

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

from Richard G. Johnstone Jr. | President & CEO



Co-op Icon, Business Leader, Philanthropist Passes Away at 95

Longtime NOVEC Board Chairman and VMD Association leader J. Manley Garber, 95, passed away on Sunday, Sept. 13. The family will be having a private service at this time due to COVID-19 concerns, and hopes to schedule a celebration of his life at a later time.

A full tribute to Manley will be featured in the next issue of *Connections*.

A native of Sangerville in Augusta County, Virginia, Manley lived in Northern Virginia most of his adult life, becoming a highly successful businessman through hard work, common sense and entrepreneurial skill. He also gave back to the community in many ways, including becoming one of the leading fundraisers in the D.C. Metro area in the March of Dimes walkathon.

He was first elected to the NOVEC (then Prince William Electric Cooperative) Board in 1950 at age 25, and by the time he retired in 2018, he was the longest-serving electric cooperative director in the nation, with 68 years of service. He was the longtime chairman of NOVEC's Board and also served as board chairman of the VMD Association during two stints, from 1969-71 and 1989-91. He received the Association's highest honor, the VMD Leadership Award, in 1996.

Survivors include his wife, Kay, along with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



J. Manley Garber, 1925-2020

UNSUNG VIRGINIAN

VMDAEC Recognizes Ted Moriak

A member of Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC) is the 2020 recipient of the Unsung Virginian Award for his work promoting safe and affordable housing for individuals afflicted with brain diseases.

Ted Moriak, director emeritus of loans and grants for The Brain Foundation, received the award Sept. 11 at a reception in his Centreville neighborhood.

"Through his drive and determination, Ted Moriak has truly made a difference in the lives of those fighting brain diseases. Ted epitomizes the seventh cooperative principle of Concern for Community and his efforts carry on the tradition of our Unsung Virginian Award," said Richard G. Johnstone Jr., president and CEO of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Representatives of the VMD Association and NOVEC presented the award to Moriak. Bestowed annually since 1968, the Unsung Virginian Award honors a citizen who has not previously been recognized for services rendered to a Virginia community and cause without thought of personal gain.

Moriak has been instrumental in the acquisition of nine houses in Fairfax County for about three dozen men and women with brain injuries or diseases, such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorders. Founded in 2003, The Brain Foundation focuses on individuals who are homeless or vulnerable to becoming homeless.

"He was tireless in pursuing money from multiple federal, state, and local government entities, from other nonprofits and from private citizens," said Trudy Harsh, founder and president emeritus of The Brain Foundation. "What Ted

Ted Moriak
displays the
2020 Unsung
Virginian Award
with Trudy Harsh,
founder of The
Brain Foundation.



accomplished was almost miraculous and I attribute it to his persistence, positive attitude and remarkable ability to learn and navigate the myriad complexities in obtaining housing."

Bill Fuller, senior community housing officer with the Virginia Housing Development Authority, added that housing is one of the most difficult and vexing problems for people with disabilities.

"It requires both a giving heart and a head for numbers. Ted has been the financial brains of this organization and an incredible advocate. His work is fast and accurate and delivers results," Fuller said.

Moriak has been a resident of Centreville, where he lives with wife Susan, since 1971. He retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture after a 39-year career as an economist and analyst. He has held an array of community leadership positions, including president of the Southwestern Youth Association, vice president of the Chantilly High School PTA and member of the Fairfax County Athletic Council, among other causes.

— Report by Steven Johnson, Editor, Cooperative Living.

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

A&N Electric Continues 'Lighting the Way' in Serving its Communities

A&N Electric Cooperative and its employee nonprofit Lighting the Way have remained committed to their community throughout the COVID-19 outbreak.

Since early 2019, Lighting the Way has partnered with the Foodbank of the Eastern Shore to provide volunteers who assist with packing bags for the organization's warehouse distribution program and backpack program.

"Although the pandemic has limited Lighting the Way's outreach abilities, our partnership with the Foodbank has allowed us to continue to positively impact the lives of those we serve throughout this time," says Mandy Montalvo, Lighting the Way president.

Out of an abundance of caution, Lighting the Way suspended its regular monthly Foodbank volunteering at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak.

With a growing need for volunteers and strong health and safety protocols implemented at the Foodbank's Tasley facility, Lighting the Way volunteers returned weekly in June and continue assisting monthly with packing nonperishable bags of food to help the community.

"A&N employees dedicating their time to volunteer allows us to connect with our community and give back to our members in a meaningful way," Montalvo said. "I'd like to thank all A&N employees who have volunteered and contributed financially. These efforts are a reflection of their commitment to our community."



Lighting the Way volunteers at the Foodbank.

BACKPACK PROGRAM

This nationally recognized program distributes food to children at the end of the school day, before weekends and/or school breaks. Students are identified by school personnel as being food insecure by a variety of criteria.

The program consists of bags filled with food that children take home on weekends. Food is child-friendly, nonperishable and easily consumed. Bags are discreetly distributed to children on the last day before the weekend or holiday vacation.

Backpacks are distributed at Chincoteague Elementary, Kegotank Elementary, Metompkin Elementary, Accawmacke Elementary, Pungoteague Elementary, Kiptopeke Elementary and Occahannock Elementary schools.

WAREHOUSE DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

This program includes all food and grocery products from food drives, purchases, and donations from manufacturers and supermarkets. This is the heart of the Foodbank.

– Report by Jay Diem, Communications and Public Relations Coordinator, A&N Electric Cooperative.

COOPERATIVE TRAINING

VMD Adds On-Demand Training, Provides it to Community Electric Co-op

In-person to virtual to on-demand. Since COVID-19, we have seen the shift from in-person training to virtual training and webinars. Well, the Association has now added an on-demand option to its delivery methods of training.

Community Electric Cooperative's annual two-day employee training transitioned to a two-week, online, on-demand training that even a few storms and outages couldn't cancel ... one of the perks of on-demand training.

VMDAEC Director of Continuing Education Brandon Burton worked with CEC Manager of Communications Jessica Parr to develop a well-rounded, customized training package to meet the needs of cooperative staff. This year's safety topic included a series of RESAP videos created by the VMDAEC Safety and Training Department.

CEC staff created two videos. One detailed their annual ACRE campaign, starring Journeyman Lineman Evan Wagensomer. The second provided staff with updates about the co-op's subsidiary, RECORE. Association Counsel Sam Brumberg created a video specifically on CEC's ethics, anti-harassment and whistleblower policies to cover their annual training requirement.

Finally, the soft-skills topic rounding out the training this year was an emotional intelligence training module via LinkedIn Learning, a free resource offered to Touchstone Energy members. All the custom training modules were uploaded



to LinkedIn Learning. Once there, the CEC training package was placed on each employee's learning plan. Employees were given two weeks to complete the training on their laptops, phones or tablets; from their office, car or homes; or wherever it was convenient. Employees had the option to take the training all at once or a little at a time, based on their individual schedules. Progress was tracked through LinkedIn Learning and Brandon provided regular reporting to CEC's management for monitoring until training was complete.

While the delivery may have been different, employees were still able to get important training, at a time that was convenient for them. Storms did not delay the training and social distancing and COVID were not an issue.

VMDAEC will continue to offer on-demand training and is in the process of building its own learning management system that will offer similar functions to LinkedIn Learning, opening doors for all its members. Stay tuned for more information.

If you're interested in learning more about how the VMDAEC can assist with customized, on-demand training, contact Brandon Burton at bburton@vmdaec.com or 804-297-3485.

'Fall' for VMD Training this Autumn

VIRTUAL TRAINING: Dealing with Difficult People

Description: This Contemporary Leadership & Management workshop helps distinguish between the individual and their behaviors. With an understanding of behavior, we will explore methods that help determine root causes for behavior that needs to be modified. Learn the value of addressing and resolving issues in a timely fashion that is measurable and effective. Address issues that require the use of policy and disciplinary processes.

Who: ALL are welcome!

When: October 8-9

Time: 10/8, 1-4 p.m. and 10/9, 9 a.m.-noon

Via: Zoom

Facilitator: Sam Bruce, Sapient Business Solutions and the University of Richmond

CPE: 6 credits

Cost: \$325 per person (4+ from your co-op, \$300 each) (your co-op will be billed following the class)

Deadline to Register: October 6*

WEBINAR: Federal Reserve & Economic Update

Who: ALL are welcome!

When: September 30

Time: 10-11:30 a.m.

Via: Zoom

Facilitator: Sonya Waddell, Vice President and Economist, Regional and Community Analysis at the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond

Fee: \$30 per person (4 or more from your co-op, \$25 each!)

CPE: 1 credit

Deadline to Register: September 29*

TO REGISTER FOR TRAINING:

Email Brandon Burton at bburton@vmdaec.com with the name and email address of all participants.

*Please follow your co-op's protocol prior to registering.

COOPERATIVE RETIREMENT

A&N Electric's Youth Tour Coordinator Retires

Patsy Goard, long-time Youth Tour coordinator and engineering staff assistant at A&N Electric Cooperative, retired at the end of August after nearly 30 years with the cooperative.

Patsy started her career with the cooperative when she took a temp job as a floater, mostly working in billing. In the spring of 1992, a job opened in engineering as a mapping clerk. Two months after starting the mapping clerk job, Patsy's supervisor quit and she was given the staff assistant position she still holds today.

"I'll miss the people," Patsy says. "I've worked with a lot of great people and I'm going to miss seeing them. I've built relationships over the years with contractors, employees and members. I've learned a lot about construction, engineering and electricity since starting work here, and I've gained an appreciation for what goes on behind the scenes at the cooperative."

STORM EVENTS

Patsy has also served as A&N's point of contact to the Eastern Shore's Emergency Operations Center and has worked through a number of major storm events throughout her career. "The best times here have been in the worst of times. Hurricanes, storms, Nor'easters. That's when everyone pulls together," Patsy says. "Those are some of my best memories of this place."

YOUTH TOUR

In November 1992, shortly after Patsy began work with the cooperative she was approached to take over A&N's Youth Tour Program. Patsy chaperoned nearly 70 local students during her 27 years of coordinating the program. "This program gives them a lot of education on top of what they learn at school," Patsy says. "I enjoyed getting to know these kids in just one week. I keep in touch with a lot of them to this day."

"My first memory of Youth Tour is Patsy breaking out into a freestyle rap about Youth Tour for the entire statewide delegation," says Jay Diem, communications and public relations coordinator. "She brought down the house. and instantly set the tone for the entire week. She's a legend."



It's a sentiment echoed by her former Youth Tour students. "Patsy made everything on Youth Tour just so much fun because her energy was so enthusiastic and she was so excited for us," said Anna Sexauer, 2017 Youth Tour delegate. "She just wanted us to have the best time we possibly could." Youth Tour has also proven to be more than an annual networking event with other cooperatives.

PARTING WORDS OF ADVICE

"Whether you go to the same place each year (on Youth Tour), treat it as if it's your first time because it will be the first time for the kids," Patsy says. "Keep an open mind, because even though you've been there before you learn something new each time."

"These kids want to know about the cooperative. This is your time to really represent the cooperative and teach them how important it is to the community. They want to know how they can help the co-op in the community."

Patsy is looking forward to being a homeschool teacher for her grandchildren as she starts her retirement. "Thanks COVID!" she says.

– Report by Jay Diem, Communications and Public Relations Coordinator, A&N Electric Cooperative.

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

Community Memorial Hospital Honors MEC CEO John Lee

Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative President and CEO John C. Lee, Jr., was recently recognized by the VCU Health Community Memorial Hospital for his three terms of service on the hospital's board of directors, including the past year as board chairman. The hospital's bylaws limit service on the board to three consecutive terms and each term is for a three-year period. VCU Health CMH President and CEO Scott Burnette presented John with a commemorative crystal award at the board's June meeting.

VCU Health CMH is a community-owned, nonprofit hospital providing health services for the south-central region of Virginia and portions of northern North Carolina, offering quality, state-of-the-art health care in a safe, convenient, patient-friendly environment.

"As a member of the CMH Board of Directors, John has been a vital part of the many positive changes that have occurred at CMH over the past nine years. From chairing the committee that led to our affiliation with VCU Health, to building a new hospital; John has helped lead the board through these grand achievements of our hospital. We are fortunate to have people like John, that volunteer their time, and put tremendous effort into making our community a better place," said W. Scott Burnette, CEO, VCU Health Community Memorial Hospital.

Burnette added, "The VCU-CMH Board of Directors volunteer their time and expertise to assure that our community, nonprofit hospital remains on a strong course for the future. These directors generously give of themselves, their time, experience and skills and in turn to their community to ensure that VCU Health CMH continues to enhance the health and well-being of the citizens of Southside Virginia and Northern North Carolina."

John commented on his tenure on the board stating, "Serving on the VCU Health Community Memorial Hospital board of directors has been a highly gratifying and educational experience and I am very proud to have been a part of the hospital's considerable accomplishments in the past nine years. Our



John Lee (right) receives a plaque from W. Scott Burnette, CEO, VCU Health Community Memorial Hospital, in appreciation for his nine years on the CMH Board of Directors.

affiliation with VCU Health was a game changer for our hospital and the quality of care offered to this region, and the board's efforts to seek out and secure an affiliate was challenging work, but in the end incredibly gratifying, especially now after they have proven themselves to be worthy partners, time and time again."

"It's been an honor and privilege to serve on the board and to work with my fellow directors and Scott and his capable team at the hospital. All of them are highly dedicated and work diligently to provide high-quality health care, with desirable options, at a contemporary, state-of-the-art facility ... I'd say we're doing all that successfully. Serving our community on the VCU Health CMH board has been a great experience for me, and I wish them continued success," John added.

- Report by Priscilla Lawson Whirley, CCC, Communications Specialist, Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative.

VMDAEC Appreciates Our Associate Members

Visit vmdaec.com/associate-members to learn more about the Platinum Members below. We also welcome our newest Platinum Member, GAC Enterprises LLC.



Sentinel Robotic Solutions



AUI Inc.



Cooperative Home Services Program



GAC Enterprises LLC