

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# Wisdom update:

## Frequent summer operation, Cooling tower under construction

An excavator quickly brought down Wisdom Unit 1's 50-plus-year-old cooling tower in late August, making way for construction of a new fiberglass structure.

Evaptech, the contractor for the new cooling tower project, tore the old facility down in about a day and a half and hauled the debris to a local landfill.

The next steps during the two-and-a-half-month outage will include assembling pre-fabricated fiberglass pieces on the ground and then hoisting framework into place on the cooling tower basin.

Fiberglass decking and a staircase will then be added, followed by fiberglass fill and drift eliminators. Louvers will then be installed on the outside of the new tower.

New mechanicals, including motors and fans, will also be installed, along with new electrical work.

Corn Belt Power Cooperative chose fall for the project timeframe due to lower need for Wisdom Unit 1 generation during off peak months.

Both units at Wisdom Station have operated more frequently this past summer, due to Corn Belt Power and Basin Electric Power Cooperative's membership in the Southwest Power Pool.

In June, Wisdom Unit 1 and Wisdom Unit 2 each had 15 start ups, operating both simultaneously and independently. In contrast, previous summers recorded few start ups for either unit. In July, Wisdom Unit 2 was started 11 times, followed by nine starts in August.

Patrick Connor, plant manager, said, "We had more starts in June, July and August than we have most years for the entire year. In 2015, for example, we had a total of just



### Cooling tower replacement

**Above |** An excavator brings down the 50-plus-year-old redwood cooling tower at Wisdom Station, Spencer. A new fiberglass tower will be constructed this fall.

23 starts. I think the reason is because of SPP and the way it gets dispatched."

Although both units operate on natural gas with fuel oil backup, Wisdom Unit 2 takes less than an hour to start up, compared to Wisdom Unit 1's steam turbine that requires eight to 10 hours to come online.

Mike Thatcher, vice president, generation, explains that the Wisdom units are called to operate most often for reliability needs rather than economic reasons. "Outages in the region resulted in the need for Wisdom to operate to relieve congestion and act as a reliability safeguard," he said.

Thatcher says that the additional run time is good for the units and the personnel who operate them.

"It's good to utilize the units. It helps with training newer operators and they've gained a lot of experience in a short time. Seasoned operators have had a good refresher. We appreciate their efforts in manning the plant. Because we don't know when we will be called on to operate," Thatcher said.

In addition to the Unit 1 outage for the cooling tower replacement, Unit 2 will also undergo an outage the last part of October for routine maintenance.

Connor says he is uncertain what to expect when it comes to run time this coming winter. "It may depend on how often we are curtailed on natural gas," he said. ■

# Highly unusual power supply costs lead to rate increase



The cost of electric power from Corn Belt Power Cooperative to its member cooperatives will increase Nov. 1, due primarily to highly unusual and unexpected power supply costs. Increase to Corn Belt Power's Rate A will be approximately 10 percent.

A Class A member of Basin Electric, Bismarck, N.D., since 2009, Corn Belt Power purchases all of its power supply from Basin Electric with the exception of its hydropower allocation.

Basin Electric's wholesale rate increased approximately 12 percent Aug. 1, 2016, due to market conditions that dramatically changed since the power supplier set its 2016 rate. Corn Belt Power will delay passing on the increase to its member cooperatives three months by covering some of the costs with its current budget.

The Corn Belt Power board of directors approved the increase at its meeting Aug. 30.

Ken Kuyper, executive vice president and general manager, Corn Belt Power, said, "Basin Electric, Corn Belt Power and their member co-ops focus on holding down costs for the power we generate and deliver. We regret having to increase the rates that members pay on their monthly bills and will continue

to work hard to keep those rates affordable."

Corn Belt Power and its member cooperatives are doing several things to help deal with increasing costs. Co-ops offer load management programs that encourage members to delay use of appliances to off-peak times. Reducing electric use during times of peak use saves on the power bill that comes from Basin Electric and can reduce overall rates charged to members.

To help individual members lower the bills they receive, Corn Belt Power and its member co-ops offer many energy efficiency programs. Members can save in two ways – with rebates for installing efficient appliances and other energy-saving measures, and with savings realized on their monthly bills when the amount of power used is reduced.

Corn Belt Power and its member co-ops continue to actively plan to make sure a reasonably priced and reliable supply of power will be available well into the future. Membership in Basin Electric offers financial stability by reducing risk and buffering market price volatility. This partnership positions Corn Belt Power and its member co-ops to meet long-term needs of members at the end of the line. ■



## Garner library project

**Above** | Attending the presentation of a loan check for a library expansion project in Garner are, from left, Randy Lansing, city administrator, Garner; Kris Hanson, chair, Garner library board; Brittany Dickey, development finance director, Corn Belt Power; Ken Mick, mayor, Garner; and Belva German, Prairie Energy Cooperative. Photo courtesy of The Leader newspaper.

## Loan funds support Garner library project

Corn Belt Power Cooperative loan funds were presented Aug. 18 to the City of Garner for a library expansion project that is estimated to be completed in October.

Corn Belt Power received a \$300,000 USDA Rural Economic Development Grant for the City of Garner's library renovation project. Corn Belt Power contributed 20 percent matching funds and loaned all \$360,000 to the City of Garner at zero percent interest over 10 years. The renovation project has a total budget of \$1,316,500 and will expand the educational programming in the community. The renovation includes 1,834 square feet to be added to the existing 6,155-square-foot library. The project will help retain two-and-a-half full-time positions. ■



## Revolving loan funds

**Above** | Brittany Dickey, left, development finance director, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, and Vicki Daily, right, general manager, Grundy County REC, present loan checks to Blaine Moats and Jeff Carson, Grundy Center Development Corporation.

## Development corporation receives revolving loan funds

Corn Belt Power Cooperative loaned \$150,000 and Grundy County REC loaned \$70,000 from their respective Revolving Loan Funds to the Grundy Center Development Corporation on Aug. 2. The funds will be used to expand the industrial park on the north edge of Grundy Center. Grundy Center Development Corporation is purchasing 25 acres to market for commercial development as the existing industrial park is almost full. ■



Sam Moore

## Moore new accountant

Sam Moore started work at Corn Belt Power Cooperative Aug. 22 as an accountant I. Moore has an accounting degree from Central College, Pella, and graduated from Clarion-Goldfield High School. He most recently worked for Anderson Tax, LLC, Chicago. ■

### Calhoun County REC votes to extend term limits

Members of Calhoun County REC voted in favor of extending term limits of board members from four to six three-year terms at the co-op's annual meeting Sept. 7 in Rockwell City. Attendance totaled 175 with 90 members present.

Terry Finley, Auburn, and LaVerne Arndt, Sac City, were re-elected to the board of directors. Officers re-elected were Jim Miller, Fonda, president; Finley, vice president; Jason McKenney, Somers, secretary; and John Wahl, Rockwell City, treasurer.

Mike Thatcher, vice president, generation, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, spoke about generation supply. John Dvorak, director, safety and loss control, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, gave a safety presentation. Displays included information about load management, power supplies and electric cooperative history.

A pork loin and chicken meal preceded the meeting. Each member received a night light and neon extension cord.

### Directors re-elected at RVEC annual meeting

Members of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative re-elected two directors at the cooperative's annual meeting Sept. 7 in Glidden. Attendance totaled 457 with 197 members present.

Steve Seidl, Coon Rapids, and Jeff Cranston, Odebolt, were re-elected to three-year terms. Officers re-elected were Dave Onken, Glidden, president; Cranston, vice president; and Mark Ludwig, Breda, secretary/treasurer.

Dr. Keri Jacobs, professor of economics, Iowa State University, spoke about the value of electric cooperatives and the importance of member involvement. The meeting was preceded by a buffet dinner with musical entertainment by Von Ketelsen. Each member received a ham and drinking glass. Bill credits were awarded as door prizes.

Ken Kuyper, executive vice president and general manager, represented Corn Belt Power Cooperative.

### Grundy County REC incumbents receive new terms

Three incumbent directors were re-elected at the Grundy County REC annual meeting Sept. 8 in Grundy Center. Kevin Pruisner, Dike; Jason Paper, Conrad; and Ben Espenscheid, Traer, will serve new three-year terms.

Attendance totaled 175 with 103 members present.

At a board meeting following the annual meeting, Pruisner was newly elected to serve as president of the board. Officers re-elected were Earl Slinker, Grundy Center, vice president; Norbert Boyle, Ackley, secretary; and Espenscheid, treasurer.

Chuck Soderberg, executive vice president and general manager, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, spoke about legislative issues affecting electric cooperatives. Each member received a package of LED light bulbs and a stainless steel knife. Cash and an electric grill were awarded as door prizes. Kathy Taylor, vice president, corporate relations, represented Corn Belt Power Cooperative.



Grundy meeting

Above | A lucky Grundy County REC annual meeting attendee wins a \$100 bill.



Brad Honold

## New director represents NIMECA

Brad Honold, manager, Coon Rapids Municipal Utilities, and president, North Iowa Municipal Electric Cooperative Association board of directors, joined the Corn Belt Power Cooperative board of directors Aug. 30 as NIMECA's representative.

He succeeds Ron Deiber, who retired from the Corn Belt Power board on Aug. 29.

A graduate of Iowa State University with a degree in civil engineering, Honold started work in 1992 as manager of the municipal utility in his hometown of Coon Rapids. His responsibilities include overseeing operations of five municipally owned services: electricity, gas, water, wastewater and telecommunications.

Serving as a director of NIMECA for the past 24 years, Honold has been involved in many of the major decisions that both Corn Belt Power and NIMECA approved, including implementing the capacity sharing agreement and common transmission system, becoming a member of Basin Electric Power Cooperative and joining the Southwest Power Pool.

"Coon Rapids Municipal and Corn Belt are both member owned and member driven. From the larger picture, we are working together to help make decisions that benefit our memberships," Honold said. ■

PRSRST STD  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Humboldt, Iowa  
 Permit No. 32



**Touchstone Energy Co-op Values** | Integrity | Accountability | Innovation | Commitment to Community

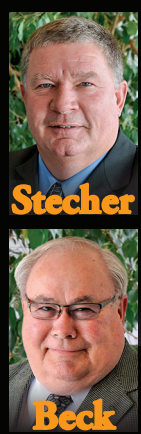


Kari Rubel

**The power of human connections**

**K**ari Rubel, accountant I, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, demonstrates the Touchstone Energy value of commitment to community by teaching kids how to line dance.

She says, "I'm from the South and love line dancing and like to teach others what I have learned. It's a fun, stress-relieving and exciting way to work out. And it can be done by all ages. Kids love to dance and are quick learners. I just enjoy dancing and showing them some fun moves."



**New officers elected**

**T**he Corn Belt Power Cooperative board of directors elected Scott Stecher, director from Prairie Energy Cooperative, as its new vice president, and Jerry Beck, director from Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, as its new secretary. The election was held Aug. 30 during the regular board meeting in Humboldt.

The vice president position became open following the retirement of Ron Deiber, director from North Iowa Municipal Electric Cooperative Association, on Aug. 29. Stecher previously served as secretary of the board.

**Corn Belt Power Cooperative**  
**Watts Watt**

Watts Watt is published monthly for employees and associates of Corn Belt Power Cooperative, 1300 13th St. North, Humboldt, Iowa 50548-0508. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Copyright 2016  
 ■ Kenneth H. Kuyper, Executive Vice President and General Manager  
 ■ Kathy D. Taylor, Editor; Vice President, Corporate Relations; CCC  
 ■ Marena Fritzler, Graphic Designer