SVEC Annual Meeting Highlights

The Cooperative’s 80th Annual Meeting was held on June 9 at the James Madison University Convocation Center. More than 1,200 members and guests attended the meeting. The meeting is held every year for member-owners to elect their board of directors and learn about the year’s Co-op business.

Member-owners received a gift bag upon registration at the meeting, which contained an Annual Report; a pen; a coupon for a discounted compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL); an “Energy Savers” guide to energy efficiency; and a letter opener. Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) celebrated children at the meeting with a Kids’ Zone; and also had a high-voltage safety-demo trailer, provided by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives, set up outside of the Convocation Center, where members could learn about power lines and the possible dangers they present.

The primary purpose of the Annual Meeting is the election of directors. Two director positions were decided at this year’s meeting. The Cooperative’s Bylaws require a minimum of two candidates for each position to be filled. Four individuals were nominated to run for the board, including two incumbents. Nominee Suzanne S. Obenshain and incumbent Stephen W. Burkholder, each representing Rockingham County, were elected. Following the election of directors, reports were made by SVEC Board Chair Robbie F. Marchant, and SVEC President and CEO Myron D. Rummel. Jackson E. Reasor, Old Dominion Electric Cooperatives’ (ODEC) president and CEO, also spoke.

In her speech, Board Chairman Marchant said that there are some changes coming to SVEC, including the new President & CEO Michael W. Hastings, who starts Aug. 1, and the new facility that the Cooperative plans to construct, which will combine its Dayton and Headquarters offices. She expressed appreciation for current President & CEO Myron D. Rummel’s years of service to the Co-op. She also spoke briefly about the Beat the Peak program, which SVEC just started on June 1.

Marchant then spoke about the history of cooperatives, and shared a brief personal story about what the Cooperative means to her. She noted the importance of the safety aspect of SVEC, and applauded the efforts in the last year — the Cooperative finished the year with 631,372 hours worked without a lost-time accident. In closing, she reiterated that no matter what the future
Cooperative, with the average outage hours being 2.64, or a reliability rating of 99.97 percent, and without strong weather systems, funds were not spent for costly outages.

Rummel said that a continuing trend in 2015 was the decreasing billing factor. He said that since January 2015, the cost has decreased more than 7.8 percent, which is about $8 per 1,000 kWh. He then spoke about capital credits, which make SVEC different than an investor-owned, or a municipal, utility. In 2015, the Cooperative was able to return more than $3.6 million to its member-owners.

He also mentioned the work done to continue system improvements, and said that in 2015 SVEC was able to rebuild two substations, while completing design work for a major upgrade. He said line rehabilitation, plus work to increase capacity to keep up with demand and maintain our high reliability standards, was completed.

Rummel also spoke about the Cooperative’s history, noting that SVEC served three counties in 1938, but today serves eight, plus the city of Winchester — for a total of more than 93,000 meters. He also said that in 2010, the Cooperative added more than 52,000 member accounts following the acquisition of a portion of Potomac Edison’s Virginia service territory.

He mentioned the Cooperative’s service to the communities, including blood drives, donations to the American Cancer Society, safety presentations to various schools and groups, support of the 4-H and FFA activities, and giving ten $1,000 scholarships to area high school seniors.

On a personal note, Rummel mentioned that this would be his last annual meeting with the member-owners as the president & CEO. Since 1993 when he started with the Co-op, the number of member-owners has grown from about 28,000 to approximately 93,000 today. The operating revenue has increased from $37.6 million to $253.5 million, and the total miles of line have increased from 4,307 in 1993 to 7,633 in 2015.

In closing, he said this time period has been a wonderful part of his life, an opportunity to work with people who were not only co-workers and member-owners, but friends. He thanked everyone for the kindness and support shown throughout the years.

The meeting ended with door prizes. This year featured two grand prizes: two $500 gift certificates for electric service. Recipients of these two grand prizes were John W. Knight of Bridgewater; and Matthew O. Comer of Shenandoah.

Harold A. Putnam of Staunton; Buddy M./Mamie R. Mongold of Broadway; Kenneth Funkhouser of Edinburg; Elizabeth E/Timothy R. Walton of Rockingham; and Chad/Meredith Welcher of Fort Defiance were recipients of $200 gift certificates for electric service.

Judy Marshall of Rockingham; Zinaida A. Gillis of Rockingham; Gregory/Michelle Garber of Mt. Crawford; Hulda H. Heatwole of Staunton; Richard D. Randolph of Staunton; Douglas/Jean H. Estep of Mt. Jackson; Jordon Brothers of Mt. Crawford; Donald R./Linda R. Shanholtzer of Rockingham; Nancy K. Kline of Broadway; and Benny D./Sherri Gregory of Rockingham were recipients of $100 gift certificates for electric service.

Don Packard, Jr., of Winchester was the recipient of the early-bird proxy prize.
Beat the Peak is a new, free and completely voluntary program to help hold down electricity rates for all Cooperative members. During periods of the very highest electricity usage across the Cooperative, participants will receive an alert by their choice of text message, email and/or phone asking them to try and reduce their electricity usage for the next few hours. These alerts will typically only occur on the very hottest or coldest days of the year.

By working together to decrease the amount of electricity used during these peak periods, the Cooperative has to buy less electricity at the most expensive times. That will help hold down everyone’s rate.

To find out more about Beat the Peak or to sign up, visit www.SVECBeadThePeak.coop

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. SVEC supports our armed services and veterans in employment opportunities.
For the 25th year, Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) was able to give back to the community by awarding ten recipients SVEC scholarships in the amount of $1,000 each. The students attend eight of the high schools in the area that SVEC serves.

The students receiving scholarships are: Grace Blanchard, Margaret Chu, Lauren Croissant, Sarah Daley, Colin Jones, Isabelle Leonard, Nathan Miller, Haley Sanders, Benjamin Witman and Jacob Wright. They were chosen from a pool of 43 applications that SVEC received from 17 different area high schools.

“Part of SVEC’s dedication to its communities is making an investment in the youth,” SVEC President & CEO Myron D. Rummel said. “With these scholarships, we hope to reduce the burden on students looking to further their education, and in turn, help the community.”

To be considered for the SVEC scholarship, the student’s parent or guardian needs to be a member-owner of the Cooperative.

A five-person scholarship committee reviewed the students’ essays, letters of recommendation, participation in school and community activities, high school classes attended, and the grade-point average earned. The scholarship committee consisted of Linda Dudley, a retired educator; Tamara Hatch, associate director of sponsored programs, administration and accounting at JMU; Susan Vass, a retired educator from Augusta County schools.

Since 1992, SVEC has awarded scholarships to deserving high school seniors in the region that it serves. These students have earned the scholarships with excellence in the classroom, extracurricular activities, and contributions to the community. In the years since the scholarship has been awarded, the Cooperative has given back more than $90,000 to the community.

Meet the ten students who received $1,000 SVEC scholarships for 2016:

**Grace Blanchard** was selected as one of ten recipients of a $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship for 2016. She attends Highland High School and is the daughter of David and Julia Blanchard. Her desired field of study is public administration.

Grace is a member of the National Honor Society, Student Council Association, Highland High School band, and Scholastic Bowl Team. She is an active member of the Highland County 4-H Club, has volunteered for the Highland Public Library and Mill Gap Rutland Club, and worked as a school-outreach representative for the Highland Center, which promotes cultural and economic development.

Grace ranks first in her class of 15 students. Her classes include AP U.S. government, AP psychology, AP Latin and AP environmental science.

Grace impressed the scholarship committee in her essay by describing her intent to become a leader. “I respect the hard work and beauty found in simple rural life and love the people who live here even more!” she wrote. “However, I know that in order to be a voice and leader for my region, I cannot be silent.”

**Margaret Chu** received one of ten $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarships for 2016. She attends Luray High School and is the daughter of Yiu Pun “Sam” and Amy Chu. Her desired field of study is political science.

Margaret has participated on the varsity girls basketball and soccer teams, serving as a captain on both, in the National Honor Society, Student Council Association and Pride and Interact, a community-service club. She has volunteered for events hosted by the town of Luray, held an internship at the Page News and Courier, and served at Choices, a nonprofit organization that works with victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Margaret excels in the classroom, where she is ranked fifth out of 118 students in her class. Her senior course load includes AP statistics, AP English literature, AP U.S./Virginia government and Honors chemistry.

Her essay to the scholarship committee details her goals of making an impact on the community, both at home and globally. “Whether it be the smiling faces of my peers at homecoming, holding a hard copy of the yearbook or raising enough money to send meals overseas, I have learned that giving back to my community can be one of the most rewarding experiences,” Margaret wrote. “I want to continue this trend during and after college.”

**Lauren Croissant** was chosen as one of ten recipients of a $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship for 2016. She attends Spotswood High School and is the daughter of Bruce and Susan Croissant. Her desired field of study is kinesiology and health sciences.

Lauren is a member of the National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society and Spotswood pep band, and has been a section leader for the Marching Trailblazers and member of the varsity girls’ soccer team. She is a Girl Scout who has been active in the community through Harrisonburg First...
Sarah Daley was one of ten recipients selected for a $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship for 2016. She attends Wilson Memorial High School and is the daughter of Essen and Cathy Daley. She is planning to study engineering or math.

During her four years at Wilson Memorial, Sarah participated in several school activities, including National Honor Society, Latin Club, Honors choir, and cross country. In the community, she has volunteered at Tabernacle Presbyterian Church; for “Live United”; and participated as a Young Life member and student leader/small group leader.

She also succeeds in the classroom, where she is ranked seventh of 180 students. A sampling of her recent coursework includes: AP English literature & composition, AP Virginia/U.S. government, AP environmental science and AP statistics.

Sarah gained the attention of the scholarship committee when she wrote in her essay, “Even though my ideas about majors and careers still vary, I am confident in the fact that I will pick a field and major where I can best use my college degree to benefit others. Whether it is innovating and creating new products to assist people through an engineering degree, or assisting people with their financial goals through a business or economics major, I want to always have a focus on putting others before myself and using my education and experience as a means to serve others.”

Colin Jones was selected as one of ten $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship winners for 2016. He attends Ridgeview Christian School and is the son of Christopher and Cynthia Jones. His desired field of study is biophysical sciences.

He has participated in varsity soccer and baseball; band as a first-chair trumpet; drama club dinner theater; and in Student Council. In the community, Colin participated with the Ridgeview Baptist youth group; worked as an intern at Augusta County Library; volunteered at Advancing Native Missions, Massie’s Haven, and Calvary United Food Bank; and worked at Chick-Fil-A of Waynesboro.

Colin is successful in the classroom as well, where his cumulative GPA is 4.25. His recent class schedule includes consumer math, Honors English lit., Honors government and economics.

Colin’s essay garnered the attention of the scholarship committee when he wrote, “In the grand scheme of things, I see a college education as a vital catalyst for developing who I am. This approaching fall, I will be supplanted from my hometown, moving to Regent University right on the shore of Virginia Beach for my undergraduate studies. As I prepare for this step towards adulthood, I am both excited and daunted by what lies ahead. After all, as amazing as the friends and campus will be, I need to invest countless amounts of study hours and finances to receive my degree.”

Nathan Miller was selected as one of ten $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship recipients for 2016. He attends Stonewall Jackson High School and is the son of Ron and Renee Miller. His desired fields of study are sociology and kinesiology.

Nathan plays baseball, basketball and football, and has been involved with National Honor Society, the Interact Club, and Future Business Leaders of America. He volunteers at the New Market Food Pantry and has helped at New Market’s Rebel Park during the summer.

Nathan is strong in the classroom, ranking eighth out of 94 students in his class. He is enrolled in AP U.S. government, AP English literature, calculus and physics.

Nathan explained in his essay to the scholarship committee how personal experiences shaped his focus to giving back to the place he calls home. “Usually most people do not say they love the place they grew up in, but I can surely say I am one of the few people who love where they live and love who they grew up alongside,” he said. “I never want to forget my roots. I love this area and the people who live in it way too much to run off and start a new chapter of my life anywhere else.”

Isabelle Leonard was one of ten recipients selected for a $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship for 2016. She attends Riverheads High School and is the daughter of Kyle and Elizabeth Leonard. She is planning to study international agriculture.

During her four years at Riverheads, Isabelle participated in several school activities, including FFA, Student Council Association and Riverheads Academic Team. In the community, she has participated in 4-H; in activities at her church, Bethel Presbyterian; and in State and National Institutes on Cooperative Education.

She also succeeds in the classroom, where she is ranked second of 118 students. A sampling of her senior-year course load includes: AP English literature & comp, AP human geography, advanced calculus and AP environmental science.

Isabelle gained the attention of the scholarship committee when she wrote in her essay, “I know that my education won’t just ‘happen,’ it will take hard work, sacrifice, scholarship, late
nights in the library, and early morning classes. I will be my own ‘boss’ with no parents around to wake me up, remind me to fold my laundry, or make decisions for me. College will give me an increased sense of independence and skills that will better prepare me for life. Even though college is going to be full of new challenges, I am eagerly looking forward to it, because I know that nothing great comes without great effort.”

Haley Sanders was one of ten recipients selected for a $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship for 2016. She attends Wilson Memorial High School and is the daughter of Grant and Caralee Sanders. She is planning to study mechanical engineering.

During her high school years, Haley participated in several school activities, including National Honor Society, Math Honor Society and FIRST Robotics Competition Team. In the community, she has worked as an Augusta County Library Teen Volunteer and a math tutor.

She also succeeds in the classroom, where she is ranked 13th of 180. A sampling of her recent course load includes: Dual Enrollment college comp, AP computer science, AP statistics and Dual Enrollment engineering.

Haley gained the attention of the scholarship committee when she wrote in her essay, “I am looking for something more in a college education. I want to learn more about the world — sometimes it seems so mysterious. I want to be able to improve myself, and I want to use the lessons that I learn in college to help those around me. College gives you certain skills, responsibilities and drive that makes you an invaluable asset to your community. I have seen this in my community every day; almost every successful adult I know has obtained a college education, and he or she has a better sense of responsibility to themselves and to their community.”

Benjamin Witman is one of ten recipients of a $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship for 2016. He attends Spotswood High School and is the son of John and Heather Witman. His desired field of study is medicine, focused on infectious diseases.

Benjamin is a member of the Spotswood academic team, marching band, National Honor Society and Social Studies Honor Society. He is an Eagle Scout, participated with the Massanutten Youth Brass Band, volunteered at Sentara RMH Medical Center and helped at the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Free Clinic.

He is projected to finish at the top of his class of 188 students after a class schedule that includes AP chemistry, AP government, AP statistics and AP music theory.

In his essay to the scholarship committee, Benjamin explained his desire to enter a field of study in need of attention. “There simply are not many people who go into Infectious Disease, and those who do go to larger more populous areas in order to get more money,” he wrote. “I can improve the community by staying closer to the Rockingham County area and being a much needed, additional Infectious Disease Specialist at RMH.”

Jacob Wright was selected as one of ten $1,000 Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative scholarship winners for 2016. He attends Fort Defiance High School and is the son of James and Jennifer Wright. His desired field of study is agronomy.

He has participated in the National Honor Society, Ecology Club, Key Club and band, where he is currently the drum major. In the community, Jacob volunteered to help provide food for the Patchwork Pantry; deliver meals for the Salvation Army during Thanksgiving; and tutor students at a local elementary school.

Jacob is successful in the classroom as well, where he is ranked 12th out of 186 students. His senior class schedule includes AP environmental science, discrete math, English 12A and advanced band.

Jacob’s essay garnered the attention of the scholarship committee when he wrote, “Although I already know some about the field of agronomy being on the Envirothon team, I want to be a lifelong learner. In order to improve myself, my current goal is to be a soil scientist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). I have grown up on a dairy farm so I have always had an interest in agriculture. Growing up, my early interest was in being a vet. One summer, I even studied livestock at Texas A&M. However, I had an influential teacher who interested me in other areas of the agricultural industry.”
SVEC Updates Online Business Page

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) has revamped its online business page to better serve member-owners. First, members must sign-in or register at www.svec-online.coop. Once logged in for the first time, you will be asked if you want to sign up for a number of text and/or email alerts related to your account and SVEC programs. These include notifications for when your bill is ready for payment; when SVEC issues a Beat the Peak alert to conserve energy when demand is the highest; and to read the monthly e-newsletter. The business site also gives members the option to select paperless billing.

You can change your notification preferences at any time. Once you’re past the notifications page, you can get specific account information, including a place to pay your bill; see current billing details; billing history; payment history; usage history; a bill calculator; and a place to add an account.

There is also an option to communicate with SVEC, where you can learn about and set up Eazy Pay; view an outage map; and make a service request. You can also set profile information for your account.

We look forward to offering a better member-owner experience through the new business page. Please visit www.svec-online.coop today!

SVEC Major Outages

April 1  Fort Valley area  
700 members out for 1.5 hours  
Thunderstorms

April 3  Town of Strasburg  
1,400 members out for 3 hours  
High winds

April 22  Jennings Gap area  
900 members out for ½ hour  
Tree on line

April 23  Round Hill and Amherst areas  
2,100 members out for 2 hours  
Broken pole

April 28  Teaverton area  
1,000 members out for 1.5 hours  
Lightning near substation

Four Area High School Seniors Earn VMDAEC Scholarships

Four area high school seniors each earned $1,000 college scholarships awarded by the Education Scholarship Foundation of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC).

The 2016 recipients are:

Taylor Bauer, a senior at Wilson Memorial High School. She is the daughter of Todd and Karen Bauer of Staunton.

Genevieve Davis, the daughter of Colleen and Richard Davis of Winchester. She is a senior at John Handley High School.

Colin Jones, a senior at Ridgeview Christian School. He is the son of Christopher and Cynthia Jones of Stuarts Draft.

Arielle Sukhram, a senior at Farmer Christian Academy and the daughter of Dennis J. Farmer, Jr., of Strasburg.

These students were eligible for consideration because their parents are member-owners of Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC). Recipients are chosen based on three major criteria: financial need (40 percent), academic achievement (40 percent) and community involvement (20 percent). Applicants must also provide evidence of their acceptance in a post-high-school educational institution or program.

This year, the VMDAEC Education Scholarship Foundation is awarding 50 $1,000 Worth Hudson scholarships to students who live in areas served by electric cooperatives in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. These grants can be used to pay for tuition, fees and books.

The scholarships are named in honor of Worth Hudson, the first chairman of the VMDAEC Education Scholarship Foundation and former chairman of the board of directors of Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative in Chase City, Virginia. Since its inception in 2000, the Foundation has awarded 567 scholarships totaling $466,500.

The Foundation is funded through tax-deductible donations and bequests from individuals, proceeds from benefit fundraising events and CoBank’s Sharing Success Program. It also participates in the Amazon Smile Program.
SVEC Warns of a Phone Scam

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) recently learned of a phone scam affecting member-owners in which someone purporting to be a Cooperative representative threatens to shut off someone’s electric service unless payment is made over the phone. A toll-free number unaffiliated with SVEC is being supplied to member-owners who receive the call.

“First and foremost, we want our members to know that no representative of the Cooperative will ever mention a specific credit card or payment method, and our employees will only communicate about potential termination of electric service with members through a mailed notification, not through a phone call asking the member to pay for their service by credit card,” SVEC President & CEO Myron Rummel said. “We want our members to be aware that correspondence of this nature will not be generated by the Cooperative.”

Rummel suggested that if members have any questions about their account, or suspect a phone call to be suspicious, they can call SVEC at (800) 234-7832, which is the only toll-free number tied to the Cooperative.

“Furthermore, if one of our members does receive a scam call like this, we suggest that you contact our office to verify your account status and contact law enforcement immediately if a financial transaction occurs,” he said.

Electricity Remains a Good Value

Electricity continues to be a bargain, especially when compared to other consumer goods. As demand for energy rises and fuel prices increase, your electric cooperative is committed to providing safe, reliable electricity and keeping your electric bill affordable.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Mainstream Graphics

The Value of Electricity

Electricity is expressed on a daily basis using EIA 2013 Average U.S. Monthly Residential Bill of $111

$4.79
average cost of a Big Mac® meal

$3.70
average daily cost of electricity

Big Mac® is a registered trademark of McDonald’s Corporation. McDonald’s Corporation does not endorse or sponsor this material. Source: Economist.com, 2013