



GCEA

POWERING POSSIBILITIES

MAY 2024



MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 180
Gunnison, CO 81230-0180



STREET ADDRESS

37250 West Highway 50
Gunnison, CO 81230



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We want to be social with you!

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram to find out about GCEA events, energy efficiency tips, safety tips and so much more.



facebook.com/
GunnisonCountyElectricAssociation



@gcea_news

**GCEA offices are open
Monday-Thursday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

GETTING TO KNOW THE BOARD

BY ALLIY SAHAGUN MEMBER RELATIONS SUPERVISOR



ALLIY SAHAGUN

Whether you are new to the area and just beginning electric service with Gunnison County Electric Association, or you have lived in the area for many years, you'll be pleased to know you are well represented by a board of directors that is mindful of our membership as they meet and discuss co-op matters. Hopefully, you have had a chance to meet one or more of them at a GCEA event or interacted with them in the community. Each director comes to the table with a unique background and lifetime of experiences suited to help our members receive reliable, affordable, and responsibly delivered power.

The first GCEA Board of Directors was formed in 1938 by a group of local ranchers who wanted to bring electricity to the Gunnison Valley. The electric cooperative was incorporated under the federal Rural Electric Administration program and the first lines were energized the day before the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 6, 1941. The country entered World War II and materials for building infrastructure were rationed for the war effort. Today, GCEA has over 1,100 miles of distribution lines serving more than 11,000 members.

In the beginning, GCEA's efforts to deliver electricity fulfilled the most basic human needs of providing an efficient way to cook meals, heat the home, and turn the lights on for everyday living. Today, our board discusses ways that improved technology can sustainably power our lives into the future. The board reviews budgets; sets rates and considers future rate options; approves infrastructure improvements such as line rebuilds and equipment upgrades; approves plans for renewable energy projects; and considers ways to give back to the community through the use of GCEA's unclaimed capital credits. Each board member represents a district of constituents and one seat represents the membership at-large. Directors are elected by the entire membership and each serves alternating three-year terms. The board listens to members as they share concerns or raise questions that relate to their experience as a GCEA member. They listen to ideas that come from the membership and look for ways to cost-effectively implement those ideas.

Each board member is required to complete the Credentialed Cooperative Director certification from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and may continue with further board director certifications. During their time on the board, the directors attend meetings and conferences at state and national levels. There, they grow their knowledge of the electric industry and stay abreast of the latest developments and emerging trends in utilities.

Most importantly, each member of the GCEA board cares about our membership and has a desire to serve and give back to the community. We appreciate their tireless service and effort to improve your member experience. If you have not had a chance to meet the current board of directors, I encourage you to read their bios on the following pages and visit with them during next month's annual meeting.

Beginning May 20, GCEA board elections will open for members to vote and as a GCEA member, your vote matters. The board represents all members, and regardless of where you live, you are eligible to vote for any candidate. Whether you've never voted in a GCEA election or have voted every year, your vote is important and signals your opportunity to select directors who best support your goals and priorities for safe, reliable, and affordable electricity.

Visit www.gcea.coop to learn more about election details.

GET TO KNOW THE GCEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Michelle Lehmann – Board President and District 4 Representative

A fourth-generation rancher from the Powderhorn Valley, Michelle earned degrees in human resource management and accounting from Colorado Mesa University. Michelle was first appointed to the GCEA board in 2016 to serve District 4; she currently serves as the board president. Michelle began her service with limited knowledge of the electric utility industry but has quickly learned the business and become an influential leader. Michelle has earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director, Board Leadership, and Director Gold certifications from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. She feels it is important for GCEA members to be heard. She says her passion is listening and being open-minded to others' opinions and ideas and finding solutions. Michelle is proud of all that GCEA has accomplished over the years, particularly the progress of the Taylor River Hydro Project and several solar projects.



Greg Wiggins – Board Vice President and District 1 Representative

Greg originally moved to Crested Butte to teach skiing and has been a property management business owner since 1983. He has been involved in Skyland Metropolitan and East River Sanitation Districts and has served on two local homeowner association boards. In his 13 years of serving on the GCEA board, Greg has proudly participated in decision-making regarding green power and supporting local renewable energy projects while maintaining affordable, reliable electricity. Greg supports Tri-State's efforts to move forward with its Responsible Energy Plan and trusts GCEA staff to execute the board's strategic goals and initiatives.



Morgan Weinberg – Board Secretary/Treasurer and District 2 Representative

Morgan Weinberg has served as a GCEA director since 2019 and currently represents GCEA on the Tri-State board. Along with older brother Caleb, Morgan founded Romp Skis in 2010 and sold the company this year. Morgan lives with his wife Heather and their son Ebbet in Mt. Crested Butte. Morgan says he was interested in serving on the GCEA board because he "wanted to have a positive impact on the environment and the community." Morgan said, "I love working with my fellow board members and the incredible GCEA staff to find creative ways to minimize both the environmental impact and the cost of the energy our members need." Morgan wants to help create a rate structure that is fair to all our members and allows GCEA to be a leader in environmental responsibility. Except for the three years Morgan lived in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, he has lived in areas served by electric co-ops: first in New Hampshire Electric Co-op territory and now in GCEA's service area.



Darcie Perkins – District 3 Representative

Darcie has been a Gunnison Valley resident since 2011 and is serving her first term as a GCEA board member. She is the founder and owner of Decorate CB, a holiday decorating business, and works as a senior consultant for Managing Results, a national firm leading governments, nonprofits, and businesses to achieve results for their customers through strategic planning, implementation planning, budget design, and best practice consulting. As a small business owner, Darcie hopes to join the efforts to bring clean energy to the Gunnison Valley to counter the impacts of energy consumption her business creates. Darcie is also involved in equity initiatives and recognizes that disadvantaged communities in our valley are marginalized by a lack of access to energy-efficient housing. "Taking on the challenge of balancing the urgency of climate change with the realities of affordability and inequity in our community is a problem worthy of great consideration," Darcie says. Her interest in serving the community on the GCEA board is rooted in the belief that we must continue to evolve and change to make the world better for future generations.

**Tom Carl – District 5 Representative**


For 37 years, Tom was the go-to guy when the lights went out in Lake City. Tom was elected to the GCEA Board in 2017 after retiring from GCEA. As a skilled lineman, Tom helped teach at Mesa Hotline School, an annual two-week program for people pursuing the electrical lineworker profession. Tom resides in Lake City where he recently retired from his service as a Reserve Deputy for the Hinsdale Sheriff's Office. He continues other civic activities in the community, including serving as chair of the Lake City Snowmobilers Club and a volunteering with the Hinsdale County Search and Rescue. Tom's previous experience as a lineworker provides valuable insight when the board discusses reliability concerns and the nuances of our local distribution system.

**Polly Oberosler – District 6 Representative**

Polly was raised in Almont on her mother's family resort established around 1910. Like many, her dream was to stay in the Gunnison Valley. She's worked as a ranch hand, ski lift mechanic, USFS Wilderness Ranger, and ski and bike mechanic. After 30 years in Mt. Crested Butte, Polly and her husband Dave moved to Doyleville where they have a small ranch. She writes for the Crested Butte Magazine and has a column, "Grazing the Tomichi" in the *Crested Butte News*. In December 2023, Polly published *The Low Down from High Up*, a compilation of her columns and magazine articles. Polly says she could see the electric business moving in a new and exciting direction and endeavored to put her varied experience to work for GCEA members when she joined the board in 2018. Since then, her voice has supported the development of local renewable energy projects. "I care deeply about the Gunnison Valley and will always do what is best for GCEA and our members," Polly says.

**Mark Daily – District 7 Representative**

Mark brings a wealth of experience to the GCEA board. He worked as a Gunnison City Planner and held various member services positions at GCEA and Poudre Valley REA in Fort Collins, Colorado. He was elected to the GCEA board in 2015 to represent the membership at-large. Mark says he "has a desire to bring a civil discourse to the ongoing debates on sustainable, affordable, and reliable electricity." Thoughtful during board discussions, Mark looks for reputable facts and data to make informed decisions that positively impact GCEA members as well as the environment. As the energy industry continues to evolve and change, Mark's hope for the future is for members to stay engaged in guiding GCEA, Tri-State, and the State of Colorado with ongoing policies, incentives, utility rate designs, and facilities that serve the member and the earth. Mark's service on the GCEA board will come to an end after our annual meeting in June, and he thanks the GCEA members, staff, CEO Mike McBride, and his fellow board members for their support and hard work. "It has been an honor to serve such an outstanding organization," he says. GCEA thanks Mark for his impactful service on the board and wishes him well in his future endeavors.



A STEP BACK IN TIME

Come take a step back in time with us at the Gunnison headquarters for a dinner, displays, door prizes, and more!

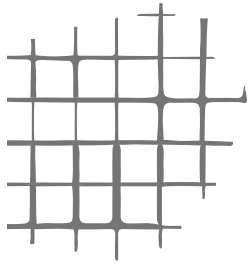
TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2024

GCEA HEADQUARTERS

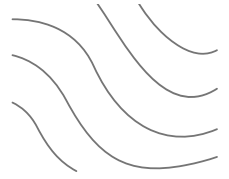
37250 W. US Highway 50
Gunnison, CO 81230

MEETING DETAILS
5 PM - IN PERSON VOTING & DINNER
6 PM - BUSINESS MEETING

For more information, visit gcea.coop



GCEA BOARD ELECTION



MEMBER CHOICE. MEMBER VOICE.

As a GCEA member, your voice matters. Your voice is your vote to elect board members who serve you by investing their time to govern your co-op. Regardless of where you live, as a GCEA member, you may vote for the candidates you support for all director seats that are up for election. Whether you've never voted in a GCEA election or have voted every year, your vote is important and signals your opportunity to select directors who best support your goals and priorities for safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. Visit www.gcea.coop to learn more about the candidates.

To help make voting easier, GCEA offers electronic voting. Ballots will be sent out to all GCEA members on May 20, with the option to either vote electronically by June 16, return your ballot by mail by June 18, or vote in person on June 18, at the annual meeting.

It is important to note that members may only vote once and there is only one vote per membership. If you try to vote electronically and by mail, you'll cancel both votes.



VOTE EARLY, VOTE ONCE! IMPORTANT ELECTION AND VOTING DATES

May 20 – Election opens – ballots mailed with voting instructions

May 20 – Electronic voting via the SmarHub application is scheduled to open at 8 am MT

June 16 – Electronic election site closes at 11:59 pm MT

June 18 – Deadline for mailed ballots to be received

June 18 – In-person voting at GCEA headquarters from 5-6 pm

June 20 – Announcement of election results



Scan the QR code for election and voting information or call 970-641-3520.

SAVVY WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE? VOTE VIA THE SMARTHUB APP!