

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to our members!

Minnesota Valley
Electric Cooperative

ElectricEye

December 2020



CEO's Corner/Ryan Hentges

Season of Gratitude

I'm going to depart from my normal column, which generally focuses on some aspect of the delivery of electricity, and instead focus this month on something that seems more appropriate this time of year: gratitude.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to work at a cooperative. It's a business model that is not generally understood and not widely used. However, it fits perfectly for the delivery of electricity because it's about service, not profits. It's about community, not shareholders. It's about local governance by a democratically-elected, informed and engaged Board that seeks to ensure the collective interests are being represented and taken into account. The cooperative model is about the people.

Working within such a model is inspiring and invigorating, and for that I'm grateful.

I'm grateful for our employees – our team. The best business model and business plan in the world can't be successful absent dedicated people to carry out the work necessary. Each year, our team sets forth aggressive plans and goals to continue to improve our service to you. This year threw us a curveball; however, rather than finding excuses to slow down, our team found ways to stay healthy and move forward in order to ensure safe and reliable electricity to our members. Our member service reps kept taking calls, although it may have been from their kitchen table. Our linemen kept building and maintaining line, although they had to consider their proximity to each other, in addition to the normal safety precautions. I'm grateful for our team and their creative and dedicated spirit in not just

maintaining, but advancing our vision and mission.

And finally, I'm grateful for you, our members-owners. We are grateful for the people in the homes and businesses in our area that make our communities vibrant. We are fortunate to serve hard-working people who still take the time to lend a smile or wave hello. Eighty-three years ago, a group of enterprising neighbors got together to form the cooperative and bring electricity to our rural communities when no one else would. Today, we seek to continue to build upon their legacy and meet the challenges and opportunities of the current day. We seek to continue to evolve the cooperative to meet your needs and find new and better ways to serve you. We are grateful for that opportunity.

Ryan Hentges



Coloring Contest Winners

See them all at www.mvec.net/coloring-entries

Congratulations to Emily Vasilchenka, 11, left, and Isaac Skahen, 7, right, who were the first place winners of \$100 Target gift cards. Amelia Shockley and Cole Flicek were the \$50 gift card winners. The \$25 gift card winners were Kinsley Zunker, Amelia Halver, Logan Bort and Edward Gula. There were over 160 entries.



\$1,000 scholarships available for seniors

The deadline to apply for a \$1,000 scholarship is Friday, Feb. 19, 2021. Graduating high school seniors attending public, private or home school are eligible. Five recipients from each of MVEC's three districts will be randomly selected. The only requirement is to be a member of Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative with a wish to further your education.

Basin Scholarship

Basin Electric, one of our wholesale power providers, has a \$1,000 scholarship available. An essay and appraisal are required. The Basin scholarship deadline is also Friday, Feb. 19. The recipient is chosen by Basin Electric.

Applications are available at www.mvec.net/our-community. Winners will be recognized during MVEC's 84th Annual Meeting, which will be held online the evening of Tuesday, April 6, 2021. MVEC scholarships are funded through unclaimed Capital Credits — money that would otherwise be claimed by the state of Minnesota.



Best wishes to our 2020 scholarship winners as they finish their first semester of college. Remember to send MVEC your first semester grades and proof of second semester registration, so that we can issue and mail your scholarship checks. 2021 applications can be found at www.mvec.net/our-community

Making a difference in a challenging year

MVEC employees volunteer in many ways throughout the year within the communities they live.

Even without traditional events, such as parades and safety demonstrations, many of our staff were still able to give of their time and talents while observing careful social distancing.



Mary Kay masked up to volunteer at the Shakopee baseball concession stand.



Several employees created seasonal decor and tied fleece blankets for senior living centers in Belle Plaine, Le Sueur (above), New Prague, Shakopee and Waconia, among others.



As raffle prizes for Union Hill baseball and New Prague wrestling, lineman Mike donated two all-inclusive fishing trips to Red Wing, hosting and teaching people who often don't get the chance to experience fishing.



Cheri, picking

Scott and the donation Jordan bl





Since 1995, Operation Round Up members have collectively donated over **\$1.9 million** in pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters

The average yearly donation to round up your bill is just \$6.
To contribute your monthly change, visit www.mvec.net/our-community



A big THANK YOU to those (over 50% of MVEC's members) who participate in this community-based program.

- Angel Foundation - \$2,500 for programs
- Arts and Heritage Center of Montgomery - \$1,000 for cabin restoration
- Belle Plaine Food Shelf - \$1,000 for food
- Belle Plaine Police Department - \$1,134 for medical bags
- BlackFire Supermileage Team - \$600 to build competition vehicle
- Bountiful Harvest - \$500 for food
- Brainpower in a Backpack of Burnsville - \$1,000 for food
- Can Do Canines of Golden Valley - \$3,000 for dog training for clients in MVEC area
- Cleveland Fire Department - \$4,520 for 30 Nomex hoods
- Cleveland Food Shelf - \$500 for food

- Henderson Food Shelf - \$500 for food
- Holy Redeemer School of Montgomery - \$720 for roller skate rental
- Jordan Backpack program - \$1,000 for food
- Jordan Food Shelf - \$1,000 for food
- Le Center Food Shelf - \$500 for food
- Le Sueur County Santa Anonymous/ Cleveland - \$500 for gifts
- Le Sueur County Santa Anonymous/ Le Center - \$500 for gifts
- Le Sueur County Santa Anonymous/ Montgomery - \$500 for gifts
- Le Sueur County Adopt a Family - \$500 for gifts
- Le Sueur-Henderson Backpack program - \$1,000 for food
- Le Sueur Nutrition - \$500 for food
- Oakcrest Backpack Program - \$500 for food
- Lutheran Home Hope Residence of

- Belle Plaine - \$1,200 for two iPads
- Majestic Hills Ranch - \$2,000 for Heroes on Horseback program
- Montgomery Food Shelf - \$500 for food
- ProAct - \$834 for counting scale and Christmas party
- PROP of Eden Prairie - \$500 for food
- Scott Carver Dakota CAP - \$3,000 for crisis nursery
- Scott SWCD - \$500 to build new stations
- Sibley County FoodShare of Gaylord - \$1,000 for food
- Sibley County Community Connect of Green Isle - \$1,000 for food
- Southwest Metro Intermediate District 288 - \$1,060 for climb and crawl slide
- SW Carver Food Shelf - \$500 for food
- Waconia Food Shelf - \$500 for food

4th quarter total: \$37,668

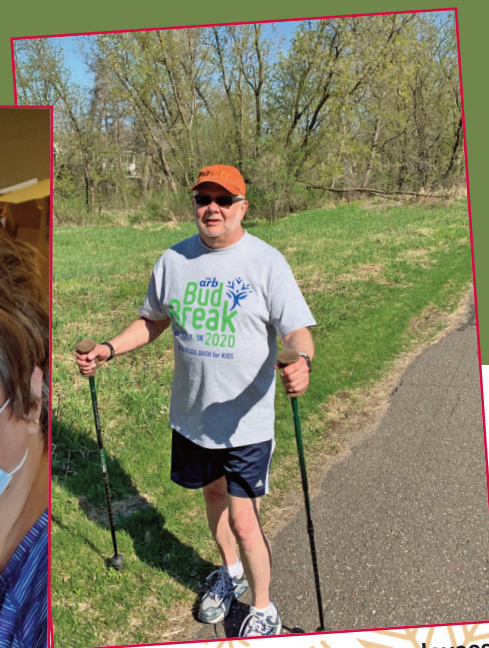


Mary Kay and Brandi stayed 6 feet apart while picking up trash in the ditches along Marystown Road.

and Sue kept up their tradition of giving blood at the and Belle Plaine food drives.



Lisa and Julie played it safe while volunteering at the Salvation Army Food Shelf in Montgomery.



Craig and 12 other MVEC employees participated virtually in the U of M Landscape Arboretum's Bud Run/Walk fundraiser, running or walking by distance in their own communities.

Interested in serving?

January 26 is deadline to file for MVEC Board of Directors

The filing period is now open with a deadline of Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2021.

On the ballot are director seats currently held by:

- Tom Wolf of Savage (District I)
- Bill Heinlein of Chanhasen (District II)
- Kevin Gibbs of Le Center (District III)

Directors represent the membership in co-op decisions and work to establish policies, develop budgets and set rates.

Qualifications

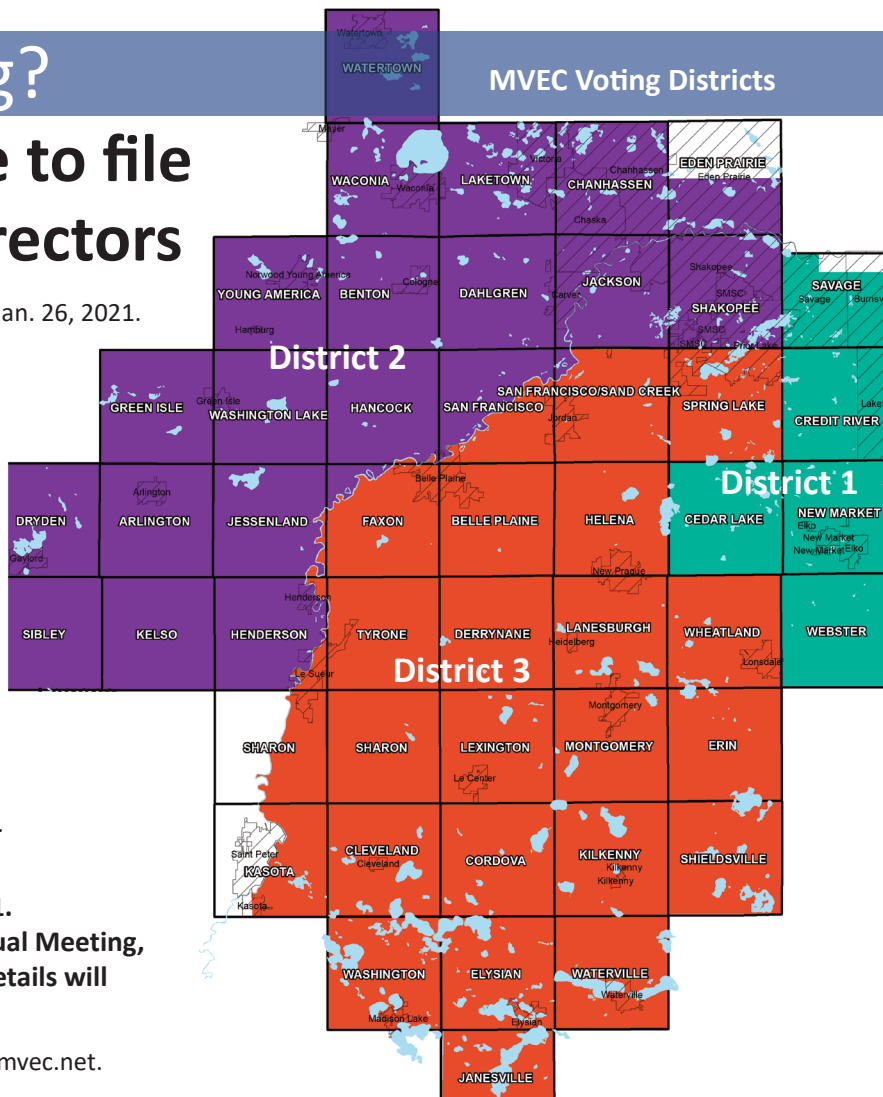
- Candidates must be members residing within MVEC's service area.
- Candidates may not be employed by or financially involved with a competitor or business selling electric energy or supplies.
- If elected, directors must be able to attend monthly board meetings held the last Monday of each month.

Voting will take place by mail.

Ballots will be mailed to all members in March 2021.

Election results will be announced at the 2021 Annual Meeting, which will be held online 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 6. Details will be communicated closer to the event.

For more information, call 952.492.8242 or email cheril@mvec.net.



Our 84th Annual Meeting will be held online on April 6. Details to follow.

Youth Tour on hold in 2021

We are disappointed to announce that Minnesota will not be sending students to the Washington, D.C. Youth Tour in the summer of 2021. The Minnesota Rural Electric Association felt the uncertainties of COVID-19 and the extra precautions that would be needed would not allow participants to fully experience the intent of the trip as many sightseeing areas and government offices may still be closed or limited due to the pandemic. MVEC plans to resume participation in this leadership opportunity in 2022.



MVEC's Gift of Electricity program is a thoughtful gesture for anyone facing financial hardship, adult children living on their own, your hard-to-buy-for parent, a loved one on a fixed budget or just a practical gift for a friend. You can give in any amount to a specific MVEC member you know.

Learn more and find the form at www.mvec.net/community/gift-of-electricity

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MVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer

