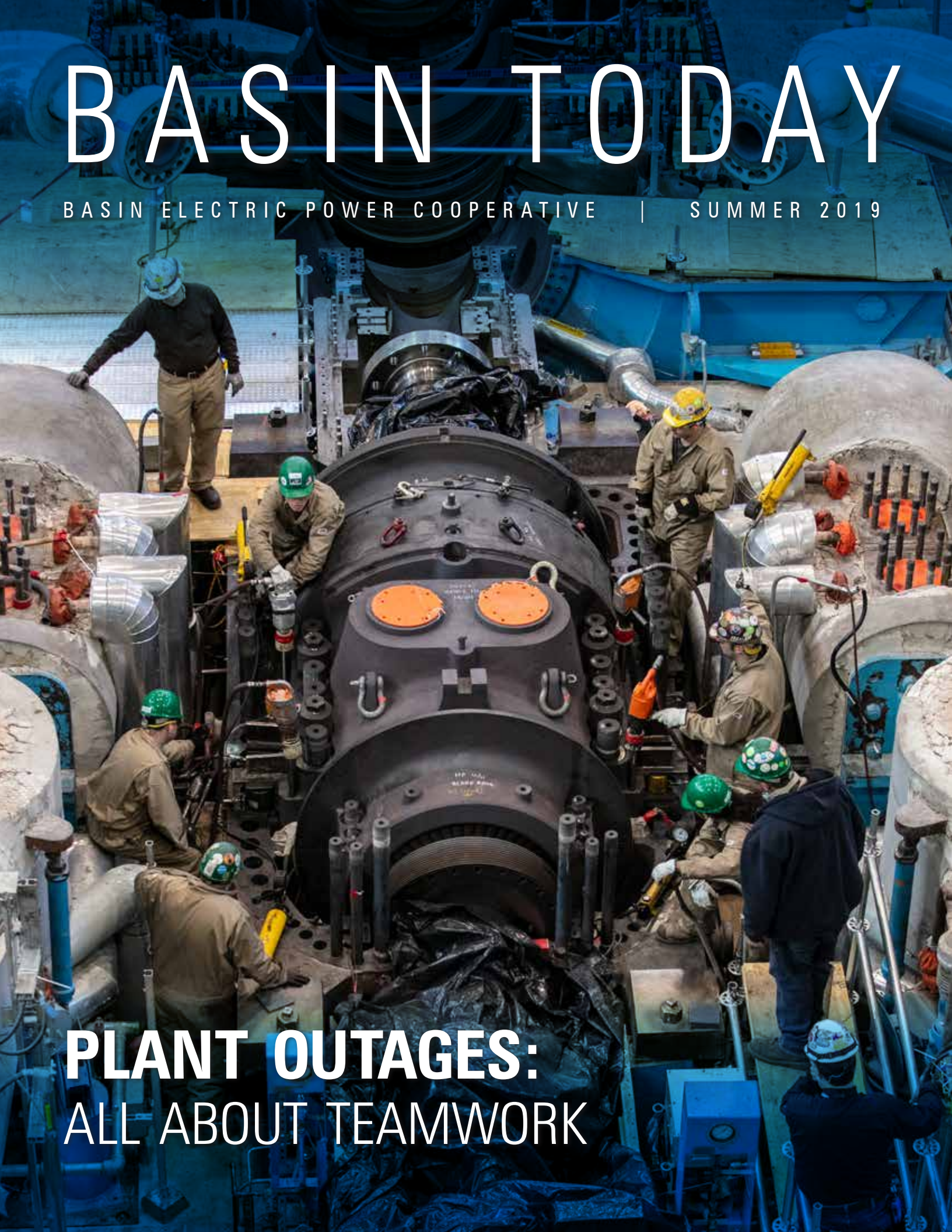
BASIN TODAY

BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE | SUMMER 2019



PLANT OUTAGES:
ALL ABOUT TEAMWORK

Employees from Capital Electric Cooperative, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, NISC, and Basin Electric worked together to build a new parade float for the Mandan (North Dakota) Independence Day parade. The colorful float features Touchstone Energy Cooperatives' "Three Amigos" and the seven cooperative principles. The float will be shared between these co-ops for parades in their service areas.

CONTENTS

VOLUME 22 | NUMBER 3

ON THE COVER

It takes the entire Basin Electric team working together to complete plant outages. Now that the spring outages are complete, the plants are ready for summer peaks.

IN EVERY ISSUE

FEATURE STORIES

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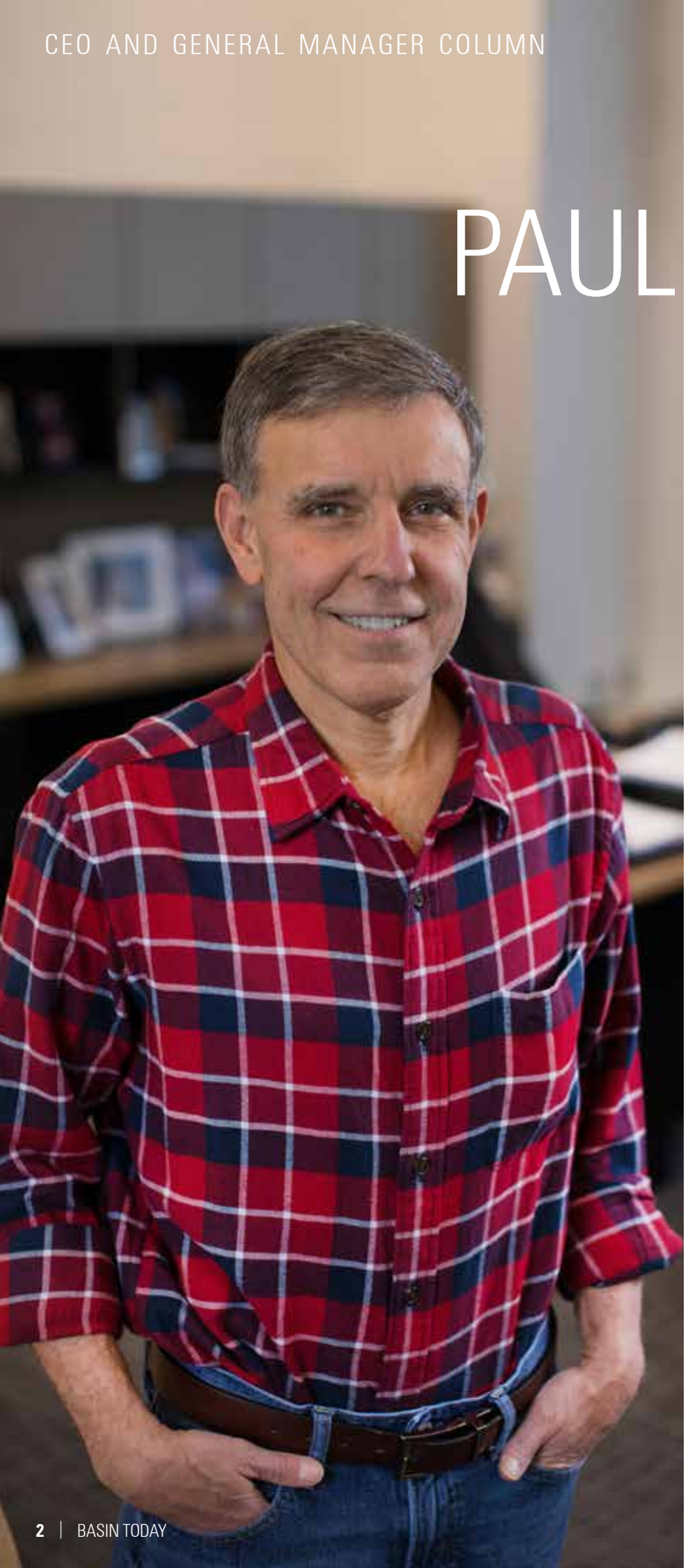

PAUL SUKUT

EMPLOYEES MAKE THE PLACE WORK

When tour guests step off the bus at our facilities, they usually don't know what they're in for.

They know they will tour a power plant, or gasification plant, or coal mine, but have they ever imagined the mechanics that make these facilities work?

The answer is found when you talk to them on the way home.

"We take it for granted, when we turn on the light switch, and there is electricity there. … You flip a switch, and things just work. That's incredible."

"Blown away by the size and scale of the facility."

"It gave me a great appreciation of our electric cooperatives and how they work together."

Many of our distribution cooperative members give their end-use consumers the opportunity to tour our facilities each summer to see what it takes to generate electricity in person. They get to stand beneath the coal pulverizers, peer into the flaming hot boiler, and stand on the top floor of a power plant to see more than 40 miles in all directions.

The machinery of a generation and transmission cooperative like Basin Electric is impressive,

especially because in our case, the Great Plains Synfuels Plant is part of the package. It's one of only two like it in the entire world.

But the people who operate and maintain all those turbines, switchyards, scrubbers, and more, are a marvel in their own right.

One of the South Dakota lawmakers who toured our facilities in June said, "These people are sincere, you can tell they love their jobs. You can tell people are really, really proud of the good work being done here."

At Basin Electric, our dedicated and engaged employees are more important than any other piece of our infrastructure. I spent some time visiting each of our facilities over the past month, and it's clear to me our employees run these facilities as though they are their own. They challenge themselves and one another to find new ways to get their jobs done. They are very interested in what they can do to help make Basin Electric the best it can be for its membership.

Because we now bid our power into the market, there is a lot of pressure on our facilities to operate as cheaply as they can. And it's not just electricity that is facing steep pricing challenges. Our natural gas, fertilizers, and other products at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant continue to see low prices, too.

We had good discussions while I was at our facilities, about how we work every day toward our goal of keeping our rates low while also keeping the light switch reliable. I spent my time with our employees working to impress upon them that we are as healthy now as we've ever been in Basin Electric's history.

We have a bright future, not because of any one type of fuel or piece of technology, but because our employees are savvy and work hard. I appreciate that, and the board appreciates that. Our employees are able to take the challenges we give them and meet them – whether that's competing in an energy trading market, finding new ways to operate equipment to keep costs low, or communicating in a quickly changing world.

The members, lawmakers, and others who get to tour our facilities see it just as clearly as I do – our employees make a strong, passionate, and proud team. And as long as people want to see how we do the work we do, we will show them.

Paul Sukut, CEO and general manager

Circuit breaker replaced at Antelope Valley Station

A project to replace the Unit 2 generator circuit breaker at Basin Electric's Antelope Valley Station near Beulah, North Dakota, is complete. Trenton Schwahn, electrical engineer, said planning for the project began in 2017.

"The old breakers are the original early 1980s equipment and are obsolete," Schwahn said.

Work began in April to remove the old breaker in Unit 2 and install the new one. It took nearly six weeks to complete the installation.

The breaker is an important piece of equipment, essentially connecting the electrical generating unit to the grid.

The new breaker will lower maintenance costs, because the manufacturer recommends inspection every six years rather than extensive maintenance during every three-year outage.

Final testing took place June 6 when the new breaker was tied into the grid.

Plans are to change the breaker on Unit 1 next spring during the annual maintenance outage. Once that job is complete, every Basin Electric coal-based generating unit will be equipped with the new type of breaker.

http://bit.ly/AVScircuitbreaker

Senators sign letter to FERC

Basin Electric, the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association recently worked with U.S. Sen. John Hoeven (R-North Dakota) on a letter in response to a recent Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) proposal that would allow third parties to aggregate distributed energy resources such as solar and battery panels, and sell electricity on the wholesale market.

In addition to Hoeven and with the help of several statewide electric cooperative associations, other senators within Basin Electric's service area co-signed the letter, including Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyoming), Kevin Cramer (R-North Dakota), Steve Daines (R-Montana), Mike Enzi (R-Wyoming), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Deb Fischer (R-Nebraska), Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Mike Rounds (R-South Dakota), and John Thune (R-South Dakota). In all, 22 senators signed the letter.

"While allowing distributed energy resources into the wholesale market can encourage innovation, the aggregation of these resources should be determined at the local and state level to ensure that there is no adverse impact on reliability or higher costs for consumers," said Hoeven, who serves on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "The Federal Power Act established important precedents in ensuring that local distribution utilities, like rural electric cooperatives, have jurisdiction of the wholesale market. This local control helps to better ensure that consumers have access to safe, reliable, and affordable energy."

http://bit.ly/HoevenFERCletter

Ratings agencies affirm and strengthen Basin Electric's rating

The ratings agencies Fitch Ratings and S&P have changed their outlook on Basin Electric's rating to stable.

Steve Johnson, Basin Electric chief financial officer and senior vice president, said Basin Electric's tough decisions of the past two years played a part in the move. "It's very gratifying that the ratings agencies recognize that we took drastic steps and we are stronger for it."

In 2016, S&P placed Basin Electric on negative outlook and Fitch changed its rating from A+ to A as well as changed its outlook to negative.

"That negative outlook would indicate that there's a greater chance than not that when the agencies

review your ratings again, you could be downgraded. That outlook reflects their vision of us for the future," Johnson said. "So bringing us back to stable is very important because it's saying in their view, they don't anticipate a change in the rating. We are 'A' rated with a stable outlook."

Moody's Ratings affirmed Basin Electric's rating with a stable outlook this year.

http://bit.ly/BasinRatings2019

EPA finalizes Affordable Clean Energy rule

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the final Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule on June 19, replacing the prior administration's Clean Power Plan (CPP).

These actions are the culmination of a review of the CPP and follow challenges from a large number of states, trade associations, rural electric co-ops, and labor unions who argued that the CPP exceeded EPA's authority under the Clean Air Act, and an unprecedented stay of the CPP by the Supreme Court in 2016.

"While we need to fully evaluate the final Affordable Clean Energy Rule to determine the full impacts on Basin Electric, we appreciate the EPA's efforts to withdraw and replace the Clean Power Plan," said Basin Electric CEO and General Manager Paul Sukut.

"The CPP was a broad overreach that we estimated could have resulted in $5 billion in increased costs for Basin Electric and its members, whereas the ACE rule is more consistent with the EPA's authority under the Clean Air Act, and recognizes the role of states to work with utilities as they implement the rule."

EPA projects that ACE will result in annual net benefits of $120 million to $730 million, including costs, domestic climate benefits, and health co-benefits.

With ACE, along with additional expected emissions reductions based on long-term industry trends, carbon dioxide emissions from the electric sector are expected to fall by as much as 35% below 2005 levels in 2030.

http://bit.ly/FinalACErule

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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF . . . CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR JESSE JORDAN AND SENIOR PURCHASING AGENT TOM WANNER

By Angela Magstadt

Tom Wanner and Jesse Jordan were two of the employees who served as procurement's "boots on the ground" during this spring's plant outages.

From a seven-cent washer to a turbine worth millions of dollars, Basin Electric's procurement division works quietly behind the scenes to make sure every employee has exactly what they need to do their job.

One of the busiest times of the year for procurement is outage season. During this time, bids need to be obtained, contracts executed and enforced, parts ordered, and unexpected discoveries dealt with when equipment is disassembled and potential issues are found.

Prior to Basin Electric's reduction in force last year, each station had a dedicated procurement employee on site. This year, the outages were staffed instead by several contract and purchasing employees who rotated weeks at a time at the plants in an effort to serve as the first line of defense when unanticipated issues arose.

Contract Administrator Jesse Jordan and Senior Purchasing Agent Tom Wanner were two of the employees who served as procurement's "boots on the ground." They were tasked with assisting plant personnel in addressing contract or parts issues that arose during the outages.

Contracts: Getting the best bang for the buck

"For me, outage season starts about a year before the actual outage," Jordan says. "From the time the contract is bid to the time the invoice is paid, I'm working to make sure Basin Electric and its members get the best work done for the best value."

Jordan emphasizes "best value" doesn't always mean the lowest bid. Factors, such as workmanship, commercial terms, project schedule, safety record, quality of work, and more are all taken into consideration.

Once the project work has been requested by the field, Jordan does a walk through with the contractors prior to bid submittal. This allows for consistent information flow, as well as a guided walk down of the project. Jordan, along with plant personnel and representatives from engineering, then analyze the bids and recommend which contractor they believe would be best for the job.

After the bid is awarded, he negotiates and executes the contract. "It is my job to ensure the contract is fair, and if the terms are not followed, there is recourse. This is done to protect Basin Electric and its members," he says.

Once the outage begins, Jordan participates in meetings to ensure the outage is on schedule. "There are many pieces to the puzzle, and knowing where each department is at allows me to help where a vendor or contractors may be falling behind," he says. "Because I am on site, I am able to chase problems when they happen so the plant personnel can focus on the outage itself."

As changes to the contracts are requested from the field, Jordan reviews the change request and compares it to the scope of work outlined in the contract. During discovery work, it is not uncommon to learn of additional work that needs to be done, which may not be outlined in the contract.

Jordan considers himself a one-stop shop plant personnel can count on to find solutions to contract issues, and the primary contact responsible for ensuring each vendor is in compliance with the terms of the contract, whether that is with delivery, schedule, pricing, scope of work, or any other part of the agreement.

"It takes an entire team," he says. "There are a lot of moving parts, and it takes everyone working together to get outages completed. Procurement staff prides themselves in providing value to our plants by managing risk and procuring materials and services that add value to Basin Electric and all of its members."

Purchasing: There isn't always the luxury of lead time

Purchasing parts and materials needed to ensure all equipment is running safely and efficiently is another piece of the outage puzzle conducted by the procurement team. Wanner starts ordering necessary equipment and parts one year prior to the outage. Advanced planning is necessary due mainly to long lead times. Purchasing works closely with each facility to understand what is needed and when to ensure all parts are on site before the outage begins.

However, as one would expect, there are a lot of unexpected material needs during an outage. "It's really important that one piece of equipment doesn't hold up the entire outage," Wanner says.

One example happened this spring during Dry Fork Station's first-ever major outage. When the turbine was removed, some of the bolts that hold it in place fractured. Without them, the turbine can't be re-assembled. Wanner contacted the original equipment manufacturer, but was quoted a 20-week lead time. Experience directed him to a local fabricator, who was able to reverse engineer the bolts in just a couple days. "Using this company allowed us to maintain the outage schedule and save a considerable amount of money. Dry Fork is the newest, most efficient plant we have, so it's important that we get it up and running as soon as possible. Parts and repairs add up to a lot of money, so if there is ever anything we can do to help save time and money while still maintaining quality, we do it."

This wasn't the only time Wanner has been able to get parts or equipment quicker than originally anticipated. He says that during an outage he becomes somewhat of an expert in expediting requests. "We try very hard to accommodate material need dates by working closely with our logistics group," he says.

Wanner also serves as a procurement liaison, communicating between the plant and other members of the purchasing staff to facilitate material purchases and expedites. On any given day, he can be found walking around the plant taking photos of serial numbers or contacting multiple vendors to see who can deliver necessary parts at the best price in the fastest time.

"Being onsite during an outage really opened my eyes to what the employees at the plants do," he says. "They are pulled in so many directions, it's unbelievable. They don't need to be worried about calling a vendor to get a part, they need to be able to just focus on the work they're trying to do. That's why we're there, to take care of the unexpected needs so they can get the job done."

Wanner and Jordan agree that being on site is an advantage for both procurement and plant personnel. "When we're working with the people in the trenches doing the work, we see the challenges they face, and they see ours," Wanner says. "We may have talked to some of these people on the phone for years, but when we meet them in person, it's a whole different ballgame. When we're at the plant and they see that we genuinely care about it and what they are trying to get done, it builds great relationships. We get to know and trust each other, which makes everyone's job a lot easier. This is one of the most rewarding parts of my job."

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT: A CLEAR PATH FOR RELIABLE ELECTRICITY

By Tammy Langerud

One tree. 55 million people without power. A $6 billion economic hit.

In 2003, one single tree touching a transmission line in Ohio is all it took to bring about the largest power outage in U.S. history. Within five hours on a hot August day, power was down in eight northeastern states and parts of Canada.

Fifteen years later, California's deadliest and most destructive fire in history was the result of a utility's failure to keep power lines clear of trees or vegetation. The 2018 Camp Fire, as it was called, ravaged Northern California, killing at least 85 people, destroying nearly 19,000 buildings, and charring an area the size of Chicago. Total damage is estimated at $16.5 billion.

Closer to home – in Basin Electric's service area – South Dakota's 2017 Legion Lake fire started in the Black Hills when a 35-foot tree fell across a power line owned by a non-cooperative utility. The fast-spreading fire burned 84-square miles before its containment.

All of these incidents demonstrate the importance of keeping the area around transmission lines clear.

Cutting trees is one of the toughest, most dangerous jobs of a line crew. They wear additional safety gear to protect themselves from sharp, fast-moving objects like a saw and large wood chipper.

Trees and power lines don't mix

High-voltage transmission lines are the backbone of how Basin Electric keeps electricity flowing. The co-op's vegetation management program, which maintains the areas around power lines, helps prevent unnecessary power disruptions, and keeps people and property safe.

Basin Electric conducts vegetation management (of trees and shrubs) for three reasons:

- Ensure a safe, reliable electric system.
- Prevent fires.
- Be compliant with federal requirements. Violations can result in fines of up to $1 million per day.

"We're not cutting down trees because we like to cut trees," says Paul Kaiser, Basin Electric assistant line superintendent for North Dakota. "We're doing it for the reliability of the power lines, and to make it safer for the landowner and for the land itself. We're helping landowners save their million-dollar crop – or other property – so it doesn't start on fire. We're here to help."

The foundation of vegetation management starts with a right-of-way, which is the area of land that a power line passes through.

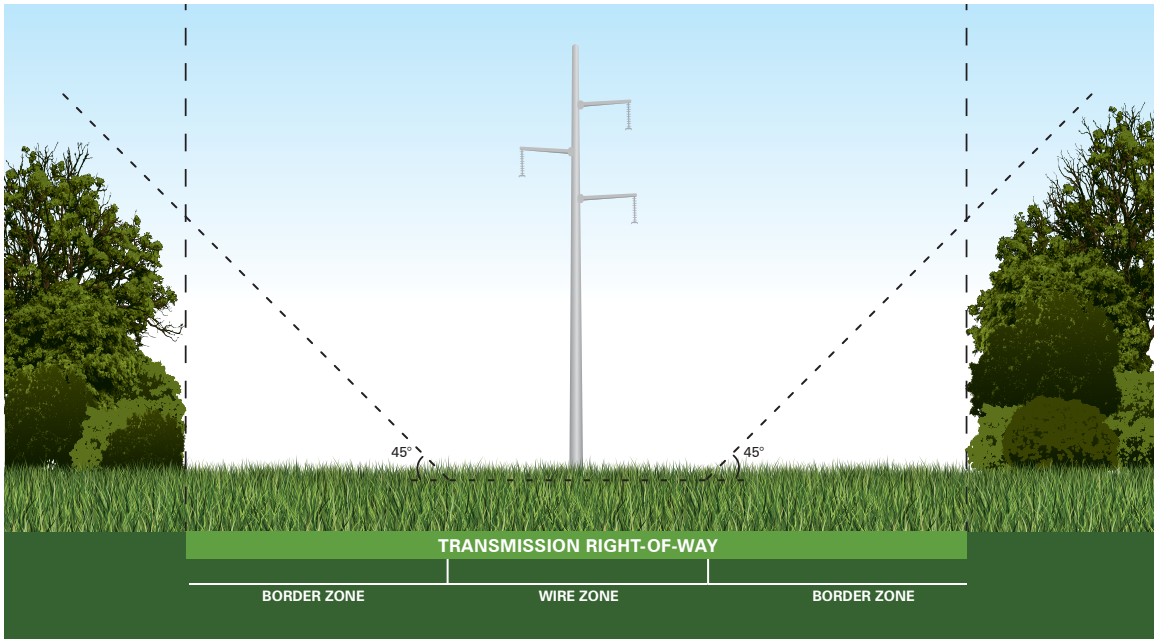
In these areas, Basin Electric has acquired a property right from the property owner to install, operate, and maintain transmission lines and related equipment.

All of Basin Electric's easements, even the older ones, have the right for vegetation management, says Shauna Laber, Basin Electric senior property and right-of-way specialist.

"Since (high voltage) electricity began being run through transmission lines, we've known that vegetation and electricity don't make a good combination," Laber says. "Many people don't realize it's a hazard, or know about restricting trees or buildings being in the easement."

Monitoring vegetation

Compliance plays a huge role in vegetation management, Kaiser says. After the 2003 power outage in the northeastern United States, the federal government started to clamp down on its checks and balances for vegetation management.



This image depicts acceptable vegetation height underneath the structure, as well as the width of the right- of-way. Note that vegetation is not permitted under the structure or wire.

According to federal regulations, trees have to be monitored once every 18 months through the MinMax program, a computer program specifically designed and maintained for compliance, and audits can be conducted by the federal government randomly. However, Basin Electric goes above and beyond the 18-month requirement.

Basin Electric's line crews monitor vegetated areas by ground patrol once per year. Aerial patrol of all lines using a fixed-wing aircraft and/or drones is conducted three times per year. Monitoring is done year round.

"Trees grow," Kaiser notes. "When the line crews do their annual inspections through the MinMax program, they document what the conductor-to-tree clearance is."

Laber also notes that some trees and shrubs are volunteer and just happen to grow in the right-of-way. "A seed blows in, and the tree or shrub happens to grow in that area because it's conducive for that type of vegetation," she says.

If a tree or shrub needs to be removed from a right-of-way, Basin Electric's line crew will cut it at the ground line, called clear cutting. The landowner can elect either to have the tree chipped and mulch spread in the area removed, the tree chipped and mulch hauled away, or have the tree cut into eight-foot sections and hauled to an area within a one-half mile radius.

"When landowners choose to have the wood left for them to use, they can still use the resource that grew on their property," Laber says.

Safety at all times

Of all job duties a line worker has, cutting trees is the toughest and perhaps least desirable, according to Kaiser.

"It's a very physical and dangerous task," he says. "From a safety perspective, you're dealing with sharp, fast-moving objects."

From head to toe, line workers are geared up for safety at all times, but even more so when cutting trees. Their gear consists of cut-resistant chainsaw boots, chaps, and gloves; a hard hat, face shield, and sound-proof earmuffs, in addition to their standard fire-resistant clothing.

A person can get very warm wearing all of this gear. To avoid heat exhaustion, fall and spring are the target cutting times. Tree cutting is only done in the summer if a dire situation warrants it.

Most of Basin Electric's line workers are certified tree fallers, having received training from one of the top five tree cutters in the world. During the training, they learn how to properly fall a tree: making it go where you want it to, and how to consider the tree's height and lean, into the decision.

Safety around machinery is vital, too, as Basin Electric's line crew operates one of the biggest wood chippers made by Vermeer Corporation.

After an incident when a line worker's hard hat and safety glasses were sucked into the chipper as tree limbs were fed into it, Basin Electric purchased a different chipper featuring an upper safety bar, in addition to the standard front safety bar.

The line crew also redesigned its procedures to safely chip trees. "We position ourselves outside the feed shoot when feeding tree limbs, and we also have an employee at the controls at all times during this task," Kaiser says.

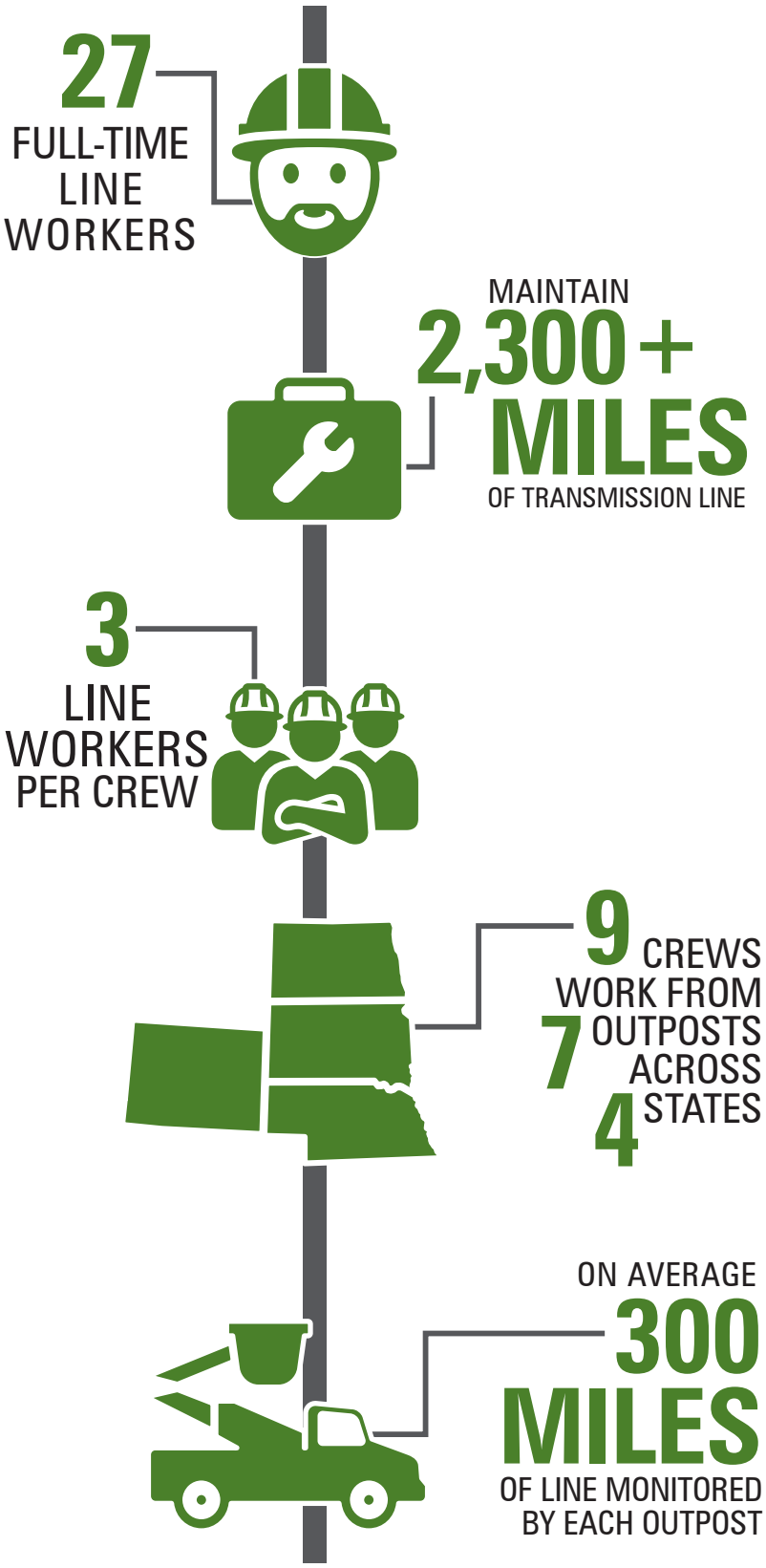
A collaborative approach

Vegetation management is a collaborative approach between Basin Electric's right-of-way team, its line crews, and the property owners.

Laber notes that from a right-of-way perspective, Basin Electric understands people's needs or desire for shelter belts, or their emotional attachment to their trees.

"It's hard for them, and we recognize that," Laber says. "We do our best to help them work through the situation by communicating up front, having discussions, and giving them time to work through it. Ultimately, we just don't want the prairie to catch on fire.

"Just like landowners have to be good stewards of the land, Basin Electric is an organization that is being a good steward of its assets," she says. "It's just all of us working together."



WHO POWERS YOU?

TOUCHSTONE ENERGY CONTEST HONORS HOMETOWN HEROES

Compiled by Angela Magstadt

In the co-op world, powering our communities means a lot more than producing and transmitting electricity – it's about people using their energy to make their neighborhoods a better place to live.

This cooperative value of commitment to community is the foundation of Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives' annual #WhoPowersYou competition, an online contest that recognizes electric distribution cooperative members making positive impacts in their communities.

"The contest is a great way to recognize the people who give their time and talents to improve the lives of others in their community," says Chad Reisenauer, Basin Electric's director of community and member relations.

In addition to the recognition, winners are given cash prizes – the grand prize is $5,000, second place receives $2,000, third place is $1,500, and honorable mention is $500.

While those who took top honors last year did not come from our service area, several who are in our neck of the woods were nominated. Following are a few of the nominations submitted by our members.

TERRY STIEG

Southeast Electric Cooperative, Inc.

In Ekalaka, Montana, a town of 400 people, there is one man who makes sure everyone is taken care of. He isn't the mayor, a law enforcement officer, or a doctor.

Terry Stieg is a Vietnam War veteran who has lived in Ekalaka all his life. In the past 15 years, he has taken it upon himself to be the town's guardian angel. His self-appointed duties include delivering Meals on Wheels to shut-ins and getting mail for residents of the local nursing home and other people in the community. Stieg has also been known to pick up elderly residents and take them to coffee at the local café. On holidays, he can be seen standing on his small ladder putting flags up on Main Street.

On snowy days, he often shovels the sidewalk in front of the café to make sure everyone can get to coffee in the morning without slipping on the ice or having to climb snowbanks. He also gets coffee cans full of sand and makes sure every intersection on Main Street and the hospital is sanded so people don't slip.

Steig is also very good about remembering the birthdays of residents of the town, and stops by their workplaces to wish them a good day. And, he is a good gardener, raising a tomato patch that keeps the entire town supplied with tomatoes all summer long.

Stieg is a man who does all these things out of the goodness of his heart without asking for anything in return, saying he does them because he doesn't like to be bored. If only there were more Terry Stiegs in our communities, can you imagine what we could do?

MARK MEIER

Capital Electric Cooperative, Inc.

In 2009, Mark Meier quit his job to open Heaven's Helpers Soup Café for the less fortunate members of the Bismarck-Mandan, North Dakota, community.

The soup café serves warm meals to the homeless, working poor, elderly, individuals with disabilities, single parents, and children. It's a place where people can come in from the cold and warm up with a cup of soup, a sandwich, coffee, and desserts. But even more than that, everyone who comes through the door is treated with dignity. Volunteers act as chefs, prep cooks and wait staff, serving hot meals to those in need.

In addition, clients who volunteer their time can earn "soup café bucks," which can be put toward a hot shower or the use of laundry facilities, which are both located in the same building.

Meier's work isn't easy – he coordinates the many volunteers needed to run the café, leads Bible studies and prayer, plans and prepares meals using donated food items, and coordinated the renovation of the café's new location, which opened in 2017.

JAN POLLEMA

Poudre Valley REA, Inc.

Jan Pollema is the executive director of Hearts & Horses, a non-profit, therapeutic riding program in Loveland, Colorado, that helps children and adults with physical and cognitive disabilities grow both mentally and physically.

Pollema started with Hearts & Horses as a volunteer 21 years ago when it began as a small program, and helped it grow into what it is today. The organization is now comprised of nine full-time staff members, a part-time staff member, and up to 40-50 volunteers per day. Last year, more than 1,600 people volunteered at the organization.

Specific programs have been created for riders with particular needs, including a therapeutic riding program designed to help with the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social well-being of people with disabilities; the Changing Leads Program, which helps at-risk youth find friendship, develop trust, and form a deep connection through partnering with a horse; Hearts and Horses for Heroes, a program for veterans that helps them heal and grow by restoring the wisdom of their mind, body, and spirit; and an Alzheimer's program and therapy services provided by licensed physical and occupational therapists.

There are currently 27 horses on the property and about 180 different riders that participate each week. Pollema and all of the other staff and volunteers who work diligently and tirelessly to help as many riders as they can, are making a huge impact in their community.

HARRISON SWIFT

Poudre Valley REA, Inc.

Harrison Swift served in the Marines in Afghanistan from 2011-2012. When he returned to the United States, he faced difficulties adjusting back to civilian life – he couldn't find a good job, was at an emotional low, and was struggling trying to make himself feel like a functioning part of society again. When he reached out for help, he felt like he got the "run around" and was directed to assistance programs from Denver, Colorado, to Cheyenne, Wyoming.

On top of these struggles, a friend he served with in the Marines passed away shortly after returning from his deployment. This tragedy became a pattern, and Swift lost more military brothers due to suicide and reckless behavior.

After attending his friend's funeral in 2014, he felt the urge to do something to break this tragic pattern. He wanted to eliminate the hoops veterans had to jump through, so he worked with a small business development center to help him put his idea to work.

His vision was to have one place for veterans to go to access a variety of assistance programs. He successfully submitted the information necessary to become a non-profit organization, and in 2017, the Northern Colorado Veteran Resource Center became a reality.

Its board of directors is comprised of individuals with business and military experience, and Swift has partnered with other non-profit organizations that assist veterans, to all work out of one building. Volunteers of America, Healing Warriors, Assisted Living Locators, Rock Jennison with EXP Realty, a veteran affairs transition coordinator, and a Reiki therapist are all located in that one building. In addition, employment and financial advisers host classes to help veterans with resume building and financial programs.

Instead of using his own struggles as excuses, Swift used them to help solve problems similar to the ones he faced.

The 2019 Who Powers You contest is upon us, so start thinking of those inspirational co-op members in your community. Nominations will be accepted Aug. 5 through Sept. 6. Visit whopowersyou.com to submit your nomination.

EMPLOYEE KUDOS

PE certification

Two Basin Electric employees, **Darrick Buchholz,** electrical engineer II, and **Mark Jenson,** mechanical engineer II, recently passed the Professional Engineering (PE) exam. Engineers must pass this exam to become professional licensed engineers in the Unites States. It is the highest achievement an engineer can obtain.

Darrick Buchholz

Mark Jenson

Agnew receives Award of Excellence as adjunct instructor

Scott Agnew, Basin Electric training coordinator and adjunct instructor at Bismarck (North Dakota) State College, received the Award of Excellence from the college. This award recognizes significant or meritorious performance in professional roles. Recipients were nominated by Bismarck State College students and employees.

Bettenhausen appointed chair on IABC Pacific Plains Region board of directors

Tracie Bettenhausen, Basin Electric senior staff writer/editor, was recently named chair on the board of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Pacific Plains Region. Bettenhausen's term began July 1.

The Pacific Plains Region provides resources and professional development opportunities to leaders and members-at-large. Pacific Plains embraces 16 chapters and members-at-large in 17 states from Wisconsin to California.

IABC serves business communication professionals through education offerings, certifications, awards and recognition programs, and online resources. IABC has more than 10,000 members from around the world.

Mark Scheele awarded certificate from National Business Aviation Association

Mark Scheele, Basin Electric chief pilot, received the Pilot Safety Award from the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA). The award was "for operating business aircraft a total of 2,500 or more consecutive hours without an accident involving damage to property or injury to persons."

2019 BASIN ELECTRIC SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Twenty-five $1,000 scholarships were awarded to children of Basin Electric and subsidiary employees to further their education this fall. Recipients were chosen for their participation in school and community activities, academic excellence, work experience, and career goals.

Katherine Ackerman, daughter of Terry (Deer Creek Station) and Lisa Ackerman, will be a freshman at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis and St. Paul), majoring in architecture.

Calysta Bascus, daughter of Jeremy Perkins (Laramie River Station) and Flora Bascus, will be a freshman at Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne, Wyoming. She will major in criminal justice.

Christina Bingham is the daughter of Mark (PrairieWinds 1) and Peggy Bingham. She will be a freshman at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota, and will be majoring in nursing.

Madison Burgard, daughter of Alan (Headquarters) and Lynn Burgard, will be a senior at Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska, majoring in pre-med.

David Hoffman is the son of Matheaw (Dakota Gasification Company) and Rebecca Parisien and Chris Hoffman. He will be a sophomore at North Dakota State University in Fargo, majoring in industrial engineering.

Kelsey Faircloth is the daughter of Ed (Laramie River Station) and Kim Faircloth. She will be a junior at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, majoring in kinesiology.

Landen Fuller, son of Lance (Laramie River Station) and Katrina Fuller, will be a sophomore at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. He is majoring in petroleum engineering.

Isabel Garman, daughter of Amy (Dakota Gasification Company) and Aaron Garman, will be a junior at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. She is majoring in psychology.

Ashley Gerving is the daughter of Allan (Headquarters) and Shana Gerving. She will be a freshman at Bismarck (North Dakota) State College, majoring in nursing.

Ramon Gomez, son of Victor (Laramie River Station) and Leticia Gomez, will attend the University of Wyoming in Laramie, where he'll be a freshman majoring in engineering.

Klel Johnson, son of Abon (Transmission System Maintenance) and Heidi Johnson, will be a freshman at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. He will major in psychology.

Matthew Kraft, daughter of Mike (Headquarters) and Jean Kraft, will be a freshman at North Dakota State University in Fargo, where he will major in engineering.

Paige Lang, daughter of Ryan (Headquarters) and Beth Lang, will be a freshman at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota. She will major in chemical engineering.

Emily Lelm is the daughter of Lynn (Leland Olds Station) and Stacy Lelm. She will attend Minnesota State University Moorhead, where she will be a junior majoring in psychology.

Garrett Mahin, son of Les (Dakota Gasification Company) and Carrie Mahin, will be a freshman at North Dakota State University in Fargo. He will major in computer science.

Megan McCarthy, daughter of Greg (Dakota Gasification Company) and Susan McCarthy, will be a freshman at the University of Mary in Bismarck. She will major in radiologic technology.

Macy Merkel is the daughter of Karla (Headquarters) and Kevin Merkel. She will be a senior at North Dakota State University in Fargo, majoring in civil engineering.

Tanner Palaniuk, son of Dennis (Dakota Gasification Company) and Jessica Palaniuk, will be a freshman at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota. He will major in electrical engineering.

Nicole Schramm is the daughter of Voni (Dakota Gasification Company) Rueb. She will be a senior at North Dakota State University in Fargo, majoring in nursing.

Madison Sheldon, daughter of Jim (Headquarters) and Susan Sheldon, will be a freshman at Bismarck (North Dakota) State College, majoring in nursing.

Joshua Snyder is the son of Kelly (Leland Olds Station) and Jonella Snyder. He will be a senior at University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota, majoring in mechanical engineering.

Erik Solie, son of Kevin (Headquarters) and Tami Solie, will be a freshman at University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. He will major in chemical engineering.

Kailey Weigel is the daughter of Valerie (Headquarters) and Brian Weigel. She will be a freshman at University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, where she will major in pre-med.

Sierra Wiest, daughter of Jason (Antelope Valley Station) and Tasia Wiest, will be a freshman at Bismarck (North Dakota) State College. She will major in business.

Dylan Zahn is the son of Gregory (Antelope Valley Station) and Shana Zahn. He will be a freshman at Bismarck (North Dakota) State College, where he will major in instrumentation and controls.

Drag racing is a family affair for Basin Electric Electrician I Dustin Buchmann; his wife, Nicole; and their two children, Cruz and Claire. The Buchmann family is pictured here with their super comp dragster.

DRAGGING THROUGH THE SUMMER

By Morgan Hochsprung

The phrase "dragging on" has an entirely different meaning for Antelope Valley Station Electrician I Dustin Buchmann. For most of the summer, he does something most people don't have the guts to do: he drag races. The sport of drag racing could be considered second nature for him – he has been hooked on the sport since he was eight years old.

Buchmann credits his dad, Lucky, for giving him the racing bug. "He raced a 1970 Chevelle SS and I went with him and my mom, Lisa, as often as I could," he says. "I loved being around all the cars and the people."

At age 16, "pretty much the same day I got my driver's license," he launched his own racing adventure.

Racing is not just a pastime for Buchmann, it's a lifestyle, because it's a sport his entire family cherishes.

"From the late nights working in the shop together getting cars ready, to the time spent with friends and family at the track. Cars and racing are my family's passion," he says.

This sport has created many memories for Buchmann. When asked about his favorite drag racing memory, his answer is hard to imagine.

"My favorite memory is the first time I ever drove a car with 1,300 horsepower," he says. "It's an experience that's hard to describe. The front tires come off the ground, and the car carries them for 20 feet or so. Then you do a quarter-mile pass in eight seconds at 170 miles per hour."

Drag racing is different from other types of racing because the outcome isn't always determined by the racer's budget.

"In drag racing, you do not need to have a super comp dragster or a super gas car to race and be competitive," he says. "You can bring your minivan or motorcycle to the track and compete. The type of drag racing we do is called bracket racing, which evens the playing field for all types of cars and budgets."

Buchmann's dedication to this sport isn't always easy with a full-time job and family, but he knows exactly how he can continue to compete.

"The support from my wife, Nicole, and my kids, Cruz and Claire, keeps me going," he says.

Buchmann travels near and far to compete in the sport he loves. You can find him racing throughout the summer in Jamestown and Minot, North Dakota; Pierre and Sturgis, South Dakota; and Glyndon, Minnesota.

New employees

Chelsey Souza began employment at Headquarters April 15 as a service dispatcher. She was previously employed with the UPS Store in Bismarck, North Dakota, as a manager.

Shane Vettel started work at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant April 22 as a field technician. He previously worked at Montana-Dakota Utilities' Heskett Station in Mandan, North Dakota, as a yard operator. He has an associate degree in power plant technology from Bismarck (North Dakota) State College.

Nathan Watson started work April 29 at Headquarters as a real time trader I. He was previously employed with Guaranteed Rate in Bismarck, North Dakota, as a vice president/mortgage lender. He has a bachelor's degree in business finance and a master's degree in business administration, both from University of Mary in Bismarck.

Lori Karlson-DeCoteau began her work as a facilities technician I at Headquarters on April 29. She was previously employed by Bismarck (North Dakota) Public Schools as a custodian.

Benjaman Webster began his position as a utility operator at Dry Fork Station on April 29. He was previously employed with BNSF Railway as a carman.

Ken Brazee started work as a utility operator at Dry Fork Station on May 13. He attended Casper College in Casper, Wyoming, and served in the U.S. Navy. He was previously employed as a coal miner with Dry Fork Mine.

Nicholas Klein started work May 13 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant as a field technician. He graduated from Bismarck (North Dakota) State College with an associate degree in power plant technology.

Tyler Bohl started work at Headquarters on May 13 as a survey technician II. Bohl has an associate degree in engineering technology from Bismarck (North Dakota) State College. He previously worked at the North Dakota Department of Transportation as an engineering technician.

Jessica Moser began her position as a member revenue specialist I at Headquarters on May 13. She was previously employed as a finance assistant with Kupper Chevrolet. Moser has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Tim Berhow started work May 13 at Headquarters as a service dispatcher. He has a bachelor's degree in industrial education from Iowa State University and was formerly employed with Mandan (North Dakota) Public Schools.

Lucas Erickson started work May 28 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant as a rotating equipment engineer. He has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from North Dakota State University in Fargo.

Nicholas Ordonez started work at Laramie River Station on May 13 as a laborer. He was previously employed with WyoDak Energy Services in Douglas, Wyoming, as a supervisor.

Corbin Souza began employment as a laborer at Laramie River Station on May 13. He previously worked as a motor hand with Stoneham Drilling in Midwest, Wyoming.

Quinn Zimmerman started work at Laramie River Station May 13 as a laborer. He has a bachelor's degree in engineering technology from Black Hills State University in Spearfish, South Dakota, and was previously employed with Halliburton Bentonite Performance Minerals in Colony, Wyoming, as a mechanic welder.

Anthony Apodaca started work at Laramie River Station on May 13 as a laborer. He has a bachelor's degree in environmental science from the University of Northern Colorado and was previously employed by Halliburton Energy Services in Fort Lipton, Colorado, as a service operator.

Jeffrey Drescher began employment on May 13 at Laramie River Station as a laborer. He was previously employed with Wells Equipment Sales, Inc. in Litchfield, Michigan, as a mechanic.

Evan Hagen began employment May 28 at Deer Creek Station as a mechanical helper. He was previously employed at B&G Industries in Watertown, South Dakota, as a welder.

Connie Zahn began employment at Headquarters as an administrative assistant on May 20. She has an associate degree in administrative assistant-medical from Bismarck (North Dakota) State College and was previously employed with American Bank Center as an executive assistant.

Michael Berg started at Antelope Valley Station as an instrument technician on May 28. He has an associate degree in instrumentation and control technology from Bismarck (North Dakota) State College. He was previously employed with Marathon Oil Company in Killdeer, North Dakota.

Hunter Eslinger began employment with the Great Plains Synfuels Plant as a pipeline engineer on June 10. He has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, and was previously employed at Falkirk Mine in Underwood, North Dakota, as an engineer.

Stephanie Morgans began employment at Laramie River Station on June 10 as a maintenance assistant. She was previously employed with Platte County in Wheatland, Wyoming, as a deputy clerk.

MiKayla Kary began employment at Headquarters as an accounting analyst I on June 17. She has a bachelor's degree in finance, business administration, and human resources management from Dickinson (North Dakota) State University. She was previously employed with Bank of North Dakota as a financial services representative.

Susan Weigel began employment at Headquarters as a facility technician I on June 24. She was previously employed at EMC Insurance Company in Bismarck, North Dakota, as a support technician.

Tyler Getzlaff, accounting analyst II, began employment at Headquarters June 24. He has a bachelor's degree in finance from Minot (North Dakota) State University, and was previously employed with Workforce Safety and Insurance in Bismarck as an accounting/budget specialist.

Service awards

Kevin Bruce
35 years
field technician
Dakota Gasification Company

Gary Koehler
35 years
field technician
Dakota Gasification Company

Mary Polzin
35 years
senior administrative assistant
Headquarters

Lance Richter
35 years
instrument–lead
Antelope Valley Station

Grace Baker
30 years
senior administrative assistant
Headquarters

Todd Bitterman
30 years
field technician
Dakota Gasification Company

Jack Eggleston
30 years
control room operator
Laramie River Station

Gary Lockman
30 years
superintendent, operations
Laramie River Station

Jeff Przybylski
30 years
manager, enterprise infrastructure
Headquarters

Dave Sauer
30 years
senior vice president & COO
Dakota Gasification Company

Pius Fischer
25 years
vice president, transmission
Headquarters

Mike Murray
25 years
manager, property and right-of-way
Headquarters

Bryce Harring
25 years
mechanical engineer III
Leland Olds Station

Jim Lund
25 years
senior mechanical engineer
Headquarters

Jamey Backus
20 years
plant manager
Leland Olds Station

Mary Hruby
20 years
records coordinator
Headquarters

Tim Huber
20 years
network security analyst III
Headquarters

We will remember ...

Dustin James DuToit, 24, died April 30 in a Bismarck hospital. He was a process operations field technician at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant, working in the ammonia plant on C crew. DuToit began working at the Synfuels Plant in 2015.

DuToit was raised and educated in Hazen and graduated from Hazen High School. He attended Bismarck (North Dakota) State College, where he received an associate degree in process plant technology.

Process Operations Supervisor Curtis Wiedrich leads the crew DuToit worked with at the Synfuels Plant. "With only four employees on the crew it was a close-knit group of guys," Wiedrich says. "Dustin will definitely be missed by us all. He was a good employee who worked hard. We will miss his smile and sense of humor."

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