

The cooling season is coming up quick, so now is a good time to get a tune-up on your cooling system! Whether you have an air source heat pump or a central air conditioner, receive a \$25 rebate when you get a tune-up.



Scan to learn more!

Save Money & Energy

with an AC or ASHP Tune-up

Plus get a \$25 Rebate

NEWSLINE

June 2024

Director Candidate Information pg 3 • Trucks for Sale pg 4

“It’s been a fun ride! Farewell to everyone at REA!”

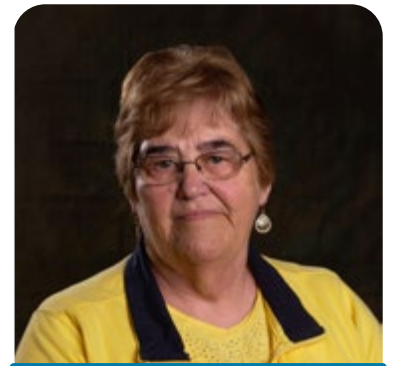
After 28 years on the Runestone Electric Association (REA) Board of Directors, Audrey Hjelle announced her retirement due to health issues.

“How do I even begin to say thank you? It’s been fun and I’ve truly enjoyed my 28 years on the board working with great board members and all the REA employees,” Hjelle said.

When Audrey was elected in 1996, she made history as the first woman to serve on the REA Board of Directors. Her tenure was marked by significant contributions, including serving as president, vice president, and secretary and representing REA on the Great River Energy Board of Directors. She successfully completed the NRECA Certified Cooperative Communicator coursework and the NRECA Board Leadership Certificate to grow her understanding of electric cooperatives.

“I first met Audrey when I was elected to the REA Board of Directors. Over the past seven years, she has mentored me and other board members, sharing her knowledge and understanding of the cooperative world, specifically our electric co-op,” President Andy Anderson shared. “Audrey is never too busy to take the time to explain a question. We all are so blessed that we have had her on the board to teach us.”

Anderson continued, “Many words can describe Audrey. A few that come to mind for me include positive thinker, joy spreader, and hard worker. I consider myself blessed to be called a friend of Audrey Hjelle! We are going to miss her!”



Audrey Hjelle



Rick Banke and Audrey Hjelle show off their socks at the 2015 Annual Meeting.

Information on how to apply for the director position vacant in District 3 can be found on page 3.



Barbara Johnson, Rick Banke, Audrey Hjelle, and Colleen & Wilbur Burquest at the 2006 Pancake Feed.



Jerome & Janet Johnson, Elbow Lake, with Audrey Hjelle at the 2022 Annual Meeting.



Audrey Hjelle (center) with her children, Lori Sommers (left), and Glenn & Paula Hjelle (right) February 2024.



Audrey Hjelle welcomes members to the 2020 District 3 Meeting held in Barrett.



Al Haman
CEO

A Note from the CEO

An Outage We Won't Soon Forget

It was a sight that caught our on-call crew off guard, an incident that won't be easily forgotten. As they pulled into the driveway south of Elbow Lake, there it was. A trampoline hanging on the transformer pole.

Kyle Rogahn, who was mowing the lawn on May 18th, was taken aback when he saw the trampoline hanging on the power pole. He had just mowed by the trampoline 15-20 minutes earlier, and there were no noticeable wind gusts. He suspects a dust devil may have come through where the trampoline was sitting and lifted it into the power pole.

Over the years, we've experienced outages caused by birds, snakes, raccoons, spray planes, farm equipment and the list goes on. To my knowledge, we have never experienced an outage caused by a trampoline.

"I went into the house to see if the electricity was on and it wasn't," Rogahn recalls. "When it comes to electricity, I wasn't going to assume anything, so I told the kids to stay away from the powerline and trampoline. I then called REA to let them know we had a power outage."

Kyle did the right thing. Despite being an interesting sight, he and his kids stayed away from the dangerous situation until our crew arrived to remove the trampoline and restore the power.



Placing the transformer at the Holmes City Sub.



New Lake Mary Substation



New Lake Mary Substation

The New Lake Mary Substation

In April, we energized the new Lake Mary Substation about 1/2 mile from the old location south of Alexandria. Due to line permitting issues, the lost COVID year, and material shortages, the project took nearly seven years to complete. The original cost estimate was \$1,400,000 in 2021 and increased over \$1,000,000 during the last four years.

The new substation is served from the 115 kV transmission network, which is more reliable than the previous line. The 115 kV power line provides better voltage stability and is more resistant to momentary outages and other power reliability issues.

The primary factor driving the project is load growth south of Alexandria. The Lake Mary Substation serves 942 member accounts in parts of Lake Mary, Hudson, and LaGrand Townships. The transformer was overloaded in the winter. Rather than put a larger, new transformer into the old facility, we made the decision to build a new substation and take advantage of modern design, new equipment, and the latest smart grid technology.

The old substation transformer was relocated to the Holmes City Substation near Lake Rachel to replace a smaller transformer that was removed and shipped to South Dakota for recycling.

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - April 2024

- » Reviewed the Financial Report for April 2024 noting sales are down for the month and quarter. The margin is under budget due to the decrease in sales and to accelerated maintenance expense. The expense will level out in the coming months.
- » Approved Gene Rasmusen, Osakis, to represent District 6 on the Member Advisory Council.
- » Reviewed the Annual Meeting. This year, 423 memberships

- registered for the meeting, and approximately 250 guests stayed for the meeting.
- » Selected Director Staples to represent REA on the STAR Energy Services Board of Governors.
- » Selected Director Anderson to represent REA on the Great River Energy Board of Directors.
- » **The regular June Board Meeting will be Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.**

Director Vacancy to be Filled in District 3

Here's How to Apply

District Three



Due to the retirement of REA Director Audrey Hjelle, a vacancy exists on the REA Board of Directors in District 3 (see map above).

According to the Bylaws, the Board is able to appoint a member to serve as District 3 Director until the Annual Meeting in April 2025. This director, as well as other candidates, may choose to run in the election for the District 3 director seat that will serve a one-year term from 2025 - 2026. Director candidates can be nominated at the District 3 meeting in February 2025.

To do a competent job, a director is expected to:

1. Attend all regular monthly board meetings, special meetings, district meetings and the annual meeting of the cooperative.
2. Read and be familiar with information, data and reports received from national, state and local associations.
3. Work in harmony with the board for the good of all REA members.

Members who are interested in the director position vacant in District 3 (please review the criteria on right) are encouraged to complete a director candidate application available at www.RunstoneElectric.com or by calling REA at 320-762-1121 or 800-473-1722.

Completed applications must be received at the REA office by Friday, June 21 at 4 p.m.

What is required to be a REA Director?

REA Bylaws Article III, Section 7. Director Qualifications.

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who:

- (a) is not a bona fide member of the Cooperative receiving electric service from the Cooperative in the district that the director represents or would represent if elected;
- (b) is not a bona fide resident of the district from which he or she is elected or for which he or she is a candidate; (bona fide resident shall be defined as occupying and continuously and materially purchasing electric service at a location within any director district from which the director is elected or for which he or she is a candidate for at least nine (9) months each calendar year);
- (c) is in any way employed by or substantially financially interested in an enterprise substantially competing with the Cooperative or any Cooperative-affiliated business;
- (d) within five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination was or during service on the Board of Directors is adjudged to be guilty of a felony;
- (e) within five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination was a full-time employee of the Cooperative;
- (f) within five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination was an employee of a statewide association of electric cooperatives, an electric generation and transmission cooperative, or any other entity in which an electric cooperative is a member.
- (g) within five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination or during his or her term if elected was or becomes employed by a labor union which represents, has represented, or has endeavored to represent any employee of the cooperative;
- (h) is a close relative* of an incumbent who is not up for reelection at that time;
- (i) is a close relative* of an employee of the Cooperative;
- (j) is or becomes the full-time employee or agent or, who is or becomes the full-time employer or principal of, another director;
- (k) does not have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts;
- (l) is absent from three or more regular meetings ("Unexcused Absences") of the Board of Directors during any consecutive twelve month period, unless excused for good cause (an "Excused Absence") by the Board. If a director participates in more than one regular meeting during any consecutive twelve month period by electronic communication, that director shall be considered absent from that meeting for purposes of determining the number of the director's Unexcused Absences, unless the attendance by electronic communication is approved for good cause by the Board.

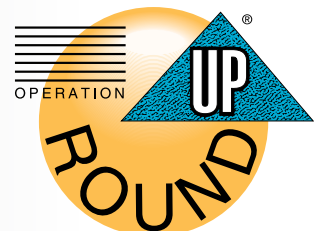
*A "close relative" is a person who is by blood, law, or marriage (including half, step, foster, and adoptive relations) a child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, or sibling); or is a spouse or resides in the same residence.

A member that is an authorized farm corporation or family farm corporation may select an individual member residing on or actively operating the farm to be eligible for election to the board.



Thank You Barry!

REA CEO, Al Haman, (right) recognizes Barry Wahlberg, Alexandria (left), for serving on the Operation Round Up Trust Board and completing a six-year term. The REA Board of Directors have appointed John Rolf, Brandon, as a new director in District 2. Thank you, Barry, for your time and dedication to the Operation Round Up program!



TRUCKS FOR SALE



2015 Dodge Ram 1500

Extended cab, 5.7 Liter V8 Automatic Transmission, Power windows, locks, and mirrors. 213K miles. Sold with the strobe light.



2015 Dodge Ram 1500

Extended cab, 5.7 Liter V8 Automatic Transmission, Power windows, locks, and mirrors. 125K miles. Sold with tonneau cover and Weather Guard toolbox.

Bids are now being accepted to sell two pickups. The trucks may be viewed at REA's Operation Center from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Monday - Friday until July 15, 2024. The equipment will be sold "as is" and "with all faults." REA's Purchase Agreement form will need to be signed by the buyer prior to closing. Cash payment required, no checks please. REA reserves the right to accept or reject any and all offers.

Include your name, phone number, and bid in a sealed envelope and submit to:

REA Truck Bid
6839 Power Lane SW
Alexandria, MN 56308

Deadline for submitting a bid is July 15, 2024.

Cogeneration Notice

In compliance with Minnesota Adopted Rules relating to Co-generation and Small Power Production, Chapter 7835, Runestone Electric is required to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers that satisfy the conditions of a qualified facility. Runestone Electric has available and will provide free information to all interested members regarding rates and interconnection requirements. An application for interconnection is required for a qualifying facility to interconnect and operate in parallel with the cooperative's distribution system and is subject to approval by the cooperative. For more information on cogeneration please visit: www.runestoneelectric.com/energy-wise-programs/renewable-energy

Is Your Electric Heat Still On?

REA recommends checking boiler and baseboard heating systems to ensure they are turned off. This easy step can prevent a battle between your cooling and heating system, especially in basements.

Save money and energy this summer by turning off the heat!

Dehumidifier Basics

Using a dehumidifier to suck moisture out of the air can cost more than \$100 a year on electric bills. Consider replacing a standard dehumidifier with an energy efficient Energy Star® model. Replace your old dehumidifier with an Energy Star unit and receive a \$25 rebate from REA.

Contact REA at 800-473-1722 for a rebate form or visit www.RunestoneElectric.com.

NEWSLINE

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rea@runestoneelectric.com
www.runestoneelectric.com

24/7: 800-473-1722

Office Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mon- Fri.

Board of Directors

- District 1: Gary (Andy) Anderson, President
- District 2: Barbara Johnson, Director
- District 3: Open
- District 4: Dave Staples, Secretary
- District 5: Mike Loken, Vice President
- District 6: Joel Seela, Director
- District 7: Matthew Mattson, Treasurer

Editorial Staff

- Al Haman, CEO
- Sue Lundeen, Editor
- Ally Koudela, Communications Specialist

In Case of a Power Outage

- » Please call 800-473-1722 for 24-hour service. Please report any tree branches in lines, twisted wires, broken poles and if your neighbors are also out of power.
- » Be sure to have a corded phone or a charged cell phone in the house, because cordless phones won't work when the power is out.
- » Program the number above into your cell phone for easy access.
- » Never assume we know you are without power. Always call to report an outage.

REA will use reasonable diligence to furnish adequate and dependable electric service, but it cannot and does not guaranty continuous and uninterrupted service.

Sign up to get text messages on control days!

Simply text #loadcontrol to 22300.
Msg and data rates apply.

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COMMUNITY FUND YOUTH BASEBALL CLINIC!

ALEXANDRIA, MN

FREE TO ATTEND! OPEN TO EVERYONE, AGES 6-12!

DATE:

SATURDAY
AUGUST 3

TIME:

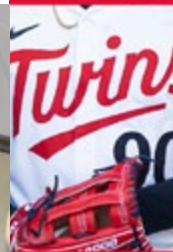
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

FIELD:

ALEXANDRIA HS
SOFTBALL COMPLEX
4300 PIONEER RD SE
ALEXANDRIA, MN 56308

HOST:

ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC
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