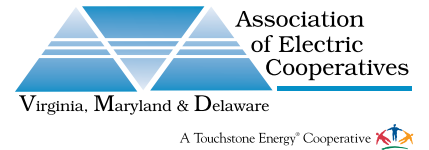


A regular update for leaders, members and friends of
the VA-MD-DE Association of Electric Cooperatives

from Richard G. Johnstone Jr. | President & CEO



VMDAEC ANNUAL MEETING

What a Difference a Year Makes!

In 2019, electric cooperative leaders from our three-state region celebrated the VMD Association's 75th anniversary at the historic Williamsburg Lodge, with a gala black-tie affair amid the music of the world-famous Glenn Miller Orchestra.

In 2020, these same electric cooperative leaders celebrated the VMD Association's 76th annual meeting on a virtual basis: from a den, a conference room watch party, or a kitchen countertop.

But there is a common denominator between a packed hotel ballroom and a laptop viewing — a love and appreciation for all things cooperative.

"No matter the setting, we must remain relevant to our members and to our communities," said NRECA President Curtis Wynn, president and CEO of Roanoke EMC in Aulander, N.C.

Curtis' remarks marked the first time that a sitting NRECA president has addressed a VMD annual meeting and it was a stellar kickoff to the event, entitled "A Virtual Meeting but a Real Celebration of Electric Cooperatives."

As about 250 viewers joined in, VMD staffers worked hard behind the scenes to cut between playing videos, to hooking up live feeds with speakers and award presenters, to connecting regularly with on-site hosts and moderators.

NOVEC President and CEO Stan Feuerberg officially opened the meeting with an invocation. VMD Association President and CEO Richard Johnstone then took a moment to praise outgoing VMD Board Chair Fletcher "Bob" Jones, who was connected to the meeting via a live feed from Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative's Chase City office, where MEC Board Chairman David Jones presented Bob with a gavel plaque honoring him for his leadership during what Richard described as "one of the most difficult years in the Association's 76-year history." Bob responded that he was "humbled" by the chance to lead the VMD Association and reiterated his passion for the cooperative business model.



NRECA President Curtis Wynn delivers keynote remarks live from Roanoke Electric Membership Corporation in North Carolina.



From left, Brian Mosier, Tommy Campbell and Jim Robertson work behind the scenes from the VMDAEC Conference Room — aka the control room.

In his remarks, Curtis said cooperatives are uniquely equipped to meet the challenges of tomorrow, saying they operate under "the most flexible business model in the industry today." He emphasized a resolution being considered by NRECA that aligns cooperatives with diversity, equity and inclusion, much like co-ops stressed reaching out to the underserved at the creation of the electric program in the 1930s.

A portion of the annual meeting was dedicated to the 15 lineworkers who volunteered last fall to light up rural South America as part of "United We Light: Project Bolivia." The Association presented U.S. Presidential Volunteer Service Awards to the lineworkers along with team leader John Medved of Rappahannock Electric Cooperative, videographer Ryan White of REC and Alan Scruggs, vice president for safety and training services at VMD.

John recalled how the Bolivia team bonded and said he regarded it as "a great experience with great guys, and a great camaraderie, as well."

One of the highlights of the annual meeting is the presentation of awards and this year was no different. VMD staffers played video tributes to two longtime co-op stalwarts who passed away earlier this year — Bill Sherrod, who in April received the Distinguished Service Award, and R. Wayne Browning, longtime director at A&N Electric Cooperative, who received the Electric Cooperative Leadership Award.

Two awards were announced in surprise presentations. E. Warren Matthews said he was humbled when he learned

that he would receive the Distinguished Service Award for more than three decades of work as counsel to Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative. Warren’s wife Faye was present with him at MEC headquarters, watching the streamed meeting, as outgoing VMD Board Chair Fletcher “Bob” Jones and MEC Board Chairman David Jones presented the award.

Warren told well-wishers the electric program is “singular” and said he was “absolutely thrilled to be a small part of it.”

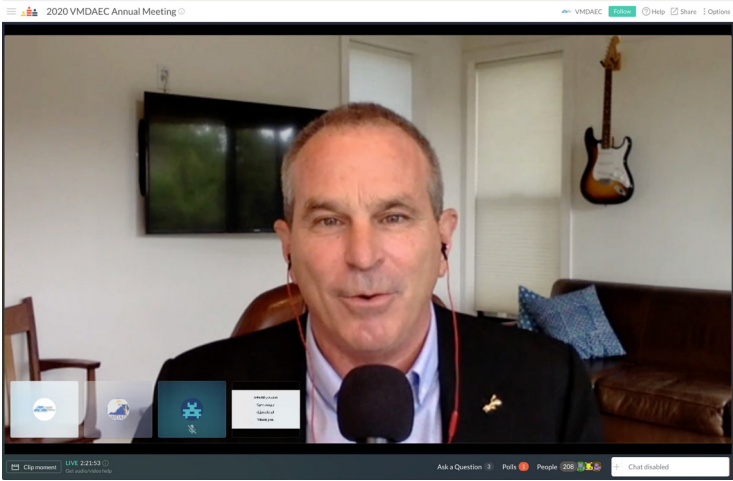
Rappahannock Electric Cooperative President and CEO Kent Farmer was in a meeting at ODEC headquarters watching the streamed annual meeting when he saw he would receive the Electric Cooperative Leadership Award. REC Board Chairman Chris Shipe entered the ODEC meeting room just after the video honoring Kent concluded, and Chris then presented the award to Kent, who retires Aug. 1. Kent expressed deep appreciation for the honor.

Wrapping up the speakers was author Robert Bryce, whose presentation on “Celebrating a World Free from COVID” discussed the energy landscape after the pandemic. He said he suspects that while the transition to renewable energy will continue, it will not be without bumps. “Energy transitions take a long time,” he noted.

Meeting viewers also got to visit several special online “rooms” to learn about sponsors of the event, the VMD scholarship program and other Association activities.

We hope to be back in person in 2021, but for now, we can say “well done” to the VMD staffers and hundreds of participants who made the 2020 meeting a success — even without a black-tie gala.

— Report by Steven Johnson, Editor, Cooperative Living.



Another keynote speaker, author Robert Bryce, discusses the energy landscape post-COVID-19 live from his home in Texas.

Go to vmdaec.mclms.net/en to check out an edited recording of the Virtual Annual Meeting, plus all the videos.



Richard Johnstone presented live from his office while Andrew Vehorn narrated the meeting from his office down the hall at VMDAEC.

VMDAEC LEADERSHIP

VMD Board Elects Officers for 2020-21

The Board of Directors of the VMD Association has a new leadership team.

Serving as chair of the VMDAEC Board for 2020-21 is Patricia S. “Pat” Dorey, a retired college administrator and academic counselor, who represents Delaware Electric Cooperative on the Association’s Board.

She succeeds Fletcher B. “Bob” Jones of Boydton, Virginia, who is a board member of Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative. Bob was praised by his board colleagues for his strong leadership during this past year, and presented with an engraved gavel plaque noting his outstanding service.

The new vice chair is Russell G. “Rusty” Brown, a director at Northern Neck Electric Cooperative in Warsaw, Va. Rusty is a banker with Atlantic Union Bank in the Northern Neck and also is a director at Colorado-based CoBank, a cooperative lending institution.

The secretary/treasurer for 2020-21 is Wade C. House. He is chairman of the board of Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC) and is retired as president of the Virginia division of a large highway construction and materials manufacturing company.



Pat Dorey, Delaware Electric Cooperative



Rusty Brown, Northern Neck Electric Cooperative



Wade House, Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative

These leaders were elected during the VMD Association’s July 27 annual business meeting, which was conducted remotely because of the health pandemic. These three officers will help guide the course of the Association as it delivers services to cooperatives that provide power to about two million people in Virginia, Maryland and Delaware.

“These three officers are all business and community leaders who embody the very best qualities of the cooperative business model, with their focus always on the best interests of the member-consumers we serve,” said Richard G. Johnstone Jr., president and CEO of the Association. “We truly depend on their leadership as we look to expand and improve upon the services we provide to our member cooperatives.”

— Report by Steven Johnson, Editor, Cooperative Living.

NRECA LEADERSHIP

John Lee Elected to NRECA Board of Directors

John C. Lee, Jr., president and CEO of Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative and EMPOWER Broadband, has been chosen by his peers to represent Virginia on the board of directors of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

John was elected on July 24 by representatives from the Commonwealth’s electric cooperatives to serve as the Virginia Director on the NRECA Board.

He succeeds Greg White, who recently retired from the NRECA Board and as president and CEO of Northern Neck Electric Cooperative.

NRECA is the Arlington, Va.-based trade association that represents the interests of more than 900 cooperatives and 42 million member-consumers across the country, as well as public power districts and public utility districts. The board is composed of one representative from each of the 48 states served by electric cooperatives.

“I am honored that my colleagues here in the Commonwealth trust in me to represent their best interests on the NRECA Board, and to champion matters that bring value to the distribution cooperatives and/or ODEC, and take a strong stand on issues that don’t,” John said, adding, “I will do my utmost to validate their support by ensuring that our national organization does the right thing by those we serve, and dutifully represents our membership during these very challenging times in the electricity and technology arenas.

“I look forward to the opportunity to work with cooperative leaders from across the country to advance the cooperative business model, position cooperatives to continue their successful efforts to provide reliable, affordable, and



John C. Lee, Jr., Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative

environmentally sensitive electric service to tens of millions of cooperative members, and continue to bring life-changing services like broadband to the communities we serve. At NRECA, I’ll be joining a group of decision-makers who share my passion for the cooperative mission of powering communities and our tradition of stepping up to provide critical services that are otherwise unavailable to our consumer-members,” he concluded.

The NRECA Board reviews and approves the association’s annual \$250 million budget, provides oversight on legislative and regulatory activities, ensures the good financial standing of the cooperative network’s benefits and retirement systems, supports the international outreach program, and advocates for the cooperative business model.

Congratulations to John on his election to the NRECA Board!

— Report by Steven Johnson, Editor, Cooperative Living.

ODEC LEADERSHIP

ODEC Board Elects New Officers

The board of directors of Old Dominion Electric Cooperative elected new officers at its annual membership meeting on July 27.

John C. Lee, Jr., president and CEO of Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative, was elected to serve as chairman of the board.

Jeffrey S. Edwards, president and CEO of Southside Electric Cooperative, was elected as vice-chairman, and Micheal Malandro, president and CEO of Choptank Electric Cooperative, was elected secretary/treasurer.

Each of the officers' terms will expire in 2023.

“I am both proud and honored to have been elected by my peers to serve as chairman of the board of directors of ODEC, the organization where I began my cooperative career 28 years ago as an employee at the Clover Power Station in Halifax County,” John said.

“I will serve in the board chairman’s role with strong unity among ODEC’s members as my highest priority, recognizing that addressing the considerable energy challenges that lie ahead will require a collective resilience among a group of



John Lee

Jeff Edwards

Mike Malandro

cooperatives who occasionally have differing views and needs,” John said.

According to Marcus Harris, ODEC president and CEO, “John, Jeff and Mike bring decades of experience and an intense focus on the needs of the members they serve. They will provide excellent leadership to ODEC’s board, and I am excited to work with them in their new roles.”

— Report by Shena Crittendon, Director, Communications & Public Relations, Old Dominion Electric Cooperative.

THANKS TO OUR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



'Wall of Honor' Recognizes VMD Business Partners

Thank you to the 55 Associate Members of VMDAEC for their continued support of the variety of services we're able to offer our distribution cooperative members. These business partners played a major role in keeping this year's annual meeting at no cost to our members, and also support several other programs, trainings and services throughout the year.

A wall fixture was installed at the VMDAEC Training Center yesterday to show our appreciation for their support. Take a look at the new fixture next time you visit the Training Center or go to vmdaec.com/associate-members to view a full list of our Associate Members.

Thank you
to our sponsors,
presenters and
participants for
making our 76th
Annual Meeting
a virtual success!

Association
of Electric
Cooperatives
Virginia, Maryland & Delaware
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Go to
vmdaec.mclms.net/en
to check out an edited
recording of the
Virtual Annual Meeting,
plus all the videos.