

THE COOPERATIVE ADVANTAGE

Looking Ahead to 2022: Milestones, Opportunity, and Growth

BY JIM HERRON CEO | HERRONJC@MVEA.ORG

I have shared this before, but it bears repeating: The start of a new year is an opportunity to take stock of what we learned the year before as we look forward to the year ahead — to reflect on success and focus on opportunity. I am proud to share that is exactly what Mountain View Electric Association, your local electric cooperative, did as we went into 2021: We focused on opportunity and will be celebrating milestones in 2022 that benefit MVEA's membership now and in the years to follow.

Milestones

While there are many lessons that we have learned as a country over the last two years, the importance of having access to fast and reliable internet service has become a national priority. Access to high-speed internet is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity. Long before a global pandemic brought the issue to the national forefront, MVEA sought a partner with whom to develop and deploy a fiber broadband network to better serve our co-op communities. A lot of strategic planning came to fruition in June 2021 when we announced a partnership with Conexon Connect to bring MVEA members access to a world-class fiber broadband network.

Since the announcement, the MVEA and Conexon Connect teams have been hard at work designing and mapping the network — ironing out the path the fiber will take,

making sure the footprint follows a logical and efficient path along MVEA's electric infrastructure. While the full project buildout will take five to six years, the first Connect, powered by Mountain View Electric Association, customers will be connected in the second quarter of 2022. This is a huge milestone for the co-op and for MVEA's membership.

Opportunities

MVEA completed an extensive digital meter upgrade project in June 2021. Throughout the project, we emphasized the advanced technology that would benefit members and the importance of using MVEA's online account management program, SmartHub, to extend the capabilities of the upgraded digital meters.

Members now have the opportunity to access daily and hourly energy use data to better understand their unique electric use patterns and to forecast future bills. For instance, this time of year, home heating is often the cause for questions about increased energy use — and space heaters are a common culprit. Through the daily and hourly data that is now available, SmartHub makes it easier to understand the impact of a space heater in the home during the time that it is turned on.

The upgraded meters don't just provide members with opportunities to take control of their energy use, the



JIM HERRON

expanded energy use data and account management features also provide MVEA with opportunities to develop programs to meet the evolving needs of co-op members. While it is currently in testing, I am excited to share one such opportunity that will be available in early 2022: a prepaid billing option for members who prefer to prepay for their electric use. Look for the official announcement and additional details in future issues of this magazine.

Growth

We anticipate another busy year driven by unprecedented growth in El Paso County. Continued growth provides another opportunity to meet the evolving needs of existing and new members alike. Expanded energy efficiency education and electric product rebate promotions are great examples of programs that have been developed based on valuable feedback from the members we serve.

As we enter a new year, I hope you will connect with us and share your perspective as MVEA continues to grow to meet the unique needs of its co-op membership. It's one of the principles that makes electric co-ops unique: our desire to serve our members, the owners of the co-op.

MVEA Member Events • Important Project Updates • Energy Efficiency Resources • Special Promotions

WHERE TO GO,
TO BE IN THE
KNOW!

MVEA Resources
to Keep Up with
Your Co-op

MVEA's Colorado Country Life magazine pages: The co-op pages are one of the best places to learn about current happenings as they are often the first place that MVEA launches new programs and promotions.

Like, follow, and share on social media: If you are on Facebook or Twitter, we encourage you to like and follow MVEA. We are able to provide real-time updates about time-sensitive topics (like weather alerts and outages).

MVEA's website, www.mvea.coop: Do you have a question about MVEA's rates or want more information about our by-laws? Are you interested in adding solar to your home or looking for ways to save energy and money? Make sure to visit www.mvea.coop to keep up with your co-op.

Monthly bill messaging: There are three areas for timely messages on your monthly bill. Have you checked them out recently?

Member advisory emails: Does MVEA have your email on file? If not, you are missing out on timely emails about events, programs, promotions, and more!

GO ELECTRIC!

Snow Blower Giveaway Winners Announced

Congratulations T. McKinsey Morgan and Patty Olney! They are each a proud new owner of an electric blower made available through Mountain View Electric Association's GO ELECTRIC! Outdoor Power Equipment Giveaway that promotes the newest product additions to the co-op's popular rebate program. Products currently include energy-efficient LED bulbs, select appliances, electric outdoor power equipment, smart thermostats, and more. To learn about MVEA's rebate program, visit mvea.coop/rebates.

Don't miss out on your chance to win! Make sure to look for 2022 GO ELECTRIC! Outdoor Power Equipment Giveaway promotions in upcoming issues of *Colorado Country Life* magazine, on mvea.coop, through member advisory emails, and on MVEA's Facebook and Twitter pages.

T. McKinsey Morgan, Black Forest

Guests at the Snowed Inn Bed and Breakfast won't have to trudge through the snow this winter while enjoying the 5-acre property tucked in the trees down a long private road. "I still can't believe my luck! Thanks again for delivering and



▲ "I'm very excited to try out the electric snow blower. It's lightweight and looks like it's easy to operate," shared T. McKinsey Morgan.

assembling the snow blower. Now I'm looking forward to being snowed in at the Snowed Inn," joked T. McKinsey Morgan, bed and breakfast owner, and winner of an electric snow blower through MVEA's GO ELECTRIC! Outdoor Power Equipment Giveaway.

A member for over 40 years, T. McKinsey entered the giveaway on a whim, and didn't believe her luck when she received the call that she had won, "At first I was suspicious about winning, but Leslie [an MVEA employee] convinced me. I was very surprised and excited about receiving an early Christmas present!"

Patty Olney, Elbert

Patty Olney, an MVEA member for over 20 years, was pretty excited to find out she was one of the winners of an electric snow blower. "I lost everything in the Black Forest Wildfires in 2013, including my snow blower," she shared. "I was ecstatic to find out I won! I recently broke my arm and was thinking... snow, broken arm, shovel...not going to work. I can't tell you how relieved and happy I am."



▲ Patty Olney is ready for the snow, "I've read the manual, learned the parts, and am ready to roll!" In fact, Patty already owns a few pieces of electric outdoor equipment that she likes. "I have a mower I can actually navigate myself!"

Patty shared that she tries to keep up with MVEA's programs and current events. "I like knowing the faces of our co-op," she said. "I have never been disappointed with [MVEA's] service, pricing, and plans for the future. I am very happy to be a member and feel this co-op is a great organization. Good people run the co-op, are very transparent in the dealings, and I feel they really do look out for us."

**We Don't
Just Brighten
Homes,
We Brighten
Futures.**



Need Cash For College? Win a Scholarship!

\$27,000 In Scholarships Available

MVEA's scholarship program includes scholarships to accredited colleges, universities, junior or community colleges, as well as Vocational/Technical Scholarships. Additional scholarships include Power Lineworker Scholarships for students pursuing a career through a lineworker training program, as well as a Power Engineer Scholarship for current college students pursuing a power engineering career.

Visit www.mvea.coop/scholarships to learn more.

Deadline: Monday, January 17, 2022.

Questions? Contact Erica Meyer, erica.m@mvea.coop, (719) 494-2654.



20 PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST 23
MOUNTAIN VIEW ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

Photos Wanted!

Do you have an eye for fiery sunsets, sweeping vistas, heritage barns, and a knack for catching nature in action? As an MVEA co-op member, you are invited to **send in your photos, taken within our 5,000 square mile service territory, that capture the seasons, people, lifestyle or landscape of co-op country.** The winning photographs will be included in MVEA's 2023 calendar. **The deadline for entry is July 7, 2022.**

Photo Calendar Submission Guidelines

Only MVEA members, directors, employees and their family members are eligible to participate in the photo calendar contest. High resolution digital entries preferred. Minimum resolution is 300 dpi. Limit two photos per person. Photos must have horizontal/landscape orientation for best chance of being selected for the calendar. Photos must be taken within our service territory. Photos will not be accepted without a completed entry form.

For complete Photo Calendar Contest submission information and entry form, please visit www.mvea.coop/photo-calendar-contest. Send entries by email to nikki.r@mvea.coop. Questions? Call (719) 494-2657.



K-5 Students... LEARN ABOUT SAFETY IN A COLORFUL WAY!

Be an MVEA Electrical Safety Superstar!

2022 Electrical Safety Poster Contest

To increase electrical safety awareness for our mini members and to assist teachers as they talk to their students about electrical safety, we're holding an **Electrical Safety Poster Contest!** To participate, K-5 students simply create a poster showing how they are safe around electricity. Posters are judged for creativity, neatness, and the overall safety message. All entries need to include the artist's first and last name, grade, school, parent or guardian's contact information, and address. Mail finished drawings to MVEA; ATTN: Erica Meyer; 11140 E Woodmen Rd, Falcon, CO 80831. **All entries must be turned in by Friday, March 7, 2022. For additional information, visit: www.mvea.coop/postercontest.**

Seven Students Will Win a Kindle Fire!
Additional prizes will be awarded to teachers.
Visit www.mvea.coop/poster-contest to learn more and submit artwork.

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This Association is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The Trivellis Win MVEA's Quarterly "Switch & Save" \$300 Account Credit

Kali and Stephen Trivelli didn't choose paperless billing or bank account auto-pay for the monthly bill credit or chance to win a \$300 account credit, they chose it for the convenience. "With busy schedules every day of the week, it's one less thing I have to worry about," Kali said when she was notified about being MVEA's most recent "Switch & Save" \$300 account credit winner. "I honestly didn't know this drawing was a thing, and it was such a wonderful surprise!"

First launched in 2016, the "Switch & Save" monthly account credit promotion has been a success. Many MVEA members enjoy the convenience of online billing and account management while also supporting the conservation of resources. Paperless billing through SmartHub is an easy way for MVEA members to cut clutter and save trees, money, and time.

Currently, more than 28,000 MVEA accounts are enrolled in the program through paperless billing, bank account auto-pay, or both. Members can save up to \$1 per month for participating in paperless billing and bank account auto-pay. Another bonus? MVEA's quarterly "Switch & Save" \$300 account credit drawing.

A quarterly winner is selected out of all "Switch & Save" program participants — both new and those who joined years ago. The next quarterly drawing will be in April for all accounts that are enrolled in



▲ Congratulations Kali and Stephen Trivelli. The Trivellis have been MVEA members since mid-2020 and enrolled in paperless billing and bank account auto-pay right away. "Everything is so easy. Everyone I've spoken with is extremely nice and in this day and age, it's hard to have wonderful people and great experiences all at one place," shared Kali.

paperless billing and/or bank account auto-pay through March. To learn more about "Switch & Save" promotions (including monthly account credits), and to make the switch, visit mvea.coop/payment-options.

High-speed fiber internet is coming to Mountain View Electric members!

Broadband service will be available soon in Phase One of Falcon.

Why Connect?

- No data caps or throttling
- No installation fee during build-out
- The same high speed for uploads and downloads
- Always affordable pricing with no sudden increases
- Business services are also available

Learn more and pre-register at
ConexonConnect.com/MVEA

