

ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MARCH 2018

Showing support for farmers and ranchers



Area Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives including Roughrider Electric participated in KFYP Radio's 41st-annual Agri-International in Bismarck in February, to acknowledge the importance of agriculture in our economy. Because so many of our cooperative members attend this event, we sponsor a booth so member services representatives including **Steve Hildebrand** can visit and answer questions about innovative electric heat products and services. We also sponsor the Living Ag Classroom, where hundreds of students learn how their food is planted, grown and harvested. From the variety of booths and seminars to the toy show, Roughrider thanks all those who make this educational event possible.

PHOTO BY CARMEN DENNEY

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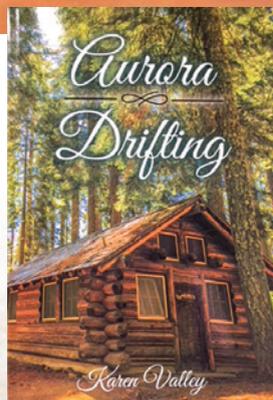
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N.D. author turns hard times into credible storylines

STORY AND PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY



*Married and widowed four times, and once living homeless in a car for years, **Karen Valley** says if she didn't have bad luck, she wouldn't have any. The mother of five grown children, Karen is still researching and writing new material in longhand, before typing it and sending to her publisher.*



A magnet on Karen Valley's fridge holds the smallest, shortest, most important message. It reads, "You matter." Eighty-four years old, Karen has been a teacher, historian, artist, author and human-rights advocate who surely doesn't need a magnet to remind her of her successes and self-worth. Regardless, she reads those powerful words every time she opens the door. She has learned to believe.

Karen, a Roughrider Electric Cooperative member from Lefor, has written more than 30 novels; 20 of which have been published and are available for purchase. Born during the Great Depression to parents who did not want another child, Karen was thrown out a second-story window during an unrecorded birth, by a brilliant mother who suffered from severe depression. Saved by aunts who found her in the snow and helped raise her, Karen learned at an early age to listen. To learn. To get the best grades. By 11 years old, she was painting and writing poetry in a narrow-lined notebook.

"I spent my whole younger life trying to make my parents see that I was worth having," she says.

Educated in a country school in South Dakota, Karen was mostly self-taught. "Teachers weren't well-educated themselves at the time; they were six-week wonders who had taken six weeks of training at a teacher's school," she says.

Karen's parents told her to stop writing and wasting her time. Education and ambition didn't make a girl more attractive to a suitor, and that was their goal — get her married and out of the house. She was another mouth to feed.

Karen didn't listen. In between the ages of 11 and 19, she wrote 10 novels.

"It's how I escaped; into the stories I wrote," she says.

She attended high school in South Dakota until one day, she walked out frustrated; she felt the teachers were only educating the boys. Karen later attended some college, wanting to earn a degree so she could be better paid for the work she was doing. Very-well read by this point, she once again felt frustrated; she knew more about the material being taught than her professors.

To pay the bills, Karen illustrated cartoons and

wrote human interest stories for a newspaper, all while researching material to incorporate into future novels. Many of the books she read were about men and adventures. She remembers asking herself, “Why do they get to have all the fun?” And, “Why do they use all that filthy language?”

She knew she could do better.

“There are still decent people in this world who want to read a wholesome novel; especially the elderly and the incapacitated. Reading is about all they have,” she says.

Already an accomplished writer, Karen focused on moral storylines centering on topics, events and geographic areas she knew well. She reads about 250 books a year, and if she needs more information, she researches before writing, so her work is authentic and credible.

In her novel *Aurora Drifting*, the heroine heads to the Alaskan wilderness to test camping equipment, and finds herself involved in a deadly high-stakes mystery. Karen, who has never been to the Land of the Midnight Sun, read every book in the Dickinson library that took place in Alaska, and her diligence was rewarded. After she mailed a copy of the book to fellow author Sarah Palin, she received a letter from the former governor, who told her she had nailed the scenery.

Aurora Drifting is probably Karen’s most widely read novel, and it can be purchased in area bookstores or online.

Another favorite is *The Last Hunt*, a novel she wrote after working at a hunting camp in Yellowstone National Park, where she cooked for hunters. In the novel, the heroine runs a hunting lodge, and a rich man from the city comes to stay and hunt — and ultimately find love, and the wrath of a bear. This book’s sequel is *Credence Creek*.

The book *Doctor, Doctor* draws on Karen’s experiences of going to school and feeling frustrated that women did not receive the same quality of education as men. In the novel, a young woman is trained to be a doctor in the late 18th century, when women were only allowed to work as midwives. She travels to a mine where her father works as a doctor to join him, and finds him strangely gone — and a man much less qualified in his place.

In the true story *Dirt*, a young man who was abused by his father leaves home and becomes a saddle bronc champion in Wyoming. His father dies and leaves property to the son that is seemingly worthless. The young man returns home with his rodeo horses to work the land. After building his house out of a torn-down elevator, he

can’t even afford the propane needed to heat the home. At rock bottom, he learns the property rests on miles of coal — and he ends up a millionaire.

In addition to these novels and more, Karen has written *The Walking Plow*, a biography on how her great-grandparents homesteaded. She’s also written *Horses In Fact and In Fantasy*, *Children on the Ranch*, and *Foxes Have Dens*, a coloring book that was purchased by the state of Wyoming and added to the school curriculum.

“Each book I write, there’s a reason behind it,” she says.

Karen’s intention was never to become rich or famous; she simply wanted to tell stories — and have the books pay for themselves. At odds with the commercial publishing industry, and what little authors receive for their creativity and labor, Karen markets the books herself by driving from library to library and selling them herself.

She’s experienced moderate success at times, selling stacks of books at various libraries and bookstores across several states. While she is far from wealthy, she is surrounded by wealth of sorts; her home is a museum of original, handwritten manuscripts, and the artwork she has created in the 20 years she’s lived there. Much like her mother, who could do algebra in her head, or play the violin or piano, Karen is an artistic prodigy.

One story she’s never told is her own, and how her mother tried to kill her two more times after birth. She died in 1986, on Karen’s birthday. Prior to her passing, she told Karen she was the least-loved child out of the five kids, and that she never was any good.

“Those were the last words she spoke. Maybe it made me tough. Maybe it made me determined to do what I wanted to do,” she says.

With wit and resolve, Karen says out of all the bad things that have happened to her, and there are plenty, they don’t bother her anymore.

“I have a personal relationship with God. I’ve read the Bible 54 times and I know what it says. I also know what it does not say. That was what took the burden off,” she says. “Without a relationship with God, I would never have had the inner strength to do this. I was meant to be.”

And she was.

Regardless, it’s still nice to receive affirmation — even if it’s in the form of a magnet.

Thank you, Karen, for sharing your story.

If you would like to purchase one of Karen’s books, call her at 701-290-0382. Mention that you read about her in the Roughrider *North Dakota Living* local pages and receive a discount. ■

Mark your calendars for the 2018 Annual Meeting

Roughrider Electric Cooperative will hold its annual meeting **Wednesday, June 6**, at Hazen High School. Look for more information in upcoming issues of *North Dakota Living*.

Vote by mail 2018 Annual Meeting

In 2009, Roughrider Electric Cooperative's board of directors decided to offer the members the option of voting by mail. Ballots and instructions will be mailed prior to the annual meeting. Under the bylaws, no nominations are accepted from the floor at the annual meeting. A qualified member of Roughrider Electric Cooperative may become a candidate for election by being nominated by the Nominating Committee or by a petition submitted not less than 60 days before the meeting.

Mail-in ballots will only be sent to members upon request. To request a ballot, please contact Steve Hildebrand at 701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533 prior to May 11. You may also contact Steve at: shildebrand@roughriderelectric.com

TO: All Members
FROM: Donald A. Franklund and Travis M. Kupper, Alliance Co-General Managers
SUBJECT: Nomination Process

To comply with Rural Utilities Service requirements, we must provide each member with a summary of the bylaws on the nomination process prior to the nomination of candidates for board positions. The following is the bylaw section on nominations:

SECTION 4. Nominations.

- (a) A Nominating Committee shall be selected by the Board of Directors in time for its first meeting to be held before the annual meeting of members in 2009 and for each annual meeting of members thereafter. The Nominating Committee shall consist of an equal number of members from each of the Cooperative's Districts and a minimum of two members from each district shall be selected. No member of the Board of Directors may serve on the Nominating Committee. The Board of Directors shall establish rules for the conduct of and arrange for the meeting of the Nominating Committee. The Secretary shall notify the members of the Nominating Committee in the manner provided by Article II, Section 4 delivered at least fifteen days before the date set for the Committee meeting. From and after 2009, the Nominating Committee shall meet at least sixty days before the annual meeting of members to nominate at least one qualified candidate for each directorship for which there is a vacancy to be filled by a vote of the members. Upon conclusion of the meeting, the Nominating Committee shall cause a list of nominees for Directors to be posted at the principal office of the Cooperative.
- (b) By petition, any fifteen or more members of the same district acting together may make other nominations for each directorship in that district for which there is a vacancy to be filled by a vote of the members, provided the petition is filed with the Secretary not less than sixty days prior to the annual meeting of members. The Secretary shall cause to be posted such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted.
- (c) The Secretary shall cause to be mailed, with the notice of the annual meeting of members, or separately but at least fifteen days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of Directors to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates, specifying separately the nominations made by the Nominating Committee and also the nominations made by petition, if any.
- (d) Unless voting by mail for directorships has been approved, the President, acting as Chairman of the meeting, shall invite additional nominations from the floor and nominations shall not be closed until a reasonable time has passed during which no additional nominations have been made. No member may nominate more than one candidate at any single annual meeting of members.

The Nominating Committee appointed by the board consists of **Gordon Ficek**, Dickinson; **Ivo Schoch**, New England; **Alan Kadmas**, Dickinson; **Bruce Voegele**, Beulah; **David V. Sadowsky**, Dickinson; **Robert Fitterer**, Golden Valley; **John Smith**, Beulah; **Lee Alderin**, Center; and **Robert Schmidt**, Center.

One committee meeting was held Jan. 26 in Hazen and another was held Feb. 23 in Dickinson.

If you have questions concerning nominations, feel free to contact anyone on the Nominating Committee or please call our office for information.

Operations outlook for 2018

BY JASON BENTZ, MANAGER OF OPERATIONS

Every day, our linemen are working in the field to keep the electric system in as good of condition as possible. A few of the jobs they take on as part of this mission are replacing sections of aging, faulting underground cable, converting some overhead lines to underground, and replacing poles that have been tested out as rejects.

Last year, Roughrider Electric Cooperative hired RAM Utilities, a company based in Moorhead, Minn., to test distribution poles. Inspection and maintenance are important steps in maintaining system reliability. More than 7,000 poles were tested and 134 were replaced.

Starting this spring and continuing through summer, RAM Utilities will test another 7,000 distribution poles on our system, looking for weathered and loose parts, and making repairs. With a reject rate of just below 2 percent, we anticipate replacing about 120 poles.

We do partner with contractors on large or specialized projects, as Roughrider's linemen stay busy with planned projects. Also this year, line crews will:

- Upgrade aged overhead single-phase lines;
- Replace defective underground cable; and
- Continue to inspect and maintain distribution and transmission lines.

Roughrider Electric Cooperative continues to grow. Last year, we installed 226 new services.

As always, we will continue to install new services as requested, and perform regular system-wide maintenance that will help prevent power outages and ultimately strengthen the system. ■



Jason Bentz

Kudrna earns Director Gold status

Roger Kudrna has completed the top tier of the Director Education Program through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Kudrna, a Roughrider Electric Cooperative board member from Dickinson, received the Director Gold certificate in January.

The Director Gold credential recognizes directors who have earned their Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate and Board Leadership Certificate credentials, and are committed to continuing their education throughout their service on the cooperative board.

Pamela Clark-Stein, education and member services director for the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, says directors pursue this prestigious credential to continue building and expanding their knowledge of the changing industry and its complex issues, so they can be the most effective director for their cooperative and its members. ■

Roger Kudrna (right) accepts his Director Gold award from **Don Franklund**, co-general manager and chief executive officer of Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative.



PHOTO BY LEONARD HIBL

Report from

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS JAN. 26, 2018

When, where and who: The Board of Directors met in Dickinson on Jan. 26.

Agenda: The Board reviewed, added to and approved the meeting agenda. Mr. Kupper asked that Federal Financing Bank refinancing and an audit contract for 2017 be added to the agenda.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The Board reviewed and approved the minutes of the Dec. 22, 2017, meeting.

Co-General Managers' report: Don Franklund and Travis Kupper presented the Managers' report. They provided a summary of the Manager's Conference they attended this past month. Mr. Franklund discussed factors affecting the coal industry and electric industry.

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Legislative Conference: The 2018 Legislative Conference will be held April 8 to 10, 2018.

CoBank 2018 Director: The Board was reminded about the nomination period for the 2018 CoBank

Director, and noted the current incumbent directors who are interested in re-election.

Chief Financial Officer report: Mr. Kupper provided the Board with a summary of his written report. Mr. Kupper presented the December 2017 financial reports for informational purposes only. He reminded the Board that the December financials are kept open pending completion of Roughrider's audit.

Operations and Construction report: Mr. Bentz referred the Board to his written report. Mr. Bentz provided an update to his report relating to Golden West's transformer that needs to be repaired.

Upcoming meetings: The next Board meeting was set for 10 a.m. CT on Feb. 23, 2018, at Roughrider's office in Hazen, North Dakota.

Other business: The Board entered into Executive Session. Upon exiting Executive Session, there being no other business, upon motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned.

Roughrider Electric Cooperative offers members CONSERVATION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCIES INCENTIVES

Roughrider Electric Cooperative is continuing the conservation and energy-efficiency program. The incentives help you, the member, become more energy efficient.

The program for 2018 will include ground-source heat pumps and air-source heat pumps.

Members must buy and install qualifying systems between Jan. 1, 2018 and Dec. 31, 2018. The program for the heat pumps is for new installation or for replacement of a conventional heating system.

Roughrider Electric Cooperative personnel will check the

installation, and get the appropriate documentation and receipts. Once completed and approved, Roughrider Electric Cooperative will send a check directly to the member to help cover the purchase cost.

A maximum dollar amount has been set aside for the incentive program. The program will close when we meet this amount. Roughrider Electric reserves the right to cancel the program without further notice. One rebate allowed per member.

For more information, please contact Brad Quenette, director of member services, at 800-748-5533 or email bquenette@roughriderelectric.com.

Ground-Source Heat Pumps:
Required minimum efficiency

\$150 per ton with a maximum rebate of \$600
CLOSED LOOP: EER >= 14.1 COP >= 3.3
OPEN LOOP: EER >= 16.2 COP >= 3.6

Air-Source Heat Pumps:
Required minimum efficiency

\$100 per ton with a maximum rebate of \$400
HSPF >= 8.2 EER >= 12 SEER >= 14.5

Hydraulic issue?

WDUS can help.

STORY AND PHOTO BY CARMEN DEVNEY

Has your truck ever had an issue with hydraulics, and you tried to fix it yourself? After you started taking it apart, ran to town for parts, came home to a mess, and spent countless hours fixing and putting it back together — when you could have been doing 100 other chores — did you ask yourself, “Why didn’t I just take the truck to town and get it fixed?”

Maybe you didn’t know West Dakota Utility Services can help.

West Dakota Utility Services, or WDUS, was started by Joe Meier in 2004. Created as a subsidiary of 3C Construction, WDUS was formed to service utility vehicles. It is now an independent business owned by Roughrider, Slope and Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperatives.

A former employee with Ditch Witch® for 28 years, Meier saw people taking vehicles to Billings, Watertown and Minneapolis for service. Knowing a North Dakota business could fill the niche, and having the knowledge and skills to start one, Meier opened a shop in the garage attached to the 3C Construction and Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative office building located in northwest Mandan at 4001 30th Ave. N.W. Now with a staff of five certified technicians, WDUS services utility trucks, in addition to contractors and customers who have vehicles that need hydraulic repairs or N.D. Department of Transportation certification. They also repair welders, engines and utility tools including crimpers and hydraulic tamps.

Also a distributor, WDUS can also order hydraulic tools and generators.

Growing up on a farm near Venturia, Meier knows the importance of owning and maintaining a standby



Joe Meier says there are a lot of farmers using old trucks. “The trucks cost a lot of money and probably gets used regularly one month out of the year,” he says. “If farmers would bring the trucks in to get serviced regularly, it could help make the vehicles last a few years longer. That’s the goal.”

generator, as well as having qualified professionals work on specialized equipment.

“Dealerships know the ins and outs of brand-name vehicles, but may not be experts on the working mechanisms of a utility truck and other large vehicles, including those used on the farm and in commercial businesses,” says Meier, who is WDUS’s chief operations officer. “When my mechanics go into the field to service a vehicle, or a customer brings one here, we go through its operations and often find simple things that if repaired at that time, can save the customer a lot of money down the road.”

WDUS is a cooperative-owned business that is filling a niche. If you have a vehicle or tool that could use a hydraulic inspection or repair, call 701-663-4365 or email jmeier@wdus.coop. ■



A phone survey may await you

Members: Roughrider Electric will be completing a random residential telephone Member Satisfaction Survey. Performed by Odney Advertising, this survey will take place March 12 to 16.

If you receive a call from Odney Advertising at 701-892-7420 on

behalf of Roughrider, please take time to answer the questionnaire. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes. By participating in the 2018 Member Satisfaction Survey, Roughrider receives better insight into how we can better serve you, the member-owner. ■



IN OBSERVANCE OF THE EASTER HOLIDAY, ROUGHRIDER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE WILL BE CLOSED ON FRIDAY, MARCH 30.

Line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.



SPRING AHEAD!

On Sunday, March 11, daylight saving time begins.



www.roughriderelectric.com

HAZEN OFFICE

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. CST Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box by Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Krause's Super Valu in Hazen or Bronson's Super Valu in Beulah.

DICKINSON OFFICE

701-483-5111 or 800-627-8470
P.O. Box 1038, 2156 4th Ave. E.
Dickinson, ND 58602
7 a.m. – 4 p.m. MST Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box west of Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Dickinson City Hall, or the west and south locations of Family Fare supermarkets.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Roger Kudrna, President; Dickinson483-8377
Darell Herman, Vice President; Beulah873-4371
Troy Sailer, Secretary; Golden Valley948-2427
Bruce Darcy, Treasurer; Golden Valley983-4222
William Retterath; Center794-8729
Arnold Kainz; Dickinson483-8207
Dan Price; Hensler794-3779
Greg Steckler; Dunn Center548-8122
Callen Schoch; New England579-4395

MANAGEMENT

Don Franklund Co-GM/CEO
Travis Kupper Co-GM/CEO



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