



WEC Picks Up Where It Left Off

Tunbridge Rebuild Had Been Sidelined by December Storm

Things didn't go according to plan last year in a remote section of Washington Electric's service territory, in the rugged hills of Tunbridge, up east of the village. The Co-op was this close (hold your fingers an inch or two apart) to finishing a line-reconstruction project that replaced and upgraded some of the oldest power poles and conductor (wire) on the Co-op's system when the snowstorm of December 9 struck Vermont. It caused some of the most widespread and extensive utility damage in the state's history. For the Co-op, this three-day, two-storm event was the biggest blow ever, causing outages – some long, some short – to more than half of WEC's membership.

Tunbridge was hit hard. Outages for many people there lasted for days because the power lines in lots of places ran through deep woods; it seemed that as soon as a WEC crew repaired an area, other trees, laden with ice and snow, broke and took down lines that caused outages to people who had just had their power restored. The restoration process lasted about nine days – nine rugged days for WEC's entire staff: the linemen and operations assistants in the field; the tree-clearing contractors, and dispatchers working around the clock at the office; member service

representatives helping callers get through the ordeal, and the rest of the office and warehouse employees who contributed in myriad ways. Of course they were also nine wearying days for many Washington Electric Co-op members who had to live with intermittent power, or for long periods with no power at all.

Roads in this part of Tunbridge include "Hill" in their names for good reason.

But another victim of the storm was that nearly complete, 40-pole line-reconstruction project in Tunbridge, which serves a comparatively small number of farms, residences, and camps in the area between Hoyt Hill Road and Potash Hill Road. (Roads in this part of Tunbridge include "Hill" in their names for good reason.)

"We were getting close," says WEC Operations Director Dan Weston. "We had probably set 30-some poles, so we didn't have a lot more to do, and then it was going to be a good winter project, running the wire in."

It had been very hard work – what Weston calls "raw lineman work." When WEC and other rural electric co-ops were founded in the late 1930s and the 1940s, one way they controlled costs was by building their infrastructures – the poles and wires – directly across farm fields, a shorter distance than it would have been to build along roadsides.

continued on page 6



Three "members" of Ted Hoyt's dairy herd enjoying a nice cow day in Tunbridge. The line-reconstruction project (see the poles behind them) got its start at Ted's farm last year. After it was halted by the December 2014 storm Construction Foreman Kevin Lanphear and his crew finished it up in August.

A Primer On Your WEC Advantage

So what are these things called capital credits?

At an electric cooperative, you are more than just a customer. You are a member. In fact, you are part-owner of your local co-op. As part of that relationship, you will periodically receive money back in the form of capital credit refunds.

Because WEC is a cooperative, owned by its members, and operates as a not-for-profit, any revenues over and above the cost of doing business are considered "margins." These margins are used by the Cooperative as operating capital. This capital allows WEC to finance operations, power restoration after outages, and construction, with the intent that this money will be repaid in later years when the Cooperative is financially able to do so. The return of money to members is what the capital credit process is all about.

The capital credit process is a two-step procedure. First, we "allocate" margins to member accounts. That doesn't mean you get that money in the year allocated. Think of this as a credit to an account we set up for you called capital credits, and it is a "promise" to pay you in the future or some point down the road.

The next step is what most members are most interested in, and this is the "retirement" of dollars – actually sending out dollars to members (in the form of credits on bills, or checks). In the second step, we decide how much money we can give back to our members from the members' capital credit accounts. This return of dollars is taking a portion of your capital credit account and providing that money to

continued on page 8

Washington Electric Cooperative

East Montpelier, VT 05651

Inside

Reaching VT's renewable energy goals will be a challenge. Let's start with the premise that we're all in it together. President's Message, page 2.

A 50-Year Anniversary! Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, and its relationship to WEC's Community Fund. Story on page 3.

WEC will soon be issuing capital credit distributions to many Co-op members. You'll find a summary of the 2015 Equity Distribution Plan, and the names of former members who qualify for benefits if contact can be made, on page 4.

Thinking about solar hot water? See the Co-op Store for information about discounts for WEC members. Page 7.



Linemen Hans Pope-Howe (left) and Doug DeGroseilliers, with the final new pole in the Co-op's reconstruction project in Tunbridge. Page One story and photos continue on page 6.

President's Message

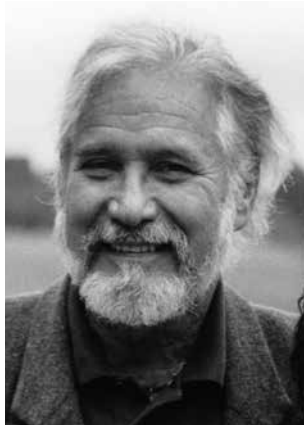
The Renewables Debate

Confronting Our Energy Challenges Honestly And Openly

By Barry Bernstein

As always, when we get to this time of year it seems that summer is too fleeting, although I am thankful for the warm weather (maybe a little too hot) in August and early September. We have experienced some scattered outages, and on my property a large ash tree came down after a lightning strike, taking the line out and with it the electric service. But crews were there quickly and got the lights back on before I had time to return calls from my neighbors asking if I knew what had happened.

As the seasons change we all begin



our preparations for colder temperatures – stacking wood, freezing and canning vegetables, sending the kids back to school, and so much more – while at your Co-op we continue to work on the fair weather jobs: regular maintenance, pole inspection and treatment, right-of-way trimming, new hookups, and Construction Work Plan projects. One of those projects, a very rural line reconstruction in Tunbridge, is featured in this edition of *Co-op Currents*.

Generation

Production at our Coventry generating plant continues to be strong,

while the Wrightsville hydro plant is at its low-production part of the season.

As the new state law, Act 148, takes effect, excluding many kinds of organic materials from landfills, it has begun to affect the content of the waste taken in by the Coventry landfill. Organics are the materials that break down through biological processes, which produces the methane gas that our Co-op uses to generate renewable electric power at our plant alongside the landfill. But as we reported in our July issue, the reduction in food wastes going to the landfill because of Act 148 is compensated for by sewage treatment plant sludge, including sludge from Montpelier and Barre here in central Vermont. This organic sludge goes through the same biological processes, and also speeds up the breakdown of other materials in the landfill, so our source of methane will remain plentiful.

Another issue we're encountering that has to do with changes in the landfill's content is the increase over the years of a chemical compound called siloxane. It comes from hygiene and cosmetics products – shampoo, soap, makeup, etc. – as well as plastics, salad dressings, mayonnaise and other sources. Siloxane enters the landfill in the assorted waste that is transported there, and also in the sewage treatment plant sludge. It enters our generating plant in gaseous form with the methane, but when heated by combustion in our engines the siloxane becomes silica – basically, sand. Sand, of course, is an abrasive and wears down the valves, cylinders and other parts of our Caterpillar engines.

WEC is at the beginning stage of exploring options for replacing the 10-year-old gas scrubber equipment we have used at the generation plant, and in doing so we are looking at new technology to help us address the siloxane issue. We will provide more information on the subject of a new scrubber system in upcoming editions of *Currents*.

Reaching 90 percent renewables by 2050

Your Co-op continues to support the state's goal of obtaining 90 percent of our energy – in all energy sectors – from renewable sources by 2050. I have discussed global warming and climate change regularly in my President's Message, and the continual

The move to predominantly renewable energy sources undeniably will come with impacts, and it will be up to all of us to make sure they are balanced and mindfully developed as we move forward with new state laws and public policy initiatives.

impact it has on our Co-op, our membership, and the state. WEC took an early leadership role in working with members to assist and support them becoming more energy efficient and conserving energy. We also took leadership in converting our power supply to 100-percent renewables and embracing net metering. Following the passage of Act 56 and Act 99, we are embracing the opportunities

contained in those laws for working with our members to help them reduce their fossil fuel usage. Our staff members are exploring potential program options, and we will be writing more about these new programs as they develop.

We strongly believe that one of the first steps for members who have not already done so is to get an energy audit of their homes or businesses so they can best weigh their options for managing their energy needs despite perhaps limited access to funds. Tightening your building's envelope, replacing inefficient appliances, and (when appropriate and affordable) converting from fossil fuel to a renewable fuel source for heat or even transportation, are all potential avenues that our members could pursue.

When considering solar panels, electric vehicles, and air source heat pumps, the sticker price is not small. Looking at all your options, including weatherization, is important so that you can invest your dollars wisely. Your best option may be to super-insulate your home and then downsize your systems because they'll no longer need to be as productive (and use as much energy).

But the place to start is the energy audit. It will provide the information you need to devise an energy-saving plan appropriate to your situation and your financial resources.

The big questions

As we engage the critical questions regarding Vermont's 90-percent-renewables goal – "How do we get there?" and "How do we honestly weigh the tradeoffs?" – it's important that we do so respectfully and transparently. Obviously, there are very strongly held views, as evidenced in the debates on wind, expansion of the gas pipeline, and more recently on commercial solar expansion. What is most critical, from my perspective, is how we weigh our choices and reach our conclusions on

continued on page 7

Co-op Currents

Co-op Currents (Publication No. USPS 711 -210 and ISSN No. 0746-8784) is published monthly except February, May, August and November by Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc., Route 14, P.O. Box 8, East Montpelier, Vermont 05651. The cost of this publication is \$.48, which is included in the basic monthly charge to each member. Periodical postage rates paid at East Montpelier and at additional offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Co-op Currents*, P.O. Box 8, East Montpelier, Vermont 05651.



WEC is part of the alliance working to advance and support the principles of cooperatives in Vermont.

Board of Directors

President	BARRY BERNSTEIN (May 2016)	1237 Bliss Road, Marshfield, VT 05658 Bbearvt@myfairpoint.net	456-8843
Vice President	ROGER FOX (May 2018)	2067 Bayley-Hazen Rd., East Hardwick, VT 05836-9873 rfox@pivot.net	563-2321
Treasurer	DONALD DOUGLAS (May 2017)	21 Douglas Rd., East Orange, VT 05086 dondouglas@gmail.com	439-5364
Secretary	ANNE REED (May 2016)	3941 Hollister Hill Rd., Marshfield, VT 05658 annereed48@gmail.com	454-1324
	ROY FOLSOM (May 2016)	2603 US Rt. 2, Cabot, VT 05647 RoyGrnsy@aol.com	426-3579
	STEPHEN KNOWLTON (May 2018)	160 White Rock Drive, #2, Montpelier, VT 05602 knowlsf@auburn.edu	223-2230
	DAVID MAGIDA (May 2017)	632 Center Road, Middlesex, VT 05602 vtmagida@aol.com	223-8672
	RICHARD RUBIN (May 2018)	3496 East Hill Rd., Plainfield, VT 05667 rrubin@sover.net	454-8542
	MARY JUST SKINNER (May 2017)	P.O. Box 412, Montpelier, VT 05601 mskinner@sover.net	223-7123
	PATTY RICHARDS General Manager patty.richards@washingtonelectric.coop	WILL LINDNER Editor Willind@sover.net	TIM NEWCOMB Layout

Editorial Committee

Patty Richards Donald Douglas David Magida Anne Reed Will Lindner

The Board of Directors' regularly scheduled meetings are on the last Wednesday of each month, in the evening. Members are welcome to attend. Members who wish to discuss a matter with the Board should contact the president through WEC's office. Meeting dates and times are subject to change. For information about times and/or agenda, or to receive a copy of the minutes of past meetings, contact Administrative Assistant Deborah Brown, 802-223-5245.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Helping People Help Themselves For Fifty Years

Once a New Idea in Adult Education, CVABE Hits a Milestone

Reading, we tend to think, is something that should be learned in grade school.

Children are taught to read, just as they're taught to line up in the hallway, use the playground safely at recess, and raise their hands in class when they have a question or an answer. Adults, in a developed society, are presumed to look at words on a page or a sign or a screen, and know what they mean.

Yet in Vermont, says Carol Shults-Perkins, the executive director of Central Vermont Adult Basic Education (CVABE), one in eight adults lacks basic literacy skills for reading and writing.

"And that's 62,000 people in our state," she says.

There can be any number of reasons: rural children forced by the death or injury of a parent to leave school early to help on the farm; an unsettled life because of an unstable family situation, resulting in one move after another and constant changing of schools. Furthermore, educators haven't always understood as much as they do now about learning disabilities, and that a child who can't be reached through ordinary instruction can be taught successfully through alternative means. Consequently, many learning-challenged children of an earlier era are the adults whom Carol and her CVABE staff and volunteers refer to as having "fragile literacy skills."

To call this an impediment is an understatement.

"There's lots of significant data," Carol says, "linking illiteracy to unemployment, poverty, criminal activity, and higher healthcare costs." All of these are negative consequences not just for the reading-impaired adult, but for society as a whole. "And the children of adults who are illiterate," she adds, "are twice as likely to have literacy challenges themselves."

If you're a Washington Electric Co-op member and you have elected to support WEC's Community Fund by donating your annual capital credit refund from WEC, rather than having it applied as a discount on your November electric bill, you're doing something about fragile literacy skills here in your home area. CVABE serves 47 towns in Washington, Orange, and Lamoille counties; Washington Electric Co-op serves members in the rural areas of 41 towns in Washington, Orange, and Caledonia counties. The overlap is considerable, making it a great fit for the grants given from the Community Fund.

If you are not contributing your capital credit refunds to the Community



Warren is helping Nhi to prepare for the citizenship exam. She passed and was sworn in as a U.S. citizen on August 11th.

Fund you're missing an opportunity to help not only with literacy problems that negatively affect real people and families – and, in fact, the overall quality of life in your community – but the many other programs supported by the Community Fund, as well. The September issue of Co-op Currents (this one) annually begins the process of identifying and locating former WEC members who qualify for capital credit refunds (see page 4). The introduction to that list also informs WEC members about the capital credit distribution plan adopted for the current year by the Co-op's Board of Directors. The process culminates over the next several weeks with the distribution of those credits as electric bill deductions (for current members) or checks (for former members no longer purchasing power from the Co-op).

So it's a good time to again encourage people to forego these (usually) modest payments and donate them to the Community Fund instead – a fund where every donated dollar helps provide grants to worthwhile nonprofit organizations throughout WEC's 41 towns and across Vermont, with literally none of the money diverted to overhead or administrative costs. Added to the contributions from thousands of other WEC members, they pack more punch, because they help support programs like Central Vermont Adult Basic Education.

'Night school' no more

CVABE is celebrating a milestone this 2015-2016 school year. It began as a new idea, branching off from the traditional "night school" that used to be the typical approach to remedial adult education, in 1965. This year CVABE is 50 years old.

"We'll be celebrating that anniversary in June," says Carol Shults-Perkins, "and publicizing it throughout the year."

Adult basic education, on the CVABE model, was an evolutionary improvement on the night school system. Night school was

primarily geared toward helping adults earn a Graduate Equivalency Degree, or GED. CVABE provides that service if that's the student's goal, but it's also structured to assist adults who want to fill a gap in their lives by finally earning their high school diploma.

"I don't think there are many jobs you can get at all anymore without high school credentials or a GED," says Carol.

What's probably more important is the flexibility built into the program. Night school was a school-based model with group classes held in the evening. CVABE departed from that regime.

"Having individualized instruction and home-based services became recognized as a need," Carol explains. "And it was about much more than literacy. Teachers at the night schools recognized that many in their classes

couldn't do basic math. A two-hour night school class was not hitting that mark."

Over the next few years this alternative approach evolved and acquired more resources. In the five decades now under CVABE's belt, its professional staff has grown to 20, which includes 12 teachers providing direct services to students. Those services remain very personalized, helping the students determine their academic and career goals, and then helping them accomplish those goals. Most are still free, though tests for the GED and a few other services entail the standard fee.

"I was one of the first two home-based teachers hired in this area," says Carol, who joined the CVABE staff in 1972 and has served as executive director since 2012.

Educational and human-services agencies helped link the new organization with people who would benefit from its services. One of the first connections made was with Head Start. That program's outreach workers had entrée into the homes of many low-income households with pre-school-aged children, says Carol, "And they would often recognize that the parents couldn't read to their children because they couldn't read themselves."

CVABE's growing corps of mobile instructors – folks like herself, Carol recalls, driving from home to home with educational materials in the back seats of their cars – were provided with the names of Head Start parents, and started knocking on doors, talking about the program, stressing that most services were free and one-on-one instruction could accommodate the schedule of each adult student. She looks back fondly on those days of working with people eager to take advantage of this convenient and individualized model of adult schooling.

"The program grew by word of mouth," she says. "I might be teaching in someone's kitchen and a neighbor would drop by. The student might say, 'This is my teacher; I'm working on math for my GED,' and that individual would ask me about the program."

As CVABE became more established it developed "learning centers" – teaching and administrative facilities in Barre, Montpelier, Waterbury, Bradford, Randolph, and Morrisville (addresses and contact information can be found at www.cvabe.org) to complement the home-schooling option. The centers sometimes attract people who don't want to reveal their literacy and math deficiencies to family members.

"We've had a number of individuals who, once they entered our doors and

continued on page 8



Central Vermont Adult Basic Education executive director Carol Shults-Perkins

WEC's 2015 Equity Distribution Plan

Co-op Seeks Former Members For Capital Credit Refunds

Washington Electric Cooperative is preparing to issue capital credit refunds to current and former members, as authorized by WEC's Board of Directors.

Under the 2015 Equity Distribution Plan, capital credits will be returned to eligible people who bought power from the consumer-owned electric utility during the years 1993 and 2014. While safeguarding the Co-op's financial stability, the Board of Directors has targeted a total amount of approximately \$350,000 for distribution in 2015, which is \$50,000 greater than the amount allocated for this purpose in 2014.

Capital credits are allocated to Co-op members (customers) for those years in which WEC's revenues exceed its operating expenses. Capital credits are a way of dividing those surplus revenues – called margins – among the member-owners. The amount of a member's allocation is based on the size of the Co-op's margins in the year(s) in question, and how much electricity that member purchased. Each Co-op member has a capital credit account in his/her name, which is a bookkeeping entry managed on an annual basis by the Cooperative.

WEC's practice has been to divide its capital credit distributions between FIFO (first in, first out) and LIFO (last in, first out) plans; the former is an approach that pays earlier (or "first") members, and the latter term (LIFO) applies to plans that pay the most recent (or "last") members. FIFO distribution plans reach back to pay off historical capital credit accounts. Since WEC initiated capital credit distributions in 1998 it has retired all allocations from 1939 through 1992, plus a portion of the credits members earned in 1993. LIFO distribution plans pay the most recent allocations, a way of providing the benefits of belonging to a cooperative to current or very recent members.

This year \$300,000 of the money earmarked under the 2015 Equity Distribution Plan will go to Co-op members from 1993. The Co-op began addressing the 1993 capital credits in 2014, refunding \$172,669 to members from that year. The \$300,000 refunded this year will leave an unretired balance of \$68,289 in capital credits from 1993. Of the remaining \$50,000 included in the 2015 plan, \$40,000 will address distributions for the most-recent completed year (LIFO), 2014. WEC's margins in 2014 totaled \$1,295,102.

When the Co-op retires only a portion of the capital credits from a given year it does not mean that some members or former members are paid and others are not. Rather, each person who qualifies for an equity-distribution payment is paid proportionally.

The final \$10,000 will be applied to the Contributions in Aid of Construction (CIAOC) allocation that all 2013 WEC members were notified about in January 2014. For a period of time, the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB) permitted Vermont's electric cooperatives to include CIAOC contributions (payments made by members toward

the costs of additional poles and wires needed for their connections) as equity, which is outside the norm of established accounting practices. In 2011 the PSB directed the co-ops to discontinue that practice, and to allocate the funds they had accrued from CIAOC, over 36 years, to their memberships of 2013. This year's \$10,000 is WEC's second installment on that obligation.

To qualify for a refund, *former* Co-op members must have a minimum of \$20 coming to them from their capital credit accounts, and must have submitted a properly executed authorization form to the Co-op by October 9, 2015. Current members who are eligible for refunds based on their 1993 and/or 2014 electric payments will receive their refund as a credit on their electric bill, regardless of the amount.

Alternatively, members, both current and former, can choose to contribute their 2015 capital credit refunds to the Community Fund administered by Washington Electric Cooperative. More than 1,300 people have taken the opportunity to do so – many on a permanent, recurring basis – and more are always welcome. Funds contributed by members in 2015 will be combined with any remaining, unspent monies in the Fund. The Fund makes financial contributions to qualifying community causes, per WEC Policy 6. A year-end report on 2015 Community Fund activities will be published in *Co-op Currents* in an early issue in 2016.

All individual retirements will be reduced by any uncollectible or delinquent amount(s) owed to the Cooperative, as permitted by the WEC Bylaws. No early retirements will be made to the estates of deceased members. No distribution will be made to patrons who purchased and paid for renewable energy credits (RECs) in 2014.

WEC may impose a \$10 annual service charge on all patronage (capital credit) accounts for years in which the credits have been retired and went unclaimed. This service charge can be applied to unclaimed accounts annually, until the balance in those accounts is \$0.

Earlier this summer WEC sent out Capital Credit Patronage Refund Authorizations to eligible former members, using the person's last-known address. Listed below are the names of people or accounts whose authorizations were returned as undeliverable. **WEC is asking friends, acquaintances, and relatives of the people listed here to contact those potential recipients or their rightful heirs, and have the former member or beneficiary contact Washington Electric Cooperative directly, at 802-223-5245 or toll-free at 1-800-932-5245.**

WEC will issue this year's capital credit refunds in November 2015.

Abare, Robert	Barry, Douglas	Bowen, Roscoe W	Carrier, Sandra L & Dan G	Copeland, Robert	Dodge, Albert	Fishbach, Michael
Abbiati, Georgianne	Barteau, Carl	Bowin, William	Whitcomb	Corbitt, Michael	Dolinsky, Ann	Fisher, Robert
Adams, Steven	Bartels, Walter L	Braman, Daniel	Carrig, Leslie	Cormier, Raymond	Doubleday, Elsa	Fisher, Stephen
Ahearn, Donald	Bartlett, Robert	Braunlich, William	Catlin, G Peter	Corron, L	Dougherty, Mary Rose &	Flanders, Arlene
Aiken, Kenneth	Bash, John	Brennan, Marty	Cavalier, Marie	Coughlin, David	Thomas E Brown	Flinn, Edwin
Albarelli, Joseph S	Bates, Bess	Bresett, Jonie	Century 21,	Coulter, Kathryn	Dowd, Blanche	Foley, Nola
Albertson, Stephen	Baumgardner, Earl	Brey Mayer, Geraldine	Cepiikas, Alison	Coutant, Florence	Doyle, John E.	Foot, Peter
Aldrich, Georgia	Bean, Kenneth	Brickett, Wilmoth	Ceppetelli, Ronald	Coutu, Raymond A & Sara E	Doyle, Virginia	Fortin, Lawrence
Alexander, Joan	Beardsley, John	Brickett (Estate), Vera	Chaffee, Jean	Couture, Laurent	Dresser, James	Fortman, Frederick E
Alfano, E C	Beardsworth, Rhonda	Brigham, Marshall	Chaffee, Michael	Couture, Matthew	Drew, Frederick E	Foster, James
Allen, Charlotte	Beck, Florence	Broad, Martha	Chafin, Brian & Catherine	Covey, Merle	Drinkwater, Gene	Foster (Estate), Kenneth
American Tel & Tel Co,	Beckler, Minnie	Brock, Bernard	Chalmers, Wayne	Coxon, Cynthia	Driscoll, John T	Foster, Sr., James K &
Amwest Surety Ins. Co,	Bedle, Julia	Brolin, Herbert	Chaloux, Sandra	Craw, Robert	Driscoll, Peter	Gertrude E
Anderson, Mark	Beede, Penny	Brolin, Ruth	Chamberlin, Aldora	Crawford, Ian	Drury, John	Frank, Elizabeth
Anderson, Roland	Beier, Deborah	Bronson, Robert	Chamberlin, Debbie	Crawford, John	Dubuque, Robert	Frappier, Larry
Andrews, Kathleen	Belanger, Mike	Brooks, Virgil R	(Norton)	Creighton, Thomas	Duchaine, Morris	Freeman, Bill
Andrus, George	Belcher, Alden	Brown, H Webb	Chamberlin, Jay	Creps, Wenda L	Ducharme, Susan M	Freeman, Ronnie
Argent, Parker	Belisle, Sandra	Brown, James	Champany, Sydney	Crisante, James	Dudley, Michael	French, Bert
Arndt, Walter	Belval, Martin & Julie	Brown, Leticia	Chapin, Dorothy M	Crosby, Jeanie	Dufresne, Robert	French, Beverly
Ashe, William	Bennett, Patrick	Brown, Margaret	Chapin, Linda	Crossett, Mary	Duggan, Rita	French, Stella
Asquith, Laura	Benoit, Lori	Brown, Thomas E.	Chartier, Theodore W	Crouse, David S	Dukette, Rose	French, Thomas
Ather, Joanne	Bent, Robert	Bruleigh, Kendall	Chase, Candis	Crowley, Sally	Dunbar, Jr., Bernard	Friedman, Penni
Atkinson, Trevor	Berger, Peter	Bryant & Dailey,	Chase, Chris L & Julie A	Crown, Deborah	Duncklee, Norman	Fullan, Everett L
Atwood, Renee	Bergeron, Laurie	Budzyn, Frederick H	Choen, David & Gertrude	Crowther, Irene	Dunn, Monique	Gable, James
Atwood, Stanley	Bernier, Judy	Burdett, Jerome	Cholewa, Raymond	Cullen, Joan	Dunn (Estate), Janet	Gadapee, Edward
Audette, James	Berridge, Peter	Burgieliwicz, Sheila &	Clancy, David	Culver, Jr., William J	Dupont, Roxann	Gagne, Michael P
Ausfeld, Thomas W & Jill M.	Berry, Alan	Nelson Olmstead	Clark, Daniel	Currier, Raymond E &	Duprey, William & Deborah L	Gagnon, George
Austin, Deborah	Betit, Michael	Burke, Francis	Clark, Harry	William G. Trombley	Dutcher, Marguerite	Gahagen, Jacqueline
Avery, Anthony	Betts, Andrew	Burke, Peter J & Linda	Clark, Peter	Curtiss, Robert	Dwinell, Joanna	Gallagher, Ruth
Ayer, Patrick	Betts, Peter	Larocque	Clark-Booth, Kimberly J	Czajkowski, Frances	Dworkin, David	Gammel, Ann
Badeau, Cynthia	Bielecki, Mark	Burnham, Ellen	Clearwaters, Duffy	Dahline, Arlen K	Earth Construction Inc,	Garcia, Florentio
Bair (Estate), Samuel	Bienvenue, Shawn	Burns, Joyce	Cleland, William	Dalmer, Brian	Eastman, David	Gardner, Ross
Baird, John R	Biggar, Margaret	Burns, Marjorie M	Clifton, Ernest	Davidson, Nick	Eastman, Shirley	Garneau, Traci
Baker, Gail L	Bilbrey, Christine M	Bushey, Ralph	Clough &, Phyllis	Davis, Charles	Edson, Theresa	Garron, Edmund T
Baker, Joseph	Billings, John	Butler, Francis	Codling, Aaron W & Nicole	Davis, Kathryn	Eldred, Allan	Garron, Edmund T & Alan
Baker, Kevin	Binder, Frank	Buttitta, Mary	Codling-Terhune, Sarah &	Davis, Lorena	Eldridge, Laura	R Quirk
Baldwin, Dave	Birutta, Gale	Button, Andrew	Timothy	Davulis, James	Elkin, Milton	Gates, Philip
Bales, David	Bishko, James G & Sally A	Button, John	Coffey, George	Defelice, Frank	Ellingson, Barbara	Gauthier, Linda
Ball, Diane	Blair, Duane	Buxton, William	Coffin, Barry	Deforge, Kathleen	Emerson, Russell	Gazaway, David
Ball, Nancy A	Blair, Gregory	Cabral, Debra	Cofrin, Tabor	Defranceaux, Carter	Engborg, Evelyn	Gazaway, Jr., David L
Banks, Tina M	Blair, Richard	Cadorete, Dorothy	Colbeth (Estate), Bernard	Delaney, George	Eniti, Anita	Geiger, Carolyn R
Barberi, Joy R	Blakslee, Ralph	Cady, Mary	Colburn, Judith	Delia, Muriel	Ennis (Estate), Everett	Geiger, Kevin
Barcomb, Don A	Blanchard, Walter M	Cahill, Robin	Cold Creek Hunting Club,	Demers, Karen M	Enriken, Jane, Mike, Philip	George, Janet M
Barcomb, W Kent &	Blau, William	Calliope, Tami	Collins (Estate), Norbert	Demingware, Cora	& Paul	Ghoodrich, Deanna
Wendy M	Blay, Donna	Camara, Albert	Colnes, Andrea	Depalo, Caroline	Estes, Brian	Giantonio, Patrick
Barfield, Coy	Blow, Paul	Cameron, Catherine	Colomb, Edward	Derby, Diane	Fadden, Linda	Gilbert, Louise
Barker, Jeanette	Bobar, Otis	Cameron, William	Colombo, Robert	Desmeules, Mark	Fagant, Carol	Giles, Scott
Barker, Winston	Boisvert, Robert	Campbell, Machel	Coltey, George	Deth, Michelle S	Fairbrother, Lawrence	Gillander, Mae
Barnaby, Terri	Bolin, Oscar	Canas, Richard	Combs, Diana	Dewey, John W	Farnsworth, Gary	Gillespie, Robert
Barnett, Dorothy	Bolles, Beverly	Cano, Antoinette (Estate)	Conard, Waller	Dexter, Tammy	Fazio, Joseph	Gilman, Charles
Barnett, Susan	Bolles, Jason	Cano, Victor	Conger, Ethel	Dexter (Estate), Bernita M	Fenner, Ernest	Gilman, Gary
Barnett (Dec), Anna	Bolton, William	Caplan, Karen	Connolly, Dorothy	Deyo, Donald	Fenner, Ernest L	Gimble, Josephin
Barnocky, May	Booth, Gordon J	Capone, Frank	Conroy, Kevin	Dickinson, C	Ferguson, Floyd	Girardi, Thomas
Barral, Robert	Bordonaro, Patricia	Carignan, James	Converse, Joseph	Dilts, William	Ferland, David	Glidden, Benjamin
Barrett, Rita	Bouldreault, Sean	Carpenter, Paul	Cook, Christopher	Dinsdale, Janice	Ferno, Herbert	Glines, Kermit
Barrows, Michael	Boutin, Sandra	Carr, Brenda J	Cooper, Jon	Doane, Stanley	Finley, James	Gloria's Salon Of Beauty,

Tunbridge

continued from page 1

Now, some 75 years later, a lot of those fields have grown up into woods, making it harder to reach the lines for repair and maintenance.

In some places, WEC has relocated sections of infrastructure to the roadsides. In this part of Tunbridge, though, Weston explains, that wasn't an option. The roads are small and the woody terrain alongside them is often steep – not hospitable to a power line corridor. Plus, these twisting, winding roads don't travel from Point A to Point B in anything resembling a direct route. It didn't take long for WEC's engineering department to conclude that rebuilding this power line section "in place" was the best option.

It's certainly not all woods. The first 10 poles or so go across Ted Hoyt's fields, high up on Hoyt Hill Road, which is open territory with wonderful views. But at Ted's place and everywhere else on this power line route "field" doesn't mean "flat," by a long shot, and the work was done with long stretches not accessible by road, and interrupted by creek beds and other impediments. WEC's digger truck (carrying an augur for drilling holes for the power poles) could reach some of these locations; elsewhere the Co-op's track vehicle was needed, and even then it was rough going.

No question that it needed to be done. "This project," Weston explains, "was identified in our current four-year Construction Work Plan [CWP] because there were a lot of old and deteriorated poles, and very small, outdated conductors in poor condition because of splices made over the years for repairs. This is cross-country, low-density territory in terms of the numbers of people served. But our Construction Work Plan helps us target and improve our reliability even at the farthest ends of our lines, because



Washington Electric Co-op member Ted Hoyt, of Tunbridge, was helpful and cooperative, say the Co-op's linemen, when they needed access to his land to set nearly a dozen new poles. Ted has three sons who, he says, will be the eighth generation of the family to farm the land on Hoyt Hill Road.

those Co-op members pay the same electric bill everyone else does."

So in the summer and fall of 2014 WEC undertook that project, pole by pole, with a team headed up by the Co-op's off-road construction foreman, First Class Lineman Kevin Lanphear. And it looked like the end was in sight, until the big storm of December 9 put a stop to it.

"Given the impact of the storm and the clean-up afterward, it took us through March to get the system back to where it was before the storm," says Weston, referring to WEC's overall 1,250-mile electric distribution infrastructure. "April comes along and we have mud season. Try working in those hills in mud season!

"Then all of a sudden it's May, and people are lined up for new

connections, just like every summer. But then in July, we said 'Okay, we're going to get back to that line in Tunbridge and finish it up.'

"And that's what we did. The old system stayed in place over the winter and got us through without too many problems for the people there, but they were due for a new power system to serve them."

Kevin Lanphear's crew returned and set the remaining poles for this roughly two-mile section. Then they ran the new conductor in, thicker and sturdier than the wire used in the 1940s.

Because that wire is also heavier, it requires that there be shorter spans between poles to provide adequate support. So there were more of them, and the new poles are stouter than the original ones (several of which had been condemned, marked with a red tag for replacement by WEC's contracted pole-inspection workers). And they are taller; most are 40-foot poles, five feet or so greater in height than what was there previously.

Replacing those two miles of live wire required a series of planned outages, which affected the members in the area. They received advance notice from the Co-op, and came to expect a temporary outage most



The Tunbridge line-reconstruction was what WEC's Dan Weston calls "raw linemen work." After starting at the Hoyt farm it went cross-country for almost two miles before emerging at the corner of Kibling Hill and Potash Hill roads.



Some of the right-of-way for this line-rebuilding project ran through the woods (left), and some was on open farming land (below), but very little was conveniently by the road. This is what "rural electrification," now often taken for granted, is all about.



Tunbridge

continued from page 6


Tuesday mornings in August, as well as a couple of Thursdays, from 9:30 a.m. to noon. Weston says he received very few complaints.

"My appreciation goes out to all the members on this section of line for their patience and understanding," he says. "And the landowners were great, giving us access to their property without any problems. We did some repair work when needed, to fill in ruts caused by our equipment. Honestly, half the success for getting this job done so efficiently in August goes to our members, who really cooperated."

The rest of the credit, Weston says, goes to Kevin's construction team (which included Lineworker First Class Jason Smith and Apprentice Lineman Scott Matheson), who accomplished this rigorous work in a short time period, and to Operations & Construction Services Manager Brent Lilley, who oversees and coordinates the Co-op's work projects. It's Brent who gives the crews guidance, sees that they are well-equipped for the

work ahead of them, and shuffles the various demands on the Operations department to make sure a project like the Tunbridge reconstruction gets done.

There are now new poles and wires strung across this mountainous and quintessentially "Vermont" section of WEC's territory. Some of the old poles have been cut off partway up and remain there, waiting for the phone company to transfer their wires to the new power poles. Pretty soon the Co-op will continue the reconstruction beyond where it terminates by a cornfield on Potash Hill Road. "We have another half to three-quarters of a mile that we're going to do," says Weston.

Of course, for the Co-op, this work never ends. Sections of the infrastructure are always getting older and more weathered with the equipment becoming outmoded for advanced technology. For the staff, though, there's a great sense of accomplishment in taking a challenging project like this, which will make a difference for members at the far reaches of the service area, and getting it done, once and for all, before the next storm can hit. 

President's Report


continued from page 2

what we want the Vermont we all love to look like. Vermont is our home, and although we sometimes have very different perspectives we all care about it greatly.

A recent development in new generation proposals is the filing with the Vermont Public Service Board for approval of four new, large-scale solar projects, each to host some 20 MW of solar generation. Each of these sites will require hundreds of acres of space. In one instance, I have been told, it calls for clear cutting 300 acres of trees.

I am not against this idea outright, but it does cause me to wonder: As we embrace and make the change to a far more renewable economy, how do we do it wisely and thoughtfully? The map we choose for our future will affect us all. There is no question: As individuals and as a society we must make the change to use less fossil fuels. But how do we do it responsibly? How can we make this transition compatibly with our environmental and aesthetic values? How do we ensure that low-income homeowners and renters are helped in this transition?

Investing our available resources wisely to reduce our carbon footprint is a critical part of the solution, as is tightening standards on all new building construction. But the move to predominantly renewable energy sources will come with impacts, and it will be up to all of us to make sure they are balanced and mindfully developed as we move forward with new state laws and public policy initiatives. We can make these changes going forward wisely if we get our eyes on the prize: the future of our children.

Have a great fall and try to come to our October 8 Community Meeting in East Montpelier at the Old Brick Church next to WEC's office. 

WEC CO-OP STORE

Solar Hot Water Made Simple WEC DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE



Now: Efficiency Vermont Incentives Available for Solar Hot Water!

- \$950** off from Efficiency Vermont and manufacturer rebates
- \$1,700** off installation by ReSOURCE
- \$1,002** in incentives from the Vermont Small Scale Renewable Energy Incentive Program
- = \$3,652 in Savings!**

There has never been a better time to install a solar hot water system!

To sign up for a FREE analysis and system quotation, take the first step NOW by visiting www.washingtonelectric.coop, or call 802-224-2329 to speak with WEC's Energy Coach about solar hot water or other energy questions.

Call the Co-op at **800-932-5245**
or visit us on the web at:
www.washingtonelectric.coop/pages/prod.htm



Capital Credits

continued from page 1

you. We balance the amount paid out with the financial needs of the Co-op. Capital credits are a significant source of equity and help to fund the growth and maintenance of the electric system. Therefore, the amount of dollars retired each year is based on the Co-op's financial needs.

Let's take a look at some of the more common questions related to capital credits, to give you a better understanding of what you as a member of the Cooperative are a part of.

What are capital credits?

Capital credits represent the member's share of ownership, otherwise known as equity, in the Cooperative. Your membership with WEC activates a capital credit account in your name. The amount of capital credits a member earns in a given year is based upon the amount of revenue the Cooperative receives from each member. This revenue comes to WEC primarily through the members' payments for electricity.

What is the difference between allocated and retired capital credits?

Allocated capital credits appear as an entry on the permanent financial records of the Co-op and reflect your equity, or ownership, in WEC. When capital credits are retired, a check or a credit to your bill is issued, and your equity in the Co-op is reduced. Hence,

it is a two-step process: first we allocate and then we retire capital credits.

How are margins allocated?

We allocate margins into a capital credit account based on your share of the revenue that was generated during that year. (Allocations to members vary, because the amount of electricity they purchase also varies widely.) We calculate your percentage of the total margins and allocate that amount to your account. Capital credits are allocated only during years in which WEC earns a margin. Remember, the allocation process is a "promise" to pay you in the future and does not mean you get that money back in that year; depending on the schedule the Board establishes, distribution of funds or credits in the capital credit account may not be paid out for many years.

Will I receive a capital credit refund each year?

Not necessarily. Each year WEC's Board of Directors makes a decision on whether to retire some capital credits based on the financial health of the Cooperative. When considering a retirement, the board analyzes and projects the financial needs of the Co-op and will authorize a retirement if WEC can afford it. During some years the Co-op may experience high construction and power costs, or unanticipated expenses such as severe storms, which may result in the need to spend additional funds to repair lines. These and other events might increase

If you would like to donate your capital credits to the WEC Community Fund, please call us at 223-5245 or send a note to WEC, P.O. Box 8, East Montpelier, Vermont 05651.

costs and persuade the board not to retire capital credits for the time being. Nevertheless, all capital credits that are allocated to members are maintained as a bookkeeping entry in their accounts until such time that the board retires them.

What happens to my capital credits when I leave WEC?

Your capital credits remain on the books in your name until they are retired – in other words, until they are paid back to you. According to WEC's procedures, some payments are made over a long-term period, such as 20 to 30 years. As a result, it is important to ensure that WEC has your current mailing address.

What do cooperatives do with capital credits when they are not retired?

Electric utilities are capital-intensive businesses requiring large investments in equipment. Like all businesses, WEC must maintain a balance between debt and equity to ensure financial stability. During periods of fast growth a large amount of money or equity is needed to build the wires and poles, upgrade the system to keep up with technology, and buy power necessary to serve members.


In order to fund this growth WEC has to borrow money from banks, reinvest member capital, or in some cases do both. By reinvesting your dollars into WEC, we are able to keep rates competitive by reducing the funds that must be borrowed from other sources.

Summary

We hope this has given you an understandable overview of capital credits. Let's review the main points in closing.

1. Your Co-op tracks how much revenue you generate for WEC through electricity purchases during the year.
2. At the end of the year, when revenues exceed expenses, these margins are allocated as capital credits to members.
3. When the Co-op's financial condition permits, your Board of Directors decides on an amount of money that will be expended to retire or pay a portion of the capital credits.
4. Your Co-op notifies you of how and when you'll receive your capital credit refund.

That's the Cooperative Difference!

And if you are interested in helping others, you can easily donate your capital credits to the WEC Community Fund, refer to the notice in the top center column. See the article on page 3 on one such organization that has received help from the Community Fund, Central Vermont Adult Basic Education. 

CVABE

continued from page 7

developed a trusting relationship with a teacher or volunteer, have told us, 'I've been walking by your learning center for years and couldn't get the courage to walk in and say, can you help me learn to read?'" says Carol.

CVABE has proved its merit to central Vermont's communities and employers as well. When new regulations expanded the requirement that truck drivers obtain a CDL (commercial driver's license) many towns faced a quandary; they had a workforce of skilled and experienced workers who knew well how to operate their trucks and plows and dump-bodies but were not able to decipher the daunting CDL manual concerning road rules, or succeed at a multiple-choice test. (Check it out online; it's not easy.)

The towns contacted CVABE, and teachers met with the drivers after their shifts at the town offices, or at their homes or the nearest learning center. Crisis averted.

A sign of the times is that the traditional basic curriculum – once called "reading, writing, and 'rithmetic – that enabled people to function in their work environments now includes computer functionality as well: word processing, file management, WINDOWS, e-mail, and Internet searches. Or – an example Carol cites – enabling a blue-collar supervisor on a production line to leave an end-of-shift report for the management or the supervisor heading the next shift. It's

not done on paper anymore.

And this, she stresses, is another critical role CVABE plays: not just helping people gain the skills to get hired for a job, but helping them keep jobs that they already have. It's why companies that have good employees sometimes refer them to CVABE for skill improvements.

Then, of course, there are the new arrivals to our communities, from Vietnam and Bosnia and other parts of the world. Many may be literate in their own languages, but turn to CVABE for English instruction.

So the program has grown. And expanded. It serves more than 500 adults and teens annually (ranging in age from 16 – the youngest age eligible – to more than 90). Yet despite additions to its curriculum, says the executive director, "Our basic, functional literacy program is the heart and soul of what we do."

A great way to volunteer

CVABE depends on a strong volunteer force. Volunteers supplement the teaching staff, provide many practical, office functions, and staff tables and distribute brochures at community events, among other things. They further link the organization with the communities it serves.

"The best way to reach people is to engage the entire community, to have their neighbors involved," Carol explains.

"We see, as volunteers, people who have had great opportunities in their lives, and want to give back. We have retired lawyers. We've had a



Richard is learning to read and write with help from Susan.

retired Supreme Court judge. We have retired nurses mentoring students who want to go into healthcare but need to improve their literacy skills before they can attend Community College. We're always looking for more volunteers."

CVABE is always looking for financial support as well. Its 2015-2016 operating budget is just over \$1.5 million. Eighty-five percent comes from the Vermont Agency of Education, leaving 15 percent to be raised annually through gifts and grants from businesses (like WEC's Community Fund), individuals, foundations, and voter-approved town funding. The organization reports that 87 percent of its resources support direct services to students, with the remaining 13 percent used for fundraising and administrative costs.

CVABE has not had to work very hard to attract the modest grants available from the Community Fund.

"It's exactly the kind of organization we want to support," says the Co-op's General Manager, Patty Richards, who

assists the WEC Board committee that approves Community Fund grants. "It's very people-oriented, actually helping people who live in our service territory to improve their lives and therefore their children's lives. That has a positive effect on our central Vermont communities, where we all live and work. And it's in our Co-op's interests to have well-informed members, able to understand and participate in the programs and options we offer and play a role in the progress of our cooperative utility. I am a firm believer that education is your ticket to the future, and CVABE is helping so many in our communities get on a path to a brighter tomorrow."

As CVABE celebrates its 50th anniversary, WEC encourages its members to support this cause and others by supporting the Community Fund through capital credit donations.

And if they've got money left over, direct contributions to this important organization would be welcome, as well. 