

NORTHERN

L I G H T S October 2024

Beltrami Electric



Touchstone Energy®
OPEN



\$18,800 RAISED FOR THE UNITED WAY OF BEMIDJI AREA

The 20th Annual Beltrami Electric Touchstone Energy® Open was held Friday, Sept. 13, 2024, at Castle Highlands Golf Course, and raised \$18,800 for the United Way of Bemidji Area. The event saw 28 teams compete in the four-person scramble. “Beltrami Electric’s Touchstone Energy Open golf tournament has been a staple event for the United Way of Bemidji Area. Not only has the tournament given hundreds of participants the opportunity to support their community, it’s also helped thousands of people in our community to thrive,” said Denae Alamano, executive director for the United Way of Bemidji Area. “We can’t thank Beltrami Electric and their staff enough for the impact their event makes – to date this tournament has raised more than \$202,000 for the United Way of Bemidji Area!”



FIRST PLACE went to the Cooperative Development Locators team. Pictured from left: Brian Passeri, Brad Davenport, Jeff Schneider and Tom Passeri.



SECOND PLACE went to the team of Paul Bunyan Communications. Pictured from left: Bob Lindberg, Dane Jones, Brian Bissonnette and Don Dale.



THIRD PLACE went to the Pinnacle Marketing Group team. Pictured from left: A.J. Dahl, Jon Stewart and Tracy Williams.

United Way of Bemidji Area United Way

Beltrami Electric would like to give a sincere thank-you to our business sponsors, the golfers and the tournament volunteers on behalf of the United Way of Bemidji Area. We are extremely grateful, as this event wouldn't be possible without their continued support!

Thank you to the following sponsors!

PRESENTING SPONSORS



- Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
- Auer Steel & Heating Supply
- Bank Forward/Insure Forward
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- BEC Board of Directors
- Beehive Liquors
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- Bemidji Collision Center
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- Your QFM



Reforming net metering rates: Ensuring a sustainable, equitable and modern energy future for Minnesota

by Jared Echternach, president and CEO

As new technologies and the transition to alternative energy resources rapidly change our electric grid, some of Minnesota's energy policies, including our antiquated net metering laws, remain ineffective. Minnesota's net metering policy allows residents and businesses with distributed energy systems, like solar panels, to generate their own electricity and require the cooperative to pay more for excess power sent to the grid than it would normally pay for power. This policy is outdated, expensive and inequitable and must be reformed to be effective in the modern world.

First off, the policy is outdated. Minnesota's net metering policy was established when solar technology was in its infancy and no longer addresses the modern energy landscape. Comprehensive reform is needed to reflect current realities and capabilities, including storage. As the first state to implement net metering back in 1984, Minnesota played a pioneering role in promoting solar energy, but it is now time to update this policy to align with today's realities. Given the state law mandating carbon-free electricity by 2040, the environmental incentive for maintaining costly net metering policies is obsolete.

Second, net metering is expensive. With Minnesota's mandate for carbon-free electricity by 2040, net metering incentives have become redundant. Utilities are already charged with reducing carbon emissions; there is no reason to keep expensive incentives to achieve the same goal. Net metering is also ineffective since it forces cooperatives to pay retail rates for energy they could purchase at cheaper wholesale prices. Additionally, generating electricity from small distributed solar systems is more costly than

from larger utility-scale projects, resulting in less efficient systems. Utility-scale systems offer a more cost-effective and efficient power supply, making net metering an inefficient tool for achieving environmental goals.

Finally, net metering is inequitable. It leads to cost-shifting, where those without distributed systems end up paying more to cover the costs of maintaining the grid. Those who can afford these systems are generally wealthier, leaving poorer members to face the brunt of the cost increases. Studies show that in Minnesota, this disparity is growing, with affluent households increasingly dominating solar installations. Reform is essential to prevent financial strain on those least able to bear it.

The current model is unsustainable and unnecessarily drives up the electric bills of most co-op member-owners and shifts those costs to those who cannot afford to install net metering systems. Reforming net metering can enhance grid stability and reliability, ensuring that both traditional and renewable energy sources are effectively integrated and managed.

By taking a balanced approach to reforming our outdated net metering policies, Minnesota has the potential to become a national leader in renewable energy policy. Embracing reform will support renewable energy growth and facilitate the connection of systems sized to load for those who want it. Minnesota's electric cooperatives stand ready to support these necessary reforms, advocating for policies that benefit all cooperative members and advancing our collective goal of a reliable, affordable and sustainable energy future.



BELTRAMI ELECTRIC SEEKING NOMINATIONS

FOR THE 2024 TOUCHSTONE ENERGY® COMMUNITY AWARD

Do you know an organization that has made outstanding contributions to our local community?

Beltrami Electric is seeking applications for the Touchstone Energy® Community Award, which recognizes businesses, non-profit and community groups that have shown a strong commitment to their community. Any organization that has helped make their community within the areas served by Beltrami Electric a better place to live and work is eligible for the \$1,000 cash award.



- Nominate an organization, association or business by completing and submitting the application form or at Beltrami Electric's office. Questions may be directed to Angela Lyseng at **218-444-3689**.
- Completed applications must be received at Beltrami Electric's office by **Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2024**.
- The award recipient will be announced in November and will then contend for the statewide Touchstone Energy® Community Award, which has a cash prize of \$2,000.

Minnesota Touchstone Energy cooperatives are part of a national alliance of more than 750 rural electric cooperatives that adhere to the values of integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

SCAN
HERE!



BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Beltrami Electric board of directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Wednesday, Aug. 28, 2024. A quorum of directors was in attendance.

The following reports were given at the meeting:

- President and CEO Echternach and the board discussed recent safety successes and observations.
- President and CEO Echternach made his monthly report, including a recap of the annual meeting, upcoming meetings, BEC roof project, an employee update and the Cooperative Family Fund.
- Arlene Hogquist presented the July financial report.
- No Barriers program participant Darion Chambard spoke about the program and his recent trip to Colorado.
- Angela Lyseng discussed the annual meeting held Aug. 7, 2024.
- Arlene Hogquist reviewed the IRS Form 990.
- President and CEO Echternach and the directors shared highlights of meetings attended on behalf of the cooperative and discussed upcoming meetings and events.

The following actions were taken at the meeting:

- Elected John Lund as chair, Sue Kringen as vice chair, Murl Nord as secretary and Sharon Lembke as treasurer.
- Approved the consent agenda.
- Set the 2025 annual meeting for Aug. 6, 2025, at the Beltrami County Fairgrounds.
- Approved IRS Form 990.
- Approved director expenses.

The next board meeting will be held Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2024.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL



Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit, community-led utilities. Because we are a co-op, we can adapt to our local members' needs, providing the programs and services you care about most.

That's the power of co-op membership.



FOR JUST THE CHANGE IN YOUR POCKET, YOU CAN COZY UP UNDER AN ELECTRIC BLANKET FOR FIVE HOURS USING ONE KILOWATT-HOUR.



PAYING PENNIES FOR YOUR KILOWATTS – THAT'S THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY.



KEEPING THE POWER FLOWING

Why vegetation management matters



Lee Pemberton
Operations Manager

Vegetation management is essential for ensuring the reliable delivery of electricity and preventing potential safety hazards. This process involves regularly monitoring and maintaining plant growth around power lines, including trimming trees that pose risks and removing overgrown brush or invasive weeds. Without proper management, vegetation can become a serious threat to power lines, leading to power outages, fires, and even delays in repairs.

At Beltrami Electric Cooperative, highly trained contractors are responsible for trimming any hazardous trees within or near the right of way. The right of way refers to the land directly beneath and adjacent to power lines, and it must be kept clear to prevent interference with electric service. Additionally, biodegradable herbicides are used to control the growth of brush and noxious weeds, ensuring the area remains safe and accessible.

Effective vegetation management not only helps prevent electrical disruptions but also minimizes the risk of dangerous situations like tree branches making contact with power lines, which can ignite fires. A well-maintained right of way is crucial in enabling quick restoration of service after storms or other incidents.



Members are encouraged to avoid trimming or removing tree limbs that are close to power lines themselves. It's best to contact the cooperative if you notice any potential hazards, such as dead or diseased trees that could pose a risk. When planting trees, shrubs, or other plants, always consider their mature height and proximity to power lines, as power lines can sag during hot weather and sway in strong winds.

If you have a padmount transformer, or "green box," in your yard, it's also crucial to keep the area surrounding it free from obstructions. These transformers need to be easily accessible to lineworkers for maintenance and repairs, particularly during outages. Please don't have any plants, fencing, or other objects blocking access to the transformer.

By being proactive and mindful of vegetation around power lines, you can contribute to the overall safety and reliability of the electrical system. If you have any concerns or questions about vegetation management, don't hesitate to contact Beltrami Electric Cooperative for expert advice and assistance. We're here to help keep your power flowing smoothly and safely.

Northern Lights Statement of Ownership

This annual notice must be published for all periodicals mailed by the USPS.

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BELTRAMI ELECTRIC MEMBER'S JOURNEY WITH NO BARRIERS PROGRAM



For many veterans, the transition to civilian life can be challenging, with the loss of purpose and camaraderie felt deeply. This summer, Darion Chambard, a medically retired Army veteran and Beltrami Electric member, found new direction through the No Barriers Warriors program, thanks to the support of his local cooperative and sponsorship from CoBank, a co-op lender.

THE PATH TO NO BARRIERS

Darion learned about the program from a neighbor and was soon nominated by Sue Kringen, vice chair of the Beltrami Electric board. After being medically cleared, he joined a group of fellow veterans in virtual meetings designed to prepare them for their upcoming adventure. These sessions encouraged participants to set personal goals and create vision statements, emphasizing that achieving one's "Everest" – a personal peak – was only the beginning of their journey.

A STRUGGLE FOR PURPOSE

Darion's military career spanned nearly a decade, during which he served his country with dedication and honor. Living in Bemidji with his wife Danielle – also a retired Army veteran – and their three children, Darion found himself facing a daily struggle to rediscover his purpose. The No Barriers program offered a lifeline, a way to reconnect with that sense of purpose and community he so deeply missed.

THE NO BARRIERS EXPERIENCE

From July 26-30, Darion participated in the No Barriers Basecamp experience at the Mountain Campus in northern Colorado. There, he tackled physical challenges like a 45-foot "leap of faith," symbolizing his commitment to confronting and overcoming life's obstacles. The group also undertook a challenging hike up

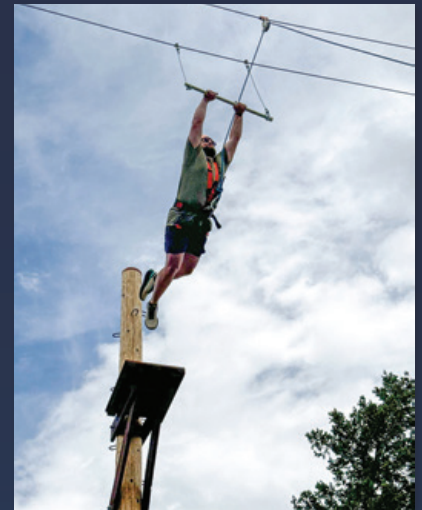
Eagle Point in the Sunnyside Mountain Range, where they pushed their physical and mental limits, forging bonds with one another reminiscent of the camaraderie they had experienced during their military service.

The program's curriculum, centered around the mantra "What's Within You is Stronger than What's in Your Way," helped Darion and others tap into their inner strength to overcome obstacles.

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

But the journey did not end with the Basecamp experience. The program continued to support Darion and his group with follow-up activities, including reading *What's Within You – Your Roadmap to Living Life with No Barriers*, a book by the co-founders of No Barriers USA. Ongoing virtual meetings allowed the group to apply the lessons learned during Basecamp to their daily lives, providing a continued source of support and encouragement.

For Darion, the No Barriers Warriors program was a transformative experience, offering him the tools to overcome personal challenges and the confidence to keep moving forward. It also provided him with a renewed sense of community and belonging, something he, like many veterans, deeply missed after leaving the military. This journey is a powerful reminder of the importance of support systems and the impact that programs like No Barriers can have on the lives of veterans, helping them face the future with strength and purpose.



“What's within you is stronger than what's in your way.”

NO BARRIERS: A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE FOR VETERANS

Classifieds

Classified ads rules

- Ads are due by the following dates:
 - **NOVEMBER ISSUE:** Submit by October 4.
 - **DECEMBER ISSUE:** Submit between October 5 and November 4.
- Ads may be submitted via our website at www.beltramielc.com. (preferred)
- NO real estate, rental, personal or commercial ads will be accepted.
- All ads must be 50 words or less and typed or printed clearly.
- Editor reserves the right to edit or reject any ad.
- Members may only submit one for sale and one wanted or free ad per issue.
- 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.
- Include name and Beltrami Electric account number on all submissions.

For Sale:

Turtle River Craft Fair, Bake Sale and Raffle. Featuring artisans from Old Salem Hall and sticky buns from Tall Pines 4-H club. Saturday, Nov. 2, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Raffle ends at 2:30 p.m. Need not be present to win. New Salem Lutheran Church, 7491 Island View Drive NE.

Mixed firewood, high % ash. Cut, split, seasoned. \$75 standard pickup load. You haul. Kelliher area. Phone 320-557-8080.

Firewood, cut and split soft wood, \$60 per standard pickup load, you haul. 218-586-2839.

Older style Coleman camp stove uses white gas. Good condition, \$50. Sega Genesis 16-bit video entertainment system with games, \$50. Buy both for \$75. Call or text 218-766-0249.

Peavey 8-channel amp: XB680E with 2 large Peavey speakers: \$290; 10' x 9' area

rug in gold: \$100; sliding interior white barn door; 24" x 82", brand new with hardware: \$200; free standing electric wood fireplace: \$150. Call 218-759-9534.

2014 Redwood 38GK, manufactured by Redwood RV, is packed with all the luxuries of home. It is built for adventure or full-time living. Three slides, including a bedroom slide-within-a-slide, open this RV up into a massive living space. \$42,500/obo. 218-556-0267.

Invacare electric adjustable hospital bed with side rails, mattress and comfort topper 36" x 88". Good condition \$395. 218-760-4013.

1990 Northwoods hull-type pontoon, 23 feet. 2005 Triton trailer. 1988 Evinrude motor with new prop. Registration sticker is current and good through 2026. In good condition. \$4,500. 218-224-2785.

150-gallon gravity flow fuel tank and stand. \$400. 218-556-3026.

2011 KZ MXT travel trailer, 8'x31', 2 pull-out beds, 1 large slide-out, propane heater, 3 skylights, good condition, \$7,900. Call 218-444-5243.

Lincoln wire feed welder easy mig 140, one-year-old, like new. \$500 firm! Can try. Price is \$500, not \$499. Call Mike at 218-444-4767.

Antique glass door secretarial hutch \$200. Full-size log bed frame \$150. 218-766-1758.

Heavy duty 250-lb, 28-ft Keller ladder. Many woodworking tools: Ryobi, Kreg, Rockwell, Router, Dremel. Call 218-444-3424.

2018 Airstream Flying Cloud 25-ft travel trailer, in pristine condition, only used 3 times, stored indoors. \$72,000. 218-368-9533 or 218-368-5676.

Surge Guard voltage regulator model 10176, 120 volts, 30-amp, all-weather fabric cover for 32-foot class A motor home. 12-quat Farberware stock pot. 218-547-1836.

Beretta 20 gauge 3", series A301 Magnum, 26" - 3 shot auto, \$800. 218-547-3947, ask for Bill.

1970s 16' extra wide Lund fishing boat with 1970s 9.5 hp Johnson motor - both work well, used but in decent condition. Needs a good cleaning and will look well. Will accept best offer. 218-835-1764.

Steel sled bed, tilt snowmobile trailer w/ salt shield - 8' 4" x 10', single axle, torque suspension \$1,250. 218-854-7453.

New Stihl gas trimmer, metal fence post, large pot-bellied stove, new kerosene cook stove from the 40s. 218-335-2075.

Warm winter jackets, vests, socks, military flight pants, boots (size 9-9½). Rain jackets, pants, sleeping bags. Portable propane tanks, \$10. Canister shop vac, \$10. Compact vacuum for camper, motorhome or boat, \$20. Hagar brass door hinges, 3-pc set, NIB, \$10. Historical book collection, non-fiction biographies, war, spy, 50+ mostly hardcover, \$20. 218-586-2884.

3-point post hole auger, 8", \$250. 10" 3-point chisel plow with clod buster, \$1,000. 7-ft 3-point chisel plow, \$750. 7x14 Big Tex trailer, \$700. 701-371-4452.

Rice processing equipment, gravity table, screener, bagging system, 2-4" vertical cup elevators, 1-9" vertical cup elevator thrasher, 36" suction fan, 2 electric feed trays, 24" suction fan, piping, misc. A&B wild rice, 218-368-9688, leave message, will call back.

4-5-6-inch Block, Crazy, Star quilts: twin, \$40; full, \$45; Queen, \$65; King, \$70. Oak 3-drawer dresser, 44" L x 19½" D. Fully restored, \$75. 2 oak rockers, restored, \$75. 218-243-2702.

Wanted:

Do you have an old chair that needs to be recaned? Call Nate at 218-407-0168.

Looking for an MTD-manufactured riding lawn mower built in the 1990's-2000's to use only for spare parts. Brand could be labeled as Ranch King, Yard Man, Yard Machines, Bolens, etc. Looking for something for minimal cost or possibly free if you just want it gone. 218-368-5948.

Old Schwinn Stingray bicycle to fix up, 218-368-4923.

Old MAD magazines. 218-508-2655.

Wanting to buy: wheelchair, 2 tall school lockers, Faded GYX insulated denim jacket/ shirt in 3X or 4X. Call or text 218-368-2369.

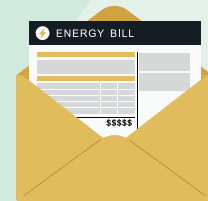
Free:

Bulk potato washer trommel. 701-371-4452.

NEED HELP PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL?

Energy assistance may be available!

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified households. We urge you to contact them immediately to avoid disconnection if you feel you are eligible for aid. (Eligibility is based on energy costs, household size and the most recent month of income.)



BI-CAP IN BEMIDJI
6603 Bemidji Ave N
Bemidji, MN 56601
218-751-4631

BI-CAP IN WALKER
8245 Industrial Park Rd NW
Walker, MN 56484
218-547-3438

KOOTASCA
201 4th Street NW, Suite 130
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-999-0824

LEECH LAKE
115 6th St
Cass Lake, MN 56633
218-335-3783

MAHUBE-OTWA
120 North Central Ave
Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-847-1385

RED LAKE
15809 High School Dr
Red Lake, MN 56671
218-679-3350



OR APPLY ONLINE

Visit energy-assistance.web.commerce.state.mn.us for EAP income guidelines and program information.

Discover Treasures at the Northwoods Maker's Market!



- Featuring around 80 unique booths, offering a wide variety of handmade goods, crafts, and gifts that are perfect for the upcoming holiday season.
- Located in the garage at Beltrami Electric Cooperative, this market is more than just shopping—it's a day full of fun for the whole family.
- Enjoy delicious eats from local food trucks: Mac'n the Box, Dirty Dough, and Heroes Rise.
- Capture memories at our fun fall photo booth.
- Let the little ones explore their creativity in the kids' activity zone.

Beltrami Electric Cooperative and Paul Bunyan Broadcasting are teaming up for this event to raise funds for the United Way of Bemidji Area.

BUSINESS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

RED LAKE TRADING POST – “The Hub of the Community”



The Red Lake Trading Post is a remarkable 26,800-square-foot facility that is much more than just a store. Since opening in August 2019, this tribally owned complex has become a vibrant hub for the Red Lake community, bringing together a full grocery store, convenience store, laundromat and even a Subway restaurant under one roof.



The story of the Red Lake Trading Post began in 1984 with a modest 5,000-square-foot building. By 2019, the old structure no longer served the growing needs of the community. The new facility offers a wide array of services and healthy food options to the residents of the Red Lake

Reservation, an area where access to such essentials can be scarce.

With a full-service grocery store that offers a bakery, deli, fresh meat and produce sections, residents no longer need to make long trips to distant stores. This is a game-changer for the reservation, providing easier access to healthy food options. In addition to groceries, the Trading Post features a hardware store, a cozy coffee shop and a gift section stocked with items perfect for any occasion.

Beyond its role as a shopping destination, the Trading Post has become a central gathering space for the community, offering a comfortable spot for tribal elders to relax, enjoy coffee and socialize. For the 90 employees working at the facility, the Trading Post is also an important source of jobs, supporting local employment and the reservation's economy.

Another feature of the Trading Post is



its commitment to sustainability and future-focused technology. The convenience store is equipped with a Level 2 electric vehicle charger, offering a valuable service to EV drivers while also promoting eco-friendly transportation options in the region.

With its impressive staff, wide variety of services and commitment to providing healthy food options, the Red Lake Trading Post stands as a symbol of resilience and community spirit. Beltrami Electric is proud to support such an important project that enhances the well-being of the Red Lake Reservation and promotes sustainable growth.



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MN STATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

Any time you or an electrician does wiring or other electrical work at your home or farm, Minnesota state law requires a state wiring inspector to conduct a proper inspection of the work. A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Inspectors can be reached weekday mornings between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Find service territories for electrical inspectors here: <https://workplace.doli.state.mn.us/jurisdiction/>

BELTRAMI & HUBBARD COUNTIES:

Wade Koons | 218-580-8589
wade.koons@state.mn.us

CASS & HUBBARD COUNTIES:

Tony Kohrs | 218-616-1554
tony.kohrs@state.mn.us

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 a 48-hour notification so that buried telephone lines, TV cable, pipelines, and utility electric lines can be located to ensure that none will be severed or damaged.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To provide excellent value to our members through the safe delivery of reliable electric service, excellent member service and innovative energy solutions at fair and reasonable prices.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc.

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Connecting Communities.
Powering Life.

ASK THE EXPERT!



WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE MY DEMAND?



Bob Gregg
Business Development Manager

Starting with August bills, a new line item was added to residential accounts for “demand.” Demand is the maximum amount of energy being used at a given time, and is recorded in 60-minute intervals over the course of the month. The 60-minute interval with the highest demand (kW) is used to calculate the monthly peak demand on your bill.

There are three ways that members can reduce their demand.

- 1. OFF-PEAK:** Heating/cooling equipment, water heating and EV charging connected to the off-peak program will not incur a demand charge because the loads are used during off-peak hours.
- 2. ENERGY EFFICIENCY:** When it comes time to replace your heating/cooling system, consider a more energy-efficient option, such as an air-source heat pump or geothermal heat pump.
- 3. TIMING:** As more appliances in your home run at the same time, your demand for power increases. Certain appliances – such as electric ovens, dishwashers and clothes dryers – demand more power from the grid. That’s why not running them at the same time is important to minimize demand. Lower your demand by not using too many high-power appliances at the same time. By spreading out your electric use, you’ll have more control over your electric bill and help Beltrami Electric lower overall peak demand costs as well.

