



Steele-Waseca Coop Electric
Coal Creek Tour-Bismarck, ND
June 12-14, 2019

REGISTRATION

1

WHO'S COMING

(list first & last names; include age for students ages 10-18 yrs.; minimum age to participate on the trip is 10 years old)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

List any special needs or notes:

HOW DO WE REACH YOU

2

Address: _____
City: _____
Primary Phone: _____
Mobile Phone: _____
Email: _____
SWCE Account #: _____
Emergency Contact Name: _____
Emergency Contact Phone: _____

WHERE WILL YOU DEPART

(please circle one location)

3

Steele-Waseca in Owatonna
OR
Flying J/Big Steer-Hwy 19

(we recommend getting on the bus in Owatonna)

ACCOMODATIONS

(please circle room type)

- a. 2 Queen Beds & 1 Pull Out Sleeper; (5 people)
- b. 2 Queen Beds-Handicap; (4 people)
- c. 1 King Bed & 1 Pull Out Sleeper; (3 people)
- d. 1 King Bed & 1 Pull Out Sleeper-2 Rooms; (3 people)

4

TELL US HOW MANY ARE COMING

5

Members: \$310.00 each x _____ adults = \$ _____
1-3 Students: FREE FREE
Add'l Students: \$150.00 each x _____ students=\$ _____

Non Members:
\$620.00 each x _____ people =\$ _____ .00
2nd Time Travelers:
\$620.00 x _____ people =\$ _____ .00
(if you bring a first time member or student, then the price is \$310.00)

TOTAL \$ _____ .00

Signed: _____ Date: _____

SEND IT IN

Mail this form & payment to:

Steele-Waseca Coop Electric
Attn: Jack Schwab
2411 West Bridge St., PO Box 485
Owatonna, MN 55060
(email: jschwab@swce.coop)

6



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

March 2019

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calendar of events

March

- 2 Dr. Suess' birthday
National Read Across
America Day
3 "The Star-Spangled
Banner" made U.S.
national anthem in 1931
10 Daylight saving time starts
17 St. Patrick's Day
20 First day of spring

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric line crews in March and April will be conducting their yearly inspection of the co-op's power lines. The co-op services the lines up to the meter pole on member service locations, so it may be necessary for Steele-Waseca trucks to enter drive-ways during line inspections. The yearly check is mandated by the co-op's insurance provider. Thank you for your cooperation.

Scheduling conflict changes 2019 Coal Creek Tour to June 12-14

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric continuing to accept reservations

Due to a scheduling conflict with Coal Creek Station, Steele-Waseca's annual tour of Coal Creek has been changed to June 12-14, 2019.

If you're seeking ideas for a three-day getaway, reservations are being accepted for the co-op's annual tour of Coal Creek Station near Underwood, North Dakota.

This mini-vacation lets you get away and leaves the planning to us. Mom and/or Dad, or Grandma and/or Grandpa, have you ever thought it would be fun to take the kids or grandkids on an outing where everything is planned out, meals included, have fun, learn, and be worry free?

The tour includes the Coal Creek Station and Falkirk Mine, with a side tour of the Garrison Dam.

Travel in the comfort of a motor coach on Wednesday, June 12, from Steele-Waseca to Bismarck, North Dakota, then stay at the Country Inn & Suites, which also has a water park for the kids. Each morning the hotel provides a full buffet breakfast.

The tour on Thursday, June 13, will include the Coal Creek Station to learn about the process of utilizing coal to generate electricity. Next is to observe the HVDC (High Voltage Direct Current) Terminal. It's here participants will see the equipment where 22,000 volts of alternating current (AC) from the generators is converted to 400,000

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric conducting auditions for national anthem singer at co-op's 83rd annual meeting

Selected performer earns \$100

Steele-Waseca is conducting auditions for the singing of, "The Star-Spangled Banner," at this year's annual meeting, Tuesday, June 4, at the co-op's headquarters in Owatonna.

Interested Steele-Waseca members or their dependents will need to audition before a panel of judges at the co-op.

volts of direct current (DC).

From the 21st floor of Coal Creek Station, you will be able to view the Blue Flint Ethanol Plant. It generates over 65-million gallons of ethanol per year by using steam from the Coal Creek power plant, rather than utilizing additional boilers and burning natural gas, making Blue Flint one of the most efficient ethanol plants.

Participants will also visit the Falkirk Mine to observe the open-pit mining process for lignite coal, and the huge drag lines that uncover the coal. You'll learn how the land is restored to its original landscape, and farmland crop production levels after the coal is mined. If weather permits, tour participants will be able to walk in the coal field and pick their own coal.

For prices and/or to register, see Page 8 of this month's *Sparks* newsletter. Parents and/or grandparents may bring up to three students between the ages of 10 and 18 on the tour at NO CHARGE! Additional students may attend for a minimal additional charge of \$150 per student. Students must be accompanied by an adult. 15787

Additional information may be obtained by calling Jack Schwab at 507-451-7340 or toll-free 800-526-3514. You may also reach Jack by emailing, jschwab@swce.coop. There are only a limited number of seats available, so sign up now.

For those auditioning (whether solo, duet, etc.), you will be judged on your vocal performance, stage presence, and personality. You may schedule an

(Anthem auditions continued on Page 7)



Published monthly by
Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric
2411 W Bridge Street, PO Box 485
Owatonna MN 55060-0485

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Website: www.swce.coop
Email: swce@swce.coop
Fax: 507-446-4242



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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 and listen to the prompts. Please have your account number, phone number, and name on the account available.

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

48-hour notice required for ALL underground cable locations

manager connection



By Syd Briggs,
General Manager

Is solar right for you?

Today's consumers want and expect options, including the type of energy powering their homes.

Many homeowners are looking for a less expensive form of energy with ongoing savings. Some are looking for a green energy source. These two motives are why many homeowners are exploring solar panel options.

The interest in alternative energy sources is also being fueled by decreasing costs for solar, the availability of financial incentives, and the proliferation of companies offering solar panel installation.

However, as attractive and popular as solar may appear, it is important for consumers to fully understand its true costs, the operational reality of this form of energy and actual energy savings. To determine whether solar is right for their particular situation, homeowners must undertake their due diligence.

We're here to help

As your trusted energy advisor, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric can offer a candid assessment of your specific situation. After all, Steele-Waseca has a different “bottom line” that is not directly tied to the sale of a product or service. We constantly strive to find new ways to help you use energy more efficiently. 31157

Steele-Waseca is seeking to keep pace with the changing energy environment and evolving technology. In 2018, the co-op introduced POWRE (Power Optimized With Renewable Energy; pronounced power), a rebate program providing additional rebates and incentives to size renewables to load. Steele-Waseca continues to promote The Sunna Project, which allows eligible water heater program participants to subscribe to a Steele-Waseca community solar panel at a significantly lower rate, than if you were to only subscribe to a Steele-Waseca solar panel alone. In addition, the co-op has maintained residential rebates and off-peak programs beneficial to our member-owners.

Unlike a solar company that has one objective—to sell their products and services—Steele-Waseca will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home. While solar construction at their service location certainly works for a number of members, it's not the answer for all.

When helping co-op members determine whether solar is right for them, a co-op energy advisor will also discuss the many financial considerations:

- Is there a large, up-front payment required or are fees spread out over time?
- Will the homeowner own the panels or will they be leased?
- Are there ongoing maintenance fees?
- Are there rebates or other financial incentives available?
- Is the estimated energy savings worth the investment?
- Is it more cost effective to invest in other energy saving measures?

Most importantly, an energy advisor will provide perspective on the total energy puzzle. Taking into account current energy consumption, the efficiency of the HVAC system and home site, an energy advisor can help co-op members determine whether solar is the best choice given the homeowners' objectives.

When assessing solar options, it is an excellent time to examine other potential energy efficiency improvements for your home. For example, it may make sense to insulate the attic.

Steele-Waseca recognizes that consumer interest in green energy sources and renewables is at an all-time high, and your co-op stands ready to help our member-owners determine their best options. For renewable energy inquiries, please contact Steve Nordahl during regular business hours.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

USED ENGINES, TRANSMISSIONS, AUTO & TRUCK PARTS, 30-day warranty. 332-2300.

PORTABLE STORAGE, 20' & 40' shipping containers, store your stuff on your property, rodent & moisture proof. 612-418-4375.

TRAILER, 4x8; **CHAIN SAWS**; **ELEC. HEATERS**; **LP GAS SUNFLOWER HEATERS**; **LP TANKS**, 20-lb. 664-9426.

1975 CHEVY C65 TANDEM TRUCK, reliable; **1938 FORD PICKUP**, custom restored in gray premier; **2008 FORD TAURUS TRANSMISSION**. 327-3626.

HOSPITAL BED, vry clean, \$200. 380-2593.

SPECIALIZED HOTROCK, 20x175, C.B. boys, \$100; **SPECIALIZED CROSSROADS**, 700x35c, 24-sp, F.S. Fork, \$200. 330-3178.

HVY DUTY TRAILER, 8'x16', (2) 7500-lb. axles, new tires, \$1700. 456-9145.

SEARS CRAFTSMAN WOOD LATHE, 12"-36" bed, \$325. 451-6061.

SKID STEER RENTAL: Case TR340 Track Loadr, 90-hp, H-patrn & ISO contrls, will delivr w/20 mi./\$40, daily rate/\$200, wkly rate/\$800, mthly rate/\$2500, can also provide operator if needed. 330-4717.

CIRCLE LK LOT, 0.7-acres; (3) **DOWNHILL SKIS**: Blizzard/160 cm, Rossignol V2/168 cm, Dynastar/162 cm; **ELEC. BASEBOARD HEATER**, 48", 220V. 470-262-7696.

CASE 1818 SKID LOADER, 820 actual hrs, both buckets, \$6000; (2) **TIRES**, 16.9x28 on AC D17 rims, \$600. 384-7553.

MUSTANG 940 SKID LOADER, Yanmar diesel, new tires, both buckets; **2016 FORD FOCUS**, 17K mi., \$8500. 330-3945.

RENN 8' SNOWBLOWER, double auger, hydraulic spout, 540 PTO, \$750/obo. 390-5222/Owat.

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.

(Anthem auditions continued from Page 1)

an audition by contacting Executive Assistant Jenifer Shimpach at Steele-Waseca. Auditions must be completed by Friday, April 26. By policy, last year's performer is not eligible to participate the year after being selected.



Caroline Nelson of Ellendale was selected to sing the national anthem at Steele-Waseca's annual meeting in 2018.

(Transmission operation continued from Page 5)

to cold temperatures, ice, and wind.

Great River Energy also worked with the regional grid operator, Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), and neighboring utilities to prepare for possible scenarios. On Jan. 28, MISO issued a cold weather alert, which signaled there would be heightened demand for electricity, and all power plants should prepare to be dispatched on short notice.

“Our crews worked through the night to ensure our generation facilities had ample fuel supplies to reliably operate the plants,” said GRE Vice President and Chief Generation Officer Rick Lancaster.

On Jan. 30, MISO declared a maximum generation emergency event. By 2 p.m., that day, all available GRE power plants were called upon to operate through the evening. Great River Energy's Coal Creek Station and Spiritwood Station power plants, which are designed to run without interruption, operated at full output throughout the extreme cold weather.

“Our member-owner cooperatives depend on a reliable supply of electricity. It was a week of hard work, but we were prepared for it,” added Lancaster.

The performer(s) selected will need to be available to sing the national anthem “live” at the annual meeting. The selected recipient will also receive \$100 at this year's annual meeting. *SWCE*

Steele-Waseca member reports attempted scam

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric was alerted by a member, Feb. 1, of an attempted scam.

The member reported they received a call from someone saying they were calling from Steele-Waseca. The perpetrator reportedly told the member they owed \$700, and was at risk of being disconnected. Fortunately, the member contacted Steele-Waseca to learn their account was current.

Scam artists attempt to defraud unsuspecting consumers in hopes they'll pay before checking their records. You should never send money or provide personal information to unknown or unfamiliar people or entities.

If something doesn't seem right, don't be afraid to hang up the phone, or not respond to future calls, emails, or text messages from the person.

At Steele-Waseca, letters are initially sent to members who have a past due balance that would warrant a potential disconnection. Secondly, a phone call from a contracted agency working for the co-op calls to remind members of their past due balance. 40000

If someone calls you demanding an immediate payment or asking for your banking information, immediately hang up the phone and call your local law enforcement authorities. By reporting any suspicious call, it allows authorities to gather information regarding the phone number that is calling and attempting the scam. In addition, please contact

Steele-Waseca so the co-op is aware of the situation.

Don't be fooled by caller ID numbers as scammers can “spoof” numbers and appear to be calling from someone else's phone number—when in fact, they are not.

According to the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, “As people try to screen unwanted phone calls, unscrupulous telemarketers and scam artists have looked for new ways to lure people to answer calls. One increasingly common technique scam artists use is to falsify or “spoof” their caller ID information with local phone numbers or information to make it look like the calls are coming from a nearby person or business. While the caller's information may falsely appear local, the calls are often placed by scam artists who are located outside the state or country.”

Criminal callers usually ignore established means of stopping unwanted calls, such as the National Do Not Call Registry. If you receive these calls, the Minnesota Attorney General's Office states you may wish to end the call by hanging up, and contact your phone company as they may offer calling features that block unwanted calls, such as selective ringing, selective call acceptance, and selective call blocking. Some of these features may also be available on your phone for no cost.

If you have any questions regarding the status of your Steele-Waseca account, please call the co-op at 507-451-7340 or toll-free at 800-526-3514. *SWCE*



ad connection

give away

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

6' OR LONGER STEEL FENCE POSTS & SMALLER FENCE POSTS TOO, about (20) in all. 402-8082.

OLDER MIXER MILLS, MANURE SPREADERS, HAY BALERS, & GREEN CHOPPERS. 456-7742.

SEASONAL DRIVERS w/CDL, Hazmat, Tanker, clean driving record w/pre-employment drug test, flex. hrs, gd pay. 774-9730.

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

PERSONS LOOKING FOR HELP IN THEIR HOMES w/housekeeping, preparing meals, yard & garden, have current references. 412-7045.

FARMLAND TO RENT in 2019. 213-9344.

NON-WORKING FLAT SCREEN TVs, any size, free to drop-off. 451-0653.

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

for sale

PENTA 2410 STATIONARY TMR w/scale, hydraulic door, 2-spd gear box, gd cond., \$12,500. 456-2628.

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

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

ITALIAN OR CARNIOLAN HONEYBEE PACK- AGES, 2- or 3-lb., call for prices, April delivery, will deliver in Owat. 456-0753.

TRI-AXLE DUMP TRUCK AVAILABLE FOR ALL YOUR HAULING NEEDS: rock, gravel, dirt, etc., 15.5-ton capacity. 456-7774.

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

KG FARROWING CRATES; BIRD HATCHING EQUIP.; BOBWHITE QUAIL. 524-4637.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

PINCOR 30-KW TRACTOR-DRIVEN PTO ALTER- NATOR/GENERATOR, \$3000/obo. 456-6715.

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

SELF-PROPELLED SAW RIG, needs gas tank, por- table, \$2500. 363-2015 or 213-6992.

ALL AMERICA PRESSURE WASHER, used, 3 gpm @ 3000 psi, 230V, single phase, temp control, hot water, \$2395; VAL 6 DAYSTAR RADIANT HEATER, new, \$1195. 583-2703.

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

2002 HONDA GOLDWING TRIKE MOTORCYCLE, 1800cc, vry nice cond., 39,111 mi. 213-6427/text.

WHITE 588 PLOW, 6-btm, reset, w/gauge wheel. 455-2484.

2003 FORD EXPLORER XLT, 191,xxx mi., exc. cond., no rust, \$3700/obo. 210-1006 or 334-7397.

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

COUNTY LINE 3-POINT POST HOLE AUGER, vry little use, comes w/9" & 12" augers. 456-1597.

ON-SITE GRAIN BIN AERATION DYNAMIC FAN BALANCING & VIBRATION TROUBLESHOOT- ING, www.cmtechnicalservices.com. 634-3409.

KING CHARLES CAVALIER PUPS, (2) males & (2) females, ruby, no papers, pet quality, \$1000 per puppy. 384-1972.

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

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

WOMEN'S GOLF CLUBS, new/never used, right- handed, set of (12) Wilson clubs w/covers & bag, \$200 for all together. 456-8500.

BROWNING BT-99, 12-ga., Invector-Plus, 34" bar- rel, 2 3/4 chamber, plus mod. choke, no extra chokes, \$1100. 451-8744.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

CONTRACTOR'S TRUCK TOPPER, fits 6.5' truck bed, red, vry nice cond., \$300/obo. 456-8556.

2017 JD 1025R TRACTOR, diesel w/front bucket & rem. blade, lawn mower rarely used (7 hrs), \$14,700/ obo. 952-492-6515.

M.G. LOATES WILDLIFE PRINTS; RUG LOOM, large; MID-CENTURY MODERN CHAIRS; QUALI- FIED KARR RANGE KITCHEN WOODSTOVE; WORK BENCH, large, old. 612-827-6575.

TV STAND, blk w/shelf & glass door, \$10; (2) PLANT STANDS, \$10/each; TAIL LIGHT for Dodge Ram pickup, fit yrs 1990-2000, never been used, \$20. 451-2687.

MAGELLAN 315 GPS, (12) channel, "Explore The Outdoors With Confidence," in box, \$10. 838-8565.

(4) ELITE REGISTERED HEREFORD HEIFERS, \$7000/firm; YEARLING BULLS. 451-2722.

EdenPURE HEATER, like new, only used (1) time, \$75. 527-2529.

1997 FORD F-150, 5.4L, 4x4, gd shape, well main- tained, 206K mi., teal green w/gray inter., \$3100/obo. 271-0150.

LOFTNESS 7' SNOWBLOWER, 3-point, \$1000. 334-7845.

SEARS CRAFTSMAN PORT. COMPRESSOR, 5- hp, 30-gal., 220V, \$190. 685-4126/Morristwn.

GERMAN ROSENTHAL FINE CHINA, (12) place settings, pattern "Motif," white on white, circa 1960s, \$800. 527-2229.

GUN CASE, holds (6) guns, mahogany, storage compartment for ammo underneath, approx 54" tall x 28" across, \$40. 213-8823.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

MN 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., Arling- ton, Mt Vernon, WWII, Korean, Vietnam, & Lincoln Memorials, & more. Starts at \$1,649 pp, 2 per rm.

NEW YORK YOUR WAY, June 25-29. Includes airfare, Millennium Hotel in Times Square, YOU pick the activities you want to see in New York City. \$1,699 per person based on 2 per room.

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



member connection

Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference scheduled March 4-5 in Eau Claire

Steele-Waseca sponsoring up to three students wishing to attend

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is sponsoring up to three students seeking to attend the Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference, March 4-5, 2019, in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Any high school sophomores, juniors, or seniors interested in attending (a conference schedule is posted on Steele-Waseca's Facebook page) may submit their name to Steele-Waseca Executive Assistant Jenifer Shimpach by no later than noon, Friday, March 1. The recipi- ents will be randomly selected on the same date. 1024840

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 opportu- nity to interact with cooperative leaders and business professionals to find out.
- **Get motivated!** Whether you strug-

gle with peers or simply want to become 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 even some dancing involved.

Those interested will have the oppor- tunity to run for the Co-ops Yes! youth board. The youth board plans the fol- lowing year's program, and will have other leadership development opportu- nities.

The students randomly selected by Steele-Waseca to attend the Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference must have a parent or guardian sign a release form that Jenifer can email to you. She will also be chaperoning Steele-Wase- ca's participants with a departure from the co-op at 6:30 a.m., Monday, March 4, and return to Owatonna at approxi- mately 3 p.m., Tuesday, March 5. ^{SWC}



Twenty years on, still united and cooperative

On Jan. 1, 1999, two generation and transmission cooperatives com- pleted the long and arduous journey to become a bigger, stronger, and more competitive organization.

Cooperative Power and United Power Association merged to become Great River Energy (GRE). The new coopera- tive would provide energy from Iowa to Canada through its membership, which consisted of 29 member-owner coop-

eratives at that time.

Over the next 20 years, the nature of electricity changed. Renewable energy became a powerful force on the elec- tric system. A regional power market— MISO (Midcontinent Independent Sys- tem Operator)—forever altered the way the electricity reaches members. And, technological advancements helped members use electricity much more ef- ficiently.

	1999	2019
Equity	\$106 million	\$650 million
Renewable energy capacity	2 megawatts	468 megawatts
Generating capability	1,603 megawatts	3,000+ megawatts
Peaking generation capacity	111 megawatts	1,383 megawatts
Assets	\$1.4 billion	\$4 billion
Member-accounts	507,000	695,000
Annual revenue	\$296 million	\$1 billion

Applications for 2019 Eagles schol- arship accepted through March 31

The Owatonna Eagles would like to invite ALL traditional and non- traditional students to apply for three \$1,000 scholarships that will be award- ed in May 2019.

A link with more information and an application will be on their website, www.eagles1791.com.

The funding for the generous award is from the Don Tuerk endowment. Don was a community-minded Owatonna native, longtime Eagles member, and Owatonna fireman. He died on Dec. 20, 2015. In keeping with Don's values and the Eagles mission, the Owatonna Eagles established this memorial schol- arship in his name.

The scholarship will be targeted, but not limited, to students with goals of public service, two- or four-year de- grees. Scholarships will be used for im- proving our communities and helping others.

The deadline to apply is Sunday, March 31. Applicants may submit their application and typed essay (maxi- mum 300 words) to Shannon DeWitz in the Owatonna High School office. An applicant's essay should demonstrate how they value civic and public ser- vice, and what the scholarship means to them.

Through it all, Great River Energy formed its own culture and identity while adapting to the needs of a chang- ing membership. Today, GRE is con- sidered one of the most innovative and successful cooperatives in the country.

More than 200 employees currently working at Great River Energy were employees at the beginning of the com- pany, including President and Chief Ex- ecutive Officer David Saggau.

"I am so very proud of the company we have become over 20 years," Saggau said. "Great River Energy was an am- bitious idea, and we have fulfilled even the most optimistic expectations. Today, we are the company we had envisioned in 1999."



David Saggau

As the company has turned 20 years old, take a look at the adjacent graphic to see how far they've come.

cookin' connection

Cheesy Chicken & Rice Casserole

Lavonne Krause

Morristown

1 can (10 3/4 oz.) cream of chicken soup
1 1/2 c. water
3/4 c. instant brown rice
2 c. fresh or frozen vegetables
1/2 tsp. onion powder or 2 tsp. dry onion soup mix
4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
1/2 c. shredded cheese

Stir soup, water, rice, vegetables, and onion in shallow baking dish. Place chicken on top, season as desired, cover, bake at 350°-375° for 45 minutes. Top with cheese.

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 16 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during January 2019. 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.

February issue of Sparks



Numbers found:
Charles A./Michelle M. Haan
Lionel/Wayne Sanborn
Numbers not found:
Toni J. Dahlenburg
John S. Mack
Michael A./Kelly Yaremchuk



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.

• **January temps** – The average high temperature for January was 21° F, while the average low was 5° F. This resulted in 1,616.5 Heating Degree Days (HDDs), and 0 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 23° F and average low of 5° F. This resulted in 1,562.5 HDDs and 0 CDDs. 1057101

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2019, 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 www.swce.coop. For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Butterfield 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

health & safety connection

YOUR POWER OUTAGE PANTRY

We do our best to avoid power outages, but unfortunately, Mother Nature occasionally has different plans. Stay ahead of the storm by stocking your pantry with a variety of non-perishable items.

Set these items aside for extended outages only, and your storm prep will be a breeze!

Don't forget to stock up on disposable goods, like paper plates, napkins, plastic cutlery and cups.

- BEANS
- CANNED FRUIT
- CANNED TUNA
- CANNED VEGETABLES
- CEREAL
- DRIED FRUITS
- DRIED MEATS/JERKY
- GRAHAM CRACKERS
- PASTA
- RICE
- SPAM
- OATMEAL



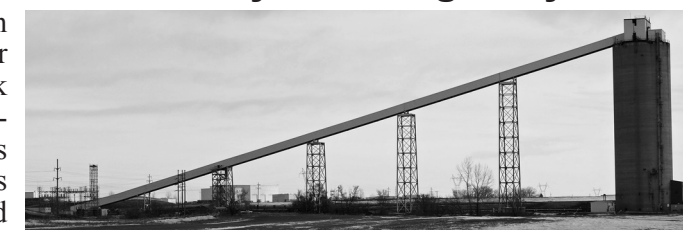
Falkirk Mine replaces conveyor damaged by storm

Falkirk Mine, which supplies Great River Energy's Coal Creek (source for Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's wholesale power for its legacy members) and Spiritwood stations with lignite coal, recently replaced a conveyor that was damaged during a June 2018 storm.

The replacement of the conveyor was completed mid-December and the system was fully operational by the end of 2018.

Coal deliveries to Coal Creek Station via the conveyor system were immediately interrupted when the damage occurred. The rebuild required short-term changes in coal deliveries for six months. Both crushed and uncrushed coal were trucked directly from the mine to the plant, and temporary conveyors were used to move the coal. During this time, 24/7 coverage was required to handle the coal with heavy equipment.

Steady coal supplies were needed last fall—up to 1,000 tons per hour—due to



The conveyor that carries coal from Falkirk Mine to Coal Creek Station was recently replaced after sustaining damage from a June 2018 storm. (Photo courtesy of Great River Energy.)

strong load demands at Coal Creek and Spiritwood stations.

"Employees at Great River Energy and Falkirk Mine worked collaboratively during this challenging time to ensure the reliable supply of electricity to our member-owner cooperatives," said Todd Gehring, leader of fuel systems at Great River Energy.

Falkirk Mine also recently marked a milestone of 40 years of operation. Throughout those years, the mine has supplied Coal Creek and Spiritwood stations with 264-million tons of coal. That fuel is equivalent to the generation of 302-million megawatt-hours of electricity, or enough to power 29-million homes for one year.

Great River Energy's transmission system braves extreme cold

Record low temperatures across the Midwest put the electric grid to the test during the last week of January.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's wholesale energy provider, Great River Energy (GRE), carefully operated and monitored the electric system to ensure energy continued to reach homes, farms, and businesses across the state.

GRE's transmission system, which carries bulk electricity over long distances, proved resilient, even in -50 degree wind chills.

"Our system performed great under extreme winter weather conditions thanks to our dedicated employees in the field and system operations," said Priti Patel, Great River Energy's vice president and chief transmission officer. "They worked around the clock to keep the grid operating for our member-consumers."

When the weather drops to such dangerous temperatures, transmission crews shift their focus from routine maintenance to intensely monitoring the grid and fixing issues that arise due

(Transmission operation continued on Page 7)