

Two Youth Members Recap the 2014 Youth Tour

Oakdale Electric Cooperative was proud to sponsor two youth members to attend the 50th Annual NRECA Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., June 13–19, 2014. Trystan Houzner and Sydney Scott were elected by their peers onto the Wisconsin Youth Board at the 2013 Youth Leadership Congress at the University of Wisconsin–River Falls, thus making them eligible to attend the Youth Tour. Funding for the trip was provided by the Federated Youth Fund, which receives monies from unclaimed and returned capital credits.



Trystan Houzner, Elroy

I had the privilege of traveling to Washington, D.C., along with 10 other youth from the state of Wisconsin. We immersed ourselves in the history, culture, sites, and saw firsthand the function of our nation's government. Furthermore, we met amazing people from around the country and created lifelong friendships.

One opportunity our group had was to meet with Senator Tammy Baldwin and Representative Sean Duffy, who welcomed us with open arms. Additionally, we were given a tour of the Capitol, and even more exciting, gallery passes to watch the Senate proceed. For a person who watches and enjoys C-SPAN, this was like landing on the moon! Capitol Hill day was an unforgettable experience.

Approximately 2,000 youth, from almost every state, attended the D.C. tour. *Dontcha know*, everyone we met had something to say on behalf of our accents, or even the stereotypical phrases like *you betcha* or *uff-dah*? I just smiled because we all know Wisconsinites *don't* have accents! Learning about the lifestyles and diversified cultures of students from all across the country was one of many unique experiences of our journey.

The most powerful and awe-striking part of the trip for me was the visit to Arlington National

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Sydney Scott, Warrens

For one week, 11 youthful Wisconsinites were given the opportunity to visit Washington, D.C. While there, we visited national monuments, acquired a wealth of knowledge about Congress, and last—but not least—we made friends.

My absolute favorite part of the trip was the Arlington National Cemetery. Though humbling, it shows just how prideful our country is. To know that so many people sacrificed their own lives for people they never knew, affected us all greatly.

On a happier note, the people of Congress were very welcoming to our group of Midwest natives. Senator Baldwin and Congressman Duffy spent time speaking with us and were very benevolent as they handed passes over to watch the Senate gallery in action. It was awesome!

There were approximately 2,000 other youth tourists from most every state. Our group of Wisconsinites became quick friends with the lone Alaskan at the Youth Congress. I think the hunting and snowmobiling commonalities were what brought us together. She was also entertained by our Midwestern accents along with the Southerners. *Don'tcha know*, eh?

Unfortunately, the trip only lasted a week, but I hope more students will have the same opportunities

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Left: Members of Wisconsin's NRECA Youth Tour delegation meet with Senator Tammy Baldwin (left). (Photo courtesy of Perry Baird)



Above: Trystan Houzner (back row, left) and Sydney Scott (back row, third from left) gather with other Wisconsin youth for a group shot in front of the Capitol, one of many sites the students visited during the seven-day tour. The articles and photographs are all courtesy of these two outstanding youth!

MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

Saturday, October 4

7:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative
Hwy. PP just north of Interstate 90/94

For everyone:

- Pancake breakfast
- Cooperative booths and displays
- Bucket truck rides
- Flu shots (pending vaccine availability)
- Ice cream and popcorn
- Chance to win \$100 credit on electric bill
- Giveaways

For the kids:

- Bounce house
- Face painting
- Balloon animals
- Kids' prizes



Youth Tour—Trystan

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Cemetery. Standing as a testament to our democracy and a symbol of freedom for all mankind, Arlington gives a firsthand view of honor, pride, and hope for the free world. The seemingly endless rows of white stone markers silently screamed sacrifice, and with each click of the Honor Guard's boots came a steadfast reassurance that no matter how great the price, our men and women in uniform always stand ready.

Unfortunately the trip seemed to be over in the blink of an eye, and now we are left with only the memories from an unforgettable experience. A huge thank-you goes out to Oakdale Electric Cooperative and its members for their continued sponsorship and support. My life has been changed forever. ■

Youth Tour—Sydney

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in the coming years. I, and many others, learned so much about our country along with its government and people. I know I'll keep this knowledge I've gained with me and possibly, someday, I'll have the ability to share it.

Thank you to Oakdale Electric Cooperative and its members for allowing me to take this trip of a lifetime. ■



**Oakdale Electric Cooperative's office
will be closed Monday, September 1.
Have a safe, happy holiday weekend!**

Mark Your Calendars...

2014 Fermentation Fest

October 4–13, Reedsburg

Check out www.fermentationfest.com for an updated schedule of events!



Member Photo Contest Calendars Coming!



Thank you to all members who submitted photos for the 2014–2015 Member Photo Contest! We sure have talented photographers on our lines. Come to Oakdale Electric Cooperative's Member Appreciation Day Saturday, October 4, to pick up your calendars, compliments of OEC.



Oakdale Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



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