

Board Tour de Oakdale

What does a giant straw pig display have in common with a solar array? They were two destinations on our Oakdale Electric Cooperative board of directors' tour this past October.

Each year our board of directors leaves the board room behind for a day to hit the open road visiting with members, viewing key construction projects, and seeing destinations unique to the Oakdale Electric service territory. While it is a necessity to meet monthly to discuss policies, rates, and budgets, it is equally as important for our board to get out of the office.

This year's road trip started off with a stop at Erin Schneider and Robert McClure's Hilltop Community Farm in La Valle to tour their solar project. As reported recently, Oakdale Electric Cooperative is considering the installation of a community solar garden, so this was a fitting and informative tour. Our board was able to see and touch the panel arrays up close and learn more about the benefits of solar energy firsthand from our members. Erin was passionate and knowledgeable on all aspects of their solar project, and answered a multitude of questions from our board. Excitement and an eagerness to learn



more about solar energy was the consensus from all board members as farewells were bid.

The next stop on the board tour was the Reedsburg Fermentation Fest Farm/ArtDTour. The views of the hills and valleys showcasing the vibrant autumnal colors in southwest Wisconsin were simply breathtaking, and were an added perk while driving this self-guided tour. For those unfamiliar with this unique annual event, it involves 50 miles of art installations, food stands, and performances, and it's slated for public viewing the first two weeks in October. A biking route is also available for





those seeking a strenuous physical challenge. The favorites amongst our group were the giant straw pigs, antique tractor display, and the signage for special lookouts. Whichever way you choose to view, the Farm/ArtDTour should be added to next year's bucket list.

Throughout the day, stops were taken to view different line department upgrades, large and small alike. Some of the projects viewed included the Lyndon Substation three-phase rebuild, Dore Road and Gavin Road line rebuilds, Section 11 Road three-phase rebuild, and recent brushing work completed for reliability. Engineering Superintendent Scott Brookman led the tour to describe the project details and answer questions. Viewing these projects in person is very powerful, and reaffirmed to our board that it takes many talented and dedicated individuals working together to make Oakdale Electric Cooperative run smoothly and successfully.



Taking an entire day off from their normal routines isn't an easy feat for our directors to do, but it always proves to be well worth it in the end. The result after a day of touring our service area is a renewed sense of pride, understanding, and respect for the land, members, and the efforts by all to keep the lights on. ■

Board Updates

"Learning is not a product of schooling but the lifelong attempt to acquire it."—Albert Einstein

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is proud to announce our board of directors' latest educational and leadership achievements.

Richard Barrett and **James Van Wychen** completed their Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate (CCDC). This is a set of five courses that focus on basic governance knowledge and the skills required of cooperative directors. The CCD curriculum provides the important foundation



Richard Barrett with NRECA CEO Jo Ann Emerson.



James Van Wychen

directors require to effectively oversee the business of their cooperative. Richard has served as the District 4 director for Oakdale Electric Cooperative since 2012, and James has served since 2009 for District 2.

Robert Hess was awarded his Board Leadership Certificate. An advanced leadership program, attainable only after the completion of the CCDC, consists of a series of courses focusing in greater depth on specific industry and governance issues, such as risk management, rate making, and policy development. As the current vice president and District 1 representative, Robert has been a key and influential figure on the board since 2002.



Robert Hess with NRECA CEO Jo Ann Emerson

The knowledge Richard, James, and Robert have obtained by earning these achievements will continue to benefit our cooperative in the years ahead. They will continue making informed business decisions in the boardroom for the betterment of our membership.

Congratulations, Richard, James, and Robert! ■

Line Department Additions

Oakdale Electric Cooperative expanded its line department by hiring two apprentice linemen this past November. Both young men easily transitioned into their new roles since they worked previously as our summer help this year. “Our cooperative is proud to hire and train such high quality and hard-working individuals,” stated Glenn Pampuch, line department superintendent.

To Quinten Reuterskiold, working for Oakdale Electric Cooperative is second nature. He grew up understanding the cooperative difference because his father spent his entire career working for an electric co-op. Quinten is excited to keep the tradition going. Originally from Adams-Friendship, Quinten attended Northwest Lineman College in Idaho this past year. After graduating in April, he moved back to Wisconsin and began working for Oakdale Electric Cooperative. Quinten is excited to plant some roots in this area for good. He appreciates the importance of the role he has signed on for and is prepared to take on the challenges ahead.



When time allows, Quentin enjoys being outside, and taking advantage of this area's great hunting grounds. Particularly fond of bow hunting, he has been busy sweeping the woods looking for that perfect 8 point buck.

Welcome to Oakdale, Quentin!

Dalton Linzmeier, graduate of Moraine Park Technical College in Electrical Distribution and originally from Nekoosa, also began his career as an apprentice lineman in November. He was initially drawn to this career path due to the appeal of working outside, while making a positive difference in people's lives. As a summer employee, Dalton worked one on one with the crews, where he was able to learn and build upon his skill set. The other linemen took him under their wing, making him feel valued and part of the team from the get-go. Dalton is grateful for this new opportunity, and proud to continue training and working for Oakdale Electric Cooperative.



A commonality among linemen is their love for the great outdoors, and Dalton is no different. He enjoys hunting, snowmobiling, and camping in his spare time.

Congratulations, Dalton! ■

12 Days of Holiday Safety

It's easy to make safety a part of your holiday with these tips. Tackle one a day and you're well on your way to a safe New Year!



Day 1 What's that noise?

Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Make sure everyone knows what to do if they hear them.

Day 2 What a shocker!

Before use, inspect all electrical lights, decorations, and extension cords for damage.

Day 3 Two's company, three's a crowd. Do not overload outlets with too many decorations or devices.

Day 4 Is it working? Test your ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) to make sure they're protecting you.

Day 5

Ouch! Prevent trips and falls by keeping cords safely along walls and out of doorways and high-traffic areas.

Day 6

Kids eat the darndest things! Avoid putting lights, metal hooks, breakable ornaments, and other small decorations within reach of young children.

Day 7

Thirsty? Keep your Christmas tree stand full of water. A fresh, green tree poses less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.

Day 8

Make a wish! Blow out the candles before leaving a room or going to bed.

Day 9

Nice and warm. Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn—decorations, trees, gifts, and curtains.

Day 10

Can't touch this! Consider installing tamper-resistant outlets/receptacles to prevent kids from inserting objects into the slots.

Day 11

Escape Route: Share your family fire escape plan with overnight guests.

Day 12

Hot stuff! Keep children away from cooking areas; use back burners and turn pot handles in away from little hands.

There's no greater gift you can give your family than a safe and happy holiday! Learn more at holidaysafety.org.

Tips for Unwrapping a Healthier YOU!

Party Planning, Creative Dinner Tactics, and Generosity Boost Holiday Health

Holidays are traditionally marked by celebration, family, and food. Here are some tips to help you enjoy the festivities while keeping a balanced and healthful diet.

Party Snacks

- **Take control.** Before a holiday event, eat a snack or light meal. You will be less likely to fill up on high-calorie foods at the event. Fasting before an event may lead you to overeat.
- **Keep it lean.** Go for the vegetable platter and lean proteins, such as shrimp. Try to avoid creamy or fried appetizers.
- **Bring a dish.** Offer to bring a low-calorie dish to the party. It will help your host *and* your waistline!

Holiday Dinner

- **Pile on the veggies.** Fill up on healthful items such as vegetables, salad, and even fruit before going for the more decadent sides.
- **Reduce your portions.** Choose items you want to try the most and eat a small portion of each. This will help you keep your calories down, while still enjoying holiday favorites!

- **Eat slowly.**

It takes about 20 minutes for your body to realize you are full. Make sure you slow down and savor your meal to prevent overeating.

- **Take a walk.** After your meal, get moving! It will help your body digest the food and use some of the extra calories you consumed during the meal.



Seasonal Sweets

- **Moderation is key.** Enjoy your favorite desserts during the holiday; just be mindful of portion sizes. Sample a small amount of your favorite items. The holidays only come once a year, so you should take the opportunity to enjoy the occasional sweet!
- **Share your dessert.** Cut calories in half by sharing your dessert with a friend or family member.

Most importantly, enjoy yourself by making the focus of the holiday season your family and friends, not food.—Source: NRECA ■



Oakdale Electric Cooperative

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