2018 Nominating Committee Selected

The Board of Directors of Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) has selected its Nominating Committee for the 2018 Annual Membership Meeting. It is the duty of this Committee to select candidates for the election of directors to be held during the business portion of the Annual Meeting.

During the 2018 meeting, SVEC member-owners will elect one director from Page County; one director from Rockingham County; and one director from Frederick/Clarke counties.

The incumbent from Page County running for re-election is Gary Gibbs, who resides in Luray. The incumbent from Rockingham County is Board Chair Gerald Heatwole, who resides in McGaheysville. The incumbent from Frederick/Clarke counties is Richard Shickle, who resides in Winchester.

If you, as a member-owner of the Cooperative, know someone you feel should be a candidate for the SVEC Board of Directors, contact one of the Nominating Committee members. Listed below are the members of this Committee and their addresses.

Potential candidates for the Board must be members of SVEC and bona fide residents of its service area. The Cooperative's bylaws say that candidates must be at least 21 years of age and may not, in any way, be employed by a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative.

The only other method for putting an individual up for election, other than through the Nominating Committee, is by petition. Section 4 of Article IV of the Shenandoah Valley Electric Bylaws states that “Any two hundred fifty (250) or more Members acting together may make other nominations by petition ... ” Nominations made by petition, if any, must be received by the Secretary at least twenty (20) days before the Annual Meeting for a name to be placed on the official ballot.

Remember, this is YOUR electric cooperative, so take an active role, and be sure to attend the 2018 Annual Membership Meeting, June 14 at the James Madison University Convocation Center.

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SVEC Eazy Pay: Convenient & Free

The SVEC Eazy Pay plan allows the amount of your electric bill to be automatically deducted from your financial institution account. This service is optional, secure, safe and FREE. HOW EZAY PAY WORKS — IT’S AS EZAY AS 1, 2, 3 ...

1. Read Material: Learn about Eazy Pay through our website, www.svec.coop; contact your local office for more information; or ask for a brochure to be mailed to you.

2. Sign Up: Enroll online at our e-Business website, www.svec-online.coop; print out an authorization form online; or pick up a brochure at your district office. Fill out information and return to SVEC with a voided check (checking account) or deposit slip (savings account).

3. Enjoy Worry-Free, Timely Payments! Upon receipt of this authorization form, SVEC will implement the direct debit of your financial institution account. You will continue to receive a monthly bill from SVEC as usual. On this bill you will see a new statement to the effect that, “Your bank account will be debited for $ (total amount due) on (date).”

You will be charged ABSOLUTELY NOTHING for this service, and you may cancel at any time, just remember to allow at least five (5) business days prior to the debit date to cancel the payment deduction or make changes to your financial institution information. Also, please remember that the payment will have to be made by another payment method.

www.svec.coop
SVEC Staff and Board Members Meet with State Legislators

Staff and board members of Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative met with legislators on Tuesday, Jan. 30, as part of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives’ (VMDAEC) quarterly board meeting and Legislative Day.

Attending were Board Secretary/Treasurer David Ferguson and Directors Steve Burkholder, Larry Howdyshell, Robbie Marchant, Suzanne Obenshain and Bill Orndoff, along with President & CEO Michael Hastings, Vice President of Member Services Mike Aulgur, and Public Relations Representative Preston Knight. They joined more than 125 people attending VMADAEC’s annual event at the Omni Hotel, which included representatives of Virginia’s 13 member-owned electric cooperatives as well as government officials, legislative staff and guests.

Following a breakfast reception at which Sen. Frank Ruff, R-Clarksville, received the Distinguished Friend of Electric Cooperatives Award, attendees spent the morning visiting with legislators and their aides in their General Assembly offices, outlining the position of Virginia’s electric cooperatives on legislation proposed in 2018.

The ultimate goal is to build and maintain relationships with legislators to ensure that the best interests of electric cooperative member-owners are in mind whenever legislation is under consideration.

Visit Planned for Sentara Van

Sentara RMH will bring its Mobile Mammography Van to Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative’s Mount Crawford Headquarters on Thursday, March 29. Registration is required.

For more information or to schedule your appointment, call Sentara RMH Funkhouser Women’s Center at (540) 689-6800 or 800-277-1021.

SVEC’s Headquarters is at 147 Dinkel Avenue in Mount Crawford.
SVEC's Major Infrastructure Improvements

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) continuously studies the reliability and safety of its distribution system to ensure we are meeting the needs of member-owners throughout our service territory.

In the first part of 2018, we’d like to highlight major infrastructure projects at two of our substations.

Strasburg Substation

Located just west of downtown Strasburg, the Strasburg Substation is receiving major improvements that include the removal of aging equipment and installation of new facilities to increase reliability and capacity. The substation expansion project includes the addition of three new transformers, relocation of four circuits off the existing transformers and placing the load on the new transformers, which in turn helps with the reliability of the station. A new control building is also on site.

Along with the increase of capacity in the substation, additional distribution feeders will be put in place to decrease the load on several circuits.

The expected completion for the project is late May to mid-June 2018.

Page Substation

Located near the Page Valley Fairgrounds, the Page Substation is under a major overhaul that includes removing aging equipment and installing new facilities to increase reliability and capacity. The substation expansion project includes the addition of three transformers, relocation of one existing transformer and splitting the load from the existing unit onto two of the new transformers, which in turn helps with the reliability of the station and includes the installation of a new control building.

Along with the increase of capacity in the substation, upgrading of the distribution feeders are on line to decrease the load on several circuits.

The site grading was completed in early January 2018. We are hopeful the labor contractor will be prepared to begin work by June 2018, and have a project completion of late 2019.

Also of note out of the Page Substation, SVEC soon will be rebuilding the Whitehouse Feeder, which will include installing new wires and about 40 new utility poles. Member-owners who may have service interruptions as a result of this work will be notified before any planned outages will occur.

Similarly, a rebuild of the Ridge Hollow Feeder out of the Columbia Furnace Substation in Shenandoah County is scheduled to begin on April 2. This project will run about four miles and include new wires and about 90 new poles.

If you have questions about any work SVEC has ongoing in your area, please contact the Cooperative at 1-800-234-7832.

SVEC’s Music Man

by Preston Knight, SVEC Writer

Even in his life outside of being a utility man for Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative’s Winchester District, Jeff Fuss seeks to light up a room.

Fuss is the author of more than 100 songs over his roughly two decades as a musician and has recurring weekend gigs at El Centro restaurant in Winchester, the Holiday Inn in Martinsburg, West Virginia, and Woods Resort in Hedgesville, West Virginia. He also often performs with his guitar for nursing home residents in Martinsburg.

“Especially there, I’ll play a song that brings back a thousand memories for them,” Fuss says. “That’s my heart gig. That gig is good for my heart.”

His writing and playing style is that of older country musicians such as Hank Williams Sr. and Merle Haggard, with lyrics frequently addressing country living, love, God and America. His performances include a mix of country and southern rock cover songs as well as originals, while Fuss also plays a select number of private events and handles deejay duties on occasion.

“You can know a million songs and they’re going to request a million and one,” he jokes.

For the last three years, Fuss has attended the Smokey Mountain Songwriters Festival in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The festival is held during the third week of August every year to celebrate “Appalachian Musical Roots,” according to its website.

“Jeff and his wife and kids spent two years living in Smithville, Tennessee, where Jeff was able to learn some great songwriting skills and spend some time at some writers’ nights in Nashville,” the site’s bio of Fuss says. “Jeff wrote a song called ‘Soldiers Christmas’ that was the most requested song one year in his hometown and also got on Nashville radio.”

Indeed, he speaks fondly of “Soldiers Christmas,” which he both wrote and recorded over Thanksgiving 11 years ago. It began playing on the radio in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, the following Monday, he said, and more than 300 copies of the single sold within 10 days. Nashville radio eventually picked it up, and Fuss says it was even making the airwaves again last year in North Carolina.

His inspiration for the song, which he wrote while passing time in his tree stand, was the fact his stepson would not be home for Christmas that year.

“It kind of helps [people] let go of their kid or spouse going back overseas,” he says of the song.

Fuss says he enjoys writing songs that connect personally with people, be it military families or those struggling with addiction.

“I try to write something that’s going to help them a little bit,” he says. “It feels good giving back.”

While he picked up a guitar “later in life,” Fuss is making up for plenty of lost stage time.

“I guess it’s kind of a labor of love,” he says. “I know every morning I thank the good Lord that I’ve got a job to go to, a roof over my head and a wife who loves me, and everything else kind of falls in line.”

To hear Fuss’ music, search his name on www.reverbnation.com.