

## Veselé Vánoce

William L. Caynor Sr., Price Electric Cooperative CEO

Once again, we find ourselves peering out the window to see the bareness of trees surrounded by a blanket of white ice crystals covering the ground. The coldness of the air is prevalent and the darkness of the day has conquered the light. For some of us this means you are commuting to work with limited visibility in hopes of not colliding with any four-legged creatures. For others, it represents the need to throw another log on the fire. The season is winter, and the month is December. A month of cultural and religious celebration coupled with family, giving and community.

Gatherings around the luminated Christmas tree with those we love and care for is the anticipated highlight of another year gone by for most. Who we are and where we originated reinforce these traditions. The Northwoods traditions originated within the family heritage of German, Czechoslovakian, Polish or Scandinavian. When we think of our hardships of living in the Northwoods today, try to imagine what your grandparents, or even their grandparents, endured and overcame so that you could live a better life. These were strong and resilient men and women. My fifth great-grandfather was an indentured servant. Arriving to the New World in 1770 as a 15-year-old English boy, a wealthy farmer paid his passage in exchange for seven years of servitude. Now, those of you that know your American history know what occurred seven years later, the colonies found themselves embroiled in the Revolutionary War. This courageous 22-year-old enlisted in the continental army and fought with General Washington through the Valley Forge campaign. What a remarkable and admirable generation who sacrificed their lives and freedom so that we experience liberty today.

Reflection and remembrance of those who are no longer with us and recognition of those serving our country to keep of us safe cannot be forsaken. I don't believe there are any among us that haven't been impacted in some way by the passing of someone close or connected to us, but rest assured that their memory, lives, through us. As for the young service men and women, most grew up in small communities like the ones we have in the Northwoods. Their dedication to duty gives us the comfort and security to rest at night.

Helping each other in time of need and giving to those less fortunate is instrumental. Given this, the Cooperative has the Santa Elves Giving Tree in our front lobby again this year, but you better hurry as there was a lot of interest last year. I would like to thank those who have graciously donated in years past. It's also that time of year for retiring your capital credits. Those of you who were members in 1989 would have received a credit on your electric bill in November. In fact, \$349,727.38 were retired this year.

I would also like to thank you for working with us, and allowing us to serve you this past year from construction activities to right-of-way clearing, to accessing your property to identify outage related problems on your distribution system. You have been more than good to us, which only inspires us to work harder for you. You are the thread that holds the fabric of America.

From the Directors & Staff, who work for you, our members, we would like to wish you and your family a very Veselé Vánoce (Merry Christmas)!