



MANAGER'S MESSAGE // PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

District Caucus Meetings

This past month, we held District Caucus Meetings in Montevideo and Wood Lake. In addition to having a general discussion about cooperative issues, these meetings are also where

board candidates are put forth. In District 2, present director Gary Groothuis was the only candidate put forth by those district members in attendance. In District 4, incumbent director Steve Norman and Randy Knutson were nominated to be put on the ballot. In District 6, incumbent director Tim Velde and Maverick Fiene were nominated to be put on the ballot. These candidates will have their names on the ballot at the Annual Meeting on April 5th at the Prairie's Edge Casino near Granite Falls. Voting will be by district. Thank you to the members from those Districts who took time to attend and participate in their Caucus Meetings.

Annual Meeting is Owners' Meeting

We, at Minnesota Valley, work hard at keeping you the members informed of what is happening with your business with newsletters, mailings and meetings. One of the cornerstone events of keeping you informed about your business is the Annual Meeting. Each year the members gather to hear about and discuss their cooperative's business and to put forth directors to govern the direction of the organization. What a great business model cooperatives are. As a member-owner, it is YOUR electric company. Hope to see you at your

company's Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 5th at the Prairie's Edge Casino near Granite Falls.

Minnesota Rural Electric Association Annual Meeting

This past month we were in St. Paul for our statewide association's Annual Meeting, Minnesota Rural Electric Association or MREA. The primary purpose of MREA is to provide safety education for our linemen. They also provide education resources to all employees and directors in the state, as well as coordinating some of our lobby efforts to get legislation more friendly to affordable electric energy and issues important to rural Minnesota. As part of that meeting, the board met with all area elected representatives to discuss issues we believe are important to Rural Minnesota and our cooperative's mission to provide reliable low-cost electric energy.

Velde to NRECA

In addition to being a director on our MREA board, our director Tim Velde was again elected this month as Minnesota's Director on our national association. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association or NRECA represents more than 900 consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives, public power districts and public utility districts in the United States. They administer employee benefit plans for cooperatives, spearhead communications, advocacy and public relations initiatives as well as our federal government relations activities. This is an elected position by all electric cooperatives in Minnesota.

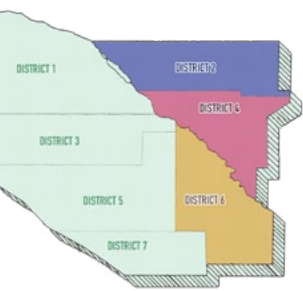
APRIL

2025 ANNUAL MEETING // SATURDAY, APRIL 5TH, 2025

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Please join us for our **2025 Annual Meeting** at Prairie's Edge Casino in Granite Falls. **Breakfast** will be served at 8:30 a.m. with the **business meeting** starting at 10:00 a.m.





Meet Your Director Candidates for Districts 2, 4 & 6



Steve Norman: District 4 **INCUMBENT**

Steve has farmed all his life on the farm he was born and raised on, which in two years will be a century farm. He raises corn, soybeans, small grain and alfalfa. He has a cow, calf operation and finishes out the calves.

His wife, Vicki and daughter Holly are self-employed operators of CCC Salon and Holly's Aesthetics and Spa on the home farm place. His son Joe works for SWCD in Meeker County and helps Steve with all the conservation projects we need to do to be good stewards of our land on the farm.

The Normans have three children: Ole (deceased); Holly and her husband Jaden; Joe and his wife Kelsey; grandsons Skyler, Jakobie, Jack, Henry, Wesley and one granddaughter Emma.

In 2002, they were the Chippewa County Conservationists of the year. In 2006, they were the Chippewa County Farm Family of the Year. Steve serves as Sexton of the Saron Cemetery Association and serves on the Saron Church Council. He has served on the Minnesota Valley Cooperative board since 1992 and currently serves as President.

"I have enjoyed serving on the board for many reasons. I have had the opportunity to work and meet with many good, dependable people and have had the job of helping make decisions that I feel will benefit us as a co-op and community. I feel fortunate to be able to have a say in many of the decisions that need to be made for our consumers. At Minnesota Valley, we strive to have the best member and electrical service possible for our member-owners at the most affordable prices. I am concerned about what is needed by you as consumers and I will continue to do my best to make the proper decisions on the issues at hand. I have appreciated your support over the years and would appreciate your continued support in my re-election."



Tim Velde: District 6 **INCUMBENT**

Family: Wife - Connie, works with Yellow Medicine County Restorative Justice & Church Volunteer; Children - Grant & Becky, Kelli, Jake & Gennie, Amanda & Chuck, 9 grandkids and 3 great grandkids.

Occupation: Fourth generation farmer between Hanley Falls and Granite Falls.

Community involvement: Minnesota Valley Co-op Light and Power Board, State Electric Co-op Board, National Electric Co-op Board, County Planning Commission, Synodical Authorized Minister serving area Churches & other community activities - Previously served on K-12 School Board, Vocational School Board, Township Board and Pork Producers.

Reason for deciding to run for the board of directors at Minnesota Valley: I am honored to represent you on the Local, State and National Electric Co-op Boards, representing you is something I take seriously. Since getting on the Minnesota Valley Board in 2008, every decision I make, I look at how our actions will make sure we continue having reliable, affordable and safe electricity. Not only are our rates one of the lowest in the state but our reliability and safety are among the best in the state and our co-op is financially strong. I humbly ask for your vote at our Annual Meeting so I can continue to look out for you and our co-op's best interest.



Gary Groothuis: District 2 **INCUMBENT**

Family: Wife - Amy customer service Chandler Industries; Children - 3 girls, 1 boy, all with significant others.

Occupation: I have just sold my business of 23 years and am now the Gaming Manager of Lac qui Parle Lake Association.

Community involvement: Bergen Church, MDHA, Lac qui Parle Lake Association, Member of the American Legion for 35 years.

Reason for deciding to run for the board of directors at Minnesota Valley: I have enjoyed serving on this board and look forward to the challenges of the future.



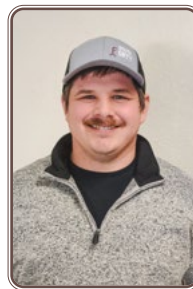
Randy Knutson: District 4

Family: Significant other - Mary Bjorgaard, owner/groomer at Perfect Paws; Children - four kids: Steven Huntley, Kari Kirking, Kristi Melmen, Kayla Boike, and eight grandchildren.

Occupation: I have been farming most of my life in some degree. I farmed with my dad until 2014 then started running the family farm which consists of 200 beef cattle and 1,000 acres.

Community Involvement: I am on the church council at Trinity as well as the stewardship committee. I also have been involved in Cancer Walk, Pheasants Forever, and the Farm Bureau Board.

Reason for deciding to run for the board of directors at Minnesota Valley: I think I could be an asset to the Minnesota Valley Board and have always enjoyed being involved in the powerline industry. My 20+ years as a lineman give me a unique perspective as a board member. I have a good understanding of what it takes to maintain an electrical system, how the rural electric co-ops work and the challenges the co-op is going to face in the future. The backbone of a rural electric co-op are the linemen, the equipment, training they need to get their job done and done safely is vital to the success of the co-op. As a board member, I would strive to ensure the safety of the employees as well as the public.



Maverick Fiene: District 6

Family: Wife - Danielle, Social Worker; Kids: Vera - 5, Syvie - 2, and Baby #3 due in July.

I have been farming on my family's century farm for the past 7 years and 3 years ago my father and I started South Forty Meat Market LLC in Lucan, MN. I manage the business side of the locker and also help with the day to day functions.

I am a member of St. Luke Lutheran Church, Redwood County Cattleman's, Minnesota State Cattleman's and the Minnesota Association of Meat Processors.

I wish to earn a seat on the board of directors because I would love to become more involved in the community. I believe it is important for my generation to get involved and learn from experienced members in leadership positions. Doing so can help with ensuring the future of these boards/programs and keep the integrity of our rural communities.

Director's Responsibilities

According to information compiled by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) in Washington, D.C., a director's responsibility consists of having the ability and knowledge to set policy and approve programs that are the basis for operating the association. A director must have the time to attend monthly board meetings and other special meetings and seminars. These special sessions are necessary to keep directors informed on the various aspects of the cooperative and the electric utility industry. Other criteria of a board member, as identified by NRECA, are listed below.

- ✓ *Be an independent thinker, but a cooperator*
- ✓ *Be capable of acquiring the knowledge necessary to cope with the issues of a modern electric utility, including finances, management and public issues*
- ✓ *Possess the character and demeanor that will reflect favorably on the cooperative*
- ✓ *Have the willingness to listen and learn*
- ✓ *Be one who can accept and direct change*
- ✓ *Let management manage*
- ✓ *Be of sufficient stature to command the respect of management, employees, fellow board members, cooperative members and the public*
- ✓ *Be willing to commit adequate time to the work of the board to be an effective member and properly discharge the duties of the board*
- ✓ *Subordinate personal and other business interests to the needs of the cooperative when making a decision*
- ✓ *Be willing to accept the unpleasant moments of a director's experience*

Find Your Location Number

If you find your location number in this newsletter, you will receive a bill credit that starts at \$10 (Operation Round Up participants get an additional \$10 bonus). If no number is claimed before the 25th of the month, the unclaimed amount **rolls over into the next month**. If both location numbers are claimed in a month, the recipients will split the credit. Once claimed, we will start again at \$10. If you find your number, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.

No one claimed the prize last month, so we've rolled it into this month! If you find your number, claim by the 25th of March to be eligible for:



ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS // TODD BOLKEMA

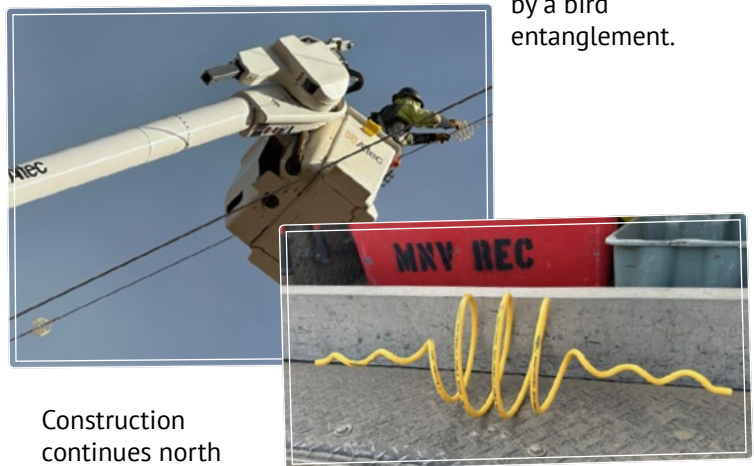


Engineering & Operations Manager

You may have seen our trucks driving slowly or spending a few minutes parked in your yard then driving away. During the coldest days, we are patrolling the lines for conditions that need repairs. The line patrols are progressing well with the linemen inspecting for damage and also noting pole framing and other facility information. We have been adding all the poles to our mapping system and it is shaping up to be a great change—letting us know where our poles are, directing people to the exact locations, allowing us to electronically document line patrol and pole inspections and also reduce field visits for designing. The facility information that the guys are gathering will be added to our electronic mapping program as well. We can take a data file and upload it so we know where the poles are and what is on each pole. Over the next four years, we will add poles and data to a quarter of our system each year as we patrol the lines.

In the east area of the system, we finished the Asbury to Gluek transmission line rebuild. This line passes through the Boike wildlife management area. This area required special permitting from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. As part of the permit for this wetland area we needed to install bird diverters. They are yellow exaggerated coils spaced 15 feet apart on the line to keep birds from becoming entangled in the lines (see photos). An additional benefit is that the line is less likely to have an outage caused

by a bird entanglement.



Construction continues north of Madison on our new 69 kilovolt transmission line. If you're in that area, you may have seen the Karian Peterson crews setting poles and stringing in the new conductors. E three twenty-five zero three On the northeast side, we are gearing up to begin installing transmission line from the Gluek Substation west and north to our future Torvik Substation. The goal is to install all the poles before the ground thaws. This will minimize the impact to the newly graded ditches along the highway there.



MEMBER SERVICES // SCOTT KUBESH



Member Services Manager

Space Heaters

Space heaters can be an attractive way to heat up a room or area when the weather is cold. However, space heaters can be dangerous if used incorrectly.

According to Harvard University Environmental Health & Safety group, more than 25,000 residential fires and 6,000 emergency room visits are caused by space heaters in the U.S. every year.

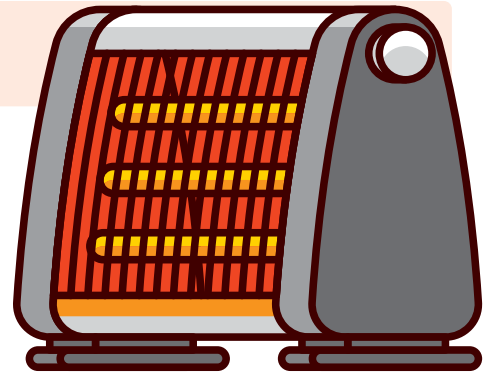
Approximately one-third of all house fires nationwide occur during the cold home-heating season from November through March. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the major cause of these winter fires can be attributed to faulty, improper use and maintenance of supplemental heating equipment, such as space heaters.

We spend many hours every heating season answering questions about high bills and this season has not been any different. Sometimes those high usage concerns come down to the homeowner using portable space heaters to try and save money. There is nothing wrong

with using a portable space heater, but you have to expect a corresponding increase in electric consumption

with the use of space heaters. Minnesota Valley has offered discounted electric heat rates for years, and will continue to do so. One twenty zero two An excellent way to reduce your heating bills would be to permanently install electric heat and have it separately metered to take advantage of these discounted rates. Cord connected portable space heaters are not allowed on the heat rates, but permanently attached electric heaters are.

Please call our office at 320.269.2163 and ask for the Member Service Department. We will gladly explain the advantages of electric heat, the economic comparison of electric heat and ways that you can take advantage of our special heat rates.



Minnesota Valley R.E.C. will be accepting applications for the summer Pole Treating Crew until April 4th, 2025. Applications are available at the Minnesota Valley office or on our website, www.mnvalleyrec.com.

Comparative Report

	Jan-Jan 2025	Jan-Jan 2024	Jan-Jan 2005
Kwh Purchased	25,872,794	25,045,520	17,149,877
Kwh Sold	24,697,398	23,941,904	15,958,232
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$1,270,455	\$1,080,838	\$422,673
Patronage Capital Margins	\$182,009	\$251,836	\$162,044
Reserve For Taxes	\$28,333	\$22,000	\$14,600
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	49.10	46.19	24.65
	January '25	January '24	January '05
Total Plant	\$108,226,101	\$101,584,669	\$37,799,249
Number of Active Services	5,311	5,309	5,218
Avg. Residential Bill	\$341.07	\$306.25	\$155.22
Avg. Residential Kwh Consumption	3,258	3,114	2,515
Avg. Kwh Usage All Consumers	4,650	4,510	3,058
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	47,917	46,702	31,060

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Turn your suds into savings. Lower your energy use in the laundry room by washing clothes with cold water whenever possible, as heating water accounts for most of the energy used in a laundry cycle. Wash full loads to make the most of energy savings and use high-efficiency detergent designed for cold washes. For drying cycles, clean the lint filter before each load to improve airflow and use dryer balls to reduce drying time.

Source: energy.gov



Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

24-Hour Telephone Answering

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800.247.5051

Minnesota Valley Co-op News

Published monthly by:
Minnesota Valley Cooperative
Light and Power Association

Website

www.mnvalleyrec.com

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501 South 1st Street
P.O. Box 248
Montevideo, MN 56265

