



Price Electric  
Cooperative

Your Sustainable Energy Partner



William L. Caynor Sr.,  
Price Electric  
Cooperative CEO

## A YEAR OF REFLECTION

### Looking back at 2016

As we embrace 2017 with open arms, we reflect on the 12 months belonging to 2016 with eyes of wisdom. The past year has come and gone, but the achievements were another step on the ladder of success. Within a small utility with limited resources, goals

become more long term, and although you work towards them routinely, it sometimes takes years to accomplish them. Staying the course and patience and discipline are a must. The membership has grown to a record high of 9,118, but the sales and operating revenue have dwindled as unseasonably warm temperatures continued to linger into December. This past summer's average temperatures were lower than 2014 and 2015 and trended with 2013. As of this writing, the winter thus far has been warmer than the past three years. With a membership of 96 percent residential and seasonal, mild temperatures manufacture lower sales. In fact, the sales in 2016 are a mere quarter of a percent less than 2015 (lowest year in past three), and the cooperative purchased and sold 5 million fewer kWhs in 2015 than in 2014 because of milder temperatures.

Thus far the continual rainfall has postponed our larger construction projects outlined in the five-year workplan. The rain caused heavy soil saturation, delaying the Glidden and Phillips substations projects until the ground freezes up.

The new metering deployment is coming closer and closer to fruition. We only have 23 percent, or 2,377 meters, in the Butternut, Catawba, and Ogema areas left to change out. The project will be fully deployed by early spring. This was a monumental undertaking, and the more than 10,000 meters are being replaced with the use of cooperative personnel.

The 2.5MW solar project at the Crane Chase substation on Short Cut road is finally underway. If you drive out there you will notice the fence posts have been installed to give you a full-scale picture of this massive undertaking encompassing 20 acres, one of the largest utility-scale solar projects in the state.

The ribbon cutting will be in June. I hope you will come out and join us.

We continue to work towards the purchase of 37 acres on Springs Drive, south of Phillips. The property will be utilized for the cooperative's new headquarters, but two contingencies must first be met. One, the properties must be rezoned commercial, which has been done, and two, road weight restrictions must be removed in order to access the property during spring break up. The cooperative is currently working with the Town of Worcester to negotiate an agreement.

There's some good news on the litigation front. Dairyland Power Cooperative, our energy provider, was awarded \$73.5 million from the federal government for breach of contract in relation to the nuclear spent fuel project at Dairyland's Genoa facility in La Crosse. Some of this money will most probably be coming back to PEC's membership in some form of rate relief, but the final distributions have not yet been determined.

We have been fortunate enough to have sustained the energy rate over the last three years by maintaining expenses and reevaluating the larger capital projects. More metrics have been instituted to better identify where the limited dollars are best spent, and a new five-year workplan has been created. Presently, a cost-of-service study is being conducted to evaluate

the cost of providing service to the different rate classes (residential, seasonal, commercial). This is the common utility method to determine what the facility charge and energy rate should be.

As we begin a new year of serving you, our members, I would like to once again pledge that we will do everything within our power to increase reliability to you, to maintain reasonable energy rates, and to ensure the safety of you, the public, and the employees of the cooperative. Did you know that as of November, the employees have worked 167,426 hours without a lost-time injury and have driven 577,533 miles without a vehicle accident? That's pretty remarkable, and we are very proud of their achievement.





## Ben Grapa bids farewell to PEC after nearly 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

**B**en Grapa was a young lineman when he came to work for Price Electric Cooperative in the spring of 1977. It was a landmark month in the country, as the first Star Wars movie was released, AJ Foyt won the Indianapolis 500 for a record fourth time, and the Trans Alaska pipeline was completed. The infamous July 4th downburst that year, which occurred less than two months after Ben was hired, meant that PEC employees had to work long hours, along with many other crews from around the state. This was a “baptism by fire” of sorts for the newest member of PEC’s line crew, as 15–16 hour workdays became the normal schedule for about a month. Ben stated that he learned a lot that first year.

In the early years of his career, Ben remembered that PEC had one bucket truck, and later added a second. Each construction crew had a digger and a bucket truck. The maintenance crew had a pickup truck for its line vehicle, which meant climbing poles with hooks and setting service poles with anchors, by hand. The equipment the cooperative uses now contributes to safety and expedites the processes the line crew uses to manage the system, and is far removed from the days when nearly all the work was manual.

After Ben’s first or second year, he was assigned to work on the maintenance crew with James Thrawl. They worked together for a number of years, and Ben recalled that Jim had worked for Com Ed and other construction contractors before coming to work at PEC. Ben commented, “I learned many tricks of the trade from Jim—many good and some not!”

After Jim retired, Ben was promoted to head of maintenance for about another 10 years. He was then moved to a new



assignment on the construction crew and also worked staking for new services. At this time, Dana Lebeck was Ben’s foreman. Ben stated that Dana was very knowledgeable, had a great work ethic, and was a great communicator.

Ben was promoted again, this time

to crew foreman, around 2004, and will be retiring from this position. Ben said, “In the line trade, things are changing constantly. As a lineman, you are learning from your fellow workers on the job. You are being trained and schooled on new tactics and equipment to use. As in our daily lives, the computer has become an important tool for linemen as well.”

Price Electric Cooperative linemen now use iPads and utility-specific software in their daily work, both in the field and back at cooperative headquarters.

Ben said he feels fortunate to have worked with so many good, hard-working co-workers, both in the past and the present. He remarked that he is grateful as an employee, a co-worker, and a member of PEC for the others who work hard and are dedicated to keeping the lights on.

Price Electric’s Board of Directors, staff, and employees wish Ben a long and enjoyable retirement, and thank him for his many years of service to the cooperative and its members.



## 2.5MW UTILITY-SCALE SOLAR PROJECT TAKES ITS FINAL STEP TOWARDS CONSTRUCTION

The 2.5MW utility-scale solar project took its final step towards construction in November with the signing of the interconnection agreement between Dairyland Power Cooperative and Flambeau Solar Partners LLC.

The solar project, located adjacent to the Crane Chase substation on Short Cut road, is now beginning to take shape with fencing being erected, the ground being leveled, and the construction of two driveways for access. Construction on the 20-acre project will continue through the winter, with a planned 9,936 photovoltaic modules of 330 watts, each mounted on tracker panel racking being installed. The racking allows the panels to be adjusted to follow the track of the sun in order to maximize system capability.

The project is expected to generate 2.5 megawatts of power, which will travel through the Crane Chase substation and out to the Price Electric members in the region. During its peak

summer generation, all of this energy will be consumed by these members and thus, during these times, will not receive any energy from the customary method of the transmission grid.

Dairyland is Price Electric Cooperative's sole supplier of power, and with this addition of solar generation will rely less on non-renewable forms of power generation, such as coal. Dairyland has 15 utility-scale solar projects, totaling 20MW, in one phase or another to be connected to the grid, and Price Electric's is one of the largest of these projects. Dairyland has a goal of increasing its renewable generation capabilities from 14 percent of its portfolio in 2015 to 23 percent in 2025, and this project is part of that diversification plan.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony is being planned for June, and will include representatives from Flambeau Solar Partners, Dairyland, and Price Electric Cooperative.



## 2017 REBATES AVAILABLE

Price Electric members are eligible to receive energy efficiency rebates on new Energy Star clothes washers and dryers, dehumidifiers, dishwashers, refrigerators; appliance recycling; energy audits; HVAC solutions; CFL and LED lightbulbs and fixtures; water heaters; and more. Please visit [www.price-electric.com](http://www.price-electric.com) or contact the Price Electric office for a complete list of available rebates, for copies of forms, or if you have any questions on energy efficiency rebates. Please note that rebate forms must be submitted to PEC within three months of purchase or installation.

## DEADLINE FOR RESOLUTIONS

March 8, 2017

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to Article III of the Bylaws; the Rules Committee of Price Electric Cooperative has set March 8, 2017, as the deadline for submission of advisory resolutions relating to the affairs of the cooperative. Any member wishing to submit an advisory resolution for consideration by the members must submit their proposal to the Rules Committee by this deadline for review prior to the 2017 annual meeting. Proposed advisory resolutions must be received at Price Electric Cooperative's headquarters office in Phillips, Wisconsin, by 4 p.m. on March 8, 2017. Resolutions submitted after this date will not be considered for member approval, and resolutions will not be accepted from the floor at the 2017 annual meeting.



## Price Electric Puzzler

How closely are you reading your issue of *WEC News*? Each month, we will present a question whose answer can be found in the issue. Return the answer, and you could receive a \$25 bill credit!

Please drop off or mail your answer to Price Electric or email your answer to [info@price-electric.com](mailto:info@price-electric.com). A winner will be drawn from all correct entries on January 31.

The winner of the November PEC Puzzler was Bill Custer. Congratulations!

***What is Dairyland Power Cooperative's goal for the portion of its energy portfolio that will be renewable generation by 2025?***

Answer

Name

Account Number

Phone

Please return to Price Electric Cooperative,  
508 N. Lake Ave., P.O. Box 110, Phillips, WI, 54555



# THANKS

## for celebrating the holidays with us!

### Giving Tree

Price Electric was proud to host a giving tree to benefit the Santa's Elves Foundation during the month of December. Thank you to all of the PEC members, directors, and employees who brought gifts to brighten a local child's holiday!

### PEC Holiday Food Drive

Thank you to all members who donated to the PEC Holiday Food Drive in November. All who donated were eligible to enter a drawing for a \$25 bill credit. The winner of the bill credit was Kathi Dahlie.

Congratulations, Kathi!

### Coloring Contest Winners

Thank you to all of the youth who participated in Price Electric's holiday coloring contest. The colorful pictures really brightened up the PEC office during those cold December days!

Congratulations to our winners, Madelyn Macholl of Catawba and Payton Vojtech of Phillips. Each of the winners received two movie passes and a voucher for treats at the movie.

## THANKSGIVING TURKEY DRAWING WINNERS

Price Electric would like to thank everyone who read November's *WEC News* and submitted entries to win a Thanksgiving turkey. The nine winners (to represent PEC's nine service districts) drawn were Jane Hansen and Chris Wallner, Gary and Leanne Edinger, Frank Quednow, Vickie Petrashek, Jim Teal, George Kozak Jr., Scott Wunrow, Stanley Bobrowski, and Jim Smugala. Congratulations to all of our winners!



### William L. Caynor Sr., President/CEO

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### Greg Bortz, Editor



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