

# The Commonwealth Quarterly

News from around the circuit.

Fall 2018



**Commonwealth Electric Company**  
of the midwest

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## Exciting Staffing Changes in Des Moines

T. Michael Price - Senior Vice President



Michael Duffy

Michael Duffy is making the transition to take over as Branch Manager of our Des Moines location. Michael has been a huge influence in our Des Moines' operation for over 30 years. He has grown into one of our most respected and successful Project Managers. Michael shares my vision of growth, hard work, integrity and ethics, and treating our employees and customers the way we would want to be treated. I am excited to see what his leadership brings to our Des Moines' operation.

In addition, Nate Findlay has been promoted to Senior Project Manager in Des Moines. Nate has also been a huge influence in the Des Moines operation for over twenty years. He will be handling much of the operational duties with our project management and estimating efforts under Michael's direction.

Nate's transition is immediate. However, Michael's full transition will take until the end of the year as he embarks on some training and I assist him in taking on the branch manager role in Des Moines.



Nate Findlay

Please congratulate Michael and Nathan on their promotions and even larger roles in our Des Moines' operation. I have the utmost confidence in both and am excited about our future in Des Moines.

## Apprenticeship Program

Jon Folkers - Business Development & Marketing

Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest, Omaha location had a CW/Apprentice/Cablers Meet & Greet Appreciation Event on Wednesday, August 29th.

We thought this would be a good way to let our Apprentices, Cablers and CW's, know how much they mean to the overall success of Commonwealth Electric's - Omaha office.

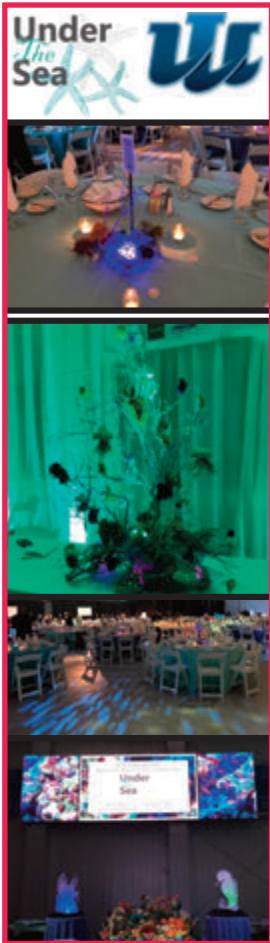
We were pleased to have approximately 50 Apprentices/Cablers/CW's attend the event, with another 20-25 office staff, Project Managers and Management staff attending, showing their support for the group.

Parkers Smokehouse provided the food, while we provided the drinks.

Neil Davidson, Branch Manager, spoke to the group on the promise of the Apprenticeship program. Neil spoke about the importance that all the CW's/Apprentices/Cablers play in our success today, and for future successes tomorrow.

## Black Tie Harvest Event

Jon Folkers - Business Development & Marketing



Commonwealth Electric—Omaha, had the distinct privilege in attending the 2018 Black Tie Harvest for Scholarship Event. This year's theme was: **"Under The Sea"**.

The annual event brings visibility, recognizing friends, and securing resources for college scholarships.

The Black-Tie Harvest is Iowa Western Community College's largest single fundraising event, raising more than 1.9 million dollars during the past 18 years, the Black-Tie Harvest for Scholarships event provides internal scholarship support to IWCC students. With nearly 70 percent of IWCC students qualifying for financial assistance, the need for scholarship support is greater than ever.

Commonwealth Electric attendees: Chris Gall, Clinton Stoffer, Scott Lamoreux & Jon Folkers, were seated with the Facility Director of the new Wellness Center. Chris, Clinton, and Scott are working directly with Brian and his team, on campus security upgrades.

Proceeds from the 2018 Black Tie Harvest will directly benefit the Iowa Western Pottawattamie Promise scholarship fund. Pottawattamie Promise is a joint initiative of Iowa Western, AKSARBEN Foundation, Iowa West Foundation and Peter Kiewit Foundation to improve post-secondary education preparation, access and completion so that students can obtain good jobs, earn competitive wages and contribute to our community.

Each year, the initiative awards full scholarships to select Pottawattamie county graduates. Money raised by the 2018 Black Tie Harvest will provide essential financial support to Pottawattamie "Promise Scholars" as they pursue their educational goals.

Commonwealth Electric is proud to have been part of this fundraising event. We look forward to working with IWCC on future projects.

## Didier's Grocery Expansion

Andy Sueper - Service Manager

Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest, Columbus branch, recently was awarded a project for Didier's Grocery in Schuyler, NE, expanding their current 18,000 sq. ft. facility with an 8,700 sq. ft. addition. Didier's, which is a locally family owned supermarket, opened its doors to a new facility in 1995. Since then many changes have taken place in the facility including an addition of a pharmacy and wine and spirits department that was completed by Commonwealth in 2014.

Supermarkets have been expanding rapidly across the United States due to changes happening in the grocery business because of superstores and discount grocers such as Amazon. Today's family-owned grocery stores provide more services necessary to satisfy today's customers. To accomplish this, Didier's grocery decided to add an addition that would not only provide much needed warehouse space but also an expanded dairy aisle and frozen department.

Our contract is with Bierman Contracting, which is a local contractor that we have collaborated with on several projects within the past few years. The scope of work will include lighting and electrical for a 5,000 sq. ft. warehouse and 3,600 sq. ft. additional retail space that will include retail freezers, a walk-in dairy cooler, bunk coolers, a walk-in freezer and electrical on the existing walk-in coolers.

The project started in June 2018 and will be completed by November of this year.

The estimator/project manager for CECM is Service Manager, Andy Sueper and Landon Braithwait is the General Foreman on the project.

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# Commonwealth Enables B&G Foods to Go Wireless

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**Kevin McCarty - Low Voltage Project Manager**

In June, Commonwealth Des Moines began the process of transitioning B&G Foods' entire plant to be covered by wireless network capability. B&G Foods, formerly known as Tones Spices, is a world leader in spices and seasonings. Today, they hold the title of the oldest spice company in the United States.

B&G Foods relies heavily on their network to manage inventory, product packaging and to direct their automated forklifts. To cover the entire plant inside and out, Commonwealth installed 88 new Panduit Category 6A small diameter cables throughout the plant. "Wash down" areas were located throughout the inside of the plant which required technicians to install the cabling in conduit. The installation of a smaller diameter cable made this process much more efficient. This also allowed technicians to use smaller conduits and have more cables in one conduit; subsequently saving on both labor and material. At the antenna end of the cable, technicians were able to use Panduit's new Category 6A field terminated RJ45 plug. These plugs connect directly to the antennas eliminating the need for a data jack, surface mount box, and a patch cord from the jack to the antenna. Ultimately, this allowed technicians to save time and cut down on any possible points of failure.

David Vanderhorst was the Low Voltage Foreman for this project. David did a great job of working in a hectic and live plant environment without any issues. Austin Pruitt, a second-year Low Voltage Apprentice, assisted David throughout the project. Austin was responsible for all the data cabinet terminations with 87 out of 88 jacks being accurately terminated and tested. This is considered an accomplishment for a seasoned technician, let alone a second-year apprentice. Commonwealth's Fiber Technicians, Jake Belcher and Skyler McDuffey-Valdez, were responsible for terminating the fiber in the new data cabinets and the data center. As always, Jake and Skyler were extremely efficient and effective in their terminations and testing; coining the nickname of "fiber ninjas".

Lee Beck was Commonwealth's lead Electrician for the project. Lee installed all the conduit for the cable and bonded the data new cabinets. Lee has been B&G's chosen electrician for quite some time. His knowledge and expertise of plant operations and his relationship with plant employees proved to be a key advantage during this project.

At the end of September, B&G's IT department officially cut over to the newly installed network. When the B&G Project Manager was asked if B&G needed to have a Commonwealth technician onsite during the cutover in case there were any issues, the B&G Project Manager replied, "No, we never have hiccups with Commonwealth; that's why we use you."

Another great installation by a great Commonwealth team!



Photo: David VanderHorst, Low Voltage Foreman, (left) and Austin Pruitt, Low Voltage Apprentice (right) at B&G Foods

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## Omaha's Summer Picnic

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**April Samuelson - Assistant Office Manager**

The Omaha office had their annual summer picnic for employees and families. We once again rented out Papiro Fun Park for a fun afternoon of go-karts, laser tag, putt-putt golf, batting cages, face painting, wax hands, arcade games and great food from Tim's Wild West BBQ. This is always a nice time to bring the field and office employees together to show our appreciation for their hard work. And the weather was perfect for some fun in the sun!

## Verizon Small Cell Wireless Project

Micah Edson - Project Manager

Verizon Wireless partnered with the City of Lincoln for the city's first "small-cell" wireless project. Commonwealth Electric was brought onboard early in the planning stages and continued to pursue the project for the past couple of years. The project finally got off the ground at the beginning of this year.



The project design essentially replaces existing street light poles and foundations with specially made poles supporting various wireless antennas and radios. A new fiber transport system deployed by Unite Private Networks provides the communication to each site. The first phase called for 30 of these poles to be installed in the downtown and Haymarket areas. As these small-cell poles come online wireless speeds and capacities will be boosted to improve Verizon's local surrounding services. AT&T, Sprint, and other wireless providers are also looking to establish small-cell networks in Lincoln.



Foreman Paul Hoegemeyer and his team are now nearing completion of this first phase led by Unite Private Networks and Pierson Wireless. Commonwealth looks forward to continuing this partnership when the next phases are released. A big thank you to the team for another safe and successful project!

## Morgan Stanley - Building 3 Tenant Improvement

Joe Wall - Director of Business Development

CECM Phoenix recently secured the Morgan Stanley Building Three Tenant Improvement build out project. Building Three is just one of several buildings located on the Morgan Stanley Campus in Gilbert, Arizona.

Our contract is with Caliente Construction Inc. This is our first project with this general contractor in several years. We are in the process of looking at several other projects with Caliente and look forward to building an ongoing and lasting relationship.

The building is over 64,000 sq. ft. and the tenant improvement portion is approximately 32,681 sq. ft. There is also a masonry enclosure that will house two new emergency power backup generators and applicable electrical gear and accessories.

The T.I. will be based around a Call Center set up and the scope of work will include and require the construction of new office space, training rooms, a secured vault, bathroom facilities, private offices, conference rooms, break rooms and storage. There will be new electrical upgrades with state of the art LED lighting with energy saving controls throughout. This will include new distribution, transfer switching, and a new UPS System.

The project started in March of 2017 and the completion date is set for October 15, 2018.

The estimator for this project is Rich Scheuermann. The project manager for CECM is our Senior project manager, John Silvas.

Our Field Operation's Manager, Jason Turner, has selected Ian Boggs as the field superintendent.



# Safety Award

Ruben J. Bera - Corporate Safety Director

Congratulations to all the team members of Commonwealth Electric. We have been awarded the insurance carrier's highest safety award for the third time. This is a great achievement! This award reflects our commitment to work site safety. It demonstrates to everyone, customers, internal customers and potential customers, our commitment to provide all employees a safe work environment. No job at Commonwealth is without issues that could cause someone to be injured. Having the knowledge and tools to get the job done safely is priority #1.

Having the necessary tools is one thing, being committed to do the right thing is a core value that you, our employee, demonstrates to everyone every day. Safety starts at the top and must be supported by upper management. The management of Commonwealth Electric have supported our efforts from day one. They fully understand the impact a poor safety record can have on business. CECM is known for our excellent safety record and the support behind it.

I've said many times, awards are nice to receive. It's nice to be recognized by our customers and peers. But the biggest award is everyone going home safe to families and friends and knowing the job got done with skilled and knowledgeable workers who truly believe in safety. Without you, our employees, believing in our safety mission these awards would not be possible. Everyone deserves a big pat on the back.



Commonwealth Electric Company Safety Program  
Promote it, Sell it, be Proud of it!

# Yorame Mevorach Art Studio

Andrew Lawrance - Project Manager



Foreman Brad Ramsey and 5th year Apprentice Connor Findlay will be running this successful project for us.

This project will consist of a new electrical service, movable LED panels that will dissect the space, a stage and sound system, a digital cyclorama and exterior LED panels. This may not be a large project but will definitely be a fun and rewarding project.

Commonwealth Electric Des Moines has received the opportunity to work with new clients as our Management Staff has changed. We secured a private art studio design assist project with Holcomb Corporation. Holcomb has been a long time partnering general contractor with Project Manager Kelly Reames and myself. We are excited to bring them onboard.

Yorame Mevorach is a world renowned digital artist whose art is displayed around the world. He is known for his works with Christian Dior specifically. Yorame owns a residence in a historic neighborhood in Des Moines and wanted to have an art workshop for his use while in Des Moines.

We have begun the underground portions of the project so far and look to be completed shortly after the first of the year. Our Project

## What It Means to be an Owner

**Cathy Maddox - HR/Benefits Administrator**

If you have some stock in Apple or General Electric, you're legally an owner of the company. But you don't have the usual rights associated with business ownership. You can't tell anyone who works there what to do. You can't even walk into one of their facilities without an invitation. All you can do is vote for the board of directors, receive dividends (if there are any), and sell your stock if you choose to do so.

Ownership through an ESOP is a little different. ESOP participants may or may not have a say in electing the company's board of directors. (Usually they do not.) They can receive dividends, but they can't sell their shares until they retire or leave the company – and even then, they must sell them back to the company. Of course, they still can't tell anybody else what to do just by virtue of being an owner.

*But there's one major difference between employee ownership and other kinds of ownership.*

If a company is owned in the usual way, by the founding investors or by absentee stockholders, the board and management are accountable to those owners. They must make big decisions with investors' interests in mind. If laying people off or holding down wages will produce higher profits, they have to give those options serious consideration.

At a company that's substantially or wholly owned by an ESOP, the board and management face different incentives. To be sure, they always must do whatever they believe will assure a healthy profitable business. But, a layoff, for example, is likely to be the last resort rather than the first. And before they close a branch or move production overseas, they may explore other possibilities, like developing new products. They are also much more likely to create a culture of ownership, enabling employees to learn about the business and make more of the everyday decisions that determine how the work is done.

October is National Employee Ownership Month, and the CECM Communications Committee has planned a full month of celebrating being an ESOP. Be watching for pictures in the next newsletter, highlighting all the fun the company has created!

Some members of the CECM Communications Committee recently attended the Midwest ESOP Conference held in Chicago while other members attended a conference in Des Moines earlier in the year. Committee members have used the information gathered to plan numerous activities in the year ahead! We will be highlighting those activities in future issues of this newsletter.

## Prairie Village Retirement Center – Columbus, NE

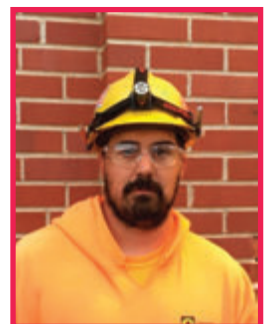
**Dusty Romshek - Project Manager**

Commonwealth Electric Columbus Branch has teamed up with Sampson Construction on a renovation and addition to Prairie Village Retirement Center in Columbus, NE. Prairie Village Retirement Center is a non-profit retirement center that offers both assisted and independent living apartments. With the new additions Prairie Village will become a 72 bed, 89,000 sq. ft. facility. Along with the addition, many areas of the existing facility will be restructured and remodeled. Total construction costs for this project are just over \$6 million.

The general foreman on this project for Commonwealth is Levi Stutzman. Levi has been with Commonwealth for over 14 years and is one of our top general foreman in Central Nebraska. He has a wide variety of industrial and commercial experience. This project is a bit unique for both Levi and Commonwealth because it is wood frame construction. Initially the project called out for all raceways to be EMT conduit. After multiple attempts we were able to get MC cable approved for all our branch wiring. This will provide a substantial savings in labor hours.



Front row: Skye Graham, Phoenix; Cathy Maddox, Lincoln Corporate; LeAnn Whitehead, Phoenix Expo  
Second row: Cheryl Keyes, Omaha; Micah Edson, Lincoln Branch; Brian Lund, Omaha; Nick Page, Lincoln Corporate



Levi Stutzman