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Jackie has a great support system which includes her husband, Jon, their four children and 11 grandchildren.

A LOVE FOR COUNTRY: **Jackie Grunefelder**

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

In rural communities such as those KEM Electric Cooperative is fortunate to serve, dedicated members are invested in the betterment of tomorrow. Jackie Grunefelder, a KEM Electric member, is a shining example of dedication and service to her community and country.

Jackie is a lieutenant colonel working as a nurse practitioner (66P) with the N.D. National Guard. She is currently on active duty in Texas on the Southwest Border Mission. With over 30 years of experience in the nursing field, she is currently providing medical support to U.S. soldiers and has been deployed since June.

"My job here is to keep soldiers mentally and physically healthy, so they can fulfill the mission," Jackie says.

When she isn't in her military uniform, she serves her local community at the Linton Regional Medical Center, where she works as a nurse practitioner.

"From early childhood, I knew I wanted to be a nurse," Jackie says.

Nursing was always the goal for Jackie, even as she enlisted in the N.D. National Guard when she was 17 years old and a senior in high school. She joined as a cook with a few other classmates and was focused

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Two of Jackie's children are also in the N.D. National Guard, **Peyton** (left) and **Jonathon**.

on the opportunity of getting her degree at the University of Mary.

Over the years, life grew busy, as Jackie and her husband, Jon, raised their family and she continued her nursing career while attending drill training. Once her contract with the N.D. National Guard expired in 2000, Jackie decided not to reenlist, but little did she know she would be drawn back.

In 2009, the opportunity arose for Jackie to reenlist in the N.D. National Guard and be direct commissioned as an officer due to her civilian degree as a nurse practitioner. During this time, many of the doctors within this branch were deployed overseas. Jackie eventually progressed to an aeromedical nurse practitioner, specializing in flight medicine within the aviation environment. There was a need for someone to step into this specialization, and she was happy to do so.

Through Jackie's roles, it is evident she has a servant heart and is someone others turn to in times of need.

"It's nice to help people help themselves," Jackie says. "It's wonderful to help people have a better and healthier life."

This is something Jackie keeps with her while

serving her fellow community members at home in Linton and on deployment, where she is serving those she has never met.

"These people are away from their homes as well and they are looking to you for advice," Jackie says. "People come to you, and they trust you."

Jackie has a great support system from her family. She and Jon have 4 grown children and 11 grandchildren who have helped her balance her roles.

"I have great support from family," Jackie says. "They have always been supportive."

Her colleagues and patients at Linton Region Medical Center have also been there for her as well.

"They've been very supportive and encouraging," Jackie says.

Through the N.D. National Guard, Jackie has shaped lifelong connections, seen new opportunities arise and serves her community and county. In the end, Jackie has a love for country. By serving, she can make a difference, she says. ⚡

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Understanding capital credits



Travis Kupper

Co-General Manager/CEO

Capital credits, patronage dividends, patronage refunds. These are all familiar terms with similar meanings. They all refer to the allocation of operating margins as equity and, when appropriate, retiring them to the members of the co-op in the form of money or a credit on the bill.

Unlike for-profit organizations, KEM Electric Cooperative operates differently from traditional utilities, and one of the key benefits of your membership is

the opportunity to earn capital credits.

What are capital credits?

Capital credits represent your share of the cooperative's margins. Unlike other utilities, after we calculate our revenues and expenses, any remaining margins are allocated back to you, the members, based on your usage of electric services from our cooperative.

How are credits allocated?

Each year, the cooperative allocates a portion of the year's margins to the membership. These margins are reflected on your account statement. Each member's allocation is determined by the amount paid for services, allowing us to equitably distribute the cooperative's earnings. Once these credits are allocated, they are recorded in your account, but are not paid.

Retirement of credits

Electric cooperatives use a long-term financial model that balances returning profits to members with keeping the cooperative stable and rates affordable. That is why capital credit retirements sometimes happen 20 to 30 years after allocation. The money stays with the cooperative for a time to help maintain power lines and equipment, avoid borrowing money and making investments in reliability and infrastructure.

KEM Electric's board of directors keeps this in mind when determining when to retire capital credits. Typically, the board retires a portion of the capital credits on an annual basis. When credits are retired, members will receive a check in the mail. This is why it is important to keep your mailing address up to date, even if you move away and no longer are an active member.

Why it matters

Capital credits are a significant way for our cooperative to provide tangible benefits to you, our valued members. They reflect the success of our cooperative and reinforce the idea you are not just a customer, but an owner. Your membership not only provides you with essential services, but also offers you a stake in our financial success.

If you have any questions about capital credits, how they are calculated or how they benefit you, please don't hesitate to reach out. We are committed to ensuring you fully understand the advantages of your membership and the cooperative model.

Thank you for your continued support of our cooperative. ⚡



Join
-US-

MEMBER APPRECIATION OPEN HOUSE



**11 A.M.-1 P.M. ON
JAN. 27**



**PIFER'S AUCTION
CENTER, STEELE**

Come enjoy a delicious meal on behalf of KEM Electric and visit with our board of directors, CEOs, staff as well as other members. Members will also receive a FREE gift.



MESSAGE FROM MEMBER RELATIONS:

Now report your outages online!



Marcy Sanders
Manager of
Member Relations

When a power outage occurs, our top priority is to restore service as quickly and safely as possible. To help us respond faster, it's important outages are reported promptly. While you can always call to report an outage, we're also making it easier for members to report online either through SmartHub or by text message.

How to report an outage in SmartHub

- For members with one or multiple meters, you can report an outage in SmartHub. Here is how:
1. Login to SmartHub via the mobile app or your desktop browser.
 2. Tap or click on "Report an Outage."
 3. Select the correct service location.
 4. Use the drop-down arrow to view all of your meters.

5. Choose the location experiencing the outage.
6. Choose an outage description from the list provided and listed below. This is a required field.

- Report a power outage
- Report line down
- Report a tree on the line
- Report a loud boom
- You may add any comments you'd like to share

If you need help navigating SmartHub or have questions about your service locations, please don't hesitate to contact us. If you don't have SmartHub yet, visit our website, kemelectric.com, or call the office at 701-254-4666 for assistance.

Report an outage by text message

If you are a SmartHub user, and only have one electric meter or service location, such as a home or business, you can report an outage by texting OUT to 844-955-2714.

We know outages are inconvenient, but we hope these seamless reporting options will help us identify and restore outages in a timely manner. ⚡

Congratulations ASHLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL & ZEELAND PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS!

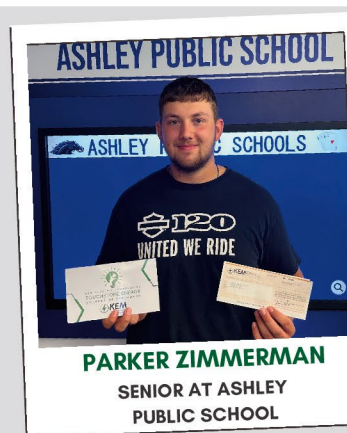
SEPTEMBER TOUCHSTONE ENERGY® STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Throughout the school year, KEM Electric is choosing one student at random who has been nominated from the schools in KEM Electric's service area to receive a \$150 sponsorship in partnership with Touchstone Energy Cooperative. The funds are utilized to the student's choosing for school activities.

In **November**, KEM Electric will be accepting nominations of students from **Kidder County Public School.**

The deadline for nominations is Nov. 15. This sponsorship is open to any K-12 student.

Scan the QR code to nominate a student or for more information, or visit kemelectric.com.



SCAN
ME!



MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: Ensuring reliability



Dale Nagel

Chief of Staff/
Line Superintendent

KEM Electric Cooperative is dedicated to ensuring safe and reliable electric services to our members each and every day. Making strides, the line crews persist with maintenance and projects to strengthen our system to continue the reliability members have come to know and expect. These tasks include routine tree trimming, pole changeouts, installation of underground cable and outage restoration.

One of the projects KEM Electric employees recently completed is replacing 7 miles of three-phase overhead with underground cable south of the Tappen Substation. Converting this stretch of overhead power line to underground will help further ensure safety and reliability to KEM Electric's system. Line crews have also addressed residential requests for underground cable installation, eliminating power lines and poles in their yards.

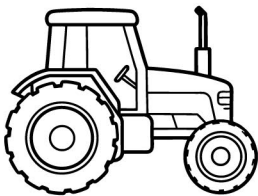
KEM Electric continues to work with contractors for vegetation management as the weather allows.

Trimming trees around overhead lines helps improve service reliability and keep members safe. Overgrown trees and branches are a leading cause of power outages, and KEM Electric can reduce related outages by routinely conducting vegetative management.

Although our crews work to ensure the system is ready to withstand the elements, sometimes animals or weather can cause damage to the system. This summer, KEM Electric's service area saw its fair share of straight-line winds, which caused poles to snap. Additionally, animals account for outages and disruptions. When small animals encounter power lines and other electrical equipment, they cause service disruptions, known as blinks. They can also cause extensive damage to the cooperative's equipment. In a recent instance, an animal caused the top of a utility pole to burn off. KEM Electric has installed safeguard equipment to help alleviate these disruptions.

As our crews work across the service area, we appreciate your input and cooperation. If you come across something that looks like it needs to be assessed by KEM Electric, please call our office at 701-254-4666. ⚡

IN 2024 KEM ELECTRIC RECORDED,



45 ANIMAL, FARM AND CAR
RELATED OUTAGES



133 TREE AND WEATHER
RELATED OUTAGES

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: **Hunting safety**

As you head outdoors for hunting season, KEM Electric Cooperative encourages you to be aware of overhead power lines, utility poles and other electrical equipment while hunting.

"Hunting is an activity enjoyed by many during the fall," says Kevin Horner, Linton area foreman. "We encourage everyone to be aware of electrical equipment and take necessary precautions while hunting."

Here are some safety tips to keep 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, pad-mounted transformers or other utility equipment. Any non-electrical equipment attached to a pole can pose an obstruction and serious hazards to our line crews.



Each of us plays a role in ensuring safety this hunting season. Please give our office a call if you see any cooperative equipment that may need immediate attention. We hope everyone has a safe and memorable season. ⚡



THANK YOU, VETERANS, FOR YOUR SERVICE AND SACRIFICE!

***OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED NOV. 11 IN
OBSERVANCE OF VETERANS DAY.***

CO-OP YOUTH PROGRAMS NOW AVAILABLE

TOUCHSTONE ENERGY® STUDENT OF THE MONTH

KEM Electric Cooperative selects a deserving student from each local school to receive sponsorship funds throughout the academic year. Nominations are due by the 15th of each month.

YOUTH TOUR

Youth Tour 2026 is calling, are you in? KEM Electric is now accepting applications for the 2026 Youth Tour. Apply today and level up your summer!

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JAN. 16

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year, KEM Electric offers a variety of scholarships for high school seniors. Whether you're attending a four-year university, technical college, or trade school, there are various scholarship opportunities.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: FEB. 6

Visit **kemelectric.com** for more information and details on each of these initiatives.



KEM ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: **AUG. 26**

The meeting of the board of directors of KEM Electric Cooperative was held on Aug. 26 in Linton. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chairman Victor Wald. A quorum was present. Also present were co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief of Staff/Line Superintendent Dale Nagel, Manager of Member Relations Marcy Sanders, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz and Executive Assistant Connie Hill.

Consent agenda: The consent agenda was approved as presented.

Strategic items: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on material supplies, training course opportunities, the June storm and more. Several additional Basin Electric board documents were available for review.

Department reports: Craigmile provided the financial report. Nagel provided a department report, which included current and upcoming line crew

projects. Sanders provided a department report on member events, communication channels and upcoming programs. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a report for the board, which included an update on physical security access for co-op property. Grosz provided an update on the status on legal topics and projects.

Action items: The board discussed and resolved action items.

Discussion/general information: The board discussed rates review and other items.

Executive session: The board entered an executive session during the meeting.

The meeting concluded with adjournment. Secretary-Treasurer Carter Vander Wal certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is at 12:30 p.m. on Nov. 18 in Linton. If you wish to be placed on the agenda, please call the office. ⚡



KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DATES: **NOV. 11, NOV. 27-28.**

**LINE CREWS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN CASE OF
AN EMERGENCY OR POWER OUTAGE.**

KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

DIRECTORS:

Victor Wald, Chairman, District 4.....Napoleon
John R. Beck, Vice Chairman, District 1.....Linton
Carter Vander Wal, Sec.-Treas., District 2.....Pollock
Dean Dewald, Director, District 5.....Dawson
Neil Meidinger, Director, District 3.....Zeeland
Carmen Essig, District-at-Large.....Lehr
Todd Schnabel, Director-at-Large.....Lehr

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

MANAGEMENT:

Travis Kupper.....Co-General Manager/CEO
Jason Bentz.....Co-General Manager/CEO

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: info@kemelectric.com

FIND US ON:

