

KEM Country LINES

KEM Electric Cooperative, Linton, N.D.

MARCH 2013

Hitting the bull's-eye

PHOTO BY LAVYN MUDDER

Inside, learn how Dan Henderson, Linton, helps youth find the bull's-eye through the Emmons County Extension Service's 4-H archery program.

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Archery program hits the bull's-eye

BY LUANN DART

As the arrow zips into the target's bull's-eye, the young archer erupts in exuberance. It's the same elation that follows a game-winning touchdown or a buzzer-beating shot. The sport of archery has found its own bull's-eye in KEM Electric Cooperative's service territory.

On Sunday afternoons, the Emmons County Extension Service is putting bows and arrows in the hands of youth through the 4-H shooting sports program, led by certified instructors Dan Henderson and Larry Leier. The Emmons County archery program began with 11 youth four years ago, and included 23 archers last year.

"It's progressively growing," Henderson says, as youth discover the thrill of the sport.

"The archery program is a great way for kids to get involved with the 4-H program even if they aren't involved in traditional clubs," says Emmons County 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent Acacia Stuckle. "4-H is all about learning by doing and archery is a great example. Kids learn both responsibility and safety while participating in a positive activity outside of school."

"There's nothing like seeing the smile on a little kid's face when they hit a bull's-eye," Henderson adds. "That's the fun part."

Taking aim

Henderson earned his certification and started coaching archery when the program launched in Emmons

County four years ago, teaching youth as young as 5 years old through teenagers.

"If they can control what they're doing, it's a jumpstart for them to start younger," Henderson says. "The excitement of a little kid that shoots almost as good as a high school kid, that's a real confidence builder for them."

An avid archer himself, Henderson has hunted deer, elk and bear with a bow and arrow. He's also competed himself and has been shooting for 36 years, so he's able to focus on the details during classes.

"You can tell them something minor about how they're doing something and it changes something and you can see their confidence just grow," he explains. "If you don't hold your hand exactly the same or put your fingers exactly the same each time, it changes dramatically."



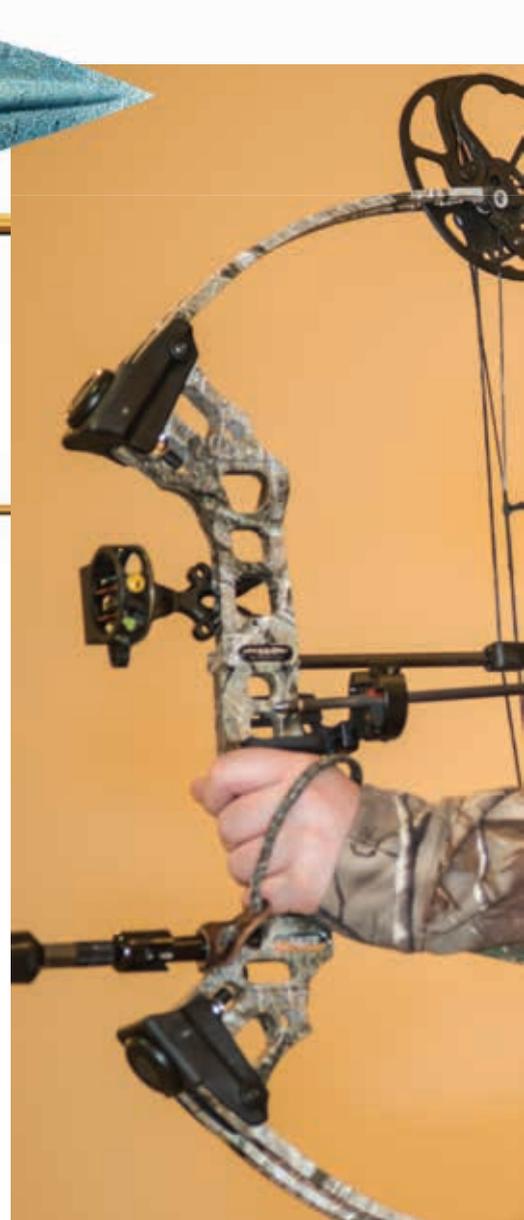
Cody Heidrich



Jessa Heidrich

KEM Electric Cooperative members Carrie and Robert Heidrich, Linton, enrolled their oldest children, Cody, 11, and Jessa, 10, in archery last year.

"When they started practice was the first time they ever picked up a bow," says Carrie, who is also a leader of the local club, the Southern Stars 4-H Club. "We thought we'd go and just



give it a try and my son absolutely fell in love with it."

And the entire family quickly became enthralled with the sport.

"They have the whole family involved in it now. We shoot as a family now, we practice as a family," Carrie says. "We've always been avid hunters, so this falls right in line with that."

While the family purchased their own bows, the Emmons County Extension Service provides compound bows and arrows for archers enrolled in the classes.

Youth ages 8 to 19 who are enrolled in 4-H can also participate in archery competitions held throughout the state. The North Dakota State University Extension Service has offered shooting sports as a 4-H program since 2001, and has

Austyn Henderson, 14, has been shooting a bow and arrow since he was 3 years old under his father's watchful eye.



PHOTO BY LAVYN MUDDER

expanded the number of competitions as the program grows.

The Heidrichs have competed in three 4-H events – Cody has earned first place in his division at each, and Cody and Jessa have been part of first-place teams from Emmons County.

“I tell them the only one you have to beat is yourself. You don’t have to try to beat somebody else. Focus on what you’re doing and you’re going to get it right,” Henderson advises his youth.

One of the competitions is an annual state 4-H tournament in May in Washburn, where youth compete with 3-D targets.

“The kids love it. They get to go out and tromp around in the grass and the trees and do things they normally wouldn’t get to do,” Henderson says.

Competition divisions are based on

both age and the type of equipment being used, explains Adrian Biewer, state coordinator of the 4-H shooting sports program and an NDSU Extension Service state specialist in youth development.

“There’s basic archery, where you’re shooting a bare bow, but you can take it to any level you want with the target sights and the perfectly balanced arrows and the high-performance speed cams. You can take it to any level you want and you can compete in that division,” he says.

Hitting the target

In 2012, Emmons County had 82 kids enrolled in 4-H. Stuckle anticipates this number to rise as interest in the archery program continues to grow.

Statewide, North Dakota hosted



PHOTO BY LAVYN MUDDER

Nathaniel Geestman pulls arrows from a 3-D target during a practice session at the Emmons County courthouse auditorium in Linton.

300 shooting sports events last year, with 4,375 young archers attending those events. Last year's spring state tournament drew 189 archers.

"It continues to be the fastest growing 4-H program," Biewer says.

"Anybody can do shooting sports and they don't have to be a super athlete to be good at it," Biewer says. Instead, archery requires concentration skills and self-discipline.

"Research has shown that their concentration is enhanced because they have to focus. For some kids who have difficulty focusing, they learn to focus through shooting sports because that's how you get better," he says.

"They get to spend time with their friends and it's a positive recreational activity," Biewer says. "It requires



Casondra Rutschke draws a Genesis compound bow, which is the type of bow provided during the 4-H archery classes.

PHOTO BY LAVYN MUDDER

some skill to get that arrow in the bull's-eye, so there's a challenge to it and the challenge is you're never going to be perfect, but you want to try to get there, so I think that intrigues a lot of kids."

"It's great recreational fun," Carrie agrees. "It's great to get together with other kids and bond over something you have in common."

She also credits the volunteer coaches who lead the classes.

"Dan is really good with the kids and he makes sure they absolutely follow the rules," Carrie says.

"Our program is very fortunate to have dedicated volunteer instructors like Dan Henderson and Larry Leier. The positive impact they have on our youth is immeasurable," Stuckle adds.

"The instructor really wants you to do well," Biewer points out. "He's going to be a positive role model in how you accomplish that."

It's all about taking aim at a growing 4-H program.

"Archery gives kids a positive outlet outside of school, whether they are involved in sports or not; 4-H truly is for everyone and archery is just one of the many opportunities," Stuckle says.

To learn more:

Archery classes, which began March 3, start at 1 p.m. each Sunday at the Emmons County courthouse auditorium in Linton. To learn more and for a specific class schedule, call the Emmons County Extension Service at 701-254-4811. ■

Co-op shares 4-H values

KEM Electric Cooperative has been a longtime financial supporter of area 4-H programs. Area 4-H clubs have also used the cooperative's hospitality room for monthly meetings and cooperative staff has helped judge exhibits during the Emmons County Achievement Days.

"KEM Electric is very proud of our area youth and is happy to support the local 4-H programs," says Chris Baumgartner, co-manager of KEM Electric Cooperative. "The cooperative principles of education and commitment to community are so closely aligned with the 4-H values of working together, performing community service and developing leadership skills. We are happy to support such a strong and lasting program that supports our youth and shapes future leaders."



What is 4-H?

The 4-H program provides hands-on experiences through projects, activities and events, including area 4-H Achievement Days. The youth program is overseen by the NDSU Extension Service. Eighty-two youth were enrolled in 4-H in Emmons County in 2012. Youth ages 5-19 are eligible to enroll in one of the county's five clubs.

"The life skills taught throughout the various aspects of 4-H help to create responsible citizens for tomorrow," says Emmons County 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent Acacia Stuckle.

To learn more about 4-H, contact your local county NDSU Extension Service.

Kidder County 4-H youth find national success

Four Kidder County youth have found national success in another 4-H program. In January, the Kidder County hippology team traveled to Denver, Colo., to compete in the Western National Round Up Hippology Contest. Of the 17 state teams competing, Kidder County placed fifth overall.

In April 2012, the Kidder County senior team of Kacey Koester, Kristin Dewald, Krista Gross and Megan Gross won the North Dakota state competition in Fargo, sending them to compete at the national level to represent North Dakota.

Throughout the competition, the girls were tested in horse judging, station identification, a written exam, team problems and slide identification. Each different portion focused on different aspects of the horse and horse industry.

As a team, they placed seventh in slide identification, horse judging and the written exam and fifth in station identification. Krista Gross placed seventh as an individual in slide identification and sixth as an



COURTESY PHOTO

The Kidder County hippology team included, left to right, **Megan Gross**, Napoleon, **Krista Gross**, Napoleon, **Kacey Koester**, Steele, and **Kristin Dewald**, Steele, and coach **Erin Rohrich**, Steele.

individual in horse judging, as well as the sixth overall individual in the nation.

“KEM Electric has been a great supporter of our local 4-H program and judging teams,” commented Penny Nester, an agriculture and natural resources NDSU Extension

Service agent in Kidder County.

Anyone interested in joining the Kidder County hippology program does not need a horse to participate. Individuals 8-19 years old can participate. Contact the Kidder County Extension at 701-475-2632 to learn more. ■

You ask, we answer

As your local electric cooperative, we're asked a variety of questions - from A to Z. Here are just a few of the most common questions and information about electric cooperatives

Q. What is an electric cooperative?

A. An electric cooperative is a type of electric utility that is owned by the members it serves. A co-op exists to provide high-quality service at the lowest possible price to its members. Members maintain democratic control of a co-op, which means they elect fellow members to represent them on the board of directors. Electric cooperatives operate on a nonprofit basis.

Q. What is a generation and transmission cooperative?

A. A generation and transmission cooperative, or G&T, is owned by several distribution cooperatives to furnish generating plants and transmission lines to supply power to their member co-ops. Five G&Ts operate in North Dakota.

Q. What is a distribution cooperative?

A. A distribution cooperative is a nonprofit, member-owned electric utility that purchases electric power and distributes it to its customers. Sixteen distribution cooperatives serve 250,000 North Dakotans through 161,000 meters.

Q. What are capital credits?

A. An electric cooperative exists to provide its members with electric service – on a nonprofit basis. Capital credits reflect each member's ownership in the cooperative. Electric cooperatives do not earn profits. Instead, any margins or remaining revenue after all expenses have been paid are returned to the cooperative's members in proportion to their electrical usage.

To learn more about North Dakota's electric cooperatives, visit www.ndarec.com.



Important dates:

Feb. 7:

Earliest day to begin circulating petition

May 7:

Last date for nomination by petition

June 20:

Annual meeting

Attend your annual meeting!

KEM Electric Cooperative 2013 annual meeting

June 20, 2013
Linton Public School

Interested in becoming a director?

If you are interested in becoming a director for KEM Electric Cooperative, you must understand the process for filing a petition.

KEM Electric Cooperative's 2013 annual meeting will be held June 20 at the Linton Public School. This year, the director seats up for election are those of Milton Brandner in District 3 and Dean Hummel at large.

Below is the section of the bylaws pertaining to filing a petition for a director seat.

404. Member Petition-Form.

- (a) Each petition shall contain the following:
1. The name of the member nominee.
 2. The director position for which the member nominee shall run.
 3. The printed names, addresses and telephone numbers, date of signature, and original signatures of each member signing the petition.
 4. At least 25 signatures of the members of the respective district, or members at large, as the case may be.
- (b) In the case of joint members, the signature of one or more than

one joint member shall constitute one joint member.

- (c) Firms, associations, corporations or body politics shall have the right to place one signature on a petition, the same as other members, by the signature of a duly appointed representative.
- (d) Petitions may not be circulated or signed more than 90 days before the date when petitions must be filed pursuant to this bylaw. Any signatures to a nominating petition obtained more than 90 days before that date may not be counted.
- (e) All petitions must be filed at the principal offices of the cooperative not less than 45 days prior to the date of the meeting of the members, as fixed by the board of directors.
- (f) After verifying that a petition complies with this bylaw, the secretary of the board of directors shall post a list of nominations for directors at the principal office of the cooperative at least 30 days before the meeting of the members. ■

Directors represent the members

KEM Electric Cooperative is overseen by a seven-member board of directors elected by you – the members. During the annual meeting each year, KEM Electric Cooperative members elect fellow members to represent them on the board of directors.

If you are interested in serving on the board of directors, here are some pointers:

- Directors devote a certain amount of time to the cooperative. At a minimum, a director attends monthly board meetings.
- An understanding of members' expectations, industry issues and how a cooperative functions is vital. To help directors with their responsibilities, training is offered through the cooperative's statewide association. Courses cover director duties and liabilities; understanding the electric industry; board roles and relationships; strategic planning; and financial decision-making.

Alliances put co-op principles into practice

BY ERIN HUNTIMER



Costs are up, challenges ever-present. The job of bringing electricity to members seems to get more challenging by the day. The cooperative business model represents a principled approach to meeting these challenges, one that offers the assurance of support.

The model's principles insist that cooperatives cooperate; no cooperative should have to do it alone. The door is open for boards and managers to turn to neighbors and friends in times of need, or even before that time arises.

KEM Electric Cooperative is just one cooperative in North Dakota taking advantage of the strength of the cooperative family, and finding solutions true to the cooperative spirit.

Forming an alliance

KEM Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Linton, serves about 3,700 meters in four sparsely populated counties in south central North Dakota. While the cooperative has been financially stable, it has experienced several management changes within the past few years. The latest came in May 2012, when the board and general manager parted ways.

The board needed management services as soon as possible, yet needed time to consider how to best manage the cooperative going forward. They immediately called upon a unique management entity borne of cooperative principles: the Innovative Energy Alliance headquartered in Mandan.

The alliance provided management services to three cooperatives in western North Dakota: Roughrider Electric of Hazen and Dickinson,

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric of Flasher, and Slope Electric of New England. Don Franklund, Clayton Hoffman and Chris Baumgartner served as co-managers at the time.

With Hoffman's retirement at the close of 2012, Baumgartner was hired to co-manage the alliance along with Franklund.

Within 24 hours of the call from KEM Electric, the alliance managers were in Linton to meet with the board to offer reassurance to the co-op. The board asked the alliance to provide management services.

Within a couple days, the managers met with employees to explain the alliance, the arrangement and what to expect, and learn about the employees' needs.

"We tried to get a finger on the pulse of the organization: where do employees feel things are at, how is it going, what's going well, what needs to be adjusted," Baumgartner says.

KEM Electric found new tools at its disposal. The alliance provides engineering, human resources, accounting and information technology services to its members. Employees who had worn these hats on top of others were now free to focus on serving members.

Baumgartner says the alliance's management style is built on trust and transparency.

The alliance managers have a centrally located office in Mandan. They've designated chiefs of staff at each of the four cooperatives and given them more authority.

Roberta Nagel, the chief of staff at KEM Electric, says the managers have opened lines of communication with them, and as a result, employees are communicating more openly among themselves.

"Their experience is unbelievable. The managers and their team bring so much to KEM Electric," she says. "They know everything from a substation to building line to working with members to working with

employees. ... It's been good."

Senior staff members from each cooperative meet regularly to share ideas and best practices, and ask questions.

"We're trying to raise the bar at all the cooperatives because we're sharing as much information as we can at a variety of different levels, certainly with staff and the boards as well," Baumgartner says.

The alliance has a board of directors composed of two directors from each of the participating cooperatives. Decisions, such as hiring a new co-manager, require 100 percent approval from all directors; any one cooperative could stop a process they disagree with. Additionally, each cooperative must approve the alliance's annual operating budget, therefore ensuring local control.

Baumgartner says the KEM Electric membership has been receptive to the new management arrangement.

"A lot of rural America has seen cooperatives, schools, churches and the like combine and do more with less," he points out.

Some members have expressed concern over the lack of a local management presence in KEM Electric's communities, but Nagel insists the cooperative will remain present and active.

"The managers promote community involvement. They don't live here, but all the other employees are involved in the community," she says.

In August 2012, KEM Electric's board voted to retain the alliance's management services indefinitely, making them the fourth cooperative member of the Innovative Energy Alliance.

"They're sharing ideas; they're part of something unique here," Baumgartner says. "This allows them to keep their individual identities but at the same time, allows them to grow in ways that they could not individually." ■

KEM Electric Cooperative Board meeting highlights

Jan. 22, 2013

- Reviewed report from the Voucher Review Committee
- Approved the special equipment summary for December
- Adopted Policy Bulletin 1-4 Director Electronic Communication Devices
- Approved the retirement of one capital credit estate
- Re-adopted the mission statement
- Re-adopted the safe work practices manual as the minimum safety standards for KEM Electric

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**Call KEM Electric Cooperative
(701) 254-4666
(800) 472-2673**

Happy Easter!

So KEM Electric Cooperative employees can celebrate the holiday with their families, the cooperative's offices will be closed Good Friday, March 29.

If you experience an outage, please call the cooperative's offices at 701-254-4666 or 800-472-2673. Your call will be routed to the proper contacts and lineworkers will be dispatched.



KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

DIRECTORS:

Dean Dewald, Chairman.....Steele
Milton Brandner, Vice Chairman.....Zeeland
Carter Vander Wal, Sec.-Treas. Pollock
Carmen Essig, Director Lehr
John Beck, Director.....Linton
Dean Hummel, Director..... Hague
Victor Wald, Director Napoleon

MANAGEMENT:

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& Chris Baumgartner Co-Managers
Roberta NagelOffice Manager
Bair Law Firm, Atty. Mandan
HDR Engineers Inc.,
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**Report outages to the following
toll-free number: 800-472-2673**

Hazleton, Linton and Strasburg exchanges'
phone number: 701-254-4666

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday through Friday,
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Website: kemelectric.com
Email address: kem@kemelectric.com

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