




the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

November 2022

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calendar of events

November

- 6** Daylight saving time ends
- 8** Election Day
- 11** Veterans Day
- 24-25** Thanksgiving holidays
SWCE office is closed



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric announces appointments for 2023 Nominating Committee

The Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors have made appointments to the 2023 Nominating Committee.

It is the nominating committee's responsibility to prepare the list of director candidates, and post it at the cooperative's office at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting scheduled Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

The election of directors will take place during the business portion of the annual meeting, held at Steele-Waseca's headquarters, located at 2411 West Bridge Street in Owatonna.

All Steele-Waseca members are eligible to serve as board directors. The governance role of directors can be summarized as being responsible for setting the overall policy, and monitoring the business affairs of the cooperative.

If you are interested in becoming a director, you may call Executive Assistant Jenifer Shimpach at Steele-Waseca, and a director nomination form will be sent to you.

Or, if you know another member who would make a good director, and you want him or her to be considered, please contact the nominating committee member nearest you. However, before you make the request, be certain the person will accept the position if nominated.

The Nominating Committee will conduct two in-person meetings. The first is scheduled Wednesday, Nov. 9. The second meeting is scheduled Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2023. The committee would appreciate any assistance you can provide in helping them select director candidates.

All Steele-Waseca members are eligible to vote each year for all expiring board director positions. 1073612

The districts electing directors at

District 7

Ryan/Jenny Angelow . . .	330-0424
Daniel/Stacy Maas	210-3738
Dale/Lynn Groskreutz . . .	461-4733

District 8

Glenn/Linda Wiesjhan . .	451-2902
Rene/Pam Koester	645-8914
Denise Bartness	444-9147


District 9


Joseph Haberman	438-7236
Charlie Peters	744-2118
John/Lyilia Iverson	451-2019

Steele-Waseca's 87th annual meeting include the following:

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

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

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

 #swceTRUST



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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Website: www.swce.coop
Email: info@swce.coop



Board of Directors

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

Management

Syd Briggs *General Manager*

Division Managers

- Kim Wilson *Member Services*
- Jon Stelter *Finance*
- Dan Meier *Operations*

Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

Operations Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

For Customer Service, Billing Questions and Power Outages Phone:

507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514

Before calling to report an outage

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

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

Phone 507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514 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

It's no secret that consumers with a water, gas, or electricity connection have long been targets for utility scams, but fraudsters have changed their tactics since the COVID-19 pandemic.

As consumers became more reliant on technology for work, school, and commerce, scammers noted these shifts and adapted their tactics to this changed environment.

Imposter scams are the number one type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission. While scam artists may come to your door posing as a utility worker who works for the "power company," in today's more connected world, attempts are more likely to come through an electronic device, via email, phone, or text.

Common types of scams

A scammer may claim you are overdue on your electric bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you don't pay immediately. Whether this is done in-person, by phone, text, or email, the scammers want to scare you into immediate payment so you don't have time to think clearly.

Please know before we shut off a service for non-pay, we will send a disconnect letter and then call to offer payment arrangements. If there is any doubt that your caller is not with Steele-Waseca, you have the option of getting the name of the person on the phone, ending the call, and calling us directly. You can always call us at the numbers found on this page adjacent to this column. Our phone number can also be found on your monthly bill and on our website, swce.coop. 100627

If the scam is by email or text, delete it before taking any action. If you're unsure, you can always contact us, or use the Steele-Waseca apps available on the App Store or Google Play to check the status of your account. Remember, Steele-Waseca will never attempt to demand immediate payment after just one notice.

Some scammers may falsely claim you have been *overcharged* on your bill and say they want to give a refund. It sounds easy. All you have to do is click or press a button to initiate the process. If you proceed, you will be prompted to provide banking or other personal information. Instead of

money going into your bank account, the scammers can drain your account and use personal information such as a social security number for identity theft.

A form of this type of scam was reported in recent weeks to Steele-Waseca. According to our customer service representatives, the scam call was automated and stated the member has been overpaying on their bill, and they would get a refund and a lower rate. The member was then prompted to press 1 to speak with a representative. When this occurred, Steele-Waseca alerted followers of our Facebook page to this scam, and explained this is not how Steele-Waseca conducts business.

We process overpayments as either a credit on the account, or if it's a large amount, we send a physical check. We never use or ask for banking information for refunds. If you have any doubts, it is best to end the call and dial our office. You may want to also block the number to prevent future robocalls. If this scam attempt occurs via email (known as a "phishing" attempt), or by text ("smishing"), do not click on any links. Instead, delete it, and if possible, block the sender. If you do overpay on your Steele-Waseca account, the co-op will apply it as a credit, which will be applied to your next bill. When in doubt, contact us.

Defend yourself against scams

Be wary of calls or texts from unknown numbers. Be suspicious of an unknown person claiming to be a utility worker who requests banking or other personal information.

Never let anyone into your home that you don't know unless you have a scheduled appointment or reported a problem. Steele-Waseca line technicians have the co-op's logo on their uniforms that matches the logo on their trucks. When Steele-Waseca performs work on our members' property or has our Master Electrician Joel Dulas come into your home, our employees are professional and will always identify themselves.

Steele-Waseca wants to help protect the communities in our service area against utility scams, and you can help create the first line of defense. Please report any potential scams to us so we can spread the word to prevent others from falling victim.



member connection

Wilson utilizing Steele-Waseca experience to develop division manager position

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Member Services Division Manager Kim Wilson is utilizing her past experience with the co-op to transition the position she started May 14 this year.

"I started with the co-op over 24 years ago and have seen so many changes over the years," stated Kim. "I have always tried to work with other departments when needed, from outages or just lending a hand. I have been part of many teams over the years, and these have offered different views from other employees than I would have gotten with just working alone on a project. I think collaboration is critical in any business."

Wilson replaces Office Division Manager Darla DeVries, who retired in May 2022. Kim was asked about her duties and responsibilities with a change in the division manager title.

"With the change in title from office division manager to member service manager, I am hoping for us to become more actively involved in helping our members," wrote Kim. "Trying to streamline how the calls are taken and if we can do more to help without transferring calls. My plan also is to have more interaction between departments at SWCE so we can work more efficiently together. Less emphasis on just the office, but a broader approach on the Cooperative as a whole." 1005663

With Kim previously serving as member services supervisor, she reflected on her interest to become a division manager.

"I have always tried to keep improving myself in my career," stated Kim. "Being interested in this current position offered a way to challenge myself to step out of my comfort zone and see if I could bring some new insight and changes to what is currently being done, and perhaps find new opportunities to help the business move forward and keep pace with industry changes."

Kim was asked about what she is enjoying about her new role and experiences.

"I am learning more about what happens behind the scenes of our billing system and how changes are made," stated Kim. "I am also getting exposure to the board of directors, which has not only been fun, but offered a view into what we can do as a Cooperative to make things run smoothly and efficiently."


Outside of work, Kim enjoys traveling, and camping with her extended family. "We love checking out new campgrounds and areas to explore," stated Kim. "We also started an annual tradition of camping over Memorial Day in my yard. Back in 2020, when there was no fair, we held 'the fair' at my house including food and games that one would find at the fair. I also love to try out new crafts, from chain maille bracelets to basket weaving to making my own rugs—or basically anything crafty as I am always up to a new challenge."


Kim and her husband, Jack, who's retired from CenturyLink, live in rural



Kim Wilson

Owatonna. They have three children: Christopher, who is in the Air Force and is currently stationed in Anchorage, Alaska, and is less than two years away from retiring after 20 years served; Jennifer works at Federated Insurance in Owatonna, and has three kids—Beckett, Harper, and Evie; and Aidan, who is attending Riverland Community College starting in January. "It's been fun watching them all grow up and develop into wonderful adults," stated Kim.

As for being a grandparent, Kim said, "Spending time with the grandkids is always so much fun and to see how they are all developing their own personalities." 

 #swceLIFE+

Dual fuel program participants encouraged to have adequate supplies of your secondary fuel source

Courtesy: John Reinhart, Lake Country Power

Inflationary pressures and supply constraints throughout the energy industry continue to drive unusually high prices in the electricity and natural gas markets.

Forward curves indicate the current pricing environment will continue into the 2022-23 winter season. There will also be additional pricing pressure in the wholesale power markets during the heating season due to natural gas supply competition with domestic heating.

Great River Energy (GRE), our wholesale power provider, will manage costs by using our members' dual fuel program participants to reduce load during peak pricing hours, which may include both morning and evening peak

load periods.

As a reminder, the primary heating system can be controlled up to 12 hours per day, and up to 400 hours per heating season. Control occurs on days of high electrical demand, high wholesale energy prices, and/or system emergencies.

Due to anticipated increases of control hours, it is highly encouraged dual fuel program participants ensure they have adequate supplies of their secondary fuel source. Replenishing storage tanks now may lead to cost savings versus filling up during peak winter heating months.

In addition to purchasing in the early fall, you can also save money if you:

1. Buy a bigger tank, which allows



Fill it up this fall.

you to stock up when prices are low.

2. Shop around and then lock in low rates. The propane market is competitive, so research rates and consider additional perks such as free service calls, maintenance, buybacks and bonuses. If rates are low, as they usually are in Sep-

(Secondary fuel sources continued on Page 8)

cookin' connection

Carrots Au Gratin

Jean Storm

Faribault

- 3 c. carrots, peeled & sliced
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- 1 c. cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1/4 c. dry bread crumbs
- 1 tbsp. butter, melted

Cook carrots with water in a saucepan and cover, medium heat until crisp-tender; drain. Spray casserole dish with cooking spray. Combine carrots, soup, and cheese in casserole dish; set aside. Combine bread crumbs and butter in a bowl, stir to combine. Sprinkle bread crumbs over carrots. Bake at 350° for 20-30 minutes.

Please use a 3 x 5 card when submitting your recipe. The member whose recipe is published will receive a \$7 energy credit. 1021441



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's solar subscribers will see a 47 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during September 2022. Learn more about community solar and The Sunna Project by visiting Steele-Waseca's website, swce.coop.

#swceINNOVATION

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.

October issue of Sparks



Numbers found:

Jonathan Esch
Mark Noble

Numbers not found:

Kent Joecks
Timothy Torstenson
Kelsi Askland or Justin Schroeder



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.

• **September temps** – The average high temperature for September was 73° F, while the average low was 51° F. This resulted in 161 Heating Degree Days (HDDs), and 66 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 76° F and average low of 51° F. This resulted in 106.5 HDDs and 57.5 CDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2022, 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

What's Your Appliance Safety IQ?



Clothes Dryer

Children have been electrocuted when hiding behind dryers; some pets also like to nap there.

Install a childproof lock on the laundry room door, as well as on your washer and dryer—especially front-loading models.

Clean lint screen between loads, and thoroughly clean the vents and duct system at least twice a year.

Make sure hoses, seals and connections do not leak and are secure.



Refrigerator

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintenance.

Clean the coils every six months to a year.

Keep an eye out for dust or lint under or behind your fridge and remove it to let your refrigerator breathe.

If you have young children in your home, make sure your refrigerator is not a tipping hazard. Consider using an appliance anchor that secures your tall appliance to the wall.



Hot Water Heater

Make sure your hot water heater is well-maintained.

Make sure it does not have excessive pressure buildup by testing the relief valve (or have it tested) at least once a year.

Ensure vents are connected securely and that the correct parts are used to avoid carbon monoxide production.

Have all components of the appliance inspected regularly (at least once a year) by a technician.

BEWARE of dangers above.
Your LIFE depends on it.



Look up and look out for power lines.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Is your home heating system ready for the winter chill? One of the easiest ways to keep your system running efficiently is to regularly replace filters. If your central air system has a furnace filter, it should be replaced about every 90 days.

If your home is heated through warm-air registers, baseboard heaters or radiators, remember to clean them regularly to boost efficiency.

Source: energy.gov

#swceSERVICE

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.

ad connection

give away

FIELD ROCK. 334-7756 or 581-3901.

DRESSER, nice, 3' high, 3' long. 332-7739.

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, or emailed to SWCE.

wanted

JUNKERS OR REPAIRABLES, top \$ pd. 332-2300.

ALUM. BOAT LIFT for my 20' boat, lift capacity should be at least 3500 lbs; FLOE ALUM. DOCK/SECTIONS. 612-817-3426.

GUNS; AMMO; JD MOWERS; TACKLE; ESTATES. 279-0431/Mark.

GALVANIZED WATER TANKS, can have holes. 456-1792.

STAMPS, older issues/canceled or uncanceled, fair pricing paid. 676-0970/Owat.

FORD DIESEL SKID STEER. 330-1849.

410 SINGLE SHOT SHOTGUN; 22 SINGLE SHOT RIFLE. 456-5466.

RENTER for 2023, 65 acres cropland, Lonsdale-Forrest Twsp. 744-2512.

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

ALUM. PONTOON BOAT LIFT W/CANOPY OR A FREE-STANDING CANOPY FRAME. 612-703-9930.

NEED TO RENT FARMHOUSE in Owat. area, pet friendly. 213-6288.

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

LEGHORN LAYING HENS. 213-0443.

RECIPES for the Sparks, only from members who have not submitted a recipe in 2022; please use a 3x5 card; the member who has their recipe published earns a \$7 energy credit on their SWCE statement.

USED/WASTE OIL, 200-gal. minimum. 420-7429.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

for sale

ANTIQUE GLASS CABINET w/shelves. 340-0506.

GEHL CHOPPER w/hay head, \$350; 24' DEUTZ ALLIS DIGGER, \$2200; 806 GAS TRACTOR w/ cab, some windows missing, \$5000/obo; BARN LUMBER. 456-1181.

2016 FORD EXPLORER XLT, 121,000 mi., exc. cond., \$20,000/obo. 317-2824.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

HOMELITE CHAIN SAW, ran 3-yrs-ago, \$35; PET CARRIER, large, exc. cond., \$30; RED CEDAR POST, 10"x7", \$30; PLASTIC BARRELS, new food grade, \$10. 455-3881.

GEHL 2-ROW STALK CHOPPER; BALE CONVEYER ON WHEELS. 210-2048.

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

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

ANTIQUES: 3/4 bed frame, high chair, rocking chair (caned), wooden folding chair. 456-7757/iv. msg.

FARM SITE, beautiful, 16 acres/3 tillable, blacktop, great location, hunting or hobby farm potential, Freeborn County. 402-5351.

MINI STORAGE UNITS FOR RENT. 456-1460.

TORO 520 LAWN TRACTOR, low hrs, \$1500/obo. 456-1617.

18.4 X 42 TRACTOR TIRE CHAINS, 14' long, 34" wide. 838-1677.

TREE TRIMMING, REMOVAL, & STUMP GRINDING, professional climber & aerial lift to U of M guidelines; 2007 FRONT CHROME BUMPER for an F-650, like new. 456-1609.

WINTER STORAGE AVAIL.: boats, pontoons, campers, etc., \$250. 491-4565.

ATV TRAILER, 8x20 w/storage box, new wheels & bed, \$3500; HABAN PULL-BEHIND LAWN MOWER, 12.5 hp, elec. start, Briggs, \$350. 279-4545.

2-ACRE WOODED/SECLUDED BUILDING SITE. 210-5596.

ALFALFA, MIXED GRASS, CANARY HAY, small squares, hvy bales, no rain. 210-1158.

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

WOODEN GOVERNMENT BUILDING, 24x14. 684-3151.

1978 SHELBY GOOSENECK 2-HORSE, straight load, sm. living qtrs, water heater, elec. fridge, cow-boy shower, \$8000. 456-0076.

RENTAL, Izaak Walton League Bldg., 4 mi. south of Owat., seats 100, full kitchen, grill, Wi-Fi, \$125. 451-7946.

BLUE OX TOW BAR, Model BX7445, 10,000 lbs, 2" receiver safety chain, & wiring complete, like new. \$475. 456-1133.

(6) STRAIGHT TALK \$45 PREPAID CARDS, have receipt, \$225. 456-3742/leave message.

TREK 7200 WOMEN'S HYBRID, 21 spd, \$150; TREK GIRL'S, 16x175, \$40; G+ BOY'S MTB, 21 spd, \$100. 330-3178.

WICKER 2-PERSON GLIDER & CHAIR for porch or patio, \$75. 465-8566.

INT 2350 QUICK TACH LOADER w/bucket, \$3200; (2) 16.9 X 28 10-PLY GOODYEAR DYNA TORQUE II, \$300; (2) 18.4 X 42 10-PLY GOODYEAR DYNA TORQUE II, \$400. 383-0711.

(4) 5-BOLT MAG CHEVY RIMS, van or 1/2 ton POS; 3/4 TON PICKUP, tires on, fair to gd. 330-5977.

TRANSFERRABLE BUILDING RIGHTS in Rice County, Webster Twsp. 612-919-4130 for details.

COLLECTIBLE GARFIELD COLLECTION; COLLECTIBLE CALIFORNIA RAISIN COLLECTION; GRAIN CLEANER; WHEELBARROW. 451-5172.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

HOLIDAY BRANSON 2, Nov. 6-12. Deluxe motor coach, 8 meals, Doug Gabriel, Dutton Family, Hot Rods & High Heels Christmas shows, Christmas Wonderland, & more! \$939 pp w/2 per room.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL WKND, Dec. 2-3. Deluxe motor coach, 1 night at Drury Inn, A Christmas Carol, Guthrie Theater; It's a Wonderful Life Radio Show w/dinner, & more! \$439 pp w/2 per room.

SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE, Jan. 6-18, 2023. Round trip Delta flights, 10-day cruise on the Enchanted Princess, nightly entertainment, pool-side theater, & more! \$3,999 pp w/2 per room.

Call 4-Seasons at 373-4705 or 373-2473, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, to learn more about their tour information.



TRUST OUR EXPERIENCE. LOVE YOUR VACATION.

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by November 4 to ensure being printed in the December 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 4th will be printed in the January issue.

For Sale Wanted Give Away

Phone # _____ Account # _____

Name _____

Clip and mail to: SWCE, PO Box 485, Owatonna MN 55060-0485, deliver to the SWCE office, or email your ad to: sparks@swce.coop.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

BOSS POWER-V DXT PLOW, 9'2" SmartShield, \$5400. 334-7177.

50-GAL. WATER HEATER; BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

DEPT. 56 DICKEN'S VILLAGE COLLECTIBLES, have many. 456-4992.

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

GRASS HAY BALES, small square, by Waldorf. 327-3672.

WHIRLPOOL MICROWAVE/OVEN COMBINATION & DISHWASHER (blk) in used/gd cond., best offer. 201-919-3270.

INT 300 UTILITY LOADER TRACTOR, new front tires, gd rear tires w/chains, gd runner, gas, some extra parts, \$3500. 676-2802.

'93 CHEV. SILVERADO 1500, 4x4 w/topper & snow-plow, 109,278 mi., new tires, runs great. 676-1232.

1938 FORD PICKUP, ready to cruise, customized, professionally done, in primer, choose your color, \$27,900. 327-2741.

ANTIQUE FARM EQUIPMENT: dump rake; (2) sickle mowers; 2-row planter, gd for lawn display, \$25/each. 651-329-6894/Nfld area.

(4) 8-PLY TIRES ON RIMS, 12.5L15, \$200; 7' BLADE, 3 point, \$200. 456-3136.

(4) GOODYEAR EAGLE ULTRA GRIP, 245/55R18, G.M.C. Factory, mag wheels & lugs, 3/4 tread, \$300. 612-685-8666.

KITCHENAID MIXER, white, \$95; SS PANASONIC COUNTERTOP MICROWAVE, \$25; TROY-BILT HORSE MODEL REAR TINE TILLER, \$300; PARLOR WOODSTOVE, \$95. 952-652-2933.

FIREWOOD, \$330/full cord; PRE-PICKED APPLES, \$2/lb.; POTATOES, \$1/lb. 651-357-5092/Paul.

STORM DOOR, 79.5x34; OLD TIN. 334-7756 or 581-3901.

(42) ALFALFA & GRASS HAY BALES, no rain, 3'x3'x8'; (80) GRASS HAY BALES, sm. sq., no rain. 456-3084.

GRAIN BIN FOR RENT, 11,000 bu., \$500/season; JD 4020, wide front, \$1250; 4020 FENDERS, \$600; 3020 GAS TRACTOR w/JD loader, \$8000; LORENZ 7' SNOWBLOWER, \$2000. 330-3945.

FARMALL H TRACTOR, 1950s?, great cond., & mower deck. 332-7739.

8.25-9.00-20 DUAL WHEEL TRUCK CHAINS, were used on skid loader, \$50. 456-7614.

'18 POLARIS SWITCHBACK 136, \$8700; '12 POLARIS SWITCHBK 136, bad motor, \$2500. 291-0252.

(4) WINDOWS, new, never been opened, 33 1/2 x 70 1/4, \$30/each/obo. 412-7045.

RYE STRAW, 2022 cutting, 5x5 round bales, \$60. 612-968-5704.

PWR LINE TRANSMISSION POLES; GRAVITY BOX, 280-bu., gd cond. 339-8577.

ACORN CHAIR LIFT, like new, \$1400. 475-4584.

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

ARONIA BERRIES, vry high in antioxidants; TROY-BILT WOOD CHIPPER w/vac, bagger, 8-hp Briggs & Stratton, & video. 451-9445.

VINTAGE GAMES; OLD BOTTLES; DISNEY PLATE (animals); VERTICAL BLIND HEADRAIL, 9', best offer. 491-2667.

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Iverson among Quilt of Valor recipients

Retired Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Line Foreman John Iverson (center) was among five veterans nominated to receive a Quilt of Valor during a ceremony, Sept. 15, conducted by the Exchange Club of Owatonna at the VFW. Iverson, U.S. Army—Sergeant, 1969-72, was nominated by Wayne Starman (pictured right). Starman and Master of Ceremonies April Paxton (left) placed the handmade quilt over the shoulders of Iverson. The Quilt of Valor program awards handmade quilts, machine or hand quilted, to nominated service members or veterans who have been touched by war. Each quilt says unequivocally, "Thank you for your service and sacrifice in serving our nation." The other veterans presented a Quilt of Valor included: Rene Gilormini, U.S. Army—Sr. Sergeant, 1979-2004; Steve Carroll, U.S. Air Force—Sr. Airman, 1989-92; Scott Lundberg, U.S. Army—Staff Sergeant, 1988-2009; and Michael Meyer, U.S. Navy—Petty Officer First Class, 1979-99. (Photo courtesy: Exchange Club of Owatonna.) 29062

#swceLIFE+

USDA funding available for qualified individuals and families to buy or repair homes

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development has funding available for very low- and low-income individuals and families seeking to purchase or repair a home in a rural area.



Committed to the future of rural communities.

The Direct Home Loan program offers financing to qualified very-low and low-income applicants that are unable to qualify for traditional financing. No down payment is required, and the interest rate could be as low as 1% with a subsidy. Applicants must meet income and credit guidelines and demonstrate repayment ability. The program is available in rural communities of generally 35,000 people or less.

The maximum loan amount is \$40,000 at a 1% interest rate, repayable for a 20-year term and can be used to improve or modernize homes and do essential repairs. Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to homeowners 62 and older, and must be used to remove health or safety hazards, such as fixing a leaking roof, installing indoor plumbing, or replace a furnace.

Time is limited to receive funds. Contact a USDA Rural Development Housing Specialist to see if you qualify. The nearest office in the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric service area is located at 1810 30th Street NW, Suite 3, Faribault, MN 55021. The phone number is: 507-332-7418 ext. 4.

#swceCOOPERATION

member connection

Minnesota co-op “spreads the word” about hybrid electric bucket trucks

Courtesy: Erin Kelly, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)

The iconic bucket truck is increasingly going electric.

Maple Grove, Minnesota-based Great River Energy (GRE) recently held a Utility Fleet Electric Vehicle Demonstration Day that featured a plug-in hybrid electric bucket truck. A diesel truck was equipped with a bucket and aerial lift apparatus that runs on an electric motor and batteries manufactured by Odyne Systems in Wisconsin.

When lineworkers reach a job site, they can turn off the truck’s diesel motor, push a button and switch to all-electric mode to power the bucket arm and provide export power for tools, eliminating the need for the truck to idle, and reducing noise and pollution. The electric mode can even power the air conditioning or heating in the truck’s cab while lineworkers eat lunch.

Great River Energy, a generation and transmission cooperative, invited all 28 of its member co-ops to get an up-close look at the hybrid bucket truck, and about 100 people showed up, Aug. 2, to the daylong demonstration. One co-op, East Central Energy, in Braham, Minnesota, already has a hybrid truck on order and Great River Energy is researching the possibility, said Rodney DeFouw, GRE’s member electrification strategist.

“There’s been a lot of positive conversation that came out of this event,” DeFouw said. “A lot of people didn’t realize that these trucks existed.”

Leonard Lincoln, director of sales at Odyne Systems, said the company has been making hybrid bucket trucks for more than a decade, but has seen an uptick in interest from co-ops and other

utilities in recent years. Odyne, which also installs the system in garbage trucks, street sweepers and other vehicles, has sold more than 200 hybrid bucket trucks, Lincoln said.

“A lot of it has to do with climate change and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and utilities trying to do the right thing,” Lincoln said.

He said the system cuts costly diesel consumption by two-thirds, reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 65%, and slashes smog-creating nitrogen oxide emissions by more than 90%. It also lowers decibel levels by as much as 50%, making it easier for co-op crews to communicate.

Basically, the process works like this: A co-op would bring a manufacturer of the hybrid electric system together with the manufacturer or dealer for whatever type of truck it wants to buy. The chassis is built first, then the electric system is installed, then the truck goes to final stage manufacturing to add the bucket apparatus.

If a co-op chose a traditional diesel truck, it would be fitted with one or more batteries and an electric motor attached to the transmission that inverts DC power into AC power, Lincoln said. If a co-op buys an electric truck, there would be no transmission, and everything would work off of the electric motor.

The price varies for hybrid bucket trucks, but they can cost tens of thou-



Co-op employees check out a hybrid electric bucket truck at a recent demonstration event hosted by Great River Energy in Minnesota. (Photo courtesy: GRE)

sands of dollars more than conventional trucks, DeFouw said. It would take a co-op six to seven years to get a full return on investment from fuel savings and lower maintenance costs, Lincoln said. Utilities would likely keep the trucks 12 to 15 years.

After GRE’s demonstration day, three of its member co-ops borrowed the hybrid bucket truck to try it out, DeFouw said.

“This is just the start,” DeFouw said. “We’re spreading the word. We want to get good info out there to our members and expose them to things that will benefit their businesses and their lives.”

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Operations Division Manager Dan Meier, who was unable to attend the demonstration, stated, “I do know that there is some interest in the hybrid solution, but I think it is still in the infancy stages. This is something that might be looked at in the near future.”

 #swceINNOVATION

(Secondary fuel sources continued from Page 3)

tember and October, ask if the company will lock in the low rate for a period of time.

3. Ask about discounts. Oftentimes these are made available for veterans, seniors, employees of the state or major corporations, memberships in travel clubs, or holder of credit cards. You never know where a discount may exist, so don’t be afraid to ask.

4. Schedule deliveries carefully. Avoid holiday, weekend and other peak delivery times that may incur a fee.

5. Conserve propane by using less. Install a smart thermostat, keep appliances clean and well-serviced, and choose energy-efficient models.

Should you have questions, please contact Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric during regular business hours.

 #swceSERVICE

