



BENCO Electric Cooperative Link

JULY 2023

FLACK REPRESENTS BENCO AT NATIONAL YOUTH TOUR IN WASHINGTON, DC

Kaitlin Flack, daughter of Keith Flack and Angela Schuck of Lake Crystal, was among the nearly 1,500 high school students from across the country, 38 of them from Minnesota, who participated in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour held June 13-18, 2023 in Washington, D.C.

Kaitlin attends school at Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial High School in Lake Crystal and is involved in many extra-curricular activities including cross country, basketball, track and field, 4H, band, National Honor Society, speech and math league.

Youth tour participants have opportunities to observe politics and community service, and what today's pressing issues are in the energy industry. Highlights included meeting with their elected representatives in the U. S. House and Senate, learning about political and energy issues, increasing their knowledge of electric cooperatives and touring the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, the Smithsonian Museum, Arlington Cemetery and the National Cathedral.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is a joint effort of local electric co-ops, such as BENCO Electric Cooperative, their statewide co-op associations (Minnesota Rural Electric Association) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association since 1964; and over 40,000 high school students have participated.

Kaitlin says, "I enjoyed being able to be very hands-on with each activity in addition to learning about history, and what we're doing to bring broadband to rural families. I also enjoyed learning about what my own electric cooperative is doing." Thank you, Kaitlin, for representing BENCO Electric Cooperative!



CEO CORNER

One way BENCO continually monitors the health of our electric system is through a utility pole inspection program.

At BENCO, we have approximately 45,000 poles serving our membership that spans across 10 counties. We inspect 3,000 - 4,000 poles annually and all poles are inspected on a 10 year rotation.

A typical pole will have a lifespan of 50 years, but BENCO does have some poles on our system dating back to the late 1930s and 1940s.

What makes a pole fail inspection? Poles can begin to decay at the ground line, or the top of the pole can dry out and begin to split. Equipment can also cause damage to a pole and the pole can also begin to rot.

In June, our annual pole inspection was completed. BENCO contracts

Exo, Inc., a third-party company, to complete the inspection. This year 3,277 poles were tested. 150 poles did not pass inspection which equals a 4.5% reject rate for the year. Those 150 poles will be replaced by our line crews as soon as possible. Most poles used in our area are milled in the western United States.

A new pole costs an average of \$1,000 each, but can vary depending on the size of the pole.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Cooperatively yours,



FROM THE BOARD

May 25, 2022
Brad Leiding Presided

The board reviewed and approved the minutes of the April 27, 2023 board meeting.

Dave reported that GRE's energy and demand are lower but still positive to overall budget.

Tim reported that two temporary line technicians were hired and began working at BENCO in May.

Jon is coordinating the change-out of Dual Fuel Load Control Receivers through our service territory.

Duane, Blake and Brad gave the CTV report.

The transfer of five FCC licenses to CTV was approved.

Get notified when it matters.

GET NOTIFICATIONS AND VIDEO ALERTS WHEN ACTIVITY OCCURS. As part of a monitored security system, receive email, text, or image alerts when alarms are triggered, doors or windows opened, the power goes out or any other activity occurs.

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PCA UPDATE

ACTUAL PCA FOR JUNE

\$0.0382

ESTIMATED PCA FOR JULY

\$0.0388

ESTIMATED PCA FOR AUGUST

\$0.0424

The Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) is due to changes in the monthly wholesale rate from our power supplier, Great River Energy (GRE).

JOIN US AT FARMFEST IN 2023

Join BENCO Electric Cooperative, Touchstone Energy and area rural electric cooperatives at Farmfest, August 1 - 3, 2023.

A trusted resource with 35+ years of proven credibility, Farmfest connects 35,000 attendees with over 625 agricultural industry leading manufacturers and providers. Farmfest features highly topical educational and political forums highlighting topics relevant to the issues that face today's farmers. The event presents successful field demonstrations with feature the latest technological advancements in the farming industry while offering programs and entertainment for the entire family.

Visit BENCO and other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives in the Ag Tent, Booth #2301. The electric cooperatives will be giving away five electric yard tools, pictured to the right. Attendees can register to win by turning in their BENCO coupon (shown to the right) at the booth.



Touchstone Energy will be giving away five EGO Power lawn tools including a self-propelled lawn mower, snow blower, leaf blower, chainsaw and string trimmer.

Visit **BENCO**, along with other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, at Farmfest 2023 and enter for a chance to win a grand prize!

FARMFEST 2023 • AUGUST 1 - 3 • REDWOOD FALLS, MN

Bring this coupon to Booth #2301.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

You must be a member of one of the participating electric cooperatives to win.



WHERE, OH WHERE?

The following is a list of former BENCO members who have unclaimed capital credit checks or credit balances on their inactive account. Please contact Angie at 387-7963 with any information on locating the former BENCO members.

M
Joe McCarney, Mankato
Pat McCarthy, Eagle Lake
Pat McChesney, North Mankato
Jared H. McClure, Eagle, ID
Jeff McCollum, Eagle Lake

Patrick M. McConnell, Mankato
Karen McCoy, Waterville, MA
Patricia J. McCreary, Faribault
Tonn McCreary, Faribault
Dennis McCulla, Overland Park, KS
Vivian McDermott, Owatonna
Alex J. McDowall, Mankato
Alexis mcElderry, Mankato
James McGillen, Mankato
Jonathan P. McGowen, Winnebago
Milo D. McGranahan, Alma, AR
James McGrath, Fairmont
Raymond McGuire, Mankato
MCI Telecommunications, New York, NY
Colby R. McIntire, Mankato

Jeff McIntire, Amery, WI
Maureen McKay, Winnebago
John McKean, Freeborn
Keith McKee, Marshall
Connor McKeen, Mankato
Gail McKinney, North Mankato
Richard McLain, St. Peter
Deloris McLeean, New Ulm
Keith W. McMahan, Mankato
John McMonagle, Madelia
Richard D. McNea, Eagle lake
Ben McVenes, Mankato
Gabrielle Cynthia Mead, Mankato
Jacqueline M. Mead, North Mankato
Jim Mead, North Mankato



Touchstone Energy®

P.O. Box 8
Mankato, MN 56002-0008

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what's cooking?

Receive a \$20 credit on your electric bill if your recipe appears in the newsletter.



ZUCCHINI HOTDISH

From the Kitchen of: Nancy Mann

Ingredients:

- 1 large zucchini peeled and cubed
- 1 small onion diced
- 1 packet dry italian seasoning
- 5 oz. package italian seasoned croutons
- 8 oz. Monterrey Jack cheese
- 1 qt. jar tomatoes

Directions:

Mix ingredients and put in shallow baking dish. Top with cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Remove cover for the last 15 minutes to lightly brown cheese. Enjoy!



This newsletter is published monthly by BENCO Electric Cooperative.

Office Hours: Mon -Fri - 7:30 am - 4:00 pm
Phone: 387-7963 or 1-888-792-3626

Outages/After Hours:
387-7964 or 1-888-792-3626

Kathy Gerber - Member Services Manager
Chelsea Germa - Editor

Board Meetings:

Board meetings are held the last Thursday of each month. Members are welcome to contact directors with items of interest in advance of the meeting or wish to attend. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Board of Directors:

Brad Leiding - President - District 3
Marilyn Lynch - Vice President - District 5
Scott Johnson - Secretary - District 9
Terry Genelin - Treasurer - District 1
Don Westphal - District 2
John Wells - District 4 - MREA Director
Blake Meshke - District 6
Gary Stenzel - District 7 - GRE Director
Duane Ehrich - District 8
Dave Sunderman - CEO
Christopher M. Roe - Attorney

ENTER TO WIN. SEND YOUR FAVORITE RECIPE TO:

BENCO Electric Cooperative, Attn: Chelsea, PO Box 8, Mankato, MN 56002