

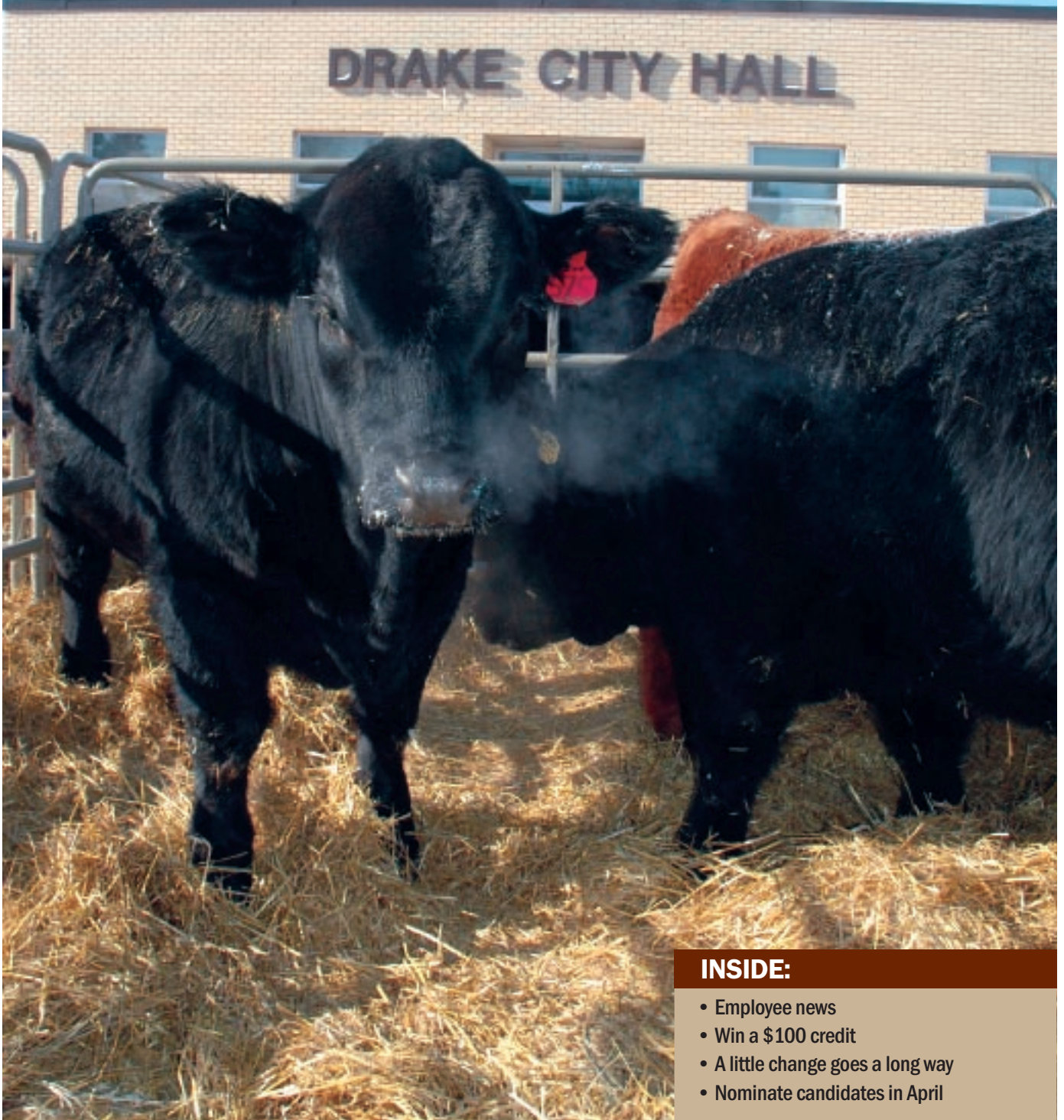
Verendrye Network News

Verendrye Electric Cooperative • Velva, N.D.

Velva: (701) 338-2855 • Minot: (701) 852-0406
Web site: www.verendrye.com

March 2011

Breeders' Classic supports industry and community



INSIDE:

- Employee news
- Win a \$100 credit
- A little change goes a long way
- Nominate candidates in April

Berthold lineworker retires after 35 years

A man who helped keep the lights on in Verendrye Electric Cooperative's system for 35 years has retired. Curt Hall, a lineworker who primarily worked in the Berthold area, put in his last day of work Feb. 7. He can quickly recall the exact day he started working for Verendrye – April 26, 1976, and he has fond memories of his profession and the people he worked with through the years.

After high school, he studied wildlife management in college before deciding it wasn't for him. He then got into constructing power lines, including a job with Central Power Electric Cooperative of Minot, before he decided to become a lineworker. Hall said it was one of the best decisions he ever made.

One of his most memorable times working for Verendrye was sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980s when he and two others were called to restore power to an area south of Ruthville that was knocked out by a tornado. The storm knocked out a section of line that crossed a large slough, requiring the three men to go out in a 14-foot boat around midnight.

"We pushed the boat out into the slough and we nailed pole tops to tree stumps," Hall said. "The three of us never laughed so much in our lives."

They ended up working until daylight.

"I got back to Berthold about eight in the morning and I just crashed."

Hall, who lives on a farm near Berthold with his wife, LeAnn, also raises cattle. In his spare time, he plans to golf and fish and help people who need help.

Verendrye Electric thanks Curt for his many years of dedicated service and congratulates him for his successful career.



Curt Hall, a lineworker for Verendrye for 35 years, received a retirement cake on his last day of work in February.



Jody Bruce receives a certificate for completing his apprenticeship from Christina Roemmich, Apprentice, Training and Safety Program safety coordinator, and Wally Kalmbach, director of safety services for the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives.

Bruce completes apprenticeship to become journeyman

Jody Bruce, a lineworker out of Verendrye's Minot office, recently completed his apprenticeship to become a journeyman.

Attaining journeyman status requires 8,000 hours of on-the-job training as an apprentice and a series of academic courses. It takes four years to become a journeyman and the academic course includes a series of written tests and a comprehensive final test. Bruce, a graduate of Bismarck State College, has been employed with Verendrye Electric since 2007.

Part-time lineworkers hired full time

Eric Schlieve and Justin Bullinger, both apprentice lineworkers, have been hired by Verendrye full time. Schlieve, who is in his second year as a Verendrye employee, works out of the Minot office, and Bullinger, who has been with Verendrye since May, works out of the Velva office.



Schlieve



Bullinger

View your bill online and win a \$100 credit

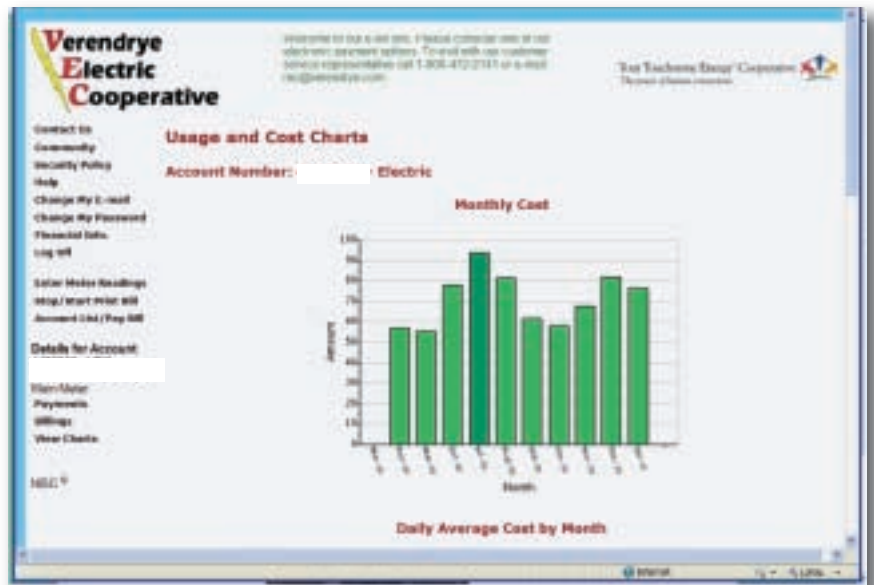
Starting this month, Verendrye Electric Cooperative members will have a chance to win a \$100 bill credit simply by checking their bills online. The contest will continue each month until the end of the year, giving a total of 10 chances to win.

It is easy to enter the contest. All you have to do is go to www.verendrye.com and check your bill online. If you are already registered with Verendrye, all you have to do is view your bill at least once each month to be entered into the drawing. You will only be entered into the drawing once each month no matter how many times you view your bill.

If you are not already registered online, you will need your account number and a valid e-mail address to get registered. Once you have the information ready, click on the red "my-e-bill" tab toward the top of the home page. After clicking on "my e-bill," there is a link for new users to register for online account access.

Verendrye encourages all of its members to view their bills online because:

- You can see and pay your bill a few days before it comes in the mail.
- You can view previous payments and bills.
- You can see charts comparing your total usage for several months and charts that show daily and monthly usage and cost data.



Accessing your bill online allows you to view and pay bills as well as access usage data like what is shown on the screen shot above.

- You can update your account information quickly and easily.

The information online is available via a secure server, and Verendrye does not release any of your information to third parties. You have the option of viewing your bill online and receiving it in the mail, or you can choose to receive it online only and receive a 50 cent credit each month.

Verendrye will publish the names of the winners in upcoming editions of *North Dakota LIVING*.

For more information, contact VEC at (800) 472-2141.

Sign up for FREE energy tour

Verendrye Electric Cooperative (VEC) members are encouraged to sign up now for the annual tour of North Dakota's energy industry.

This exciting tour allows members to get an inside look at the Antelope Valley Station power plant, Dakota Gasification Company's Great Plains Synfuels plant, which is the only commercial-scale plant in the U.S. that turns coal into natural gas, the Coteau Freedom Coal Mine and the Prairie Winds wind farm, the largest wind farm solely owned by a cooperative in the nation. The wind farm is located about 15 miles south of Minot. The other facilities on the tour are located around Beulah.

This year's tour is scheduled for Thursday, April 21. The bus leaves at 7:30 a.m. from the Velva VEC office and will return by 5 p.m. Free lunch will be provided and the bus is a comfortable charter bus.

Call Sandee Michalenko today at (701) 852-0406 or toll-free at (800) 472-2141 to reserve your spot.



See draglines like this one at the Coteau Freedom Mine near Beulah during the free energy tour.



Bulls draw hundreds of visitors to Drake each year for the Breeders' Classic.



Justin Alme, a Drake FFA officer, serves pie at the Breeders' Classic.



Blaine Bruner, a Verendrye board member who is also an organizer of the Breeders' Classic, thanks the audience for their support of the annual event.

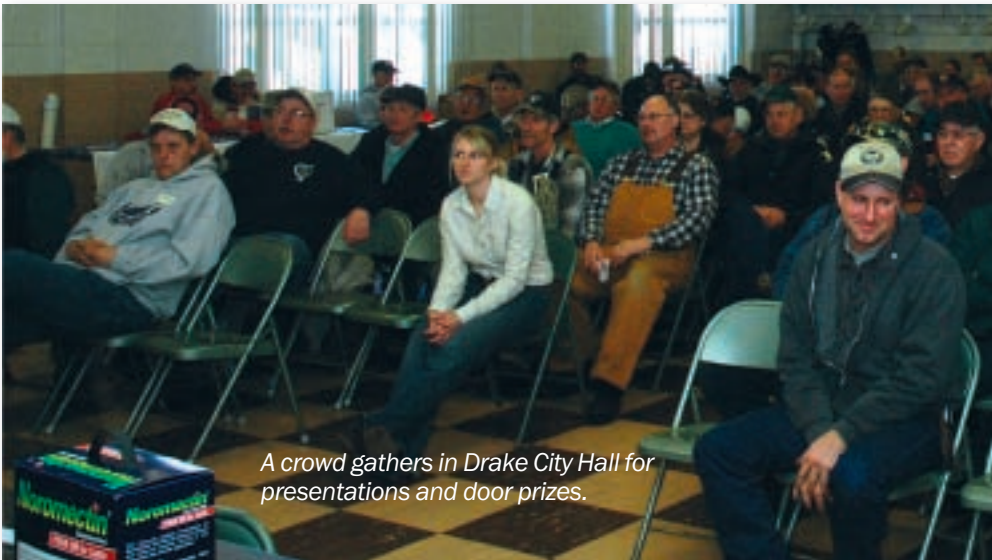
Breeders' Classic supports

by Tom Rafferty

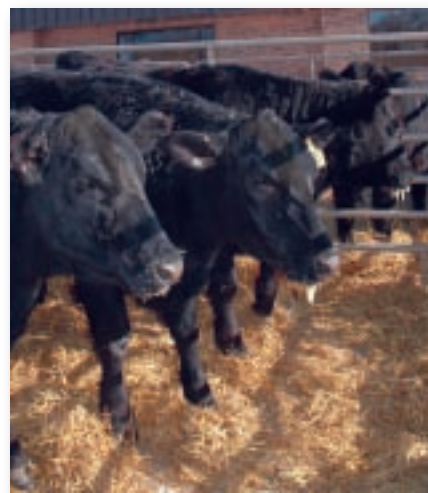
One of the biggest events of the year in Pamplona, Spain, involves cordoning off a street and letting bulls chase daring festival-goers who risk being gored. Bulls are responsible for one of the biggest days in Drake, too, but people there aren't running from them.

For the past 15 years, the Drake community has cordoned off a section of Main Street to set up bull pens for the annual Breeders' Classic. This year, the event took place Feb. 2.

Blaine Bruner, a Verendrye Electric board member who has helped organize the event since its inception, said farmers and ranchers from across the state appreciate the event because it gives them a chance to see the types of bulls available in anticipation of spring.



A crowd gathers in Drake City Hall for presentations and door prizes.



A variety of bulls are on display at the Breeders' Classic where people can purchase or just see what is available.

industry and community

"There are some sales that do happen but the main purpose is to advertise and promote the bulls," Bruner said. "When you are here, you can look at many types of bulls on the same day."

The first Breeders' Classic began with just seven pens. This year, there were 22 pens.

The event also includes informational seminars, including tips from McClusky veterinarian Dr. Gerald Kitto, vendor displays, door prizes and free chili. Volunteers normally serve chili to 200 to 300 people each year. The event benefits Drake because it brings visitors to town that will also shop in the local stores.

"It's the biggest business day in Drake for the year," Bruner said.



Ruth Seehafer serves hot chili to hungry visitors in the Drake Knights of Columbus.



Dr. Gerald Kitto, a McClusky veterinarian, gives tips about vaccinating cattle during a presentation at the Breeders' Classic.

Operation Round Up grants \$15,500 for community needs

A little bit of pocket change can go a long way when thousands of people put it together and use it to improve their communities and help others.

The small amount of change – less than \$1 a month – that the majority of Verendrye Electric’s members contribute toward Operation Round Up recently helped 11 different causes to the tune of \$15,500.

The grants helped one community to revitalize its downtown area, another to build a new food bank. In other communities, the grants helped repair a senior center, furnish a homeless shelter, provide activities for school children and contribute toward someone’s extraordinary medical expenses.

Deb Kunkel, executive director of the Minot YWCA, received \$2,000 to purchase appliances for the emergency shelter in Minot that houses homeless women and children until they can find a place to live. The appliances are for the handicapped clients.

“The funding is going to really help us tremendously because we really need those appliances,” Kunkel said. “It just gives us such an uplift to know that organizations and businesses in



Stephanie Siewert’s kindergarten class in Sawyer purchased iPads to be used in class lessons.

the community support us in what we are doing.”

The shelter is currently undergoing a remodel and plans are to have it completed in the spring. The YWCA is also in the process of raising \$4 million to go toward a new childcare facility, to complete the shelter renovation and to support its endow-

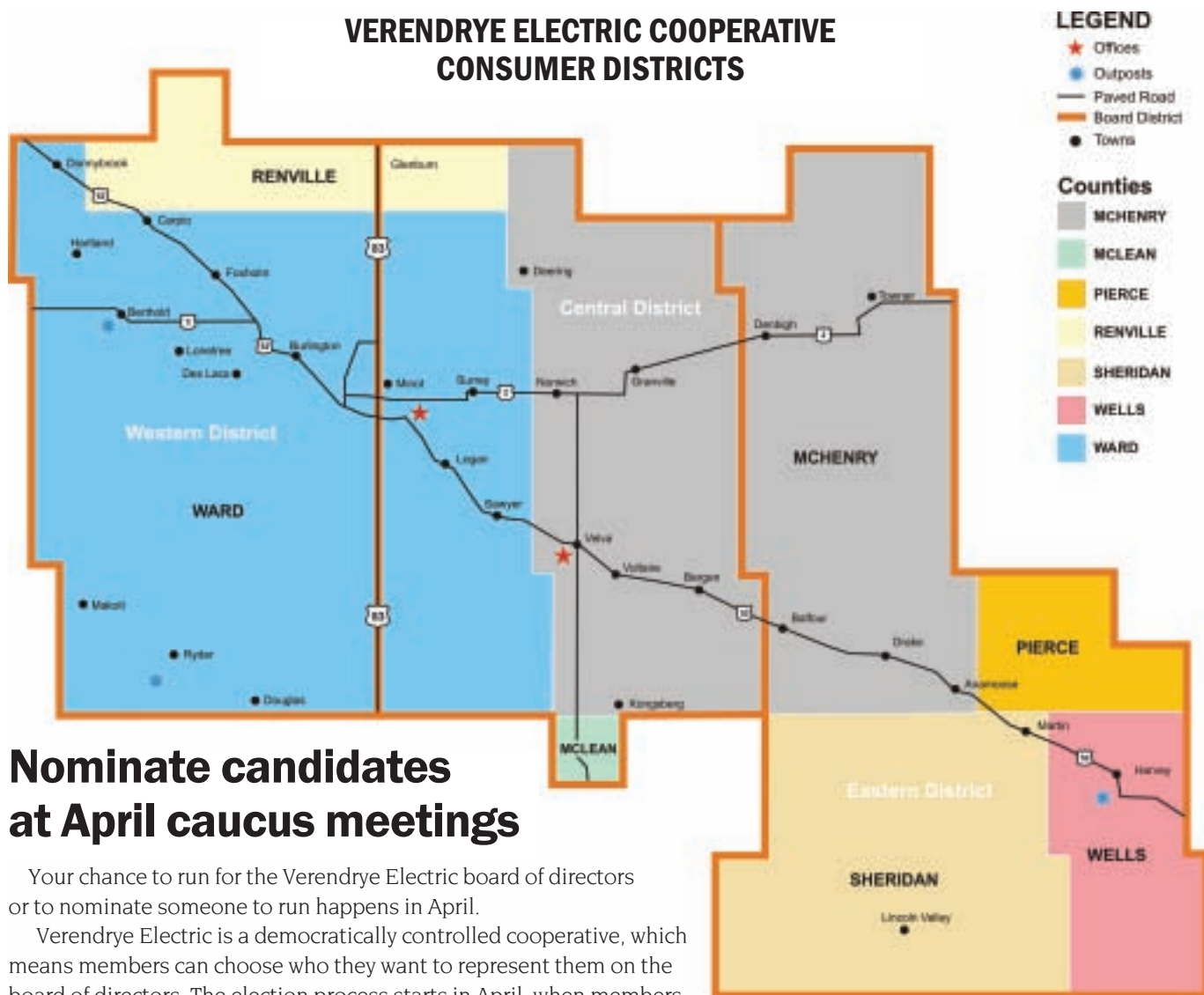
ment fund. Kunkel said the YWCA welcomes donations, and also volunteers who want to contribute labor or help mentor their clients. Contact the YWCA at (701) 838-1812 for more information.



OPERATION ROUND UP GRANTS

Organization	Purpose	Amount
First District Health Unit, Minot	Educational equipment for child seat safety	\$1,000
Sawyer Public School	Purchase technology for classroom	\$1,000
Drake Community Club	Repair fire damage to building on Main St.	\$1,500
Minot Area Youth Sportsmen’s Club	Youth shooting equipment	\$1,500
St. Cecilia’s Catholic Church, Velva	Help pay medical expenses for Norma Schmaltz	\$1,500
Harvey Senior Citizens	Help repair roof	\$1,000
Central Dakota Ministerial Association, Harvey	Help construct new food bank	\$1,000
Lewis & Clark School, Berthold	Document cameras	\$1,500
Minot YWCA	Appliances for emergency shelter	\$2,000
Energy Share of North Dakota	Assist low-income families with utility bills	\$2,500
City & Country Health Clinic, Minot	Purchase medical equipment	\$1,000
TOTAL		\$15,500

VERENDRYE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONSUMER DISTRICTS



Nominate candidates at April caucus meetings

Your chance to run for the Verendrye Electric board of directors or to nominate someone to run happens in April.

Verendrye Electric is a democratically controlled cooperative, which means members can choose who they want to represent them on the board of directors. The election process starts in April, when members can nominate candidates at area caucus meetings.

The caucus meetings will be held at noon on the following dates:

- Tuesday, April 12 – West District, Curt’s Place, 241 N. Main St., Ryder
- Wednesday, April 13 – Central District, Verendrye headquarters, 615 Hwy. 52 Bypass W., Velva
- Thursday, April 14 - East District, Ranch House Restaurant, 217 Main St., Towner

Candidates nominated at caucus meetings will be on the ballot at the June 9 annual meeting. Members can also nominate candidates at the annual meeting, but it is recommended that the nominations be made at the caucus meetings to allow candidates the opportunity to be included in the annual report that is distributed before the annual meeting.

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

Members can attend any of the caucus meetings, but if they choose to nominate someone for election to the board, they must make the nomination at the meeting held in their district.

Contact Verendrye at (800) 472-2141 for more information.

About the election

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.

This year, the incum-

bents are Cindy Smith – West District; Orrin Nelson – East District; and Bob Wolf – Central District.

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.

This map shows the three districts within Verendrye territory. If you want to run for the Verendrye board or nominate someone to run on the board, you must do so in the district in which you live. If you are unsure of your district or have questions about the process, contact Verendrye.

DEFEND YOUR HOME with a **SUMP PUMP**

A sump pump may be a homeowner's first line of defense against a waterlogged basement. Making sure your sump pump works now can prevent problems later. A North Dakota State University (NDSU) video offers tips on getting sump pumps ready to handle spring and summer water. It's available at www.ag.ndsu.edu/flood/home/sump-pump-tips.

HOW A SUMP PUMP WORKS

Drain tile, which can be clay tile or perforated plastic pipe, collects the water that builds up around the house's foundation and drains it into the sump. The sump is a hole about two feet in diameter that holds 15 to 25 gallons of water. When the water reaches a certain level, the sump pump turns on and lifts the water to ground level, then discharges it into a pipe that leads away from the house.

Sump pumps, available at hardware and home improvement stores, come in two basic models: upright, commonly called pedestal, and submersible. Either will work well with proper maintenance, according to Tom Scherer, an NDSU Extension Service agricultural engineer.

The pedestal pump's motor is on top

of the pedestal and the pump is at the base, which sits on the bottom of the sump. The motor should not get wet. A ball float turns the pump on and off. One advantage of this type of pump is that the on/off switch is visible, so you can see the ball float's action easily, Scherer says.

Submersible pumps are designed to be submerged in water and sit on the bottom of the sump. The on/off switch is attached to the pump. A sealed mercury switch generally is more reliable than a pressure switch, Scherer says.

Either type of pump should have a check valve on the water discharge pipe so water doesn't flow back into the sump when the pump shuts off. Water flowing back into the sump can cause the pump to turn on and off more frequently than necessary,

which decreases the life of the pump.

Homeowners should consider having a battery-powered backup sump pump with fully charged batteries in case of a power outage, Scherer says.

HOW TO TEST A PUMP

To test whether the pump is operating properly:

- Make sure the pump is plugged in.
- Remove the sump's lid, if it has one, and use a flashlight to see whether the sump is clean and the pump outlet isn't plugged.
- Slowly pour about five gallons of water into the sump at the same speed that water normally would flow into the sump.
- Watch the on/off switch's action and listen to the pump.
- Make the pump turn on and off at least twice.

"If something doesn't work right, fix it as soon as possible," Scherer advises.

A number of factors, including the area of drainage connected to the sump and the depth of the basement, determine the right size sump pump for a house. However, a one-third horsepower pump generally works for most houses, he says.

Homeowners should not pump the water into their septic system or basement floor drain. Scherer says homeowners should discharge sump water at least 20 feet from their home in a way that the water will drain away from the house.

For more information about sump pumps, visit the NDSU Extension Service Web site at www.ag.ndsu.edu/flood.



While a sump pump won't be able to stave off floodwaters like those that inundated Linton in March 2009, it may be a homeowner's first line of defense against a waterlogged basement.

VERENDRYE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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