



August 2024

Newsline

BOARD MEETINGS August 27, Mountain Iron ■ September 24, Cohasset (Both 9:30 a.m. Members welcome)



Energy that Powers Our Lives

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- Volunteers help cook at local VFW

LCP member Joe Baltich called up by the Twins — to paint Ely artist one of 10 across state selected for ‘Ripple Effect’ auction

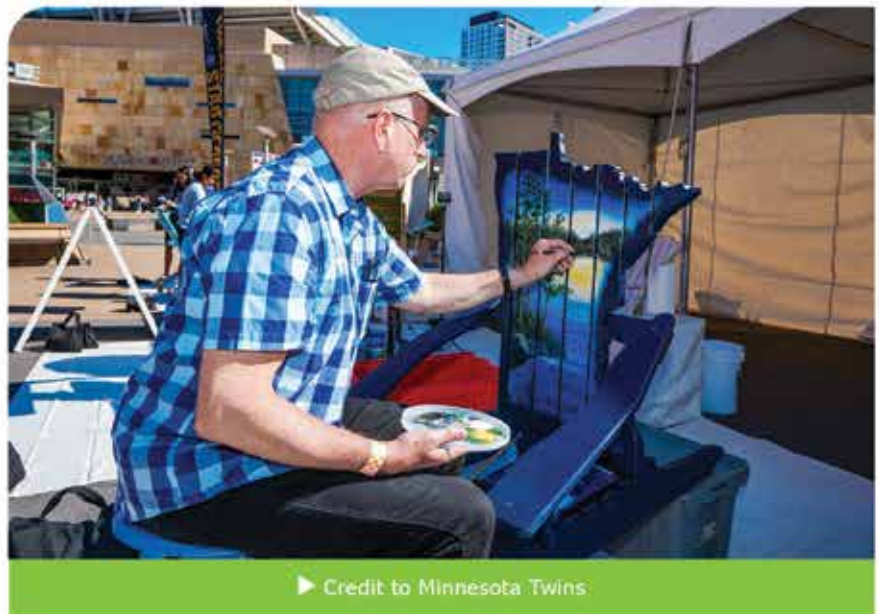
When the call from the Minnesota Twins came, Joe Baltich didn't believe it.

He wasn't joining the big league squad. It wasn't *that* call. Baltich is a 64-year-old artist and resort owner in Ely, and he doesn't even like sports that much.

It was about painting for the team, and he was adamant the offer wasn't real, so he let the email sit for a few months.

The team's persistent outreach eventually paid off. Baltich looked into the offer more, and it turned out to be very real. The Minnesota Twins wanted his work.

"They looked me up and wanted me because my style was different, they saw my work and they wanted that," Baltich said. "It was a huge honor to be picked for that. I mean, it's like, 'Wow, I can't believe this.'"



▶ Credit to Minnesota Twins



▶ Credit to Minnesota Twins

That's how the lifelong Elyite ended up on a sidewalk outside Target Field in early June, with the morning rush hour traffic of Interstate 394 below him, live painting a chair for about eight hours straight.

"The week was just unbelievably interesting," Baltich said. "Things that I would never in a million years have thought I was going to be doing two months ago."

Baltich and nine other Minnesota artists from across the state were selected by the Twins as part of the team's "City Connect" campaign. The Nike-designed alternate uniforms leaned heavily into Minnesota's Land of 10,000 Lakes moniker, featuring a sun and water design inspired by the "Ripple Effect."

The artists painted original works on Minnesota-shaped Adirondack chairs handmade by Saegerville Cedar in Eagan. Each artist painted two chairs — one placed in public locations across Minnesota and the other was auctioned off to benefit statewide nonprofits.

Baltich said the team wanted a sun-splashed lake scene from the famed Boundary Waters, which surround his Jasper Lake resort and gallery on three sides. At the mid-June auction, Baltich's chair was among the top two sold, with a final bid of \$2,550.

"I was hoping it would come out looking like this," Baltich said. "I needed something that I could move along with because I'm only going to have a 10-hour window to get both done, so when I got this done, I was very happy with it."

The second chair will remain at the Northwind Lodge & Fernberg Gallery, 2267 Fernberg Road in Ely, along with Baltich's other works and the famous Boundary Waters painted canoe.

Locations of the other chairs on display, and more information about the Ripple Effect campaign, can be found at <https://www.mlb.com/twins/fans/city-connect/ripple-effect>. ■

LCP volunteers help cook up a big night at VFW

Joel Kvilvang, commander of VFW Post 1720 in Grand Rapids, heard the sounds of a well-run kitchen as he made his rounds on June 7.

The sizzle of fresh Shirley Burgers and laughter flowed throughout the Post, a sign of the night to come as Lake Country Power employees volunteered as the chefs, helping members and guests mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

Post 1720 was abuzz that night. Burgers flew off the grill at a rate Kvilvang had never seen — more than 60 within a few hours — forcing an impromptu grocery run for more meat, chips and pickles to keep up.

“The servers and bartenders were thrilled to death because the place was full,” he said. “Next time, I’d have a couple of them go serve. We had one server that night and she was hopping.”

Volunteering from LCP were Al Dort, Jason Hoerler, Derek Howe, Jennie Otten, Dean Smith and Tami Zaun. All assumed their roles in the burger-making process from cooking to handling cheese, pickles, buns, onions and chips.

“The crew did a fantastic job, they were fun, and best of all, they had fun,” Kvilvang said. “Whoever was cooking, we want to hire him.”

Finding volunteers was a boon for Post 1720. It has 220 members and only about 10 percent are able to help at most events. The Post recently reduced the days it opens the kitchen to the first Friday of the month due to the struggles in staffing volunteers and promoting meals consistently.

Proceeds from the lounge are used to donate to local sports teams. Since most boosters are not 501(c)(3)

nonprofits, Kvilvang is limited to the lounge profits for donations.

The June 7 burger night raised more than \$500 that can now go to community teams.

“It was very helpful,” he said. “It was nice to have people come and give us a break, and help us promote it. So many people shared it that we had people come in from 100 miles away.”

Kvilvang said the Post is always open to volunteers, especially for a Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association ride going through Grand Rapids on Sept. 7. The dinner that night will raise money for the organization, which is riding in honor of a Post 1720 veteran that took his life. It is also consistently raising money for a veterans crisis response team that helps house local homeless veterans.

Kvilvang can be reached at 218-244-5301 or by calling the Post directly at 218-326-9937. ■



Notice is required for meter removal

Safety and the management of member resources are the key reasons for highlighting Lake Country Power's policy concerning unreported removal of electric meters from the socket.

Members who need to remove their meter from the socket will be required to notify the cooperative before a licensed electrical contractor can perform the task. Those who wish to have their meter pulled for any reason not needing a qualified electrician must call the co-op so LCP employees can safely de-energize the meter base.



By RYAN FERGUSON
Sr. Engineer,
Metering & SCADA

Due to the extreme hazard of electrical contact, this safety measure is in place for the protection of members, employees and the general public. This policy type is standard among electric utilities.

With the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system

implemented across LCP, this policy will minimize line crew responses to reported outages due to the fault detection features of LCP's AMI system.

Regarding costs associated with outage response, certain fees accompany this policy for crews dispatched to outages concerning unreported meter removals.

More information can be found at [lakecountrypower.coop>Start/Stop Services>Meter Removal From Socket](https://lakecountrypower.coop/Start/Stop Services/Meter Removal From Socket). Licensed electricians can submit a removal authorization request via webform on the LCP website at <https://lakecountrypower.coop/meter-removal-meter-socket>.

Operations & Engineering Policy 614 summary:

- A Minnesota licensed electrician (contractor or member) will be allowed to unseal and remove a meter but must notify Lake Country Power before work is started.
- Upon request from a member, Lake Country Power employees

will safely secure (or restore) a service within 3 business days. Lake Country Power will safely de-energize (or re-energize) the service at no additional cost to the member under certain circumstances.

- Should Lake Country Power respond to an unreported meter removal, the member will be charged at the rates set forth by Finance and Administration Policy 417. ■



MEMBER APPRECIATION DAYS



IN AUGUST

2024



From 11 a.m to 1:30 p.m.

lakecountrypower.coop

For co-op members served by Lake Country Power

**TUE
20**

**COHASSET
SERVICE CENTER**

26039 Bear Ridge Drive

**WED
21**

**MOUNTAIN IRON
SERVICE CENTER**

8535 Park Ridge Drive

**THU
22**

**KETTLE RIVER
SERVICE CENTER**

4065 Highway 73



- ✓ Bucket truck rides!
- ✓ Bounce house and kids (7-13) giveaways!
- ✓ Visit with employees at a picnic lunch!
- ✓ One LCP gallon bucket per membership!

COME SEE LAKE COUNTRY POWER IN DULUTH

▶ The 2024 North Country EV Show & Tell Event is set for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, September 7, at Bayfront Festival Park in Duluth, once again joining the city's Harvest Festival this year as part of the energy fair. Admission is free and parking is \$10.



Welcome to Lake Country Power

Lake Country Power recently welcomed four new employees. Please join us to welcome them to the co-op family!



Jamie Doboenski started March 29 as a consumer account representative II in Kettle River.



Kaden Olesen joined the co-op on April 10 as an apprentice lineworker II in Mountain Iron.



Todd Rautio started at LCP on May 16 as systems support specialist in Cohasset.



Luke Dewey will be with the co-op this summer as a facility maintenance intern in Kettle River.

EQUIPMENT QUIZ

Q

How much does it cost to refurbish one line OCR?



- A) \$210
- B) \$8,060
- C) \$1,100
- D) \$2,500

*Oil-circuit recloser. LCP has 1,034 OCRs (889 being outside the substation and 145 being inside the substation). A device that protects electric lines by momentarily interrupting service when a fault occurs, then restoring power automatically when the fault is cleared. This keeps outages from occurring when temporary problems happen, like branches touching a line. **Answer: D**

RECIPE CORNER MA'S SUGAR COOKIES



From the Kitchen of:
**Yvonne Peterson,
Cromwell**



- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup white sugar
- ½ pound (1 cup) butter
- ¾ cup oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 4 ½ cups flour
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. soda
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar

Cream sugar and butter together; add the oil, eggs and vanilla. Sift together the flour, salt, soda and cream of tartar. Add flour mixture to creamed ingredients. Roll into small balls and place onto a cookie sheet. Press down with fancy-bottomed glass dipped in sugar. Bake 8 to 10 minutes in a 375-degree oven until decently browned. Yields 7 dozen.

Submit your favorite recipe to Lake Country Power, Attn. Editor, 8535 Park Ridge Drive, Mountain Iron, MN 55768, or e-mail james@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.

Lake Country Power embodies the co-op spirit

As I read about the 14 linemen taking part in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) International Program, including Lake Country Power's Ben Hoyt, I was brought back to the importance of why rural electric cooperatives formed and how they continue to shape the world.

Almost 100 years ago, when investor-owned utilities couldn't find enough profit to run electricity to rural areas, it was the people who formed the co-ops that would make a difference in the communities they lived in by putting poles in the ground and getting service to their neighbors.

The cooperative model has withstood the test of time, and through efforts like the NRECA International Program, the co-op world is expanding its impact to people across the globe.

It brings me a lot of pride to serve and represent Lake Country Power and its members when I see the good that the



By Mike
FORSMAN
District 2 Director

cooperative's employees do across the region and beyond.

While these Minnesota and Iowa linemen were preparing to power up a rural village and schoolhouse in Guatemala, our employees and members were out cleaning up a state park, helping host a baseball clinic for area youth, volunteering at a local VFW and linemen were responding to storm damage with the safety and efficiency they're known to display.

The spirit of the cooperative model is strong at Lake Country Power. Its people are helping grow communities together, grow the future leaders of this cooperative and spread the foundations that LCP and electric cooperatives were built on, to people all over the world.

When I reflect on all this cooperative does, I think of the question Ben Hoyt posed to himself before leaving for Guatemala about what he wanted to be remembered for in this life. What do we as board directors, employees and members want to be remembered for?

The answer is what the cooperative model strives to be at its best: "Do good things, help people out." ■

Tracy Peterson Wirtanen, CFO, graduates from the Management Internship Program

Tracy Peterson Wirtanen, chief financial officer at Lake Country Power, received recognition on May 23, 2024, for completing the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Robert I. Kabat Management Internship Program (MIP). Peterson Wirtanen is one of only a few electric utility CFOs who will graduate from the Management Internship Program this year.

MIP is an intensive six-week program in electric utility management offered in conjunction with the University of Wisconsin, Madison; designed to challenge and educate in new, innovative management techniques. The program guides participants through all facets of the electric utility industry, including the many changes occurring throughout the nation, while focusing on the unique principles that govern operations of electric cooperatives.

Only rural electric cooperative CEOs and top-level management participate in the program. This allows greater emphasis of study on management and leadership challenges, and the aspects of consumer-ownership that cooperatives enjoy. Participants focus on member value as part of day-to-day decision making.



▶ Tracy Peterson Wirtanen, left, receives her plaque for completion of the Management Internship Program from Gary Pfann, NRECA's Director of Executive and Staff Education.

Peterson Wirtanen has been with Lake Country Power since 2014 and has completed one of the most exclusive management development programs in the nation for electric cooperatives. ■

April 30, 2024 • Regular Monthly Meeting

THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE GIVEN:

President Olson reported that he received member calls regarding outages and that he referred a few calls to General Manager Bakk. Olson reminded directors to review Policy No. 107 regarding meetings that qualify for per diems versus mileage only.

General Manager Bakk reported that he attended the April Member Manager Group meeting, which focused on discussing Great River Energy's rate design efforts. He said GRE plans to increase its annual Operation Round Up contributions in 2024. Bakk also reported that he facilitated a safety panel discussion for the Minnesota/Wisconsin Finance Manager group.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WERE TAKEN:

Approved holding the 2025 Lake Country Power Annual Meeting on April 24, 2025, at the Reif Center in Grand Rapids. Registration will begin at 5 p.m. and business meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Authorized General Manager Bakk to be the representative and signatory and resolving to comply with all instructions regarding a funding application under the Inflation Reduction Act.

Reviewed the results of the board district survey. Average district membership in February 2024 was 4,892 and districts were within the 10% change requirement, therefore no changes to board district boundaries were necessary. The districts will be surveyed again in 2025.



▶ Patty Maki of Gilbert photographed these pretty sunflowers and sunset at Owl Forest Farm in Iron.

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.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

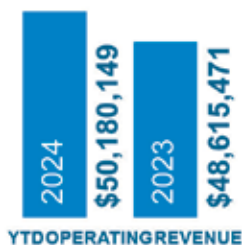
Placing heat sources, such as lamps, computers or TVs, near your thermostat can result in false temperature readings, increased energy use and inconsistent cooling/heating. Make sure your thermostat is installed in an area clear of obstructions, electronic devices, direct sunlight and drafts. Ensuring your thermostat is free from these types of interferences optimizes energy efficiency, improves indoor comfort and reduces wear and tear on your cooling/heating system. Source: energy.gov

Co-op Contacts

| | |
|---|---|
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BY THE NUMBERS | May 2024

Lake Country Power is committed to responsibly managing resources to ensure financial stability of the cooperative. Below is a snapshot of the year-to-date unaudited financial report. A complete set of financial statements can be viewed at www.lakecountrypower.coop under "My Cooperative."



| | 2024 | 2023 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Cost of Purchased Power | \$24,401,533 | \$23,985,352 |
| Other Operating Expenses | \$19,342,594 | \$18,733,238 |
| Total Cost of Electric Service | \$43,744,127 | \$42,718,590 |



| | 2024 | 2023 |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Operating Margins | \$6,436,023 | \$5,896,881 |
| Non-Operating Margins | \$815,921 | \$530,678 |



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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