

Barron Area Phone: (715) 537-3171
Toll Free: 800-322-1008
Fax: (715) 637-1906



Dallas Sloan
General Manager
www.barronelectric.com

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Contact Person: Carrie Baribeau, Marketing Specialist
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Over 850 Members and Guests Attend Barron Electric's 80th Annual Meeting

Barron Electric celebrated 80 years of delivering affordable and reliable electricity at their member's annual meeting on April 9. Congressman Sean Duffy and Senator Janet Bewley both recognized Barron Electric for their 80 years of service. Congressman Duffy expressed his thanks to Barron Electric for taking the lead and keeping him informed on issues facing the electric industry. He said, "This partnership helps me do my job better to assist in keeping your rates low." Senator Janet Bewley presented Barron Electric with an 80th anniversary certificate from Wisconsin's Governor Walker. Barbara Nick, Dairyland Power Cooperative's President and CEO, told members, "Dairyland Power's goal is to diversify their energy mix by building more renewables and shifting from coal to natural gas." Dairyland plans to add 15 solar installations throughout their service territory. General Manager Dallas Sloan discussed Dairyland Power's maintenance projects, including a 1.3 mile water crossing project over the Great Mississippi River. He also emphasized Barron Electric's commitment to worker safety, noting its extensive safety education and training program. He stressed, "Barron Electric's safety record is the second best in the state and has one of the lowest worker compensation rates. These savings contribute to keeping rates low. Barron Electric has gone five years without a rate increase." Board President Selmer Nelson reported to the members, "Our balance sheet shows that our members have contributed almost 42% of the capital required to finance the assets of the cooperative. Outage reports indicate that our reliability is very high with an average of only one and a half hours of outages per member for the entire year."

Incumbents Michael Baker, Lynn Peterson, and Richard Bol were all reelected to three-year terms, representing Districts 3, 6, and 9, respectively. Members had the opportunity to ask questions. One member asked, "Why does Barron Electric give out large rebates to businesses?" General Manager Dallas Sloan explained that these rebates were given to members who have made energy-efficiency improvements in their facilities. He added that rebates are also given to members who make energy-efficiency improvements in their homes. These rebates are funded through Dairyland Power. Another member asked about the security of the electric grid. Barbara Nick, Dairyland Power Cooperative's President and CEO, explained that the grid has redundancy and that there are strict protocols for security.

Leon Comeau of Springbrook was the grand prize winner of the one year of free energy. Kierra Schuebel of Cameron was the kids' grand prize winner of an iPod Touch.
