

Seeking candidates

At the June 3, 2020, annual meeting of the members, director terms in Districts 2 and 5 will expire. To be considered eligible for election, members must reside or receive electric service from Prairie Energy at a location within the district in which they are seeking election. If you are interested in serving on the board of directors, contact one of the following nominating committee members:

District 2: Ryan Eekhoff
720 180th Street
Britt IA 50423
507-370-1161

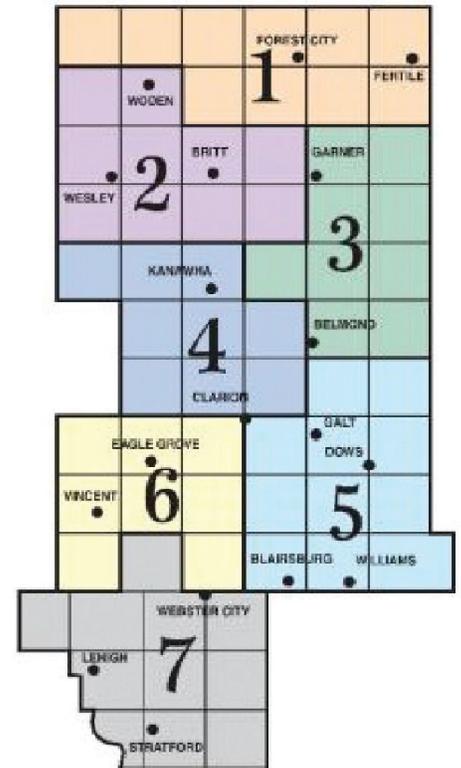
Jared Wellik
410 310th Street
Woden IA 50484
515-928-7665

District 5: Ronald Lentz
3112 Washington Ave
Dows IA 50071
515-852-3302
515-571-4399 (Cell)

Jerry Norris
PO Box 307
Dows IA 50071
515-852-4499



Front row L to R: Nominating Committee members—Ryan Eekhoff, Jerry Norris, and Jared Wellik; back row L to R: Nominating Committee member—Ron Lentz, Advisory Members—Josh Amonson, Scott Stecher, and Ted Hall



Greiman retires after 23 years of service

Jane Greiman (pictured here in her first photo as an REC employee) began her employment with Hancock County REC in January of 1997 as a cashier/receptionist/billing clerk, transitioning eventually to senior billing clerk. Jane began working out of the Clarion headquarters when the Garner office closed in February of 2018.

When asked what she enjoyed the most and will miss the most from her time at Prairie Energy, Greiman responded “Working with the members ... the members were always my first priority.”

Jane and her husband Todd have three children, Brett, Jared, and Renee, and four grandchildren. Retirement plans include spending more time on the golf course and going to more Twins games. She is also looking forward to spending as much time as possible with the grandkids.

Prairie Energy thanks Jane for her service, and we wish her all the best in her retirement!





We love our communities

“To move forward, you have to give back.” This quote from Oprah Winfrey reflects the special bond and obligation that ties your electric cooperative to the communities we serve. Because it’s February, we can’t think of a better time to express how much we love serving you and your community.

When we helped to bring electricity to rural Iowa many years ago, quality of life improved. Through the years, other issues needed to be tackled, and we have been at the forefront, helping to address some of those issues. We want to help meet the long-term needs of your community to ensure it continues to thrive.

While our top priority is to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy, equally important is our mission to enrich your life. This focus to benefit the larger community is central to the way we operate as a cooperative. We understand that electricity is a critical need, but it takes more than poles and power lines to make a community.

Over time, our co-op has evolved to meet your changing needs, thereby improving the quality of life for everyone. And that means many different things. It means programs for Iowa’s youth, such as education scholarships or the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. It means donating time and resources to community programs.

Our community-focused programs and other giving projects have helped build fire stations, fed hungry families, enabled those in need to keep the lights on, and so much more – and we couldn’t do any of this without you.

As a local business, we are proud to power your life and bring good things to the communities we serve. We hope you will continue to guide our efforts by sharing your perspective as we plan for the future. While the larger environment in which we operate is constantly changing, one thing remains the same. Working together, we can continue to do good things.

Help keep lineworkers safe

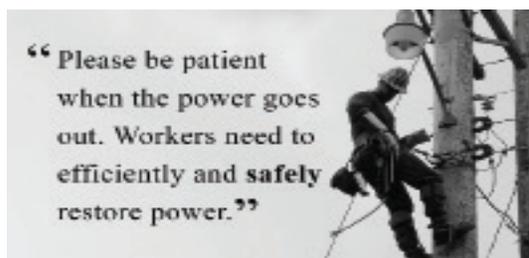
It’s nearing 5 p.m. on a workday. Your boss wanted that last-minute report and your kids need to be picked up. You jump in your car and on the way you approach a work zone. You don’t have time to slow down so you rush through it and ignore the orange work zone signs.

You’re having a garage sale and you think posting a sign on a utility pole won’t hurt. Everyone does it, right?

But either of these scenarios could injure or kill one of our lineworkers.

The job of an electric lineworker is not easy. Lineworkers take great pride in providing safe and reliable service, but their job involves working on and around live power out in the elements. We ask you to do your part to keep them safe:

- 1. Slow down and move over in work zones.** Cars or trucks that go too fast not only endanger workers on the ground but can also put a lineworker working high up in a bucket in danger by causing it to move or sway.
- 2. Do not post anything on a utility pole,** especially with staples, nails, or tacks. These can puncture insulated gloves or other protective clothing and expose workers to high voltages.
- 3. Never plug a generator into any wall outlet.** The power that back feeds into the electric line could electrocute a utility worker.



We appreciate your help in keeping our employees safe.

2020 rebate changes

On April 1, 2020, we will be adjusting the following rebates:

- Central Air: > SEER 15 \$50/unit; > SEER 16 \$100/unit
- Lighting: We will no longer rebate CFL bulbs or T8 or T5 fixtures. We will rebate LED bulbs and fixtures for retrofit only, not new homes or structures.
- Water Heaters: We will no longer rebate solar water heaters. In addition, low-flow shower heads and sink aerators will not be given to members purchasing a water heater.

Remember that we have added an EV charger rebate and an additional \$100/ton to the air source rebate if you install automatic gas backup (subject to future load control). Contact us to discuss rebate opportunities.

RURAL Act signed into law

In December, President Trump signed into law the RURAL Act, protecting more than 900 electric cooperatives throughout the nation from the risk of losing their tax-exempt status when they accept government grants for disaster relief, broadband service, and other programs that benefit co-op members.

The RURAL Act was a top legislative priority for cooperatives in 2019 because of the profound threat to the business model of not-for-profit co-ops. Tens of thousands of co-op leaders, employees, and members across the country rallied to advocate passage of the bill.

Lawmakers passed the popular bipartisan legislation in the final hours of the 2019 session as part of a larger tax and spending bill that funds the government through September 2020.

The bill's passage fixes a prob-



lem created in 2017 when Congress passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which redefined government grants to co-ops as income rather than capital. That change made it difficult for many co-ops to abide by the 15% limit on non-member income to keep their tax-exempt status. The RURAL Act once again exempts grants from being counted as income and is retroactive to the 2018 tax year.

Without the fix, some co-ops would have had to start paying taxes this spring after receiving grants in 2018 or 2019 to repair storm damage, bring high-speed internet to rural communities, or invest in renewable energy and energy-efficiency programs. Many co-op leaders feared they would have to raise rates for members to pay the new taxes.



Save energy in home office

More people are working from their homes instead of commuting to offices. If you're one of them, consider these energy-efficient features for your home office:

- If you will be away from work for more than two hours, shut down your computer. Turn it off when you're finished for the day.
- Enable the power management features on your computer. These are the features that automatically put your computer into standby mode when it's not in use.
- Shut off printers, copiers, scanners, and other large equipment when they are not in use. Plug them into one power strip to shut them off with one flick of the switch. If you often forget to turn them off, use a power strip with a timer to power down each night.
- When buying new equipment, look for the Energy Star label on all computers and printers. Choose equipment that performs more than one operation—like a printer that also scans and copies, for instance. You'll have fewer devices to plug into the wall.
- Though you may be home all day, it's a waste to heat the whole house when you are spending time in only one room. Instead, lower your home's thermostat and use a portable space heater just for your office while you're working.

Contact your Touchstone Energy cooperative for more energy-saving ideas. We're here to help!

**PILLOW TALK
SAFETY**

Taking your cell phone to bed with you can do a lot more harm than interfere with your sleep.

For more information, visit:

**Safe
Electricity.org**

Sign up for auto pay

Sign up for auto payment between now and March 31, 2020, and your name will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 bill credit! All you need to do is either stop into the office or complete and sign the form found in the January issue of our InTouch newsletter and **attach a blank voided check**. Return the completed form to:

Prairie Energy
2099 Hwy 3 West
PO Box 353
Clarion IA 50525



Energy Trail Tour 2020

Prairie Energy Cooperative and Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative invite you to join us for the Energy Trail Tour being offered this summer, July 8-10. This 3-day adventure will allow you to view, first-hand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind, and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are, then, returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Learn how the energy industry is evolving to become more dependent on renewable power generation and glimpse into the future of carbon capture technology. Enjoy the fellowship of other cooperative member-owners on a comfortable motor coach journey to North Dakota's Energy Loop. This all-expense paid trip covers your lodging, meals and entry fees. Two lucky couples from Prairie Energy's members will be selected at random from those who sign up at our Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 3, 2020. Candidates **MUST BE PRESENT** to win.

Save the date for your chance to win

Attend the annual meeting of the members on June 3, 2020, to enter your name into a drawing for a chance to win an all-expenses paid trip to go on the Energy Trail Tour! Members must be present at time of drawing to win.

Plan to attend your annual meeting: June 3, 2020

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Tim Marienau, CEO



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