



# FALL MESSENGER

Fall 2020 • Vol. 38

[www.midcountycoop.com](http://www.midcountycoop.com)**INSIDE:**

Page 2 - 3 Energy

Page 4 - 5 Agronomy

Page 6 - Auto, Truck, &amp; Tire

## Updates from your Coop



Bill Reimers  
General Manager  
(952) 466-3721  
[billr@midcountycoop.com](mailto:billr@midcountycoop.com)

**Holiday of Waverly:**

In our spring newsletter, we talked about the transformation of our Waverly store. The addition to the building, the remodel, the upgrade of the gas and diesel islands along with the changing from Tesoro to a Holiday franchise. The results are a dramatic increase of customer traffic and sales. This fall we will be installing all new gas and diesel dispensers, making it easier for our customers to fill their tanks.



Holiday of Waverly interior 2020

**Fertilizer Plant Expansion:**

We also reviewed our Agronomy facilities, more specifically our dry fertilizer blending plant and the changes we have made through the years. There comes a time when there is a need for a transformation for that facility also, and the time has come to increase the size and speed of that operation.

We have signed an agreement and have made a down payment on a new dry fertilizer building that will increase the storage capacity by 3 1/2 times of the existing building. We are still finalizing the truck receiving and blending system that will be installed, and we are currently working with Waconia Manufacturing on the details.

Countless hours have been spent deciding on location, size, layout, and more. It is always difficult to decide whether to add on to the existing building or just start over. Given the age of the building, and the space needed, it was determined to start over.



Bill Reimers and Scott Nelson stand in front of the existing dry fertilizer blending plant.

The existing plant will operate through the spring, and when empty, we will tear it down and rebuild on the same site. This will all happen throughout the Summer of 2021 and we expect to be fully operational for the fall season.



Mid-County Agronomy spraying equipment.

increase in acres sprayed compared to previous years.

**Energy:**

The energy markets have not really changed much since June. The values of all products are still fairly attractive, and are quite a bit below last years levels. OPEC is always talking about reducing output to prop up prices, but at the same time, that keeps US domestic drilling unprofitable. This leads to lower cost energy for us, and at the same time making us more reliant on imports.

Propane on the other hand is more of an export product for us. The last few years several facilities have been built to export out of the US, and they can very quickly reduce US inventories if overseas prices are higher than at home. That market has been fairly stable as well, and with an expected reduction in crop drying demand this fall, prices are expected to stay fairly stable in the short term. The next thing that can affect the propane markets is a colder winter. Time will tell. Fortunately Mid-County is well-positioned for Propane storage.



Mid-County Energy's new propane truck 2020.

**Staff and Hiring:**

We have been fortunate to make some staff additions recently. Mike Blood has joined our Auto, Truck and Tire department as Service Manager, and Ryan Pawelk as a Sales Agronomist in the Agronomy department. Current openings include an Auto Technician and Driver/Service Person in the Energy Department.

**Audit and Annual Meeting:**

Mid-County just finished up our fiscal year on August 31st. Our auditors will be here in mid-October to complete the financials. Once again, I believe you will be pleased with the financial performance of your cooperative. We are in the process of deciding how we will handle our Annual Meeting this year which is usually in December. With meeting restrictions in place, the state has published an executive order that removes the requirement for an annual meeting, and allows for mail in voting for directors. We will keep you informed as we learn more.

We are looking forward to a great fall. As always, I appreciate your comments and suggestions to improve your coop.

## How do you purchase propane from Mid-County Energy

At Mid-County we offer 3 ways to purchase propane from us and all 3 are on the same contract.

### 1. Budget Program

The Budget Program starts in June when we send out the contracts. The first payment would then be due in July. To begin, the customer will need to call the office to find out what the budget price is, then the customer decides how many gallons they wish to budget at that set price. We then figure out the monthly payment for July through May. The customer, upon return of their contract, will be put on a scheduled delivery service unless the customer tells us differently or they have a secondary source of heat – electric, wood, heat pump, or a tank that is only used occasionally.

### 2. Prepay Program

The prepay program allows the customer to buy all their gallons of propane they use at a set price all at one time. The customer calls in to find out what the prepay price is, then decides how many gallons they wish to purchase and pay up front. The customer, upon return of their contract, will be put on a scheduled delivery service unless the customer tells us differently or they have a secondary source of heat – electric, wood, heat pump, or a tank that is only used occasionally.

### 3. Market Price/Off-The-Truck Price At Delivery

The Market Price/Off-The-Truck Price allows the customer to decide not to budget or prepay. The customer chooses to pay what the off-the-truck price is the day of delivery.

Budget and Prepay programs require an approved account be set up with Mid-County.



Pictured is Mid-County Energy's new propane truck, ready to deliver.

## More about Quay, Mid-County Coop's Energy Manager



Quay Zander  
Energy Manager  
(952) 466-3727  
quayz@midcountycoop.com

Energy Manager Quay Zander oversees the energy department as it pertains to pricing, contracting, dispatching, and servicing the coop's customers.

Hired May 7, 2001, Quay began his career with Mid-County in the agronomy department as a custom applicator. He eventually moved his way into the energy and fuel department.

Quay sees working for Mid-County as a rewarding experience. "Mid-County is a small coop that cares about the small purchase customer, along with the large purchase customer. Being able to get to know and talk

to your customer is a great situation. When it comes to fellow employees, we have great people to work with and we all care about one another."

He lives with his wife, Nancy, on their family farm north of Waverly. Quay is a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Howard Lake. He is an active HLWW FFA Alumni member. Quay believes giving back is a big part of how you should live your life.

"It's not just about you, it is about the people, and where you live that keeps a community going. Even if you can only give a little bit of your time and talents, it helps more than you think."

Besides taking time out for his family, he is passionate about hunting and keeping up his 4th generation farm.



## Meet your board member - Brian Krause



Brian Krause  
President/Chairman

Brian Krause never expected to be a member of a board of a coop, let alone the Chairman of the Board. He is very proud of what Mid-County has become and is excited for the future of the company.

Brian originally grew up in rural Minnesota between Spicer and Willmar, on what he calls “a little five acre giant garden.”

They had a couple of cows, chickens and a few ducks. “My parents both grew up on farms, they still liked the country way of life and later moved out to a hobby farm where I grew up.”

In 1984 he married his wife Sandy, moved to Victoria, and has lived in the same house for the last 30 years.

Being an electrician, Brian decided to start his own business in 1987. In 2006, he sold the business to his employees and just performed electrical work by himself. Everyone thought he was retiring, but as Brian explains it, at the time his kids were going to a small Christian school that didn’t have any busing, and he and his wife needed to get the kids to and from school each day. Trying to manage his schedule and his employee’s schedules just got to be too much, so he thought going solo was the best decision.

In the early 1990s, Brian was approached by a Board Member of what was then the Minnesota Victoria Oil Company, who asked him about the possibility of taking over his position on the board.

“He knew that’s where I got the work done on my vehicles and purchased all our gas. He told me the Coop needs somebody that understands business and cares about the community.”

When asked what a Board Member does, he explained that they were there to give the General Manager guidance, and be a sounding board because they don’t always have someone else to discuss what is happening with the business. He attended a meeting, was elected, and has enjoyed it thoroughly ever since.

Brian has learned much from being on the board at Mid-County. “First of all, we try not to micromanage at all and look at the bigger picture. Once a month we go over the financial statements on what all the departments performed. We see how all our employees are doing, we might talk about advertising, and we go over different ideas for the Coop. We trust our management. It’s hard for us to get a really good grasp on everything going on when you only meet once a month. I may have several conversations a month with the manager but only one formal meeting a month. I like to call our manager every once in a while and ask how it’s going and provide support if needed,” Brian said.

“Mid-County’s business is ever-expanding and growing into all areas. The next 10 years will find Mid-County in a good position for the future,” Brian says. “I think we have found our niche and we feel like that we can really provide quality service to the people of our area. We have a lot of smaller farms that we serve and have been really trying to cater to them. Once the new fertilizer plant is built, we should be able to do just about anything that a larger coop can do.”

“Integrity is a big part of the business and I know we can’t always be the cheapest and we don’t want to be. Usually the lowest price can’t provide the customer the best service. Coops are in business to make a profit, but it is a little bit different in our case, because in a coop like ours, many of our customers are local farmers that depend on some of the services we provide. If it wasn’t for us, they couldn’t afford or get some services we provide in their area.

That’s how coops started. Farmers put their money together and started these businesses because they couldn’t buy things, such as fertilizer or fuel, at a decent price. That means in this type of business, there are some things that you would just like to break even on because it allows you to bring a service to our customers because they need it and we care about them.”

Brian said, “I’m proud of Mid-County, it is like a big family. Everyone gets treated that way whether you are a customer, an employee or the Chairman of the Board. At Mid-County, we look out for each other and treat each other with respect. This is a coop that people can be proud of and be proud to be a part of.”

## Mid-County Agronomy moving ahead with plans to build a new fertilizer plant.



Scott Nelson  
Agronomy Manager  
(952) 466-3733  
scottn@midcountycoop.com

The current fertilizer facility was built in the 1970s. While it is actually still in relatively good shape, it has become too small for our needs. It has served us well for 45 years, and it's time to upgrade and replace it.

The new facility will be three-and-a-half times the size of the existing building. It will be built in the same location as the existing plant. It is the

intent to start next spring right after the planting season. The project is expected to take all summer and should be ready to blend fertilizer next fall.

### Reusing a great location

We will be building on the same spot. Other sites were considered, but none had the access in all directions of our trade area. With the large amount of traffic in our area, being able to safely enter the roads and highways with our large equipment is another very important consideration. As time goes on, fewer people are familiar with slow moving vehicles, and we need good entry points to roadways.

### Investing in the future

The decision to replace the current fertilizer plant has been part of long-term planning and discussions between Board and Management over the past several years.

Mid-County is making a commitment to its customers regardless of size. "We have made a commitment to our customers and community to continue to provide a vital service to them for the future," Brian Krause, Chairman of the Board said.

With the speed that crops are planted, and our limited storage, it can be difficult to receive fertilizer fast enough in season. This will allow us to have enough storage to not be so hard-pressed in the busiest times.

Mid-County is investing approximately two-and-a-half million dollars into this project. We feel agriculture is going to be part of this county and surrounding areas for a long time.

### Increased capacity and state of the art equipment

The receiving area for semis will be covered for dust control, and to avoid any issues when it is raining. We should be able to unload a semi in about half the time it currently takes.

The design of the building, with its additional storage capacity, will allow us to easily store and blend many of the new products on the market such as Micro Essentials and Aspire that are gaining popularity. There will also be room for other new products that may develop in the future.

The speed of the conveying and blending systems will also increase dramatically, reducing the time to load trucks and getting them to the fields faster.

We are very excited to move ahead on this project that will make Mid-County well-positioned for the farmer of the future. We are proud to be planting our roots even deeper in the farming community.



Scott Nelson and Bill Reimers stand in front of the existing dry fertilizer blending plant.



# AGRONOMY

## Mid-County Agronomy helps recycle agricultural plastics

### Nearly 20,000 pounds of plastics kept out of a landfill and burn barrels

Thanks to a partnership between Carver County Environmental Services, the University of Minnesota Extension office, and Mid-County Co-op, local farmers again recycled nearly 20,000 pounds of plastic ag bags earlier this spring.

In May, approximately 20,000 pounds of plastic bags were collected at Mid-County, and hauled away for recycling. County farmers participated in this innovative recycling program, as plastics destined for landfills or burn barrels were recycled, while simultaneously reducing disposal fees.

Monica Johnson, the County's Minnesota GreenCorps member, organized the program. "The recycling program was eagerly accepted throughout the County," she said. "In addition to saving money, the program appealed to many farmers who were looking for an eco-friendly way to get rid of their plastic bags."

Carver County farmers in the program were able to pick up free packs of recapture bags that served as a way to collect their plastics. Each recapture bag is designed to hold approximately 200 pounds of plastics, and farmers were responsible for filling the 8 foot by 10 foot bags with silage and grain agricultural plastics. The recycling

program is also available to marinas and greenhouses, several of which participated in the May collection. Acceptable items included boat film, stretch wrap, and greenhouse covers. Hockey rink liners were additionally accepted.

Johnson also mentioned that Carver County is planning on offering another collection in October 2020. She is encouraging farmers, marinas, and greenhouses to visit the Carver County Extension Office, located at the County's Public Works building off Highway 212 in Cologne, to pick up a starter pack and capture plastics for the October collection.

Revolution Plastics, the company whose truck picked up the plastics in mid-May, is a nationwide business specializing in recycling agricultural, marine, and greenhouse plastics. Carver County's collected plastics were delivered to Revolution's recycling plant in Arkansas where they will be recycled into can liners and architectural films. To participate in the program or to learn more, please contact Johnson at [mrjohnson@co.carver.mn.us](mailto:mrjohnson@co.carver.mn.us) or the Environmental Services Department at (952) 361-1800.

## Meet our Sales Agronomists



### Steve Salz

As part of Mid-County Coop's agronomy team, Steve Salz of rural Mayer enjoys being involved in sales, soil sampling, custom application, and handles a majority of the field mapping for the company.

Steve grew up on a farm near Fairmont, and was a business owner for about 20 years. Wanting to get back into agronomy, he began working at Mid-County part time in 2012, before becoming a fulltime staff member.

Steve and his wife, Cheryl, have two children; Lesley graduated from the University of St. Thomas with a business/marketing degree, and Joe is also a graduate from St. Thomas, and has an active career as an actuary.



### Ryan Pawelk

Ryan Pawelk is a sales agronomist at Mid-County. Ryan grew up in Hollywood Township just north of New Germany and currently lives in Watertown. After graduating from high school Ryan attended Ridgewater College in Willmar and received his AAS degree in Agriculture Business. He then attended Southwest Minnesota State in Marshall and earned a degree in Crops, Soils and Pest Management from the University of Minnesota.

Ryan said what he most likes about his job at Mid-County is "just being able to work with the farmers and help them produce their crops. I like being outside and scouting fields. I like how variable the job is. There's always something different going on."

Outside of work he likes playing softball and volleyball in the summer, and bowling in the fall and winter months. He also loves spending time with his family, his wife Bria, 5 year-old son Peyton, and one month old daughter Collins.



### Dylan Marx

Dylan Marx is a part of the Mid-County Agronomy staff as a Sales Agronomist. Dylan grew up in Albertville and currently resides in Delano.

After graduating high school Dylan went to South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD, and majored in Agriculture Science. He then interned with Winfield (Land O'Lakes) as a Research Technician. He took care of crop research plots throughout Minnesota and collected data from field trials.

Mid-County is Dylan's first job out of college. He liked that it was close to home and it fit the type of job he was interested in.

Dylan likes working with farmers and building relationships with the community. He loves talking to farmers about how to improve their farms through best management practices.

Outside of the workplace Dylan's hobbies include fishing and working out at the gym.

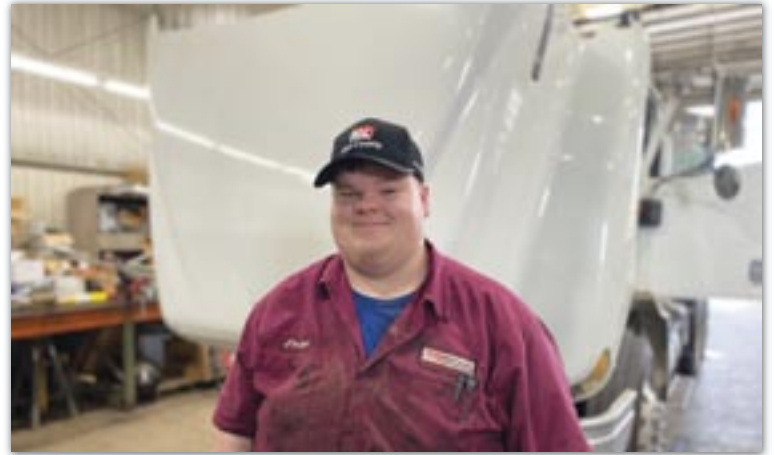
## What is it like being a mechanic at Mid-County?

Mechanics at Mid-County experience a wide variety of tasks and challenges each day. Mid-County not only takes care of its customer's equipment repairs but it also takes care of its own fleet. There is also a wide variety of the type of vehicle mechanics work on. They take care of agricultural equipment, commercial equipment such as landscapers, truckers, and excavators, as well as daily drivers.

Mid-County has the facilities to handle that wide variety of work. Mid-County Auto, Truck & Tire Center is in a great location, relative to the Twin Cities, making it convenient and easy to get to.

As a mechanic at Mid-County, you get to work in the country but have access to the cities, that's best of both worlds. Mid-County is a smaller company, with one location, a family-type atmosphere with a respect for employee's culture. Mid-County keeps up a good facility, investing in equipment and technology, so the tools the mechanics are working with are always newer and the mechanics are ready for any job.

"The folks here really do care about the employees which is not that common anymore. In my opinion, that's a very compelling reason to want to work here. You're not just a number," Service Manager Mike Blood said.



Jordan Meuleners, a mechanic at Mid-County Auto, Truck & Tire Center stands in front of a semi-truck he's working on.

## Where can you go for:

- **D.O.T. inspections for your truck or trailer**
- **Balancing your semi-truck tires**
- **Alignment for your semi tractor or straight truck**

Look no further than Mid-County Auto, Truck & Tire Center. Our state-of-the-art Hunter Balancing and Alignment Machines are the best in the business and will identify and solve many issues such as eliminating wheel-related vibrations, detecting if the assembly is out of round and match-mounting the high spot on a tire to the low spot on a rim to make the assembly roll as smoothly as possible.



### TIP-TOP TIRE CARE AND MUCH MORE



Check out all our services and get a quote at [www.midcountycoop.com/autotrucktires](http://www.midcountycoop.com/autotrucktires)

At Mid-County Auto, Truck & Tire Center we keep hundreds of tires on hand for replacements ensuring quick and hassle-free service! We also have two state of the art Hunter alignment machines for both heavy trucks and personal vehicles.



# MID-COUNTY COOP SERVICES SPOTLIGHT



## Looking for a local propane supplier?



*Look No Further than*



Mid-County Energy is the leading local supplier of propane for home heating, agricultural use and commercial use. We offer customers the ability to purchase their propane in a variety of ways:

- Budget program • Scheduled delivery
- Prepaid programs • Pay as you need

### **WE ALSO OFFER:**

- Bulk Commercial, Agricultural and Construction Fuels
- Lubricants & Oils
- Fuel Equipment



**WE DELIVER!**

Serving You Since 1935 • Your Locally Owned & Operated Coop



Contact Mid-County today for all your propane and fuel needs.

(952) 466-3720 • [www.midcountycoop.com](http://www.midcountycoop.com)

# Open to find out what your Coop is up to!

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT



### Scott Nelson

Scott Nelson, Agronomy Manager for Mid-County Coop, started with the company in 2011.

He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Management and has been in that field for several years.

Nelson has spent 12 years working on a dairy farm.

He is married and has three children. During his off time, Nelson enjoys fishing, hunting and camping. Scott has a two-month old grandson. Scott has helped organize fundraising events and is a past Delano Chamber of Commerce president.

"I like working with Mid County because of the small town atmosphere. We still say things like 'Merry Christmas.' The employees work really well together and will help out anyone if asked," Nelson said.



### Marsi Motschenbacher

Marsi Motschenbacher grew-up in the Carver/Chaska area and currently lives in Prior Lake. She is the Controller for Mid-County. Marsi has worked in accounting for the last 25 years. Before coming to Mid-County Marsi worked in accounting for Twin Cities Harley Davidson.

Marsi said the thing she likes most about her job at Mid County is the "people I work with are great. It's a different type of industry for me. Accounting is accounting, but I am learning a lot about the Agriculture process, all the different types of fuels and products we offer, and how we serve the community!"

Outside of work Marsi is an active grandma. She has a granddaughter and a new grandbaby on the way. She also loves being outdoors and spends a lot of time riding her Harley and boating.



### Mike Blood

Mike Blood grew up in Hopkins and currently lives in Blaine. He is the Service Manager at Mid-County. Before coming to Mid-County Mike was the General Manager for the I-State Truck Center in Blaine. What Mike likes most about his job at Mid-County is interacting with customers and the fact that Mid-County is like a big family. The company really cares about its employees.

Outside of work Mike likes spending time working on his Corvette and taking care of his three dogs that he said are always a handful.



### Mike Rolf

Mike Rolf is Mid-County Energy's newest petroleum driver. After spending thirty-three years working indoors at an office equipment business, Mike was ready for a change. He wanted a job where he could get outside on the road, a job that did not require wearing a "shirt and tie" everyday. He decided to pursue a Commercial Driver's License, and soon after discovered Mid-County Coop.

"I walked in the door and talked to Quay and Bill," Mike recalled. "They were friendly, and we had a great talk. They invited me back for an interview." After accepting a position with Mid-County Energy, Mike was sent to St. Cloud for further training for propane delivery.

Mike and his wife Marlene have two adult children, Krista and Dillon. Mike was born and raised on his family's farm near Bongards, an unincorporated community in Carver County. After his father passed away, and his mother moved into a senior living facility, Mike and Marlene acquired 8 acres of the original farmland, and live there today.

One of Mike's great passions is motorcycles. He owns two. "I have probably driven two million miles in my life," Mike said. "I've been riding since I was ten years old."

## HONESTY • INTEGRITY • VALUE

710 Lake St., W., Cologne, MN 55322  
(952) 466-3710700 Lake St., W., Cologne, MN 55322  
(952) 466-3720700 Lake St., W., Cologne, MN 55322  
(952) 466-3730Hwy. 212 & Hwy. 284, Cologne, MN 55322  
(952) 466-5657801 Pacific Ave., Waverly, MN 55395  
(763) 658-4662