



Annual Meeting Official Notice

You will please take notice that a regular meeting of the members of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative will be held at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 20th, 2021. The meeting will be held virtually, at which time and place the following matters will come before the meeting for consideration:

1. Presentation and consideration of reports of officers and managers.
2. Election of two directors to serve terms of three years. Ballots will be mailed to all members; alternative options will include electronic voting and on-site drop box voting. Mailed and electronic ballots will be counted as a vote if received by 9:00 a.m. CST on April 20th, 2021. On-site drop box ballots will be counted if received by the Cooperative by 9:00 a.m. on April 15th, 2021. The Nominating Committee selected the following nominees whose names will appear on the ballot for terms expiring in 2024: *Miles Kuschel* and *Tom Brichacek*.
3. Voting on a proposal that adds a new Bylaw provision to restrict the disclosure of members' information.
4. Voting on a proposal that modifies petition deadlines to allow adequate time for proper ballot preparation in advance of printing and other administrative deadlines.
5. Voting on a proposal that adds a new Bylaw provision to implement an arbitration process for dispute resolution with members.
6. Any other business to properly come before this meeting.

Marie Katterhagen, Secretary

Virtual Annual Meeting

Due to COVID-19 and the safety of our members and employees, there will be a virtual Annual Meeting this year. On **Tuesday, April 20th at 5:30 p.m.**, you can tune into our Annual Meeting on the radio at *101.7 KWAD* and *99.7 FM Hot Rod Radio KXDL*. You can also log in virtually via SmartHub and click on the *Annual Meeting* button.



April 20th • 5:30 p.m.

Meals **4** Members

We are continuing to collect food items for *Meals 4 Members*. Your donation will help Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative members in need. Please donate unexpired goods or non-perishable food items now through April 9th. If you are in need, or if you know of a member in need, please fill out a Meals 4 Members one-time home delivery request form located on our website, www.toddwadena.coop, under *Upcoming Events*, or by calling Allison at (218) 632-3217 or Kallie at (218) 632-3216.



Dan Carlisle, TWEC's President/CEO has been delivering Meals 4 Members home delivery baskets on a weekly basis. Sign up or call if you or another member is in need.

DELIVERING MORE THAN
JUST ELECTRICITY!



Thank a Lineworker

When asked to associate an image or a person with Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, many people would picture a lineworker. Some of the most visible employees of the co-op, lineworkers work tirelessly to ensure our community receives uninterrupted power 24/7.

“Lineworker” is listed as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S. This is understandable as they perform detailed tasks near high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day or current weather conditions, lineworkers are sent out to get the job done.

Being a lineworker takes years of specialized training, ongoing education, dedication, and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of your home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions, when most are sheltering comfortably at home? This dedication and sense of service to the community is truly what sets them apart. That's why we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize our lineworkers who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

While lineworkers may be some of the most visible employees at Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, it's important to note that there is a team of highly skilled professionals working behind the scenes. Staff provide ongoing expertise and guidance on the operations side of the co-op. Member service representatives are always standing by to take your calls and questions about your account, rebates, energy efficiency, and more. Those who work in TWEC's finance department help

ensure the fiscal health of the cooperative. These are just a few of the individuals who work together so we can deliver the service and reliability you expect. Without them, our lineworkers wouldn't be able to “bring the light” to our community.

When our region experienced extreme and long-lasting cold temperatures this February, Todd-Wadena was prepared and able to provide reliable electric service to our members. The historic winter weather drove up demand for natural gas and electricity to such an extent that some parts of the country experienced rotating outages. Thankfully, our wholesale power provider, Great River Energy (GRE), has a system designed to provide reliable electricity in extremely cold weather. At no point during the polar vortex were rolling blackouts considered for our region. GRE's facilities, coal, gas, fuel oil, and wind performed as planned for extreme weather events.

Todd-Wadena's dedicated lineworkers deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day. On April 12, and any time you see a lineworker, I hope you'll join me in thanking them for their exceptional service. I also hope you'll remember that you have a dedicated team of professionals working behind the scenes at the co-op whose commitment to service runs just as deep.



Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO &
General Counsel

Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO
& General Counsel

Board Minutes

Highlights from the January 29th, 2021, regular board meeting:

- CEO Dan Carlisle reported on multiple meetings he attended in the past month. Great River Energy (GRE) held its monthly Member Managers Group meeting and hosted a Transmission meeting with the TWEC team. Carlisle attended the NRECA CEO mini conference remotely.
- STAR Energy visited TWEC and is working on a couple upgrades for the outage mapping system. A mobile friendly version will be available to members in the near future.
- After discussing the options, a decision was made to host TWEC's 2021 Annual Meeting virtually.
- Lisa Graba-Meech, CFO, presented the December and preliminary year-end financials to the Board. Monthly kWh sales were 7 percent under budget; year-to-date was 1.3 percent under budget. Energy revenue was 9 percent under budget; year-to-date 1.6 percent under budget. December's purchased power expense was 1.5 percent under budget; year-to-date 0.7 percent under budget. Tier is 3.0 and Equity is 44.25 before any margin refund.
- The Board approved a resolution for a \$400,000 margin refund to be returned to active members as of the end of 2020 by way of a bill credit.
- TWEC's Nominating Committee met in December and January.
- Member Services Manager Allison Uselman presented the 2021 MN Pipeline rate that is passed through from GRE. The Board approved the adjusted rate.
- Operations Manager Todd Miller highlighted the 2020 year-end statistics for the Operations Department. The cooperative hit a new service high of 111 new services.
- Board Member Mike Thorson gave the GRE report. December was another negative month due to the warmer temperatures, but GRE did still end 2020 in a strong position.
- Board Chair Miles Kuschel participated in the MREA Resolution Committee and shared the changes that will be coming up for a vote at the MREA Annual Meeting.

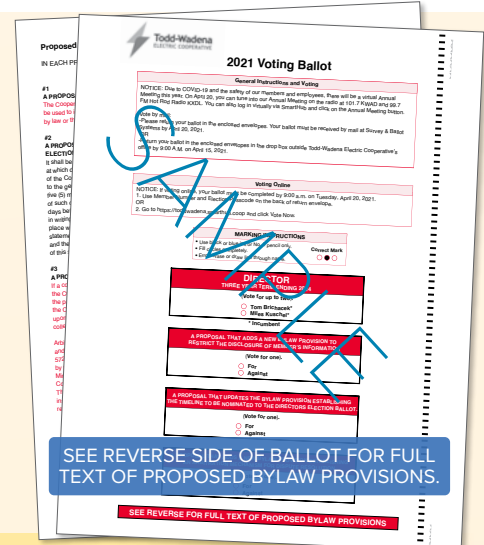
2021 Director Candidate & Bylaw Voting Options

Cooperatives are *democratic entities*, owned by those they serve and governed by elected representatives. In order to underscore this important cooperative principle, we offer multiple ways to cast your vote.

1 Vote by Mail

Election ballots are scheduled to be mailed to all Todd-Wadena members March 15th. The ballots will look like the sample to the right. The order of candidate names will be rotated among ballots. After marking your votes, you will be instructed to insert your completed ballot into a *secret ballot envelope*, and then to seal and place that envelope into a pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelope to return by mail.

The return envelopes are pre-addressed to *Survey & Ballot Systems (SBS)* in Eden Prairie where the ballots will be secured, scanned, and tallied. SBS is a professional election management company that oversees the balloting process for the cooperative.

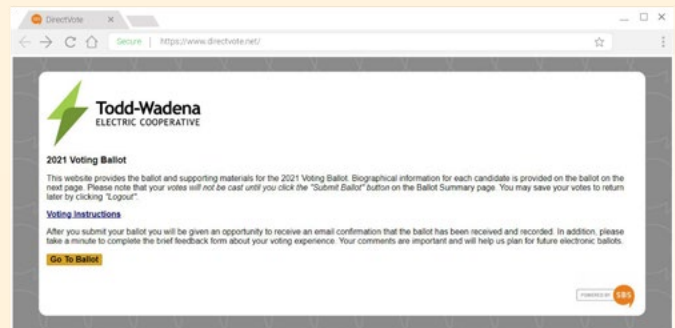


NOTICE
CONCERNING
MAILING
ENVELOPES

There are two envelopes to be returned with each ballot. One is the **pre-addressed** envelope to *Survey & Ballot Systems*, the other is the **secret ballot envelope**. It is very important that the ballot is first placed into the secret ballot envelope, and then that envelope is placed into the pre-addressed envelope to be mailed. **If the ballots are not in a secret ballot envelope they cannot be counted as a valid vote.**

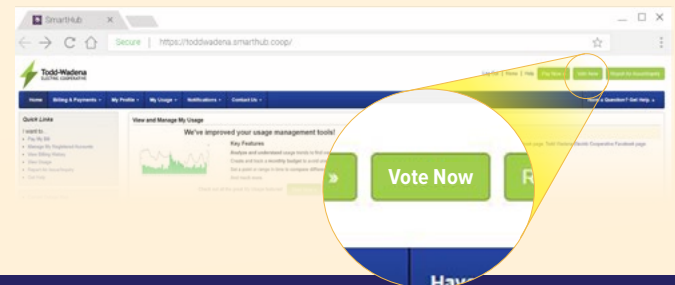
2 Vote Online via DirectVote

There will be instructions with the ballots you receive in the mail on how you can vote online using DirectVote. You will **not** need a SmartHub account in order to vote this way. Once you've authenticated through the DirectVote page, follow the directions to cast your vote.



3 Vote Online via SmartHub

Log into your SmartHub account and look for the "Vote Now" button in the upper right corner. Follow the instructions to finish casting your vote.



Results of the balloting will be announced at the close of the Annual Meeting on April 20th and printed in the May issue of *Pine to Prairie News*.

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative Summary and Complete Text of Proposed Bylaw Amendments for 2021 Annual Meeting



Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) Bylaws are the rules by

which the Cooperative is operated. The Bylaws and all amendments are adopted and approved by members

at TWEC's Annual Meeting. At various times, the membership has voted to amend the Bylaws to keep up with changes the Cooperative is experiencing. You may remember the last Bylaw change in 2013 when the membership approved electronic voting!

The TWEC Board of Directors, representing your interests at the Cooperative, is unanimously recommending a series of amendments. The following proposed Bylaw amendments will be voted on by members. If approved, these changes will become effective on April 20th, 2021.

Full Text of the Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative

Article I, Section 5 - The intent behind adding this new section to the Bylaws is to allow the Cooperative to better protect its members' information by clarifying and restricting the circumstances under which the Cooperative may disclose such information.

Article I, Section 5

The Cooperative shall not release without court order or other lawful mandate, any data to outside vendors or others if the data could be used to identify and/or defraud an individual; harm the Cooperative; or is otherwise considered confidential, proprietary or protected by law or the policies and practices of the Cooperative.

Article III, Section 4 - The intent of the amendment to this Bylaw provision is to allow adequate time for proper ballot preparation in advance of printing and administrative deadlines imposed by our election administrator.

Article III, Section 4

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than eighty (80) days before the date of the meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of not less than five (5) nor more than eleven (11) members of the Cooperative; which committee shall be selected from the members so as to give equitable representation on the committee to the geographical areas serviced by the Cooperative. The actions of the nominating committee shall be valid as long as at least five (5) members are present for its meeting or meetings. No officers or member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed a member of such committee. The committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative ~~at sixty (60)~~ at least seventy (70) days before the annual meeting a list of nominations for directors, but any thirty (30) or more members may make other nominations in writing over their signatures not less than ~~50~~ sixty (60) days prior to the meeting and the Secretary shall post the same at the same place where the list of nominations made by the Committee is posted. The Secretary shall mail with the Notice of the Meeting a statement of the number of directors to be elected and showing separately the nominations made by the committee on nominations and the nominations made by petition. Notwithstanding anything in this section contained, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors.

Article IX, Section 1 - The intent of adding this new section to the Bylaws is to implement the arbitration process for dispute resolution with members. It is expected that arbitration will provide a fair, expedient, and cost-effective means of resolving disputes between the Cooperative and its members.

Article IX, Section 1

If a controversy or claim arises out of, or relates to, the Cooperative's Bylaws, the Cooperative's provision of a Cooperative service, the Cooperative's exercise of its rights under these Bylaws or the terms of membership, or a member's use of a Cooperative service, the parties shall first try to settle the dispute through negotiation. If the dispute is not settled by negotiation and if requested in writing by the Cooperative or the member, the dispute shall be resolved by binding arbitration by a single arbitrator, who shall be mutually agreed upon by both the Cooperative and member. Controversies and claims must be settled through individual arbitration and not through collective or class action arbitration.

Arbitration shall take place in Wadena County, Minnesota, or at such other place as agreed by the parties. The selection of the arbitrator and all arbitration rules and procedures shall be determined pursuant to the Uniform Arbitration Act in Minnesota Statutes sections 572B.01-572B.31, or any successor provisions, and pursuant to any additional written procedures to be established from time to time by the Cooperative's Board of Directors. The determination of any dispute in arbitration shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota. This agreement to arbitrate disputes shall survive any withdrawal from or termination of a member's membership in the Cooperative.

This section does not apply to controversies over the acquisition of right-of-way; the right of the Cooperative to construct, operate, inspect, repair, maintain, relocate, improve, reconstruct, or replace its facilities within any of its rights-of-way; or disputes or claims related to the payment for electric energy provided by the Cooperative.

Tom Brichacek

Tom and his wife Aimee, live in rural Staples with their two daughters—Abby and Lily. They will be married for 20 years on April 21st, the day after the Annual Meeting.

Tom was born in Moran township and attended school in Staples. He attended Alexandria Technical College, receiving a degree in Marketing and Sales Management. Currently he is part-owner and Vice President of Miran Creek Furniture, Inc. and is in charge of all day-to-day operations, including accounting, advertising, customer service,

and production. He is also on the Sacred Heart Area School Board and previously served as Chair, and on the boards of the Staples Area Food Shelf, Staples/Motley FFA Alumni, and the eight parish Area Catholic Community where he served as the initial Chair and helped develop the strategic plan for the eight parishes.

As a director on the TWEC board since 2012, Tom serves as Vice-Chair and has completed the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate. “Working with

the entire board, staff, and employees to make decisions that are in the best interest of the members of our cooperative makes serving on the board enjoyable. I work hard to ensure all of the decisions we make are thought out and will serve our membership for years to come. I would appreciate your vote for me to continue to serve.”



Miles Kuschel

Miles, his wife Sarah, and their three children live east of Nimrod, where he is a third-generation cattle rancher. They use rotational grazing to provide forage for the cattle and produce much of their own hay.

A Sebeka High School graduate, Miles attended the UW-Madison Farm & Industry Short Course earning a degree in Beef Production. He has served various roles within the Cass Co. Farm Bureau, American Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers, Ansel Township Board, and is currently serving on the FCC Broadband Task Force; Data and Mapping Group. He also serves as a District Director for the MN Farm Bureau State Board. Miles volunteers for 4-H, FFA, and Second Harvest Heartland, among others.

Miles has spent much of his term on the Todd-Wadena board advocating

for a reliable and affordable electric supply and continues to promote Beneficial Electrification. “Anytime we can save members money and make their lives easier, we need to put our efforts into making it succeed,” Miles states. He has worked with both state and federal legislators to ensure that they understand how the rules and regulations affect our members of today and tomorrow. Miles says, “I’m genuinely concerned at the government’s current pace of mandates and regulations. We must continue to tell the agencies how they impact our small towns, family farms, and families.” Miles’ focus for the upcoming term will be keeping members’ rates affordable, increasing broadband access, meeting members’ concerns, and promoting youth involvement.

Miles is humbled to have the opportunity to serve the Cooperative

and looks forward to continuing to serve members. He says, “I enjoy receiving questions from members about how the industry is evolving at a rapid pace, and I am excited for the future of the Co-op as the electric vehicle goes from concept to reality. We really have an opportunity to save members a lot of money— whether on transportation, home automation, off-peak rates, or a host of other things. We want to be your trusted resource when it comes to all things energy. I really appreciate the work of our staff and the support of our valued members as we continue to work back towards normal!”



Why is Vegetation Management So Important?

Vegetation management is one of the largest preventive maintenance measures for utilities.

It contributes to system reliability and outage management and helps prevent wildfires.

Unmanaged vegetation, combined with severe weather, is the dominant cause of outages and brings serious safety risks.

Vegetation Management: Right-of-Way and Spraying

When you become a member of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, you are agreeing to abide by all co-op policies. TWEC's tree trimming policy is as follows:

Primary lines (other than those in yards) will be maintained a minimum of 20 feet horizontal clearance on each side of the pole line from the ground up. Overhead primary lines located in members' yards are maintained 10 feet minimum horizontal right-of-way on each side of the pole line. On three-phase power lines located in members' yards, the right-of-way must be maintained 10 feet from outside lines and 10 feet below the neutral line. Outside of the right-of-way we also look for "danger trees"—dead or leaning trees that will touch the line if they fall, causing an outage or blinking lights.

	PRIMARY LINE (not a member's yard)	PRIMARY LINE (in a member's yard)	THREE-PHASE LINE (in a member's yard)
HORIZONTAL FEET OF CLEARANCE (ON EACH SIDE)	20 feet	10 feet	10 feet
VERTICAL CLEARANCE	Ground to line	10 feet	10 feet below the neutral

This policy allows TWEC to responsibly provide safe and reliable energy to our members.

The process of implementing this policy is called *Vegetation Management*. Strategies used to minimize

vegetation growth that could cause issues near power lines include tree pruning, brush removal, mowing, and spraying.

TWEC Arborist, Joe Sworski, is responsible for lining up work for TWEC crews and our vegetation management contractor, **Carr's Tree Service**. Work consists of side trimming, removals, and mowing. Our goal is to reach all areas of our system once every 10 years, without going from spot to spot. This helps us keep the lights on and the blink count minimal.

This spring, TWEC is mowing and spraying all circuits coming out of the *Orton* and *Thomastown* substations. TWEC has contracted this service out to **Central Applicators**. Central Applicators will notify the members in those areas on the timeline of the spraying via a letter in the mail.

Please read this letter completely and let Central Applicators know if there are any issues. Look for their logo on the letter/envelope (pictured to the right).

We thank you for your cooperation in the ongoing quest for a clear right-of-way.



READER'S CONTEST

For your chance to be entered in a drawing to win a **\$10 credit** on your bill, correctly answer the questions and include with your TWEC bill. Mail to TWEC, P.O. Box 431, Wadena, MN 56482. Or email the answers to kvandeventer@toddwadena.coop with the subject line "Reader's Contest". Be sure to include your name and TWEC service address. Entries must be received by March 25th.

Conrad Tyrrell of Browerville was the winner of our February Reader's Contest.

1. Lineworker Appreciation Day is celebrated on April _____.
2. Log into your _____ account and look for the "Vote Now" button to cast your ballot in the 2021 election.
3. This spring, TWEC is mowing and spraying all circuits coming out of the _____ and Thomastown substations.

Name:

Your TWEC Service Address:



Local Projects Receive Grants

Giving back to the community we serve is a core cooperative principle. The Operation Round Up Program from Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is a great way for the co-op and its members to give back.

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's Community Trust Board recently met and awarded five Operation Round Up grants to local non-profit organizations, totaling \$4,600.

Since the program's inception in 2002, Todd-Wadena members have raised and donated more than \$559,000 for more than 720 local community projects.

Todd-Wadena's Operation Round Up grant applications are reviewed and recipients selected three times a year by a seven-member volunteer Community Trust Board. The next application deadline is May 15th.



Organization		Amount
Central Lakes College Food Pantry	CLC Staples Campus Food Pantry Expansion	\$2,000
Horizon Health Care (Fiscal Agent for the Conference)	39th Annual Conference on Aging	\$1,000
Park Rapids Figure Skating Club	Annual Ice Show	\$200
Riders of the Crow Wing Saddle Club	New Timers	\$400
Verndale Volleyball	Power Attacking	\$1,000
Total		\$4,600

Local, nonprofit community groups may apply for Operation Round Up grants by calling the office at (800) 321-8932 or by downloading an application from our website at www.toddwadena.coop.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Don't keep your refrigerator too cold. The Department of Energy recommends a temperature setting of 35 to 38 degrees for the fresh food compartment and zero degrees for the freezer. Make sure the refrigerator doors are sealed airtight to maximize efficiency.

Source: www.energy.gov



Welcome, Mike!

Mike Orlando started at Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative on January 4th as an Energy Management Technician in the Member Services Department. Mike and his wife Charlene live near Verndale. They have two adult sons, Ethan and Craig. Welcome, Mike!



Annual Cogeneration Notification to Membership

In compliance with Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers who satisfy the conditions as a Qualifying Facility. Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases is subject to resolution by the Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative Board. Interested members should contact Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 431, Wadena, MN 56482 or call (218) 631-3120.

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Pine to Prairie News

*A monthly publication for
members and friends of*



Todd-Wadena
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

www.toddwadena.coop

Office Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm
Monday - Friday

Telephone: (218) 631-3120 or
(800) 321-8932

Email: todd-wad@toddwadena.coop

Address: 550 Ash Avenue NE
P.O. Box 431
Wadena, MN 56482

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Miles Kuschel, Chair
Tom Brichacek, Vice Chair
Marie Katterhagen, Secretary
Dale Adams, Treasurer
Michael Thorson, Director
Gene Kern, Director
Kristine Spadgenske, Director

Daniel Carlisle, President/CEO &
General Counsel

LOCAL ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

Todd County:

Troy Bak (320) 760-1017

Wadena County:

Gary Zacharias (218) 631-1392

District 5 (Todd County):

Mark Hunter (320) 616-5574

District 6 (Wadena County):

Sheldon Monson (218) 689-3260


If your electric power goes out:

First, make sure the problem is not on your side. (Members may be billed for service calls if the problem is caused by their own equipment.) Check fuses and circuit breakers in your home and by the meter pole. (Call us for help, if necessary.)

Second, check with your neighbors to see if they have power. Then call Todd-Wadena to report the problem. Give your name and account number. Then report any tree branches, twisted wires, broken poles, and whether or not your neighbors are also out of power.

Before digging call:

Gopher State One-Call
811 or (800) 252-1166

Find us on  

www.facebook.com/toddwadenelectriccooperative
www.instagram.com/twec.coop

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 431

Wadena, MN 56482

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Our Lobby is Open!

Our lobby is now open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Masks are required and we ask that all visitors
practice social distancing in the lobby.

Coffee With the CEO

Are you interested in learning more about what's going on at Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative? Do you have any questions or topics you'd like to discuss? Do you just enjoy a good cup of coffee?

Dan Carlisle, Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's CEO, invites members to join him for a series of "Coffee With the CEO" events. The casual coffee hour events are planned from 6:30-7:30 a.m. at the Cooperative.

March 9th, April 6th, May 4th, June 8th