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Renewable Energy Highlighted at Barron Electric's Annual Meeting

More than 700 members and guests attended Barron Electric Cooperative's 79th annual meeting on March 28, where they learned more about Barron Electric's rates, the Community Solar Project, voted on a bylaw amendment regarding director qualifications, and heard about Dairyland Power Cooperative's vision. Barron Electric's General Manager Dallas Sloan remarked, "There will be no rate increase in 2015. This marks the fourth year with no rate adjustment." He told members that Barron Electric's Community Solar Project, Community Rays, is an affordable, turnkey solution for members interested in purchasing renewable energy. The cost of participation in Community Rays is \$3.18 per watt, while a member-owned system may cost twice as much while receiving the same benefit. Community Rays, a 100 kW solar array located at Barron Electric's headquarters, was energized on September 11, 2014 and has produced more than 53,000 kilowatt hours from the sun. Nearly 60 members have purchased units and receive monthly credits for the production of the unit. Contact the Member Services Department if you are interested in how you can receive a monthly credit on your electric bill.

Brian Rude, Dairyland Power's Vice President of External and Member Relations, remarked, "This is the second year with no Dairyland rate increase." He informed members that Dairyland hired a new CEO this year, Barb Nick. Her vision is safety, a diversified generation portfolio, building on Dairyland's financial strength, and growing wisely. He said, "Members want reliable and affordable energy. Today, the typical home has, on average, 25 electric products which must be plugged in or recharged." Because of greenhouse gas concerns, new coal plants are not likely to be built. In the future, Dairyland is looking at generation using natural gas, wind, and solar.

Barron Electric's Board President Selmer Nelson informed members that Barron Electric was in excellent financial condition. He remarked, "A successful cooperative takes teamwork, an engaged membership, a reliable wholesale power supplier, and dedicated employees." Peter Olson, Barron Electric's Supervisor of Finance and Consumer Accounting, reported that the cooperative spent over \$23 million on their wholesale power bill, while margins were \$2.8 million.

Incumbents Arlyn Helm, Larry Kuhl, and Randy Cook were reelected to Barron Electric's Board of Directors representing District 1, District 5, and District 7, respectively. Members passed a bylaw amendment by a show of voting cards, which added the following language to Article IV Board of Directors, Section 3-Qualifications : (d) while a director or during the five years preceding the most recent election, or appointment as a director, was convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving a breach of trust. The following directors were elected to officer positions: Selmer Nelson-President, Lynn Peterson-Vice President, Arlyn Helm-Treasurer, and Barb Holman-Secretary. Michael Baker was elected to serve as director on Dairyland Power Cooperative's Board.
