

OEC Generously Supports Barn Quilts of Oconto County



and you can see it in their faces. They are eagerly willing to show the new volunteers how to properly paint the squares.

Without the support of OEC, this wouldn't be such a success or as affordable. The 8' x 8' barn quilts cost \$200. That covers the cost of the materials. They estimate that it would have been an additional \$200 or more to hire someone to install the squares.

OEC donates the use of its equipment for the installation of the barn quilt blocks. OEC linemen Ron Friedman and Tyler Schroeder then donate their time. Lineman John Havemeier and Ben Wilcox

The Barn Quilts of Oconto County (BQOOC) project was introduced in April of 2013. The mission of the BQOCC is to celebrate and promote the culture, heritage, and progressive nature of Oconto County by placing quilt blocks on barns and other suitable buildings throughout the county.

Kay Rankel, who is the director of the Gillett Public Library, contacted Lynn Jones, the day service coordinator of New View Industries in Gillett, about getting BQOOC off the ground. New View Industries is a non-profit employment and training facility for people who have developmental/physical disabilities. What makes the quilt program so unique is that it is community driven. The community has embraced this project and it continues to grow.

Lynn has 12 New View clients who work 10 hours a week on producing the barn quilts. With the help of three wonderful volunteers, they prep the boards by drawing the quilt pattern on the plywood. The clients then work on masking the edges of the shapes with tape and color-code each block. It is then time for them to start painting.

The clients have really taken pride in the project,

and you can see it in their faces. The installation is done after work hours or on weekends. Since 2013, OEC has installed 15 barn quilts, and as of January 2015 there are seven orders in progress.

There is a lot of pre-planning that goes on before the squares can be installed, like finding out what type of material the squares will be fastened to and the ground conditions around the barn. The spring of 2014 was a very wet spring, so many installations had to be postponed until the ground had dried up.

The first installation that OEC helped with was in June of 2013 at the Chase Stone Barn. This is the only location that Kay and Lynn solicited to get the project going. They thought it would be awesome to have the first barn quilt go on the historic stone barn that is the gateway into Oconto County. Because of the historic preservation of the stone barn, the squares had to be mounted onto a special frame that the OEC crew built and installed.

Lynn had a second thought after the project had started to take off, and that was to offer a Community Quilt Block. These blocks are still available in the 8' x 8' size for \$200 or a smaller 4' x 4' block for \$100 for those

who really enjoy the quilt blocks, but don't necessarily have a barn or building large enough to display it on. Kay said that a lot of the businesses in Gillett really appreciate this project and have purchased their own community blocks.

Gift certificates for barn quilts are available in any amount. These make great birthday, Mother's Day, or anniversary gifts. New View sold a gift certificate that was being gifted to a farm that was celebrating 100 years.

Businesses, groups, and individuals are encouraged to sponsor a Barn Quilt for a farmer/barn owner in Ocon-

to County. If you don't have a specific person in mind, the BQOOC project can pair you with a barn owner. Contact them and let them know that you would like to support this project by sponsoring a quilt.

If you are interested in volunteering with the layout and/or painting, please call Lynn at 920-855-2128. To learn more about Barn Quilts of Oconto County, visit <http://barnquiltsfocontocounty.weebly.com>, visit Barn Quilts of Oconto County on Facebook, call (920) 855-6224 or (920) 855-5128, or email barnquiltsfocontocounty@gmail.com. ■



New View clients proudly paint a barn quilt. Left: Shannel. Right, back to front: Bonnie, Mike, and Susie.



OEC linemen Ben Wilcox and Ron Friedman install a barn quilt on the Linzmeyer Barn located in Gillett.



Kay Rankel and Lynn Jones present an appreciation certificate to the Oconto Electric Cooperative board of directors to thank them for their first year of support.

Left to right: CEO Byron Nolde, Tony Wagner, Vernon Gisenas, Ken Cisar, Lynn Jones, David Hischke, Kay Rankel, Dan Kanack, Todd Duame, and Doug Allen.

Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference March 16–17

The annual two-day Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference is being held in Eau Claire from March 16–17. Oconto Electric Cooperative invites four high school students (sophomores, juniors, seniors) to participate in learning about cooperatives with other students from Minnesota and Wisconsin.

This year's theme is "It's a Jungle Out There!" Survival takes cooperation and leadership. Students will have the opportunity to attend workshops, develop leadership skills, and learn what a cooperative business is.

Motivational speaker Craig Hillier will inspire students with his personal stories and promote teamwork. Breakout sessions will be available for students to learn more about leadership through cooperation, credit unions as a financial cooperative career, and much more. Hypnotist Dr. Al Snyder will be the evening entertainment. His show guarantees an evening of laughs and motivation.

If you would like to be one of the four high school students attending this compelling, all-expenses-paid leadership conference, please contact Katie at 1-800-472-8410 for more information. ■



New Scholarship Available

Oconto Electric Cooperative is offering one \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior who is attending Northeast Wisconsin Technical College in the school's Electrical Power Distribution program. Any graduating high school senior whose parent or guardian is a residential member of OEC is eligible. (Residential is defined as having the primary residence within OEC's service territory.) Scholarship awards will be paid out upon entry into the second full-time semester of post high school education.

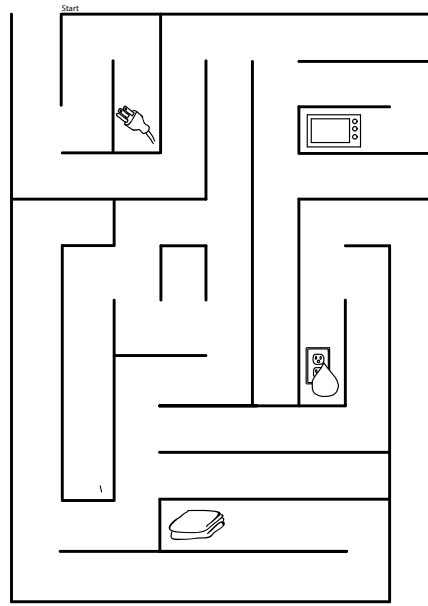
OEC still is offering ten \$1,000 scholarships to 2015 high school graduates going to college or tech school in the fall. This offer is available to children of OEC residential members only.

Students must submit applications no later than February 28, 2015. Applications are available from local high school guidance counselors, online at www.ocontoelectric.com, or at OEC's office. ■





Sparky Needs Your Help to Stay Safe!


Sparky is sniffing around the house to see what's new and interesting before he takes a nap. Lead him safely to his favorite resting spot by keeping him away from electrical hazards.




Help protect pets from electrical hazards.

 Do not let pets find a cozy warm spot near electronics to stay warm. This is not safe!

 If your pet shows an interest in electronic cords, tell your parents so that they can move the cords where they cannot be reached.

 Water and electricity are a dangerous mix! Check to make sure appliances and electronics near sinks, bathtubs, and pools are safely away where playful pets can't knock them in.

 Never let a pet sleep on top of an electric blanket.



Source: safeelectricity.org

Meet OEC's Communications and Marketing Specialist



Oconto Electric Cooperative has named Katie Jagiello as its new communications and marketing specialist. She will be in charge of writing articles for the monthly news magazine, working with social media, creating promotional items, designing advertising pieces, and working with the MainStreet Messenger program.

Before joining OEC, Katie worked nine years as the design and sales assistant for *The Compass*, the official newspaper for the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay. While at *The Compass* she won numerous awards for her designs from the Catholic Press Association of the United

States and Canada. Katie has designed newspaper advertisements, flyers, brochures, and booklets. She helped manage *The Compass* website, assisted in the planning of yearly pilgrimages, and attended events to promote the newspaper, including the annual Bishop's Charities Game at Lambeau Field.

Katie grew up on Washington Island where she spent most of her time working in her family's grocery store, which has been family owned since 1903. Upon graduating high school Katie left the Island to attend college at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, returning to work on weekends and during the summer months. Katie left the Island in 2003 to pursue her career in marketing and graphic communications.

Katie lives in Lena with her husband and little boy. She loves spending time with her family, enjoys the outdoors, and is know for her great cooking and baking. She looks forward to getting to know the OEC members and being able to share her talents within her own community. ■



A snowy owl perched on one of OEC's power lines. (284200) Photo captured by lineman Ron Friedman.

Hidden Account Numbers

Oconto Electric Cooperative hides two account numbers in the local pages of the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* each month. If you spot your account number, call our office before you receive the next issue, and OEC will give you a \$15 credit on your electric bill or a \$25 credit if you have a load management receiver. The January account numbers belonged to Northern Grace Youth Camp, Gillett, and Arthur Fredriksen, Abrams.

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Katie Jagiello - Editor
Byron C. Nolde - CEO
 7479 REA Road
 PO Box 168
 Oconto Falls WI 54154
 (800) 472-8410
 (920) 846-2816
 www.ocontoelectric.com