

## Powering Our Rural Communities

### Nominating Committee Meets to Identify Director Candidates

Each year, an independent committee of DCEC members works to recruit members interested in running for the DCEC board at the Cooperative's Annual Meeting. This year members will elect new directors at the 2017 Annual Meeting scheduled for September 22nd. The Committee, which kicked off their work on April 6th, will submit official nominations by July 14th. Members interested in learning more about being a director or becoming a candidate, should contact members of the Nominating Committee or the DCEC office. All candidates will be expected to submit a letter to the Nominating Committee presenting your credentials and qualifications and explain why you are interested in serving on the DCEC Board of Directors. Further details are available on the DCEC website.

The director positions that are up for election in 2017 include:

- **Northern Region:** Towns of Gilboa, Jefferson, Summit, Davenport, Harpersfield, Stamford, and Maryland
- **Central Region:** Towns of Bovina, Delhi, Franklin, Hamden, Kortright and Meredith
- **Southern Region:** Towns of Andes, Colchester, Masonville, Middletown, Sidney, Tompkins, Walton and Bainbridge

#### 2017 DCEC Nominating Committee:

*Southern Region:*  
Carol LaTourette  
David Bartlem

*Central Region:*  
Steven Mason  
Robert Cairns

*Northern Region:*  
Thomas Courtenay-Clack  
Christine Hauser  
Camilia Eldidi



### DCEC Office Closing Reminder:

DCEC's office will be closed on  
**Monday, May 29, 2017 for Memorial Day.**  
DCEC staff asks our members to remember  
our fallen heroes who have served.

39 Elm Street, PO Box 471, Delhi, NY 13753  
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Website: www.dce.coop  
Fax: 607-746-7548  
OUTAGES: 607-746-9283  
SECURE PAY-BY-PHONE: 1-844-209-7162

### Happy Retirement Ron Schmitz!

Ron Schmitz retired April 7, 2017 after 34 years of service. Ron started in May of 1983 as a laborer with the Right-of-Way crew. He went on to become the Right-of-Way Foreman and in March of 1985 was hired as an Apprentice Line Worker. Ron would go on to complete his apprenticeship and was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Class Lineman and then continued his training to become a 1<sup>st</sup> Class Gloving Lineman. Ron saw and worked through many of the Co-op's worst storms but always did so until "the lights came back on". Ron was a dedicated lineman and an advocate for the members and the cooperative business model. Ron said, "I would like to thank the members, the Board of Directors and my fellow employees for helping to make my career an enjoyable one".

Ron will be spending his retirement enjoying his family which include his wife Elsa, children Brian and Nikki and granddaughter Olivia.

Please join us in thanking Ron for his dedicated service and in wishing him a well-deserved and restful retirement.



Ron Schmitz

### Gavett Selected as DCEC's 2017 Legislative Youth Delegate

Annually, the Delaware County Electric Cooperative (DCEC), sponsors a "Legislative Youth Tour" providing a selected youth-delegate the opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. to meet with our nation's political leaders and learn about our Nation's legislative process. This year the tour was from Sunday, April 23, 2017 to Wednesday, April 26, 2017.

DCEC has selected Molly Gavett from Walton Central School as their 2017 Student Youth Delegate. As a Youth Delegate for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Legislative Conference, Molly accompanied DCEC officials to Washington D.C. She was also joined by representatives from over 800 other rural electric co-ops in meetings with Congressional leaders on Capitol Hill.

Molly is actively involved with the community and Girls on the Run. Her selection was based heavily on her dedication to the community, recommendations from teachers and advisors, academics, and extra circular activities.

*Continued on Page 2...*

## Members Decide on Donation

At the Annual Meeting on Friday, September 22, 2017, DCEC will be teaming up with CoBank, one of our financial services partners to give three donations to three, 501(c)(3) charitable organizations to be selected by the members. 1st prize award will be \$1,000, 2nd prize is \$600 and lastly 3rd prize will be \$400. Nominations for charities should be sent by Co-op members to Alicia Wyckoff by June 16th at [alicia.wyckoff@dce.coop](mailto:alicia.wyckoff@dce.coop) or by regular mail to the office of the Cooperative. To be nominated to receive a donation, a charity **MUST**:

- Be a 501(c)(3) organization.
- Have a significant presence within the DCEC service territory.
- Be able to attend the DCEC Membership meeting and educate Members on behalf of their organization.

Nominated charities will appear in the special edition of the Catskill Hi-Line, which you will receive with your August bill. Members will vote on the “winning” charities at the Annual Meeting. Many thanks to CoBank for their matching grants.



Above is CoBank representative Clarence Mahovlich, Winner Catskill Area Hospice Representative Kelly McGraw, and DCEC's CEO/General Manager Mark Schneider shown with the 1st place check for \$1,000 at the 2016 Annual Meeting.

## Fiber Optic Contractors

You may see one of the following fiber optic installation contractors working in the Cooperative's right-of-way throughout 2017:

- Proline Fiber Optics
- Syracuse Utilities
- Todd Cable Construction

These contractors are installing fiber optic cable on behalf of the Cooperative's partners in the Delaware County Broadband Initiative: Delhi Telephone Company and Margaretville Telephone Company. Although these contractors do not work directly for the Cooperative, they do keep us informed of where they are working and what work they are performing. If you have questions about a contractor you see in the Cooperative's right-of-way, call our operations department at 607-746-9284.

## Are You Interested in Being on DCEC's Fixed Budget?

Members interested in being on DCEC's fixed budget plan need to contact the office by the end of June in order to be enrolled. Members can also elect to be on a variable budget plan, which you can sign up for at any time throughout the year as long as you have 12 consecutive months of usage. For more information on the budget plans please contact the office.

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## Continued from Page 1...Gavett Selected as DCEC's 2017 Legislative Youth Delegate

Molly wrote this about her visit to Washington D.C.

*I recently was given the extraordinary experience of getting to travel with Mark Schneider, Alicia Wyckoff, and Hartley Russell of DCEC for the yearly Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. In order to do this I was given the honor of being selected the youth delegate of 2017 by the board of directors. The time I spent in D.C. was truly an amazing once in a lifetime experience that I would do again and again if given the chance. We departed from home on Sunday April 23rd and arrived back Wednesday April 26th. During the three days we were there, I couldn't have had a better time if I had tried. Not only did I get to explore and learn more about the beautiful city of Washington D.C. but I was able to learn more about our beloved DCEC as well. Really it couldn't have gotten any better. I saw many sights while I was there such as the capitol building where I actually got to tour inside, Lincoln's memorial, a play at Ford's Theater, the library of congress, and more! What made it better was the fact that we stayed in a hotel right in the middle of the city. I was only a block away from the capitol building!*

Continued on Page 3...

## Should I Call When the Lights Go Out?

Many members are aware that the Cooperative has invested in several technologies over the years that help staff determine if there is an outage and who is affected by an outage. For example, every meter at every member's service location is monitored 24 hours per day to make sure that it still has power. These technologies have improved our ability to dispatch line crews quickly to restore outages, but they will never replace the information we get from talking to members. We still want you to call when your lights go off.

When you do call after hours, you will be given the option to report an outage with the automated phone system or to speak to an operator. If you have specific information to share with us such as seeing a tree on the line, hearing a loud boom, or seeing sparking or arcing, we encourage you to speak to the live operator. That gives you the opportunity to share these important details with a live person who can then pass that information on to our line crews. If you do not have any special information to share about the outage, then you may use whatever outage reporting mechanism is convenient for you, including the automated phone system or on-line through the Cooperative's SmartHub application.

No matter how much technology becomes available to us, there will never be a replacement for direct human contact between our members and our staff. Never hesitate to call us under any circumstances, but especially when your power is out. Outage Line: 607-746-9283 or toll-free at 1-866-436-1223.

## Cooperative Financials

Cooperative members are owners of their electric cooperative, not just customers. Members gain ownership shares in their cooperative through a process called "capital credit allocation." DCEC is allocating \$604,293 in ownership equity to all members who paid electric bills to the Cooperative during 2016. You should see a note about your own capital credit allocation on your May electric bill. The amount of member equity created in 2016, which was \$604,293, is the amount of money collected through member electric bills that exceeded the cost to run the Cooperative during 2016. In most businesses that would be considered a profit and it would be distributed to shareholders. Remember shareholders of a for-profit company are not the customers.

However, in cooperatives, our members are also our owners. Therefore, we do not distribute our margin to a distant set of shareholders, we retain it as member equity in the Cooperative.

Member equity in the Cooperative is essential to maintain good financial health. For example, if we did not have sufficient member equity in the Cooperative, then banks would not loan us money to invest in things like substations, poles, and wires. Member equity is returned to members approximately 25 years after it is allocated through a process of equity rotation. This past year we returned approximately \$454,126 in member equity to those members who received capital credit allocation for 1990. The process of developing and rotating member equity in the Cooperative is an

essential function of every cooperative.

DCEC also uses an outside accounting firm that conducts a comprehensive audit of DCEC financial practices and internal controls. Fiore Fedeli Snyder Carothers, LLP out of State College, Pennsylvania, was hired and completed an audit of how DCEC processes payments, conducts business and records financial transactions. They also reviewed the strength of DCEC internal controls to ensure against the risk of fraud or inaccuracies in DCEC's accounting practices. We are pleased to report to our members that the findings for 2016 have revealed that DCEC is in good, sound financial standing with no deficiencies identified in internal control practices.

## Continued from Page 2...Gavett Selected as DCEC's 2017 Legislative Youth Delegate

*Then when it was time for lobbying meetings with representatives on DCEC's behalf, I got to sit in on them and talk to the people who work for our representatives. When we went to the meetings to talk to the representatives, we got to bring up issues that are affecting us as rural electric cooperatives and ask them about these issues so we can try to fix them. I was able to ask the questions I had and received very good answers. It was absolutely extraordinary to see how we as members of Delaware County and the folks lobbying for any county or any matter can be heard anytime and make a difference because what we have to say is important. That would definitely be the greatest lesson that I learned from this trip- don't be afraid to let your voice be heard because you are important and you deserve to be heard. You can make a difference. While on the trip, I also made new friends from other rural electric cooperatives in the state, ate amazing food, got to walk around an amazing city, and learned more about myself and what I want to do when I get older. Anyone who is a high schooler and is going to be a junior next year or in the next couple of years, has a soon to be junior son or daughter, grandchild, has any relation to a soon to be junior whatsoever, or just knows someone who would be interested should look into this trip because it is an incredible experience that you won't soon- or ever for that matter- forget!*

If you are interested in the Youth Delegate opportunity and would like more information about the application process please contact the DCEC office at (607) 746-2341 or visit our website for more information.

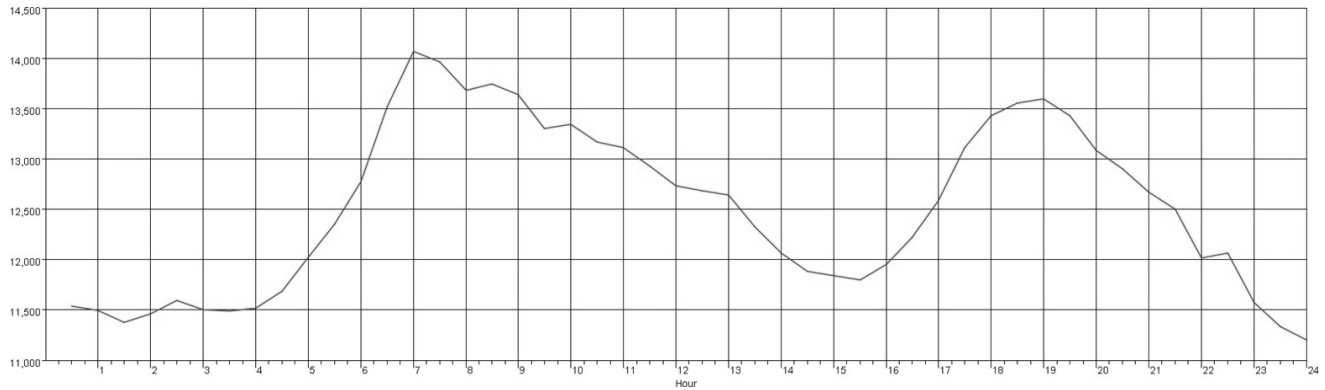


2017 Student Delegate Molly Gavett and Vice President Hartley Russell in front of the Capitol Building



## The High Cost of Peak Demand

One of the biggest factors in determining the size of the monthly wholesale energy bill paid by the Cooperative is our **system peak demand**. The system peak demand is a measure of how much power is being utilized simultaneously by all members at a given point in time. Each month, there is a single ½ hour period that sets the peak demand for the month. When and how big that peak is depends on the decisions made by all members of the Cooperative. The Cooperative's system demand throughout a typical day is shown in the graph below. Demand (measured in kW) is shown along the y-axis and the hours of the day from midnight to midnight are shown along the x-axis.



Notice that the system peak occurs in the morning and again in the early evening. That is because many members are busy in their homes performing their daily morning and evening activities during those times. For example, meal preparation, laundry and television watching are activities that members perform before they leave for work and school and then when they return home in the evening.

A key to controlling the Cooperative's wholesale power costs is to shift as much energy away from the peaks into the valleys of low use periods during the day. You can help the Cooperative do this by participating in our **Hot Water Heater Load Control Program** if you have an electric hot water heater at least 30 gallons in size and you use at least 350 kWh of electricity per month. You also need to have the unit on at all times for potential load control. If you help the Cooperative save by participating in the program then we pass some savings on to you through a **\$4.00 per month credit** on your electric bill. For more information about this opportunity to save money while helping your cooperative, call our operations department at 607-746-9284.

## Know What's Below: Call before You Dig

DCEC urges Members to know before you Dig! Don't make that judgment call, instead make two calls:

- Call Dig Safely New York, by dialing 811 before you dig
- Call DCEC because secondary lines are not listed with Dig Safely New York



DCEC crews are able to locate underground for members upon request. Please call (607) 746-2341 to confirm if your service location has underground and the proper safety procedures.

There are potential hidden dangers and the Co-op urges Members to please call and don't make assumptions whether or not their service location has underground. Every digging job requires a call - even "small" projects like planting trees and shrubs, installing mailboxes, hiring a contractor or landscaper to do a digging project. Failure to identify location of underground utilities can result in damage to gas, electric, communications, water and sewer lines, which can lead to service disruptions, serious injuries or even death and costly repairs and fines.

## Simple and Secure Payment Options

DCEC is continuously working to make sure that our member's personal and financial information is secure. We strongly suggest that our members take advantage of these valuable tools that have been put in place to assure that your information is as secure as it can be.

**SmartHub** is a web and mobile tool that helps you manage your account information, store payment information and allows members to sign up for the automatic payment option. Please visit <https://dce.smarthub.coop> to begin using this secure and valuable tool.

**Pay-By-Phone** is DCEC's automated phone system which allows members to make payments, store payment options, check account balance and sign up for the automatic payment option. Please call **1-844-209-7162** to begin using this secure payment option.

Both of these options are available 24 hours per day, 365 days a year.

## Broadband Progress Continues

The Delaware County Broadband Initiative (DCBI) is a partnership between the Cooperative, Delhi Telephone Company, and Margaretville Telephone Company. DCBI received its third round of major grant funding on March 1, 2017. By the end of 2018, construction will be nearly complete to 99.2% of all Co-op member locations. The table below summarizes approximate timeframes and service providers for each town in the Cooperative's service territory.

For information updates throughout the year, visit the Cooperative's website at:

<http://dcec.cms.coopwebbuilder2.com/content/delaware-county-broadband-initiative-dcbi>.

County	Town	Construction Target	Service Provider
Chenango	Bainbridge	2018	DTC
Delaware	Andes	2017	MTC
Delaware	Bovina	2017	DTC & MTC
Delaware	Colchester	2017 - 2018	MTC
Delaware	Davenport	2017	DTC
Delaware	Delhi	2017-2018	DTC
Delaware	Franklin	2017-2018	DTC
Delaware	Hamden	2017-2018	DTC
Delaware	Harpersfield	2017-2018	DTC & MTC
Delaware	Kortright	2017-2018	DTC
Delaware	Masonville	2018	DTC
Delaware	Meredith	2017-2018	DTC
Delaware	Middletown	2017	MTC
Delaware	Roxbury	2017-2018	MTC
Delaware	Stamford	2018	DTC
Delaware	Sidney	2018	DTC
Delaware	Tompkins	2018	DTC
Delaware	Walton	2018	DTC
Otsego	Maryland		Not Planned.
Schoharie	Gilboa	2017-2018	MTC
Schoharie	Jefferson	2017-2018	MTC
Schoharie	Summit		Not Planned.

## Vegetation Management Research

The Cooperative is collaborating with Professor of Biology and Ecology, Jack Tessier of the State University of NY at Delhi to assess novel methods of controlling undesirable species growth within our rights-of-way. We have a growing number of members who have elected to not allow the use of herbicides on their properties. We know that maintaining rights-of-way without the use of herbicides is more labor intensive and costly. We want to determine the most effective ways of working with our members to maintain safe and reliable rights-of-way at the lowest practical cost. Working together with Dr. Tessier, the Cooperative's operations employees have identified a number of properties for testing the efficacy of the following vegetation management strategies:

- traditional vegetation management with the use of herbicides
- annual trimming by the landowner of regrowth of undesirable species from the stumps of removed trees
- application of a non-herbicide basal oil to control regrowth of undesirable species within the right-of-way

During the summer of 2017 we will be collecting base data about the number and size of plant species within the research areas. Both desirable and undesirable plant species will be measured and quantified. In subsequent years, we will be comparing the success achieved by the various treatments so that we can advise our members as to the most effective methods of maintaining rights-of-way.

## Operations Update

**Pole Replacement & Line Reconstruction:** Cooperative line crews will continue rebuilding a single phase line on County Route 16 in the Town of Delhi, and on Randall Hill Road, Town of Masonville, and Fish Hollow Road, Town of Andes. Additionally the crews are replacing poles for Margaretville and Delhi Telephone Companies, Rural Broadband Initiative.

**Right of Way Clearing:** Crews will be working on East and West Terry Clove, Basin Clove, Coles, Skip Gray Road, Huntley Hollow, and Emerald Lake in the Towns of Hamden and Colchester. In addition to Cooperative Crews, crews from Asplundh Tree Experts will be clearing ROW.

## Special Request to Landowners of Herbicide Free Properties

Special Request to Owners of Herbicide Free Properties

Landowners who have signed their properties up as herbicide treatment-free properties will all be receiving letters from the Cooperative asking them for help in maintaining safe and reliable rights-of-way through their properties. Cutting down mature trees and trimming tree branches up off the ground is dangerous and should only be performed by trained craftsmen such as Cooperative employees and our contractors. However, we will be asking members to assist us in preventing re-growth of undesirable species from the stumps of previously removed trees. Normally the Cooperative uses a cost-effective method of targeted, low-volume application of herbicides to the leaves of undesirable re-growth to prevent or at least slow the growth of hardwood trees within the right-of-way. When landowners elect to enroll their properties in the herbicide-free program, our most cost-effective method is eliminated. This requires us to use mowing and/or hand-cutting of re-growth on a 3 or 4 year cycle instead of our normal 8-year cycle. We'll be asking landowners of herbicide-free properties to help us by pruning back any regrowth from the stumps within the right-of-way on an annual basis. This work can be performed safely from the ground. Landowners should only be dealing with sprouting regrowth that is a few feet high and small in diameter. Pruning can be accomplished with hand tools so no power tools such as chainsaws are required. By working together, the Cooperative and our members can continue to maintain safe and reliable rights-of-way.



*New mowing machine and example of cleared Right-of-Way.*



### Is Your Location Number in This Issue?

Your service location number begins with two letters and is located on your bill next to your account number. Keep your eyes peeled for the "hidden location number" in this newsletter! If you find the number, and it is your service location you will receive a DCEC fleece sweatshirt! **Good luck!**




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Contact DCEC at (607) 746-2341.*



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The information contained herein is designed to promote action and discussion among members. Statements published do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Cooperative. The information has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, and the editor has exercised reasonable care to assure its accuracy.

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