



Capital Electric

COOPERATIVE

JANUARY 2024

Operations Manager Rick Dressler announced his retirement after nearly 40 years of dedicated service to our members. Over that time, the membership has grown immensely. Dressler's career as a lineworker, system supervisor and now operations manager has been focused on keeping your lights on. We thank him for sharing his time and efforts with Capital Electric Cooperative and all of you!



IN THIS ISSUE

- Dressler announces retirement
- Murrey recognized with tree care award
- Holzer promoted to operations manager
- Haman added to accounting department
- Celebration of Trees program
- Employees recognized for years of service
- Apply for scholarship and Youth Tour
- Board minutes



Once Rick Dressler started as a Capital Electric Cooperative lineworker, he was instantly part of a great team. In front of a trencher are Johnny Fasching, Gordy Weise, Dressler and Terry Mertz.

Dressler retires after nearly four decades

BY WES ENGBRECHT

Just a few years ago, we celebrated Rick Dressler's 35-year anniversary with Capital Electric Cooperative. Now, we get to thank him for nearly 40 years of service, as he retires on Jan. 5. Few cooperative employees have reached this milestone, so it's a pleasure to recognize his commitment to our members, directors and fellow employees.

A summer storm during the night prompts lineworkers to rush to the shop to fire up their trucks in a race to restore power. Winter weather is even more menacing, as the snow, cold and wind make it almost impossible to see, much less reach, the affected areas. These are just two examples of Dressler's career with Capital Electric.

Answering calls at 2 a.m. to respond to power outages, and to later manage system damage from winter storms, takes a dedication that is extremely difficult, yet necessary, in this business. Our members have often shared how much they appreciate this work.

"I have been fortunate to work with hardworking

lineworkers over the years. We are a team, and it continues to feel that we are always on the same page," Dressler says.

Through good times and bad, the commitment to duty and service has remained constant. As the co-op moves forward, System Supervisor Jeff Holzer will move into the operations manager position Dressler is vacating.

"Jeff will do an outstanding job in this position. I have worked with him for 21 years and have great confidence he will do the job well," Dressler says.

It's been a good run for the Dressler boy from Flasher, who started his career on May 1, 1984. When Dressler started his lineworker career at Capital Electric, one of his first co-workers on the crew was Johnny Fasching.

"Johnny went home to his wife that first day and told her there was a new guy that had started. When she asked who he was, Johnny retorted, in his typically rough manner, 'Some skinny kid from Flasher,'" Dressler shares.

Dressler has shared a lot of great stories about his



time at the co-op, and they all mean so much to him.

Dressler has a highly contagious and unique sense of humor that has often left co-workers in stitches. He especially loves to poke fun at people and see their reactions.

"I like to keep the mood light in the office, and I enjoy making people laugh. I think the employees have come to expect that from me over the years. It's just who I am," he shares with a smile.

At the end of the day, however, his career embodied the spirit of member service and cooperation to get the work done, even in the face of significant challenges.

"Rick has been dedicated to serving Capital Electric for nearly 40 years – half of the cooperative's existence! He served as a lineworker, our system supervisor and currently as the manager of operations. Rick takes great pride in the work he does and cares deeply about his fellow employees and serving the membership. He brings his work ethic and great sense of humor to the job every day. We wish Rick the best in his retirement and thank him for his service," General Manager Paul Fitterer says.

Dressler shares an often-told humorous story about a co-op member.

"After I first started with the co-op, we had a member in Goodrich who lost power. We found out a few days later, when the mailman delivered the letter,

which he sent to inform us of the outage. We still laugh about that," he says.

In retirement, Dressler plans to devote more time to his family. He has three sons, who are all married and have children. In fact, his 11th grandchild is on the way.

"To have the time to spend with them will be an amazing gift. My wife, Val, and I are fortunate to have everyone live within a few blocks of our home in south Bismarck," he says with a beaming smile.

We wish you well, Rick, and will miss you greatly as you move on to the next phase in life! ☺





Tyrell Murrey and his daughters, Hazel, 3, and Hollyn, 5, stand in a tree row on their farm south of Wilton.

Murrey recognized with tree care award

BY WES ENGBRECHT

North Dakota happens to be surrounded by states with no shortage of vegetation. Those who have spent most of our lives here have commented, and even joked, “Why do we have to plant our own trees and they don’t?”

Long rows of trees, also known as shelterbelts, follow the terrain of fields and pastures across the

state. Patches of trees are also found across the countryside. Most of these trees are there because a landowner made the effort and bore the expense of putting them into the ground.

A Capital Electric Cooperative member, Tyrell Murrey has many reasons for planting and maintaining trees on his property south of Wilton.

“I started with my tree restoration program in 2010, mainly to provide it for the next generation. I have two daughters, ages 5 and 3, who I believe will appreciate these efforts as they grow up. I also have family members who enjoy hunting, and the trees work well for them,” he explains.

Initially, Murrey planted patches of trees in various areas of his pastureland. He started with fruit trees and other varieties for local wildlife, mainly deer and pheasants. He has since focused on junipers and cedar to meet his planting goals.

The Burleigh County Soil Conservation District offers a cost-sharing program for tree planting, which aids in the financial side of planting.

“I send a map of what I’d like to put in, and they provide expert advice to make it a reality. Outdoor Heritage Fund funding is available to aid as well,” Murrey says.

Capital Electric Cooperative is proud to sponsor the tree care award annually. The co-op congratulates Murrey on receiving this year’s award. 🎉

Holzer takes over operations manager role

BY WES ENGBRECHT

Managing operations for a co-op serving more than 23,000 meters can be challenging, but Jeff Holzer is ready for the job. Following 21 years at the co-op as a lineworker and currently the system supervisor, his understanding of our entire system is complete.



Jeff Holzer

As operations manager, Holzer will work closely with the new system supervisor, Lance Diebold. They will manage a team of lineworkers who ensure reliable power delivery 365 days each year.

A significant aspect of maintaining a successful operations department is communicating with co-op members.

“There are many situations, both positive and challenging, that arise during the workday. Of course, frequent North Dakota storms can bring on many of these challenges, but there are many other times

when member communication is needed,” Holzer says. “The coordination of our crews is vital to ensure a quick response to restore power. Our guys will brave all conditions to make this happen.”

Communicating daily with other departments within the co-op is important as well.

“As a co-op, we work together to get things done and that’s what makes things go smoothly,” Holzer explains. Co-op employees have the same goal in mind – to serve the needs of our members.

“We are confident Jeff’s experience at the co-op and his knowledge of our system will translate into a seamless transition. He will do a great job managing our operations department,” General Manager Paul Fitterer says.

We look forward to Jeff’s continued dedication to Capital Electric. As a co-op member, you can be confident the same level of service we have provided in the past will continue. 🎉

Haman joins accounting department

BY WES ENGBRECHT

Capital Electric Cooperative is pleased to welcome Amber Haman to our accounting department. Amber will serve as the payroll and benefits accountant.

"Amber's exceptional experience is a great addition to our accounting department. I am very impressed with her professionalism and interpersonal skills. Working with our employees on complex and sensitive human resources topics will be a challenge I know she can meet," explains Business Manager Luke Steen.

Haman served her country with the U.S. Army as she was stationed in Germany for two years. During this



Amber Haman

time, she worked as a Russian language specialist.

Amber earned a Master of Business Administration at the University of Mary and worked as vice president of human resources with HIT Inc.

She and her husband of 22 years, Dale, have two grown daughters, one in college pursuing an engineering degree and one working as a phlebotomist, and a 3-year-old grandson. They also host a foreign exchange student, Klaudia, from Poland, who will spend her junior year at Mandan High School.

Amber is active in the community, being involved in the launch of their church. She also likes tennis and plays in a volleyball league.

Amber is looking forward to working at the co-op.

"I will be taking on new challenges, while utilizing my experience in human resources and accounting. I look forward to learning more about the energy industry as I move forward with this opportunity," she says. ☺

A tree decorated with and for 'Pride'

BY WES ENGBRECHT

For 17 years, Capital Electric Cooperative has been pleased to support Pride Inc.'s Celebration of Trees. This fundraiser is a unique annual event in which businesses decorate a tree provided by Pride Inc. and deliver it to the Bismarck Event Center for viewing during the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase and Breakfast with Santa.

The ornate trees are judged by attendees and the winner receives the satisfaction of having decorated the most amazing tree in the show. Following these events, the trees are donated to area families who would love the opportunity to have a tree in their home during the holiday season.

Capital Electric employees have always enjoyed this group activity and are absolutely hooked on the idea of creating a special holiday for a deserving family.

Since opening its doors in 1976, Pride Inc.'s passion to provide quality services for adults and children with disabilities has helped thousands experience life to its fullest. In 2001, they started the Celebration of Trees event to give back to the community. All proceeds from the sponsorship of the Celebration of Trees are kept in the community and used to help meet the needs of the individual receiving services. ☺



Capital Electric Cooperative's **Chelsey Bryant** and **Lana Jones** proudly display our fully decorated tree for Pride Inc.'s Celebration of Trees.

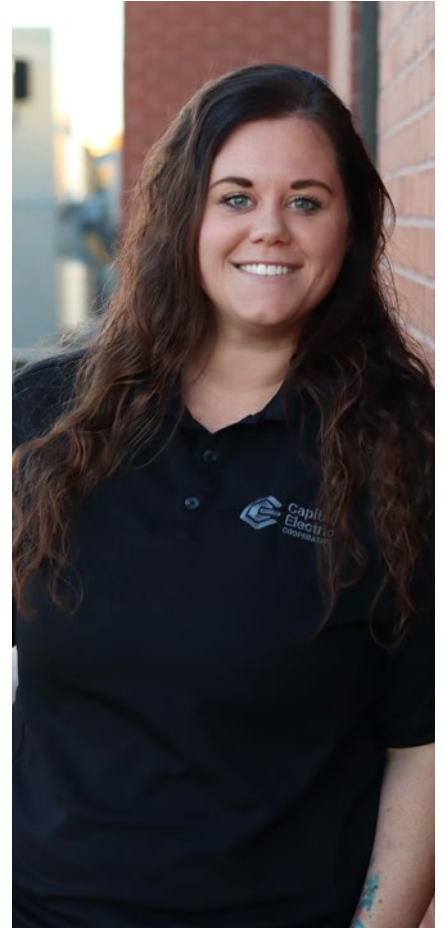
Employees reach milestones



Steve Kuball
15 years



Jesse Goehring
10 years



NaTesa Messerschmidt
5 years



Capital Electric Cooperative offers student scholarship

Capital Electric Cooperative is offering a \$1,000 student scholarship, in partnership with Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

To qualify for the scholarship, students must be enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Their parent(s) or guardian(s) must be members of Capital Electric.

Our cooperative will assemble a panel of impartial judges to review all applications. The judges will select the winning application based on academic performance, potential to succeed, leadership and participation in school and community activities, honors, a statement of education and career goals, work experience and an outside referral. The scholarship will be awarded without regard to other awards, loans or financial assistance the applicant may have obtained.

Application forms may be downloaded at www.capitalelec.com or picked up at co-op headquarters at 7401 Yukon Drive in Bismarck. **Applications need to be completed and returned to Capital Electric on or before Friday, Feb. 16.**

APPLY FOR A TRIP OF A LIFETIME

WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

- An all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., paid for by Capital Electric Cooperative.
- A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world class museums, learning about electric cooperatives and meeting elected officials.
- Developing lifelong friendships with delegates from across the country!



JUNE 15 TO 21, 2024

AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

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?

HOW TO APPLY

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school, and you and your parents or guardian must be served by Capital Electric Cooperative.
- Email entries to Wes Engbrecht at wese@capitalelec.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, 7401 Yukon Drive, Bismarck, ND, 58503.
- Questions? Call Wes at 701-223-1513 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Jan. 19, 2024.

EMPOWER



LEARN MORE AT NDYOUTHTOUR.COM

Board minute excerpts NOV. 20, 2023

The regular meeting of the board of directors of Capital Electric Cooperative was held on Monday, Nov. 20, 2023. The meeting was held in person at Capital Electric, 7401 Yukon Drive, Bismarck, pursuant to due notice to all directors. 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 Zachary Pelham of Pearce Durick PLLC, who acted as recording secretary.

Financial Review: Prior to the board meeting, Directors Anderson and Hollenbeck reviewed the October 2023 check register and expenditures. They advised all checks and expenditures were in order. 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 October 2023 financial and statistical report to the board.

Revenue was ahead of budget for October, as \$3,297,624 was generated, in comparison with the budgeted figure of \$3,271,639 (favorable variance of \$25,985 or 0.8%).

Capital Electric's October gross load factor was behind budget by 6.51%.

The operating margin for October was \$126,165, ahead of the budgeted amount of \$22,721. The total margin for October was \$124,548, which was ahead of the budgeted \$32,889.

Capital Electric began billing 41 new services in October, bringing our active services to 22,195 versus 21,906 at this time last year, or a net increase of 289 accounts over the last 12 months.

The October cash flow statement and most recent accounts receivable balances as of Nov. 17, 2023, were reviewed.

Cafeteria Plan: An amendment to the Cafeteria Plan was discussed and adopted as presented.

Estate Retirements: Following review of the financial condition of the

cooperative and recommendation by management, three estate retirements totaling \$2,972.04 were authorized.

Operations Report: Owen reviewed the written report from the operations department. Owen reported crews continued terminating cable on the ongoing 43rd Avenue overhead to underground cable project and anticipated being able to energize the new underground cable by the end of November and then work to remove the overhead lines.

Safety Report: There were no lost time accidents in November. Mike Koenig, North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) safety instructor, met with line crews for a field visit on Nov. 9. Four lineworkers attended a personal protective grounding and bonding seminar at the training center in Mandan on Nov. 5. The safety report was approved.

Engineering Services Report: Owen reviewed the written report from engineering services. Seventeen work orders were completed in October. Owen reported on ongoing and upcoming projects.

South Washington Utility Relocation Agreement: Owen reviewed a proposed utility relocation agreement with the city of Bismarck for the South Washington Street reconstruction project. Following discussion, the agreement was approved as presented.

Property Update: Owen reported the sale of the former administrative building closed on Nov. 6. Work on the new facility addition is nearing completion.

Energy Services: Schaffner reviewed the energy services report. Thirty service orders were completed in October.

Communications and IT: Engbrecht reviewed the communications and IT report.

2024 Budget: Fitterer and Steen presented on the 2024 budget, which the board discussed. Following discussion, the 2024 budget was approved as presented. 2024 will be a challenging year, with increasing cost pressures and the need for additional revenue.

Policies: Fitterer presented the

interruptible rate and peak time rebate policies, which the board discussed. The interruptible rate schedule was rescinded and the peak time rebate program was modified.

Strategic Planning: Fitterer outlined the plan for implementing and completing items identified at the strategic planning session and following discussion and the plan was adopted.

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

Central Power Electric Cooperative: Charles reported the November board meeting is set for Nov. 21.

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

NDAREC: Vilhauer reported an update on NDAREC.

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA): Fitterer reported on the upcoming NRECA Power X conference in March. Director Tschosik will serve as delegate and Director Wrangham will serve as alternate. ☺

CAPITAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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