

NOMINATE CANDIDATES AT APRIL CAUCUS MEETINGS

Dates and locations to be announced in March

Editor's note: This is the fifth article in a six-month series explaining cooperative leadership and the advantages of being part of a democratically controlled, member-owned cooperative. Next month's installment will discuss how the cooperative business model incorporates principles benefitting you and your community.

Verendrye's principle of democratic member control means members not only get to vote for their directors, but they can also get their name on the ballot to become a director. April is the time when Verendrye holds annual caucus meetings where any member can be nominated to run for a spot on the board of directors.

Candidates can also be nominated from the floor during the annual meeting in June, but it is more advantageous for candidates to be nominated in April.

"Knowing in April who the candidates are gives the members time to get to know the candidates, and their names are preprinted on the annual meeting ballots," said Verendrye General Manager Bruce Carlson.

After candidates are nominated at the caucus meetings, a biography and photograph of each one will be published in *North Dakota LIVING*. Because the May magazine goes to all of the Verendrye members, it is critical for candidates to have their information in the issues prior to the annual meeting. Candidate information is also published in the annual report, which is mailed to all of the members in May.

The nomination process

Verendrye's bylaws require a caucus meeting to be held in each of the three director districts. Notice of the dates and locations of the caucus meetings is placed in Verendrye's section of *North Dakota LIVING*, and it will also be mailed to each member.

Any member can nominate another



Members attend an area caucus meeting last year in Ryder. Caucus meetings give members a chance to be nominated to become candidates for the board of directors. The dates and locations of the April caucus meetings will be announced in March.

member and there is no limit to the number of candidates that can be nominated. A nominee must be a resident of and a member of the district in which he or she is nominated.

All members are encouraged to attend a caucus meeting even if they are not there to nominate a candidate. Verendrye staff will present a short program updating members on the status of the cooperative and a free lunch will be provided.

"We want the nomination and elec-

tion process to be as open as possible to all of our members, and you can even nominate yourself if you like," Carlson said. "If you have not been to a caucus meeting, we invite you to come to one, have some lunch with us and learn more about your cooperative. The meeting locations are rotated around the director districts so they are easy to get to."

The election

The election occurs at the annual meeting in June.

There are nine members of the Verendrye board of directors – three from each district. Each director serves a three-year term and terms are staggered so that at least one director from each district is up for election each year.

Although candidates have to run for election in the district in which they live, all member owners vote for a candidate in each of the three districts.



Lineworker Jesse Suckut collects ballots at last year's annual meeting. Members who want to run for the board have the best chances if they are nominated at an April caucus meeting.