

October is National Cooperative Month



October is National Cooperative Month. Since 1930, Cooperative Month has celebrated the fact that cooperatives make a difference because they are different. Democratically governed businesses, cooperatives are organized under the Seven Cooperative Principles, anchoring them firmly in the communities they serve and ensuring that they are closely regulated by their members.

Seven Cooperative Principles:

- Voluntary and Open Membership
- Democratic Member Control
- Members' Economic Participation
- Autonomy and Independence
- Education, Training, and Information
- Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- Commitment to Community

During this year's Cooperative Month, Copper Valley Electric Association (CVEA) will focus on two Cooperative Principles, 'education, training, and information' and 'commitment to community'.

Education, Training, and Information

Cooperatives provide education, information, and training for members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Members also inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

CVEA works hard to keep members informed of important things going on in their cooperative. Each year, in April, CVEA

holds an Annual Membership Meeting to announce Director election results and update members on the accomplishments of the past year.

Throughout the year, CVEA includes current information on projects and issues important to the membership on the official CVEA website, cvea.org, and in Ruralite, the CVEA monthly magazine. CVEA also utilizes the local newspapers and radio stations, when necessary, to keep members informed.

In 2010, CVEA took this principle one step further and implemented a new program called the Copper Valley Electric Connections Program. CVEA invited members who were identified as large stakeholders, opinion leaders, members who are willing to work with the cooperative for mutual benefit, and members who have shown interest in the cooperative in the past to become more closely connected to their cooperative.

This program is intended to keep participants up to date on important projects and industry and legislative issues as well as give them the opportunity to ask questions, share their opinions, and get involved. It gives interested members the chance to stay connected and make a difference.

We've recently distributed a new Co-op Connections newsletter to program members and will hold our second annual Connections Luncheon during Co-op Month this October.

In 2011, CVEA also launched the CVEA Facebook page and will soon launch a communications plan to help keep members and the media better informed during extended electrical outages.

Commitment to Community

CVEA has a strong commitment to the communities where our members work and live. Demonstrating this commitment is a business principle that CVEA practices year round, contributing to the community in countless ways.

To further CVEA's commitment to the community, CVEA created the CVEA Community Foundation to provide scholarships for students and contributions to educational, scientific, and charitable organizations within the community.

Each year the CVEA Community Foundation awards thousands of dollars in scholarships to graduating high school seniors, adults attending Prince William Sound Community College (PWSCC), high school sophomores and juniors attending the Idaho Youth Rally Leadership Camp, and to students selected to attend the National Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

In 2011, the Foundation is working with the Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment (WISE) on a program to bring hands-on science projects and education to our schools.

CVEA supports other education and youth programs includ-



ing the Kenny Lake Library Summer Literacy Camp, the Valdez Science Fair, the Glennallen PTO, a summer Media Camp hosted by One Voice, and the Wrangell Mountain Center's cultural education programs.

CVEA also supports community groups and events such as the Kenny Lake Community League Fun Run/Walk, the Copper Basin Senior Citizens, the Valdez Relay for Life, and Copper River Emergency Medical Services, to name a few.

The CVEA Community Foundation is funded by capital credits that have escheated back to CVEA, generous donations from CVEA members and vendors, and fundraisers.

This cooperative month, CVEA employees are demonstrating their commitment to community by donating their time, as well as their personal items and baked goods, to raise money for the Community Foundation.

CVEA will have a large garage sale and bake sale on Saturday, October 15, 2011, from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., in Valdez. You can purchase treasures and treats and know that you're helping your community at the same time.

Join us in Glennallen for an Eat Up, Sign Up, Round Up Event and Bake Sale on Friday, October 21, 2011, from noon-7 p.m. Enjoy cookies, coffee, and apple cider and sign up to make a donation or Round Up your electric bill each month for the Foundation.

Every person making a purchase or donation of \$25 or more or those who sign up to Round Up will get a door prize ticket and be entered to win a \$50 energy credit!

All proceeds will go to the CVEA Community Foundation to help fund scholarships and contributions to organizations making a difference within our communities.



Top Left, Hannah and Elli listen to a story at the Kenny Lake Library Literacy Camp. Photo courtesy Kenny Lake Library

Top, Jack Kendall and Ryann Westfall working a camera at the One Voice Media Camp. Photo courtesy One Voice

Middle, 2011 CVEA Foundation Valdez scholarship recipients.

Above, 2011 CVEA Foundation Youth Rally Leadership Camp attendees.

For additional information on these or any other CVEA or CVEA Community Foundation programs, contact Sharon Crisp, Manager of Member Services, at 822-5006, 835-7005, or email crisp@cvea.org. ■