

Hagy plans retirement from SWRE

Mike Hagy has announced plans to step down from his duties as SWRE's CEO. He will retire effective January 3, 2017.

Hagy has served as the co-op's manager/CEO since January 2006. Prior to that, for more than 11 years he was a credentialed member of the SWRE board of directors.

"SWRE is a special organization," Hagy said. "Our members, our employees and our board are fine people. I've been honored to work with all of them."

Hagy and his wife Debra live near Frederick and are longtime Southwest Rural members.

He was named SWRE CEO-designate in 2005 after a long career in education which included a 15-year tenure as superintendent of Frederick Schools.

Much of Hagy's growing up years were in the Weaver community west of Frederick where his parents were SWRE members. When he and Debra built their farm home in the early '80s, they powered it with electricity from SWRE.

"There have been a lot of challenges," Hagy said of his time as SWRE's chief executive. "We've seen shifts in the power market, legislative threats at the federal and state levels, and especially difficulties related to ice storms and other weather events."

He notes that the 2010 and 2016 ice storms were particularly stressful. Both events decimated SWRE and WFEC transmission



Mike Hagy

and delivery lines, and resulted in extended outage periods. Even under those trying conditions, Hagy said that he most remembers the generosity and strength of SWRE's members and employees.

Hagy is most proud, though, of strides that the co-op has made in technology, including automatic meter reading, digital mapping, and development of SWRE's mobile app.

"These are all developments that have allowed the co-op to be responsive to the needs of co-op members and to provide better service," he said.

He's also quick to talk about distributive generation.

"We at SWRE want our members to view us as their energy company – not just for electricity, but for all their energy needs. That's why we launched

programs related to geothermal energy, whole house generators, and solar energy."

SWRE can't stand still, Hagy said. While he's proud of the changes that have been instituted during his years at the co-op's helm, he looks forward to watching the organization's continued growth and further changes from the vantage point of a member.

His plans for the future include more time to visit family, travel, hunting, church work, and attending Oklahoma State University football games.

The Hagys have two sons and one grandchild.

Heath and daughter-in-law Erin live in Pekin, Illinois, with grandson Max who is two-and-a-half.

Holt and daughter-in-law Jenna live in Edmond, Oklahoma.

SWRE
CEO Report



by Mike R. Hagy
 Chief Executive Officer

One Man and a Duck

I've prepared more than 100 newsletter column articles over the past almost 11 years. As I look back through them now, a few stand out.

This article was originally printed in a 2009 issue of our newsletter, and I received a lot of comments about it at the time. I decided to rerun it this month with a postscript at the end.

The words "Persistence and Perseverance" came to mind as I prepared to write this column a few days ago. One of the things that I try to be persistent about is exercise. Red, my red Labrador retriever, always accompanies me when I run since I live in a rural area on SWRE lines that doesn't have a lot of traffic.

Due to the rains of the past few weeks, the ditches and waterways south of my farm have been filled with water and have attracted quite an array of wildlife.

Recently as Red and I were running down the road between the ditch and the waterway, ducks flew off the waterway, circled, and then landed again.

Red, who loves the water, jumped in the waterway and began to swim around as usual. As I continued to run, I noticed that Red was about 100 yards behind me carrying something. After about a quarter of a mile on down the road my dog caught up with me. He had a duck in his mouth.

Now being a good retriever, he was just carrying the duck without clamping down on it and killing it. So I stopped my run and reinforced his actions of being a good dog and retrieving a downed duck. I took the duck and threw it up in the air so that it could fly away, but evidently the duck's wing was injured so that it could only fly 20 or 30 feet.

Sure enough, my dog retrieved the duck and brought it back to me! After about three more attempts at trying to grant this duck his freedom only to have it retrieved back to me, I decided to finish my run... with duck in tow.

Now if you can picture this, I was running down a country road with my dog by my side, my radio headphones in my ears, while holding a duck that was moving his head forward and backward like he was either flying or swaying to the music! I was trying to figure out what I would say if someone came by, stopped, and asked me why I

was running with a duck!

Eventually I finished the run and jumped in my pickup so that I could outrun my dog back down the road to put the duck back in the water.

But this is not the end of the story. For the next seven days when I ran, my dog retrieved that same duck over and over, and each day I had to go put it back in the water after my run.

Day by day the duck was slowly recovering and flying greater distances, but that duck was retrieved more than any other duck in the history of waterfowl! The lab never hurt the duck but just liked carrying him around and releasing him... then retrieving him again. Red has his own version of "catch and release!"

Thankfully, after seven days the duck recovered enough to fly away. My red Lab was persistent in doing what he had been trained to do, and the duck demonstrated perseverance in surviving day after day. Each day I finished my run with my dog and my duck! I really kind of miss running without my duck now!!

At SWRE we "Persistently" endeavor to try to provide you the best service possible, and we constantly "Persevere" despite many obstacles that confront us each day. Through our vision of Safety, Service, and Satisfaction we will stay "Persistent" and "Persevere"... one member at a time.

Postscript –

One Saturday morning last spring, as I stretched before I ran, my old dog Red licked me in the face and I dropped to a knee and gave him a big hug! A few minutes later, as Red and I were running down the road, I noticed that he was not closely behind me as usual. When I doubled back it was apparent that he had collapsed and died instantly – no pain! He was 13 1/2 years old.

Red and I logged hundreds of miles running down that old road. We endured varmints, wind, rain, lightning, heat and cold, but many of life's lessons are learned as we persist and persevere running down those "roads" on the diverse routes through our life.

Mike R Hagy

Westover joins SWRE operations

Jimmy Westover has joined SWRE as an apprentice lineman. He will be working in the co-op's Texas territory, based from SWRE's Vernon warehouse.

Westover is a native of the Vernon area and a graduate of Vernon High School. He served for almost 10 years in the U.S. Army, and has worked at the North Texas State Hospital and the Oklahoma Department of Corrections.

Westover and his wife Petrina currently reside in Frederick but will relocate to Vernon in the near future.

They are parents of two sons, Kolton who is 11 and Woodrow, 10 months.



Jimmy Westover

Don't be fooled by common energy myths

Some common myths about effective energy use may be costing you money.

Myth: The higher the thermostat setting, the faster the home will heat (or cool).

Many people think that walking into a chilly room and raising the thermostat to 85 degrees will heat the room more quickly. This is not true.

Thermostats direct a home's HVAC system to heat or cool to a certain temperature. Drastically adjusting the thermostat setting will not make a difference in how quickly you feel warmer. The same is true for cooling. The Department of Energy recommends setting your thermostat to 78 degrees during summer months, and 68 degrees during winter months.

Myth: Ceiling fans keep your home cool while you're away.

Ceiling fans cool people, not rooms. Ceiling fans circulate room air but do not change the temperature. A running ceiling fan in an empty room is only adding to your electricity use. Remember to turn fans off when you're away and reduce your energy use.

Myth: Opening the oven door to check on a dish doesn't really waste energy.

Opening the oven door does waste energy. Every time the oven door is opened, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees, delaying the progress of your dish and costing you additional money. If you need to check the progress of a dish, try using the oven light instead.

What's Cookin' in the SWRE Kitchen

Easy Chicken Tortilla Soup

- 4 cups water
- 3 cubes chicken bouillon
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 banana pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 (15.5 oz) can hominy, drained
- 1 (15.5 oz) can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15.5 oz) can garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (14 oz) can diced tomatoes w/ green chilies, undrained
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 (10.75 oz) cans cream of chicken soup
- 2 (12.5 oz) cans white chicken, drained
- 4-1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 3 Tbs lime juice
- 5 dashes hot pepper sauce
- 3 Tbs dried cilantro
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- salt and pepper to taste



Directions

1. Bring water to boil in a large pot.
2. Stir the bouillon cubes into water until dissolved.
3. Add all other ingredients. Stir.
4. Reduce heat to medium and cook the soup until the onions are soft and opaque (about 20 minutes)
5. Serve with tortilla chips, sour cream, and sliced avocado.

SWRE News

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