

Continuing to build upon NMPP Energy's culture

The Nebraska Municipal Power Pool, the charter organization of NMPP Energy, was formed in the mid-1970s out of the desire to provide energy solutions, services and value to small, local municipalities.

Much has changed since those early years of NMPP. We've grown to four organizations operating in diverse and complex industry environments. We now have a membership that spans nearly 200 municipalities across five states. In the face of all that has changed, however, our mission remains the same.

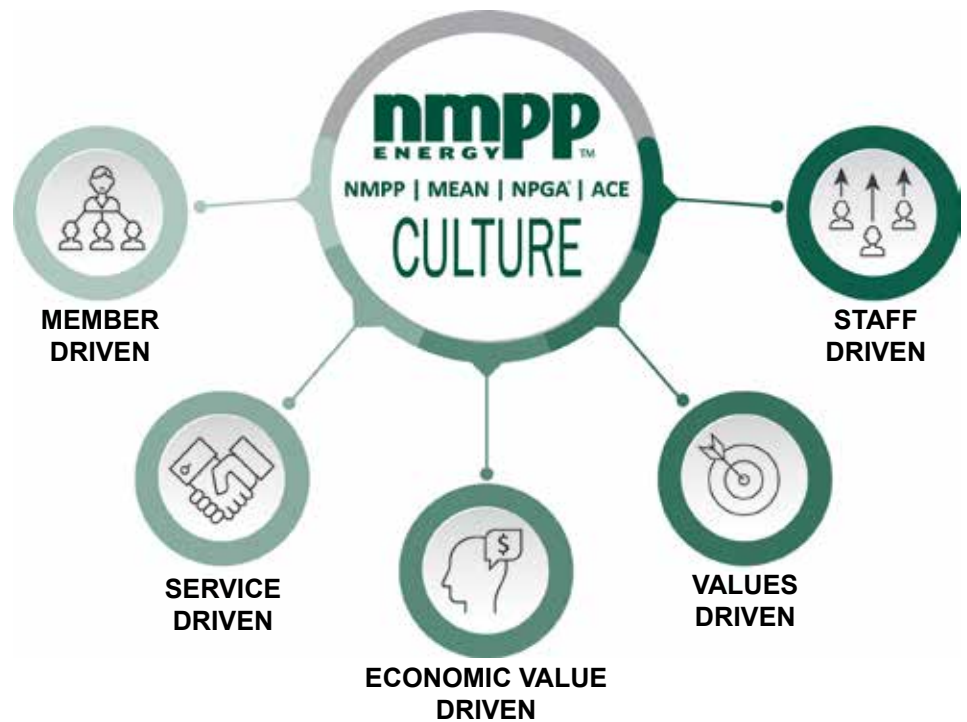
From the Executive Director



By Bob Poehling

To ensure we successfully continue this mission for our member communities, a staff culture must exist within the NMPP Energy organizations. My management team and I recently spent time discussing what a successful culture should include. We ultimately unveiled the initiative earlier this year to staff as well as to each organization's board of directors.

There are five elements that define our culture: Members, Service, Economic Value, Values and Staff. To be clear, I believe we are currently performing well in many areas under



each of the elements. Defining the elements in writing, however, underscores not only the things staff is currently doing successfully, it also reminds staff of areas where we could improve. Staff is reminded daily of the five elements of our culture through laminated and framed wall hangings, clocks and coasters that are visible throughout the NMPP Energy building.

As part of the initiative, we created a Culture Council. The Council is a cross-departmental team that fosters workplace culture and reinforces the

values of NMPP Energy in achieving its mission of service to our members. The Council receives staff feedback and meets periodically to discuss any staff issues that may impact our culture, positively or negatively.

The five elements of NMPP Energy's culture:

WE ARE MEMBER DRIVEN

Every decision we make is in the best interest of our Members. We encourage Member engagement on

SPP Board gives approval for transmission projects

The Southwest Power Pool board of directors at their July 31 quarterly board and committee members meeting approved the 2018 Integrated Transmission Plan Near-Term Assessment, requiring SPP members to construct 13 new transmission projects in six states over the next five years, at an estimated total investment of \$47 million.

These upgrades are expected to resolve 101 anticipated reliability needs on the electric grid, resulting primarily from increased electric consumption expected in certain areas of the region and from announced generation retirements in Eastern Kansas and Western Missouri.

According to SPP, completion of these upgrades will contribute

to voltage stability, reduce grid congestion and ensure the SPP region remains compliant with mandatory federal standards. SPP also found that six previously approved projects expected to cost \$85 million are no longer needed. The net effect of this board action is expected to have no impact to the monthly bills of the average residential customer in SPP's footprint.

SPP is one of seven regional transmission organizations (RTOs) that oversee the bulk electric grid and wholesale power market in the United States. SPP ensures reliable power supply and adequate transmission infrastructure and competitive wholesale electric prices across its 14-state footprint in the Central U.S.

SPP intends to provide reliability coordination service in West

The Southwest Power Pool (SPP) recently sent letters to the Western Electricity Coordinating Council and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) indicating its intent to serve as an electric grid reliability coordinator in the Western Interconnection.

Twenty-eight western utilities representing approximately 200 terawatt-hours of net energy for load have already signed letters of intent expressing interest in SPP's reliability coordinating services.

System reliability is essential to the U.S. electric grid. There are several entities across the country that serve as reliability coordinators for their regions.

They are responsible for complying with North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) and regional standards, including providing oversight, monitoring operational and security risks, taking or directing action to preserve electric system reliability and providing leadership in system restoration.

SPP has served as a reliability coordinator in the Eastern Interconnection for more than two decades. SPP's announcement to serve as reliability coordinator in the West came on the heels of the announcement by Peak Reliability to end its reliability coordinator services in the West at the end of 2019.

NPGA Board OKs participation in prepay deal

The National Public Gas Agency Board of Directors recently approved participation in a prepaid natural gas transaction with the Public Energy Authority of Kentucky (PEAK).

The 30-year agreement would feature multiple repricing periods during which NPGA would receive discounted natural gas supply for 1,000 MMBtu/day (Million British Thermal Units), which represents approximately 21 percent of NPGA's total gas load.

The pre-pay transaction is projected to provide a revenue stream that will reduce administrative and general costs to NPGA members and enhance NPGA's ability to retain and attract prospective new municipal customers.

"This is a positive step forward for NPGA," said Beth Ackland, NPGA director of gas operations. "The incremental revenue stream will give us some flexibility to grow."

It is anticipated the prepay will go to market this fall, in time for gas supply beginning with the winter gas season starting Nov. 1.

Formed in 1991, NPGA provides wholesale natural gas supply to small and medium-sized participating municipalities that own their own gas systems.

NMPP Energy Culture

Continued from page 1

boards and committees. And, we equip our Members with the resources to be effective leaders within the organization and in their communities.

WE ARE SERVICE DRIVEN

We offer outstanding service to our internal customers (co-workers) and our external customers (Members, vendors, etc.). New product offerings are developed to enhance existing services and create additional value propositions for our Members.

WE ARE ECONOMIC VALUE DRIVEN

We continue to pursue financial strength and ensure the sus-

tainability of our business model. Every day, we come into work and ask ourselves: "How can I do what I do more efficiently and cost effectively without sacrificing quality to our Members?"

WE ARE VALUES DRIVEN

We pursue professional ethics in all our dealings internally and externally. We treat others how we wish to be treated. At every opportunity, we do what is expected of us and then just a little bit more. We are compliant with legal and regulatory matters.

WE ARE STAFF DRIVEN

We value a work/life balance and foster a healthy "family-ori-

ented" environment in the workplace. Our staff's well-being is a high priority. We provide education and training to develop our workforce. Staff is asked to take a proactive role in seeking professional training opportunities. We break down any silos existing in our organization. Our goal is to become and remain industry experts in our respective fields.

* * *

These five elements are who we are, who we strive to be and who we need to be for the organizations of NMPP Energy and the communities we represent to be successful for many years to come.

Public Power/Natural Gas Week set for Oct. 7-13

National Public Power Week and Public Natural Gas Week will be celebrated by municipal utilities across the country Oct. 7-13.

This is a good opportunity for public utilities to share benefits of their public power and natural gas systems such as low-cost energy, local control, reliability, in lieu of tax payments, local employment, donated labor/service, support to local economic development and customer service.

For assistance with no-cost materials such as a news release, letter to the editor or an article for your utility newsletter, contact the NMPP communications department for assistance by emailing kwickham@nmppenergy.org.

Share your Public Power and Natural Gas Week Events

Share how your utility celebrated Public Power and Natural Gas Week. Email any event



details and photos to kwickham@nmppenergy.org so that we can share with other NMPP members through the Essent newsletter, website and social media.



North Platte revives WWII canteen tradition of feeding soldiers

The community of North Platte, Neb., revived its tradition of honoring service men and women passing through the community with a warm welcome and a hot meal.

The Wall Street Journal recently featured the community as it fed a group of 700 service men and women over two days in June. The soldiers were returning to their base in Arkansas after weeks of training in Wyoming. The caravan of buses planned a stopover in North Platte to eat. The buses pulled up to the D&N Events Center where soldiers were welcomed by applauding residents and escorted into a decorated and fully prepared hall with a variety of home-cooked food.

The community mobilized to feed the large group after a call to the North Platte and Lincoln County Convention and Visitor's Bureau asking if there was a place that could handle feeding such a large caravan of people. The community stepped up just as it had during World War II, when a small group of women decided to support troops by taking their baked cookies to the train station to offer as a snack to troops as they passed



Photos by Stephen Barkley/North Platte Telegraph

Residents of North Platte came together to offer soldiers passing through a home-cooked meal and much more.

through. It came to be known as the North Platte Canteen.

North Platte, being centrally located and on a major rail line, served as hub for troop trains crossing the country during the war. Starting near the end of 1941, volunteers from North Platte and many surrounding communities met every train beginning at 5 a.m. and ending after midnight, greeting between 3,000 and 5,000 soldiers each day with food and gifts. By the end of the war, 55,000 volunteers from 125 towns provided food to feed six million soldiers.



See 'MEMBER NEWS' on page 5

USDA has more than \$4 billion in loan assistance for water, wastewater projects

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently announced it has more than \$4 billion in loan assistance available to help rural communities upgrade and rebuild rural water infrastructure.

Eligible rural communities and water districts can apply online for funding to maintain, modernize or build water and wastewater systems. They can visit the interactive RD Apply tool, or they can apply through one of USDA Rural Development's state or field offices (listed at right).

USDA is providing the funding through the Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program. It can be used to finance drinking water, stormwater drainage and waste disposal systems for rural communities with 10,000 or fewer residents.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to

USDA Field Offices in NMPP States

Colorado

Phone: (720) 544-2903
www.rd.usda.gov/co

Iowa

Phone: (515) 284-4663
www.rd.usda.gov/ia

Kansas

Phone: (785) 271-2700
www.rd.usda.gov/ks

Nebraska

Phone: (402) 437-5551
www.rd.usda.gov/ne

North Dakota

Phone: (701) 530-2037
www.rd.usda.gov/nd

Wyoming

Phone: (307) 233-6700
www.rd.usda.gov/wy

help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

Management Committee elects officers

The Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN) Management Committee elected officers for fiscal year 2018-19 at its quarterly meeting in August in Kearney, Neb.

The management committee officers elected for 2018-19:

- Mike Palmer, electric superintendent, **Sidney, Neb.**, chair;
- Brent Nation, director of water resources and utilities,

Fort Morgan, Colo., vice chair;

- Jeremy Tarr, electric line foreman, **Burwell, Neb.**, secretary.

Among the committee's functions is planning current and future power supply. The committee includes a designated representative from each of MEAN's wholesale power participating communities in Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and Iowa.

Member news

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Grand Island installing pilot solar project

Grand Island, Neb., Utilities is in the process of installing a one-megawatt solar project. Grand Island Utilities Director Tim Luchsinger said the pilot project will help the City gain experience and a better understanding in operating a solar generating facility.

The project covers approximately 10 acres of land and includes more than 50 rows of solar panels. A private developer funded the project to take advantage of federal tax credits.

Luchsinger said that as the utility gains more first-hand knowledge with solar generation, the City would be in position to possibly partake in a future larger scale project.

Source: Grand Island Independent

Fort Morgan Police to start drone program

The Fort Morgan Police Department is developing a drone program that was recently helped by a \$3,000 grant from Cargill Meat Solutions. The grant will be used to purchase the department's first drone aircraft as well as additional batteries to extend flying time and other accessories.

The drone will be used to locate missing children and adults and provide critical public safety information during natural and manmade disasters. Drones have also proved to be effective in locating and photographing evidence in large areas as well as assisting in car crash investigations and locating fugitives.

The drone will be made available to any law enforcement agency in northeast Colorado that requests it.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED CHAMPION BUSINESS



Olsson Associates ranks among top U.S. engineering design firms

Olsson Associates, an engineering and design firm with more than 1,100 employees, opened for business in Lincoln, Neb., dating back to 1956 when John E. Olsson first hung out his shingle. What started out as a one-man firm has come a long way since the early days.

Today, Olsson's reach has expanded to include offices in eight states as it serves clients and communities located throughout the United States. In 2018, Olsson was ranked among the top 100 design firms in the United States, checking in at No. 98 on the list compiled by Engineering News-Record.

Olsson specializes in infrastructure, which includes utility and industrial electrical systems.

www.olssonassociates.com

The firm has a dedicated practice that excels at designing new electrical systems as well as conducting system studies/evaluations, rate analysis, power supply studies, system protection, and cost analyses. Solutions engineered by Olsson maximize the benefits of ownership and operation of an electrical system, regardless of size.

These solutions help distribution, substation, transmission, and power plant owners provide efficient, flexible, and reliable systems to their customers and communities at rates that are among the most competitive in the nation.

Utility owners provide a crucial service to the communities and

citizens they serve. Olsson's Power teams realizes the responsibilities utilities have and collaborates with power companies to keep the electricity flowing. When utility providers work with Olsson, they benefit from an enhanced experience and the latest ideas in the marketplace.

For more information about how Olsson can help utility providers, contact John O'Connor at (402) 458-5043 or joconnor@olssonassociates.com.

Olsson has nearly 30 offices located in the Midwest and Southwest U.S. Learn more at www.olssonassociates.com.

For a complete listing of NMPP Energy Champion Businesses, see page 7

Employment Opportunities

Electrical Lineman

The **Broken Bow** (Neb.) Electric Department is accepting applications for a full-time Electrical Lineman. Applicants must be a U.S. citizen, possess a valid driver's license with the ability to attain CDL within six months of hire. Applicant must have at least two years prior experience as an electrical lineman. Benefits include vacation, sick time, holiday time and health insurance. Competitive wages with experience (Step 1 \$21.41 to Step 9 \$28.85). This position will remain open until filled. Applications are available online at www.cityofbrokenbow.org or may be picked up at the Utilities Office 314 South 10th Avenue, Broken Bow, NE 68822. Submit application and related information to: Broken Bow Municipal Utilities, ATTN: Electrical Superintendent Doug Staab, P.O. Box 567, Broken

Bow, NE 68822 or via email at dstaab@cityofbrokenbow.org. Broken Bow is an EOE.

Journeyman Lineman

The City of Yuma, Colo., Electric Department has an immediate opening for a journeyman lineman. The City of Yuma (population 3,524) is located about 150 miles northeast of the Denver metro area. Under the direction of the electric superintendent, the journeyman lineman is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and construction of an electrical substation and distribution system; including overhead and underground lines. The successful candidate will have completed an accredited journeyman lineman apprenticeship program, obtained a journeyman's license, and have at least three years of increasingly responsible experience in an elec-

To submit an ad

NMPP members can advertise job openings for free in the *Essent* newsletter and on the NMPP Energy Web site. E-mail kwickham@nmppenergy.org.

All job openings posted at www.nmppenergy.org

tric utility. Candidates must also possess or be able to obtain Class A CDL license and be insurable under the City's insurance policy. The position will be required to take on-call rotation. Pre-employment requirements will include a written skills test, criminal background check, and drug and alcohol screening. A City employment application is required. The City of

See 'EMPLOYMENT' on page 8

Support NMPP member communities through the Champions Business Program

Champions are businesses and organizations that support NMPP Energy's effort to provide products and services to members. Consider these businesses when your utility or municipality has a business need. If your business is interested in becoming an NMPP Energy Champion, call Andrew Ross at (800) 234-2595.



Champions Business Directory of Services

Financial

Ameritas Investment Corp. (Ameritas.com)	Omaha, Neb.
D.A. Davidson & Co. (dadavidson.com/ficm)	Omaha, Neb.
First National Bank (Firstnational.com)	Omaha, Neb.
UNICO Group, Inc. and Midlands Financial Benefits (unicogroup.com)	Lincoln, Neb.
Nebraska Energy Federal Credit Union (ne-fcu.org)	Columbus, Neb.
RBC Capital Markets (rbc.com)	Denver, Colo.

Regulatory/Compliance

Air Regulations Consulting (airregconsulting.com)	Lincoln, Neb.
Power Plant Compliance (Powplant.com)	Oketo, Kan.
NAQS Environmental Experts (naqs.com)	Lincoln, Neb.

Utility/Community

EnergySolutions, Inc. (energysolutions-inc.com)	Omaha, Neb.
Hometown Connections, LLC (Hometownconnections.com)	Lakewood, Colo.
Hubbell Power Systems (Hubbellpowersystems.com)	Bellevue, Neb.
Foundation for Educational Services (fes.org)	Lincoln, Neb.
JK Energy Consulting, LLC (JKenergyconsulting.com)	Lincoln, Neb.
Kriz-Davis Co. (Krizdavis.com)	Grand Island, Neb.
NovaTech (Novatechweb.com)	Lenexa, Kan.
PDS, Inc. (PDSinc.biz)	Omaha, Neb.
Protective Equipment Testing Laboratory (petl.com)	Great Bend, Kan.
REM Electric, Inc. (Davidsoncompanies.com)	Nebraska City, Neb.
RESCO (Rural Electric Supply Cooperative) (resco1.com)	Ankeny, Iowa
Solomon Corporation (Solomoncorp.com)	Solomon, Kan.

Computer/Technology

Proteus (Proteus.co)	Lincoln, Neb.
Salt Creek Software, Inc. (Saltcreek.com)	Lincoln, Neb.

Engineering

EPSIM Corporation (epsim.us)	Boulder, Colo.
Exponential Engineering Company (exponentialengineering.com)	Fort Collins, Colo.
JEO Consulting Group, Inc. (jeo.com)	Wahoo, Neb.
Lutz, Daily & Brain, LLC (ldbeng.com)	Overland Park, Kan.
Olsson Associates (Olssonassociates.com)	Lincoln, Neb.
Power Engineers (powereng.com)	Overland Park, Kan.

Insurance

League Association of Risk Management (larmpool.org)	Lincoln, Neb.
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Legal

Chapman and Cutler, LLP (chapman.com)	Salt Lake City, Utah
Spiegel & McDiarmid (spiegelmcd.com)	Washington, D.C.

Telecommunication

River Oaks Communications Corp. (rivoaks.com)	Centennial, Colo.
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NEWSLETTER

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Employment (cont.)

Yuma is an Equal Opportunity Employer. For more information or to receive an application, contact John Prettyman, electrical superintendent, at (970) 848-3878 ext. 2112, email at j.prettyman@yumacolo.org, or by U.S. mail at City of Yuma, PO Box 265, 910 South Main Street, Yuma CO 80759. The position will remain open until filled.

Electric Journeyman Lineworker

The City of **Gering**, Neb., is accepting applications for the position of full-time electric journeyman lineworker. This individual will perform skilled line work in the operation, construction,

maintenance and repair of overhead and underground electric distribution and transmission systems. The City will also accept applications for electric apprentice lineworker, utilizing the City of Gering's Apprenticeship Program. Applications with resumes will be accepted until the position is filled. Specific duties, responsibilities, and desired qualifications are available with the application form. Apply at the City of Gering, 1025 P Street, Gering, NE 69341 or at www.gering.org. Applicants are asked to include any training and/or educational certificates they may have to their application. Application deadline is 4:30 p.m., Sept. 21, 2018. EOE

Upcoming Meetings

- Sept. 6 NMPP Board
- Sept. 13 NPGA Board
- Nov. 7 JOC Meeting
- Nov. 8 NMPP Board
- Nov. 14 ACE Board
- Nov. 14 MEAN Committees
- Nov. 15 MEAN Mgmt/Board

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