



BASIN TODAY

BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE | SPRING 2022

**POWERING OUR
RURAL COMMUNITIES**



The upper Midwest saw two big snowstorms in April complete with ice, high winds, and feet of snow in some areas. As always, lineworkers stepped up, working long hours in extreme weather conditions to restore power to hundreds of members. At North Central Electric Cooperative, a Basin Electric Class C member headquartered in Bottineau, North Dakota, members showed their appreciation for the lineworkers in many ways. Pictured here is North Central Electric Apprentice Lineworker Brody Moun, Crew Foreman Tyler Liebelt, and North Central Electric members Meg and Mark Fleck. The Flecks brought ham sandwiches, cookies, and drinks to the line crews working around Lake Metigoshe. Members of the crew said they were the best ham sandwiches they'd ever tasted.



CONTENTS

VOLUME 25

| NUMBER 1

ON THE COVER

Jonas Krueger works on planting equipment at Krueger Farms near Max, North Dakota. The farm is served by Basin Electric Class C member Verendrye Electric Cooperative headquartered in Velva, North Dakota.

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 2 CEO and general manager column: Todd Telesz
- 4 In brief
- 11 Member focus
- 18 Employee highlight feature: Living the cooperative way
- 20 Employee highlights

FEATURE STORIES

- 6 Cryptocurrency – the modern-day gold rush
- 8 Rural America becomes even more electrified
- 14 A day in the life: Senior fleet and logistics administrator Nathan Johnson
- 16 Working hard and taking opportunities: Steve Johnson retires after 40 years

CONTRIBUTORS

- Editor: Angela Magstadt (amagstadt@bepc.com)
- Graphic designer: Janene Pudwill
- Photographers: Greg Wheeler & Joy Schnabel
- Writers: Tracie Bettenhausen, Kalli Senske, & Lindsey Chumley



Use your smartphone barcode scanner to view stories online.



TODD TELESZ

A THREAD THAT TIES US TOGETHER

Late winter into spring this year I was invited to about a dozen member cooperative annual meetings and statewide meetings to update our members on the important work Basin Electric and our membership is doing to provide reliable, affordable, and responsible power to our members in rural America.

I also took the opportunity to visit our members through tours of western North Dakota and several of our facilities to meet the Basin Electric team members who keep our generation facilities and the Great Plains Synfuels Plant operating safely, effectively, and efficiently.

Seeing the Bakken oil play was important to me, especially now that the area has become a magnet for cryptocurrency and data mining operations on the lookout for not only the reliable and affordable power we deliver, but also the cooler temperatures helpful in keeping their servers from overheating. You can read more about cryptocurrency and crypto mining in an article focused on this potential new load that is quickly emerging across our service territory and rural America.

As our team worked through preparing the information I would highlight as I visited with our members, something incredible stood out — the substantial investments our members have made in the communities and states we serve.

We have members who have grown 10 times over the last decade in terms of their demand. We also have members who have grown 99 members (as in, 99 meters) over the course of 30 years. Our ability to serve the breadth of that membership diversity, cost-effectively, is a compliment to the entire Basin Electric family and a testament to the cooperative business model.

The generation and transmission services we provide to our members are at the core of what we do and are certainly the most capital-intensive pieces of our business. Basin Electric has \$7.9 billion in assets including more than 2,500 miles of transmission line owned and maintained by our team, along with nearly 80 substations, and more than 7,024 megawatts of generation capability including owned generation and contracted purchases.

A simple breakdown shows our cooperative has made the greatest investment in North Dakota, with more than \$5 billion in total investments including our subsidiary, Dakota Gasification Company. In Wyoming and South Dakota, Basin Electric has made \$2 billion and \$1 billion in investments, respectively. These three states are home to the bulk of the steel-in-the-ground infrastructure that makes Basin Electric's generation so reliable and diverse.

All told, since its inception, Basin Electric has invested nearly \$9 billion into delivering affordable and reliable electricity and value-added products to rural America through Dakota Gas' Great Plains Synfuels Plant. The taxes we pay in all these states combined is more than \$30 million annually.

As a not-for-profit, the margins we earn allow us to return money in different ways to our members over time. We have returned \$817.2 million to the membership since 2000, with \$154 million in capital credits returned in the last five years. Also, in December 2021 our board of directors approved a \$30 million bill credit for our membership based upon our strong financial performance.

In addition to the money we return, our margins allow us to create value for our members through investing in assets and people. This can be in the form of additional generation, environmental controls, upgrades, employee training and development, and more. It is also used to support our neighbors.

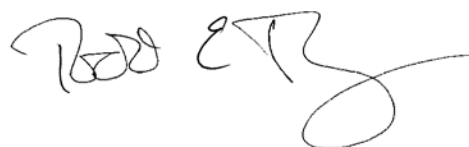
Since 2001, Basin Electric has given more than \$18.5 million through our Charitable Giving Program; in 2021, we gave \$1.34 million to more than 660 charities across our service area. As our members know well, about

a third of our charitable budget is used for matching the dollars our members give in their communities. And, in support of our future, we have disbursed \$5.2 million in scholarships since 1991.

We share values with our membership, a thread that runs through our three-tiered system. From the cooperative principles to the products and services we provide far beyond the kilowatt-hour, a shared set of values such as this is unique in the energy industry, and I see this as a unique and sustainable competitive advantage.

This competitive advantage serves our membership and the communities they operate well because the people who own the cooperative live directly in the communities they are serving. That's why it makes sense that we are committed to being part of our communities and keeping a laser focus on our members at the end of the line.

All this points to the criticality we bring to the table as a Basin Electric membership — ensuring there is an opportunity for economic prosperity, resiliency, and vitality in the communities we serve to enhance the quality of life for the member at the end of the line.



Todd E. Telesz, CEO and general manager



2021 annual report available

The 2021 Basin Electric annual report is now available. The report focuses on the value Basin Electric’s membership brings to rural America through serving reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible power. Member features throughout the report demonstrate the services electric cooperatives bring to sectors of load Basin Electric serves, including residential, industrial, and agricultural.

According to Tracie Bettenhausen, Basin Electric senior staff writer/editor and annual report editor, the report presents a review of 2021 business and financial activities including the cooperative’s strong availability in both generation and transmission, commitment to a diverse generation portfolio, and the importance of how Basin Electric’s strong financials and widespread operational facilities helped carry the cooperative through the February 2021 energy emergency.

The report was sent to member-system directors and managers, representatives of financial entities, and congressional delegates in Basin Electric’s nine-state service area. It was also provided to employees and affiliated organizations.

The report is available for download on Basin Electric’s website.

 <https://bit.ly/BEPC2021AnnualReport>

No injuries, isolated damage reported after fire at Dakota Gas

A March 30 fire at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant near Beulah, North Dakota, resulted in no injuries, isolated damage, and no impact to fertilizer production. The fire rescue team from Dakota Gasification Company acted quickly to extinguish the fire.

The fire started while maintenance was being performed in one of the plant’s 14 cooling tower cells.

The plant remained in operation, though at a reduced rate, throughout the entire incident.

“We are thankful for Dakota Gas’ firefighters for their quick action, which minimized damage,” said Dale Johnson, vice president and Synfuels Plant manager. “Most importantly, we are thankful no one was hurt. Plant personnel jumped in to get nearly all the cooling towers up and running safely after the fire and did an excellent job returning the plant to nearly full production.”

Repairs are scheduled to take place this summer.

 <https://bit.ly/DGCfire>



Basin Electric’s first wind turbines decommissioned

The ground shook when each of two 200-foot-tall wind turbines fell to the ground on March 14. The turbines were built in 2002, the beginning of what would become Minot Wind, a project spearheaded by Basin Electric and its member Central Power Electric Cooperative, a Class A member headquartered in Minot, North Dakota.

“The turbines were taken down because they were at the end of their useful life, and parts and service are no longer available,” said Joe Fiedler, Basin Electric manager of distributed generation. “While it is possible to repower wind turbines in many instances, these two cannot be repowered because their foundations are not large enough to support the larger equipment that would be necessary.”

 <https://bit.ly/WindTurbinesFall>

System reaches new all-time billing peak

Jen Feigitsch, Basin Electric member revenue specialist III, said final billing determinants completed for January 2022 show Basin Electric hit a new all-time-high system billing peak of 4,371 megawatts (MW).

Feigitsch said Basin Electric's January 2022 member peak sale level surpassed the previous all-time-high system member sale level by about 129 MW. The previous all-time high peak was 4,242 MW, set in February 2021.

Feigitsch said the peak is attributable to continued load growth and pandemic recovery throughout the membership.

 <https://bit.ly/Jan22BillingPeak>



Permit application submitted for sequestration permit

On March 8, Basin Electric submitted the storage facility permit application for the Great Plains CO₂ Sequestration Project to the North Dakota Industrial Commission's Oil and Gas Division.

The application describes the project and demonstrates

compliance with applicable rules and regulations for geologic storage of carbon dioxide in North Dakota.

According to Tyler Schilke, Basin Electric mechanical engineering supervisor and project coordinator for the Great Plains CO₂ Sequestration Project, it took approximately three months to draft the permit application, but he and his team have been gathering and developing data for it since last spring when the test well was drilled.

"We anticipate the permitting process to be complete in late summer or early fall of this year, and then we will be able to begin sequestering CO₂ in accordance with the permit requirements," Schilke said.

 <https://bit.ly/CO2StorageApplication>

Basin Electric launches refreshed website for members

Basin Electric's new Members Website was launched on May 2. This password-protected website is only available for access by employees of Basin Electric's members and Basin Electric employees.

The website includes many enhancements including a fresh look for easier navigation, an expanded news center, an improved media store, two-factor authentication for added safety, and more.

Members wanting to access the website can visit basinmembers.com to create a new username and password.

 <https://bit.ly/MembersWebsite>

FIND US ON THE WEB



[BasinElectric.com](https://basinelectric.com)
[DakotaGas.com](https://dakotagas.com)



Read Basin Today online @ basinelectric.com/BasinToday
Read Basin Electric news online @ basinelectric.com/NewsBriefs

CONNECT WITH US



[/basinelectric](https://facebook.com/basinelectric)



[@basin_electric](https://twitter.com/basin_electric)



[/basinelectric](https://youtube.com/basinelectric)



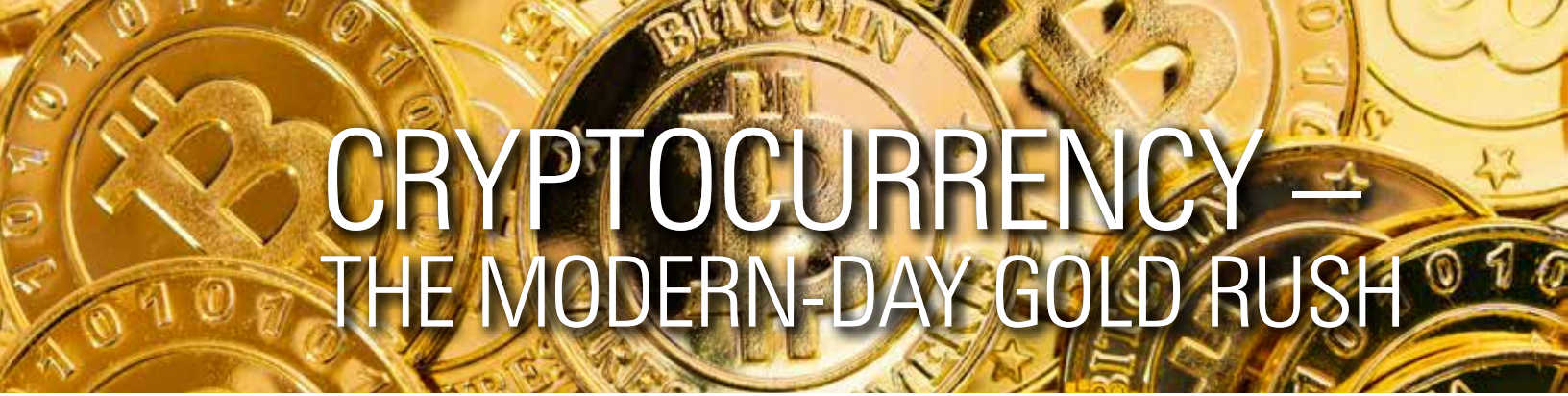
[basin_electric](https://instagram.com/basin_electric)



[/company/basin-electric-power-cooperative](https://linkedin.com/company/basin-electric-power-cooperative)



basinelectric.com/news-center



CRYPTOCURRENCY – THE MODERN-DAY GOLD RUSH

By Angela Magstadt

May 22, or “Bitcoin Pizza Day,” commemorates the day the first commercial cryptocurrency transaction was conducted by a man who purchased two pizzas for 10,000 Bitcoin. In 2010 when the purchase occurred, the pizzas cost the Bitcoin equivalent of about \$30. That same amount of cryptocurrency would now be worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

What is cryptocurrency?

Cryptocurrency is a digital form of currency that doesn't come from central authorities such as governments or banks. Bitcoin, the first form of cryptocurrency, was introduced in 2009 and today it is just one (and the most popular) of about 18,000 types.

Crypto's building blocks

Cryptocurrency can't be explained without mentioning blockchain, the technology on which it was built.

Blockchain is an extremely secure and verifiable decentralized data ledger replicated across millions of servers, so if one server crashes, none of the data will be lost. This also means blockchain is virtually unhackable (although an individual can still be hacked if pass phrases aren't kept secure).

Think of it like a train where each car contains data. As each car is filled, you build on it by adding data to the next one. Bitcoin was the first application of blockchain technology.

During a presentation to the Basin Electric board of directors in February, representatives of the Royal Bank of Canada said that while blockchain is in its infancy, it will likely create a revolution across the industry similar to how the internet changed the face of business.

Crypto mining

Jay Lundstrom, Basin Electric lead load forecast analyst, says “mining” for cryptocurrency is like a modern day gold

rush. Just as hundreds of thousands of people flocked to California during the gold rush in the mid-1800s, individuals and companies are jumping on the bandwagon to mine for cryptocurrency. While they don't use the picks, sluice boxes, and pans the gold miners used in the 19th century, the process is still risky, but in a different way.

Crypto mining involves solving extremely complex mathematical equations and verifying blocks on the blockchain. These efforts are so complex that it takes “farms” of high-powered computer servers to efficiently and quickly solve the equations.

According to Lundstrom, each type of currency has its own blockchain ledger. When a transaction is verified, the award is a “coin,” created in the code of the cryptocurrency being mined.

The amount of computational power crypto mining requires makes the process extremely energy intensive. Not only are the server farms expensive, but so is the amount of energy it takes to power them. Because the value of cryptocurrency fluctuates a great deal (just in the time it took to research and write this article – about a month and a half – Bitcoin fluctuated approximately \$35,000 per coin), miners need to ensure the reward is greater than the costs they are incurring. “The process is a rollercoaster,” Lundstrom says. “It's like the stock market; you try to buy low and sell high.”

Why is Basin Electric's service area attractive?

Because the cost of crypto mining is so high, companies building the data centers to do the mining want the cheapest power they can find. In fact, they often choose “interruptible power,” meaning they'll turn off the computers when the price gets to a point where mining isn't cost effective.

Developers also look for electricity suppliers with available capacity on their transmission systems so no costly upgrades need to be completed.

In addition to the reliable, affordable electricity Basin Electric and its member cooperatives provide and the more than 2,500 miles of transmission lines the cooperative maintains, the cooler temperatures in much of its service area are attractive to developers because they help constantly-running servers stay cool.

All these attributes make Basin Electric's service area prime real estate for data centers. "Our members are getting a huge amount of inquiries from companies wanting to construct data centers in their service area – big data centers – 100-200 megawatts (MW) a piece," Lundstrom says. "Compare that to the oil refinery near Mandan (North Dakota) which uses 9 MW." He says it's hard to wrap your head around a 200-MW data center especially when Basin Electric's newest natural gas generation unit – the sixth turbine at Lonesome Creek Station in western North Dakota – produces 45 MW. "Before all this talk of crypto mining, a 'big load' was around 20 MW," Lundstrom says.

Growth that requires planning

With the growing interest in data centers, Basin Electric's Resource Planning and Rates department is working to plan for what could potentially be exponential load growth. Lundstrom says there have been multiple calls to multiple members; however, it is likely that the same developer is calling several members looking for the best deal.

"We can't just build generation resources for loads that may or may not be coming," says Becky Kern, Basin Electric vice president of resource planning and rates. "If our members want this type of load, we'll serve it, but we need to plan for it. This has the potential to be a huge investment and we don't want stranded assets. Before committing to every data center that makes an inquiry, we need to do transmission planning, conduct studies, and consult with SPP (Southwest Power Pool). This process takes at least a year or two, and it's difficult because these developers are saying 'I have money, give me power.'"

More to come...

In late January, North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum announced the construction of what could be one of the largest data centers in the world near Williston. Basin Electric Class C member Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative will supply power to the data center, and



Farms of high-powered computer servers are used to mine cryptocurrency.


an electrical substation is already built near the data center with available capacity.

The \$1.9 billion, multiyear project will be built in phases, and would allow for planning resources to be procured or built in sync with the project, according to Benjamin Hertz, Basin Electric manager of power supply planning. "Basin Electric is working to ensure our generation resources can meet our member loads, and we'll be working together to plan for projects like this," he says.

"Basin Electric has never seen this magnitude of potential load growth within its system, and a good chunk of that is data centers and crypto mining facilities," Kern says. "If even a portion of that load growth were to happen, it would definitely put some stress on our ability to serve it. That being said, we are looking at types of opportunities that are available to expand our resource portfolio both in the short- and long-term future. We need to find ways to do this so if for some reason the load doesn't materialize it won't negatively impact other members."

Over the past several months, multiple departments have been meeting to discuss the best ways to meet this load growth. Kern says it has been good to have the different groups together in one room so questions can be answered and options can be discussed before final decisions are made. Kern's group has also been having discussions with members about potential loads in their service areas to determine the probability of the load coming on, where they're at in the process, the expected timeframe, and if they have submitted load interconnect requests.

"Some members are going out and pursuing growth opportunities and others are doing what they can to support the opportunities that come to them," she says. "Either way, Basin Electric has an obligation to provide the power and energy our members need as part of our all-requirements contracts. Load growth is a very positive thing for our members and we are here to do whatever we can to help them achieve this growth."



Grand Electric member Keith Gaaskjolen uses infrared heaters to warm up calves when it's cold outside.

RURAL AMERICA BECOMES EVEN MORE ELECTRIFIED

By Kalli Senske

Cooperatives played a first-hand role in bringing electricity to rural areas across the country. When you look at those small communities, for most, the agriculture industry is at the heart of it.

Even though the same principles the ag industry was built on still live on, the ag producers' tools and practices have evolved tremendously over the years, largely thanks to the introduction of electricity.

Today, agriculture and energy are more closely entwined than ever before.

Rural roots have grown with time

Keith Gaaskjolen and his family have been members of Basin Electric Class A member Grand Electric Cooperative in Bison, South Dakota, since it helped bring electricity to the ranch.

"I can remember electricity coming here in '52 or '53. We had it before then, but it was just a standby generator in the basement that was gas powered," Gaaskjolen says. "When the house was built, it was already wired, so the writing was on the wall that electricity was coming some time."

Gaaskjolen is a second-generation rancher on his family ranch in Meadow, South Dakota. The operation was started by his father in 1947.

He says even though he remembers a time without electricity, it's hard to imagine working like that anymore.

"Today, I just use a digital scale under a hydraulic chute. If I had to go back to a manual chute and weigh bar, I think I'd quit," Gaaskjolen says.

"Electricity is definitely part of the evolution of commerce. It's like a human being, a bunch of systems: cardiovascular, digestive, nervous. Electricity is like one of those systems. I couldn't say we couldn't get along without because we did for centuries, but not like we do today," he says.

Gaaskjolen says not only has electricity brought convenience, but it's created a safer work environment.

"We use infrared heaters for calves when it's cold. Years ago, we'd use diesel heaters, but those could put out sparks. Now I flip a switch and we have infrared heat, along with barn cameras to keep an eye on things," he says.

Gasskjolen says today, people take reliable energy for granted.

“Some of it’s a convenience and some of it’s a necessity, but every aspect of our operation depends on electricity,” he says. “We have standby generators and a few solar wells, so we could get by without for a couple of weeks, but we couldn’t operate like that for very long. Our operation would fold up.”

Enhancements that make a big impact

Eric Watson is a fourth-generation farmer who raises corn, soybeans, and sugar beets. His operation, Watson Partners, has been a member of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association, a Basin Electric Class C member in Danube, Minnesota, since the operation planted its very first row.

Watson says over the years, their need for reliable energy has increased.

“We used to have barely any lighting sources, but as time has gone on, we keep adding more light capacity everywhere we go. We have good lumens everywhere, and have transitioned to LED,” he says.



Eric Watson grows sugar beets as part of Watson Partners, an operation powered by Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association. (Stock photo).

As farms have become larger and more mechanized, the need for larger electricity motors has increased. Residential homes are usually served by a single-phase power supply, while commercial and industrial facilities often use three-phase power.

“The ability to have three-phase power, like for our dryer site, is vitally important for efficiency and cost savings. Our local REA (rural electric association) added three-phase power, and that’s made a big impact,” he says.

“Having more access and reliability for power has been critical,” Watson continues. “If we didn’t have reliable power, it would hit every aspect, from the ability to open a shop door, to pumping fuel, to just turning on our computers. It’s something we take for granted because we’re lucky to have reliable power.”



Keith Gaaskjolen, a member of Grand Electric Cooperative in Bison, South Dakota, by his radiant floor heating system.



Rob Jacobs at Cooperative Farmers Elevator's George, Iowa location.

Co-ops providing for co-ops

Cooperative Farmers Elevator (CFE) has a long history dating back to 1899, so like its CEO Rob Jacobs says, "We've been around for a minute."

CFE is a farmer-owned cooperative that services local farms and rural business owners in the agronomy, feed, grain, and lumber industries throughout northwest Iowa, southwest Minnesota, and southeast South Dakota. It has more than 4,000 members and 20 grain locations, including one in George, Iowa.

The George location recently moved to a new site and is now served by Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative, a Basin Electric Class C member in Rock Rapids, Iowa. Jacobs says he appreciated the Lyon Rural Electric team's insight and willingness to work with CFE while putting together projects.

"We wanted to explore different ways to look at decreasing demand charges. Lyon Rural Electric's engineers were looking for ways to help us in facility and energy design, and how we put that together," he says.

"They were very customer friendly, willing to work with us, and honest about what they could and couldn't do. We don't get that all the time."

Jacobs says for CFE, electricity touches everything they do.

"If you get to the basics, we're a processing, merchandising, and transportation company. Whether it's blending fertilizer or shipping grain to markets or feed mills, everything we do is reliant on dependable and available electricity," he says. "We have to have enough horsepower and capacity to meet our needs. We ran into that a little bit at one location (that isn't serviced by the co-op). It wakes you up to say, 'When there isn't enough power to meet demands, that's a big thing.'"

He added that for CFE's members, who are primarily farmers, reliable energy is just as important.

"From our farmers' standpoint, there are a lot of livestock facilities we're servicing. Swine confinements, dairy, cattle-feeding operations – they all rely heavily on dependable energy," he says.

Approximately 41% of Basin Electric and its members' residential consumers are involved in farming and ranching. The cooperative is also heavily involved in the commercial side of agriculture.

Basin Electric's energy sales have remained fairly stable in the last 10 years. Other sectors have grown pretty rapidly, but the cooperative relies on the ag industry to provide a stable base of sales.



VASTNESS AND VARIETY SET MONTANA CO-OP APART

By Angela Magstadt

Take Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, and New Jersey, add a little more space and you'll end up with the area served by four of the eight members belonging to Basin Electric Class A member Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative. If you wanted to get to all of Central Montana Electric's members you'd have to drive a 1,000-mile loop from its headquarters in Great Falls, Montana.

Not rural, frontier

Central Montana Electric's distribution cooperatives serve some of the most rural areas in Montana. The co-op's CEO Doug Hardy says these areas are "far past the federal definition of rural – they're frontier."

Hardy says four of its member cooperatives have, on average, just under three-quarters of one member per mile of line. "When we say we're here to serve rural America, this is exactly the place we're talking about," he says.

But not all of the co-op's service area is rural. It also serves more urban areas such as the Billings, Montana,



Central Montana Electric CEO Doug Hardy testifying before Congress in Washington, D.C.

area, which is growing significantly as the city is expanding. Hardy says the members at the end of the electrical lines are "wonderful, salt of the earth Montanans."

From the mountains to the prairie

The co-op's service area is as diverse as the state of Montana itself. Just as the state consists of plains and snow-capped mountains, Central Montana Electric serves members at elevations as low as 2,000 and as high as 9,000 feet above sea level.

“We serve areas in mountains with beautiful seasonal homes and areas that are very flat,” Hardy says. “As you can imagine we’re seeing significant growth in the areas that have mountains and water.”

While the density of Central Montana Electric’s system is very low, its load is highly residential, which is a benefit because it means stability. “Financial institutions look for residential load when lending money, and we definitely bring that to Basin Electric’s table,” Hardy says. “We generally have a low load factor because we don’t serve business and industry as much as other systems, but it’s good, consistent load for us.”

In addition to homes and farms, the co-op provides electricity for irrigation; a couple members serve old oil wells that run when oil prices are high; a member that serves a pipeline’s pumps; another serves a mine; and several serve some smaller businesses. Hardy says one of its member systems, Yellowstone Valley Electric, a Basin Electric Class C member, serves more suburban loads including schools and businesses as the city grew out into its service area, but it continues to have its rural loads.

Unlike many other rural electric cooperatives, Central Montana Electric does not own its transmission

resources. Hardy says that much of its power is delivered over transmission owned by NorthWestern Energy, a company that provides generation and transmission services to Montana and South Dakota. “NorthWestern’s system was built before the co-ops even existed,” Hardy says. “Owning our own transmission isn’t practical due to our geography, density, and location, so it is far more cost effective to wheel over existing transmission and for our members to own their transmission.”

A nearly 50-year career

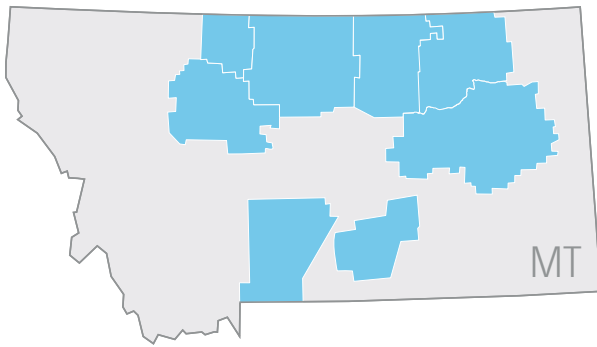
Hardy is the sole office employee at Central Montana Electric. He does everything from answering the phones to testifying before Congress in Washington, D.C. on behalf of his and other rural electric cooperatives. He is currently starting his 48th year in the rural electric industry, beginning his career with Central Montana Electric member and Basin Electric Class C member Park Electric then moving to his current co-op in 2008.

Some of the lessons he’s learned over the past nearly five decades have served both him and the cooperatives he’s worked for very well. Lessons like assessing the short- and long-term impacts decisions have on members.

“I’ve learned that I don’t get to spend a single penny that hasn’t come from one of our members’ pockets,”



In addition to homes and farms, Central Montana Electric provides electricity for irrigation. Pictured is an irrigation pivot in member Sun Valley Electric’s service area.



Central Montana Electric's service area.

Hardy says. "I've learned to volunteer to do things nobody else wants to do because some of those things have applications you would never have anticipated. I've learned that good luck follows hard work. And I've learned that knowing what you don't know is just as, or more important than what you do know."

Hardy says he continues to work because he appreciates the opportunity to make a difference, the perfect job for someone who has devoted his life to the cooperative business model.

We're in it together

Like Central Montana Electric, Basin Electric's service area is diverse, generating power from several sources and serving various types of loads, terrains, climates, rural areas, and larger cities from the northern part of the nation to as far south as New Mexico. Hardy says

the diversity of Basin Electric's footprint creates a huge amount of risk management for a co-op like Central Montana Electric, helping keep electricity reliable and rates affordable.

"There is a commonality between Central (Montana Electric) and Basin," Hardy says. "We're both cooperatives that look out for the members at the end of our lines. However different the loads and members are, that commonality is crucial. Providing affordable power on a consistent and long-term basis is absolutely critical."

Hardy says in the late 1990s there was a push by a large investor-owned utility in Montana to allow customers to choose who their energy provider would be. "We knew that was not in our members' best interests. We knew Basin has firm sources of supply that are not volatile like the market, which went through the roof pricewise as Enron fell a few short years after the investor-owned provided choice," he says. "It's important to appreciate how cyclical things can be. Consider the long-term impacts of your decisions – don't be attracted to a low price with the misassumption that it will always stay low – that is the danger of relying solely on the market."

Hardy stresses the importance of cooperative governance, saying, "If you don't have governance, you can be in trouble," he says. "And if that governance is not going in the direction of the grassroots, you're likely going in the wrong direction. Our members are who we exist for."

CENTRAL MONTANA ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative is a wholesale energy provider that delivers electricity to its eight members who then distribute it to homes, farms, and businesses across rural Montana. These distribution cooperatives, all Basin Electric Class C members, make up Central Montana Electric.

Big Flat Electric Cooperative – Malta
Hill County Electric Cooperative – Havre
Marias River Electric Cooperative – Shelby
McCone Electric Cooperative – Circle
NorVal Electric Cooperative – Opheim
Park Electric Cooperative – Livingston

Sun River Electric Cooperative – Fairfield
Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative – Huntley
*Glacier Electric Cooperative – Cut Bank
*Vigilante Electric Cooperative – Dillon

**Non-purchasing member that receives power from the Bonneville Power Administration*

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

NATHAN

SENIOR FLEET AND LOGISTICS
ADMINISTRATOR

JOHNSON

By Angela Magstadt

We've all experienced inconveniences because of supply chain issues, product and worker shortages, and the COVID-19 global pandemic. But when your job is ensuring the delivery of every piece of equipment necessary to run facilities that provide power for 3 million people, the pressure can be significant.

Nathan Johnson is Basin Electric's senior fleet and logistics administrator, managing orders from when Procurement makes a purchase to when that purchase is delivered to one of Basin Electric's generation facilities. He coordinates freight for items as small as an o-ring that can be shipped in a UPS package to motors that weigh tens of thousands of pounds and need to be hauled overseas using a barge, then shipped the rest of the way by truck or train. Making sure an item is where it needs to be by the time it is needed is his job, as is holding vendors to what they said they can deliver.

Johnson says his goal is always to minimize the landed cost of a shipment, meaning what it costs to get a part or equipment to one of the facilities.

"I work with employees at our facilities to find out when they need the equipment they ordered, then with trucking companies to coordinate schedules and come up with the best possibilities to get it there on time," Johnson says. "It's important to communicate our expectations and let them know where it needs to be and whose hands it needs to be in when it gets there."

This is especially important during spring and fall maintenance outages. Any delays can end up costing the cooperative, and ultimately its members, a significant amount of money.

In addition to coordinating with outside freight vendors, Johnson works with fellow employees in special

situations. Earlier this spring, a motor at Leland Olds Station (LOS) experienced issues requiring replacement parts. "The people at LOS were able to keep the unit running using the existing motor until someone in Procurement could find a replacement part, which they did . . . in Alabama," Johnson says. "I knew we could use Co-op Air (one of Basin Electric's airplanes) to transport it if it was within the weight and size requirements, which luckily it was. The flight took place on a weekend I had (National Guard) drill so Nick Roemmich (Basin Electric contract administrator) coordinated the end of that deal. At the end of the day, the difference between air and ground was about eight hours, but to have a unit down for those eight hours would cost us hundreds of thousands of dollars, so it was definitely worth spending a little more by using our plane."

Johnson says Ryan Anderson, Basin Electric manager of aviation, and his crew are "phenomenal" to work with whenever Procurement calls upon them. "They have made things happen for us on a number of occasions," he says. In addition to Basin Electric's Aviation team, he says the vendor in Alabama was "gracious enough" to bring the equipment to the airport when the plane was scheduled to land. "Finding the right people who are willing to go the extra mile is a really cool part of my job," Johnson says.

He says the last two years have been a challenge with the pandemic and subsequent supply chain issues. "Right now things either go really smoothly or get really frustrating," he says.

Johnson remembers in late 2020 and early 2021 when he'd know when the next port call was, when the next ship was scheduled to be at the port, and that it had space, but then they'd miss the port calls because there wasn't enough freight on the ship to warrant a stop. "Our stuff would be waiting there and the ship just sailed past. We'd have no choice but to wait until the next port call and hope we'd catch them the next time through," he says.

That same situation continues today. He says there is one item in particular that has been waiting on the East Coast for several months. "It's an 81,000-pound motor we can't just move with a typical trailer and driver," Johnson says. "The world is playing two years' worth of catch-up, and with worker shortages that is really impacting the freight industry."

He says when the pandemic was at its peak, demand was so low that freight rates were below \$2/mile. Today, they're ranging from \$4.50-\$7.50/mile.

With that significant increase in freight rates, Basin Electric has had to start pushing quotes to the open market. In the past, the co-op had negotiated rates with companies it had good relationships with, but it was necessary to review those costs to ensure the co-op was getting the best rates.

With that said, it isn't only about who comes in at the lowest bid.

For example, when cleaning out his files a few years ago Johnson says he found a transportation company the co-op used years ago. "I looked into the company, and it was one that provided a hot-shot, need-it-yesterday kind of service, a niche we're always looking for," he says. "We reached out to them and they've been phenomenal. They've probably saved Basin Electric hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars because they're a good vendor who provides a good service. They're loyal and work hard at what they do to please their customers."

That company is a lot like Basin Electric's Procurement team, Johnson says. "I may be biased, but I truly believe that some of the best and brightest people at Basin Electric work in Procurement," he says. "They're constantly on the ball making things happen for the plants and working to find ways to bring costs down. They are consummate professionals and I am lucky to work with them because they do their jobs for the good of the co-op and its members."



WORKING HARD AND TAKING OPPORTUNITIES

STEVE JOHNSON RETIRING AFTER 40 YEARS

By Kalli Senske

As Steve Johnson sat on horseback in a field near his family's Kintyre, North Dakota, farm, he marveled at how different his surroundings looked just hours before. Less than 12 hours prior, he had been overlooking Manhattan, New York.

"Paul (Sukut, former Basin Electric CEO and general manager) and I were often there together, and we'd remind each other that even though we were in the big city, we were still a couple of North Dakota farm boys," Johnson, Basin Electric senior vice president and chief financial officer (CFO), says. "Overlooking the city, we'd say, 'Who'd ever have thought?'"

Johnson had a modest upbringing, and always felt gratitude for the opportunities to travel and see different places, like going to New York to conduct business. He earned those opportunities by having a long career with Basin Electric.

Johnson's career with the cooperative began in 1982 when he crossed paths with a former college classmate who told him that she was a budget analyst at Basin Electric, and that there was another position open. Johnson researched the position, applied, and got the job.

"I grew up on a farm served by KEM Electric (Basin Electric Class A member headquartered in Linton, North Dakota), but I had no idea who Basin was. I was just excited and appreciative to work for an organization that large," Johnson says.

Johnson worked in budgeting for three years before moving into finance in 1985 where he served as a financial analyst. He knew he wanted to advance his career, so he set his sights on gaining management experience. He then managed cash operations for more than 11 years before being selected as director of Financial Services for Basin Electric's subsidiary Dakota Gasification Company.

"That role was a game changer for me. It got me in front of the board, rating agencies, and our banking group, so I had a lot of exposure," he says.

After three years, Johnson became Basin Electric's treasurer, and from there vice president and treasurer. It was when Sukut was named CEO and general manager in 2014 that Johnson was named senior vice president and CFO.

"I always wanted to take the next step in my career, but did I foresee myself as a senior vice president? Further into my career, I hoped, but I didn't have my sights on that early in my career," he says.

Johnson is in a small group of people who can say they've worked with each of Basin Electric's six general managers. He says Sukut has played a key role in the later part of his career.

"When Paul became CFO and I was the treasurer, he had been away from the finance arena for a bit and I was more removed from the members, so we were a natural fit. He took me to member meetings and I reintroduced him to the financial sector," Johnson says. "We worked well together professionally from the start and developed a friendship over time that I think has served Basin well the last number of years."

Johnson says his farming background has helped him stay connected to the membership.

"I still follow the grain and cattle markets, and I obviously know what different pieces of machinery are and what they cost, and that definitely helps," he says. "For all practical purposes, our farm is still that guy at the end of the line, so it's been huge in connecting with the membership."

One of the reasons Johnson says he's found success in his career is that he has tried to treat everyone with respect and dignity and give people an opportunity to express their opinions and thoughts.

He says that if he could give advice to someone early in their career, he would tell them to, "Work hard and take advantage of every opportunity. Develop a reputation that people see you as a valuable asset because you have kept proving yourself. And depending on your aspirations, put yourself in front of as many people as you



Johnson in 2002 receiving his 20-year service award.

can. People need to see who you are and learn of your reputation, and hopefully the opportunity to advance is there when you're ready."

After 40 years with Basin Electric, Johnson says some days he still has "buyer's remorse" about declaring his retirement.

"I told Todd (Telesz, Basin Electric CEO and general manager) that part of me wishes I was 10 years younger. I could say, 'I want to work until this,' but there's always a 'this.' It's been a great run, I've worked hard, and it's time to step back and pass the baton," Johnson says.

"I'm going to miss it. I'd be lying if I said I wouldn't. A lot of it is the people. You spend your life here, and the relationships and friendships that you develop matter," he says. "When I started, I'd see people having kids. Then those kids were going to school, in school events, graduating, going to college. Pretty soon they were getting married and having their own kids. You go through all that with your coworkers."

In retirement, Johnson says he'll still keep an eye on happenings at Basin Electric.

"How can you spend 40 years of your career somewhere and not?" he says. "I'm excited to watch and see what happens."

Johnson plans to spend a lot of time at the farm, traveling, spoiling his grandsons, and "reading something besides a business periodical or legal document."

"At the end of the day, I'm very humbled and honored. I wouldn't have been able to script my career to be what it is, but it turned out to be a pretty darn good story," he says. "I thank God for the opportunity."



LIVING THE COOPERATIVE WAY

EMPLOYEES SERVE THEIR COMMUNITY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF WORK

By Lindsey Chumley

During the early morning hours of March 24, five Basin Electric employees were called to a structure fire in their community. The employees, who work at Laramie River Station in Wheatland, Wyoming, all serve as volunteer firefighters for the town's fire department. Working together, they were able to safely extinguish the fire that morning.

While it may seem unique that the five volunteer firefighters who responded to that incident are also all coworkers, William Deglman, safety coordinator at Laramie River Station and assistant chief of the Wheatland Fire Department, says it's normal because that kind of concern for community is common there.

"It's a testament to the values and heritage of the people here," says Deglman. "Small town folks are proud of their communities and of helping others. It's one of those values that may be foreign to some, but it's second nature to these people."

Deglman has served as a volunteer firefighter for the Wheatland Fire Department for over 23 years. He says public service has always driven him.

"My family has a strong foundation of service, especially in the armed forces. I was also motivated by a quote from (Shawnee Chief) Tecumseh, 'Seek to make your life long and its purpose in the service of your people.' To do that, I joined the Army out of high school and then got into law enforcement, ultimately working in Wheatland. While working as a police officer, I got to see the Wheatland Volunteer Fire Department in action and I knew I had to be part of that fraternity," he says.

The skillsets Deglman uses in his role as safety coordinator at Laramie River Station are also useful in his role as assistant fire chief for the Wheatland Fire Department.

"What I've learned in the last eight years here with Basin Electric is there's little difference in the risk my firefighters take versus the things the men and women of Laramie River Station do at the plant on a daily basis," he says. "There's a lot of risk here – heights, pressures, chemicals, and heavy equipment. Every minute that passes without an incident is a testament to the safety efforts of those working here."

What it comes down to is managing risk, Deglman says. "In emergency services, you're willfully putting

yourself in high-risk, high-stress situations. Not every day, of course, but more often than most think," he says. "Most of the time they are calculated risks that can be mitigated through development of procedures, policies, or implementing proper tactics in conjunction with the right PPE (personal protective equipment like hard hats and safety glasses) and other equipment," he says.

Deglman says there are many similarities between his roles of safety coordinator and assistant fire chief, but the greatest similarity is the connection between teammates and the bond shared while working alongside each other.

"There's a level of comfort and understanding for how someone works or thinks. You'll obviously gel with people of similar backgrounds and form unwritten bonds; however, there's also a heightened level of responsibility as well. As an incident commander, you're responsible for the overall success of the mission, as well as the safety of your personnel. It's a very difficult dynamic to put people in harm's way. I've lost teammates in the military and in law enforcement, and that possibility enters into every decision. It's a responsibility that bonds people in a way I'm finding hard to describe. I'm proud to be associated with these giants," says Deglman.

The dedication of Deglman and all Basin Electric employees who serve their communities by providing emergency services is honorable and appreciated. From keeping the electricity flowing to keeping their community safe, these employees are shining examples of what it means to live the cooperative way. Concern for community is one of the seven cooperative principles, and service is at the root of what being a cooperative is all about.

Deglman says he's had the "honor and privilege to work and serve with many employees and retirees from Laramie River Station."



Newly hired Laramie River Station Laborer Kendal Olson cuts a ventilation hole during a residential structure fire in Wheatland, Wyoming on March 24. Olson works from an aerial apparatus that was purchased using a Charitable Giving donation from Basin Electric and Missouri Basin Power Project in 2018.

Laramie Peak Fire Zone: Ronda Walker, plant operator; Kelby Walker, mechanical engineer; Tim Walker, control room operator

Hartville Fire Department: Ross Walker, mechanic/welder

Guernsey Fire Department: Anthony Mansfield, instrument technician

Palmer Canyon Fire Department: Kurtis Wilson, mechanic/welder; Pat McGuire, assistant plant operator; Robert Niemczyk, control room operator; Amy Windmeier, supervisor maintenance planner/scheduler; Edward Min, scrubber supervisor

Wheatland Fire Department: Barry Sishc, electrician; Andrew Klatt, auxiliary operator; Kevin Brown, maintenance planner/scheduler; Eric Ockinga, mechanic/welder; Eric Holtzclaw, control room operator; Kendal Olson, laborer

Honorary past members: Edward Min, scrubber supervisor; Dave Windmeier, shift supervisor

EMPLOYEES WHO RESPONDED TO THE MARCH 24 FIRE



Kevin Brown
Maintenance planner/
scheduler and training captain



Eric Ocking
Mechanic/welder
and firefighter



Kendal Olson
Laborer and firefighter



Barry Sishc
Electrician and lieutenant

New employees



Jaime Fuchs, employment coordinator, began work at Headquarters on Dec. 16. Originally from Kailua, Hawaii, Fuchs previously worked for the Department of Human Services - West Central Human Service Center in Bismarck, North Dakota. She has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Southern New Hampshire University of Manchester, New Hampshire.



ReNee Kline began work as an administrative assistant at Headquarters on Dec. 20. The Bismarck, North Dakota, native previously worked for the City of Bismarck as an office assistant.



Ashley Bargmann, protection services specialist, began work at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant on Dec. 27. Originally from Hannover, North Dakota, Bargmann previously worked for the National Park Service as a laborer in Stanton, North Dakota.



Sean Cheatley, protection services specialist, began work on Dec. 27 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. Originally from Richardton, North Dakota, Cheatley previously worked for the North Dakota Department of Transportation as an equipment operator in Beulah, North Dakota. Cheatley also serves on the Beulah City Council.



Nolan Loflin began work as a protection services specialist on Dec. 27 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. Originally from League City, Texas, Loflin previously worked for Harris County Fire Marshal's Office in Texas as an arson investigator.



Freedom Zietsman began work as a protection services specialist on Dec. 27 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. Originally from Underwood, North Dakota, Zietsman previously worked for the North Dakota Department of Health as an emergency medical technician for the COVID-19 rapid response.



Prairie Newman began work as a service dispatcher on Feb. 21 at Headquarters. The Bismarck, North Dakota, native previously worked for Touchmark as a receptionist in Bismarck.



Cory Alt began work as a field maintenance technician on Feb. 28 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. The Beulah, North Dakota, native previously worked for Red River Biorefinery.



Tyrel Folden began work as a laborer on Feb. 28 at Antelope Valley Station. Originally from Garrison, North Dakota, Folden previously worked for Tinum Services as a facility operator.



Jereme Huss, shift/shop maintenance field technician, began work on Feb. 28 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. Originally from Hazen, North Dakota, Huss previously worked for Center Machine, Inc.



Matthew Mohl, instrument technician, began work on Feb. 28 at Antelope Valley Station. The Hazen, North Dakota, native previously worked for ConocoPhillips as an I&E technician in Watford City, North Dakota.



Kendal Olson began work as a laborer on Feb. 28 at Laramie River Station. He previously worked for Norb Olind Construction as a concrete foreman in his hometown of Wheatland, Wyoming. Olson also serves as a volunteer firefighter for the Wheatland Volunteer Fire Department.



Michael Snow began work as a laborer at Laramie River Station on Feb. 28. Originally from San Diego, California, he previously worked as a crew foreman for Stallion Oilfield Services in Wheatland, Wyoming.



Jarin Sprecher, instrument technician, began work on Feb. 28 at Antelope Valley Station. The Bismarck, North Dakota, native previously worked for Uponor North America as a senior maintenance technician in Hutchinson, Minnesota.



Mark Young, laborer, began work at Laramie River Station on Feb. 28. The San Diego, California, native previously worked as a foreman for Stallion Oilfield Services in Wheatland, Wyoming.



Landyn Fitterer began work as an E&I maintenance field technician on March 7 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. Originally from Glen Ullin, North Dakota, Fitterer previously worked for ONEOK as an E&I technician in Keene, North Dakota. He earned an associate's degree in instrumentation and control technology.



Aaron Pavlicek, E&I maintenance field technician, began work on March 7 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant. The Dickinson, North Dakota, native previously worked for Allied Valve Inc. as a valve technician in Bismarck, North Dakota. He earned associate's degrees in power plant operations and instrumentation control.



Cameron Boughton began work as a laborer March 14 at Laramie River Station. The Wheatland, Wyoming, native previously worked for Hoffman's Custom Construction in Wheatland, Wyoming.



Justin Goddard began work as a laborer on March 14 at Laramie River Station. Originally from Wheatland, Wyoming, Goddard previously worked for the Wyoming Department of Transportation as a construction field technician in Wheatland.



James Heth began work as a mechanical maintenance technician on March 14 at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant.



Cameron O'Brien began work as a laborer on March 14 at Antelope Valley Station. Originally from Leeds, North Dakota, O'Brien previously worked for Montana Dakota Utilities as a yard operator in Mandan, North Dakota.

FIND US ON THE WEB

Basinelectric.com

Dakotagas.com

Basinmembers.com

Members must create a new account for this new and improved members-only website.



RETIREES



Wayne Hermes, maintenance planning/scheduling/warehouse supervisor at Antelope Valley Station, retired on Nov. 5 after 37 years with the cooperative. He began working at the plant in April 1984 as a mechanic/welder. In December 2008, he started in the planning and scheduling area, and in December 2013, he moved up to the planning/scheduling supervisor.

“Wayne was an outstanding employee. He always had a positive attitude and was very well respected by his co-workers,” says Chad Edwards, Antelope Valley Station plant manager. “We will greatly miss his plant site knowledge. He was always willing to help out where needed, and many considered him a jack of all trades. Wayne remembered everyone’s birthday and always sent them a birthday greeting first thing in the morning. We thank him for his dedication to Basin Electric and wish him all the best in retirement.”

In retirement, the Wahpeton, North Dakota, native plans to enjoy spending extra time with family, especially his grandkids. “I like to stay busy and don’t foresee that being an issue,” says Hermes.



Jill Leintz, business intelligence architect, retired on Dec. 30 from Headquarters. She had recently moved into the position she held before retirement. Prior to that, she worked in Basin Electric’s Support Center. Originally from Noonan, North Dakota, Leintz worked for the cooperative for 32 years.

“Jill obviously has great customer service skills, but more than that, she truly cares about people. While she was in the Support Center, she loved connecting with our

customers on a personal level. She personally knew so many employees on some level that it always sounded like she was talking to a friend when she was helping someone,” says LaDonna Carpenter, Support Center supervisor.

“Her caring was especially evident in her relationships with the rest of the Support Center staff. Whether she was helping a new employee learn the ropes, helping a teammate solve a particularly difficult problem, or just chatting with them between calls, Jill had such a nurturing nature that the rest of the team often referred to her as the ‘team mom,’” says Carpenter.

“I’ve been the Support Center supervisor for a little over four years, but she had been with the group for more than 30. If I didn’t understand a procedure or a process, not only would she explain it to me, but she could also give me the history of how and why things were done that way. Having that type of history with the group was invaluable to me in my decision making,” says Carpenter. “And the team misses her caramel rolls!”

In retirement, Leintz looks forward to traveling and working on home improvement projects.



Doran Link, MIS operations field technician at the Great Plains Synfuels plant, retired on Jan. 4 after 21 years with the cooperative.

During much of his career, Link also served in the National Guard and Army Reserve for 24 years. He had two military occupational specialties, including combat engineer and food service, spending the last 10 years of service as a military instructor for combat engineers. He served on active duty from August 2004 to August 2005. He received a 20-year letter and was honorably discharged.



In retirement, the Golden Valley, North Dakota, native, looks forward to traveling with his wife, working on restoring cars in his shop, and riding motorcycles.



Jeff Dietz, maintenance planner/scheduler at Headquarters, retired on Jan. 10 after 39 years with the cooperative. Dietz spent the first 32 years of his career in the Operations, Electrical, and Planning sections at Antelope Valley Station before transferring to the Distributed Generation division at Headquarters in 2014.

“It’s been a long, great career with Basin Electric. It has provided a lot for my family and me,” Dietz says. “I was fortunate to work in numerous areas at Antelope Valley Station and Headquarters Distributed Generation, and I have met and worked with many great people.”

“Jeff was instrumental in setting up the equipment lists in Asset Suite for all of the new Distributed Generation facilities,” says Joe Fiedler, manager of Distributed Generation. “This now enables the sites to use the Asset Suite work management system and all its functions.”

In retirement, Dietz looks forward to spending time with his kids, grandkids, and friends, as well as spending summers at the lake and golfing. He also looks forward to winters in Arizona.



Joan Dietz, communications manager at Headquarters, retired on Jan. 10 after 37 years with the cooperative. Dietz began working at the Synfuels Plant in 1984 on contract in the Records department, and then was hired on permanently in March 1985. After two years in Records, she took a position

in Human Resources. When Basin Electric purchased the Synfuels Plant in 1988, the Human Resources (HR) group was split into HR and Communications. She was in Communications the rest of her career, with the last seven years spent at Headquarters.

“I enjoyed all the different aspects of the work I did throughout the 37-and-a-half years for the Synfuels Plant and Basin Electric, and the many people I met along the way,” says Dietz. “I’m thankful and grateful for the time at the Synfuels Plant and Basin Electric and the life it has provided for me and my family.”

“I had the opportunity to work with Joan for the past 13 years in several capacities. One thing about Joan is that she is incredibly honest and very hard working. You could always count on her to get the job done,” says Andrew Buntrock, director of Strategic Planning and Communications.

“I will miss Joan’s steadfast approach to things. She always had a calm sense about her, and the focus was always on the membership and the employees. When Joan retired, her group put together a little skit for her to the tune of a country western song. I thought that was really cool that she made such a positive impact on her teammates. She will be missed at Basin Electric and Dakota Gas, but I think she has a new job as ‘Nana’ for lots of grandkids. Enjoy your retirement, Joan, and thank you for what you have done for the cooperative,” says Buntrock.

In retirement, Dietz says she looks forward to “spending time with her family – especially the five grandkids – as well as time at the cabin in the summer, some time in the warmth during the winter, and time seeing the country.”

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS



Joe Leingang, superintendent of Fuel and Transportation at Headquarters, retired Feb. 4. Leingang first began working for the cooperative as a contract analyst in 1979. In 1980, he left Basin Electric to attend graduate school at North Dakota State University in Fargo. He returned to Basin Electric as a cost analyst in 1981 and was promoted to operations cost control supervisor in 1991. From 1991 to 2007 Leingang pursued careers as controller at Arizona Electric Power Cooperative & Sierra Southwest Cooperative Services, and as business manager at Vail School District, before returning to Basin Electric in 2007 as director of fuels & fuel transportation.

Leingang received a bachelor's degree from the University of Mary in 1979 and a masters in business administration from North Dakota State University in 1982. He was also named a Smithsonian Laureate in 2000, which is among the most prestigious awards in the information technology industry. The case study he co-submitted for the award will remain in the Smithsonian's collection forever.

"I will miss Joe's genuine honesty and sincerity as well as his passion about Basin and commitment to the cooperative. He is truly one of a kind and will be sorely missed," says Randy Banning, manager of Basin Electric's subsidiaries Dakota Coal Company and Montana Limestone Company.

In retirement, Leingang plans to spend time with his grandchildren, fishing, and doing ministry to the homeless, elderly, and lonely.



Bill Rott, boiler attendant at Leland Olds Station, retired Feb. 24 after nearly five years of service. He previously worked for United Power Association/Great River Energy beginning as a laborer and holding positions through control room operator.

In retirement, Rott plans to travel with his wife and golf. He's also looking forward to enjoying the pool and not having to shovel snow.



Dan Pillar, superintendent of Electrical and Instrumentation (E&I) maintenance, retired March 11 from the Great Plains Synfuels Plant after 17 years of service. Pillar began as an E&I maintenance field

technician in 2004, then worked as an electrical engineer, before becoming the superintendent of E&I maintenance.

Pillar says he set a goal at the beginning of his career to learn something new every day, and he never failed at that goal. "I absolutely enjoyed working with all the people at DGC and Basin locations," he says.

"Dan was a caring individual and always kept a positive and professional attitude," says Brian Dillman, Dakota Gas maintenance manager. "He was always dedicated to the plant and to the E&I section. He led through example and served on various boards and committees outside the organization, within our community, and industry. Dan's dedication, leadership, and personality will be missed; he was a great team player at all levels of the organization."

Pillar previously worked for Honeywell International as a team lead. He has an electrical engineering degree from North Dakota State University in Fargo.

In retirement, Pillar and his wife, Kris, plan on spending time with their two daughters, Allison and Emily, their husbands, Zach and Mason, and grandson, Oliver. During the winters they plan to escape to their Mesa home to enjoy the warm weather and play lots of golf.



Beth Beadle, registered nurse at Dakota Gas, retired March 15 after 19 years of service. Beadle is originally from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but has lived in Beulah, North Dakota, since 1983. She previously worked for Sanford Medical Services as a registered nurse in occupational nursing.

She says over the course of her career, Basin Electric and Dakota Gas' Medical Services expanded both in the distance they cover and the services they provide. "I was able to receive my limited X-ray license in North Dakota and help with X-rays," says Beadle. "It was the hardest thing I ever did while employed."

"Some characteristics that describe Beth as an employee are hardworking, honest, team player, reliable, professional, and committed to her profession. Beth was always willing to help when I needed a project to get done. She always had a smile and genuinely cared about how everyone was doing," says Stephanie Hottman, Medical Services supervisor.

"Beth is originally from Louisiana, and every year she would make sure we would celebrate Mardi Gras at work," says Hottman. "She would make some type of southern dish, such as jambalaya, and would always bring what is called a king cake. She also brought colorful beads and feather boas for all of us to wear. We instructed her that she will have to come back to the clinic each year on Mardi Gras to celebrate with us and keep her tradition going."

In retirement, Beadle looks forward to traveling, working a summer in Yellowstone National Park, spending more time with her grandbabies, and learning to play guitar.



Dale Niezwaag, vice president of government relations, retired from Headquarters April 4.

The Marion, South Dakota, native worked for the cooperative for 33 years and worked in the electric cooperative industry for 43 years. Previously he worked for 10 years at two distribution cooperatives in South Dakota as an apprentice lineman, journeyman lineman, and member services director.

"I can say it has been a very enjoyable and rewarding career that provided opportunities I never could have imagined when I started in 1978," says Niezwaag. "Basin Electric provided many opportunities to grow through education, training, and employment options that I don't believe I would have had with another employer."

"What truly made Dale effective at his job was he is a man of his word. You could take what he said to the bank, and perhaps more importantly, he wouldn't make a commitment unless he was absolutely positive Basin could deliver on that promise," says Mark Foss, senior vice president and general counsel.

"I think all of us that worked with Dale will miss his sense of humor. Sometimes the best antidote for a crisis is to have a good laugh to put everything into perspective," says Foss.

"A person could not have asked for a better mentor than Dale. He always made sure I was aware of the issues he was involved in or working on, even if it wasn't specific to my portfolio. It was helpful to have that broad perspective on what was going on in the cooperative. It provided a foundation so I could engage in meaningful interactions with the membership on current issues. He modeled the way to become a trusted resource on policy positions and was equally respected by legislators and lobbyists for the integrity he brought to his work in government relations," says Jean Schafer, Basin Electric senior legislative representative.

"I'll miss most how he brought us together as a team with a laser focus on our policy work, yet at the same time we still somehow managed to have fun in the process. It takes a special leader to provide that balance to a team," says Schafer.

Service awards



Steve Johnson
40 years
Senior vice president and chief financial officer
Headquarters



Janet Kubisiak
40 years
Manager, capital assets
Headquarters



Stacy Fennewald
30 years
Designer I
Headquarters



Stacey Gall
30 years
Designer III
Headquarters



Clark Jundt
30 years
Manager, civil engineering
Headquarters



Kelly Neameyer
25 years
Process operations field technician
Dakota Gasification Company



Chad Kuntz
20 years
Supervisor, electrical engineering
Headquarters




Jodi Schlatter
20 years
Accounting analyst II
Headquarters



Jesse Schuette
20 years
Supervisor, facilities
Headquarters



**BASIN ELECTRIC
POWER COOPERATIVE**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

1717 EAST INTERSTATE AVENUE
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA 58503-0564
701-223-0441

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BISMARCK, ND
PERMIT 224

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



BASIN ELECTRIC



ADAPTABILITY

POWERING THROUGH WHATEVER COMES YOUR WAY

Each day brings its own challenges, and Basin Electric will help you power through all of them. We have the strength and versatility to adapt so you can keep your operation running, your business doors open, and your family safe and sound.



**BASIN ELECTRIC
POWER COOPERATIVE**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Reliable Energy for **Our Way of Life.**