



MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

Thank You Plow Drivers

We are having a real winter again with plenty of blowing snow and bitterly cold temperatures. Keeping the roads clear for everyone is a big job during winters like this one. We are thankful for the people plowing for the township, county and state that do a great job in tough conditions. When our guys need to get out to restore power or repair a heating system, we are especially thankful.

Minnesota Rural Electric Association Annual Meeting

Minnesota Valley's board went to Saint Paul for a few days in mid-February for our statewide association's Annual Meeting. Our association's name is the Minnesota Rural Electric Association or MREA. One of the primary purposes of our trip was to meet with our area state legislators to work on energy issues. 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.

In addition to our legislative issues, we met with representatives of the rest of the electric cooperatives in the state at this meeting to work on the balance of our statewide association's business. MREA's purpose is three-fold. First, to provide safety instruction for the employees of the member systems—which is primarily for our linemen. Second, to coordinate education and communication opportunities for the employees and directors of member

systems. Finally, to provide coordinated and unified legislative lobbying on a statewide and national level.

Caucus Meetings

The sole nominees at the recently held Caucus Meetings were Gary Groothuis in District 2, Steve Norman in District 4 and Tim Velde in District 6. They will have their names on the ballot at the Annual Meeting on March 30th at Prairie's Edge Casino near Granite Falls. Thank you to the members from those districts who attended.

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 this continuing duty to keep you informed about your business is coming up this month. That event is our 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. We hope to see you at your company's Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 30th at Prairies Edge Casino near Granite Falls. We will have capital credit retirement checks of almost \$1.6 million available that day! If you paid a light bill in 2005 or 2006, we will have a check for you when you register, as those are the years we are retiring from.

please join us!



Minnesota Valley Cooperative
Light and Power Association's
Annual Meeting is Saturday,
March 30th, 2019 at
Prairie's Edge Casino.

Get Mobile with SmartHub!

With the SmartHub mobile app, you can receive notifications from your SmartHub provider, pay your bills, report problems with your service and contact your provider—all from your iPhone or Android device.

Getting started is easy – you just need to install the app and log in. It's that simple. This year at our Annual Meeting, employees will be offering assistance getting SmartHub set up for members who bring their smartphone.



New this year! Bring your smartphone to the Annual Meeting and a Minnesota Valley employee will help get you signed up for a SmartHub account!

Meet the Director Candidates

Gary Groothuis: District 2



Gary is a lifelong resident of Chippewa County, living on the farm site that has been in his family for four generations. He farmed for 12 years prior to purchasing a bar in Montevideo 19 years ago. He is married to Amy (shipping/receiving supervisor at Chandler Industries). Their children include: TJ and Dan, Brad and Tanns, Jojo and Caitlin, Kyle and Amanda and four grandchildren. Gary served in the

U.S. Army Airborne from 1984 to 1990. He has been a member of the American Legion for 31 years, a member of Ducks Unlimited for the last 10 years and an 11-year member of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association.

"I have learned a lot about the electric business. I enjoy working with the board and all the employees."

Steve Norman: District 4



Steve has farmed all of his life in the same location. His wife, Vicki, is a self-employed manager-operator of the CCC Salon & Boutique with their daughter, Holly. The Normans have three children: Ole (deceased); Holly and her husband, Jaden; and Joe and his wife, Kelsey; grandsons Skyler, Jakobie, Jack, Henry, Wesley and one granddaughter, Emma.

"I have enjoyed serving on the board for many reasons. I have

had the opportunity to work with and meet 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 the many 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 reelection."

Tim Velde: District 6



Tim is a fourth generation farmer by Hanley Falls growing corn and soybeans. Tim and his wife, Connie, have four grown children: Grant and Becky, Kelli, Jake and Genny, Amanda and Chuck and nine grandchildren. Connie is active in church activities, works with the restorative justice program in Yellow Medicine County and helps on the farm. Tim has served on the K-12 and vocational school board,

Regional Development Commission, Township Board, Pork Producers Church Council and other local boards. Currently, he serves on the Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power Association Board, Minnesota Rural Electric State Board, Basin Electric Bylaws Board, Center for Rural Policy Development and Ag Water Resources State Boards, along with numerous community activities.

Tim is currently serving in his eleventh year on the Minnesota Valley Electric Co-op Board representing District 6 and represents our region on the State Board.

"I truly enjoy and am honored to represent our district on the Minnesota Valley Board. I ask for your support so I can continue to represent you on the Board. In every decision the Board makes, my first thought is how will this impact you, the member-owners of the Co-op. For 82 years our Co-op has provided all of us with safe, reliable, affordable energy. I will do my best to make sure Minnesota Valley continues to be a trusted partner providing our energy needs in the future."

Find Your Location Number for a Bill Credit!

This year we changed the way we do our *Find Your Location* bill credit. As we've done in the past, there are two hidden account numbers in this newsletter. If you find your location number, you receive a \$10 bill credit (*Operation Round Up* participants get a \$10 bonus). But now, if neither number is claimed before the 25th of the month, **the unclaimed amount rolls over into the next month!**

The bill credit will continue to roll over and accumulate until it is claimed. If both location numbers are claimed in a month, the recipients will split the credit. Once claimed, it will start again at \$10. The current running amount is noted in each issue. If you find your number, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.

CLAIM BEFORE MARCH 25TH FOR: **\$20**



No one claimed the bill credit last month, so we've rolled last month's credit into this month!

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Free Wood Chips Call Jarrod from Minnesota Valley Tree Service at 320.226.7306 if you would like some wood chips.



Meet Your Employees



Name Robert (Bob) Walsh

Hometown Born in Benson, MN and have lived in Dawson, MN since 1979

Family Married, Wife-Mary (school teacher); two adult daughters, Ann & Mary Jo; one son, John, who is a senior in high school; five grandchildren

When did you start at Minnesota Valley and what do you do? I started at Minnesota Valley on 8/8/88. My first job was a Member Services Representative and then became Member Services Manager in 1996.

What do you like best about working here? I feel like we have a good bunch of employees who are great to work with but I really like the interaction with our member-owners.

What do you like to do in your free time? I like to golf, ride motorcycle, hunt and fish. My whole life I have never been afraid to try something, so I am always tinkering with some project!

What did you want to be when you grew up? In my early years I wanted to be a teacher, so I married one. From 10th grade on, all I wanted to do is work with electricity, so I went to electrician school.

ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS • BOB KRATZ



Manager of Operations

We have just about made it through another winter. Now we can enjoy the longer days and working outside. With all the snow we had in February, I am sure there will be many wet areas when things start to melt. This, of course, will cause a delay in some of Minnesota Valley's projects for 2019. In mid-February, one of our crews went around and blew snow away from seven substations where it had gotten so high that living things could crawl over the fence and get into it. In the picture to the right, Kent Smith, Line Foreman, is standing next to one of the drifts.

During line patrol, the crews have looked at your usage and your transformer size to make sure everything is correct and the size it should be. If not,

they have made a service order to either upsize or downsize your transformer. H two thirty two zero one These will be done when weather permits, especially if you have an underground line transformer and the crews can get in your yard when the ground is dry or frozen.



During line patrol, we also noticed some items attached to the high voltage power poles on the system (mostly in consumer yards). These items need to be attached to your own supporting structures. These items range from a consumer's own security light, TV dishes, bird houses, etc. Minnesota Valley crews will remove them and leave them at the bottom of the pole.

I am really looking forward to spring and hope to see you all at the Annual Meeting.

Comparative Report

	Jan-Jan 2019	Jan-Jan 2018	Jan-Jan 1999
Kwh Purchased	24,061,016	24,240,957	15,070,083
Kwh Sold	22,552,158	22,957,424	13,661,408
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$1,139,112	\$1,059,325	\$432,756
Patronage Capital Margins	\$114,314	\$196,371	\$75,154
Reserve For Taxes	\$21,333	\$22,917	\$27,000
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	47.34	43.70	28.72
	January '19	January '18	January '99
Total Plant	\$73,787,713	\$71,569,627	\$31,758,114
Number of Active Services	5,276	5,276	5,188
Average Residential Bill	\$288.14	\$277.86	\$142.59
Average Residential Kwh Consumption	3,199	3,120	2,225
Average Kwh Usage All Consumers	4,274	4,351	2,633
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	46,157	43,877	28,056

Minnesota Valley R.E.C. will be accepting applications for the summer Pole Treating Crew until April 26th, 2019. Applications are available at the Minnesota Valley office or at our website, www.mnvalleyrec.com





Member Services Manager

Make Safety Priority One When Doing Home Improvement and Repair Projects

Well, it is hard to believe, but spring is just around the corner. With spring, will come that urge to get out and work around the yard or maybe start a new construction or remodel project. Remember, Minnesota Valley is always available to help you with your electrical or heating questions for any project you may be looking at. Just contact the Member Services Department for assistance.

More people are doing their own remodeling, repairs, maintenance, landscaping and construction projects inside and outside the home. We urge all do-it-yourselfers to take precautions, especially when working around electrical equipment and overhead power lines.

Make sure outdoor outlets have a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don't have them. It's also a good idea to have GFCIs professionally installed in wet areas of the home, such as the kitchen, bath and laundry.

Safety tips to remember include:

- Look up and around you. Always be aware of the location of power lines, particularly when using long metal tools like ladders, pool skimmers, and pruning poles or when installing rooftop antennas and satellite dishes or doing roof repair work.
- Be especially careful when working near power lines attached to your house. Keep equipment and yourself at least 10 feet from lines.

- Never trim trees near power lines—leave that to the professionals. Never use water or blower extensions to clean gutters near electric lines. Contact a professional maintenance contractor.
- If your projects include digging, like building a deck or planting a tree, call the Minnesota underground utility locator at 8-1-1 before you begin. Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. This service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted and can help you avoid serious injury.
- Always check the condition of cords and power tools before using them. Repair or replace worn or damaged cords and tools.
- Electricity + water = danger. If it's raining or the ground is wet, don't use electric power or yard tools. F two thirty zero one Never use electrical appliances or touch circuit breakers or fuses when you're wet or standing in water. Keep electric equipment at least 10 feet from wet areas.

Make certain your home's electrical systems and wiring are adequate to support the increased electric demands of any new electric appliances, home additions or remodeling projects. An older home may be inadequately wired for today's electricity consumption, putting your family at risk for fire and electrical shock. Have a professional replace worn and outdated circuitry and add outlets for appliances and electronics—this is not a job for casual do-it-yourselfers!

If You Do Your Own Wiring—Have It Inspected

Minnesota State Statute requires any wiring that is added, altered or repaired needs to be inspected by a state certified electrical inspector or the authority having jurisdiction.

Minnesota State Electrical Inspectors

Inspectors in our area are listed by county below.

Chippewa Swift

Bruce Haugen
(320) 212-9678

Lincoln Lac qui Parle Yellow Medicine

Mark Senkyr
(507) 829-2993

Renville Redwood

Kent Weispfennig
(320) 446-4718

Lyon

Randall Maha
(507) 274-5261

Office Hours

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

24-Hour Telephone Answering

320.269.2163
800.247.5051

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