member connection

Co-ops step up in the cold of February

▲ s parts of the United States strug-Agled to maintain electric service during a historic cold snap in February, Minnesota's cooperatives went to great lengths to ensure their members had the energy they needed.

Electricity is responsible for a long list of conveniences of modern life: a charged phone, hot coffee, air conditioning, television. But, when the temperature drops below zero, dependable energy is also a matter of safety.

Historic cold weather across the country in mid-February drove up demand for natural gas and electricity to such an extent that some regions experienced rotating power outages.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's wholesale energy provider Great River Energy operates an electric system designed to provide reliable electricity in extremely cold weather, and it performed well. In fact, Minnesota endured the frigid temperatures with few

Extreme weather requires extra effort to keep electricity reliable, but Steele-Waseca knows how to keep the lights on when temperatures stay below zero for several days.

A rapid response

Each year, Great River Energy (GRE) employees complete training on the proper protocols to respond when the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) declares a "capacity and energy event" like the one that occurred in mid-February.

"During the recent cold snap, Great River Energy's control room employees were hard at work, following emergency procedures that are in place for this type of extreme weather," said Mark Peterson, GRE's manager of system operations. "We saw a handful of outages on the transmission system but were able to quickly restore customers using established tools and processes."

MISO is the grid operator for 15 U.S. states and the Canadian province of Manitoba. It oversees the operation of the bulk power transmission system, facilitates an energy market, and has responsibility, along with its members, for maintaining electric reliability across its system.

"The transmission team rose to the challenge, responding quickly and safely to the needs of our member-owners and the transmission grid," said Vice President and Chief Transmission Officer Priti Patel.

Producing more electricity

GRE's power supply resources which include coal-, gas-, and fuel-oil based power plants as well as wind energy resources—performed as planned for extreme weather events.

"We have a talented group that runs our power plants, and they really shined during the polar vortex," said Vice President and Chief Power Supply Officer Jon Brekke.

The coal-based Coal Creek Station and Spiritwood Station operated throughout the cold weather with no issues. Great River Energy's peaking stations operated as designed, injecting electricity onto the grid quickly and dependably when needed. Most of GRE's peaking plants are "dual fuel" facilities, which means they can operate on fuel oil when demand for natural gas is heightened.

"Fuel oil operation was absolutely critical this month," Brekke added. "Natural gas supply was particularly strained due to the additional demand for home heating. Fuel oil back-up ensured we could operate our peaking plants at all hours."

Reducing energy needs

Great River Energy deployed its demand response programs—a strategy that reduces demand for electricity during events such as a polar vortex over the course of a few days. More than 200,000 cooperative members participate in these voluntary programs, which will allow GRE to temporarily interrupt, or "cycle," water heaters, space heaters, or other electric loads for a period of hours on high-demand days. The cooperatives collectively re-

(Remembering Don Resler continued from Page 5)

Rolling blackouts: Could they happen here?

The Midwest electric grid looks quite different from Texas, which experienced widespread rolling blackouts in February. Most utilities in Minnesota are part of a much larger and geographically diverse energy market coordinated by MISO.

Most of Minnesota is located in MI-SO's northern region which includes generating resources using a wide variety of fuel sources and technologies, both conventional and renewable. Power plants in the northern states are also designed to handle very cold weather.

At no point during the polar vortex were rolling blackouts considered in the MISO North region. MISO works aggressively with its member utilities to plan for emergencies, and rolling blackouts are only used as a last resort to pre-

ents challenges on the electric grid, but utilities prepare for it. Planning for these kinds of events by Steele-Waseca, Great River Energy, and MISO North helped ensure resources and resiliency practices were ready for the challenge.

duced hundreds of megawatts of electricity demand over a few days, which

electric water heaters.

66Overall, we were well prepared to handle these system conditions. Our programs operated correctly and played an important role in maintaining reliability. The strong performance showed how strategic load management can help reduce costs and position our portfolio for the future," Hebert said.

vent more widespread outages. 29152

Weather like Minnesota experienced in February certainly pres-

alleviated stress on the electric grid and allowed Great River Energy to avoid expensive purchases from the energy market during both morning and evening peak periods. "Our members went above and be-

yond the norm and controlled peak shave water heat during those few mornings, which is not typically planned," said Josh Hebert, load management specialist at GRE, referring to a program that allows cooperatives limited control over member-consumers'

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric **April 2021**

the power of human connections

inside connections

- 2 Manager Connection
- National Lineworker Appreciation

Remembering former SWCE board director Don Resler

- Cookin' Connection: SWCE community solar update; Stray voltage questions; Sparks in brief; Members finding their account number in the March '21 Sparks
- Spring storm safety: **Ductless ASHP rebate promotion**
- Ad Connection;

promotion

- 4-Seasons Vacations Ad Connection; Air Source Heat Pump rebate
- Reliable power during cold February; Could rolling blackouts happen

calendar of events

April

- Good Friday 19347 **SWCE** office is closed
- 12 NRECA Nat'l Lineworker Appreciation Day
- 13 Thomas Jefferson's b-day
- 15 Minn. Tornado Drill Day
- 21 Administrative **Professionals Day**
- 22 Earth Day
- Vietnam War ended in 1975

Northfield's Earth Day is April 24



The public is invited to attend Northfield's Earth Day, Saturday, April 24 (with a rain date of May 1). There will

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board candidates for 2021 announced by Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee for Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric have announced their selection of candidates for the board seats up for election in Districts 1, 3, and 5, at this year's annual meeting tentatively scheduled (considering the status of the coronavirus pandemic), Tuesday, June 8, 2021.

The committee conducted virtual and phone meetings Dec. 2, 2020, in order to comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidance to social distancing due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Materials were mailed to all committee members, and followed up with phone calls to each member.

The mailing and calls reviewed the duties of the Nominating Committee as stated in the co-op's bylaws, the activities and conduct of individual board members policy, the qualifications for eligibility for service on the co-op's board of directors policy, the director election filing form and affirmation of director qualifications, and questions concerning qualifications for director.

A list of potential questions a candidate may have, highlighting the time commitment it takes to be a board director was also included in the mailing along with the selection process.

The Nominating Committee works on a rotation system that keeps six experienced members on the committee, and adds three new members each year.

A list of members in each district was provided, and it was suggested that committee members from each district call each other to discuss the search for candidates and review the information given to them.

Nominations for committee chairperson for the January meeting were not opened during their December

2020 meeting, and the meeting was adjourned.

The Nominating Committee conducted virtual and phone meetings on Jan. 12, 2021, to comply with the CDC guidance of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result of the calls made to all members of the Nominating Committee, the names of the following candidates were submitted, and will appear on the election ballot for Steele-Waseca's 85th annual meeting tentatively scheduled, June 8, 2021, at the co-op's headquarters located at 2411 W. Bridge St., Owatonna:

- District 1: Patrick J. Duchene (incumbent). Faribault.
- District 3: Sylvia J. Archer, New Richland; Duane R. Edwardson (incumbent), Ellendale.
- District 5: Rodney D. Krell (incumbent), Blooming Prairie.

A profile of each candidate will appear in the May 2021 Sparks newsletter. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor during the annual meeting with nominations closing at that time.

This year's Nominating Commit-Lee consisted of the following Steele-Waseca members: District 1— Frank/Joyce Ahlman, Faribault; Lester/ Jane Kroeger, Waseca; and Ryan/Jenny Angelow, Faribault; District 3—Keith/ Carol Schrader, Nerstrand; Doug/Cindy Finch, Owatonna; and Glenn/Linda Wiesihan, Owatonna; District 5—Jane Middlestadt, Owatonna; Jim/Patricia Pagel, Faribault; and Joseph Haberman, Blooming Prairie.

be morning outdoor workshops, an afternoon outdoor Cannon Valley Farmers Market, sustainable exhibitors, kids activities, food trucks, and more. Meet outside, with masks on, for socially-distanced events. Check out community efforts as they strive for sustainability and resiliency, www.northfieldearthday.com.

great-grandchildren, and his brother, Lavern, Lakewood, Colo.

uneral services were conducted Saturday, Feb. 20, at the Michaelson Funeral Home in Owatonna. Interment was at St. 📘 John's Lutheran Church Cemetery in Havana Township. 🛰

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his institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

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Facebook Email: swce@swce.coop Fax: 507-446-4242

Board of Directors

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

Management

Syd Briggs General Manager

Division Managers

Darla DeVries	.Office
David Lundberg F	inance
Dan Meier Open	rations

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

In the middle of Feb-Iruary, the mid-section of the country, from Minnesota to

Texas, experienced a polar vortex that was extreme for some of the country and lasted several days. It was not too unusual for Minnesota, but for the deep south, it was record setting.

I am sure all of you were following the news of almost 3 million people going without power for days, and the many explanations and fallout that has followed. We received a few calls and emails about our system, which worked very well without any rolling blackouts or loss of service other than the occasional outages due to trees, animals, and other nature-related problems.

I want to take a moment and explain why we did so well in Minnesota compared to several other states, both in the north and the south. Most of Minnesota (all of our supplier Great River Energy [GRE], and therefore all of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric) is part of the MISO (Midcontinent Independent System Operator) grid which stretches from Canada to Louisiana.

This large grid explains the first reason we did well; we have a very large area to rely on when part of the grid experiences a sudden demand for power. Each part of the grid will seldom experience the same weather as the rest of the grid, and support for supply of power can come from many areas and sources.

Looking at ERCOT (Electric Reliability Council of Texas), which is the grid that supports most of Texas, you find a much smaller grid, and in this case the entire grid was experiencing an extended polar vortex with low temperatures never seen before in much of the area.

Another distinction, and reason why Minnesota did so well, is that we prepare for cold temperatures every winter. Our suppliers are prepared with backup facilities which are designed to be protected from sub-zero weather as are our regular facilities. This includes renewables such as wind generators and fossil fuels such as coal, gas, and oil.

Lately, a lot of utilities, including our

supplier GRE, are relying more on renewables (especially wind), and that is causing a lot of speculation on whether we are prepared for times in which the wind does not blow, or if it can be too cold for the wind generators to produce. GRE's and MISO North's wind resources are designed for the type of sub-zero weather we experience up here; there are also many resources spread around the MISO and GRE grid that enables some generation from that resource to exist at almost all times. However, for the times in which the demand for power becomes significantly more than our regular resources, GRE has ample backup in the form of Peakers, contracted load, and Demand Side Management that will exceed our needs. We have a great partner in Great River Energy that continually plans and studies for every conceivable event on our system. 1023385

Our biggest problem is when Mother Nature decides to bless us with tornados, ice, flooding, and straight-line wind; we still have a plan of action for these events, and we always have the generated power ready and available when the lines are back up and ready.

Also, GRE and MISO performed studies, and the results found the plant is not needed for grid reliability.

Finally, GRE plans for our peaking plants to provide the core for reliability. Most peaking plants have dual fuel capability, and can store fuel oil on-site, which makes them highly dependable, and avoids the risks and cost of natural gas on extremely cold days when the price is higher. They also have firm transmission rights that support delivery throughout Minnesota.

On an extra note, it should be obvious that we still need fossil fuel for reliability. We are developing a greatly diversified portfolio of power with renewables, and can plan for having over 90% carbon-free power soon; however, it is not practicable yet to go to 100% carbon free on a regular basis, and we especially need fossil fuel backup for most of our needs when there exists a polar vortex, or other extreme situations. Steele-Waseca and Great River Energy are working together to provide reliability and balance that every member depends on.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6) MILWAUKEE ELEC. CHAIN SAW & BLOWER KIT, new, never used, \$475. 210-3782

GRASS HAY, sm. sq. bales by Waldorf, \$6.327-3672.

(3) TABLES w/chairs. 213-0443.

2003 FORD F-150 PICKUP, 4x4. 685-2415.

(6) PRECIOUS MOMENTS FIGURINES, exc. cond. \$15/each/obo. 213-6286/leave message

WILL DO TILLING, PLOWING, BUCKET WORK W/ compact tractor, 451-6046

EGGS, brown & green; MIXED GRASS HAY, sm. sq., no rain. 334-6377.

CAN COLLECTION; (2) HAMSTER CAGES; SCHMIDT SERIES BEER MUGS; MANY MAN CAVE ITEMS; OLD COINS (PAPER). 491-2667

TV ANTENNA, new w/UHF-VHF, ideal for house, cabin, fish house, \$50; CEDAR MAILBOX POST, new, \$10. 334-3804.

REESE 18K 5TH WHEEL CAMPER HITCH. \$900. 210-6084

SUNFLOWER 6333-25 SOIL FINISHER; GEHL 750 CHOPPER, hay & corn head; "95" CADILLAC **DEVILLE.** 684-3136.

(2) WHEATIES 1987 TWINS BOXES, never opened. \$25/each box; (2) 1991 TWINS HOMER HANDKER-CHIEFS, \$10/each. 412-9194.

2-SLED TRAILER, tilt bed, new tires, 8'x10', \$1500.

MINI STORAGE UNITS FOR RENT. 456-1460.

2007 CHEVY TAHOE LTZ, 131,367 mi., gd shape. \$9000, 451-2307.

18' RANGER 350V BASS BOAT, has a Mercury 175 V6 power trim, \$5000; WRAPPED PEA BALES, 5x5, 20% protein. 475-2029

LADIES SAS LEATHER TIE SHOES, new, made in USA, 451-7626.

DC ATLAS AGRIMETAL BALE CHOPPER: STRAW, sm. sq. bales; GAS BARREL ON STAND; FUEL OIL BARREL. 456-6210.

REDLINE 340 BMX. 20x175. \$100: SCHWINN HY-BRID, men's, 700x35c, 21-spd, \$100; TREK MTN LION, 20x175, \$40. 330-3178.

JOHNSON OUTBOARD MOTOR, 8 hp, like new cond., incl. tank & stand. 323-153

REM 1100 LEFT HAND 12-GA. SHOTGUN, 2 3/4, \$600: REM 870 PUMP LAM STOCK VENT RIB. new, \$425; SAKO TIKKA T3 LITE 243 WIN SYN., new in box. \$625, 461-1191

STANLEY 1/3 HP GARAGE DOOR OPENER, complete, \$35; FLOE BOAT LIFT COVER, new, 8' wide, 20' long. \$400/obo. 451-9614.

ENGINES & TRANSMISSIONS. 30-day warranty on eng. & trans.; USED AUTO PARTS. 332-2300.

JD 620 w/pwr steering & 3-point; JD G. 330-2820.

PUREBRED GERMAN SHEP. PUPS, have both parents, dewormed & ready to go. 334-5532.

RECLAIMED WOOD FLOORING, approx. 250 sq ft, 3 1/4" tongue & groove, 1/4 sawn Douglas Fir from 110-yr-old home, \$100/obo. 440-8831/lv. message.

POTHOLES FIXED FAST, 2-yr warranty, quality asphalt repairs—commercial, residential, local, starting at \$99, www.potholepatrolmn.com. 215-8088.

16' LUND FISHING BOAT, 25-hp Mercury elec., fish finder, trolling motor, battery, lights, seats, Spartan trailer LED lights, \$2150. 327-2741.

CIRCLE LK LOT. 0.7 acres: (2) DOWNHILL ROS-SIGNOL SKIS, 678-978-7444.

2000 FLEETWOOD CLASS A COACH 38' TURBO **CUMMINS,** OD auto, 98K mi., (2) slides, new tires,

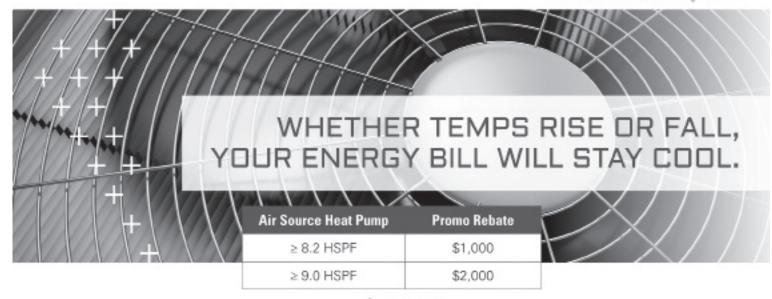
BOAT, MOTOR, & TRAILER, 2000 Saturn, Wisc. motor, VG4-45 hp; WILL TUNE UP MOWERS, & SM. ENGINES. 213-7978 or 475-1311

CONCRETE TROWELING MACH., \$125; WIDE **FRONT** for Oliver 88, \$425. 952-652-2933.

PALOMINO 8' POP-UP PICKUP CAMPER, \$4800/ obo: 500-GAL, FUEL BARREL from fuel oil, best offer. 363-2593.

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.

ENERGY WISE -##- MN



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS UP TO \$2,000 REBATE WHEN YOU INSTALL A QUALIFYING, ENERGY-SAVING AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP!

Air source heat pumps provide home cooling and supplemental heating, using 72% less electricity than conventional air conditioners and furnaces.

Visit energywisemn.com/promotions to learn more about the rebate!

Limited lands are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Rebate amounts and programs are subject to change without notice.

Offer expires June 30, 2021

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ad connection

give away

PRINTER. 451-7578.

4' FLUOR. LIGHT TUBES: T12, T8. 384-8730.

HOG FINISHING BUILDING TO SALVAGE, 30'x128' 456-1671

SEARS PROFORM TREADMILL, u haul, 332-6925

CHEST-STYLE FREEZER, used, approx. 7 cu. ft. 32" wide, 22" deep, 35" high, wrks without problems. 210-2219

wanted

JOBS FOR CONSTRUCTION, YD WRK, others

BARN, GRAINERY &/OR OUTBUILDINGS, I remove to repurpose the lumber; OLD TIN; BARN SIDING; LUMBER. 330-0258/Tim.

SAVANNA BILLY GOAT. 451-3678

ELECTRONIC LIFT CHAIR w/electronic foot rest. slightly used, gd cond., smaller size, cloth (not leather). 456-8201.

GUNS; AMMO; METAL SIGNS; TACKLE; ES-TATES. 279-0431/Mark.

FORD DIESEL SKID STEER, 330-1849.

OLD STAMPS, premium prices paid as book prices value, will meet or phone talk for COVID-19 rules.

EXPERIENCED INSTALLER for a TV antenna. 210-2244

CANVAS PORTABLE FISH HOUSE, SPEARING DECOYS, & SPEAR for ice fishing. 952-290-0059.

YOGURT MAKER. 451-7578.

PROPANE TANK, 1000-gal; OUTBOARD MOTOR. 10-15 hp; **SM. FIELD DIĞĞER,** 8'-10'. 663-1275.

NH 467 HAYBINE. 952-652-2678

LOCKING LIVESTOCK PANELS FOR GATES. 330-2820

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

POTATO LIFTER, used & working; JD 4400D COM-BINE; SM. GRAIN PICKUP. 651-357-5092/Paul.

5th will be printed in the June issue.

For Sale

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

SILO STAVES. 451-5016.

LEGOS; ARTICLES FROM MOVIE, FROZEN, for granddaughter: dress, hats, movies, etc. 334-3668.

WHEEL CART for cutting torch tanks. 456-7614.

JUNKERS & REPAIRABLES, cars or trucks, top \$ pd for junkers 332-2300

USED LUMBER for a hobby farm project; ANY FENCING MATERIALS. 301-8265.

MANUAL TYPEWRITERS, old, repairable, no junk.

STEEL FENCE POSTS, used, any length, straight or almost. 676-1009.

for sale

(34) 30' RAFTERS; APPROX. 2000' - 2X4s; FEED-ERS; AUGER; LB. WHITES, & more. 456-1671

250-BU. DAKON GRAV. BX WAGON, alw. shedded, \$2000; WINCO GEN., 25,000W, PTO drive, \$1000; '68 FORD GRAIN TRUCK, not tandem, new tires, alwys shedded, \$4000. Email: eakerdr@gmail.com.

TOMMY LIFT, gd cond., \$300; PET KENNEL, large, \$30; 4.5" GRINDER, new in box. 455-3881

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

BRIGGS & STRATTON LAWN MOWER MOTOR, 17.5 gross hp, runs gd, \$175. 583-6679.

NU-BILT GRAV. WAGON on JD 953 gear w/14' hyd. fertilizer auger, \$1000; NH 499 HAYBINE, \$5000; WOOD BALE THROW WAGON on JD 1065A gear, \$1000, 384-8730.

SHINGLING & LIGHT CONSTRUCTION, free estimates 456-0296

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

HONEYBEES, 3# Italian pkgs, early April, Owat. delivery, call for prices. 456-0753

DUMP TRUCK SERVICES, 15.5-ton capacity for all your hauling needs: rock, gravel, dirt, etc. 456-7774.

(2) EAR CORN FLARE BOXES w/hvdraulic lift. stored inside: '92 JEEP, has rust, 383-1021

Give Away

NH 311 BALER w/kicker. 524-4637

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

LOW UPRIGHT PIANO, exc. cond., incl. bench w/ storage & piano books. 451-5172.

ALFALFA/GRASS MIXED HAY, large rounds & sm. sq.; CORNSTALK BALES, large rounds. 420-0382.

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

ALFALFA/GRASS MIX HAY BALES, full size, sm. sq., great quality, no rain. 451-2978.

27" SONY TRINITRON WEGA TV SET, works great \$20; DREAMSICLES ANGELS COLLECTION, L/\$5 & sm./\$3; **VERIZON MOBILE HOTSPOT ELLIPSIS** JETPACK in box, used vry little, \$20. 789-6596.

14' ALUMACRAFT BOAT w/(2) swivel seats, anchor, cushion, trailer, vry low houred Mercury 9.9-hp outboard, vry gd cond., \$1650. 461-0898.

HARD DRIVE W/16,000 KARAOKE SONGS, new, never used, was a backup, \$100. 465-8244.

RENTAL, Izaak Walton League Bldg., 4 mi. south of Owat., seats 100, full kitchen, grill, Wi-Fi, \$125.

(3) H&S 17' FORAGE BOXES; (2) SILAGE BLOW-ERS; (2) NH 790 CHOPPERS; DEMCO 550 GRAIN CART: POLARIS SPORTSMAN 600 4-WHEELER.

ROUND HAY BALES, stored inside, no rain, yr old for cattle. 461-2411.

TREE TRIMMING, REMOVAL, & STUMP GRIND., pro climber & aerial lift to U of M guidelines; HEWITT LIFT w/canopy. 456-1609.

STRAIGHT GRASS BALES, & MIXED ALF. & GRASS BALES, sm. sq., \$4 per bale. 612-756-1131.

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

4 X 5 MIXED GRASS HAY BALES, & CORNSTALK BALES, net wrapped, no rain. 451-5131

JD 1750 6-ROW PLANTER; KEWANEE 380 DIG-GER. 583-2026.

200-BU. GRAVITY WAGON w/running gear, \$400 cash only. 456-2528. (12) VINTAGE GLASS INSULATORS, some green,

OAT STRAW, sm. sq. bales, \$4/bale. 254-8251. (For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

some clear, all for \$10. 684-3877.

travel

Call 4-Seasons at 373-4705 or 373-2473, from 9 a.m. to noon Mondays, to learn more about their tour information.



member connection

















National Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 12

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) has recognized the second Monday in April as National Lineworker Appreciation Day since 2015. Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric wishes to recognize their line technicians for their dedication in serving the co-op and its member-owners. The line crew with their Steele-Waseca experience includes (top row, left to right): Line Foreman Don Bos, May 1991; Line Foreman Troy Pederson, June 1999; Line Foreman Ben Hrncir, May 2012; Line Foreman Kevin Kjersten, October 2012; Assistant Foreman Pete Hines, October 2012; Assistant Foreman Adam Davis, July 2013; Second row (L-R): Assistant Foreman Jake Jablonski, September 2013; Line Technician Chad Henderson, July 2015; Line Technician Marshal Madery, September 2016; Line Technician Carlos Cruz, September 2016; Apprentice Line Technician Tanen Holzem, July 2019; and Line Technician Collin Wencl, May 2020. 1072548

Long-time Steele-Waseca board member, Don Resler, dies at age 95

onald Resler, who served on the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors for 33 years, died Tuesday, Feb. 16, at the age of 95.

Don was appointed to the co-op's board of



Don Resler

directors in September 1973. In 1976, he was elected vice president and served in that role for 17 years. Don then went on to serve as board president until June 2003, and retired from the board in June 2006.

In the June 2006 Sparks newsletter, General Manager Gerald Mikel and Board President Donald Kolb reflected on Resler's time on the Steele-Waseca board of directors, "Don is an outstanding friend, neighbor, and businessman who has devoted countless hours to the cooperative movement. He's meant so much to so many who have observed and appreciated his loyal stewardship."

The column also detailed board de-

cisions led by Resler, "During Don's words, 'Just make sure the cooperative tenure, Steele-Waseca faced many difficult decisions. Many of them reflect the strong leadership of this gentle man. We recall one of his finer moments while debating whether to construct a new headquarters or remodel its existing facility. After a lot of number crunching and head scratching, we were no closer to a decision than when we started. Then Don stood up and made a simple statement: 'We will build new. When we are spending millions of dollars of our members' money, we will not have an old building to show for it when we're finished...we will build new.'

"That was all anyone wanted to hear from the leadership of the board. From that moment the wheels of progress turned and our new headquarters became a reality. This was not an easy decision, but because of the leadership of Don Resler the project has seen no regrets.

"Don Resler also stood tall during the changing years of the cooperative. When a new manager was selected to be the fourth general manager of the cooperative, Don challenged us with these

sparks • april 2021

remains in the hands of the membership.' Simple and direct. That's Don's style. His leadership set the course for a system of process improvement, which marked an era of growth and prosperity for Steele-Waseca when the rest of the industry was faced with instability.

"Retail deregulation and retail wheeling were a source of fear in the electric world. Don's strong political leadership was a stabilizing force during this time of uncertainty. His graciousness was never more evident than when he stepped aside as president in 2003 and was there when needed to help our new board president assume the helm."

In closing, "We'll all miss Don's strength and counsel, not to mention the warmth he shared with us over the vears."

Don was born on Sept. 9, 1925, to Anton and Myrtle (Hondl) Resler. He graduated from Owatonna High School in 1943.

On Feb. 3, 1951, he married Barbara Freese of Anaheim, Calif., and together they built a dairy and purebred

(Remembering Don Resler continued on Page 5)

sparks • april 2021

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by April 5 to ensure being printed in the May

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

Wanted

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.

cookin' connection

Easy Chicken Hot Dish

Marti Cox

New Richland

1 c. uncooked macaroni

4 Tbsp. butter

1 c. chopped celery

3 Tbsp. flour

1/2 c. milk

1 c. cooked and diced chicken

1 c. mushrooms

1 c. chopped onions

3 c. chicken broth

Put macaroni in baking dish. Saute mushrooms, celery and onion in butter for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and add flour, then broth and milk. Put chicken over macaroni and cover with sauce. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes or until macaroni is tender.

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 28 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during February 2021. 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.

March issue of Sparks



Numbers found:

None found by those members

Numbers not found:

Vickie Pohlmann Joel Vochoska Jason/Melissa Kocina Jared & Jamie Forbord Tara/Ted Biornson



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 13month 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.
- February temps The average high temperature for February was 16°F, while the average low was 1° F. This resulted in 1,581 Heating Degree Days (HDDs) and 0 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 26° F and average low of 7°F, which resulted in 1,398 HDDs and 0 CDDs.
- ENERGY STAR® Rebates In 2021, 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



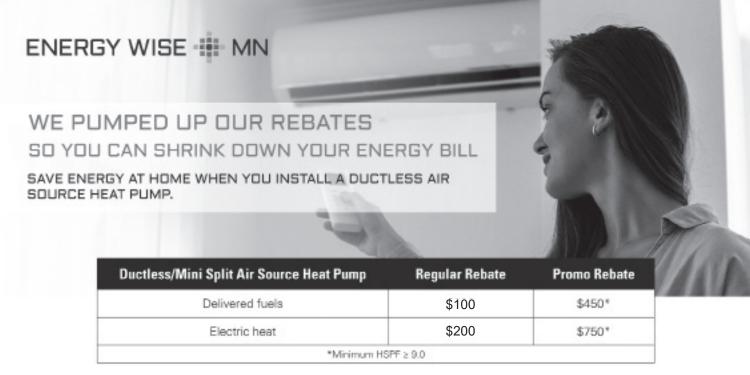
Minnesota's Tornado Drill Day is April 15

Plan ahead so you do not get caught outside in a storm. Lightning can strike up to 10 miles from the area in which it is raining, even if you do not see it. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. If you are inside when a storm hits, stay inside. Keep away from windows and go the lowest level of your home. If you are outside during a tornado and you can't find shelter, do not take cover in a vehicle or under a highway overpass. Find a ditch or ravine, lie flat, and clasp your hands behind your head to protect yourself from flying debris. If you come across downed power lines, stay away, and instruct others to do the same; call 911 to notify emergency personnel and the utility immediately. For more safety tips, please visit SafeElectricity.org.

(Remembering Don Resler continued from Page 3) hog operation, and raised their family in Aurora Township. Don and Barb enjoyed traveling together and loved their time at Crane Lake, Minn. Both were known for their hospitality and making all feel welcome whether at the farm or on Crane Lake.

Don served on the Steele County Dairy Herd Improvement Association board, the Steele County Soil and Water board, and the National Spotted Swine board of directors. In 2013, he was inducted into the Steele County Free Fair Livestock Hall of Fame, and in 2019, he was inducted in the National Spotted Swine Hall of Fame. He was the Steele County rural assessor for 18 years, and was a member of the Star in the East Lodge #33, and Western Fraternal Life Lodge #127. 1091832

Don is survived by his children: Todd (and Laura) Resler, Owatonna; Murry (and Valerie) Resler, Cottage Grove; Daun Resler-Schultz (and Mark), Owatonna, six grandchildren, and seven (Remembering Don Resler continued on Page 8)



And when you act now, you'll receive a supersized, limited-time rebate of up to \$750!

Ductless air source heat pumps provide home cooling and supplemental heating, using 72% less electricity than conventional air conditioners and furnaces.

Visit energywisemn.com /promotions to learn more about the rebate!

Limited funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Rebate amounts an Offer expires June 30, 2021

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