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## Lineworkers shine at annual Public Power Rodeo

Warm sunshine and blue skies provided the perfect backdrop for the Northeast Public Power Lineworkers Rodeo, held on Sept. 6 in Burlington, Vt. on the shores of Lake Champlain. The event, now in its



*Lake Champlain provides a pleasing backdrop for the Northeast Public Power Rodeo held in Burlington, Vt.*

fifth year, was jointly sponsored by the Burlington Electric Department and NEPPA, and provided an outstanding display of lineworker skills and teamwork under competitive conditions. Thirteen teams participated in the Rodeo, representing 10 public power utilities from three New England states (see list of participants). In addition to the competitors, a large number of fellow employees, family members and other spectators cheered on the teams during the long day.

Team performance was judged in five different events (see summary of results), with judges rating each team on safe

operating procedures, teamwork and proper equipment usage and techniques. Individual performances were also rated in two timed events. The Champions Trophy for overall team performance was claimed by the Middleton Municipal Electric Department of Massachusetts, which became the first two-time winner of the Rodeo, having also won in 2000.

Burlington Electric Department, the host utility, had an especially challenging day, as a service outage in the downtown area required the attention of several managers and field staff who were participating in the Rodeo. Service was restored, however, by late afternoon, enabling them to attend the evening awards banquet. Pat Hyland, NEPPA executive director, thanked the BED staff and others for their commitment of time and manpower to the event: "We are indebted to Barbara Grimes, Bob Risley, and the BED organization for all they do to make this Rodeo such a success. They have provided a wonderful home for this public power event and great hospitality to those who participate. We also thank Hydron for their assistance with equipment, and Altec for their financial support and the use of their trucks. Finally, a tip of the hat to Bob Henriksen for all his work in helping to organize and run the event. We are indeed fortunate to have such a dedicated team of volunteers."

*See rodeo results on page 2*



# 2003 Lineworkers Rodeo Results

Team Events	First Place	Second Place	Third Place
<b>Overall</b>	Middleton	Vermont Electric Coop. II	Middleboro I
<b>Speed Climb</b>	Middleton	Taunton II	Vermont Electric Coop. II
<b>Transformer Changeout</b>	Middleton	Vermont Electric Coop. II	Danvers
<b>Lightning Arrester</b>	Taunton I	Braintree	Vermont Electric Coop. I
<b>Fused Disconnect</b>	Wakefield	Taunton II	Mansfield
<b>Pole Top Rescue</b>	Vermont Electric Coop. I	Danvers	Middleborough I

## Individual Time Events

### Speed Climb

Shawn Holbrook  
Vermont Electric Coop.

### Pole Top Rescue

Shawn Holbrook  
Vermont Electric Coop.

*First place for overall performance went to Middleton Municipal Electric Department. (left to right) Mike Cloutier, Kenneth Rollins, and Charles Clinch, IV.*



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The Northeast Public Power Association is an organization representing and serving consumer-owned electric utilities in New England.

# Rodeo 2003!

## *Participating Teams*

Braintree Electric Light Department  
Burlington Electric Department  
Danvers Electric Division  
Mansfield Municipal Electric Department  
Middleborough Gas and Electric Department (2)  
Middleton Municipal Electric Department  
Pascoag Utility District  
Taunton Municipal Lighting Plant (2)  
Vermont Electric Cooperative (2)  
Wakefield Municipal Gas & Light Department



*Shawn Holbrook (left) of VEC won the individual Fastest Speed Climb and Fastest Pole Top Rescue events. James Hoppe (bottom left) of Pascoag Utility District was honored for being the "most senior" participant in the rodeo. Kelly Enright, VEC executive manager (bottom right), poses with the Cooperatives two teams and their many awards.*



# Keeping the lights on

*Get to know the line crews that contribute to the high level of reliability and service that public power is known for.*

## **North Attleborough Electric Department North Attleborough, Mass.**

*(kneeling from left to right )  
Bob Bukin, Justin Hergt, and  
Dale Langille,*

*(Standing from left to right)  
Carl Johnson, Dave  
Schofield, and Tom Whalen.*



## **Hingham Municipal Light Plant Hingham, Mass.**

*(from left, standing)  
Richard Frazier, Kurt  
Gondveer, Michael Menten,  
Thomas Orlawski, Todd  
Sherwin, Gus Bregnard*

*Kneeling,  
Jack De Luca, Anthony Fahie*



Photos by Bob Henriksen

# NEPPA and NECA agree to affiliate

The Northeast Energy and Commerce Association (NECA) and NEPPA have agreed to establish a formal affiliation between the two organizations, to enhance their members' informational resources and networking opportunities, and possibly undertake future collaborations together. Initially, both associations have agreed to exchange memberships and to publicize each association's programs of potential interest to their own members.

NECA is a regional not-for-profit association of companies and individuals who are affiliated with the electric power industry in the northeast United States. Its membership includes electric utilities, generators, marketers, suppliers, regulators and professional service firms which are active in regional energy markets. The association's headquarters are in Needham, Massachusetts. Member pro-

grams include informational meetings and conferences, standing committees, educational programs, and interpretation and analysis of regulatory orders and rulings. Association policies and programs are determined by a 31-member Board of Directors which meets periodically throughout the year. The next board meeting is Oct. 23. NECA's current President is Lawrence W. Plitch, a partner with the law firm of McCauley & Plitch, which serves clients in the energy industry.

"We are pleased to establish this affiliation with NECA," said Pat Hyland, NEPPA Executive Director. "NECA's directors and members can be a valuable resource to NEPPA members in the rapidly evolving energy markets of the northeast. We look forward to a mutually beneficial relationship between our two associations."

*Information about NECA can be obtained from its website, [www.necanews.org](http://www.necanews.org), or by contacting Lois Lawson, Executive Director, at 781-449-5959.*

## *Braintree Electric Light Department hires new general manager*

William Bottiggi, a project manager for NStar, has accepted the position of general manager of the Braintree Electric Light Department in Braintree, Mass. The appointment comes after a yearlong search that began shortly before Walter McGrath retired in November of 2002. The Sept. 23 issue of the Patriot Ledger reported that Bottiggi could start as early as Oct. 20.

According to Light Board Chairman, Darrin McAuliffe, the department received more than 100 applications for the general manager position. BELD used an executive recruitment firm that specializes in the

utility industry to screen resumes and narrow the field of candidates. The firm conducted approximately a dozen interviews narrowing the field to five candidates who were considered by the light board. The last three candidates were interviewed on Sept. 16.

McAuliffe said he was impressed with Bottiggi's 15 to 20 years experience in the private sector and is glad the department will be steered by someone with a master's degree in business administration.

McGrath is now working with Community Broadband, a division of Vectren Communications.

# Employment

*Employment advertising in News Line is \$30 with a maximum of 50 words or is free to NEPPA members. Deadline for the next issue is Oct. 20.*

## *Peabody Municipal Light Plant Assistant Superintendent of Electric Distribution (Support)*

Duties to include: serve as safety compliance officer, coordinate safety training, tree trimming, vehicle maintenance, hazardous waste handling. Candidate must be self-motivated and team oriented, must participate in on-call rotation, and have a valid Massachusetts CDL driver's license. A minimum of five years experience using line construction tools, three years experience working on energized primary distribution circuits is required. Applications are available at PMLP, 201 Warren St. Ext., Peabody, Mass. between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. All inquiries may be directed to the attention of Rick Sandler, (978) 531-5975. PMLP is an EOE.

## *Chester Municipal Electric Light Dept. Lineworker*

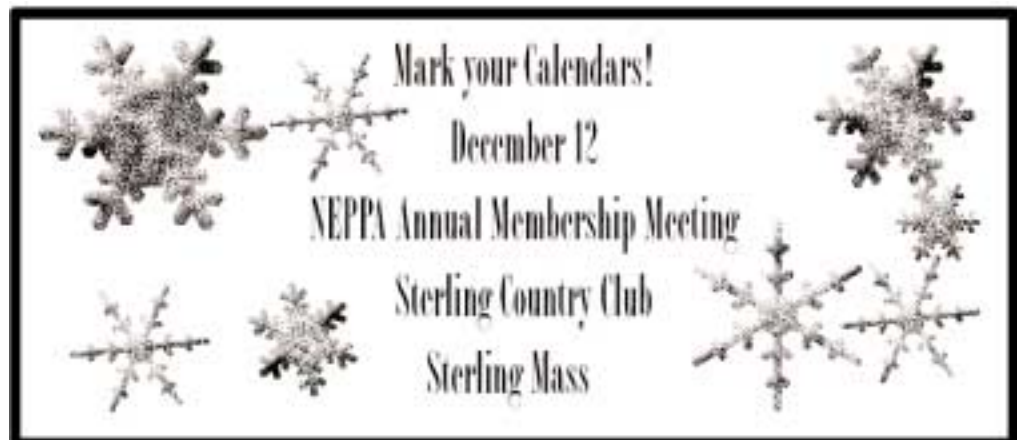
Responsibilities include, but not limited to, all aspects of construction and maintenance of 25KV overhead electric distribution system, maintenance of vehicles, tree trimming, etc. CDL, class B, hoisting license required. Candidate should have completed an approved apprentice program that meets journeyman qualification. Candidate must presently live or agree to relocate within 30 minute radius and be willing and able to respond promptly to non-scheduled overtime. We offer 90% paid health and dental, life insurance, deferred compensation plan and competitive wages. Send or fax resumes to CMELD, 15 Middlefield Road-Box 14, Chester, MA 01011. Fax (413) 354-6610, phone (413) 354-7811.

# Member Notes

## *Thomasson Lumber Company*

Thomasson Lumber Company of 1007 St. Francis Drive, Philadelphia, MS has joined NEPPA as a corporate member. They sell and distribute utility poles and provide all pole treatments. The contact person is Jason Fulton and he can be reached at (800) 647-6260 or faxed at (601) 656-6317.

*NEPPA welcomes guest columns and feature stories from our affiliate members. Content must be of interest to our readers and not represent a conflict of interests for NEPPA. Final approval of all submissions will be made by the editor. Contact Mary Harrington mharrington@neppa.org or (508) 482-5906, ext. 15 for more information.*



# Washington Electric makes major commitment to renewable energy

Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC of East Montpelier, Vt. has announced plans to develop a renewable energy project. The Co-op will build a plant that will generate electricity from



Avram Patt..

the landfill gas (LFG) being produced and collected at the state's largest landfill in Coventry, Vt. The landfill is owned and operated by New England Waste Services of Vermont (NEWSV), a wholly owned subsidiary of Casella Waste Systems of Rutland.

The project will be a source of long-term,

affordable, stable and predictably priced renewable baseload power, and is expected to meet a significant portion of the electricity needs of the Co-op's member/consumers for up to 30 years. The

*The Coventry landfill gas project is a major step for us... With this project, we will be able to maintain and increase our renewable energy supply for many years to come, at an affordable cost.*

facility is expected to begin generating in 2005. In its initial stages, the project will generate approximately 3.2 megawatts (MW), equivalent to the amount of energy the WEC was purchasing from the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant up until February 2002. It will replace and supplement power that WEC has already been purchasing from a landfill gas facility in Connecticut since the expiration of the Vermont Yankee supply, a contract that will expire at the end of 2004. Over time, the landfill is expected to create enough gas to generate up to 6 MW. WEC projects that its net cost of power will be less than 5 cents per kwh over

thirty years, a cost that is equal to or better than current market costs and lower than other long-term options. A key benefit to WEC and its members is that the cost will be stable and predictable, and not subject to the volatility and unpredictability of fossil fuel and other market energy prices.

Landfill gas is methane produced by the natural decomposition of waste. Because methane is a harmful greenhouse gas, modern landfills such as the one in Coventry collect the gas and burn (flare) it, rather than letting the methane escape into the atmosphere. Using the gas to generate electricity has two important environmental benefits. It significantly reduces the air emissions at the landfill itself, compared to flaring. In addition, power from this project will offset the need for production and environmental impacts from fossil fuel and other non-renewable generators from which WEC would otherwise need to procure power.

Although the project will supply WEC members with a major portion of their energy needs, it is actually a very small project compared to most types of electric generation. It will involve construction of a



*Continued on page 6*

building on the landfill itself, sized to house generators capable of producing up to 6 MW of power, as well as a single pole line connected to a nearby VELCO substation.

In a report in Washington Electric's membership newsletter, the Co-op's General Manager Avram Patt and Board President Barry Bernstein write: " The Coventry landfill gas project is a major step for us... As Co-op members, you presently have more renewable energy in your supply than perhaps any other utility customers in the country today. With this project, we will be able to maintain and increase our renewable energy supply for many years to come, at an affordable cost."

A number of regulatory and other approvals must all be in place before the project can be built. WEC will be seeking a Certificate of Public Good from the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB), which will review economic, environmental and other aspects of the project in making its decision. The project will also need an Air Quality Permit. WEC is seeking financing approval for the \$6.345 million dollar project from its principle lender, the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), and will also need a vote of its members as required by Vermont law, once the PSB has issued its Certificate. NEWSV and Casella are presently in the process of seeking a Solid Waste Permit and Act 250 approval for a proposed expansion of the Coventry landfill.

## Reputation Recovery

*An interactive seminar for public power professionals*



The NEPPA Public Communications Committee is hosting an interactive seminar on reputation recovery.

Robin Schell, APR, senior counsel with Jackson Jackson & Wagner, will incorporate case studies both from within and outside the utility industry that will address the recovery stage following an image crisis.

Participants should leave the seminar with a practical step-by-step guide that will detail actions that should be taken before and after an image crisis and knowledge of the tools used to measure an organization's public image.

The session will begin with a discussion on the concept of reputation and why it can make or break a company. The program will then move on to the concept of behavioral public relations.

Three main areas will be addressed:

**Establishing a bank of good will**

**Recovering from a crisis or issue**

**Measurement**

The session will end with a discussion on assessing image-building techniques with dipstick research, focus groups, telephone and written surveys and media tracking. An informal lunch will follow the session with opportunities for questions and further discussion.

*Thursday, October 23, 2003*

*9:00 am to 1:00 pm*

*Shrewsbury Town Hall*

*Shrewsbury, Mass.*

*Register at [www.neppa.org](http://www.neppa.org) or call Mary Harington at (508) 482-5906 for more information.*

# Nominations sought for new Customer Service Award

NEPPA members will soon receive nomination forms for a new award which will recognize public power employees who provide exceptional service to their customers.

Early this year, the NEPPA Board of Directors established the award in memory of Carol Tracey, who served the association for 10 years as a staff member devoted to serving member needs in a professional, courteous and friendly manner. The award, to be known as the Carol A. Tracey Customer Service Award, will be presented each year to employees of NEPPA utilities who have demonstrated a commitment to delivering outstanding service to their utility customers, either through sustained, exceptional performance of their customer service duties, or

the development of new and/or innovative customer service programs for their systems. The award will be presented annually to all recipients at the NEPPA Customer Service Conference, which is held in March.

Candidates must be nominated by their general managers and must have served their utilities as full-time employees for at least three years. Nominations will be reviewed by the NEPPA Executive Committee, which shall be responsible for approving all award recipients. Awards will be made to all worthy recipients, without limitation as to number in a single year or from a single utility. All nominations must be in writing, and submitted no later than Dec. 31, 2003.

## *Customer service and the telephone*

Utility personnel are often put in the position of receiving and making telephone calls to customers or vendors.. Here are some tips on how to approach this sometimes tedious task.



Don't shrug off the typical telephone call. It's a powerful communication and sales tool, and if you take the time to systematically plan your calls, you'll find they can become business builders.

Consider, for a moment, what you can do to make a top-notch call happen:

**Plan.** Before making a call, understand your customer and try to visualize her needs, now and in the future.

Determine in advance the benefits of your call. Set an objective for the call.

**Introduce yourself.** Be sure to engage your customer with courtesy, but not transparently impersonal pleasantries. Get to the point quickly and ease into the body of the conversation.

**Present.** Have all the information concerning the customer's account or complaint in front of you and have answers ready. Remain courteous and open to customer comments.

**Confirm.** At the end of the call, reinforce what will happen next and when.

**Follow Up.** Be sure to do what you promised, thank your customer, and set the stage for the next, and hopefully even more successful, contact.

## *Georgetown joins MMWEC*

The Georgetown Municipal Light Department has rejoined the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC).

The Georgetown utility, a founding member of MMWEC, withdrew from membership in 1999. It rejoined to take advantage of MMWEC's wholesale power market services and financial services.

Georgetown Municipal Light Department Manager Wayne Snow said joining MMWEC makes good economic sense for the utility.

"Overall, I believe Georgetown will be better off being a member of MMWEC," he said.

Georgetown is a participant in most of MMWEC's power supply projects, through which the utility receives a diverse mix of electric power and energy resources from MMWEC's ownership in several generating units. Georgetown also receives hydroelectric power and energy through a contract with the New York Power.

MMWEC now has 23 members.

## *WMGLD offers rebate for energy-efficient clothes washer*

Twenty residential customers of the Wakefield Municipal Gas & Light Department (WMGLD) recently received an additional \$50 rebate as part of the WMGLD incentive and rebate program administered through the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company's (MMWEC), Home Energy Loss Prevention Service (HELPS) program. In addition to the ongoing rebate from the WMGLD, the customers also received a \$50 rebate through the HELPS program, for a total individual rebate of \$100.

According to WMGLD Manager William Wallace, the 20 customers purchased an eligible Energy Star-qualified clothes washer from a participating manufacturer and retailer by July 15, 2003. These customers are now using up to 2/3 less energy and are saving approximately 25 gallons of water per load.

"This double rebate was a great incentive for those customers who needed

a new clothes washer and wanted to save money at the same time," Wallace said. "Customers should also remember that they still can participate in the ongoing incentive and rebate program."

The WMGLD incentive and rebate program offers residential customers an opportunity to save money by making home repairs and/or purchasing energy-efficient appliances and thermostats, including programmable setback thermostats, refrigerators, dishwashers, clothes washers and hot water heaters.



# Around New England

*If you have a program, service or event at your utility you'd like to tell others about, please let us know at*

## News Line

*by email:*

*marrington@neppa.org*

*or call us at (508) 482-*

*5906.*

## TMLP to hold Community Day

Taunton Municipal Lighting Plant (TMLP) will hold its 17th annual Community Day to kick-off Public Power Week, an October celebration that will be observed by TMLP as well as over 2,000 community-owned, locally controlled electric utilities in the United States.

The event will feature tours of the generating plant, bucket and Bosun Chair rides, a giant slide, Power Train USA, community demonstrations, trackless train rides, a DNA kit table, and temporary tattoos. Special guests will include Sparky, the Lincoln Continentals Quartet, and

Barn Babies. All activities are free of charge and will be held rain or shine.

The event will be hosted by the employees of TMLP, along with General Manager Joseph Blain, and Board of Commissioners Robert Treano, Joseph Medeiros, and Robert Nune.

"There will be hot dogs, popcorn and soft drinks, along with activities and tours for kids of all ages," said Cynthia Angus, TMLP public communications manager. "Community Day has always been a popular family-friendly event for our customers."

## North Attleborough to host Safety Saturday

North Attleborough Electric Department is kicking off Public Power week with its Ninth Annual Safety

Saturday in early October. Light refreshments will be served and visitors will be able to meet "Louie, the Lightning Bug". They will learn about electric safety with "Hazard Hamlet" safety stage and learn to generate electricity by pedaling NAED's electric generating bike. Line crews will give demonstrations of NAED bucket truck and pole rescue. NAED's Energy Smart Home will demonstrate energy conservation and money savings and Energy Star® rated products.

NA Teen center will be helping visitors recycle returnable bot-

tles and cans using any return money toward their programs. The Fire Department will demonstrate the Jaws of Life and the Police Department will demonstrate bike and motorcycle units and crime fighting equipment. Also participating are the Hockomock YMCA, N. A. Animal Control and Shelter, and the County Sheriff's Incident Command Center.

Awards will be presented to the 13 winners of the third and fourth grade "2004 Energy Smart Calendar" coloring contest. An art gallery exhibiting all entries of student artwork will be on display. The Board of Selectmen will join in the ceremony along with NAED Board of Electric Commissioners. State Representative Elizabeth Poirier who will present Commonwealth Citations to the winners.



# Committee Meetings

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*October 16*  
**Public Communications**  
10:00 a.m.  
NEPPA Office  
Milford, Mass

*October 17*  
**Board of Directors**  
Common Man Inn  
Plymouth, N.H.

# Upcoming Events

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*Fall Session, October 3*  
**Supervisory Skills**  
Radisson Hotel  
Marlborough, Mass.

*October 3*  
**Administrative Conference**  
Holiday Inn  
Taunton, Mass.

*October 7-8*  
**TAPS**  
Stowe, VT

*October 8*  
**General Foreman's Roundtable**  
Hendrix Wire & Cable  
Milford, N.H.

*Fall Session, October 8-10*  
**Public Utility Management Program**  
New England Center  
Durham, N.H.

*October 23*  
**Image Recovery Seminar**  
Shrewsbury's Electric Light  
Shrewsbury, Mass.

*December 12*  
**Annual Membership Meeting**  
Sterling Country Club  
Sterling, Mass.

