

November 2020

Credit: Nole Slay

# Newsline

BOARD MEETINGS November 24 ■ December 29



## IN THIS ISSUE

Greg Randa Plans to Retire  
Unclaimed Capital Credits  
Cybersecurity Collaboration  
Sufficient Energy for Reliability

## Discover the benefits of SmartHub

SmartHub is a free technical tool offered to members of Lake Country Power. You can register for SmartHub at [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop), or by calling 800-421-9959. The tool allows members the ability to report a power outage without having to call anyone at the co-op – no more long wait-times on the phone. SmartHub also gives you oversight and access to your account with your co-op at any time.

SmartHub also lets you sign up to be notified when Dual Fuel and water heating programs are being controlled for peak demand.

### Benefits of SmartHub:

- With your new Aclara advanced meter(s), you have the option to see hourly energy use information. If your bill seems higher than usual, you can track trends in your home by looking at your own energy analysis report.

- View past and current bill statements, payment history and energy usage.
- Make a payment or schedule a future payment.
- Enroll in automatic bill payment using a bank account or credit card.
- Daily usage data in conjunction with LCP's new Aclara advanced metering infrastructure.
- Review a current electric account balance and your energy usage.
- Receive e-mails and/or text notifications regarding your bill information.
- Receive e-mails and/or text notifications when Energy Wise® dual fuel heating & interruptible water heating loads are controlled.
- Go paperless.
- Report a power outage – it's quick and easy!

### Notifications from SmartHub

1. First you'll need a SmartHub account. It's free, and you can register online at [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop). Sign up from a desktop or laptop computer, or a mobile device using a web browser. Note: The mobile app alone does NOT allow notification management.
2. From the SmartHub home page, click the Notifications tab.
3. Click the Manage Contacts link in the far left menu. The Manage Contacts page appears, displaying various options for adding email addresses or cell phone numbers for text messaging.
  - Add contacts by choosing the appropriate link on the top of the screen: Add Email Contact and/or Add Text Message Contact.
4. Click the Manage Notifications link in the far left menu. The Manage Notifications page appears, displaying various categories of notifications including

Billing, Miscellaneous and Reports. If you specifically want to enroll in load control notifications, follow these next steps:

- To enroll in Load Control notifications, click Reports.
- Check the box next to the Load Control Notification.
- Follow the onscreen instructions; click Options to set the available LCP notification types. Determine the type of notification you want – Email, Text Message or none.

**Please note:** In the event of a rare weekend or holiday control, the load control messages may not be sent out. When in doubt, refer to Great River Energy's load control page at <http://imguide.grenergy.com>, or visit the web page from a link at [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop).

### HOLIDAY OBSERVED

All LCP offices will be closed November 26-27 for Thanksgiving. 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.



Sign in with your existing account

1-800-421-9959 • LAKECOUNTRYPower.COOP



# Reflecting on Randa's 41 years of co-op leadership

When I was first elected to the Lake Country Power board in 2011, one of the first tasks I experienced was hiring a new general manager. The cooperative needed someone who would be a fair leader, respected, honest and transparent. The board unanimously agreed to appoint Greg Randa, and it was a pleasure to be part of the hiring process.



By Craig  
OLSON  
District 7 Director

Greg takes an active role when members have questions or concerns. He has first-hand involvement in making sure members receive excellent service and care. Greg is a thoughtful man, and he is not easily rattled by challenging circumstances. He is grounded and very likeable. In fact, I have never heard a bad word spoken about Greg by anyone.

## Background and Accomplishments

It was 1979 when Greg was hired as warehouse clerk at the former Carlton County Cooperative Power Association in Kettle River, Minn. He quickly climbed the ranks holding several leadership positions in various departments, which helped him understand the co-op business model and develop best practices for serving members.

Fast forward to April 2012 when he accepted the role as general manager at Lake Country Power. At that time, the cooperative

needed to adjust its rate structure to eliminate cross-subsidization and make it fair for all members. Costs were rising, reliability and aged infrastructure were concerning, and the board needed to adopt a long-term philosophy to maintain the financial integrity and overall viability of the organization.

Under Greg's leadership, he also involved members in determining the new rate plan by encouraging interaction at numerous district member meetings. At those meetings, members were presented financial information and options, were able to ask questions, and take part in a decision process important to the co-op community.

Greg's business-sense has guided the co-op to borrow funding at low-interest rates to replace aged infrastructure and improve reliability. He has moved the co-op into the twenty-first century when it comes to system upgrades and keeping the lines clear from trees and brush. Under his watch, members are now receiving new state-of-the-art advanced meters. Recently, he spearheaded the construction project of the

new Cohasset Service Center and recognized the need to replace and construct a new outpost in Ely.

I appreciate how Greg fosters effective conversations and negotiations with the labor management committee. In addition, his skills have set a professional tone at the board level where we all understand our governance responsibilities and boundaries under his guidance.

## Best Wishes

Greg will soon retire having left the cooperative in an excellent position. On behalf of the entire board, I wish him all the very best for a long life in retirement where he can enjoy fishing, hunting, the cabin and more time with his wife, Sherry, and their grandchildren. Thank you for your 41-years of excellent service to the co-op, Greg.

Craig Olson was elected by members in Lake Country Power District 7. He can be reached at 218-393-2276 and [colson@lcp.coop](mailto:colson@lcp.coop).

If you have ever met Greg in person or visited with him by phone, you know his calm, cool and collective demeanor. He is a true leader. He always acts with integrity and in doing so he has established trust among members, employees, colleagues and the board. Greg values people, a hard work ethic, and has always made decisions with members' best interests in mind.

When the board appointed Greg as general manager in 2012, he started meeting with employees in small group settings to establish transparent communications and his open-door policy. He made employees feel good about working for the co-op and emphasized that their work matters to members.

A graphic featuring several blue and white dollar signs of varying sizes. A blue banner with white text reads "KNOW ANYONE WITH UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS?". To the right is a wooden gavel. Below the banner is a red circular stamp with the word "UNCLAIMED" in white. At the bottom, text reads: "A NEW AND UPDATED LIST IS AVAILABLE AT LAKECOUNTRYPOWER.COOP > MY ACCOUNT > CAPITAL CREDITS. IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL LCP AT 800-421-9959, PRESS 5."/>

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# Four ways to save energy in the kitchen

Ah, the kitchen. It's undeniably one of the most-loved rooms in our homes. It's where we gather with family and friends for our favorite meals and memories. But like most of us, you probably aren't thinking about saving energy when you're planning that perfect dish. Here are four ways you can save energy in the kitchen with minimal effort.

**When possible, cook with smaller appliances.** Using smaller kitchen appliances, like slow cookers, toaster ovens and convection ovens is more energy efficient than using your large stove or oven. According to the Department of Energy, a toaster or convection oven uses one-third to one-half as much energy as a full-sized oven.

**Unplug appliances that draw phantom energy load.** Halloween may be over, but it's possible you have energy vampires in your kitchen – these are the appliances that draw energy even when they're not in use, like coffee makers, microwaves and toaster ovens. The Department of Energy has estimated that one home's

energy vampires left plugged in year-round can add up to \$100-\$200 in wasted energy costs. Unplug them when they're not in use, or better yet, use a power strip for convenient control.

**Help large appliances work less.** There are small ways you can help your larger kitchen appliances run more efficiently. For example, keep range-top burners clean from spills and fallen foods so they'll reflect heat better. When it's time to put leftovers in the refrigerator, make sure the food is covered and allow it to cool down first. That way, the fridge doesn't have to work harder to cool warm food.

**Use your dishwasher efficiently.** Only run full loads, and avoid using the "rinse hold" function on your machine for just a few dirty dishes; it uses 3-7 gallons of hot water each use. You can also save energy by letting your dishes air dry. If your dishwasher doesn't have an automatic air-dry switch, simply turn it off after the final rinse and prop the door open so the dishes will dry faster.



**Bonus tip:** The best way to save energy is to not use it. Try a tasty, no-bake dessert recipe. Your sweet tooth (and energy bill) will thank you.

By slightly adjusting a few of

your habits in the kitchen, you'll be well on your way to energy savings. Contact us to learn about additional ways you can save energy and money at home.



## RECIPE CORNER BARLEY MUSHROOM SOUP

From the Kitchen of:  
**Tod Rubin &  
Catherine Corey  
Ely**

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 pound Italian sausage (hot or mild)
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped fine
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 2 fresh Roma tomatoes cored & chopped, or one 14.5 oz. can diced tomatoes
- 6 cups beef broth
- 3/4 cup quick cooking barley
- 1 – 10 oz. pkg. frozen chopped spinach
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Sour cream for topping



### DIRECTIONS

Remove casings from sausage, crumble, and brown in heavy stock pan (4-5 quart). Add onion, carrots, and mushrooms and sauté 10-12 minutes.

Add broth, barley, and chopped spinach and bring to boil. Stir, cover and simmer until barley is tender about 10-15 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Ladle soup into bowls. Add dollops of sour cream on top. Recipe can be easily doubled, and soup freezes well.

### We need more recipes!

Submit your favorite recipe to Lake Country Power, Attn: Editor, 26039 Bear Ridge Drive, Cohasset, MN 55721, or e-mail [tzaum@lcpcoop.org](mailto:tzaum@lcpcoop.org). 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.

## Change the batteries this fall



As we fall back one hour this month, now is a good time to change the batteries in your programmable thermostat.

If your electric heat is not working properly, it could mean the batteries in your programmable thermostat are dead. Changing your batteries is a quick and easy fix to do, especially before the heating season kicks in. Follow the pictured diagrams above for a basic tutorial.



# Co-ops collaborate on cyber security

A lot of work goes into keeping the electric grid secure. In addition to protecting the physical infrastructure, there are safeguards in place to protect the grid from cyberattacks.

Your cooperative is part of a larger network with extensive resources and an ability to ensure our part of the grid is secure, even as instances of cyberattacks rise.

Great River Energy, wholesale electric provider to Lake Country Power, represents cooperatives with the Department of Energy (DOE) and shares lessons learned with its member-owners. By working together, we pool our resources to share in protecting the grid.

## Cooperation among Cooperatives

Great River Energy facilitates cybersecurity collaboration between Lake Country Power and its 27 other member-owner cooperatives across Minnesota. Regular meetings allow cooperatives to discuss successes and challenges in security practices, which allows all cooperatives the opportunity to learn from each other and increase security practices.

## Sharing the Co-op Voice

Great River Energy has been a member of the DOE's Cybersecurity Risk Information Sharing Program for the last six years. During its first four years, Great River Energy was the only cooperative participating in the program. The group is a forum for data sharing and analysis to identify threat information among energy sector stakeholders.

## Industry Partner and Leader

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) RC3 program focuses on developing tools and resources for improving cybersecurity capabilities of electric co-ops.

Co-ops around the nation

provide their expertise and experience to others while also working together with NRECA to develop cybersecurity assessments. Minnesota cooperatives were among the first to participate in the cybersecurity assessment as a pilot project.



Cyber threats are ever-changing. Cooperatives' willingness to share information and experiences assures that the grid remains a secure way to power homes, farms and businesses.



## ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR HUNTERS

This hunting season, we encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment and take necessary precautions while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.



**Take notice** of posted warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.



**Do not** shoot at or near power lines or insulators.



**Know** where power lines and equipment are located on the land where you hunt.



**Be especially careful** in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.



**Do not** place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.



**Do not** place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Any non-electrical equipment attached to a pole can pose an obstruction and serious hazards to our line crews.



# 'Perfect storm:' Could it happen here?

*Midwest energy market maintains sufficient resources for reliability*

A persistent, record-breaking heat wave hit California in August, causing the state's three biggest utilities to cut power to hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses for about an hour at a time until the emergency declaration ended a few hours later.

These rolling blackouts—the first California experienced in nearly 20 years—made headlines and sparked questions across the country, particularly in regions like the Midwest that are seeing rapid renewable energy growth. Great River Energy and many of its member-owner cooperatives are receiving the same question: "Could this happen here?"

Some have called the West Coast's situation a perfect storm: a widespread heat wave, unexpected plant outages, higher amounts of non-dispatchable generation, inadequate resource planning, and changing system needs—all of which contributed to an overreliance on energy imports from other markets that ultimately wasn't available.

Unlike California, most utilities in Minnesota are part of a much larger and geographically diverse energy market coordinated by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). MISO is responsible for transmission planning and generation dispatch across

15 states and Manitoba, Canada. Great River Energy has been a MISO market participant since 2005.



By David  
**SAGGAU**  
Great River Energy  
President and Chief  
Executive Officer

The generating resources in the MISO energy market reflect a wide variety of fuel sources, both conventional and renewable. Rolling blackouts are only used as a last resort by

grid operators, and MISO works aggressively with its member utilities to plan for all load serving needs. In April, MISO projected it had ample power reserves to meet the 2020 summer system demand requirements.

"Thanks to outstanding work by our operators and strong collaboration with our members, we have been able to successfully navigate the changing demands and shifting load shape created by the pandemic environment," said Julie Munsell, director of strategic communications at MISO. "While we have more challenges with an active hurricane season ahead, we have the processes and tools in place to ensure power continues to flow throughout our footprint."

In addition to energy markets, MISO is also responsible for overall system reliability and creating "the rules" every utility in MISO must follow to ensure the grid has enough resources. As a MISO market participant, Great River Energy must have enough

generating capacity to supply its members' peak load needs plus a reserve margin.

"We have a fleet of modern natural gas plants in Minnesota that provide all-hours reliability," said Great River Energy President & CEO David Saggau. "Most of these plants have on-site backup fuels. We have also built new transmission across the region to ensure energy can be delivered to our members. And, in partnership with member-owner cooperatives, we have developed one of the country's most robust demand response programs which allows us to effectively reduce electric loads during extreme conditions."

**Scholarships:  
Application season  
OPENS SOON**

January 1, 2021, is an important date for high school seniors. That's when Lake Country Power's online application process officially opens for the Les Beach Scholarship. Just as important is the application deadline, which is January 31, 2021.

To complete the electronic application and submit electronic letters of recommendation, go to [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop) > My Cooperative > Community > Scholarships.

Scholarship recipients may qualify for up to \$4,000 over four years to help pay for college or technical education. Scholarships are renewable for up to eight semesters, and students must maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher. They must have a full-time enrollment status at a technical school, community college or university. Qualifying students must also have parents or legal guardians who are members of Lake Country Power.

Stay tuned for more information in next month's *Newsline*.

## 2021 Co-op calendars are here



Be sure to request your 2021 co-op calendar before they're gone. Supplies are limited to a first-come, first-serve basis and two per membership. Request yours online at [www.lakecountrypower.coop](http://www.lakecountrypower.coop), call 800-421-9959 (press "6"), or visit the kiosk area of LCP's service centers in Cohasset, Mountain Iron or Kettle River.

## Make your holiday twice as bright.

**Buy one string of energy-saving  
LED holiday lights, get one FREE!**

The holiday season is one of the most energy-intensive times of the year, but that doesn't mean you should keep your twinkling, strobing and glittering decorations packed away. Instead, use up to 80% less electricity by switching from incandescent to durable, longer lasting LED holiday string lights. And now, we're making it easy to make the switch with a buy one, get one free offer—available to the first 200 members. Offer begins November 1, 2020.

ENERGY WISE  MN

Use the code **SHINE20** at checkout to receive your free string of lights! Take advantage of this BOGO offer while supplies last! Give yourself the gift of energy savings at [energywisemn.com](http://energywisemn.com)



## August 25, 2020 • Regular Monthly Meeting

### THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE GIVEN:

President Olson stated he has been in communication with Attorney Felstul and the LCP human resources director regarding a process to select/search a new general manager. Olson noted he will appoint directors to serve on the Board Policy Committee to review policies.

General Manager Randa provided a written report to the board prior to the meeting. He also reported that LCP is working with the architect on landscaping and business sign location for the Cohasset Service Center. Department updates were given by staff as part of his report as well.

### THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WERE TAKEN:

Approved to purchase a high-voltage trailer for training and educational purposes with students and fire departments.

Approved the 2019 Form 990 and that it be filed with the Internal Revenue Service. ■

**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 November. Edee Conner of Isle took this photo of the northern lights above the dock at Whiteface Reservoir.



### ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Keep cold air out to save energy. Seal air leaks around pipes and any gaps around chimneys and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

## Comparative Operating Statement

Year-To-Date – August 2020

	2020	2019
Electric Operating Revenue	\$61,478,168	\$61,501,968
Cost of Purchased Power	31,337,316	31,811,769
Distribution Expense - Operations & Maintenance	9,664,870	9,381,232
Consumer Accounts Expense & Informational	2,600,613	3,060,163
Administrative and General Expense	4,291,772	4,376,027
Depreciation, Interest Expense and Other Deductions	10,709,181	10,716,590
<b>TOTAL ELECTRIC OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>58,603,752</b>	<b>59,345,781</b>
Net Electric Operating Margins	2,874,416	2,156,187
Non-Operating Margins	731,600	815,513
<b>TOTAL MARGINS BEFORE SUBSIDIARIES</b>	<b>3,606,016</b>	<b>2,971,700</b>
Net Income (Loss) from Subsidiaries	177,782	189,760
<b>TOTAL MARGINS</b>	<b>\$3,783,798</b>	<b>\$3,161,460</b>
<b>TOTAL KWH SOLD (YEAR-TO-DATE)</b>	<b>397,118,106</b>	<b>412,236,958</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.

## Co-op Contacts

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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  
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