

## OEC EMPLOYEES RAISE \$10,000 FOR TWO LOCAL CHARITIES



### CHECK PRESENTATION

September 16, 2015, OEC employees distributed a total of \$10,000 to Lena Public Library and Little Hearts for Life, Inc.

OEC employees distributed a total of \$10,000 to two local charities, Lena Public Library and Little Hearts for Life, Inc. Each spring the OEC employees choose a charity to raise money for. Five thousand dollars was raised by the employees through employee lunches, candy bar sale, bake sale, raffle, and an employee golf outing. CoBank, one of the co-op's lenders, also donated \$5,000 as part of a matching funds program.

Lena Public Library was awarded \$5,000. The grant money will update the library's adult and child non-fiction section. The books will consist of health, dieting, cookbooks, crafts, decorating, quilting, do-it-yourself projects, autobiographies, poetry, and more.

Lena Public Library belongs to Outagamie Waupaca Library System (OWL-Snet), a consortium of 49 public libraries in northeast Wisconsin. OWLSnet allows library patrons to borrow books, music, and movies from other libraries if they are not available at their local library. (867401) Not only will Lena benefit from the new books, but so will other neighboring libraries.

Little Hearts for Life, Inc. received \$5,000. Little Hearts for Life, Inc. is a non-profit organization that was started in 2013 by Joel and Ginny O'Harrow of Oconto Falls. In 2009 the O'Harrow's fourth son, Gannon, was born at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin in Milwaukee with Congenital Heart Defects (CHD). By the time Gannon was 5 months old he had already undergone three open-heart surgeries, and at 14 months of age he received a heart transplant.

Little Hearts for Life, Inc.'s mission is to bring awareness to and educate the public about CHD to fund ongoing research and to ultimately help change lives of those living with congenital heart disease. The money will be given to Milwaukee Children's Hospital strictly for chronic heart disease research. Little Hearts for Life, Inc. raised an additional \$35,000 this year at its annual corn roast.

Since 2004, Oconto Electric Employee Charity has awarded \$56,000 to charities and organizations such as Home Respite Care, Old Glory Honor Flight, Oconto Police K9 Unit, and local schools.



OEC's CEO Byron Nolde presents \$5,000 to Little Hearts for Life, Inc. secretary Randi Maloney and founder Ginny O'Harrow.



OEC's CEO Byron Nolde presents \$5,000 to Lena Public Library director Amy Peterson.





## WHY ELECTRIC CO-OPS REPLACE UTILITY POLES

You probably don't pay much attention to the utility poles found throughout OEC's service territory, but did you know these tall structures are the backbone of our distribution network?

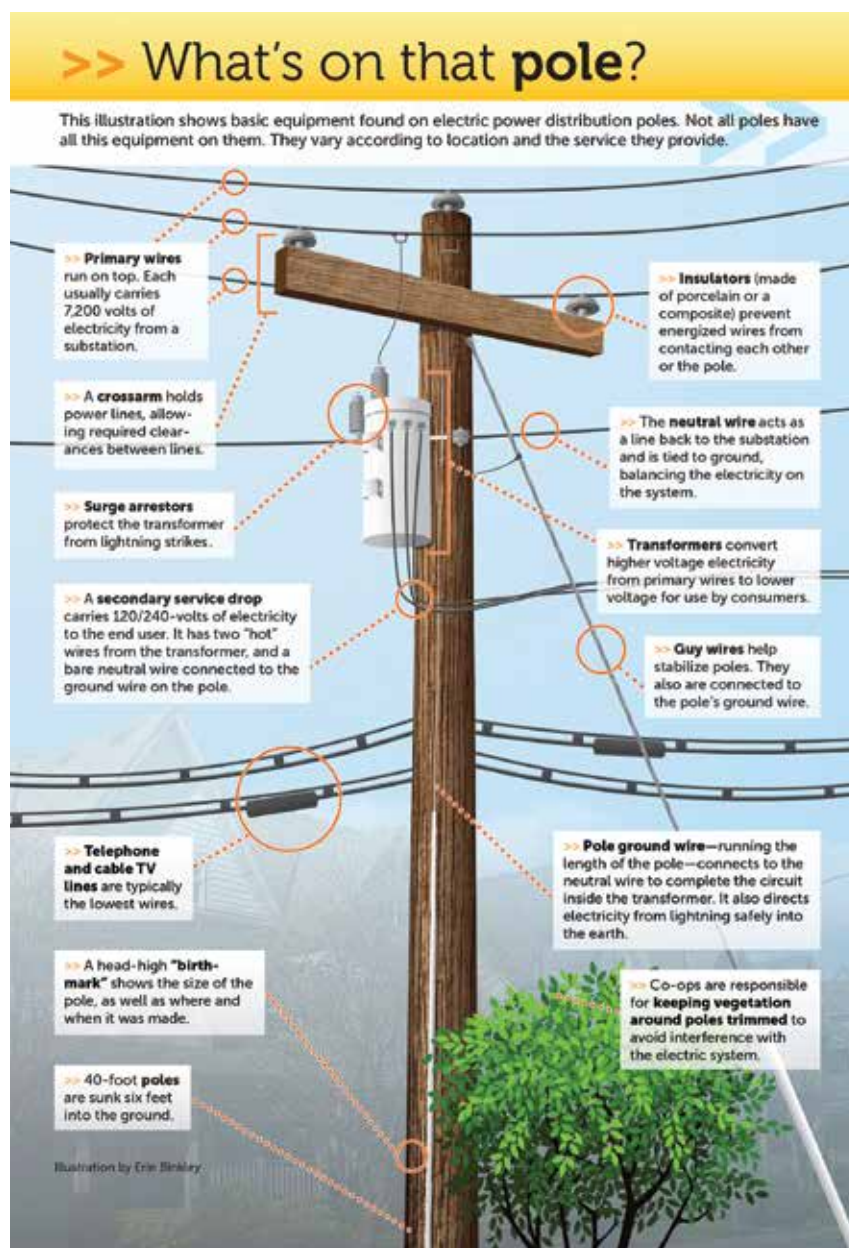
Strong, sturdy utility poles ensure a reliable electric system, which is why we routinely inspect the thousands of poles found on our lines. Throughout the year, our crews check poles for decay caused by exposure to the elements. They know which poles are oldest and conduct inspections through a rotational process. Typically, a standard wooden distribution pole is expected to last more than 50 years.

Occasionally, poles need to be replaced for other reasons besides decay and old age. Weather disasters, power line relocation, and car crashes are potential causes for immediate replacement. When possible, OEC communicates when

and where pole replacements will take place so that you stay informed of where crews will be working.

Here is a quick breakdown of how crews replace a utility pole. When a pole needs to be replaced, crews will start by framing up the new pole with bolts, cross arms, insulators, ground wires, and arm braces—all of the necessary parts for delivering safe and reliable electricity. Then, crews safely detach the energized power lines from the old pole. The old pole is then removed. The crew will then make the existing hole the necessary depth for the new pole. The depth of the hole will be anywhere from 5-1/2 feet to 7-1/2 feet depending on the pole height, which ranges from 30 to 45 feet. The new pole is then raised and guided carefully into position, and the lines are attached, leaving the new pole to do its job.

So, the next time you come across an OEC crew replacing a pole, use caution and know that this process ensures a more reliable electric system for you, our members.



Here is an example of a pole that is ready for replacement. It is rotted and splitting. The cross arm brace is no longer attached and the cross arm is starting to rot.



A black bear scratched this pole, most likely to mark its territory. It was one of three poles on Old Hwy. 64 that needed replacing.





Step One: New poles are delivered directly to the site when it is a large job, saving the co-op time and money. Bell Lumber & Pole Company delivered 75 Northern Red Pine poles in early September to Sunshine Road in Lena. Each pole weighs about 1,000 pounds.



Step Two: OEC journey linemen (L to R) Ben Wilcox and Ron Friedman work on framing up the pole while it is still on the ground. All poles will include insulators and a pole ground wire. Some poles require extra equipment such as a cross arm, transformer, or fuse.



Step Three (L): The energized lines are safely detached from the old pole by the crew. OEC journey lineman Scott Bancroft is in the bucket with a pole mounted auxiliary arm they call a Christmas Tree to raise the lines out of the way for removal of the old pole.

Step Four (bottom L): The old pole is safely removed. The crew then digs the existing hole to the depth needed for the new pole.

Step Five (bottom R): The new pole is set. A ground rod is then inserted in the hole. The crew then makes sure the pole is properly placed and straight before back filling the hole with dirt. The final step is then lowering the energized lines back onto the insulators and properly fastening them. (OEC apprentice lineman Tyler Schroeder is setting the pole with the truck boom. OEC journey linemen Ron Friedman and John Havemeier are on the ground working.)





## GIVE THE GIFT OF ENERGY

Do you have a friend or family member who is hard to buy for at Christmas? Try the gift of energy. If they are members of Oconto Electric you can pay their electric bill for a month, a year, or any amount in between. Go to [www.ocontoelectric.com](http://www.ocontoelectric.com) and click on billing and choose gift certificates, or call Oconto Electric at 1-800-472-8410.



## 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 October account numbers belonged to Angela Johnson, Oconto Falls, and Danny Nickels, Coleman.

**Byron C. Nolde, CEO**

7479 REA Road, P.O. Box 168, Oconto Falls, WI 54154  
800-472-8410 • 920-846-2816  
[www.ocontoelectric.com](http://www.ocontoelectric.com)

**Katie Jagiello, Editor**

## OEC INSIGHT

### Chuck Wellens recognized for 40 years of service



Chuck Wellens was hired in 1974 in the metering department. He then became an apprentice lineman, working his way to a journeyman status. Chuck was a lineman

for 30-plus years. Chuck enjoyed going out to the schools and giving safety demos. He is currently OEC's part-time hydro operator. In Chuck's free time he likes to keep active by walking and riding bike. He also enjoys playing with the grandkids. We appreciate your hard work!

### Dick Stymiest recognized for 35 years of service



Dick Stymiest was hired in 1979 as a load management technician and appliance repairman. OEC sold, delivered, and repaired appliances from 1951 to 1999. Dick

currently works part-time as our load management technician.

When Dick isn't working he enjoys hunting, working around his home, and playing poker. Congratulations!

