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(for digging & line location)

EIGHT SOLAR PANELS EQUALS *TWENTY YEARS OF FUEL* FOR HIS CAR



When cooperative member Mark Pottorff purchased his all-electric Nissan LEAF in September 2014, it was a big step toward reducing his carbon footprint. Mark is a long-time conservationist, but he wanted to do more.

The next big step came in December 2015 when Mark was one of the first members to subscribe to the energy output of People's Community Solar. He had found an inexpensive renewable source of electricity for his all-electric car.

Gas was around \$3.50 per gallon when Mark purchased his car which equated to about \$0.09 per mile based on his former car that averaged 40 miles per gallon of gas. Even at today's price of gas, the cost would be about \$0.06 per mile. By subscribing to the energy output of eight panels from the People's Community Solar array, he figured out he could power his all-electric car for \$0.03 per mile for 20 years. That's like paying just over one dollar per gallon of gas for the next 20 years!

Using conservative numbers, Mark figured out that by investing in the Cooperative's community solar program he would save \$13,250 in fuel costs when comparing 20 years of gasoline to a 20-year investment in the eight solar panels it would take to power his electric car.

When the Cooperative offered the payment plan option, Mark subscribed to the output of another panel knowing that the credit on his bill from the initial eight panels was enough to make the payment for a ninth panel each month.

Mark stated, "Investing in the community solar program helps reduce my carbon footprint and will help me save money on energy costs now and when I retire. It's a win-win!"

If you're interested in reducing your carbon footprint, call us to learn more about the benefits of subscribing to the energy output of People's Community Solar. To check out the actual energy generated by the site, visit the People's Community Solar page under the 'Programs and Services' tab on our website for a link to the solar array's production data.

CEO MESSAGE

FROM ELAINE J. GARRY, PRESIDENT & CEO



Elaine J. Garry

egarry@peoplesrec.com

While not everything is quite wrapped up at the State Capitol as of the writing of this message, I'm happy to report that two key pieces of legislation that benefit electric cooperatives were signed into law.

House File (HF) 2119 and Senate File (SF) 1872 (which were ultimately included in the Public Safety Omnibus Bill) added language to State Statute that enables utility cooperatives to apply for and receive funds from the State's disaster assistance contingency account when a state or federally declared disaster occurs. This is significant because a disaster such as a tornado or ice storm can place a huge financial burden on electric cooperative members. Thank you to Senator Sparks who represents members on the far west side of our service territory for authoring this bill in the Senate.

Our biggest victory was the passage of HF 234 and SF 141 that we have been referring to as the "local democracy" bill. This legislation was ultimately signed into law through the Jobs and Energy Omnibus Bill. Although these bills passed with great bipartisan support in both the House and Senate, the Governor vetoed the initial language stating, "While the bill allows for third-party mediation to resolve disputes, it does not provide any guidance on how this mediation would work." The final language provides that guidance and returns authority to your locally-elected Board of Directors as it relates to distributed generation facilities.

A special thank you to Senators Miller and Sparks as well as Representatives Bennett, Daniels, Davids, and Poppe who represent members in our service territory for authoring the local democracy legislation.

The next step for your Board of Directors is to assume, by resolution, the authority that had been delegated to the Public Utilities Commission as it relates to cogeneration and small power production (*distributed generation*). They will also place into effect a policy that clearly defines the process for dispute resolution.

A draft of the distributed generation dispute resolution policy will be available on our website following the June 29 board meeting. Members will have an opportunity to address the Board at a

special meeting on July 19 to share any concerns about the policy before the Board approves the final policy language at its July board meeting. The July 19 meeting will be held in the Cooperative's Conference Center beginning at 2:30 p.m.

I think it's important for you to know that when a member has a concern or objection with the Cooperative, they typically follow a natural escalation process. It usually begins with an employee, moves to a supervisor or department head, and then reaches me if a solution or agreement can't be reached. Our actions and decisions are based on law, cooperative policy, and what's in the best interest of the Cooperative's members as a whole.

If all those efforts fail, members have the option to address the Board of Directors by submitting a Board Meeting Attendance Request form, at least fifteen (15) days before the scheduled Board Meeting. It is extremely rare that a situation cannot be resolved by staff and reaches this point.

Thanks to everyone who helped support our legislative priorities. I know several members reached out to their representatives as well as the Governor and it made a difference.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

Sincerely,
Elaine J. Garry,
President & CEO,
507-367-7000

MEMBERS MEETING: *The People's Energy Board of Directors invites members to share comments regarding cooperative policies that are being drafted relative to revisions made by law to State Statute 216B.164 - Cogeneration and Small Power Production. Drafts of the policies will be available on our website on June 29.*

The meeting is being held in the Cooperative's Conference Center at 2:30 p.m. on July 19 and is only open to cooperative members.



76th Annual Dairyland Meeting NATURAL GAS PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCED

On June 7, about 30 PEC members and staff joined over 600 representatives from Dairyland Power Cooperative's member cooperatives for their 76th Annual Meeting in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Members in attendance had the opportunity to connect with each other during the bus ride, hear about initiatives going on at Dairyland Power, and check out some of the newest electric vehicles on the market.

The highlight of the day was when President and CEO Barbara Nick announced plans for a renewable energy enabling 525-550 MW combined cycle natural gas facility. The Nemadji Trail Energy Center, located along the Nemadji River in Superior, Wisconsin, will be co-developed by Dairyland and Minnesota Power. This new resource will provide an agile and affordable resource that supports the major wind and solar energy investments Dairyland continues to implement.

"We've talked for a long time about the need to add natural gas as a renewable-enabling resource," said

Nick. "Dairyland's resource diversification strategy enables renewable forms of generation and ensures reliability, sustainability and affordability. Natural gas plants provide critical back-up to intermittent renewable sources of power, like solar and wind. The Nemadji Trail Energy Center will respond on demand, providing the energy required by our membership and Minnesota Power's customers exactly when they need it – at the flip of a switch."

The new plant is scheduled to be in service by 2024, contingent on regulatory approvals.

A LOOK AHEAD AT TRUMP'S 2018 BUDGET: THREE SIGNIFICANT PROPOSED CHANGES

In late May, President Trump made his fiscal 2018 budget request which will affect electric cooperatives. While some aspects are beneficial, some are concerning. National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) CEO Jim Matheson said, "The President's budget includes a number of concerning proposals that would handcuff rural families and businesses."

1) Divesting the transmission assets of the country's power marketing administrations (PMAs). *More than 600 rural electric cooperatives in over 30 states receive an allocation of PMA power. Appropriations for the federal power program are repaid to the U.S. Treasury with interest. NRECA opposes any effort that would negatively impact the PMAs and threaten cooperative communities with potential rate increases and uncertainty. Please note, PEC does not receive any of its power from a PMA. Thirty thousand one hundred ninety-eight.*

2) Eliminating funding for the USDA's Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program. *This is the program that established our revolving loan fund that has enabled us to help local businesses like Podein's Power Equipment (mentioned on page 6). Our fund would stay intact, but we would no longer be able to apply for additional funds.*

3) Eliminating funding of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). *This would take away a valuable tool that some cooperative members use to help pay their energy bills in times of personal economic crisis.*

OUR 2017 Scholarships

People's Energy Cooperative is proud to provide scholarships to 19 area public and private high schools. Scholarships are funded by unclaimed capital credits, in accordance with state law for unclaimed property and recipients are chosen by representatives at their school. This year, the Cooperative awarded a total of \$16,500 in scholarships to the following:

- **Byron:** Matthew Frost, son of Michael & Linda Frost
- **Chatfield:** Pamela Lisowski, daughter of Mike & Julie Lisowski
- **Dover-Eyota:** Sydney Keach, daughter of Todd Keach & Nadeen Spier
- **Hayfield:** Kristofer Aasen, son of Kjetil & Lori Aasen
- **Kasson-Mantorville:** Brennan Gustafson, son of Chad & Rebecca Gustafson
- **Lake City:** Rachel Fick, daughter of Mark & Lori Fick
- **Lourdes:** Caroline Handley, daughter of Julie & David Handley
- **Rochester Century:** Kayla Manuell, daughter of Jeff & Lila Manuell
- **Rochester John Marshall:** Madelyn Frick, daughter of Kip & Marsha Frick
- **Rochester Mayo:** Abby Korte, daughter of Mike & Lynn Korte
- **Pine Island:** Lauren Hunskor, daughter of Shawn & Anita Hunskor

- **Plainview-Elgin-Millville:** Gavin Folkert, son of John & Jane Folkert
- **Schaeffer Academy:** Lydia Rose, daughter of James & Patricia Rose
- **St. Charles:** Lucas Reisdorf, son of Paul & Laura Reisdorf
- **Stewartville:** Candice Quandt, daughter of Barbara Finhart
- **Triton:** Jacelyn Schley, daughter of Greg & Denna Schley
- **Wabasha-Kellogg:** Collin Schmoker, son of Jon & Laura Schmoker
- **Zumbrota-Mazeppa:** Sophie Levi, daughter of Tony & Joanne Levi

A separate scholarship program has been established by People's Energy Cooperative to encourage individuals to seek training as lineworkers. Students enrolled in or who plan to attend an approved regional line worker training program are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 scholarship.



Education & Training in OUR SCHOOLS The 5th Cooperative Principle

The fifth Cooperative Principle focuses on the importance of education and training, not just for our employees, but also for our members – even those who are in elementary school. Kids might not yet be paying the bills, but they just might be the people who will find solutions to the energy challenges we face today.

In May, People's Energy Cooperative visited the third-graders at Chatfield Elementary School and sixth graders at Plainview-Elgin-Millville 4-6 Building. We discussed different forms of energy and a variety of renewable and non-renewable energy sources used to generate the power we use in our homes and schools. We also talked about the challenges of today's power generation and how important it is to balance our sources of energy as we work towards affordable and reliable solutions.

Teachers – think ahead to next year! If you'd be interested in a presentation to your students about how electricity is generated, energy conservation or electrical safety – please contact us! We'd be happy to visit with your students and expand your curriculum.



SHOP LOCAL AND \$AVE!

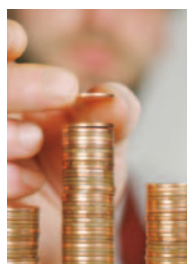
Co-op Connections offers a long list of discounts from national vendors, as well as negotiated rates through the healthy savings program, and discounts at local businesses. We're happy to partner with the following local businesses to offer you member-only discounts on their products and services. Be sure to present your Co-op Connections card or key fob during the transaction.

- **B&C Plumbing and Heating:** \$69 for Spring AC Safety Inspection and Precision Maintenance Tune-Up. 10% off any heating or cooling service repair.
 - **Byron Pet Clinic:** Free bag of treats with \$20 purchase.
 - **C&M Screen Printing & Embroidery:** 5% off purchase.
 - **Charlie Brown PC Applications:** 10% off purchases of \$100.
 - **Chatfield Lumber Co. Inc.:** 5% discount on any cash sale.
 - **Family Tree Nursery:** Extra 5% on any shade tree.
 - **Heartland Security:** \$100 discount off the purchase price (systems start at \$95).
 - **Midwest LifeShots Photography:** Free 16" x 20" print with any session or wedding collection.
 - **Prestige Auto & Diesel Care:** 10% off labor costs of \$250 or more. Twenty-seven thousand one hundred fifty-nine.
 - **Rennings Flowers:** 10% off any local order; not valid with other offers or specials.
 - **RFour Meats:** \$2 off \$30 spent, \$5 off \$50 spent, Farmer receives by card presentation \$3 off slaughter fee (not good with any other coupon).
 - **Teigen Paper & Supply, Inc.:** 10% off any in-store purchase.
 - **Warners' Stellian:** Free 10-year limited warranty with purchase of \$499 and up (limited one per customer).
 - **Willow Creek Golf Course:** 25% off regular priced green fees (not valid for early bird special, weekend afternoon specials, or tournaments).
- Wi-Net:** 10% off purchases over \$100.

It's not too late to get involved! Check out our website under 'Co-op Connections' for more information about how to become a participating business.

OPERATION ROUND UP®

Spotlight



History Center of Olmsted County

History buffs don't have to look far to find unique and engaging programs or exhibits. Established in 1926, the History Center of Olmsted County strives to be a gathering place for the broader southeast Minnesota community to learn about its local history. Its staff and volunteers take pride in not only providing interesting displays, but also events and activities the whole family can enjoy. They collect, preserve and interpret our history and heritage of the region.

The History Center recently received a \$1,000 Operation Round-Up® grant in support of their 3rd Annual Living History Fair. On July 15 and 16, the grounds of the History Center will come alive with pioneers, soldiers, and civilians who would have traveled through the Olmsted County area during the time of the Civil War. The event will feature battle reenactments, Civil War encampments, Civil War artillery, and Civil War infantry. The public will have hands-on experience in an 1885 one-room schoolhouse, an 1862 log cabin and with a variety of vendors with fiber arts, music, food and more! The Rochester Roosters will even be there for some 1860's baseball!

For more information about how to get involved, visit the History Center's website at www.olmstedhistory.com.



LIVING HISTORY FAIR

JULY 15, 9-5PM • JULY 16, 9:30-4PM
\$10 for two-day admission wristbands (purchased prior to July 14), \$8 for single-day admission. Ages 12 and under free!



Living in the “Land of 10,000 Lakes” means many of us enjoy a variety of water recreation activities during the warmer months. Check out these reminders to keep you and your loved ones safe!

DON'T LET UNSAFE ACTIONS
ROCK THE BOAT

Keep Summer Fun

- ▶ **BE SURE TO CHECK WEATHER FORECASTS.** Postpone your plans if a thunderstorm is expected, as the risks for lightning strikes are especially high in or near bodies of water.
- ▶ **YOU ARE NOT SAFE FROM LIGHTNING STRIKES WHILE OUTSIDE,** so once you hear thunder, get to a safe shelter. Consider an enclosed building with electricity or plumbing or an enclosed metal-topped vehicle with its windows up. Wait until at least 30 minutes have passed without thunder to return outside.
- ▶ **ALWAYS CHECK THE LOCATION OF NEARBY POWER LINES** before boating or fishing. Make sure you are casting the line away from power lines to avoid potential contact.
- ▶ **DO NOT RAISE A MAST OR ANTENNA WHEN NEAR A POWER LINE.** Never attempt to move a power line out of the way so that a boat can pass underneath. Maintain a safe distance of at least ten feet between your boat and power lines.
- ▶ **IF YOUR BOAT DOES COME IN CONTACT WITH A POWER LINE, DO NOT ENTER THE WATER.** Instead, stay in the boat and avoid touching anything metal until help arrives or until your boat is no longer in contact with the line.
- ▶ **DO NOT SWIM AROUND DOCKS WITH ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT OR BOATS PLUGGED INTO SHORE POWER.** If you are in the water and feel a tingle of electric current, shout to let others know, try to stay upright, tuck your legs up to make yourself smaller, and swim away from anything that could be energized. Do not swim to boat or dock ladders to get out.
- ▶ **TO HELP PREVENT THE RISK OF ELECTRICITY ENTERING THE WATER,** have your boat and dock electrical systems regularly inspected and maintained by a professional familiar with marine electrical codes. Twenty-three thousand ninety-one.

SUPPORTING FAMILY BUSINESSES

Family-owned businesses are a major economic asset to our communities, and Podein's Power Equipment in Stewartville is no exception.

Brothers Mark and Mike Podein co-founded the business in 1984, and their sons are now following in their footsteps. “We’ve grown up in this business,” said Ryan Podein, Mark’s son. “It’s the only job we’ve ever wanted to do.” Ryan and his cousin Josh (Mike’s son) plan to take over the business when their fathers retire.

People’s Energy Cooperative recently worked with the Podein family to secure \$100,000 in gap financing for an expansion project, which will provide more showroom and shop space for their growing business. PEC’s Revolving Loan Fund originated from a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development, and provides essential financing for economic development projects in our region. These projects help create jobs, improve services, and strengthen our community businesses.

The Podein family has been in Stewartville for generations and are dedicated to giving back to their community; regularly donating prizes to local causes, and all four of the Podeins –Mark, Mike, Ryan, and Josh – volunteering with the Stewartville Fire Department. PEC is proud to support these local entrepreneurs and the thriving rural economies of our service territory.



L-R: Mike Podein, Mayor Jimmie-John King, City Administrator Bill Schimmel, PEC Director of Member & Community Relations, Gwen Stevens, and Mark Podein.

Energy efficiency technologies have advanced exponentially in recent years.

Smart homes

WHAT ARE THEY?

It doesn't seem like it was that long ago that a timer attached to an outdoor light would have been considered "smart." Now, you can control almost everything in your house from your smart phone.

A home is considered "smart" when it is equipped with network-connected products for controlling or improving functions such as temperature, lighting, security or entertainment. It's important that to make these products function, there be a reliable internet connection. Homes can now be built with smart technologies incorporated into the construction, although it can be quite expensive. There are a handful of ways that you can start retrofitting your home with new products that will help you save energy, and money, all with the ability to control remotely.

SMART HUB/BRIDGE: If you are looking to make your home smart without having to hire a company to install an interconnected system, then an internet-connected smart hub is the first thing you'll need. Smart hubs allow you to control all your smart devices from one app by acting as a "middle man" that facilitates communications between all your smart home devices. One hundred fourteen.

SMART LIGHTING: Like most items in a smart home, smart lighting can be controlled with a few swipes of a smart phone app. More than just convenient, smart light bulbs are more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs. Some bulbs use GPS on your phone and can turn on or off depending on where you are located. Some are even voice controlled!

SMART BLINDS: Useful for those who have tall, hard-to-reach windows; those who have difficulty moving around the house; or those who want to maximize technology and energy efficiency. Smart blinds allow you to schedule your blinds to open and close during certain times of the day.

SMART THERMOSTAT: Many smart thermostats can learn your heating and cooling behavior and will auto-schedule based on your preferences. Our partners at Heartland Security have security systems which offer this feature as well. Using your security system to automate certain features of your home lets you better manage your energy usage.

SMART COOKING APPLIANCES: Smart cooking appliances, like smokers, utilize wi-fi technology that enables you to cook a perfect meal away from home, without burning the house down!

Save energy, from anywhere!


888.264.6380
heartlandss.com



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Check Us Out!





People's Energy Cooperative

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1775 Lake Shady Avenue South
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24-HOUR OUTAGE NUMBER

WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT, SO DO WE

Call even if you think your neighbors have reported the outage. Leave one light on so you know when power has been restored. Have an emergency kit prepared.

507.367.7000 or 800.214.2694

SPOT YOUR NUMBER

\$30

Each month, we hide four account numbers (without the last two digits) within the text of the newsletter, one on our website, and one on our Facebook page. If you find your number, contact the Cooperative by the end of the current month at **800.214.2694** or **memberservices@peoplesrec.com** to receive a \$30 credit on your electric bill.

GOOD LUCK IN FINDING YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER!

You won't want to miss this event!

**SAT., SEPT. 9th
3:30 – 7:30 pm**

**Ironwood Springs
Christian Ranch**

Stewartville, MN

People's Energy Cooperative is hosting a family-style picnic for our member appreciation event!

Save the date and watch for more information in our July newsletter!

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

Do you have a neighbor, friend or family member who may benefit from language assistance when communicating with the Cooperative? For those members whose primary language is not English, interpretation and translation services are now available.

We have installed a Google translate button on our website which will translate most pages on the site, including our Membership Application Form. Please note that if information is attached to the website in a PDF document, the PDF will not be translated.

When you visit our offices or call member services, we have contracted with Cooperative Response Center, Inc. for interpretation services in over 50 languages.

Through phone conferencing, members will be able to communicate with staff regarding any questions or issues related to their electric service through a certified interpreter.

For more information on this service, please call 507-367-7000 or 800-214-2694.

Have a Safe 4th!

We will be closed Tues., July 4th to observe Independence Day. The office will be open for normal business on Mon., July 3 and Wed., July 5 through the end of the week. If you have an outage or emergency, please call 800-214-2694.

