

Reliability is About to Get a Whole Lot Better in Northfield

WEC digs under the interstate as part of improvement plan

Imagine every time the wind blows, you worry you'll lose power. That's been the situation for many WEC members in Northfield. The Northfield feeder line – a three-phase line that heads toward East Roxbury from the Jackson Corners substation – and a single-phase line off that feeder are being targeted for reliability improvements.

The main problem is the extreme terrain the three-phase line traverses. Utility Field Technician Brian Wilkin, who is managing the project, said members of the operations team have been working on the line since January of this year. In the wake of the destructive late October windstorm of 2017, they've been spotting trees at risk of falling on lines from outside the Co-op's right of way and looking for damaged insulators on top of poles – which involves a rugged hike with a pair of binoculars to look for cracks in the equipment at the top of each pole. "We've tried to get ahead of equipment failure by physically walking the line," he said. In the meantime, tree crews have been working nonstop to clear the line of undergrowth and danger trees.

When members call in to tell us about outages, we're listening. We got all these calls from this one area, and we said, ok, what the heck was going on?
 – Patty Richards

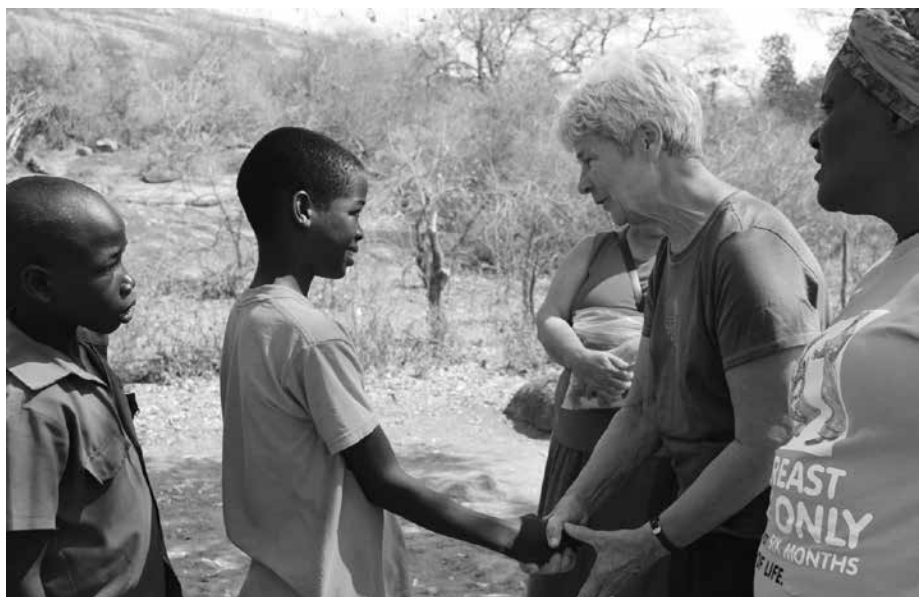
"We've heard loud and clear from our members that reliability in this area is not good, and we are going to fix that," said General Manager Patty Richards. "When members call in to tell us about outages, we're listening. We got all these calls from this one area, and we said,

ok, what the heck was going on? Then we could fix it." The line, which serves 1,301 Co-op members, travels about 14 miles through heavy woods away from roadways. A three- to four-mile long single-phase tap near the end of the feeder serves 128 members and has been affected the most by outages. "It's not acceptable," Operations Manager Dan Weston says of that line's reliability. "But it is fixable and we have a plan in place to improve reliability."

That single-phase line ends very close to Interstate 89, near the Northfield exit. So WEC is working to connect that line to the line on the other side of the interstate, putting poles as close to the highway as possible and then running line underneath the road.

When the power goes out for either an unplanned outage (a tree falls

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Nancy Clark checks in with a Zienzele youth in a Zimbabwe village. The Zienzele Foundation pays school fees for kids orphaned by AIDS.

Courtesy Nancy and Jim Clark

Weaving Self-Reliance

Nancy and Jim Clark's Zienzele Foundation empowers women's artisan co-ops and AIDS orphans in Zimbabwe

Nancy and Jim Clark of West Topsham, a nurse and retired climate scientist, did not expect their life paths would have them selling baskets at craft fairs. Nor did Nancy anticipate co-founding a nonprofit based halfway around the world, or spending 5-10 weeks each year in Zimbabwe. "What always strikes me is we just fell into it," mused Jim. "It" is the work of the Zienzele Foundation, which supports AIDS orphans and their caregivers by providing a market for baskets and other crafts produced by women's cooperatives in tiny Zimbabwe villages. "If anyone is willing to listen to the story," said Nancy, "they'll buy a basket."

Zienzele means "self-reliance,"

which is the core value of the foundation. There is some kismet in how Zienzele began: in 1998, the Clarks' daughter worked on a project with Earthwatch, an international environmental research and action nonprofit whose field expeditions immerse participants in global sustainability issues. Nancy flipped through the catalog and grew interested in a program addressing women and children's nutrition in Zimbabwe. She called and secured the only volunteer spot left. The team was led by Prisca Nemapare, a Zimbabwean nutrition researcher and professor at Ohio State. After two and a half weeks working on health assessments, nutrition, and

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Washington Electric Cooperative
 East Montpelier, VT 05651

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Seconds count: WEC's fleet is now outfitted with lifesaving AEDs. P. 2.

Fall is refund season at WEC: P. 4.



WEC's annual Community Meeting is October 25 at the Groton Community Building. Dinner is free with RSVP and benefits the Groton Rec Committee. RSVP form on p. 7.

Courtesy Groton Town Office

Affairs of the Heart

WEC Deploys AEDs in Its Service Fleet

By Will Lindner

People are seeing them, more and more, in public places: AED cabinets, mounted on the walls in airports, shopping malls, office buildings, and schools. Like many workplaces, Washington Electric Cooperative keeps an AED in plain sight in its headquarters in East Montpelier, and another in its operations center a mile away. AED stands for “automated external defibrillator,” and it’s a lifesaving device that even a layperson can use in an emergency to rescue someone experiencing sudden cardiac arrest.

The best way to get rapid assistance to people suffering such an episode, the

We’re hoping they’re just eye candy. We don’t want to have to use them.

– Rick Stergas, Safety & Environmental Compliance Specialist

American Heart Association says, is by providing access to AEDs that bystanders, friends, or coworkers can use to defibrillate a victim’s heart.

That’s why another place that AEDs can be found nowadays is in the Co-op’s trucks and off-road vehicles. Nearly half of Washington Electric’s employees work in Operations; they’re

lineworkers, engineers, and others whose work takes them out into WEC’s far-flung, very rural territory. If there’s a heart emergency in the field, the AED unit back in the garage won’t do them any good.

And because they work in close proximity to 60-cycle (Hz) alternating current – the standard for AC current in



An AED, or Automated External Defibrillator, can save the life of a person experiencing cardiac arrest.

the United States – line workers are at somewhat elevated risk of a fibrillation incident. Exposure at just a fraction of a second can cause a life-threatening injury.

“First and foremost, we preach safety,” said WEC Engineering & Operations Director Dan Weston. “That means de-energizing the lines before working on them, making sure to ground the current, wearing insulated gloves and all other protective gear. But things can happen. For example, during a storm, they might be working where there’s a downed wire, and someone nearby has turned on a generator that’s not properly disconnected from the system and it sends current down the line from where they’re not expecting it.”

“If something like this were to occur and send one of our workers’ heart into irregular rhythm,” Weston said, “the AED greatly enhances the odds that he’ll survive. Normal chest compressions will not get the heart back into the correct rhythm.”

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the AED is that it provides its own voice instructions. “You open it up and activate it, and it tells you what to do,” said Weston. “If you don’t do it right, it won’t work.”

The AED kit includes sensors that the operator applies to the victim’s torso. There’s a razor for clearing away body hair, and voice commands tell the operator where to attach the sensors. Once they’re in place, the internal computer monitors the victim’s heart to determine whether defibrillation is needed. If it is, the operator follows the

command to press a “shock” button that stuns the heart and allows it to resume its correct rhythm. The machine then provides a tempo for performing chest compressions.

All the while, presumably, a medical emergency team is on its way, summoned by a call someone has made to 911.

The website “AEDs Today” says that if someone in cardiac arrest receives defibrillation within the first minute of his or her affliction, the survival rate is 90 percent. But every moment counts. Citing statistics from the American Heart Association, AEDs Today says a cardiac arrest victim’s “chance of surviving drops by seven to 10 percent for every minute a normal heartbeat isn’t restored.” That’s why Weston and Board President Barry Bernstein both cite an additional benefit to outfitting Washington Electric’s vehicles with the life-saving device:

“We serve a rural membership, who are usually miles away from any kind of medical assistance,” said Bernstein. “We want people to know we have these AEDs in some of our vehicles, in case it presents an opportunity to get help to someone quickly in an emergency.”

Going mobile

WEC purchased its first three AEDs for its vehicle fleet about three years ago. With input from lineworkers, one went in WEC’s large digger truck (used, among other tasks, for installing utility

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Co-op Currents

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

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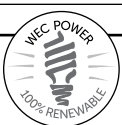
Patty Richards Donald Douglas Jean Hamilton Anne Reed Katie Titterton

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 Dawn Johnson, at 224-2332.

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Rate Design Community Conversation: September 19

Please attend a special meeting with WEC staff and Board at the Old Brick Church in East Montpelier, next door to WEC’s offices. September 19, 6:30 p.m. Come with questions and comments about WEC’s new rate design structure.



President's and General Manager's Message

Fall at Co-op Brings Members Cash and Conversation

Employee appreciation, revenue returns, rate design meeting, Button Up funds available, Coventry Open House, Community Meeting

Barry: August 9 was WEC Employee Appreciation Day—not that every day isn't. I have so much respect for and am proud of the whole Co-op culture. I was talking with Mike Patterson in the engineering department and we were talking about his 27 years as part of the Co-op. One thing Mike said is he's so proud to be part of an organization that puts the member first, and always has, and all the employees here grow up within that culture. Remember last issue's letter from a member about how Larry [Gilbert, Right of Way Manager] gave his lunch to her? That's just second nature to our employees.

Patty: Barry, that was spot on. You really captured the essence of the Co-op. For a small group of hardworking employees, we're always thinking about the members and how to do best by them.

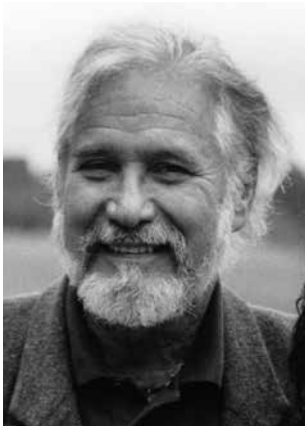
Barry: Mike also mentioned that he was so appreciative of the Co-op board, the time we spend on things, and that members of the board serve meals to employees at the church next to our office during storms. From my perspective, that's a time our board gets to look at everybody working during these storms and know even though they're tired they're still going out there. It's a very special spirit you don't see anywhere but here.

Patty: I agree completely.

Co-op returns extra revenue in November

Patty: As a co-op, not only is our culture about the people and communities we serve, but capital credits are a distinction between co-ops and other utilities in the state. When we take in more money than we need to keep the power on, we give

Last year WEC's Community Fund donated nearly \$38,000 to Central Vermont nonprofits helping our neighbors. To donate your capital credit refund to the Community Fund, call Member Services: 802-223-5245 or 800-932-5245.



I continually have members ask why they got a credit on their bill in November... My response is, that's the Co-op difference. Co-ops give back excess revenues to the people we serve.

— Barry Bernstein

it back. Only WEC and Vermont Electric Co-op give money back to their members. For-profit utilities keep profits for their shareholders. Municipal utilities are not-for-profit, but they don't return excess dollars each year. We return our extra funds. It's a process unique to co-ops.

Barry: I continually have members ask why they got a credit on their bill in November, or former members ask why they got a notice saying they have money waiting for them even though they're no longer on the Co-op line. My response is, that's the Co-op difference. Any funds left after annual expenses are met are returned to members over time: both members

who've been on the line a long time and current members who are getting electricity for the year. We give it all back.

We're going to be distributing \$750,000 back to our consumer-owners this fall. It will come to people who were on the lines in 1995, current members, and members who were on line in 2013. Those three pockets will get refunded in the fall. Current members will see it as a credit on their bill; former members will get a check in the mail. Every year, in this issue of *Co-op Currents*, we print a list of former members we've lost contact with who have money waiting for them. If you see someone you know on that list, tell them to contact WEC for their refund!

Patty: The other fun thing we do is the WEC Community Fund, which gives grants to local not-for-profit organizations in our service area. Ever year we ask folks if they'll consider donating their capital credits to the Community Fund. It makes a world of difference to small mom-and-pop nonprofits helping folks in central Vermont.

Barry: For myself, I donate my capital credits to always go to the Community Fund. It's such a worthwhile way to give to people and organizations in our service area. There's no administrative cost in giving those funds.

Patty: Right. Every dollar we collect we give back in donations.

Rate design meeting September 19

Barry: We're going to have a meeting at the Old Brick Church, next to the Co-op office in East Montpelier, on September 19 [see p. 2]. We're looking for more member input as we move ahead with our new rate design.

Patty: We're getting feedback from members in response to the rate design story we ran in the last *Co-op Currents*. We encourage people to come to the meeting if they can attend. At the end of the day, we're fundamentally doing this to address two things: climate change and energy costs—that's the total energy bill people pay, not just electricity. I'm happy to discuss this, one on one or at the meeting. People can call or email me at the office: 802-223-5245 or patty.richards@wec.coop. I'm happy to talk and I respond to emails.

Button Up funds available for home and transportation updates

Patty: The Button Up incentives continue! I want to remind members we have to meet energy requirements from the state, and if we don't, we have to pay penalties. The requirements increase each year. We have money to give away and if we don't meet the state's goals, we're going to get charged. Given the choice between basically paying a fine to the state



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—Patty Richards

for not becoming more efficient, and giving money to our members to do upgrades to be more energy efficient, we choose the second. We'd much rather spend that money helping our members.

Barry: Button Up is an extension of what we've been working on since the 1990's, with conservation and efficiency in mind. Everybody benefits when our consumer-owners take advantage of these incentives: you, the planet, the Co-op.

Patty: Button Up goes hand in hand with rate design. Moving away from inefficient and fossil fuel energy is something we

need to be doing anyway, regardless of whether the state set the goals or not. It's part of our mission as an electric co-op.

We have two electric vehicle incentives: there are Button Up incentives for low to moderate income members, and Freedom Nissan is offering another deep discount on their all-electric Leaf. There's something for everyone.

Coventry Open House September 15

Patty: This year's Open House is September 15 from 10-2. It's not only the generating plant but the entire landfill. It's an opportunity to see the whole process, from taking in waste, to sending methane into WEC's power plant and making electricity. Folks can see the whole cycle from waste to electricity.

Barry: When we entered into an agreement with Casella Waste Management in 2003 to build our generation plant, it was in partnership because they wanted to make sure the methane gas was used as productively as possible instead of just flaring it. Methane is 20-40 times as potent as carbon dioxide and this way it's being used to energize 6-7,000 homes. I'm proud of that and want to commend Casella for working with us to use that gas. And the Co-op just spent two million to put a new SRS device in to make the air coming out of the plant

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Co-op Returns \$750,000 in 2018 Refunds; Seeks Former Members for Distribution

When for-profit utilities take in excess revenue, it makes their shareholders richer. But when electric cooperatives like WEC take in excess revenue, that money is returned to the co-op's members. This fall WEC will issue these refunds, commonly called capital credit retirements, to current and former members.

This year, the Board will refund eligible members on the Co-op's lines in years 1995 and 2017. An additional amount will be returned to members on the lines in 2013 for what WEC calls Contribution in Aid of Construction. The Co-op will return \$750,000 altogether, or approximately \$30,000 more than was returned in 2017.

All individual refunds will be reduced by any uncollectible or delinquent amounts owed to the Co-op, and no early retirements will be made to the estates of deceased members. WEC will issue this year's refunds in November, 2018.

How it works

Refunds are allocated to Co-op members for those years in which WEC's revenues exceed its operating expenses. The credit a member receives for a particular year is determined by two factors: the amount of excess revenue the Co-op received, and the amount that member paid for electricity.

WEC's practice is to divide distributions between several years back and the most recent year the Co-op took in excess revenue. The idea is to include everyone: new members get a taste of the benefits of belonging to an electric cooperative; longtime members reap refunds from both recent and past years on the lines.

People who have moved off WEC lines also receive refunds. Former members must have a minimum \$20 capital credit distribution, and must submit an authorization form to the Co-op by September 28, 2018 to be eligible. Earlier this summer

WEC sent Capital Credit Patronage Refund Authorizations to eligible former members. Listed below are the names of people or accounts whose authorizations were returned as undeliverable. If you know any person on this list or their rightful heirs, please have the former member or beneficiary contact Washington Electric Cooperative directly, at 802-223-5245.

Eligible current members receive refunds as a credit on their November electric bills, regardless of the amount.

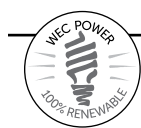
Co-op Community Fund

WEC's Community Fund exists through the generosity of current and former Co-op members who donate their capital credit refunds. Any current or former member may direct their refund to the Community Fund, as a one-time gift or in perpetuity.

The Community Fund supports small not-for-profits serving Central Vermont communities. The people served by these organizations are often WEC members. Managed by WEC staff and a committee of board members, the Fund has no administrative costs. "The Community Fund is inspiring and rewarding all in one. Every dollar we collect from our generous members goes right back out into Central Vermont communities. It is a terrific way to help small non-profits in their missions and it makes a real difference locally," said General Manager Patty Richards.

In 2017, generous refund donations from Co-op members allowed the Community Fund to give \$38,465 to 74 causes in Central Vermont; the recipient list is in the July 2018 issue of *Co-op Currents*. A year-end report on 2018 Community Fund activities will be published in *Co-op Currents* in 2019.

Abare Jr, Robert	Bent, Robert	Burke, Francis	Cole, Virginia	Degrasse, Kenneth	Entriken, Jane	Garone, Gregory
Adams, Earle	Bergeron, Laurie	Burnell, Robert	Collins, Bonnie	Delaney, George	Erwin, Cody	Garrett, Nancy
Adams, Steven	Bernard, James	Burnett, Candis	Collins, Donald	Delisle, Maurice	Erwin, Cody	Garron, Edmund
Aiken, Garrett & Tiffany	Bernier, Judy	Burnham, Ellen	Collins Estate, Norbert	Delorenzo, Andrew	Estes, Brian	Gauthier, Eric
Aiken, Kenneth	Berry, Alan	Burrington, Elise	Coltey, George	Demers, Arthur	Facini, Chris	Gauthier, Julie
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Altman, Gregory	Bingham, Kimberly	Cahill, Robin	Cooper, Jon	Dimick, Linda	Fassett, Robert	Gillespie, Robert
American, Tel	Birutta, Gale	Calliope, Tami	Cordes, Mari	Dinsdale, Janice	Fazio, Joseph	Gilman, Charles
Anderson, Mark	Blair, Gregory	Camara, Albert	Corron, Laurie	Dixon, Evelyn	Feldvary, Lou	Gilman, Kathleen
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Ashley, Charles	Blow, Paul	Cardosi, Sandra	Coutant, Florence	Dorfman, Michael	Fisher, Robert	Goldsborough, Pamela
Atlantic, Cellular	Boardman, John & Cynthia	Carpenter, Eric	Couture, Laurent	Douglas, Michael	Fisher, Stephen	Gonsalves, Joseph
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Austin, Deborah	Booth, Robert	Carten, Brian	Cragin, Rebecca	Doyle, Heather	Flanders, Arlene	Goodenough, Beverly
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Avery, Brian	Bouchard, Kent	Caspari, April	Crawford, John	Doyle, Virginia	Flinn, Edwin	Goodrich, Deanna
Ayer, Patrick	Boutin, Sandra	Center, School	Creps, Wenda	Dresser, James	Foley, Nola	Goodrich, George
Back, James	Bowen, Brett & Catherine	Century, 21	Crisante, James	Drew, Dennis	Fontaine, Fernand	Gorchinski, Edward
Bacon, Romaine	Bowen, Roscoe	Ceplikas, Alison	Crosby, Jeanie	Drew, Frederic	Foote, Peter	Gordon, Alexis
Badeau, Cynthia	Bowen, Sterle	Chadwick, Brian	Cross, Joseph	Drew, L Leonard	Fortin, Lawrence	Goslant, Ruby
Baginski, Dan	Bowin, William	Chaffee, Michael	Crouse, David	Drew, Sandra	Foster, David	Gould, Jeffrey
Bair Estate, Samuel	Bowley, Barbara	Chaffee, Patricia	Crowell, Scott	Drinkwater, Wayne	Foster, James	Gove, Robert
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Barnhart, Jenny & John	Brochu, Donald	Chateauvert, Janet	Dale, Laura	Duling, Donnie	French, Beverly	Green, Raymond
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Barral, Robert	Broe, Kimberly	Christie, Sueann	Dames, John	Dunbar, Pamela	French, Stella	Greenberg, Leo
Barrett, Rita	Broe Jr, Heidi & Everett	Clancy, David	Daniels, K C	Dunn, Brandi	French, Thomas	Gregoire, Glenn
Barrows, Michael	Brolin, Herbert	Clark, Amy	Daniels, Rebecca	Dunsmore, Susan	French, Timothy	Grier, Paul
Barry, Daniel	Brolin, Ruth	Clark, Daniel	Darling, Gary	Dupont, Roxanne	Freund, Leonard	Griffin, Bridget
Barry, Douglas	Bronson, Robert	Clark, Danny	Daunhauer, Andra	Durocher, Mitch	Frey, Terry	Griffin, Valda
Bartlett, Robert	Brooke, Glenn	Clark, Elizabeth	Davenport, Shannon	Dusseault, Kimberly	Friedman, Howard	Griffith, Trinidad
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Bean, Kenneth	Brown, Leticia	Clough, Phyllis	Davis, Kathryn	Eastman, Shirley	Gadapee, Edward	Guadagnoli, Donald
Bean, William	Brown, Margaret	Cloutier, Michael	Davis, Lloyd	Eaton, Russell	Gaelic, Susan	Guarcello, Giovanni
Beardsley, John	Brown Jr, Sherwood &	Coburn, Katherine	Davis, Lorena	Edson, Theresa	Gagne, Michael	Guggemos, Christian
Beardsworth, Rhonda	Denise	Codling-Terhune, Sarah	Davis, Phyllis	Edwards, Barbara	Gagnon, George	Guilmette Estate, Donald
Beck, Florence	Bruleigh, Kendall	Coffey, George	Davis, Richard	Ehly, Janice	Gahagen, Jacqueli	Gumbrell, George
Beckler, Minnie	Bruno, Barbara	Coffin, Barry	Davis, Walter	Eldred, Allan	Gallagher, Ruth	Guy, Stuart
Bedell, John	Bryant, Dailey &	Cofrin, Tabor	Davulis, James	Eldridge, Laura	Gallant, Linda	Habeck, Edward
Bedle, Julia	Buck, Stephanie	Cohen,, David	Deaquair, Dwight	Elkin, Milton	Garcia, Florenti	Hackmann, Jeff
Beier, Deborah	Buckley, John	Colbeth, Bernard	Decker, Jonathan	Emerson, Russell	Gardner, Ross	Hadley, Jozuf
Belcher, Alden	Burdett, Jerome	Colbeth, Roger	Decoteau, Gary	Engborg, Evelyn	Garneau, Traci	Haggett, Phoebe
Belval, Martin	Burgeliwicz, Seila	Cold, Creek	Defelice, Frank	Eniti, Anita	Garone, Francis	Haile, Dennis



Hale, Michael	Johnson, Jeffrey	Lyford, Nelson	Mullen, Jeremiah	Preston, Carl	Simmons, Rick & Jennifer	Upmal Estate, Upmal
Hall, Kenneth	Johnson, Lanae	Lylehaven Iii,	Munger, Ellen	Prosser, Robert	Simpson, Isabelle	Utton, Debra
Hall, Kristin	Johnson, Pauline	Lyn, Vincent	Murac, Robert	Protas, Alan	Sinon, Joanne	Vaczy, Charles
Hall, Raymond	Johnson, Robin	Lynch, Douglas	Murphy, George	Proulx, Annie	Slade, Christopher &	Vail, Edith
Hallock, Angela	Johnson, Walfred	Lynn, John	Murphy, Harold	Provencher, William	Lucinda	Vandenburg, Michael
Halper, Jeremy	Johnston, Kenneth	Lyons, Prescott	Murphy, James	Pryce, Steve	Smith, Barbara	Vasquez, Claire
Halpin, Robert	Jones, Allison	Lyons, Robert	Murphy, Marie	Pulsifer, Elizabeth	Smith, Barry	Veech, Roberta
Hamelin, Charles	Jones, Corey	Macarilla, Michael	Murray, David & Kathleen	Pytte, Anders	Smith, Benjamin	Veillette, Perry
Hance, Borden	Jones, David	Macie, Ronald	Murray, Nancy	Quagliano, John	Smith, David	Vermette, Joanne
Hanks, May	Jones, Dean	Mack, Roger	Murray, Robert	Quesnel, Annette	Smith, George	Vermette, Thomas
Hanley, Robert	Jones, Deborah	Mackay, Diane	Nadeau, Philip	Randall, James	Smith, Karl	Vermont, Sports
Hannett, Donna	Jones, Warren	Mackay, Stephen	Nary, Sean & Tammy	Randles, Jamie	Smith, Kenneth	Victory, Carole
Hansen, Winifred	Jordan, Veronica	Mackenzie, Jane	Neader, Rhoda	Rashid, Sikander	Smith, Kenneth	Vitkauskas, Janine
Hanson, Lisa	Jorstad, Laura	Mackenzie, Stephen	Neubauer, Karl	Rathmann, Heinz	Smith, Philip	Vitti, Marion
Hardy, Angela	Jose, John	Macnow, Wallace & Roberta	Newman, Benjamin	Rattee, Alan	Smith, Philip & Julia	Volpini, Frank
Hardy, Christine	Joslyn, Bruce	Magoon, Edgar	Newton, Grant	Raynor, Raymond	Smith, Richard & M Thelma	Vt, Institute
Hardy, Viola	Jurkiewicz, Helene	Magoon, Jerrol	Nichols, Ginger	Reed, Barbara	Smith, Sandra	Wachtel, Deborah
Harney, Mary & Jessica	Justice, Marjorie	Magoon, Laurie	Nichols, Trust	Reed, William	Smith, Sarah	Wagner, Howard
Harriman, Diane	Katz, John	Magoon, Lori	Nielsen, Kevin	Reese, Brenda	Smith, Stuart	Wakefield, H Paul
Harrington, Claudett	Keene, James	Magoon, Robert	Nishiyachi, Etsuro	Reid, William	Smith, Trent	Walbridge, Frances
Harrington, Dean	Keith, Gail	Mahon, Patricia	Noble, Gregory	Renaudette, Sheila	Smith, William	Walbridge, Gerald
Harrington, John	Keith-Hynes, Meghan	Males, Amanda	Noble, Lara & Gregory	Renfrew, Rosalind	Snyder, Marvin	Walsh, Christopher
Harris, Fredrick	Kelley, Amber	Mallary Iii, R D	Noel, Lorenzo	Resource, Of	Snyder, William	Walsh,, Deborah
Harris, Susan	Kelley, Leslie	Manavola, Joseph	Norman, Shawn & Tami	Revers, Peter	Somers, Steven	Ward, Marion
Hart, Amy	Kelly, Kevin	Manchester, Jessica	Northland, Tel	Richards Estate, Alfred	Sorensen, Mary	Warsley Estate, W
Hart, John	Kelton, Mary	Mangene, Jim	Noyes, Catrina	Richardson, Elizabeth	Sousa, Jose	Wasley, Randall
Hart, Lillian	Kemp, Marcia	Mangino, Albert	Nunn-Hudson, Martin	Richardson, Joseph	Spear, Neil	Wasow, Mona
Hart, Mark	Kenefick, Marie	Mangum, Thomas	Nutter, Michael	Richer, Raymond	Spencer, Carolyn	Watker, Wayne
Hartson, Ray & Shirley	Kent, Lisa	Manley, June	Nye, Dorothea	Richmond, William	Spencer, Fred	Watkins, Timothy
Haskins, Peter	Keyser Jr, F Ray	Manning, Kelly	Nye, Jason	Ricker, Ryan & Tina	Spinelli, Michael	Watson, Bryant
Hatch, Dale	Khan, Omar	Maple, Corner	O'Brien, David	Ricker, William	Spitzer, Steven	Webster, Daniel
Hatch, Margaret	Kiefer, James	Marciello, Robin	O'Brien, Richard	Riddel, Douglas	Spooner, Forrest	Webster, Lori
Hatch, Marguerite	Kiley, Matthew	Mark, Marion	O'Brien, Sandra	Rider, John	Spooner, Howard	Webster, Michael
Hatch, Ralph	Kilian, Jon	Markwood, David	O'Donnell, David	Riley, Thomas	Spooner, June	Weed, Jennifer
Hathaway, Lynn	Kimball, Allen	Marone, William	Oliver, Sheila	Robar, Don	Spoonire, Terry	Weiner, Susie
Hathaway, Lynn & John	Kimball, Brian	Marsh, Christine	Olsen, Kathy	Robb, David	Squires, Jeffrey	Weiss, Daniel
Hawkes, Glenn	Kinder, Pamela	Marsh, Douglas	O'Meara, Kelly	Robertson, Dale	St Cyr, Marcia	Weiss, Deborah
Hawkins, Wanda	Kindestin, William	Marshall, Jill	O'Neill, Myriam	Robertson, Ella	St Germain, Victor	Weiss, Stephen
Hawley, Melvill	King, Tammy	Martin, Catherine	Ordway, Michael	Robertson, Walter	Staples, Charlott	Welch, Michelle
Hay, Terri	Kirkpatrick, Scott	Martin, Edward	Ormsby, Deborah	Robinson, Jeremy	Stark, Anita	Welch, Patrick
Haynes, Larry	Kitchen, Lee	Martin, Herbert	Orner, Frank	Robtoy, Bonnie	Stark, Ivy	Welch, Stanley
Hayslett, Elizabeth	Kjier, Christin	Martin, Robert	O'Rourke, David & Lorna	Rode, Mary	Starr Estate, William	Weller, Dwight
Hayward, Shawn	Klinefelter, Douglas	Martin Estate, Mary	Ortoli, Ronald	Rodriguez, Sarah	Steed, Cynthia	Wells, Marjorie
Hazelton, Peter	Knapp, Eric	Martineau, Joseph	Otten, Richard	Rogers, Alona	Stein, Gretchen	Wendel, Bert
Healey, Robert	Knapp, Leo	Mascoveta, Mary & David	Ouellette, Arthur	Rogers, Fay	Stein, Nancy	Wentworth, Roderick
Heath, Donald	Knowles, Florence	Masi, Victor	Overstrom, Brenda	Rogers, Joyce	Stender, Angeline	Westcott, Ronny
Heath, Parker	Knowlton, Deborah	Mason, Carroll	Owens, Wade	Rogers, Kimball	Stephens, Alan	Westover, Dean
Heath Estate, Richard	Koeppl, Violet	Matthew, Thomas	Pacetti, Edmund	Rogers Jr, Scott	Stephens, Richard	Whalen, Mary
Hebert, Ernest	Kohl, Arlene	Maxfield, Terry	Pacini, Alberta	Roggensack, John	Stetson, Harvey	Wheatley, Gail
Heft, David	Kokoszka, Lawrence	May, Anita	Pagani, David	Ronner, Arthur	Stevens, Craig	Wheeler, Gerald
Hein Iii, William	Kramer, Donald	Mayer, Frances	Page, Carwin	Ronner, Arthur	Stevens, Mae	Wheeler, Herbert
Helburn, Margaret	Krause Jr, John	Mayes, Christy	Page, Howard	Ross, Harriet	Stewart, Candace	Wheeler, Lucy
Henderson, Gary	Krauss, Coleen	Mayo, Sheri	Page, Kristian	Rossi, Douglas	Stiles, Lewis	Wheeler, Richard
Henning, Robert	Kurutza, Cindy	Mazzona, James	Page, Martha	Rossi, Mark	Stillwell, Speer	Wheeler, Richard
Henry, Bernard	Labbie, Joseph	Mccarthy, George	Palisoul, Richard	Rossier, Kelley	Stoeckel, Ronald	Wheeler Estate, Helen
Henry, Tom	Labeber, Gerard	McCarthy, Joseph	Palmer, Bryan & Deborah	Rossignol, Boyd	Stone, Gayle	Whitcomb, Lawrence
Herman, Sylvia	Labrie, Hughes	McCarthy, Lucy	Papineau, Fonda	Rossiter, Donna	Stone, Gregory	White, Frank
Herrick, James	Lacasse, Robert	McCracken, Maurice	Paquette, Jeffrey	Rouelle Estate, Alfred	Stone, Harvey	White, Sherry
Herriott, Cynthia	Lacillade, Walter	McCue, Kevin	Paquette, Todd	Rounds, Stanley	Storto, Joseph	Whiteley, Thomas
Herzig, Thomas	Lackey Jr, H John	McCullough, John	Paquin, Heather	Rousse, Norbert	Straight, Carla	Whittemore, Keith
Heskett, Marilyn	Laclair, Joan & Aime	McCullough, Marilyn	Parauka, Marion	Routhier, Donald & Lynn	Strathaus, Gerard	Wies, Thomas
Hetzler, Gregory	Ladd, Gordon	McEnany, Larry & Julie	Parent, Robert	Ann	Stratton, Robert	Wild, David
Hierons, Robert	Lafogg, Bertha	McFarland, Stephen	Parker, Isobel	Roux, Robert	Strayhorn, Alvin	Wild, David
Higgins, Amy	Lagerstedt, Robert	McGadden, J & D	Parker, Jennifer	Roy, Danielle & Joseph	Stridsberg, Joseph	Wilder, Christop
Hill, Arthur	Lahart, Russell	McGeary, Meghan	Parker, Lyman	Roya, Kristy	Stryker, Jon	Wilder, Wayne
Hill, Camellia	Laing, Frank	McGovern, Sheila	Parker, Michelle	Roya, Leonard	Suarez, Donald	Wilkinson, Dean
Hill, Rodney & Amy	Lakatos, Peter	McGrath, John	Parks, Eva & Michael	Rutledge, Roy	Sullivan, C	Willey, Delene
Hill, William	Lalli, Luciano	McIntosh, Jean	Parrot, Kenneth	Rutledge, Shirley	Sullivan, Robert	Williams, Gwen
Hiner, James	Lambert, Gordon	McIntosh, Mary	Parry, Arthur	Ryan, Erla	Sullivan, William	Williams, Leslie
Hinton, Henry	Lamoille, Valdon	McKenna, Michael	Parry, Joel	Sainsbury, Scott	Sweeney, Ethel	Williams, Steven
Hiscox, Lisa	Lamp, Michael	McLane, Michael	Paterson, Christopher &	Saldi, Robert	Sweet, Rheagene	Willis, Kendall
Hoblin, Harry	Landa, Anita	McMahon, Thomas	Kathleen	Sales, Suzanne	Sweet, Sidney	Willis, Virginia
Hodgdon, Clara	Landers, Lorraine	McMahon, Thomas	Paton, Kenneth	Sallerson, Mary	Sweetser, Clyde	Wilmott, Kathy
Hoehel, Heather	Landis, Joshua	Meeks, Charles	Paul, Armenthia	Salomaa, Edward	Sweezy, Mark & Karyn	Wilson, Cindy
Hoffman, Jake	Langevin, Wilfred	Meier, C Padma	Paul, Harry	Salter, Gary	Symons, Helen	Wilson, Edward
Hoffman, Marion	Langford, David	Melkonian, Travis	Payne, Douglas	Sanborn, Beth	Szulc, Alfred	Wilson, Nicole
Holden, J Kent	Langmaid, Melissa	Menard, Katherine	Pearl, Logan	Sangermano, Peter	Tamez, Hallie & Jesus	Wilson, Richard
Holman, Patrick	Langone, Robert	Menard, Robert	Peatman, Philip	Sanville, Jason	Tanner, Michael	Winnie, Gregory
Holmes, June	Lanphear, Kevin	Mendes, Tara	Peckham, William	Sarazin, Jennifer	Taplin, Roger	Winter, Heidi
Holmstrom, Raymond	Laperle, Tammy	Merchant, Melvyn	Peduzzi, Norman	Sargeut Estate, Gaynor	Taylor, David	Wintle, Serena
Hood, Lynn	Lapierre, Margaret	Merritt, Barry	Perdue, Brian	Sarquiz, Ronald	Taylor, Frederick	Wires, John
Horton, Marilyn	Laprade, Andre	Merritt, Robert	Perkins, Timothy	Sassi, David	Teitelbaum, Maurice & Mary	Wiseman, Warren
Hotchkiss, Alex	Larivee, Estate	Merritt, Sugarhouse	Perreault, Amanda	Saunders, Monica	Thanhauser, Chaya	Wishinski, Peter
Hotchkiss, Sarah	Larkham, Glen	Messer, Richard	Perry, Linda	Saunders, Stephanie	Therrien, David	Witham, Estate
Houghton, Estate	Lawrence, Albert	Miller, Anne	Perry, Linda & Jason	Savidge, Evelyn	Thibeault, Georgett	Wnukoski, Joseph
Houston, William	Lawrence, Frank	Miller, Iva	Perry, Marybeth	Savioli, Catherine	Thibodeau, Timothy	Wolf, Guenther
Hovey, Cindi	Lawrence, Susan	Miller, Lawrence	Perry Iii, Courtland	Sawyer, Edward	Thivierge, Roger	Wood, Gregory
Howe, Mandevil	Leahey, John	Mills-Brown, Melanie	Persons, D W	Sawyer, James	Thomas, Alison	Wood, Harriet
Howell, Gail	Lee, Lisa	Minor, Austin	Persons, Russell	Schenker, Thad	Thomas, John	Wood, Patricia
Howell, Nancy	Leeper, Paula	Miskolczy, Elizabeth	Petell, Douglas	Schibuk, Norman	Thomas, Judson	Wood, Susan
Hoyt, Samantha	Lefevre, Kevin	Missner, Richard	Peters, Sonia Lee	Schlipf, Steve	Thomas, Kathleen	Woodard, Stanley
Huestis, Thomas	Leggett, John	Molander, Russell	Peterson, Susan	Schlosser, Frank	Thomas, Trudy	Woodbury, David
Hughes, J Norman	Leibold, Jonathan	Molleur, Lanny	Pettibone, Mary	Schneider, Eleanor	Thompson, Constance	Woodbury, Gordon
Hunt, Dana	Lemay, Juliette	Monte, Kenneth	Phillips, Kenneth	Schneider, Rodney & Debra	Thompson, Richard & Rose	Woodward, Joanne
Hunter, M Kelley	Leno, Deborah	Montgomery, Frank	Pierce, Ben	Schumaker, Esther	Thompson, Robert	Woodworth, Shelly
Hurley, Rowen	Lenz, Lilli	Moody, Dwight	Pierce, Walter	Schumaker, Esther	Thompson, Velvet	Wootton, Matthew
Hutchins, Ruth	Leonard, Ellen	Mooney, Eleanor	Pike, Emily	Schumaker, Esther	Thorne, Philip	Wright, Christine
Hutchins, Tammy	Leonard, Milford	Moore, Helen	Pike, Francis	Schwartz, Robert	Thresher, Michelle	Wright, Florence
Isaak, Jacquell	Lessig, Robert	Moore, Mavis	Pilbin, William	Schwarz, Lucille	Thurston, Andrew	Wright, Nancy
Isham, Christin	Levarn, Corinne	Moore, Pearl	Placa, Antonio	Searles, Pauline	Thurston, Diana	Wyeth, Dianne
Izzo, Anthony	Lewis, Brice	Morey, Roger	Plante, Renee	Seften, Nola	Thurston, Pamela	Wynkoop, Karen
Jackson, Robert	Lewis, Norton	Morgan Jr, David	Plaster, Cheryl	Sellyei, Lynn	Tibbetts, Germaine	Yates, Bartlett
Jackson, Stanley & Shirley	Lilley, Kim	Morin, David	Plattner, Helen	Setien, Cecilia	Tidd, Robert	Yates, Steven
Jackson, Stuart	Locke, Norman	Moroch, Grace	Podesta, Elisabet	Sevigny, Diane	Tierney, Patricia	Yoder, Margie
Jaeger, Paul	Long, Eugene	Morreale Estate, Anita	Polumbaum, Nyna	Shatney, Lori	Tighe, Scott	Young, James
Jamele, Peter	Longo, Deborah	Morris, Kenneth	Poole, Todd	Shaw, John	Tillotson,, Shirley	Young, J Peter
Jane, Dunn	Lonsdale, Paul	Morrison, David	Pooler, Dana & Laura	Shearer, Steven	Toffing, Rose	Young, Jackie
Janes, Melissa	Lorah, Sabrina & Mark	Morrison, June	Pope, Arthur	Shepard, Connie	Tokar, Brian	Young, Judy
Jarrett, Gabriel	Lord, Charles	Morse, Ceylan	Poplowski, David	Sherman, Charles	Toohey, Marion	Young, Marcia
Jarvis, Jessica	Lord, Marian	Morse, Linda & Douglas	Porcello, Ute	Sherman, Patricia	Tousignant, Edith	Young, Roland
Jauhola, Estate	Lori, Michael	Morse, Lucille	Porter, John	Shipman, David	Towle, Bruce	Young, Wayne
Jenner, Amy	Loring, William	Morse, Patricia	Potok, Charlotte	Shor, Betty	Towle, Susan	Zaremski, Thomas
Jensvold, Erik, Chris,	Lovelette, Lisa	Moses, Jessie	Potter, Ruth & Kermit	Shumway, Sheri	Trepanier, Tracie	Zdon, Victor
Andrew	Loving, William	Moses Sr Estate, Richard	Powell, Therese	Shuttle, John	Trombley, Aldis	Zedick, Mark
Jerome, Sarah	Lowell, Carol	Moulton Estate, George	Powers, Roger	Sicely, Brent	Trombly, Joanne	Zeno, Nancy
Jewell, Adela	Lowell, Neil	Moz, Jane	Powers, Wilfred	Sicely, Grace	Turner, Lisa	
Johnson, Gregory	Lowney, Paul	Mrasz, Barbara	Precht, Patricia	Sicely, Michelle	Tuttle, Alfred	
Johnson, Harold	Lumbra, Donald	Mujkanovic, Ramiz	Preston, Brenda	Simard, Jane	Unverzagt, Daniel	

Zienzele Foundation

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food access, Nancy was hooked. She returned the following year as team leader, and when Zimbabwe's instability caused Earthwatch to pull the program in 2000, Nancy returned on her own to work with Nemapare. Eventually, Nemapare retired from her professorship and relocated to Harare, Zimbabwe's capital.

At that time, the AIDS epidemic was killing thousands of Zimbabweans, and scores of children were orphaned. A group of grandmothers approached Nancy and Nemapare for help. "These women said, 'We've had all these grandchildren dropped on our doorstep as our children are dying of HIV. We can't feed or clothe them or send them to school. You have to help us,'" said Nancy. While she and Nemapare wanted to help, they didn't have any simple solutions to such a monumental problem. So they asked the women what they could do for themselves.

The women of the village had several marketable skills, Nancy said. Many wove traditional baskets, though they lacked a market for them. Others could sew, but had no sewing machines; or could garden, but lacked plots.

With this framework, Nancy and Nemapare founded Zienzele; a year later, Jim applied for nonprofit status in the U.S. They figured if they could provide the market, the women could sell crafts to support their households. Zienzele buys baskets directly from the artisans, at their asking price. The foundation resells them. Then, all proceeds from Zienzele's basket sales pay for orphans' school fees.

Which is how the Clarks came to spend "at least 15 weekends a year peddling baskets wherever we can," they said, at Vermont fairs like the Quechee Balloon Festival, and in Massachusetts and New York. Baskets are also available on their website, zienzele.org.

Zienzele began working with one group of weavers, and "now there are 46 groups of women making baskets," said Nancy. Zienzele works with 350 women and pays for 900 kids' school fees each year. Jim added, "We figure we've paid school fees for over 14,000 kids."

"It's not like we brought in brilliant ideas to solve their dilemmas"

The structure works something like this: Nancy is the president of Zienzele; Prisca Nemapare is the vice president; and Jim serves as secretary/treasurer—all volunteer. Each village elects a Zienzele representative to watch over the children. Three coordinators oversee these representatives. Nancy has 20-year relationships with most of these people, dating back to her earliest work in Zimbabwe. Each women's group functions as a cooperative. Nancy and Nemapare offered guidance as the women developed a business structure and helped them develop a simple but effective budget plan. "They save a third, reinvest a third, and share a third," she explained.



Above: Members of a Zienzele cooperative making baskets. At right: Traditional handmade Zimbabwe baskets, made by women in artisan co-ops affiliated with the Zienzele Foundation.

And, she said, it's critical that Zienzele is homegrown—she and Nemapare didn't swoop in with a prepackaged fix. "One of the reasons we've been so successful is Prisca and I didn't know what we were doing," she exclaimed. "It's the women's work and their ideas. It's not like we brought

in brilliant ideas to solve their dilemmas." The women artisans of Zienzele decided to do something to help themselves and the children of their communities, she said. "They've been empowered when before they were marginalized."



Courtesy Nancy and Jim Clark

Paradoxes of market growth

The Clarks are now examining how to expand Zienzele's markets. Several of the elements that make Zienzele unique—and successful—also create growth paradoxes: for one, because the organization's mission is to foster self-reliance, Jim said, they've chosen to not seek grant funding (though rotary clubs, church groups, schools, and hospitals have all given gifts or supplies). For another, the organization's smallness is an asset: surging incomes, Nancy explained, would risk attracting Zimbabwe's notorious corruption.

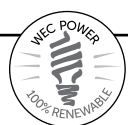
Other forays quickly become complicated. Partnering with retail outlets to sell baskets would make sense if the organization were serving only the artisans. But because 100% of resale profits pay for orphans' school fees, they're wary about any deal that might compromise that financial commitment. So they're looking at finding bigger markets willing to distribute according to the working model. "These all take a lot of involvement and time, but it's the direction we need to go to let it be a bigger business model," said Nancy, adding that like many nonprofits, their goal is to eventually solve their way out of their work.

Child Headed Households

A generation of AIDS orphans has grown up in the two decades Nancy has been working in Zimbabwe. "People were dying all the time in the beginning," said Nancy, adding that now, while HIV cases are still high, people are living with access to medicine. Three years ago, she said, they held their first wellness clinic that wasn't entirely focused on HIV. As far as human systems go, it's hard to



Nancy and Jim Clark of West Topsham display Zienzele baskets for sale. Nancy Clark and Prisca Nemapare of Harare, Zimbabwe are co-founders of the Zienzele Foundation. The foundation buys traditional Zimbabwe baskets from artisan co-ops and resells them to pay the school fees of Zimbabwe children and youth orphaned by AIDS.



predict what happens when the dust settles. “It’s difficult to look at the impact of HIV on the country—we don’t have any idea what that will be because all these kids have lost the scaffolding of a family unit,” Nancy said.

These kids are the focus of Zienzele’s Child Headed Households program. Usually in their early teens, they’re either solo or caring for younger siblings, sometimes living with an elderly grandmother, sometimes entirely on their own. Zienzele matches donors with these families: donors’ annual gifts provide quarterly packages of food, clothes, and other support items, plus the comfort of a proxy family relationship thousands of miles away. Nancy packs suitcases full for them when she goes to Zimbabwe, and Jim said she builds a relationship with every single child Zienzele supports while she’s there.

One recently told her, “When I was little, and you used to tell me, ‘I’ll see you in September,’ I would go home and cry, because I wouldn’t see you till September,” she recalled. “These are kids!” Of 15 Zienzele youth in postsecondary education now, she says, 13 are from child headed households. “They’ve had the resiliency chip plugged in out of necessity,” she said.

Now is a pivotal, though uncertain, moment in Zimbabwe’s history. Last year the military forced president Robert Mugabe to resign after a nearly 40-year reign marked by violence and corruption. People maintained hope for years, said Nancy, even as AIDS devastated families, and food, education, and economic systems were all depleted. The political climate was too unstable for her usual spring trip this year, she said, “but I’m going

in September, by God!” If all goes as planned, she said, she’ll be there with Prisca Nemapare as well as fellow volunteer Cynthia Stadler to lead cervical cancer screenings and lead workshops on adolescent health and reproductive health. And she’ll check in with the kids. The kids are waiting for her.

For more information, visit zienzele.org.

Currents seeks out stories about WEC members—both individuals and businesses—whose lives or work reflect one or more of the Seven Cooperative Principles. The Zienzele Foundation, a cooperative itself, practices all seven. See wec.coop or any October issue of Co-op Currents for the full list of seven principles.

WEC Deploys AEDs

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poles) and two went in the bucket trucks the crews use for aerial work at the top of poles, along the wires, and for cutting back tree limbs.

Recently, WEC purchased three more AEDs. The Operations team decided one would go in the largest of the bucket trucks, another in the track vehicle used for work in hard-to-reach locations, and the third rides in the on-call truck that crews use for responding to outages at night and on weekends.

But since the AEDs are portable, they can be switched among any of the vehicles. “The idea is to have an AED in at least one vehicle on every project,” said WEC Safety & Environmental Compliance Specialist Rick Stergas. These can include line-reconstruction and relocation projects, or restoration projects involving multiple crews after a storm or other incident.

“We’re hoping they’re just eye candy,” Stergas said. “We don’t want to have to use them.”

Even though AEDs provide their own voice instructions, Stergas brought in a certified trainer to demonstrate their use. “People respond differently under pressure,” he explained. “The AED tells you what to do, but it will certainly help faster in an emergency if they’ve had practice and are familiar with the device.” AED, CPR, and First Aid trainings for the line crews are annual requirements under VOSHA (Vermont Occupational Safety and Health Administration).

The cost of AEDs has dropped significantly since WEC purchased its first ones for about \$4,000 apiece. They now cost around \$1,600, and the price is expected to go down further. WEC intends to purchase a few more.

“That sounds like a lot of money,” Weston conceded, “but you’re talking about a tool that can make a difference between someone living or dying.”

Get to Know Your WEC

Tyler Skinner

Have you ever wondered who that is fixing the line up your road, or who you spoke to when you called in about an outage or a bill? Co-op Currents profiles Co-op staff in this feature.

Tyler Skinner

How he got started

Tyler is an Apprentice Lineworker who started at WEC in July 2017, right after graduating from Southeast Lineman Training Center. Before training to work on the lines, he worked as an electrician in Milton, his hometown. “I always wanted to be a lineman,” he claimed, saying since he was a child he studied crews at work: “I watched these guys working in my parents’ woods, and I was just mesmerized by what they were doing,” he said. He’s always liked working with electricity, he added.



Multi-sport athlete

Tyler lives in Barre with his longtime girlfriend. They enjoy biking together and being outdoors. Tyler also likes to make time for metal detecting with his dad and helping out family members who need electrical or handy work done around their homes. “I like to help people,” he explained.

As someone who loves adrenaline and being outside, Tyler pushes himself to try new activities and improve on skills. He fishes, and recently discovered he enjoys golf (“My best last year was an 83. It only happened once, though,” he said) and got a pass to keep working on his game this summer.

You Are Invited— Thursday, October 25, 2018

WEC Community Meeting

*Doors open at 5:30 p.m.
Dinner begins at 6 p.m.*

Please join WEC staff, directors, and members at a dinner meeting and informational discussion on Thursday, October 25, 2018.

The meeting will begin with dinner at 6 p.m. followed by discussion on topics of interest to you and your community. While reservations are required for the dinner, it is not necessary to preregister for the informational portion of the meeting which will begin at approximately 7 p.m.

The dinner meeting, **to benefit the Groton Recreation Committee** will be held at the Groton Community Building, 1476 Scott Hwy, Groton, VT 05046. The buffet menu for the evening includes spaghetti (meat and vegetarian), rolls, salad, beverages and ice cream and brownie dessert.

To make a reservation for the dinner meeting, please fill out the reservation form and return it to **WEC, Attn: Dawn Johnson, PO Box 8, East Montpelier, VT 05651** or by email Dawn.Johnson@wec.coop. There is no charge for the meal.

Reservations must be received at the Co-op by the morning of October 12. Thank you.

Dinner Reservation

(No charge for the dinner.)

2018 Community Meeting

Groton Community Building • October 25, 2018 • 5:30 to 8:00

Doors open: 5:30 • Dinner: 6:00pm • Meeting: 7:00pm • Wrap up: 8:00 pm

Meeting Agenda:

- Meet and greet WEC staff and Board of Directors
- Reliability • Rate Design • What’s on your mind

Name _____ Vegetarian Member or Guest
(Please print clearly)

Name _____ Vegetarian Member or Guest
(Please print clearly)

Name _____ Vegetarian Member or Guest
(Please print clearly)

Name _____ Vegetarian Member or Guest
(Please print clearly)

Address _____

Account # _____ Map # _____ Telephone _____

Email _____

Special needs (food or accommodations): _____

Reservations must be received at the Co-op by the morning of October 12.

Return to WEC/ Attn: Dawn Johnson, P.O. Box 8, East Montpelier, VT 05651
or by email: Dawn.Johnson@wec.coop



Reliability in Northfield

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through the wires) or a planned outage (a line crew shuts off power to fix broken equipment) it's disruptive to the people who rely on that line's power. One way to improve reliability is to have a backup route for power to reach members.

That's why WEC is taking a multi-pronged approach to improve reliability for all members on the Northfield feeder line, and especially for the 128 members on the single phase at the end of the feeder, explained Wilkin. Clearing danger trees and replacing faulty equipment prevents outages. A new line under the interstate connecting the two lines will ensure when an outage does occur, members will get the lights back on much faster with power from a redundant source. It's called backfeeding. "We'll keep people energized while we're fixing the problem," he said. "We have these types of things throughout the system to try to limit the amount of people that are out. This one's a little unique in that we're going underneath the interstate."

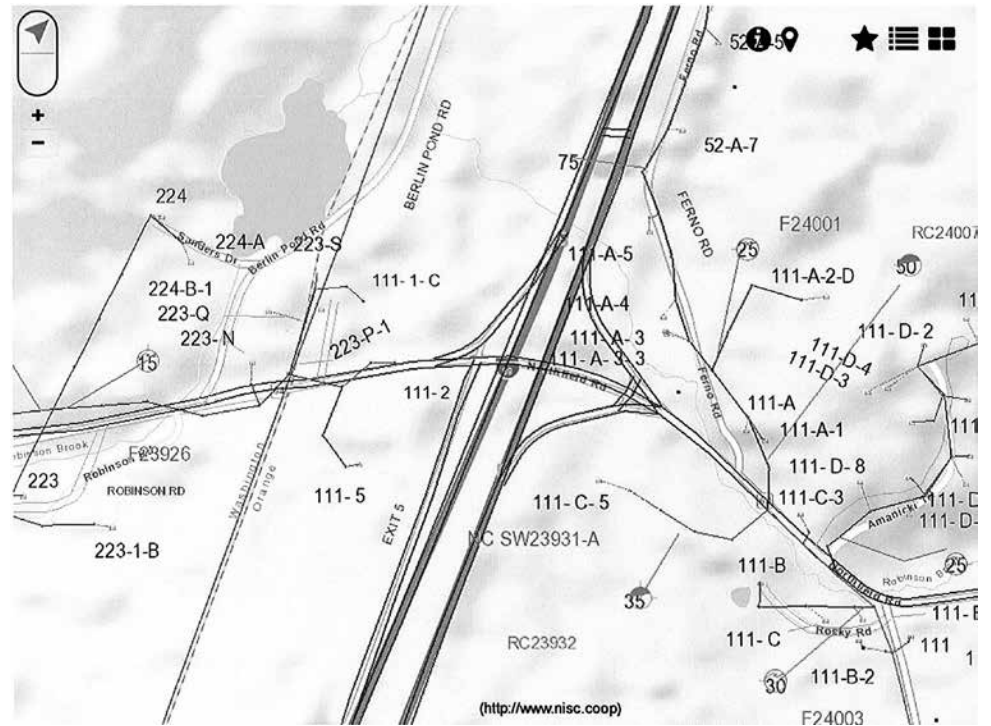
WEC has already reached out to VTrans, the state Agency of Transportation, to make sure the project is doable. The state gave a preliminary nod to the idea, and Wilkin said they

need to map the line and finish the highway permitting process. Once that's done, he said, the "tentative plan is to get it in by the time the snow flies."

"This is what our rural co-op looks like," said WEC Board Member Annie Reed of Marshfield. Electric co-ops were developed to serve rural communities left behind by for-profit utilities, she pointed out, and WEC's plan for Northfield is an investment that directly benefits WEC's rural consumer-owners. "We're committed to making the deep investment to take care of our members. We're paying for lines through challenging terrain to improve reliability for 128 people," she said.


Weston said those 128 members should see their reliability improve dramatically, but to not expect perfection. "That area gets hammered by microbursts and heavy snow. And then there's the problematic emerald ash borer we're all now facing," he said, referring to the invasive pest that kills ash trees. Dying trees is a problem in general; a grove of dead trees near a power line is a problem too.

Wilkin reiterated that success comes only with a comprehensive improvement plan: removing trees that pose a risk to lines, spotting faulty equipment before it fails, and building in redundancies. It makes a big difference for those



WEC members along a single-phase line near the end of the Northfield three-phase feeder will see marked improvements in reliability after WEC puts a line under I-89 to connect them to another source of power. The new connector will go under the interstate off Ferno Road, near the exit. The line construction is part of WEC's comprehensive plan to improve reliability for members along the Northfield feeder.

members whose power is especially vulnerable and who brace for an outage every time a storm rolls through. The line going under the interstate is

one "piece of the puzzle to improve reliability," he said. "We're trying to be as proactive as possible." 

Manager's and President's Report

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even cleaner.

There's been discussion about the Coventry expansion in the news, and there will be a number of public hearings on that. Even though that's not part of our direct connection with the landfill, we're hopeful Casella will work with the Agency of Natural Resources and concerned people to address their issues.

Patty: There's a high quality renewable generation plant at the landfill. The expansion of the landfill will allow continuation of the generation plant for the long term.



On September 15, WEC and Casella Waste Management hosted an open house at Coventry Landfill. Visitors learned about landfill operations as well as WEC's landfill methane electricity generation plant. More to come in the October issue.

Community Meeting in Groton October 25

Barry: When is the Community Meeting, Patty?

Patty: October 25 in Groton! This is another difference between electric co-ops and other utilities: we hold meetings with our consumer-owners. We'll have details and signup info to come; mark your calendar for dinner out with your Co-op on the 25th.


Barry: We've had great member turnout for these meetings over the last few decades. It's a really great opportunity for Co-op staff and board to sit down and share a meal with members and listen to them, and

for members to hear about different aspects of the Co-op's operations, and for us to answer any questions you have. I'm always excited for these meetings. As a co-op we work to make sure every member has input and that they're heard.

Patty: We dig into substantive issues and we really hear what's on consumer-owners' minds. People stand up and ask great questions. I really enjoy these meetings.

Barry: Another thing we've done successfully is work with community

groups where the dinner is held, so the dinner benefits a local nonprofit organization or effort. It's always something for the community, whether the school or a community club or a playground or a rec club. That added benefit is the Co-op is helping those organizations support a project in their community.

Patty: If any local organization trying to do a fundraiser wants to know more about participating in a Community Meeting, we're always looking for local folks to help with the meal and clean up. Any folks interested can contact me at the office at 802-223-5245. 



Peter and Pearl Keene of It Suits Us Farm in Topsham planted the seeds WEC gave out at the Annual Meeting in May. By August, the seeds had grown into a riot of orange and gold cosmos flowers. The Keenes wrote, "They were a nice surprise as we did not know what we were getting! They add a good color palette to our many different flowers and plants that abound in our gardens." Many thanks to the Keenes for the picture!

