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NEWSLINE

July 2021

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JOIN US FOR THE 84TH ANNUAL MEETING

Join us for the 84th Runestone Electric Association Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 19, at Alexandria Area High School. Director seats in District 2 and 5 will be determined as will amendments to REA's Bylaws.

Materials will be mailed for the 2021 REA Annual Meeting in mid-July. In the packet, members will receive a number of items, including the Notice of Meeting, Annual Meeting registration card, and a ballot for the Bylaw Amendments.

Please bring your registration card and ballot with you to the Annual Meeting or return the ballot by mail in the envelope provided.

Due to Covid concerns, there will be no food served at the Annual Meeting.

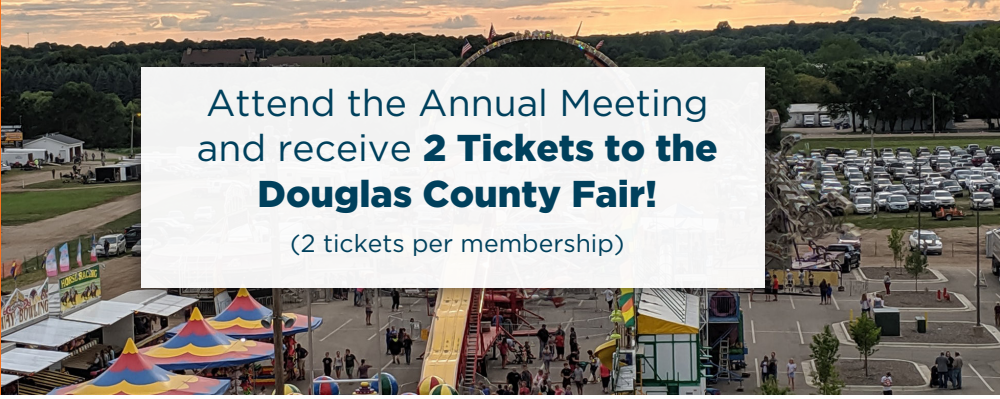
If you have any questions regarding the Annual Meeting, please call REA at 1-800-473-1722 or email rea@runestoneelectric.com.

**REA Annual Meeting:
Thursday, August 19, 2021**

Registration opens at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting begins at 5:00 p.m.

Alexandria Area High School
4300 Pioneer Rd SE
Alexandria, MN 56308



Attend the Annual Meeting and receive **2 Tickets to the Douglas County Fair!**
(2 tickets per membership)

Hosted by:

**FREE
Baseball Clinic
for boys and girls
ages 6-12.**

Alexandria Area High School
Softball Complex
Alexandria, MN

**Saturday
July 31, 2021**

Session 1:
9:00 AM

Session 2:
10:30 AM



Register at www.playballmn.com



Al Haman
CEO

A Note from your CEO Annual Meeting Preparations

In this issue of Newslines, we are announcing details about the REA Annual Meeting in August. Recall that last year's meeting that was scheduled for April 16, 2020, was initially postponed

due to Covid, and in August, the Board made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 meeting. Unfortunately, that was the first time in the history of the cooperative that an Annual Meeting was not held.

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to elect directors, hear reports regarding the previous year, and transact other business that may come before the meeting.

This year's Annual Meeting will be different in that we must first take care of a few items regarding 2019 and then move on to the 2020 business. There will be reports from President Barbara Johnson and myself to cover events from 2020 and the financials of your cooperative. Finally, we will learn the results of two director elections and Bylaw Amendments.

Please note that the requested Bylaw Amendments are presented elsewhere in this document. Generally speaking, we wish to add language to the Bylaws that allow us to conduct future meetings via electronic means using today's video conferencing technology. All members are asked to consider this question and vote. If there is ever another situation where meeting attendance restrictions are in place, this change allows another option for us to easily hold an Annual Meeting.

Barbara and I look forward to welcoming everyone to the 2021 Annual Meeting!

Summary Statements of Amendments to the Bylaws

Under the proposed amendments, the Board of Directors may authorize membership participation and voting at the Annual Meeting by remote communication. Members attending remotely would also be counted as being "present" for establishing a quorum. The Cooperative is to implement reasonable measures to verify that each person attending an Annual Meeting remotely is, in fact, a member. The *Notice of the Annual Meeting* shall provide instructions for accessing the meeting remotely if remote attendance is authorized.

The REA Board of Directors adopted the following resolution approving *Board Granted Authority for Virtual Annual Meetings and Member Attendance at Annual Meeting by Remote Communication*. The Board recommends approval by the members:

Resolution

WHEREAS, the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic that the members of this cooperative have experienced in this last year has made us aware of the benefits of the option of meeting attendance through remote communication; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the Cooperative if its Bylaws be amended to provide that (if authorized by law) the Board of Directors may authorize members to attend the Annual Meeting by remote communication or, alternatively, may authorize the Annual Meeting to be held solely by means of remote communication;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved, that the Board of Directors recommends to REA members for consideration at the next Annual Meeting of the members that the Article II of the Bylaws be amended.

The recommended Amendments above will be mailed to members in mid-July with the *Notice of Annual Meeting*.

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - May 2021

- » Reviewed the Financial Report for April 2021. She noted sales revenue was down from budgeted more than power cost expense, contributing to a negative margin for the month. Year to date, the REA margin is right at budget, with a negative variance on the gross margin and a positive variance on operating expense.
- » STAR Energy Services Safety Compliance Specialist Lisa Tickhill presented the Safety Year in Review and answered questions from the Board
- » CEO Haman presented the Lease and Easement Agreement with Gardonville Cooperative Telephone Association. The lease allows Gardonville to place a small communications building at the Belle River Substation in exchange for free internet service for the substation's metering building.
- » Approved the union contract extension agreement between REA and Local Union 949 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL-CIO).
- » Approved changes to M-18 Energy Service Loan Program to allow for program flexibility.
- » **The regular July Board Meeting will be July 27, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.**

Director Candidate Biographies

Learn more about director candidates in District 2 and District 5. Election results will be announced at the Annual Meeting on August 19, 2021.



Barbara Johnson

District 2 Barbara Johnson Incumbent

Barbara Johnson (incumbent director) was nominated at the District Two meeting at Gathered Oaks in Alexandria.

An REA member since 2000, Barbara and her husband, LeRoy, live in Leaf Valley Township on Lake Milnora. They have three grown

children and seven grandchildren.

Barbara has served on the REA Board of Directors for twelve years, and for the last five years has been the board president. She is a certified Credentialed Cooperative Director through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Barbara holds a degree in Math from the University of North Dakota - Grand Forks and worked as a computer programmer, systems designer and later as a bookkeeper.

District 2 Townships: Leaf Mountain, Effington, Millerville, Leaf Valley, Brandon, and Ida.



Mike Loken

District 5 Mike Loken Incumbent

Mike Loken (incumbent director) was nominated at the District 5 meeting at Country Blossom Farm in Alexandria. Mike and his wife, Ginny, reside on part of the farm where he grew up in La Grand Township. Before retiring in 2002, Mike worked in computer systems management for life insurance companies in the Twin Cities.

Mike has served on the REA Board of Directors for three years, and has been treasurer the past two years. He is a certified Credentialed Cooperative Director through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Mike and Ginny have 7 grown children and 15 grandchildren. The Loken's belong to First Lutheran Church in Alexandria.

Mike has volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, Love INC, and volunteers during tax season preparing free income tax forms for low income clients through West Central MN Community Action.

District 5 Townships: Alexandria and La Grand.

Small Change Can Make Big Changes with Operation Round Up®



Through the contributions of Runestone Electric Association's participating members, the Operation Round Up® Electric Trust Board recently approved **\$14,900** to assist local community programs during its quarterly meeting.

The Cooperative's trust board, a voluntary board of seven REA members, reviewed and considered 44 grant applications and distributed funds to 36 projects and programs this past quarter. Since the program's inception in 2003, more than \$1 million has been distributed to community-based projects and programs.

The deadline to apply for the next round of funding is August 6, 2021. Application forms can be completed online at www.RunestoneElectric.com.

Fire Departments & First Responders:

- » Osakis Emergency Medical Responders (\$250)
- » Parkers Prairie Community Ambulance (\$1,000)
- » Herman Fire & Rescue (\$1,000)
- » Osakis Fire Department (\$1,000)
- » Starbuck Fire Department (\$1,000)

Youth:

- » Osakis After Prom (\$200)
- » Osakis Boy Scouts Troop 426 (\$250)
- » MAHS Clay Target Association (\$250)
- » Brandon/Evansville Basketball Booster (\$250)
- » Alexandria Youth Baseball Association (\$250)
- » Alexandria Area High School Trap Team (\$250)
- » Fellowship of Christian Athletes (\$250)
- » Brandon-Evansville Post Prom (\$200)
- » Brandon-Evansville T-Ball, Toss Ball, Softball (\$500)
- » Youth Outdoor Education Foundation (\$500)
- » Boy Scouts of America, Northern Lights Council (\$500)

Community:

- » Vietnam Veterans Association 235 Funeral Detail (\$300)
- » Safe Families for Children (\$500)
- » Bethel Cemetery Association (\$250)
- » Selective TV (\$500)
- » West Central Area Schools (\$300)
- » St. Luke's Cemetery Association (\$250)
- » Hoffman Commerce & Agriculture (\$250)
- » Hoffman Lions Club (\$250)
- » Aeneas Cemetery Association (\$250)
- » Gray Ladies of American Red Cross (\$200)
- » Relay for Life Douglas County (\$500)
- » Barrett Legion Unit 351 (\$200)
- » Garfield Community Club (\$250)
- » Starbuck Depot & Museum (\$500)
- » Hoffman Farmer's Market (\$500)
- » Friends of Nordic Meadow Inc. (\$500)
- » Trysil Bethesda Cemetery Association (\$250)
- » Knute Nelson Foundation (\$500)
- » Friends of Douglas County Fair (\$500)

Seniors:

- » Let's Go Fishing - Alexandria Lakes Area (\$500)

Avoiding Electric Shock in Real Life

“We had a scary situation at our family cabin in Northern Minnesota earlier this summer. We have a little shack down by the lake that has power, and so my uncle had plugged in his on board battery charger. The following morning, another uncle noticed dead fish floating in the water around the dock. Something was wrong, so we unplugged the battery charger.

After investigating, we found that the old shack only had a two-prong outlet with no ground. We also discovered a problem with the wiring on the battery charger. The neutral conductor was making contact with the charger case and the case was in contact with the aluminum hull. Without a grounded conductor or GFCI to clear the fault in the outlet, the boat hull, other connected metal and the water surrounding the boat were energized.

Luckily the charger was plugged in after everyone had come out of the water for the day. It could have been a disaster if the charger had been plugged in while my family and our dogs were in the lake. Thankfully we noticed the dead fish early in the morning before anyone had entered the water.

We wired a GFCI outlet in the shack to fix the situation, and my uncle replaced his battery charger. We feel pretty fortunate that nothing bad happened with this dangerous situation.”

- REA Lineman Ross King



GFCI Outlets by the lake

The National Electrical Code requires GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protection for any outdoor outlets. It's recommended to follow manufacturer guidelines for testing.

For more information, visit esfi.org.

NEWSLINE

The official monthly publication of Runestone Electric Association.

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Office Hours:
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, Vice President
- District 4: Dave Staples, Director
- District 5: Mike Loken, Treasurer
- District 6: Cliff Patrick, Director
- District 7: Matthew Mattson, Director

Editorial Staff

- Al Haman, 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

Sign up to get text messages from REA on control days!
Simply text #loadcontrol to 22300.
Msg and data rates apply.

GFCIs



 Your **Protection** from Electrocuti**o**n



Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters have saved thousands of lives since their introduction to the National Electrical Code in the 1970s. Make sure your home is properly protected against ground faults with the correct installation of GFCIs.

50%

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that **50% of home electrocutions** have been **prevented** by the introduction of GFCIs.

GFCI Protection is required for outlets installed in:

Bathrooms 	Garages 	Outdoors 	Balconies, Decks, and Porches 
Kitchen Countertops 	Within 6 ft of a Sink 	Laundry Areas 	Within 6 ft of a Bathtub or Shower 

Know what's below, Call before you dig!



Call 811 or visit gopherstateonecall.org before you dig