

Member Appreciation



MY CO-OP

PANCAKE & SAUSAGE BREAKFAST

OCONTO ELECTRIC
OEC
COOPERATIVE

September 16, 2023

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Join us at OEC - 7479 REA Rd, Oconto Falls

**Fun and Food
FOR THE
WHOLE FAMILY**

**Door Prizes
Kids Activities**



Bring this portion to the 2023 Member Appreciation Breakfast to register for door prizes.

Member Name _____

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Phone Number _____

WHY ARE YOU HERE? WHAT ARE YOU ABOUT?

YLC helps youth identify where they want to be

The 60th Annual Youth Leadership Conference was held July 11-13 at UW-Stout, with 73 young people in attendance. OEC was happy to sponsor four students from our service territory this year. Throughout the three-day event, students met friends from throughout the state, experienced life on a college campus, and learned more about honing their own personal leadership skills from dynamic speakers and activities.

Highlights for the students included motivational speaker and author Craig Hillier, who incorporated demonstrations, activities, and stories into his presentation. He focused on the five “p’s” of leadership: people, passion, perspective, process, and principle.

Students also attended a safe driving presentation, an etiquette dinner, a hypnotist, and a presentation about cooperative careers from Beth Knudson, NRECA youth programs and training manager. The youth groups also produced their own videos demonstrating cooperative principles.

This year included a very special presentation from former Packer great Gilbert Brown, “The Gravedigger.” Gilbert talked about anti-bullying, working together, and being a leader. He explained to the students that bullying expands past high school. You will find it in college and in the work place. Bullying gets you nowhere.

Gilbert said, “When I was younger I was bullied, but it was to the point where I knew I could smash them. I knew it, but I had to deal with my mama when I got home. So I had to try and figure out a different way to handle it. There’s always different ways to handle things, not by brute force. Use your mind.” He added, “This is a tough world out there right now. Help somebody.”

Sponsoring students to this conference is just another way your cooperative demonstrates two of the seven cooperative principles it was founded on: Principle 5 – education, training, information; and principle 7 – concern for community.



Group picture L to R: Lillyan Neta, Landon Friedman, Collin Karcz, Justin Borchert.





POWER IN YOUR HANDS

Recently, one of our newer employees asked me what makes electric co-ops different than other types of utilities. This month, I thought I'd tell you a few of the things I told her.

Because we're a co-op, we operate a little differently than other utilities. OEC's decisions are made locally, by directors who also live right here in our community. Everyone who pays to receive electricity from the co-op is a member. When you pay your electric bill each month, your money stays here—to pay for the electricity used, or to make improvements to our local system to strengthen service reliability. The money you pay the co-op doesn't line the pockets of shareholders five states away. We're a co-op, and we exist to provide a service to you, our local members.

You may notice that throughout the year, we schedule opportunities for you to attend co-op events, like our annual meeting, member appreciation day, and district meetings so we can hear from you.

Because you're part of an electric cooperative, you can count on our team to maintain local jobs, at-cost electricity and first-class service, no matter what the economy—and supply-chain issues—throw at us.

OEC is striving to keep our costs as low as possible so we can keep more money in your pocket. (1193001) We want to help you maximize the value you can get from our services and offerings.

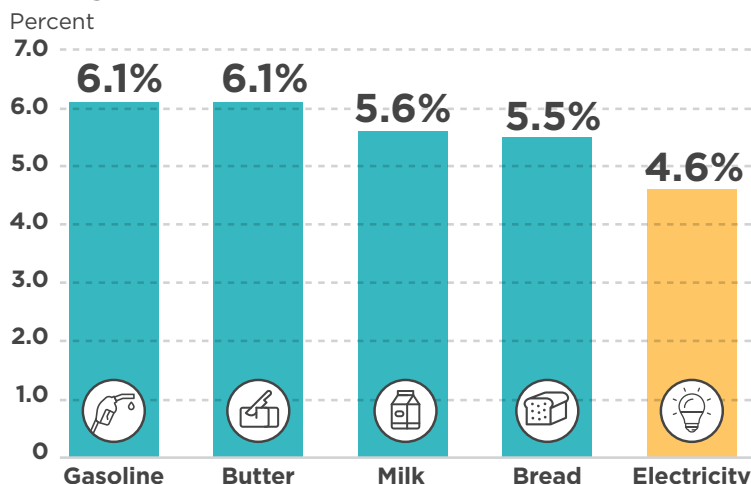
Please know that you—the members of OEC—are at the heart of everything we do. Co-ops adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles that reflect core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness, and service.

We exist to serve you and provide the quality, reliable, friendly service you expect and deserve. While we've grown over the years, we're still driven by the same guiding principles to serve our community. We hope to see or hear from you soon. This co-op was created for you, the members. The power is in your hands.

Electricity remains a good value

Although inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods.

Average Annual Price Increase 2017-2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy



CHANGE MATTERS GRANT RECIPIENTS



Change Matters is a special grant that Community Change distributes utilizing funds provided through the generosity of the former Bay Lakes Cooperative. This grant is meant to provide far-reaching enhancement for a neighborhood or community.

Growing Together

The Oconto Falls Community Garden, located behind the Oconto Falls Ambulance, has plots available for anyone in the community to plant and harvest delicious and healthy foods. (162200) Vegetable gardening is a healthy way to save money and enjoy fresh produce at home. The 8'x10' plots or raised beds are \$10 each and available on a first come, first served basis.

The garden has a separate area for produce that is grown specifically to benefit Kingdom Come Food Pantry and The Nurse's Nook weekend food program for low-income youth and their families. They are always looking for volunteers to help weed this area.

Funds provided by the Change Matters Grant are being used towards topsoil fill, fruit trees, and remaining fencing.



Raise the Roof Campaign

While celebrating its 20th anniversary as a community theater, Abrams Spotlight Productions Inc. faced a significant challenge in 2023: a failing roof at the Nancy Byng Community Theater. With an estimated cost exceeding \$33,000 for a new roof, the volunteer-led organization had to find creative ways to finance this capital project.

To address this need, ASPI launched the “Raise the Roof” campaign in November 2022, kick-started by a \$1,000 donation from the Oconto Falls Lioness Lions Club. Through an online auction and community donations, ASPI raised \$17,000. A Change Matters Grant from Oconto Electric Cooperative added a much-needed \$4,000 to the roof fund. The grant not only provided a significant financial boost but also showed OEC’s support of the theater as a valuable community asset for the arts and entertainment.

ASPI President Bill Koehne expressed his gratitude saying, “We are so thankful to OEC for the grant. The theater belongs to the community, and we’re excited to experience so much community support from OEC and other contributors.”

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. There were no hidden numbers in August.

Byron C. Nolde, CEO

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Katie Jagiello, Editor

