

The Commonwealth Quarterly

News from around the circuit.

Summer 2020



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Electric Company
of the midwest**

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100% Employee Owned

Kristin Callan – Marketing Coordinator

Commonwealth Electric Company of the Midwest is excited to announce that as of March 31st, 2020, we are officially 100% employee owned.

This is such an exciting achievement for the company and would not have been possible without the hard work and determination of our great employees. As we've said before and we will say forever, our people are our greatest asset.

It is incredibly important to note this great achievement affects every Commonwealth employee, including our Union employees. Without the exemplary work and service of our field employees, Commonwealth would simply not be Commonwealth. Like any company, we have a supportive overhead staff that ensures this company continues to grow and flourish. But without our field staff – our electricians, foremen, service workers and everyone in between – we would not be able to accomplish our goal: to provide exemplary and professional work with a fierce commitment to excellence. The people willing to work with dirt on their hands and sweat on their brow are the foundation – and the majority – of this great company, and at the end of the day, we would not be successful without them. And while they are not able to participate in our ESOP plan, we cannot congratulate ourselves without recognizing these individuals.

Whether you're in the ESOP or not, there are still many benefits to working for an employee owned company. ESOP companies have been proven to be more profitable than competitors. As the company has higher profits, this creates more work for our tradespeople. Beyond the financial benefits, an ESOP has instilled a companywide culture of shared responsibility, mutual respect, and commitment to improve and grow our company with each workday. Everyone has some skin in the game. This has translated into higher levels of productivity, marketplace success, employee retention, and at its core: pride in being an owner.

Commonwealth began this journey in January of 2017, but it was always the hope and dream of Tom Price, one of the four original owners of the company, to become 100% employee owned. Unfortunately, at that time, selling the company to the employees just wasn't possible. However, several years later when the idea resurfaced, the three remaining owners, Pat, Dave, and Glen, were in favor of the idea.

The process began with immediately buying 60% of the company shares, for a majority stake in the company. In just three short years, Commonwealth bought out the remaining shares to become 100% employee owned. This process, with great amounts of focus and ambition, was completed years ahead of schedule.

This achievement could not have been accomplished without the support of our great employees and Employee Ownership Committee. They are instrumental to the success of the Commonwealth's stock ownership plan, through educating employees on the employee stock ownership plan, ensuring that employees are aware of his or her contribution to the success of Commonwealth, organizing ESOP-related activities, and attending ESOP conferences to ensure that the company is constantly informed.

Again, thank you so much to all of our employees – ESOP participants and Union workers alike – for their support and service for Commonwealth. Though our celebrations have been cut short due to COVID-19, we are still so proud of everyone and hope they share this feeling of accomplishment. The future of this company is incredibly bright, and though we've come so far, we have so far to go.

**COMMONWEALTH
ELECTRIC COMPANY**
100% Employee Owned

Children's Hospital Renovates 3rd & 4th Floor

Jon Folkers - Business Developer & Marketing Manager & **Troy Deats** - Sr. Project Manager

Commonwealth Electric – Omaha, NE was hired recently to perform a project at Children's Hospital, 84th & West Dodge Road, in Omaha, NE. We worked under the guidance of our General Contractor, JE Dunn, and delivered the electrical portion of the 3rd and 4th floor renovation project.

We are in the process of completing phase one of a two phase project. Phase 1 consisted of the renovation of the 3rd floor while delivering a new Helmet lab and waiting room. The 4th floor is home to the pavilion pediatric offices, patient rooms and conference room areas. The 3rd and 4th floor renovations included a new fire alarm system, new lighting, power and lighting controls. Phase I will be completed May 22nd, 2020 with phase II to follow in mid-October.

Our Project Manager was Troy Deats, while John Pettis provided the on-site presence as our Foreman. John, and his team, did a good job of delivering a quality product. The schedule requirements for these 3rd and 4th floor renovations were fast paced. John, and his team, did a good job of adhering to a tight schedule, delivering a quality project and strengthened relations to Children's Hospital and to our General Contractor, JE Dunn.

Our team was committed to the project and understand that their efforts will help our customer, Children's Hospital, enhance the overall operations of the Pediatric Pavilion. JE Dunn and Children's Hospital were pleased with our performance and provided us with positive feedback regarding our planning abilities, providing the correct personnel for a successful job, and staying ahead of the fast-paced work-schedule. We were encouraged by the outcome of this project, and we look forward to working with both companies on future projects.



Children's Hospital

Phoenix Small Projects Staying Strong

Jon Imada - Project Manager, Phoenix

Many of us have spent the last couple months wondering when we can return to the office, how to homeschool our kids, or even where to buy toilet paper. But despite all the uncertainty, the Phoenix market hasn't skipped a beat, and our small projects are continuing to add up.

We currently have several projects running at area hospitals. These hospital projects range from small improvements to radiology labs, to a new telepresence video theatre with stadium seating and state of the art lighting controls, and even a full renovation of the rehabilitation gym at the Muhammed Ali Parkinson Center, serving those affected by movement disorders.



Eller Telepresence

Our newest project is with E.T. Environmental, a great customer we've partnered with many times doing explosionproof work at CNG plants for Waste Management and Southwest Gas. At the Waste Management Deer Valley Transfer and Recycle Station, a 20,000 S.F. expansion is getting underway. This expansion marks the first major upgrade to the facility in years. With a much-needed upgrade to the electrical infrastructure and new LED building and site lighting, this facility will be anything but trashy.

As the City of Phoenix continues growing, we expect CECM Phoenix to follow that trend making this a great year for our customers, employees, and our Company.

UnityPoint Health Blank Star and Development Center

Ashley Huinker – Project/Safety Coordinator

The Des Moines office is proud to announce the completion of the UnityPoint Health Blank Star and Development Center. This new facility is located off campus in West Des Moines from its prior home at Blank Children's Hospital within Iowa Methodist Medical Center. The new "from ground-up" building is two-story and approximately 29,000 square feet with additional 2nd floor shell space for future expansion. Construction began in June of 2019 and wrapped up in February of 2020. The scope of work for this project consisted of a new electrical distribution, LED interior and exterior lighting, low voltage lighting controls, voice/data system, camera system, surveillance and intercom systems, card access and a complete fire alarm system.

The Blank Star and Development Center houses two specific areas of healthcare. The STAR (Support Teams for Achieving Resiliency) Center is a unique community center designed to be child and adolescent friendly and trauma sensitive. To fulfill its mission, the STAR Center houses a Child Advocacy Center, focusing on cases of potential abuse and neglect, as well as three specialized clinics designed to meet the needs of children and their caregivers. This includes the Drug Endangered Children Clinic, the Growth and Nutrition Clinic and the Foster Care Clinic.

The Development Center focuses on and provides specialized care for infants and children experiencing developmental, learning or behavioral problems. The Development care team and physicians take a close look at the medical and psychosocial aspects of development and behavioral problems to offer appropriate intervention and treatment options unique and personalized for each child. In addition, the Development team follows babies who have been patients in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and provides care to any experiencing problems with vision, hearing, communication, behavior or delays in mental or motor development.

The CECM management team consisted of Travis Powell as Project Manager, Clint Bailey as Low Voltage Project Manager, and Dianna Merritt and Ashley Huinker as Project Estimators/Coordinators. Trevor Schmidt was the electrical foreman for the project. Trevor's experience and supreme attention to detail was an asset during this fast-paced and detail-specific project. Joe Schaff, Low Voltage Foreman, was also a vital part of this team's success. Joe's leadership and great work ethic were able to keep the low voltage team focused and productive.

Commonwealth was thrilled to work with Edge Commercial, general contractor, on the construction of the Blank Star and Development Center. This particular project was near and dear to Commonwealth's heart as it was funded and spear-headed by the UnityPoint Health Foundation, whom Commonwealth has worked so closely with on Blank Children's Hospital Festival of Trees and Lights over the years. Commonwealth, Edge and UnityPoint Health have been fortunate to forge such an incredible and lasting relationship throughout so many UnityPoint Health projects.

The Des Moines office is proud to have been part of such an amazing project for Blank Children's Hospital. The help and care this new facility will be able to provide for so many children and families of Iowa is extremely important to us and why we strive to work so hard at what we do.



Blank Star and Development Center



Clint Underwood, 5th Period Apprentice, with UnityPoint Health Foundation members Rachel and Alissa

Those Who Don't Jump Will Never Fly

Scott Ragland – Automation Manager



James Henshaw

James Henshaw has been with Commonwealth Electric - Lincoln since 2008. Currently James is working in Technical Services. While taking on the many service calls and putting out fires for many of our customers in manufacturing, James also works with automation and controls. James helps create and troubleshoot a variety of automated controls.

James's wife Kerri, five sons Tyler age twenty, Josh and Colin eighteen, Alex and Landon are four, and a daughter Addison that is thirteen.

James enjoys Skydiving, Teaching, and Automated Controls.

James is a Skydiving coach. Being a coach, he takes students up for freefall jumps to complete their "A" License requirements. To reach freefall jump status a student must have a minimum of five jumps under their belt and be cleared by an instructor for freefall. James's responsibility is to make sure his students gear is correct, and a jump plan is in place. Another part of a coach's responsibility is to observe and teach the student how to do things such as exits, adjusting fall rates, forward and backwards movements.

James has been jumping out of airplanes for thirteen years. He carries a class "C" license. To hold one of these licenses the jumper must have a minimum of two hundred jumps. James currently has three hundred forty-five jumps under his belt. When asked what drove James to do more jumps, he said after my first jump I said, "I have to do this again". One of the jumps he likes to talk about is one where he used a "para-commander" military style canopy. After hitting the ground using the para-commander, he separated two ribs.

Another of James's passion is teaching. James is an instructor for the IBEW. He has been teaching the fourth-year apprentices for three years full time and two years part time. A lot of the teaching revolves around getting them experience with motors, motor controls, and PLCs. When asked, James says he enjoys it when a student gets it. He likes the moment that they understand because he can see the satisfaction in their face.

As a part of Commonwealth Electric, we are excited to have James as part of the technical services team. His dedication and expertise make him an asset to Commonwealth Electric.

Welcome to the CECM Family, Deb Miller

Bill Schaff – Project Manager



Deb Miller

The Des Moines location is excited to announce a new face in our office. Deb Miller has joined our team as a Project Accountant. Her role will focus primarily on the various Facebook projects. Deb comes to us with over 15 years of industry experience and brings a wealth of knowledge with her. She is always willing to learn and brings fresh ideas to the table.

One fun fact about Deb is her family fosters dogs from a local rescue group. One just had puppies!

Also, in her free time she enjoys target shooting and riding her Harley. Welcome to the CECM Family, Deb! We are glad to have you!

“Biggest Loser Challenge Builds Comradery, Competition and Great Results to Omaha Branch”

Jon Folkers – Business Development & Marketing

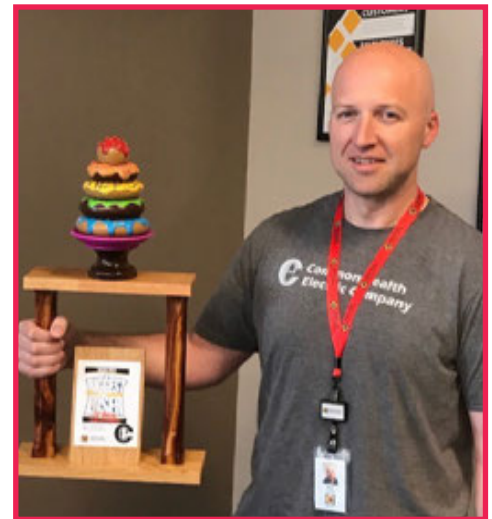
Omaha, NE – This was the second year that our Omaha office held a Biggest Loser Challenge. This year, we extended the challenge to 15 weeks, from our previous year’s 12-week challenge. We had 15 employees competing for the chance to be called the “2020 Biggest Loser Champion”.

Each participant joins this yearly event for various reasons. Some join because they enjoy the comradery of the event, while others want to fit into their clothes better, with the opportunity to buy new clothes. Regardless of why each team member joins the event, it was clear to see that each member enjoyed the challenge and the competition was fierce.

Jody Boeckman was crowned the Biggest Loser Champion, Clinton Stoffer was a close 2nd and Fay Klock was 3rd. These 3 contestants lost a combined total of 120lbs in 15 weeks! Congratulations to Jody, Clinton and Fay and to the remaining 12 competitors who made this event a successful challenge. They have set the mark for the rest of us who may want to master our own weight loss challenge.

The winner of the 15-week challenge is determined by the contestant with the highest percentage of weight loss over the duration of the event. Weigh-ins were done individually each Monday morning. Contestants posted their own weight for the day on a leaderboard. The contestant with the highest % of weight-loss for each week won a \$10 gift certificate. During the contest, 7 different contestants won the weekly challenge, which meant along with the \$10 gift card for the week, they also earned an additional chance to win a \$100 gift card raffle at the end of the 15-week contest.

The Biggest Loser Champion won a \$100 gift card and a hand-made trophy. Jody will sign the trophy and keep it in his office for a year, with hopes to retain it after next year’s challenge.



Jody Boeckman - 2020 Biggest Loser Weight Loss Champion

Competition Numbers

15	Number of Contestants who Participated in the Competition
120	# of lbs. Lost by the Top 3 Participants
4.83	Average % of Weight-Loss for the Group
7	# of Contestants that Won Highest % of Weight Loss for a Week



Working Through a Pandemic

Harley Wilson – Service Manager

In a time when it seems like our world has been turned upside down, it's important to acknowledge the people and teams that rise to the occasion and take care of business. The Des Moines Service Team has done exactly that.

Our team, while taking the necessary precautions and maintaining the highest level of safety, has moved forward and worked through every obstacle this pandemic has thrown at us. There have been no hesitations for getting the job done and taking care of our customers.

One example is Des Moines Water Works. When DMWW needed power for an RV Park Command Center they were setting up, our team was there within the hour to help make that happen. This gave DMWW the ability to keep a team on-site and quarantined, in order to protect the operation that delivers clean water to the city.

This is only one of the many instances in which our service electricians do what they need to do and do it to the high standards Commonwealth Electric prides itself on. I'm thankful for the opportunity to share this and thank the entire Service Team here in Des Moines.



Des Moines Service Team (L-R) Drew Schmidt, Tom Washington, Chase Kohler, Cole Hyler, Cory Schmidt, Dave McQuiston, Kevin Day, Danielle Thompson, Jeff Hutchison, Mark Hollingworth, Harley Wilson (Not Pictured – Mike Ertl)

Not Today COVID-19

Kalee Findlay – LV Project Coordinator



(left to right): Gabe Coco, Matt Kirby, Joe Schaff, David Vander Horst, Tony Nizzi, Derek Smith, Kay Mealey, Jake Belcher, Lindsay Leslie, Rae Lenz, Ryan Bettcher, Curtis Wheeler, Timothy Bettcher

In Des Moines, COVID-19 has not stopped the Commonwealth Low Voltage Team. This group has continued working hard to serve their customers in the best way possible. We currently have a total of 13 field employees that are working diligently, despite the circumstances over these past couple of months.

This is a tribute to the field employees pictured below. Without them we would not be successful in maintaining long-term relationships with our customers. These team members have been successful in serving many customers over the past couple of months including; UnityPoint Health, Wells Fargo, Camp Dodge, Graceland University, City of Des Moines, Des Moines Airport, Multiple Dollar Tree locations around the State, Data Center work, Greenhill Apartments along with many others.

Thank you to the Commonwealth Low Voltage team for all that you continue to do!

(M.U.D.) Metropolitan Utilities District Receives and Electrical Upgrade at Florence Low Service Pump Station

Jon Folkers – Business Developer & Marketing Manager and Adam Brumbaugh, P.E.



Omaha, NE: Commonwealth Electric was awarded the MUD Florence Low Service Pump Station project. Hawkins Construction Company was the general contractor who chose CECM to manage this 2-phase project. The project consisted of a complete remodel to their existing electrical distribution system at the Florence Plant.

The project had to be done in 2 phases, because they are required to have 3 of their 6 pumps operational at any time. These pumps provide North Omaha and the Florence community with fresh drinking water.



Commonwealth had to ensure that our sequence of operations matched the production expectations of M.U.D. It was critical that the overall production efforts of the Low Service Pump Station, did not interrupt the fresh-drinking water needs of the city.

Phase I of this project started in January 2020 and will be up and running by the end of this September. Immediately following Phase I, we will start the demo on Phase II. The second half of this project has a planned completion date of January 2021. The 2-phase project is currently on schedule and will have a complete run-time of 1 year, from start to finish.



The upgrades will make the plant more efficient, reliable and help to create a more robust sequence of operations for their Low Service Pump personnel. The improved electrical capacity and maintenance functions of the plant will enhance the monitoring and daily controls for the Florence facility.

Our team for this project consisted of Adam Brumbaugh, P.E. – Project Manager; Josh Kreifels – Foreman, and Ron Castro – Field Operations Manager, along with several field electricians.



Adam, Josh, Ron and their team of electricians had to meet the needs and expectations of our customer M.U.D. Taking an older plant and upgrading it to current technology is no easy task, but our CECM team was committed to making this happen. They displayed flexibility, efficiency and organization while providing our customer with creative and innovative solutions for M.U.D.'s Low Service Pump upgrade.

We look forward to the completion of Phase I and the start to Phase II. We value our relationship with M.U.D. and CECM will continue to live our values with each project that we perform for them.

Traffic Upgrades to Major Intersections Help Omaha Travelers Reach Destinations Quicker

Gil Stensrud – Line Crew Division Manager



Commonwealth Electric Omaha was hired by the city of Omaha to work on their Automated Traffic Signal Project. The new automated systems will be able to make an adjustment to the lights, based on the demand of traffic flow.

Our crew was tasked with automating the traffic signals on 84th street from Center Street to the Highway 370 corridor. Our work started at 84th & West Center Road and continued to work south on 84th Street, while making changes to every major intersection along the way to Highway 370 in Papillion, NE. This 7-mile stretch, between Center Street to Highway 370 is technically state Highway 85 and was one of the corridors picked due to the high traffic demand, reliability, and known fluctuations in traffic.

Our crew had to first shutdown all power to the intersection they were working on. Our crew, headed by Superintendent, Rick Brock, had to ensure his team would not interrupt the flow of traffic, always remain safe, and stay on schedule with the installation of the new automated signal control traffic signals.

Safety was a huge concern on this project. Imagine yourself in a boom that is hovering over a busy intersection with no lights to inform oncoming traffic when to stop or when to pass through the intersection. Now imagine getting yelled at from the guy who is running late for a meeting. This is the kind of atmosphere our crew had to perform day in and day out.

The project we performed was extensive and consisted of the following upgrades to various aspects of the City's traffic signal system including:

- **Traffic Signal Controller Equipment:** Existing traffic signal cabinets were replaced with a larger size cabinet. The traffic signal cabinets received new components, including new controllers.
- **Vehicle Detection:** Sensors which detect the presence of vehicles at intersections will be replaced at most intersections with more reliable technology.
- **Traffic Signal Management Software:** Each traffic signal controller will have new software installed that allows the implementation of new features and provides more flexibility for City staff to operate traffic signals efficiently.
- **Traffic Signal Heads:** New flashing yellow arrow signal heads will be installed when applicable to allow for safer and more efficient operations of permitted left turns at intersections.
- **Communication System:** Higher band-width will allow for real-time and consistent communication from the traffic signal equipment to a central monitoring system.
- **Battery Back-Up System:** Major intersections will be equipped with a system of batteries to provide back-up power which will keep the traffic signal in service in the event of utility outages and/or power spikes.



The use of the Adaptive Signal Control Technologies for this project was new to us and new for the city of Omaha. So why the change? A typical traffic signal in the city of Omaha will operate using one of three timing plans based on the time of day: (AM rush hour, PM rush hour and off-peak hours).

Using Adaptive Signal Control Technologies, in conjunction with well-engineered signal timing, can determine which lights should be red and which should stay green. ASCT will also help to improve travel time by more than 10 percent. Areas with outdated signal timing can see improvements up to 50 percent or more.

Adaptive signal control technologies are also kinder to the environment. Using ASCT, eliminating long wait lines at red lights, the ability to reduce emissions of hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide will occur due to improved traffic flow.

This traffic project started April 2019 and was completed in September 2019. Although this project is completed, we are in the process of working on two other ASCT projects for the city. They are:

- 132nd & Dodge Traffic Control
- 144th & Dodge Traffic Control

Rick and his crew live our Core Value of MASTERY. They are committed to excellence by being the absolute best at what they do. It is in their core to excel. As a casual observer, I have seen up-close that each member of the line-crew understands their role. Communication is good and decisions are made quickly to ensure the project progresses. They strive to meet the expectations of our customer, and by doing so, they meet the expectations they have of themselves.