

## member connection

### Men's choral group, Just Friends, selected to sing national anthem at co-op's 80th annual meeting

Local men's choral group, Just Friends, will be singing, "The Star-Spangled Banner" at Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's 80th Annual Meeting, June 7, at the co-op's headquarters in Owatonna.



Just Friends is a local men's choral group who was selected to sing, "The Star-Spangled Banner" at Steele-Waseca's 80th annual meeting on June 7. The group includes (left to right): Larry Crabtree, New Richland; Doug Riskedahl, Oakland; Dennis Maurer, New Richland; Dale Krueger, New Richland; Randy Lewer, New Richland; Charlie Priebe, Waseca; Dale Loken, Owatonna; Roger Groskreutz, Wells; Dean Buendorf, New Richland; and Vern Wilker, Owatonna.

A panel of judges consisting of two Steele-Waseca employees evaluated four auditions on vocal performance, stage presence and personality. Members and/or their dependents were eligible to audition. Just Friends will

sing the national anthem at the beginning of this year's annual meeting.

The men's group comes from New Richland, Wells, Owatonna, Waseca and Oakland. The group will receive \$100 following their performance at the annual meeting.

Steele-Waseca wishes to thank all who auditioned and will announce when auditions will be held for the 81st annual meeting in 2017. *SWCE*

## Play Ball! Minnesota Youth Clinics coming to Faribault and Owatonna

The summer of 2016 is the 56th summer the Minnesota Twins, Twins Community Fund and Play Ball! Minnesota, in partnership with Great River Energy (GRE), Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's wholesale energy provider for its legacy members, will offer free youth baseball and softball clinics.

Locally, the clinics are coming to Faribault on Saturday, June 4, and Owatonna on Saturday, June 25.

The Play Ball! Minnesota Youth Clinics have always been, and will continue to be, available to participants and communities free of charge. Funding for the Play Ball! Minnesota Youth Clinics is provided by the Twins Community Fund and Great River Energy. No registration is required to participate in a clinic; just show up on the day of the clinic and be ready to learn and have fun.

The current baseball clinic format was developed by Twins General Manager Terry Ryan and former Twins executive Bob Gebhard. The current softball clinic format was developed by Terry Ryan Award winner and longtime softball instructor Jim Berbee. Clinics are broken up into two sessions; the first session is for 6- to 9-year-olds, and the second for 10- to 13-year-olds.

The Faribault clinics on June 4 will be held at Bell Field. The first session will start at 10 a.m.; the second session will start at 11:30 a.m. If weather doesn't cooperate, then the clinic will be held at the Armed Forces Reserve Center. The Owatonna clinics on June 25 will be held at Diamond #1 at the Steele County Fairgrounds. The first session will be held at 9 a.m.; the second session will start at 10:30 a.m. The indoor site in case of inclement weather is the Owatonna Junior High School.

Created in 1961 by longtime Twins scout Angelo Giuliani, the clinic program serves as a way for the ballclub to promote the games of baseball and softball to boys and girls throughout the region. *SWCE*



## annual meeting

Plan to arrive at SWCE early enough to be registered by the time the meeting begins. As noted on the agenda, registration ends at 10:30 a.m. You must be registered by that time to be eligible to vote for director candidates. 26598

*80 Years*  
*Lighting The Way*

There will be two Early Bird prize drawings this year. There will also be Grand Prize drawings for gift cards and flowers.

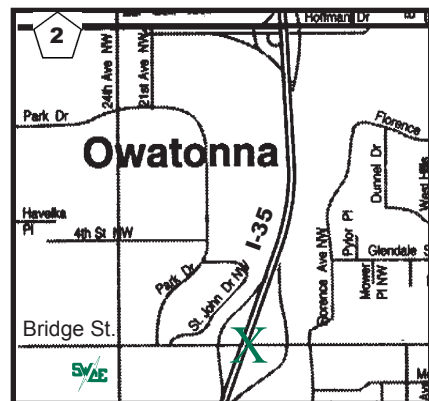
Steele-Waseca will be collecting donations for an area county food shelf. Please bring non-perishable food items or monetary donations with you to the annual meeting at the SWCE booth and receive (1) free LED bulb.

If you are new to Steele-Waseca or have never attended an annual meeting, please pick up a complimentary copy of the co-op's 75th anniversary book and DVD entitled, "Making the Connection," at the SWCE booth. Additional copies and/or purchases during regular business hours are available for \$7/each.

Lunch will be served after the annual meeting. The menu will include: smoked pork chops, green beans, twice baked potatoes, salad, dinner rolls, coffee, white and chocolate milk, water, soda and Dairy Queen Dilly® Bars.

The green X on the map below marks the exit (#41) you'll need to take if you're arriving via Interstate 35 (give yourself extra time due to road construction projects). The green *SWCE* marks the location of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's headquarters at 2411 West Bridge Street in Owatonna.

Parking will be available on the property surrounding the building. Miner's Outdoor & Rec, located at Highway 218 South, Blooming Prairie, will be supplying several golf cars to shuttle you to and from the meeting.



the power of human connections

# sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

June 2016



## 2015 Annual Report

*80 Years*  
*Lighting The Way*

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being held in Fbo & Owat.

### calendar of events

- June
- 3-5 Morristown Dam Days
- 7 SWCE Annual Meeting  
**SWCE office is closed**
- 14 Flag Day
- 17-18 Mdfd Straight River Days
- 19 Father's Day
- 20 First day of summer
- 24-26 Ellendale Days

National Dairy Month

## SWCE's 80th Annual Meeting Agenda

**Tuesday, June 7, 2016 – 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**  
**Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric**  
**2411 West Bridge Street, Owatonna, Minnesota**

9 a.m.-10:30 a.m. ....Registration for director voting and prizes  
9 a.m.-10:30 a.m. ....Popcorn and co-op display booths

10:25 a.m. ...Early Bird Prize Drawings: (2) \$250 travel certificates from 4-Seasons Vacations, Inc., Albert Lea

10:30 a.m. ....Registration ends, business meeting begins  
Presentation of Colors ..... Color Guard, Civil Air Patrol, and Faribault Middle School

Pledge of Allegiance.....Everyone  
National Anthem.....Just Friends

Invocation ..... Duane Edwardson, Board Chaplain  
Welcome .....Syd Briggs, General Manager

Call to Order.....Gary Wilson, Board President  
Establish Quorum, Adopt Agenda ..... Gary Wilson, Board President

Notice of Meeting, Proof of Mailing .....  
...Gerri Lienke, Board Secretary/Treasurer

Acceptance of 2015 Reports as printed in *Sparks*.....  
...Gary Wilson, Board President

Board of Directors Introduction ..... Gary Wilson, Board President  
Election of Directors

Nominating Committee Report....Mike Herman, Committee Chair  
Director Candidate Introduction... Mike Herman, Committee Chair

Call for Nominations from the floor..Eric Mattison, SWCE Attorney  
Nominations Closed, Tellers Appointed, Director Voting

Presentation by 2015 Youth Tour Delegate Lucas Arndt  
Introduction of 2016 Youth Tour Delegates Karsten Singh & Abigail Hansen

ACRE Presentation  
Guest Introductions .....Syd Briggs, General Manager

SWCE Report..... Syd Briggs, General Manager

Announcement of Election Results...Eric Mattison, SWCE Attorney  
Unfinished and New Business ..... Gary Wilson, Board President

Adjournment  
Grand Prizes.....Gift cards and flowers

11:45 a.m. ....Lunch catered by HyVee, Owatonna

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 2411 W Bridge Street, PO Box 485  
 Owatonna MN 55060-0485

Website: [www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop) Find us on  
 Email: [swce@swce.coop](mailto:swce@swce.coop) Facebook  
 Fax: 507-446-4242

**Board of Directors**

- PJ Duchene . . . . . District 1
- Geraldine Lienke . . . . . District 2  
*Secretary/Treasurer*
- Duane Edwardson, *Chaplain* . District 3
- Dennis Ringhofer . . . . . District 4
- Rodney Krell . . . . . District 5
- Gary Wilson, *President*,  
*GRE Director* . . . . . District 6
- John Beal, *Vice President* . . . . District 7
- Ronald Sommers . . . . . District 8
- Renee Malecha . . . . . District 9  
*Assistant Secretary/Treasurer*

**Management**

Syd Briggs . . . . . *General Manager*

**Division Managers**

- Darla DeVries . . . . . *Office*
- Douglas Hughes . . . . . *Marketing*
- David Lundberg . . . . . *Finance*
- Kim Huxford . . . . . *Operations*

**Office Hours**

8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

**Operations Office Hours**

8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

**For Customer Service, Billing  
 Questions and Power Outages  
 Phone:**

507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514

**Before calling to report an outage**

1. Check fuses and circuit breakers in your home and on meter pole.
2. Check with your neighbors to see if they have power.
3. Look for possible causes such as a tree branch on wires, a broken pole, twisted wires, etc.

**To leave a non-emergency message  
 whenever SWCE's Office is closed:**

Phone 507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514  
 Press "2" and leave message including name, account #, and phone # you can be reached at the following business day.

**Call Before You Dig  
 Gopher State One Call  
 811 or 800-252-1166**

48-hour notice required for ALL underground cable locations

**message to our owners**



*By Syd Briggs,  
 General Manager*

Soon we perform one of the main functions of an electric cooperative; we have our annual meeting for the purpose of reporting to our members our activities, and we elect three of our nine directors for a three-year term, and due to a special circumstance, one director for a one-year term.

It is also great to get together and have a relaxed time with our members, directors, employees, and retired personnel. We also have guests from around the area such as personnel from some of our vendors, employees from neighboring cooperatives, and elected representatives that serve us locally and in St. Paul.

As always, we will have a great meal provided by our friends from HyVee followed by the always popular Dilly® Bars. Please remember to bring non-perishable foods for our annual drive for the county "food shelves," and this year everyone who donates will receive a LED bulb. This is a chance to not only help many people in the immediate area with food, but to also continue personal conservation and efficiency efforts.

We also get to hear from our Youth Tour delegates; always one of the highlights of the meeting for myself and the membership. The co-op's 2015 delegate, Lucas Arndt, will present highlights of his experience last year in Washington, D.C. This year we increased our support by providing for two of our youth to attend the tour in Washington, D.C. It will be great to hear from both Karsten Singh and Abigail Hansen.

This year's annual meeting has added significance in that our newest members joining the co-op after previously being with Alliant Energy will have the opportunity to participate and experience what cooperative membership is about. Even though the acquisition was only for a few months last year, we have already experienced a positive impact in our financial reports and an increase in involvement in town hall meetings and membership.

Financially, we are proud to say we experienced another increase in kWh sales of 8.1 percent over 2014. This increase was largely due to the acquisition of the new members. Any increase in energy sales helps to minimize the effect rising costs have on our cost of service and benefits everyone on our system. Our average number of meters grew from 9,626 in 2014 to 10,341 in 2015, again due to the acquisition of service territory through the Southern Minnesota Energy Cooperative (SMEC). This resulted in a growth rate of 7.4 percent. 19138

With that growth, our cost of power increased 7.4 percent while our operating expenses (less the power cost) increased \$655,916 or 8.4 percent. Most of the increase in expenses occurred in operations; however, it was more than offset by an increase in revenue resulting in a 23.9 percent increase in operating margins. The actual increase in operating margins was \$213,931. Due to our continued growth in meters and quality of plant, electric plant increased about \$9.1 million along with an increase in long-term debt of \$5.8 million. Together this caused equity to increase \$1.9 million to \$32,700,068 which now stands at 42.7 percent of assets or a decrease of 3 percent over last year. As equity continues to grow, the cooperative will be in a good position to continue the excellent practice of retiring, or paying, capital credits at the end of each year. In 2015, we paid over \$749,000 to our member owners, which is an increase over last year of \$52,000; our total retirement of capital credits now stands at \$13.9 million.

Steele-Waseca has always been blessed with member interest in many areas of planning and direction. Last year we continued having town hall meetings across our territory. We had a total of five meetings throughout our service territory informing nearly 500 members on a variety of information covering SMEC, co-op youth programs, industry news, renewable programs and political action.

The Coal Creek Tour in 2015 was again attended by over 50 members as attendees traveled to Great River Energy's largest coal generating facility for an extensive and highly informative tour. This year's tour will be taking place June 14-16.

Steele-Waseca is very grateful to our members who take time to serve on our advisory and nominating committees performing an immensely vital function of our cooperative purpose. Many members were contacted and given the opportunity to be a part of the leadership of the cooperative.

We also continue to see an increase in member involvement in ACRE (Action Committee for Rural Electrification). This is our political action committee whose purpose is to support members of Congress that support rural electric issues. This year we have over 420 members, directors, and employees in our political action committee. ACRE works to ensure your electric cooperative has a voice in legislative matters, and we have several victories this year.

It is indeed a pleasure to continue to be a part of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric and the community we share. Our goals of safety, reliability and communication are considered vital in the service we provide to you, our member-owners.

**ad connection**

(For Sale ads continued from Page 14)

**SPORTSSTUFF CAROUSEL**, seats/hauls/pulls 6-people beh. boat, like new. \$200; **FOOSBALL TBL**, exc. cond., \$75; **YOUNG ADULT DRESSER-COMPUTER DESK** w/bookshelf hutch, \$100. 455-1241.

**OTTERTAIL RV LAKE LOT FOR RENT**, premium location for RV/Park Model, breathtaking sunsets, 105' lakefront + private river boat ramp access. 645-2806.

**MINIATURE HORSE**, male, 3-yrs-old. 390-6563.

**GRASS HAY BALES**, small square. 612-756-1131.

**MINOLTA TROLLING MOTOR**, 64 lb. thrust, autopilot, \$110; **(50) WESTERN PAPERBACK NOVELS**, \$20. 210-1826.

**2003 VIKING CAMPER**, 12' long, sleeps (6), stove, fridge, furnace & electrical setup, attached awning w/screen, \$3200. 334-5799.

**(2) 46" & 34" WOODN HORSE DBL TREE EVENRS, 2-SINGLE TREE 42" EVENRS, 2-HORSE HARN. HAMES, 3-HORSE HOOF TRIMMRS, BRIDLE & 3-DRFT HORSE LEATHR HALTRS**, \$150. 330-1154.

**1998 VIKING 2107 SAGA POP-UP CAMPER**, re-frig., sink, stove top, furnace, (2) LP tanks & battery, beds on both ends & table/lounge area turns into bed, \$2650. 412-1246/Terry.

**VITAMASTER AIR ADVANTAGE TRIPLE ACTION EXERCISE BIKE**, \$25. 334-9541.

**MOTOBECANE MOPED; DIESEL TANK** on stand. 334-7756.

**PANEL & DRYWALL ADHESIVE**, 29 oz., (12) tubes, new, \$30; **LARGE GEORGE FOREMAN GRILL** w/ bun warmer, new, \$40. 334-3804.

**(2) HVY DUTY OPEN FACE RODS & REELS**, \$60. 528-2763.

**O'BRIEN SYNCHRO 69 WATER SKI**, used (3) times, \$200. 438-3753.

**(2) OLIVER 99 STANDARD TRACTORS**, \$2000 choice or \$3500 for both; **SAW RIG POWERED MT ENGINE** w/V-belt, \$1800. 583-2386.

**HIGHLAND CATTLE**: (3) bulls, (1) yearling heifer, (2) cows w/calves at side, (1) cow due soon; **DORPER RAM LAMBS**. 715-205-0411.

**TORNADO FOOSBALL TABLE**, like new, \$350. 456-8461.

**300-GAL. FUEL TANK** w/stand, hose & nozzle, \$200; **(2) 8' CYLINDERS** for loader, \$100. 456-8329.

**KATAHDIN HAIR SHEEP**, never shear sheep again, great for beginners, organic & grazers; **RAM LAMBS**. 451-2722.

**LADIES BICYCLE**, 10-spd, gd cond., used twice; **COLEMAN GENERATOR** for a camper, 10,000 Btu, like new, used once. 455-1502.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) assumes no liability for the content of, or reply to, any item posted. The party posting any advertisement assumes complete liability for the content of, and all replies to, any advertisement and for any claims against SWCE as a result thereof, and agrees to indemnify and hold SWCE harmless from all costs, expenses, liabilities and damages resulting from, or caused by, any advertisement or reply thereto.

**Please inform Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric if you have changed your phone number. There are times your co-op needs to reach you, whether it is to inform you about a planned outage, to learn if your power has been restored following a storm, or if it is regarding your account. You may update your phone number by calling 507-451-7340 or toll-free 800-526-3514, or by email at [swce@swce.coop](mailto:swce@swce.coop).**

**STORAGE UNITS**, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

**SHIPPING CONTAINERS**, 20' & 40', store your stuff on your property, rodent & moisture proof. 612-418-4375.

**TORO 22" RECYCLER LAWN MOWER** w/Kohler engine, new, never used, \$175. 451-8036.

**1-ACRE WOODED LOTS** w/lakeshore on Beaver Lk. Gravel cul-de-sac, southern exposure, utilities & common well to lots incl. Ready to build your dream home! [www.beaverlkstates.com](http://www.beaverlkstates.com). 438-9503.

**1971 TRIUMPH STAG SPORTS CAR**, wire wheels, \$8000/obo. 333-2191.

**JD 335 ROUND BALER**, vry gd cond.; **AC 180 DIESEL TRACTOR; 16' FEATHERLITE GOOSENECK STOCK TRAILER**. 744-2792.

**STRAW & HAY ROUND BALES; ALF. HAY**, as low as \$2/bale; **HAY**, sm. sq., no rain (also will have alf. grass hay off the wagon during the season). 451-7489 or 414-2245/cell.

**TRAIL LITE 8240 RV CAMPER**, 20', like new cond. w/extras, \$5700. 334-5390.

**GRASS HAY & STRAW**, sm. sq. 744-2871.

**LIFT CHAIR**, 1-mth-old, \$500. 645-6894.

**1941 PLYMOUTH 4-DOOR; 1955 DODGE PICKUP; 1957 DODGE PICKUP** (all restored). 451-3462.

**KING KUTTER 72" 3-PT REAR BLADE**, \$160; **KING KUTTER 30" 3-PT DIRT SCOOP**, \$210. 456-1976.

**POTTED FERN LEAF PEONIES**, \$25; **POTTED HOSTAS**, many varieties, sizes, various perennials; **CALLA LILY BULBS; CORKSCREW WILLOW & CATALPA TREES**. 451-4274.

**ANTIQUE WOOD DRESSER**, 5-drawer, nice, \$149; **ANTIQUE FAINTING COUCH**, exc. cond., \$399. 213-8823.

**CABIN ON FRENCH LK**, leased land, beautiful view, great muskie lake, \$125,000. 334-6362.

**FOR HIRE**: landscaping, retaining walls, shrubs, edging, decorative rock, spring cleaning & more, free quote. 475-1352/Noah.

**CROP HAIL COVERAGE** for your 2016 growing crops. 676-7767 for rate quote.

**2011 CENTRAL BOILER**, Classic 5036, outdoor, hardly used, \$3500; **GIRL'S BEDROOM SET**, great cond., \$100. 390-4626.

**2014 14' ENCLOSED TANDEM AXLE TRAILER**, \$3900. 330-3266.

**(2) FIRESTONE TIRES**, 136x28, on AC rims, \$550; **(2) 149x28 TIRES** on AC rims, \$700; **JD 60 w/WF & pwr steering**, stuck, \$1250. 330-3945.

**BUILDABLE LOTS** on the north side of Hartland, assessments are paid, water, sewer, blacktop road, \$15,000. 461-0996.

**HARO F.S. BOY'S BIKE**, 20x175, \$100; **TREK MT 200**, 21-spd, 24x175, boy's, \$100. 330-3178.

**(100) PUZZLES**, each 1000 pieces, vry gd cond. 744-2585.

**BUCKET TRUCK**, sitting 2 yrs, tires slashd, '68 Ford 361, M.T., all world gd 2-yrs-ago, \$1700. 332-2300.

**ANTIQU VANIY**, \$75. 583-6679.

**2015 GRASS HAY**, new crop in June, sm. sq., hvy bales. 334-6377.

**2002 VOLKSWAGON VAN**, 2.6 motor, 130k mi., body in gd shape, \$2000/obo. 651-247-8574.

**RASPBERRY PLANTS**, \$1; **PAMPA GRASS**, (10) for \$3; **PURPLE LUPINES**, \$1.25/ea.; **GAILLARDIA**, \$1.25/ea. 663-1275.

**SHINGLING & ROOF REPAIRS**, licensed & insured, trusted since 2000. 271-9129.

**LARGE CHEST FRZR**, gd cond., \$250. 838-5467.

**17' FELLING TRAILER**, nice tandem trailer incl. (4) ratchet tie downs, \$3200. 334-7656.

**JD 14T BALER**, \$1350. 334-6334.

**UNEEDA "WALKER DOLL"**, 31" tall, body/face in exc. cond., scary hair, nds new wig, \$50; **MARX TIN LITHO DOLLHOUSE**, all orig. furn. w/orig. bx, mint cond., Model 4055, circa early '70s, \$100. 645-2806.

**QUICK HITCH**, Cat II, older version, \$75; **OLD HORSE HARNESS**, use for parts, not complete, \$50. 685-4372.

**METAL WELDING CART; 14' FISHING BOAT; 25 HP JOHNSON O/B; (3) DH ROSSIGNOL SKIS**. 470-262-7696.

**'91 310 RUB.-TIRE BACKHOE**, 4x4, extendahoe, 2-buckets, cab & heat, 75% tires, new transfr case 2 yrs ago, front buckt cyl. rebuilt last 2 yrs & out rigger, 8k hrs, grt running machine, \$22,500. 456-9114/Brad.

**STORAGE**: vehicles, boats, campers, RVs, Waldorf area. 380-1609/Chad.

**INT. 1066 TRACTOR** w/Schwartz Quick Tach loader, vry gd cond. w/cab & gd rubber. 334-8538.

**(2) BILLY GOATS**, born Jan. '16. 330-2889.

**WOOD BUNK BED**, or converts to 2 singles, sturdy, \$45/obo. 651-983-8410/Ron.

**ASPARAGUS**, organic. 334-9733.

**TROLLING MOTORS; SHELFING** for workshop; **PLASTIC BARRELS**. 664-9426.

**8" 3-PT HVY DUTY JD BLADE**. 451-5121.

## ad connection

### give away

**OUTDOOR HOT TUB**, needs cleaning & the cover replaced or repaired, everything works, you haul. 334-3904.

**FREE ONLINE CLASSIFIEDS**, you place & remove your own ad on SWCE's website, [www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop), these are separate from Sparks & will not appear in Sparks unless emailed to [sparks@swce.coop](mailto:sparks@swce.coop).

**TRACTOR TIRES**. 744-2585.

**FARM KITTENS**, 3-mths-old, tame. 334-9302.

### wanted

**SPIGOTS** for tapping sap from maple trees. 332-8936.

**20' SILO UNLOADER** in working cond. 451-3456.

**DEAD/ALIVE GARDEN TRACTORS**, will pay \$; **GARDEN TRACTOR LOADER**, attachments, weights & misc. 256-7299 or 451-0546/evenings.

**18' PONTOON** w/trailer, gd cond. 334-3511.

**LAND FOR RENT FOR 2016 & beyond**. 456-6521.

**SCREENS** for Anderson windows: 20.5 x 36.5, 17.5 x 36.5, 20.5 x 43.5. 583-7848.

**WILL DO:** garden tilling, post-hole drilling, lawn grading, seeding, rolling, lawn mowing, thatching, aerating, erosion control, dirt leveling, seed & fertilizer broadcasting. 390-1567/cell.

**JUNK & UNWANTED APPLIANCES**, free drop off, no TVs, computers &/or plastic dishwashers, Fbo. 210-6728.

**LAND TO RENT FOR 2016 & beyond**. 213-6979.

**JANITORIAL WORKERS**, PT, day/evening, needed in local area, \$10/hr. 412-1248/Laura.

**SUFFOLK SHEEP BUCK**, 1- or 2-yr-old. 835-5421.

**GOATS**. 715-205-0411.

**USED OIL**, 200-gal. minimum, will come out to the farms. 420-2429.

**JOBS:** roofing, siding, windows, shingling barns & outbuildings, local builder. 848-1477.

**UNWANTED BIKES & LAWN MOWERS**, \$ paid on delivered. 330-3178.

## All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

**CORN BINDER**. 339-0603 or 330-0876.

**JUNKERS & REPAIRABLES:** cars, trucks, most farm & constr. equip., top \$ pd for junkers.332-2300.

**PONTOON-STYLE PADDLEBOAT** w/bench seat. 684-9665.

### for sale

**RIDING LESSONS; HORSE TRAINING**. 332-2176.

**DUMP TRUCK AVAIL. FOR YOUR HAULING NEEDS**, rock, dirt, etc., 15-ton capacity. 456-7774.

**LG PET PORTER**, composite w/metal door, \$35; **ELEC. HD MEAT GRINDER**, new, \$60; **FLARE BOX**, exc. cond., \$600. 455-3881.

**SHINGLING & LIGHT CONSTRUCTION; TREE REMOVAL**, free estimates. 456-0296.

**TIME-SHARE:** rent/buy, week 25 (June 19-26), Village West, Okoboji, Iowa, reas. 952-652-2929.

**HOME REPAIRS:** plumbing, decks (repair or replacement), window & door installation, drywall (repair or installation) & more, quality wrk, exc. references, affordable prices. 581-6562/John.

**1983 16' PALM BEACH PONTOON**, 15 hp Evinrude, bimini top, Minn Kota 55 lb. thrust trolling motor, fish finder, \$1650. 339-4972.

**PASTURE FOR RENT**, fenced, rural Dundas. 952-270-5562.

**RENTAL**, Izaak Walton League Building, 4 mi. south of Owat., seats 100, full kitchen, grill, Wi-Fi, \$100. 451-7946.

**(2) SETS OF STARTER GOLF CLUBS:** men's right-handed set & a women's left-handed set, \$40/each. 952-652-2661.

**CASE IH 7140 MFWD MAGNUM TRACTOR**, Powershift, (3) hyd. remotes, duals, large PTO, 7500 hrs, gd cond., \$41,900/obo. 380-2759.

**(54) BABY PIG ROUND RED BOWL FEEDERS**, \$30/ea.; **(32) LP BABY PIGS BLOOD HEATERS**, \$75/ea. 456-3014.

**BEACHFRONT VACATION CONDOS FOR RENT** in Fort Myers Beach, South Padre Island & Mexico, visit [www.sandysbeachfrontcondo.com](http://www.sandysbeachfrontcondo.com) for details & photos. 612-865-9604/Sandy.

**HONDA 21" WALK-BEHIND MOWER**, Model HRS2164PDA, little use, \$200. 583-2314.

**CABIN** on south side of Beaver Lk, built in 2008, (2) bdrm, 900 sq. ft w/covered deck, gas fireplace, a/c w/heater, 53' lakeshore & large south lot. 456-5213.

**CLIMATE-CONTROLLED UNITS** for rent, 11'x9' to 16'x10'. 332-4623.

**BOWFLEX POWER PRO STRENGTH TRAINING SYSTEM**, \$500/obo. 213-1735.

**FOLDABLE PICNIC TABLE**, hunter green; **MIXED FIREWOOD**; **STORAGE** for fish houses; **APPLE TREE FIREWOOD**; **DOG KENNEL**, XL, wire. 676-1141.

**FORTUNE CREEK TRL LOTS**, the covenant allows for a pole shed, starting at \$75,000. 838-5033/John.

**POULAN PRO RIDING MOWER**, 25 hp twin cyl. engine, 42" cut w/bagger, \$795. 334-8613.

**2008 16' SMOKER CRAFT PRO ANGLER BOAT**, has 60 hp Mercury motor, front mounted trolling motor & (2) depth finders, \$7800. 838-8458.

**ALF./GRASS MIX HAY BALES**, full size, sm. sq., gd quality, no rain. 451-2978.

**LILLISTON 6-ROW ROLLING CULTIVATOR; WHITE 378 8-ROW WIDE CULTIVATOR**, c-shank. 456-7633.

**10" RADIAL ARM SAW; SHELL CASINGS & RELOADS; WELDING SUPPLIES**. 332-7624.

**ALKOTA 3102 HT WTR PR. WSHR**, 3 gpm@1000 psi, recond., 115V, \$2595; **SIMPSON COLD ON CART PR. WSHR**, 4 gpm@2000 psi, 11 hp, \$899; **VAL 6 RKF 503 EVAP. COOLER**, \$1995. 583-2703.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 15)

### travel

**ALASKA TOUR/CRUISE (AIR INCLUDED)**, July 21-Aug. 4. Fourteen days, all meals on cruise, Fairbanks, Denali, Anchorage, 8-day cruise + tour. Starting at \$4,299 pp based on 2 per room.

**HEART OF ALASKA (AIR INCLUDED)**, July 28-Aug. 4. Eight days, 12 meals, Anchorage, Denali, Fairbanks, Valdez. \$3,429 per person based on 2 per room.

**NEW YORK & NEW ENGLAND CANADA CRUISE (AIR INCL.)**, Sept. 22 - Oct. 1. Two days in NYC, 7-day cruise to Boston, Halifax, Bar Harbor. Starting at \$2,999 pp based on 2 per room.

**NEW YORK HOLIDAY TOUR (AIR INCLUDED)**, Nov. 9-13. Five days in New York City Times Square, Radio City Rockettes, Broadway play & more. \$2,299 per person based on 2 per room.

For more information on this month's travel options, phone 800-328-4298, or stop by and visit Larry at the 4-Seasons booth on June 7 at Steele-Waseca's annual meeting to learn more about upcoming trips.



## great river energy — 2015 in review

# Meeting the needs of a changing membership

The cooperative business model is designed to ensure that the values of the membership drive the strategy of the business. As member expectations change, the cooperative must adapt.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's wholesale power supplier, Great River Energy (GRE), is discovering ways to evolve with changes among its membership and within the industry while continuing to do what it has always done: generate and transmit reliable and affordable electricity in harmony with a sustainable environment.

When research revealed that members were increasingly interested in solar electricity, Great River Energy and its member cooperatives devised programs that offered solar energy in ways that treated members fairly. Today, those cooperatives collectively own nearly 2 megawatts (MW) of solar capacity.

After stakeholders indicated there was growing momentum for the electrification of Minnesota's economy, particularly transportation, GRE and its member cooperatives responded with Revolt™. This first-of-its-kind electric vehicle program allows cooperative members to fuel their vehicles with wind-generated electricity at no additional cost.

### A strong financial backbone

Great River Energy maintained its strong financial position in 2015. The

cooperative consistently receives investment-grade credit ratings and maintains wholesale rates below the averages. In fact, GRE's rate to its member cooperatives declined in 2015, and rate projections show moderate increases in the years ahead.

### Curbing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

In August 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released its Clean Power Plan, which would require a 32 percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the power sector by 2030. The Supreme Court has since issued a stay of the rule, which will require legal challenges to be settled before it could go into effect.

Despite the delay of this recent rule, the EPA is obligated to regulate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Great River Energy has long recognized that impending carbon regulation is a serious business issue. For that reason the cooperative has taken steps to prepare for regulations and actively engaged in discussions with state and federal agencies.

In recent years, Great River Energy has reduced its exposure to CO<sub>2</sub> regulations by exiting a contract for half the output of a Wisconsin coal-based power plant, commissioning a coal plant compliant with the Clean Power Plan's emission limits, and accelerating the depreciation of its remaining coal assets.



### State accepts resource plan

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission unanimously accepted Great River Energy's Integrated Resource Plan by a vote of 5-0. The commission agreed with GRE and its member cooperatives that the resource plan is in the best interest of the membership.

Great River Energy's 15-year outlook provides options and flexibility for future power generation resources, adds new wind and hydro energy, and maintains energy efficiency and conservation programs.

### CapX2020 fulfills promise

On March 26, the utilities involved in CapX2020 energized the Brookings County-Hampton project, a 250-mile, 345-kilovolt transmission line between Brookings County, S.D., and Hampton, Minn. Great River Energy served as project manager on the line, which establishes an important transmission link between the Twin Cities and generation resources, including wind energy.

(GRE continued on Page 4)



The Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors and corporate services include (seated, left to right): Renee Malecha, assistant secretary/treasurer, District 9; John Beal, vice president, District 7; Gary Wilson, president, GRE director, District 6; Geraldine Lienke, secretary/treasurer, District 2; and Duane Edwardson, chaplain, District 3. Back row (L-R): Syd Briggs, general manager; Debbie Eby, executive assistant; Dennis Ringhofer, District 4; Rodney Krell, District 5; Ronald Sommers, District 8; P.J. Duchene, District 1; and Eric Mattison, SWCE attorney.

### Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by **June 6** to ensure being printed in the July Sparks. Please print neatly or type your ad of **20 words or less** on this form. We reserve the right to edit ad copy to allow space for more ads. Ads received after the 6th will be printed in the August issue.

For Sale  Wanted  Give Away

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and mail to: SWCE, PO Box 485, Owatonna MN 55060-0485, or fax to: (507) 446-4242 or email your ad to: [sparks@swce.coop](mailto:sparks@swce.coop).

## member connection

### Steele-Waseca conducts town hall meetings in Waldorf and Owatonna

Nearly 260 members and spouses were in attendance for Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric town hall meetings conducted in Waldorf and Owatonna.

The first town hall meeting in 2016 was held April 18 at the Waldorf Community Center for members in District 2 and portions of Districts 3 and 4. Nearly 100 members and their spouses were in attendance.



The second town hall meeting was held April 19 at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites in Owatonna for members in District 5, and portions of Districts 3, 4 and 6. Over 160 members and their spouses were in attendance.

Steele-Waseca General Manager Syd Briggs (pictured above addressing the town hall attendees in Waldorf) encouraged members to vote in this presidential year as the National Rural Electric

(GRE continued from Page 3)

CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region to expand the electric transmission grid to ensure continued reliable and affordable service. The projects have been in the works for more than 10 years. When the fifth and final project is completed in 2017, CapX2020 will have been responsible for 800 miles of transmission line and a total investment of more than \$2 billion.

#### Investing in the reliability of vital resource

Great River Energy will soon undertake the largest transmission refurbishment project in the organization's history with the overhaul and upgrade of the converter stations at both ends of the 436-mile high-voltage, direct-current transmission line, which delivers power to Minnesota from GRE's Coal Creek Station power plant in central North Dakota.

Maintaining Great River Energy's high reliability standards for this system is not only critical for delivering power for its members now, but also because it

Cooperative Association (NRECA) has developed a [vote.coop](http://vote.coop) website to encourage more rural voter participation. Briggs detailed how personal visits from co-op directors and management with state and federal legislators remains important regarding issues impacting Steele-Waseca and its member-owners.

Presentations involving ACRE (Action Committee for Rural Electrification) explained the importance of ACRE participation regarding the support of elected officials who support legislation in keeping electricity reliable and affordable for rural electric cooperatives.

As a result of the town hall meetings, the latest members to join ACRE include: Paul/Deb Brudelie, Pemberton; Dan Dunn, Owatonna (Century Club participant); Andrew/Marilyn Gassner, Owatonna; Mark Gengler, Owatonna; Marian Houglum, Medford; Paul E. Kubicek, Owatonna; Mark/Patricia Milbrett, Waseca; David Miller, Owatonna; Robert/Patricia Mollenhauer, Owatonna; John Pirkel, Hope; Joel/Cynthia St. John, Owatonna; and Frank Suchanek, Blooming Prairie. 19303

It was also announced ACRE now

will continue to provide a corridor for delivering energy from North Dakota for the foreseeable future.

#### Planning the grid of the future

Senior leaders and key staff from Great River Energy and its member cooperatives have begun discussing the evolution of the electric industry and investments in grid technology that will be essential to serving member-consumers in the future.

As part of that evolution, GRE will deploy a new demand response management system in 2016. The system will introduce a new level of precision and control capability to Great River Energy's existing demand response resources. Demand response allows cooperatives to avoid purchasing costly electricity during periods of heightened electricity use and maintain reliability while the grid is stressed.

#### New subsidiary operating county processing plant

When the Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy Board outlined plans

has a Vice President's Club participation rate of \$20.83 per month or \$250 per year.

Briggs presented information regarding Steele-Waseca's commitment toward community involvement through the Washington, D.C. Youth Tour, the Co-ops Yes! leadership conference, and the annual bus tour to the Coal Creek Station in North Dakota.

Town hall attendees were also informed on the co-op's security light program, the annual meeting taking place June 7, and that updates are being made on Steele-Waseca's website for improved mobile device capabilities and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The next round of town hall meetings is tentatively scheduled for late this fall, but specific dates and locations have yet to be finalized. Members are notified by a postcard mailed to their billing address, and a phone call through Steele-Waseca's automated phone messaging system to the number listed on the member's account. **5/16**

to purchase a resource processing facility, they sought an operator with experience making energy from household waste. They found that in GRE. Under an agreement that began Jan. 1, 2016, a new Great River Energy subsidiary, GRE Newport Services, LLC, will operate the Newport Resource Recovery Facility through Dec. 31, 2017.

#### Rising among the nation's healthiest

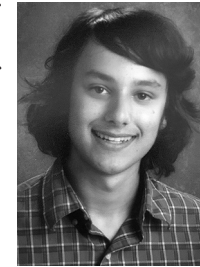
Great River Energy was named the 14th healthiest workplace in the nation at the 2015 Healthiest 100 Workplaces in America awards ceremony. GRE's wellness initiatives, which support employees and their families to live healthier lives, continue to reap benefits and recognition for the organization. This is the second year GRE has made the healthiest workplace listing, moving up from 31st place in 2014.

As Great River Energy faces new challenges, the cooperative finds strength through collaboration. GRE and its 28 member cooperatives are learning from one another new ways to achieve their vision: to keep cooperative energy competitive.

## youth tour connection

### Singh, Hansen selected Steele-Waseca's delegates for Washington D.C. Youth Tour

Karsten Singh of Northfield and Abigail Hansen of Owatonna were selected Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's delegates to the 2016 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., June 11-16. 23682



Karsten Singh

Karsten, the son of and Raghav Singh and Kristin Moorhead, and Abigail, the daughter of Bret and Kari Hansen, were selected by a panel of judges who evaluated four entries.

The judges evaluated two essay questions on why the applicant wished to be Steele-Waseca's delegate for the Youth Tour, and what commitment to community meant to them. The applications were also evaluated for completeness, composition, neatness, ability to communicate, and participation in school and community activities.

Karsten is a junior at Northfield High School. Last summer he had the opportunity to participate in Steele-Waseca's Coal Creek Tour. "I was so excited after that three-day tour, I can only imagine how exciting it will be while visiting our nation's capitol and learning about the unique business model of a rural electrical co-op," wrote Singh.

"I show commitment to my community through many community activities in my neighborhood, school and town," stated Karsten. "I gain a lot from my participation in 4-H and learn valuable skills for the future but being part of this group also gives me a chance to contribute. My involvement in Boy Scouts also has a strong service component and I enjoy the friendship of the other scouts and leaders and feel more connected to my community."

As for school, Karsten served on the Northfield schools technology committee, is a current member of the National Honor Society, bowling team, Science Olympiad team, is squad leader for his school's trap team, and a member of the Maennerchor choir at Northfield High School.

Karsten participated last summer in the Emmaus Youth Church Mission Trip to Costa Rica, where they did outreach and construction projects.

As a member of the Full-O-Pep 4-H

club for eight years, Karsten has won championship awards for the last four years and has represented Rice County at the State Fair. Through 4-H, he has also been involved with many service projects including Salvation Army bell ringing, Blankets for Vets program, Christmas caroling at a local nursing home, Valentine's party for seniors, and ditch cleanup.

At home, Karsten works as a personal care attendant for his father, who is paralyzed. Karsten previously received a Boy Scout National Medal of Honor for Lifesaving as he saved his father from drowning after he was paralyzed in a home accident. In addition, Karsten takes care of the animals on their farm.

Abigail is a junior who is homeschooled. "By participating in the 2016 Youth Tour, I hope to gain insight on how co-ops are run and how they better our country, how history plays a role in America today, and how I can learn from the powerful combination of government, diligence, and leadership," stated Hansen.

As for her commitment to community, Abigail wrote, "I make efforts to get to know new people and maintain relationships already made. Regularly playing bingo and making crafts with nursing home residents, teaching a community education class for all ages, cleaning senior citizens' homes and lawns, being a leader in my homeschool co-op, and serving in my 4-H club for the past 11 years are some of the ways I build upon my commitment to my community...I have loved meeting countless new people at more than 40 non-profit events as their guest musician."

Abigail assists The Salvation Army through Shop with a Cop, bell ringing and backpack fill; she has performed on the harp for over 100 hours to raise funds for The Salvation Army and even recorded a Christmas harp CD with all proceeds going to that group.

Hansen has participated as a tree decorator for the Advocates for Developmental Disabilities Christmas tree fundraiser, adopted a cemetery for veterans by placing flags at each headstone



for Memorial Day.

Among school honors earned were a theater letter at Owatonna High School (OHS), a harp concerto soloist with the OHS Symphony Orchestra, and "Best Performer by a Member of the Pit in a Musical," awarded by peer votes through OHS. Her theater experience at OHS also included assistant director, house manager and lead hairdresser.

Abigail's work experiences include founding and maintaining a harp lesson studio where she has 12 students ranging from ages 8 to adult, teaching piano lessons in homes, working at The Blast ice cream shop, babysitting as she is Red Cross certified and provides child care for children with developmental disabilities, and various jobs at her family's auto repair shop.

Hansen's church activities include being on the youth group leadership team, missions trip to Chicago, activities director for Vacation Bible School, worship leader, slides technician and serving on the youth pastor search committee.

Abigail has been the featured artist in the Classical MPR's Minnesota Varsity competition on the harp, and an MMTA piano competition winner for four years.

In her Happy Hustlers 4-H club, Abigail has served as vice president and historian, earned eight State Fair trips and has conducted demonstrations at the Steele County and State fairs in photography and beekeeping. Her beekeeping interests include maintaining an apiary at home and harvesting honey.

Steele-Waseca wishes to congratulate Karsten and Abigail for being selected this year's delegates and is proud to have them represent the cooperative in Washington, D.C. **5/16**

## cookin' connection

### Banana Bread from a Cake Mix

Delores Kalina

Lonsdale

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 egg
- 1/2 c. milk
- 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- 1/2 cup nuts

Mix ingredients together. Put in greased bread pan. Bake at 350° for 1 hour. Delores wrote, "Good - quick."

Please use a 3 x 5 card when submitting your recipe. The member whose recipe is published will receive a \$7 energy credit.

## Sparks in brief . . .

• **Want easy energy payments?** Sign up for **EnergyPay Plus**, our automatic payment plan, or **Energy Prepay**, our discounted advance payment plan. Contact our office for details. You may also pay your bill online at [www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop). By entering your Steele-Waseca account number and password you can also view a 13-month history of your account.

• **If you have changed or added phone numbers, please contact SWCE to update your contact information.**

• **Need a new water heater?** For information about our Marathon Electric Water Heater Program, phone Cindy Aamot at our office between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., 446-4204 / 800-526-3514.

• **April temps** – The average high temperature for April was 57° F, while the average low was 39° F. They compare to last year's average high of 59° F and average low of 36° F.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2015, all ENERGY STAR refrigerators/freezers (with recycling), dehumidifiers, central air conditioners, air and ground source heat pumps, compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs), light emitting diode (LED) holiday lights and bulbs purchased are eligible to receive rebates (may not be combined with special promotions). Rebate request forms must be submitted within 90 days of purchase. Rebate forms are available at [www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop). For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Aamot between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. at 446-4204 or 800-526-3514.

• **Steele-Waseca's tree service contractor** – Carr's Tree Service, Inc., is contracted to do SWCE's tree trimming. To report a tree concern, phone:

**507-451-7340 / 800-526-3514**

### STEELE COUNTY TIP LINE

**866-878-7964**

TO BE USED TO REPORT ANY CRIME OR SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY ANONYMOUSLY

COVERS ALL OF STEELE COUNTY INCLUDING THE CITIES OF:

**OWATONNA ELLENDALE  
BLOOMING PRAIRIE MEDFORD**

## swce 2015 annual meeting minutes

The annual meeting of the members of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) was held at SWCE in Owatonna, Minn., on Tuesday, June 2, 2015. The meeting was called to order by President Donald Kolb (hereinafter referred to as Chairman) who presided.

At an early bird drawing, two members each won a \$250 certificate toward a vacation with 4 Seasons Travel. Everyone in attendance received a \$30 Member Perks certificate and a \$50 Energy Star gift certificate.

The Color Guard, Civil Air Patrol and Faribault Middle School presented the colors, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Board Chaplain Duane Edwardson gave the invocation.

There were more than 50 members present (their attendance having been verified), the number needed to constitute a quorum within the meaning of the bylaws of the cooperative. President Kolb declared there was a quorum and instructed the secretary to file the list of members in attendance, establishing a quorum.

The Chairman asked for a motion to adopt the agenda as printed. A motion was made, seconded, and carried.

Gary Wilson, secretary-treasurer of the board, read the Proof of Mailing of Notice of the Annual Meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and carried, to accept the Proof of Mailing as read, and to waive the reading of the minutes and accept them as printed.

The Chairman asked the membership to read the general manager's report, the financial report for the year ending Dec. 31, 2014, the Great River Energy report, and the minutes printed in the annual report. The membership was asked if they had any questions pertaining to the reports. There being no questions, a motion was made, seconded, and carried.

Attorney Eric Mattison presided over the election of the directors. Mattison stated there were three districts in which directors were to be elected. Nominating Committee Chairman Mike Herman, reviewed the bylaws concerning director election and summarized the minutes of the nominating committee meetings held on Nov. 10, 2014, and Jan. 8, 2015. Herman introduced the candidates by name and district, and presented a biographical

summary of each. Attorney Mattison then called for nominations from the floor.

Additional nominations for District 1 were called, there being none; nominations were declared closed.

Additional nominations for District 3 were called, there being none; nominations were declared closed.

Additional nominations for District 5 were called with Marvin Spindler being nominated from the floor. Additional nominations were called again, there being none; nominations were declared closed.

Attorney Mattison instructed the membership to write Marvin Spindler's name on the ballot for District 5.

SWCE General Manager Syd Briggs introduced visiting guests and welcomed them and the membership to the annual meeting. He also acknowledged retired directors and employees who were present.

Nina Lessman, 2014 Washington D.C. Youth Tour delegate, gave a presentation about her tour of Washington, D.C., and introduced 2015 Washington D.C. Youth Tour Delegate Lucas Arndt. He thanked the membership for

the opportunity.

General Manager Briggs updated the membership on SMEC (Southern Minnesota Energy Cooperative) and the acquisition of Alliant Energy. He also spoke about the solar garden and The Sunna Project.

Attorney Mattison reported the voting results:

District 1: Patrick Duchene 152 votes; Kevin Schmidt 146 votes.

District 3: Duane Edwardson 181 votes; Neil Schlaak 117 votes.

District 5: Rodney Krell 159 votes; Marvin Spindler 132 votes.

Chairman Kolb called for any unfinished business, there being none. He called for any new business, there being none. He then asked for any questions the membership might have.

There being no further business to be conducted, the Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and carried that the meeting be adjourned.

### Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric 2016 Annual Meeting Letter of Voting Authorization

Member corporations, churches, clubs and organizations are encouraged to use this form as proof of designation.

Name of corporation, church, club or organization SWCE Account #

Address of above

Name of officer or agent authorized to vote Office title

is the person authorized to represent the organization as its voting delegate at Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's Annual Meeting on June 7, 2016.

Secretary of organization or other designated official

NOTE: Only officers of an organization are generally authorized to vote on behalf of the organization. For any agent of the organization other than an officer to cast the organization's vote, this form must be accompanied by a certified copy of a resolution of its governing body appointing such person to vote for the organization.

## Was your account number in Sparks?

Each month five account numbers are printed in *Sparks* and a total of \$35 in energy credits is divided among however many of those numbers are found. For example, if all numbers are found, a credit of \$7 will be applied to the members' following month's electric bills; or, if only one number is found, that member receives the full \$35 credit. Members finding their numbers who have a load management receiver on their dual fuel, electric water heater, air conditioner, or genset will receive an additional \$7 credit. When you find your number, phone our office no later than the 7th of the month following receipt of the Sparks, or the amount will be forfeited.

## May issue of Sparks



### Numbers found:

Tim/Diane Daly  
Paulette J. Hutchinson

### Numbers not found:

Robert P./Joyce T. Matthies  
Eugene A. Simon  
Chad A. Young



## swce 2016 board of director nominees

June 7



The 2016 Nominating Committee has selected the following nominees for the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors. Committee members included: Jerome/Diane Stenzel, New Richland; Gene/Joyce Wertheimer, Faribault; Jeff/Nola Karow, Faribault; Kendall/Laura Strawmatt, Owatonna; Ron/Pat Brey, New Richland; Pat/Tori Jirik, Nerstrand; Jane Middlestadt, Owatonna; Lowell/Kathleen Miller, Owatonna; and Mike Herman/Diana Lobo, Owatonna. The election of directors will take place during Steele-Waseca's 80th annual meeting on Tuesday, June 7, 2016, at the co-op's headquarters located at 2411 West Bridge Street in Owatonna.

District 2



**Geraldine G. Lienke**, incumbent, has been a board director since 2004. Gerri and her husband, David, live in Freedom Township in Waseca County. They have four children and enjoy their 10 grandchildren. Currently, Gerri serves as clerk for their township, Region 9 board director, and a member of the Budget and Personnel Committee for Region 9. She previously worked 25 years at an ag co-op as an administrative assistant, 10 years as a bartender, served as president and secretary of a home extension group, bowling league treasurer, and adult supervisor for a youth church group. "I have lived in this area all my life and have met many good people," wrote Gerri. "Therefore, I feel we have open communications and each of them know I will listen to all and any concerns and go the extra mile to get answers to their questions." As for the qualities she seeks to bring to the board, "I have the ability to use common sense and think outside the box," wrote Gerri. "I don't make hasty decisions. I believe we need to explore to find the right answers concerning our future, whether it is green energy or something else, because I feel we should be responsible to leave this earth as good or better than we found it."

District 4



**Dean W. Jirousek** of rural Ellendale was born and raised on the family farm where he resides in Summit Township. He operated and purchased the farm and expanded after graduating from the University of Minnesota. Dean developed and improved the dairy herd, won many awards and earned All-American nominations. He was recognized in 2014 for his family farm's 150 years of continuous operation. "I feel that my background in farming and business, successfully, that I have the work ethic, passion, and dedication to fulfill the responsibilities of the board position," wrote Dean. "I have always felt affordable and dependable electric service was extremely important and should not be taken for granted. The responsibility to insure this is huge and I want to take my experience in business to the board to be an asset."



**Dennis C. Ringhofer**, incumbent, has been a board director since 2004. He resides in Somerset Township in Steele County where he raises corn and soybeans on the family farm. Dennis has two sons and a grandson. He has been an independent insurance agent with Ringhofer Insurance Agency for 28 years. Currently, Dennis is the vice president of the Owatonna Mutual Fire Insurance Company. "I am also a longtime supporter of our local 4H and FFA programs," wrote Dennis. "Our young people are our future. I considered it an honor to be on the Board of Directors for SWCE, to see that the needs are met for farms, residential, and industrial alike. With the many changes in the future of the electric industry, I would like to see that it is maintained as professionally as possible. I have attended many seminars and meetings to further my education of co-ops and the electric industry."

District 6



**Philip J. Heim** and his wife, Gail, reside in Medford. After military service, Philip attended college for a year and then tech school. He started an electrical apprenticeship in March 1980 and worked for a variety of contractors doing mainly commercial and industrial construction. Philip retired from Local 343 IBEW in January 2014 as a master electrician. He has been active in the community with serving on the zoning board, school board, Civic Club and faith community. "I feel with my experience of working with a variety of people and my desire to implement more efficient use of electrical energy, I can contribute to the continued success of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric," stated Philip. "I strongly believe in cooperatives and believe the owner-customer nature of cooperatives is a good business model." Adding, "Safe, reliable and efficient electrical distribution is what I would like to help to continue to provide for this generation and future generations."



**Gary W. Wilson**, incumbent, has been a board director since 1992. He and his wife, Diane, have lived on their farm located in Havana Township in Steele County for the past 45 years. They have recently retired from active farming and are renting out their land. The couple has two married sons and seven grandchildren living in the area. Gary currently serves as president on the SWCE board of directors. He also represents the co-op on the Great River Energy board of directors where he is a member of the Executive Committee. Gary has completed the Credentialed Cooperative Director Program and holds the Board Leadership Program Certificate. He recently earned the Director Gold Certificate to signify advanced training in cooperative leadership. "It is a privilege to serve on the SWCE Board of Directors," wrote Gary. "One of the things I look forward to is meeting and welcoming the former Alliant members to the co-op family and improving the reliability of the system that serves them."

District 8



**Ronald D. Sommers**, incumbent, has been a board director since November 2015. He and his wife, Ruth, reside in Northfield Township on his home farm where he grew up near Northfield. They have two married children and four grandchildren. Ron is presently retired, but was an agricultural educator in southern Minnesota (Kiester, Faribault and Riverland Community College) for over 20 years. He was also with Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., as a sales accounting manager and sales coordinator for Minnesota for nearly 20 years. "I believe in the cooperative way of doing business and that Steele-Waseca has done a great job of providing reliable, affordable electric power to its service area," stated Ron. "I would like to be part of continuing that tradition. I've had a career of working with people to help them improve their lives and achieve their goals. I believe my experience with people and the agricultural community can help me serve our cooperative."

## financial report for year 2015

### STATEMENTS OF PATRONAGE CAPITAL AND OTHER EQUITIES YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015 AND 2014

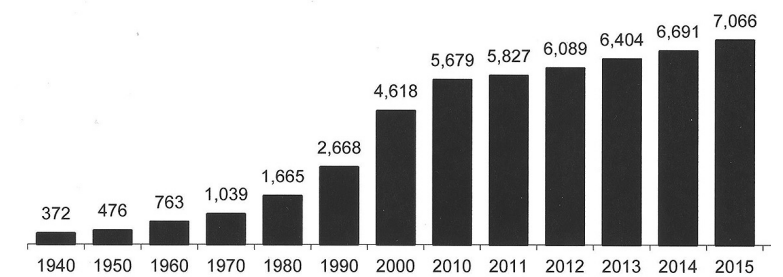
	Memberships	Patronage Capital	Other Equities	Total
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2013	\$14,666	\$27,209,828	\$957,781	\$28,182,275
Unassigned Current Year Margins	-	3,329,211	-	3,329,211
Retirement of Capital Credits	-	(607,050)	-	(607,050)
Estate Settlements	-	(126,775)	36,566	(90,209)
Membership Changes - Net	(64)	-	-	(64)
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2014	14,602	29,805,214	994,347	30,814,163
Unassigned Current Year Margins	-	2,744,929	-	2,744,929
Sales Tax Refund on Margins	-	-	-	-
Adjustment	-	(112,153)	-	(112,153)
Retirement of Capital Credits	-	(647,680)	-	(647,680)
Estate Settlements	-	(146,183)	44,396	(101,787)
Membership Changes - Net	2,596	-	-	2,596
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2015	\$17,198	\$31,644,127	\$1,038,743	\$32,700,068

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

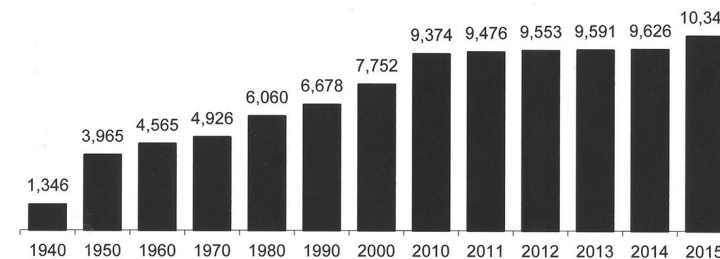
The balance sheets, statements of operations, patronage capital and other equities, and cash flows were taken from complete financial statements which were audited by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, Certified Public Accountants, who expressed their unmodified opinion on those statements.

Copies of the complete financial statements together with the independent auditors' report may be examined at the office of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric.

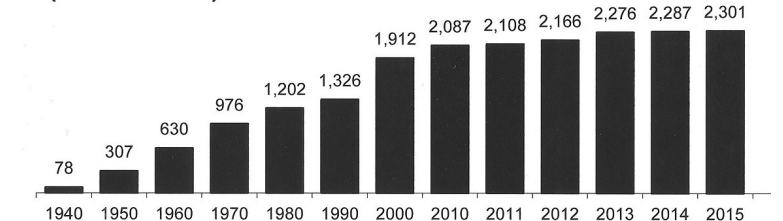
## PLANT \$ INVESTMENT PER CONSUMER



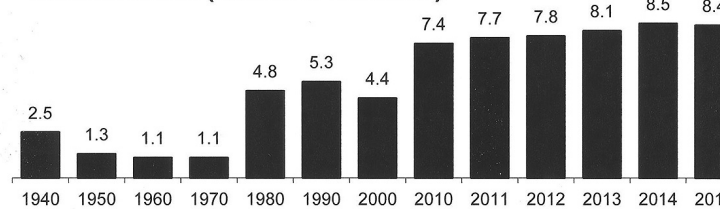
## AVERAGE NUMBER OF CONSUMERS



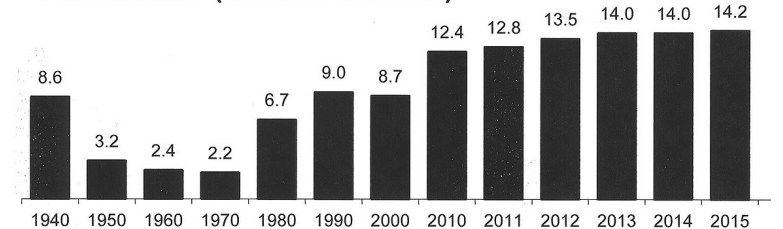
## AVERAGE KWH USED PER CONSUMER (PER MONTH)



## AVERAGE WHOLESALE POWER COST FOR RESIDENTIAL CONSUMERS (CENTS PER KWH)



## AVERAGE ELECTRIC RATE TO RESIDENTIAL CONSUMERS (CENTS PER KWH)



## financial report for year 2015

### Nature of Operations

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's (SWCE) principal line of business is providing electric service primarily to local residential and business customers residing in the nine-county rural area surrounding Owatonna, MN. Rates charged to customers are established by the board of directors.

### Financial Statement Presentation

SWCE prepares its financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. These principles require management to make informed judgments, best estimates, and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues, and expenses. Actual results could vary from those estimates.

### Patronage Capital

SWCE operates as a cooperative. Amounts received from the furnishing of electric energy in excess of operating costs and expenses are assigned to patrons on a patronage basis. All other amounts received by the cooperative from its operations in excess of costs and expenses are allocated to its patrons on a patronage basis to the extent they are not needed to offset current or prior deficits.

### Income Taxes

SWCE has been granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service and the State of Minnesota. Therefore, the financial statements do not include a provision for income taxes.

### STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015 AND 2014

	2015	2014
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Net Margins	\$ 2,744,929	\$ 3,329,211
Adjustments to Reconcile Net Margins to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities:		
Depreciation	2,611,124	2,477,798
G & T and Other Capital Credits	(596,510)	(1,439,937)
(Increase) Decrease in Unamortized Discount on Held-to-Maturity Investments	27,140	33,552
Gain (Loss) on Sale/Disposal of Assets	5,213	(7,361)
Interest Income Credited to Cushion of Credit	(976,734)	(840,388)
Interest Expense Paid by Cushion of Credit	611,837	-
Changes in Assets and Liabilities - Decrease (Increase) in:		
Accounts Receivable	(787,482)	43,936
Materials and Supplies Inventory	(84,407)	(81,227)
Deferred Debits	124,488	(389,372)
Other Current and Accrued Assets	17,403	11,538
Increase (Decrease) in:		
Accounts Payable	630,629	166,982
Deferred Credits	540,530	689,610
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	196,660	97,895
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	<u>5,064,820</u>	<u>4,092,237</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Construction and Acquisition of Plant	(10,199,529)	(4,252,966)
Proceeds from Sale of Held-to-Maturity Investments	1,196,487	1,257,215
Cash Received from Retirement of Patronage	162,738	78,181
Payments Received on Notes Receivable	272,004	263,006
Issuance of Notes Receivable	-	(1,000,000)
Net Cash Used by Investing Activities	<u>(8,568,300)</u>	<u>(3,654,564)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Increase (Decrease) in Memberships	2,596	(64)
Retirement of Capital Credits	(749,467)	(697,259)
Sales Tax Refund on Margins Adjustment	(112,153)	-
Change in Customer Deposits	(12,005)	16,875
Proceeds from Issuance of Long-Term Debt	9,712,000	4,680,000
Advance Payments on Long-Term Debt	(1,200,000)	(2,600,000)
Principal Payments on Long-Term Debt	(2,270,075)	(2,262,514)
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Financing Activities	<u>5,370,896</u>	<u>(862,962)</u>
<b>NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>1,867,416</b>	<b>(425,289)</b>
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Beginning of Year	<u>2,301,106</u>	<u>2,726,395</u>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 4,168,522</b>	<b>\$ 2,301,106</b>
<b>SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURES OF CASH FLOW INFORMATION</b>		
Interest Paid	<u>\$ 1,181,930</u>	<u>\$ 1,737,833</u>
<b>NON-CASH FINANCING ACTIVITY</b>		
Principal Payments on Long-Term Debt Paid by Cushion of Credit	<u>\$ 366,464</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Debt Refinancing	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$17,800,000</u>

## swce director districts

**District 1:** Kilkenny Township in LeSueur County, Shieldsville and Morrystown Townships and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Erin Township, Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Wells Township, and the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) of Warsaw Township in Rice County. (Represented by PJ Duchene)

**District 2:** Dunbar, Lura and Minnesota Lake Townships in Faribault County; Mapleton, Danville, Medo, McPherson and LeRay Townships in Blue Earth County; Freeborn Township in Freeborn County; Alton, Byron, Freedom, Janesville, St. Mary, Vivian and Wilton Townships in Waseca County. (Represented by Geraldine Lienke)

**District 3:** Hartland Township in Freeborn County; New Richland, Otisco, Woodville, Blooming Grove and Iosco Townships in Waseca County; Lemond Township, the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) and the Northeast one quarter (NE 1/4) of Berlin Township, and the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) and the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Somerset Township in Steele County. (Represented by Duane Edwardson)

**District 4:** Bath and Geneva Townships in Freeborn County; the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Berlin Township; Deerfield, Owatonna and Meriden Townships; the Northeast one quarter (NE 1/4) and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Somerset Township, and Summit Township in Steele County; the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Warsaw Township in Rice County. (Represented by Dennis Ringhofer)

**District 5:** Newry Township in Freeborn County; Aurora and Blooming Prairie Townships, and the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Havana Township in Steele County, and Westfield, Ripley, Ashland and Hayfield Townships in Dodge County. (Represented by Rodney Krell)

**District 6:** Medford, Clinton Falls and Merton Townships; and the Northwest, Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NW, NE & SE 1/4's) of Havana Township in Steele County, and Ellington, Concord, Claremont and Wasioja Townships in Dodge County. (Represented by Gary Wilson)

**District 7:** The Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NE & SE 1/4's) of Warsaw Township; the Northwest and Southwest one quarters (NW & SW 1/4's) of Walcott Township; the Northwest, Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NW, NE & SE 1/4's) of Wells Township in Rice County. (Represented by John Beal)

**District 8:** Kenyon Township in Goodhue County; Richland, Wheeling, Cannon City, Bridgewater, Upper Bridgewater and Northfield Townships, and the Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NE & SE 1/4's) of Walcott Township in Rice County. (Represented by Ronald Sommers)

**District 9:** Forest, Webster, Wheatland Townships, and the Southwest, Northwest and Northeast one quarters (SW, NW & NE 1/4's) of Erin Township in Rice County. (Represented by Renee Malecha)

## Nominating Committee selects board of director candidates



The 2016 Nominating Committee included the following Steele-Waseca members (front row, left to right): Joyce Wertheimer, Pat Brey, Jane Middlestadt, Kathleen Miller and Diane Stenzel. Back row (L-R): Gene Wertheimer, Ron Brey, Mike Herman, Lowell Miller, Kendall Strawmatt, and Jerome Stenzel. Not pictured is: Jeff/Nola Karow, Laura Strawmatt, Pat/Tori Jirik, and Diana Lobo.

Board directors are typically elected each year from three of the nine Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric districts to serve three-year terms. With the resignation of Don Kolb in District 8, the seat also was up for election since Steele-Waseca's bylaws state the board of directors can appoint a member to fulfill the remaining one-year term of a director. Since the District 8 seat isn't up for election until 2017, the seat will be up for election at the 2016 annual meeting and the annual meeting in 2017. 26883

Steele-Waseca's bylaws require the board of directors to appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of no less than five cooperative members. Each year's committee is responsible for an important part of the cooperative process—to select nominees for the board seats up for election.

The 2016 Nominating Committee members include: District 2 – Jerome/Diane Stenzel, New Richland; Gene/Joyce Wertheimer, Faribault; and Jeff/Nola Karow, Faribault; Districts 4 & 8 – Kendall/Laura Strawmatt, Owatonna; Pat/Tori Jirik, Nerstrand; and Ron/Pat Brey, New Richland; District 6 – Jane Middlestadt, Owatonna; Mike Herman/Diana Lobo, Owatonna; and Lowell/Kathleen Miller, Owatonna.

The committee met twice at the cooperative's office in Owatonna to select director nominees for the expiring terms of Geraldine G. Lienke, Dennis C. Ringhofer, Gary W. Wilson and Ronald D. Sommers.

The committee's first meeting was on Nov. 10, 2015. Steele-Waseca Attorney Eric Mattison reviewed the duties of the Nominating Committee as stated in the bylaws. He also detailed policies regarding the activities and conduct of individual board members, and the qualifications for eligibility for service on the board.

The committee's second meeting was on Jan. 26, 2016. General Manager Syd Briggs reviewed the director position description, highlighting director responsibilities, board/manager relations, board/cooperative member relations, and board/community relations. Mattison reviewed the director duties and Standard of Conduct Policy, and the qualifications for eligibility for service on the Board of Directors Policy. The Nominating Committee announced the following candidates will be on the election ballot for Steele-Waseca's 80th annual meeting, June 7, 2016, at the cooperative's headquarters located at 2411 West Bridge Street in Owatonna:

**District 2** Geraldine G. Lienke

**District 4** Dean W. Jirousek  
Dennis C. Ringhofer

**District 6** Philip J. Heim  
Gary W. Wilson

**District 8** Ronald D. Sommers

Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor during the business portion of the annual meeting until the nominations officially close and the election is held.

Steele-Waseca wishes to thank all of the committee members for the time and effort devoted to selecting the director nominees. 5/15

## financial report for year 2015

On Oct. 10, 1936, when Steele County Cooperative and Waseca Cooperative Electric voted to consolidate, there were 860 members. By the end of 2015, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) service locations had grown to 11,310.

SWCE's first office was located in Waseca. After Rice County joined with Steele-Waseca in 1937, the office was moved to Owatonna to provide a more central location. The office was located on West Bridge Street and then on Cedar Avenue until 1954, when a new building was constructed on East Rose Street. That building served as the headquarters until 1994 when the present facility on West Bridge Street was built.

The first part of SWCE's line was energized in February 1938. When completed, the initial project consisted of 350 miles of line. By 1950, that number had grown to 1,562. Today, SWCE has a total of 2,197 miles of line, 19 substations in service, and 900 square miles of service area.

In 1950, SWCE had 2.6 members per mile of line. Currently, SWCE has 5.1 members per mile of line. In comparison, according to the U.S. Department of Energy's 2013 data, investor-owned electric utilities on average serve 34 customers per mile of line while municipal electric utilities average 48 customers per mile of line.

### BALANCE SHEETS DECEMBER 31, 2015 AND 2014

ASSETS	2015	2014
<b>UTILITY PLANT</b>		
Electric Plant in Service	\$73,067,005	\$64,408,346
Construction Work in Progress	836,158	401,572
Total	73,903,163	64,809,918
Less: Accumulated Provision for Depreciation	(22,987,321)	(21,477,268)
Net Utility Plant	50,915,842	43,332,650
<b>OTHER ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS</b>		
Investments in Associated Organizations	12,030,155	11,596,383
Other Investments	-	1,223,627
Notes Receivable - Net of Current Portion	1,366,266	1,614,282
Total Other Assets and Investments	13,396,421	14,434,292
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4,168,522	2,301,106
Accounts Receivable, Net	5,516,404	4,728,922
Materials and Supplies Inventory	675,108	590,701
Interest Receivable	6,784	26,150
Prepayments	8,213	6,250
Current Portion of Notes Receivable	248,016	272,004
Total Current Assets	10,623,047	7,925,133
<b>DEFERRED DEBITS</b>		
	1,591,207	1,715,695
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$76,526,517</b>	<b>\$67,407,770</b>
<b>EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>EQUITIES</b>		
Patronage Capital	\$31,644,127	\$29,805,214
Memberships	17,198	14,602
Other Equities	1,038,743	994,347
Total Equities	32,700,068	30,814,163
<b>LONG-TERM DEBT, Less Current Maturities</b>		
RUS Mortgage Notes	11,336,344	3,528,388
CFC Mortgage Notes	1,570,375	1,815,336
CoBank Notes Payable	18,878,219	20,628,965
Total Long-Term Debt	31,784,938	25,972,689
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	2,655,175	2,590,396
Accounts Payable	3,897,760	3,267,131
Consumer Deposits	293,730	305,735
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	934,110	737,450
Total Current Liabilities	7,780,775	6,900,712
<b>DEFERRED CREDITS</b>		
	4,260,736	3,720,206
<b>TOTAL EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$76,526,517</b>	<b>\$67,407,770</b>

## financial report for year 2015

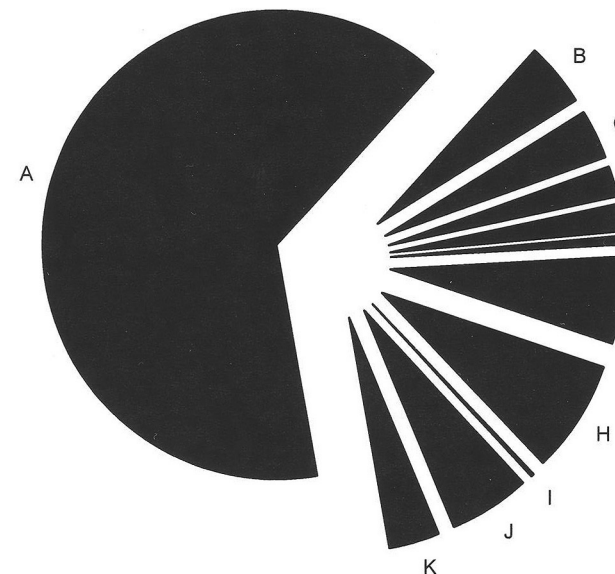
### STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015 AND 2014

	2015	2014
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>	<b>\$31,938,892</b>	\$29,664,386
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
Cost of Power	20,601,270	19,188,426
Distribution Expense - Operation	1,395,383	1,060,489
Distribution Expense - Maintenance	1,078,236	1,086,976
Customer Accounts Expense	686,339	654,019
Customer Service & Informational Expense	606,877	498,722
Sales Expense	181,619	180,267
Administrative and General Expense	1,928,870	1,870,183
Depreciation	2,502,749	2,383,087
Other	56,133	46,547
Total Operating Expenses	29,037,476	26,968,716
<b>OPERATING MARGINS BEFORE FIXED CHARGES</b>		
	2,901,416	2,695,670
<b>INTEREST ON LONG-TERM DEBT</b>		
	1,790,787	1,798,972
<b>OPERATING MARGINS AFTER FIXED CHARGES</b>		
	1,110,629	896,698
<b>GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION &amp; OTHER CAPITAL CREDITS</b>		
	596,510	1,439,937
<b>NET OPERATING MARGINS</b>		
	1,707,139	2,336,635
<b>NON-OPERATING MARGINS</b>		
	1,037,790	992,576
<b>NET MARGINS</b>		
	\$2,744,929	\$3,329,211

The mission of SWCE is to provide every member with dependable, reliable, high quality electricity. We work daily to accomplish this mission by striving for excellence through continual improvement, applying prudent leadership, partnering and following cooperative principles.

During the year 2015, the average SWCE member had power for 8,759.44 hours out of a possible 8,760 hours. That's a reliability record of 99.99 percent!

For each dollar received from consumers, 3.5 cents goes into operating margins. These margins are used to help finance construction and improvements, pay capital credits, and make payments on our debt. Since 3.5 cents per dollar is not enough to do all of this, we borrow money to finance the shortage of funds needed for these purposes.



### WHAT YOUR 2015 CONSUMER DOLLAR PAID FOR

A.	64.5%	Purchased Power
B.	4.4%	Operations
C.	3.4%	Maintenance
D.	2.1%	Billing & Collection
E.	1.9%	Customer Information
F.	0.6%	Sales
G.	6.0%	Administrative & General
H.	7.8%	Depreciation
I.	0.2%	Other Income Deductions
J.	5.6%	Interest on Long-Term Debt
K.	3.5%	Margins