

## Inside this issue:

- What do the lights on your receiver mean?  
page 3
- More than one way to save money this summer  
page 3
- ORU makes 2nd quarter donations of \$31,863; new ORU trustee sought  
page 4

## Reminders

Summer is the time when everyone wants to play outside, so it is important that everyone knows what possible electrical safety hazards to avoid.

- Go around your yard and neighborhood and show your family where electrical lines are located.
- Never play near or touch a power line with any part of your body, toy, stick, or any other object. Assume that any power lines you see are live and dangerous.
- Never climb on or play around a utility pole or equipment.
- Do not touch electrical toys or appliances if you are wet or standing in water.

Additional resources available 24/7 at [www.mvec.net](http://www.mvec.net)



# ElectricEye

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative

July 2019

## Youth Tour rep Natalie experienced “awesome” Washington, D.C. trip

Natalie Thoms didn't expect to fall in love with the Washington, D.C. area, but her five days in June in the nation's Capitol did exactly that.

“I didn't know what to expect. I hadn't been out East before,” said Natalie.

Each year in June, electric cooperatives send youth delegates to Washington, D.C. to learn more about government, electric cooperatives and, most importantly, to have some fun.

Natalie, who will be a junior at Prior Lake High School this fall, was MVEC's 2019 representative.

“I had a blast,” said Natalie. “It was an awesome experience.” So awesome, she wants to go back already and take her family (Dad Eric, Mom Jean



Natalie Thoms, third from left, with new Minnesota co-op Youth Tour friends.



Natalie Thoms of Prior Lake was an exuberant representative for MVEC on the national Youth Tour. Here she is at the Supreme Court Building.

and younger sisters Julia and Aubrey) with her.

At the very least, she'd like to include a few Washington, D.C. schools on her college tour plan. “I'd love to check out Georgetown and some other colleges in the area. “I'm a real planner. I like to have a plan,” said Natalie, who is eyeing a career in electrical engineering, like her dad, or pre-med.

She was very excited to get the Youth Tour itinerary from the Minnesota Rural Electric Association, which coordinated the trip for 40 Minnesota students. In D.C., the Minnesotans joined over 1,800 teens from electric cooperatives around the U.S. for the annual youth leadership event.



See Youth Tour on page 2

# Youth Tour continued from page 1

Natalie and the Minnesota group flew from Minneapolis to D.C. on Saturday, June 15, had a whirlwind five days bussing to various locations, and arrived back home June 20.

Sightseeing stops included the Smithsonian Museums, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the National Cathedral, Old Town Alexandria where she experienced nitrogen-infused ice cream, George Washington's Mount Vernon estate and the many national monuments along the National Mall and Tidal Basin.

**“I think the Lincoln Memorial was my favorite,” said Natalie. “But Thomas Jefferson’s memorial was absolutely amazing, and also he’s my favorite president.”**

Other stops included the World War II, Martin Luther King, FDR and Iwo Jima memorials, and the Holocaust, Marine Corps and African American History and Culture museums.

She enjoyed watching the changing of the guard at Arlington Cemetery’s Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. “It was so cool how the Marines were perfectly in sync.”

For their day on the Hill, the Minnesota contingent met with several Minnesota

congressional leaders, toured the Capitol and visited the Senate Gallery and watched as all the U.S. senators voted and intermingled. “It was exciting to dress up and meet with people who make a big impact in our government,” said Natalie. “My favorite part of the Capitol building was the design and details in the ceiling and walls. Also, I didn’t realize it has so many statues.”

On several evenings, Youth Tour delegates had informational sessions on The Cooperative Way, presentations from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association staff, and inspiring motivational speakers.

Natalie sent several updates throughout her week in D.C., which were posted on MVEC’s Facebook and Twitter feeds. Additional photos from her adventures and info on Youth Tour also can be found at

[www.mvec.net/our-community/youth-tour](http://www.mvec.net/our-community/youth-tour)

**“Words cannot express my gratitude to MVEC for sending me on this amazing trip,” said Natalie. “It truly was a trip of a lifetime, and I will never forget the wonderful people and memories I made. I loved every minute of D.C.”**



Beginning with take-off at MSP airport, Natalie (front row in the center) said she feels she has made lifelong friends with her fellow Minnesota participants. A week after getting home, several were already making plans for summer reunions.

Natalie said she did her research once selected by MVEC for the Youth Tour. “I wanted to know who I was representing and what they do.” She said she now wants to tell others about cooperatives and how they are different than other businesses.



# Energy Wise: managing load to save money

Members who choose Energy Wise programs allow MVEC to periodically manage electricity use to reduce demand during peak usage times. In return, participants save money on their electric bills.

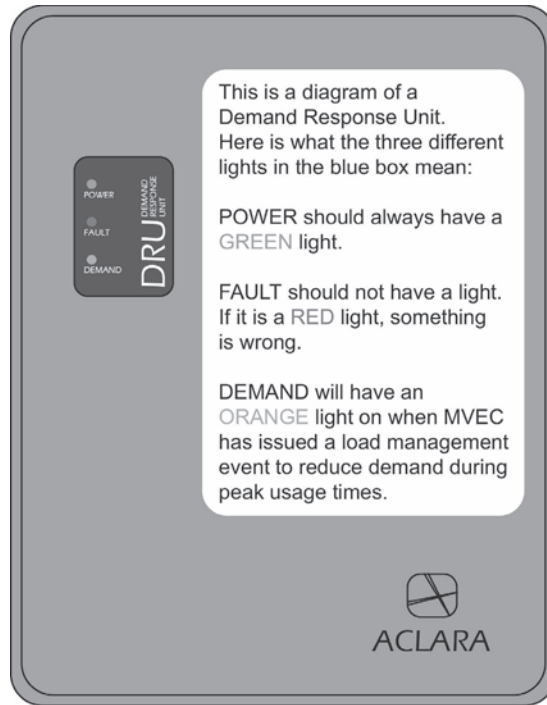


While electric water heaters play a major role in the

co-op's load management strategy year-round, during the summer months, management of air source heat pumps and air conditioners comes to the forefront in saving power and money for the co-op and its members.

## What do the lights on your receiver box mean?

All Energy Wise programs for heating, cooling and electric water heating (except electric vehicle programs and WiFi thermostats) require a Demand Response Unit (DRU) on your home to receive signals to start and end a load management time period. The graphic shown here shows what the three lights on the DRU mean.



## Why manage load?

- ▶ MVEC determines Energy Wise management times daily according to system-wide usage and wholesale power market energy prices.
- ▶ The system's electric load is impacted by temperature, humidity, time of day and other conditions around the Midwest.
- ▶ MVEC reduces its wholesale power costs by reducing the total amount of energy our members use at any one point during the calendar month. The savings come by reducing the demand for new power plants that would need to be built by our power suppliers.
- ▶ Energy Wise programs lower our power bills, so we, in turn, pass rate savings to our members.

**Receive notifications.** If you participate in an Energy Wise program, you can have email notification of load management times sent to you. Sign up at [www.mvec.net/residential/load-control/](http://www.mvec.net/residential/load-control/)

**GO BEYOND THE CARD.**

Download the new Co-op Connections<sup>®</sup> app today!



## You have Connections at home and away

In addition to pharmacy savings, MVEC members who use the Co-op Connections program can take advantage of thousands of local and national offers throughout the U.S., including discounts offered in the popular Entertainment books.

It's the perfect travel companion, thanks to the GPS-enabled phone app and a new

travel feature, which lets you easily search to see what discounts await you at your next destination.

Vacation-related offers include entertainment, hotels, food, attractions, car rentals and more!

Learn more at [www.mvec.net/our-community/](http://www.mvec.net/our-community/)

Air conditioning is a major culprit for a summer electric bill that seems unusually high, as are dehumidifiers and fans. Here are other simple tips for keeping your electric bill under control:

### Countertop Convenience

Range or oven cooking can really warm up a kitchen. Microwaves, convection ovens, Crock-Pots and toaster ovens are cooler ways to cook.



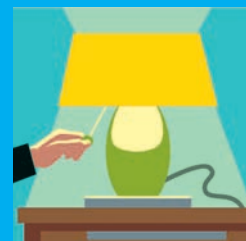
### Intramural Competition

Online gaming with each active player using their own computer, display, console and internet connection gets pricey. Play each other at home on one screen.



### Laundry for Less

Full loads mean fewer cycles, and running your washer and dryer in the late evening adds less heat and humidity to your home. Energy costs less outside of peak hours.



### Cool it Down

Turn off unnecessary lighting and electronics that generate heat. Resist the urge to turn down the thermostat and remember that lower fan settings use less energy.

# Giving back to the community

## ORU makes 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter donations of \$31,863

Operation Round Up (ORU) is a voluntary program where MVEC members pool excess pennies together to benefit local organizations. If your bill is \$75.56, it is rounded up to \$76.00, and the extra 44¢ goes to ORU. Multiply all that extra change by the thousands of generous MVEC members who participate and it makes a BIG difference. Here are the groups that received donations in the second quarter of 2019:



Belle Plaine Food Shelf - \$500 for food  
Campfire MN - \$2,500 for camp scholarships  
Central Elementary - \$880 for field trip transportation  
Cologne Fire Department - \$3,534 for gas and personal monitors  
Czech Heritage Club - \$750 for monthly meeting speakers  
First Stop Shop - \$1,000 assist start up businesses  
Green Isle Community Connect - \$500 for food  
Green Isle Lions Backpack program - \$2,000 for school supplies  
Jordan Heimatfest - \$1,000 for lighting or fireworks  
Infants Remembered in Silence - \$2,500 healing books  
Henderson Food Shelf - \$500 for food  
Henderson Sauerkraut Days - \$1,000 for music  
Holy Redeemer School - \$500 for candy and parade supplies  
Ind. School District 191 - \$250 for accomplishment event  
Le Center Sportsman Club - \$1,000 for take a kid fishing day  
Le Sueur-Henderson Nutrition - \$500 Backpack program food  
Le Sueur-Henderson ECFE - \$1,600 for outdoor toy shed  
Lions MD5M - \$1,000 for t-shirts  
Lonsdale Area Food Shelf - \$500 for food  
Lutheran Home Hope - \$1,250 for CPR mannequins  
New Options - \$949 for weigh scales/storage bins  
New Prague Community Ed - \$500 for Camp Invention scholarships  
Oak Crest Elementary - \$1,260 for field trip transportation  
Scott Carver Dakota CAP - \$3,000 for crisis nursery  
Sibley County Food Share - \$500 for food  
Shakopee Police Department - \$1,500 for car seat program  
St John's Lutheran Church - \$240 for trip transportation  
Chaska High School - \$200 for all night safe party  
Jordan High School - \$200 for all night safe party

TOTAL SECOND QUARTER DISTRIBUTION: \$31,863

Thanks to all who participate!

Add your cents at

[www.mvec.net/our-community/operation-round-up](http://www.mvec.net/our-community/operation-round-up)

*Since 1995, MVEC members who participate in Operation Round Up have raised and contributed over \$1.8 million to a wide variety of organizations throughout the cooperative's nine-county service area.*

## Wanted: MVEC member to serve on ORU Trustee Board

MVEC has an opening on its 9-member Operation Round Up Trustee Board.

A separate entity from MVEC's Board of Directors, ORU trustees evaluate and award requests for assistance from Operation Round Up. Trustees meet four times a year (the third Monday of February, May, August and November) and are given approximately three to four grant applications to research and recommend to the ORU Board as a whole. MVEC's ORU program awards approximately \$120,000 in grants annually.

Applications for the open trustee position are available online at [www.mvec.net/our-community/operation-round-up/](http://www.mvec.net/our-community/operation-round-up/) and are due Wednesday, Aug. 14. Please contact [chris@mvec.net](mailto:chris@mvec.net) with any questions.

## Recent ORU donations in action

Top: the Czech Heritage Club of New Prague used a recent grant to bring in speakers and programs for their monthly meetings.



At right: Dave Nichols shows the new document readers the Scott County Historical Society in Shakopee has purchased.



Far right: A new AED cabinet now hangs at East Junior High in Shakopee by Door F, thanks to an ORU grant.

