

## People at Work

# 'Nuclear Viking' takes helm at Arizona power plant

By John L. Braese  
The Enterprise

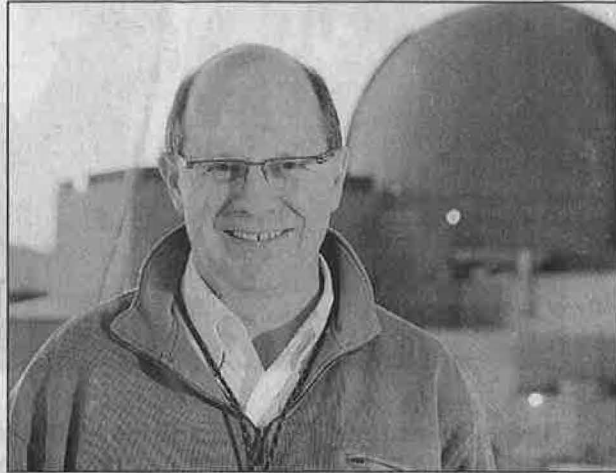
Bob Bement, a native of Vale and graduate of Vale High School, was recently named executive vice president and chief nuclear power officer for the nation's largest nuclear power plant and largest producer of electricity of any kind.

Bement grew up in Vale, leaving in 1975 to join the Navy. After leaving the armed forces in 1981, he started his career at the Arkansas Nuclear One plant. He joined the Exelon Corp. in 2003, going up the ranks to plant general manager.

Bement's most current job puts him in charge of a 4,000-megawatt nuclear power station at Palo Verde, Ariz., that produces more than 30 billion kilowatt hours of power for more than 4 million people in Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas.

He will also supervise more than 2,000 employees.

"Growing up in a farming community like Vale, I learned the importance of a great work ethic," said Be-



Submitted photo

**Bob Bement**

ment. "When I was a boy, it became clear right away that if I didn't take responsibility, the work would not get done, the crops would not get planted or harvested, the cattle wouldn't get fed. That work ethic has been of tremendous value throughout my career."

Bement was born in Nyssa, but grew up in Vale, where his father taught school.

"I joined the Navy to see the world and wanted an education," Bement said. "The recruiter said the most challenging career was in

the nuclear field. I had my choice between a ship or a sub. There were 5,000 people on a ship and I grew up in Vale. I chose the sub."

Even with his new job, Bement still plans on returning home.

"I get back home once a year or more," he said. "It is comforting to get back to Vale, go into the local watering hole and still see people I know. I went back when my father received his lifetime achievement award, and it was just like old times."