

The Cooperative Advantage is Connection

BY TOM WALCH CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

November on the Western Slope. By now, fall has fully shed its colorful layer, college football teams are battling for bowl position, and I am looking forward to the first of what I anticipate to be several slices of pumpkin pie.

No matter what your position on fall, football, or how many is too many slices of pie, this is the time of year to reflect on that for which we are grateful and to give abundant thanks for our members, friends, and family. At Grand Valley Power, we are thankful to be part of a business that focuses on connecting with our members.

How do we connect? Last fall we held an Empower Hour to talk more with our members about Time-of-Use Rates and ways to save on energy costs. We hosted appreciation events such as our GLOW safe Halloween event for kids. In the summer, we ask members to join us for dinner at our annual business meeting. In the pages of this magazine, we share personal vignettes, stories about our members, and cooperative news. Everything we do is intended to keep you apprised of what is happening with the business in which you — as a member — have a significant stake.

These connections are important to the success of GVP: through them we come to understand whether our purposeful decisions are empowering your lives, and if not, how we should adjust to best serve the people who created our co-op. Every step we take is intended to move our members forward. We must get the input and feedback to confirm we are headed in a momentum-gathering direction.

Being a member-owned organization really doesn't matter if our members don't

speak to us. And it matters even less if we don't listen to them.

That's why we are so grateful for the input and feedback we receive from members. Reflecting on events of the recent past, some comments have confirmed that our employees provide exceptional hometown service. Others have offered feedback on events such as our annual meeting. And still other interactions have yielded creative suggestions that we anticipate implementing as part of our business.

Specifically, we have received questions about Time-of-Use rates, and the board promised to conduct a comprehensive review of the new cost structure. That review solidified that GVP's rates are more equitable under the new structure, and those consumers who use electricity during periods of peak demand from 4–9 p.m. — when power costs are higher — pay for those higher costs under Time-of-Use. One of our members who's retired expressed in a handwritten letter how important it is for her to be able to shift her energy usage to off-peak times when she can access cheaper power and keep her electric bill within her fixed, limited budget.

Other members provided feedback on our annual meeting — asking for brief stand up breaks during the business portion — and another member has offered input on a viable way that we could incentivise members to change their habits and take advantage of paperless billing.

We've also been given validation that our employees fulfill our promise of exceptional hometown service. In the month of July, when summer storms rolled across the Grand Valley, lighting up the evening sky



TOM WALCH

and knocking out power to thousands of our consumers, we received a half dozen phone calls from grateful members praising the work of our linecrews that safely restored power as quickly as possible.

What it all boils down to is this: Our members speak up and we listen. We understand our community because we were built by it. We are a part of it. Like our members, we see the colors change every fall and root for Colorado football teams (no matter how hopeless that can seem). And like our members, we might even consume too much pumpkin pie.

This is how we connect with our members. This is the cooperative advantage.

COMMENTS TO THE CEO

You are a member of a cooperative and your opinion does count. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please let Tom Walch know by writing to *Ask the CEO*, P.O. Box 190, Grand Junction, Colorado 81502, or send an email to me at twalch@gvp.org.

BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Grand Valley Power board meetings are open to members, consumers, and the public. Regularly scheduled board meetings are held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the headquarters building located at 845 22 Road, Grand Junction, Colorado.

Son's Enlistment Adds Meaning to Veterans Day

BY RITA-LYN SANDERS DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

For the first time in my life, Veterans Day is tangible — no longer something that I observe only in appreciation for the men and women who have protected the freedoms that I value so much. It is now going to be a day to honor my own hero. Just a few short weeks ago, my son, Hayden, enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and shipped out for boot camp in San Diego.

His decision came as a surprise to my husband and me. While Hayden has proven himself to be quite capable at everything he pursues, he has never been very physical. With few exceptions (recreational soccer, a 40-mile backpacking trek through the majestic Eagle Cap Wilderness, hunting trips), he had not demonstrated his athleticism beyond the hand-eye coordination that comes with hours of video gaming. But last winter, after trying and deciding that sitting in college classes was not where he wanted to be, he expressed interest in serving in the military.

My husband and I didn't encourage him. We thought, like our military family before him, that he would complete college first. My brother graduated from Southern Oregon University. He entered the U.S. Army as a warrant officer and flew combat operations in the Middle East before transferring to the U.S. Coast Guard. Now he flies rescue missions in the pilot seat of the iconic orange Dauphin helicopter as a commander. My older cousin, a professor of economics,

retired from the U.S. Army Reserve as a special forces colonel after being mobilized in Operation Desert Storm and Bosnia. My second cousin (the colonel's son), is my age and graduated from West Point. While on active duty with the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), he was part of the initial campaigns in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

What we learned is that once he chose his path, Hayden didn't need any encouragement. He drew on a passion so deep that it led him to the Grand Junction Recruiting Station and weekly workouts with the gunny sergeant and other poolies. So intense was his desire to be at the tip of the spear that he pushed himself to lose 40 pounds in the time span of a few months. He combined strength training with running and cardio and consumed a steady diet of canned chicken with mustard.

Now Hayden is at boot camp — tackling the obstacle course, running 4x-400 meter intervals, learning martial arts and combat survival skills — and preparing for the ultimate 48-mile, 54-hour Marine recruit test: The Crucible.

To say that we are proud of him for pursuing his passion with vigor and determination is an understatement. I think about him more often than not, and because we are only permitted to communicate through letters, I handwrite one every day.



RITA-LYN SANDERS

Protecting this country against our enemies requires a selfless act of character, strength, resilience, and determination like no other. The men and women of our armed forces uphold a commitment to fight for democracy and human rights. For them, and for our sake, failure is not an option. As this Veterans Day approaches, let us be grateful for their resolve. I know that I am. And since mid-September, I've given in to thinking about it every day.

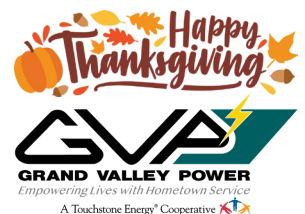


Hayden Sanders (with his mother, Rita Sanders) heads off to United States Marine Corps boot camp in San Diego, California.

Co-op Calendar



- DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS** - Sunday, Nov. 5
- TOYS FOR TOTS DRIVE BEGINS** - Monday, Nov. 6
- VETERANS DAY** - Saturday, Nov. 11
- THANKSGIVING DAY** (Office Closed) - Thursday, Nov. 23
- DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING** (Office Closed) - Friday, Nov. 24





◀ Grand Valley Power lineman Matt Mason preps the osprey nesting platform for future residents.

A Bird's Eye View

Thanks to the coordinated efforts of the Friends of Highline Lake State Park, osprey that frequent Highline Lake State Park near Loma now have a platform on which to build their nest, away from the dangers presented by power lines.

The state park saw an influx of osprey this year that necessitated building nesting locations. "I have a passion for birds, especially raptors," said Linda Snodgrass, secretary of the Friends of Highline Lake State Park and a 47-year member of Grand Valley Power. "We wanted to contribute something tangible to the landscape and for the raptors."

Snodgrass and her fellow Friends of Highline Lake State Park members received donations of supplies from Home Depot and Taylor Fence. Grand Valley Power provided the pole, labor, and equipment and installed the platform on the land north of the lake.



▲ A Grand Valley Power linecrew installs an osprey nesting platform in Highline Lake State Park.



▲ Friends of Highline Lake State Park members (left to right): Treasurer Rich Sales, Secretary Linda Snodgrass, Pat Goben, and President Rich Goben.

 U.S. Army Josh Barela INTERN	 U.S. Marine Corps Cole Crider APPRENTICE LINEMAN	 U.S. Army Joseph Foster SAFETY COORDINATOR	<p>Thank You VETERANS</p> GRAND VALLEY POWER Empowering Lives With Hometown Service
 U.S. Army Robbie Barela SERVICE PLANNER	 U.S. National Guard Tony Ippolito SERVICE PLANNER	 U.S. Army Mike Gardner DISTRIBUTION DESIGN SUPERVISOR	



**ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS & SENIORS
who get their electricity from Grand Valley Power**

Washington, D.C. 

- Applicants compete for a spot in the Washington D.C. Youth Tour
- June 17-23; all expenses paid
- Visit museums and historic monuments
- Meet elected officials
- Sponsored by Grand Valley Power and our statewide and national rural electric associations
- Apply at gvp.org by January 8

Steamboat Springs 

- Get more out of camp than a sunburn at Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp
- July 13-18; all expenses paid
- Build leadership skills
- Make new friends
- Ride a gondola, raft, play volleyball, swim and more in the beautiful Rocky Mountains
- Apply at gvp.org by January 8

EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

"Wow. That was my first reaction as the bus pulled into the city. In fact, that was my reaction about the whole trip. In D.C., we got to see just about everything. Our schedule was jam packed. To say the least, I was tired." -Kianna Colaizzi, Youth Tour Scholar

"The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp gave my daughter the experience of a lifetime and inspired her to explore a career as an electric lineworker. Thank you, GVP!" -Parent of Leadership Camp Participant



Kianna Colaizzi

Applications Due January 8!

gvp.org/youth-leadership-programs