

Meeker Cooperative PIONEER

June 2019

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Light and Power Association

www.meeker.coop

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The Kurth's goal: Working smarter, not harder

With the roller coaster milk prices, demanding hours, total commitment and hard work, dairy farming might seem like the last choice of young couples today. However, for one young couple, they are meeting those challenges with positivity while even growing their business.

"It's a lifestyle," said Bill Kurth, who milks 120 cows on a farm he owns near Cosmos with his wife Leah. Bill was raised on a dairy farm and it got into his blood naturally. Leah is a different story.

"I was raised in town," she said. "Friends ask me if 15 years ago I would have ever thought I'd be milking cows. No, not ever." Yet despite being adopted into the lifestyle Leah is now one of its biggest champions. She wants people to know all the good that comes from the life they've chosen.

"We're not just raising animals, we're raising kids, too," Leah said. "I don't dislike how I was brought up, but I can see some differences. Like we go to school conferences and teachers tell us that we have such good kids. They're leaders in their group, and you don't have to tell them what to do.That's because they know they have responsibilities and obligations."



Their three children; Larkun, 12; Livia, 8; and Briecyn, 5; are kept busy with chores appropriate to their ages, from Livia and Briecyn feeding calves to Larkun helping mom in the milking parlor.

Blending life and business

Owning a farm, especially a dairy farm, is not an 8-5 job that you can leave at the end of the day. Owning your own business, especially a home-based business, means it's difficult to get away from it. Dairy farms have to balance size of herd to cost, to manpower, to space available, to lifestyle. Smaller herds are easier for one family to manage, but then the family is always there, twice a day every day, to milk the herd. Growing bigger allows enough money

to hire help occasionally, but then that requires additional resources, such as food and space.

"Our goal was to work smarter, not harder," Bill said. "Now we have grown and gotten more efficient we have good, consistent hired help so we are able to see the value of spending time with family off the farm," Bill said.

The Kurths feel that dairies are being pushed to get bigger. Realistically, there's a need for growth to accommodate family members who want to farm, too.

"You really need to have about 100 cows now to make a living," Bill said. But that may vary with the operation.

"It varies with the cost of living, also," Leah added. "Do you need the nice, fancy things or are you okay with simpler needs?"

The size of herd balanced with the price of milk often determines how well the business fares at any given time.

Smarter, not harder
continued on page 3

VIBRANT Broadband is online at www.VIBRANTBB.net

VIBRANT Broadband is almost here! If you're interested in fast broadband internet with no caps on bandwidth and frustration-free streaming, gaming and more, you'll find all the information you need at www.VIBRANTBB.net! **And you can sign up there, too, and we'll notify you when we're installing in your area.**

This website has all the packages, prices, installation requirements, resources and answers to questions you may have.

If you like what you see, there is a "Sign Up Today" button for you to add yourself to the list of those interested in receiving VIBRANT Broadband. We will notify you when we're in your area delivering service.

We also have a VIBRANT Facebook page at www.facebook.com/vibrantbb.net.

Your wait is nearly over! Visit us online and add your name to our list today!

Smart Technology for Superior Service, Quality and Performance.
Powered by Meeker Cooperative

VIBRANT Broadband is your local high speed internet and phone provider.

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A VIBRANT Broadband Construction Update

Away We Go

Since last October we have been acquiring easements, putting in duct, installing poles, rebuilding overhead power lines, and hanging strand for fiber optic lines, all in anticipation of hooking up our first VIBRANT customer.

Our construction plan is a two-year build-out which makes it a challenge on our part as many members have already indicated that they want and need high-speed internet service now. Obviously, no one wants to be on the back end of the two-year build-out and we are diligently working to try and move construction along as quickly as possible. With some of the conversations I've had with members hoping to get hooked up as soon as possible, I can only imagine that the same type of conversations happened in the mid-thirties when the Co-op was first installing electric lines. Everyone wanted to be in that first phase of the build-out to receive electricity.

Following is a little information on our VIBRANT Broadband construction activities:

Thank You

Let's start with easements. This task in itself is quite daunting. For the entire project we anticipate the need for about 1,200 different easements. Writing them for each parcel of land, contacting the land owners, meeting with them, getting the landowner signatures, getting them notarized and then filing them in the appropriate county courthouse takes a good deal of time. To date, about 95 percent of our members we have contacted have granted the Co-op an easement to either hang the fiber optic line from the existing poles or to install it underground. We estimate we are about 80 percent complete on the easement process.

To those of you that have granted an easement, "thank you, thank you, thank you!" Gaining easements and placing the lines within those easements rather than in the road right-of-way saves the Co-op money. Of course in the end, as the member-owners of Meeker Co-op, it is your money that is being saved.

Fiber Underground or Overhead

How did we determine if the fiber optic line is going in overhead or underground? As we planned this project, we began with the premise that we would do "like for like." That means that where Meeker Co-op had existing overhead lines we would try and attach to those poles. Where we had existing underground power lines, we would install fiber in duct (conduit) underground. As a side note:

due to the nature of fiber optics we made the decision not to direct bury any main fiber lines. All of our backbone and lateral lines to the poles will be placed in a duct. The duct is the orange-colored stuff you see sticking out of the ground or on reels around the service territory as construction progresses. This duct does not contain fiber optic lines. The fiber optic lines are only installed after the duct has been installed and secured to cabinets or underground handholes.

As planning continued we looked at the overhead lines and where there was just too much "make ready" we changed from going overhead to underground. Make ready is the process of ensuring an additional line on a pole meets all safety standards. For example, the National Electrical Safety Code, which we must follow, mandates lines be a certain height going across different types of roads or approaches into fields or driveways. If the new line does not meet the height requirement, we would be required to change out the poles to taller ones. Another safety factor is that fiber lines or any communication lines may only be placed so close to power lines or certain electrical equipment without other precautions taken. Sometimes the cost of making these necessary "make ready" changes to the overhead poles didn't make economic sense versus installing it underground, especially if we were already in the area with the underground equipment.

Although we are a long way from finished with the fiber build-out, we are estimating about 60 to 70 percent of the fiber lines will be going in underground with the remaining lines being installed overhead.

Fall vs. Spring

Although we made good construction progress last fall, the heavy snowfall this winter put a stop to any fiber construction. Once the snow started to melt, we again started construction only to be slowed down by the road restrictions going on earlier than usual. Now, of course, the unrelenting rain has significantly slowed construction. As we can all see, every road ditch is overflowing with water and every field is a water-logged mud hole. We will just need Mother Nature to dry things out a bit for construction to get fully on track again.

Starting construction in Minnesota in October for a project of this size is not ideal but we felt it was important to get as much done as possible sooner rather than later. With as wet and muddy as this spring has been it turned out to be the right decision. Construction would be way behind had we waited to start this spring. That said, I certainly empathize with farmers trying to get the crops in the

field, the contractors working on road construction, home builders and landscapers — really everyone trying to accomplish anything outside this spring.

Testing

For those members who attended the Annual Meeting in April, you heard me say that on that day shortly after 6 p.m. we were finally able to get a fiber optic line into our office. With that in place we could continue to build out the "Head End" or "Central Office" room where all the fiber lines will be tied into and start testing that equipment.

We are now at the point of being able to test some of the equipment that will be used out on the broadband system along with equipment that will be installed in members homes. Ideally, testing will be complete in two months and then we can begin installing to customers wishing to receive high-speed internet service.

As we are able to install fiber along the construction route and turn up the various poles for the Fixed Wireless System, we will inform members around those areas so they can begin to sign up and have the VIBRANT Broadband system installed.

A Year Later

It was only one year ago that the Board of Directors made the decision to move forward to have the Co-op provide high-speed internet service. With all that has happened in that year from designing a system, route planning, equipment, and materials selection, construction contacts to hiring a few new employees to help run the system, I'm happy with our progress to date. Unfortunately, the last few weeks have certainly tested everyone's patience when it comes to being able to do the outside construction.

DID YOU KNOW

According to the Federal Reserve the average lifespan of each note is as follows:

- \$1 — 5.8 years
- \$5 — 5.5 years
- \$10 — 4.5 years
- \$20 — 7.9 years
- \$50 — 8.5 years
- \$100 — 15.0 years

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Meeker Pioneer

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The Meeker Pioneer is the official member publication of Meeker Cooperative and focuses on our members, programs and events. All member story ideas and comments are welcome. Send to Becky Sorenson at the address above.

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Use the "Contact Us" form on the home page

Meeker Cooperative Mission Statement

"To enhance the quality of life of the Cooperative's Members and Customers by providing safe, reliable, competitively priced energy and other value-added services, while practicing environmental stewardship."



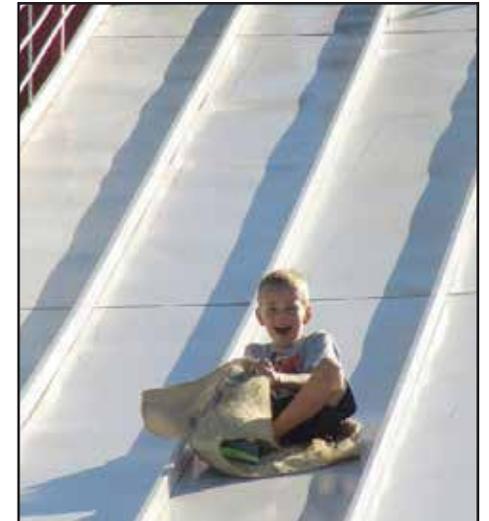
Save the Date: Member Appreciation is August 16!

Come join us at the "A maze'n Farmyard" in Eden Valley

Get **FREE admission**, a **FREE meal** and a **lot of fun** at our next Member Appreciation to be held at the family-fun A maze'n Farmyard on Hwy. 55 just outside of Eden Valley. This event runs from 4:30 to 8 p.m. on Friday, August 16. Here are just a few of the activities available:

- Bucket truck rides for all
- Parakeet house with seed pretzels to feed the birds
- Pond stocked with fish and a lovely photo-op bridge
- Dwarf goats with plenty of fun antics
- Huge 150-foot slide
- Two mazes
- Barn full of animals to hold and pet
- Miniature golf putting greens
- Snack & Gift Shop
- Pony Rides and Wagon Rides
- Water races and more!

Look for more information in the next edition of the Meeker Pioneer. Put this on your calendar and make plans to come!



Smarter, not harder

continued from page 1

"When we were first starting out in 2007, we were at a break-even point," Bill said. "Then in 2009 milk prices hit rock bottom, about \$10 per hundred weight. In 2013 we sold a few cows. We grow from within and we had so many cows we had to make the decision to either sell some or expand. There was no spot to expand, and not enough money to fund it, so we sold some cows."

Then in July 2014 milk prices jumped to \$25-\$30 per hundred weight but the Kurths were only milking about 20 cows so they couldn't take as much advantage of the high prices as they wished. The last three years, the Kurths have had a return on investment that is several dollars below the cost of production.

The decision to expand

With prices low, it's risky to plan an expansion. But in September of 2017 they purchased a farm just a mile down the road from a family friend of the Kurths who sold his cows and got out of the business. The neighbor had already sold the land and nobody wanted just a dairy facility. But it was just the right situation for Bill and Leah.

For the first 10 years of their milking operation, they were milking up to 60 cows in a tie-stall situation. That meant crouching down to milk each cow, switching cows in and out of the barn twice during each milking session, which led to being knocked around by the cows. Cleaning stalls had to be done manually and there was no good place for the calves.

The couple met with their Farm Business Management instructor from Ridgewater College, those involved in their Minnesota Dairy Initiative team, and others who are involved in the farm's

success. It took a year of financial planning to make the dream a reality. The freestall barn had to have new side curtains and overhead doors, and headlocks and stalls were replaced.

Once they moved the herd to the freestall barn, the old tie-stall barn was revamped by tearing out the stalls and putting up 19 individual 4 x 6-foot stalls which face the walkway, allowing Leah to easily feed the calves.

Now that a year has passed, they are seeing real benefits. They feel they've found their "groove."

"I'm not at the chiropractor as often," Bill said. "Now I can scrape stalls and feed the cows with a skid steer, which is much more efficient. I like working smarter."

Now the calves have a place of their own and are used to grow the herd from within. If they have the room, the Kurths will keep the bull calves longer and feed them the whole milk from treated and fresh cows, rather than throw it away.

"With milk prices so low, it makes more economic sense to give the milk to the bull calves and keep them a little longer. Sometimes we'll let them out in the summer to eat the grass.

"Our goal is to have 150 cows by fall," Bill said. "With the heifers we have coming up, we should make it."

Promoting dairy farming

The Kurths host school groups or others who are interested in dairy farming. They had the South Dakota State University Dairy Club stop by their farm on the way to the World Dairy Expo.



Leah and Bill Kurth in their new freestall dairy barn they purchased and refurbished for increasing their herd.



The Kurths now utilize a double-eight herringbone milking parlor which improves efficiency with less physical labor.

"People want transparency right now," Leah said. "They want to know where their food comes from and that they can trust where their food comes from."

"For most farmers, the cow comes first because that's where the money comes from," Leah added. "Everybody loves that picture of a cow laying in the sun in the middle of a green pasture, but from a realistic standpoint, we can better control

the inside than the outside. When it's 100 degrees outside, our cows are in the shade, getting sprinklers on them every 15 minutes, fans, and ventilation. It's probably 75 degrees in the barn. There aren't as many flies, they're not standing in mud after it rains. Our cows stand and lay on sand, which is better on their feet and legs."

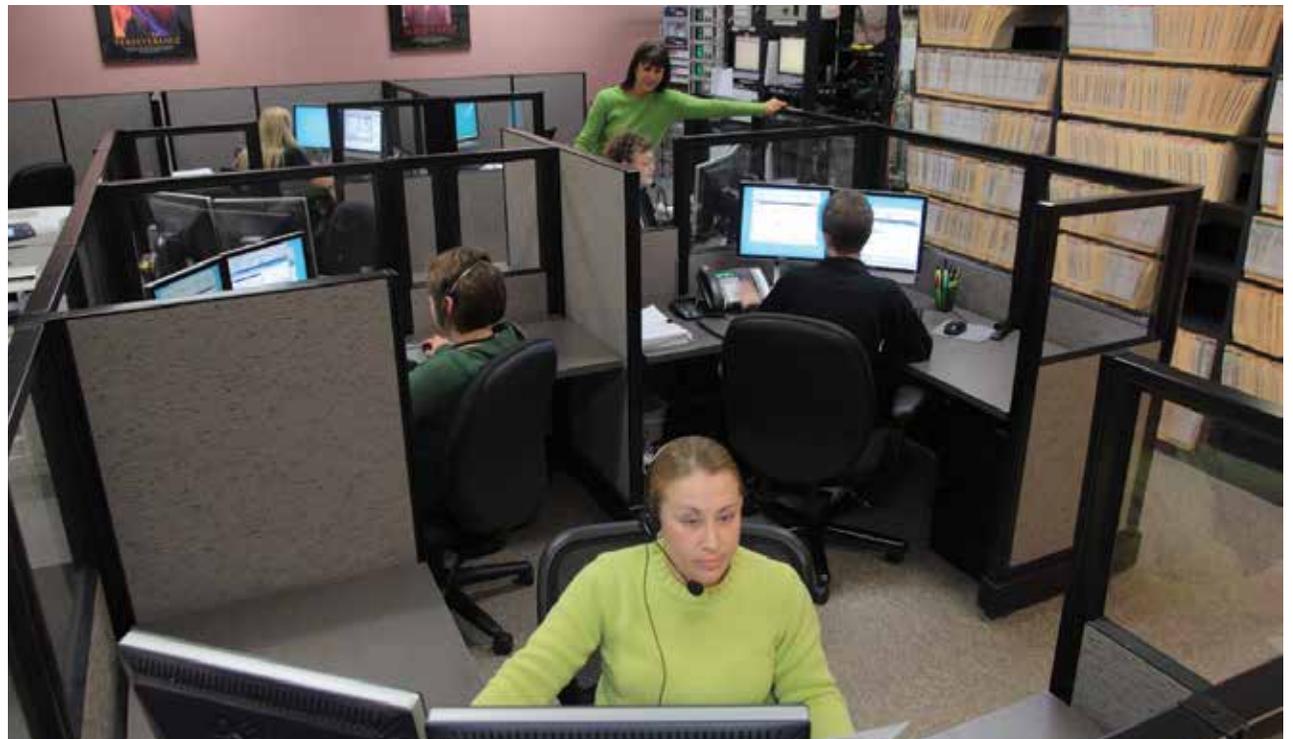
When all is said and done, it's the lifestyle that keeps the Kurths committed to their farm.

"This morning we had twin calves born," Leah said. "We can look outside and watch the dogs playing or see the kids coming down to help."

"When I asked Livia what she wants to be when she grows up, she said a dairy farmer," Bill said. "That's very rewarding."

Heartland Security Celebrates 20 Years!

Happy 20th Anniversary Heartland Security!



Hearthland Security was founded in January 1999 by nine electric co-ops. At that time 80 percent of cooperative members surveyed thought security systems would be a valuable service for the cooperatives to offer. Only two percent of homes had security systems at the time. The cooperatives worked together to create Heartland Security Services, LLC — now known as Heartland Security — with a mission “to enrich the lives of our customers by protecting their families, homes and businesses with innovative technologies, quality equipment, skilled installation, caring service and trusted monitoring.”

The mission has been fulfilled. As of today, Heartland Security offers members and non-members the following quality services:

- Home security
- Business security
- Ag monitoring (typically for hog barns)
- Medical alerts
- Camera systems
- Card access and
- Panic buttons

Heartland Security also offers environmental sensors to protect your home or business from water, carbon monoxide, smoke, extreme temperatures and freezing pipes. In addition, Heartland Security can upgrade you to a doorbell camera where you can answer the door from your smartphone, even if you're not home.

Since Heartland Security began in 1999, it has continued to upgrade its technologies to offer customers the most reliable products and services to keep up with the market. At this point a Heartland Security system can serve

as the hub to your smart home, helping you control your thermostat, lights, locks, garage doors and cameras — all from one app on your smartphone or tablet. Their alarm systems integrate with Amazon's Alexa, Google's Home and Apple smartwatches. You can add almost any kind of Z-wave device into your system from smart outlets to motorized window coverings. Location #24-18-402

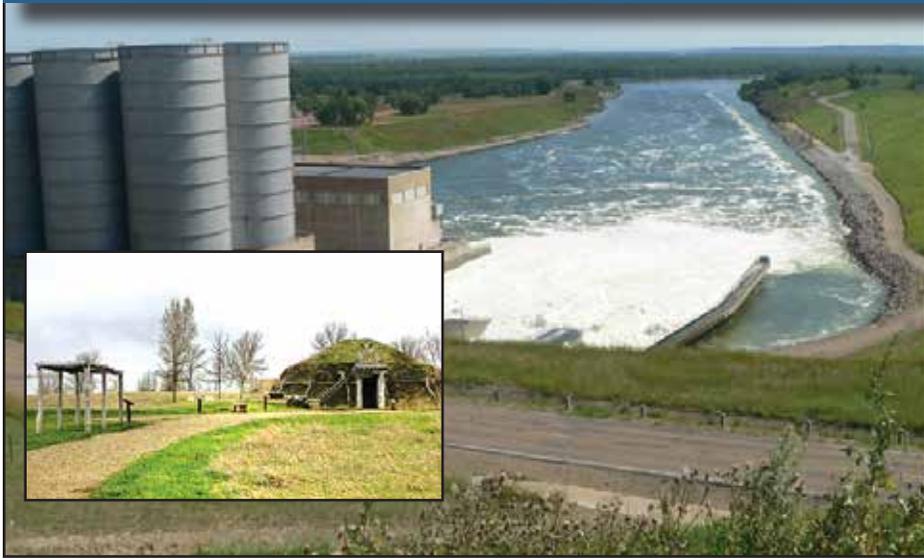
Heartland Security has installed systems in schools, banks, golf courses, restaurants, bars, resorts, colleges, liquor stores, gas stations, city buildings, courthouses, art galleries and doctor's offices.

You don't have to be a Co-op member to get a security system or medical alert from Heartland Security, but NEW installed and monitored systems and services will receive a 10 percent discount on the base package and \$1 off the monthly monitoring if you are a Meeker Cooperative member. Heartland Security also offers discounts to emergency responders, as well as active military and veterans (only one discount applies per account).

Heartland Security now has 23 full-time employees and eight part-time employees with sales representatives, alarm technicians and medical alert installers throughout their territory. The main office is located in Melrose with our operations manager, four administrative services employees, an in-office technician and our scheduler working from there. Vern Zimmer is the Heartland Security consultant for the Meeker Cooperative service territory. He can be reached at 320-995-6224 or vzimmer@heartlandss.com.

Their International UL-listed response center, Wright-Hennepin International Response Center (WHIRC), is located in Rockford, Minnesota, and earned Five Diamond Certification by the Central Station Alarm Association in recognition of their employee training in emergency dispatch response and customer service. WHIRC is staffed by highly trained dispatchers 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week, 365 days-a-year who are ready to respond to any alarm.

Join us for our 2019 North Dakota Energy Tour July 24-26!



Enjoy a three-day luxury coach tour to North Dakota's coal country July 24-26, 2019 to see how lignite coal is mined and turned into the electricity we need every single day!

This fun and educational trip includes the following highlights:

- Tour the Falkirk Mine and see the gigantic equipment used to supply 8 million tons of lignite each year.
- Tour Coal Creek Station, the largest power plant in North Dakota and learn why this plant is vitally important to our generation needs.
- Tour the Garrison Dam fisheries project and see the massive Dam
- Tour the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site to see how early Native Americans lived.

- Visit North Dakota Historical Center Museum, which has been remodeled and expanded.
- Two-night stay at the all-suite StayBridge Hotel in Bismarck with pool, spa, theater room, in-room kitchens, plush bedding, and nearby shopping.

Most meals are included in this trip, with the exception of fast food/coffee stops during the bus trip to and back from North Dakota and any restaurants you may visit during your free time.

Children 10 and older are welcome when accompanied by an adult.

Cost: \$175 per person single or double

Deadline: June 28 or when seats are filled!

We'll send a letter two weeks before we go with the schedule and trip details.

Energy Tour Reservation

Please reserve _____ places for the Energy Tour on July 24-26, 2019.

Name(s): _____

Account Number: _____

Phone: _____

Number of Reservations at \$175 each _____ Total \$ _____ **DEADLINE JUNE 28**

Return to: Meeker Cooperative, 1725 US Hwy. 12, Suite 100, Litchfield, MN 55355, ATTN: Becky Sorenson. Persons listed above will share a room.

Industry News

Plummeting battery prices to make EVs cheaper than gas cars in three years

Batteries have been getting smaller and cheaper so much faster than expected that the experts at Bloomberg NEF (BNEF) have had to revise their own projections for electric vehicles every year.

BNEF projected in 2017 that "the crossover point when electric vehicles will be cheaper upfront than a combustion vehicle" would be 2026 (nine years), BNEF energy analyst Nathaniel Bullard tweeted last week. But things have changed quickly since then and the timeframe has narrowed significantly: in 2018, it was 2024 (six years), and now, in 2019, BNEF projects the crossover point will be 2022 — just three years away.

Achieving parity for upfront, initial cost means that the buying decision for electric vehicles (EVs) is about to become a no-brainer. And that means decarbonizing much of the transportation sector is also becoming a no-brainer. Location #15-11-223

That's because EVs are already superior to gasoline cars in many key respects: they have faster acceleration, much lower maintenance costs, zero tail-pipe emissions, and a much lower per-mile fueling cost than petrol cars, even when running on carbon-free fuel.

Bullard explains in a Bloomberg article that this crossover will start in 2022 for large vehicles in Europe, but quickly spread to smaller vehicles and other parts of the world as battery prices continue to plummet. Indeed, he notes that as recently as 2015, batteries were 57 percent of the cost of a U.S. medium-sized car. Today that is down to 33 percent, and by 2025, batteries will be a mere 20 percent of total EV cost.

-Think Progress

No Bake Strawberry Lasagna

Lois Dahl of Dassel submitted this month's winning recipe for **No Bake Strawberry Lasagna**. She will have \$10 credited to her account. Congratulations!

No Bake Strawberry Lasagna

Crust:

36 Golden Oreo cookies
½ cup butter, melted

1-1/4 cup whipped cream
1-1/3 cup diced fresh strawberries

Cheesecake layer:

½ cup butter
1 cup powdered sugar
8 oz. softened cream cheese

Jell-o layer

3 oz. strawberry gelatin
½ cup boiling water
1 cup strawberry Greek yogurt
4 cups whipped cream

Crush oreo cookies and mix with melted butter. Press in 9x13 pan and chill. Cream together softened butter, cream cheese and powdered sugar. Fold in whipped cream and strawberries. Spread on crust and chill. Dissolve Jell-o in boiling water, whisk in yogurt. Fold in whipped cream until smooth. Pour over cream cheese layer. Refrigerate 2-3 hours. Spread additional whipped cream on top. Decorate with sliced strawberries or curls of white chocolate.

For July, submit your favorite Pot Luck Recipe by June 28 to: Meeker Cooperative, ATTN: Becky Sorenson, 1725 US Hwy 12, Suite 100, Litchfield, MN 55355

2019 Basin Scholarship Winners

Basin Electric Power Cooperative offers \$1,000 scholarships for high school graduates each year. One scholarship is for children of cooperative members. The other is for children of employees of cooperatives. This year, Meeker Co-op was excited to be able to award scholarships to graduates in both categories. Congratulations to this year's scholarship winners:



Julie Eggert, daughter of John and Jodi Eggert. John is an Energy Management employee at Meeker Co-op. Julie is a graduate of Litchfield High School and plans to attend SDSU in Brookings, SD. to study business economics and accounting.



Taylor Smith, daughter of David and Angela Smith, Litchfield, who are members of Meeker Cooperative. A Litchfield High School graduate, she plans to attend Northwestern College in St. Paul with a focus on biology and pre-physical therapy.

Congratulations to these Meeker Co-op Electric Trust \$1,000 Scholarship winners!

ACGC Senior High School Lindsey Minnick, Dylan Studemann
 Dassel-Cokato High School Samuel Resop, Morgan Wozniak
 Eden Valley-Watkins High School... Ashley Hansen, Anna Kahlstorf
 Hutchinson High School Grace Kalenberg, Elle Petersen
 Kimball Area High School.....Casey Gohmann, Amaya Lyrek
 Litchfield Senior High SchoolNatalie Hansen, Kylee Jones
 Paynesville High School.....Eric Johnson, Luke Johnson
 BOLD High SchoolNo Eligible Student

Grill Winner

The Litchfield Chamber of Commerce held a Business Expo May 4 and Meeker Cooperative attended to introduce attendees to the new VIBRANT Broadband service coming soon.



Attendees who visited Meeker Cooperative's booth were entered into a random drawing for an electric tabletop grill. After the event, the drawing was held and Joan Eurele of Litchfield was the winner.

Congratulations Joan!

Cut more than grass with an electric lawn mower

For years, electric lawn mowers were little more than a novelty. Most were corded, meaning you were tethered to an electrical outlet, constantly moving the cord out of the mower's path. And early iterations of battery-powered mowers (often expensive and underpowered) could rarely cut a ¼-acre yard on a single charge.

That all changed a few years ago, when the Ego LM2002 became the first electric model that performed well enough in our tests to make Consumer Report's list of recommended mowers. Since then, other manufacturers have gotten serious about investing in lithium-ion battery technology, and the results speak for themselves.

"Today, the best battery-powered push mowers cut as well as comparable gas versions," says test engineer Frank Spinelli, who oversees CR's lawn mower testing. Location #25-30-105

In Consumer Report's lawn mower ratings, they now recommend many battery push mowers. And prices have come down, too. You can now score a top-tier electric mower for about \$400.

Although mowers that use an electric motor are still typically more expensive than gas mowers, a big part of that cost lies in the lithium-ion battery that powers the machine. But that investment can pay off in other ways: You can use your mower's battery to power other outdoor gear from the same brand, power tools such as string trimmers, leaf blowers, snow blowers, and more.

No longer second-class citizens, the best battery-powered electric mowers cut grass just as well as their gas counterparts. Battery mowers utilize rechargeable lithium-ion battery packs and are available in both push and self-propelled varieties. They are much easier to store and maintain than gas mowers, but their relatively short battery run times make them better suited to smaller yards.



Pros: Most battery mowers cut a 20- or 21-inch swath, and their batteries are interchangeable with other outdoor power tools from the same brand. They also start with push-button ease, produce no exhaust emissions, and run more quietly than gas models. They don't require oil changes or frequent tuneups.

Cons: They have a limited runtime—usually enough to cut one-third acre. Battery-powered self-propelled models use up to 20 percent of the battery charge to power the wheels, so you won't be able to cut as much grass unless you buy larger or additional batteries. And they're pricier than gas models, though you'll recoup that cost over time.

Upkeep: Battery mowers require little upkeep beyond blade sharpening.

Best for: Yards smaller than one-third acre.

Source: Consumer Reports

Be on the Lookout for Private Facilities in Your Yard

Private underground facilities, also called customer-owned facilities, may be found anywhere, including your excavation site. Chapter 216D requires operators of lines buried in the public right-of-way to register with Gopher State One Call (GSOC), so these lines will be marked as the result of a locate request.

Privately-owned facilities, like utility lines that serve heaters for hot tubs, gas barbecues, electric security lighting, invisible dog fences, farm taps, buried sprinklers systems, and many others, are not marked when locators respond to your GSOC request, since they are the owner's responsibility. Let's take a look at some common types of private underground facilities.

Common private facility types include:

Propane is a fuel source used to heat residential buildings, swimming pools, grills, fireplaces, and appliances, among others. In agricultural settings, it can be a fuel source for buildings, corn dryers, and other equipment. Commercial and industrial locations also rely on propane as a fuel source for heating and backup facilities.

Natural Gas can fuel grills, pool heaters, yard lights, or heaters in outbuildings like sheds, garages, and barns. Natural gas may travel through a "master meter" to a residential building. As a general rule, natural gas facility operators will mark underground gas lines only from the main to the meter, making the lines on the "other side" of the meter a private facility. Location #10-06-204

Electricity can also be supplied to a "master meter" to power multi-resident properties, such as trailer parks, town homes, or apartment complexes. These lines may connect outbuildings like garages, sheds, and barns to a source of power. Remember that the locators usually only mark the public power lines up to the meter.

Farm Taps are private natural gas lines. All the equipment from the outlet of the meter (usually, but not always, located near the pipeline) to the house, corn dryer, milk house, or barn belongs to the landowner and will not be located. Farm taps support many farms, and as farms have expanded, adding more houses and buildings to the original farmstead, private lines attached to a single tap have increased in number.



Some other types of private facility lines are underground sprinkler systems, data communications cables, fiber optic lines, septic systems, and waste collection lines, among others. In agricultural settings, drain tile and irrigation lines are often buried.

If you are installing private facilities, consider doing the following:

- Prepare maps of any new facilities.
- Bury tracer wire with the new facilities.
- Use above ground markers or signs to indicate the buried facilities.

If you are a land-owner or a professional excavator digging on private property, there is a

good chance that there are private facilities in your work area. Look for above-ground warning signs such as a "master meter" or "farm tap" and any former colored marks or flags and contact whomever installed the lines to determine if any current records or maps exist of the area.

Protect yourself by investing the time necessary to determine if there are private utility lines buried in your area of excavation!

You, or the owner of the property, may have to contact a PRIVATE LOCATOR to get private lines marked.

Source: Lareina Taing, Gopher State One Call

Do you have past Capital Credits coming to you?

If you have ever received power from Meeker Cooperative, you may be entitled to receive past Capital Credits. To check to see if your name is on our list of past members, go to: www.meeker.coop, choose "About Us" from the list of options across the top of the home page, then click on "Capital Credits." You will find a blue link called "Unclaimed Capital Credits." Click on that link and you can download the PDF of the complete list. Or you may call our office to have a list sent to you by email.

If your name is on the list, or if you recognize someone else's name on the list, please contact Alicia at 320-693-3231.

After seven years of unsuccessful attempts to locate members with outstanding Capital Credit balances, the State of Minnesota allows the Co-op to donate these funds to the Operation Round Up program to use for educational purposes.

HOT WATER. NO WORRIES



85-gallon and 50-gallon Marathon water heaters to fit your space

Money-saving interruptible water heating is affordable and easy.

All you need is a super-efficient water heater 50 gallons or larger like the Marathon water heater. We will deliver the water heater and sign you up for the program. You take advantage of an incredible rebate of up to \$800 off the purchase price!

Perfect for cabins, homes and businesses with limited space.

**Call today for details!
320-693-3231**

Your July bill may be higher

With the beginning of Meeker Cooperative's summer rate of 12.3¢ per kilowatt hour June 1, the energy you used in June will be at this higher rate. This may result in a slightly higher bill in July. Beginning September 1, the rate will return to the fall/winter rate of 10.3¢/kWh.

If you are on an Energy Management program, your summer rate for your heating/cooling will be 6.2¢/kWh in the summer and 5.7¢/kWh the remaining months. For information on how to receive the low Energy Management electric rate, contact us at 320-693-3231.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Want to light up your outdoor space without increasing your energy use? Try outdoor solar lights! They're easy to install and virtually maintenance free. Remember, solar lights work best when the solar cells receive the manufacturer's recommended hours of sunlight.

Source: *energy.gov*



Pioneer Ads — Free want ad service for members. Please limit your ad to nine words, one word per line. One phone number please. Use the coupon below or pick one up in our office. Ads will be printed for one month only. Submit again for addtl. months. Three ads per member per month limit. Include your name and address, which will be used for identification purposes only. Ads received by **June 28** will be included in the July issue.

Please run this ad in the next Pioneer

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Telephone number: _____

Please check ad category

- For Sale, Misc.
- Agricultural
- Automotive
- Wanted
- Giveaway
- Service
- For Rent

Remember to limit your ad to nine words!

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____
 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____
 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____

Clip and Send to: Meeker Cooperative, 1725 US Hwy. 12, Suite 100, Litchfield, MN 55355 Attn: Becky Sorenson or email rsorenson@meeker.coop

For Sale - Miscellaneous

- 1979 15-ft. Lund boat w/15hp motor. \$1,200. 320-693-7546.
- Golf clubs/bag. Bob Martin. Putter, 2,3,5,6,7, 2 drivers. \$20. 320-583-5621.
- Harley jacket. Black w/ grey accent. \$275, lk. new. 320-905-6597.
- Med. cabt. w/light, 44"W x 40"H. \$15. 320-485-2649.

- Kenmore 70-pint dehumidifier, lk. new. \$75/ obo. 320-275-3882.
- 20-ft. Pontoon/30hp Johnson/trailer. \$2,400/ obo. 320-221-2822.
- Elec. Log firepl., \$50 ; Bunk beds \$25; Dbl. Bed/ matr. \$10. 320-221-1317.
- Craftsman 42" 20hp riding lawn mower, uses oil. 430 hrs. \$100. 651-283-2802.

- Eleven Musky baits in Plano Tackle Systems. 320-693-8369.
- H-D helmet, XL; Sears roto spader; Forney Welder. 320-693-3070.
- 2016 Polaris Ranger SxS/570 UTV, EPS/EFI, low mi. 320-212-7655.
- 14-ft. Maden Alum. boat/9.9 Suzuki motor/ trailer. 320-699-9788.
- Cement mixer w/elec. motor, one wheel, barrel size. 320-693-8464.
- 2003 Coleman mesh pop-up camper, exc. cond. 320-894-5782.
- Mobile hm. PK model, 8x24-ft., sleeps 6, lrg. kit., full ba. \$4,700/obo. 612-237-8116.
- Home on Lk. Minnie Belle, dbl. garage, 191-ft. shore. 320-693-8492.
- Walnut table, 43x54 w/6 chairs. 320-693-8492.
- Toro 8" cordless trimmer. 320-693-8492.

- 14-ft. Crestliner fiberglass fish. Boat/trailer. \$300/obo. 320-275-4170.
- Tappen LP gas 30" range, almond. \$25/obo. 320-275-4170.
- Six Larson storm windows 44x55, 3 doors. \$50. 320-221-3635.
- 12' Porta-Bote, folds for roof rack. \$199. 320-221-3635.
- Stihl gas pole chain saw. \$375. 320-693-8375.
- Evenflo BabyGo portbl. Playard 25"x38" w/zip. storage bag. 320-693-8405.
- Two metal chairs/metal picnic table/glass top 3'x4-1/2'. 320-693-8405.
- BB hoop, fibergl. Backbrd., adjust. portbl. stand. 320-693-8405.
- 1-yr.-old top-load Maytag washer, commercial tech. \$650/obo. 320-583-7103.
- Brown/tan plaid sofa bed, lk. new. \$100. 507-778-4102.
- Antique 45" dia. oak pedestal table. \$125. 320-275-4159.
- Lennox Pulse furnace. Always serviced. Circa 1990. \$150/obo. 320-434-1766.
- Titan airless paint sprayer. Used little, exc. cond. \$175. 320-275-2421.
- Star Lk. home, furnished, bunkhse. shed, pontoon. \$185,000. 507-429-2733.
- Picnic table, redwood, new boards, bench style. \$40. 952-938-8269.
- Portable encl. satellite toilet. \$165/obo. 952-938-8269.
- '78 approx. 27-ft. Travel trailer w/pullout bed, 2 singles. \$950/obo. 952-938-8269.
- Dog kennel, 5'H x 5'W x 18'L, large Dogloo doghse., lk. new. 320-275-3601.

- Homemade ¾ ton Studebaker trailer. 320-275-3601.
- Two 50' wood snow fences; lots of canning jars. 320-275-3601.
- Two 38" antique iron wheels. \$45/both. 320-275-3413.
- 3-1/2 hp front garden tiller. 320-693-8464.
- Cedar deck boards, 1x6", 6-8-ft. lengths, slightly used, gd. cond. 320-221-2487.

For Sale - Automotive

- 1997 Chev. 6-1/2' box pickup, very little rust. \$200. 320-292-6628.
- 1997 Ford Expedition, runs well, clean, 5.4, 4x4. \$1,500. 320-296-5874.
- 1999 Ford Ranger XLT, 171K mi. 320-857-9400.
- 4 mounted., balanced tires on Buick Century rims (2000-2006) #205/70/R15. \$150. 320-275-2795.

For Sale - Agricultural

- New Holland 327 manure spreader, gd. cond. \$950/ obo. 320-221-1954.
- Bantam Red Old English chicks, hatched May 6. 320-693-8464.
- McKee 1981 round baler Model #1578. \$1,200. 320-693-6504.
- John Deere flail chopper, gd. working cond. \$500/ obo. 320-221-1954.
- 1,000 gal. fuel tank w/ pump. 320-275-2842.
- Vibra Shank field cultivator, 18 feet. 320-275-2842.
- Barge box, 7-ft x 12-ft. w/ hoist, gd. running gear. 320-275-2842.
- Allis mounted 2 bottom plow, CA coupler. \$200. 320-221-3635.

- John Deere 400 feed mill. \$1,500 firm. 320-221-1730.
- One Meyer forage box 4618, lk. new. 320-877-7760.
- Hayrack w/excellent running gear. Painted, sealed, travels well. \$700. 320-420-4951.
- IH 370 disc, 14-ft. w/ hydraulic ram. \$450/ obo. 320-693-5502 or 320-269-1057.

Wanted

- Any kind of metals. Will pick up or clean up. 320-905-5625.
- Old anvil, the larger the better! 320-249-2838.
- Unwanted riding lawn mowers, running or not. Free pick up. 320-693-5884.

Giveaway

- FREE woodchips from stump, ½ pickup full. 952-454-4472.
- 10 tomato cases, several sizes, round type, gd. cond. 320-221-2487.

Services

- Stump grinding, any size job. John's Stump Grinding. 320-583-9158.
- Denfeld Welding Machine, shaft rebuild, mobile welding, machine welding. 320-250-6533.
- Painting: Interior/ Exterior, Cleaning services. 320-583-6210.
- Plumbing, heating, repairs, remodels, Mastercraft, mechanical. Call Paul 320-292-9483.
- Quality paint/stain, Int./ Ext. decks, woodwork. 320-201-3076.

Find your location number

Four location numbers have been hidden within this **Pioneer**. If you find your number and claim it by calling Meeker Cooperative by June 28, you will have \$10 credited to your account! If you find your number and your information is correct in our system, you'll receive a bill credit equal to one month's output from a Member Solar panel. Richard Bengtson of Paynesville found his location number and will receive a credit on his electric bill. Good luck!

