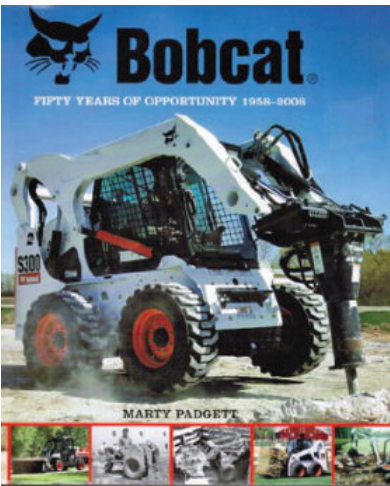


# Keller Brothers Named To Inventors Hall Of Fame



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“The Bobcat loader has positively impacted the lives of thousands of employees who have worked for the company, dealers who sell the machines, and customers who use the equipment every day to build their livelihood,” said Louis’ son Joe Keller. “While we may not always realize its impact, it is an integral part of our everyday life—from supporting farm operations that result in food on our tables to hauling materials around a jobsite building our homes and offices.”

Cyril died at age 98 in 2020; Louis passed away in 2010 at age 87. Along with Mary, there are still two surviving sisters and two brothers. Louis was a widower twice. His first wife passed away six months after the birth of one of their children. He married again a few years later, but he outlived his second spouse and later remarried. His third wife has also passed away.

As Bobcat Company celebrates 65 years since the invention of the machine that created the compact equipment industry, it has continued to forge the future of the industry through innovation and forward-thinking. “We are proud of our inventors’ spirit of innovation, and while we remain grounded in our humble roots, we continue to push the boundaries to offer customers increased choices, improved performance and advanced technology to work smarter,” said Mike Ballweber, president, Bobcat Company North America.

Acknowledging the award on behalf of his father and uncle, Joe said, “This recognition is a great honor to dad and Cyril’s families, but it is not just for us. It is a recognition for all of the early and current Bobcat employees who have helped bring our little ‘Keller loader’ to be the Bobcat machine it is today. It has been a great honor to have had a front-row seat watching this invention revolutionize the way work gets done around the world.” The first loader the brothers built



The Keller brothers’ three-wheeled loader, later refined and renamed the Bobcat® skid-steer loader.



An early 1960s ad for the M400 Bobcat Loader.

for the turkey farmer is housed in the Otter Tail County Historical Museum in Fergus Falls. “It’s a funny looking thing,” Carlson said. “And the turkey farmer put his name on it.” Eddie and Leola Velo continued to develop and grow a large poultry and grain operation that lasted 60 years.

In 2008, “Bobcat: Fifty Years of Opportunity,” was published. The book is a comprehensive history of the company, its inventions and innovations, product line and more. The book remains available for sale on sites like Amazon. It is also in the Lake Agassiz Regional Library’s collection.

# LREC Held Three District Meetings In Early January

LREC District Meetings were held on Jan. 5 and 6 in Districts 2, 5 and 8. In District 2, incumbent Cecil “Bud” Hensel was nominated as a director candidate. In District 5, incumbent Patrick Meyers was nominated as a director candidate and in District 8, James Gronbeck was nominated as a director candidate to fill the seat left by Sid Wisness, who served on the LREC board for the maximum 15 years. “These meetings showcase the grassroots efforts of our members, whether it is the nomination of candidates, or having important discussions related to all things related to LREC, meetings like these never disappoint,” said LREC CEO Tim Thompson. Thompson discussed with members several topics, including but not limited to, member engagement, appreciation of membership, investments that have been made to LREC’s local grid that have improved reliability, new technology being utilized by LREC to continue to improve reliability, power supply resources, energy transition, member engagement, historical rate stability experienced by members over the past decade, rate projections, revenue streams of LREC that help reduce LREC member rates, rate changes taking effect in September of this year, load management rate increase that went into effect on Jan. 1, the solid financial strength of the cooperative resulting in 2022 being the 10th consecutive year of record capital credit retirements paid to members and Operation Round Up (ORU), a program that creates an opportunity for LREC members to volunteer their time to review applications for funding various programs and determine how ORU funds are disbursed to area organizations.

Over 130 members—consumers, plus many LREC directors and employees, attended the meetings. LREC once again livestreamed the meetings for those members who were unable to attend in person. Thompson was able to field several questions, including but not limited to, reliability, efforts taken by LREC and Great River Energy to assure that the power stays on, electric vehicles, legislative decisions being made that affect the industry and energy transition. “One of my favorite parts of district meetings is receiving questions and feedback from the members,” said Thompson. Thompson spoke about the purpose of the general service rate change that will take effect later this year on Sept. 1. Thompson explained that the wholesale cost of power is increasing and LREC needs to begin collecting about 5% more revenue moving forward. He also explained that the cost of electricity is going up because of higher natural gas prices and significant increases in costs of transformers and other necessary infrastructure. The general service rate change will affect members differently depending on the amount of electricity they use. A higher facility charge, and lower energy rates, will take effect on Sept. 1 of this year. The higher facility charge, which will increase from \$24 per month to \$39 per month, will match the cost of providing electric service to members’ homes based upon a recent Cost of Service Study that was

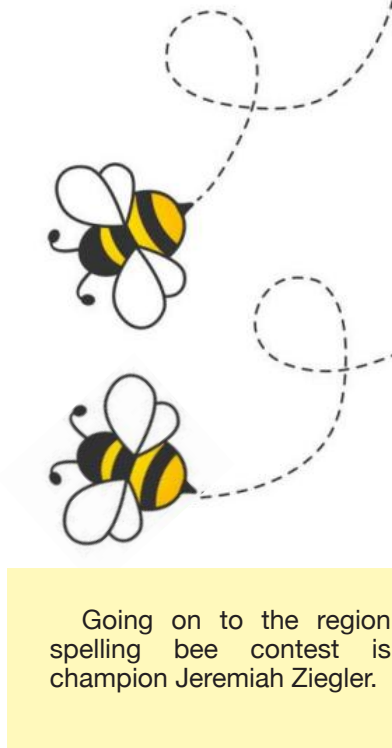


completed by an independent firm. The lower energy rates that members will pay, which will decrease by 1.3 cents per kWh, will more closely align with the cost of providing electricity to the homes of LREC members. “Smaller users will see an increase on their bill each month and larger users will see a decrease on their bill each month,” said Thompson. For example, a member using an average of 500 kWh per month will see an increase of \$8.50 per month on their bill; a member using an average of 1000 kWh per month will see an increase of \$2 per month on their bill; and a member using an average of 2000 kWh per month will see an \$11 decrease on their bill. LREC employees provided a rate booth at the meetings that allowed members an opportunity to see how their bill will be affected by the rate changes that will go into effect on Sept. 1. In addition, for those members who were not able to attend one of the recent district meetings, LREC is in the process of putting a bill calculator on its website so they can see how their monthly bill will be impacted when the rate changes take effect on Sept. 1. The video recordings of all three recent district meetings can be found on LREC’s website at [www.lrec.coop/2023districtmeetings](http://www.lrec.coop/2023districtmeetings). The LREC Annual Meeting will be held on April 13, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., and like last year, there will be three in person meeting opportunities—one at LIFE CHURCH in Fergus Falls, another at the Frazee Event Center and another at the Prairie Event Center in Parkers Prairie. The Annual Meeting will also be livestreamed for those who are not able to attend in person.

# Rothsay School Crowns A New Spelling Bee Champ



There were eighteen students from grades 3-8 participating in the annual Spelling Bee. Eighth grader Jeremiah Ziegler won the coveted honor of Rothsay’s 2022-2023 Spelling Bee Champion. Cory Opsahl will be his alternate for the regional bee in Fergus Falls on February 7. Both participants are eighth graders at Rothsay High School. Middle school students competing in the Spelling Bee were, from left, front row - Jeremiah Ziegler, Mason Heidecker; back row - Kody Leininger, Cory Opsahl, Carter Davenport and Hunter Martin.




Going on to the region spelling bee contest is champion Jeremiah Ziegler.



## REGIONAL REPORT Rothsay, Minn. Winter 2023 Edition

PAGE 6



*Do You Have  
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## Probable Treatment Center Has Rep. Backer Support



State Representative Jeff Backer, R-Browns Valley, recently met with Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge CEO Tom Truszinski at Rep. Backer’s office in St. Paul. Rep. Backer is authoring legislation this year that would pave the way for Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge to build a facility in Douglas County. This would be a treatment center that could serve the region including Ottertail, Wilkin, Traverse and Grant Counties.



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