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Reminders

Help keep our linemen safe - don't post signs on our utility poles

A power pole might seem to be a convenient place for signs, bird houses or other objects. However, this is a hazard for linemen who may need to climb that utility pole for power restoration or maintenance work. Nails, tacks, screws and staples in the pole can tear or damage insulated gloves and clothing which protect MVEC line workers from the high voltage hazards they face with their work. Please avoid tampering with utility poles!

April Board Highlights are online at www.mvec.net/your-cooperative/

Additional resources available 24/7 at www.mvec.net



ElectricEye

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative

May 2019

Incumbents re-elected Annual Meeting message: co-op focuses on the fundamentals

Over 300 people, representing 222 registered member households and businesses, attended Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative's 82nd Annual Meeting at Le Center Elementary/ Middle School the evening of Tuesday, April 9.

All three incumbents were returned to the Board of Directors for three-year terms.

In District I, Deborah Erickson of Savage was unopposed and was returned to office by acclamation.

In District II, incumbent Gary Haberman of

See Annual Meeting on page 2



Members filled the gymnasium at Le Center Elementary/ Middle School for the 82nd Annual Meeting on April 9.

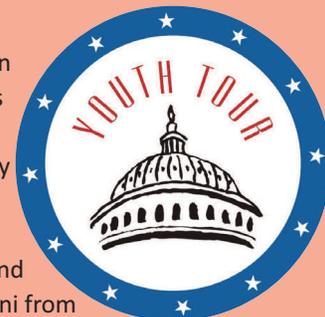


Natalie Thoms

Thoms selected as 2019 Youth Tour representative

Natalie Thoms, a sophomore at Prior Lake High School, will represent MVEC next month on the 2019 Youth Tour, a national leadership trip to Washington, D.C. Abigail Kunkel of Norwood was selected as the alternate.

Forty Minnesota youth will join more than 1,800 students from electric cooperatives all across the U.S. on this week-long trip, which gives young people the opportunity to learn more about U.S. history and the role rural cooperatives play, explore museums, memorials and monuments, and be part of a group with over 50,000 alumni from the past 60 years in every walk of life.



MVEC's 82nd Annual Meeting continued from page 1

Chanhassen received 774 votes while his challenger Raymond Briggs of Prior Lake received 613 votes. Approximately 10 percent of eligible voters in this district cast votes.

In District III, Jim Connelly of St. Thomas was unopposed and was returned to office by acclamation.

General Manager Ryan Hentges said MVEC continues to focus on the key areas of safety, reliability, digital security, cost effectiveness and member satisfaction. The co-op is rooted in a heritage of service to community and continues to evolve to meet member needs with cost-effective renewable energy options and programs to help members use electricity efficiently.

Gerry Mareck, vice president of finance, presented the 2018 financial review. He said MVEC's average electric rate remains 10 percent below the average rates of U.S. and similar-sized electric cooperatives, which is accomplished through load management, member participation in Energy Wise and



Prior to the meeting, MVEC General Manager Ryan Hentges converses with Operation Round Up (ORU) board member Dick Peterson of Belle Plaine. Since 1985, ORU has donated \$1.8 million back to community organizations.



Sixteen \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to area high school students. All recipients will be featured in the June *Electric Eye*.

generation programs and using the co-op's rate reserve fund to minimize rate impacts.

The co-op has kept local spending flat and at the same time for the past five years has returned over \$1 million in Capital Credits back to members each of those years.

The annual meeting also featured scholarship presentations, funded by MVEC's unclaimed capital credits. Fifteen \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to area high school seniors. MVEC's wholesale power provider, Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, also awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

Natalie Thoms, a sophomore at Prior Lake High School, was announced as MVEC's representative on the 2019 Youth Tour, a national leadership trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by America's rural electric cooperatives.

At the meeting's end, there was a drawing for eight \$100 gift cards to Fleet Farm, Cub, Amazon and Kwik Trip. New and existing Operation Round Up participants in attendance were put in a drawing for one of two \$50 bill credits.

NOTICE TO COGENERATORS

The Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative Board of Directors adopted the Cooperative Minnesota Distributed Energy Resource Interconnection process, which was updated by the State of Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. Minnesota Statute 216B.1611 states cooperatives shall adopt an interconnection process that addresses the issues addressed in the Commission's order. MVEC's updated Cogeneration Policy reflects the adoption of the Cooperative Minnesota Distribution Energy Resources Interconnection Process

(C-MIP). All new distribution energy resources will follow the C-MIP interconnection process beginning June 1, 2019.

In compliance with MVEC-adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, MVEC is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers who satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility. MVEC is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested

members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by MVEC. Members with questions can contact Jeff Langeberg, Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative, 125 Minnesota Valley Electric Drive, Jordan, MN 55352 or call 952.492.2313 or 800.282.6832.

MVEC to add 16 million KWh in wind energy

MVEC's Board of Directors recently signed a contract that will add an additional 16 million kilowatt-hours of wind energy to the co-op's renewable energy portfolio.

MVEC is working with wholesale power provider, Great River Energy of Maple Grove, to purchase additional wind power from a new 109-megawatt wind project called Buffalo Ridge Wind Energy Center to be built in Lincoln County, MN, and completed in 2021.

"More and more, people care about how their energy is generated," said Ryan Hentges, MVEC general manager. "Our strategy is two-fold: First, we work with our wholesale power providers to invest in cost-effective renewable energies. And second, we provide options to members who wish to have more of their power come from renewable energy."

Currently, 17 percent of the electricity members receive from MVEC comes from cost-effective renewable sources.

In 2018, MVEC launched its GreenSource program, which allows members to customize

the amount of renewable energy they purchase.

With GreenSource, members can increase their percentage to 100 percent renewable by the voluntary purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates - or RECs.



In 2018, members purchased three times the RECs than had been purchased the previous year.

As part of the GreenSource program, the co-op had promoted an option to build a solar array in MVEC's service territory, but the project did not go forward as only 10 percent of the needed subscribers committed to the project.

The Buffalo Ridge wind project is approximately eight times the amount of renewable energy the community solar array would have provided, and at a fraction of the cost, said Hentges.

"That said, we realize renewable options are important to our members," said Hentges, "and we'll continue to look for ways to develop and invest in cost-effective renewable energy."

Buffalo Ridge is also expected to provide significant economic benefits to Minnesota. It will create an estimated 300 construction jobs to build the project, and approximately six to 10 full-time jobs to operate it once it's complete.



Overloaded electrical circuits are a major cause of residential fires. Lower your risk of electrical fires by not overloading your home's electrical system.

Safety starts with you.

MAY IS ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

And a few more tips:

- Always replace damaged or loose electrical cords.
- Avoid running extension cords across doorways or under carpets.
- Never yank an electrical cord from the wall.
- Replace wobbly switches and outlets.

Thank you, linemen!

In between Spring flooding, surprise snow storm outages and our Annual Meeting, we celebrated our 26 linemen (apprentices, journeymen and foremen) on Lineman Appreciation Day and National Lineman Day in April. They had a busy month - not only responding to MVEC outages during stormy weather, many went on to help sister cooperatives in southern Minnesota deal with storm outage restoration.



401 combined years of service at MVEC!

From two apprentice linemen who started this past month to a veteran lineman with 40+ years of service, MVEC linemen are: Colten Berghuis, Randy Breeggemann, Andrew Burke, Chris Cooper, Jim Cullen, Jeremy Denzer, Lee Friendshuh, Stu Haefner, Bill Hjortaa, Lee Hoese, Joe Jutz, Bret Kitner, Bruce Klehr, Pete Kochlin, Grant Kulzer, Andy Lynch, Trevor Mahowald, Chad McGowan, Sawyer Moser, Mavrick Nelson, Bryan Ott, Mike Otteson, Kevin Rens, Kent Schmitt, Jim Schwalbe and Steve Volek. (Not all were available on photo day.)

Our linemen work smart, safe and efficiently, all while 40 feet in the air wearing thick gloves and heavy gear. On a typical day, our 26 linemen maintain the 4,000+ miles of MVEC's electrical system and build an average of 1,000+ new services a year. But when there's an outage or emergency, even in the middle of the night or on a holiday or weekend, everything else takes a back seat. Thank you to the families who understand and support their lineman's commitment to the greater MVEC community during severe weather and prolonged after-hours outages.



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