



**CAPITAL ELECTRIC**  
COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**MARCH 2022**

In this month's feature story, we introduce readers to two of our members, Bob and DeEtta Gibbons.



*Capital Electric Cooperative members, **Bob and DeEtta Gibbons**, enjoy being semi-retired at their home northeast of Bismarck.*

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Member feature: Bob and DeEtta Gibbons
- CEC employees give local family a Christmas
- Place your name on the ballot
- Directors represent your interests
- Board minutes

# Member feature: Bob and DeEtta Gibbons

STORY AND PHOTOS BY WES ENGBRECHT



**Bob Gibbons** poses with a smaller version of his original capsizer. This model is used to repair small watercraft, such as Jet Skis and WaveRunners.

Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC) members and local business owners, Bob and DeEtta Gibbons, have lived an interesting and exciting life full of colorful stories. Living this productive and happy life has served them both well, and it's evidenced by what they have accomplished over the years.

Bob has always been an inventor by nature. From the time he joined the U.S. Air Force in 1964, where he served as a crew chief and mechanic on the F-101 fighter jet, he has been fixing or improving all types of equipment.



*Bob Gibbons developed the Arctic Shark fiberglass sled, which is designed for downhill sledding. The two-person model allows persons with physical, cognitive and visual challenges to enjoy the experience of operating the sled.*

Even at the young age of 80, Bob continues to create more unique products to make life easier for people.

Following his service in the Air Force in 1967, Bob made frequent trips to Billings, Montana, where he eventually met his wife, DeEtta, a Williston native. After dating for only six months, Bob and DeEtta realized they were meant to be together and were married. Fifty-four years later, they continue to enjoy the lives they have created in Bismarck.

When they moved to North Dakota in 1981 and later to Bismarck in 1986, Bob recognized a need for his expertise in boat repair and maintenance. He started Gibbons Fiberglass and Aluminum Boat Repair in 1987 and hit the ground running as the only boat repair shop in the state. Bob had already been a marine mechanic since 1968. For the next 34 years, Bob would provide top-notch repair services on all types of watercraft.

When asked how significantly the market for boat repair has grown over the past several years, Bob remarks, "It has grown immensely, as the number of people buying boats has increased greatly over the years. Being the only 'game' in town, I had no problem staying busy all year round."

DeEtta adds, "We thought the boat repair business would be seasonal at best, but soon realized it would take a year-round effort to keep up with demand."



Bob Gibbons is working to restore a 1963 Volvo P1800. The model was used in the 1960s television series, "The Saint," which starred Roger Moore.

What keeps Bob busy today is the production and marketing of a product he developed several years ago, the Capsizer 8000.

"When I started my business in Bismarck, I realized I would need a way to elevate and flip the boats so I could easily access the entire frame, including the bottom, of course. My first invention to make this happen came about when I purchased an operating room table from the hospital in town. I was able to convert it into a machine to suspend the boats with a pump of the hydraulic pedal."

As time went on, Bob recognized the need to develop a more robust and flexible piece of equipment to lift, flip and turn the boats. The Capsizer 8000 was the perfect solution and Bob, along with his subcontractor, Ray Dockter, could create them in his shop.

"Ray is an amazing welder, and he puts this machine together for me," Bob says. "We have sold them to repair shops all over the country and even around the world."

Being an inventor has served Bob well throughout his life. Along the way, Bob developed the Arctic Shark fiberglass one-person sled, which is designed for downhill sledding. It is a steerable unit that allows the user to have complete control. He eventually converted his basic

one-person design into something more amazing. The two-person sled he later developed allows persons with physical, cognitive and visual challenges to enjoy the experience of operating the sled.

These days, besides operating the capsizer business, DeEtta and Bob keep themselves busy around the house northwest of Bismarck. DeEtta loves to decorate their home, and Bob has remodeled it completely over the years. Bob also works on his 1963 Volvo P1800. This model was used in "The Saint," a television series from the 1960s that featured Roger Moore, who later became James Bond.

The Gibbons' have one daughter, Anjanette, who works in the Bismarck school system. They continue to work hard and enjoy their lives with many years yet to come.

"I plan on being around a long time yet," Bob proclaims.

DeEtta just smiles as she has grown accustomed to Bob's antics throughout their many years of marriage.

We thank Bob and DeEtta for being valued CEC members and for adding so much to the Bismarck community and our entire state over the years. Their positive and welcoming attitudes are a testament to how they have embraced life and what it has to offer. **CEC**



# Spring into energy savings

We'll soon be celebrating the first day of spring. With the start of a new season comes a fresh opportunity to find ways to save energy and money.

Here are a few simple tips to improve the energy efficiency and comfort of your home as warmer temperatures arrive:

- 1. Service your air conditioner.** Easy maintenance, such as routinely replacing or cleaning air filters, can lower your cooling system's energy consumption by up to 15%. Use the first day of spring as a reminder to check your air conditioner's evaporator coil, which should be cleaned annually to ensure the system is performing at optimal levels.
- 2. Open windows.** Opening windows creates a breeze to naturally cool your home without using air conditioners. This is an ideal tactic in spring when temperatures are mild.
- 3. Use ceiling fans.** Cooling your home with ceiling fans will allow you to raise your thermostat four degrees. This can help lower your electricity bills without sacrificing overall comfort.
- 4. Cook outside.** On warmer days, keep the heat out of your home by using an outdoor grill instead of an indoor oven.
- 5. Caulk air leaks.** Using low-cost caulk to seal cracks and openings in your home keeps warm air out – and cash in your wallet.
- 6. Set the thermostat.** On warm days, setting a programmable thermostat to a higher setting when you are not at home can help reduce your energy costs by approximately 10%.
- 7. Seal ducts.** Air loss through ducts can lead to high electricity costs, accounting for nearly 30% of a cooling system's energy consumption. Sealing and insulating ducts can go a long way toward lowering your electricity bills.
- 8. Switch on bathroom fans.** Bathroom fans remove heat and humidity from your home, improving comfort. **CE**

# Capital Electric Cooperative employees give local family a Christmas

BY WES ENGBRECHT



Helping your neighbor is a way of life in the cooperative world. We take care of those we serve and those in the community that need our help. At Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC), we embody this “help others in need” mentality.

In December, CEC’s employees and board members committed to support a family in need through the AID, Inc., Adopt-a-Family program. The program is designed to provide needed funds to families in our community who have been dealing with financial hardships.

CEC’s adopted family was a mom and dad and their two young children who had amassed a significant amount of medical bills. Dad had multiple surgeries, and Mom had medical issues relating to the recent birth of their second

child. The co-op was able to raise nearly \$1,500 for the family before Christmas.

Billing Coordinator Dana Solem introduced the idea to the office. “I work with billing assistance programs every day, and I feel that AID, Inc., does a great job supporting our local communities. I wasn’t sure how we could help, but this turned out to be a very good idea for us,” she said.

The adopted family sent a thank you note to the co-op, which said, “To the people who gave our family a Christmas: We truly didn’t think we would be able to celebrate this year and were surprised to get a call saying we would be receiving a donation. God bless you and your families during this holiday season!”

Manager of Communications and IT Wes Engbrecht was more than pleased with the response from CEC employees, “It was a very rewarding experience to deliver the money to AID, Inc., knowing it would make a big difference for a worthy family. We will definitely participate in this program again!” **CEC**

*AID, Inc., is a non-profit organization serving Morton and Burleigh counties in North Dakota. Their goal is to provide temporary, emergency assistance to help families and individuals stay in their homes and become self-sufficient. Contact them at 701-663-1274, ext. 18, for more information on how you can help.*

## Make your voice heard in this year's director election

### Sign up for SmartHub to vote online!

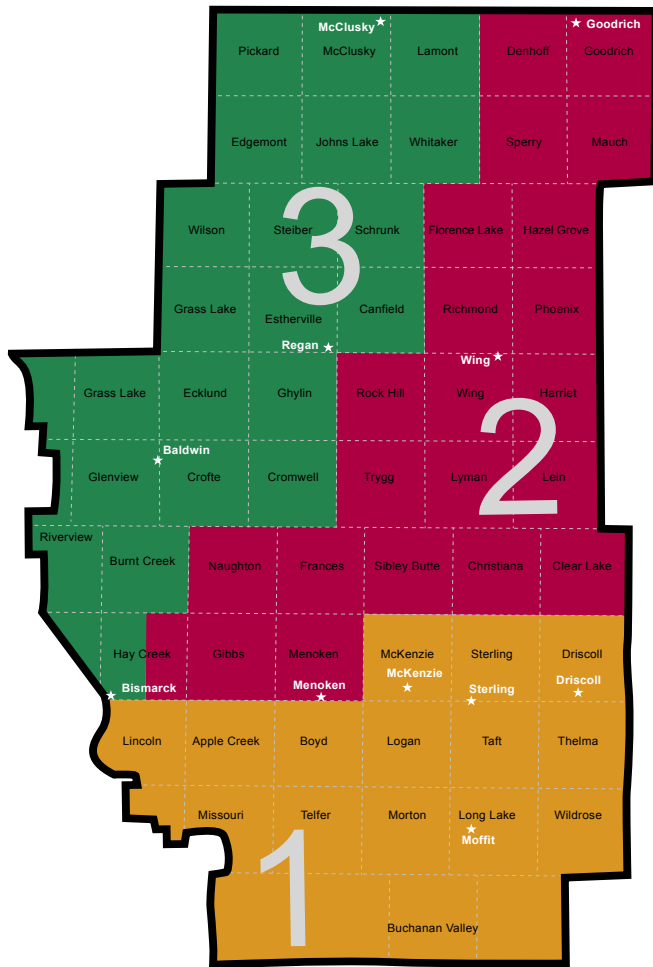


This is the third year Capital Electric Cooperative has offered online and mail-in voting for the election of directors.

Mail-in voting is easy, just fill out the ballot you receive in the mail and use the return envelope provided. As we near our annual meeting date of June 16, we encourage those of you who would like to vote online to register before voting opens in May.

Online voting will be offered through SmartHub, a web and mobile app that allows members to access their bill, manage their account and monitor electric usage. To register for the free resource, visit [capitalelec.com](http://capitalelec.com) and click on “New User? Register to use SmartHub!” at the top of the home page. You will need to enter your billing account number, last name and email address to sign up.

## Are you interested in serving as a director for Capital Electric? Place **YOUR** name on the ballot today!



Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC) will hold its 76th annual meeting at the Bismarck Event Center on June 16.

This year, three seats on the co-op's board of directors will need to be filled. Directors whose terms will expire in October include Kayla Pulvermacher, District 1; Arlene Olson, District 2; and Kyle Hilken, District 3.

The nine members who make up the CEC Board of Directors set policies and make decisions that guide the cooperative into the future. With the annual meeting just a few short months away, now is the time for members to start thinking about whether they have the time and desire to serve their electric cooperative.

In accordance with Article 4, Section 3, of the co-op bylaws, current members of CEC can have their names placed on the ballot to be voted upon for the open board positions in either of these two ways: 1) accepting a nomination by the CEC Nominating Committee or 2) submitting a petition signed by at least 15 current members of the cooperative, not less than 40 days prior to the annual meeting.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate for the CEC Board of Directors or wish to have a member considered for nomination, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee (listed on this page) prior to April 20. Committee members will have information on the requirements a member must meet in order to serve on the co-op's board of directors. Pursuant to the bylaws, the Nominating Committee must post a list of nominations at least 35 days prior to the annual meeting.

Official notice of CEC's 76th annual meeting will be mailed to members in September. **CEC**

### The following members have been appointed by the board of directors to serve on the Nominating Committee:

**Brian Bitner**  
751 80th St. SE  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-226-3456

**Gary Hansen**  
1423 Eagle Crest Lp.  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
701-471-3558

**Ann Reich**  
4401 Lookout Trail  
Bismarck, ND 58504  
701-255-4406

**Kristi Schlosser Carlson**  
2810 Powder Ridge Dr.  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
701-251-8027

**Scott Meske**  
4609 Patriot Dr  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
608-516-9307

**Sara Vollmer**  
40331 353rd St. NE  
Wing, ND 58494  
701-220-4768

**Kristen Hamman**  
5414 Flatrock Dr.  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
701-934-5307

**Julie Roswick**  
4315 England St.  
Bismarck, ND 58504  
701-255-3626

**Jill Trygg**  
19201 197th St. NE  
Baldwin, ND 58521  
701-391-0345

# Directors represent your interests

Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC) is overseen by a board of directors elected by the member-owners of our co-op. Each director represents the members on the board and each director is a co-op member.

Directors represent the members' interests. They learn and internalize concerns, expectations and ideas, and take the information into the board room. During board meetings, directors exchange information and strategize for the co-op's progressive growth.

Directors have a fiduciary responsibility to the cooperative. They exercise care, time and responsibility in reviewing co-op matters. Because they are also owners of the cooperative, they treat the business like their own.

Directors devote a certain amount of time to the cooperative. At a minimum, directors attend a monthly board meeting. To learn about the industry

and understand critical issues, directors research issues important to cooperatives and attend state and national meetings.

To help directors with their responsibilities, training is offered through the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC). If directors choose to pursue certification, they must take and complete five courses that cover director duties and liabilities, understanding the electric business, board roles and relationships, strategic planning and financial decision-making.

Serving CEC and your community can be a rewarding experience! For more information, contact a member of the Nominating Committee (see C6) or call the co-op at 701-712-7923 and ask for Wes Engbrecht, manager of communications and IT. **CEC**

**Save the date**

**June 16**

**WHAT:**  
Capital Electric Cooperative  
Annual Meeting

**WHERE:**  
Bismarck Event Center

**WHY:**  
To learn about co-op issues; to cast your vote and elect three board members to serve on the board of directors; and to enjoy entertainment and eat a free meal.

## What does it take to be a good board member?

We often get questions in the office from CEC members who are interested in running for a board position. The most common questions are: 1) *What does it take to be a good board member?* and 2) *What is the time commitment required to do the job well?*

A good board member is someone who takes the time to learn about the cooperative business model and understands what it means to the co-op's member-owners. A director will put time into training classes and individual study of issues the cooperative is dealing with on a regular basis. They will attend board meetings and other related meetings regularly to collaborate with fellow board members on those issues.

The following list of meetings and time requirements will give you an indication of what is generally expected of a CEC director:

- Twelve regular monthly board meetings, almost all in Bismarck
- One day at CEC's annual meeting, held in June in Bismarck
- Six days at NDAREC and G&T annual meetings, Bismarck and Minot
- Regional and national meetings
- Some CEC directors serve on other related boards at Central Power and NDAREC, which meet on a monthly or quarterly basis
- Other unscheduled meetings and training classes can add additional days

On average, a CEC director can spend between 25 and 30 days on co-op business each year.

A commitment to the cooperative and the cooperative business model is vital to a director's success on the board. Focusing on the needs of our member-owners is the common thread that keeps our board operating effectively. **CEC**

## Board minute excerpts **JAN. 21, 2022**

The Board of Directors of Capital Electric Cooperative (CEC) held its regular meeting on Friday, Jan. 21, 2021. The meeting was held in person at CEC headquarters, 4111 State Street, Bismarck, North Dakota, pursuant to due notice to all directors. All directors were present at that time.

Also present, in person, were Manager Paul Fitterer, Business Manager Luke Steen, Operations Manager Rick Dressler, Engineering Services Manager Greg Owen, Energy Services Manager Josh Schaffner and Attorney Zachary Pelham of Pearce Durick, PLLC, who acted as recording secretary.

**Financial Review:** Prior to the board meeting, Directors Arlene Olson and Kyle Tschosik reviewed the December 2021 check register and expenditures. They advised that all checks were in order. The financial review was approved.

**Management Reports (Business Department, Operations Department, Engineering Services, Energy Services and Public Relations/ Communications/IT):**

**Engineering Services Report:** Owen reviewed the written report from Engineering Services.

There were 38 work orders completed in December.

Owen attended a joint trench meeting with other utilities to discuss the upcoming year, which is anticipated to be another busy year for residential and commercial accounts for CEC. Projects are now paused for winter.

**Property Update:** Owen reviewed continued marketing efforts for the sale of available parcels. The City of Bismarck has given final approval for the re-plate and zoning for CEC land. Following discussion, management was authorized to execute the re-plate document.

Owen reported revisions for a purchase agreement for Parcels B, C, E, F and G. Following discussion, the general manager was authorized to execute the purchase agreement for Parcels B, C, E, F and G upon final review by staff and legal counsel.

Owen provided an update on meetings with the architect for anticipated modifications to the new headquarters building, including the public entryway, control center and shop. Following discussion, management was authorized to retain a construction manager for anticipated modifications to the new headquarters building.

**Business Department Report:** Steen presented the December 2021 financial and statistical report to the board.

Total kilowatt-hour (kWh) sales for December were on par with the budget, over by 0.34%. The monthly electric revenue was behind budget by -2.5%.

CEC's December load factor was just under budget.

The operating margin for December was \$544,123, ahead of the budgeted \$180,790. The total margin for December was \$2,422,991, which is ahead of the budgeted \$1,709,215. The year-to-date (YTD) operating margin is ahead of budget by \$753,216, and YTD total margins are ahead of budget by \$755,130.

CEC began billing 27 new services in December, bringing active services to 21,654 versus 21,318 at this time last year, or a net increase of 336 accounts

over the last 12 months.

The cash flow statement and monthly power cost for December were reviewed. Accounts receivable balances as of Jan. 20 were reviewed.

**Estate Retirements:** Following review of the financial condition of the cooperative and recommendation by management, 11 estate retirements totaling \$10,629.72 were approved.

**Quarterly Write-offs:** After discussion, fourth quarter write-offs totaling \$4,557.03 were approved. Total 12-month write-offs are \$9,923.

**Revenue Deferral:** After discussion, \$600,000 was added to CEC's revenue deferral fund for 2021.

**2020 Tax Documents:** After discussion, it was approved to submit amended tax forms 990T and ND 40 for tax year 2020.

**Financial Audit:** After discussion, it was approved to enter into an engagement letter with Brady Martz to perform the co-op's annual audit.

**Operations Report:** Dressler reviewed the written report from the operations department.

Dressler reported crews are in winter mode, completing maintenance on machinery and vehicles, while at the same time completing several permanent and temporary connections despite extreme weather conditions.

**Safety Report:** There were no lost time accidents in January.

Six lineworkers attended the Apprenticeship, Training and Safety (AT&S) Conference in Bismarck. Topics included grounding techniques, transformer connections and the importance of job briefings.

Without objection, the safety report was approved.

**Energy Services:** Schaffner reviewed the Energy Services Report.

Twenty-seven service orders were completed in December. Schaffner has been working through supply chain issues in procuring equipment and materials. Schaffner is reviewing quotes that have been provided to remove the underground fuel tank in advance of moving to the new headquarters building.

**Communications, Public Relations and IT:** Fitterer reviewed topics of interest.

Fitterer updated the Board on efforts to develop a new logo, which include visiting with graphic designers from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and working with Agency MABU.

A Member Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Feb. 17.

**COVID-19 Update:** Fitterer reported on continued efforts to educate employees on current COVID-19 protocols, including revised isolation recommendations.

**Policies:** Steen reviewed the Coincident Peak Policy that remains in a pilot phase. The policy was amended to provide for an increase in the number of members who can participate in the pilot rate schedule from 25 to 75.

**Basin Electric Power Cooperative:** Fitterer reported on Basin matters. He reported that Basin approved its 2022 budgets.

**Industry Update:** Fitterer reviewed materials related to power markets and general cooperative news.

**North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC):** Director Deon Vilhauer reported on the board meeting and the success of the annual meeting.

**NDAREC Rural Development Presentation:** Vilhauer introduced the NDAREC Rural Development Team: Lori Capouch, Brian Gion and Mary Helvig. The team gave a presentation to the board.

**National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC):** Fitterer reported on the NISC board meeting.

**National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA):** Fitterer reported on NRECA's upcoming annual meeting in March 2022.

**National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Board Report:** Fitterer reported on the December 2021 board meeting.

**CoBank:** Fitterer reported on the upcoming 2022 director elections.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned. **CEC**

### CAPITAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

4111 State St. N.  
Bismarck, ND 58503  
Website: [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com)

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Sheri Haugen-Hoffart, Pres. .... Bismarck  
Dave Charles, V. Pres. .... Bismarck  
David Straley, Sec.-Treas. .... Bismarck  
Deon Vilhauer, Asst. Sec.-Treas. .... Bismarck  
Kyle Hilken ..... Wilton  
Rex Hollenbeck ..... McClusky  
Dwight Wrangham ..... Bismarck  
Arlene Olson ..... Wing  
Kyle Tschosik ..... Bismarck

#### OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday : 8 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Office phone: 701-223-1513  
Toll-free: 888-223-1513  
Pay-By-Phone: 1-877-853-5928  
DAY-NIGHT-WEEKEND  
TROUBLE CALL: 223-1513

Capital Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 