New year bringing changes

By Greg Goetz

As Alfalfa Electric Cooperative says goodbye to 2016 and welcomes in 2017, we reflect on all the changes over the past year. One of the biggest surprises was the resignation of our CEO Colin Whitley. Colin did a very good job as CEO for AEC but had an opportunity to take a job closer to his family. As a result, I was promoted to fill the position of CEO in September. Although I have held several different positions during my career here at AEC, this was the biggest change. Being CEO is challenging and rewarding at the same time, but being surrounded by a remarkable staff, employees, and Board of Directors makes this a fantastic position to be in and a wonderful place to work.

Another big story for 2016 was the decline in the oil and gas industry. I hesitate to say “bust” because AEC is still serving a lot of oilfield load. Over the past several years this has provided a huge economic boost to many businesses and individuals throughout Oklahoma. Our area is also still seeing some drilling activity, and we continue to receive new service requests to serve new load. With oil prices hovering around $50.00 (continued on page 2)
ALTERNATING CURRENTS...

Jim Daub
Manager of Engineering and Operations

Jim was born in Newton, KS, to Sonny and Donna Daub. He moved to Wakita, OK, when he was a freshman and later graduated from Wakita High School. In 1978 Jim began working for AEC as a groundman. In 2 short years, he was promoted to apprentice lineman. After 9 years of working through the ranks, Jim became an area serviceman. In 1998 he became the Supt. of Construction. Twelve years later, Jim was AEC’s Director of Operations. This past year, Jim was promoted to Manager of Engineering and Operations. Through all these titles, he has enjoyed working with his fellow employees and the members of AEC.

Jim married his high school sweetheart, Pat. They raised 3 daughters Abby, Tricia, and Molly. Jim and Pat have 9 grandkids with 2 more on the way in March. Jim recently became the proud owner of Dixie, a yorkie puppy.

When Jim is not attending his grandkids activities, he enjoys feeding and watching the birds in his back yard. Jim has quite a collections of giraffes, too – stop by his office sometime. He loves his OSU Cowboys and OKC Thunder. Jim is an avid reader, mostly non-fiction. He is also AEC’s weather buff. Jim and Pat enjoy traveling and hope to vacation in Alaska someday.

Jim’s dad Sonny has inspired him to work hard. Sonny was an example of how to live life to the fullest and still is today. Jim is proud of turning his life over to the Lord – something I am sure made Sonny proud, too.

(continued from page 1)

I believe we will continue to see some moderate growth in our area.

The older you get, the faster time goes by. This is a familiar saying, but as we do get older that saying really does ring true. Even though this past year has flown by, we have been preparing for 2017. System maintenance continues to be a priority. Our in-house pole inspection program targets 6,000 poles to be inspected and results in approximately 1,000 poles changed out each year. Along with that, Mother Nature always lends a hand with thunderstorms, ice storms, and high winds that break off poles and cause other damage.

AEC is also working towards installing a new dispatch center this coming year. This will include a large live wall map that will show the entire system and will highlight outages. This new dispatch center will be a tremendous help during large outage situations such as the 2015 ice storms. AEC is also in the process of building a new office and warehouse for AEC Services. This project included the purchase of two older buildings that needed to be torn down and cleaned up. The new building will benefit both AEC Services and Alfalfa Electric Cooperative with the additional offices and warehouse space. This endeavor will also improve the appearance for the City of Cherokee’s downtown business district.

Beginning April 1, 2017, Western Farmers Electric Cooperative, who supplies the electricity to AEC, will be implementing a new rate. This will have an effect on some of our large commercial accounts but not our residential, farm, and ranch accounts or our small commercial accounts. I do not expect AEC to make any changes to our rates over the next year. As always Alfalfa Electric Cooperative will strive to provide the best possible service at the lowest possible cost for our members in 2017 and in the years to come.

2017 top resolution

Have you ever hired an electrician to do a whole-house safety inspection? Make it a priority in 2017.

Especially if your home is older, you could be using light fixtures and outlets that are waiting to burn your house down. The components of overhead lights and behind-the-wall wiring don’t last forever. Most homeowners wait until there’s a visible problem—like a spark, smoke or they can’t turn something on—before they call an electrician for help.

A fully licensed and insured electrician can inspect every outlet, wiring, circuits and appliances and let you know what needs fixing or replacing. In some cases, the inspection might come just in time to save your family from a shock, an electrocution or a house fire.

Wintertime is prime time for electrical fires. We run the furnace non-stop; we leave the lights on longer; we take longer hot showers, and we tend to stay indoors. Staying indoors means we watch more TV, cook at home, and give our electronic equipment a workout. As we press our home’s electrical system into overtime, anything that was waiting to go wrong probably will. Make your family’s safety your top New Year’s resolution this year.
AEC does Christmas right

By Robyn Turney

Alfalfa Electric Cooperative does much more than just keep the lights on. It follows the seven cooperative principles which insures that AEC does business in an effective way. In the last 2 ½ years, this retired teacher gone co-op (is that proper grammar?) has observed the operations of your co-op from the inside to the outside. I have witnessed your employees at their finest – doing first class work to assure they give their members the best. The temperatures, the long hours, and the stressful responsibilities don’t affect their performance. But for one night a year, AEC employees and board members, both past and present, bring their families together to celebrate Christmas.

The night began with a word of prayer offered by board member Joe Woods. It wouldn’t be an AEC Christmas party without Sue Fellers playing Christmas songs while the guests enjoyed their buffet-style meal provided by Yur Place. Jason Cloyd and his daughter Kassidy sang a variety of entertaining Christmas songs.

AEC’s favorite Santa Claus (Greg Graham) made his grand entrance. Santa noted what each child wanted for Christmas and also posed for pictures with the children. Linda Warner supplied games for the children – their favorite being the quarter drop.

The Bingo games for prizes and poinsettia plants is always a relaxing treat. CEO Greg Goetz introduced a new game of “Heads or Tails,” which had the group laughing out loud. The winners took home some cash, too.

Terry Ryel presented a game from “Minute to Win It.” Contestants used their skills or possibly their luck to roll ping pong balls down a table into cups for cash prizes. The night was capped off with final games of “Heads or Tails” for more cash.

It was a stress-free, fun-filled night. Sue’s piano playing and Jason and Kassidys’ singing reminded us of the Real Reason for the Season. Santa Claus made both young and old smile. The games were fun and entertaining whether contestants won or not. The AEC Christmas party is nothing fancy, just a night to relax and enjoy the company of friends and family. The next day we are back at work, serving our member in the only way AEC knows – the best way.
Election for two districts

The new year brings a special opportunity for members of Alfalfa Electric Cooperative. This year members in districts 5 and 7 have the chance to file for the position of Trustee. The current District 5 Trustee is Joe Waggoner from Nash, OK. The District 7 Trustee is presently Joe Hise from Cleo Springs, OK.

Potential candidates in these districts must obtain a filing document from the AEC office. Information containing the qualifications needed to be elected to this position is also available at the AEC office. The normal office hours are 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Potential candidates must file the document at the AEC office during the filing period of February 1-10, 2017.

Alfalfa Electric will hold the election for these trustees’ positions at District Meetings. The dates and times will be determined at a later date.

Alfalfa Electric Cooperative provides boundaries for the voting districts of the Board of Trustees which contains, as nearly as possible, the same number of members. The Board of Trustees has established 8 districts to provide representation to the members.

**District 5** That portion of Oklahoma in Garfield and Grant Counties served by Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc. within the following Townships: **Township 23**, Range 8; **Township 24**, Range 6-8; **Township 25**, Range 6-8; **Township 26**, Range 6-8; **Township 27**, Range 6-8; **Township 28**, Range 6-8; **Township 29**, Range 6-8

**District 7** That portion of Oklahoma in Alfalfa, Major, and Woods Counties served by Alfalfa Electric Cooperative, Inc. within the following Townships: **Township 21**, Range 11; **Township 22**, Ranges 11-13; **Township 23**, Ranges 11-14; **Township 24**, Ranges 11-14