Q&A with the President & CEO

Keeping up-to-date with the happenings at your Cooperative can be difficult when you and your families are busy. I'd like to take this opportunity to address some of the recent questions I've heard in this brief Q&A. There are some changes coming up at your Cooperative, a celebration of 80 years of service to you, our member-owners, and energy-saving tips I'd like to share.

Another great resource for questions you may have is available at SVECs website, www.svec.coop. There are many pages of information available on the site, including the latest news from the Co-op, energy-efficiency tips, and a link to conveniently access your account information.

Q: What is going on with the land SVEC purchased?

SVEC recently purchased land north of Mount Crawford. The land was purchased to meet the future needs of the Co-op, but there are a lot of planning and approvals that must happen before any future development of the property may take place. In the coming months, SVEC will be releasing information pertaining to the land purchase.

Q: When will you be retiring, and when will the new CEO be announced?

I officially retire from the Cooperative on Aug. 31. I have worked 22 years with the Cooperative, and it has been a great time of my life. It's always been a real team effort, of which I have enjoyed being a part, and I have made some great friends. The new CEO will be announced with enough time for a transition period before I retire.

Q: How has the cost of electricity changed?

Electricity remains a great value. As a matter of fact, from January 2015 to April 2016, the wholesale power cost decreased $7.97 for 1,000 kW h of electricity. Our member-owners are getting a great value for very reliable service — last year, SVEC had a 99.97 percent reliability rate of electric service across the system.

Q: What is planned at SVEC this year?

The year 2016 means a celebration of 80 years of Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative. SVEC was the first electric cooperative chartered in Virginia in 1936. Recently, SVEC held a Food Drive to benefit the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, in which 841 pounds of food was donated by member-owners and employees. System-improvement-wise, the Cooperative will continue working to improve facilities, to better serve you, our member-owners. Looking forward, SVECs Annual Meeting will be held on June 9.

Q: What happens at the Annual Meeting?

During the Annual Meeting, held at the JMU Convocation Center, member-owners enjoy a delicious barbecue meal, learn about financial and general SVEC information, and participate in voting to elect their Board of Directors. It is a great evening, with live music performed by the Walnut Ridge Boys, and a Kids' Zone, where children can learn about safety around electricity and ways to save energy.

Q: Do you have any favorite energy-saver tips?

I don't have any real favorites — I think
they are all important. Two things I think are the most important to consider — the heating/cooling of a home, and the water-heater temperature setting. These can account for probably two-thirds of your bill. A lot of it is personal preference, as far as having the thermostat set to a comfortable temperature, but if you can change it just a few degrees, it can make a difference on your bill — and the same is true with your water heater.

For the last 80 years, we have existed to serve you, our member-owners. We look forward to continuing our service to you today, tomorrow, and in the following years. We will provide you with reliable and safe electric service; answer your questions, or find the answers for them; and continue working to keep the costs we are able to manage as low as possible.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service to you, your families, and your businesses.

As a final note, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the SVEC family, for allowing me to be a part of the outstanding team that provides electric service to communities served by the Cooperative. I will be retiring in August in order to spend more time with my wife and family (aka grandchildren!). The time that I have been a part of SVEC will always hold special memories for me. I know that the SVEC team will continue to strive to provide service that meets or exceeds your expectations. Thanks once again and best wishes and God’s blessing to all.

Myron D. Rummel

---

REACHING TO SAFETY:
Use Extension Cords Properly

Roughly 3,300 home fires originate in extension cords each year, killing 50 people and injuring 270 more. Extension cords can overheat and cause fires when used improperly, so keep these important tips in mind to protect your home and workplace.

- **DON’T** attempt to plug extension cords into one another.
- Make sure extension cords are properly rated for their intended use, indoor or outdoor, and meet or exceed the power needs of the appliance or device being used.
- Keep all outdoor extension cords clear of snow and standing water.
- **A heavy reliance on extension cords** is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have additional outlets installed where you need them.
- **Do NOT** overload extension cords.
- Inspect cords for **DAMAGE** before use. Check for cracked or frayed sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections.
- **Do NOT** nail or staple electrical cords to walls or baseboards.
- **NEVER** use three-prong plugs with outlets that only have two slots. Never cut off the ground pin to force a fit, which could lead to electric shock.
- **Do NOT** run through walls, doorways, ceilings or floors. If cord is covered, heat cannot escape, which may result in a **FIRE HAZARD**.
- **Do NOT** substitute extension cords for permanent wiring.
- **DO NOT** use an extension cord or a power strip with heaters or fans, which could cause cords to overheat and result in a fire.

MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

www.facebook.com/ESFI.org  www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg  www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg
The Cooperative’s consumers for 2015 will soon be rewarded with one of the advantages of being a Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative member-owner: Capital Credits. Capital Credits are not received by consumers of all utility companies. Capital Credits are one of the benefits of being a member-owner of a cooperative.

SVEC will mail “Notices of Equity Allocation” to its member-owners. Equity allocation is the member-owner’s share of the Cooperative’s margins, or revenues after all proper expenses, for a given year.

The notices were mailed to member-owners who received electric service in 2015 and had Capital Credits assigned. This represents the amount of equity assigned to their accounts. The allocation amount for each member-owner is based on their total electric service billing with the Cooperative for the year. The total dollar amount of owner equity assigned for the fiscal year of 2015 was more than $12 million.

The amount of equity allocation for a member-owner is determined by multiplying their total electric service revenue (“total patronage” on their equity allocation notice) for the year by area allocation percentage. It is SVEC’s intent to return Capital Credits when its financial condition meets the reserve requirements of Rural Utility Service and on the conditions outlined in the Cooperative’s Bylaws (Article VII, Section 2b).

The Cooperative’s Bylaws (Article VII, Section 2b) state that no Capital Credits may be paid until authorized by the Board of Directors. Before this can be decided, the Board must determine that the overall financial condition of the Cooperative will not be adversely affected and that all mortgage requirements are met.

If you, as a member-owner, receive an allocation notice for 2015 or any prior year, please keep the Cooperative informed of any address changes. This will enable the Co-op to issue you a check, or credit to your bill, when the Board does approve Capital Credit retirements (payment) associated with your allocation.

Please call your local Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative office if you have any questions regarding your Equity Allocation notice.

### SVEC Warns of ‘New Energy Provider’ Scam

Although no Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) member-owners have received this kind of fraudulent phone call or email, SVEC has recently learned of a cooperative in Florida whose members have received scam messages stating their electric provider had changed.

These calls and emails, falsely claiming to be from a real company that markets wind power to consumers, inform cooperative members that they have a new electric provider and direct them to begin paying that new provider. In some cases, the scammers say that the real company, Arcadia Power, had even purchased the cooperative.

Arcadia makes it clear on its website that you don’t switch your electric provider when you sign up with its company. Unfortunately, members of the Florida cooperative have realized that there was a problem only after receiving notice from their cooperative that their bill is unpaid.

SVEC is closely monitoring the situation and urges member-owners to stay aware for the potential of scams over the phone or through email. The possibility exists that the latest scammers will start claiming to be from a firm other than Arcadia and perhaps spread its false claims to states beyond Florida.

“First and foremost, we want our members to know that no representative of the Cooperative will ever call a member asking for any kind of payment. Our employees will only communicate with members about payment for electric service through a mailed notification,” SVEC President & CEO Myron Rummel said. “Likewise, if SVEC were involved in a transaction in which someone’s membership with the Cooperative were to change, we would communicate this change to them through a mailed notification, and not phone calls or emails.”

When in doubt of a correspondence regarding your electric service account, please call SVEC using a number you know to be legitimate, such as a number on your most recent statement.

“Furthermore, if one of our members does receive a call or email like this, we suggest that you contact SVEC at 1-800-234-7832 to verify your account status,” he said.

If you incur a financial loss as the result of a scam, contact law enforcement immediately.

### January/February SVEC Major Outages

- **Jan. 5** Clear Brook area
  - 600 members out for 1 hour
  - Equipment failure

- **Jan. 7** Silers Road area (Frederick County)
  - 500 members out for 1 hour
  - Protective device on sensitive setting to protect workers

- **Jan. 25** Fulks Run area
  - 960 members out for 1½ hours
  - Unknown cause

- **Feb. 3** Fulks Run area
  - 960 members out for 1½ hours
  - Equipment failure

- **Feb. 12** Highland County area
  - 1,600 members out for 1 hour
  - Request of emergency services

- **Feb. 12** Loudburn Street area
  - 1,600 members out for 1 hour
  - Equipment failure

- **Feb. 25** Whitacre area
  - 1,600 members out for 1 hour
  - Insulator failure
SVEC Assists in Restoration

Staying true to the sixth cooperative principle, “Cooperation Among Cooperatives,” several Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) line crews assisted Rappahannock Electric Cooperative in its service-restoration efforts following the devastating storms that hit on Feb. 24.

Early that evening, a tornado left a 28-mile swath of destruction near the town of Tappahannock in the eastern part of Rappahannock Electric Cooperative’s 22-county service territory. Homes were destroyed and miles of power lines were ripped and entangled in debris.

SVEC crews left at about 5 a.m. on Feb. 25 and returned in the middle of the day on Feb. 26. Power was restored to all homes still able to receive service by early evening of Feb. 25.

SVEC employees who provided assistance were:

Augusta District:
- Josh Hedrick
- Brandon Long
- Barry Shifflett
- Nick Fortin

Rockingham District:
- Alan Moyers
- Shannon Detamore
- Jeremy Wisman
- Kevin Good

Shenandoah District:
- Kenny Grandstaff
- Sam Knupp

Luray District:
- James Cubbage
- Kevin Coy

Winchester District:
- Mike Alexander
- Craig Bockey
- Matt Durbin
- Brent Neff

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative line crews assisted Rappahannock Electric Cooperative in its service-restoration efforts following the devastating storms that hit on Feb. 24. Homes were destroyed and miles of power lines were ripped and entangled in debris after a tornado left a 28-mile swath of destruction near the town of Tappahannock in the eastern part of Rappahannock Electric Cooperative’s 22-county service territory.

SVEC Annual Meeting Reminder

The Matthews look forward to the Annual Meeting of their Cooperative every year. This year, the meeting is on June 9 at the James Madison University Convocation Center.

At Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative’s 2016 Annual Meeting, several exciting things are happening. The member-owners are electing their board of directors, and learning about the Cooperative’s business for the year.

Families can enjoy a delicious barbecue dinner. Kids can learn about safety and electricity, and have a good time at the “Kids’ Zone” for children ages 5-10. There will also be door prizes and gift certificates given.

This year features two grand prizes: two $500 credits on the winners’ electric bills.

Come to your Annual Meeting and take an active role in your Cooperative.

Only your local electric co-op makes every customer an owner of the business. Unlike other electric utilities, your co-op exists to make sure your needs are always met, not to make a profit. And since every electric co-op is locally owned and operated, your co-op is always there with you, reinvesting in your community. That’s why in an electric co-op, the people have the power.
Memorial Day Not ‘Just Another Holiday’

Story by Preston Knight, SVEC Writer

From points around its native Virginia to its namesake in the Midwest, the Page County town of Shenandoah leaves an impression with its heartfelt tributes to veterans. The respectful displays arrive in large part because of Mayor Clinton Lucas, a man many in the town label as “honorable,” Assistant Town Manager Juanita Roudabush said. “He may not consider himself the honorable mayor,” she said, “but everybody in the town knows, especially everyone who works for the town.”

As Shenandoah prepares for its biggest annual celebration May 27-28, the weekend before Memorial Day, Lucas, its mayor for more than a quarter-century, stands ready to lead the way. Usually, a box of tissues should be close by.

The two days of events feature a car show, lawn party, parade and a special ceremony at the Shenandoah Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8613, where about 100 people will share in singing patriotic songs and recognizing local veterans, including the oldest living member of the VFW.

Within that special service is a Lucas-inspired tribute to the family of a Virginia soldier who died in combat the previous year and who lived closest to the town. In 2006, the mayor added this touching homage, which includes the presentation of a folded American flag — similar to what’s done at a military funeral — to the family.

From 2006-2013, families of soldiers from Staunton, Ruckersville, Maurertown, Oakton, Grottoes, Harrisonburg, Broadway, Lexington and Shenandoah have attended, some having never heard of the town before, yet all leaving moved by the generosity of a community of strangers.

“They really didn’t know what we were doing. They thought, ‘They are trying to exploit [the soldiers].’ They were just so honored that we would be keeping up with it to honor their son, father, daughter or whoever it is they lost,” said Lucas, an Army and National Guard veteran who is known to get teary-eyed as he speaks during the service. “It was just something that was well received. I just felt like it was the least we could do.”

In 2014, for the first time, none of the families of Virginia soldiers killed in action could attend, so names were mentioned and photos shown instead. Last year, family members who were invited declined because their loved one’s death occurred barely two months before Memorial Day.

As the U.S. military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan has scaled back, fortunately, the town is finding fewer families of killed soldiers to invite. This year, as of March, there were no Virginia soldiers killed in action over the last year.

Roudabush relies on the Department of Defense’s database of soldiers killed in action, as well as local media reports, to find someone to honor. In 2014-2015, invites went to families of four men and one woman from Moseley, Newport News, Orange, Norfolk and Williamsburg, showing how far-reaching Shenandoah’s commitment is to celebrate the life of a fallen warrior.

It’s important to note that more Virginia soldiers died from 2006-2015 than those who were specifically honored in Shenandoah.

Lucas said he came up with the idea to honor a fallen veteran as the number of U.S. casualties from the conflict in the Middle East appeared to be rising in the mid-2000s.

While he did serve during the Vietnam War, he was not deployed to Vietnam. However, Lucas felt that returning soldiers were condemned for fighting for our freedom.

“People just did not have a good reception when they came home,” he said.

As mayor, Lucas refuses to allow such an attitude to permeate.

“I hope to have a humongous crowd,” he said of the service. “The whole idea is to honor the veterans. People who have never had a military acquaintance, it’s just another holiday to have an extra day off.”

FULL SCHEDULE

The Memorial Day celebration is in its 19th consecutive year, though its history goes further back. It’s a fun-filled weekend as much as it can be an emotional one.

On Friday, May 27, there is a vehicle CRUZ IN, flag-retirement ceremony and lawn party, with food from the Shenandoah Volunteer Fire Company.

On Saturday, May 28, following the VFW service at 9:30 a.m., is an antique car,
truck, motorcycle, you-name-it show (Lucas said a restored school bus was there one year); SPCA animals up for adoption; library book sale and reading bus; food vendors; another lawn party with steamed shrimp and chicken; a parade and more.

More than 1,000 people are expected to attend the parade, an event that will feature Grand Marshal Russ Rodriguez, a Shenandoah Elementary School teacher and Marine veteran who served in Iraq. The town has 2,300 residents.

“It just blossomed into a full day of events,” Lucas said.

Town officials stress that it’s a weekend to honor all veterans — past and present — and not just those singled out at the VFW event. But in Shenandoah, a highly visible level of recognition is actually available throughout the year.

Several years ago, the town secured donations to open Shenandoah Veterans Park on Virginia Avenue, across from its post office. The park, which is not a memorial since living veterans can be honored as well, has flagpoles for each military branch, granite memorials with the insignias of each branch, and walls of bricks with the names of veterans.

The cases holding the bricks are at capacity, with the remaining empty spots on reserve. Nearly 600 names are on display already, including one for Army Private First Class Brandon L. Buttry, from the city of Shenandoah, Iowa. That Shenandoah sits in Page County, Iowa.

The identical names are no accident.

Originally called Fair Oaks, the city of Shenandoah, Iowa, took its permanent name on Aug. 6, 1870, after soldiers returning from the Civil War saw a striking resemblance to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, according to the Daughters of the American Revolution. Roudabush said those soldiers petitioned for their town's name to be changed to Shenandoah and their county to be called Page.

The two Shenandoahs connected again several years ago when a family from Iowa visiting the Virginia town purchased a brick to recognize Buttry, who was killed in Afghanistan in 2012. The soldier's place in the Veterans Park is another example of Shenandoah, Virginia, doing something for an unfamiliar family.

“We are so very sorry for your loss of this courageous and heroic young man. Please know we also grieve with you in your loss,” Lucas wrote to Iowa resident Carolyn Ruhe, who purchased the brick. “Please know everyone in the Town of Shenandoah will be eternally grateful for Brandon’s service and sacrifice.”

For more information on the town's Memorial Day activities, visit www.townofshenandoah.com.

Past Memorial Day Honorees at VFW

Marine Lance Cpl. Jason C. Redifer, 19, Stuarts Draft
Army Cpl. Adam J. Fargo, 22, Ruckersville
Army Pfc. Thomas R. Wilson, 21, Maurertown
Army Pfc. David H. Sharrett II, 27, Oakton
Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Scott Resner Bubb, 19, Grottoes
Marine Lance Cpl. Jordan Chrobot, 24, Harrisonburg
Army Spc. Brian “Bucky” Anderson, 24, Broadway
Army Spc. Levi R. Nuncio, 24, Shenandoah/Harrisonburg
Army First Lt. Stephen Chase Prasnicki, 24, Lexington
Army Spc. Kyle P. Stoeckli, 21, Moseley
Army Spc. Caryn E. Nou, 29, Newport News
Army Master Sgt. George A. Bannar Jr., 37, Orange
Army Sgt. Lyle D. Turnbull, 31, Norfolk
Marine Master Sgt. Thomas Saunders, 33, Williamsburg