



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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A VETERAN TRIBUTE

PHOTO BY PAT STOCKILL



Turtle Lake



Washburn



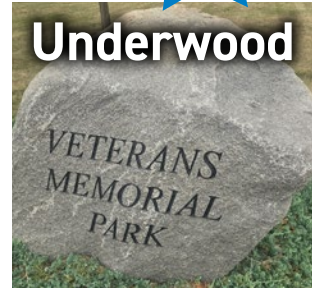
White Shield



White Shield



Washburn



Underwood



Wilton



Max



Underwood

PHOTOS BY PAT STOCKKILL

A VETERAN TRIBUTE

‘Those farm boys can fight, I can tell you that much’

BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL



Throughout America’s history, the nation’s military has defended the country in times of war and secured it during times of peace.

“Those farm boys can fight, I can tell you that much,” are words spoken by Lewis “Chesty” Puller in a U.S. Marines 7th Regiment headquarters tent after a battle at Guadalcanal. And those words could speak well of the strength of the American men and women who served and continue throughout the U.S. military.

Lt. Col. Puller was a U.S. Marine commanding the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines at the time. His comments were made following fighting on the Pacific Theater island during World War II.

North Dakota’s Army National Guard 164th Infantry Regiment was called to active duty, landing on Guadalcanal Oct. 13, 1942. They were the first U.S. Army unit to engage enemy forces in an offensive, reinforcing the U.S. Marine Division in intense fighting against Japanese troops Oct. 24 and 25.

Four years before that historic battle, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed federal legislation establishing Nov. 11 as Veterans Day, honoring military veterans.

It was a day of historic significance, when an armistice was signed on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month for a cease fire during “the war to end all wars.”

The Treaty of Versailles was signed June 1919, yet

the November 1918 armistice marked the end of World War I. In November 1919, President Woodrow Wilson designated Nov. 11 as “Armistice Day,” commemorating the first anniversary of the armistice, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website describes.

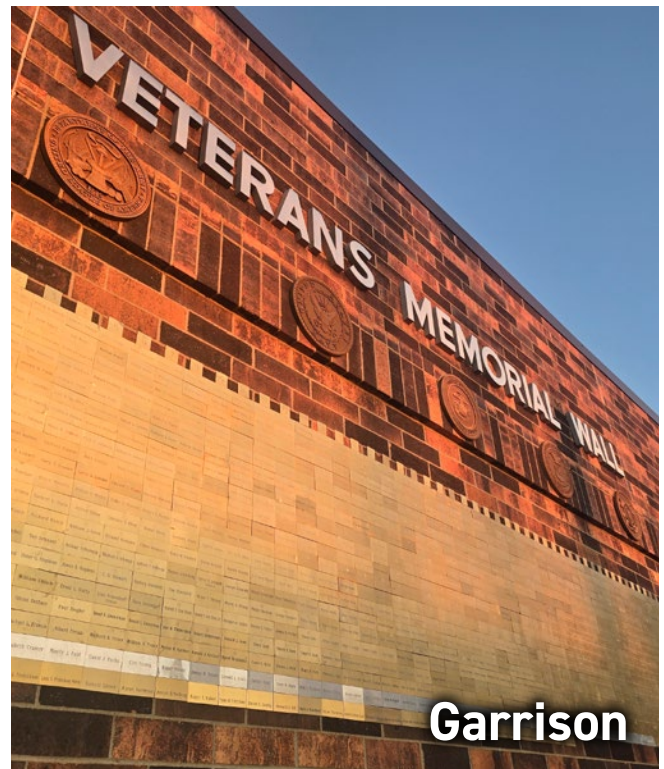
Across the country, many communities pay tribute to military veterans, including several in McLean County.

As described in Riverdale’s Lakeside Park veterans tribute: “Hero: A person who is admired or idealized for courage, outstanding achievements or noble qualities.”

Sometimes, they’re recognized by the quiet reading of names at events, such as Memorial Day. Sometimes, names are noted on brass placards. Other times, it’s a quiet park setting.

They are our U.S. military veterans, as well as those currently serving, from all six branches – Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, Navy and the Space Force, established in 2019.

McLean Electric Cooperative salutes each and every one of them. ■





Reflections of the 2024 construction season

BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL

The 2024 year is winding down, as winter puts an end to construction across the nation's northern tier.

Yet, this is the time of year to reflect on another season of growth and opportunity for McLean Electric Cooperative (MEC) and its member-owners. It might be easiest to simply sum up the cooperative's 2024 construction schedule as "busy as usual."

But that doesn't tell the whole story.

Instead, MEC Engineering Manager Lucas Schaaf offers more insight: With continued interest in rural living, especially along the variety of lakes across the county, MEC continues striving to improve reliability and capacity, while meeting electrical needs of its member-owners.

Part of the 2024 work projects included converting approximately one-half mile of single-phase overhead line to underground in an ongoing partnership with

cabin owners along Strawberry Lake.

In addition, Snake Creek Cabin site owners and MEC partnered on a construction project converting about one-half mile of single-phase overhead line to underground and the addition of one-half mile of underground three-phase cable to provide increased capacity.

Collaboration among area landowners, MEC and the North American Coal Company's Falkirk Mine resulted in yet another project completion converting 4 miles of single-phase overhead line to three-phase underground in the Underwood area. Removing overhead lines improved mining safety, while increased three-phase capacity benefited everyone on that portion of MEC's system.

The 2024 construction season brought an end to a two-year project along Highway 200 in the Washburn area, with completion of 2 miles of line. Four miles of the project were completed in 2023.



McLean County residents are the beneficiaries of its robust recreation and energy opportunities, which contribute to ongoing interest in rural residential developments along its popular lakes.

In addition to the two projects along Strawberry Lake and Lake Audubon, Schaaf said additional lots are being developed along Lake Sakakawea in the Garrison area, including about 15 near Sportsmen’s Centennial Park east of the community and 32 lots west of Garrison near Camp of the Cross on Douglas Bay.

Coal Creek Construction, Underwood, serves as MEC’s primary construction contractor on large construction projects, which includes several in the White Shield area for a new casino and the community’s general infrastructure needs, Schaaf added.

Even though the 2024 construction season is over, plans are already underway for 2025.

The general trend has been one of increased electrical

usage for new and existing accounts, Schaaf continued, with MEC already looking ahead to 2025 construction and beyond. More rural residential developments are planned, he explained, along with about 10 miles of overhead to underground upgrades next year, especially in the Coleharbor area.

It’s all part of the stable growth the cooperative has experienced in recent years.

“In the last 10 years, we’ve seen a more than 30% growth,” Schaaf described.

Much of the construction work entailed service upgrades to improve reliability and capacity, but it’s also a combination of striving to meet existing and new member-owner requests and electrical energy needs.

Plus, it’s about trying to stay ahead of Mother Nature. “Whatever we can do to insulate us from weather, the better,” Schaaf concluded. ■



Don't burn energy in the kitchen

Your kitchen contains appliances that make your life easier, but they also consume energy. Don't worry, there are ways to lower your electric bill.

First, buy the most efficient units possible. Finding the most efficient models is simple: just look for the EnergyStar label. This assures you it's among the most efficient models.

For refrigerators, avoid the automatic ice maker and drink dispenser, because they cause more breakdowns and leaks, in addition to increasing energy use. Can you consolidate one refrigerator for two you already have? A second refrigerator, especially an older one, greatly increases your energy costs.

Selecting the most efficient stove is also important. Induction stoves are now the most efficient and provide features not available with traditional electric or gas stoves. Induction stoves are still more expensive, but the energy savings can repay the extra cost, especially if you cook at lot.

OTHER TIPS

If you aren't buying any new appliances, you can still save energy.

- Cover cooking pans and pots.
- Use an electric kettle instead of running hot water.
- Load the dishwasher fully before washing.
- Remove extra refrigerators and freezers.
- Place the faucet lever on the kitchen sink in the cold position when using small amounts of water; placing the lever in the hot position draws hot water even though it may never reach the faucet.
- Keep range-top burners and reflectors clean; they will reflect the heat better and you will save energy.
- Match the size of the pan to the heating element when cooking.
- Use the microwave oven when possible.
- Use small electric pans, toaster ovens or convection ovens for small meals rather than your large stove or oven. A toaster or convection oven uses one-third to one-half as much energy as a full-sized oven.
- Do not set your refrigerator or freezer too cold. Recommended temperatures are 35 to 38 degrees for the fresh food compartment and 0 degrees for separate freezers for long-term storage.
- Make sure your refrigerator door seals are airtight.
- Regularly defrost manual-defrost freezers and refrigerators; frost buildup decreases the energy efficiency of the unit. Don't allow frost to build up more than one-quarter of an inch. ■

BE PREPARED FOR WINTER'S WRATH

McLean Electric Cooperative (MEC) strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. MEC wants you to remain safe during severe winter weather, so consider preparing now for the possibility of power outages this winter.

OPERATE GENERATOR SAFELY

If your standby electric generator has been in storage since last winter, make sure it is still operating properly – before an outage occurs.

And always follow the manufacturer's recommendations on how to use your generator. Most important is the transfer switch that disconnects the farm or home from the power line and connects it to the generator. It must be a double-throw transfer switch, which prevents the generator from feeding electricity back onto the power line. This protects the lineworkers who may be working to restore your service.

If you have additional questions, please call MEC. We will be glad to work with you to make sure your generator is used properly.

STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED POWER LINES

Mother Nature isn't always kind to power lines. Winter winds, snow and ice often prove to be too much for utility poles and power lines. If you see a downed power line or utility pole, contact MEC immediately.

Do not go near the line or the pole. Just because it's on the ground doesn't mean it's safe to approach.

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

Because power outages can't be totally eliminated, MEC offers these steps to follow if an outage occurs:

- Confirm the outage. Check your own fuses and circuit breakers first.
- Check with a neighbor to confirm if he or she is also experiencing an outage before you call the cooperative. This will help your cooperative determine the extent of the outage.
- Call the cooperative. If the outage is widespread, the phone lines may be busy, but keep trying. Your cooperative will send a line crew to find the problem and restore power as quickly as possible.

If you have additional questions about outages, please call MEC. ■

DURING AN OUTAGE

To prevent an overload on the system while power is being restored, take these steps:

- Turn off every inside light except one.
- Turn down your thermostat.
- If the outage lasts more than 60 minutes, turn off your electric water heater.
- Make sure your kitchen range is off, both the surface and the oven.
- Turn off all unnecessary appliances and unplug sensitive electronic equipment.
- When power comes back on, slowly switch your appliances and lights back on and gradually return your thermostat to its normal setting. ■



McLean County community calendar: Events and activities to see and do

McLean County area food pantry November distribution dates, times and locations:

- **Community Cupboard of Underwood food distribution:** 10 a.m.-noon Nov. 2. Thanksgiving turkey basket, 10 a.m.-noon Nov. 23, with preregistration recommended, and 10 a.m.-noon Dec. 7, 208 Lincoln Ave. Like us on Facebook (Community Cupboard of Underwood) for distribution dates, thrift store and other information.
- **Community Food Pantry serving Ryder, Makoti, Roseglen, Plaza, White Shield, Parshall and those in need:** 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Nov. 23, 181 Ellsworth St., Makoti.
- **Community Thrift Store serving Ryder, Makoti, Roseglen, Plaza, White Shield, Parshall and the region:** 3-6 p.m. Tuesday, 4-7 p.m. Thursday and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, except holidays, 181 Ellsworth St., Makoti.
- **Free Community Clothing Share and Exchange Store,** every Thursday (except Thanksgiving Day), noon-6 p.m., 221 Main St., Turtle Lake.
- **Garrison Area Resource Center & Food Pantry:** Noon-2 p.m. and 5-7 p.m. Nov. 21, Garrison.
- **McLean Family Resource Center:** McLean County residents can contact the center, 701-462-8643, for an appointment to pick up baskets and for more information or assistance through the center, 205 Seventh St., Washburn.
- **McLean Family Resource Center Clothing Outlet:** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. first Saturday of every month, 205 Seventh St., Washburn.
- **Our Savior Lord's Food Pantry:** Noon-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m. Nov. 18, City Hall, 215 Main St., Max.
- **The Lord's Pantry:** 2-4 p.m. Nov. 14, 10 a.m.-noon Nov. 23, Trinity Lutheran Church, 515 Kundert St., Turtle Lake
- **Wilton Food Pantry, Wilton:** "Mini" distributions every Friday, 11:30 a.m. until gone. Full food distribution, 4-6 p.m. Nov. 21, Senior Citizens Center, 42 Dakota Ave., Wilton.

Area food pantries often experience high needs for the following items: baked beans, pork and beans, canned fruit, tuna, chicken, vegetables, cereal, oatmeal, granola and breakfast bars, juice, macaroni and cheese, hamburger and tuna helper, pancake mix, syrup, pasta, spaghetti,

Alfredo and pasta sauce, peanut butter, jelly, rice side dishes, soups and chili, and household items, such as body wash and soap, dish soap, laundry detergent, shampoo and conditioner, toilet paper, toothpaste and toothbrushes. Contact local food pantries for drop-off locations, information or a list of additional needs in your community.

November and early December events:

- **Nov. 11:** Veterans Day.
- **Nov. 16:** Turkey bingo hosted by the Wilton Lions Club, Wilton Memorial Hall.
- **Nov. 23:** Turtle Lake Hospital Auxiliary Holiday Fair, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. with lunch, vendors and basket raffles. Proceeds benefit the various needs of the hospital's departments for the communities it serves.
- **Nov. 25:** Hunter's brunch, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., sponsored by the Audubon Refuge Partners, Audubon National Wildlife Refuge along the south shore of Lake Audubon. Hunters and non-hunters alike are invited to the annual freewill brunch on the first day the refuge is open for upland bird hunting.
- **Nov. 25:** Preschool Story Hour, 10:30 a.m., Max Community Library.
- **Nov. 26:** Book Club, 7 p.m., Max Community Library.
- **Nov. 28-29:** McLean Electric Cooperative closed to allow employees Thanksgiving family time.
- **Nov. 28-29, Dec. 6-7, 13-14:** Dickens Village Festival. Visit www.dickensfestival.com for event details and schedule.
- **Nov. 28-29, Dec. 6-7, 13-14:** Fort Stevenson State Park Dickens Village Festival Geocache. Contact the park, 701-337-5576, for details or go to its Facebook page, www.facebook.com/fort.stevenson.
- **Nov. 30:** Small Business Saturday Vendor and Craft Show hosted by Washburn Life (Washburn Area Improvement Association), 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Washburn Memorial Hall.
- **Dec. 1:** Annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony sponsored by the Riverdale-Pick City Women's Club, Riverdale. Check *The Riverdale Times* for location and other details.
- **Dec. 6:** Angel of Hope Memorial, 7:30 p.m., Wilderness Park, Garrison.
- **Dec. 7:** Santa Day, Washburn Memorial Hall.

Nonprofit organizations and communities throughout McLean County can contact Patricia Stockdill at stockdill.patricia@gmail.com or 701-337-5462 to submit community events. ■

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