

# POWERLINES

POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, DECEMBER 2018

May your days be merry and bright!



## Co-op enhances community safety with \$694,880 zero-interest loan for new Alden Fire Station

by Board President Ed Gullickson

Construction of a new fire station means that safety and peace of mind will be a lot closer to home for families in the Town of Alden. Helping to finance the new station is a \$694,880 zero-interest pass-through loan from Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative, via the U.S.

Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) program.

The new station will improve fire, rescue and first-response service for local residents and is part of Allied Emergency Services, a newly formed fire district serving the towns of Osceola, Alden, Garfield and the Village of Dresser.

*"Many of these rural families are co-op members, and we are proud to be a part of this project that looks out for their long-term needs and improves our local quality of life,"* said Polk-Burnett Board President Ed Gullickson. *"The zero-interest loan from Polk-Burnett provides \$350,000 in interest savings for fire district taxpayers and allows us to support our communities far beyond our electric service. We are excited to receive USDA funding for this project; this is an opportunity to make a difference in our community."*

As a cooperative, Polk-Burnett is eligible for USDA loans to support rural economic development; our participation does not impact electric rates for members.

Pictured below at the October 30 groundbreaking are Polk-Burnett Board President Ed Gullickson, General Manager Steve Stroshane and Operations Manager Ed Johansen with members of Allied Emergency Services; representatives from the offices of U.S. Senator Ron Johnson and U.S. Congressman Sean Duffy; project managers from contractor Berghammer Builders; and representatives from Bremer Bank, who is also helping to finance the project. The new Alden Fire Station is scheduled for completion May 15, 2019.



Photo by the Osceola Sun.

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Member owned. Community focused. Reliable service.

## 12 local programs receive \$13,356 from Operation Round Up

Thanks to the generosity and support of co-op members like you, the Luck Fire Department, the library in Webster, two food shelves, and programs for senior citizens and people with disabilities received a financial boost this quarter. Operation Round Up awarded \$13,356 in grants to 12 local programs.

Pictured below: Luck Fire Department and Endeavors Greenhouse in Milltown each received \$1,000.

See all fall Operation Round Up grants on [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com) and learn how your nonprofit can apply!

SMALL CHANGE THAT CHANGES LIVES!





**99.97% RELIABLE**

## Building redundancies into the electric grid

by Operations Manager Ed Johansen

**LESS THAN ONE HOUR WITHOUT POWER PER MEMBER PER YEAR!** That's the target we work toward, and that's the result that puts Polk-Burnett in the top 25% nationwide for reliability. To achieve our reliability goal, we invested \$3.5 million in 2018 to upgrade and maintain 3,000+ miles of power line.

**Re-routing your power:** A significant investment this year has been building redundancies into the electric grid, so if power goes out at the substation or section of line serving your home or business, we can re-route power to you from a different substation. This decreases the duration of the power outage while linemen make repairs. To date, we have added equipment and switches to re-route power at the Luck and Bunyan substations to decrease the duration of power outages for members.

**Short blinks prevent long outages:** Pictured above, co-op linemen installed new reclosers at Bunyan Substation east of Balsam Lake as part of our 2018 work plan. Reclosers are circuit breakers that sense and interrupt faults on power lines. The equipment automatically closes a circuit that's been opened by a fault on the lines, and members may see up to three short blinks. If the fault is temporary, power is automatically restored. (Temporary faults are often caused by wildlife, small branches or lightning.) If the fault is permanent, power shuts down and linemen will be dispatched to repair the damage.

Reclosers and blinks help reduce lengthy power outages, and protect wires and equipment from damage. Polk-Burnett has 500 reclosers throughout the system.

## First notice: Director elections in districts 4, 5 and 6, members invited to apply

Co-op members in districts 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to get involved in co-op decision making by running for the board in May.

Directors serve three-year terms and represent co-op members at monthly meetings. The deadline to apply is March 8, 2019.

For a district map and board election details, visit [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com). To apply, call 800-421-0283, ext. 313.

## Thank you for participating in our email survey, your input helps us improve

We emailed a short survey to 10,000 members in October, asking for your feedback on co-op performance. We received 2,410 surveys back, and all who submitted surveys were entered into a drawing for 10 bill credits.

**Congratulations to the following members who won a \$50 electric bill credit:**

- John & Kristin Linhoff, Webster
- Lawrence & Ellen Ray, Webster
- John & Lorelee Struck, Frederic
- Holly Carley, Balsam Lake
- Shirley Miller, Webster
- Jerry Petersen, Spooner
- Vicki Ericksen, Balsam Lake
- Matthew & Kelsie Henderson, Somerset
- James Keopple, Dresser
- Aloysius Jorgenson, Balsam Lake

The co-op received a rating of 8.79 on a scale of 10 for overall satisfaction and an 8.21 for meeting your expectations. We also received pages of comments.

We appreciate your feedback to learn what's working and what we can do better.

In our survey, members said you'd like a text when your power goes out...

Enroll now on [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com)!

You'll know:

- When the power goes out at your location.
- Estimated restoration, when possible.
  - When power is restored.
- The outage cause, when possible.



### Class of 2019: Win a \$1,250 Polk-Burnett scholarship for college or tech school next fall



45 scholarships will be awarded to children of co-op members who perform community service. Applications are on [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com). Deadline is January 4, 2019.

### Did you make energy efficiency upgrades in 2018? Get co-op rebates before the year ends for...

New appliances, lighting, EV chargers, HVAC and renewable energy systems. Deadline is January 1, 2019.



**IF YOU RECEIVE AN EMAIL SURVEY, WE APPRECIATE YOUR PARTICIPATION TO HELP US IMPROVE.**  
All members who submit a survey will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 bill credit.

Polk-Burnett is your local Touchstone Energy Cooperative. Reliable power with efficiency and extraordinary service.

Like us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter.

800-421-0283 • [polkburnett.com](http://polkburnett.com)



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

