

NORTHERN

L I G H T S



**Beltrami Electric
Cooperative Inc.**

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

January 2018

Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club *named Beltrami Electric's 2017 Touchstone Energy® Community Award winner*



Accepting the local 2017 Touchstone Energy® Community Award for Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club are from left: Mark Walters, Andra Vaughn, Nate Haskell, Joan Sagedahl, Paul Dybing and Bill Scheela.



Beltrami Electric Cooperative has selected the Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club as the winner of the local 2017 Touchstone Energy® Community Award from a pool of excellent and worthy nominations. The recognition comes with a \$500 cash award donated to a community service organization/project of their choice and an engraved Touchstone Energy Community Award plaque. The Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club was nominated by Bob Montebello of Bemidji.



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Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday – Friday

Member Service: 218-444-2540
or 1-800-955-6083

www.beltramielectric.com

Board of Directors

President	Rick Coe, DISTRICT 6 (Minnkota Director)
Vice President	John Lund, DISTRICT 7
Secretary	Murl Nord, DISTRICT 1 (Square Butte Director)
Treasurer	Judy Honer, DISTRICT 9
Directors:	Charlie Perkins, DISTRICT 2; Charles Parson, DISTRICT 3; Craig Gaasvig, DISTRICT 4; Robert Wallner, DISTRICT 5; Sue Kringen, DISTRICT 8
CEO	Jared Echternach
Editor	Angela Lyseng

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Minnesota State Electrical Inspectors

Beltrami County

Davis Smid

507-227-2772 - mntristate@gmail.com

Cass and Hubbard Counties

Steve Schauland

218-652-2213 or fax 218-333-0451

These are the inspectors covering the area served by Beltrami Electric. They can be reached by phone Monday through Friday between 7 and 8:30 a.m. or by fax or email as indicated.

Gopher State One Call

1-800-252-1166 or 811

www.gopherstateonecall.org

Anyone who plans to dig is required by law to notify the state of their intentions at least 48 hours in advance.

All digging requires the 48-hour notification so that buried telephone line, television cable, pipelines, utility electrical lines, municipal water and sewer lines can be located to ensure that none will be severed or damaged.

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The year in review

Jared Echternach, CEO

2017 was another busy year for your cooperative. We completed the first year of our new four-year construction work plan. This included projects near the Red Lake Hospital, along State Hwy. 371 north of Walker, along 16th St. in Bemidji, and along Beltrami CR 39 (Scenic Highway). We also completed construction of our community solar array, an 80-kW system located at our headquarters facility.

Crews constructed nearly 300 new services and performed more than 100 service improvements for our membership, a sign that our economy is improving.

While we experienced modest service growth, 2017 was flat in terms of energy sales. A mild winter, energy efficiency and fuel switching have resulted in lower than budgeted energy sales. This continues to place upward pressure on rates as there are fewer kilowatt-hours over which to spread our fixed costs. Your board of directors recognizes this and is faced with the financial reality of insufficient margins. As a result, a rate increase will be needed in 2018. We will continue to work hard internally to minimize the impact of the increase and we will communicate any changes in advance so members have time to prepare and budget. The last retail rate adjustment occurred in April 2017.

We experienced one major storm in 2017 as high winds in July caused sustained outages throughout our service area. Crews did a great job restoring power as safely and quickly as possible. The cost to repair your system as a result of this storm was approximately \$33,000 with no FEMA



reimbursement funding or state disaster relief available.

While 2017 was a challenging year financially for your cooperative, I'm very proud of our employees for all they accomplished in terms of our construction work plan and for their continued dedication to our members.

The year ahead

2018 will be another exciting year for your cooperative, including major projects north of Walker, Minnesota Island, Laporte and along North Plantagenet Rd. We expect to build another 250-300 new services and perform 100 system improvements. Our new metering system is scheduled to be fully deployed by the end of 2018. These projects will keep our employees busy throughout the year.

Touchstone Energy® Community Award

Congratulations to the Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club on winning our local Touchstone Energy Community Award. Their dedication to making our community great is remarkable and we're pleased to recognize them in a small way for all the big things they do.

Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club

named Beltrami Electric's 2017 Touchstone Energy® Community Award winner

(article continued from page 1)

Since the early 1980s, the Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club has been working to enhance the cross country ski trails in the Bemidji area. The club has had a board of directors since its inception, consisting of local volunteers who are passionate about promoting this winter activity for the Bemidji area. The club currently grooms numerous local trails to include the Montebello lighted trail at the Bemidji City Park, Hobson Forest trail, Movil Maze trail, Three Island Lake Park trails, Buena Vista trails, Fern Lake trails, as well as the Bemidji High School forest trail. There are more than 100 kilometers of trails groomed and maintained by the club year-round. If you ski in the Bemidji area, you owe that opportunity to this club.

The entire organization is volunteer driven and member supported. With the help of a grant from the Neilson Foundation, the club was able to acquire grooming equipment. The club receives membership fees that are then used for purchasing and maintaining grooming equipment, hosting events like a Sunday Ski School, Snowjourn, NightSkis and more. Through the club's tremendous amount of volunteer labor, they have earned additional money from the State of Minnesota's Cross Country ski trail grants-in-aid program to support the maintenance and grooming of cross-country ski trails.



The club offers a Sunday Ski School for all ages and abilities each year at the city trails. They have been able to purchase some equipment for those who don't have it to use for the ski school. The group also volunteers their equipment each year to groom the trails for the annual Finlandia Ski Race at Buena Vista. This group's efforts are commendable as they promote this fun and healthy outdoor winter activity in our area

The Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club's application will be submitted for consideration to the statewide Minnesota Touchstone Energy® Community Award committee. The statewide award recipient will

be selected from numerous local award winners throughout Minnesota, and the overall winner will receive \$1,000 toward a community cause of choice. It will be presented in March 2018 during the Minnesota Rural Electric Association's annual meeting in St. Paul.

The Touchstone Energy Community Award recognizes organizations for outstanding contributions to their community. For a complete list of previous year's winners, please see our website: www.beltramielectric.com/content/touchstone-energy-community-award.

"The mission of the Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club is to promote the sport of cross-country skiing in the Bemidji area through the development, maintenance and stewardship of trail areas; sponsor and co-sponsor ski-related events and activities, and promote leadership, camaraderie and goodwill among sports enthusiasts."



Beltrami Electric Cooperative scholarships

Once again, it is time for high school seniors to apply for Beltrami Electric's college scholarships. As we all know, a college education can be expensive. Beltrami Electric and its board of directors are pleased to offer \$1,000 in scholarship money to deserving students attending seven area high schools to help with this ever-growing expense. To be eligible to be awarded scholarship money this spring, the parents and/or guardians of the students must be members of Beltrami Electric Cooperative.

If you are a high school senior who attends one of the schools listed below and are interested in applying for a scholarship from BEC, please contact your high school's designated guidance office or scholarship committee for additional information and applications. The scholarship selection process is handled through each school's designated career guidance offices or scholarship committees.

Bemidji High School
Blackduck High School
Cass Lake High School
Kelliher High School
Laporte High School
Red Lake High School
Walker-Hackensack-Akeley High School



New for 2018!

Beltrami Electric will award **At Large Scholarships** to high school seniors who are dependents of BEC members. Look for more information in the February *Northern Lights* or at www.beltramielectric.com.

★ This Summer ... Go on a Power Trip! ★ 2018 YOUTH TOUR WASHINGTON, D.C., JUNE 9-14, 2018

Be There. Be Heard. Be Inspired.

Beltrami Electric Cooperative is now accepting applications for the 2018 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 9-14, 2018.

Each year the cooperative sponsors one high school junior (will be a senior in the fall of 2018) whose parent or guardian is a member of Beltrami Electric Cooperative.

Students on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour will have the opportunity to meet with elected representatives in the U.S. House and Senate, discuss the process of government and increase their overall knowledge of electric cooperatives and U.S. history. They will also spend time touring several historic sites in Washington, D.C. Students have said that the Youth Tour was

the best week of their entire summer!

To qualify, candidates must submit an application, write a 500-word essay from a list of selected topics, and submit two letters of reference from teachers, group or community leaders and have a parent or guardian who is a member of Beltrami Electric Cooperative.

Applications must be received by **Thursday, March 1, 2018**, and are available at your high school counselor's office or via download at Beltrami Electric's website at www.beltramielectric.com/content/youth-tour-washington-dc. Those interested should mail their applications, letters of recommendation and essays to Beltrami Electric Cooperative, Inc., Attn: Youth Tour, P.O. Box 488, Bemidji, MN 56619-0488. They



can also be dropped off at the office located at 4111 Technology Dr. NW in Bemidji.

For more information, contact Angela Lyseng at Beltrami Electric, 218-444-3689 or visit our website <https://www.beltramielectric.com/content/youth-tour-washington-dc>, or visit <http://www.mrea.org/youth-tour/> and www.youthtour.coop for exciting highlights of past Electric Cooperative Youth Tours.

Cold Weather Expo

JOIN US!

Monday, Feb. 12, 2018
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

COLD WEATHER RULE CLARIFICATION

- ◆ How it works and who it affects

ASSISTANCE AGENCIES

- ◆ Visit with your local agencies
- ◆ Learn about qualifying for resources

ENERGY CONSERVATION

- ◆ Home Electrical Evaluations
- ◆ Ways to make your home more energy efficient
- ◆ Rebates on heating, lighting, water heating and more!

LOAD MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

- ◆ What is it and how does it work?
- ◆ How to take advantage of a lower electric rate

MEMBER TOOLS

- ◆ Learn about SmartHub
 - View/pay your bill, report an outage and more!
- ◆ My Meter - how to track and take control of your energy use

Roger Spiry Community Room

4111 Technology Dr. NW Bemidji
218-444-2540 or 800-955-6083

** Cookies and refreshments will be available!*

** Enter to win a \$50 credit on your BEC electric bill!*

** FREE gift while supplies last!*

Important NEW YEAR Resolutions . . .

That don't involve diet or exercise!



1. Make sure outlets have GFCIs in the kitchen, bathroom & laundry
2. Replace frayed electrical cords
3. Check for loose-fitting plugs
4. Replace missing or broken wall plates
5. Check for overloaded outlets
6. Make sure light bulb wattage matches the fixture requirements
7. Have an electrician check outlets that are warm/discolored

Learn how to keep your family safe at:

Safe
Electricity.org[®]

Northern Lights

CLASSIFIEDS

Classified ads rules

- Ads are due by the fifth of the month prior to publication of the next issue. Example:
 - o Ads submitted by Jan. 5 – will be published in February issue.
 - o Ads submitted between Jan. 6 and Feb. 5 – will be published in March issue.
- Ads may be submitted via our website at www.beltramelectric.com (preferred).
- Include name and Beltrami Electric account number on all submissions.
- All ads must be **50 words or less** and typed or printed clearly.
- Members may only submit one for sale and one wanted or free ad per issue.
- No real estate, rental, personal or commercial ads will be accepted.
- Ads are published at no charge as space permits on a first-received, first-printed basis, **with no guarantee your ad will appear.**
- Ads are only allowed to be repeated for **three consecutive months** and must be resubmitted each month.
- Editor reserves the right to edit or reject any ad.
- All telephone numbers are presumed to have a 218 area code unless otherwise noted.

For Sale:

Benelli (Franchi) 12 gauge shotgun, Instinct SL Over/Under, like new, \$800. 15-gallon Roughneck Gas Caddy, US and Canada approved, used only once. \$100. 586-2009.

Remington 710 bolt action rifle, .270 caliber with two clips, sling and 3x9 scope. 214-6724.

Smith & Wesson K22 Model 17-3, 8 3/8-inch barrel, blued. Excellent condition. \$750. 224-3866

Beretta Px4 Storm air pistol, .177 pellet. Near new/mint condition. Only a few pellets through it. \$70. 444-6014.

90-gallon bulk fuel tank for pickup. 20 GPM, 12-Volt Fill Rite pump, hose and nozzle. \$375. 244-5811.

Hide-a-bed couch, good condition, green, burgundy and tan in color. Asking \$125, call 224-2836.

20-inch gas range, works, great for apartment or cabin. \$125, call 444-8441 after 6 p.m.

Snowmobile, like new, Yamaha Ventura, 4 stroke, 139 total miles, a couple of years old but under cover, a real deal, \$5,500.

Snowblower, John Deer, like new, slightly used, \$400. 556-8988.

Kitchen Aide mixer, 10-speed, 5-qt metal bowl, pearl in color, good condition \$200; Ashley brown leather couch, like new, \$250; Ashley brown leather chair w/ottoman, \$100; walnut dining room table, w/2 leaves and 4 chairs, \$125; antique wooden school chair/desk, \$30; Danish B&G plates, \$5/ea. Call AM's, 224-2141.

2007 Honda CRV, heated leather seats, navigation, 6-disk CD player, moon roof, no rust, new tires. 194,000 miles. \$6,100. Very clean vehicle. 766-0189.

Mixed hardwood firewood. Cut, split and delivered in Bemidji area. \$115 for 8' box pickup load. 224-2613.

Avon 1876 Cape Cod Collection: 4 pestle mugs, 4 wine goblets, 4 elegant wine glasses, 4 tall beverage glasses, 4 footed glasses, 4 dessert plates, 4 dinner plates, 4 dessert bowls, 4 soup/cereal bowls, 4 saucer champagne glasses. Buy them all for \$300. 556-3016.

Equator Super Combo EZ 4000 CV Combo Washer-Dryer, on locking wheels, connects to sink and vented inside or out, 13 lb. cap. elec. 110V 60Hz 15A, 33.5 x 23.5 x 22. May be permanently installed to elec. and water source. Hardly used, asking \$750. 854-7428.

18" or 20" Stihl MS291C 55cc easy start, used one time, cost \$789, will sell for \$700 to include case. Antique exam/delivery table \$1,000, Bowflex with all the extras \$1,000 call 243-2663.

New 49" granite vanity top with back-splash fits 48"x21" vanity-beige-single bowl-in original carton. 751-1850.

1997 MXZ 500 Ski-Doo snowmobile. Tuned up and ready to ride! \$1,200. Call 556-3820.

Healthy Swinger (Electric). Lie down and place ankles on the cradle, touch button on remote control. It vibrates the body and stimulate blood control. \$50. 751-7947.

2016 Ice Castle fish house, 6½' x 14'. New! Used only once! Insulated floor, bathroom, fridge, stove/oven and microwave. \$9,800. 355-0414.

Brand new never fired, 12-gauge Browning Citori White Lighting over and under shotgun w/choke tubes. List \$2,059. Sell \$1,500. Call 556-5715

Motorized wheelchair, good working condition. \$500. 243-3327 or 407-7723.

Boss V-plow, Ford mounts, \$1,500. 3pt snowblower, \$350. 835-6449.


Wanted:

Good pair 10-24 matching tractor tires. 209-6397 or 751-5763, leave message.

Scamp or Casita travel trailer with air conditioner and furnace and indoor cook area. Leave message, 586-3585.

Free:

Wind fallen trees close to driveway. Need cutting up and some wood just to be picked up. Hard woods, you cut you take, no charge! 849-8377.



2018 Electrical Continuing Education Classes

Dates and Locations

West Fargo - Jan. 23 or Jan. 24
DoubleTree Inn, 701.551.0120
825 E Beaton Dr, West Fargo, ND 58078

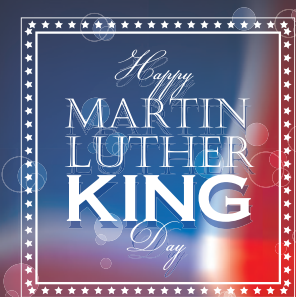
Bemidji - Jan. 30
Eagles Club, 218.751.9985
1270 Neilson Ave SE, Bemidji, MN 56601

Fergus Falls - Jan. 31
Bigwood Event Center, 218.739.2211
925 Western Avenue, Fergus Falls, MN 56537

Grand Forks - Feb. 6 or Feb. 7
Minnkota Power Cooperative, 701.795.4292
5301 32nd Ave South, Grand Forks, ND 58201

Online registration ONLY at www.minnkota.com

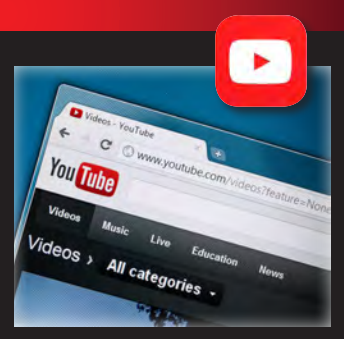
For more information contact:
contractortraining@minnkota.com
Minnkota Power Cooperative • 701.795.4292
Website: www.minnkota.com



Beltrami Electric Cooperative will be closed

Monday, Jan. 15, 2018,

in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.



Check out our informational videos on our YouTube channel!

Simply search: Beltrami Electric Cooperative



Look for
WATTS UP!
in your inbox
in January!

Technology allows Beltrami Electric members to connect with their cooperative like never before. We know our members are always on the go and want to conveniently access important information on our website, social media sites, and utilize bill and account management tools! Now you can access all these from your desktop computer, cell phone and tablet. In addition, our newly launched e-newsletter provides easy access to energy-saving tips, program information and cooperative news right at your fingertips!

If Beltrami Electric already has an email address on file, you will automatically receive **WATTS UP!** If you would like to receive our e-newsletter, you can easily sign up on our website. Find the **WATTS UP!** sign up form under the News/Events tab. Members may unsubscribe at any time by using the SafeUnsubscribe® link found at the bottom of every email.



Problems paying your electric bill?

Energy assistance may be available!

If you are receiving a low income or suffering from a temporary financial shortfall, the following agencies may be able to assist you with your electric bill. We urge you to contact them immediately to avoid disconnection if you feel you are eligible for aid.

Bi-CAP Energy Assistance

6603 Bemidji Ave N
Bemidji, MN 56601
218-751-4631

Mahube Energy Assistance

120 North Central Ave
Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-732-7204

Leech Lake Energy Assistance

115 6th St NW, Suite E
Cass Lake, MN 56633
218-335-3783

Red Lake Energy Assistance

PO Box 190
Red Lake, MN 56671
218-679-1880

Kootasca Energy Assistance

201 NW 4th St., Suite 130
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-999-0800

Board Meeting Highlights

Beltrami Electric's board of directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2017. A quorum of directors was present.

The following reports were given:

- CEO Echnernach gave his monthly report, including the new meter system, legislative issues and the preliminary 2018 budget. He also reported on the employee benefit plan costs for 2018, the CIP reform effort and presented the list of unclaimed capital credits.
- Sid Sletten gave the Financial and Statistical report for October, including review of work orders.
- Dave Hengel gave an update on Greater Bemidji.
- Arlene Hogquist, director of strategy and corporate services, presented the third quarter balanced performance scorecard.
- Sid Sletten discussed a revision to the CoBank line of credit.
- CEO Echnernach, Bob Wallner and John Lund discussed the tentative union agreement between BEC and the IBEW 1426.
- President Coe appointed Craig Gaasvig as the NRECA voting delegate and Charles Parson as the alternate.
- Directors shared highlights of meetings attended on behalf of the cooperative and discussed upcoming meetings and educational conferences.

The following actions were taken:

- Approved the consent agenda and work order inventories.
- Approved the revision to the CoBank line of credit.
- Approved a donation to Greater Bemidji.
- Approved distribution of unclaimed capital credit funds.
- Approved an employee year-end bonus.
- Approved the tentative union agreement for the clerical union.
- Approved changing the regular board meeting dates for December 2017 and February 2018.

The next regular board meeting will be Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2018.

SYSTEMWIDE METER UPGRADE CONTINUES

installing new meters to help serve you better

Work continues on our system-wide meter upgrade project, and to-date, we have completed 21,000 meter replacements. As we have been communicating over the past year, our existing metering system was installed in the mid-1990s and has reached its end-of-life, and the manufacturer is no longer supporting this older equipment.

BEC contracted with a third party metering group, Allegiant Utility Services, to assist in completing the remaining meter exchanges. Allegiant Utility Services' vehicles have its logo, as well as signage designating that they are a contractor for Beltrami Electric. The contractors from Allegiant Utility Services also wear an ID badge with their name and photo.

Technology has changed a lot in 20-plus years, when we installed our previous metering system. These new meters will improve reliability and give you more tools and opportunities to manage and save energy. The impact of the installation is minimal. Co-op members can expect to lose power for a few minutes on the day of installation. You may need to reset your electronic devices, such as digital clocks. In addition, the next bill will show two meter readings: one from the old meter and one from the new meter. We will not need to access your home or business, nor will you need to be on-site when this work is performed.





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Beltrami Electric Cooperative *collects and delivers items for 18th annual Mitten Tree*

Beltrami Electric Cooperative recently delivered donated mittens, gloves, hats and scarves to area children as part of its annual Mitten Tree campaign for the 18th straight year.

This season, a record 830 items were collected and distributed to more than 700 students enrolled in seven Head Start and Early Child Family Education programs throughout the cooperative's service area. The number of items the cooperative receives from employees, members and friends continues to be very generous. As we have seen enrollment numbers grow each year, so has the number of items donated.

As some of you might know, cooperatives around the globe adhere to the same Seven Cooperative Principles that guide all of our decisions – from how we run the co-op, to how we engage with our local communities. Concern for community is the seventh principle and it is one that seems especially important. No matter how great or small the act, every time we give back, we strengthen our community.

Thank you to everyone who helped with a donation to the Mitten Tree this year! By working together, we are able to make a big impact in our local communities, keeping children warm for yet another winter season.

**We'd like to give a special thank you to member Esther Homister-Kingbird from Blackduck, who graciously hand-knitted 160 colorful scarves for the mitten tree this year!*

