

September 12, 2019

## Co-op Leaders

### CVEC's Gary Wood Wins NRECA Regional Award

**Gary Wood**, president and CEO of **Central Virginia Electric Cooperative**, received a **top honor** at the **NRECA Regions 1 & 4 meeting** when he received the association's **2019 Region 1 Award**. The award was presented during the NRECA regional meeting last week in **Buffalo, NY**, held for co-op leaders from North Carolina north to Maine, and west to Ohio, Indiana and Michigan. Over two dozen leaders from **VMD systems** were in attendance at the meeting, **Sept. 4-6**.

The Regional Award recognizes **outstanding service** and **leadership** by co-op employees and directors at a regional or state level.

Gary was cited for his **28 years of service at CVEC**, including the last **11 as CEO**. During that time, CVEC has seen **historic improvement** in system **reliability**, experienced the highest-ever level of **member satisfaction**, introduced **solar energy** into its diverse portfolio and is in the process of bringing **high-speed internet** service to its 37,000 members under **Firefly broadband**.

In his letter of congratulations, NRECA CEO **Jim Matheson** hailed Gary's tireless efforts to secure **nearly \$40 million** in funding to help support the broadband initiative. "Your leadership and commitment to the community you serve will have a lasting impact on the co-op family for many years," according to Jim.

At the meeting, Gary thanked NRECA for the award and praised the assistance he's had **from his board** and the **co-op staffers**. Several CVEC board and staff members attended the meeting with Gary.



*CVEC CEO Gary Wood (l) receives NRECA's 2019 Region 1 Award from NRECA CEO Jim Matheson, who told Gary, "your leadership and commitment to the community you serve will have a lasting impact on the co-op family for many years."*



*Gary Wood (c) is joined at the awards ceremony by (l-r) CVEC CFO Tina Mallia, Board Members George Goin and Roberta Harlowe, and COO Bruce Maurhoff.*

Gary also was the subject of a **very complimentary letter** in the August 15 edition of the *Nelson County Times*, where reader **Bryan Williams** of Nellysford thanked him for his leadership in bringing broadband to CVEC territory.

"For businesses located in Nelson the opportunity is enormous! No longer will we be considered the backwoods of the commonwealth dependent on consumption related businesses, unable to attract other opportunities for lack of a modern communications infrastructure," wrote Williams, who prior to retirement had to locate his education-tech firm outside of Nelson County because of a lack of broadband.

**Congratulations to Gary** on this much-deserved recognition!

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

## Co-op Heroes

### NOVEC Lineworkers Step Up to Help Woman and Child

A pair of **lineworkers from NOVEC** are getting well-deserved attention for their **heroic deeds**. **Troy Price** and **Mauricio “Mo” Paz** were quick to intervene when they saw a woman by her car, crying and holding a baby. The two put on their flashers to slow down traffic and tended to the woman and child.

They were prepared to step in and perform CPR when first responders, **alerted by Paz and others**, arrived in the nick of time to deal with the baby, who had a congenital heart issue. They credited **NOVEC’s regular safety program** with helping them to spring into action. Read the entire story at <https://www.electric.coop/virginia-co-op-lineworkers-help-save-babys-life/>



*NOVEC’s Troy Price (l) and Mauricio “Mo” Paz outside the co-op’s headquarters. (Photo by Emily Ready)*

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

## Co-op Director Training

### Top Two Training Requests are Coming in October!

During its April strategic planning session, the VMD Association Board identified two key training topics they wanted the Association to cover in classes in the near future. The two key topics the Board identified were **board governance** and **crisis management and communication**. The Association leapt into action and has been able to **schedule classes for both of these topics** in the upcoming **Director Education Days** being held **October 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>** at The Virginia Crossings.



*Highly rated instructor Molly McPherson will teach the crisis management workshop on Oct. 29 at The Virginia Crossings.*

The **Board Governance presentation** will take place the **afternoon of October 28<sup>th</sup>**. This half-day presentation is designed to show **challenges to the cooperative business model** locally, regionally and nationally. It will look at what cooperatives and other businesses are doing to prepare their boards for the future. Teaching this class will be instructors from **Capital Results**, a full-service **public affairs and business consulting firm** whose clients include a wide range of companies, associations, government entities and cooperatives.

The following day, **Crisis Management and Communication: Executive Media & Communication Training for the Modern Age** will take place. Think you’ve taken this course through NRECA? This is a **next-level, more personalized version than the NRECA class you may have taken**. Dive deeper into what is happening to co-ops that are being targeted by national and local reform groups around the country, and how boards can mitigate the threat. This class includes **media training tips** with **interview examples** from around the country and will come with an **actionable playbook** for how to **manage**

**issues** in today's electric co-op environment. This workshop will provide explanation and instruction in the **latest digital tools** that help co-ops position themselves well and protect themselves when besieged with challenges. This workshop will be facilitated by a director-favorite, **Molly McPherson!**

Come to one or both, all are invited! **Board Governance costs \$250** and **Crisis Management and Communication costs \$400** separately, but come to both for **only \$600!** The **deadline to register** and to get a lower-rate room at The Virginia Crossings is **September 20<sup>th</sup>**.

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



## **VMD Lineworkers Already Bringing Power to Rural Bolivians**

Fifteen lineworkers from the VMD territory are **hard at work in Bolivia**, bringing power to local residents as part of **United We Light: Project Bolivia**.



*A rural Bolivian villager gives a happy thumbs-up as his house receives electric service for the first time as part of the VMD team's "United We Light: Project Bolivia."*

**Things have not always been easy.** Working in Salinas, an overloaded breaker caused a power outage, but the lineworkers were **ready to fix** it. Pipes were frozen one morning and **golf ball-sized hail** blanketed the area.

Despite that, the workers remained **hearty and upbeat**, meeting with locals and providing **soccer balls, flying discs and coloring books** for the kids. **Cody Minter** of **BARC Electric** passed out bracelets made by the youth group at his church, **Goshen Baptist**. Truly this exemplifies the seventh cooperative principle, **Concern for Community**.

The trip is the **first international electrification mission** sponsored by the **VMD Association**, with help from participating co-ops and **CFC**.

Follow along with the team, which will be **in Bolivia through Sept. 21**, on the Facebook page,

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/UnitedWeLight/>

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

The crews flew from Reagan National Airport on **Sept. 4** as part of a winding journey that led them to **Santa Cruz**, the commercial center of Bolivia, and a six-hour bus ride to their rural destination. Thanks to their effort, **seven homes received power on Sept. 7** for the first time.



*With snow-capped mountain peaks as a backdrop, VMD crews string wire that will bring power for the first time to several rural Bolivian villages.*

## **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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