

# The Nodak Neighbor

November-December 2023  
Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative  
[www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com)

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**A trip of  
emotional  
healing**

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Official Publication of the  
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

746-4461 or 800-732-4373

[www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com)

*This institution is an equal opportunity  
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The Nodak Neighbor (USPS 391-200) is published six times a year, February, April, June, August, October and December for \$1.00 per year by the Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc., 4000 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave. S., Grand Forks, N.D. 58201-5944. Periodicals postage paid at Grand Forks, N.D., and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NODAK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC., P.O. Box 13000, Grand Forks, N.D. 58208-3000.

**Volume 73, No. 6**  
**November-December 2023**  
**Officers and Directors**

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Vice Chairman . . . . . Les Windjue  
Secretary/Treasurer . . . . . David Brag  
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David Kent, Pete Naastad,  
Cheryl Osowski and Steve Smaaladen  
President & CEO . . . . . Mylo Einarson  
Editor . . . . . Blaine Rekken

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## SAVE THE DATE

### 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2024**  
**ALERUS CENTER**

*Meal: 5 p.m. | Meeting: 6 p.m.*



*On the cover:* American veterans participating in the 2023 Honor Flight of ND/MN tour the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial in Washington, D.C.

*Photo courtesy of Russell Hons Photography*

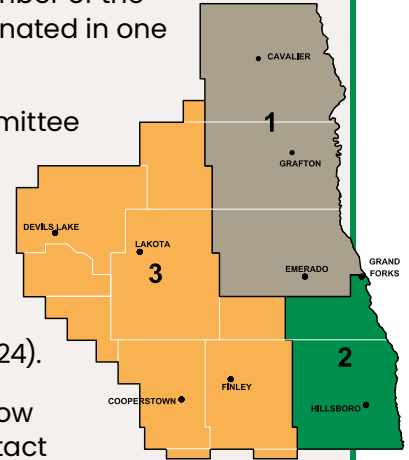
# 2024 DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc. will hold its 84<sup>th</sup> annual meeting **Wednesday, April 10, 2024**, at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, N.D. Elections for three director positions will be held at the annual meeting.

Members who desire to serve as a member of the Nodak board of directors may be nominated in one of two ways:

1. By Nominating Committee. The committee will meet Monday, Feb. 19, 2024.
2. By a petition signed by 15 members of Nodak in good standing. The petition must be submitted to Nodak's office 45 days prior to the annual meeting (Sunday, Feb. 25, 2024).

If you are interested, or would like to know which district you reside in, please contact Nodak's office at 701-746-4461 or 1-800-732-4373 for more information.



## The 2023 HollyDazzle: Festival of Lights

The 2023 HollyDazzle event took place on Sunday, Nov. 19. Nodak Electric took part in the holiday fun by participating in the parade and socializing with many community members.

The HollyDazzle event featured all sorts of activities in the form of fireworks, hot chocolate, ornament making, cookie decorating, horse-drawn wagon rides, sing-alongs and a parade, just to name a few. It's a great community event that gets Grand Forks and East Grand Forks residents together for a night of holiday cheer.



*Mylo Einarson  
President & CEO*

## New year, same focus on providing affordable and reliable energy

**R**inging in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the president and CEO of Nodak Electric Cooperative, for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at Nodak is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering – and empowering – our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across Nodak's service area. You may not realize it, but Nodak doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our

energy provider, Minnkota Power Cooperative, and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community. Our current energy resource mix is made up of 34% wind, 7% hydro and 57% coal, with the final 2% coming from various small sources.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it. You've heard me say it before, but the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine all the time, so we need the dependable and stalwart coal to power your homes and businesses.

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, Nodak is using technology to enhance our local distribution system, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering infrastructure, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the co-op and consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps save money with near real-time data, and ultimately

improves power reliability for our entire membership.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps overhead power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall. Inspections of lines and vegetation have allowed us to reduce outage labor and equipment costs while bolstering reliability. As technology advancements become more accessible, we anticipate using advanced mapping software to better maintain the environment while providing more reliable service.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in North Dakota and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, Nodak Electric Cooperative will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve – for today and tomorrow. From all of us, to you and your families, have a joyous holiday season!

*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year  
from all of us at Nodak Electric!*

**Nodak's offices will be closed for the following days:  
Monday, Dec. 25 | Tuesday, Dec. 26 | Monday, Jan. 1**

# A TRIP OF EMOTIONAL HEALING



2023 Veterans Honor Flight group photo

All photos courtesy of Russell Hons Photography

The Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN is one of several Honor Flight programs that recognizes American veterans for their sacrifices and achievements by transporting them to Washington, D.C., to view the monuments built in their honor. This is done at no cost to the veterans and has become a beautiful tradition for those who have served.

This October's Honor Flight trip started with a sendoff from Grand Forks International Airport as family and friends filled the terminal, cheering for the 109 veterans departing to Washington, D.C. Each veteran was accompanied by a guardian who would attend to them

for the entire trip, helping them have a safe and rewarding experience.

Veterans were on the go from the time they landed until their flight home three days later. They visited the National Museum of US Army, World War II Memorial, National Archives, Navy Memorial, Air Force Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, Korean and Vietnam memorials on the National Mall, FDR Memorial, Marine Corps War Memorial, Military Women's Memorial and the Fort McHenry National Monument.

The trip of emotional healing surfaced strong feelings for many veterans, who never spoke about their time serving and the horrors

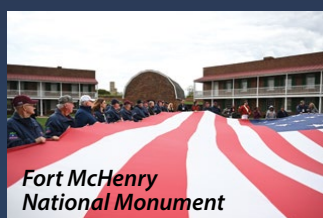
they faced. This was their time to remember and share stories with fellow veterans of how scared they were, the bloodshed they had seen and the friends and family they lost.

The return to the Grand Forks airport was a welcome home these veterans deserved, as well as a recognition of those who served and didn't make it home. The welcome reception included cheers from family and friends, reaching out to shake hands with each of the returning veterans and say, "Thank you."

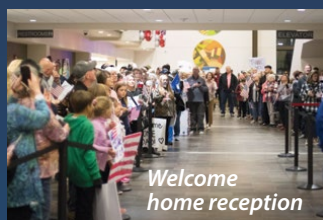
We would like to extend our gratitude to all veterans for their service, bravery, and sacrifices for our country – and for our freedoms.



Senator John Hoeven greets veterans



Fort McHenry National Monument



Welcome home reception



Vietnam Veterans Memorial



Veterans arriving in Washington, D.C.

## About Veterans Honor Flight

The Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, 100% volunteer organization with a mission to celebrate America's veterans by inviting them to share in experiencing our nation's memorials. Veterans must apply to get on the waiting list, which currently has over 600 veterans. Top priority is given to World War II and terminally ill veterans from all wars. The Honor Flight Network has escorted 22,000 veterans annually and nearly 275,000 veterans from all services since it started in 2005.

VISIT [VETERANSHONORFLIGHTOFNDMN.ORG](http://VETERANSHONORFLIGHTOFNDMN.ORG) TO VOLUNTEER OR DONATE!

# RECOGNIZING YEARS OF SERVICE

Nodak has many hardworking employees, and their years of dedicated service has helped keep the lights on for our members. Here we recognize and thank all our great employees for their years of service.

**Greg Anderson (8)**  
Operations Technician

**Chris Becker (1)**  
Apprentice Lineman  
Grand Forks

**Brad Bergman (1)**  
Apprentice Lineman  
Grand Forks

**Jeff Bolstad (5)**  
Information Technology Coordinator

**Rachael Boman (1)**  
Member Service Representative

**Kevin Dahlen (38)**  
Meter Technician  
Grand Forks

**Steve Danielson (33)**  
Energy Management Coordinator

**Trent Edens (5)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Construction

**Tom Edwards (40)**  
Accounting & Finance Manager

**Mylo Einarson (12)**  
President & CEO

**Michael Foerster (10)**  
District Crew Foreman  
Cavalier

**George Gardiner (7)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Finley

**Wade Haman (30)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Hillsboro

**Casey Hansen (12)**  
Electrical Engineer

**Jeff Hanson (30)**  
Lead Lineman  
Grafton

**Todd Herz (18)**  
Energy Services Specialist

**Eric Hjelmstad (18)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Michigan

**Jordan Holm (8)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Cavalier

**Chad Honek (18)**  
Electrical Technician  
Grand Forks

**Brock Janikowski (5)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Grafton

**Brooke Johnson (8)**  
Member Service Representative

**Cole Johnson (11)**  
Engineering Manager

**Jordan Johnson (1)**  
Apprentice Lineman  
Finley

**Kurt Kelley (30)**  
District Crew Foreman  
Grafton

**Lucas Kindseth (13)**  
Information Systems Specialist

**Matt Konze (5)**  
District Crew Foreman  
Construction

**Jake Lamb (12)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Devils Lake

**Joleen Landis (5)**  
Warehouse Person

**Bryce Langerud (1)**  
Receptionist

**Alex Larson (4)**  
Electrical Technician  
Grand Forks

**Todd Lommen (15)**  
Apparatus Technician  
Grand Forks

**Jared Lothspeich (8)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Grand Forks

**Trey Lovcik (7)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Devils Lake

**Jacob Lund (1)**  
Apprentice Lineman  
Cavalier

**Michelle Markuson (31)**  
Accountant II

**Cory McKelvey (43)**  
District Crew Foreman  
Devils Lake

**Scott Midstokke (35)**  
District Crew Foreman  
Michigan

**Chad Neppel (9)**  
Engineering Representative

**Andrew Peterson (10)**  
Plant Accountant

**Bret Poehls (28)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Michigan

**Bethany Rambeck (1)**  
Member Service Representative

**Jay Raymond (32)**  
Assistant Line Superintendent/  
Safety Coordinator

**Blaine Rekken (33)**  
Member/Energy  
Services Manager

**Dan Schaefer (40)**  
Line Superintendent

**Gretchen Schmaltz (15)**  
Energy Services Advisor/Analyst

**Alex Schultz (5)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Grand Forks

**Sawyer Smith (10)**  
District Crew Foreman  
Finley

**Derek Sondreal (14)**  
District Crew Foreman  
Grand Forks

**Alex Spitsberg (8)**  
Electrical Engineer

**Jared Stadstad (12)**  
Lead Lineman  
Grand Forks

**Jeremy Steinhaus (26)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Devils Lake

**Max Stromsodt (2)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Finley

**Jesse Sturman (5)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Grand Forks

**Blaine Thompson (6)**  
Member Services Supervisor

**Kacie Tretter (3)**  
Communications Specialist  
& Executive Assistant

**Travis Vatthauer (8)**  
Journeyman Lineman  
Grand Forks

**Duddy Weisser (11)**  
Engineering/Operations Specialist

THE HOLIDAYS ARE A PRIME TIME FOR SCAMMERS TO WREAK HAVOC AT THE HAPPIEST TIME OF THE YEAR. **BE DILIGENT IN KNOWING THE SCAMS AND LEARNING TO IDENTIFY AND AVOID THEM.**

If you receive a suspicious call or email stating your electric service will be disconnected unless you provide a debit or credit card, hang up or avoid opening any email attachments, then contact Nodak Electric. After calling us directly to confirm we did not contact you, notify your local authorities.

If a Nodak Electric employee contacts you by phone, it is our policy to NEVER request confidential, personal financial information. When a member is asked to pay a delinquent bill, they are redirected to Nodak's automated pay-by-phone system or asked to make a payment online using SmartHub. Chances are, anyone contacting members asking for a payment is not employed or authorized by the cooperative.

A member should never be surprised by a pending disconnection of electric service. Members will receive their regular bill showing a past due amount and a delinquent notice sent via the U.S. mail. Members also receive a phone call from Nodak Electric notifying them of a pending disconnection of service.

Have a happy and safe holiday season!





## ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT



When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.



### ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

### ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

### WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

### OTHER ICE FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages



Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

# GREAT REBATES

Add comfort and energy efficiency to your home with help from Nodak Electric Cooperative!

Rebates are available to help you upgrade your heating and cooling system, water heater and chargers for electric vehicles. Nodak Electric offers these rebates to encourage load development, load retention and wise use of energy.

## ELECTRIC HEATING

Heating Systems	Rebate
Plenum heaters, baseboard, electric furnace and hanging unit heater	\$25/kW
Cable floor heat, electric boiler and brick storage unit	\$45/kW
Mini-split or air-source heat pump	\$150/ton
Ground-source heat pump	\$250/ton



## WATER HEATERS

Electric Water Heaters	Rebate
55 gallon or less	\$125/unit
56-99 gallon	\$200/unit
100 gallon or greater	\$300/unit
Additional rebate for new building construction	\$100
Additional rebate for conversion from existing natural gas or propane to an electric water heater	\$250



## ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS

Electric Vehicle Chargers	Rebate
Electric vehicle (EV)	\$50/kW
Commercial – forklifts, Zambonis, etc.	\$50/kW



All systems must be new equipment and controlled on Nodak's off-peak program. A check will be issued to participating members after a visit from a Nodak technician.

Please call our Energy Services team at 701-746-4461 or 800-732-4373 if you have any questions about off-peak or the rebate program.

# PRIDE OF DAKOTA HOSTS SHOWCASE

The 2023 Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase was held recently at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, N.D. The showcase drew in over 200 vendors for the two-day event offering North Dakota-made products.

Pride of Dakota was created in 1985 by former Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Jones who asked a small group of North Dakota businesses and the Department of Agriculture's marketing staff to develop an identifiable state brand that would designate products as "made in North Dakota."

Pride of Dakota was officially launched the same year with a roster of about 20 companies. Today, more than 500 member companies – ranging in size from large companies with more than 100 employees to "mom-and-pop" operations – participate in the program. Members include food and beverage companies, manufacturers, publishers, artisans, gift manufacturers and service providers.

Pride of Dakota hosts showcases for manufacturers and service providers. Associate members, such as commodity groups, government agencies, educational institutions and retailers, also support the program. Pride of Dakota's goal is to provide local business owners the business development resources and marketing opportunities they need to be successful.

Source: [prideofdakota.nd.gov](http://prideofdakota.nd.gov)



Vendors from across the state gather to promote their products.



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP



Get smart with a better way to heat and cool your home! Smart thermostats are Wi-Fi enabled and automatically adjust heating and cooling temperature settings in your home for optimal performance. Smart thermostats learn your temperature preferences and establish a schedule that adjusts to energy-saving settings when you're asleep or away.

## STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

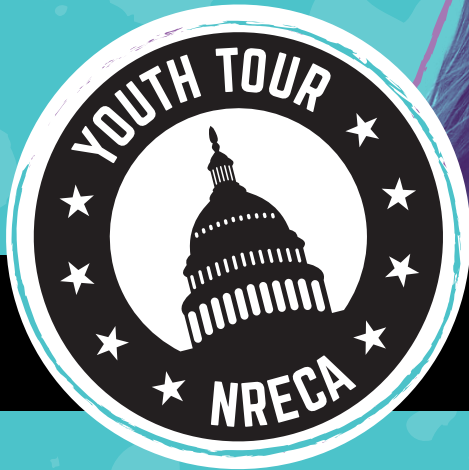
In accordance with Federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations/policies, USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs or reprisal/retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA; not all bases apply to all programs; remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: 202-690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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# APPLY FOR A TRIP OF A LIFETIME



## JUNE 15 - 21, 2024

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

### ESSAY QUESTION

Washington, D.C. Youth Tour students have an opportunity to visit with their congressman or woman. As a member of an electric cooperative, write an essay about the concerns and questions you would discuss with your representative. Explain why these are important issues to you.

### HOW TO APPLY

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parent(s) or guardian must be served by Nodak Electric Cooperative.
- If you have any questions, please contact Gretchen Schmaltz, Nodak Electric, at 701-746-4461 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 19, 2024. You can email entries to Gretchen Schmaltz at [gschmaltz@nodakelectric.com](mailto:gschmaltz@nodakelectric.com) or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, 4000 32nd Ave. S., PO Box 13000, Grand Forks, ND 58208-3000.