

- A look to 2024
- Scholarships available
- Apply for Youth Tour
- Student of the Month selected

## KEM ELECTRIC REGIONAL MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY: **Thank you for joining us!**



*KEM Electric Cooperative hosts a regional Member Appreciation Day in Linton. This is another way KEM Electric makes a difference in its communities.*

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES:

# KEM Electric sparks change with grant funds



*The Wishek Civic Center is a community staple.*

One of the core values of KEM Electric Cooperative is commitment to its service area, whether through sponsorships, grants or participation in events. The Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) grant helps demonstrate the true meaning of commitment.

KEM Electric received grant funding from RDFC to benefit its service area. The funds are allocated directly to KEM Electric, and entities apply for the grant funds. The applications are then reviewed by the RDFC committee before funding is awarded. KEM Electric was able to assist three entities in 2023 within its service area, including the Ashley Public School, city of Wishek and Wishek Park Board.

## Ashley Public School

The Ashley Public School secured funding assistance to update the football scoreboard. At the home of the Mustangs, the scoreboard has been well utilized during the football season and will continue to be used in years to come.

## City of Wishek

The city of Wishek acquired funds for the Wishek Civic Center ceiling project. The civic center holds many community events, such as public walking, weddings, 4-H events and various other activities, throughout the year. The new ceiling installation includes an upgrade in insulation that is more acoustic friendly, which will reduce echoing and noise during events.

“We are grateful for the funds, and they will be put to good use to give the civic center a facelift,” says Mary Vickers, auditor for the city of Wishek.

## Wishek Park Board

Lastly, the Wishek Park Board obtained funds for playground equipment updates at Green Lake Park, also known as Doyle Memorial Park. The equipment upgrade will add additional excitement to family camping and fishing trips at the park next year.

RDFC is a North Dakota nonprofit finance and development corporation whose member-owners are all the North Dakota electric cooperatives, nine North Dakota telecommunications cooperatives, the Broadband Association of North Dakota and the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives. RDFC was founded in 1994 with a desire to invest in rural communities. Almost 30 years later, its mission remains the same. RDFC’s grant allotment included funds to member-cooperatives to support community-owned entities, nonprofits and community-based projects. ⚡



*The Ashley Public School Mustangs scoreboard has been updated.*

# MANAGER'S MESSAGE: A look to 2024



Jason Bentz

As we approach the most wonderful time of the year, we wanted to take a moment to extend our

warmest holiday greetings to each and every one of you. The Christmas season is a time for reflection, gratitude and joy, and I hope you find the space to enjoy these moments with your loved ones.

This holiday season also marks the beginning of a new year, filled with fresh possibilities and exciting opportunities. As we embrace the festive spirit and bid farewell to this year, let's also look forward to the challenges and achievements awaiting us in the next.

In the coming year, we will have the chance to make a significant impact on our organization by selecting members for our board of directors. Our board plays a crucial role in shaping the direction of our cooperative, and I encourage you to consider taking on this important responsibility.

Serving on the board of directors is not only a great way to contribute to the growth and success of our organization, but it's also an excellent opportunity to develop leadership skills, broaden your horizons and work closely with a dedicated group of individuals who share your passion for our mission.

In the weeks ahead, KEM Electric Cooperative will be sharing more information about the nomination and election process. I encourage you to reach out to current board members if you have any questions or would like to learn more about what it entails. Whether you decide to run for the board or support your fellow members in their pursuit, your engagement in this process is vital to our collective success.

As we celebrate the holiday season and prepare to welcome the new year, I want to express my gratitude to the current directors and our employees on their hard work, dedication and unwavering commitment to our cooperative. Your contributions are what make us a great team. I have no doubt we will continue to achieve remarkable things in the year ahead.

May this holiday season be filled with laughter and cherished moments, and may the coming year bring us all the success and growth for which we aim. We look forward to what lies ahead and the incredible journey we will embark on together.

Warmest wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy New Year! ⚡



## POWERING ON:

### KEM ELECTRIC'S CALENDAR

#### DECEMBER 2023

STUDENT OF THE MONTH - LINTON PUBLIC SCHOOL  
APPLICATIONS DUE DEC. 25



#### DEC. 25-26

KEM ELECTRIC OFFICE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF CHRISTMAS.  
THE LINE CREWS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.



#### DEC. 31

OPERATION ROUND UP DEADLINE



#### JANUARY 2024

STUDENT OF THE MONTH - NAPOLEON PUBLIC SCHOOL  
APPLICATIONS DUE JAN. 25



#### JAN. 1

KEM ELECTRIC OFFICE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF NEW YEAR'S DAY.  
THE LINE CREWS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.



#### JAN. 13

BOARD OF DIRECTOR SEAT PETITIONS BEGIN



#### JAN. 17

REGIONAL MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY  
PIFER'S AUCTION, STEELE



#### JAN. 19

YOUTH TOUR APPLICATION DEADLINE



#### FEBRUARY 2024

STUDENT OF THE MONTH - STRASBURG PUBLIC SCHOOL  
APPLICATIONS DUE FEB. 25



#### FEB. 9

DEADLINE FOR HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS



## STUDENT OF THE MONTH:

# Emma Weiser

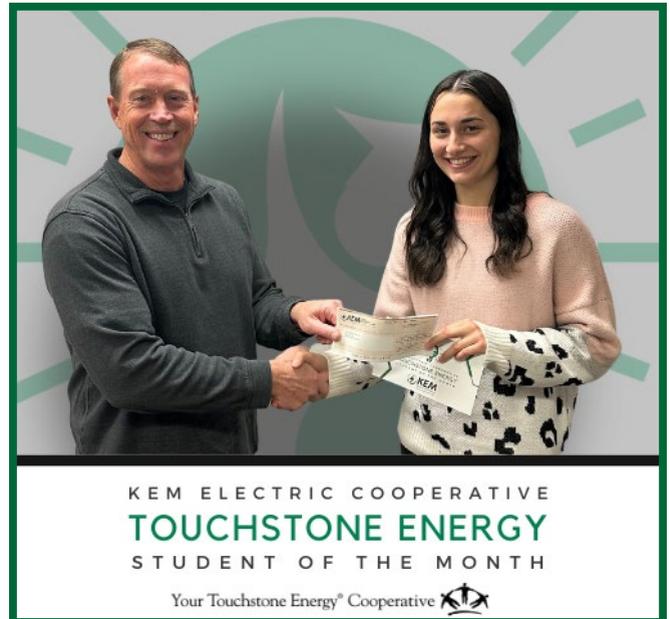
## Hazleton-Moffit-Braddock Public School

Emma Weiser was named the November Touchstone Energy® Student of the Month from the Hazleton-Moffit-Braddock Public School (HMB). Weiser is a senior at HMB and was recognized for her leadership in academics, extracurriculars and around HMB.

“Emma helps out in my classroom and is a great help, hard worker and a joy to be around,” says Weiser’s nominator. She plans to utilize the funds for the elementary and high school general fund, which can be used for field trips for HMB Public School students.

We would also like to recognize the other outstanding students who were nominated:

- **Avery Benz** – Nominated for being a hard worker, kind and always willing to help on her ranch or wherever help is needed.
- **Lelyn Guina** – Nominated for always helping around the community, especially at the Braddock South Central Threshing Bee & Antique Show, and in the summer mowing lawns.
- **Annabelle Huber** – Nominated for her caring personality and being an asset to the HMB Student Council.
- **Jonathan Appert** – Nominated for leading by example. As the HMB Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) president, he can always be counted on for helping others learn and become leaders in the community.
- **Lucas Held** – Nominated for always being willing to help in the classroom and in the community.
- **Katelyn Preszler** – Nominated for being an avid volunteer in the community.
- **Layla Burza** – Nominated for her passion for learning new things and achieving success in dock dog competitions.
- **Jacob Shea** – Nominated for being an instrumental part of his church by volunteering to teach, serve, sing and read. ⚡



Throughout the school year, KEM Electric Cooperative is choosing one student at random who has been nominated from the schools in KEM Electric’s service area to receive a \$100 sponsorship in partnership with Touchstone Energy Cooperative. The donation can be utilized to the student’s choosing for school activities.

In December, KEM Electric will be accepting nominations of students from Linton Public School. The deadline for nominations is Dec. 25.

Scan the QR code to nominate a student or for more information, or visit [www.kemelectric.com/touchstone-energy-student-month](http://www.kemelectric.com/touchstone-energy-student-month).





# 2024 SCHOLARSHIPS

**DEADLINE: FEB. 9, 2024**

## Download Application



### **Area high school scholarship**

KEM Electric Cooperative will award eight \$500 scholarships to qualified applicants. KEM Electric will choose one graduating senior from Ashley, Wishek, Zeeland, Strasburg, Linton, Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock, Kidder County and Napoleon to receive scholarship funds.

### **Home school, GED setting or student outside of KEM service area**

The co-op will also award one \$500 scholarship to a graduating senior from a homeschool setting, GED setting or a school outside of our service area.

### **\$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship**

KEM Electric Cooperative will award a \$1,000 scholarship to a student who is already enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program. The student must attend an accredited two- or four-year program, university or vocational/tech school.

### **Luck-of-the-draw scholarship**

KEM Electric will award two \$500 luck-of-the-draw scholarships.

These will be awarded in June at the KEM Electric annual meeting in Linton.

All scholarships require an application form to be filled out and submitted to KEM Electric. Applications can be found by scanning the QR code, visiting our website, [www.kemelectric.com](http://www.kemelectric.com) or calling the office at 701-254-4666. Applications must be submitted by email to [msanders@kemelectric.com](mailto:msanders@kemelectric.com), or printed and mailed to: KEM Electric Cooperative, Attn: Marcy Sanders, 107 S. Broadway, P.O. Box 790, Linton, ND 58552.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

***All applicants must have a parent or guardian who is a KEM Electric member.***

## SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Holiday lighting tips

Amid the cheer that defines the holiday season, holiday lighting is one tradition bringing warmth and radiance to our homes. As we prepare to deck the halls and string those festive lights, it's vital to remember safety is the true star of the show.

"We know this is an exciting time for people to get ready for the holidays, but we want members to take a couple of things into account when decorating, including safety and light selection," says Dale Nagel, chief of staff/line superintendent at KEM Electric Cooperative.

Most holiday decorations involve some installation at heights, so it is important to keep the following in mind while decorating indoors and outside:

1. Have a ground crew (one or two people) to steady your ladder and pass up the decoration, which is an invaluable part of safety and to keep you supplied with untangled light strings, fasteners and encouragement.
2. Remember to keep a safe distance from your overhead electric service.
3. Don't overreach. If you cannot get to a point with your body completely centered between the sides of the ladder, get down and relocate the ladder.
4. Don't overextend the ladder. If your ladder is too short, rent or borrow a longer one. A ladder extended beyond its working limits is dangerous, as is standing on rungs too close to the top.
5. Do not overload circuits by stringing more light sets together than the manufacturer recommends. Check the packaging for details.
6. Check your wires for breaks and cracks in the insulation that can lead to shorts.



### Safety Starts with ME (and YOU)

Make this holiday season unforgettable with your lighting inside and out, while staying safe for you and your family and making memories all will cherish for years to come. During this holiday season, KEM Electric wants to thank you for being a part of our cooperative family and hope you and your loved ones have a merry Christmas and happy New Year! ⚡



KEM Electric Journeyman Lineworker **Kirk Praus** assists members at the regional Member Appreciation Day.

### Thank you for joining us for our regional Member Appreciation Day in Linton

The following members received a \$25 bill credit from KEM Electric Cooperative.

- Gil Silbernagel
- Bernice Flegel
- Max Gross
- Terry Rath

Please join KEM Electric on Jan. 17, 2024, at Pifer's Auction in Steele for a regional Member Appreciation Day from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

INTERESTED IN SERVING?

## Join the KEM Electric board and power the future

Are you a dedicated leader with a deep connection to our rural community? We invite you to be a driving force behind positive change by joining the KEM Electric Cooperative board of directors.

KEM Electric currently has an at-large vacant seat, along with District 1 and District 2 positions up for election.

### Why join our board?

Running for a board of director position for an electric cooperative can be a meaningful and impactful decision. Here are just a few reasons to join:

- **Make a difference:** Contribute to decisions that impact our energy future.
- **Community engagement:** Collaborate with like-minded individuals dedicated to community growth.
- **Professional growth:** Enhance your leadership skills and network.

### Who we're looking for

We're seeking individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives who share our commitment to serving the members of KEM Electric. Ideal candidates should have:

- Leadership and strategic thinking skills
- A commitment to our communities/service area
- Strong communication and collaboration abilities

If you're ready to make a meaningful impact, we encourage you to visit [www.kemelectric.com](http://www.kemelectric.com) to learn more. Nomination petitions open on Jan. 13, 2024, and must be turned in by the end of day on March 13, 2024.

For inquiries or more information, please contact Marcy Sanders at 701-254-4666 or email [msanders@kemelectric.com](mailto:msanders@kemelectric.com). 

## APPLY FOR A TRIP OF A LIFETIME

### WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

- An all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., paid for by KEM Electric Cooperative.
- A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world class museums, learning about electric cooperatives and meeting elected officials.
- Developing lifelong friendships with delegates from across the country!

### HOW TO APPLY

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school, and you and your parents or guardian must be served by KEM Electric Cooperative.
- Email entries to Marcy Sanders at [msanders@kemelectric.com](mailto:msanders@kemelectric.com) or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, 107 S. Broadway, P.O. Box 790, Linton, ND, 58552-0790.
- Questions? Call Marcy at 701-254-4666 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 19, 2024.

### ESSAY QUESTION

If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate, you will be traveling to Washington, D.C., to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?



# JUNE 15 TO 21, 2024

AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

LEARN MORE AT  
[NDYOUTHTOUR.COM](http://NDYOUTHTOUR.COM)

# KEM Electric board meeting highlights

## Sept 26, 2023

The September meeting of the board of directors of KEM Electric Cooperative was held on Sept. 26 at BEK Communications in Steele. President Víctor Wald called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. All directors were present. Also present were KEM Electric's Co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Alex Craigmile, Legal Counsel Tom Bair, Operations Manager Dale Nagel, Member Relations Manager Marcy Sanders, and Executive Assistant and Board Liaison Connie Hill.

**Consent agenda:** There were a few additions made to the consent agenda. The agenda was approved as amended. The Aug. 22 meeting minutes were also approved.

**Strategic/action:** Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included an update from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Region 5-6 meeting and a Basin Electric Power Cooperative update.

**Action items:** The 2024 capital budget was reviewed

and approved by the board. Financial items were also discussed and approved.

**Department reports:** Craigmile reviewed the financial report with details on the balance sheet and income statements. He is also working on the 2024 budget. Nagel provided a department report, outage reports, safety statistics for August and the September safety meeting minutes. Sanders presented a report, which included a department report, an annual meeting update, the Survey & Ballot contract and the October center pages. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a report the board reviewed.

**Discussion and general information:** Upcoming meetings and events were shared.

The board then entered into an executive session.

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

**Next meeting date:** The next meeting date was set for Oct. 24 at KEM Electric's office in Linton. ⚡

## Stay connected wherever you go!

Planning to soak in the sun this winter? Be sure to sign up for SmartHub and complete the notification section to receive important cooperative updates, like planned power outages, while you are away!

You will receive a notification of important information related to your electric service. If you do not have a SmartHub account, set one up by going to [www.kemelectric.com](http://www.kemelectric.com) and select the SmartHub link in the top right corner. From there, you will be able to sign up as a new user.

Now is a good time to also make sure KEM Electric Cooperative has your current contact information. To verify your telephone number or email address, or request an update, call 800-472-2673 or 701-254-4666. Members can also login to their SmartHub account to update your information.

KEM Electric also has a Facebook page. Please like and follow to learn timely cooperative and community news. Members, thank you for staying in touch and helping us keep you informed. ⚡

### KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

**DIRECTORS:**

- Victor Wald, Chairman .....Napoleon
- John Beck, Vice Chairman .....Linton
- Carter Vander Wal, Sec.-Treas. .... Pollock
- Dean Dewald, Director..... Dawson
- Carmen Essig, Director .....Lehr
- Neil Meidinger, Director ..... Zealand
- Director- At-Large .....Vacant

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**MANAGEMENT:**

- Travis Kupper ..... Co-GM/CEO
- Jason Bentz ..... Co-GM/CEO

**Report outages to the following toll-free number:  
800-472-2673**

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

FIND US ON:



**OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday through Friday,  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Website: [kemelectric.com](http://kemelectric.com) / Email address: [info@kemelectric.com](mailto:info@kemelectric.com)