

# Connections



## Missing members missing out on co-op's money tree

Co-op members planted 'seeds' financially that produced capital credits. However, some members moved before the capital credits' harvest. Help them reap the rewards of co-op patronage. (See Pages 2-3 for the listing).

Your electric co-op is trying to locate these missing members. After moving off the cooperative's system, we no longer have their current address. Their capital credits check was returned — address unknown. If you know the location of any of these members, call or e-mail the appropriate co-op with the member's current address.

Unclaimed capital credits checks are donated to a tax-exempt organization. Brown County REA and Federated Rural Electric give unclaimed capital credits to their Operation Round Up program. Brown's Round Up Trust Board donates to programs that benefit their rural residents and local communities. Federated's Round Up Trust Board awards high school scholarships. South Central Electric donates funds to local fire departments and rescue squads. ♣

## Our Energy, Our Future Minnesota

If you are concerned about how climate change legislation might negatively impact your electric bills, the state's economy and budget deficit, let your voice be heard through the Our Energy, Our Future — Minnesota program.

Based on the success of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Our Energy, Our Future campaign, which enlisted millions of electric cooperative members to urge Congress to ask the right questions when considering greenhouse gas legislation, Minnesota has created a similar program. The Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) is currently contacting co-op members who participated in the national program for their permission to send those same messages — along with another about jobs — to state legislators. They've also created a website — [www.ourenergymn.coop](http://www.ourenergymn.coop) — that will automatically send those questions for new participants.

**Important note: if you already participated in the NRECA Our Energy, Our Future campaign in 2008, please do not enter your information into the Minnesota site or complete another dialogue card. Instead, MREA will send messages to state legislators on your behalf soon.**

For those who didn't participate in the federal program, please consider joining the effort at the state level. Go to [www.ourenergymn.coop](http://www.ourenergymn.coop) and send your questions to our representatives in St. Paul. Begin a dialogue that will help Minnesota leaders put together a responsible energy plan. Show the legislators your concerns now and ask questions before the laws are passed. ♣



Connecting our co-ops & members to a progressive future



### Inside this issue:

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This publication focuses on CAP's members, programs and events. As this is the official member publication, member's story ideas, letters-to-the-editor and comments are welcomed.

Andrea Christoffer, CCC, Editor  
*"Owned by those it serves"*

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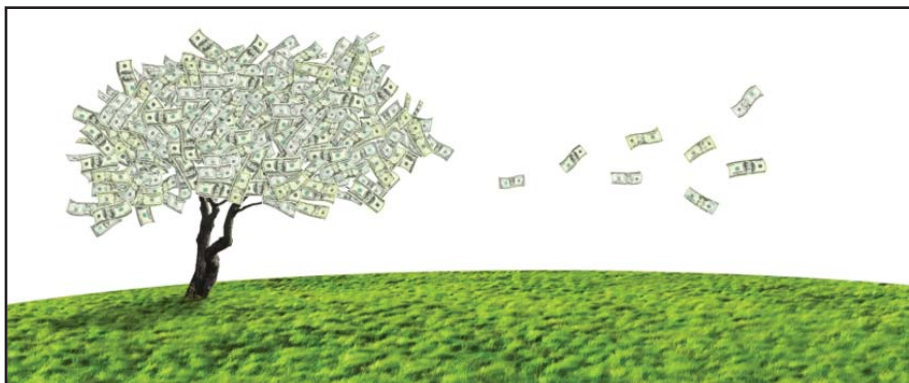
# Money grows on the co-op tree

## Help former members 'pick' their harvest as co-op members

### Former South Central

**members:** Call 375-3164, 628-5571 or 1-888-805-7232; ask for Betty or e-mail [bjohnson@southcentralelectric.com](mailto:bjohnson@southcentralelectric.com).

Ager, Ross	Butterfield
American Telecasting Inc.	Leesburg, FL
Anderson, Roger J.	Heron Lake
Behne, Rick	Trimont
Bridges, Darwin E.	Frisco, TX
Brogger, Steven	Jamestown, TN
Brouk, Mike	Bruce, SD
Clover, Brent	Fairmont
Colglazier, Anita	Cincinnati, OH
Collins, Todd	Northrup
Cooper, Steve	Mapleton
Cother, Kenneth	Jackson
Damon, Michael	Minneapolis
Des Moines River Telemedia	Storden
Dettmer, Derry	Fairmont
Dickson, Joseph	Mt. Lake
Dougherty, Jeffrey	Madelia
Engelby, Steven	Madelia
Foster, Terry	Estherville, IA
Frydenlund, Hilmer	St. James
Geerts, Francis	Charles City, IA
Goin, Paul	Boulder City, NV
Gravley, Kathy	Windom
Haler, Rick	Cologne
Harder, Keith	Kalamazoo, MI
Heidelberger, Kenneth	Moorhead
Hepp, Jerry	Windom
Hindermann, Sandy	Waseca
Hippert, Joe	St. James
Holland, Glen	Fairmont
Holland, Todd	Annandale, MN
Holmgren, Douglas	Alexandria
Janssen, Paul	Trimont
Johnson, David A.	Somerworth, NH
Johnson, Jay	Jeffers
Johnston, Greg	North Mankato
Kain, Calvin	Truman
Karschnik, Richard	Dundee



King, Arnold	Heron Lake	Schultz, Mike	Richmond
Klein, Pete	Heron Lake	Sjoquist, Patricia	Minneapolis
Kleven, Muriel	Pharr, TX	Smart, Richard	Sioux Falls, SD
Koch, James	Sioux Falls, SD	Smith, Gordon Charles	Barnum
Kremmin, Ron	Comfrey	Squier, Monte	Ashland City, TN
Kuehl, Arlene	Apple Valley	Surber, John	Edgemont, SD
Langland, Ardith M.	Lakefield	Tilden, Mary	New Ulm
Lawrence, Sandy	St. Paul	Voshage, Gene	Monument, CO
Leiferman, Paul	Owatonna	Waterbury, Lynne	Las Vegas, NV
Leimer, Terry	Truman	Waterbury, Vernon	Truman
Maertens, Danial	Fergus Falls	Werner, Wesley	Sanborn
Mathistad, Joel	St. James	Wright, Jodie	Mankato
Mertesdorf, Lee	Casa Grande, AZ		
Meyer, Rod	Pipestone		
Miller, David L.	Hanska		
Mudgett, Randy	Mapleton		
Nachreiner, Pat	Madelia		
Nelson, Bruce	Cedar Falls, IA		
Nelson, Don	New Ulm	Ackerson, Stewart L.	Fargo, ND
Nelson, Joey W.	Spirit Lake, IA	Albrecht, Alton	Apache Junction, AZ
Nielsen, Holger	Fairmont	Albrecht, George H.	New Ulm
Olson, Raymond L.	Comfrey	Anderson, Orelan	Sleepy Eye
Olson, Wayne A.	Madelia	Bartol, David H.	Pine River
Quiring, Bradley	Sioux Falls, SD	Blaschko, Norita	Columbus, OH
Ramsey, Michael	Mt. Lake	Carmichael, Terry	Rowlett, TX
Reese, Jay	Boonville, MO	Catherman, Daniel R.	La Valle, WI
Rengstorf, Ivan	Anoka	Clobes, Alice	New Ulm
Ripley, Scott	Lynd	Cook, Gregory, G.	Plainview
Roe, Kellie	Sleepy Eye	Dahlen, Larry A.	Irving
Ross, Bill	Jeffers	Dier, Roger	Green Bay, WI
Schaffer, Glen	Eota	Elias, Kenneth L.	Racine, WI
Schlomann, Kenneth	St. James	Erickson, Glenn L.	Mankato

### Former Brown County

**members:** Call 794-3331 or 1-800-658-2368. Otherwise, e-mail [bcrea@browncountyrea.coop](mailto:bcrea@browncountyrea.coop)

# 'Branch' out and help us find these missing co-op members!

Fitzgerald, John P. New Ulm  
 Frederiksen, Scott Wabasso  
 Gonzales, Jesus Hanska  
 Granstrom, (Ibberson) Judy A. Buffalo, WY  
 Hall, Ted J. Maple Shade, NJ  
 Halverson, Steve P. New Ulm  
 Hansen, Philip H. Woodbury  
 Henrichs, Steven L. Fairfax  
 Hensley, Edna L. Franklin  
 Hoffmann, Susan Sleepy Eye  
 Hollingsworth, LaVarre Springfield  
 Johnson, Delores L. Monticello  
 Jutz, Charles J. Banner, WY  
 Kliner, Dale J. Blackstone, VA  
 L. P. Triax Midwest Assn. Denver, CO  
 Lewandowski, Ryan Sleepy Eye  
 Malsch, Daniel J. Marysville, WA  
 Marti, Elden Alexandria  
 Mastick, Rob R. Highlands Ranch, CO  
 Miller, Dean Redwood Falls  
 Moore, Terry A. New Ulm  
 Moser, Todd W. Morris  
 Musich, Michael J. Redwood Falls  
 Neubauer, Vincent T. Mankato  
 Nosbush, Lawrence New Ulm  
 Olson, Allen E. New Ulm  
 Pederson, Gerald Winthrop  
 Peterson, Diane M. Winnebago  
 Peterson, Roland A. Winthrop  
 Pfeiffer, Brian New Ulm  
 Platz, Gerard L. Hutchinson  
 Reighard, Paulette L. Eldora, IA  
 Rohde, Clem Morgan  
 Schmidt, Susan New Ulm  
 Schugel, Penny I. New Ulm  
 Schultz, Edward C. Searles  
 Sirovy, Edward L. New Ulm  
 Smith, Michael W. New Ulm  
 Sonnenburg, Charles Crete, IL  
 Spicer, Debbie L. New Ulm  
 Spicer, Gary New Ulm  
 Stolt, Gerald Lindstrom  
 Stueber, John Jr. New Ulm  
 Thompson, Kim M. Rapid City, SD  
 Triax Midwest Assn. L.P. Denver, CO  
 Ulrich, Tad M. Lafayette  
 US West Communications Denver, CO  
 Williams, Edward C. Hanska  
 Yonkovich, Dorothy Lafayette

**Former Federated members:** Call 847-3520, 728-8366 or 1-800-321-3520; ask for Nina or e-mail [billing@federatedrea.coop](mailto:billing@federatedrea.coop).

Abels, Janeen Jackson  
 Adams, Stephen Northfield  
 Albright, Don Atlantic, IA  
 Ahrens, Cleo Viola Windom  
 Anderson, John O. Burnsville  
 Anderson, Kari Gerdes Round Lake  
 Ardolf, Mike St. Paul  
 Austin, Kathy Luverne  
 Baumhoefner, Roy Fairmont  
 Becker, Elizabeth E. Fairmont  
 Behrens, Lynn Elmwood, WI  
 Braend, Earl Waverly, IA  
 Bresson, David Marshall  
 Carlson, Ron & Harold St. Paul  
 Carpenter, Mae Novato, CA  
 Fernholz, Duane Phoenix, AZ  
 Fitzgerald, Corey Estherville, IA  
 Frank, Lyle Lake Park, IA  
 Garloff, Donald Windom  
 Gay, Jeffrey L. Alpha  
 Glidden, Kay Harris, IA  
 Grelson, Paul Forestville, WI  
 Griese, Mike Mountain Lake  
 Hall, Debra Mountain Lake  
 Hanson, Selmer B. Windom  
 Hase, Gary Ceylon  
 Heimendinger, Wade Fairmont  
 Hodnefield, Stephen Phoenix, AZ  
 Holt, Rodney C. Windom

Howard, Harvey Sr. Fairmont  
 Keltgen, Bruce Fairmont  
 Kremmin, Ronald Odin  
 Kutzbach, Rolland Worthington  
 Landon, Les Fairmont  
 Ling, Brad Jackson  
 Maday, Ethel Olivia  
 Mallecker, David Welcome  
 Maday, V. S. Granada  
 Metli, Jeff Osage, IA  
 Meysenburg, Travis Fairmont  
 Miller, Kara Windom  
 Miller, James Jackson  
 Molitor, Milo Sibley, IA  
 Moritz, Mary Sioux Falls, SD  
 Odegaard, Kathy New Brighton  
 Olson, Troy Estherville, IA  
 Potter, Rex Windom  
 Rankin, David Lakefield  
 Rickert, Robert Alamo, TX  
 Russenberger, Kreg Sherburn  
 Schlauch, Mark Estherville, IA  
 Schmidt, Connie Windom  
 Sheppard, Kelley Jackson  
 Snyder, Scott Granada  
 Solyntjes, Scott Lakefield  
 Stamer, Clarice Round Lake  
 Steinberg, Dan/Carla Jackson  
 Stewart, Laurie Fairmont  
 Stolarski, Ray, Cincinnati, OH  
 Taylor, Steve Lakefield  
 Terhorst, Matilda Orange City, IA  
 Waldron, Gerald Windom  
 T&H Grain Storage  
 % David W. Zemke Truman  
 Zimmer, Marie Mt. Lake

## Tell me more about capital credits

As a member-owner, you have a share in the earnings of your not-for-profit electric co-op. Your co-op's rates are set to bring in enough money to pay operating costs, make loan payments and provide an emergency reserve. Revenues in excess of the cost of doing business are returned to members as capital credits. The co-op holds onto these capital credits for a period of years, according to policy, before returning them to you, the member-owners. The reason your co-op holds onto these monies is because your co-op is a very capital-intensive business. It needs to invest a lot of money in substations, transformers, poles, wire, etc. This then allows your co-op to provide reliable electricity to its members.

# Federated Focus

## Operation Round Up deadline...

Local organizations can apply for Round Up funds by February 20. Go to our website for the application.

## D.C is calling you!

High school freshmen, sophomores or juniors can still apply for the free trip to D.C. Apply by February 27. Download the application and contest details from our website. Students also write a 300-word essay on an energy-related topic.

## Got blueprints? Call us

Building a new home or hog barn? Adding on a major home addition or adding to your grain drying system? Call Federated. Talk to Joe first to see if your service is large enough and place your electric service project on our construction do-list. Then talk to Jon. Find out about our money-saving programs for heating, cooling, water heating or about rebates for electric motors and adjustable-speed drives, plus hog barn and shop lighting rebates.

## Iowa members' complaints

If you have a concern or complaint regarding Federated Rural Electric, it should be addressed to: Richard Burud, manager, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or call 507-847-3520.

If Federated does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from: Utilities Board, Department of Commerce, 350 Maple St., Des Moines IA 50319-0069 or call 515-281-5979.

If your complaint is related to service, rather than rates, and Federated does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Utilities Division too. ⚡

## Congratulations on 130 years of service!



Employees and their spouses are pictured at the Federated recognition banquet last month (employees are in the back row). Mary and Bob Emgarten, Karen and Jim Oltman, Linda and Steve Handevitd, Sheryl and Blaine Strampe, Jennifer Claussen with Matt "George" Madden and Richard Burud.

These Federated employees, directors and attorney were recently recognized for their 130 years of cumulative service and their 2008 service anniversaries:

Richard Burud, general manager	35 years
Blaine Strampe, chief electrical engineer	25 years
Bob Emgarten, electrical engineer	25 years
Steve Handevitd, attorney	25 years
Jim Oltman, director	15 years
Matt Madden, journeyman lineman	5 years ⚡

## Wins \$250 CFLs



Congratulations Penny Claussen, Sherburn! She entered Great River Energy's "Home Lighting Makeover" contest on the website [www.mnbrighterideas.com](http://www.mnbrighterideas.com). She took a short quiz on compact fluorescent lights (CFLs), which entered her in the contest. Claussen won \$250 of CFL lights for her home and farm. CFLs last 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs, plus use up to 75 percent less electricity. ⚡

## Line crews hit the road for line patrol

Why is that Federated truck driving so slow?

Federated's line crews are doing the annual line patrol. They visually inspect all power lines looking for minor problems before they become big problems and cause an outage. At the same time they are verifying the readings on all meters.

In addition, some townships are undergoing meter changeouts (done every eight years) to test the accuracy of the meters: Alba, East Chain, Ewington, LaCrosse, Lake Belt and Weimer.

Other townships undergo pole-by-pole inspections where poles are struck with a hammer to test if it's sound or rotten: East Chain, Minneota, Silver Lake, Sioux Valley and Pleasant Prairie. ⚡

# Be the first in line to pay your Federated bill online!



Step up to your computer or phone, instead of stepping out to your mailbox, to pay your Federated bill.

Using Federated's online payment service gives you a variety of options when you log on:

- Viewing your bill gives you an on-screen bill statement exactly like you receive in the mail. It displays your monthly electricity usage, your yearly averages and more. Plus, you can save the trees. You can opt out of receiving a paper bill by signing up for this online format.

- Registering a payment account allows users to pay online through their bank account or credit card. You can also sign up to enable Federated to automatically deduct the amount of your electric bill from your bank account or credit card each month.

- Reporting your meter reading enables you to send in your meter reading any day at any time. No more waiting for certain hours to call the Federated office. This also helps Federated save money by allowing employees to spend less time logging meter reading calls.

- You can also make changes to your current data and more!

Federated wants to assure users that the process is safe. The online payment system is run by and protected by a professional vendor dedicated to making online payment secure.

"I love the new site," said tester Susan Wahl, Round Lake. "We have three meters to report and it's handy to do them all at once. Being able to view the bill online is also nifty. Sometimes we aren't home to get the bills in the mail.



**Say goodbye to trudging out to snowy mailboxes. Pay your bill over the phone or via the computer. Report meter readings 24/7 via the phone or online. Avoid check writing. The Easy2Pay program is easy as 1, 2, 3!**

Everything was clearly explained and I had no problem signing up."

Don't have online access or are not comfortable paying online? No problem! Use the 24/7 phone access; call 1-866-797-7218 and follow the directions. Users will walk through a process similar to the online payment service (outlined below), just do these steps over the phone any time of day or

night! It eliminates the need for stamps, envelopes and a trip to the mailbox!

Paying online or over the phone is another way Federated brings the best possible service to its members. If you are tired of writing checks, stuffing envelopes, paying for stamps and remembering due dates, these new programs are for you. They're as easy as pushing a button! 🗑️

## Follow these steps to take it easy when paying

1. Go to [www.federatedrea.coop](http://www.federatedrea.coop).
2. Click on "Easy 2 Pay" button.
3. Select "I'm a new user" and click "continue."
4. Create a user name of your choice.
5. Input your member number, which can be found on your electric bill.
6. Input your meter number, which is also listed on your electric bill under the "account activity" section.
7. Choose a four-digit PIN number and confirm it.
8. Select a question Federated can ask you to verify your identity if you forget your PIN number. Confirm your answer to the question.
9. Input your e-mail address and then confirm it a second time.
10. Enjoy the ease of paying and viewing your bill online. 🗑️

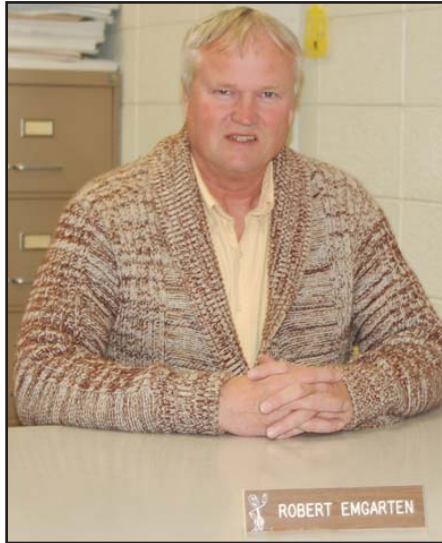
# Co-op Engineer Emgarten pulls the switch from serving 5 co-ops to 1

Robert Emgarten showed up to serve your electric cooperative as an electrical engineer on October 31, 1983, wearing a brown and white sweater. He hung the sweater on a coat rack next to his desk and it stayed there for the next 25 years.

“I will leave it there until my last day January 16,” Emgarten said. In this way Emgarten made himself at home, which fits because he thought of the five electric cooperatives he served as one big family. “One of the things I appreciated about the job was being on a first name basis with everyone. That’s fairly unique when working among five different locations, but normal for cooperatives.”

Emgarten grew up in Watertown, South Dakota. He graduated from high school in 1970 and joined the army. “I repaired microwave and satellite communication systems while stationed in Korea and Thailand,” Emgarten said. “Upon returning home I attended Lakes Area Vocational School, Watertown, for a degree in industrial electronics. I then worked a series of jobs, including a stint with a South Dakota Public TV station, fixing TVs and repairing pinball machines, but none of those jobs were fulfilling. I then obtained a degree in electrical engineering with a minor in chemistry from South Dakota State University, Brookings.”

During this time, Emgarten also met his wife, Mary. They married in 1977 and attended school together. “After graduation, I worked for Northwest Public Service in Huron, South Dakota,” Emgarten said. “I designed the distribution systems for these towns and laid out their annual construction.” Emgarten worked at Northwest Public Service for about two years.



**Electrical Engineer Bob Emgarten can still wear the sweater he brought to work the first day at the co-op 25 years ago; he accepted a position at a neighboring electric co-op.**

He then moved on to serve your electric cooperative, being stationed at Federated Rural Electric, Jackson. Emgarten was one of two engineers who served Federated, Brown County REA, Sleepy Eye; Nobles Cooperative Electric, Worthington; South Central Electric, St. James; and Iowa Lakes, Estherville, Iowa. Emgarten will now solely serve Iowa Lakes.

“My duties included many electrical engineering tasks,” Emgarten said. “I did everything from rate studies to system design, construction material ordering, voltage problems, load management, WildBlue installs and more. The goal of every task was to satisfy the members and make everyone happy.”

Several memories stand out for Emgarten. “The science of engineering hasn’t changed much over the years, but the tools have,” he said. “When I started, everything was done with a calculator. Eventually, we got a ‘personal’ computer. It was on

wheels so everyone at the Federated office worked with it. The whole office shared it. I only worked on it for a couple of hours a week. Now everyone has a computer at their desk.”

This technological revolution also reached the electric cooperatives’ members. “I often visit members’ sites to resolve electrical issues,” Emgarten said. “Such problems used to be fairly simple, but as rural populations started taking advantage of electricity combined with technology, the problems started becoming more challenging. Farm sites aren’t just farms anymore. They are ‘businesses’ equivalent to what you find in towns.”

As for the storms that hit electric co-ops, “they are part of the job,” Emgarten stated. “You deal with them as they come up. I remember getting stuck in South Central’s territory during a blizzard. A line truck came out to get me. I then ended up staying overnight at the manager’s home.”

Emgarten also enjoys spending time with his wife and their four children: Justin, Mike, Robin and Carrie. He is also involved with the Okobojo Winter Games, serving as the director of the 5K and 10K races. He has served on the fire department and as a past commander of the Spirit Lake American Legion. He also raises horses on his rural Iowa acreage.

“I’d like to thank everyone for making my co-op work enjoyable,” Emgarten said. “It was a pleasure to get to know the employees and directors and the members I worked with on a one-on-one basis. I will miss those friendships.”

The employees and directors of the cooperatives Emgarten served wish him well. They are also impressed that the sweater still fits! 🧶



## Oh my, I'd like some tasty pie! Share your favorite pie recipe

Mail your pie recipes by February 23 to: Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop. Otherwise, drop it off at your local electric co-op. Add your name and phone number. 📧

### Chicken Vegetable Alfredo Soup by Ann Terfehr, Fairmont

- |                            |                           |                          |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 c. chopped broccoli      | 1 garlic clove, pressed   | 16 oz. jar alfredo sauce |
| ½ c. chopped carrots       | 14 oz. can chicken broth  | grated Parmesan cheese   |
| ½ c. chopped onion         | 2 c. diced cooked chicken |                          |
| ½ c. diced red bell pepper | 1 T. snipped basil        |                          |

Place broccoli, carrots, onion, bell pepper and garlic in 3-quart saucepan. Add broth; bring to a boil. Cover; reduce heat and simmer uncovered 5 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender. Meanwhile, dice chicken and snip basil; set aside. Add chicken and alfredo sauce to broth; simmer 5 minutes or until heated through. Remove from heat. Stir basil into soup. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese if desired. 📧



### Wild Rice Soup by Carol Marti, New Ulm

- |                         |                             |                              |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 lb. bacon             | 3 c. water                  | 1 lb. Velveeta cheese, cubed |
| 1 med. onion, chopped   | 2 pints half & half cream   |                              |
| 1 c. uncooked wild rice | 2 cans cream of potato soup |                              |

Brown the bacon and onion. Drain. Put the rice and 3 c. water in a 2-quart microwaveable dish and cover. Microwave for 5 minutes on high power. Then microwave 30 minutes at 50 percent power. Let stand 10-15 minutes. Drain. Heat the cream and potato soup. Add the rice, bacon and onion. Add the Velveeta and stir. Heat until the cheese melts. Add milk to thin, if necessary. Freezes well. Serve with garlic toast. 📧



### German Autumn Soup by Gerry Henning, Granada

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1 T. butter              | 1 lb. precooked Kielbasa, sliced lengthwise & then in chunks |
| 3 c. shredded cabbage    |  |
| ½ c. shredded carrots    | 3 c. frozen southern-style hashbrowns                        |
| 1 med. onion, chopped    | 2 - 15 oz. cans chicken broth                                |
| 1½ stalks celery, sliced | ¼ tsp. black pepper  |
| ¼ tsp. caraway seed      |  |

Melt butter. Add cabbage, carrots, onion, celery and caraway seed. Cook and stir 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender. Add all remaining ingredients and mix well. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Cover and simmer 5-10 minutes or until potatoes are tender and soup is thoroughly heated, stirring constantly. (You can use 3 c. of a cabbage blend package instead of chopping carrots and cabbage.) 📧



### Cheeseburger Soup by Mary Garbers, Welcome

- |                       |                            |                              |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 lb. ground beef     | 1 tsp. parsley flakes      | 8 oz. Velveeta cheese, cubed |
| ¾ c. shredded carrots | 4 T. butter                | 1½ c. milk                   |
| ¾ c. onion, chopped   | 3 c. chicken broth         | ¾ tsp. salt                  |
| ¾ c. celery, diced    | 4 c. diced peeled potatoes | ¼ to ½ tsp. pepper           |
| 1 tsp. dried basil    | ¼ c. flour                 | ¼ c. sour cream              |

In a 3-quart saucepan brown the beef; drain and set aside. In the same pan saute the onion, carrots, celery, basil and parsley in 1 T. butter until the veggies are tender (10 minutes). Add the broth, potatoes and beef; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10-12 minutes or til potatoes are tender. Meanwhile, in a small skillet melt the remaining butter. Add the flour; cook and stir 3-5 minutes or until bubbly. Add to soup and bring to a boil. Cook and stir over low heat. Add cheese, milk, salt and pepper. Stir til the cheese melts. Remove from heat; stir in the sour cream. Yields 8 servings. 📧



### Slow Cooker Taco Soup by Donna Brown, Sherburn

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 16 oz. can chili beans with liquid
- 15 oz. can kidney beans with liquid
- 15 oz. whole kernel corn with liquid
- 8 oz. tomato sauce
- 2 c. water
- 2 - 14.5 oz. cans diced tomatoes
- 4 oz. can diced green chili peppers
- 1.25 oz. pkg. Taco seasoning mix

Brown the ground beef. Put all ingredients in a slow cooker. Cook on low for eight hours. To serve top with shredded cheddar cheese, corn chips and a dollop of sour cream. 📧



**Don't dig up trouble!  
Contact Gopher State  
One Call before doing  
any digging**



1-800-252-1166  
[www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org)

Contact Gopher State One Call (GSOC) before doing any digging more than 12-inches deep. Make this call 48 hours before digging for foundations, trees, tiling and more. You can also register on the website at [www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org). This gives utilities time to mark their underground lines up to your meter so you are safe! Then contact a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. 📧



**Richard 'Rick' Burud**

## **Manager's Message**

### **Line patrol ongoing**

You may have seen our service trucks in your farm yard or at your electric meter. Every winter our crews perform line patrol to find lines that need repair. While they are out, they also do a systematic meter changing program and read all meters. These efforts keep meters tested for accuracy and help us find and repair problems that could cause an outage. We'd rather do this as part of normal maintenance,

than have to do repairs in extreme weather conditions.

### **Why is my bill so high?**

Many of our customers have called and said, "I couldn't have used that much juice." I'll give you a few examples of what we're finding.

- Many members are using space heaters. No matter who makes them most are about 1,500 watts. Depending on your thermostat setting, these heaters could use quite a bit of electricity.
- Cold weather has caused increased use of heaters on tractors, vehicles and furnace fans.
- Crop drying fans — many are using air to keep corn dry. Remember to look at the usage dates on your bill as we are at least a month behind in billing.
- Our power cost adjuster has increased due to wholesale costs escalating. If you have trouble paying your bill, agencies are available to help our members. These includes:

- Western Community Action Program (Jackson County) 847-2632
- Minnesota Valley Action Council (Martin County) 238-1663
- Jackson County Human Services (847-4000)
- Martin County Human Services (238-4757)
- Minnesota Department of Energy Services; ask for fuel assistance (1-800-657-3805)
- Stay Warm Campaign (1-800-657-3782)

### **How can we serve you better?**

As a cooperative we need to hear from you if you think there are things we should be doing but aren't or if there are ways to improve the things we are doing. Just drop me a note in your bill if you have suggestions. Again, thanks for the patronage. 🍷

## **Soar with High Speed WildBlue Satellite Internet — only \$99**

Always on. Fast. Local. Packages start at \$49.95/ month. Call 1-800-321-3520.



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Federated Rural Electric  
77100 US Hwy 71, PO Box 69  
Jackson, MN 56143-0069  
E-mail: [info@federatedrea.coop](mailto:info@federatedrea.coop)  
Website: <http://www.federatedrea.coop>

Office hours: 8 a.m.-4:30p.m.  
Monday-Friday

Richard Burud, General Manager

David Post, President — 853-4518  
David A. Hansen, V. President — 847-3530  
Jim Oltman, Sec./Treasurer — 464-3479  
Glenn Dicks — 662-5321  
Lyle Fisher — 847-4757  
David Meschke — 238-1122  
Jon Saxen — 764-3771

The Board of Directors generally meets the last business day of the month at 9 a.m. at the Jackson office. Regular board meetings are open to the membership. Members interested in discussing business items should contact the general manager or president three days before the meeting.

## **Board meeting highlights**

Federated Rural Electric's Board of Directors met January 29. All directors were present. They acted on these issues:

- Approved quarterly inventory adjustments.
- Appointed directors to serve as the voting delegates at the following annual meetings: National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative and Minnesota Rural Electric Association.
- Reviewed the rates from Federated's three wholesale power suppliers.
- Approved Great River Energy's Appendix B, which is an amendment to the wholesale power rates.
- Conducted a joint board meeting with Nobles Cooperative Electric in Worthington; the topics of discussion focused on: carbon dioxide legislation, succession planning, ways to work closer together, as well as an executive session of the directors. 🍷