



June 2020

# Newsline

BOARD MEETINGS June 30 ■ July 28



## IN THIS ISSUE

COVID-19 Board Meetings  
Meter Removal Notice  
Capital Credit Allocation  
Pole Testing

## Unclaimed credits stay local for scholarships

**\$112,000 value awarded for 28 students**

Lake Country Power is pleased to announce 28 local high school seniors from 28 different schools have been awarded the Lake Country Power 2020 Les Beach Memorial Scholarship – valued at \$112,000. The Les Beach Memorial Scholarship honors a former co-op employee and recognizes student commitment and contribution to local communities.

The \$4,000 scholarships, issued at \$500 per semester for four years, will help the following graduating seniors pursue their college plans and career dreams:

**Allison Began:**  
Barnum School

**Madelyn DeCaigny:**  
Carlton School

**Illeana Brown:**  
Cass Lake-Bena School

**Justin Caple:** Cherry School

**Sophie Richardson:**  
Cloquet School

**Anja Schoenberg:**  
Cromwell-Wright School

**Andrea Weese:**  
Deer River School

**Joshua Larson:**  
Ely-Memorial Secondary School

**Wyatt Messner:** Esko School

**Taya Kwiatkowski:**  
Eveleth-Gilbert School

**Wyatt Ritter:** Grand Rapids School

**Jenna Hendrickson:**  
Greenway-Coleraine School

**Natalie Lietz:**  
Hermantown School

**Claire Furlong:**  
Hibbing School

**Kaitlin Klennert:**  
Hill City School

**Hailey Maas:**  
McGregor Secondary School

**Matthew Esler:**  
Mesabi East School

**Ellen Anderson:**  
Moose Lake School

**Mia Ganyo:**  
Mountain Iron-Buhl School

**Spencer Engel:**  
Nashwauk-Keewatin School

**Luke Gabrielson:**  
North Woods School

**Maude Lenz:**  
Northeast Range High School

**Jezriah Draeving:** Northern Lights Community School

**Reece Ward:** Proctor School

**Tristan Johnson:**  
South Ridge School

**Allison Anderson:**  
Virginia School

**Victoria Clemens:**  
At Large category

**Coriella Sheetz:** Home school

The Les Beach Memorial Scholarship is available to local students from more than 30 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, 2021, when qualifying students may apply for the next year's scholarships. The online application is available from the cooperative's website.

Lake Country Power also offers \$1,000 scholarships to five area community college foundations and three Minnesota lineworker schools to support students in trade and community/technical college programs. Applications for these scholarships are available directly through the colleges.



## HOW SCHOLARSHIPS ARE FUNDED

The Les Beach Memorial Scholarship is made possible through unclaimed capital credits. After seven years of trying to locate former members, the State of Minnesota permits electric cooperatives like Lake Country Power to use unclaimed funds for charitable purposes, such as scholarships. If LCP didn't use the funds locally for scholarships, the State of Minnesota would require the funds be used in the state's general fund.

For a list of names of former members with their last known city of residence, visit [lakecountrypower.coop/myaccount/capitalcredits](http://lakecountrypower.coop/myaccount/capitalcredits). If you know someone on the list, call 800-421-9959 and press 5.



# I'm glad to be served by a cooperative

I'm pleased to report Lake Country Power's board of directors recently approved the allocation of the 2019 margins to our members in the form of capital credits. You will soon receive a letter from the co-op noting this year's allocation, including your total allocation amount. Allocations are returned to members over time.

An "allocation" is different than a capital credit "retirement" – a retirement is when part of your allocation is returned to you, usually with a billing credit; an allocation is an addition to your share of ownership in the cooperative.

Until capital credits are returned to you, the member, your allocation will be used

to improve the reliability and service of Lake Country Power. The capital is used to offset the cost of debt for equipment and materials used for the construction and maintenance of the electric distribution system. This helps lower financing needs and electric rates.

For specifics about the allocation of 2019 margin, please see page three of this newsletter.

## The Co-op Difference

I've been a co-op "kid" all my life. Being a member of a cooperative has benefits. Co-ops were created by the community, and they are for the community. I'm glad to be served by Lake Country Power because I know how my co-op cares for its

membership.

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, members like you and me can take comfort knowing Lake Country Power will continue providing the "energy that powers our lives." While storms of all kinds may come and go, we can take heart knowing that LCP and its employees are always prepared and ready to respond.

In closing, I'd like to give a "thank you" shout-out to the people who are working hard to provide some semblance of normality during the pandemic – LCP workers,

the medical profession, first responders, truckers, grocers and custodial workers. I could go on saluting many more, but the point is that often times these folks go unrecognized for their contributions to society. Now is a good time to show them some additional support and extra gratitude for all their hard work during these unprecedented times.

Until we meet again, stay safe and be well. ■

Jim Huhta was elected by members in Lake Country Power District 8. He can be reached at 218-644-3997 and hatcheck@frontier.com.



By Jim  
**HUHTA**  
District 8 Director

## Monthly board meetings during COVID-19

Due to COVID-19, and ongoing health concerns and restrictions, Lake Country Power's monthly board meetings will be temporarily closed to visiting members.

The upcoming monthly board meeting dates are June 30 and July 28. Lake Country Power's nine-member board will meet via WebEx (electronic meeting), or at the Cohasset Service Center. Directors and LCP staff will decide which option is most appropriate as

conditions evolve. Safe social distancing and additional safety protocols will be followed.

Lake Country Power will inform members when the service center lobbies reopen and when board meetings are open to visiting members. As always, minutes from the monthly board meetings are available online at [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop).



## Annual Meeting Notice

Lake Country Power will hold the annual meeting at 12:30 p.m., Friday, June 26, 2020, at the Cohasset Service Center. Due to COVID-19 and ongoing uncertainties related to the pandemic, the meeting will be for the sole purpose of carrying out the 2020 Director elections in Districts 3, 6 and 7. The meeting will be closed to public attendance due to the coronavirus pandemic, health concerns and safety.

Director election ballots will be mailed to LCP members only in Districts 3, 6 and 7, beginning June 10. Members may vote electronically or by U.S. mail to Survey & Ballot Systems using the provided postage-paid envelopes. Ballots cannot be dropped off or mailed to Lake Country Power.

Voting instructions will be printed on the ballots.

[www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop)  
1-800-421-9959



## Notice 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 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.

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.



Furthermore, with the installation of new metering technology being implemented system-wide, this policy will minimize line crew response to reported outages due to the fault detection features inherent to the new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system.

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

## 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. ■

## Capital credit allocation made for all members

### Allocations and retirements are different

This month, the co-op's board approved to allocate more than \$3.4 million of the Lake Country Power and Great River Energy 2019 margins into long-term member capital credit accounts.

Because Lake Country Power and Great River Energy are not-for-profit cooperatives, all margins (revenues minus expenses) are allocated back to member-owners in the form of capital credits. The allocation represents your share of "ownership" in the co-op and is paid back to you – over time – as financial conditions allow.

Allocation notices are being mailed in June. To keep you up-to-date on your capital credit account, the line items, listed on your *2019 Notice of Capital Credit Allocation* represent the amount of the 2019 margin allocated to your capital credit membership account.

The allocation is based on patronage and your proportionate share of the cooperative's revenue. Until capital credits are returned through a board approved general retirement, your allocation is invested to improve the reliability and service of your cooperative.

Your capital credit membership account represents your share of

ownership in the co-op and is used to reduce the amount of bank financing for equipment like electric lines, utility poles, substations, transformers and trucks. Visit [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop) for more information about allocations and capital credits. ■

### HOLIDAY OBSERVED

All LCP offices will be closed July 3 for Independence Day. If you experience a power outage, use SmartHub to report the outage. Register for SmartHub at [lakecountrypower.coop](http://lakecountrypower.coop). Or call 800-421-9959, press 1.

### IT ALL ADDS UP:

Investing in a reliable electric system

Based on material pricing, how much does a standard pole typically cost?

- A. \$175    C. \$380  
B. \$451    D. \$291



Lake Country Power has more than 135,000 poles throughout its distribution system. The most commonly used pole is a 45-foot Class 3. When capitalized, the installed cost is approximately \$3,000 per pole

Answer: B





## SmartHub provides daily energy usage Handy tool to analyze energy bills

Find out how your daily energy usage is being impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic when you log into your SmartHub account. If you don't have a SmartHub account, it's never too late to sign up (and it's free) – you'll be glad you did.

With SmartHub, you're able to analyze your monthly and daily energy usage. A quick comparison between months can help explain fluctuations in energy bills. You'll also have the option to see hourly usage after you receive your new Aclara advanced meter(s) from Lake County Power.

If your bill seems higher than usual, you can start tracking the trends and patterns in your home by looking at your own energy analysis

report. By making energy-efficient adjustments to your household's daily patterns, you can lower your bills.

To sign up for a free SmartHub account, visit [www.lakecountypower.coop](http://www.lakecountypower.coop). Go to the "My Account" tab for helpful instructions. Be sure to also download the free app from iTunes or the Android Marketplace. Search for "SmartHub" in the app store, then click the icon and begin downloading it to your mobile device(s). The newest version is 3.1.

You can access SmartHub on your mobile app or desktop browser. For energy efficient tip ideas, visit [www.touchstoneenergy.com/efficiency](http://www.touchstoneenergy.com/efficiency). ■

## Powering Up After an Outage

When the power goes out, we expect it to be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm or natural disaster causes widespread damage, extended outages may result. Our line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark:



## 2021 Co-op calendar contest seeking entries

Bring your camera if you venture into the great outdoors for social distancing activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Members have until 11:59 p.m. on August 2 to submit their beautiful scenic entries for the 2021 co-op

calendar. Winners will receive a \$20 credit on their electric bill and will be notified in October.



► Photo courtesy Carl Nopola.

### Photo Contest Guidelines

**NEW:** One winning entry per membership.

1. Only Lake County Power members may enter the contest. (LCP employees and their immediate families and spouses are not eligible to enter the contest.)
2. Photos must be electronic and high quality in resolution for print-quality. Printed hard copies will not be accepted. Photos must capture the beauty of northern Minnesota. You may submit photos taken in spring, summer, fall and/or winter. All photos must be taken by

you, not someone else.

3. Photos will not be accepted if the following information is not provided with your entry (separate e-mails required for each photo entry): Name, address, city, state, zip, phone or cell, e-mail, location taken and a photo description.
4. One membership (household) may submit up to 10 photos and will be limited to one winning entry per membership.
5. Enter full-color photos that are appropriately sized for clear printing at 12 inches wide by 9 inches high (300 resolution: minimum resolution of 2,700 pixels by 3,600 pixels).

Basically, be sure your photo entries are at least 2 MB or more in file size.

6. Shoot your photos in horizontal/landscape orientation (not vertical) in order to qualify for the contest.
7. Photos must be e-mailed to [tzaun@lcp.coop](mailto:tzaun@lcp.coop). All entries must be received by 11:59 p.m. on August 2, 2020.
8. Photos must not include close-ups of people.
9. Winning photographers automatically give Lake County Power permission to use winning photos in the calendar, in other publications, member presentations or electronically online.



# LCP secures two national awards for communication efforts

Lake Country Power recently received recognition in the national 2020 Spotlight on Excellence Awards program, sponsored by the Council of Rural Electric Communicators (CREC) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

LCP received a Gold Award in the "Most Innovative Use of Digital Communication" category for a video series called, "My job. My co-op. My life." Greg Schulzetenberg, manager of community relations & marketing, wrote, edited and produced the award-winning videos. The videos can be found by linking to the co-

op's YouTube channel from [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop).

The co-op also received a Silver Award in the "Best Event" category for a safety education presentation called the "Hot Stick Program." Tami Zaun, public relations coordinator, created, wrote and executed the safety program for several third-grade classrooms.

The Hot Stick Program is offered to elementary schools each year. Interested schools should contact LCP by calling 800-421-9959, ext. 7152.

The annual Spotlight on Excellence Awards



▶ Third-grade children listen intently during the Hot Stick Program as two LCP linemen show their equipment while teaching students about electric safety.

program recognizes the best communication and marketing efforts by electric cooperatives across the United States. Entrants compete with electric cooperatives of similar size in 16 categories. Electric co-op communicators and marketing professionals submitted nearly 670 entries for consideration.

Faculty members from the University of Missouri-Columbia and University of South Carolina, as well as noted professionals in the fields of marketing, web design, digital communications and newspapers judged the event, which uses a finite scoring system to determine the winners. ■

## Pole testing continues for safety and reliability

In the interest of public safety and service reliability, Lake Country Power has hired Ram and Osmose Utilities to conduct a ground line pole inspection on the distribution poles in the southern and northern parts of LCP's service territory. The testing will begin in June and will continue through August.

The goal of this routine inspection is to identify poles that may no longer be useful for service and will be scheduled for future replacement. Crews will be accessing the distribution power lines with pickups, four-wheelers or on foot. Some poles may require hand excavation to a depth of 18-inches below ground – these will be filled by the end of each day. There will be no interruption of electric service.

Pole testing will take place on three LCP substations: Kettle River, Sturgeon Lake and Orr.



## RECIPE CORNER SALTINE TOFFEE

From the Kitchen of:  
**Katrina Wozniak**  
Cloquet

### INGREDIENTS

- About 40 saltine crackers, or enough to line a 15"x10" cookie sheet
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup packed brown sugar

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400° F and line a cookie sheet with saltine crackers in a single layer. In a saucepan, combine sugar and butter, and bring to a boil. Once mixture is at a boil, continue boiling for 3 minutes. The mixture should be a deep caramel color. Immediately pour over saltines and spread evenly. Bake 5 – 6 minutes. The crackers should look bubbly. Optional: Melt chocolate chips and drizzle over the tops.



Submit your favorite recipe to Lake Country Power, Attn: Editor, 26039 Bear Ridge Drive, Cohasset, MN 55212, or e-mail [tzaun@lcp.coop](mailto:tzaun@lcp.coop). If your entry is drawn and printed in *Newsline*, you'll receive a \$5 credit on your electric bill. Entries must include name, address and phone number on account.



## Condensed Board Minutes

### February 25, 2020 • Regular Monthly Meeting

#### THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE GIVEN:

President Olson stated that most LCP directors attended the Great River Energy regional meeting that was held in Hinckley. He also gave a report about the year-end operations and financials for Lake States Tree Service and Lake States Construction.

General Manager Randa reported that the district member meetings have been well attended and very positive. He also reported about Northland Connect operations.

#### THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WERE TAKEN:

Approved the change in the 2020 multi-party contracts (2020-11 and 2020-12) as it relates to overhead vs. underground line

construction.

Approved Operations and Engineering Policy 614 (meter removal from meter socket).

Approved job classification revisions to Personnel Policy 305 (driver's license suspension).

Approved to adopt a new rate schedule (Schedule 20 Three Phase Residential). ■

**Editor's Note:** These board minutes have been condensed. A full copy of the board minutes can be read at [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://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 June. Barney Chamberlin of Virginia captured a family of friendly loons through her lens on Baileys Lake.



### ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Home cooling makes up a large portion of your energy bills. Try to keep the difference between the temperature of your thermostat setting and the outside temperature to a minimum. The smaller the difference, the more energy you will save.

## Co-op Contacts

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District 8 hatchcheck@frontier.com

**Sherman Liimatainen,** 218-879-3135  
District 9 nucpp@yahoo.com

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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Cohasset • Kettle River • Mountain Iron  
800-421-9959 • [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop)  
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## Comparative Operating Statement

Year-To-Date – March 2020

	2020	2019
Electric Operating Revenue	\$25,500,240	\$26,899,984
Cost of Purchased Power	13,045,672	14,531,785
Distribution Expense - Operations & Maintenance	3,223,094	2,736,785
Consumer Accounts Expense & Informational	1,009,867	1,156,364
Administrative and General Expense	1,880,914	1,745,924
Depreciation, Interest Expense and Other Deductions	4,202,522	4,127,655
<b>TOTAL ELECTRIC OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>23,362,069</b>	<b>24,298,514</b>
Net Electric Operating Margins	2,138,171	2,601,470
Non-Operating Margins	506,818	624,470
<b>TOTAL MARGINS BEFORE SUBSIDIARIES</b>	<b>2,644,989</b>	<b>3,225,940</b>
Net Income (Loss) from Subsidiaries	(229,873)	(244,379)
<b>TOTAL MARGINS</b>	<b>\$2,415,116</b>	<b>\$2,981,561</b>
<b>TOTAL KWH SOLD (YEAR-TO-DATE)</b>	<b>188,876,383</b>	<b>209,864,285</b>

**Editor's Note:** These financials are condensed. A complete set of financials can be viewed at [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://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.