MOR-GRAN-SOU
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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NOVEMBER 2026



Brewing community at The Sippin' Chicken

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

Many small towns feature a central hub for community members to gather, visit and get started with their day. In Elgin, you can find locals at The Sippin' Chicken on Main Street.

Shawna Ottmar, the owner, starts each morning brewing fresh coffee while preparing homemade sweet treats for her dependable regulars and bright-eyed customers.

For those who make The Sippin' Chicken a regular stop, it is more than a local coffeeshop. It's a place to gather and connect, and a place where visitors can find a sweet taste of small-town hospitality. That small-town charm is what Ottmar wants to bring to customers and is part of what shaped the name of The Sippin' Chicken.

"When I started this shop, my three boys were still young and one in particular had an obsession with chickens and I knew that I wanted to keep the inside of the place cozy, like a farmhouse," Ottmar says. "I want people to feel like they're coming into somebody's house and this name kind of popped into my head as I was falling asleep one night."

The Sippin' Chicken

Ottmar wears many hats besides business owner, including as a lineworker's wife, mom of three boys and a rancher. Before she was a rural business owner, she stayed at home with her boys, but began looking for something to help channel her energy once they got older. For the last eight years, she has owned and operated The Sippin' Chicken.

"I knew that I wanted to do something where I was my own boss. At that time, Elgin did not really have anyplace to go and just hang out and get treats. So, I

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decided that a coffee shop would be a great addition to the town," Ottmar says.

Ottmar began in a different location for a few months, but then had the opportunity to buy her own storefront. With her family's support and help, they remodeled the space to make Ottmar's vision come to life.

"This building sits on the corner of Main Street across from the bank and I always loved the building," Ottmar says. "I called the realtor and purchased the building and in a matter of two months' time, my husband and a couple of my cousins had it remodeled."

The Sippin' Chicken features house-brewed coffee, specialty coffee and treats made by Ottmar each week. Treats and flavors rotate between the seasons, including, bars, muffins and her personal favorite, the scones.

"The scones and caramel rolls are our most popular items," Ottmar says. "Everyone who comes in enjoys them."

Beyond the scones, Ottmar's caramel rolls, which are the size of a large to-go container, are freshly baked each Friday and are only offered on that day on a first-come, first-served basis.

Gathering place for locals and visitors

To Ottmar, The Sippin' Chicken is more than just a place to grab a quick cup of coffee and a treat. To her, it is about community and offering a space for people to gather and visit. Each morning, she looks forward to her regulars gathering at her tables. She and her employees often join them and listen to their stories.

"The community is the number one reason I have this place," Ottmar says. "Every single morning, we get a table full of people coming to get their coffee and it's usually the same guys at the exact same time every morning."

Her oldest customer at 98 years old has missed maybe five days at the shop, Ottmar recalls.

"He is one of the reasons that I keep this place going, because he's literally said that it gives him a reason to live," Ottmar says.

In a unique location, Elgin is often the last stop in North Dakota for folks heading to the Black Hills. A coffee shop like The Sippin' Chicken gives people a reason to stop.

Coffee, treats and beyond

Along with Ottmar's homemade treats, and warm and cozy space, she is proud to offer locally made gifts and products at The Sippin' Chicken. From candles to homemade pottery, holiday shoppers can find something special for nearly everyone on their list.



A group visits around the table at The Sippin' Chicken, where owner Shawna Ottmar has created an atmosphere that feels like home.

The gift shop features consignment items from area makers, including pottery from Mott, locally made candles and laundry products from the Little White Farm Candle Co., jewelry, T-shirts, crocheted winter hats and handmade Christmas ornaments. The Sippin' Chicken offers a place to buy meaningful gifts while supporting the local creators who help make the region unique.

"We have all kinds of different little things that people make," Ottmar says. "We have a lot of good, unique stocking stuffers and little gifts."

Along with gifts in the shop, you will find floral arrangements, which is something she has picked up over the years. No ordering is necessary, as customers can stop into the shop and grab a pre-made arrangement by Ottmar.

"I have one small cooler where I have bouquets and I'll do a few little arrangements every week," Ottmar says. "It's kind of a one-stop shop."

From its corner on Main Street, The Sippin' Chicken has created connections that reach far beyond Elgin, from local regulars to visitors. The Sippin' Chicken remains rooted in something close to home, making every person who walks through the door feel welcome. One cup, one treat and one conversation at a time, Ottmar has shown how a small-town business can make a meaningful difference throughout its community.

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:
The season of giving



Jason Bentz
Co-General Manager/CEO

As the holiday season approaches, we're reminded this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for one another. At Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, that's something we take to heart year-round.

You've probably heard us talk about our concern for community. It's not just a nice phrase. It's one of the core principles that makes electric cooperatives like ours different from other utilities. We're not just here to keep the lights on, although we're always working hard to keep power flowing. We're also here to make life better for the people we serve – our members, our neighbors and our friends.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and our co-op family has stepped up every time. We've come together to support those in need, to keep our community strong and to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

Our Operation Round Up program is one example. Thanks to the generosity of members like you who round up their electric bills to the nearest dollar, we're able to provide real help to local organizations who are helping our communities. Every little bit adds up and it makes a big difference.

We're also proud to support local students through the Youth Tour program, where we send some of our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., to see democracy in action and dream big about their futures. The most meaningful giving is investing in tomorrow's leaders.

At Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, we believe concern for community is more than a value. It's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such a caring, generous community. From all of us at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, we wish you and your loved ones a joyful, safe and bright holiday season.



Mor-Gran-Sou Electric is proud to give back to communities by visiting with youth about electrical safety.

MESSAGE FROM MEMBER SERVICES:

Help shape future of cooperative



Julie Armijo
Chief of Staff/Member Services Manager

While you may be thinking about holiday plans or staying warm this winter, we're already looking ahead to next June's 80th annual meeting. Our board of directors leads our cooperative with passion and forward thinking to ensure the longevity of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative. If you are interested in running for a director position, learn more below!

Director elections

The initial commitment is a three-year term, with provisions in the bylaws limiting a director to serving six consecutive three-year terms, after which time the director is not eligible for another six consecutive three-year terms until one year has elapsed.

At the annual meeting on June 10, 2027, the following three board positions will be elected:

- **At large** – Steve Tomac (currently serving his second three-year term)
- **Morton County** – Kathy Tokach (currently serving her second three-year term)
- **Sioux County** – Chad Harrison (currently serving his fifth three-year term)

Under the bylaws and due to a mail-in ballot, no nominations are accepted from the floor at the annual meeting. Instead, the bylaws require the board of directors to appoint a Nominating Committee of five to nine members who geographically represent the cooperative.

These members will provide a list of qualified and willing candidates to the board for approval and inclusion on the ballot at the board meeting scheduled for Feb. 24, 2027. This date has been set so there is adequate time for each candidate's biographical information to be included with the notice of meeting sent to the members in May, along with the mail-in ballot for those who are unable to attend the annual meeting in person.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee, which is appointed by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's board of directors, will be appointed at the Oct. 28 meeting and will meet soon after in December

For a person to be nominated, the member running for a board seat must submit the completed declaration of candidacy form to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric by 4 p.m. CT on Thursday, Feb. 11, 2027. The completed form must be mailed to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Attn: Julie Armijo, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND 58535-0297.

All qualified and willing candidates who have completed and forwarded the written declaration of candidacy form to the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric office by the Feb. 11, 2027, deadline will be included in the list the Nominating Committee will provide to the board.

Bylaws and resolutions for the annual meeting

Under the cooperative bylaws, any amendment to the bylaw amendments or resolutions must be presented to the members in writing in advance of the annual meeting scheduled for June 10, 2027. The board of directors has charged the Nominating Committee with reviewing and advising the board of any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions. Therefore, any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions should be submitted in writing no later than Feb. 11, 2027, and/or they can be presented in person at one of the Nominating Committee meetings.

If you or someone you know is interested in being nominated for a board position or submitting a bylaw amendment or resolution, please contact one of the Nominating Committee members or Julie at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric by calling 800-750-8212, 701-663-0297 or 701-597-3301. You can also email Julie at jarmijo@morgransou.com. Nomination forms as well as bylaws and resolutions can also be mailed to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, Attn: Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND 58535-0297 before Feb. 11, 2027.

Need heating assistance?

Apply for LIHEAP.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can help cover heating and weatherization costs for eligible residents.

Check with your local human service office for more information regarding these services. Applications are now being accepted year-round and can be found online at applyforhelp.nd.gov or by request at the local human service zone office.

STAND OUT. LEAD. EXPLORE.









JUNE 16-22, 2027

Stand Out. Lead. Explore.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is more than a trip. It's a leadership experience that can shape your future. Selected high school students, including one from Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, spend a week in Washington, D.C., gaining firsthand insight into government, cooperative history and business model, and civic engagement. For one jam-packed week, you'll be immersed in the cooperative spirit that built and sustains our great nation. **And all expenses are paid by your electric cooperative!**

To enter the essay-writing contest:

- You must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative.

Essay question:

If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate, you will be traveling to Washington, D.C., to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?

The application deadline is Jan. 15, 2027.

Questions? Please contact Julie Armijo, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212 during regular business hours.

Email entries to Julie Armijo at jarmijo@morgransou.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND 58535-0297.

Learn more at ndyouthtour.com

MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS:
Ensuring system reliability



Gary Fitterer
Manager of Operations

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is committed to providing reliable service while meeting the needs of a growing membership. To support new service requests and maintain a dependable electric system, the cooperative has been investing in infrastructure upgrades and conducting pole testing across the system.

New services and upgrades

As growth continues throughout our service territory, crews have been busy installing new services and expanding infrastructure to meet members' needs.

Our crews have also been converting overhead power lines to underground facilities as part of the cooperative's ongoing work plan. Service installations and system upgrades will continue as long as weather conditions allow.

Pole testing

Utility poles, like any infrastructure exposed to extreme weather conditions, can begin to deteriorate over time, both externally and internally. To ensure the safety and reliability of the utility poles, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric tests poles on a 10-year rotation. Testing also allows us to find poles that are an issue and replace them before they begin to fail.

This year Mor-Gran-Sou Electric tested more than 6,000 utility poles with a less than 2% failure rate. Once utility poles are flagged for replacement the operations and engineering department creates a plan for changing out the poles. If there are a lot of rejected poles on one section of line, operations and engineering department will see if it is feasible to replace that section with underground.

These are just a few projects Mor-Gran-Sou Electric is completing to ensure reliable electric services for you, our members. If you notice anything the doesn't look quite right on our electrical infrastructure near you, such as trees growing too close to the power line, give us a call at the office so we can have a crew assess the potential issue.



Mor-Gran-Sou Electric lineworkers gather to discuss plans on a job site.

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME:

Aim for hunting safely



Cody Graetz
Lead Lineworker

As hunting season begins, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative reminds you to be aware of overhead power lines, utility poles and other electrical equipment while hunting.

Here are some safety tips to keep in mind as you enjoy the outdoors:

- Keep clear of electrical equipment, including pad-mounted transformers (the large green boxes), substations and meter boxes. Never hang signs or place hunting decoys on electrical equipment, including utility poles.
- Never shoot at or near power lines or insulators. Damaging this equipment can cause an outage, disrupt electric service and create a serious safety hazard.
- Do not place deer stands on power poles or climb utility poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who has contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.
- Do not attach signs, trail cameras, ropes, straps or other objects to utility poles or equipment. These items can obstruct line crews and create serious hazards during maintenance or emergency repairs.

Safety is everyone's responsibility during hunting season. If you notice damaged cooperative equipment or a hazardous condition, stay clear and call our office immediately. We wish everyone a safe and memorable season.



***Cody Graetz** and his son, **Linden**, enjoy turkey hunting together.*

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS
Aug. 26

The board of directors meeting of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was held on Aug. 26 at the Mandan Service Center. Chair Steve Tomac called the meeting to order at 9:47 a.m. CT. A quorum was present. Also present were Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's co-General Managers/CEOs Jason Bentz and Travis Kupper, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Chief of Staff/Member Services Manager Julie Armijo, General Counsel Andrew Fergel and Executive Assistant Connie Hill.

Board reorganization: Directors reelected to their existing board positions include Tomac as chair, Chad Harrison as vice chair and Pam Geiger as secretary-treasurer.

Consent agenda: The consent agenda was approved as presented.

Strategic items: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which reviewed power supplier updates, a North Dakota electric cooperative manager meeting, supply change updates and other items. Several additional Basin Electric Power Cooperative reports and board documents were available for review.

Department reports: Craigmile provided a financial report, which included the balance sheet and income statement. Fitterer provided a written operations report. Armijo provided a review of the 2026 annual meeting, youth and program updates. She also outlined other member service initiatives. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided the board with a written report on technology updates. Fergel provided a general counsel report covering legal topics and ongoing projects, including capital credit retirement policy and seminar updates.

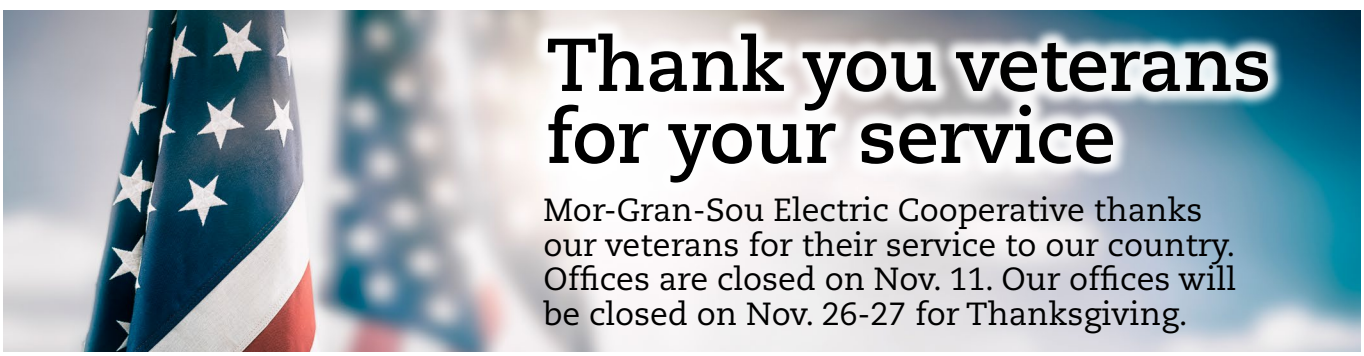
Action items: The board reviewed and approved National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation district meeting ballots and delegates and Form 990.

Discussion: Bentz provided a quarter two strategic plan update. The board discussed capital credit policy and bylaw amendments.

Executive session: The board entered an executive session during the meeting.

The meeting concluded with adjournment. Secretary-Treasurer Pam Geiger certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is at 12:30 p.m. CT on Nov. 18 in Mandan.



MOR-GRAN-SOU
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS
Chair ..... Steve Tomac
Vice Chair ..... Chad Harrison
Secretary-Treasurer ..... Pam Geiger
Directors ..... Mark Doll, Seth Johnston, Ryan Petrick, Tess Schmidt, Kathy Tokach, Katie Wirt

MANAGEMENT
Co-GM/CEO ..... Travis Kupper
Co-GM/CEO ..... Jason Bentz

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