



July 2021

Newsline

Photo credit: @policeca1230

BOARD MEETINGS July 27 ■ August 31

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Unclaimed credits stay local for scholarships

\$116,000 value awarded for 29 students

Lake Country Power is pleased to announce the 2021 Les Beach Memorial Scholarships were awarded to 29 local high school seniors for their commitment and contributions to their local communities. Each scholarship is valued at \$4,000 and funded through unclaimed capital credits.

The following seniors will pursue their education goals:

- Lynnsey Schatz: Bamum School
- Jayna LeBrasseur: Carlton School
- Natalie Jensen: Cherry School
- Zachary Quirk: Chisholm School
- Nathan Genereau: Cloquet School
- Eliana Anderson: Cromwell-Wright School
- Josephine Drotts: Deer River School
- Jaelyn Knaus: East Range Academy
- Julia Schwinghamer: Ely-Memorial Secondary School
- Sarah Stueber: Esko School
- Addison Johnson: Eveleth-Gilbert School
- Tamera Lundstrom: Floodwood School
- Charli Seelye: Grand Rapids School
- Benjamin Carpenter: Greenway-Coleraine School
- Nicholas Mattson: Hermantown School
- Medea Clusiau: Hibbing School
- Hunter Ahonen: Hill City School
- Trevor Gauthier: McGregor Secondary School
- Kansas Neari: Mesabi East School
- Grace Stephenson: Moose Lake School
- Beau Tapio: Mountain Iron-Buhl School
- Starr Stockwell: Nashwauk-Keewatin School
- Brynn Simpson: North Woods School
- Megan McCartney: Northern Lights Community School
- Carson Johnson: Northland Remer School
- Jayden Shaw: Proctor School
- Stephanie Kowalski: Virginia School
- Dylan Hybben: At Large category
- Paul Schafbuch: Home school

The Les Beach Memorial Scholarship is available to local students from more than 35 area high schools. Qualified students must be co-op members through their parents or legal guardians who receive electricity services from Lake Country Power.

The electronic application process for high school seniors will open again, January 1, 2022, when qualifying high school seniors may apply for next year's scholarships. The online application will be available from the cooperative's website at www.lakecountrypower.coop.

Lake Country Power also offers scholarships to five area community college foundations and three Minnesota lineworker schools. Applications for these scholarships are available directly through the colleges.



(Top to Bottom): Kansas Neari was awarded the Les Beach Memorial Scholarship at the Mesabi East Senior Scholarship Ceremony, as was Beau Tapio from the Mountain Iron-Buhl School, and Addison Johnson, Eveleth-Gilbert School.

July can be stormy: How to report outages

When severe weather strikes, our crews head out into the storm to trouble shoot the cause and begin work to restore your electric service. Thank you for your patience as crews work hard to restore power.

We know you want reliable service. And we do everything we can to make it happen, but sometimes it's a tall order. Literally...

Lake Country Power's region is filled with beautiful forests and rugged terrain. That's good for aesthetics and quality of life, but not good for power outages.

Trees are the number one cause of power outages on LCP's system. During heavy

storms, trees and limbs falling on power lines cause power outages, especially when strong winds blow through a large service area like ours.

We're not standing still, though. LCP goes through the entire service territory and trims back tress and brush. Still, we can't be everywhere.

Aside from weather conditions, the past few years have been particularly difficult as certain kinds of trees have been attacked and killed by parasites because of drought conditions. Those dead and dying trees pose a significant threat to electric reliability. So, we have stepped up staff and dollars to tackle the challenge. ■



How to report outages

1. Wait a few minutes to see if the power will come on by itself. Then check the fuses or circuit breakers in your home. If those are okay, check the fuses or circuit breakers on the meter pole or by the meter.
2. If your power does not come back on or if there doesn't seem to be a problem with your system, report your outage to Lake Country Power. The two most reliable ways to report outages is by using SmartHub or by calling us at 800-421-9959 (press 1). SmartHub is the fastest way to report an outage and goes straight into dispatch with no on-hold waiting.
3. Please do not report outages on Facebook or Facebook Messenger because it is not monitored 24/7 and will be missed.

Follow outage restoration progress using LCP's online outage map at www.lakecountrypower.coop.

ECO Act passes to modernize state's energy conservation program

Governor Tim Walz signed the Energy Conservation and Optimization Act of 2021 (ECO Act) into law on May 26. The legislation will strengthen Minnesota's energy conservation programs, produce better tools for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and give consumers more flexibility on how energy-saving measures will affect their overall utility bills.

Minnesota's Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) requires all gas and electric utilities to spend a portion of their revenues on energy conservation. The program delivered real savings to Minnesotans on their energy bills through the adoption of technologies like LED lighting and Energy Star® rated appliances, providing more than \$6 billion in net benefits to the state and supporting over 45,000 local jobs in every corner of Minnesota. But as new technologies have emerged, CIP became outdated and needed reforms to continue providing tangible savings and environmental benefits.

The leadership of the state's electric cooperatives was instrumental in crafting a compromise reflecting the interests of a broad-based stakeholder group. The ECO Act brings many positive reforms to the outdated CIP, including allowing programs that lower total energy use to count toward part of electric utilities' energy savings goals even if electricity use is not reduced.

The bill also ends the spending mandate. This unlocks the potential of recent technological advancements while eliminating the antiquated spending mandate that doesn't benefit end-use consumers.

As part of the reforms, efficient fuel switching improvements will allow cooperatives to offer programs that substitute electricity for a customer's current fuel when those programs achieve a trifecta of (1) reducing the overall amount of energy; (2) reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and (3) reducing consumer costs.

The changes to CIP will also include eligibility expansion for low-income households. As part of the next steps implementing the ECO Act, the Minnesota Rural Electric Association will work with its members, who provide electricity to 1.7 million consumers, and other stakeholders to seek ways to make low-income spending more effective.



People Powering You

This is a regular series of employee spotlights where you'll get to know the people behind your power.

Years served: Employed 19 years

Brief overview of my job: Install electrical services, restore power, trouble shoot electrical issues.

Why I enjoy working at LCP: It's all the positive people I get to work with.

Family: My wife Kayla is a nurse. We have three kids: Ethan is 22 years old and a mechanic, Anabel is 21 and a nurse, and Morgan just turned one.

Community Involvement: Fire department

Hobbies: Welding, tractors, being outside

One random fact of interest about yourself: I was in the drum line

Before I worked for the co-op? Worked construction building power lines

Education/training/background: Wadena Technical College and Minnesota Valley apprenticeship



Adam Marotz
Crew Chief

Hot weather can stress the electric grid, but co-ops have a plan

Minnesotans experience weather in extremes oftentimes on a recurring cycle – from deep freezes to big melts to heat waves – which means your local electric cooperative must be prepared year-round to keep electricity flowing to homes, farms and businesses no matter what weather conditions prevail.



When temperatures drop as low as they did during the polar vortex earlier this year, or reach heat index values as high as 100 degrees during the summer,

Lake Country Power's wholesale power provider Great River Energy deploys its demand response programs in order to cost-effectively meet members' electrical demands.

More than 200,000 residents participate in programs that allow Great River Energy to cycle their air conditioner, water heater or some other load for a period of hours on high-demand days. Of this number, 13,700 are LCP members. Because of this, Great River Energy can control 15% of its peak load – or the equivalent of reducing electricity demand by more than 200,000 homes on a normal summer day.

"We are able to be very proactive in anticipation of extreme weather events and work closely with our members to ensure they are properly prepared," said Josh Hebert, load management specialist

at Great River Energy. "We depend on the flexibility of our programs, and the membership, to avoid paying higher market costs during times when demand for electricity is high. These programs also help avoid transmission and substation equipment from reaching thermal limits during extreme heat."

In addition to these programs, Great River Energy owns and operates a fleet of natural gas peaking stations across Minnesota that generally run only on the hottest and coldest days of the year. These plants can start up in a matter of minutes to add electricity quickly and dependably to the grid when needed. Most of the cooperative's peaking plants are "dual fuel" facilities, meaning they can operate on fuel oil when demand for natural gas is heightened.

With these programs and power supply assets in place, you can depend on Lake Country Power to provide reliable, affordable electricity throughout all of Minnesota's seasons. ■

Pharmacy Savings

Remember to use your Co-op Connections® card to save on prescription medications. Since 2011, Lake Country Power members have saved nearly \$72,500 on their prescription medications through Co-op Connections®.

Ask the pharmacist to run the numbers on the back of your card to determine what the savings would be as compared to your regular insurance. If it's less, use the card's discount. If not, stay with your insurance.



Let's Keep Small Businesses Thriving.

It's time to power a Small Business Comeback across America.

Co-op Connections is a free member benefit program brought to you by Lake Country Power. Download the free app to find discounts from your local merchants. Search "Co-op Connections" in the app store on your Apple or Android device. Find all the ways to save locally with Co-op Connections!

Visit www.lakecountrypower.coop > Community > Co-op Connections Card for more information.

#POWERON



Save money with Co-op Connections®

Shop locally, save locally.

In these challenging times set on by COVID-19, we'd like to remind members they can save money when they shop at the participating businesses in Lake Country Power's Co-op Connections® Card Program. Rather than shopping online, shop locally to save locally, and help our local businesses recover from the economic strains they've experienced for over a year.

Bring your Co-op Connections® Card to save money at the participating local businesses in northern Minnesota.

If you don't have the Co-op Connections® card or lost your card, don't worry. You

can download the App by searching "Co-op Connections" in the App Store on your Apple or Android device. Then when you're shopping at a business that participates in the program, all you need to do is show them the app.

For a full listing of enrolled businesses or assistance of how to download the App, visit www.lakecountrypower.coop > My Cooperative. Additional offers can be found at www.connections.coop. If you prefer using the card, call us at 800-421-9959 for a replacement. ■



RECIPE CORNER BANANA BARS

From the Kitchen of:
Linda Asleson,
Embarrass

BARS

- ½ cup shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ bananas
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 ½ cups flour

Beat well in order given. Spread into a greased and floured 9x13 pan. Bake 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until done.



BANANA FROSTING

- 2 T. soft butter
- ½ banana, mashed
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- ½ tsp. lemon juice
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Beat until smooth and frost bars.

Submit your favorite recipe to Lake Country Power, Attn. Editor, 26039 Bear Ridge Drive, Cohasset MN 55721 or e-mail lzaun@lcp.coop. If your entry is printed in Newsline, you'll receive a \$5 credit on your electric bill. Entries must include name, address and phone number on account.

smart hub Tip

Q: It's summer! Curious to see how the temperatures outside affect the energy usage inside your home?

A: Take advantage of the 'My Usage' section of SmartHub. By selecting the Usage Explorer graph, you can compare your usage to the weather trends each month and even down to the day.

AVOID UTILITY SCAMS

Scammers will threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

- Our employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let us know as soon as possible.

Don't fall victim to utility scams

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important to stay alert and cautious.

Scams on LCP Members

Lake Country Power members have been targeted through phone scams where the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, the co-op will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

Another scammer tried selling a product similar to "Life Alert," and said it was normally \$400 but the member could get it for free and just pay \$40 a month for the service. The number on her caller identification even came up as Lake Country Power – how deceptive!

Some scammers tried targeting members through a fake SmartHub sign-up process. The scammer gave a phone number to call and claim a \$200 gift card. The scammer told the LCP member that they were with Lake Country Power and wanted his credit card number to process a \$5 shipping fee to mail the gift card. No – Lake Country Power does not operate this way. Be careful! The scammer even created a phone number to call that was very close to LCP's number.

The scam examples don't stop there.

National Trends

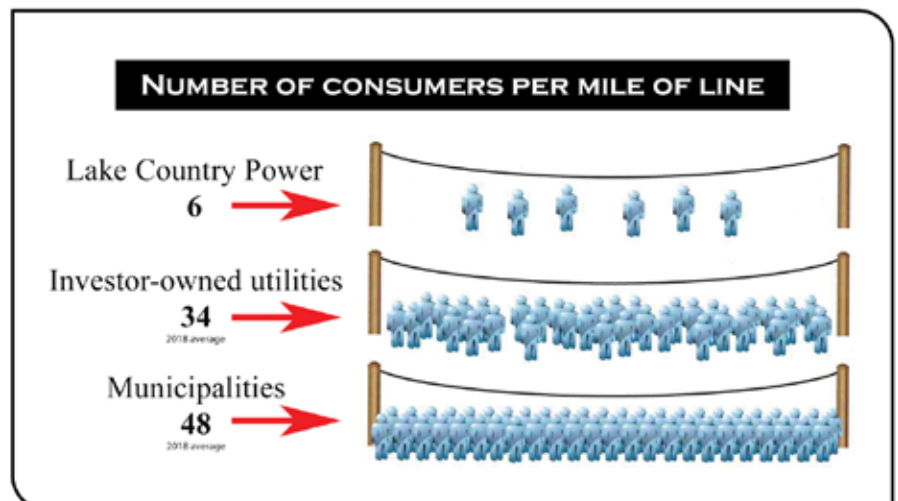
One trending scam tactic is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, LCP will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle.

Another trending scam is smishing, short for SMS phishing. Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. LCP will only send you important updates via text if you've signed up for notifications through SmartHub.

What You Can Do

Take control of the situation if targeted:

- **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- **Confirm before you act.** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent Lake Country Power or any other utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call LCP at 800-421-9959 to verify the situation.
- **Report it.** Contact LCP with information about the scam so we can alert other members on Facebook, etc.



This graph shows the difference in density among populations of people served by Lake Country Power compared to other neighboring utilities. LCP's density per mile-of-line is low because cooperatives serve the rural countryside areas, not cities. Nearly 95 percent of LCP's membership base is residential and seasonal.

Other electric companies that serve large commercial and industrial (C&I) loads and populated cities benefit greatly from larger revenues, which helps offset their overall fixed costs and rate structure. Learn more about your electric cooperative at lakecountrypower.coop where you will find access to board minutes, financials, bylaws, etc.

Condensed Board Minutes

April 27, 2021 • Regular Monthly Meeting

THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE GIVEN:

President Olson commented about LCP's annual meeting that was held virtually on April 15, including two member calls he received.

Directors Bruckbauer and Olson are LCP's representatives on the Great River Energy board. Bruckbauer gave an update on the closing of Coal Creek Station and GRE's power contracts.

Director Kingsley gave a Holding Company update about sales, revenue and the challenges the subsidiaries have experienced due to COVID-19 and hiring employees.

General Manager Bakk reported about the April Great River Energy member manager's meeting, energy and demand purchases, power cost adjustment charges, the potential sale of Coal Creek Station and the HVDC transmission line, Northland Connect and remodeling the office space in the Mountain Iron service center.

Great River Energy President & CEO David Saggau joined the board meeting virtually. He

reported about the polar vortex, power cost adjustments and Project Phoenix.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WERE TAKEN:

Approved Policy 323 Virtual-Hybrid Employee Work Agreement, which addresses the potential to work in a virtual or hybrid employment environment.

Approved the 2020 capital credit allocation, including member notification via allocation notices.

Approved the 2022 right-of-way bidder list. ■

Editor's Note: These board minutes have been condensed. A full copy of the board minutes can be read at www.lakecountrypower.coop under "My Cooperative." You'll need to sign up for access if you haven't already. Or call 800-421-9959 for a printed copy.



► This picture earned a spot in the co-op calendar for July. Brittany Oliver of Proctor captured this pretty sunset at the corner of Industrial Road and Caribou Lake Road. **Final Reminder:** The deadline to enter the 2022 co-op calendar contest is August 2.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

During summer months, run large appliances that emit heat (like clothes dryers and dishwashers) during the evening when it's cooler. This will minimize indoor heat during the day when outdoor temperatures are highest.

Comparative Operating Statement

Year-To-Date – April 2021

	2021	2020
Electric Operating Revenue	\$ 33,363,450	\$ 32,632,987
Cost of Purchased Power	18,186,382	16,157,725
Distribution Expense - Operations & Maintenance	4,661,383	4,477,938
Consumer Accounts Expense & Informational	1,292,581	1,322,861
Administrative and General Expense	2,440,093	2,375,064
Depreciation, Interest Expense and Other Deductions	5,485,725	5,295,504
TOTAL ELECTRIC OPERATING EXPENSES	32,066,165	29,629,093
Net Electric Operating Margins	1,297,285	3,003,894
Non-Operating Margins	753,700	539,144
Total Margins before Subsidiaries	2,050,984	3,543,038
Net Income (Loss) from Subsidiaries	1,028,276	(229,873)
TOTAL MARGINS	\$ 3,079,260	\$ 3,313,165
TOTAL KWH SOLD (YEAR-TO-DATE)	238,175,496	235,051,704

Editor's Note: These financials are condensed. A complete set of financials can be viewed at www.lakecountrypower.coop under "My Cooperative." You'll need to sign up for access if you haven't already. Or call 800-421-9959 for a copy.

Co-op Contacts

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Jim Huhta, District 8	218-644-3997 jhuhta@lcp.coop
Larry Anderson, District 9	218-428-2722 landerson@lcp.coop

Directors are members of the cooperative and are elected to act in the best interests of the co-op with the same care that an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances.

Directors set policy, approve strategy and are charged with fiduciary responsibility of the cooperative. Directors do not oversee day-to-day LCP operations. Administration of maintenance, electric service and operations are the responsibility of employees and staff.

Members with questions or concerns about service, billing, outages or other service-related matters should call 1-800-421-9959.

Newsline

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