

POWERLINES

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC






wwwremc.com



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Employee News



MARY JO THOMAS,
CEO

For the past several years WWVREMC has been talking about and working on plans for employee succession. We always encourage our employees to learn all they can and adopt a professional development plan for

continual growth. I've shared with employees how our organizational chart will change over the next 5, 10, and 15 years as current employees reach retirement age. We looked out into the future in our planning anticipating those possible retirements and working towards the availability of skilled employees ready to move up to that next career step. Early this summer I learned some of those anticipated plans were going to become reality.

After 33 years of service, Chief Operating Officer Mike Waltz has announced his plan to retire at the end of August. Waltz started as an apprentice lineman in 1988. While at the cooperative, he wore many different hats working his way up from apprentice lineman, journeyman, line foreman, superintendent of operations, director

of finance/HR, to chief operating officer. He has always been a great motivated leader with strong organizational skills. Those skills helped the cooperative excel in vegetation management, storm restoration, and copper replacement. Upon retirement, he plans to spend most of his time on the golf course and taking time to travel with his wife Gena.

Operations Superintendent, Adam Carman, also announced his plan to retire in September. Carman started as an apprentice lineman in 2002 and graduated from the Hoosier Energy Apprenticeship Training and Safety (HEATS) program in 2006. He was promoted to operations superintendent in 2011. His strong technical skills helped deploy the cooperative's advanced meter infrastructure (AMI) and complete a system-wide upgrade in 2019. Once retired, Adam plans to travel with his wife Tammy, spend time with his kids and grandchild and pursue his ongoing interests in cycling, fitness, golf, live music, woodworking, and home improvements.

Both Waltz and Carman will be missed around the workplace. We thank them for their outstanding dedication to the cooperative and wish them well

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September Due Dates

The due dates for payment of electric bills are **September 19 and 26.**

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for their retirements.

As soon as those announcements were made known, we began a process to fill those voids that Waltz and Carman will leave. We are fortunate that we have been preparing for succession because we had several employees interested and ready to step into those needed roles.

We are pleased to announce that Derrick Mullins has accepted the position as operations manager. Mullins has a wealth of experience in the utility industry and at WWVREMC that includes serving as lineman and North serviceman.

Sam Woeste has been named line superintendent. Woeste has been with the cooperative since 2005. He is a graduate from the Hoosier Energy Apprenticeship Training and Safety (HEATS) program with an electric line technician associate degree from Ivy Tech Community College.

Both Mullins and Woeste began serving in a transitional role in June to learn the duties of their new positions. We are convinced that both will be effective leaders for the operations department and future of the cooperative.

In addition, to fill the financial job duties that COO Waltz covered, Kyle Jobe has been named director of finance and accounting. He has been with the cooperative since 2013 and moves to this position from the position of office manager/accountant.

Jennifer Scott has accepted the position of manager of member support representatives. She has been with the cooperative since 2008 and moves to this position from serving as an MSR. She will be managing the work of the MSR's and the front office activities.

We congratulate both Jobe and Scott on their advancements at WWVREMC. Their commitment to our members and the member support department has made the transition seamless.

We expect there to be more changes to come. Taking change one step at a time, looking for efficiencies and improvements along the way is our hope for a successful cooperative long into the future. Please join me in thanking our retirees and supporting our employees in their new positions. They all make me very proud.

UNPLUG WITH MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

by Sandy Cason

Most adults have a vague memory of a time when “checking for messages” meant listening to an answering machine. We carried on with our days without relying on cell phones and managed just fine. The hidden account number is 387101. But today, we are more connected than ever through our smart phones and other devices.

Our phones are so much more now--from cameras to calendars to social media connections--and truly disconnecting from them can be tough. But it's even harder for our kids to unplug because they only know life with these tiny screens. It's difficult for them to imagine life without computers, gaming devices, tablets or cell phones.

But there's great value in unplugging for children and adults, even if it's for just a short period of time. For kids, time away from the screen to be outside with other children allows them to connect with nature and others in a way that a virtual experience simply does not allow. They are able to experience life in the moment and allow their creativity and energy to break free.

Fortunately, we are surrounded by some great parks and recreational areas such as Brookville Reservoir, Whitewater Memorial State Park, and the Cardinal Greenway. Outdoor enthusiasts will find plenty to do here from camping and fishing to biking and hiking.

We also have access to great community programs and organizations like 4-H, JA, and COPE that provide children with a safe place to play, learn and grow, while cultivating new skills and interests.

These types of clubs and programs offer kids an opportunity to explore activities and interests outside of school academics. Children can investigate areas they might not otherwise have access to and discover new interests

and passions. They often learn new skills and strengthen existing ones. It's no secret that the broader the range of experiences and activities children are exposed to, the more likely they are to find their own path and possibly a career. Community programs also foster important leadership development and public speaking skills. Through guided and informal play and activities, children learn problem-solving and interpersonal skills that enable them to resolve conflicts peacefully and improve interpersonal relationships.

Adults can also find meaningful opportunities to spend time with the kids when we all unplug. From board games to craft projects to playing in the park, there are many ways we can unplug for some family fun.

While you and your children are disconnecting, take a moment to identify potential energy savings. Unplug electronics that are not in use to avoid “vampire” energy loss. This is the energy that is drained from technology and electronics even when they are not in use. For example, although it is turned off, your TV is waiting to receive a signal from the remote and your DVR is waiting to record the next show or perform an update.

Let's encourage youngsters to step away from the screens and join in. To play and be part of an organization that helps them connect with others and find meaningful interactions and explore new activities and interests.

When you do plug back in, WWVREMC is here to help you save money and energy by connecting you with our energy saving programs and services. While we'd love to see you in person, we're also just a call or click away. Visit us at www.vremc.com or call us at (800) 529-5557.

Thank you for 'Chipping' In! Shedding Light on Hunger Program Wins National Challenge

by Mike Waltz

First of all, I would like to thank everyone for coming out to our event in July. While this is a responsibility-filled day for me, it's also an emotional moment as I gathered with friends one last time as the cooperative's representative for the Shedding Light on Hunger Charity Golf Tournament. As you all know by now, I announced my plans to retire and will have moved on by the time you read this.

At press time we were still collecting and totaling donations from the event. However, I am confident of our success and your support will help several local organizations who share our goal of feeding hungry Hoosiers throughout the cooperative's service territory.

We surpassed our goal of 100 lunch bag sponsors. Please follow our social media outlets for where the bags were distributed as we are still working out those details as I write this.

Another big announcement to make is that the Shedding Light on Hunger program has been awarded \$10,000 from NRECA and United Healthcare. The cooperative entered the program in the 2021 NRECA INTERACT Community Service Challenge in June. We feel honored to have won this award and employees have already begun seeking local organizations whose goals align with the Shedding Light on Hunger program guidelines to partner with them using these additional funds.

This event shows everyone's dedication and commitment to the Shedding Light on Hunger program. I am sure I will see many of you on a golf course soon. In the meantime, God Bless.



Go Paperless. Get a \$5 Bill Credit!

You may have heard about proposed postage increases going into effect this year. To help off-set this additional expense of mailing bills to our members we are running a paperless billing promotion for a limited time.

Every dollar the cooperative saves in postage and printing expenses goes right back to the members in the form of lower power bills. Going paperless is great for the environment and members benefit in other ways too.

- A monthly email notification will be sent via email.
- See the identical bill statement online as you would receive at home.
- Receive your statement real time without any delays.
- You will be able to access your SmartHub website or mobile app 24/7.

- Reduces your paper clutter at home and more misplaced bills.
- Pay your bill online using your checking account or credit card. You will receive an email confirmation of your payments made online or through our mobile app.
- Your Powerlines newsletter will be emailed to you so you won't miss out on important co-op news.

Sign up before October 2 to receive your power bill by email and receive a \$5 bill credit.

Reduce the number of paper bills being sent to your home by enrolling in our paperless billing notifications. It's free and simple.



Each month we hide an account number in the Powerlines. Did you find it?

NO JULY WINNER

Keep reading your Powerlines each month because the next hidden account number could be yours!

Director Candidate Applications

AVAILABLE ON THE WEB

WWVREMC members interested in running for a seat on the WWVREMC Board of Directors are encouraged to read the Director Candidate Information Sheet and complete an application. The information sheet and application can be downloaded from the cooperative website.

Members interested in serving on the nominating committee can download the Nominating Committee Candidate Information Form. More information on the 2022 district election will be included in upcoming issues of the Powerlines but members can submit applications by November 1 for consideration at the 2021 nominating committee meeting(s).

Visit www.wwvremc.com/be-active-member for more information.

Payment Options

US Mail

Whitewater Valley REMC, P.O. Box 3199, Martinsville, IN 46151-3168

SmartHub

Log-on at wwwvremc.com.

Pay-by-Phone

Call 844-827-4759. Set up your PIN. Follow prompts.

Liberty Office

In person or in the drop box.

Automatic Withdrawal

Simply request a form and submit it to our office.

FCN or Franklin County National Bank

In person or in the drop box. (Bring payment stub.)

VanillaDirect

Visit vanilladirect.com for payment locations and details.



For more information about payment options, please call us:

765-458-5171 or 1-800-529-5557

Bill Credit Winners

Our monthly drawing for five \$20 bill credits from all voting members of the 2021 annual meeting continues. Here are the winners.

SEPTEMBER

Ileen Ball, Brookville

Tracy Giffen, Centerville

Teresa B. Paddock, Liberty

Gary Schultz, Centerville

W. Kenneth Stephens, MD, West Harrison

Helpful Information

Liberty Office Hours

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

CLOSED SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

To Report an Outage or Emergency

Call 1-800-776-0493, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Login to your SmartHub account or sign up for outage texting at wwwvremc.com.

Be ready to provide the following information:

- The name and account number under which your electric service is listed.
- Map location number.
- Your phone number - needed to call back or confirm power restoration.
- The type of problem you are experiencing - flickering lights, complete power outage, etc.

Ready for more info?

Visit wwwvremc.com



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