

youth tour connection

Steele-Waseca accepting applications for 2017 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is accepting applications from eligible high school sophomores or juniors for an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., for the 2017 Youth Tour, June 10-15.

The tour is coordinated through the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) and hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Participating cooperatives sponsor a member student(s) to travel to Washington, D.C., to learn about cooperatives and our government, tour historical sites, and have fun meeting new friends from Minnesota and other delegates from across the nation.

To be eligible, the entrant must meet the following requirements:

1. The entrant is currently a high school sophomore or junior, and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) are a Steele-Waseca member. Dependents of Steele-Waseca employees or directors are not eligible to participate.
2. All entries must include: a) the completed application form below; b) answers to both essay questions typed on an 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper; c) applicant's school and community information typed on a separate sheet of paper; and d) two letters of recommendation (one from an instructor, counselor or administrator, and the other from a church or community leader).
3. Return entries to: Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric, c/o Youth Tour

2017, PO Box 485, Owatonna, MN 55060. Entries must be received in Steele-Waseca's office on or before Friday, Feb. 17, 2017. The two Youth Tour recipients will be notified by Friday, March 17, 2017.

Each entry will be evaluated by a panel of judges for:

- completeness
- composition
- neatness
- ability to communicate
- school and community activities

Essay Questions:

1. Why would you like to be Steele-Waseca's delegate to Youth Tour 2017? What do you hope to gain from the experience? Answer in 150 words or less.

2. Write a short essay on what commitment to community means to you. Include how you contribute to your

community. Answer in 300 words or less.

School and Community Information (use a separate sheet of paper to list the following):

- All school activities – include letters and honors earned, positions held, etc.
- All community activities – include all church, community service and positions held.
- Work experience and any other information.

MREA is requiring that each participating cooperative's delegate(s) report to the Crowne Plaza Airport located at 3 Appletree Square in Bloomington for an orientation session on Saturday, June 10, at 9 a.m. An afternoon flight to Washington, D.C., will follow the orientation session. SWCE



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric sponsored two Youth Tour delegates in 2016. They included Abigail Hansen of Owatonna (pictured in the bottom photo, fourth from the left in the second row from the front), and Karsten Singh of Northfield (pictured in the back row, second from the right in sunglasses). The co-op will again sponsor two delegates in 2017.

Washington, D.C. Youth Tour 2017 — June 10-15 — Theme for 2017: Commitment to Community

Name _____ M or F _____ Phone _____

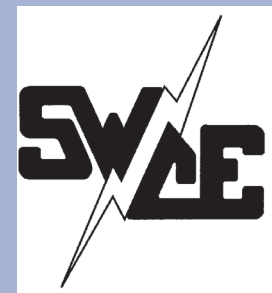
Address _____ street _____ city _____ state _____ zip _____ county _____

Email address _____ Parent(s) or Guardian(s) _____

I am currently a high school _____ sophomore _____ junior at _____

Parent/Guardian consent: I/we hereby give my/our dependent high school son/daughter permission to enter the Rural Electric Washington, D.C. Youth Tour 2017 Contest. I/we understand if he/she wins, I/we will be responsible for providing his/her own transportation to the Crowne Plaza Airport in Bloomington and from the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.

Name(s) _____ SWCE account # _____



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

January 2017



Capital Credit Refund

Please check this month's billing statement for your 2016 capital credit refund. If you have any questions regarding your refund, please call Kathy Friedrichs at Steele-Waseca during regular business hours.

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calendar of events

- January**
- 1 New Year's Day
 - 2 New Year's holiday 19844
SWCE office is closed
 - 16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 - 17 Benjamin Franklin's b-day

Steele-Waseca offering scholarships to high school graduates in 2017

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric will present scholarships to qualified high school seniors graduating in 2017.

One \$500 scholarship will be awarded at each participating school. Scholarship eligibility required by Steele-Waseca includes:

1. Applicants must currently be high school seniors, who will be continuing their education on a full-time basis at a two- or four-year technical school or college.
2. Applicants must be dependents of a Steele-Waseca member.

Each participating school is respon-

Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference scheduled March 6-7

Steele-Waseca sponsoring two students wishing to attend

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is sponsoring two students seeking to attend the Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference, March 6-7, 2017, in Eau Claire, Wis.

Any high school sophomores, juniors and seniors interested in attending may submit their name to Steele-Waseca Executive Assistant Debbie Eby by no later than 3 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 4. The recipients will be randomly selected on Thursday, Jan. 5.

The conference is a youth-led event for Minnesota and Wisconsin high school students who want to develop their leadership skills and are curious about cooperatives.

• **Learn from the experts!** Is a co-op career in your future? Take the opportunity to interact with cooperative leaders and business professionals to find out.

• **Get motivated!** Whether you struggle with peers or simply want to be-

sible for administering any other eligibility requirements, the selection of their school's Steele-Waseca scholarship recipient, and the disbursement of the scholarship dollars from Steele-Waseca.

All eligible high school seniors should contact their guidance counselor or scholarship administrator for more information.

In 2016, Steele-Waseca awarded 18 scholarships to 18 high school senior graduates. The co-op's scholarship program has awarded \$150,750 since the program was established in 1954. A portion of the funds to support these scholarships comes from unclaimed capital credit equity. SWCE



come a better leader, learn life lessons that will hit home and move you to action.

• **Have fun!** Work as a team and share some laughs with fellow students from across Minnesota and Wisconsin. There will definitely be a T-shirt and maybe some dancing (or singing) involved.

Those interested will have the chance to run for the Co-ops Yes! youth board. The youth board plans the following

(Co-ops Yes! continued on Page 7)

cookin' connection

Raspberry-Applesauce Salad

Doris Krause

Owatonna

- 2 pkg. raspberry JELL-O (regular size)
- 2 c. boiling water
- 2 c. unsweetened applesauce
- (2) 10 oz. pkg. frozen raspberries or 2 c. fresh raspberries

Thaw berries and drain well. Add enough water to the juice to make two cups. Bring to boiling in a saucepan. Pour in a serving bowl. Stir in JELL-O. Chill until a syrupy consistency, but not set. Stir in applesauce, then berries. Chill until firm. Optional: Decorate top with dollops of Cool Whip. Doris wrote, "Delicious for Christmas or any time."

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



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's solar subscribers will see a 26 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during November 2016. Learn more about community solar and The Sunna Project by visiting Steele-Waseca's website, swce.coop.

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.

December issue of Sparks



Numbers found:
Richard K./Sandra Wiles
Numbers not found:
Jacqueline Crouch
William/Marjorie Gruszewski
James J. Lyons
Wm R. Rohwer



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. By entering your Steele-Waseca username 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 Westinghouse Electric Water Heater Program, phone Cindy Butterfield at our office between 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., 446-4204 / 800-526-3514.

• **November temps** – The average high temperature for November was 52° F, while the average low was 34° F. They compare to last year's average high of 48° F and average low of 32° F.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2017, 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. For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Butterfield between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. at 446-4204 or 800-526-3514. 24178

• **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

LIVESTOCK OWNERS

If you have questions or concerns regarding stray voltage in your livestock confinement building(s), or are planning an addition, or constructing a new one, call Steele-Waseca at 507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514. Steele-Waseca will work with you and your electrician to eliminate potential stray voltage problems.

health & safety connection

Making a Winter Driving Survival Kit

Use an empty three-pound coffee can or any similar container with a plastic cover to store the following items:

- Small candles and matches
- Small, sharp knife and plastic spoons
- Red bandanna or cloth
- Pencil and paper
- Large plastic garbage bag
- Safety pins
- Whistle
- Snacks
- Cell phone adapter to plug into lighter
- Plastic flashlight and spare batteries

Reverse batteries in the flashlight to avoid accidental switching and burnout. Warm batteries before using them. Store safety items in the passenger compartment when severe winter weather threatens in case the trunk is jammed or frozen shut. Choose small packages of food that you can eat hot or cold.

Suggested food items:

- Raisins in small packets
- Semi-sweet chocolate in pieces for sharing
- Miniature candy bars
- Chewing gum
- Wrapped hard candies
- Food bars
- Canned soup, meat and poultry

Store bulky and heavy items in an accessible place:

- 30-foot cord to use as homing line when you must exit the vehicle
- Booster cables
- Basic tools
- Sand, cat litter or other grit in a plastic milk carton
- Shovel
- Tow cables or chain
- Sleeping bag or blankets
- Road flares and reflectors
- Snowmobile suit and heavy boots

Emergency Phone Calls

If you become stranded in any part of Minnesota, and you have a cell phone, call 911 to summon help. In other states, you may be able to dial 911 or 0 to reach an operator. When you talk with authorities:

- Provide information on your location, condition of all persons in the vehicle and the problem you are experiencing
- Follow instructions; you may be told to stay where you are and wait for rescuers
- Do not hang up until you know who you have spoken with and what will happen next
- If you must leave your vehicle, write down your name, address, phone number and destination. Place the piece of paper inside the front windshield for someone to see



Minnesota Department of Public Safety
Homeland Security and Emergency Management



Be safe

Stay clear of downed power lines

NEVER TOUCH A DOWNED POWER LINE. Always assume it is energized and call 911 immediately.

POWERFUL STORMS can damage power lines. If you see a downed power line:

- Stay at least 50 feet away from it and assume it is energized. The ground may also be energized making the entire area extremely dangerous.
- Never touch anything that is touching a downed power line. It is as dangerous as the line itself.
- If a power line falls on your vehicle while you are in it, stay inside your vehicle until help arrives.

Steele-Waseca conducts town hall meeting in Lonsdale

Over 150 members and spouses were in attendance for a Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric town hall meeting, Nov. 10, at the Lonsdale American Legion.

The members invited were from the northern two-thirds of District 1, the northern halves of Districts 7 and 8, and all of District 9.

Steele-Waseca General Manager Syd Briggs was the lead presenter (see adjacent photo) and covered details regarding the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA's) [vote.coop](http://www.vote.coop) website designed to promote rural electric cooperative member participation during this past Election Day.

Briggs explained how personal visits from co-op directors and management with state and federal legislators is important regarding issues impacting Steele-Waseca and its member-owners.

Board Director John Beal presented details regarding ACRE (Action Committee for Rural Electrification) and how participation supports elected officials who approve legislation keeping electricity reliable and affordable for rural electric cooperatives.

The ACRE presentation prompted the following to join: Lowell Anderson, Northfield; Rose Berg, Northfield; Mel Grant, Lonsdale; and Loren Jacobson, Dundas. 122490

Briggs and Steele-Waseca Commu-



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric members wishing to dispose of their unwanted/unusable holiday lights, may drop them in the bins inside the main entrance of the co-op at 2411 W. Bridge St., Owatonna, during regular business hours. The bins will be available through January 2017.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric does not sell the mailing addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses of our members



nications Specialist Randy Sobrack presented information on the co-op's scholarship program for high school seniors graduating in 2017, as part of Steele-Waseca's commitment toward community involvement.

Town hall attendees were also informed on the co-op's security light program and how changes to Steele-Waseca's website will make for a more user-friendly experience with mobile devices. Attendees questioned Briggs on the water heater program regarding the value of participating.

The next round of town hall meetings will be conducted in early Spring 2017. 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. **SWCE**