



**CAPITAL ELECTRIC**  
COOPERATIVE

# CAPITAL ELECTRIC COMMENTS

Capital Electric Cooperative • Bismarck, N.D.  
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[www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com)

FEBRUARY 2017

## Soul survivor



PHOTO BY J.C. BALCOM

*It's a long, cold winter for all of God's creatures seeking food and shelter among the piles of snow. While Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative member and photographer J.C. Balcom has many pheasants taking shelter in the brush on his property, he captured this shot of a sole rooster trying to warm itself in the morning sun. Balcom notes it takes soul to persevere through a North Dakota winter.*

### FEBRUARY 2017 IN THIS ISSUE

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# MEMBER SURVEY OPPORTUNITY

**Capital Electric Cooperative members taking this survey are eligible to win one of three \$50 gift cards!**

In an effort to reduce the overall electric demand for Capital Electric and save money for our members, we are planning to initiate various peak-demand reduction procedures that you may be able to participate in. Please take the time to respond to the following questions that will assist us in evaluating what options would be available to you.

1. Does your home have electric heat or any type of electric heater? This would include electric baseboard heat, wall heaters, garage heaters and others.  
**Please circle: Yes No**  
If so, are you aware that you may be eligible for Capital Electric's discounted heat rate?  
**Please circle: Yes No**  
**I am already on this rate.**
2. Do you currently have an electric water heater in your home?  
**Please circle: Yes No**  
Capital Electric offers a load control credit program for water heaters in which a device is attached to your water heater, and during times of peak energy demand, Capital Electric cycles your water heater on and off on pre-defined intervals and you get a monthly bill credit. Dependent on factors such as water heater size, number of family members and other factors, the hot-water requirements of the home can still be met. Would you be interested in learning more about this program?  
**Please circle: Yes No**  
**I already receive this credit.**
3. Do you currently have an air source heat pump for heating and cooling in your home?  
**Please circle: Yes No**
4. Capital Electric is considering a new optional summer load-control credit program for air conditioning. Similar to the water heater program, Capital Electric would cycle your air conditioner on and off during times of peak energy usage and you get a monthly bill credit. Would you be interested in learning more about this program?  
**Please circle: Yes No**
5. Capital Electric is also considering implementing a second optional summer load-control program. Instead of an additional device to control your air conditioner, Capital Electric would connect to a Smart Thermostat (Nest, Ecobee, etc.) located in your house. Signals would go out to pre-cool your home just prior to a peak energy event. During the peak energy event itself, your thermostat would be turned up 4 degrees and then revert back to normal once the peak energy usage period was over. Pre-cooling allows your home to stay comfortable until the peak event is over, and results in a savings to you because energy used outside the peak is less costly to the cooperative.
  - a. Do you have a smart thermostat such as NEST, Ecobee, Etc.?  
**Please circle: Yes No**
  - b. If you have a smart thermostat, would you be interested in learning how you could earn a credit on your bill by allowing Capital Electric to control your thermostat to reduce usage during peak demand times?  
**Please circle: Yes No**
  - c. If you don't have a smart thermostat, would you be interested in this program if Capital provided you with a smart thermostat?  
**Please circle: Yes No**
6. Capital Electric is excited about our new "Beat the Peak" program! Like the basic premise of a cooperative, it's about working together to reduce our collective power bills. It is as simple as logging into your Capital Electric SmartHub account and signing up under the notifications section for "Beat the Peak." This optional program provides text or email notifications when Capital Electric is expecting to reach a period of peak demand. On a voluntary basis, members do their best to shift what electric usage they can to a time outside the peak period. Is this a program you would be interested in?  
**Please circle: Yes No**
7. Ever wonder where your power comes from? Would you like to learn how your cooperative works? Capital Electric will soon be offering a forum for explaining the nuts and bolts of your electric cooperative. Would you be interested in attending a series of eight quarterly meetings at Capital Electric to help you learn more about your cooperative?  
**Please circle: Yes No**

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Member Name

*This survey can also be completed online. Please visit our website at [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com) and click the link on the home page to complete the survey. If you are filling out this form, please mail to our office: Capital Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 730, Bismarck, ND 58502*

# Capital Electric members earn awards in November



COURTESY PHOTOS

David and Colleen Pearce

## Pearce family receives Harvest Bowl honor

David and Colleen Pearce of Bismarck were recognized as Burleigh County's honoree at the 43rd annual Harvest Bowl. The couple operate Papa's Pumpkin Patch and Polar Patch, where they sell garden produce and hold a fall and winter festival with activities for families. They received the USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development) Farmer-to-Farmer program's Volunteer of the Decade Award in 2014.

David, a 1978 North Dakota State University (NDSU) graduate, is also an international volunteer and group facilitator, a Hay Creek Township supervisor, a member of the Burleigh County Advisory Committee, and a past president and former member of the Bismarck Public School Board.

Colleen is a 1977 NDSU graduate and the state WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) program director. She also serves on the North Dakota Nutrition Council.

As the state's land-grant university, NDSU plays a major role in contributing knowledge through research, academic programs and the Extension Service. More than 2,700 agriculturists have been

recognized and more than \$210,000 in scholarships have been awarded to NDSU student athletes who are studying agriculture, business or premed, and come from an agricultural background.

The NDSU Harvest Bowl program recognizes the success, dedication and hard work of outstanding agriculturists in 53 counties in North Dakota and 10 counties in western Minnesota. **CEC**



**Jerry, Renae, Jay and Jayce Doan** are North Dakota's first Aldo Leopold Conservation Award winners. Jerry's great-grandfather homesteaded in Dakota territory in 1882. His grandfather had a 32-volt wind generator until electricity was extended to the McKenzie area by Montana-Dakota Utilities. After Capital Electric Cooperative was formed to serve rural areas, the co-op later traded those power lines through a service-area agreement. An active member of Capital Electric Cooperative, Jerry serves on the Member Advisory Committee and recently fulfilled two terms on the Operation Round Up board of directors. He is also a cooperative member of Northern Plains Electric and KEM Electric.

## Black Leg Ranch receives N.D. Leopold Conservation Award®

Jerry and Renae Doan and family, Black Leg Ranch, McKenzie, have been awarded the inaugural North

Dakota Leopold Conservation Award®, honoring North Dakota landowner achievement in voluntary stewardship and management of natural resources.

Sand County Foundation, in partnership with the N.D. Grazing Lands Coalition, N.D. Association of Soil Conservation Districts and the N.D. Stockmen's Association, presented the \$10,000 award to the Doans at the N.D. Association of Soil and Conservation Districts' convention in Bismarck.

The Doans own and manage the fourth- and fifth-generation Black Leg Ranch. The 17,000-acre, no-till farm and ranch contains 700 acres of cover crops consisting of a 20-species mix. The cover crop diversity has benefited wildlife and pollinators, and has been a cost-effective source for winter grazing.

Some of the family's goals include improving the ecological health and sustainability on the ranch, and diversifying. Their infrastructure projects have allowed them to implement an intensive grazing system, mimicking what bison accomplished many years ago – grazing in large numbers while impacting the ground with their hooves, and allowing the grass a long period of rest before returning to graze.

The Doans have further diversified their ranch by adding a full-service hunting and outfitting business. In the future, the ranch will feature a winery.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the Leopold Conservation Award recognizes extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. It inspires other landowners through these examples and provides a visible forum where farmers, ranchers and other private landowners are recognized as conservation leaders. **CEC**

# DOUG MORK RETIRES

## Coming to Capital 'best move he made'

BY CARMEN DEVNEY

ARCHIVED PHOTO



Doug Mork

When Doug Mork crossed paths with Lars Nygren in the Capital Electric Cooperative parking lot in 1988, Doug was friendly and direct. "I want the job in member services," he told the co-op's former general manager. Initially, Lars might have wondered why. Doug was working next door for HDR Consulting Engineers as a design engineer, and for 13 years had been living the dream

of designing and traveling. But with a wife and four young children at home, Doug wanted less road time and more family time. Very much a family man, Lars could relate.

With the cooperative's member services director retiring, Doug applied and was hired. Lars later told Doug that hiring him was a no-brainer because he was exceptionally qualified, willing, and he had strong cooperative roots.

"I was the happiest guy in the world to take a pay cut and come to work here, and it's the best move I've ever made," he says.

Doug has worked for Capital Electric for the past 29 years, designing the transmission system and substations, and educating members on electric heat products and services. He retired on Feb. 1.

"When Doug believes in something, he's very passionate. His dad was heavily involved with cooperatives, and that's how Doug grew up," describes current General Manager Paul Fitterer. "He's very passionate about the business model, and we are going to miss his knowledge and service when he retires."

### Continuing the legacy of advancing cooperatives

The son of Grace and the late Andrew "Andy" Mork, Doug grew up on a progressive farm and ranch north of Mandan along the river. Doug remembers seeing his father give \$5 to a Morton County Extension Service agent for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative to bring power to the area. In the coming years, Andy would serve as a board member for



PHOTOS BY CARMEN DEVNEY

*Doug Mork strongly believes in the cooperative business model of working together to achieve great things. At the Capital Electric Cooperative annual meeting in 2012, Doug visited with members about ACRE: Co-op Members for Political Action. Electricity and energy-related issues are at the forefront of today's political debates. The legislation and regulations crafted by lawmakers regularly impact electric cooperatives and our member-owners. This program is an opportunity for members to endorse candidates and elected leaders who support electric cooperatives.*

Mor-Gran-Sou, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and North Dakota Farmers Union.

Through his father's commitment to advancing area cooperatives, Doug learned their value. He liked the philosophy of people working together for the greater good, and how his family received service from an organization that makes decisions based on what is best for the members at the end of the line and not the shareholders.

A 1973 civil engineering graduate of North Dakota State University (NDSU), Doug worked as a construction engineer for Basin Electric for a couple years before his father became a board member. Not wanting people to perceive a conflict of interest, Doug resigned and took a job with HDR Consulting Engineers, which equipped him with the experience necessary for his position at Capital Electric.

Over the years, Doug has certainly helped advance the cooperative and save money. Working closely with Engineering and Operations Manager Ron Lipp, the two

men planned, developed and expanded the electrical system. Ron focused on the distribution side, and Doug concentrated on the transmission and substations.

Prior to hiring Ron and Doug, the cooperative outsourced the work using consultants.

“We were hired within six months of one another, and we started doing it ourselves,” Doug reflects. “It has resulted in a lot of savings over the years.”

Friends who live close to one another, Ron says he was the one who told Doug about the opening in the member services department all those years ago — and that Doug still owes him for the tip. Joking aside, Ron notes how versatile Doug has been as an employee.

“Doug can weld and build anything, and he’s good in member services. We’ll have a big area to fill,” he says.

Engineer Assistant Rich Dunn also worked alongside Doug on various projects ranging from staking transmission lines between substations to building new service centers in Bismarck and Wing.

“Doug’s a good friend,” Rich shares. The two have fished together in the REC Derby, rode motorcycles to Seattle, and discussed the challenges and accomplishments of their children, who are close in age. They do like to argue about one, thing — politics — but Rich says it’s all in good fun, because he knows the topic is a quick way to ignite Doug’s passion.

“I like to jab him because he’s easy to get going,” he jokes.

A couple years ago, Capital Electric sold its transmission and substation assets to Central Power Electric Cooperative. While Doug is no longer involved in the design of the electrical system, Manager Paul says Doug still provides advice to the linemen who maintain parts of the substations.

In member services, Doug was also instrumental in working with co-op members who installed geothermal heating and cooling systems, and

electric heat products and services. Since 1988 when he was hired, the membership has tripled — and kept him busy advancing the cooperative’s technology, answering questions and helping with projects.

“He’s really good with customers, and he knows his stuff,” says Wes Engbrecht, director of communications and public relations. “He’s the perfect kind of guy to go to and get an education about a topic in his area. And if an issue comes up, he’ll try to find an answer. He has a, ‘let’s get it done’ kind of attitude.”

That attitude was adopted by Josh Schaffner, member services assistant, who worked closely with Doug and valued him as a resource.

“Any time I needed advice or an opinion, he was always there and willing to give me what he thought was the best idea. He has always been very supportive, and he never questioned my purpose or ethics in advising our members,” Josh says. “Doug always has a great attitude every day, and he’s been easy to work with. I will miss him, for sure.”

Just as Doug wanted more family time when he was hired, he wants even more time now. He and his wife Joanie, have four grown children and seven grandchildren they want to see more often. Doug also plans to help

his brother on the family farm, finish building a hotrod, take Joanie for short trips in their Camaro convertible, go fishing a few times a month, and fix whatever is on Joanie’s honey-do list.

“I will never be bored for not knowing what I’m going to do that day,” he says.

Diehard Bison fans, the couple will also continue traveling to home games and cheering from the same seats they’ve held since the Fargodome was built.

Married for 42 years, Doug says Joanie is his rock and strength — and credits her for much of their combined success.

“She’s one of the most awesome people you ever want to meet. She’s the one who set the standard for our three girls, for what it takes to be a wife and a mom, and for our son who did a fantastic job choosing a wonderful woman for his wife. And Joanie is all of that,” he says. “She’s been the strength of our family and always will be. I have her back; I’ll tell you that. She is always there. And we love each other and always will. It has been, and always will be, a tremendous, beautiful journey.” **CEC**

*We thank you for all you’ve done for the members of Capital Electric Cooperative, Doug, and wish you and Joanie a continued beautiful journey.*



**Doug Mork** (left), member services director, says he’s worked on a lot of interesting projects with a lot of great people. Here, he helped **Josh Schaffner**, member services assistant, install solar panels next to a stock tank.

# Lineworkers attend annual safety conference

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) hosted the 53rd annual REC Apprenticeship Training and Safety (AT&S) Conference Jan. 11-13 at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck. The conference is sponsored by the NDAREC AT&S program, with cooperation from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship.

The conference drew about 200 representatives of NDAREC member-cooperatives, students

of the Bismarck State College lineworker program and the electric industry for classroom sessions, equipment evaluations and awards ceremonies. Training topics included incident investigation, working in severe weather, temporary protecting grounding and bonding, preparing for dog encounters and more.

Christina Roemmich, director of safety services for NDAREC, says the AT&S conference provides an opportunity to reflect what is going on in the industry, and to recognize

the accomplishments the students have made in training and safety throughout the year.

Capital Electric Cooperative employees who attended this year's conference included Crew Foreman Les Vietz; Lead Lineman John Frey, System Supervisor Jeff Holzer, and Journeyman Linemen Charles Atkinson, Lance Diebold, Jesse Goehring, Matt Hagen and Steve Harrington. **CEC**

# Capital Electric earns RESAP certification



On behalf of Capital Electric, Crew Foreman **Les Vietz** accepted the Safety Award from NDAREC Safety Instructor **Jeff Tweten**.

During the Apprenticeship Training and Safety Conference banquet on Jan. 12, Capital Electric Cooperative was awarded a RESAP certificate of safety achievement.

To achieve and maintain high safety standards for the protection of employees and the community, Capital Electric applied for and achieved safety accreditation through the Rural Electric Safety

Achievement Program. Founded by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), RESAP strives to promote the highest standards of safety among electric cooperatives. The premise for the program is based on two fundamental guiding principles that are essential to achieving safety excellence:

1. Safety must be embraced as a core value where the actions and decisions of the cooperative reflect a fundamental and unwavering commitment to safety at all levels. This is achieved through a strong safety leadership culture. Cooperative leaders accept responsibility for a culture that ultimately drives safety performance.

2. Cooperative leaders and employees take ownership of the systems and processes that create a safe working environment. Safety systems are a shared responsibility and should focus on enhancing safe behaviors and reducing unsafe acts and risks to injury.

Additional components to achieving recognition including:

- A cooperative safety improvement plan;
- The completion of 14 annual

self-assessments; and

- Establishing safety goals and benchmarking performance.

Capital Electric's RESAP audit was conducted May 4 by industry peers including Christina Roemmich and Jeff Tweten from the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC), and Tim Dockter from KEM Electric Cooperative. Jeff Holzer, system supervisor for Capital Electric and member of the cooperative's safety committee, gave the auditors a tour of cooperative headquarters, the Wing service center and warehouses, and took them to the field to watch some line crews working.

Roemmich, the safety services director for NDAREC, said Capital Electric demonstrates the highest level of safety performance.

"Crews are safety-oriented, programming is thorough, performance is constant, and their manager provides leadership in safety," she concludes.

Capital Electric Cooperative thanks its employees for taking a team approach to safety and its continuous improvement. **CEC**

# Goehring named 'Outstanding Apprentice'



PHOTOS BY NDAREC/JOHN KARY

Capital Electric Journeyman Lineman **Jesse Goehring** (center) accepted the Outstanding Apprentice award from the NDAREC safety services team including, from left: **Steve Homes, Christina Roemmich, James Neether** and **Jeff Tweten**.

Each year, the North Dakota Rural Electric Cooperative Managers' Association recognizes a graduating apprentice lineworker for outstanding academic achievements and on-the-job performance, in completing his apprenticeship training. This recognition is based on final academic test scores and an evaluation by his supervisor

and co-workers. The academic scores count for 70 percent and the supervisor/co-worker evaluations count for 30 percent of the total score.

The Apprentice Training and Safety program is administered by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives. This four-year program is approved by the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau

of Apprenticeship and sponsored by the co-op, which covers the costs of the program.

Apprentices must have 8,000 hours of supervised training on poles, tower and construction; line hardware and framing; overhead conductors; tools and equipment; transformers; oil circuit reclosers, regulators and capacitors; metering and instrument transformers; rolling stock; engineering; records; safety meetings; hot-line maintenance; troubleshooting; underground; substations; lighting; and service. All apprentices are required to take and pass a series of tests throughout their coursework.

The North Dakota Rural Electric Cooperative Managers' Association is proud to recognize Jesse Goehring of Capital Electric Cooperative for his outstanding performance in completing his apprenticeship in the trade of electric line maintainer.

Goehring completed his bookwork and hours of training in October, when he reached journeyman status. Congratulations, Jesse, on this career milestone achievement. **CEC**

## Capital Electric offers student scholarship

Capital Electric Cooperative is offering a \$1,000 student scholarship, in partnership with Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

To qualify for the scholarship, seniors must be enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Their parents or guardians must be members of Capital Electric.

Our cooperative will assemble a panel of impartial judges to review all applications. The judges will select the winning application based on academic performance, potential to succeed, leadership and participation in school and community activities, honors, a statement of education and career goals, work experience and an outside referral. The scholarship will be awarded without regard to other awards, loans or financial assistance the applicant may have obtained.

Application forms may be downloaded at [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com) or picked up at co-op headquarters at 4111 State St. N. in Bismarck. Applications need to be completed and returned to Capital Electric on or before Friday, Feb. 17.



**Board minute excerpts  
Thursday, Dec. 15, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Capital Electric Cooperative, Inc., was held Thursday, Dec. 15, 2016, at co-op headquarters in Bismarck, North Dakota, pursuant to due notice to all directors.

All directors were present at that time except Bill Patrie and Rodney Eckroth.

Shannon Patrick from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) gave the board a presentation regarding employee benefits. He answered questions from the board. He left the meeting after his presentation.

**Financial review:** Prior to the board meeting, Directors Hollenbeck and Wrangham reviewed the November 2016 check register and expenditures. They reported all checks were in order. It was moved, seconded and carried to approve November expenditures in the amount of \$2,862,725.55.

**Business Department report:** The Business Manager presented the financial and statistical report to the Board. The total kilowatt-hour (KWH) sales for November 2016 was below budget by 15.4 percent. The actual monthly electric revenue is below budget by 8.7 percent. Year-to-date KWH sales are under budget by 3.5 percent and electric revenue is under budget by 2.1 percent.

The Business Manager reviewed cash flow, power costs, and the comparison of actual-to-budgeted expenses for the month of November 2016. Accounts receivable balances as of Dec. 14, 2016, were reviewed.

**Federal Financing Bank loan advance and cushion of credit:** Our most recent loan advance was processed on Dec. 2, 2016, in the amount of \$1,700,000.

**Revenue deferral vs. margin stabilization fund:** The Board discussed the various options available. Management discussed what is going to be done so the Board is aware of it.

**Strategic planning:** There were no changes made to the strategic planning document draft; therefore, the draft was marked final.

**Estate retirements:** Following review of the financial condition of the cooperative and recommendation by management, it was moved, seconded and carried to authorize payment of capital credits to the following deceased members' estates:

Florine Wetzel	\$1,079.23
Diane Deveraux	\$ 5.24
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,084.47</b>

**Engineering and Operations report:** The Manager reviewed the written report from the Engineering and Operations department. We completed 47 work orders this month, adding 79 new consumers to the system.

Fisher Contracting and Gieser Utility Contracting continue to trench in new services. VIP continues to work on overhead and rural rebuild.

The outages for November were reviewed.

We have 29 new services staked but may not have to trench them all. We will start on OCR maintenance the end of December and will also start our annual line patrol the first of the year.

**Member Services department:** The Manager reviewed the member service written report.

**Capital Electric heat connected in 2016:** We continue to make a strong commitment in 2016 to KWH sales in all electric heat areas. A total of 616 kilowatts of new residential electric heat has been connected year-to-date. We have connected 25.9 megawatts of new electric heat over the past 12 years.

**Communications and Public Relations department:** Topics of interest were discussed with the Board.

**Safety report:** There were no lost-time accidents this month.

**Policies:** Following discussion, it was moved, seconded and carried to approve the change to Policy IV-I to amend the Demand Override Change.

The following policies were reviewed but were not modified:

- I-11 – Membership App and Service Connect Fee
- I-13 – Conflicts of Interest
- I-14 – Whistleblower policy
- I-15 – Joint Ventures

**Basin Electric Power Cooperative:** Fitterer discussed the negotiations that have taken place regarding the land lease of the Radar Tower Site.

It was moved, seconded and carried to approve the two-year lease amendment with a third-year option to extend for an additional year.

**Central Power Electric Cooperative:** Hilken reported on the highlights of his report and the synopsis.

**Operation and Maintenance agreement:** Following discussion, it was moved, seconded and carried to approve the agreement with Central Power.

**North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives report:** No meeting was held this month.

The annual meeting is scheduled for Jan. 17 and 18, 2017, in Bismarck.

**Mid-West Electric Consumers Association:** Fitterer presented on the highlights. Wrangham also discussed take aways from the meetings.

**NRECA annual meeting:** Hollenbeck shall be the delegate to this meeting with Olsen as alternate.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the meeting, without objection, the regular meeting was adjourned. **CEC**

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