

December 5, 2018

Focus on Line Workers

**VMD Member Co-ops Compete Against
the ‘Best of the Best’ at 35th Annual International Rodeo**

Line personnel from **BARC, Central Virginia, Mecklenburg and Northern Neck electric cooperatives** were among more than 1,000 competitors at the **35th Annual International Lineman’s Rodeo**, held **Oct. 10-13 in Bonner Springs, Kansas**. This event attracts the best line technicians, ground technicians, and apprentices from **across the United States and around the world**, as they display their skills before **thousands of spectators**.

As with the **VMD Association’s Gaff-n-Go Rodeo** each spring, this event tests participants’ skills and attentiveness to safety. Competitors from **all types of electric utilities** gathered to see new tools and safety equipment and test their skills while sharing camaraderie with other experienced line workers.

In the journeyman competition, MEC fielded the team of **Mitch DeJarnette, Jason McKinney and Brad Clark** who earned the **2018 Jimmy Gardner Award**, given to the highest-scoring VMD-member team at the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo. Two CVEC teams of **Brandon Hudson, D.J. Noble and Brute Gardner**, and **Jimmy Wilmoth, Steven Matney and Brian Prue** also competed among the 220 teams in this division.

More than 300 competitors in the apprentice division included four from VMD-member co-ops: **Cody Minter** of BARC, **Billy Cascio** of CVEC, **T.W. Parks** of MEC and **Blaine Swann** of NNEC.

Clint Card, MEC manager of district operations who serves on the **International Rodeo Judging Committee**, explained, “Rodeo competitions not only provide an opportunity for line professionals to receive recognition for their proficiency in the craft, but also are a forum for the public to better understand and recognize our linemen’s technical skills.”

The International Lineman’s Rodeo included an **Expo** showcasing tools and equipment specifically designed for electrical workers, and a **Safety Conference**, at which participants heard first-hand the consequences of taking shortcuts, learned to maximize body mechanics to reduce injury in line work, and gained a fuller understanding of safety regarding electrical arcs.

Reflecting on the event’s value, **MEC President & CEO John Lee** concluded, “Participation in the International Lineman’s Rodeo has many overlapping benefits, including a rigorous technical

analysis of on-the-job challenges, an opportunity to evaluate innovation in tools and equipment, and a peer-to-peer comparison of work practices. This event hones the skills and expertise of our capable personnel that really pays off as it enhances our daily work and timely efforts during outages.”



From left: MEC’s Brad Clark, Mitch DeJarnette, Jason McKinney and T. W. Parks were among 13 VMD linemen who competed at this year’s International Lineman’s Rodeo.

-Report by Mary Howell, VMD Association PR & Communications Coordinator.

Co-op Innovation

BARC and Rockbridge County Public Schools Continue Career and Technology Education Partnership

BARC Electric Cooperative recently donated \$5,000 to the Rockbridge County Public Schools (RCPS) to support educational programs needing additional resources. BARC CEO Mike Keyser presented the funds to the Rockbridge County High School Principal, Mike Craft, during the Rockbridge County School Board's November meeting.

BARC and RCPS have a long-standing partnership that has focused on educational programs and developing a strong workforce pipeline for the region. Over the last few years, BARC has provided access to its community solar learning center and solar array, and paid internships that have enabled the school system to launch its own Solutions Energy & Power STEM pathway.

Earlier this year, BARC's subsidiary BARC Connects constructed a fiber network for the entire school system that is providing reliable broadband service to all of the county's schools.

"BARC believes in the future of all Rockbridge County students and in our community as a whole. By partnering with the Rockbridge County Public School System to promote and strengthen key pathway programs, we are helping students to increase their knowledge while building a foundation for their future success," said Mike Keyser, BARC's CEO.

-Report by Tish Blackwell, BARC Communications Specialist.

Commitment to Community

CVEC Holds Thanksgiving Food Drive

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on all that you have to be thankful for, a time to enjoy delicious food, and a time for football and shopping. However, many homes in central Virginia struggle to provide basic meals, much less a Thanksgiving feast.

For the second year in a row, employees from Central Virginia Electric Cooperative held a Thanksgiving food drive to benefit the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. Overall, CVEC employees donated 61 pounds of food and raised \$630, which will provide over 2,520 meals for families in central Virginia. (For every \$1 donated, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank can provide 4 meals.)



CVEC is proud to work with the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, which serves 9 of the 14 counties in CVEC's service territory: Albemarle, Amherst, Appomattox, Buckingham, Campbell, Fluvanna, Greene, Nelson, and Orange counties. Blue Ridge Area Food Bank provides food to 106,000 people each month through a network of 200 food pantries, soup kitchens, schools, churches, and other non-profit groups.



CVEC employees donated 61 pounds of food to the food bank.

-Report by Ginny Tyree, CVEC Communications Specialist.

Co-op People

REC Names Manager of Information, Technology and Security Services



Marc Seay will lead REC's technology services, business analytics, and physical and cybersecurity efforts.

Marc L. Seay was recently selected as manager of information, technology and security services for Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC). In his new role, Marc will lead REC's technology services, business analytics, and both physical and cybersecurity. He brings more than 30 years of IT experience, including 25 in the electric utility industry, to his new role and most recently worked as program manager for Lockheed Martin Energy (LME), REC's primary IT service contractor. In his work with LME, Marc led the advancement of cybersecurity, IT project management and modernization, and disaster recovery and business analytics.

Before joining LME, he was database administrator for Intellisource and Affiliated Computer Services and served as REC's supervisor of applications and development from 1995 to 1999. He's also held technical and IT management positions with the Silver Companies and Spotsylvania County, where he focused on software development and IT systems management.

Marc earned his bachelor of administration degree from **Averett University**, where he graduated **magna cum laude**. An active volunteer with the **Rappahannock United Way** and **Empowerhouse** in the Fredericksburg area, he was **vice chair** of the **Fredericksburg Regional Technology Council** (FredTech) from 2013 to 2015. He is a resident of Manassas.

Congratulations Marc!

Scott Smith Joins CEC as Manager of Engineering

Community Electric Cooperative (CEC) recently named **Scott Smith** as **Manager of Engineering**. In his new role, Scott will be responsible for overseeing the design of electrical facilities, as well as system-wide mapping, planning and improvements across the co-op's service territory.

After earning his electrical engineering degree from **Old Dominion University**, Scott began his career at the **Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, Va.** He joined **Northern Neck Electric Cooperative (NNEC)** in 2004, where he led a team responsible for system planning, substation design and construction, SCADA, load management, power quality, distribution generation and GIS mapping. He established substation and apparatus maintenance programs and had daily oversight of the apparatus and metering department. Under his guidance, NNEC developed and implemented multiple construction work plans and a 30-year long-range plan.

"Scott's vast cooperative experience in sustainable facilities operations and his member-centric hospitality background make him a fantastic addition to our team," said **CEC President & CEO Steve Harmon**. "One of our core values is to deliver superior value to our members - safely. Scott is a proven asset that will help us highlight just that."

Congratulations Scott!



Scott Smith earned his electrical engineering degree from Old Dominion University, and before coming to CEC, worked for Northern Neck Electric Co-op.

Personals

News About Members of the VMD Cooperative Family

We are very sad to report the passing of **Barbara Widdowson**, 80, of Princess Anne, Md., this past Monday, Dec. 3, at Hartley Hall Nursing Home in Pocomoke, Md. Barbara is survived by her husband of 62 years, **Carl**, who is a long-time member of the **Choptank Electric Cooperative Board of Directors**, and also served on **ODEC's Board** for many years. In addition to Carl, survivors include two children, six grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. Barbara worked for Somerset County Public Schools, and with husband Carl and their family ran **Widdowson Farms**. Barbara was involved in leadership roles in Somerset County civic organizations, and loved spending time with her family. A funeral service will be held at **2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 8** at **Hinman Funeral Home**, 11673 Somerset Ave., **Princess Anne, Md.**, with **visitation from 12 noon till 2 p.m.** Her son-in-law, **the Rev. Denny McLeod**, will officiate at the service, with interment following at St. Andrews Episcopal Cemetery.

Help Us Keep You Informed!



If you have story ideas, news or information of interest and benefit to other members of the electric cooperative community in our three-state area, please contact

Mary Howell at mhowell@vmdaec.com (804) 968-4070 or
Phyllis Long at plong@vmdaec.com (804) 968-4077

*The VMDAEC Education Scholarship Foundation wishes everyone a **Happy New Year!***



As you consider your **year-end giving**, we would be **grateful** for your support and consideration. Your **tax-deductible donation** goes to help **Cooperative youth** fulfill their dreams of higher education and to educate the **linemen of tomorrow**. **Together**, we have funded well over **half a million dollars** in scholarships for college students and budding line workers!

Please contact us for monthly giving, leadership giving, and bequest opportunities.

Contact us at scholarship@vmdaec.com or (804) 968-7164.

Thank you!