

January 2017

## Reflecting on Our Legacy...

### The Night Electricity was turned on in Weissert, Nebraska



#### Custer Public Power District Board of Directors 1947

- Frank J. Haumont, President
- Bryan Holmes, Vice President
- Ira Cool, Director
- Clarence Rodine, Director
- Vance Smith, Director
- M. L. Gould, Director
- Roy Rhodes, Director
- Ivan D. Evans, Project Attorney & Secretary

*Frank Haumont Photo Gallery Courtesy of the Kevin Cookley Family*



## Preparing for Challenges Still Ahead

It always feels good to begin a new year. I have a feeling that 2017 will be both interesting and challenging. I thought it would be good to highlight some of the work we'll be doing this year to help maintain reliability in the system.

One of the things we continue to strive for is safety. Whether that's out in the field or in the office. In 2017, we will continue our efforts to advance a safe working environment. Sometimes I think that we try so hard at safety that people take it for granted and forget how lethal electricity can be.

One of those safety projects involves rebuilding a substation near Merna. The working clearances, while they meet our safety code, are a little tight for the amount of load we have on that substation, so getting in there and rebuilding that substation will help provide a safer work environment.

On the distribution side, we will be replacing some line in the Village of Thedford. That project will help with loading and improve the age of the line. We're still using some of the original lines in the Thedford area and it's time we start updating them.



We will also be doing some underground work south of Merna on the Safranek substation. This will be 3-phase replacement. We will also be building some three phase lines to tie substations together in the Merna area. This will allow us the ability to switch lines around and will help make the system more efficient.

Part of the payback is the reduction of line loss, the reduction in power as it travels over distance. To us, line loss is like the foam on a beer or pop. It costs money when we have a higher line loss. Cutting it means the system will operate more efficiently and at lower cost.



One thing that has impacted our budget is the increase in rejection rates as we do pole testing. Every year you probably see an ad in the paper or get a letter from us saying that our contract pole testing people will be working in your area.

We try to meet the standard testing cycles that the industry has adopted. That means we must test about 5,000 poles per year on a 12 to 15 year cycle to get to all of them.



Over the years the rejection rates have been increasing for a simple reason: our

lines are all getting older. However, last year was one of the first times that the number of rejected poles increased dramatically. Interestingly, rejections from below-ground decay was lower than the rejection due to the pole tops.

To quote a recent Nobel Prize winner about one of the reasons that is so, “The answer is blowin’ in the wind.”

We believe in testing poles because it’s a great way to perform maintenance on our system. That means a larger impact on this year’s budget than in the past, but it also promises lower maintenance costs in the long run.

There’s never a dull moment around here. There’s much work to do and a crew of folks who love to figure out how to do it better year after year. It’s a treat to work with them.

If you have a generator, know how to

## Use Generators Safely

## Safety First!



### Tips for Safe Generator Operation:

Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions.

- ✓ Never connect a standby generator into your home’s electrical system.
  - 1) For a stationary generator – A professional should have installed an approved generator transfer switch, which keeps your house circuits separate from the utility.
  - 2) For a portable generator – Plug your appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator.
- ✓ Set up and run your generator in a well-ventilated area outside the home—out and away from your garage—away from doors, windows, and vents into your home. The carbon monoxide the generator produces is **DEADLY**.
- ✓ Start the generator first—BEFORE connecting appliances.
- ✓ Use a heavy-duty extension cord to connect electric appliances to the outlet on the generator.

When your power goes out, call:

**(888) 749-2453**

# HOMEMADE MINESTRONE SOUP

Author: Little Spice Jar [littlespicejar.com](http://littlespicejar.com)  
Follow Little Spice Jar on Pinterest!  
Serves: 6-8 servings

## Ingredients:

2 cans (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
¼ cup sun-dried tomato pesto (homemade or store-bought)  
1 parmesan rind  
4 cups vegetable stock  
2 cups water  
1 cup carrots, diced  
1¼ cup celery, diced  
1½ cup white onion, diced  
4 - 5 cloves garlic, minced  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
1 sprig rosemary (or ½ teaspoon dried)  
2 bay leaves  
salt and pepper to taste  
1 can (15 oz) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed  
1 can (15 oz) great northern beans, drained and rinsed  
1½ cups zucchini, diced  
1½ cups tubular (ditalini) pasta  
1 cup frozen green beans, thawed  
2½ cups baby spinach, chopped  
Finely shredded Parmesan cheese, for serving (or Romano)

## Instructions:

Add the diced tomatoes, tomato paste, tomato pesto, parmesan rind, vegetable stock, water, carrots, celery, onions, garlic, oregano, rosemary, and bay leaves to a slow cooker. Season with salt and pepper to taste and cook on low heat 6-8 hours or high 3-4 hours.

Add in red kidney beans, great northern beans, zucchini, and pasta and cook on high heat for an additional 20 - 25 minutes until pasta is tender. Stir in the spinach and green beans and cook for an additional 5 minutes until heated through. Serve warm topped with parmesan cheese and garlic toasts.

## Nutritional Facts:

Calories 307, Total Fat 9.8g, Cholesterol 2.5mg, Sodium 469.8mg, Total Carbohydrate 44.2g Dietary Fiber 9.1g, Sugars 6.4g Protein 12.8g

*Carol Fritzier made this recipe and said it is fantastic!*

*Don't be scared off by the long list of ingredients.*



# CUSTER CURRENTS

## Newsletter of the CUSTER PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

Broken Bow, NE - Phone 872-2451  
[www.custerpower.com](http://www.custerpower.com)

Serving Custer, Loup, Blaine, Thomas,  
Hooker, McPherson, Logan and parts of  
Sherman, Garfield, Brown, Cherry,  
Lincoln, and Dawson Counties

## Officers & Directors

Brad Bartak, Merna.....President  
John Blakeman, Merna.....Vice President  
Greg Smith, Milburn.....Secretary  
Brad Howard, Litchfield.....Treasurer  
Tom Roberts, Loup City.....Asst. Treasurer  
Lloyd Ramsey, Broken Bow.....Director  
Wayne V. Licking, Thedford.....Director

## Staff

Rick Nelson.....General Manager  
Tom Knott.....Director of Operations  
and Loss Control  
Cheryl Taylor.....Director of Finance and  
Administration

## Board Meetings

The regular monthly meeting of the Custer Public Power District Board of Directors is on the last Thursday of each month, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the main office in Broken Bow on Hwy. 2.

An agenda for each regular meeting of the board is available for public inspection during business hours.

In the event of matters of an emergency nature or conflicts with other meeting dates, the Board of Directors will set changes. Any change in the monthly meeting date will be posted in the legal notice at the main headquarters building at Broken Bow and at each of the District's area service centers located in Callaway, Sargent, Stapleton and Thedford, Nebraska.