




the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

July 2023

inside connections

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calendar of events

July

- 1** International Day of Cooperatives
- 2-4** Blooming Prairie's Old Fashioned Fourth of July
- 4** Independence Day; **SWCE office is closed**
- 7-9** New Richland Farm & City Days
- 12-16** Dodge County Fair; Waseca County Fair
- 19-23** Rice County Fair
- 20-23** W.Concord Survival Days
- 27** Korean War ended in 1953
- 28-30** Montgomery Kolacky Days
- 30** Litomysl Summer Festival

National Hot Dog Month



Celebrate the Oldest County Fair in Kasson, MN!

July 12-16, 2023

www.dodgecountryfreefair.com

Members in attendance for annual meeting approve proposed articles of incorporation, bylaws, and elect directors

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric members in attendance for the co-op's 87th annual meeting Tuesday, June 6, voted to approved proposed articles of incorporation and bylaws in addition to electing three board members to three-year terms.

Of the 421 registered members in attendance at Steele-Waseca headquarters in Owatonna, the proposed articles of incorporation and bylaws were approved 339 to 47.

A question-and-answer session was conducted prior to the vote as members were mailed the new articles and bylaws, May 22, and received a copy as they registered for the meeting. It is the first change to the articles of incorporation since the co-op started in 1936. The last time Steele-Waseca members changed the bylaws was in 1995.

Board members elected to three-year terms by acclamation were incumbent District 7 Director John R. Beal, Faribault; and Scott J. Carlson, Faribault, in District 9, as each were unopposed. In District 8 incumbent Ronald D. Som-



Directors elected to the SWCE board Tuesday, June 6, during the co-op's 87th annual meeting were (left to right): John Beal, District 7; Ronald Sommers, District 8; and Scott Carlson, District 9.

mers, Northfield, was re-elected by a margin of 256 to 131 for Bryan L. Finley, Northfield. District 8 Candidate Mark Estrem withdrew from the election days before the annual meeting.

With guests, the co-op's annual meeting had 892 in attendance. Steele-Waseca members who attended received an ice cream scoop, \$50 Energy Star® gift certificate, and a \$30 Power Perks certificate good at participating member-owned businesses listed on the certificate. Both certificates expire Dec. 31, 2023 (no exceptions).

There were two Early Bird drawings before the start of the annual meeting. William Jr. and Jane DuPay of Webster had their registration card drawn for a \$250 gift certificate from 4-Seasons Vacations in Albert Lea, and a \$100 gift certificate from Nagel Sod & Nursery of Medford. Thomas and Karen Partridge of Mankato had their registration card drawn for a \$250 gift certificate from 4-Seasons Vacations, and a \$100 gift certificate from Boonie's Bar & Grill in Faribault. 1091934

In addition, members with donations to a local food shelf received an LED lightbulb. In all, 232 pounds of non-per-
(SWCE annual meeting continued on Page 7)



The local Color Guard led by Steele-Waseca retiree, Jerry Lewison, conduct their procession for the Presentation of Colors at the annual meeting with American flags displayed by Faribault Middle School students.

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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
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer
- Geraldine Lienke District 2
- Duane Edwardson District 3
- Dennis Ringhofer District 4
- Rodney Krell District 5
Vice President
- Gary Wilson District 6
President, GRE Director
- John Beal District 7
- Ronald Sommers District 8
Secretary/Treasurer
- Scott Carlson 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*

We had our 87th annual meeting Tuesday, June 6, and it was great as always

to see 421 members (almost 900 in attendance) as Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) reported on the last year. We had the largest member attendance in recent history.

The co-op reported on our financials, held our regular director election for three districts, heard from our Youth Tour delegates, and discussed recent legislation in Minnesota.

This year's meeting also presented our newly revised Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. It had been 28 years since the last revision, and we had a lot of changes to consider. For those of you who could not make the meeting, I will review some of the questions and discussion that took place. 1019367

The main question we addressed was why Steele-Waseca would find it beneficial to shift from a "Stock Cooperative" to a "Non-stock Cooperative," and how will Steele-Waseca be returning the value of the stock to the membership.

As many of you remember, you were charged \$2 when you joined Steele-Waseca and started receiving electric service. This was a practice established when SWCE was formed in the 1930s to help fund and establish the cooperative. Before we were formed, had employees, and raised revenue through the sale of energy, \$2 was a lot more meaningful and valuable 87 years ago. Today, it serves no real purpose as the amount never changed and we have developed into an ongoing business that raises all needed revenue to cover expenses through the sale of electricity.

In addition, per the old bylaws, the \$2 investment could not be bought or sold with anyone other than the cooperative, did not pay dividends, and could not be cashed for more than \$2. Since it was designed solely for the assistance of financing and currently has almost no impact on the cooperative's finances, it was determined that we could now operate without it.

Also, the voting rights of our members were always based on each member has

one vote no matter how many shares of stock a member might have purchased; incidentally, as far as we know, no member has ever purchased more than one share of stock. In the next few months, SWCE will be issuing a credit on each member's bill for the \$2 which was paid when joining.

Another very good question was, "Will members still have control in voting for future changes in bylaws?" This is an excellent question. Since we are only changing the bylaws and articles as an incorporated cooperative in the state of Minnesota, all the previous rights of members remain with the current and future members.

Not only will all future bylaw changes require approval by the membership, the election of directors and approval of financial reports still requires approval of the membership. The annual meeting is still required to occur each year, and a quorum of members is still necessary for there to be an official meeting.

In fact, since the approval of mail and electronic ballots was added to the bylaws, more members will be able to participate by exercising their right of voting. Although we enjoy seeing everyone at the annual meeting, we especially look forward to providing the opportunity to vote to all our members each year.

"Why are the nominations from the floor being eliminated?" Procedurally, if we provide voting by mail or electronic means, we will have the results reported at the annual meeting, and having someone nominated at that time would be too late to include them on the ballot that would go to all the membership. In order to still make running for the board as convenient as possible, there are still two ways to be placed on the ballot: one is to get in contact with the Nominating Committee before their last meeting in January and let them know your desires to run; and the other is to turn in a petition with the required number of signatures in time to be placed on the ballot.

We continue to encourage anyone who desires to be involved in the life of the cooperative to contact us and we will always assist in putting you in touch with the correct information. The Nominating Committee is always looking for those interested, and they can explain the details and time commitment involved with the job of a director on the board.

"Why are the voting districts being
(Annual meeting reflections continued on Page 7)

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric awards scholarships to “Class of 2023” high school graduates

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric awarded \$1,000 scholarships to 16 high school seniors who graduated this past school year.

A portion of the funds to support these scholarships come from unclaimed capital credit equity.

Steele-Waseca’s scholarship program has awarded \$214,250 in scholarships since the program was established in 1954. 1072402

The recipients are a dependent of a Steele-Waseca member and will be attending a two- or four-year technical school or college full time this fall. The recipients were selected by their respective high schools. This year’s recipients include:

- **Jasmine LaCanne**, Bethlehem Academy, the daughter of Matt and Jaime LaCanne, Faribault.

- **Madison Lea**, Blooming Prairie, the daughter of Kent and Kim Lea, Blooming Prairie.

- **Emma Kramer**, Byron, the daughter of David Kramer, Hayfield and Andrea Boon, Byron.

- **Isabella Clausen**, Faribault, the daughter of Brian and Kim Clausen, Faribault.

- **Reese Bauman**, Hayfield, the daughter of Neil and Jessica Bauman, Blooming Prairie.

- **Leah Proehl**, Maple River, the daughter of Rick and Gena Proehl, Minnesota Lake.

- **Payton Ristau**, Medford, the daughter of Mark and Diane Ristau, Medford.

- **Grace Tumasmith**, New Prague, the daughter of Christopher and Mary-Ann Tumasmith, Lonsdale.

- **Gavin Wilkenson**, New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva, the son of Daniel Wilkenson and Billie Jo Jenniges, New Richland.

- **Drew Nelson**, Northfield, the son of Pat Nelson, Northfield, and Katie Nelson, Faribault.

- **Sarah Snitker**, Owatonna, the daughter of Grant and Paula Snitker, Owatonna.

- **Wyatt Meyer**, St. Clair, the son of Dave and Jennifer Meyer, Mapleton.

- **Riley Skluzacek**, Tri-City United, the son of Jesse and Gail Skluzacek, Lonsdale.

- **Zale Bushlack**, United South Central, the son of Chris and Betsy Bushlack, New Richland.

- **Miranda Breck**, Waseca, the daughter of Todd and Kelly Breck, Janesville.

- **Jenessa Baumgarten**, Waterville-Elysian-Morristown, the daughter of Kristine Baumgarten, Morristown, and Jason Baumgarten, Warsaw. ^{SWCE}

#swceLIFE+



Jasmine LaCanne



Madison Lea



Emma Kramer



Isabella Clausen



Reese Bauman



Leah Proehl



Payton Ristau



Grace Tumasmith



Gavin Wilkenson



Drew Nelson



Sarah Snitker



Wyatt Meyer



Riley Skluzacek



Zale Bushlack



Miranda Breck



Jenessa Baumgarten



cookin' connection

Easy Peach Crisp

Cresta Melcher

Mantorville

1 large can peaches in syrup
1 butter pecan cake mix
1 stick butter (melted)
1/2 c. chopped pecans

Pour peaches with syrup in ungreased 9x13 pan. Sprinkle dry cake mix on top of peaches. Drizzle melted butter over cake mix. Sprinkle on chopped pecans. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes.

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 45 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during May 2023. 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.

June issue of Sparks



Numbers found:

Adam/Angela Thoen
Mike/Ann Atzenhoefer

Numbers not found:

Troy/Christine Jeanes
Cory Nihart
Stacey/Todd Eustice



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. 16253

- **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.

- **May temps** – The average high temperature for May was 73° F, while the average low was 50° F. This resulted in 148 Heating Degree Days (HDDs) and 44.5 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 70° F and average low of 49° F, which resulted in 242.5 HDDs and 66.5 CDDs.

- **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2023, 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

Efficiency upgrades to help you save this summer

by Abby Berry, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)

This is an opportune time of the year for home upgrades and DIY projects.

If you're planning to make improvements to your home, consider upgrades that promote better efficiency.

Here are a few projects that can help you save energy and money—and increase the comfort of your home.

Installing a smart thermostat is one of the simplest ways to manage home energy use and keep summer bills in check. Smart thermostats are easy to install and allow you to control your heating and cooling from your phone.

You can purchase an Energy Star®-certified smart thermostat for as low as \$100, which can save you 8% on

annual heating and cooling costs, about \$50 per year. This upgrade will quickly pay for itself, and you'll gain insight into better ways to heat and cool your home.

Speaking of *smart*, additional devices like smart LED bulbs also offer convenient control and help boost energy savings at home.

With smart lighting, you can set a schedule for when and how your lights should be turned on or off. And the next time you head out to run errands and realize you left the lights on, all you have to do is turn them off through your phone.

Smart lights come in a variety of shapes, colors and brightness levels—and you can purchase bulbs for indoor or outdoor use. Schedule outdoor smart lights to illuminate your home at night and when you're out of town for better security.

While it's not as trendy as incorporating smart technologies, sealing air leaks around your home is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower your bills.

Applying new (or replacing old) weather stripping around doors and windows can instantly make your home more comfortable and reduce energy waste.

Applying caulk to fill gaps can also improve the seal of your home. Caulk can be applied to a variety of areas including windows, doors, bathtubs and sinks.

If your home feels too warm during summer (and too chilly during winter) even after you've sealed with weather stripping and caulk, your home may need additional insulation.

Insulation is considered a more expensive efficiency upgrade; however, if your home is under-insulated, additional insulation can make a big impact on reducing energy use and costs. The cost of new insulation depends on a variety of factors like materials, size of the home and whether you use a contractor. Typically, the project costs can be recouped in a few years and your home will immediately feel more comfortable.

Of course, there are additional efficiency upgrades that can make a big impact on energy use, like replacing old appliances with Energy Star models or replacing old, leaky windows with new, energy efficient windows. But these up-

(Upgrades to save energy continued on Page 8)

5 OUTDOOR ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

- 1. Power Lines** – Always look up and out for power lines. Keep you and your equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines.
- 2. Outdoor outlets** – These should be powered by a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI), which turns itself off if it senses a current leak or a short circuit.
- 3. Pools** – Use battery-powered electronics around the pool. Have an electrician inspect your pool, spa or hot tub before the beginning of each swim season to avoid electrical hazards.
- 4. Extension Cords** – Use extension cords that are rated for outdoor use. Using an indoor cord, which cannot withstand the weather conditions, could result in a shock or fire hazard.
- 5. Electric Garden Tools** – Never use electric garden tools in wet or damp conditions. Check for cracked or frayed cords before use and replace if damaged.

Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org)

ad connection

give away

FARM KITTENS. 210-5731.

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

USED/WASTE OIL, 200-gal. min.420-7429/Quentin.

OLD STAMPS W/O CANCELING ON THEM, book value paid. 676-0970.

OLDER ATV, running or repairable. 330-3387.

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

HUSQVARNA PUSH MOWER w/Honda engine, new or gently used. 451-2722.

SEEKING PLASTER FOUNDATION JOBS on old houses, barns, stone walls & sm. cement jobs, close to Owat. area. 273-3587.

SKID STEER QUOTE TO MOVE 2 MOUNDS OF DIRT AROUND YARD. 256-684-1546.

FULL COLLECTION OF 1960S BASEBALL CARDS, gd cond. or unopened boxes of baseball cards from the 1960s. 993-3556/Linda.

SAILBOAT, looking for a small shark or sunfish sailboat. 612-805-8546.

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

FARRIER SERVICE FOR (1) HORSE, trained w/farrier, Waseca area. 213-1660.

SM. BROODER HOUSE; OLDER CANOE; OLDER FISH HOUSE OR SPEAR HOUSE; FENCE POSTS. 952-270-6667.

A-C WD OR 45 TRACTORS FOR PARTS.455-0900.

JUNKERS & REPAIRABLES, top \$ paid for cars or trucks. 332-2300.

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

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

for sale

LAKE MATS, 12'x24', lay on the lake bottom to kill weeds. \$100/each/obo; REBUILT 12V BOAT LIFT MOTOR, \$350. 465-8244.

1986 CHEV. 4-TON DUMP TRUCK, hydraulic lift, dump box, gd tires, brakes been checked, gd cond.; INT 706. 475-0486.

BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

GRAVITY BOX, gd shape. 456-4807.

JD 6600 COMBINE, 4-row wide corn head & 15' bean head included, stored inside. gas engine, hydrostatic transmission, \$3000. 456-9546.

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

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

WEBER TRAVELER GAS GRILL, like new; REESE 18,000# 5TH WHEEL HITCH, fits Ford F-350 factory pucks. 213-6582.

18' FIELD CULTIVATR, hydraulic wings w/mulchers, 4 new tires, new shovels, \$1200. 334-6334.

1988 17' MAXUM BOAT, MOTOR, TRAILER SET, 85 hp Force outboard, new cockpit cover, \$4500. 339-1507.

ROOFING on houses, barns, & outbuildings, over a decade in business. 651-238-1123.

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

OLIVER 316 PLOW, 3 point; H.F.A. TRACTOR; INT 418 PLOW. 213-0317.

1953 SEA KING ALUM. 14' BOAT w/trailer, \$400; 18' DOCK ON WHEELS, \$300. 330-5670.

(2) 6-GAL. ELEC. WHIRLPOOL WATER HEATERS, 120V, new in boxes, \$250/each or (2) for \$450. 838-2646.

GRASS HAY, small sq. bales by Waldorf. 327-3672.

2004 MERCURY MOUNTAINEER, V6, runs gd, "loaded," 174,000 mi., AWD, \$5000. 838-8689.

TRUCKS & MACHINERY; GRAIN DRILLS; DRAG; OLD SILAGE LOEPER, WAGON; NH HAYBINE PARTS; SNOW BLADE; 1995 DODGE PICKUP, needs work. 783-9240.

2007 ALUMACRAFT 16.5' BOAT w/60-hp Yamaha 4-stroke motor, EZ trailer, (2) fish finders, trolling motor, many extras. 456-7542.

55-GAL. PLASTIC & STEEL BARRELS w/covers, \$5-\$15; 220-GAL. POLY TANK w/valve in forklift frame, \$75. 421-2521.

INFLATABLE 2-SEAT CATAMARAN FISHING BOAT w/Minn Kota motor; 2020 SEA EAGLE 375FC, like new, \$1950 w/accessories. 645-8593.

SMALL FARM, 11937 Hwy 218. 206-8870.

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

'99 FORD DUALY 7.3 DIESEL, auto, 4 door, leather, runs gd, new steer tires, \$7200/obo. 456-0631.

STEEL DESK, 36"x60", 6 drawers, \$75. 390-5222.

USED CANNING JARS, qt & pt, no lids, \$5 per doz. 451-9533.

PADDLE BOAT, \$295; SWIM DOCK, 8'x8' wood deck floor w/(2) 7"4" long & 19" diameter alum. toons or pontoons w/ladder, \$495. 491-4565.

VARIOUS MOTORCYCLE LUGGAGE, several items to choose from, call for images, \$20/each. 612-247-5346.

HUNTING BLINDS, weather/rodent proof, insulated & more. 330-2452.

JD 445 MOWER, 25 hp, all-wheel steer, 1153 hrs, 60" deck, \$3200; FIELD STONE; PADDLE BOAT; HAY, big sq. alfalfa; GRASS ROUND BALES, 5'x5'. 456-8639.

2000-GAL. FUEL TANK, new, UL approved w/Fill-Rite pump, hose, filter system, auto nozzle, \$5585. 383-1215.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by July 5 to ensure being printed in the August 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 5th will be printed in the September 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.

travel

SUMMER ON THE MISSISSIPPI, Aug. 9-12. Deluxe motor coach, 6 meals, 3 nights accomod., Mississippi River Museum, lunch cruise, Circa 21 Dinner Theatre, & more! \$759 pp w/2 per room.

NATIONAL PARKS: AZ & UTAH, Sept. 18-28. Deluxe motor coach, 14 meals, 10 nights accomod., Badlands, Mt Rushmore, Grand Canyon, Zion & more! \$2,399 pp w/2 per room.

CARIBBEAN CRUISE, Jan. 25-Feb. 6, 2024. Roundtrip Delta Air from Mpls to Ft Lauderdale, 7-day cruise on Caribbean Princess, St Kitts, Antigua, St Maarten, & more! \$4,199 pp w/2 per room.

Call 4-Seasons at 373-4705 or 373-2473, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, to learn more about their tour information.



TRUST OUR EXPERIENCE. LOVE YOUR VACATION.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

TALL SHOWER BENCH, new, \$30. 744-2709.

1978 SHELBY GOOSENECK, 2 horse, straight load, sm. insulated living qtrs, water heater, sink, cowboy shower, tack area, screen door. 456-0076.

ALFALFA HAY, sm. squares. 327-4493.

USED LUMBER. 334-7756 or 581-3901.

JD 6V RECHARGEABLE BATTERY, powered ride-on tractor w/loader, slightly used, includes battery & charger, \$75. 475-3556.

CHICCO NEXTFIT ZIP CONVERTIBLE CAR SEAT, 9 position recline sure-leveling system for accurate fit, \$75. 334-9516.

GRAVEL TRUCK AVAIL. FOR ALL YOUR TRUCKING NEEDS: delivery of rock, gravel, dirt, etc., 15.5-ton capacity. 456-7774.

JD 894A RAKE, \$300; **JD 1610 CHISEL PLOW**, 10', \$300; **JD 1219 MOWER CONDITIONER PARTS**, \$200. 744-4419.

LATHAM RASPBERRY PLANTS, you dig, \$1.50/each; **(30+) CANNING JARS**, qt & pt sizes, \$10 for all. 581-2301.

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.

2000-GAL. DIESEL FUEL BARREL, great cond.; **INT GRAIN DRILL**, grass box on front, double disc, gd tires. 421-9779.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

TREK MT 220, girl's, 24x175, \$100; **DIAMONDBACK**, men's hyb., 18 spd, 700x35, \$100. 330-3178.

YARD MAN CHIPPER SHREDDER, 10 hp, \$250; **15-GAL. YARD SPRAYER** on homemade trailer, 12V, \$55 (both in gd working cond.). 952-652-2933.

RENTAL, Izaak Walton League Bldg., 4 mi. south of Owat., seats 100, full kitchen, grill, Wi-Fi, \$150. 451-7946.

HOUSE CLEANING, will clean bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, etc. 461-9422.

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

GIGANTIC GARAGE-SHED SALE, July 14-15, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., collectibles, puzzles, household items, wheelbarrow, toys, & much more! 451-5172.

NH 7' HAY MOWER, semi-mount, \$500; **NH 256 HAY RAKE**, \$1200; **SM. GALION ROAD GRADER**, all hydraulic, runs but needs engine work, \$2500. 330-3945.

(7) BRED BLK ANGUS CATTLE, 3 cows & 4 heifers, due to calve mid-June/July, bred to blk angus bull, \$1900/head. 456-6333.

4X5 MIXED GRASS HAY BALES. 390-0600.

A-C WD, recent paint, loader, chains, tires in gd shape, needs some work, \$895; **FLARE BOX**, hydraulic lift, 2x8 treated extensions, exc. cond., \$575. 455-3881.

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.

(Annual meeting reflections continued from Page 2)

eliminated?" The voting districts are only being eliminated in the bylaws. We need and will maintain all nine director districts as we need full and complete representation from our membership to have the best guidance from the wishes of our members. The problem with listing the districts in the bylaws, and most cooperatives have also changed this, is that as members choose where they wish to live, some districts grow faster than others. It becomes necessary to change the boundary lines of each district to balance the number of members between each district. If we continue to list the district descriptions in the bylaws, it again requires a bylaw change for what could be a simple adjustment on our territory map. We can now adjust as needed to have nine fairly equal districts in numbers. 21066

Changes in the Articles and Bylaws are very important, and I was pleased to see the interest our members took to read and ask questions. It was a real pleasure to be involved with the cooperative for this moment and provide information for better communication with our members. I remain available for any future questions; please do not hesitate to contact myself or any office staff for further information.

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(SWCE annual meeting continued from Page 1)

ishable items and \$227 were collected and donated to the Faribault Community Action Center.

Steele-Waseca's 2022 Youth Tour Delegate Nate Seykora of Owatonna had a PowerPoint presentation on his experience last year in Washington, D.C. The co-op also recognized their 2023 Youth Tour Delegate Fred Klokonos of Lonsdale, who will be joining Minnesota's delegates to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., June 13-18.

Steele-Waseca General Manager Syd Briggs introduced guests, and retired Steele-Waseca employees and directors in attendance.

Briggs reflected on the past year for the co-op and what's ahead after the Minnesota legislative session.

"Our main purpose every year is providing reliable power to our members; 2022 was a good year and 2023 has been fantastic so far," said Briggs.

As for the recently completed legislative session, "One of the biggest news

items this year is the 100% Carbon Free by 2040 bill passed by the Minnesota Legislature in early February. Originally the bill called for 80% carbon free mandate by 2030 and 100% by 2040. We have our statewide organization and our power supplier to thank for helping us acquire many changes to the bill before it passed," said Briggs. "Minnesota Rural Electric Association and Great River Energy worked very hard to affect several very needed changes or modifications to the original bill. One of the biggest changes was to reduce the 2030 mandate from 80% to 60% for cooperatives. Although Great River Energy is well on its way to achieve many of the goals in the bill, it is good to have options and alternatives to help support all of us as we remain committed to reliability in addition to sustainability."

Briggs also addressed the grants available due to the federal government's Inflation Reduction Act approved in 2022.

"Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is now a part of those grants. We have

(SWCE annual meeting continued on Page 8)



Steele-Waseca employees were introduced to members and guests attending the annual meeting.

Minnesota's legislative session will impact everyone in the state who uses electricity

Courtesy: Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA)

The 2023 legislative session, which began in January and concluded May 22, was one of the most consequential in history for Minnesota's 1.7 million cooperative members.

Record investments, key policy changes, and a landmark 100% carbon-free by 2040 mandate all made this legislative session one with big long-term impacts on everyone using electricity in the state.

The Minnesota Rural Electric Association represents Minnesota's 44 distribution cooperatives and six generation and transmission cooperatives, who collectively serve over 1.7 million Minnesotans. They are the voice for non-profit electric cooperative member-owners at the Capitol and have been deeply engaged with lawmakers, so Minnesota cooperative-member owners have their voice heard. They work tirelessly to shape the session's outcomes. Here is an overview of a few items affecting electric cooperative members.

100% Carbon-Free by 2040

The first and most impactful bill for electric cooperatives and their member-owners was the historic 100% carbon-free by 2040 bill, which was signed into law in early February.

The legislation, passed in record time, is widely regarded as the most significant energy policy ever passed in Minnesota and mandates all electricity sold in the state come from carbon-free sources by the year 2040. The law will increase the challenge of keeping the electric grid reliable under all conditions; significant advancements in technology will be needed to achieve the mandate.

Minnesota's electric cooperatives are leaders in navigating the clean energy transition while keeping electricity reliable and affordable. However, this new law does present significant challenges. As a result, MREA worked with lawmakers to add some common-sense

(Upgrades to save energy continued from Page 5)
grades can be a bit pricey.

If you're wanting to make your home more energy efficient but you're not sure where to start, your best bet is to enlist the help of an expert to conduct

amendments to help protect affordability and reliability. Nonetheless, a lot of investment, innovation, and ingenuity will be necessary to avoid cost increases and potential service disruptions, while meeting the mandate.

State Competitiveness Fund

Investments in Minnesota's electric grid are more crucial than ever, and historic funding from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) necessitates Minnesota think big to attract federal dollars.

As a result, lawmakers put \$190 million into a newly created State Competitiveness Fund, which will be used to attract hundreds of millions of dollars for investments in Minnesota's energy infrastructure. Cooperatives across the state will be using these funds, including an additional \$5.3 million specifically for consumer-owned utilities, for projects to improve affordability and reliability, and aid in the energy transition.

Electrification Rebates and Grants

The state of Minnesota wants to help you buy an electric vehicle. This includes a rebate up to \$2,500 for a new electric vehicle with a sale price below \$55,000 or up to \$600 for a used vehicle under \$25,000. The rebate is open to individuals, businesses, nonprofits and governments; those who have already received an EV rebate or tax credit from Minnesota are not eligible.

Those who would like to purchase a high efficient heat pump to heat and cool their home could receive rebates of up to \$4,000. The legislature also made grant money available for solar on schools, electric bikes, electric school buses, pre-weatherization work and more.

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an energy audit of your home. An energy audit can easily identify areas to boost efficiency, and then you can determine the projects you want to tackle first based on your budget and needs.

#swceSERVICE


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applied for a \$500,000 grant that will make our infrastructure a much bigger part of the 'smart grid.' Every four years we develop a 'four year work plan' which schedules our changes to our facilities to sustain growth, reliability, and improve our system," said Briggs. "Included in our next plan will be the ability to communicate remotely with our distribution lines in a very advanced way. We will install equipment on our lines that have the ability to designate exactly where an outage is on a feeder from a substation, which saves time that a crew will normally spend walking or driving out a line. In addition, the equipment will be able to decipher whether it is a break in a line or a problem with a piece of equipment, which enables our crew to be prepared with the necessary materials for a quicker repair."

Following the business portion of the annual meeting, three Grand Prize drawings were conducted along with drawings for the flowers on stage. The Grand Prize drawing recipients included David Lau of Pemberton with a \$100 gift card to Lerberg's Foods in Ellendale; Gerald Saxton of Morristown had his registration card drawn for a \$100 gift card to Grampa's Ole Home Meats of Medford and a \$100 gift card to Casey's General Store. Fred and Kathryn Klokonos (Youth Tour Fred's parents) of Lonsdale had their registration card drawn for a \$150 gift certificate to Steve's Meat Market of Ellendale and a \$150 gift card to Casey's General Store.

Following the drawings, a smoked pork chop lunch was served by Hy-Vee of Owatonna, which included potatoes, corn, coleslaw, roll, water and/or milk. The Faribault Middle School students delivered your choice of chocolate, cherry, or butterscotch Dilly® Bars to the dining members and guests.

At the conclusion of the annual meeting, the Steele-Waseca board of directors met for their reorganizational meeting. The following officers were elected: Gary W. Wilson, Owatonna, president; Rodney D. Krell, Blooming Prairie, vice president; Ronald Sommers, secretary/treasurer; and PJ Duchene, assistant secretary/treasurer.

The co-op's 88th annual meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 4, 2024. 

#swceAPPRECIATION