Perennial NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE
PERENNIAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

October 2026 Vol. 27 No. 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Spotlight on Henderson.

The third of our series on the towns we serve.

Teen Driver Safety.

Teaching teens how to be safe behind the wheel.

Energy for Generations
PERENNIAL™
PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

PerennialNEWS
CONNECTIONS

Brandon Lehman,
Perennial General Manager

Let's Celebrate Public Power

In the first full week of October, Public Power utilities and the communities they serve officially recognize Public Power. This week serves as an opportunity to reflect on the real value of public power for those it serves. We celebrate the unique advantages of locally owned power districts and the dedicated employees who keep the lights on every day.

Public power districts are built on a simple mission: providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. Unlike investor-owned utilities that answer to shareholders, public power districts are accountable to the people they serve. Decisions in the boardroom are made with the community's best interests in mind, ensuring that local priorities remain at the forefront.

Reliability continues to be one of the greatest strengths of public power. Whether facing severe storms, like the March 2025 winter storm, extreme winds, or other unexpected challenges, our employees work hard to maintain service and restore power safely and quickly when outages occur. Their commitment often requires long hours under difficult conditions, all to ensure customers have the electricity they depend on.

Another key advantage of public power is the reinvestment of revenues into the system that serves you. Funds are used to maintain infrastructure, adopt new technologies, enhance system reliability, and support employee training and safety programs. These local investments help ensure that electric service remains dependable not only today but for future generations as well.

Public power is more than electricity. It's neighbors serving neighbors, investing in local communities, and powering opportunities for generations to come.

Here in Nebraska, public power remains a unique and valued tradition. Our state's publicly owned electric utilities have long demonstrated that local control, accountability, and a commitment to service create lasting benefits for consumers and communities alike.

As we celebrate Public Power Week, we extend our sincere appreciation to our customers, employees, directors, and community partners. Together, we continue to build a stronger future powered by reliable service, local leadership, and a shared commitment to our communities.

Public power is more than electricity. It's neighbors serving neighbors, investing in local communities, and powering opportunities for generations to come. That's something worth celebrating.

On Our Cover:

Henderson's welcome sign offers a fitting introduction to this issue's community spotlight.

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Teen driver safety

As a parent, you're in the driver's seat

Parenting teens can be challenging. While some battles aren't worth fighting, protecting your teen behind the wheel is.

And although no one wants to think about teens being in car accidents, it does happen. Protecting your teen behind the wheel is crucial due to their inexperience, which makes them more susceptible to crashes. Car accidents are a leading cause of death for teens in the U.S., with the highest risk in the first year of driving. Common hazards include additional passengers, speeding, drowsy driving, and using phones.

Typically, more than 3,000 people die each year in crashes involving distracted drivers, including teens. Teen drivers often lack the skills and experience needed to avoid fatal crashes, and distractions such as texting can be particularly dangerous. For example, reading a text at 55 mph is like driving the length of a football field with your eyes closed. For this reason, many states have laws against texting, talking on the phone, and engaging in other distractions while driving.

There are three types of driving distractions to discuss with your teen:

- Visual, when you take your eyes off the road.
- Manual, when you take your hands off the wheel.
- Cognitive, when you take your mind off driving.

To prevent distracted driving, teach your teens (and emulate) these tips:

- Do not text while driving.
- Block texts and keep your phone out of sight.
- Avoid eating while driving.
- Use playlists instead of searching for music.
- Set up navigation before driving or have a passenger navigate.

Teen drivers report pressure from families and friends to use phones while driving. Many drivers continue to use phones even when they are aware of the crash risk. Technology can help avoid cell phone use while driving. Use built-in features on your smartphone or cell phone blocking apps to prevent distractions. For the greatest safety benefit, change your phone settings to block hands-free and calls and text messages.

Stay safe around power lines

Ensure your teen knows what to do if they encounter downed power lines: stay in the vehicle, call 9-1-1, and stay at least 50 feet away from the scene if they witness an accident. If they need to exit the vehicle due to smoke or fire, cross arms over their chest and jump out with feet together. Do not touch the car and the ground at the same time. Once out of the vehicle, shuffle or bunny hop with feet together and get as far away as they can.

Make sure they realize that downed lines or other damaged utility equipment can look lifeless and harmless yet still be energized. They do not have to be sparking, moving or sizzling (like you often see in movies) to be energized.

For more safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org and consider downloading a Parent-Teen Driving Agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

PERENNIAL

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

HENDERSON

Our community spotlight series continues with Henderson. Located 3 miles south of Interstate 80 on 93A Spur in York County.

Henderson officially became a customer in late 1999 during a realignment between the Nebraska Public Power District and what was then the York County Rural Public Power District (now Perennial).

Henderson showcases the best of rural Nebraska. From its deep roots as a rail and farming settlement to the vibrant community it is today…

Rich Roots

Henderson was originally settled in 1874 by 35 Mennonite families that had immigrated from Holland to Russia, and then came to the United States. The original 35 Mennonite families survived in an immigrant house that was built by the railroad. You can see a replica of the immigrant house these families all shared at the Henderson Heritage Park. In 1887, the Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley Railroad extended to Hastings, which led to the establishment of Henderson on land sold by Cornelius Regier. Henderson was eventually incorporated in 1899 and named after early settler David Henderson. Despite losing railroad service in 1941, the town thrived through irrigation and manufacturing, doubling its population and expanding its facilities in the 1950s and 1960s.

Parks and Recreation

Henderson has two city parks and a museum. The Downtown City Park is approximately one acre and is located just east of Main Street in the town center. It includes playground equipment, picnic tables, picnic shelter, restrooms, gazebo and a bandstand. The city's largest park is Lakeview Park, located in the southwest part of Henderson on 55 acres. This park is the location of the annual car show, which is held during Community Days in July. This park includes a lake, tennis courts, park shelters, playgrounds, and the town's new swimming pool. The city also has two new ball fields and a sand volleyball court. The lake is surrounded by a mile-long sidewalk, which is five feet wide and is lined with trees and park benches. There are two bridges that arch over the lake. A playground offers many exciting and challenging activities for children of all ages. There is also a 9 -hole golf course, called Galaway Creek Golf Course.

AT A GLANCE

POPULATION: 1,080

LOCATION: 93A; three miles south of I-80

PERENNIAL CUSTOMER SINCE 1999

KNOWN FOR: Henderson Heritage Park, Community Days, Lakeview Park, Heartland Community Schools

A view down Henderson's Main Street

Picnic shelter used for the Farmer's Market in the Downtown City Park

Mural across the street from Heartland Schools

The Henderson Heritage Park is an 8.5-acre site that was homesteaded by Jacob and Anna Friesen, one of the original settlers, on the north edge of Henderson. The site includes a replica building of the original immigrant house built by the Burlington Railroad that housed the first Mennonite settlers in the Area. There is also a Country Mennonite Church built to resemble a typical country church that both branches of the Mennonites built in rural Henderson in the late 1800's. The park also features a turn-of-the-century farmhouse, with a summer kitchen, granary, outdoor oven, windmill, water tower, outhouses, chicken house, and fully restored barn built in 1911. Nestled in the back corner of the park is a metal machine shed housing large pieces of equipment and a shop. The Visitor's Center, called the General Store, is located on Main Street at the park and is an air-conditioned and heated building with public restrooms, office, gift shop, basement storage, and display area. The original District #73E County Schoolhouse is located at the park and is fully restored and available for school field trips and other educational activities. Finally, there is also a replica building of the original Henderson railroad depot, which is filled with railroad artifacts, historical pictures, and equipment.

Small City Pride, Big Traditions

The second weekend of July every year is Henderson Community Days, where the community comes together and celebrates. There are all sorts of activities during Community Days with fun for all ages. Community Days is open to everyone, whether you are from Henderson or anywhere in the world. The community of Henderson enjoys coming together one weekend a year as a community and giving the world a glimpse of what makes the town of Henderson so special.

The Recreation Department, which has a committee made up of volunteers, also helps with an Easter Egg Hunt, the softball/baseball program, and events during Community Days.

The school located in Henderson is Heartland Community Schools. Heartland is made up of the Henderson and Bradshaw communities. For sports, Heartland Community Schools co-ops with Hampton, and they are known as the H & H Bearcats.

Rural Health Care Close to Home

Henderson Health Care just opened a 10,250 square foot clinic to meet the growing healthcare needs of the region. They transitioned from their old clinic to their new clinic on July 10th, opening the doors to patients on July 13th. The facility features 14 patient exam rooms, allowing providers to serve more patients while reducing wait times. Henderson Health Care also offers specialty clinics, senior care, acute care, emergency services, inpatient/observation, outpatient, surgical services, and telehealth services.

A Thriving Local Economy

Over 50 businesses call Henderson home, alongside the many dedicated farmers who cultivate the surrounding land. Some of the major employers driving the local economy include Henderson Health Care, Heartland Community Schools, Circle 5 Beef, and Henderson Irrigation.

Whether honoring its rich history at Heritage Park, gathering for Community Days, or supporting local agriculture and industry, Henderson showcases the best of rural Nebraska. From its deep roots as a rail and farming settlement to the vibrant community it is today, we are proud to serve the homes, schools, and businesses that make Henderson a wonderful place to live, work, and grow.

Henderson Heritage Park

Heartland Public Schools

Powering Tomorrow's Leaders

Perennial sponsored Hayden Powers of Henderson at the annual Nebraska Rural Electric Association (NREA) Youth Energy Leadership Camp, which was held at the Campe Comeca near Cozad on July 20-24, 2026. Hayden is the son of Troy and Joni Powers. Hayden attends Heartland High School, where he will be a senior in the upcoming school year.

John Lehman of York also represented Perennial at NREA Youth Energy Leadership Camp. John is the son of Brandon and Amy Lehman. He was sponsored by Women in Rural Electricity (WIRE). John is homeschooled and takes a few classes at York Public Schools. John will be a junior this coming year.

We are proud that Hayden and John represented Perennial at the Nebraska Rural Electric Youth Energy Leadership Camp.

Left to Right: Hayden Powers and John Lehman

Youth Energy Leadership Camp is a fun-filled week that taught the students how public power districts operate. The students toured Gerald Gentleman Station near Sutherland and the Kingsley Hydro at Lake McConaughy. Campers who attend Youth Energy Leadership Camp have the chance to go to Washington with the NREA Youth Tour the following year.

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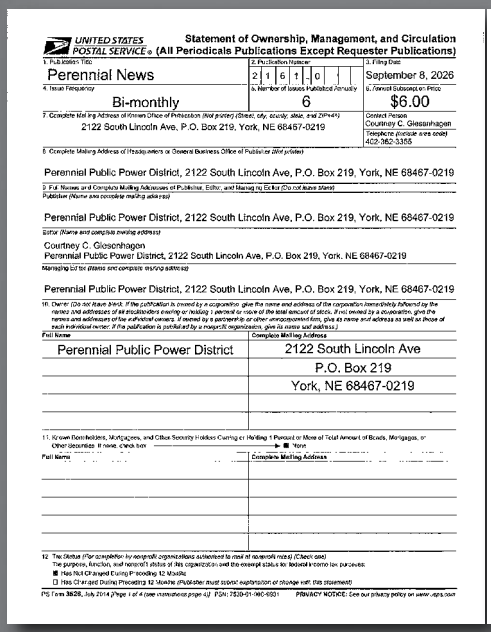

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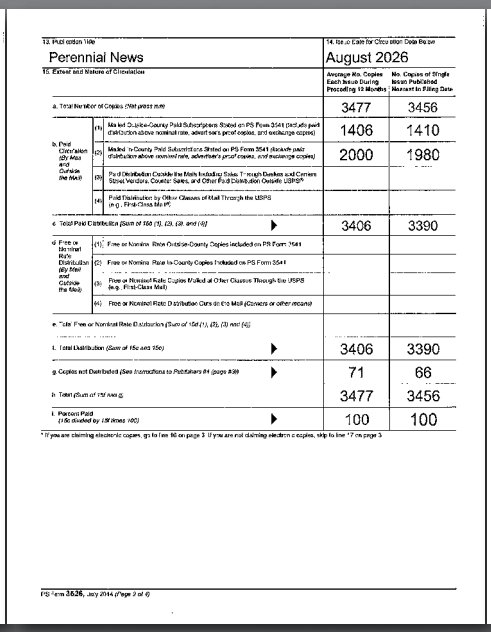

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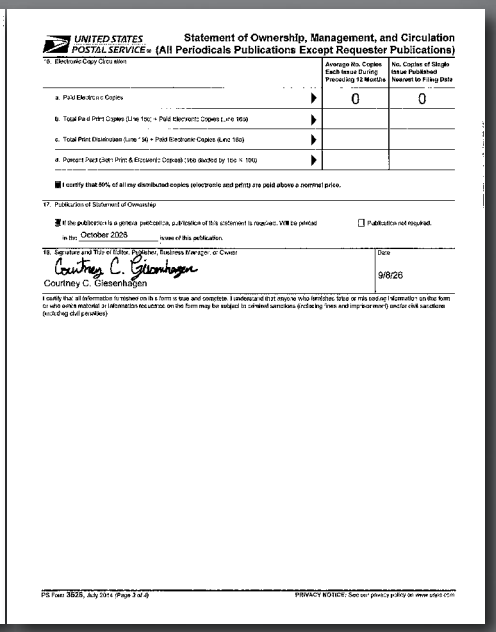

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PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 3 of 4)

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P E R E N N I A L

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Jared Hain

Manager of Finance and Accounting

Jared Hain began his career at Perennial Public Power District on November 15, 2021, as Financial Accountant. He was promoted to Manager of Finance and Accounting in January of 2025. In this role, Jared oversees the District's daily accounting and financial operations. He also assists with the District's IT operations.

When asked what he enjoys most about working for Perennial, Hain said, "I enjoy all the nerdy things that other people might find boring. I love analyzing spreadsheets and financial statements, and I enjoy modernizing processes and optimizing the various tools that are available to me."

After graduating from Aquinas Catholic High School in David City, Jared attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Finance.

Jared and his wife, Elizabeth, live in York with their daughters, Layna and Brynn. When he is not at work, Jared enjoys golfing, going to the gym, and playing games with family.

Susan Walz Retires from Perennial

July 30, 2026, marked the end of a fourteen-year career at Perennial Public Power District for Customer Service Representative Susan Walz. Susan began her career at Perennial in February of 2012.

Walz grew up in Hebron, and after graduating high school, she attended Southeast Community College and Peru State, where she got a degree in Elementary Education. In the early years at Perennial, Susan greeted folks at the front desk of District headquarters, where she came to know many of the customers by name. Her job responsibilities included billing and customer service.

Susan resides in York with her husband Scott and daughter Ashlyn. In her free time, she volunteers with Catholic Daughters of America, as well as golfs, travels, scrapbooks, and spends time with family.

When asked what she enjoyed most about her time at Perennial, Susan said, "Working with the customers. I've enjoyed getting to know them and assisting them in the office as needed. I also enjoyed getting to know my coworkers; they are a great group of people to work with."

Left to right, Jordon, Scott, Susan, Landon, Nathan, Ashlyn, and Erin.

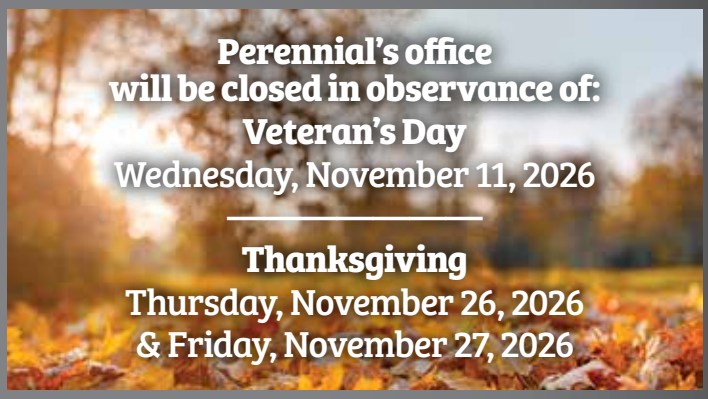
So, what does retirement hold? For Susan, she also wants to travel and get more beach time, attend her daughter Ashlyn's golf tournaments, spend more time with her sons, Nathan (wife Erin) in Kalispell and Jordon in Denver, as well as spend more time with her grandson Landon.

Utility Line Scholarship

Perennial Public Power District is offering a $1,000 per year scholarship to a student planning to enroll in an accredited utility line program. Applicants must reside within Perennial's service area to be eligible.

This scholarship program is aimed at highly-motivated and safety-conscious individuals who want to become a line technician. Participation in this program offered by Perennial does not guarantee future employment by Perennial.

The application deadline for this scholarship is **December 31, 2026**. Scholarship applications and applicant guidelines are available on our website, ***www.perennialpower.com*** or contact Courtney Giesenhagen at ***cgiesenhagen@perennialpower.com***.



Take the Heat Off Your Energy Bill

Adjust your water heater settings to save energy. As cooler weather arrives, your water heater may be working harder to keep up with longer, hotter showers. Check its temperature setting and consider lowering it to 120°F, which the U.S. Department of Energy recommends for most households. Lowering the temperature can reduce energy use while also helping prevent scalding. Always check the owner's manual before making adjustments.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy