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POWER OUTAGES

To report a power outage,
call 844-473-6668. We are available
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dennis "Jim" Savage, *President*

Todd Smith, *Vice President*

Cindy Scott, *Secretary-Treasurer*

Tony Caldwell

Mark B. Hahn

Scott Marschand

Donald E. Willson

STAFF

Robert Schwartz
CEO

Mike Barron
Director of Member Services

Lora Goodman
Human Resources Director

Matt Mavrick
Director of Information Technology

Liz Vance
Office Manager

Brandon Williams
Director of Operations

Stephanie Ziems
Director of Finance and Accounting

LOOKING BACK ON THE YEAR

CEO SHARES ANNUAL MEETING REMARKS



Each year, as Miami-Cass REMC's CEO, I am given the privilege of addressing you, our members, at our Member Appreciation

Day/Annual Meeting. Here are a few highlights from my address to those in attendance at the meeting:

It truly has been a strange year and a half as we find ourselves at another virtual meeting. Unfortunately, due to the unknowns of the pandemic and for the safety of our members and employees, we made the decision to hold the meeting virtually. We are planning to have the event in person next year.

Our elections were not contested this year, and Jim Savage, Don Willson and Scott Marschand all confirmed they would remain as directors for at least three more years in their respective districts.

As for the co-op, we have had a pretty normal year. The storms still came, and we did our best to keep the lights on. Our outage time went down from the previous year, averaging about an hour and half per member. In 2019, members saw an average closer two hours. We did see a little uptick in growth, adding close to 60 new meters.

Financially, the co-op remains strong. We saw positive margins for 2020 and have started 2021 strong as well. This means that we don't foresee a rate increase for at least two more

years. 2021 is the eighth straight year without an increase.

One of the major projects we completed was the refurbishing of our Bunker Hill substation. We are also working with Wabash Valley Power Alliance, our power supplier, to add a transmission and distribution tie line between our Bunker Hill and McGrawsville substations. Our current plant worth now exceeds \$40 million.

With the new political administration, we are in uncertain times when it comes to energy. Energy rates have remained stagnant for the last five years; however, if the push to increase renewables and the war on fossil fuels and nuclear remains, the cost of electricity will skyrocket. The demand for electricity isn't going down, and with the influx of electric vehicles, it will only increase and renewables simply cannot keep up with the demand. There has also been talk and actions taken to slow down natural gas production. Natural gas is the go-to fuel for peaking plants. These types of plants are usually offline waiting for electric use to spike and can be fired up very quickly.

If you recall from last year's meeting, I spoke about the purchase of Broadway Broadband and our intention to build out fiber and high-speed internet throughout our service territory and beyond. Quite a bit has happened since then. We have been working with the commissioners of Miami and Cass counties to offer

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low-cost or free internet to county students who cannot afford it or are in an area where service is poor or simply does not exist. All the schools in each county supplied us with a list of students they identified as being in need.

Broadway Broadband also entered the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF). It provides funding over a 10-year period to companies that can supply fiber and internet to areas not being served at 25-3 MB speed (25 down and 3 up). We were awarded funds for close to 550 miles at close to 50% of the cost to build. Broadway Broadband has six years to build these miles and to serve them.

Your cooperative also applied for a USDA grant and should know the outcome in September. There are more opportunities for grants coming with the stimulus packages that we

will pursue to help fund and speed up our fiber deployment. Currently we have fiber deployed at Eagles Point and to our office and surrounding businesses. There is also fiber from our office to our Twelve Mile substation which is currently being spliced and was ready for individual installations in July.

As you can imagine, with the push to get fiber out by us and many other entities, the demand for fiber material is through the roof. The current lead time to get fiber is approximately 42 weeks along with other hardware. We have a good amount of fiber right now but are still waiting for pieces and parts.

If you have been by the office, you may have noticed a new addition to our property. We recently built a building to house our fiber company and employees. We currently have 11 full-time fiber employees along with

current REMC employees who assist in various applications. We will likely need to expand our employee base by a couple more installers and/or splicers to service our customer base, which is now close to 1,500.

I also want to take time to thank all our directors and employees for a great and productive year. Miami-Cass REMC will also be saying goodbye to a long-time employee. Kim Burton has announced his retirement at the beginning of 2022. Kim started as our member service representative and moved to office manager in 2014, along with his member service responsibilities. Thank you, Kim, for your time with us.

I hope to see everyone in person next year as we get back to normal.

ROB SCHWARTZ
CEO

ANNUAL MEETING DOOR PRIZE WINNERS

\$500 BILL CREDIT

Bryon Norris
Sherri Moore

\$100 BILL CREDIT

Patricia Fry
Dwayne Johnson
Allen Parker Shinn
Robin Skiles
Donald Craig
Wayne Hostetler
David Quick
Jeff Brenton
Charles Brown
Josh Clingaman

\$50 VISA CARD

Richard Surface
Bryan Reed
Donald Byrum
Richard Slisher
Larry Conner
Thomas Buffum
David Carver
Kent Mills
Janelle Foust
Jill Robertson

\$25 CASEY'S GIFT CARD

Edwin Armstrong
Daniel Herrell
Thomas Duncan
James Jones

Steven Braden
Kay Weideman
John Wilson
Michael Sampson
Lora Pegg
Richard Weaver
James Newman
Sandra Miller
Lillian Palmer
Fred Schumacher
Jason Rouch
Daniel Wyant
Todd Huddleston
Larry Crown
Sharon Mckibben
Sandra Bowyer



The Miami-Cass REMC board of directors and employees conducted a virtual annual meeting on June 17 in the REMC boardroom.

ANNUAL MEETING *Recap*

Miami-Cass REMC's 82nd Member Appreciation Day and Annual Meeting was held virtually June 17 at the Miami-Cass REMC headquarters in Peru. A total of 235 members submitted their voting cards to the REMC prior to the meeting, which represents nearly 4.7 percent of the total voting membership.

Miami-Cass REMC employee Mike Barron welcomed everyone, Pastor Eric McCoy gave the invocation, and the national anthem was sung by North Miami High School student Jacob Birk.

REMC Board Secretary-Treasurer Cindy Scott called the meeting to order and read Board President Jim Savage's comments in his absence. Savage's comments highlighted the fact that the staff has been working hard the last year to bring fiber optic cable and high-speed broadband internet to Miami-Cass REMC members and customers beyond

the system. This is reminiscent of when Miami-Cass brought electricity to its members 82 years ago. Your cooperative continues to look for opportunities to help improve the lives of those it serves.

CEO Rob Schwartz then addressed the members (see highlights on page 5). Schwartz also announced that the board appointments ran uncontested and that the following board members were duly elected to serve for another three-year term.

Director election results:

- **DISTRICT 1** – Dennis (Jim) Savage
- **DISTRICT 3** – Scott Marschand
- **DISTRICT 4** – Don Willson

The meeting was concluded with the selection of scholarship winners and prize winners of \$500 and \$100 bill credits and \$50 and \$25 gift cards (see page 6 for a list of winners).

Board meets in JUNE

1. Counted seven board members attending. Attorney Jeremy Fetty also attended via teleconference.
2. WVPA board report was given by Jim Savage.
3. Rob Schwartz presented the monthly CEO report.
4. Minutes from the previous board meeting were approved.
5. Financial report given by Schwartz.
6. May monthly operating, member services and safety reports were reviewed.
7. Set the next board meeting for Monday, Aug. 2, at 7 p.m. at the REMC headquarters.

AREA STUDENTS AWARDED SCHOLARSHIPS

During its annual meeting, Miami-Cass REMC awarded \$500 scholarships to the following students:



- Daphne Dawson
- Britney Stroud
- Elise Ann Rosenow
- Abby Rogers
- Brooks Hensley
- Conner Hanaway
- Cain Clingaman
- Aleya Katherine Mygrant



Marshall County REMC's Emily Howard talks with Benjamin Adams about his project at the Cass County Fair.

4-H ELECTRIC *judging*

Miami-Cass REMC continues to support the 4-H Electric program in Miami and Cass counties. There were great projects this year and we are proud of the accomplishments of this year's participants. There were 20 entries in Miami County and 16 entries in Cass County.

Fair judging took place on June 18 in Miami County and June 25 in Cass County. Judges for Miami County included Emily Howard, Marshall County REMC; Kenny Eggleston, Marshall County REMC; Garrett Keiser, Heartland REMC; Kyle Perkins, Fulton County REMC; and Mike Barron and Shadd McLochlen of Miami-Cass REMC. Judges for Cass County included T.J. Garner and Kyle Perkins, Fulton County REMC; and Emily Howard and Kenny Eggleston, Marshall County REMC.

Great job to all who entered

projects. We hope to see all of these 4-H Electric members back in the program next year.

MIAMI COUNTY WINNERS

- **Division I:** Micah Cunningham champion; Hayden Soldi, reserve champion
- **Division II:** Anna Lorenz, champion
- **Division III:** Jaxon Jimenez, champion; Marissa Roush, reserve champion
- **Division IV:** James Richardson, champion
- **Division V:** Cameron Metcalf, champion; Cali France, reserve champion
- **Overall Grand Champion:** James Richardson



Garrett Keiser of Heartland REMC speaks with Chase Washburn at the Miami County Fair about his baseball-themed 4-H Electric project.

CASS COUNTY WINNERS

- **Division I:** Austin Hubenthal, champion
- **Division II:** Benjamin Adams, champion; Samuel Vanderburg, reserve champion
- **Division III:** Nathan Hubenthal, champion
- **Division IV:** Jason Gluth, champion; Rylee Miller, reserve champion
- **Division V:** Jeffrey Mills, champion; Brenden Harrison, reserve champion
- **Judges Award:** Benjamin Adams

Congratulations to those who participated and exhibited their projects at the county level.