

youth tour connection

Steele-Waseca accepting applications for 2019 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 2019 Youth Tour, June 15-20.

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 co-operatives 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. 34406
 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
- 2019, PO Box 485, Owatonna, MN 55060. Entries must be received in Steele-Waseca's office on or before Friday, Feb. 22, 2019. The two Youth Tour recipients will be notified by Friday, March 22, 2019.
- 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 2019? 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.

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Washington, D.C. Youth Tour 2019 — June 15-20

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 2019 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 2019

Capital Credit Refund

Please check this month's billing statement for your 2018 capital credit refund. If you have any questions regarding your refund, please call Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric during regular business hours.

inside connections

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calendar of events

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



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric scholarships awarded to qualified high school graduates in 2019

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is awarding scholarships to qualified high school seniors graduating in 2019.

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.

Great River Energy retiring capital credit equity for first time in 2019

As a member of a cooperative, you get a voice, a vote and occasionally some money back. When members pay their electric bills, they become part owners of the business. When business is good, members get a return on that investment.

The same principles apply to Great River Energy (GRE), which is a cooperative owned by 28 other cooperatives including Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric.

Great River Energy expects to reach 20 percent equity at the end of 2018, achieving a goal set decades ago. As a result, GRE will, for the first time in its 20-year history, return patronage capital, or cash back, to its member-owner cooperatives in 2019.

"The new year signals the start of a different financial era for Great River Energy," said GRE Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Michelle Strobel. "Not only will we return patronage capital to our membership, the rates members pay for electricity are holding

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. 27110

In 2018, Steele-Waseca awarded scholarships to 15 high school senior graduates. The co-op's scholarship program has awarded \$166,750 since the program was established in 1954. A portion of the funds to support these scholarships come from unclaimed capital credit equity.



steady."

Great River Energy's average 2019 wholesale rate will decline 0.4 percent over the budgeted 2018 rate. The long-term outlook has improved as well. GRE projects rates to increase less than 0.5 percent annually over the next 10 years.

This improved financial outlook is the result of sustained strong results stemming from cost-saving measures and strategic decisions to position Great River Energy's generation portfolio. The exit of two coal-based power supply contracts and the retirement of Stanton Station have provided long-term rate relief for cooperative members.

"We have an important job for the (GRE 2019 budget continued on Page 7)

ad connection

give away

DEAD TREES to be taken down. 744-2709.

FREE ONLINE CLASSIFIEDS, you place & remove your own ad on SWCE's website, swce.coop, these are separate from Sparks & will not appear in Sparks unless mailed, delivered, faxd or emailed to SWCE.

wanted

CHAIN-LINK FENCE. 744-2873.

HAY FOR HORSES, round bales or large sq.; POST POUNDER for rent or purchase. 651-260-9225.

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

for sale

1988 BASS TRACKER BOAT, 18', trailer, 150-hp Johnson; 2000 FORD F-350, 4x4, crew, V10 w/ Hiniker plow; (3) JD 7" LASER RIP PTS, new, \$150 for all 3. 612-290-2835.

FULL-SIZE BED, BOOKSHELF & FOOTBOARD, real wood, metal sided, gd shape, other things, \$100. 583-6679.

TREE TRIMMING, REMOVL & STUMP GRINDING, pro climber & aerial lift to U of M guidelines; FRONT CHROME BUMPER for an F-650, new. 456-1609.

SELF-PROPELLED WOOD SPLITTER, needs gas tank, portable, \$2500. 363-2015 or 213-6992.

TORO 624 SNOWBLOWER, 5.5-hp, 4-cyl. engine, 21" cut, elec. start, gd shape, \$125; (2) FISH HOUSES, suitcase style canvas, both like new cond., \$200/ea./firm. 465-9918 before 8 p.m.

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

ProForm CROSS TRAINER TREADMILL, has incline & some pgms, exc. cond., \$100. 451-8722.

AALADIN HOT WATER PRESS. WASHER, used, 4 gpm @ 3000 psi, 220V, single phase, 4-wheel, \$3295; VAL 6 DAYSTAR RADIANT HEATER, new, \$1195. 583-2703.

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

(4) FIRESTONE DESTINATION TIRES, P235/60R17, gd shape, \$60. 451-1749.

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by January 7 to ensure being printed in the February 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 7th will be printed in the March 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.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

BELSAW 905 13" HVY DUTY PLANER w/new set of blades, \$150; RIDGID R4330 13" TABLETOP PLANER w/new set of blades, \$100. 330-5503.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

FORCED AIR HEATER, Knipco-type, 100,000 Btu; LP AIR FORCE HEATER; KEROSENE RADIANT HEATER, (all 3 \$100). 451-0996.

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

MOHAIR (ANGORA GOAT) WOOL & ALPACA FIBER; YARNS, ROVING, BATS, WASHED FIBER & RAW FLEECES. 832-392-1587/cell.

50-GAL. STEEL FUEL TANK w/Gasboy 12V pump; HAND OIL PUMP, fits 5-gal. pail w/hose; FRONT BUMPER HITCH for Ford 9N, 8N, or 2N tractor; D17 FRNT TIRE RIMS; 100-LB. ANVIL, nice. 456-0259.

CLIMATE CONTROLLED UNITS FOR RENT, 11'x9' to 16'x10'. 332-4623.

ROUND LIGHT FIXTURE, new; VANITY LIGHT; TRIMLINE 2450 TREADMILL, like new; MICRO-WAVE for above stove, great cond. 993-9176.

VARIETY OF MEN'S & WOMEN'S OLD WEST/ FRONTIER CLOTHING incl. hats, skirts, vests, frocks, shirts, trousers & accessories.952-451-4821.

MF 2705 TRACTOR; PRONTO PWR WHEEL-CHAIR, exc. cond., best offer. 475-2322.

MINI STORAGE UNITS FOR RENT in Ellendale. 456-1460.

CHICKEN EGGS, farm fresh, delivery avail. depending on location, \$2/dozen. 456-1617/call or text.

SONY HT-CT780 TV SOUNDBAR w/wireless subwoofer, \$175. 456-2060.

VAUGHN RECTANGULAR TUBE LOADER w/trip snow bucket (straight), off JD 50 tractor, \$250/obo. 685-4251.

2012 TOYOTA PRIUS, charcoal gray ext., gray & blk int., 47-mpg, clean car, clean title, vry reliable, 76,000 mi., \$9895. 491-4565.

FIREWOOD, mostly oak, sugar maple, & ash, split well & dried a yr, 20" or less in length, \$100/truck-load. 332-7590.

JIFFY ICE AUGER, \$150. 451-7837.

ROUND GRASS HAY BALES, 4x5; 1975 GMC, 2-whl drive, 3/4 w/454 engine, \$3500/obo. 451-5131.

ITALIAN LEATHER COUCH, dark brown, 88x36, like new, non-smoking home, \$500. 213-8438 call/txt.

PLASTIC BARRELS; 2-WHEEL TRAILERS, 4x8 & 7x13; LP TANKS; GARAGE LP HEATER, 80,000 Btu; ELEC. HEATERS. 664-9426.

1984 FORD CARGO VAN, insulated, runs great, gd rubber, 6-cyl., 4-spd manual, PS, great for hauling ice house, firewood, etc., \$1288. 213-8823.

LIGHTED BEER SIGNS; RECORD ALBUMS; WOODEN WAGON WHEEL HUBS; WILDLIFE PRINTS; PICTURE FRAMING MATERIAL; WOOD SHELIVING. 612-827-6575.

1949 MH 22 & 1950 MH 44, all completely rebuilt, all new radiators, tires, rims, immaculate show-room cond. 605-772-4541.

OMC 282 HAY SWATHER, 12' head, \$500; 2006 YAMAHA GRIZZLY, 4x4, \$600/obo. 213-1277.

ANTIQUE ROUND OAK WOOD BURNER (C20), approx. 5' high & 2' round, fancy scrolling outside, firebox is gd, \$350/obo. 446-8866.

2000 POLARIS 500 XC SNOWMOBILE, high performance twin, 2130 mi., like new cond., \$1500. 451-8744.

LUM & ABNER CLASSIC VOLUMES 1, 2, & 7, 9-CDs in each vol., \$10/each set. 451-5456 > 5 p.m.

ShoreStation 36108 BOAT LIFT, has wheel kit, no canopy, alum., \$1250. 951-2568.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

SAN ANTONIO RIVERWALK, Feb. 11-18, 2019. By motor coach, 7-nights hotel, 13 meals, Dallas, LBJ Ranch, San Antonio city tour, Oklahoma Memorial & more! Starting at \$1,399 pp, 2 per room.

MINN. TWINS SPRING TRAINING IN FLORIDA, March 7-17. By motor coach, 10-nights hotel, 16 meals, 3 Twins training tickets, Nashville highlights tour & Grand Ole Opry. \$1,999 pp, 2 per room.

SAVANNAH—SOUTHERN CHARM AT ITS BEST, March 29-April 6. By motor coach, 7-nights hotel, 11 meals, St. Louis Arch, Gospel Dinner Cruise, tour of Savannah. \$1,599 per person, 2 per room.

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 17-21. Includes airfare, 4 nights, meals incl. Guided tours of D.C., Arlington, Mt Vernon, WWII, Korean, Vietnam & Lincoln Memorials, & more. Starts at \$1,649 pp, 2 per rm.

Call 4-Seasons at 800-328-4298 and reserve space today! Be sure to tell us you are Steele-Waseca members!



member connection

Strong turnout for town hall meeting in Lonsdale

One hundred fifty-eight members, spouses, family and/or friends attended the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric town hall meeting, Nov. 8, at the Lonsdale American Legion.

The meeting invited members from Wheatland, Webster, Upper Bridge-water, Northfield, Bridgewater, Forest, Erin, Shieldsville, and Wells townships in Rice County; and Kilkenny Town-ship in LeSueur County representing portions of Districts 1, 7, 8, and all of 9.

Steele-Waseca General Manager Syd Briggs moderated the meeting. He pre-sented information on cooperatives' seven principles, Steele-Waseca's oper-ating margins, and the co-op's practice of retiring capital credits, and returning that equity to current and past members having service through Steele-Waseca during those years being retired.

Briggs highlighted the co-op's newest renewable energy program, POWRE (Power Optimized With Renewable En-ergy; pronounced power) for members wishing to produce their own renew-able energy. The program is a 10-year contract with Steele-Waseca and the member with incentives for renewable energy projects built to program pro-duction specifications. Members seek-ing additional information are encour-aged to contact Steele-Waseca's Steve Nordahl.

Attendees were presented informa-tion regarding ACRE (Action Com-mittee for Rural Electrification), and how participation provides support to elected officials who support legislation keeping electricity reliable and afford-able for rural electric cooperatives.

Briggs demonstrated the convenienc-es for members wishing to download the co-op's free app available through Steele-Waseca's website, swce.coop, for your smart mobile devices. Among the services available include viewing your current bill, making payments, and viewing your 24-month usage history.

Steele-Waseca Line Supervisor Dan Meier detailed the co-op's Geographic Information System technology that allows the co-op to have quicker re-sponse to outages, determine overhead or underground service at a particular location, which is allowing for more ef-ficiency for Operations and line techni-

(Town hall meeting continued on Page 7)

COUNTDOWN

10 RESOLUTIONS FOR AN ENERGY-EFFICIENT NEW YEAR

The new year is a time for starting over. If you're looking for a change that can benefit your family, your community and the entire planet, how about saving energy? As you begin the countdown to 2019, make a pledge to:

10. Turn off lights when you're the last one to leave a room.
9. Switch to energy-efficient, longer lasting LED bulbs.
8. Have your heating and cooling system inspected by a qualified professional.
7. Change furnace filters regularly according to manufacturer's instructions.
6. Adjust the thermostat to save energy at night or when no one's home.
5. Unplug battery chargers when they're not charging anything.
4. Take shorter showers.
3. Fix water leaks as quickly as possible.
2. Install water-efficient showerheads and faucet aerators.
1. Purchase only Energy Star® certified high-efficiency appliances and devices.

It's no secret that New Year's resolutions are hard to keep. Just stick with it. The savings you'll start seeing on your monthly energy bills should be enough to keep you going all year.

Is my off peak/dual fuel being controlled today?

Visit Great River Energy's website at www.greatriverenergy.com and click on "Load Management"

Need a history of controls? Click on "History" on the "Load Management" page

cookin' connection

Mint Dazzler

Lorraine Mueller

Janesville

2 c. graham crackers (crushed) 3 eggs
1/4 c. melted butter 3 oz. chocolate (melted)
1/2 c. butter 1 c. whipping cream
1 1/2 c. powdered sugar 8 oz. pkg miniature marshmallows
1/2 c. red and white peppermint candy (crushed)

Spread graham crackers and melted butter into 9x13 pan. Bake for 15 minutes in 350° oven. Beat until thick like frosting: butter, powdered sugar, eggs, and melted chocolate. Pour chocolate mixture over crumbs. Whip whipping cream. Fold in marshmallows and pour over chocolate mixture. Top with crushed red and white peppermint candy. Chill until serving 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 15 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during November 2018. 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:

No members found their number

Numbers not found:

Steven/Misae Gare
Kevin M. Quinlan
Gretta J. Lageson
Christopher/Kara Walderon
Jonathan D. Calcamuggio



sparks • january 2019

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 33° F, while the average low was 20° F. This resulted in 1,159.5 Heating Degree Days and 0 Cooling Degree Days. They compare to last year's average high of 43° F and average low of 24° F, which resulted in 955.5 HDDs and 0 CDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – All ENERGY STAR refrigerators/freezers (with recycling), electric clothes dryers, dehumidifiers, central air conditioners, air and ground source heat pumps, light emitting diode (LED) bulbs purchased (limit 5) 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 swce.coop. For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Butterfield at 800-526-3514.

• **SWCE'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. You may also visit: www.minnesotastrayvoltageguide.com.

health & safety connection



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.

Be mindful of using DOXO to pay your Steele-Waseca electric bill

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric members are being reminded that www.DOXO.com is not affiliated with the co-op. A member recently called the Steele-Waseca office regarding DOXO's payment portal. This is a third party payment processing site that mails a check to Steele-Waseca when you make a payment through their website. As such, the payment is not immediate and may be delayed, resulting in late payment charges to you if not received by the due date. Please make sure you are making your payment through the Steele-Waseca website at www.swce.coop for immediate credit to your account. 1079816

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**