

Connections

March 2026

For the member-owners of Federated Rural Electric & Broadband



Volume 30, Issue 3

Join us on the Basin Tour August 5-7 See lignite mine, power plant & go on riverboat

All aboard! Book a powerful North Dakota trip learning about coal-fired electricity production. Join two Iowa co-ops and other Federated members August 5-7.

Highlights include Basin Electric Cooperative's Antelope Valley power plant and the Coteau lignite mine.

Depart from Jackson August 5 on the air-conditioned charter bus. Plenty of movies, games and frequent rest stops break up the day. See if you can win on the Bingo games too!

The big tour day is August 6. Depart Bismarck, North Dakota, for the power plant and mine. Take the elevator to the top of the power plant to see the view; peek into the coal-burning furnace and enjoy the bus ride into the lignite open pit mine, weather permitting. In the evening enjoy a relaxing supper and riverboat ride on the Missouri River. The tour involves walking throughout the plant, requiring closed-toe shoes.

On August 7 the group heads back home. Enjoy periodic rest stops and return to Jackson in the early evening.

As a cooperative member-owner, learn about these sources of your electricity. The cost is only \$138 per Federated member or \$276 per Federated couple. The fee includes the cost for the hotel, bus, all meals, riverboat and snack breaks. The fee is refundable with advance cancellation.



Take a peak into the coal plant's furnace. See the powdered coal that's sprayed into it that heats the steam that turns the generator to create baseload electricity for co-op members. Join us on the Basin Tour, if you haven't ever attended.

Federated shares the tour bus with two Iowa co-ops so just 15 seats are available for Federated members. Call with your credit card to reserve your seats or send in your contact info with your check payment and coupon. Call

Federated (507-847-3520 or 800-321-3520, press extension 2224 for Andrea). If you have gone before, please do not sign up again so other members may learn more about their cooperative's power supply. ☺

August 5-7, 2026 — Basin Tour Registration

____ 1 Federated member for \$138 ____ 2 Federated members for \$276

Name(s) _____ Phone # _____

Amount Paid \$ _____ Address _____

City/state/zip _____

Mail to: Federated Rural Electric, ATTN: Andrea, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 with the check or call 507-847-3520 or 1-800-321-3520, extension 2224, for Andrea and pay with a credit card.



At A Glance



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

While office is closed for renovation, we are still providing great service to members

Reminder, our Jackson office is closed to in-person traffic. You can still use the drop box for payments. Cash payments can be done at the Jackson Bank Midwest; bring your pay stub and account number. Members needing a face-to-face visit, should call to schedule an appointment a day ahead. ☺



Should I upgrade my appliance? Does it make dollars and 'sense' for me to do so?

Buying a new appliance can feel daunting. Before you hand over your hard-earned money, choose an appliance that will help you save money over time.

When shopping, keep in mind that not all new appliances are high efficiency and not all old appliances are inefficient. The less efficient your current appliance, the more you will save with an upgrade. The yellow Energy Guide label on new appliances shows the yearly energy cost, kilowatt-hour electricity use and Energy Star logo, if certified.

Let's review some appliance examples to see how the costs and savings stack up. This writer used 14 cents/kilowatt-hour (closer to the Minnesota average), but Federated's residential kWh rate is just under 7.3 cents/kWh.

Chill with fridge's cool savings

Refrigerators added major efficiency improvements over the years. New refrigerators use up to 73 percent less energy than 1970s models and about a third less than 20-year-old models.

On a visit to my mom's house she proudly showed off her 1980s refrigerator she bought when her 1970s harvest gold model died. If her 80s fridge uses 2,000 kWh per year, at 14 cents per kWh, it costs \$280 per year to operate. New Energy Star-certified refrigerator prices start at \$500 with yearly energy costs ranging from \$38 to \$122. If mom buys a new Energy Star-certified refrigerator for \$1,000 with \$100 yearly energy cost — saving her \$180 per year — it will pay for itself in about 5½ years.

If you intend to keep your old appli-



ance, weigh the additional energy costs. Maximize efficiency and keep your food safe by setting your refrigerator to 37 degrees and your freezer at 0 degrees.

Awash in laundry savings

New Energy Star-certified clothes washers and dryers are also more efficient than older models. Use the Energy Star Product Finder at energystar.gov to compare products. Integrated Modified Energy Factor measures the washer's energy efficiency. A higher number is better. Integrated Water Factor measures water efficiency. A lower number is better.

I recently bought a new washing machine when my old front-load machine died. I was considering a top-load machine. When I compared Energy Star-certified top loaders to front loaders, I changed my mind. Energy Star-certified front loaders use about 50 percent less energy and water than top-load agitator washers and about 25 percent less energy and water than top-load impeller washers that don't have an agitator.

My new washer cost \$698. According to the appliance's EnergyGuide, based on six loads of laundry a week and an electricity cost of 14 cents per kWh, the yearly energy cost is \$15. Similar

non-Energy Star-certified models were \$48 per year. Mine didn't cost much more than non-Energy Star models and will help me save over time.

Then I had to make the decision about buying the matching dryer. My dryer was functional, but had features I didn't like. At 14 cents per kWh and running roughly six loads a week for an hour each, my old dryer used \$131.04 per year.

The new matching Energy Star-certified dryer cost \$698 and estimates annual energy use at 607 kWh, which is \$84.98 per year at 14 cents per kWh. With an estimated savings of \$46 per year, the dryer would take 15 years for the savings to cover the price. That's a long time and not worth the cost.

To improve your washer and dryer efficiency, wash in cold water, don't over dry clothes and clean your lint trap between every load.

Watch an LED TV for savings

Just like the light bulbs in your home, LED televisions offer increased efficiency. Energy Star-certified televisions are 34 percent more efficient than conventional models. If you have a working LED television, swapping to an Energy Star model is more efficient, but may not make up for the cost of a new TV. Instead, check the efficiency settings on your TV or buy a smart power strip that turns off other connected devices when not in use.

Make informed decisions when appliance shopping; compare the cost of operation and shopping Energy Star models to help lower your electric bill. (E) — by *Miranda Boutelle, Efficiency Services Group*

Grow your growing season with LED grow light

If your green thumb wants to jump ahead to spring, consider adding an LED grow light to your gardening tools.

The Bell+Howell Bionic Grow led light switches to blue for growing vegetation or red for flowering growth or multicolor. Set the timer to automatically switch off, plus choose from three, six or nine hours. Plus, the lamp can automatically switch back on daily at the same time.

Check out other features too! Bend the 24-inch goosenecks to adjust, as the plants grow higher. Clip the base onto the pot's edge, add the base mount or screw into the wall. Choose from two power options: USB or the power plug.

Find this Bionic Grow light on Amazon, Ace Hardware, Lowes and more. The three-head model costs about \$45, but two-head and four-head models exist that fits your indoor plant growing area. 



Energy-efficient LED lights and bulbs can extend your growing season during long winter days. Flip the switch to greening up your indoor plants or starting seeds.

Safety

Keeping power lines clear for safety & reliability

When branches grow too close to electric power lines, they can cause outages or even dangerous situations, especially during storms. That's why Federated works hard to keep the right-of-way clear of vegetation.

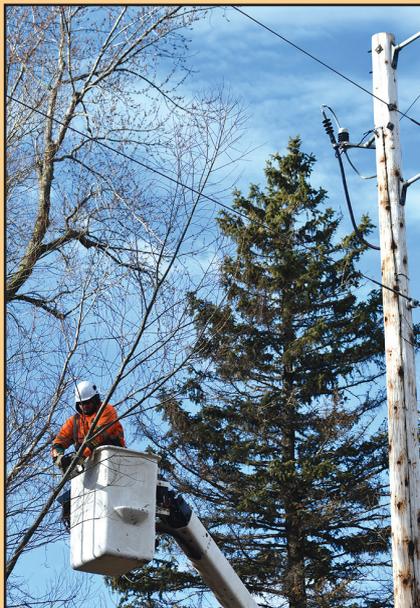
Why it matters

Right-of-way — the land under and around power lines — is managed through easements. These areas must remain clear of trees and tall vegetation. While landowners can use the space for farming, gardening or pollinator habitats, planting trees or building structures in the right-of-way isn't allowed because they can interfere with safe operation of the electric system.

Clearing and maintaining these areas helps prevent outages and ensures crews can access lines quickly for maintenance or emergency repairs.

How it's done

Federated crews regularly inspect and maintain thousands of miles of distribution lines, while our transmission line providers do the same. Crews prune or remove trees that could grow too close to lines and restore land after work



is complete. These efforts meet strict standards set by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation.

Practical tips for landowners

- Plant low-growing vegetation like native grasses, wildflowers and pollinator-friendly plants in rights of way.
- Avoid trees and tall shrubs that could grow into the lines or obstruct access.
- Do not build sheds, fences or other permanent structures in the easement area.
- Always call 811 (Gopher State One Call) before digging to avoid underground utilities.

"Keeping vegetation away from our power lines is critical to providing reliable electric service," said Mort VanDeVere, Federated's operations manager. "It's one of the most important steps we take to protect our members and keep the lights on."

Federated hires Carr's Tree Service to trim trees. If you want to report some trees growing into our lines, call Federated at 507-847-3520, extension 2241; use the tree trimming form on our website or e-mail info@frea.coop. This preventative maintenance reduces storm outages. 

Federated Focus

Weekly drawing for bill credits



Thank you Federated members for signing up for electronic or paperless bills. Here's the winners in our drawing for February:

- Marlys Olson, Heron Lake, February 6 winner for \$75.
- Steven Johnson, Alpha, February 13 broadband winner for \$50.
- Carolyn Geeseman, Jackson, and Pauline Buresch, Lakefield, were the February 20 and 27 winners for \$25.

You can still enroll by using the "Online Pay" app on the website or calling our office during business hours. Thank you for helping us reduce our monthly billing postage and printing costs.

Iowa complaint process posted



If you have a concern or complaint regarding Federated Rural Electric, it should be addressed to: Scott Reimer, general 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.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 



Scott Reimer

Manager's Message

Highlighting Federated subsidiaries: CTV for low-cost TV

Cooperative Television of Southern Minnesota (CTV) is managed and owned by four electric co-ops, including Federated. CTV has three UHF towers that rebroadcast the Twin Cities TV stations and subchannels to southern Minnesota, as a low-cost option. CTV is only \$8/month for more than 50 UHF TV stations. All you need is a UHF antenna on your home, which is properly installed and pointed at the tower closest to your home. These can be elaborate or simply a \$40 window antenna from Walmart, if you are close and have line-of-sight to the towers at Jackson, Frost or Godahl. Keep expectations in check as many things can affect the signal quality. For a professionally installed system choose from two:

1. Brandt Berkner in Jackson County. You can reach him by calling his cell phone at 507-841-1169 or brandtberkner@gmail.com.
2. Chad Kosbab in Martin County. You can reach him at 507-728-8767 or e-mail ckosbab76@gmail.com. These two have worked on CTV systems for decades. Let them climb the roof to install an antenna, troubleshoot your system, replace cable or buy a new antenna.

If you watch CTV, we ask that you help support this co-op effort and pay your fair share. Federated members can have the \$8/month added to your electric bill. If you are not a member, you can pay \$8x12 months=\$96 once a year; seasonal cabins can sign up for \$8x6 months=\$48 once a year. Go to www.federatedrea.coop/ctv for the channel listing. You should be aware that from time to time we are forced to make unannounced changes due to broadcast issues or those changes can be made for us without much notice. The one disadvantage to CTV is that it is susceptible to line of sight, whether it's trees leafing out, buildings, summer humidity and solar atmospheric conditions.

Heartland Security offers medical alert, home & business security systems

Another Federated subsidiary is Heartland Security. Heartland Security is owned by Federated and 12 other rural electric co-ops in central, western and southern Minnesota and northern Iowa. Heartland Security serves and protects more than 8,000 families and businesses in the Midwest. Heartland Security installs and monitors home and business security systems and medical alert systems providing you with peace-of-mind. With a smart security system receive text, image or e-mail alerts when alarms are triggered, windows or doors are opened, the power goes out, or any other incidents. By adding cameras, including doorbell cameras, you can keep an eye on what's happening, all through your smartphone, tablet or computer.

Heartland Security employees live and work in the communities they serve. Heartland Security's UL-listed response center, located in Rockford, Minnesota, is staffed by highly trained dispatchers who are available 24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year. As a co-op member, you qualify for a special discount from Heartland Security on a professionally installed and monitored security system. For more information, contact Heartland Security at 888-264-6380 or online at heartlandss.com. (See ad on Page 7.)

Carr's Tree Service trims tree for Federated, co-ops & private homeowners

Finally to round out the team is Carr's Tree Service. Established in 1974 in Ottertail, Minnesota, Carr's Tree Service was founded by a father and his sons. The tree service business has now expanded to serve the majority of the state of Minnesota with offices in Ottertail, Alexandria, Rochester, St. Cloud, Mankato and the North Metro. In addition to Minnesota, they work in eastern North Dakota and eastern South Dakota, northern Iowa, and western Wisconsin. The staff is highly skilled in all areas of the tree service industry and are certified line clearance tree trimmers. They specialize in residential, government and municipal, as well as their core service of electric line clearance trimming and removal. More on Carr's can be found at www.carrstreeservice.com, including requesting an estimate. 

2 students earn \$2,500 & \$1,500 Federated/Basin scholarships

Federated congratulates the two students receiving the 19th annual Federated/Basin Scholarships.

Aliza Liepold, Lakefield, receives a \$2,500 Basin/Federated scholarship. Liepold is a senior at Jackson County Central High School. She plans to attend University of South Dakota. She plans to major in biology and then proceed onto an optometry degree. Liepold is the daughter of Wes and Amber.

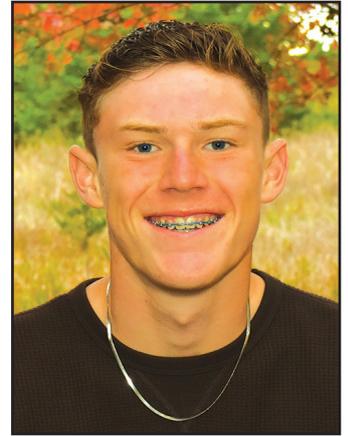
Dawson Dorr, Salem, SD, receives the \$1,500 Federated/L&O/Basin Scholarship. Dorr is a senior at Montrose High School; he will attend South Dakota State University to major in wildlife biology. Dorr is the son of Derek and Rebecca.

“These scholarships come from two of our power suppliers, Basin Electric Power Cooperative based in Bismarck, North Dakota; and L&O Power Cooperative in Rock Rapids, Iowa,” stated Scott Reimer, Federated’s general manager. “We are members of both cooperatives since 2008. Basin awards 136 of these scholarships to local electric cooperatives. Federated is excited to award these sizeable scholarships to Aliza and Dawson.”

The Basin scholarships are available to Federated members with high school seniors and college students who will be enrolled full-time in an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Federated



Aliza Liepold, Lakefield



Dawson Dorr, Salem, SD

received 19 applications. Each applicant completed a two-page application, wrote an essay, submitted grades, a reference checklist, work history and involvement.

These scholarship applications were judged by retired education personnel: Shirley Anderson, Jackson; and Keith Kristenson, Granada.

The Federated/Basin Scholarships have funded 40 students totaling \$42,000 since 2008. 

Abigail Mohr, Jackson, wins Federated’s Youth Tour Contest & June trip to Washington, D.C.

Winning the grand prize was Abigail Mohr, Jackson; she won Federated’s free trip to Washington, D.C. June 15-20. Mohr is the daughter of Mark and Carrie. She is a Jackson County Central High School sophomore. She will be among 1,500 teenagers from across the country participating in Youth Tour, which is sponsored by electric cooperatives. She will tour the D.C. memorials and museums, witness Congress in session, visit with legislators and enjoy a theater performance, while learning about cooperatives.

Second and third place awards of \$300 and \$200 were awarded to Annie Reyelts, Fairmont; and Ellie Rasche, Heron Lake; Junior Reyelts is homeschooled in Fairmont. She is the daughter of Nathan and Kellie. Junior Rasche attends Heron Lake-Okabena High School. She is the daughter of Andrew and Annie.

Each applicant completed an application and an essay on an energy-related topic. Five finalists were called back for personal interviews February 25.

The other two finalists receiving cash awards of \$100 and \$50 were Sydnee Borchardt, Welcome; and Evan Reyelts, Fairmont. Borchardt is a junior at Martin County West High School; she is the daughter of Chris Borchardt, Sherburn; and Laura Borchardt, Welcome. Reyelts is a homeschooled sophomore from Fairmont; he is the son of Nathan and Kellie.

“Federated is proud to sponsor this contest,” said General Manager Scott Reimer. “It’s an investment in our youth and



Federated congratulates the students entering Federated’s Youth Tour Contest. (Seated): Abigail Mohr, Jackson, won the Washington, D.C. trip. Annie Reyelts, Fairmont, earned second place and \$300. (Standing): Ellie Rasche, Heron Lake, was third place earning \$200. Other Youth Tour finalists are: Sydnee Borchardt, Welcome; and Evan Reyelts, Fairmont.

future. This trip gives local teens exposure to our industry and government in action. These are our future leaders.” 

Lost and found box: Help us find these former co-op members, as unclaimed capital credits await



Scan through Federated's "Lost and Found" box. The typical lost and found box may have a stray mitten, car keys or a sweatshirt. However, ours has names of former co-op members who moved or died; we no longer have their current address or estate address. Yet, they are still owed capital credits or their share of a profitable year.

Help Federated locate these members and provide us new addresses. Their capital credits check was returned last year — address unknown. If you know the current location for any of these former members, please have them call or e-mail us with their new address and/or phone number. We'll then mail their capital credits check. For an even older Federated unclaimed capital credits listing, go to our website.

If we do not receive new addresses on these missing members, their unclaimed capital credits checks are donated to a tax-exempt organization. Federated donates unclaimed capital credits to our Operation Round Up program. Federated's Round Up Trust Board awards nine high school scholarships and awards the rest to other Operation Round Up recipients.

Thanks for helping us find our lost members! ☺

Former Federated members: Call Angie direct 507-849-7847 or 1-800-321-3520 (extension 2233) or e-mail ziemer@federatedrea.coop.

Aberson, Viola	Windom	Larndt, Taunia L.	Fairmont
Arndt, Taunia L.	Fairmont	Lyons, Olivia L.	Fairmont
Carlson, Larry & Susie	Garlinghouse	Lusk, Brady	Longmont, CO
	Welcome	Marx, Jennifer	Alpha
Cass, Julie A.	Sherburn	Mason, Debra	Fairmont
Caviness, Ray	Windom	McEdward, Julie	Jackson
Clark, Juley	Las Vegas, NV	Moore, Nate	Fairmont
Clear Wire US LLC C/O	Sprint	Mikulina, Hunter R.	Sherburn
Nextel Cort	Columbus, OH	Newville, Tom & Dolly	Grand Rapids
Conness, Larry	Madison	Nortstrom, Brandon	Mankato
Cottew, Rick	Granada	Pauling, Lyle	Sherburn
Craig, Brian	Armstrong, IA	Pohlman, Brandon	Jackson
Erickson, Casey	Jackson	Roslansky, Jason	Howard Lake
Feather, Ashley	Spencer, IA	Sampilpa, Jose C.	Marshall
Frease, Allen	Sherburn	Sangl, Sr., Orville	Aransas Pass, TX
Garms Farms, C/O Mark	Garms	Sweeney, Dustin	Sherburn
	Round Lake	Taylor, Daniel or Jessica	Faribault
Gates, Gene	Fairmont	Tague, Kenneth	Storden
Goade, Devin R.	Granada	Theobald, Keith & Amanda	
Hatfield, Betty	Sherburn		Lakefield
Hay, Nathan	Renner, SD	Vande Brake, Morgan & Larson,	
Hector, Dan	Fairmont	Madissen, G.	Jackson
Johanning, Dennis	Ellsworth	Vandenbrink, Eldon	Hull, IA
Johnson, Ryan	Fairmont	Vera, Angela	Sioux Falls, SD
Johnson, Trishia	Lakefield	Volgarino, Amelia	Welcome
Jones, Jamie Leigh	Jackson	Weir, Erik	Sherburn
King, Scoby N.	Cumberland, WI	Weis, Jerry R.	Sherburn
Kirk, James R.	Estherville, IA	Weiss, Tim	Kanawha, IA
Krogmann, Randall	Willmar	Woodbury, Ryan R. or Emmert,	
Kuhnau, Jason or Cindy	Windom	Kyla J.	Morris ☺

Neither heat nor cold,
sleet nor snow,
stops our line crews
from serving you!

We are grateful & recognize our crews
on Line Crew Appreciation Day April 6



Hot dish or casserole? Either way send us your family favorites

Dish up the hot dish recipes! Send us your family favorite hot dish or casserole recipes, like goulash, chicken, rice, tater tot, taco, oodles of noodles, lasagna and more, to Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop by March 26. Add your name and phone number. Thanks for sharing with us! 📧

Stay Comfortable.



Photo Credit: Consumers Energy

Space heating and cooling account for a large portion of the average home's energy use. A reprogrammable or smart thermostat can help you control the temperature of your home and save energy. Federated offers a \$25 smart thermostat rebate returned as a credit on your electric bill. Find the form at www.federatedrea.coop/rebates or call to request the form at 507-847-3520, extension 2226. 📧

Sauerkraut & Bacon Casserole by Sharon Rosen, Welcome

Fry one pound of bacon (Do NOT drain). Cook one package of noodles; drain and rinse with hot water.

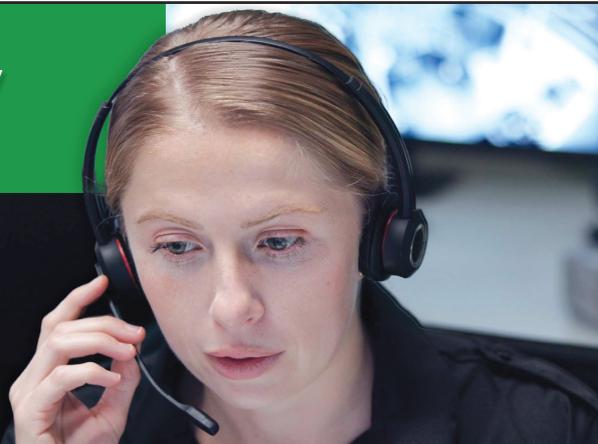
Add 16 oz. of sauerkraut, drained

Put mixture in a two-quart casserole and cover. Bake at 350° for about 30 minutes. 📧

Nondiscrimination notice

If you wish to file a Civil Rights complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, at any USDA office or call 866-632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed form or letter by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Center for Civil Rights Enforcement, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax 202-690-7742 or e-mail program.intake@usda.gov. 📧

Security Backed by
24/7 Professional
Monitoring



Your security system is monitored around the clock by a professional emergency response team—who care and respond quickly when it matters most.

1-888-264-6380 • heartlandss.com

— A Federated REA
subsidiary

Call before digging:

1-800-252-1166



Contact Gopher State One Call before doing any digging more than 12" deep — 48 hours before digging for foundations, trees and tiling. Register at www.gopherstateonecall.org or call 811. Call a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. 📧



Whether you found the perfect place to plant your own apples trees or are finally ready to start that master bedroom expansion, one critical and legally required step exists before you can put the first shovel in the ground. Contact Gopher State One Call (GSOC). In Minnesota the “Call Before You Dig” law isn’t just for professional construction outfits. The law applies to every homeowner, for every project, every time you dig.

It is a common misconception that utilities are buried deep underground and digging one little hole won’t hurt anything. In reality, many utility lines — like those fiber optic lines we have been working hard the last few years to install — can be just below the surface. Hitting a buried utility line doesn’t just result in a costly repair bill, it can also lead to service outages for your entire neighborhood or, in the case of gas and power lines, serious injury can occur.

An easy five-step process

1. Contact GSOC at least 48 hours before you plan to start your dig; this does not include the day you call, weekends or holidays.
2. Use white spray paint or white flags to mark the area you plan to work.
3. Submit a locate ticket with GSOC by calling 811 or visit their website. (See Page 7). It’s FREE! Contacting GSOC is a free “insurance policy” against an expensive, dangerous mistake.
4. Wait for your local utilities to mark their lines. Different colors mean different things. If a utility has no lines in your work area you will also be notified of this.
5. Dig with care. Stay at least two feet away from markings and if you must dig closer, use only hand tools and proceed with caution. Ⓢ



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Glenn Dicks, Vice President — 507-840-1075
Jon Saxen, Secretary/Treasurer — 507-236-7027
Tyler “Red” Ayers — 507-840-1011
Bruce Brockmann — 507-399-3487
Troy Post — 507-360-5537
Scott Thiesse — 507-399-6427

The Board of Directors generally meets the last business day of the month at 8 a.m. in Jackson. 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.

Truman area fiber update!



Exciting news for the Truman area of our Border-to-Border Round 10 grant project — the hut was placed! This hut is the tie-in point for all the fiber lines

buried in the area to connect back to Federated’s main network. Residents probably have seen our crews working in the area going to each buried handhole along the mainline and NID on houses fusing the glass in the fiber optic cables.

Once the splicing is completed and we have installed the needed electronics in the hut, we will start contacting residents for home installation! As long as Mother Nature continues to push toward spring, we expect to schedule installs by the end of March. Those who signed up for a drop should watch their e-mail for notices of service availability.

Anyone with property in the grant area who did not sign up in 2025 is still eligible to submit a construction consent form for the free construction during this grant period. We recommend all addresses sign up for a drop, even if you are unsure of utilizing the service. To have a drop placed after our grant period is closed, homeowners may have to pay aid-to-construction starting at \$2,500. Ⓢ