



# Calhoun County ECA closes on first business park

After years of in-depth research and careful planning, Calhoun County has an industrial park.

Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association partnered with Corn Belt Power, Calhoun County Board of Supervisors and Calhoun County Economic Development Corporation to get the project located at the intersection of Highways 20 and 4 off the ground. The planning and organizing group held a groundbreaking on Thursday, June 3.

“We have worked for years to make this a reality,” said Jim Vermeer, vice president, business development, Corn Belt Power Cooperative. “In 2008, Rox Carisch, now retired CEO at Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association, invited me to visit with her board about industrial park development and we envisioned developing something at the intersection of 20 and 4. After much discussion and planning, we recruited Sparky’s to locate at the intersection. Since then, we worked to get the infrastructure to the intersection.”

Getting infrastructure to the location was a team task.

“We had many meetings with Twin Lakes Utilities and the City of Rockwell City to discuss getting water and sewer to the intersection,” said Vermeer. “About two or three years ago, we heard that Rockwell City was going to provide water to Twin Lakes Utilities. We approached the city and the supervisors to run the water main past the intersection. Without the commitment by the supervisors, this project would not have happened.”

Phase One amounts to 21.72 acres near Sparky’s One Stop at the intersection of Highways 20 and 4. With help from the



## Open for Business

**Above** | Breaking ground at the new Calhoun County ECA business park June 3 at the intersection of Iowa Highways 20 and 4 are from left, Rand Fisher, president, Iowa Area Development Group; Brittany Dickey, development finance director and Jim Vermeer, vice president, business development, Corn Belt Power Cooperative; Brooke Sievers, ISG Engineering; Scott Jacobs, Calhoun County Supervisor; Keaton Hildreth, CEO, Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association; Jill Heisterkamp, executive director, Calhoun County Economic Development; Debi Durham, executive director, Iowa Economic Development Authority; and Nick Buse, Calhoun County Engineer.

partnership, infrastructure buildout is set to begin in the near future.

Studies show that the area is primed to attract warehousing and distribution businesses. Those businesses will support travelers and logistic support in the region. Vermeer, who has been developing industrial parks in the Corn Belt Power system for more than two decades, says industrial parks are critical to a county’s and cooperative’s success.

“Calhoun’s members will see direct benefit of new load growth which helps to spread fixed cost over more energy sales,” Vermeer said. “This is the direct benefit to the member. Other benefits of new growth due to industrial park development are: stronger economic base, increased wage base, increased tax base, job creation and creation of wealth. All of this

directly benefits the members of Calhoun County ECA and the taxpayers of Calhoun County.”

Vermeer says he’s happy to see the project finally come to fruition.

“After starting this project nearly 13 years ago, it’s great to see the vision for the intersection come to fruition,” Vermeer said. “We started something that will provide opportunities for Calhoun County and Calhoun County ECA for years to come. It was a privilege to work with a great team to build a strong partnership for the future. Most people don’t realize the amount of work behind the scenes and the amount of time to make a project happen.”

There is an option to purchase 96.08 acres in the future, provided Phase One is successful. In total, the project could be as large as 117 acres. ■

## Prairie Energy Cooperative, Corn Belt Power, Basin Electric and CoBank make donation to art museum



### Museum to display Iowa's largest engine

**Above** | Prairie Energy Cooperative presented donation checks to the Jenison-Meacham Memorial Art Museum and Farm June 4. The \$2,500 donation total came from Prairie Energy, Corn Belt Power, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and CoBank. The museum will use the donation to bring a 1930s era steam engine to their location. Photographed from left, Prairie Energy employees, Tim Marienau, chief executive officer; Todd Foss, manager business/community development; Darren Johnson, member services; and museum employees Karen DeKuiper, Vern Anderson, Diane Martens and Gerry Holmes .

A 1930s-era steam engine power plant may soon be making its way to Belmond.

Prairie Energy Cooperative and Corn Belt Power Cooperative recently made donations to the Jenison-Meacham Memorial Arts Center to help bring the 1,000-horsepower, 750-kilowatt generator to the area. Basin Electric Power Cooperative and CoBank matched the donations, which totaled \$2,500.

The steam engine, built by Murray Machine Works in Burlington, Iowa, generated electricity for the Iowa State Penitentiary at Fort Madison. It was retired in the early 1950s and donated to the Waukeee Tractor Club by the state in 1982, where it was on display until 2008.

The Belmond Arts Center received the opportunity to acquire the generator last fall. It is currently the largest engine on display in Iowa and has never left the state since the day it was built.

The arts center is in the process of raising money to move and house the generator at the Jenison-Meacham Memorial Art Museum and Farm. The engine is nearly 30 feet long with a 15-foot diameter flywheel. The flywheel weighs 27 tons by itself. When put together, the generator weighs 150 tons.

"This is a great project to participate in," said Tim Marienau, chief executive officer, Prairie Energy. "Two of our core principles are commitment to community and education, training and information. This project will go a long way in educating youth about how we historically generated electricity. It will also be a nice addition to an already fantastic arts center."

Money raised for the project will go towards transportation from the Des Moines area and construction of a 9-foot deep concrete pad.

To get involved with the project, contact the Jenison-Meacham Memorial Arts Center. ■

# Graduate Spotlight!



### Anthony Bruening

**School:** Humboldt High School **Academic awards:** B Honor Roll **Activities:** Football, Track, Building Trades, Future Farmers of America **Hobbies:** Golf, Weightlifting, Motorcycle riding **Future plans:** Attend Des Moines Area Community College to be an electrician **Parents:** Sara and Chris

Bruening, outage coordinator ■



### Brielle Cowell

**School:** Sioux Central High School **Activities:** Track, Volleyball, Drill Team, Cheerleader, Speech, Band and Choir **Hobbies:** Arts, Crafts and Kayaking **Community activities:** Future Christian Athletes **Future plans:** Earn Associates degree in Business from Iowa Central CC and transfer to Iowa State

University to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in Interior Design **Parents:** Judy and Mike Cowell, shift operator ■



### Eric Wittrock

**School:** Humboldt High School **Academic awards:** Math and Engineering Department award; Athletic Academic award; Rotary Top 20 **Activities:** Track and Field; Cross Country; National Honors Society; Speech Club **Hobbies:** Designing electronic gadgets, creating computer programs, running

and parkour **Community activities:** 391 hours of service to various organizations, Salt and Light at St. Mary's Church **Future plans:** Attend Iowa State University to study electrical engineering and computer software engineering **Parents:** Ann and Matt Wittrock, journeyman field technician ■



Coon Rapids Hardware Hank

## Co-ops assist hardware store with expansion

Coon Rapids Hardware Hank is expanding and renovating in a new Main Street location in Coon Rapids. The new store will be a block down the street from the old store, which allows the business to triple their store space and meet expansion needs.

Corn Belt Power loaned \$150,000, Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative loaned \$50,000 and Region XII Development Corporation loaned \$50,000 all from their respective Revolving Loan Funds to assist with the project. The new store is expected to open in July.

Pictured at the new location from left, Jim Gossett, Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative; Adam Esdohr, Duane Esdohr & Robyn Esdohr all with Coon Rapids Hardware; Tami Lehmann, Region XII Development Corporation; and Brittany Dickey, Corn Belt Power Cooperative. ■

# News in brief

## Butler Logistics Park loaned funds for expansion land purchase

Butler County REC loaned \$208,000 and Corn Belt Power loaned \$52,000 from their respective Revolving Loan Funds to the Butler-Grundy Development Alliance on May 26, 2021.

The loan funds will purchase land near the Butler Logistics Park for future expansion and infrastructure needs. Since it's 2006 start, the Butler Logistics Park continues to grow with newly developed TrinityRail Maintenance Services and Shell Rock Soy Processing.



### Logistics Park funding

Above | Katie LaBree, Butler County REC, left, and Brittany Dickey, Corn Belt Power, award expansion funds to Jeff Kolb, Butler-Grundy Development Alliance.

## Pipho Family Dentistry receives loan funds

Corn Belt Power loaned Pipho Family Dentistry \$360,000 through a USDA Rural Economic Development Grant and an additional \$176,000 from the Corn Belt Power IRP fund.

The funds help construct a new 2,100-square-foot dental clinic in Denver, Iowa, which is slated for a late 2021 completion. This project will create 10 new jobs over the next three years.

Dr. Bob's mother, Dr. Donna Pipho started Pipho Family Dentistry in 1978 in La Porte City. The business now has dental offices in La Porte City, Dysart and Denver.



### Supporting rural dentistry

Above | Brittany Dickey, Corn Belt Power Cooperative and Katie LaBree, Butler County REC present loan and grant funds to Dr. Bob Pipho, Pipho Family Dentistry and his daughter Dylan.



**Prairie Energy Cooperative**  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## Virtual annual meeting

Above | Marion Denger, president, board of directors, Prairie Energy Cooperative addresses members at Prairie Energy annual meeting via video.

## Prairie Energy Cooperative holds annual meeting

For the second year in a row, COVID-19 protocols forced Prairie Energy Cooperative's annual meeting to a digital platform.

Members are now able to view the annual meeting on Prairie Energy's Facebook page and website.

At the meeting, Tim Marienau, chief executive officer, Prairie Energy, Marion Denger, board president and Dennis Puckett, attorney, Sullivan & Ward, each spoke.

Members conducted the election of directors via mail-in ballots. Josh Amonson, Scott Hasty and Ted Hall were each elected to new three-year terms.

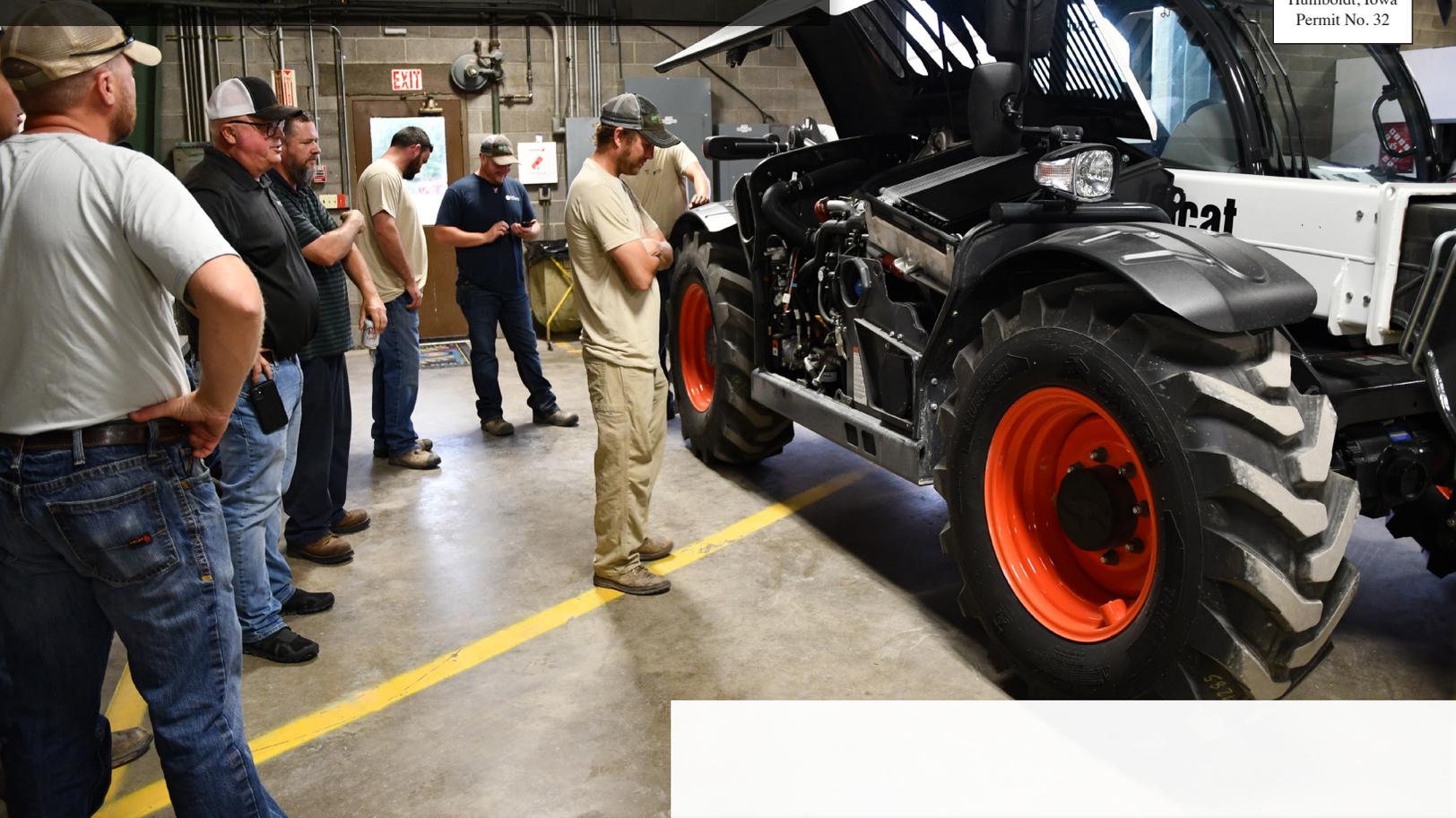
Following the meeting at the board's reorganization meeting, officers were elected as follows:

- Marion Denger – President
- Josh Amonson – Vice President
- Donald Christopherson – Secretary/Treasurer
- Allyn Waddingham – Asst. Secretary-Treasurer

For more, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/PrairieEnergyCooperative/>. ■

Corn Belt Power crews learn about the co-op's new Bobcat telehandler during the June 11 safety meeting. The telehandler enhances fork lift safety while loading and unloading increasingly larger loads. Its pole attachment can also move and handle an 80-foot transmission pole.

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**April Touchstone Energy Volunteer Challenge winner | Mark Tuttle**, director, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, donated his \$100 drawing prize to the Masons of Iowa, Pomegranate Lodge 40.

# HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

# 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY

## Ubben earns software certification

Josie Ubben, engineering and operations assistant, Corn Belt Power, recently completed a 20-hour training session in the use of Power Line Systems overhead line design software. The training session included theoretical and practical exercises on many aspects of transmission and distribution line design. Congratulations, Josie!



## Corn Belt Power Cooperative

# Watts Watt

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