

POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



EDITION: FEBRUARY 2023

Food that will lift more than just your spirits

When COVID caused the previous restaurant to close at 9 Brickyard Dr, Bloomington, Ray Ceresa, Executive Vice President of Hospitality & Asset Management, was on a mission to fill the void. Having dined at a Barrel House with his family in the past, Ray started looking into bringing Barrel House into the vacant location next to the DoubleTree hotel. "It's perfect for all ages," stated Ray, from young to young hearted.

Don't let the name Barrel House fool you. They serve more than just what comes from a barrel. They're in the business of making people feel at home. From delicious upscale tavern food to a full service bar with specialty cocktails and even a Barrel House exclusive draft, The Island Wheat, crafted by Bent River Brewery.

Ray is the 1st and only franchisee, at the moment, as all other Barrel House locations are corporate owned. Bloomington has the largest



footprint of all the locations and can seat almost 300 people inside and out. In addition to the Bloomington location they have 6 other restaurants, located in Iowa, with an additional one coming soon.

Before the Barrel House could move into the space, they needed to do almost a full renovation. A new roof, parking lot and knocking down partial walls to make room for more seating were just a few of the larger projects that needed to be done.

Inside, you'll find there's ample seating and multiple dining areas, including "the garage" which is perfect to host a meeting, business lunch or small event.

Weather permitting, they also have

a beautiful outdoor patio, with fire a pit, so patrons can sit around and enjoy each other's company.

Behind the scenes, there's all new equipment, the same you'll find in each location, as that's the Barrel House standard. There's even a commercial air fryer that takes just 2 minutes to cook a pizza!

Before opening their doors, corporate chefs came in to make sure all food and food preparations were up to quality standards. Barrel House prides themselves on making every customer experience the best it can possibly be and that's just what you'll find.

Once everything was set, Barrel House held a week long grand





opening with fun events such as service industry night, family night and a grand finale party.

At Barrel House you'll find upscale tavern food. There's a wide variety from appetizers, salad, sandwiches, burgers, pizza and kids meals (complete with a chocolate chip cookie!) There's over 80+ items to choose from making it an ideal choice for every age.

Some of their most popular dishes include Portabella Mushroom Fries, Firecracker shrimp salad (pictured right), and the Blackstone Reuben.

Their fish and chips, which is also a



customer favorite, features Atlantic haddock, which is hand breaded in house and fried to golden perfection. The dish is served with french fries and coleslaw, which is a family recipe, and a side of tartar sauce.

They have daily specials which include entrees, kids meals and drink specials. They also have a late night special with 1/2 price appetizers after 9pm.

Barrel House is also a great atmosphere to watch a sporting



event. There are plenty of TV's to catch your favorite team whether sitting at the bar or dining at one of the tables, there's no bad seat in the house!

They have 12 beers on tap, a full selection of bottled and canned beer, a full bar featuring signature (and seasonal) cocktails, and non-alcoholic beverages.

Their Barrel Boxed lunches are pre-packaged and super convenient. And, if you are hosting a large gathering, they have event and

catering services available as well.

If you're staying at the DoubleTree hotel in Bloomington, Barrel House is steps away. Ray stated, "Barrel House hopes to eventually take over room service offered at the DoubleTree, but that's a little ways down the road."

When you stop into Barrel House they have t-shirts, hats and even their own "Madness" seasoning available for purchase.

Barrel House is open Monday-Thursday 11am-10pm, Friday-Saturday 11am-12am and currently closed on Sundays.

You can learn more about Barrel House at www.barrelhousepub.com or by visiting them at 9 Brickyard, Drive, Bloomington, IL 61704.



Beat the Peak

If you look around your home, you likely have more devices and equipment that require electricity than ever before. Our connected lives are increasingly dependent on more electricity to function. At the same time, as demand for electricity rises, Corn Belt Energy must deliver an uninterrupted 24/7 power supply—regardless of market conditions or other circumstances

As you would expect based on your family's habits, electricity use fluctuates throughout the day based on consumer demand. Corn Belt Energy must be able to provide enough electricity to meet the energy needs of all members during times of highest energy use or "peak hours." These peak times are typically in the morning as people start their day and in the evening as people return to their homes.

What you may not know is that electric utilities including Corn Belt Energy typically pay more for electricity—either from a power plant or from another utility with excess power—during those morning and evening "energy rush hours." In addition, the demand for electricity is even higher when it's especially cold outside, when heating systems must run longer to warm our homes.

During peak periods when the cost

to produce and purchase power is higher, we encourage you to take simple steps to save energy, such as turning your thermostat down a few notches, turning off unnecessary lights and waiting to use of large appliances during off-peak times.

You can also save energy by plugging electronics and equipment such as computers, printers and TVs into a power strip, then turn it off at the switch during peak hours. If you have a programmable thermostat, adjust the settings to sync up with off-peak rate periods. When we all work together to reduce energy use during periods of high electricity demand, we can relieve pressure on the grid and save a little money along the way. Another benefit of this time-of-use approach to electricity use allows greater control over your bill. Reducing the peak impacts the power-supply cost to every co-op member. This is particularly noticeable as energy costs have risen across the U.S. Collectively, everyone conserving energy and making small changes can truly make a difference.

Remember, taking simple steps to save energy throughout the day and shifting energy intensive chores to off-peak hours is a smart choice for you and our community.

For more information, visit cornbeltenergy.com/btp

Let's stay connected

Have you recently updated your contact information? If so, please take a moment to confirm or update your information by calling us at 800-879-0339, by updating the contact information in your SmartHub account, on your most recent bill stub, or by completing the secure online form at: www.cornbeltenergy.com/billing/update-contact-info.html

Accurate information enables us to improve customer service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages.

By updating your information, you will be helping us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all members of the co-op.



Megan Marlowe
Manager of Communications & Public Image

How long have you worked at Corn Belt Energy?
1 year

What is your role at Corn Belt Energy?
My role is to work closely with different departments to develop and implement communications to our membership through various channels.

What aspect of your role do you enjoy the most?
Connecting and communicating with members whether it's in person, through social media or over the phone.

If there is one piece of advice that you could share with our members, what would it be?
Be kind. Always. You never know what someone else may be going through.

Corn Belt Energy puts SAFETY FIRST. What safety tip would you share with our members?
If you see a downed power line, always assume it is energized and dangerous.

What are your hobbies and outside interests?
I love spending time with my family and friends, cooking and being active. I'm a summer girl, so during the warmer months, you'll always catch me outside.

Who or what inspires you?
My husband, kids, and dad. Each one of them always has encouraging words and different perspectives to challenge me forward and strive to be better.

If you had to select a hashtag to describe yourself, what would it be?
#EverydayisaBonus

Is there anything else that you would like to share with our members?
As our membership grows, so does our cooperative. The great thing is, we're always evolving. If you've got suggestions, ideas or businesses you'd like us to highlight, we're all ears.



Winter safety tips

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because during the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators. Here are a few tips and tricks to help keep you safe this season.

Don't overload outlets

Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections—they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet.

Keep a close eye on space heaters

Electric space heaters can help warm a room quickly when safety

precautions are used. If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed on hard surfaces and at least three feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.

Use a generator safely

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous.

Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will

use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

Heating Pads and Electric Blankets

Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads – look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

CONTACT US

309-662-5330 | cbec@cornbeltenergy.com | www.cornbeltenergy.com |  
1 Energy Way, Bloomington IL 61705 | Office hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

