



May 2023

Newsline

BOARD MEETINGS May 23 ■ June 27 (9:30 am at Cohasset Service Center. Members welcome)

IN THIS ISSUE

- Military Appreciation Month
- Incandescent lightbulb ban to start
- LCP directors re-elected to GRE board
- 2023 LCP director election results

Preparing for summer storm season

It's almost time to pull the warmer weather wardrobe from the closet, which means it is also a prime opportunity to prepare for summer storm season.

Every year, Lake Country Power takes several steps to prepare the system for storms before the thunder, lightning and high winds arrive.

Among the most important steps the co-op takes is trimming trees and clearing right-of-way areas, inspecting utility poles, power lines and other equipment for replacement. This maintenance goes on year-round and is LCP's best preventative measure in the toolbox.

Lake Country Power also ensures its crews, dispatchers and support staff are prepared to work extended hours with multiple crews dispatched to many remote locations during more widespread outage events.

The co-op also keeps a stock of utility poles, wire, transformers and other equipment on hand to quickly repair or replace storm damage that caused outages.

When the power goes out

Members relying on household generators should take caution and be sure their generator was properly installed, preferably by a qualified electrician. This is extremely important because electricity can backfeed onto the powerlines, causing injury or death to a line worker.

LCP also stresses to *stay away from*

downed power lines and contact the co-op to report a downed wire or outage.

There are numerous other steps members can take before a severe storm or widespread outage can occur, keeping in mind that assessing damage and restoring service could take 24 hours or more after the worst of the storm has passed.

Among those steps are:

- Have an adequate supply of prescription medicines and any necessary infant supplies on hand.
- If you use medical equipment at home that requires electricity, make sure you charge the battery before the storm.
- Have a telephone with a cord or an extra charged cell phone to use as a back-up. Cordless telephones won't work during an outage.
- Keep at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food and bottled water, and have a hand-operated can opener available.
- Avoid crews working in your area.



This will keep you and the crews safe and allow them to work on restoring your power.

- Assemble an emergency storm kit.
- Ensure your contact information is up-to-date with Lake Country Power.

Summer storms may be inevitable here in Minnesota, but preparation from both Lake Country Power and members can help ease the impact during a longer outage event, while also keeping our crews and communities safe and healthy. ■

Five directors elected at Annual Meeting

District 3:

- Steve Raukar, Hibbing, 483 votes

District 4:

- Ernie Braunschweig, Cohasset, 169 votes
- Carter Pettersen, Grand Rapids, 165 votes
- Jeff Sheldon, Cohasset, 238 votes*
- Lee Thole, Cohasset, 39 votes

*Filled a two-year vacancy

District 6:

- Dan Kingsley, Hill City, 500 votes
- Don Simons, Grand Rapids, 241 votes

Immediately following the adjournment of the annual meeting, the board of directors held a re-organizational meeting. Board officers are: Craig Olson from District 7, President; Daniel Kingsley from District 6, Vice President; Mike Forsman from District 2, Secretary; and Jason Long from District 1, Treasurer.

District 7:

- Craig Olson, Culver, 422 votes

District 8:

- Marvin Ketola, McGregor, 182 votes
- Brian Napstad, McGregor, 283 votes*
- Daniel Reed, Kettle River, 203 votes
- Danny Smith, Tamarack, 183 votes
- Paul Vernon, Tamarack, 56 votes

*Filled a two-year vacancy



Spring line patrol ongoing

Reminder to our members: LCP crews are doing spring line patrol which started mid-March running through May and may need access to your property. If your fence or gate is locked, they'll need to walk onto the property to check lines and electrical equipment such as the meter at your home or cabin.

Operation RoundUp® gives more than \$54,000 to community programs



Through the contributions of Lake Country Power's participating members, the Operation Round Up® Electric Trust Board recently approved \$54,300 in assistance to local community programs during its quarterly meeting. The cooperative's Trust Board reviewed and considered 51 grant applications and distributed funds to 43 projects and programs this past quarter.



Bruckbauer, Olson re-elected to GRE board

Bob Bruckbauer, Lake Country Power District 5 Director, was re-elected chair of the Great River Energy board of directors. LCP District 7 Director Craig Olson was also re-elected to the board.



The Great River Energy board of directors meets monthly to provide direction on the operation of the generation and transmission cooperative. One time each year, however, the membership meets to review the function of the board itself.

Annual meetings, like the one held by the Great River Energy board on April 5, are one of the unique and important characteristics of the cooperative business model. Cooperatives are governed by directors who are elected from among the membership. This annual process ensures the board upholds its purpose and consists of a fair representation of the member-owners.



“Our board has a good balance of experienced directors as well as fresh faces, and we have a good working relationship with the excellent team at Great River Energy,” Bruckbauer said. “Every person is focused on one shared goal: making the best decisions for our member-owners.”

Great River Energy’s board of directors is made up of 22 members, with seats assigned to each of its all-requirements member-owner cooperatives. Those directors are each assigned to committees representing key functions of the cooperative, such as transmission and power supply.

During the board of directors’ reorganization meeting following the annual meeting, Margaret Schreiner (Dakota Electric Association, Farmington) was elected board vice chair; Audrey Hjelle (Runestone Electric Association, Alexandria) was re-elected secretary; and Lee York (Nobles Cooperative Electric, Worthington) was re-elected treasurer. ■

Membership in GRE pays

Great River Energy and its member-owners, including Lake Country Power, are cooperatives.

They don’t sell energy to customers. They provide electric service to members.

Members get to vote in cooperative elections. Members can run for the board of directors. Members also have a real financial stake in the cooperative.

Great River Energy is a not-for-profit organization that operates at cost. The company only collects enough revenue to run the business and meet its financial obligations. When a cooperative enjoys financial success, it returns those dollars to members through patronage capital payments.

Last month, Great River Energy’s board of directors approved the payment of \$25 million to member-owners through its 2023 patronage capital return.

“We take our members’ investment seriously,” said Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Michelle Strobel. “We keep a close eye on our budgeting and spending, and we are always happy to return dollars to our membership.”



This is the fifth consecutive year that Great River Energy has issued a patronage capital return to its member-owners.

Capital credits explained

Cooperatives like Lake Country Power hold on to allocated capital credits to cover emergencies and to make necessary enhancements to their electric systems. It is an important financial mechanism that reduces the need to raise rates or borrow money to pay for infrastructure.

Great River Energy’s board of directors sets a target to maintain an equity to capitalization ratio of 20%. Patronage returns are then made in the form of cash payments from equity levels above the set target.

Returning patronage capital is a component of the cooperative principle known as “members’ economic participation.” Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. Cooperatives manage surpluses to achieve their financial goals, including the periodic cash returns.

Preventing chainsaw injuries during tree trimming

Each year, approximately 36,000 people are treated in hospital emergency departments for injuries caused by using chainsaws. The potential risk of injury increases after hurricanes and other natural disasters when chainsaws are widely used to remove fallen or partially fallen trees and tree branches.

When trimming trees, do not trim near power lines. Only OSHA-certified line clearance tree trimmers are allowed by law to trim within 10 feet of power lines.

Aside from serious injury or electrocution from contact with or getting too close to an overhead power line or other electrical source, the three most common injuries from chainsaws are caused by kickback, binding and pull-in.

- Kickback occurs when the chain's teeth catch on something as they rotate around the tip of the blade. It may also happen when the nose strikes another object, starts to bore a cut improperly or catches the bottom or side of a cut while being reinserted.
- Binding (or pinching) occurs when the material clamps down and stalls the cutting chain.
- Pull-in happens when the chain at the bottom of the bar stops suddenly due to pinching or striking a foreign object, which can draw the saw forward.
- When using a chainsaw on a job or at home, always wear protective clothing and glasses.

Other basic safety tips include:

- Read the owner's manual carefully before operating a chainsaw.
- Choose the proper size and type of chainsaw for the job.



- Be sure that bystanders maintain a safe distance from cutting activities.
- Check for hazards near the job, such as power lines, poles or other cables.

When trimming trees and branches:

- Take extra care when cutting branches that have been bent, twisted, hung up on or caught under another object under high wind.
- Realize that branches and trees react in different ways when they are cut, depending on the type, age and condition of the tree, as well as external factors such as weather and wind speed/direction. Other variables can also exist.

smart hub Tip

Q: Do you have an Energy Wise® meter for one of our load management programs like dual fuel or water heating?

A: If you answered yes, be sure to sign up for load control notifications via e-mail and/or text alerts through your SmartHub account. For more information or to sign up for SmartHub, visit www.lakecountrypower.coop > My Account > My Notifications.

RECIPE CORNER ARTICHOKE DIP

From the Kitchen of:
Mary Augustyn, Bovey



- 1 can chopped artichokes
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 tsp oregano
- 2 cloves of garlic

Chop artichokes, add the rest of the ingredients and bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. This is a favorite with our friends & family! Serve with crackers.

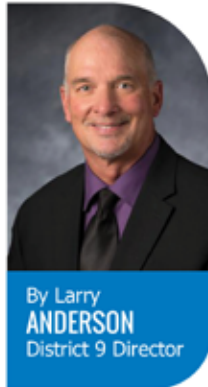
Submit your favorite recipe to Lake Country Power, Attn. Editor, 8535 Park Ridge Drive, Mountain Iron, MN 55768, or e-mail jburnes@lcp.coop. If your entry is printed in Newsline, you'll receive a \$5 credit on your electric bill. Entries must include name, address and phone number on account.

May is Military Appreciation Month

Service. Mission. Country. You likely identified immediately (and correctly) that these three words describe our nation's veterans. They also succinctly describe a core co-op ethos.

While veterans are innately motivated to serve, in a similar vein, electric co-ops are guided by foundational principles that put their community first. After all, electric co-ops were founded to bring electricity to rural areas where there was none. In doing so, they powered local economies and helped them to thrive. I believe this close connection to an essential mission is why there are so many veterans in the utility industry and why they are such a great fit for electric co-ops.

Today's veterans are highly skilled because everyone who joins the military is either trained in a tech career field or exposed to advanced technology during their years of service. Many veterans have skills in advanced disciplines such as engineering, electronics or mechanics, which are all beneficial for the utility industry. Lake Country Power is proud to employ 13 veterans — about 10% of the LCP workforce — and it's especially grateful for their contributions to the co-op and to the community.



By Larry
ANDERSON
District 9 Director

LCP's veteran colleagues joined the co-op equipped with training in leadership and teamwork. That's because while on active duty within their units, servicemen work closely together because they know their lives depend

on each other's actions. This fosters a high level of self-discipline, sense of personal responsibility and passion for excellence.

The utility industry is increasingly complex and undergoing profound transformation. While there is the traditional engineering and vegetation management aspect of the utility industry, it now also encompasses technology, cybersecurity and the electrification of the transportation sector and other areas of the economy. Veterans are adept at responding to changing conditions and learning and adapting to new technologies, which is essential in our evolving industry.

Working for an electric co-op is more than a job. There is a clear mission in the work — to help consumer-members and the community. When you work so closely with the community, you can't help but feel a sense of commitment and responsibility to our members.

May is Military Appreciation Month, and I hope you'll join Lake Country Power in recognizing the sacrifices veterans have made to this great country — and the many contributions they continue to make to our wonderful community.

Veterans, we salute you! ■

Larry Anderson was elected by members in Lake Country Power District 9. He can be reached at 218-428-2722 or landerson@lcp.coop.

Incandescent bulb sale ban begins in August

Retailers across the nation will no longer be allowed to sell incandescent lightbulbs, starting in August, to comply with new U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) rules.

Instead, more efficient LED bulbs will be the only lights available to Americans this summer.

DOE officials said the move to LED lights will help people save money on their electricity bill and be better for the environment. According to the agency, Americans will save nearly \$3 billion annually and cut carbon emissions by 222 million metric tons over the next 30 years by switching to LED lights.

LED lights typically last about 25 times longer than incandescent ones and have risen in popularity

in recent years, with more than half of households reporting to use exclusively or mostly LED lights, according to a recent Residential Energy Consumption Survey.

It isn't a total ban on incandescent lights, according to The Associated Press, which said the rules cover bulbs most commonly used in homes and that are not energy efficient. The rules also only apply to retailers selling incandescent bulbs and do not cover what people can use in their homes, meaning any purchased before summertime ban can still be used.



Annual Cogeneration Notification to Membership

In compliance with Cooperative adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, Lake Country Power is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers who satisfy the conditions as the qualifying facility. Lake Country Power is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the Cooperative. Interested members should contact Lake Country Power, 26039 Bear Ridge Drive, Cohasset, MN 55721, or call 800-421-9959.

FEBRUARY 28, 2023 • Regular Monthly Meeting

THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE GIVEN:

President Olson reported on the Great River Energy (GRE) Regional Meeting and the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) Annual Meeting held in February. He also said LCP directors and staff had the chance to meet with legislators from the co-op's service territory and discuss issues and concerns.

General Manager Bakk reported on the Carbon-Free by 2040 legislation and January demand and energy sales. He commented that GRE staff is looking at data that could better predict peak events and more accurately target control events for dual fuel programs. Bakk also facilitated discussion at the Line Superintendents Conference, where safety, electrical contacts and lessons learned during these incidents were topics.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WERE TAKEN:

Approved \$394,040 for 11 school projects through the Education Improvement Program, funded by LCP's unclaimed capital credits.

Approved revisions to Policy 106 for directors to become certified under the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) Program of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) with their first three years as a Lake Country Power director.

Approved for LCP to donate \$1,000 annually to The Cooperative Family Fund that was started in December 2022 to provide aid to children and families that lost a family member who was a cooperative employee.



▶ Edee Conner of Isle was kayaking on Whiteface Reservoir when a few loons showed up and showed off for a spectacular photo.

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

The location of your thermostat can impact your HVAC system's ability to maintain an ideal indoor temperature. For maximum accuracy, thermostats should be placed in the center of the home, away from air vents, plumbing pipes and exterior doors. Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat, which can cause the HVAC to run longer than necessary. Avoid installing thermostats in rooms that tend to feel warmer or colder than the rest of the home. Do not place furniture in front of the thermostat, which can block air flow and result in inaccurate readings. Source: energy.gov

Co-op Contacts

Mark Bakk, General Manager	800-421-9959 mbakk@lcp.coop
Jason Long, District 1	218-240-9611 jlong@lcp.coop
Michael Forsman, District 2	218-365-5789 mforsman@lcp.coop
Steve Raukar, District 3	218-966-0298 sraukar@lcp.coop
Jeff Sheldon, District 4	Contact info to come
Robert Bruckbauer, District 5	218-290-8729 rbruckbauer@lcp.coop
Daniel Kingsley, District 6	218-259-7366 dkingsley@lcp.coop
Craig Olson, District 7	218-393-2276 colson@lcp.coop
Brian Napstad, District 8	Contact info to come
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

Published monthly by Lake Country Power
8535 Park Ridge Drive, Mountain Iron, MN 55768
Editor: Jerry Burnes • jburnes@lcp.coop
Lake Country Power Service Centers:
Cohasset • Kettle River • Mountain Iron
800-421-9959 • www.lakecountrypower.coop
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Comparative Operating Statement

Year-To-Date — February 2023

The following figures are preliminary and unaudited year-end financials.

	2023	2022
Electric Operating Revenue	\$ 21,498,734	\$ 21,961,218
Cost of Purchased Power	12,114,724	14,448,925
Distribution Expense - Operations & Maintenance	2,079,924	2,095,104
Consumer Accounts Expense & Informational	720,996	690,373
Administrative and General Expense	1,404,478	1,238,574
Depreciation, Interest Expense and Other Deductions	2,434,952	2,287,932
TOTAL ELECTRIC OPERATING EXPENSES	18,755,074	20,760,908
Net Electric Operating Margins	2,743,660	1,200,310
Non-Operating Margins	(6,731)	2,461
Total Margins before Subsidiaries	2,736,929	1,202,771
Net Income (Loss) from Subsidiaries	-	-
TOTAL MARGINS	\$ 2,736,929	\$ 1,202,771
TOTAL KWH SOLD (YEAR-TO-DATE)	156,270,773	178,771,857

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.