

June 19, 2019

Co-op Annual Meetings

SVEC Members Elect Four to Board

Two newcomers will join **two current members** on the **Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative Board of Directors** following the co-op's successful annual meeting on **June 13**.

Jerry Dofflemyer of Luray and **Conrad A. Helsley** of Shenandoah County won four-year terms on the 12-member board. Incumbents **Robbie Marchant** and **Bill Orndoff** were reelected to new terms even as **Board Chairman Fred C. Garber** said goodbye, as he is **retiring after 35 years of service**.

"Tonight, you elected my successor," said Fred, who represents Shenandoah and Warren counties. "I would like to thank Shenandoah Valley and you for allowing me to serve for these three-and-a-half decades. It's been my privilege."

The co-op's 83rd annual meeting attracted **more than 1,000** people to the James Madison University Convocation Center for a mixture of entertainment, food and serious business.

Members and guests enjoyed live music by the **Walnut Ridge Boys** and a **barbecue dinner** with cole slaw, baked beans and ice cream sandwiches.



The Shenandoah Valley Children's Choir delivers an outstanding performance of the National Anthem at the SVEC annual meeting.

The **Rockingham County Fire and Rescue Color Guard** presented the U.S. and Virginia flags, while the **Shenandoah Valley Children's Choir** presented a powerful rendition of the National Anthem to **594 registered members** and a legion of guests, family members, dignitaries and SVEC staffers.

Jerry, a member of Luray Town Council, will hold a seat that represents Page, Warren and Shenandoah counties. Jerry is a past president of the Luray Jaycees, Caverns Shrine Club, and a past president, treasurer and board member of the Luray/Page Chamber of Commerce. With his wife Nora, he operates Pass Mountain Rentals, West End Car Wash and the Gleam Machine Car Wash in Stanley.

Conrad is a member of the Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors, where he has served four terms, including a stint as chairman. He is not seeking reelection this year. He retired after nearly 40 years from a dental practice that he founded in Woodstock. Conrad also served two terms on the JMU Board of Visitors.

Robbie, who represents Winchester, has been on the board since 2011 and heads the VMD Association Education Scholarship Foundation Board. As he has since July 2015, Bill, a businessman, will represent Clarke and Frederick counties and Winchester.



President and CEO Michael Hastings addresses the annual meeting at the James Madison University Convocation Center.

In his address, President and CEO **Michael Hastings** touched on some of the highlights of SVEC's past year, ranging from the opening of a **new headquarters building that enabled office consolidation** to recording **more than 2 million hours of work without a lost-time accident**.

"This kind of accomplishment is only reached by working together as a team to make sure each co-op employee is prepared for every day and every situation that they might encounter," Michael said.

Additionally, the co-op returned about **\$6 million** to member-owners in **capital credits retirements** and provided more than **\$24,000 in grants** to worthy causes from its **Operation Round Up** program, he added.

Greg Rogers, vice president of engineering and operations, updated members on **two successful substation projects**, including construction at the **Strasburg substation** that tripled capacity and now serves 6,000 members, and a rebuild of the **Dayton substation** that serves 3,000 members. Both projects were completed on time and under budget, Greg said.

On the drawing board: a possible **community solar project**; the co-op is working with North Carolina State University to explore how to make that **renewable resource** available to its 77,996 members.

Renewable energy also was a theme in a presentation by **Marcus Harris**, president and CEO of **Old Dominion Electric Cooperative**, who briefed attendees on the ever-changing mix in generation trends.

The meeting concluded with drawings for two \$500 and five \$200 electric-bill credits. **Congratulations to Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative** board members, management and staff for another successful year and annual meeting!

-Report by Steven Johnson, VMD Association Director of Member & Public Relations.

Member Engagement

REC Makes Special Connection with Member-Consumers

Mike Ward of Frederick County didn't know what to expect when he brought his family to **Rappahannock Electric Cooperative's (REC) Get Connected** event on June 6. He attended with his wife, Jessica Jackson, and their 9-year-old daughter, Ava. Mike visited out of curiosity, but walked away gushing about how much he learned and how much fun his daughter had.

"I found all the booths really interesting and our daughter had a lot to do," Mike said. "I was able to learn about solar power and how fuses work in transformers, and Ava had fun jumping in a bounce house and getting her face painted. There was something for everyone."

REC hosts **Get Connected**, a member appreciation event, in a different part of its 22-county service territory each year. It's also a chance to share important information on **energy use** and **conservation**, **electric safety** and **green energy** initiatives - among other topics.

More than 1,000 people attended this year's event at the Frederick County Fairgrounds.

Among the highlights, REC:

- Gave away 500 energy-saving trees (red osier dogwoods).
- Provided live-line electric safety demonstrations.
- Shared energy-saving information and tips.
- Offered the chance to see electric vehicles, such as a Chevy Bolt, a Tesla and a Nissan Leaf.
- Educated member-owners on Cooperative Sunshare, a program that allows them to support solar energy without having to install panels at home.
- Informed members about MyREC Smarthub, which makes it easy for member-owners to manage their electric account – and track their energy use.
- Provided information about how power is restored.
- Offered children's entertainment such as a moon bounce, face painting and crafts.
- Partnered with Jordan Springs Market BBQ to provide a free meal for attendees - and offered Kona Ice for dessert.
- Featured music by Fiddlin Dave and Morgan of the Mountain Furnace Band and dancing by the Blue Ridge Thunder Cloggers.
- Handed out #WeAreREC T-shirts to celebrate member-owners.

Activities aside, Ward also appreciated the opportunity to meet REC's leaders.

"It's empowering to be able to shake hands with board members and REC's president," he said. "It makes me realize I'm a piece of REC."

Chris Jarrell of Stephens City said his family also was impressed.



Visitors to the Get Connected event display the red osier dogwoods that the co-op furnished as energy-saving trees.



Some of the participants at the Get Connected event display their #WeAreREC T-shirts.

“This event was amazing,” Chris said. “We wouldn’t expect our electric company to put on an event like this. We are so grateful for REC and what they’re doing in our community – the way REC really invests in our communities. We couldn’t ask for a better electric company.”

Jeff Hinson, director of member services and community relations at REC’s Blue Ridge office, said the event bridges the gap between employees and the member-owners they serve.

“Get Connected gives our employees a chance to really get to know a lot of REC’s member-owners,” according to Jeff. “It’s always special to connect in person with the folks we serve every day.”

-Report by Casey Hollins, REC Director of Communications and Public Relations.

Commitment to Youth

Community Electric Helps Kids Pedal for Success

If you see some youngsters pedaling shiny, new bicycles in **Community Electric Cooperative’s service territory** this summer, know this: They did well in school.

Students at four elementary schools won **new bikes** and **matching safety helmets** as part of Community Electric’s annual **bicycle giveaway**, a prize designed to motivate **academic achievement**.

“We always say that Community Electric Cooperative is much more than just a power provider,” said President and CEO **Steve Harmon**. “We work every day to bolster our communities and the members we serve, and there are few better ways of doing that than to reach out to school children and encourage their reading and their studies.”



No peeking: Clint Walters, principal at Carrsville Elementary School, draws a bike winner’s name from a bucket held by Community Electric’s Cindy O’Reilly.

“This is such a wonderful program,” said **Ellen Couch**, principal at 570-student Windsor Elementary, who pulled the winning name from a bucket of entries. “We usually keep the bikes up front on the stage so when they come to the cafeteria, they see them. A lot of the students will come up and say, ‘I read for my bike. I read for my bike.’”

The shiny bikes were purchased by **Tidewater Energy Services**, a subsidiary of Community Electric. **Four were given away at each school** — a boy’s and girl’s model for grades K-2 and again for grades 3-5.

Kristy Vaughn, a kindergarten teacher at Carrsville, said the bikes represent “a bonus” above and beyond the medal that students get every nine weeks for successful reading. “It’s something to get very excited about,” she said.

Nottoway Elementary School and **Pioneer Elementary School** in Suffolk also participated in the program.

-Report by Steven Johnson, VMD Association Director of Member & Public Relations.

Two of the giveaways occurred on June 7, when **Daryl Walls**, Community Electric’s vice president of business development and special projects, and **Cindy O’Reilly**, administrative assistant, oversaw the rewards at **Carrsville Elementary School** and **Windsor Elementary School**.

Students in grades K through 2 at Carrsville got an entry slip for completing 30 minutes of reading outside of school every day, while students in grades 3 to 5 got entries for each Standards of Learning test that they passed.

Consistency in the reading program was the determining factor for entries in all grades at Windsor Elementary, so students had **multiple chances to win**.



Bike winners Ethan Allison (left front) and Alyssa Walters show off their prizes with Daryl Walls and Cindy O’Reilly of Community Electric and Ellen Couch, principal at Windsor Elementary School.

Month of May Overflows with Association Classes

2019 Engineers & Operations Conference



184...49...30...39. These are some of the **record numbers** from our **2019 E&O Conference**. Virginia Beach served as the beautiful backdrop for the 2019 **Engineers & Operations Conference & Vendor Expo**, where **184 attendees** gathered to network, hear from subject-matter experts in their field and meet with vendors to talk about

their latest products and services. **Twelve VMDAEC member cooperatives, 30 associate members, ODEC and 39 other companies** were represented at the highest attended E&O Conference to date.

Broadband continued to be a hot topic this year along with **battery storage, breaker tripping and electric vehicles**. Annual updates were provided by **NRECA, RUS** and the **Association** and attendees earned **11.7 professional education credits** for attending. Opportunities to visit the expo were woven into the schedule between speakers, and attendees visited **49 different vendors, another record number**. Surveys were positive and planning for the **2020 E&O Conference** has already begun. Next year's conference and expo will be **May 6-7, 2020 in Virginia Beach**.

Thank you to our planning committee, sponsors, vendors, speakers and attendees for another successful conference!



Jonathan Thompson (Community Electric Co-op) started the conference off with a session on safety.



Brian Sloboda (NRECA) presented an update on the latest technologies in the electric utility industry.

IT Exchange

The second quarter **IT Exchange (ITX)** took place on May 8th at the Association. **Twenty-one IT professionals** from **eight cooperatives** gathered to share best practices, lessons learned and new initiatives. Association Counsel **Sam Brumberg** provided a **regulatory update** and **Bruce Lane from Microsoft** discussed Microsoft Teams, a program within the Microsoft 365 suite.

These meetings take place each quarter from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with lunch and are free to attend. The next ITX will be on **September 11, 2019** and will include a speaker from the **Department of Homeland Security**. If you are interested in attending and have not received an invite, please reach out to **Brandon Burton**, director of continuing education at the Association, at bburton@vmdaec.com or (804) 297-3485.

Contemporary Leadership & Management (CLM)

"**Leadership through Communication**" was the focus of the **May Contemporary Leadership & Management** class. **Sam Bruce** of Sapient Business Solutions and the University of Richmond taught the **class of twelve** from eight cooperatives. Attendees were asked what they liked about the class and their responses included, "the good atmosphere and the great learning experience," "the engagement of the entire class," "the interaction with the other people in the class," and "the interaction/discussion was insightful." This is a **common theme** with these leadership classes; learning from the instructor as well as other cooperatives.

For more information about the Contemporary Leadership & Management program and the rest of this year's classes, go to **VMDAEC.com**, search "**contemporary**" and select **2019 CLM Registration**. The next class is "**Tools & Methods of Leadership**" and will be held on **August 22nd**. You *don't* have to manage people to attend. **All are welcome!**

2019 HR Roundtable

The busy month of May ended with the annual, **2-day HR Roundtable**. On May 29th and 30th, the HR Roundtable took place at the **new training center in Palmyra**. HR professionals from **11 cooperatives and the Association** networked and discussed topics ranging from wellness in the co-ops to communications strategies to employee engagement. Attendees also heard **David Burton** of Williams Mullen law firm share important **employment law updates**.



“Discussions keep getting better at each roundtable” and “great discussions and ideas – taking a lot of information and ideas back to my co-op to work on” were some of the comments from the event. The next HR Roundtable will be **February 12-13, 2020**.

Thank you to the planning committee for all they did to make this roundtable a success!

If you are interested in knowing more about this annual event, please reach out to **Brandon Burton**, director of continuing education at the Association, at bburton@vmdaec.com or (804) 297-3485.

Here's a list of upcoming training:

- ★ **July 10:** [Legal Seminar](#) – VMDAEC Training Center in Palmyra, VA.
- ★ **July 28 – 30:** [75th VMDAEC & ODEC Annual Meetings](#) – The Lodge in Williamsburg, VA.
- ★ **August 15:** [Ragan Hands-on Video and Visual Storytelling Workshop](#) – VMDAEC Headquarters in Glen Allen, VA.
- ★ **August 22:** [Contemporary Leadership & Management – Tools & Methods of Leadership](#) – VMDAEC Headquarters in Glen Allen, VA.
- ★ **September 11:** [IT Exchange](#) – VMDAEC Headquarters in Glen Allen, VA.
- ★ **September 24 – 25:** [Regional C.R.A.F.T. Conference](#) – The Stonewall Jackson Hotel in Staunton, VA.

If you'd like more information about these events or other professional development opportunities, contact **Brandon Burton**, director of continuing education at the Association, at bburton@vmdaec.com or (804) 297-3485.

“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement and success have no meaning.” – Harvey S. Firestone

-Report by Brandon Burton, VMD Association Director of Continuing Education.

Legislative Insights

A Pair of Upsets, Some Avoided Upsets & Turnout Were Key Primary Takeaways

Primaries were held across Virginia on **Tuesday, June 11th**, that will have significant effects on this fall's election, and the make-up of the 2020 General Assembly. The big upset occurred in the metro Richmond area, with former Delegate **Joe Morrissey defeating Senator Rosalyn Dance**. A former Morrissey intern, **Waylin Ross**, has launched an independent campaign against him, but in all likelihood, Morrissey is heading back to the General Assembly.

The other upset of the night occurred in the Stafford-based 28th District. Stafford Supervisor **Paul Milde defeated freshman Delegate Bob Thomas** in the Republican primary. Paul campaigned against Bob's support of Medicaid expansion, and was able to overcome his own past personal indiscretions to win.

In the “most-watched” primary of the night, Senate Minority Leader **Dick Saslaw narrowly (500 votes) defeated two primary challengers, Yasmine Taeb and Karen Torrent**. In other co-op territories, **Senator Emmett Hanger again survived a bitter primary challenge, this time from Tina Freitas** (wife of Delegate Nick Freitas), and **Senator Frank Ruff easily dispatched challenger Dale Sturdifen**.

Upsets that weren't included Democratic **Delegates Lee Carter** (Manassas,) **Kaye Kory** (Fairfax), and **Alfonso Lopez** (Arlington), all soundly defeating their primary opponents.

The other big, potentially foreshadowing, story of the night was turnout. In the 7th Senate district – vacated by **Senator Frank Wagner**, there were both Republican and Democratic primaries. Republican turnout (7,800) was **nearly 50% higher** than in the Democratic primary (5,500). Turnout, especially in primaries, generally is **correlative to enthusiasm**. Prior to the landslide 2017 election, turnout in Democratic primaries was a significant early predictor of what was to come. Additionally, turnout in the Shenandoah Valley in the Hanger/Freitas primary was over 18,000 voters – **significantly higher** than anyone expected.

-Report by Andrew Vehorn, VMD Association VP of Governmental Affairs.

Co-op People

Title Changes for Andrew Vehorn and Steve Johnson

Two Association employees have recently had **title changes** to reflect new and expanded duties.

Andrew Vehorn's title has been changed from Director of Governmental Affairs to **Vice President of Governmental Affairs**. This title more accurately reflects the expansion over the last couple of years of his areas of responsibility, which now include **Virginia and federal ACRE** membership recruiting and reporting, as well as the expansion that's underway of the Association's **grassroots/grasstops** program. Both Andrew and Association Counsel **Sam Brumberg** will continue to report directly to COO **Brian Mosier**. Andrew has nearly 20 years of political experience, with a strong background in **local, state and federal public policy** communications, issue advocacy, coalition development and legislative affairs. Over the years he has represented clients at the Virginia General Assembly from different industry segments that include energy, tobacco, telecommunications, finance, insurance, health care and automotive.



Andrew Vehorn



Steve Johnson

Also, **Steve Johnson's title** has been changed to **Acting Editor of Cooperative Living** magazine. **He also remains the Association's Director of Member and Public Relations**. Steve's duties as acting head of the magazine will continue until long-time Editor **Bill Sherrod** returns full-time to his position after undergoing medical treatment. Steve has **over 35 years** of experience as a **print journalist** with daily newspapers, and for **13 years** was an integral part of **NRECA's Communications Department**, including serving as **Managing Editor** of *Electric Co-op Today*. Steve is also an experienced photographer and videographer.

Personals

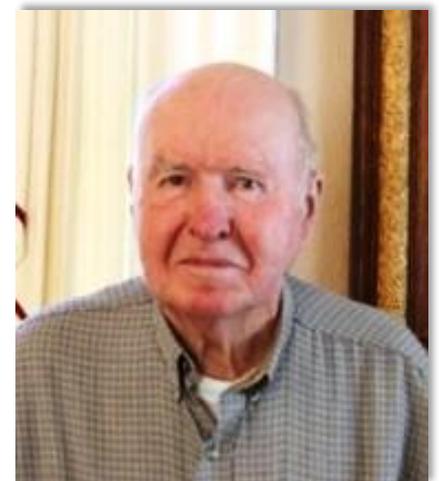
Longtime REC Director Frank Boxley Passes Away

The VMD community was saddened to learn of the death of **Frank Boxley**, a longtime board member at **Rappahannock Electric Cooperative** and committed supporter of the co-op cause.

A resident of Bumpass in Louisa County, Frank died June 4 at the age of 82. He served on the REC board for **nearly 27 years**, from August 1989 until his retirement on Aug. 1, 2016.

Frank was devoted to his family and his **Pottiesville Farm**, which traces its roots to 1771 and is certified as a **Century Farm** by the Virginia Department of Agriculture. In addition, Frank was a congregant at **Little River Baptist Church**, where he served as a **deacon** for 61 years. He also was a **Louisa County supervisor** for 20 years and a **retired rural mail carrier** for the Bumpass Post Office.

In 2015, the *Central Virginian* described Frank as "old school, a believer in hard work, steadfast in tradition and respectful of history." The family asks that donations be made to **Little River Baptist Church**, 4959 Buckner Road, Bumpass, VA 23024.



Frank Boxley served for nearly 27 years on the REC Board of Directors.

Help Us Keep You Informed!

If you have story ideas, news or information of interest and benefit to other members of the electric cooperative community in our three-state area, please contact:

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