audit Report through video conferencing issuing a clean opinion on the financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2019.
- » Interim CEO Haman reviewed REA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- » **The regular May Board Meeting will be May 26, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.**

Congratulations to REA Scholarship Winners

We wish you the very best!

REA's Scholarship Program is funded through unclaimed capital credits. This is money that would otherwise be claimed by the state of Minnesota. Scholarship applicants are required to have a parent or legal guardian that is a member of REA. Winners were determined through a random drawing.



Miranda Broberg,
Parents: Patrick & Jennifer Broberg, Milaca



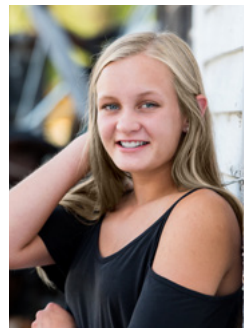
Paige Boesl,
Parent: Kim Boesl, Brandon



Adam Oehenschlager,
Parents: Chad & Tricia Oehenschlager, Alexandria



Megan Rydberg,
Parents: Kraig & Heather Rydberg, Garfield



Hailey Bennett,
Parents: Brent & Rebecca Bennett, Elbow Lake



Matthew Zick,
Parents: Jeffrey & Kristine Zick, Farwell



Ciara O'Connor,
Parents: Holly & Donnacha O'Connor, Farwell



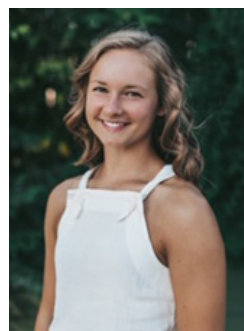
Jaiden Drewes,
Parents: Corey & Tammy Drewes, Alexandria



Aiden Tank,
Parents: Jason & Karin Tank, Glenwood



Ryan Massmann,
Parents: Rod & Gail Massmann, Alexandria



Hallee Anderson,
Parents: Bryan & Chara Anderson, Alexandria



Lucas Barkeim,
Parents: Russell & Jean Barkeim, Starbuck

Use Co-op Connections at your Pharmacy



AND SAVE!

Ask that your pharmacy compares the price using the Co-op Connections Card. You may be surprised!

Need another card? No Problem.

Simply call (800) 473-1722 or email rea@runestoneelectric.com

Download the Co-op Connections app to easily access local, regional and national offers!

Available on Google Play and the App Store.



Be sure to use your Co-op Connection Card the next time you need to fill a prescription. Insist that your pharmacy compares the price using the Co-op Connections Card. You may get a pleasant surprise!

Below is the list a participating pharmacies in our area that accept the discount card:

- » Cub Foods Pharmacy, Alexandria
- » CVS Pharmacy (Target), Alexandria
- » Glacial Ridge Clinic, Glenwood
- » Glacial Ridge Hospital, Glenwood
- » Herman Clinic, Herman
- » Samuelson Drug Store, Starbuck
- » Thrifty White Drug, Alexandria
- » Thrifty White Drug, Morris
- » Thrifty White Drug, Osakis
- » Trumm Drug, Downtown, Alexandria
- » Trumm Drug, Alexandria Clinic
- » Trumm Drug, Glenwood
- » Trumm Drug, Parkers Prairie
- » Walgreens, Alexandria

Dental discounts

Use the "Locate Provider" feature in the Healthy Savings section on www.connections.coop to find dental discounts.

What are those markers?

With construction season upon us, you may see flags or other markers within the road right of ways or perhaps even in your yard. Here's why:

When notified by Gopher State One Call, REA will mark our underground wire with red flags and red spray paint. Other utilities will mark their equipment with different colors (see chart below). It is required by law to call Gopher State One Call before you dig. If you see red markers, it doesn't always mean REA is conducting the work, it could be anyone who requested the locate, such as another utility, an excavator, or even you.

If the markers are white and not red, they are representing proposed excavation. White markers can be used by anyone preparing for an excavation project. REA uses stakes with white ribbon, like pictured to the right. If you see these, they typically represent where we will be plowing in new underground or replacing old underground.



Color Coding For Marking Underground Utilities	
White	Area of proposed excavation
Pink	Temporary Survey Markings
Red	Electric
Yellow	Gas, Oil, Steam, Propane
Orange	Communication, CATV, Fiber
Blue	Water
Purple	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation
Green	Sewer

Quick Note about locating:

Remember that utility power lines will be marked for free, up to your main meter. Underground powerlines from your main meter inward, however, are the responsibility of the member. Property owners need to call an electrician or a powerline locating company to have their private lines marked. A list of private powerline locators can be found at gopherstateonecall.org.

NEWSLINE

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Office Hours:

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mon- Fri.

May 4 to Labor Day:
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mon- Fri.

Board of Directors

- District 1: Gary (Andy) Anderson, Secretary
- District 2: Barbara Johnson, President
- District 3: Audrey Hjelle, Director
- District 4: Dave Staples, Director
- District 5: Mike Loken, Treasurer
- District 6: Clif Patrick, Vice President
- District 7: Matthew Mattson, Director

Editorial Staff

- Al Haman, Interim CEO
- Sue Lundeen, Editor
- Ally Coleman, Communications Specialist

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 a corded phone or a charged cell 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.

REA is an Equal Opportunity Provider

Source: call811.com

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Always call 8-1-1 first, because you never know what's below. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before you start.



2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility-owned lines.



3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project.

