SUPER BOWL LII
Reliability and clean energy on display during the NFL’s big event
Productivity
New General Ledger and Work Asset Management systems helping shape the future of Xcel Energy.

Innovator and I Deliver Awards
The most recent winners announced, along with details of their award-winning work.

Super Bowl LII
Thanks to nearly two years of company preparation and planning, all went seamlessly for the big game.

Puerto Rico
A force for good has descended on the devastated Caribbean island in the wake of Hurricane Maria.

Unique Gardens
A pair of solar garden projects that will exclusively serve low-income families are launching.

People
The most recent Friends We’ll Miss and Retirements.

On the Cover
The Super Bowl is far more than just a game, and the company had to ensure reliable service to the entire suite of activities taking place in the metro area. One of those events was Super Bowl LIVE, held along Nicollet Mall, where the company played an integral role in many ways. For more information, please see page eight.
You may have read in the news that the bids we have received for our wind and solar expansion in Colorado are extraordinarily low. Through our Colorado Energy Plan proposal, we are seeing the price for renewable technology continue to fall, which is great news as we can pass these cost savings onto our customers.

If our Colorado plan is approved, by 2026 we expect to generate more than 55 percent of our energy in Colorado from renewables. The Colorado PUC is expected to make a final decision sometime this summer on the proposal that includes the early retirement of two coal units.

We will continue to articulate the extraordinary stakeholder consensus for this plan by a consortium of Colorado organizations and use the long runway to support affected employees and communities.

Our Colorado plan is getting a lot of attention because of the tremendous value it can bring to our customers. I recently had the opportunity to speak at the University of Denver to share that vision firsthand with nearly 900 Coloradans, including two Colorado commission members and a few dozen employees. We made the most of our time in Denver and met with a couple of reporters, including one from the New York Times. It was a great opportunity to share the story of our ability to deliver cleaner energy at a low cost to our customers, without sacrificing reliability.

“Our Colorado plan is getting a lot of attention because of the tremendous value it can bring to our customers.”
Several years ago, Xcel Energy recognized that its aging management systems were no longer sufficient. That realization – coupled with increasing demands from customers and regulators – meant a change was needed.

Enter the Productivity through Technology (PTT) effort, with its end goal of changing how the company works. It is transforming roles and processes enabled by entirely new General Ledger and Work Asset Management systems and will help shape the future of Xcel Energy.

"Through this effort, we have created a foundation for continuous improvement that will benefit us for decades to come," said Michael Lamb, vice president of Operating Services and the Enterprise Transformation Office. "It will allow us to measure and improve our performance like we’ve never been able to before – and keep getting better every day on behalf of our customers."

The PTT effort was critical due to the value it created for the company. It changed how work is done, removed roadblocks and streamlined processes, he said. Roles, responsibilities and processes will be the same across the company, and the new technology will enable ongoing improvements to occur.

That new technology is provided by SAP – a European company that makes enterprise software to manage business operations and has offices in 180 countries. The software is now helping provide standardized processes across five of Xcel Energy’s main business units – Gas, Nuclear, Distribution, Transmission and Energy Supply.

Initially, a team looked at best practices – and roles and responsibilities needed internally – to move and convert huge amounts of data from various legacy systems into SAP, said Heidi Benedict, senior director of Business Innovation. The team also considered how best to cleanse existing data before conversion, so only high-quality data entered the new system.

In the end, seven cutover weekends were critical to launching the new systems – one for the General Ledger (GL) and six for Work Asset Management (WAM). They were the culmination of the effort, after years of practice and preparation for the massive conversions of data and startup of new people, processes and technology.

But before the cutover weekends occurred, a multitude of readiness activities were undertaken, such as table-top exercises to learn the system and understand processes, she said. For instance, an exercise would look at creating a work order and all of the various steps required to do that, such as paying invoices, requesting materials or services, and creating purchase requestions and purchase orders.

“We went through a series of exercises to demonstrate how people’s work would be performed in the new system,” Benedict said. “A lot of processes changed from the legacy systems, and we wanted to walk employees through them from start to finish to make sure everything would go as well as possible and that they understood their handshakes along the way.”

In addition, system product testing was an ongoing task, done in phases, she said. Legacy applications were tested for their link-
age to SAP through two separate six-month testing periods.

“We wanted to make SAP the one source of truth, so all of the key data we need going forward is all in the new system,” she said.

With everything set, the cutover weekends began, usually starting on a Thursday night and ending on Sunday. During some of the weekends, hundreds of millions of records would be converted through a series of more than a thousand steps, said Bill Magrogan, director of PTT Data Conversion.

“They were highly orchestrated efforts, conducted after several dry runs,” he said. “They all went well because we had the resources needed to do the job right.”

Hundreds of people, including both internal employees and external support, were needed for the 24/7 operations during cutover weekends. People would call a conference number one hour before their data-conversion task was due, for instance, then wait for the go-ahead.

Steps had to be executed one by one, in the proper order, Magrogan said. Afterward, employees would call back to say the task was complete and then also send a “done” email.

In total, more than 250 million records were converted. That covered every pump, switch, valve, regulator and transformer, as well as a myriad of other equipment, materials and vendor information at the company.

With those records tied to General Ledger financial records, the company now has all its information in one robust system, he said, and everyone is using it in the same manner. Both timing and information are better, which will lead to better decision making.

From the Business Systems side, the focus entailed supporting the needs of the main business units impacted by the conversion, said Eric Weimert, director of the SAP Center of Excellence.

“We looked at the business needs that had to be met with the new system, then considered what the legacy systems were providing to make sure nothing was left out,” he said. “With SAP, we now have new software features and enhancements.

“From the standpoint of system stability, we are fully up to speed on technology,” he added. “In the big picture, we’re now working in a very stable system and environment.”

In the end, all of the research, planning, training and testing proved effective.

“We had plenty of support from the business units throughout the process,” Benedict said. “And that included a lot of input and engagement from all employees from the bottom up.”

PTT will give Xcel Energy better insight into its operating performance, which will allow it to better manage the business — and in turn, deliver more for customers.

“This solution is shaping the future for Xcel Energy,” she said. “That would include continually looking to standardize processes, drive efficiencies, and leverage and maximize investments.

“It has and will continue to change the way we work,” she added, “and is creating a platform from which ‘always getting better’ is possible, encouraged and rewarded.”  

Shaping the Future

The Productivity through Technology effort, with its end goal of changing how the company works, is transforming roles and processes enabled by entirely new General Ledger and Work Asset Management systems. The photos here were all included in a scrapbook created for PTT team members.
Innovator and I Deliver awards announced

(Editor’s Note: Innovator and I Deliver awards at Xcel Energy reward performance when teams and employees deliver greater-than-expected results. These award opportunities are designed to help fuel collaboration, innovation, continuous improvement and an enhanced customer experience. Xtra is running a series of articles on select winners.)

Innovator Awards

**Metal Recycling**

An Xcel Energy team created a new business opportunity for the company worth $12.5 million over 10 years, and helped deliver on the company’s commitment to communities and environmental leadership by reclaiming metals otherwise destined for landfills.

The project, conducted with metal-reclamation developer LabUSA, will recover and recycle large quantities of metals contained in waste ash generated by the company’s two refuse-derived-fuel (RDF) plants in Minnesota, as well as from existing RDF ash at Xcel Energy’s ash disposal facilities.

The project forged a new partnership with LabUSA and built on the company’s partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), as well as the local communities of Red Wing and Mankato. Employees from Operations, Community Relations and Environmental Services all played critical roles to make the project a reality.

**Nuclear Leadership**

A cross-functional team focusing on leadership effectiveness through governance, oversight and human resources delivered improved Nuclear fleet performance. The team’s work helped save millions of dollars through the shortest nuclear plant outage time in years and exceeded the year-end Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO) plant performance index goal. The effort’s cost of recovery was just one-quarter of what other utilities have spent on similar work.

Team members designed unique processes, tested their effectiveness and then implemented them. The actions taken by the team have been integrated into the business, resulting in improved operations, leadership behavior and employee engagement.

Their work was also published by INPO as an example of nuclear industry “good practice.”

The team, which included a diverse group of employees with different functional expertise and talents, had to rely on each other’s capabilities and trust in everyone’s respective competence to complete the effort.

In the end, team members met the company strategy of a commitment to excellence by being decisive, innovative and well-coordinated.

**Cyber Defense Center**

The Cyber Operations group, Integrated Operations Center (IOC) and Facilities partnered under tight deadlines to create a state-of-the-art, 24/7 Cyber Defense Center (CDC) to protect Xcel Energy’s enterprise from malicious activity and potential threats. The new CDC has significantly improved the company’s overall security posture, while reinforcing its reputation as a leader in cyber-security within the energy sector.

New technology embedded in the CDC allows for the automated processing and evaluation of the vast majority of cyber-events and allows the analysts to focus on events that present the greatest potential threat to the network.

Additionally, a focus on veteran hiring was used to staff the team, with 14 veterans brought into the organization. The CDC has already successfully identified and mitigated a ransomware cyber-attack last fall. In addition, in creating the CDC, the effort was able to terminate a contract early and save the company nearly $1 million.
Innovator and I Deliver awards announced

**Unit Rate Alliance**
A two-year Transmission and Supply Chain partnership delivered an innovative solution that will yield $55 million in savings over the next five years. The Unit Rate Alliance initiative revamps how Transmission accomplishes projects—with the intent to have as much work as possible completed by alliance vendors.

The two business areas developed processes to allow for the direct award of work, while still meeting company compliance requirements. The company identifies what work needs to be done, but partners can determine the best method for execution.

As part of the initiative, a contractor safety effort is allowing for customized safety programs between Xcel Energy and its alliance partners. These programs help elevate safety awareness in both organizations.

Overall, the effort aggregates construction spend in geographic areas to leverage pricing, reduces number of contractors and creates strategic alignment through multi-year construction “alliance” contracts, with the intent of having one vendor per region wherever possible. The effort has helped establish a streamlined operating model for project execution and is now being embraced throughout the company.

**I Deliver Awards**

**New Mexico DSM Goals**
Finding ways to connect with Xcel Energy’s New Mexico customers in support of Demand-Side Management (DSM) goals, a collaborative team successfully launched an integrated plan that improved brand reputation, built customer trust and loyalty, and improved DSM program awareness and participation.

With a limited timeline, the team created and rolled out the plan, which included advertising, community outreach, and residential and business messaging, while ensuring optimal regulatory treatment.

Through 21 community outreach events, the demonstration of their expertise, and the distribution of more than 9,000 LEDs and nearly 8,000 LED holiday lights, the team was able to identify a justifiable spend of $300,000 to successfully promote DSM offerings to this largely rural service territory.

**PTT Business Readiness**
Keeping employee engagement and business needs front of mind, a Corporate Sponsorship and Outreach employee collaborated with PTT change consultants, Sourcing and other groups to communicate business impacts, resolve issues and identify solutions for her organization during its recent WAM launch.

She identified an opportunity to save more than 1,000 hours of training time by providing one-on-one coaching and learning support on an assortment of processes.

She also provided project recaps and updates at numerous meetings and gave feedback regarding PTT in-person trainings. She worked to ensure that all teams had the resources and tools that they needed in order to ensure success on day one of the new system.

**Line Patrol Standardization**
An operations supervisor in Transmission Construction identified substantial cost savings through the creation of a standardized line-patrol program for each operating company.

This standardized, scalable four-tiered program allows each operating company to scale inspection programs, manage work to assigned budgets and identify associated risks.

This approach has provided improved process documentation and reduced past line-patrol redundancies, while fulfilling all relevant FERC requirements.

By transitioning from the Tier One approach to a Tier Two approach, he has identified more than $750,000 in O&M savings, which could be expanded to approximately $1.5 million annually if the Tier Four approach is implemented.
Serving as host city of the Super Bowl comes with some pressure. Just ask New Orleans and its energy company, which became famous for a blackout during the big event – now dubbed the Blackout Bowl.

This year, it was the Twin Cities’ and Xcel Energy’s turn. Thanks to nearly two years of preparation and planning – and perhaps a little luck with the weather – all went seamlessly.

Kelly Bloch, regional vice president of Distribution Operations for Minnesota and Wisconsin, praised an “amazing” team for making the big event successful in the many ways the company played a role.

“I can’t say enough good things about the team,” she said. “They were engaged, great to work with and took it seriously.”

The day of the Super Bowl was stressful, she admitted. But the company had prepped for anything and had worked to preclude many possible issues, with the help of Operations, Security, Communications, Community Relations, Account Management, Enterprise Continuity and others.

That preparation went well beyond the game itself. There were a series of nearly 60 high-profile events involving NFL owners, executives and others in the months leading up to the Super Bowl. Those events were held in various locations around the Twin Cities.

“The Control Center knew what was up for each of those events, and we were ready if any trouble came up,” Bloch said. “In addition, key people at each of the events had our phone number handy if anything arose.”

The Super Bowl is far more than just a game for all the locals and visitors interested in taking part in the overall experience, and the company had to ensure reliable service.
to the entire suite of activities taking place in the metro area. Beyond the game, those events included the NFL Experience at the convention center, Super Bowl LIVE on Nicollet Mall, NFL Opening Day at the Xcel Energy Center, NFL Honors at the University of Minnesota, Taste of the NFL at the River Centre and Radio Row at Mall of America.

“There were people everywhere, and plenty more constantly piling off the light rail,” she said. “Nicollet was bustling. People embraced the experience and got out and had a really nice time.”

Two years earlier, however, there was a fear of the unknown as the company started to consider how to prepare for the big event, she said.

That led to a trip to Houston for the festivities surrounding Super Bowl LI. Bloch and Troy Browen, director of Control Center and Trouble Operations – North, visited with the Houston Host Committee, the local energy company CenterPoint Energy and others.

They also had earlier talked with representatives from PG&E concerning their work around Super Bowl 50 in Santa Clara, California. That pre-work gave them a sense of ease.

“It was very helpful,” Browen said. “We took away a couple of key points from each company, and started piecing together how we would work with the NFL and the Minnesota Super Bowl Host Committee.”

In Houston, the Super Bowl LIVE event was held in a park, with above-ground cables and noisy diesel generators supplying electricity. Bloch and Brown saw a unique opportunity for the Minneapolis version of the event. For this year’s festivities, the company brought power up and out of existing vaults below Nicollet Mall.
“We saved the host committee a lot of money over using diesel generators,” Bloch said. “And we also supplied them with clean and sustainable wind power through our Windsource program.”

“It was a big win for us to be able to power Super Bowl LIVE that way,” Browen added. “And to do it all with wind power.”

Besides supplying power to Super Bowl LIVE, Xcel Energy also took part in the event, hosting a renewables and energy-efficiency display on the mall, in conjunction with wind turbine manufacturer Vestas. More than a million people attended Super Bowl LIVE over its 10-day run.

The company’s booth featured the tip of a wind turbine blade, an interactive LED light board, the company’s energy-efficient Tiny House, a bean-bag-toss game and more. Overall, Super Bowl LIVE featured something for everyone, including free live concerts, national broadcasts, food and fun, with a nod to winter that showcased Minnesota’s authentic, Bold North brand.

About three dozen employees helped out with the company’s Super Bowl LIVE display, while others volunteered at the Joint Information Center, Emergency Operations Center and Multi-Agency Coordination Center.

Over in St. Paul, the company helped build and sponsor the Ice Palace in Rice Park – yet another event tied to Super Bowl LII. Employees transported the 4,000 blocks of ice that created the ice castle for the St. Paul Winter Carnival. The ice blocks, weighing 750 pounds each, were harvested from Green Lake in Spicer, Minn., and transported more than 100 miles to St. Paul.

For Operations, the focus was on reliability for U.S. Bank Stadium and making sure the day of the game went smoothly. The internal team took time to work with lots of employees to get their ideas, input and involvement, Browen said.

A plan eventually came together around equipment inspections of the Twin Cities system and any mitigation work needed to ensure reliability.

In the end, the team isolated the stadium and had three different feeders available to feed it power. Readiness drills were held for loss of power at either the Elliot Park or Fifth Street substations, where the crucial feeders were located.

Each feeder could handle 10 megawatts. At peak use during Super Bowl LII, the company served the stadium with 7.9 megawatts of power.

During the game, there were no outages to any Super Bowl venues, and no outages in Minneapolis or St. Paul – or even the first ring of suburbs.

“We had everything ready, with neighboring utilities, contractors and more than 100 employees ready to help if anything came up,” Browen said. “With time to plan and a strong team able to reach out to many different parts of the company, we were able to make the effort a success.”

“People did an amazing job to make Super Bowl LII in the Twin Cities a success,” Bloch added. “For the host city, a Super Bowl is much more than the game itself. It’s a community celebration – and this year it was a great opportunity for us to showcase our reliability and share our story as a clean energy leader.”
Festivities
The Super Bowl is far more than just a game, and the company had to ensure reliable service to the entire suite of activities taking place in the metro area. On pages 8 and 9, U.S. Bank Stadium hosted the big game, while Super Bowl LIVE was held on Nicollet Mall on page 10 and directly above. At top, company crews helped with the ice blocks and logistics for the Ice Palace in St. Paul, sponsored by the company in Rice Park.
Puerto Rico Assistance

A force for good has descended on Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria, as the U.S. utility industry responds to help rebuild the devastated Caribbean island's electric infrastructure.

A second wave of Xcel Energy workers recently landed in Puerto Rico to continue power-restoration efforts, but they won’t be the last. Xcel Energy has decided to send additional crews to the island.

That second wave — composed of nearly 70 employees from Texas, Colorado, New Mexico and the Upper Midwest — arrived in Puerto Rico on Feb. 19 for a three-week operation. The same day, the first wave of crews returned home from their deployment that began on Jan. 29.

While not part of the original plan, Xcel Energy will now send a third wave of crews to Puerto Rico to help with the restoration efforts, said Luke Oberle, director of Design and Construction for Southeast Minnesota and South Dakota. All told, more than 200 Xcel Energy employees will play a role in restoring power on the island.

Xcel Energy crews are working in Caguas, a mountainous and remote region in the southeast area of Puerto Rico. The hurricane came inland on this part of the island, and the damage is significant. Crews are working with incident-management teams that have partnered with the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) on restoration efforts, he said.

PREPA is working with members of the Edison Electric Institute, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on damage assessment and a coordinated restoration effort. More than 20 electric companies, including Xcel Energy, are part of a nationwide mutual assistance response that’s brought nearly 1,500 additional workers to Puerto Rico. More than 5,500 people are part of the overall restoration effort.

At one point during the first wave, Upper Midwest crews worked along an extremely narrow road where they had to work with local police to reduce the road to one lane of traffic to safely do their work. They also encountered steep ravines, and one new pole location had to be hand dug. They spent many days on one single line, restoring power to about 50 customers.

Last month, Bob Frenzel, executive vice president and CFO, and Kent Larson, executive vice president and group president of Operations, traveled to Puerto Rico to see the restoration progress.
Crews helping rebuild the devastated Caribbean island

firsthand. They met with PREPA in San Juan, and toured the island by helicopter to survey some of the damage and restored infrastructure.

They also met with Xcel Energy crews in the field to understand the challenges the crews are dealing with and to thank them for all their hard work. Crews have had no injuries or reported any equipment issues.

“We have the best crews in the business, and we wanted to thank them in person for all the hard work they’ve been doing to help bring power back to Puerto Rico,” Frenzel said. “They are working in rugged terrain and some of the most difficult conditions we’ve ever encountered – with limited materials and supplies, but with an astounding amount of creativity and determination.”

“It’s an honor to be part of this historic restoration effort, and we are proud of the phenomenal work our employees have accomplished so far,” Larson said. “Seeing the damage firsthand makes you appreciate the scope and scale of this effort, and our crews have risen to the challenge.”

Spirits remain high, Larson said, and workers are continuously receiving gratitude from the people of Puerto Rico. So far, more than 2,000 Puerto Rican customers have had their electricity turned back on thanks to the work of Xcel Energy crews.

Overall, more than 1.2 million Puerto Rican customers – or 84 percent of the island – have had their power restored. However, hundreds of thousands still remain without power five months after Hurricane Maria caused tremendous damage to the island’s homes, businesses, infrastructure and electric grid.

Despite the devastation to the island, the company was able to secure safe accommodations for employees during their deployment, along with food, ice, fuel, water and laundry.

In preparation for the crews’ arrival, Xcel Energy sent 65 pieces of equipment from Minnesota, Colorado and Texas – which included line trucks, pickups, diggers and trailers – to Lake Charles, Louisiana. There they were loaded on the Ulysses – a barge that transported the equipment to Puerto Rico.

“We wanted to assist the people of Puerto Rico and are honored to be part of this restoration effort,” Larson said. “This is a massive undertaking under difficult circumstances, but our crews are bringing power back on safely.

“It’s what we would do for our own customers, and we are delivering that same quality of service to our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico,” he added. “Our crews are passionate about their work and happy to do the job.”

Mutual Aid
All told, more than 200 Xcel Energy employees will play a role in restoring power on the island Puerto Rico. Pictured at top, utility equipment on its way from Louisiana to the island, and above, various scenes of Xcel Energy crews at work to restore power.
A solar garden project that will exclusively serve low-income families has launched in the Denver area.

The community solar garden, located just east of Denver International Airport, is owned and operated by Denver Housing Authority (DHA) and will create cost savings for low-income families in the Denver metro area, as part of the company’s Solar*Rewards Community program.

In Colorado, a solar garden is a solar electric installation of less than two megawatts with at least 10 subscribers. This two-megawatt garden will provide bill credits for about 500 to 700 low-income households.

In Colorado, through Solar*Rewards Community, subscribers work with a third party solar garden operator to sign up for a subscription, and then receive a bill credit from Xcel Energy for the power produced, said Eric Van Orden, team lead of the Renewable Choice Programs team in Customer Solutions. In addition, the garden operator bids for and receives additional incentive payment for the project’s Renewable Energy Credits, which are then used by the company on behalf of all customers.

Van Orden’s team, along with about a dozen employees from Customer Solutions helped install a portion of the nearly 6,000 total solar panels that will be part of the community solar build.

“Xcel Energy employees gained hands-on experience building the garden, panel-by-panel,” Van Orden said. “This made for a great way for us to help give back to the community, while learning more about the technology and installation details behind the programs we support.

“This is the first time that a 100-percent, low-income garden has successfully competed with more traditional, commercial solar gardens to win an RFP,” he added. “Declining solar prices, combined with the volunteer nature of parts of the installation, helped make that work.”

DHA partnered with GRID Alternatives to support the installation event and build the solar garden. As a local nonprofit, GRID Alternatives aims to make renewable energy technology and job training accessible to underserved communities.

Steve Hogan, mayor of Aurora, and Jerry Tinianow, Denver’s chief sustainability officer, were among other community members who also came together in the build. During the celebration event, Xcel Energy received positive acknowledgement for playing a critical role to help DHA and GRID achieve their project goals to provide renewable energy for underserved communities.

In 2012, the company launched Solar*Rewards Community, one of the nation’s first solar gardens programs. One component of program design entailed a minimum five percent threshold of low-income participation.

This project is especially noteworthy as it expands low-income subscriber availability beyond that required five percent, he said, and demonstrates how falling solar prices have enabled low-income installations to compete in an RFP with more commercial projects.
In addition, Xcel Energy has proposed a first-of-its-kind pilot program in Minnesota, which will give low-income customers more access to renewable energy through a proposed partnership with the Energy CENTS coalition to help residents in St. Paul’s Railroad Island community subscribe to a local community solar garden.

The company is seeking Minnesota PUC approval for this low-income solar garden, along with efforts to help residents in this community save energy through energy-efficiency efforts, said Tom Santori, portfolio manager with Customer Solutions.

“We’re excited to work with Energy CENTS Coalition and roll out a locally driven, grassroots project that gives the community access to solar energy, while also finding ways to reduce their energy use,” Santori said. “This program has great potential to save energy for those who need assistance most, and increase renewable energy for this community and beyond.”

“The Energy CENTS Coalition and our community partner, Dayton’s Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services, are proud to be a part of this project with Xcel Energy,” said Pam Marshall, executive director of Energy CENTS. “The combination of energy efficiency improvements and the solar garden will direct significant resources to this community, and will increase low-income customers’ access to more affordable and renewable energy.”

As part of the pilot program, Xcel Energy will develop a half-megawatt community solar garden for the community. This solar garden is unique in its approach to removing traditional barriers to the low-income market, Santori said.

For example, subscriptions will be available without a long-term commitment or a check of a subscriber’s credit score, which are common requirements for most community solar gardens in Minnesota. Subscribers would also not be responsible for any up-front payments and can terminate the contract at any time.

Building the solar garden will be the first step in offering Railroad Island residents a complete solution to help with their energy bills, he said. Xcel Energy also will be working with the community through the company’s Partners in Energy offering to promote access to the community solar garden and energy conservation.

Elements of this part of the program will include a free Home Energy Squad visit for low-income customers, where experts identify and install low-cost efficiency measures and provide energy conservation tips.

Pending approvals, this program is expected to launch later in 2018. Railroad Island, a community of about 2,200 people, was selected because many customers qualify for low-income, home energy assistance programs, live in older homes that use more energy and experience a spike in electrical usage during the winter months, he said. Xcel Energy will work with the community and the housing service to promote the program to residents.
2017 earnings results announced

Xcel Energy recently reported 2017 GAAP earnings of $1,148 million, or $2.25 per share, and ongoing earnings of $1,171 million, or $2.30 per share, compared with GAAP and ongoing earnings of $1,123 million, or $2.21 per share, in 2016.

GAAP and ongoing earnings were higher as a result of increased electric and natural gas margins to recover infrastructure investments, reduced operating and maintenance expenses, a lower effective tax rate and higher allowance for funds used during construction. These positive factors were partially offset by increased depreciation expense, interest charges and property taxes. GAAP earnings for 2017 also included the negative impact of the recently enacted Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

“We once again delivered on our objectives in 2017, achieved our earnings and dividend targets, while keeping average bills to our customers flat-to-down for the fourth consecutive year,” said Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO. “We continue to execute our ‘steel-for-fuel’ strategy by advancing wind projects that deliver great value to customers.

“We anticipate making further progress on our strategy in 2018 with the proposed Colorado Energy Plan, whose preliminary bid responses have proven to be very promising for our customers,” Fowke added. “Looking ahead, we plan to work with regulators to bring the benefits of tax reform to our customers as we continue to drive a transition to cleaner energy, and pursue investment opportunities in advanced grid technologies and continued electrification. These advancements will allow us to offer more innovative services to customers while continuing to deliver on our earnings-per-share and dividend growth objectives.”

Foundation and employees give to communities

Xcel Energy’s commitment to communities shone through in 2017, as employees volunteered 29,000 hours to support nonprofits during the year. Employees also donated to nonprofits, and the company’s foundation matched their giving through a program that contributed more than $5.8 million to 1,000 charities in 2017.

In addition, the foundation supports nonprofits that work in four focus areas that include: STEM education, economic sustainability, environmental stewardship, and arts and culture. The foundation donated nearly $3.7 million in nonprofit grants nationwide in 2017.

“Xcel Energy is grateful for the opportunity to support nonprofit groups that are improving the quality of life in the places we serve. We thank them for all they do,” said Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO. “As a community partner, we’re committed to continuing our work with nonprofits and pursuing our shared goal of building more vibrant communities.”

During Xcel Energy’s annual Day of Service this past fall, groups of employees volunteered for nonprofit groups in communities throughout the service territory. At 100 nonprofit organizations, Xcel Energy crews logged more than 12,000 volunteer hours during the single-day event.

Texas Switch Adjustment

Marshall Armes, journeyman electrician with Southern Substations out of Lubbock, adjusts switches at Yoakum Substation near Plains, Texas, in this photo taken by Ismael Rodriguez, who is a second-year electrician apprentice, also out of Southern Substations.

Editor’s Note: “Photo Op” is a standing feature in Xtra. Each issue, a photo submitted by a reader or produced by a member of Corporate Communications will be published. Please submit high-resolution digital photos to the editor at the email address listed on the back page of this publication. By submitting images for “Photo Op,” employees give Xtra permission to run the photos.
FPL sends thanks for Hurricane Irma restoration help

Dear Xcel Energy:

We have finished holding several Florida Power & Light (FPL) leadership meetings and certainly the subject of our Hurricane Irma restoration effort was highlighted as a huge success.

You and your teams were key members of the team that brought Florida back to life. Just to share the importance of your team’s efforts, here are a few facts:

• Florida’s GPD is driven by tourism.
• 115 million visitors came to Florida last year.
• Florida’s economy is now more than $1 trillion (almost $3 billion per day!).
• Our restoration effort was the largest electrical-outage event ever experienced by a U.S. utility.

FPL customers’ favorable rating rose 2 percentage points in 2017 (even with Irma!)

I wanted to share this information. Best wishes and thanks again for your support.

—Greg Gartner, senior director, Storm Hardening/Power Delivery, Florida Power & Light

‘You guys rock’

Dear Editor:

Please pass on how thrilled I am (weird, I know) to have Xcel Energy as my energy provider given the company’s aggressive commitment to clean energy. You guys rock.

—Steven Westberg, Castle Rock, Colorado

Eves named EVP and group president; McDaniel to retire

David Eves has been named executive vice president and group president of Utilities. Eves will oversee the leadership of Xcel Energy’s operating companies, a responsibility held by Marvin McDaniel Jr., who previously announced his retirement.

Eves currently serves as president of Xcel Energy – Colorado and will continue in both roles at this time.

“David’s in-depth knowledge of the industry and vast background in the planning, generation and delivery of energy makes him well suited for this role,” said Ben Fowke, chairman, president and CEO. “He is an exceptional leader who will continue driving the company’s clean-energy transition while keeping customer bills low.”

Eves’ new direct reports include: Chris Clark, president, Xcel Energy – Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota; David Hudson, president, Xcel Energy – New Mexico and Texas; and Mark Stoering, president, Xcel Energy – Michigan and Wisconsin; as well as Jonathan Adelman, associate vice president, Strategic Resource and Business Planning.

Eves has been president of Xcel Energy – Colorado since 2009. He previously served as president and CEO of Xcel Energy – Texas and New Mexico. He also served as vice president of Resource Planning and Acquisition, with responsibilities including: long-term resource planning, wholesale power supply, transmission rights and gas transportation.

McDaniel will continue to hold the title of executive vice president, chief administrative officer, which includes responsibility for information technology, enterprise security, customer solutions, human resources and employee services. The company expects to make further announcements as to the transition of responsibilities closer to the date of McDaniel’s retirement.

Over his nearly 30-year career, McDaniel has held a variety of roles, including senior vice president of Corporate Services and CAO, and senior positions in Human Resources, Commercial Operations and Corporate Accounting for Xcel Energy and predecessor companies.

“Marvin has been a tremendous asset to Xcel Energy and he leaves the company in a strong position,” Fowke said. “Marvin’s leadership and industry expertise have helped solidify our strong position as a leader in delivering reliable, clean and affordable energy and as an employer of choice. I am grateful for his many contributions in making our company what it is today.”
Donald Ables, 80, Texas, died on Dec. 9, 2017. He worked for SPS from 1964 to 1985.


Ellen Green, 85, accountant, Corporate Accounting, Colorado, died on Jan. 16, 2018. She worked for PSCo from 1953 to 1992.

Gerald Hagstrom, 92, senior gas engineer, Gas Planning and Engineering, Rice Street Service Center, St. Paul, Minn., died on Nov. 19, 2017. He worked for PSCo from 1955 to 1987.


Robert Hillen, 94, tree trimmer, Electric Construction, Brooklyn Center Service Center, St. Cloud, Minn., died on Nov. 6, 2017. She worked for PSCo from 1987 to 1994.

Claudia Bernstein, 73, senior IT asset/vendor analyst, Users Services, 414 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Oct. 17, 2017. She worked for NSP from 1979 to 2001.

Otis Berry, 80, specialist, Finance, Amarillo, Texas, died on Dec. 8, 2017. He worked for SPS from 1986 to 1998.


James Kneen, 72, plant environmental analyst, Harrington Station, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Dec. 20, 2017. He worked for SPS from 1972 to 2010.

Joe Chavez, 70, working foreman, Clovis, N.M., died on Dec. 17, 2017. He worked for SPS from 1986 to 1998.


Michael Schneider, 73, manager, IT Business Services, 414 Nicoll Mall, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Dec. 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy from 1970 to 2002.


Frieda Trask, 91, Amarillo, Texas, died on Dec. 11, 2017. She worked for SPS from 1960 to 1989.


William Laidlaw, 84, regional meter general manager, Chestnut Service Center, Minneapolis, Minn., died on Nov. 9, 2017. He worked for NSP from 1980 to 1992.


Retiring

Keith Aalderks, operator, Trucking, Maple Grove, Minn., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 34 years.

Michael Anderson, lead station electrician, Maintenance, Prairie Island Nuclear Power Plant, Welch, Minn., retired, on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

Charles Babcock (chuck.babcock21@gmail.com), troubleshooter, Electric Trouble, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo. He worked for Xcel Energy for 13 years.

Tom Bauer, team lead, Customer Contact Center, Sky Park, Eau Claire, Wis., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 25 years.

Paul Banekas, Production, Zuni Station, Denver, Colo., retired on Dec. 25, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 35 years.

Donald Belland (donbelland283@gmail.com), fleet supervisor, Fleet, Rice Street Service Center, St. Paul, Minn., retired on Jan. 31, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 3 years.

Tami Bratnere, representative, Customer Contact Center, Sky Park, Eau Claire, Wis., on Dec. 29, 2017. She worked for Xcel Energy for 20 years.

Edward Buckley (nealb55@yahoo.com), dispatcher, Gas Emergency Response, Rice Street Service Center, St. Paul, Minn., retired on Dec. 30, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 25 years.

Eldon Cannon, shift foreman, Operations, Maddux Station, Hobbs, N.M., retired on Nov. 15, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Patrick Cline (pcline2@comcast.net), community relations director, Community Service, 401 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Dec. 31, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 43 years.

Gary Culig (gculi@msn.com), dispatcher, Gas Emergency Response, Minnetonka, Minn., retired on Dec. 30, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 34 years.

Gary Johnson (john7070@hotmail.com), technical designer, Engineering and Construction, Energy Supply, 1800 Larimer, Denver, Colo., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 42 years.

Thomas Koonen, foreman, Garage, Rice Street Service Center, St. Paul, Minn., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Mike Krattenmaker (paulykrattenmaker@gmail.com), information consultant, Distribution Finance, Lipan Distribution Center, Denver, Colo., retired on Dec. 15, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Kenneth Kubes ( kennkm9@yahoocomm.com), trouble foreman, Metro-West Trouble, Chestnut Service Center, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Dec. 1, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 44 years.

Gary Kalkay, repairman, Maintenance, Sherco Plant, Becker, Minn., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Gary Lauck (glauckalliancecom.net), electrician, Substations, Sioux Falls, S.D., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Michael Lerol (mleol65@gmail.com), shift engineer, Operations, High Bridge Plant, St. Paul, Minn., retired on Jan. 19, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Gary Lohman, senior communications consultant, Corporate Communications, 401 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Nov. 27, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 32 years.

Dino Lombardi, environment analyst V, Environmental Services, 1800 Lamar St., Denver, Colo., retired on Feb. 28, 2016. He worked for Xcel Energy for 33 years.

Tom Bauer, team lead, Customer Contact Center, Sky Park, Eau Claire, Wis., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 25 years.

Donald Rask, senior operator repairman, Riverside Plant, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Dec. 28, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

John Roeller (icrosfer@yahoo.com), specialist, Billing Operations North, Sky Park, Eau Claire, Wis., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 44 years.

Michael W Royse (howdoulikekme-ow@gmail.com), electrician specialist, Maintenance, Cherokee Station, Denver, Colo., retired on Jan. 31, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 23 years.

Cindy Rundle (cindelisa57@comcast.net), manager, Cash Processes, 401 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. She worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Bill Schmitz (bschmitz1118@atandt.net), district representative, Electric Line Distribution, Jordan Service Center, Jordan, Minn., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Patrick McClanahan (pmclanahan7@gmail.com), journeyman mechanic, Engineering Services, Har- rington Station, Amarillo, Texas, retired on Feb. 1, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Robert Moore (robert.moores@tueeniernet.net), operator, Trouble, Chestnut Service Center, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 25 years.

Michael Mayerchak (gmayerchak@com- cast.com), consulting engineer, Engineering Services, 1800 Lamar St., Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Patrick Meissner, foreman, electrician, Underground, Rice Street, St. Paul, Minn., retired on Feb. 9, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 35 years.

Smith Moore, principal fuel consultant, Nuclear, 414 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Feb. 2, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Jim Morgan, lead transmission account representative, Strategic Transmission Initiatives, General Office, Minneapolis, Minn., retired on Feb. 2, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 30 years.

James Payton (jpayton_54@live.com), principle coordinator, Emergency Planning, Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Welch, Minn., retired on Sept. 15, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Kris Phillips (kphilips57@gmail.com), senior substation CAD operator, Substation Engineering and Design, Sky Park, Eau Claire, Wis., retired on Jan. 11, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Ron Quick, lead steamfitter welder specialist, Maintenance, Monticello Nuclear Plant, Monticello, Minn., retired on Dec. 26, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 37 years.

Ron Radford (razz@ntchc7ron.com), meter reader, Meter Reading, Anamulito, Texas, retired on Jan. 12, 2018. He worked for Xcel Energy for 19 years.


Steven Warnken, gas service lead, Gas Service, Newport, Minn., retired on Dec. 29, 2017. He worked for Xcel Energy for 38 years.

Sometimes, being more energy efficient is as simple as changing a light bulb. Today’s LED bulbs use up to 70-90% less energy than a traditional bulb, and last significantly longer too. It’s an easy switch that we’re making even easier, by providing discounts on LED bulbs. We’re always delivering ways to save. To find a retailer near you, visit xcelenergy.com/LightingDeals.