



Corn Belt Power hosts members at diamond annual meeting

Corn Belt Power Cooperative held its 75th annual meeting, themed “Power Shines Through,” at the Starlite Best Western in Fort Dodge Wednesday, April 5.

Close to 120 were in attendance to hear updates on the cooperative, elect a director and listen to keynote speaker, Dan Meers.

Meers is widely known as KC Wolf, the official mascot of the 2023 NFL Superbowl winning Kansas City Chiefs football team. He travels throughout the United States and the world entertaining thousands of people both in and out of costume. Meers delivered an address on how to live a life of influence.

During the meeting, member-cooperatives and local businesses representatives heard from Dave Onken, board president, about how Corn Belt Power came to be 75 years ago.

“Over the last 75 years, we’ve faced numerous challenges, threats and pressures,” said Onken. “Our circumstances and



Super Bowl Champion

Above | Keynote speaker, Dan Meers, presents an uplifting message about living a life of influence. Meers is widely known as KC Wolf, the official mascot of the Kansas City Chiefs. He travels throughout the United States and the world entertaining thousands of people both in and out of costume.



GM Report

Above | Ken Kuyper, executive vice president and general manager, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, showcases the importance of a balanced power supply using Steady Eddie during his 2022 operations update. Kuyper noted Corn Belt Power is in a strong position to weather any future challenges.

resilience have formed us into a strong organization. Working together with our member cooperatives, Corn Belt Power Cooperative impacts and enhances the lives of many. Like a diamond, our Power continues to Shine Through.”

Ken Kuyper, executive vice president and general manager, Corn Belt Power Cooperative reported during the meeting the cooperative is in a strong position to weather future challenges. To cap off his remarks, Kuyper channeled Ben Jaspers, Corn Belt Power’s board president in 1950.

“To attain the goal of a complete, successful, and efficient rural electrification program, your board of directors and management must turn to the membership of this organization for its help and influence,” he said. “We cannot

compromise on cooperative philosophy, if we are to continue to exist as a cooperative organization. It is only through and by the faith and loyalty and courage of the members, that we, can long endure.”

During the meeting, Ted Hall, Prairie Energy, was unanimously approved for another three-year term. Following the meeting, the board reorganized and voted to keep officers the same. They are as follows:

- Dave Onken, President
- Dale Schaefer, Vice President
- Jerry Beck, Secretary
- Larry Rohach, Treasurer
- Gary Poppe, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Attendees received a popcorn bowl maker and popcorn kernels from Iowa’s own Jolly Time Popcorn. Next year’s annual meeting is scheduled Wednesday, April 3, 2024. ■



Legislative Fly-in

Above | Chad Chapman, member services, Prairie Energy Cooperative, speaks with U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst during the senator's Wednesday morning Coffee with Constituents. Cooperative directors Paul Heineman, Midland Power Cooperative, and Kenneth VandenBerg, Chariton Valley, watch on.

Iowa co-ops descend on Washington, D.C.

As part of our cooperative commitment to democracy and advocacy, Iowa's electric cooperatives regularly coordinate meetings with state and federal legislators through the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC). The week of April 17, nearly 30 electric co-op representatives traveled to Washington, D.C., to advocate face to face with members of the Iowa Congressional delegation.

"Going to our nation's capitol is a valuable opportunity for our Iowa Rural Power grassroots efforts to shine. Iowa's electric cooperatives care deeply about the member-owners and communities we serve and it's important to meet with our elected officials to discuss issues that affect our ability to provide reliable and affordable power," said Ryan

Cornelius, vice president, corporate relations, Corn Belt Power.

Iowa's electric co-op advocates were able to meet with Congressman Nunn, Congressman Feenstra, Congresswoman Miller-Meeks, Senator Ernst and Senator Grassley, in addition to talking with a staffer from Congresswoman Hinson's office.

Specifically, the group talked to legislators about modernizing the permitting process, Farm Bill reauthorization, supply chain challenges, and continued threats to the reliability and affordability of power. Additionally, IAEC coordinated briefings from the American Public Power Association, the Renewable Fuels Association and the Nuclear Energy Institute for the Iowa co-op group to learn more

about issues impacting our communities.

In D.C., the advocates also attended the annual legislative conference hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). NRECA staff and speakers addressed 2,000 co-op leaders from across the country with a core message to urge Congress and federal agencies to focus on maintaining reliable electricity for the American people.

We appreciate the service of Iowa's elected officials and the tireless work of their staff who help look out for Iowans in the Halls of Congress. The next planned trip for Iowa Rural Power advocates will come later this fall. Learn more about Iowa Rural Power grassroots advocacy at IARuralPower.org ■

Feenstra and Haley visit Fort Dodge

The 2024 presidential election may be more than a year away, but that isn't stopping candidates from sharing their pitch in Iowa.

On Tuesday, April 11, presidential candidate Nikki Haley, former South Carolina governor and U.N. Ambassador, spoke to Fort Dodge area residents at the Cardiff Center. U.S. Representative Randy Feenstra joined Haley on stage for a panel discussion with Jeff Kauffman, Iowa Republican Party chairman.

Representatives from Corn Belt Power



Presidential candidate visits Fort Dodge

Above | From left, U.S. Rep. Randy Feenstra, Jeff Kauffman, Iowa Republican Party Chairman, and former U.S. Sen. and U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley take part in a panel discussion at the annual Republican Party dinner in Fort Dodge.

Cooperative, Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative, Prairie Energy Cooperative and Iowa's Association of Electric Cooperatives

attended to speak with Haley on her plan to keep electricity affordable, reliable and safe for Iowa residents. ■

News in brief

Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative hosts annual meeting

More than 240 members were in attendance at Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative's annual meeting on Saturday, April 15 at the Clay County Regional Events Center.

Reports from officers included Jerry Beck, board chair; Dan Winterhof, treasurer; and Janet Deim; Operation Round Up. Members also heard from Youth Tour representatives and their chaperone Mat Kilgore, foreman, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative. Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative's vice presidents Aaron Ruschy, Shelly Tredway and Jen Sievert presented a video presentation on cooperative operations.

Keynote speaker Kacey Johnson gave a riveting presentation on her life story which included surviving the Columbine Shooting.

During the meeting, Trent Will, Spirit Lake and David Friedrich, Alta were reelected to the cooperative's board. Officers are as follows:

- Jerry Beck, Board Chair
- Gary Rouse, Vice Chair
- Trent Will, Secretary
- Dan Winterhof, Treasurer



ILEC annual meeting

Above | This year's Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative annual meeting drew more than 240 members to the Clay County Regional Events Center. Members heard a keynote address from Columbine shooting survivor Kacey Johnson.

Members elect new director at Butler County REC meeting

Members cast close to 600 mail-in ballots for Butler County REC's scaled-down annual meeting that took place on Saturday, April 1.

Members elected Grant Greenzweig, Charles City, to his first term on the board. Gerald Schmitt, Rockford, and Tim Schrage, Allison, were re-elected to three-year terms on the board of directors.

Officers are as follows:

- Duane Rieckenberg, President
- Gary Poppe, Vice President
- Tim Schrage, Secretary
- Troy Feldman, Treasurer

Members will have the opportunity to attend a number of member appreciation events throughout the year in Butler's service territory.

VanHorn re-elected at Franklin REC annual meeting

Franklin REC held its annual meeting April 4. There, members re-elected Darwin VanHorn to another three-year term on the cooperative's board of directors. Following the meeting, VanHorn was elected secretary/treasurer of the organization. Other directors remained the same and are as follows:

- Gordon Greimann, President
- John Snyder, Vice President

The cooperative offered members ribeye steak sandwiches, potato salad, baked beans and scotcheroos. The Franklin County Cattlemen prepared the ribeye steak sandwiches.



All-employee day

Above | Corn Belt Power employees listen to Bob Farmer, Delta-Montrose Electric Association, share about cybersecurity and what his cooperative learned following a ransomware attack last year.

Employees flock to The Shores for all-employee day

For the second time in two years, Corn Belt Power held an all-employee training day. This year's event took place at The Shores in Emmetsburg.

At the event, employees heard brief updates from each of Corn Belt Power's departments. The group also heard from Bob Farmer, Delta-Montrose Electric Association, on his co-op's recent cyber breach and how to avoid those situations.

Mark Edwards, Homestead Funds, and Dan Sigman, NRECA, spoke to employees about retirement benefits. Melody Stone, Shared Hope International, gave a presentation on human trafficking and what to look for to help authorities stop trafficking in rural Iowa.

The event is put on by Corn Belt Power's Employee Engagement Committee. The committee is tasked with bringing employees across all departments and locations together to improve communication and information sharing, enhance the cooperative's values, safety and workplace culture. ■



The Shores

Above | Employees enjoy the grounds of The Shores in Emmetsburg during lunch at this year's all-employee day April 13.



March Touchstone Energy Volunteer Challenge winner | Doug Vlasman, energy advisor, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, donated his \$100 prize drawing to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation in Emmetsburg.

Fire causes damage to Corn Belt Power system

On April 11, an out-of-control fire caused damage to numerous Corn Belt Power pole structures in the Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative service territory. The line section from Dickens to Riverton sustained damage to 10 poles. Each of the poles needed to be replaced.

“A fire damaged poles in this same location in 2021,” said Jeremy Stattelmann, transmission superintendent, Corn Belt Power Cooperative. “Fortunately, crews were able to do some switching after the line went out to isolate the damage. This allowed us to keep our substation running.”

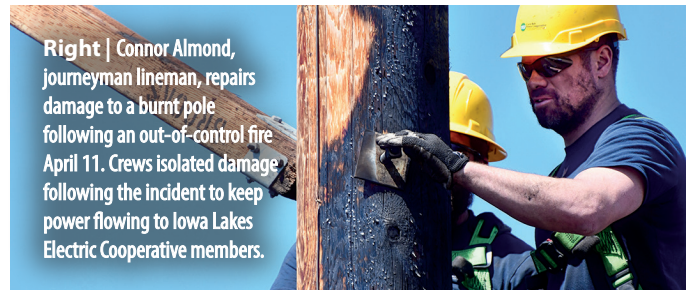
When fire broke out, the entire state of Iowa was under a “Red Flag Warning,” meaning no purposeful burning should take place.

“Wind and dry conditions were the main factors as to why this one got out of hand,” said Stattelmann. “Even during good burning conditions, a simple pre-burn around each pole or trimming would take care of most situations.”

Stattelmann notes, it’s always important to be mindful of electric utility facilities when doing any work around the home or farm.

“I always like to tell people to look up and live,” he said. “It’s easy to get complacent and not look at your surroundings when you’re planting, harvesting, burning, or even climbing on the roof. We want people to be safe, so it’s important to always take note of your surrounding when doing a job around the house or farm.”

An investigation is ongoing into how the fire started. ■



Right | Connor Almond, journeyman lineman, repairs damage to a burnt pole following an out-of-control fire April 11. Crews isolated damage following the incident to keep power flowing to Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative members.

Corn Belt Power Cooperative WattsWatt

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