

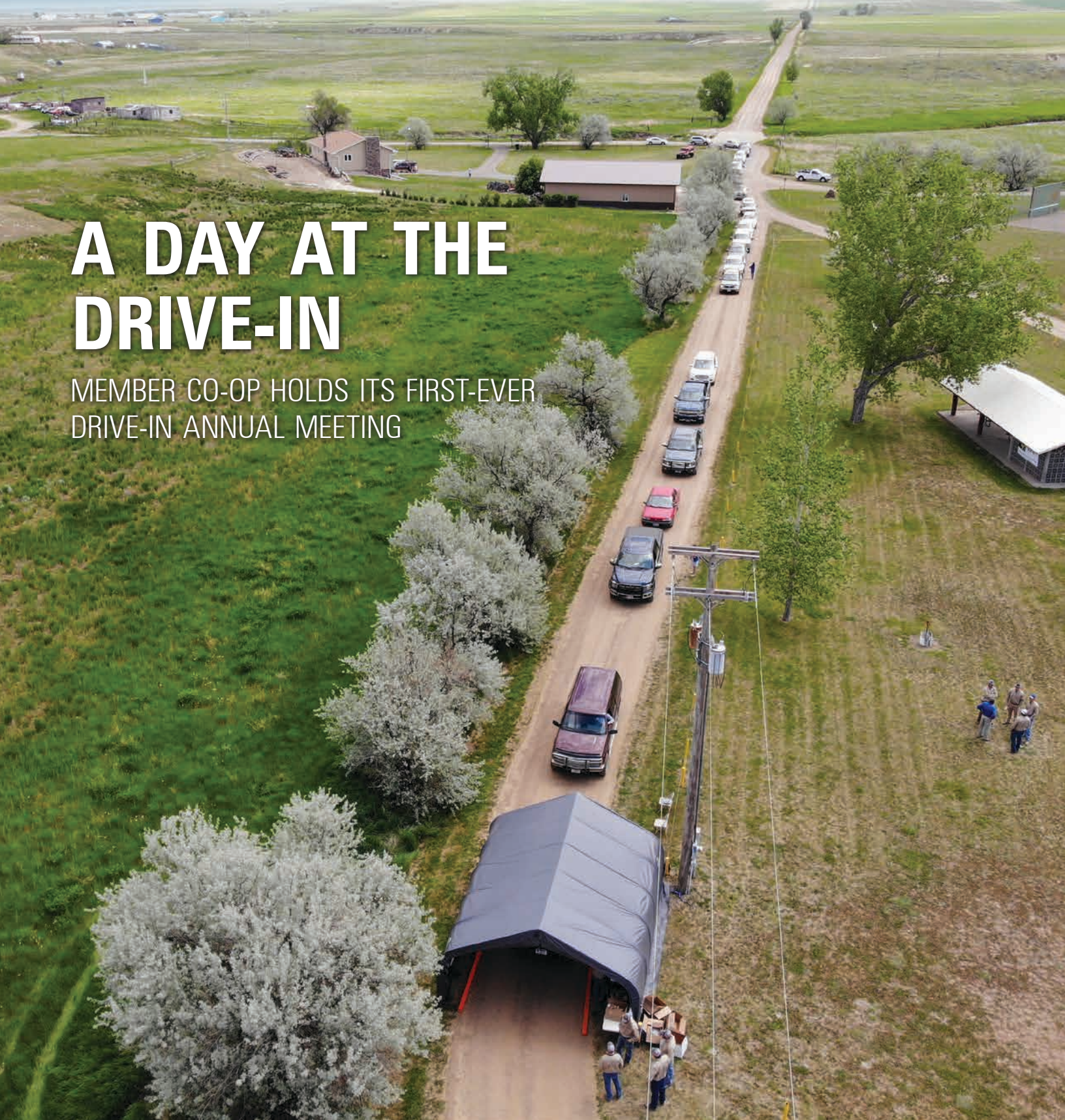
BASIN TODAY

BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE

| SUMMER 2020

A DAY AT THE DRIVE-IN

MEMBER CO-OP HOLDS ITS FIRST-EVER
DRIVE-IN ANNUAL MEETING





Preschool children participating in this summer's Safety Village in Bismarck, North Dakota, had fun while learning where electricity comes from and how to be safe around it from Basin Electric Project Coordinations Representative Erin Laverdure. Safety Village is a child-sized town complete with buildings, sidewalks, streets, and marked crosswalks designed to teach children safety lessons, including home, car, pedestrian, bike, fire, and other safety topics. Pictured here is Annabelle Griffin taking her turn with the Van de Graaff generator, which is a static electricity machine that makes your hair stand up. Read more:



<https://bit.ly/SafetyVillageElectricity>

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| NUMBER 2

ON THE COVER

Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association Communications Director Ryan Hall captured this drone photo of Basin Electric Class C member McCone Electric Cooperative's members arriving for its 75th anniversary and first-ever drive-in annual meeting. Held in Circle, Montana, the meeting was done this way because of social distancing guidelines due to COVID-19. This safe alternative to cancelling the meeting, along with a \$40 bill credit, brought record attendance – 35% higher than average. Read more on page 19.

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Use your smartphone barcode scanner to view stories online.

PAUL SUKUT

WHY WE GO ALL IN ON ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE

In this cooperative, we do the right thing even when it's hard. Often, the best decision is a complicated one.

In just the last six months, Basin Electric has announced partnerships with multiple new solar and wind projects.

We are in a unique position, different from most other generation and transmission cooperatives in the nation, in that we have been consistently, and in some years, quickly, growing. Basin Electric has grown almost 50% in the last decade, and 80% of this growth was met with wind, natural gas, and market purchases.

The recent additions of solar come now because the price is finally economical enough to be a good option to serve our membership. Solar energy is competitive in the market, and it provides generation during the daytime, when our system peaks. Plus, it works well with the generation profile of wind, producing the most power when wind is generating the least, and vice versa.

We have another positive on our side when it comes to our growth. Basin Electric made the forward-looking decision in 2015 to join a regional transmission organization. When we did that, we expanded our options and also our definition for what was best for our members.

In the Southwest Power Pool, a 14-state area power pool in which members are able to both buy and sell their power, the market is constantly searching for the lowest cost power to serve its load. Each generating unit receives a rate, both day-ahead and real-time. Those rates are

based on many things, including the information we give to the market for each unit. We need to be able to cover the costs for running our units, and that is the strategy we use for our submissions.

We have the best of both worlds – cheap renewable power when it’s available through our owned wind projects, power purchase agreements, and from the market, and the reliability of our baseload units when renewables aren’t generating.

Wind is the lowest cost power in the market. And because natural gas prices are at extremely low levels, it’s difficult for coal to compete with natural gas peaking stations that can be turned on and off quickly to follow wind in meeting market demand.

Despite the good attributes of wind and solar, we cannot ignore a big downer: wind only generates when the wind is blowing, and solar only generates when the sun is shining.

That’s where we stay smart.


Coal generation is extremely efficient, especially because our plants are located so close to where the coal is located. We couldn’t ask for a better, more efficient, and responsible scenario. The fuel to get the coal from point A to point B is about as low as it can get. Also, if we could run coal generation all the time, the operators in those power plants would tell you that is when the plant is running at its best. We will keep these plants running as long as is responsible.

Our all-of-the-above energy strategy means we don’t limit ourselves to one source of energy. This smart approach allows us to use lower-cost, intermittent renewable sources when available and balance them with other resources such as coal and natural gas.

Looking forward, we know our coal generation units are under both economic and political pressure. We will continue to operate these facilities as responsibly as possible, as long as they remain a viable resource to our membership. We will continue to incorporate other energy resources when it makes economic sense and it does not adversely affect reliability.

Our all-of-the-above strategy has proven to be a smart one for nearly two decades.

Our mission is to provide wholesale energy and services to our member-owners. The nitty gritty can get complicated. But knowing who we work for and what they need, that’s simple – our members get the best power in the smartest way possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Sukut', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Paul Sukut, CEO and general manager

U.S. Treasury issues proposed rules supporting carbon capture development projects



U.S. Sen. John Hoeven's office

The U.S. Department of the Treasury issued proposed rules implementing the 45Q tax credit, which will support the development of commercially

viable carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) technologies.

"The 45Q tax credit creates an important revenue stream for coal-fired electric companies to help generate revenue. This is a key part of our efforts to advance commercially-viable CCUS technology, benefiting a wide section of North Dakota's energy industry," says U.S. Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND).

"Basin Electric appreciates Sen. Hoeven's diligent efforts to advance the 45Q tax credit and ensure that IRS regulations are workable for our industry," says Paul Sukut, Basin Electric CEO and general manager. "Basin Electric has strived to be a leader in finding cost-effective technology solutions to capture and sequester carbon dioxide. 45Q is a crucial incentive to help develop this complex technology and we are encouraged by the release of proposed IRS rules to allow for its use."



<https://bit.ly/CCUSTaxRules>

Laramie River Station plant manager named new head of Operations department



Troy Tweeten has taken the role of Basin Electric's new senior vice president of Operations. Tweeten replaces John Jacobs, who retired in May.

Tweeten began work at Basin Electric's Dry Fork Station near Gillette, Wyoming, in 2009 as operations supervisor, and was promoted to operations superintendent. He was promoted to plant manager at Laramie River Station near Wheatland, Wyoming, in 2017.

Levi Mickelsen, Laramie River Station's plant engineer, was hired as the new plant manager as of June 22.



<https://bit.ly/TweetenSrVP>

XPRIZE finalist begins production at Wyoming Integrated Test Center at Dry Fork Station

In early July, the first team from the NRG COSIA Carbon XPRIZE competition onsite at

the Wyoming Integrated Test Center (ITC) in Gillette, began taking flue gas from Dry Fork Station.



The team, CO₂Concrete, is now using CO₂ from the flue gas to manufacture a low-carbon concrete-equivalent material.

"The XPRIZE is setting a high bar for success," says Jim Ford, operation manager at the ITC. "Carbon capture is a weighty task in itself, but what do we do with it once it's captured? This prize is looking for a way to take that CO₂ and transform it into a usable product. It is changing the dynamic of CCUS (carbon capture, utilization, and storage)."

Additional teams competing for the Carbon XPRIZE will be arriving for testing at the ITC in the coming months.



<https://bit.ly/MIRecord>

Basin Electric board votes to refurbish Stegall DC tie

Basin Electric directors approved the refurbishment of the Stegall DC tie.

The back to back AC-DC-AC converter tie was constructed by Basin Electric Class A member Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association in 1977 to transmit power in either direction between the Western Interconnect system and the Eastern Interconnect system. Basin Electric leases 100 percent of the Stegall DC tie to transfer power generated at Laramie River Station into the Eastern Interconnection in meeting member load requirements. Tri-State continues to own, operate, and maintain the tie.

Basin Electric is responsible for the cost of the refurbishment project because of its lease arrangement in the facility.

The project is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2022.



<https://bit.ly/StegallDCTie>

Dakota Gas' first beverage-grade CO₂ sale shipped

Dakota Gas hit a milestone in July when its first shipment of beverage-grade carbon dioxide (CO₂) captured from the Great Plains Synfuels Plant's ammonia production facility was shipped.

The ability to capture and sell liquid CO₂ was made possible with the addition of the urea plant, and excess CO₂ is now being sold into the commercial food and beverage industry.



The first load, about 20 tons of beverage-grade CO₂, was used to help balance pH levels in the water at water treatment plants in North Dakota, which are currently near an emergency state due

to a shortage of CO₂. The shortage has occurred mainly because ethanol plants have curtailed their production (due to low oil prices), which thus produces less CO₂.

"We are excited to be able to step in and help fill a need for the citizens of North Dakota," says Zach Jacobson, Dakota Gas marketing account manager. "Dakota Gas will now likely supply over 80% of North Dakota's water treatment plants with the CO₂ they need to treat water for their citizens."



<https://bit.ly/DGC-AVSTransformer>

Basin Electric closes on purchase of Capital Hill microwave tower land

Basin Electric closed on the purchase of land that houses its microwave tower known as Capital Hill in Bismarck, North Dakota.

"These towers make up our microwave system, which is the backbone of our communication system," says Jason Batke, Basin Electric superintendent of telecommunications. "They ensure reliable signals continue to flow between Basin Electric facilities and transport critical circuits and data, such as protective relaying, substation data remote distributed generation controls, mobile radio traffic, and revenue metering."



Prior to the purchase of the Capital Hill property, Basin Electric leased the land from Basin Electric Class C member Capital Electric Cooperative for 28 years, and the tower served as a backup location. With the lease of the site up, Basin Electric approached Capital Electric about purchasing the site, and an agreement was reached.



<https://bit.ly/CapitalHillMicrowaveTower>

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AFTER 41 YEARS, JOHN JACOBS HANGS UP HIS HARD HAT

By Angela Magstadt

A man of integrity. Fairness. Respect. Consideration. A true servant leader. All these words have been used to describe John Jacobs, Basin Electric senior vice president of Operations. Jacobs retired on May 29 after a 41-year career at Basin Electric.

Being in charge of the department that generates the very electricity that powers the cooperative and its members is a big responsibility, but Jacobs is a humble man, saying he worked for his employees and the members at the end of the line. And that is exactly what made him such a successful leader, according to Paul Sukut, Basin Electric CEO and general manager. "I want to take the opportunity to congratulate John on his 40-plus years at Basin Electric and thank him for his leadership of the Operations group over the past six years," Sukut says. "He provided solid leadership that contributed greatly to the success of our ever-changing resource portfolio."

Jacobs was hired as a civil engineer in 1979, fresh out of college, recently married, and hired to work on the construction side of Antelope Valley Station (AVS) in Beulah, North Dakota. It was an exciting opportunity for a young engineer because he was able to be involved in the construction of the largest boiler in physical size in the entire world at the time and a unique intake structure bringing him 350 feet under the surface of Lake Sakakawea.

While Jacobs says he has many memories of that time, one of the most vivid is the traffic. With construction going on at Antelope Valley Station, the Great Plains Synfuels Plant, the Freedom Mine, and Coyote Station all in the same area at the same time, there were over 1,000 workers traveling the same two-lane road. "At quitting time, all four lanes (two in each direction) were full of cars all going in the same direction. You better not have wanted to be going the opposite way!" he says.

Jacobs says he was initially hired for a three-to-four-year job, but Antelope Valley Station "became my life," he says. "Nothing happened at that plant that I wasn't involved in –

from the first shovel in the ground until I walked out of the building on my last day at Basin Electric."

As those three or four years at Antelope Valley turned into 35, Jacobs' roles shifted from civil engineer to administrative supervisor of construction, then maintenance superintendent, then plant manager, a position he held until being promoted to senior vice president of Operations in 2014, an achievement he says was the "golden ring of his career."

Jacobs says each of these positions were rewarding and challenging in their own way, but there is one time in particular when he saw both extreme challenges and rewards in one project. "There was a time in the 1980s when we didn't know if we were even going to build AVS Unit 2 because loads were down," he says. "Virtually all the equipment was onsite, but everyone else in the industry was scrapping their construction projects. Ultimately the board decided to build it even though it meant our system would be overbuilt. For a little while there was a lot of surplus, but then the market picked up and we were the only ones that were built and ready to go. The members stuck with us even though we worked through some very hard financial times and it turned out to be a great decision, much like the challenges we are facing today. That was just one example of the foresight I've seen at Basin Electric over the years."

Jacobs says of all the positions he held over the years, he never had a real favorite because each was different, exciting, and challenging. "That's what I always enjoyed about working for Basin Electric. There are always new opportunities if you want to step up and get involved – it's a virtual career smorgasbord," he says.

And just as when you go to a smorgasbord not knowing exactly what you're going to get, when you work in a power plant, you don't always know what's going to come up during your shift. Jacobs says there were many days that didn't go as planned during his tenure at Antelope Valley Station. One of those times was during the winter of 1984.

John Jacobs spent 35 years of his 41-year career at Basin Electric's Antelope Valley Station, a coal-based generation facility near Beulah, North Dakota.



"Wouldn't you know it that the first-ever tube leak on Unit 1 happened on Christmas Eve. I was working and couldn't get anyone to relieve me. We couldn't get ahold of any of the contractors because of the holiday, so I was in charge of the tools, people, and materials," he says. "I worked for 40 hours straight with no sleep and had to watch my daughters open up their Christmas presents on a video."

It's because of situations like these that Jacobs says plant workers should be valued. "They are the ones who are there 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and during holidays, storms, and even global pandemics to make sure electricity is reliable and available for essential services such as water treatment, hospitals, and communication."

It is because of the importance of electricity and the people who work to provide it that Jacobs says labor union contract negotiations were one of the most important parts of his job as senior vice president of Operations.

"These people are a highly trained and professional workforce whose sole purpose is to solve equipment problems and generate electricity at the lowest possible cost," he says. "There are no politics, and there are no credit takers

— just a genuine, selfless, get-it-done mentality. Because of this, I did my best to be fair to everyone. Every worker has specific things they'd like to see, and they might be totally different from others in different positions, but it is our job to be fair to all of them. It's not 'we' versus 'they' — we are all Basin Electric employees so decisions need to be win-win, because at the end of the day we are all on the same team and we all work for the same people."

Jacobs says he learned a great deal during his years at Basin Electric. "This journey taught me that I work for everyone that would typically say they work for me, and to truly be successful it is the other way around," Jacobs says. "If I couldn't give the time, resources, and direction that makes everyone in the Operations department successful, then I failed."

But fail he did not. Jacobs has earned the respect of those with whom he worked. Chad Edwards, current Antelope Valley Station plant manager, says he has "had the pleasure of working with Jacobs for the past 30 years. He is a man of integrity who shares the same passion for coal. John represented us well and kept the best interests of the coal plants in mind," Edwards says.

"Working for John has been a great learning experience," says Jamey Backus, plant manager of Leland Olds Station. "His professionalism and commitment to Operations is second to none."

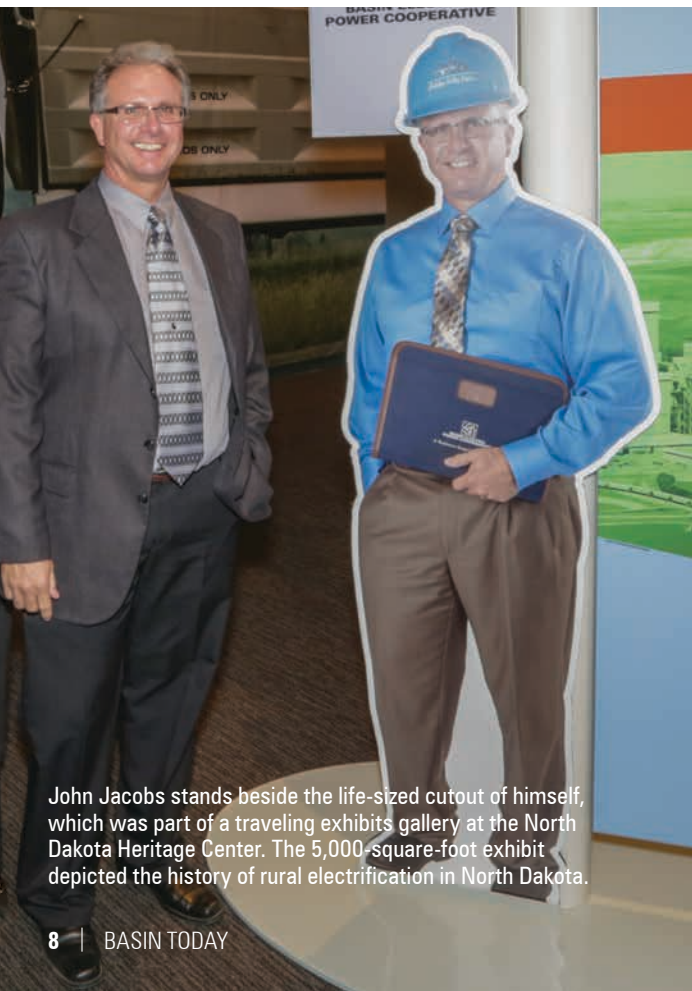
"John was always supportive of me and the entire Dry Fork Station staff," says Tom Stalcup, Dry Fork Station plant manager. "With his background in power plants, his technical background was very helpful to run concerns or issues by and visit about future plans for the plant. He is pro-coal and supportive of testing being conducted at Dry Fork Station for carbon capture and storage using the Integrated Test Center and CarbonSAFE projects."

Troy Tweeten, former Laramie River Station plant manager and the person who has taken the reigns of senior vice president of Operations from Jacobs, says, "One thing I really appreciated was that at the end of our calls he would always say, 'Hang in there and thanks for all you do, I really appreciate it.' I took it as his way of saying thank you and I knew he was there to help and support me whenever I needed it."

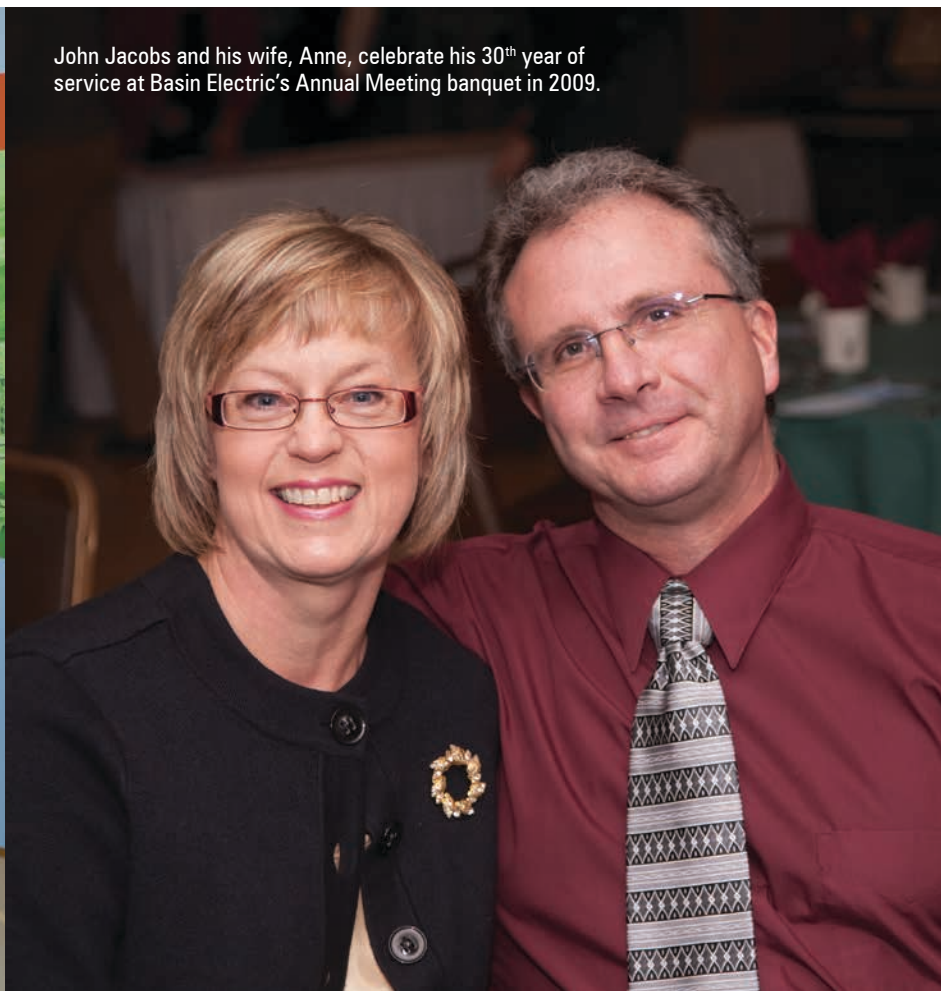
As for retirement, Jacobs says after being part of a department that is on call 24/7/365, life is really going to be different.

"I'm told every day is Saturday and while I don't know what that'll be like, I'm sure it will be centered around family, traveling, hunting, fishing, and golfing. I might even be convinced to fit in a honey-do here and there," he says. "There were a lot of family events and activities I missed over the years, so I'm looking forward to spending time with my family and not having to worry about work. In this profession it is important to have a supportive family, and I could always rely on my wife, Anne, and daughters, Elizabeth, Sarah, and Kaity to provide that support. They have always been my reason to go to work every day regardless the weather or situation that might await me when I got there."

In true John Jacobs fashion, he compares retirement to starting up a power plant for the first time. "It's bittersweet. Both are the end of something you've worked hard at for a long time and the beginning of a new chapter. But like the startup of a plant, it's time to hand the controls over to someone else who will take it from here," he says. "There are so many talented employees waiting for an opportunity to add their personal touch and apply their talents to make Basin Electric a success story. I am so impressed with the professionalism and drive I see in so many of them. That true cooperative spirit that has been with us since our inception is what will carry Basin Electric successfully into the future."



John Jacobs stands beside the life-sized cutout of himself, which was part of a traveling exhibits gallery at the North Dakota Heritage Center. The 5,000-square-foot exhibit depicted the history of rural electrification in North Dakota.



John Jacobs and his wife, Anne, celebrate his 30th year of service at Basin Electric's Annual Meeting banquet in 2009.

THE GIFT OF HOPE

BLACK HILLS ELECTRIC EMPLOYEE BRINGS MORE THAN WHEELCHAIRS TO PEOPLE IN NEED

By Kalli Senske

Over the last 25 years, Mike Chase, manager of marketing and member services at Class C Basin Electric member Black Hills Electric, has listened to people talk about hundreds of good causes at his Rotary meetings. Many of the talks inspired him to donate money, but it wasn't until he heard Mark Siemonsma, director of development with Hope Haven Foundation in Rock Valley, Iowa, talk about his organization's wheelchair ministry that Chase became inspired to donate his time.

"Something inspired me to act that day," Chase says. "I went home, talked with my wife about helping with a distribution of wheelchairs in Romania, and contacted Mark. I had been saving money from announcing sporting events for Custer High School for several years and decided this would be a great way to spend the savings."

Hope Haven International Ministries' goal is to deliver wheelchairs to people in desperate need from



109 different countries (due to U.S. regulations, rebuilt wheelchairs may not be donated in the United States). Chase had the opportunity to go to Romania to help distribute 200 wheelchairs in 2011.

Hope Haven's global outreach began in Romania in 1996. Officials charged with the overwhelming task of serving thousands of institutionalized people with disabilities requested that Hope Haven's executive staff visit, assess, and advise on more effective implementation. They found people with disabilities living in deplorable conditions.



Mike Chase helps fit a woman to her wheelchair.



Mike Chase helps adjust a wheelchair for a woman who lost a leg due to diabetes.

During the years when Romania was under Communist control, people with disabilities were either institutionalized or their care was left entirely to the person's family. Simple necessities, such as wheelchairs or crutches, were non-existent.

Chase talks about a delivery in one Romanian community where Hope Haven gave chairs to a hospital for people with work-related injuries – physical and/or mental.

"One very large man was lucky enough to be on the first floor since there was no elevator, but the hospital had no way to move him around. His wife sat with him every day in his small room. On a previous distribution trip, Hope Haven volunteers did not have a wheelchair large enough for him, so it became a mission to find and rebuild a chair for him.

The day I was there, I helped fit the chair for him and helped his wife roll him outside for the first time in several years. She could not stop hugging me and the others in my group. Even with the language barrier, you could tell that this was a great moment in their lives. We left them sitting under a large tree in the courtyard.

Next, we ascended three flights of stairs to the third floor where a young man in his 30s was curled in the fetal position in his multi-patient room. His muscles were atrophied and unusable, and he could barely speak. He suffered from muscular dystrophy.

We brought in a child's wheelchair and lifted him into it, strapped him in, and made adjustments to fit his needs. Since he had been abandoned by his family, we rolled him around the room and showed the aides how to operate the chair's brakes. Prior to this, he would be carried to a stationary chair in his room and strapped in for the day. As we left the building, I looked up and the aides had rolled him out on the fire escape landing, and he had the biggest smile on his face that I had ever seen.

Even though we could only communicate through an interpreter, everywhere we went with our wheelchairs, people expressed their gratitude and appreciation, and the joy was overwhelming. These chairs actually changed the lives of those families."

The wheelchairs the families receive are given free of charge because of donations of new and used



Refurbished wheelchairs are unloaded in Focsani, Romania. The wheelchairs were distributed to 200 people around the country.

wheelchairs, parts, raw materials, financial support, and more. Several of the used wheelchairs in need of repair are serviced at the wheelchair warehouse inside the South Dakota State Penitentiary. There, approximately 40 inmates serve community service hours working on wheelchairs. This unique partnership not only keeps the inmates busy, but they're able to take pride that they're doing work for a great cause.

Matthew, an inmate who works on the chairs at the South Dakota State Penitentiary, says, "The work puts my heart in motion. Working in this wheelchair shop, fixing wheelchairs for little kids has transformed me spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically."

Chase is appreciative of his employer, Black Hills Electric, for supporting his work with Hope Haven. Not only do they support his time away while he's volunteering, but they also offer a place in their shop for Hope Haven to store chairs.

Chase also says other community members, like Karl's TV and Appliance in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, play an important role by transporting the wheelchairs from the western to the eastern part of the state.

"After the store's employees drop off merchandise at their store, they'll use the then-empty trucks to move our wheelchairs to Sioux Falls for us. They're a big supporter of Hope Haven."

One of the things that has amazed Chase the most while working with Hope Haven is the resiliency of people.

"Poverty in most countries that Hope Haven helps is rampant with very little hope for the future. Through programs like Hope Haven's wheelchair ministry, people with no other options are now able to live more normal lives."

For more information on Hope Haven Ministries or to get involved, visit hopehaven.com.



A patient with muscular dystrophy who was previously bedridden is fitted for his own wheelchair.



Maintenance outages are held on a regular basis to perform tasks necessary to keep Basin Electric's generation facilities running as reliably as possible. The outages are staggered so not all facilities are down for maintenance at the same time.

DELAYED PLANT OUTAGES ENSURE SAFETY, SAVE MONEY

By Angela Magstadt

As the spring power plant outages drew near, the COVID-19 pandemic hit in full force across Basin Electric's service area. With the safety of the co-op's employees and the communities where they live and work of utmost importance, Basin Electric's management enacted work-related travel bans, and the number of contractors allowed at its generation facilities was significantly limited to curb the spread of the virus and keep the cooperative's essential workers healthy.

With these restrictions in place, management struggled with the question of how the three major outages at Antelope Valley Station, Leland Olds Station, and Laramie River Station would move forward.

"We initially postponed a few of them to the fall of 2020, but when other utilities across the country started postponing their outages as well, NERC (the North American Electric Reliability Corporation) stepped in because multiple utilities conducting their outages at the same time could affect grid reliability," says Troy Tweeten, Basin Electric senior vice president of Operations. "We did some research and found it was safe to delay many of the projects that were scheduled during the outages, so we decided to postpone them to the spring and fall of 2021."

Darla Jensen, Basin Electric manager of financial planning and forecasting, says that by delaying the outages,

it is estimated that Basin Electric will reduce spending by approximately \$36.7 million in 2020. "These delayed expenses help alleviate the unfavorable revenue impact of reduced member loads Basin Electric is experiencing," Jensen says. "Also, the delay gives us an opportunity to reexamine the anticipated costs and work to reduce those costs."

After the decision was made to postpone the outages, the Process Assessment Team (a group of cross-functional employees tasked to perform a detailed review of the cooperative and its subsidiaries' operations and processes) created a subteam to review the work plan for the upcoming outages and tailor the task list to more accurately couple with the plants' reliability expectations and ability to compete in the market.

In addition to the cost savings, delaying the outages will allow Basin Electric the foresight to see if a four-year outage schedule would be feasible and cost efficient. If it is, it could mean significant savings in the long run.

Along with the benefits of delaying the outages, there are a few drawbacks as well. Regulations in North

Dakota require boiler maintenance every three years, so Basin Electric had to ask the state for an extension to do that work. "Not doing that maintenance when it's required has the potential to affect reliability, so we took precautionary measures to prevent that from happening," Tweeten says. "We also took short outages at each of the three plants using only our own employees to complete tasks that were necessary to keep the plants running and provide the power our members need." At the end of May, the plants began allowing a small number of contractors on site to complete the work that is necessary to keep the plants running.

"I am really proud of the plant staff and the work they've done throughout this uncertain time," Tweeten says. "They have really stepped up and done their part to help in any way necessary. They've pulled together to get the job done and through it all, keep looking for better ways to do things and cut costs to make the plants more marketable. They have gone above and beyond to maintain reliability, save money for our members, and ensure they have the electricity they need to keep their homes, businesses, and essential facilities up and running."



Basin Electric postponed three major outages at its generation facilities this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The facilities have been limiting outside contractors in the facilities to keep essential employees healthy and able to provide reliable power to Basin Electric's members.



Stensland Family Farms is a family-owned farm located just outside of Larchwood, Iowa, operating a 200-cow dairy.

MARKET DROP

WHAT COVID-LOW COMMODITY PRICES IN EARLY 2020 MEANT FOR BASIN ELECTRIC AND ITS MEMBERS

By Tracie Bettenhausen



POET Biorefining - Chancellor (South Dakota) is located about 20 miles southwest of Sioux Falls. Originally built in 2003 as a 45-million gallon plant, the facility was expanded in 2008 to an annual production level of 100-million gallons of ethanol.

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent screeching brakes of the economy had widespread impact for several months in 2020, starting in March. There are many industries that were impacted, but let's look at three in Basin Electric's service area to learn more about what they experienced.

Dairy undulations

When schools and restaurants closed down in March to help slow the spread of COVID-19, "it's like a switch flipped. It just happened, and we couldn't deliver milk to those places anymore," says Doug Stensland, owner of Stensland Family Farms.



Creedence Energy Services is an oil and gas chemical company headquartered in Minot, North Dakota, servicing the Bakken and Permian basins.

The system that takes milk from production to processing to delivery was disrupted. Grocery stores ran short of milk on their shelves, and prices started to plummet at the same time. It was a blow to dairy farmers who saw milk prices at a high point before COVID-19. In April, milk prices tanked to their lowest level in recent memory and then dropped even further in May. In June, prices rebounded to above their late-2019 heights. (See chart on page 15.)

Stensland Family Farms is a 105-year-old operation located near Larchwood, Iowa, a member of Basin Electric Class C member Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative in Rock Rapids, Iowa. Doug Stensland's daughter and three sons wanted to stick with the business, grow it, and started thinking about what could be different. When



According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Class III milk prices started out 2020 higher than any January since 2016. March prices continued to remain higher than the previous four years. However, April and May took steep declines followed by a sharp rebound in June rivaling prices seen at the end of 2019.

the family decided to invest in robotic milking eight years ago, they became totally family-operated.

Then, three-and-a-half years ago, the dairy farm invested in their own processing equipment. A capital-intensive upgrade that may have saved the day.

With processing came vertical integration. The dairy owns and operates three retail stores that carry milk, cheese, butter, cream, and ice cream, and they also sell retail milk to other local groceries. But on top of the milk that ends up in home kitchens, the dairy also sells milk and cheese to daycares and restaurants.

At the time COVID-19 hit, 40% of Stensland Family Farms' sales were in the wholesale market.

"When daycares and restaurants had to close, that 40% went away overnight," Stensland says.

Their investment in processing equipment helped them fill some local demand. The cows, unaware of COVID-19's effects on the world, kept producing milk, and the farm quickly adjusted a segment of that production from daycare and restaurant packaging to the packaging customers buy for their homes.

"The large production facilities had a harder time adjusting quickly because those are immense operations focused on a strict single product production schedule,

where we have considerably more flexibility. It takes time to switch production and packaging and on top of that, all those employees needed to start following new [pandemic] safety procedures," Stensland says.

Large production facilities are focused on efficiencies, but when the system can't keep up "it can make for a bad deal," he says. At Stensland Family Farms, the operation's efficiency means production can turn on a dime.

The dairy was able to fill in gaps that COVID-19 blew open. "In those weeks right after people went home, they were drinking a lot more milk because families were eating at home and kids were drinking milk at home," he says. "We saw a 25-30% jump. But now that the larger producers have their arms around it, our demand is back to normal."

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Stensland advocated for supporting local businesses. But he is more convinced now.

"There is a uniqueness to this COVID situation that has me looking at things in a different light. Dairy farming is always challenging, but what our family has done for a few years now is helping us get through this," Stensland says. "It's better for farms and customers if farms don't put all their eggs in one basket, so to say. We were a local operation that was able to get milk to customers

quickly because we were able to really start pumping out for one particular need. Also, we are close to where the customers are.”

Stensland says 2020 started off with high hopes, and with prices coming back, he feels better than he did just a couple months ago. “I feel for all dairy families. It’s not fair how hard they work. They are good managers, but many just don’t have the size they need to make it, to try to play into this field,” he says.

Ethanol equations

When COVID-19 shut down businesses and schools in March, many people, essential workers excluded, started putting on fewer road miles.

Total miles driven dropped by more than 50% in the last two weeks of March in the United States, according to data collected by Arity, a mobile data analytics company that provides data to insurers. Areas with lower population density did not drop as far as areas with higher population density, and in some states, mileage dropped

more than 60% below what would be expected without a pandemic.

This new behavior had an intense effect on oil prices, and therefore ethanol production.

Brad Schardin, general manager at Southeastern Electric Cooperative, a Basin Electric Class C member in Marion, South Dakota, says a fair amount of the cooperative’s revenue is tied to the oil industry. The cooperative’s three largest loads are the TransCanada pipeline, NuGen Energy ethanol plant, and the POET Biorefining - Chancellor (South Dakota) ethanol plant.

“We saw our kilowatt hours drop by 39% through May, and revenue drop by 30% on these large loads as well,” Schardin says.

The corn harvest has been an interesting one as well. In 2019, in Southeastern Electric’s six-county service area, three of the largest counties had only 30-40% of their corn crops planted due to extremely wet conditions

NuGen Energy is an ethanol plant located near Marion, South Dakota. The facility began production in 2008.





According to North Dakota Job Service, one-fifth of the state's oil and gas employees are out of work. Creedence Energy Services has been able to rehire many of the employees they were forced to let go earlier this year.

causing an unheard of corn shortage for the ethanol plants late last year and into 2020. Schardin says the ethanol plants in Southeastern Electric's service area decided to stop production in April and ride out the effects of low oil prices, coupled with low ethanol margins, short corn supplies, and finally the COVID-19 pandemic. "They understand there will not be more corn available to buy until the 2020 fall harvest, have worked out details for railed-in corn from North Dakota, or are hanging on to what they have in storage. It's been a wait-and-see game for them right now. NuGen Energy in Marion just started operating again on June 27 with some North Dakota railcar corn procurements. We believe the other plant will not be up and running until the new corn harvest starts coming in later this fall," he says.

In May, 36 electric cooperatives and rural electric associations sent a letter to 20 federal lawmakers asking Congress to provide economic relief for rural America due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The letter noted that a steep drop in liquid fuel demand has had a major impact on biofuel plants. The groups asked for relief that specifically benefits food and ethanol processing plants, along with the farmers and ranchers who serve them.

Schardin says that effort was much appreciated by the ethanol producers. "The fact that the co-op would go to bat for them, to present a letter to our congressional

delegations and administration, that was incredible to them," he says. "We advocated for local ag and the feedstocks that come out of ethanol. Sometimes they see their utility bill and forget how reliable and affordable we are. But for our cooperative family to write that letter and hold several nine-state conference calls on the matter, that boosted our stock with them. We offer more than just the price of electricity."

Schardin is thankful that outside of the oil pipeline and ethanol loads, the cooperative has been on pace for a record year of new members. "Take 2018 – we hooked up 318 new members or services through the end of May. This year, through May 2020, we have 308 new members/services, which puts us on track for matching that record year. It is interesting to note that many of these new members or services are twin homes or small commercial loads, but there are several large loads like the Dakota Access pipeline pumping station, dairy facilities, and a large egg-laying facility all in the background waiting for everything to shake out right now," he says.

Oil and natural gas strain

The price of oil and its impact on the world economy cannot be overstated. Products made with petroleum, shipped using petroleum, produced using petroleum, and fueled by petroleum are all affected.

By early March, prices had fallen by 30% since the start of 2020. For a brief period, the price of oil was negative,

a result of storage being completely full and nowhere to put production.

In North Dakota, about 6,100 of the state's 16,000 producing wells are now shut in. North Dakota's rig count has dropped to 11 rigs as of July 10, which is less than a quarter of the average number in March. Production fell to 858,000 barrels a day in May, which is the lowest level since 2013. According to North Dakota Job Service, one-fifth of the state's oil and gas employees are out of work. The North Dakota Petroleum Council estimates that oil needs to be \$35/barrel (bbl) before shutdown wells come back online, and \$40/bbl before drilling activity resumes. (Prices noted are WTI prices; oil produced in the Bakken has a basis point of \$8 due to the transportation needed to move the oil to market.) Worldwide, demand for natural gas dropped off in late April, but became most apparent in May and June when liquid natural gas export terminals in the United States reported continued cargo cancellations. When COVID-19 hit, demand for natural gas dropped, but so did production. And, there is continued uncertainty with some states implementing shutdowns once again.

According to Robert Johnston, executive advisor and managing director of Global Energy and Natural Resources at the Eurasia Group, OPEC continued cuts

through the end of July, and smaller producers will likely start producing again. Which means \$40/bbl will likely continue even as demand ramps up.

Gas production in the Bakken oil play of western North Dakota is expected to decline. The North Dakota Industrial Commission has reinstated a program that allows oil and gas operators to keep wells in "not completed" or "inactive" status to prevent production during an oil collapse. There are 420 drilled but uncompleted wells in North Dakota. Whiting Petroleum Corp., a major Bakken producer, filed for bankruptcy April 1.

For Creedence Energy Services, a company that serves oil and gas operators that have wells in production, discussions about what it would take to survive the price drop began in April. Kevin Black, president of the five-year-old company, says because their business is focused on delivering chemicals that improve production, reduce failures, and optimize efficiencies, their first focus was on their customers.

"We needed to talk about what we were going to do to weather this storm. So, we looked at whether they had the protection they needed for their equipment, especially in the cases of those companies that were shutting in their wells that were already producing,"

Creedence Energy Services delivers oil and gas chemicals and does scale remediation.



Black says. "There are specialty treatments we can provide to help that process, like corrosion inhibitors and chemicals to prevent mineral scaling. Those work when the oil is pumping, and when the well is down."

Black says at one point, the company had to let go a portion of its staff, most of which they were able to bring back by July. "In our area, this impacts families in a big way. Most of our employees also have spouses that work in the oil and gas industry. It was very grueling, but we kept grinding every day to find a way to keep our company alive."

Black's company is a member of Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative, a Basin Electric Class C member headquartered in Williston, North Dakota. "We had invested in a new state-of-the-art laboratory near Mountrail-Williams' headquarters building, and it was

about half done when prices dropped," Black says. "We are happy Mountrail-Williams has helped us get through this period, making sure we have the power we need to get the facility going."

This company, headquartered in Minot, North Dakota, but with all major services in Williston, was started by a group of cousins in November 2014 when oil prices were at \$82/bbl. "By April 2015, prices dropped to \$42/bbl," Black says. "We've gone through this before, and we got through it by being innovative."

He says they have found new ways to grow throughout this downturn, too. "We are not trying to get outside of our lane, but we have expanded our footprint, and are way more efficient with new processes and technologies," he says.

MONTANA CO-OP'S DRIVE-IN ANNUAL MEETING BRINGS RECORD ATTENDANCE

McCone Electric Cooperative, a Basin Electric Class C member in Circle, Montana, held Montana's first drive-in electric co-op annual meeting on June 5.



Due to social distancing guidelines because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many cooperatives are canceling their 2020 annual meetings. There were 225 registered members in attendance, which is up 35% over average

Scot Brown, McCone Electric manager of member services & compliance, says the co-op wanted to keep the meeting on the same day they always have it.

"With everything going on, we wanted to keep things going as normal as possible," Brown says. "We talked about postponing or canceling but felt like this was the best option." Read more and see photos:



<https://bit.ly/Drive-inAnnualMeeting>

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

STEPHANIE

MEDICAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR

HOTTMAN

By Kalli Senske

Ask nearly anyone in the medical field and they'll tell you a story of how they were called to help others. For Stephanie Hottman, nurse and medical services supervisor at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant, her story began wanting to be a veterinarian because of her love of animals. It wasn't until she took a job as a Certified Nursing Assistant at a long-term care facility that she decided to pursue nursing.

"From the first time I started working there, I decided nursing was for me – I felt called to the profession," Hottman says. "Years later, nursing is still 'it' for me."

Hottman joined Basin Electric in a part-time nursing position and took a full-time position in 2015. She says her current position is rewarding because of the impact she can make, whether that's recommending new services to offer or finding ways to save Basin Electric money.

"Helping people is still first and foremost why I went into nursing," she says. "I'm in a position now where I'm there to help out with blood draws or occupational injuries if needed, but I also get to give input regarding the direction of medical services. I'm still helping people through my suggestions and opinions, and I love that this position allows me to do that."

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted everyone, but those who work in the medical industry experienced the pandemic up close and personal. Hottman says the ever-changing restrictions added to her team's workload.

"For us in medical services, it's added 100-times more work. We are still doing all of our normal stuff and also took on providing input for what to do in pandemic situations," Hottman says. "Basin Electric looked to us for guidelines on what to do, and we stepped up to the game to look at the guidelines from the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and Department of Health, which changed frequently. We tried to take even more caution

As Basin Electric's medical services supervisor, Stephanie Hottman assists with tasks such as blood pressure monitoring, occupational injuries, and blood draws, but also offers input regarding new services to offer or finding ways to help save the co-op money.



than what was recommended to keep positive numbers down in the workforce, like asking essential workers who tested positive to quarantine for 14 days instead of the recommended seven.”

She added that the Basin Electric medical team serves five different states, so they tried to be consistent with their recommendations across the co-op.

Although they’ve had to limit patients coming into medical services, Hottman and her team have been seeing patients virtually.

“The co-op had been doing FaceTime visits since before I started seven years ago, but there wasn’t a solution for people on other phones. We got Skype set up for our other patients and it’s been a good addition,” Hottman says.

She adds that people have been receptive to virtual appointments, and it’s helped the team be able to treat patients in remote locations. Unfortunately, though, not everything can be done by telemedicine, so Hottman is anxious to start traveling again.

“We’re used to being on the go all the time – traveling to see patients in Wyoming and other sites – and that’s part of my job that I miss. Our patients need us, so I know they’re looking forward to seeing us as much as we are looking forward to seeing them,” Hottman says.

Like all of us, Hottman is looking forward to some normalcy once pandemic restrictions have been lifted.

“I’m looking forward to not having to worry about coronavirus, but that may be a long ways out. I think we truly will have a new normal to adjust to,” Hottman says.

Whether it’s dealing with the worst disease outbreak in a century or responding to a work injury, there’s never a shortage of activity happening in medical services.

“Having a medical team on staff is the best of both worlds,” Hottman says. “The cooperative is so good. They are great to their employees and have kept everyone’s safety their priority.”



2020 BASIN ELECTRIC SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Twenty \$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.



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



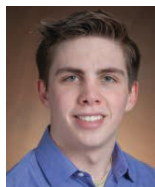
Paige Lang, daughter of Ryan (Headquarters) and Beth Lang, will be a sophomore at the University of Mary, majoring in chemical engineering.



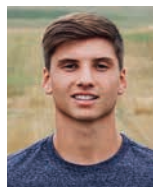
Landen Fuller, son of Lance (Laramie River Station) and Katrina Fuller, will be a junior at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. He is majoring in petroleum engineering.



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



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



Tryston Miller, son of Robyn (Dakota Gasification Company) and Scott Miller, will be a freshman at Bismarck (North Dakota) State College. He will be majoring in instrumentation and control technology.



Patrick Kernan, son of William (Laramie River Station) and Angie Kernan, will be a freshman in the welding program at Eastern Wyoming College in Torrington.



Caleb Myhra, son of Phil (Dakota Gasification Company) and Jennifer Wallender, will be a freshman at North Dakota State University, and will be majoring in computer science.



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



Parker Schmidt is the son of Kris Schmidt (Leland Olds Station). In the fall, he will be a sophomore at Bismarck State College, majoring in mechanical maintenance technology.



Hunter Schroetlin is the son of Neil (Dakota Gasification Company) and Coleen Schroetlin. He will be a senior this fall at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. He will major in mechanical engineering.



Brandon Snyder, son of Kelly (Leland Olds Station) and Jonella Snyder, will be a freshman attending North Dakota State University. He will major in computer science.



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



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



Cade Steffan, son of Todd (Dakota Gasification Company) and Jennifer Steffan, will be a freshman at Bismarck State College this fall. He will be studying mechanical maintenance and petroleum production technology.



Hunter Truedson, son of Milo Schramm (Dakota Gasification Company) and Jennifer Aberle, will be a freshman at North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton this fall, majoring in welding.



Ethan Vallie, son of Jeanelle (Headquarters) and Dan Vallie, will be a junior at North Dakota State University. He will be majoring in business.



Cael Voigt, son of Shawn Voigt (Dakota Gasification Company), will be a freshman at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City. He will study civil engineering.



Jayden Vollmuth, daughter of Dana Friedt (Headquarters), will be a freshman at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City. She will be majoring in chemical engineering.



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



EMPLOYEE'S IMPACT

AS A TRAINED WEATHER SPOTTER GOES BEYOND SPOTTING STORMS

By Lindsey Chumley

Summer brings some of the most active weather to Basin Electric's service area, and it's important to stay informed of any weather warnings to protect yourself and your property. Information provided by Doppler radar and satellite is used to predict severe weather, but perhaps the most essential sources are the trained weather spotters, those who are reporting what's actually happening down on the ground.

One Basin Electric employee has been protecting her local community as a National Weather Service (NWS) SKYWARN® storm spotter for about 15 years. Erin Laverdure, project coordinations representative, relays weather information to the NWS' Bismarck, North Dakota, office.

Laverdure's interest in weather began as a young girl. She says the root of her interest actually came out of fear. "The first several years of my life I have very vivid memories of being whisked away from our trailer house into the pickup, then flying across town and running over to my grandpa's place to get down into the basement every

time the weather got bad," Laverdure says. "This was terrifying as a child. I started to watch on my own as they would talk about warnings. It became an ingrained thing I was always paying attention to when I was young."

Fast forward to her adulthood in the early 2000s. She again lived in a mobile home, but this time in a rural area. She says this made it challenging to know if severe weather was on its way. "It seemed like the TV and radio only reported on weather that would be impacting the more populous areas, like Bismarck, which wasn't all that helpful to me living on the outskirts," Laverdure says.

Around that time is when she first learned about the NWS' SKYWARN Severe Weather Spotter Training. The program is open to the public and educates its volunteers on the basics of severe weather, how to identify specific features within a storm, how to properly position oneself in relation to a storm, spotter safety, and how to communicate severe weather reports. Laverdure saw this as an opportunity to formally learn more about how to better understand the weather happening near her. "Still, the

root of my interest in weather was fear, and I knew one of the ways to conquer fear was through education,” she says.

Although the training sessions are not required every year, Laverdure says she became a regular attendee throughout the years. “I’d learn something new every time, and I would just really enjoy it. I got to know the meteorologists that were giving the sessions,” she says. “Let’s just say when I show up, I get a hug from them.”

Since Laverdure has been reporting her weather observations, the NWS has found her reports particularly helpful. When she was living in rural Oliver County, North Dakota, because of the prevailing weather patterns, she says the weather that would happen there would impact Bismarck within about 40 minutes or so. For this reason, the NWS was always interested in tracking the progression to know whether or not the systems were intensifying.

Laverdure remembers one occasion in particular when the phone rang and it was a meteorologist calling from

the NWS. “There was a front coming through, and they were thinking the wind speeds were going to be really bad,” Laverdure says. “I told him I thought it was really quiet here and hadn’t noticed anything. He said that if I stepped out on my porch, I should see a gust front and a shelf cloud, as well as some dust coming up from the west. I looked out and said, ‘Well there it is!’ and called him back after the front had passed to let them know the wind speeds,” she says.

Laverdure’s weather observations have been more than a resource for just the NWS. The reach of her ground truth reports stretch further than that. Throughout the years, they’ve contributed to the issuing of severe weather warnings, which have likely protected property and even lives. “Whether it’s from my personal weather station, my contact with the weather service, or using apps to send in observations, I like being able to advance the science of it,” Laverdure says. “This contributes to the public safety component of it, and I hope makes us all safer.”

Erin Laverdure, Basin Electric project coordinations representative, snapped a selfie after a non-severe storm drifted by and a rainbow appeared while she was fishing on the Knife River in North Dakota this summer.



EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS

Service awards



Faye Miller
45 years
chief auditor
Headquarters



James Futch
40 years
lab supervisor
Laramie River Station



Jay Houx
40 years
water treatment
plant supervisor
Laramie River Station



Dave Raatz
40 years
senior vice president,
asset management,
resource planning,
& rates
Headquarters



Brent Charging
35 years
instrument I
Leland Olds Station



Tom Christensen
35 years
senior vice president,
transmission,
engineering,
& construction
Headquarters



Patty Cogdill
35 years
protection services
supervisor
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Marci Schorsch
35 years
accounting
administrator
Headquarters



Russ Bosch
30 years
maintenance
superintendent
Leland Olds Station



Tammy DeWitt
30 years
senior executive
administrative assistant,
corporate services
Headquarters



Chad Edwards
30 years
plant manager
Antelope Valley Station



Rory Hochsprung
30 years
field maintenance
superintendent
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



JoAnn Hubbard
30 years
procurement coordinator
Laramie River Station



Kelly Neuberger
30 years
process operations
field technician
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Zane Zuther
30 years
utility planning analyst
Headquarters



Jim Alt
20 years
electrical &
instrumentation
maintenance supervisor
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Dustin Bentz
20 years
shift supervisor
Leland Olds Station



Kelly Borlaug
20 years
warehouseperson
Antelope Valley Station



Scott Bullinger
20 years
process operations
field technician
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



David Feil
20 years
shift supervisor
Antelope Valley Station



Randy Garrett
20 years
shift supervisor
Leland Olds Station



Gary Heidelberg
20 years
senior environmental
specialist
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Ryan Rask
20 years
utilities shift supervisor
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Darrin Rittenbach
20 years
process operations
field technician
*Dakota Gasification
Company*

Service awards



Donavon Schnabel
20 years
process operations
field technician
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Neil Schroetlin
20 years
senior fixed equipment
engineer
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Barry Vietz
20 years
warehouseperson
Menoken TSM



Shawn Voigt
20 years
process operations
field technician
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Valerie Weigel
20 years
director, asset
management &
commodity strategy
Headquarters



Thad Zahn
20 years
process operations
field technician
*Dakota Gasification
Company*



Lyle Zinke
20 years
chemical production
shift supervisor
*Dakota Gasification
Company*

Retirees



Jim Tupa, field technician in shift/shop maintenance, retired from Dakota Gasification Company on Jan. 31.

"Jim was a very dedicated employee.

A lot of employees bid from one area of the plant to the next, but Jim was the last original welder left in the weld shop from the start of the plant from day one," says Seth Nehl, Dakota Gas maintenance shop supervisor. "Since he was in the weld shop for 36 years, he saw a lot and had a good memory. If you got stumped on a job, he had a wealth of knowledge and more times than not he would be able to help you out. And, Jim was a good teacher and mentor to new hires. He had patience and did a good job."

Tupa said his time at Dakota Gas was "quite the ride. From plant closures to extreme cold and extreme heat conditions — I loved it! That is why I was the only one to stay in that shop the whole time I was employed there."

In his retirement, Tupa is excited to spend time with friends and above all, his grandbabies.



Scott Battest, Dakota Gas shift supervisor of gas production, retired on March 5. Battest started working at the plant as a contractor at 18 years old while it was being built. "The changes that have been made to produce more byproducts have been a great experience," Battest says. "I enjoyed working with so many different people for the last 35 years and have a lot of good memories that will not be forgotten."

"Scott was a dedicated employee who enjoyed coming to work and being part of the operations team," says Tim Seidler, Dakota Gas gas production section manager. "He took a lot of pride in being an employee at Dakota Gas. He took work seriously but also tried to make it enjoyable for everyone."

In his retirement, Battest plans to travel, hunt, and fish.

Retirees

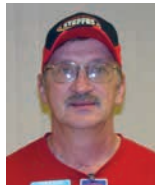


Larry Collins, mechanical supervisor, retired from Laramie River Station on March 9. He worked at the plant for over 30 years, beginning his career in 1989. He said that in his time at Laramie River, he “had a lot of fun and met a lot of nice folks.”

In his retirement, Collins plans to travel and work on the family ranch.



Dale Howard retired from Antelope Valley Station on March 13. He started as a yardman at the former William J. Neal Station and transferred to Antelope Valley Station in 1982 when he started his apprenticeship. He became lead electrician in 2017, a position he held until retirement.



Steven Ronngren, Dakota Gas process operations field technician, retired on March 30. He started in coal handling and was quickly transferred to the boiler house where he stayed for two-and-a-half years. He then moved into air separation for his last nine years. Before joining the co-op, he worked as a prep/boiler operator for Cargill Oil Seeds in Fargo, North Dakota. Ronngren has a power plant degree and a boiler operator license.

“Steve was a true jack of all trades with a vast knowledge of many things,” says Brandon Nordstrom, Dakota Gas process operations field technician. “He took great pride in how clean he kept the oxygen plant. Steve loved cooking and bringing in homemade baked goods for his crew. He always had the most entertaining stories, which will surely be missed.”

In his retirement, Ronngren plans to spend summers in North Dakota and Minnesota at his son’s lake home, help with the grandchildren, fish, and woodwork. He plans to winter in Mexico.



Vern Buchholz retired on April 3 after a 35-year career with Dakota Gas and Basin Electric. He began his career at Dakota Gas then transferred to Antelope Valley Station in 2007. He retired as a mechanic at Antelope Valley Station.

Buchholz says he’s grateful for the lifelong friends he made throughout his career.

“Vern is a very happy individual who would always bring a smile to your face,” says Casey Stern, Antelope Valley Station mechanical maintenance supervisor. “I learned a lot of ‘street smarts’ from Vern. I’ll miss his daily words of wisdom and jokes.”

“There wasn’t a day that went by without Vern telling a good joke,” adds Allan Frederick, Antelope Valley Station maintenance supervisor. “He would say, ‘I am not here for a long time but I am here for a good time.’ I always enjoyed working with Vern. We will miss him here.”



Randy Binstock retired from Dakota Gas on April 8. He began his career in the boiler house/water treatment in 1984 where he worked for 24 years. He was then transferred to gas processing/methanation/rectisol for the last 11 years, all in operations. He finished his 35-year career as a process operations field technician.

In his retirement, Binstock plans to raise cattle and restore old International Harvester tractors, trucks, and scouts. He says he is also looking forward to hunting, fishing, and spending time with his kids and grandkids.



Kevin Bruce, process operations field technician at Dakota Gas, retired on June 4. “I had a great work experience at Dakota Gas for 35 years,” Bruce says. “I worked with a lot of good people.”

“I have known Kevin for 30-plus years and had the pleasure of working with him on C crew the last two years,” says Bruce Banks, shift supervisor in the chemical products section. “He is professional, knowledgeable, and willing to help and train others. He will be missed.”

New employees



Jordan Boehm began work as a field technician at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant on March 1. Previously, he worked as a process operator at Hankinson Renewable Energy in Hankinson, North Dakota. Boehm also worked as an operator at Midwest Ag Energy and a laborer at Minnkota Power Cooperative. The Fort Rice, North Dakota, native earned an associate's degree in power plant technology from Bismarck State College in Bismarck, North Dakota.



Greg Hatzenbiler started work as a journeyman lineman at Transmission System Maintenance-Menoken (North Dakota) on March 16. Before joining the co-op, he worked as an associate professor of electrical lineworker at Bismarck (North Dakota) State College. Hatzenbiler earned an associate's degree in electrical lineworker from Bismarck State College, a bachelor's degree in career and technical education from Valley City (North Dakota) State University, and graduated from the Missouri Valley Line Constructors Apprenticeship and Training Program.



Brittany Cyrus started as an accounting analyst II at Headquarters on March 31. Before joining Basin Electric, she worked as a senior associate at Brady Martz & Associates, P.C. Cyrus is originally from Crystal, North Dakota.



Shane Olson began work as a laborer at Leland Olds Station on May 11. Before joining the co-op, he worked as a foreman at Acrotech Services in his hometown of Bismarck, North Dakota.



Cassie Tomlinson began work as a laborer at Leland Olds Station on May 11. Previously, she worked as a teacher's aide for Underwood (North Dakota) Public School. She is originally from Turtle Lake, North Dakota.



Bruce Keranen started work at Pioneer Generation Station as an operator technician on May 18. He was previously a construction manager at Northland Excavating, LLC in Buffalo, Minnesota, his hometown. Before that, Keranen was employed as an apparatus technician at Basin Electric Class C member Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association in Rockford, Minnesota for 15 years. He earned an associate's degree in telecommunications at Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Wadena, Minnesota.



"It's during difficult times like this when we truly work together — both at home and as a co-op family. Basin Electric employees are working to produce products that fuel our economy and ensure our members have the electricity they need to power our homes and the essential services that are more important now than ever. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, to our employees and members who are ensuring these critical needs are met."

Basin Electric CEO and General Manager Paul Sukut



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“This is one of the best areas in the nation to raise bees.”

— Dusty Backer, Backer Bees

Environment isn't just a buzz word at Basin Electric.

Backer Bees has bees at Glenharold Mine, a reclaimed coal mine that used to supply coal to our first power plant. The reclaimed pasture has a variety of flowers—alfalfa, clover, sunflowers, wildflowers—making it one of the best areas in the nation to raise bees.

Environmental stewardship has always been a guiding principle for us. That's why we're committed to reclaiming and restoring land back to its natural state, like Glenharold Mine.



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