



GRAND VALLEY POWER



C.E.O.'s Corner

DECEMBER, 2016

GVP PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR LOCAL MATH AND SCIENCE PROGRAM BY TOM WALCH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

For more than 25 years, young students in the Grand Valley have been fascinated and inspired by an innovative, hands-on science program started by a retiree who wanted to do his part to improve our community. The retiree, John McConnell, was a retired physicist from the Los Alamos National Laboratory, who initially volunteered to help a small group of students at an elementary school near his home. As teachers continued asking him for assistance with greater frequency, McConnell recognized that young students across the Western Slope needed help with math, science and critical thinking. To address this need, he designed lessons, experiments and interactive presentations that he could take on the road in the trunk of his car. McConnell's program was so popular that it reached more than 5,000 students every year. Fast forward 25 years and the program, which is now known as the John McConnell Math & Science Center, provides math and science education for more than 15,000 children a year.



The success of McConnell's program is emblematic of the way our community addresses problems and needs: We tackle problems head-on, without waiting for a government program to fund a solution or a bureaucrat to tell us how to implement it. Unfortunately, the program reached the point that it is hampered by its success, as the space School District 51 has available cannot accommodate its every-growing popularity. Enter Colorado Mesa University, which offered to house the McConnell Center in its new engineering building. But to take advantage of this offer, the center must come up with capital to fund its share of the completion of the space. In response to a request from the center, the Grand Valley Power Board of Directors voted to join other community leaders in a five-year pledge to provide financial support for the endeavor.



The pledge makes sense. It provides much-needed support for a local, homegrown program that will strengthen our community by providing science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) based education for young students. GVP's pledge will have no material impact on electric rates, as it will be funded by unclaimed capital credits, putting these funds to work here in the Grand Valley. It is consistent with our support for the CMU and University of Colorado Engineering program, our support of area youth and our commitment to economic development.

It is fitting that this announcement comes as the Christmas season approaches, the time of year when we are reminded of the rewards of helping those less fortunate. We recall how Charles Dickens' Ebenezer Scrooge responded to the apparitions that visited him at Christmas with a pledge of his own: "I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year."

It's a pledge I try to make personally as well, with varying and limited success. Others around me here at GVP do a great job, from donating blood, to shaving their heads to support the fight against childhood cancer, to pitching in on the construction of our low-income community solar array. It is heartwarming to see the way everyone in our Grand Valley Power organization – members, directors and employees – keeps the Christmas fires kindled with a sincere generosity of spirit.



CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S HOURS

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Christmas & New Year's Office Schedule

- December 26 – Closed
- December 27 – Closed
- January 2 – Closed

Grand Valley Power's office will be closed on December 26 & 27 along with January 2. Linemen and Dispatchers will be on call throughout the holiday season to ensure that the lights shine brightly.



Call **(970) 242-0040** to report an outage.