

REA Wishes You and Your Family a Very Happy Thanksgiving!

REA will be closed November 27 and 28.

To report a power outage or an emergency, call (800) 473-1722. We have a 24-hour answering service to take your call.

During this time when we have so much for which to be thankful, we want to thank you for your business!

NEWSLINE

November 2025

Member Tour Highlights pg 2 Christmas Lighting Drawing pg 4

Werk Brothers Remember Life Growing up on the Farm

Werk is a common family name in the Herman/Donnelly area. The four sons of Lester and Grace Werk came to REA recently to share stories and memories of their childhood growing up in a house built by their grandparents with their great-grandparents just down the road.

Their father, Lester, was an entrepreneur of sorts making a living by farming, selling seeds, taxidermy and gunsmithing. Grace, their mother, had a full-time job raising four boys and helping on the farm.

Lester had the foresight to know life on the farm needed to change due to his deteriorating health. That's where electrifying their home and farm played a major role. With the family living in the basement, over the course of three years, Lester spent every free moment taking down the original farmhouse built in the late 1800s and replacing it with a single level home. Unfortunately, Lester would die a few years later at the age of 45. The brothers recall their uncle coming to help finish the ongoing remodeling project. This is the home in which Roger and his wife, Betty, live today.

"Before the electric baseboard heaters, Dad and us boys had to haul coal for the coal furnace," David recalled. "Electric heat was so much easier, cleaner and warmer." The newspaper article (on right) states the electric heating rate in 1958 was 1.75¢ per kWh.

The Werk family is one of many stories we have found in our archives in which the electrification of rural Minnesota positively impacted many lives. Here's to 90 years of serving West Central Minnesota!

David, Roger, Larry and Wayne Werk at their family farm near Herman.



Werks Heat Home Electrically

Mr. and Mrs. Lester Werk, Herman, and Wayne, 5, are shown in front of their all-electric home.

Werks To Have First All Electric Farm

Louis Grosenick

Mr. and Mrs. Lester Werk of Herman, Minnesota, (Section 33 of Roseville Township) will have the distinction of having the first ALL-ELECTRIC farm place on the Runestone Electric Association system by going ahead with the installation of wiring and heating units to electrically heat their completely remodeled 28' x 48' home.

Lester and Grace, with their family of four boys, Wayne 5, Larry 6, Roger 8, and David 15, own and operate their 320 acre grain farm, specializing in cer-

tified barley and flax seeds and have about 750 laying hens. They also have developed quite a business of taxidermy, hide tanning and tailoring of leather jackets and gloves which grew from a hobby more than 15 years ago. Most of their work comes in from this general area, but they say that their out-state business is growing, too.

Electricity has played an important part in their lives for their better living and working ever since power came to their territory in about 1941. Along with the usual uses of electric energy, an electric range and

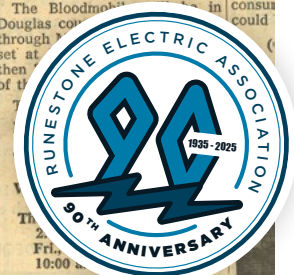
water heater have served them so well during the past years, also.

Since last spring, the Werks have made considerable progress in a complete remodeling job of their old two story home, by a complete disassembly and reconstruction from basement on up and now we see shaping up a nice single story, 28' x 48' three bedroom dwelling. Included in their plans is a modern electric heat system.

After a thorough investigation of several electrically heat-

(Continued on Page 4)

Bloodmobile Schedule Set



(From l to r) Larry & Peggy, Roger, Karen & David, and Wayne Werk gathered at REA to share stories and swap pictures.



Al Haman
CEO

A Note from the CEO A Great Day for 2nd Annual Member Tour!

To celebrate National Cooperative Month, REA hosted its 2nd Annual Member Tour on October 10.

Our first stop was at the CF Industries facility east of Glenwood. This facility serves

as a storage and distribution point for much of the anhydrous ammonia used in agriculture within our region. The anhydrous ammonia is manufactured in northern Canada and shipped to Glenwood via railcar. It is stored in large vessels at a temperature of -28 degrees Fahrenheit and must be warmed before being placed into tanker trucks, which transport the product to local farmers' cooperatives.

We next visited Dorrich Dairy south of Glenwood. The dairy utilizes several robotic milking machines. The 500 cows at the farm choose when to be milked and approach the robot. An electronic ID tag is scanned to determine if the cow is due for a milking, and if it's time, the robot opens. The cow enters, is cleaned and prepped automatically, and milked. After milking is complete, the cow exits the robot and returns to the resting and feeding area. This process goes on non-stop, 24/7. There are even robot vacuums that clean the barn floors!

Rolling Forks Vineyard hosted us for a delicious lunch and wine sampling. We learned about the history of the vineyard, their wine production, and the numerous awards won, and were encouraged to explore the grounds. The views of the vineyard, fall foliage, and Lake Minnewaska were spectacular! I strongly encourage a visit to enjoy the fantastic wine, scenery, and great hospitality.

Our tour continued to Glacial Ridge Growers, located south of Lake Minnewaska. They are a wholesale grower of a large variety of plants. One thing I found particularly interesting was their focus on starting native perennial plants. I hadn't really considered the difficulty of germinating seeds that normally require exposure to seasonal weathering, such as cold dormancy, or special environmental conditions, like freezing and thawing. It surprised me to learn they have walk-in coolers on-site for this purpose and have been experimenting for several years to get their processes correct.

The final stop, and maybe even the highlight of the day, was a tour through Glacial Lakes State Park south of Starbuck. We started with Louise and Todd Malecha of Malecha Enterprises, Villard, who boarded the bus and shared with the tour their latest endeavor, Papa and Nana's Chillery Fruit Pops. These tasty popsicles are just one of many new products the Malechas are exploring.

We then traveled through the park. Glacial Lakes State Park is unique in that it features a rare native prairie and a burr oak savanna. Glacial formations, such as kames and kettle lakes, dominate the landscape. The 56-acre Signalness Lake is unique in that the entire watershed is contained in the park, which makes its water clear and clean. There are many seasonal activities, from snowshoeing to camping to wildlife watching. We were told that August might be the most beautiful time of year to visit since the native prairie flowers are in full bloom.

I want to thank all the businesses and members who participated in the tour. Once again, I was amazed and intrigued by the variety of businesses REA serves. I'm already looking forward to next year's tour!

(Check out the photos on page 3)

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - September 2025

- » Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report noting the REA Margin is 2.5% under budget after August, with gross margin under budget, offset partly by operating expense also being under budget. August kWh sales are up 6.3% from last year and are 4.5% lower than budget.
- » The Board reviewed patronage refunds from National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) and Cooperative Response Center (CRC).
- » CEO Haman provided an update on the GRE Member Managers Group meeting, noting that GRE is undergoing an internal rate study of specific areas of the organization, and that Demand Side Management (DSM) rates are likely to increase this fall. Haman recently served on a panel at the MREA Engineering and Operations Conference, alongside

CEOs who had previously held operations management roles.

- » CEO Haman presented the September Safety, Reliability, and Service Quality Report and answered questions from the Board. He reviewed tree-related outage statistics and identified areas affected by outages caused by trees.
- » President Anderson reported on the September GRE Board Meeting and the committees in which he participates. He noted that, due to the closure of the Elk River facility and transmission expansion projects, the GRE Headquarters office space in Maple Grove is at full capacity, and they may consider a future building expansion project.
- » **The regular November Board Meeting will be Tuesday, November 25, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.**



2025 Tour Photos



REA's Lake Mary Substation



Dorrich Dairy



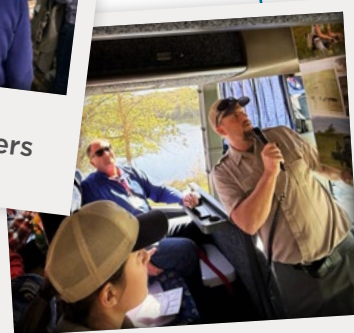
Glacial Ridge Growers



CF Industries



Rolling Forks Vineyards



Glacial Lakes State Park

Correcting Stray Voltage Conditions



As a member of Runestone Electric Association, you should feel free to call us anytime with concerns related to your electric service. One area that can be a concern, particularly for livestock farms, is stray voltage.

Although stray voltage is present on all distribution systems, humans usually do not notice it. However, livestock - especially dairy cows - are particularly sensitive. The goal is to keep the voltage level low enough that it will not cause a problem on the farm. Stray voltage can also result from deteriorating and improper wiring, faulty equipment, or improper grounding. Because of high electric use, high humidity, silage acids, and manure, a dairy farm is not the ideal environment for electrical wiring.

REA offers stray voltage investigations at no charge.

The Minnesota Stray Voltage Guide outlines the steps farmers, electricians, utilities and their advisors can take to discover and resolve stray voltage concerns on livestock farms.

When farmers and utility companies work together, stray voltage concerns are more likely to be satisfactorily resolved. To download the Guide, visit www.minnesotastrayvoltageguide.com.



let it GLOW

Let's light up the countryside! REA presents the **5th Annual Let It Glow** event to recognize members who put in hard work on their light displays AND to let our communities know where to look for these spectacular lights. Check out the details below.

Prizes:

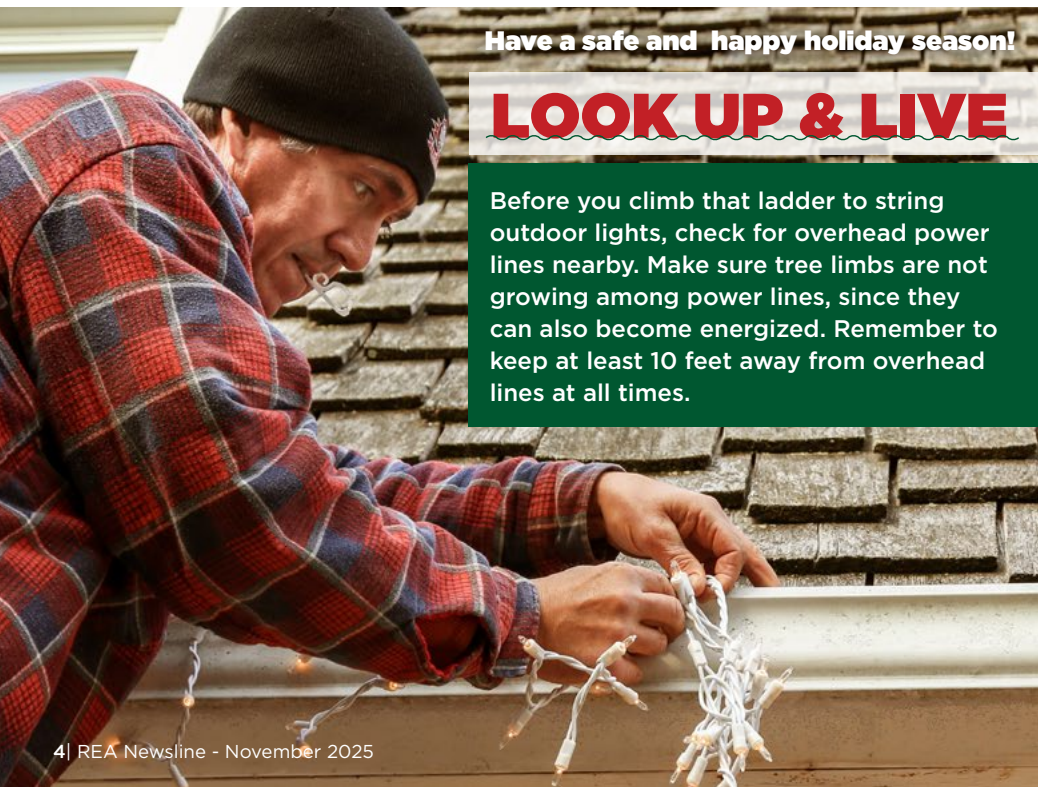
ALL Christmas light display entries will be entered into a drawing for three \$100 bill credits.

Registration:

Online registration form at www.runstoneelectric.com or call REA at 800-473-1722. Submit a photo with an address so that the public will know where to go to check out the holiday displays.

Details:

- Display must be served by Runestone Electric Association (REA).
- Deadline for drawing entry is 12/11/25.
- Drawing will be held on 12/12/25 and winners will be notified.
- Map of participating displays will be available at www.runstoneelectric.com on 12/15/25.



Have a safe and happy holiday season!

LOOK UP & LIVE

Before you climb that ladder to string outdoor lights, check for overhead power lines nearby. Make sure tree limbs are not growing among power lines, since they can also become energized. Remember to keep at least 10 feet away from overhead lines at all times.

NEWSLINE

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6839 Power Lane SW
Alexandria, MN 56308

320-762-1121

Fax: 320-763-4149

rea@runstoneelectric.com
www.runstoneelectric.com

24/7: 800-473-1722

Office Hours:

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

Board of Directors

- District 1: Gary (Andy) Anderson, President
- District 2: Barbara Johnson, Director
- District 3: Jon Winter, Director
- District 4: Dave Staples, Secretary
- District 5: Mike Loken, Vice President
- District 6: Joel Seela, Director
- District 7: Matthew Mattson, Treasurer
Al Haman, CEO

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 will use reasonable diligence to furnish adequate and dependable electric service, but it cannot and does not guaranty continuous and uninterrupted service

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Sign up to get text messages from REA on control days!

Simply text #loadcontrol to 22300
Msg and data rates apply

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



Scammers will try anything to pressure customers into providing their personal information. If you are ever asked to pay your utility bill through an app such as Cash App or Venmo, it's a scam. Only use authorized payment methods when paying your utility bills.

Source: Utilities United Against Scams