



**Capital
Electric**
COOPERATIVE

SEPTEMBER 2023

Capital Electric Cooperative employees dedicate themselves to operating the cooperative, and are appreciated during Labor Day.

**Thank you for
your hard work**

Happy Labor Day!

IN THIS ISSUE

- The significance of Labor Day to your cooperative
- Bret Weiland joins board of directors
- Lineworkers fortify their skills
- Visit new building for open house Oct. 5
- Capital Electric represents co-op at parade
- Board minutes



Capital Electric Cooperative employees are happy to represent and serve our membership each day.

Employees appreciated at your co-op on Labor Day

BY WES ENGBRECHT

On the first Monday in September, the United States celebrates Labor Day, a national holiday dedicated to honoring the contributions and achievements of the American workforce. Labor Day serves as a reminder of the vital role workers play in the growth and prosperity of the nation, while also providing an opportunity to reflect on the history and significance of the labor movement.

Labor Day got its start in the late 19th century during the industrial revolution. During this time, industrial workers faced long hours, low wages and poor working conditions. These conditions led to the introduction of labor unions, which were created to help alleviate some of these issues.

Capital Electric Cooperative's lineworkers continue to be represented by a labor union, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). Today, the purpose of the union is to help maintain a strong relationship between those lineworkers and cooperative management.

"The union provides support and ensures

consistency with other co-ops in the state," says Capital Electric Operations Manager Rick Dressler.

Capital Electric has 40 employees, who dedicate themselves to operating this business, which is vital to almost 19,000 co-op members.

General Manager Paul Fitterer proudly accentuates the work being done.

"Every day, I see the heartfelt commitment our employees have in providing safe, affordable and reliable service to our members. I'm very proud to be a member of this team that takes tremendous pride in minimizing outages, ensuring bills are correct and providing expert energy advice," he says.

The cooperative's board of directors, led by President Deon Vilhauer, represents members from across three districts in our service area, which includes Burleigh County and the southern half of Sheridan County.

"The focus and determination of the entire Capital Electric staff is noticed and greatly appreciated by the board of directors," Vilhauer says.

In 2022, the cooperative moved to its new building north of Bismarck on Highway 83. Following the office remodeling and the addition of a new shop building, everything is in place to serve our members effectively. During the move and the resulting transition process, the co-op's work continued without interruption. Even during the harsh winter months, with our line trucks housed at the former building, our crews stayed on top of the storm-related outages.

Hard work has become the cornerstone of many businesses in the great state of North Dakota. In fact, we should all be proud of what we accomplish. Capital Electric employees espouse this work ethic and will continue to do our best to keep our system operating for you, our members.

Labor Day serves as a reminder that the strength and prosperity of a nation are built upon the hard work and dedication of its people. So, on this day, let us express gratitude to the countless workers who have contributed to the growth and success of our society, and let us strive for a future where every worker is valued, protected and empowered. 🇺🇸



Lineworkers **Ryan Koenig** (left) and **Matt Hagen** (right) pause to show their appreciation to our members for your support.



Senior Billing Representatives **Dana Solem** (left) and **Michelle Starck** (right) work together to ensure the billing department runs smoothly and member accounts are accurate.



Bret Weiland joins Capital Electric board

BY WES ENGBRECHT

Interest in joining the Capital Electric Cooperative board arises in many ways. Meeting members' needs is usually the most noted motivation. At the annual meeting in June, Bismarck resident Bret Weiland was elected to the board of directors in District 2.

What prompted Weiland to make the move to run for the board?

"It was really a spur of the moment inspiration," he states. "My education and job experience, as well as my significant interest in the energy industry, was a deciding factor, but I have other reasons that relate to providing service to our members."

Weiland worked for Basin Electric Power Cooperative for more than seven years and in the ethanol industry in South Dakota as well. He has degrees in process plant technology and energy management.

"I knew Capital Electric has a board election each year and I have always wanted to serve our area in a

meaningful way. While I lived in South Dakota, I was an ambulance service volunteer. That experience made me understand what it means to make a difference for a community," Weiland continues.

Weiland intends initially to soak things in as a board member.

"I would like to get to know the board and the issues we face. I would then like to focus on system reliability, which is affected by state and federal government involvement. Since I have been in the cooperative's service area, I have never been out of power. We need to continue serving our members in that manner," he states.

Weiland was born and raised in Ham Lake, Minn., and later moved to Lincoln with his parents. He and his family are lifelong co-op members. He and his wife, Kendra, have two horses, a dog and a bird.

Capital Electric welcomes Bret to the board of directors and the co-op family! ☺



New this year was Medivac training, featuring a helicopter provided by Sanford Health.

Lineworkers train for safety at annual Hotline School

BY WES ENGBRECHT

Safety is the No. 1 priority for our lineworkers as they work around high-voltage lines and equipment. Providing reliable power to our members requires proper safety techniques on their part. Weather conditions also make their work more challenging, which means utilizing the appropriate skills to maintain safe practices is even more important.

Capital Electric Cooperative sent 13 lineworkers (with three instructors) to the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives Hotline School in July. Held at the new Lineworker Training Center in Mandan, the annual field training teaches lineworkers how to safely work on high-voltage lines.

Under the guidance of instructors, participants practiced their skills at six workstations. Lineworkers also received Medivac training from Sanford Airmed staff, who brought an air ambulance to the site.

Hotline School is a statewide effort and is attended by lineworkers from other North Dakota co-ops.

"It's a great opportunity for our guys to meet other co-op lineworkers to share information and ideas for safety enhancements," relates Operations Manager Rick Dressler.

The next time you spot a Capital Electric line truck, be assured the lineworkers operating that vehicle and other equipment are prepared to do the job safely and efficiently. ☺



Lineworkers require intentional training to remain safe during line work in all weather conditions.



Our new headquarters rests on the prairie north of Bismarck.

Join us at our new facility for open house

Capital Electric Cooperative employees have been fielding questions and responding to comments relating to our new location at 7401 Yukon Drive in Bismarck. One of the most asked questions is, "How is the new building working out for you?" The answer nearly always given is, "It's working out great!"

Now that our shop addition and renovations are complete, we are ready to invite you to take a tour and have lunch with us. After all, as members of the cooperative, this is your building. We are proud to do the work to provide the power you need, and we are thankful for the opportunity to inhabit this great new facility to do our work.

We welcome you to join us for an open house to celebrate the completion of the move to our new location north of Bismarck. The open house will be from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 5, at 7401 Yukon Drive.

Expect to be greeted by co-op employees, who will join you for lunch and provide you with a tour of the full property. To reach our location, head north on

Highway 83. You will pass 71st Avenue and take the next left off the highway to enter.

Give Wes Engbrecht a call at 701-712-7923 with questions or for more information. We look forward to seeing you all here on Oct. 5! ☎



Capital Electric Cooperative's new logo greets co-op members as they enter the newly remodeled reception area.



This year's Touchstone Energy float shines bright as it makes its way through the parade route.

Co-op joins in Fourth of July parade

Most people would agree a parade is a proper way to celebrate an important holiday such as Independence Day. At least we know the countless people attending each year's Fourth of July parade in Mandan feel that way. These parade-lovers make this parade a priority each year, arriving from a wide swath of the state to partake in the festivities.

"I'm always amazed at the attendance at this event. I've been involved with the co-op's involvement for 16 years and it seems like every year it grows and becomes more exciting. It is truly a happy community event that puts a smile on so many faces," says Wes Engbrecht, Capital Electric's manager of communications.

Capital Electric, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and other local Touchstone Energy® cooperatives have made their appearance in the celebration for many years. We appreciate the energy and enthusiasm of the families along the parade route, especially the children clamoring for the candy and prizes handed out during the event. The kids never go away disappointed!



Parades are for kids, and Energy Services Coordinator **NaTesa Messerschmidt** and her girls are always ready to join in the fun.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative employees put in the time to design and create a unique float representing the co-ops. There are also two electric vehicles added to the mix, which includes Capital Electric's and Basin Electric's Chevy Bolts.

Capital Electric is proud to celebrate our nation's independence and pleased to see so many attending this enjoyable community event! ☺

Board minute excerpts JULY 28

The regular meeting of the board of directors of Capital Electric Cooperative was held on Friday, July 28. The meeting was held in person at United Tribes Technical College, 3315 University Drive, Bismarck. All directors were present at that time.

Also present were: Manager Paul Fitterer, Business Manager Luke Steen, Operations Manager Rick Dressler, Manager of Engineering Services Greg Owen, Energy Services Manager Josh Schaffner, Manager of Communications and IT Wes Engbrecht and Attorney Meredith Vukelic of Pearce Durick PLLC, who acted as recording secretary.

Financial Review: The financial review was approved as presented.

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

Business Department Report: Steen presented the June financial and statistical report to the board.

Revenue was ahead of budget for June, as \$3,741,450 was generated, in comparison with the budgeted figure of \$3,676,601 (favorable variance of \$64,849 or 1.8%).

Capital Electric's June load factor was ahead of budget by 0.47%.

The operating margin for June was -\$340,384, behind the budgeted amount of -\$314,485. The total margin for June was -\$270,928, which was ahead of the budgeted -\$295,214.

Capital Electric began billing 34 new services in June, bringing our active services to 22,087 versus 21,760 at this time last year, or a net increase of 327 accounts over the last 12 months.

The total cash on hand and monthly power cost for June were reviewed. Accounts receivable balances as of July 26 were reviewed.

Estate Retirements: Following review of the financial condition of the cooperative and recommendation by management, 16 estate retirements totaling \$13,802.10 were approved for payment.

Write-offs: Write-offs of \$4,386.13 for the second quarter were approved. The total 12-month write-offs are \$13,703.70.

2022 Tax Filings (IRS Forms 990 and 990T, N.D. Form 40, Form 8879): Tax filings for Form 990, 990T, N.D. Form 40 and Form 8879 were approved.

RUS "AN45" Loan Application: Steen reviewed the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) loan application. Steen reported on the corporate debt limit in relation to the loan application. Approval was made to raise the current debt limit. Steen reported

on board signature documents that are required as part of the loan application. The required documents were approved.

Update of Board Officers: Steen reported on the need to update the board officers for RUS Form 87, CoBank Incumbency Certificate and FCCU board resolution form. Authorization was made to update the current board officers.

Rate Increase/Member Concerns: Steen reported on correspondence with a member concerning rate increases. Further followup with the member will occur and no board action was taken.

Operations Report: Dressler reviewed the written report from the operations department. Capital Electric energized a tie line for Horizon Middle School, while continuing work on the Ash Coulee Road construction project, installed services for two city sirens near the Horizon substation and Bismarck Surgical Center, and replaced two poles identified for replacement during the annual pole inspections.

Safety Report: There were no lost-time accidents in July. Capital Electric lineworkers attended hotline school and line operation field training the week of July 10 at the new Bismarck State College lineworker training facility in Mandan.

Engineering Services Report: Owen reviewed the written report from engineering services. Ten work orders were completed in June. Owen reported on ongoing and upcoming projects, including upcoming work on a project at United Tribes Community College involving converting the campus to multiple point monitoring.

Property Update: Owen reported on the status of the anticipated sale of the former administrative building that is currently under contract.

Energy Services: Schaffner reviewed the energy services report. Nineteen service orders were completed in June. Schaffner reported on continued work on the new headquarters addition, work on multiple residential solar projects and work with members on available load control technologies.

ERC Loans: Three ERC loan applications were approved.

Public Relations and IT: Engbrecht reviewed the communications and IT report.

Policies: Fitterer reported on new and amended policy proposals involving employee paid time off, which were approved.

Strategic Planning: Fitterer reported on the cooperative's upcoming strategic planning meeting.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative: Fitterer reported on Basin Electric matters.

Central Power Electric Cooperative: Charles reported on the July board meeting.

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

North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC): Vilhauer reported on the July board meeting at Minnkota Power Cooperative's headquarters in Grand Forks. Vilhauer reported that he is running for president of the NDAREC board.

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Region 5 and 6: Fitterer reported on the upcoming NRECA regional meeting.

National Information Solutions Cooperative: Fitterer reported on the July board meeting.

Mid-West Electric Consumers Association: Fitterer reported on updates related to Western Area Power Administration cost pressures and that an additional 2024 drought adder is not anticipated.

CoBank Nominating Committee: Fitterer reported on the 2024-25 Nominating Committee election. €

CAPITAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

7401 Yukon Drive
Bismarck, ND 58503
Website: www.capitalelec.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Deon Vilhauer, Pres.	Bismarck
Dave Charles, V. Pres.	Bismarck
Kyle Tschosik, Sec.-Treas.	Bismarck
Lyndon Anderson, Asst. Sec.-Treas.	Baldwin
Rex Hollenbeck	McClusky
Dwight Wrangham.....	Lincoln
Kayla Pulvermacher.....	Lincoln
Sara Vollmer	Wing
Bret Weiland.....	Bismarck

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday : 8 a.m.-4 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 