

North Central's News

Delivering a difference to parts of Knox, Antelope, Pierce, and Holt Counties Since 1945



Thoughts and Comments from General Manager Keith E. Harvey



**"The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep."**

From *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, by Robert Frost©1923

Well, I have arrived at the point in time where I am writing my final newsletter article as General Manager of North Central Public Power District prior to my retirement on June 30, 2019. A little over 20 years ago I moved here from a position with a co-op in western Kansas and took over the GM position at North Central. It has been an extremely fulfilling career and I have greatly appreciated being able to be a part of something as special as public power, in general, and North Central particularly. I want to thank all of you for this wonderful opportunity and for the chance to watch this system grow into a mature, highly-efficient, cost-effective public utility. In my tenure, North Central has grown from 3,904 meters in early 1999 to our current 6,583 customers (68.6% increase) with the addition of seven villages in 2000 in a realignment with NPPD, and the addition of the City of Plainview in 2018. The District has added 779 irrigation services since 1999 and now totals 1,227, up from the 448 when I arrived. Our revenues

have grown from about \$4,000,000 per year to \$16,000,000 plus in 2019. I am not in any way taking credit for this growth because it is the result of many dedicated and hard-working people, as well as economic and political conditions. I am merely letting you know that you have a vibrant and extremely viable company furnishing you reliable electricity. Thank you again.

The topic or topics for this newsletter have been selected, in my mind, because they are perhaps the most important issues that I believe will be manifesting themselves in your electrical future. Individual customers need to be aware of what is happening before the system that provides each of you with low

electricity prices and the HIGHEST reliability in the United States is dismantled and reliability is significantly reduced or gone. This scenario is being delivered, wrapped in a veil of high purpose and "feel-goodism." What could be better than saving the planet earth from human-driven, catastrophic climate change? Probably nothing. Hold on to the thought of "human-driven" here and we can visit that topic again a little later. Remember this with public power – all of the assets of public power are owned by the people of the State of Nebraska – the ratepayers. If those assets are prematurely devalued, then the people of Nebraska are the big losers. Baseload generation (like

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*North Central PPD's Office
will be closed
Thursday, July 4, 2019
in observance of Independence Day*

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Gerald Gentleman coal-fired plant and Cooper Nuclear Station, both operated by NPPD) is being devalued by incentivizing other forms of generation in the form of accelerated depreciation and tax credits. These forms of generation would be wind and solar.

Wind and solar for generation are fine with me. The problem is that they are intermittent and are in need of a huge battery to pick up the slack when the sun is blocked or not shining and the wind is blowing too little or too much. No battery exists that is big enough to backup that amount of renewables, particularly wind, within the Southwest Power Pool's (SPP) footprint. So instead, the grid is used as the battery and power plants located within SPP ramp up and replace the lost wind or solar (or both) and life is good. Those areas that no longer have baseload generation are now depending on someone else's generation and on the fact that all of the transmission system from the generation plant to the customer is intact. It's like, if NPPD closed Cooper and Gentleman Station (and no they are not planning on doing that, but there are state senators who may be so inclined) and our power had to come from, say Oklahoma, we had best hope that all the required transmission lines are intact or we will be without power. The customers in this state need to insure that Nebraska keeps adequate baseload generation in place to make sure the power system remains reliable.

One last thing I would like to mention before moving on past the baseload generation topic is that I keep hearing that the fuel for wind and solar is free. It is not. When wind and/or solar is generating and for some reason suddenly stops or experiences a significant drop in output, then some other generation asset (and these would most likely be fossil fuel

or nuclear power) has to ramp up to supply the power until the issue with the wind or solar is corrected. It costs more money to ramp other plants up and down than it would to just run them at a steady, higher level. Thus, that extra cost for fuel for ramping should be charged against the wind and solar fuel costs. Once again there is a fuel cost for wind and solar – it's just not something that is discussed in "polite" political circles. It is an inconvenient truth.

In conclusion of this topic, I would like to say that I do not understand why it is that the energy policy makers in this country cannot, or will not, look around the world to see what has happened to countries that have done away with baseload generation in favor of moving almost exclusively to renewables. Somehow the U.S. is planning to do things so much better that these issues will not crop up here. Well, we shall all see how that plays out. In the Netherlands (huge amount of wind power), Germany (shut down coal fired plants and was planning to shut down any nuclear plants in favor of a solar solution) and South Australia (closed all baseload plants and was dependent on power from a baseload plant located in a different state) all have experienced either blackouts or sky-high electric rates or both. Germany is now building new high tech coal-fired plants to insure enough power for its manufacturing base; South Australia is trying to bring a moth-balled, coal-fired plant back to life to prevent recurring blackouts from no power when the wind stops blowing or a transmission line from a plant located a distance away fails; and the Netherlands, like Germany, copes with the highest electric rates in the world. If we wait a while, a couple of U.S. States, California and Hawaii, may soon be able to compete for that honor too – then again, maybe not since we may do everything better than other nations. And no power is not the definition

of reliability. No reliable power is the definition of a lower standard of living and, if significant enough, even creating a third-world economic status. A blackout that lasts weeks or more could lead to some very serious social issues.

In a recent issue of *The Wall Street Journal* there was an article by Simtheandile Ntobela titled: **'Chill, Chat, Eat.' The Secret to Life Without Electricity.** This article speaks of how people deal without power in Johannesburg, South Africa, that occurs on a random, but daily basis – they never know when their power will be out (I guess there is a cell phone app that can tell you – if your phone is charged). This situation is a result of low or no maintenance to the electrical system for years, and now they will face years of these blackouts. The article talks about how people have adapted to this life by having community barbeques, self-directing traffic at non-working street lights, sipping wine and going to bed early. How romantic. There is nothing romantic about "no power" to the guy who is an artisan and casts molten bronze or brass into molds. No power – no heat – no product or product ruined. There is nothing romantic to the melt-master using an arc furnace at a steel mill to melt 100 tons of scrap steel into liquid steel to cast billets and finished product. There is nothing as much fun as cutting cold steel out of rollers when the hot steel has cooled and become solid. The plant will likely not survive economically. In our case, ask an ethanol plant manager how well they could survive with random, long-term blackouts. My guess would be not very long. The price of electricity is important but reliability is far more important to our way of life here in Nebraska. We need to keep and maintain baseload electric units in Nebraska until renewable energy technology – including some type of storage – is

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truly ready to shoulder that burden. That day may well come, but we need to keep the lights on until it actually does.

The other topic that I felt it almost obligatory to discuss has to do with the idea that we must strive to be carbon free by some date in the future. We CANNOT be carbon free as we are a carbon-based life form – no carbon, no life. So let's just say that we are talking about carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere and how it will contribute to higher global temperatures over the next century. This will then result in all kinds of bad things happening to the earth up to, and including, the absolute destruction of the planet. I don't know about any of that and no one else will either until a hundred years from now. However, from scientific studies that do have agreement within the scientific community, here is where the carbon on earth is found (and in some cases stored): 1) the atmosphere has about 800 Gigatons (a Gigaton is a billion tons) of carbon as carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and then other trace compounds; 2) soil and other organic matter about 1,600 Gigatons; oceans have about 40,000 Gigatons; plants about 600 Gigatons; fossil fuels (including all known reserves) about 4,000 Gigatons and limestone stores about 100,000,000 Gigatons (Robinson & Robinson III, P 26). Looking at these numbers there is only .47% of carbon that is not stored in limestone. So 99.5% of the total carbon in the world is found in limestone (Ibid). If one looks at the amount of carbon in the atmosphere as a percent of the total carbon in the world, it is about 8/10,000ths of one percent. And carbon dioxide is only 3.62% of the earth's atmosphere, while water vapor makes up 95% of the earth's atmosphere. Some portion of the 3.62% is absolutely necessary

to maintain plant life on this planet. The burning of fossil fuels that power just about everything amounts to about 8 Gigatons per year while around 50 Gigatons enters the earth's atmosphere annually from plant and animal respiration and another 60 Gigatons from the decay of organic material (Ibid, P 26). And "contrary to popular opinion, for most of the time the earth has existed, its atmosphere contained far more carbon dioxide than it does today" (Ibid, P 29). And living animals did survive and prosper (especially plants) under these conditions including the dinosaurs when atmospheric carbon dioxide levels were ten times what they are today (Ibid, P 31).

What I am trying to illustrate is that we want to be sure the policies that are being set within this state and in this nation, with respect to energy policy, is actually founded on verifiable science. Remember, there is a big difference between predicting and projecting. Scientists are predicting climate change of catastrophic proportions from computer models that are designed and have parameters that are set and evaluated by the people writing the programming. Do they know all of the variables that affect the climates of the earth? Are each of these variables weighted properly in the calculations as to the amount each contributes? I don't know the answer to this but it scares me that if they get one of these incorrect, or leave one out, then their conclusions could be wrong – very wrong. Projection is based on historically verifiable information and then extrapolated out into the future. The data drives the conclusion. That is

important. Projections can be wrong as can predictions. However, when trillions of dollars in costs and the possible loss of a life-style and a corresponding high standard of living hang in the balance – we had better be very certain that we have it right. The result of getting this wrong could be the catastrophe that so many people are worried about 100 years into the future.

I won't go any deeper into the weeds with this newsletter, but did want to try to leave you with some meaningful thoughts. I really don't have the answers to these issues, but do implore all of you to look at what is going on in the electrical industry and take notice – this is the product that powers your life.

I wish each of you a safe and hopefully enjoyable summer and future. After 20 years at North Central, I will be retiring at the end of June and entering a new phase of my life. Thank you for so many fond memories and for the chance to be a part of something so important. I'm certain the lights will all stay on and your power will be there when you want it.

One last quotation -

"From whence shall we expect the approach of danger? Shall some trans-Atlantic military giant step the earth and crush us at a blow? Never. All the armies of Europe and Asia... could not by force take a drink from the Ohio River or make a track on the Blue Ridge in the trial of a thousand years. No, if destruction be our lot we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of free men we will live forever or die by suicide."

— Abraham Lincoln

Robinson, G Dedrick, and Robinson III, Gene D., **Global Warming: Alarmists, skeptics & deniers: A geoscientist looks at the science of climate change.** Abbeville, SC., Moonshine Cove Publishing, 2012.

Ntobela, Simthandile. "'Chill, Chat, Eat.' The Secret to Life Without Power." *The Wall Street Journal*. 8 May, 2019.

Multiple Job Transitions Occurring at NCPPD

Many changes are happening at North Central Public Power District (NCPPD).

Doyle Hazen will be transitioning to the General Manager position after the retirement of Keith Harvey at the end of June. Doyle has been the Manager of Finance & Administration since he started with NCPPD 24 years ago.

Doyle graduated from Verdigre High School. He has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, a Minor in Computer Information Systems, and a Masters of Business



Summer Rates

North Central PPD's summer electric rate schedule went into effect June 1, 2019. These rates were implemented Jan. 1, 2019, and are effective for the four summer demand months: June, July, August and September. The wholesale, as well as retail, electric rates are higher because Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) charges North Central higher wholesale rates due to their higher costs during this time. It is North Central's goal to keep our summer electric peak demand down to prevent or lessen rate increases in the future.

North Central encourages customers to reduce their electric usage during these months between the hours of 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. If everyone does their part to reduce usage, hopefully we can keep our electric rates at an affordable level.

Administration from Wayne State College.

The Manager of Finance & Administration position will be filled by Brent Eggerling. Brent is currently the Assistant Operations Manager. He has been with NCPPD for 13 years.

Brent graduated from Creighton Community High School. He received an Associate in Applied Science degree in Utility Line from Northeast Community College. He also has a Bachelor of Science in Business from Bellevue University and a Masters of Business Administration from Wayne State College.

Brent started at NCPPD as an Apprentice lineman, continuing through other lineman positions before becoming the Manager of Finance & Administration and will oversee financial operations and reporting, as well as conducting administrative tasks.

Matt Fritz will be making the move from Special Operations Tech to Assistant Operations Manager and Safety Director.

Matt graduated from Creighton Community High School. He also graduated from North-

east Community College with an Associate in Applied Science degree in Utility Line.

Matt has continued his education with a diploma in Business Management from Northeast Community College and a Bachelors in Business and Masters of Business Administration degree from Bellevue University.

Matt has been with NCPPD for 17 years. He started as an Apprentice lineman, working his way to Assistant Operations Manager and Safety Director. He will be responsible for the safety program, purchasing of materials, and directing the operations department in absences of the Operations Manager.



Assistant Operations Manager and Safety Director Matt Fritz and Manager of Finance & Administration Brent Eggerling.

Pole Testing to Begin around Page area

S & L Pole Testing Company will be performing distribution line pole tests starting in July and continuing through August. They will be testing poles in the North Central Public Power District (NCPPD) service area around Page, Nebraska.

You will see the S & L Pole Testing Co. pick-ups and ATV's along the county roads. Please be aware of these workers and drive carefully.

Most utility poles are made of wood and their constant exposure to the environment takes a toll. Wind, moisture, and soil conditions all can distress or decay wood. Regular pole inspection and treatment helps to spot and take care of any problems before they become critical situations.

S & L Pole Testing Co. is a professional firm out of Columbus, NE, that is an expert in pole evaluations. Employees from S & L will be identifiable by company logos, equipment, shirts and hard hats and will carry identification. For more information, stop in or call the Operations Department at NCPPD at 800-578-1060.



Area Schools Participate in the Electrical Safety Program



Linda Sokol,
Energy Advisor

Every year North Central Public Power District puts on an Electrical Safety Program for the 4th & 5th graders of the local schools. This year, Assistant Operations Manager Brent Eggerling and Energy Advisor Linda Sokol presented the program to the participating schools: St. Ludger's Elementary, Creighton Elementary, Plainview Elementary, Verdigre Elementary and Niobrara Elementary. **The Shocking Truth** video was shown and then there was discussion on the dangers of electricity. Students got to see the equipment that the lineman use for safety and also see how heavy a lineman's tool belt is. North Central has an energized farm display that shows what could happen if you were

to come into contact with an energized power line while flying a kite, climbing a tree or working with large farm equipment. Using the energized farm set, we can simulate with a hotdog what could happen if someone or something came in contact with an energized power line. It is a real eye opener for the kids when an electrical arc is created using the hotdog as part of the electrical circuit. We hope what the kids learn in this safety program stays with them so if they are ever in a situation where electrical wires are present, they will remember what to or not to do. The students are then given the opportunity to enter a poster into an electrical safety poster contest. Posters will be judged and the winners will receive a \$25 checks and be invited to a North Central Public Power Board of Directors meeting.



Creighton
Elementary



Niobrara
Elementary



Verdigre
Elementary



Plainview Elementary



St Ludger's Elementary

From our homes to yours . . .

Mini Mixed Berry Crescent Braids

Ingredients

Braid

- 1 can refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
- 3 oz cream cheese, softened
- 3 Tbs powdered sugar
- ¼ tsp vanilla
- 1 cup fresh mixed berries
- 2 Tbs strawberry preserves, stirred

Drizzle

- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 2 to 3 tsp milk
- ¼ tsp vanilla

Directions

Heat oven to 375°F. Line large cookie sheet with cooking parchment paper. Unroll dough and separate into 4 rectangles, pinching remaining seams together. In a bowl, mix cream cheese, 3 Tbs powdered sugar and ¼ tsp vanilla until smooth. Spread generous tablespoon of the mixture down center of each dough rectangle, all the way to the edge of the long ends, leaving 1 ½-inch border on short ends of dough. In another bowl, carefully mix berries and strawberry preserves to coat. Spoon on top of cream cheese mixture, dividing mixture evenly among rectangles. Make 8 cuts on each short side of rectangle, just to edge of filling. Alternating from side to side, fold cut strips of dough at an angle across filling, slightly overlapping ends. Gently pull short ends of assembled braid so berries peek through strips of dough; place on cookie sheet. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Cool 10 minutes on cookie sheet before serving. In small bowl, mix Drizzle ingredients, adding enough milk for desired drizzling consistency. Drizzle over warm braids; serve.



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FOR SALE: 2002 Pontiac Grand Prix GTP, Cherry red, 4 door, chrome wheels, 235,000 miles, 3800 motor, auto trans. Runs great. \$1250. Call 402-358-0200.

FOR SALE: 2 Cummins Power Units: One 6BTA ReCon with 3808 hours and one 6BT with 13500 hours. Call 402-340-5253.

GIVE AWAY: Large aloe vera plant to give away. Just replace 14 inch plastic pot. Call 402-668-2868.

FOR SALE: New Holland 5 bar Model 258 side delivery rake. Call 402-841-0475.

FOR SALE: From 2014 to 2018 GMC Sierra Crew Cab short box, also fits Chevrolet models and may fit other years: 1) Weather Tech front & rear floor liners. \$105 for both. 2) Truxedo Lowpro Tonneau cover short box. \$245. 3) Heavy rubber short box bed floor mat. \$50.

4) Heavy rubber tail gate mat. \$15. 5) GM Crew Cab under seat storage. GM part #23183674. Fits under rear seat. \$95. 6) Bedxtender HD Sport bed extender. New in box. GM part #19352883. All items priced less than half of new. Will consider offers. Call 402-360-1124 or 402-358-3740.

FOR SALE: Fetrat 8"X66' Auger, very little use. Call for details: 402-360-1124 or 402-358-3740.

Do you have something to sell or are you looking for something in particular? You may call, send or email (bargain.barn@ncppd.net) your description of what's for sale or what you are looking for to our office. The ad will run in the Bargain Barn section free for one month. Please include name and telephone number. No commercial ads will be accepted, personal items only.



Upcoming Events



**Klown Festival
-Plainview**

June 7-9



**Kolach Days
-Verdigre**

June 14-16

**Appreciation Dayz
-Bloomfield**

June 14-16

**BerryPepper Days
-Creighton**

June 21-23

**Desperado Days
-Niobrara**

July 19-21



**Celebration Days
-Orchard**

July 26-28

**Antelope County Fair
-Neligh**

July 30-Aug 4

**Pierce County Fair
-Pierce**

July 30-Aug 4

**Holt County Fair
-Chambers**

Aug 6-10

**Knox County Fair
-Bloomfield**

Aug 8-11

