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EMERGENCY POWER OUTAGES

To report a power outage, please call 800-933-7362. We are available to serve you 24 hours a day.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rick Robertson, *Chairman*
Doug Burnworth, *Vice Chairman*
Bill Knox, *Treasurer*
Andy Strack, *Secretary*
George Bennett
Mark Demske
Joe Hutsell
Larry Ott
Jay Wysong

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Ron Raypole,
President & CEO
Sarah Dreibelbis,
Office Manager
Doug Dickmeyer,
Manager of Engineering & Operations
Kevin Dreibelbis,
Communications & Marketing Manager
Adam Chitwood,
Manager of Finance & Accounting

In Memoriam

Noble REMC employees and directors were saddened to learn of the passing of our former long-term director, Tom Malle. Malle passed away on April 29 at the age of 83. A Wawaka resident, he served the cooperative as a director from 1990-2013. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, and we will continue to honor his legacy of leadership at the co-op.

SUSTAINING

a reliable electric system

We've all heard the phrase, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." This is often said when someone is about to do something foolish or risky. If they heed this advice, it means they did not commit to "one basket," but instead hedged their bets with multiple options.

This strategy is how I describe Noble REMC's common-sense approach to the current energy transition.

Unfortunately, we currently don't have the alternative generation resources to replace fossil fuel completely. If natural gas and coal plants are allowed to close as electrical demand continues to grow, the electric grid will continue to be taxed. The fear is that if we continue to close fossil fuel plants at an alarming rate, we will run into shortfalls of energy when we need it. We are already seeing this in multiple states with rolling blackouts when capacity is in short supply.

Over the last few years, Noble REMC and our power supplier, Wabash Valley Power Alliance, have adjusted our fuel mix by utilizing more renewables, and today, 17% of our fuel mix is comprised of renewable energy, the majority of which is solar and wind. That's an increase of 10% since 2017.

Nationally, there is an increasing push toward shutting down all fossil fuel power plants on too quick of a timeline, which is concerning when we don't have a 24-hour replacement energy source. We're seeing fossil fuel plants taken offline, often ahead of schedule. Additionally, we're seeing more pressure on the electric grid due to the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events and rising electricity demand.

COMPETING PRESSURES

So, how do we reconcile these challenges of grid pressure and a changing fuel mix? Solar and wind energy are certainly beneficial for the environment, but they are limited resources because the sun does not always shine, and the wind does not always blow. Our primary responsibility is to provide electricity 24/7 to you and our community. To do this, we need reliable sources of power that will meet all the peaks and valleys of on-demand energy in our connected world.

That's why we spread our eggs into multiple baskets. There is great value in maintaining a diverse mix of fuel sources — both fossil fuels and renewables — to ensure reliability and resiliency, as well as to meet the growing demand for electricity.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Lowering the overall carbon footprint in this country means we're going to electrify more and more of our economy. Solar and wind power are an important part of a broader energy portfolio, but they are not available 24/7. In today's ever-connected world, people need power around the clock.

As our nation increasingly depends on electricity to power the market, Noble REMC is working to anticipate, plan and respond to market trends and policy shifts. That's how we can power your home and our economy, while continuing to serve as your local energy provider.



RON RAYPOLE
President/CEO

co-op news

TEACH THEM EARLY

There's nothing quite like seeing the first "zap" of a safety demonstration grab the attention of the students watching intently.

"It's even funnier when the teachers who have seen the demonstrations for years, and know it's coming, still jump," said Noble REMC Communications and Marketing Manager Kevin Dreibelbis.

He has been conducting tabletop electric safety demonstrations in local schools for 28 years, and it continues to be one of his favorite parts of his job. It gives him the ability to take his love of teaching and combine it with his three decades of experience in the electric industry.

The presentation illustrates to students how electricity works, but also the dangers of coming into contact with power lines and poles. That's where the "zap" comes in.

"To watch their amazement and interest is so neat. Teaching them something as vitally important as electrical safety that could prevent them from getting injured or even possibly killed is so worthwhile," Dreibelbis said.

How does he know that the message is being received and making an impact? He inevitably hears from the students' parents.

While out and about in the community, he'll be approached by weary parents who sarcastically laugh as they explain how their children are now giving their own electric safety lessons at home — over and over and over again. Fortunately, the ribbing is all in good fun.

"I respond with, 'Great, that means I've done my job!'" Dreibelbis laughed.

He estimates he's probably given more than 250 presentations over his

tenure, not including multiple demos at the same school, as well as those he's given to other youth programs and organizations, such as 4-H.

This past school year, he was able to visit seven schools, presenting more than 10 demonstrations.

He's happy to be able to provide this service for the community and encourages youth organizations to reach out if they would like to teach their own students or participants about electric safety.

Dreibelbis' main goal is to get to the students young so they can remember these lessons well into the future, when they begin driving and owning homes of their own.

"Electricity is our friend, and we pretty much can't imagine life without it; however, it can be dangerous if it isn't used properly."



Noble REMC Communications and Marketing Manager Kevin Dreibelbis gives an electric safety demonstration at Wayne Center Elementary School in early 2020.

SAVE THE DATE!

NOBLE REMC *annual meeting*

Join us online at facebook.com/nobleremc or youtube.com/nobleremc at 5 p.m. on June 14 to watch the broadcast of your annual meeting!

You'll learn the results of the board of directors' election, see an overview of the past year's achievements and be informed on the state of the cooperative.

If you would like to watch last year's meeting or read the minutes from the 2022 meeting, please visit nobleremc.com/annual-meeting.





Noble REMC Director George Bennett, left, greets members at a co-op event.

LIGHTING *the Way*

BENNETT GIVES BACK AND GUIDES THE CO-OP

Director George Bennett found his way to Albion through love and stayed for his decades-long career in banking.

In the meantime, he became a pillar of the community through his time serving on local boards, such as the Albion Rotary Club and Noble County Council, as well as volunteering through Junior Achievement and other organizations.

His run for the Noble REMC Board of Directors five years ago seemed an organic pairing. Learn why:

WHY DID YOU WANT TO RUN FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

"I've lived here 44 years. Before my time on the board, I had always been a customer of the REMC, and then I was a banker to the REMC when I worked at the bank in Albion.

"I had the opportunity to get acquainted with the organization. I realized, number one, what a good organization it is — the quality of the people that are there and also the quality of the service that's delivered.

"When my predecessor decided not to seek reelection, I was asked if I'd consider running as a candidate. I thought about it, I think, only briefly before deciding. And during the time I've been on the board, which has been almost five years, that's been

reinforced as I've learned more about the industry and about our own co-op."

WHAT'S BEEN YOUR FAVORITE PART OF BEING A DIRECTOR?

"One of them has been the educational opportunities. You get to meet directors from other co-ops, and you get exposed to presenters from all around the country.

"Also, near the top of the fun parts of the job has been when I signed up to run for reelection two years ago. You have to take your petition around to get signatures and that was a lot of fun — talking to people and hearing what they had to say about the REMC. Normally, I wouldn't get that chance to talk to them.

"And, I suppose, the third thing I'd add is some of the overlap that's occurred with my other job. I'm a county council member and one of my assignments is to work on the planning commission. We've been right in the thick of developing a solar ordinance and when it comes to renewable energy and the way it overlaps and augments some of my experiences with Noble REMC, it just matches up beautifully. That's really been rewarding."

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF IN YOUR LIFE?

"I think I could pretty conclusively say

that what I'm most proud of in my life is my family, and that certainly includes my extended family. I'd also say it includes my family heritage."

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MUSIC?

"If you want to know a favorite song, I think anybody that knows me would pick the hymn, 'It Is Well With My Soul.' I would say that as far as a life's journey, that hymn probably resonates and indicates the most of what my life experience has been about."

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE LOCAL RESTAURANT? WHAT DO YOU USUALLY ORDER THERE?

"I'm going to throw kudos to my good friend Tom Janes from the county council, and we'll go with Charger House. Of course, we get fish there."

WHY IS SERVING YOUR COMMUNITY IMPORTANT TO YOU?

"I think that represents one of the more powerful things of what I think our society and culture is all about, and should be all about, and that is the willingness to volunteer your time and to volunteer the talents that you have, or maybe even only sort of have. But everybody's got their different gifts and as you can find your place to give some of that back, that's important."

CELEBRATING OUR YOUTH

NOBLE REMC AWARDS THREE SCHOLARSHIPS TO AREA STUDENTS



GRANT FLORA



BREE MCCOMB



RYAN NORDEN

Noble REMC is proud to invest in the future of three area students who earned \$1,000 scholarships from the co-op for their hard work at their school and in the community.

To be eligible for the scholarships, recipients' parent(s) or guardian(s) must be a member of Noble REMC. Candidates were judged anonymously based on their involvement at school and in the community, as well as on grade point average, a short autobiography and letters of recommendation.

The 2023 recipients are:

GRANT FLORA from West Noble High School will be attending Indiana Wesleyan University to earn a degree in multimedia communications and mathematics to one day work in the field of sports media, with a concentration in statistics, data analysis and broadcasting. Flora is the son of Mike and Jennifer Flora of Ligonier.

BREE MCCOMB from Garrett High School will be heading to Purdue

University to study nursing, with the goal of earning her master's degree and becoming a nurse practitioner. McComb is the daughter of Brian and Lori McComb of LaOtto.

RYAN NORDEN from East Noble High School will be attending the University of Notre Dame in his pursuit of a degree in biology and pre-med. This is the first step in his goal to become a pediatrician and open his own practice in Kendallville. Ryan is the son of Mike and Joan Norden of Avilla.

YOUR SPARE CHANGE MAKES AN IMPACT

Noble REMC members' contributions through our Operation Round Up grant program continue to make huge improvements and strides in our communities. The latest disbursement awarded \$20,900 and impacted 12 local organizations and projects.

The program's mission to give back to the community wouldn't be possible without the generosity of our members. With more than 85% participating in the program, the pennies donated by rounding up your bill each month are making a big impact.

The second quarter grants of the Operation Round Up Trust Fund included:

LaOtto Community Park, Inc., \$1,500, playground equipment

Noble Trails, Inc., \$2,500, trail improvements

Junior Achievement serving Noble County, \$1,500, BizTown for Noble County fifth graders

Central Noble Community School Corporation, \$2,500, library books

Helping Hands of Orange Township, \$1,500, food

Bear Lake Camp, Inc., \$1,800, camp equipment

West Noble Middle and High Schools, \$2,500, Charger Reading Program books

VFW Post 4717 Auxiliary, \$2,000, building maintenance

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Indiana, Inc., \$1,000, School Buddies programs

City of Kendallville, \$1,000, Kid City event

Drug Free Noble County, Inc., \$1,000, prevention support programs

Black Pine Animal Sanctuary, \$2,100, two-way radios

Are you part of a local nonprofit looking to improve the quality of life in our community? Now's the time to apply for our next round of grant funding!

Organizations are encouraged to fill out and return an application to the Noble REMC office by June 30 to be considered for the next round of Operation Round Up disbursements. Applications can be downloaded from nobleremc.com.