

OAKDALE ELECTRIC BOARD ELECTION ON THE HORIZON



Districts 3 and 6 are up for election

Members in Districts 3 and 6 have an opportunity to serve on the Oakdale Electric Cooperative board of directors by running for a position on the board in the March 2019 co-op election. Two positions will be up for election; terms are expiring for Gregory Eirschele, Tomah, representing District 3; and Jonathan Williams, Lyndon Station, representing District 6. Both incumbent directors have announced their intentions to seek re-election in the districts they represent.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is owned by its members and guided by directors elected from the membership. Board directors serve three-year terms and represent co-op members at monthly meetings. For applications or more details about board elections, visit oakdalerec.com or contact Cherlyn at cmoseley@oakdalerec.com or 800-241-2468.

Director Qualifications

In order to serve as a representative on the Oakdale Electric Cooperative Board of Directors, a member must...

1. Be a member and primary resident in the district from which elected.
2. Not be employed by or have any financial interest in a competing enterprise or business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative or engage in selling electrical or plumbing appliances or supplies to members of the co-op.
3. Not be employed by the cooperative.

Director Duties

A director must have the time to attend monthly board meetings, other special meetings, and educational seminars that are designed to keep directors informed on the various aspects of Oakdale Electric Cooperative and the

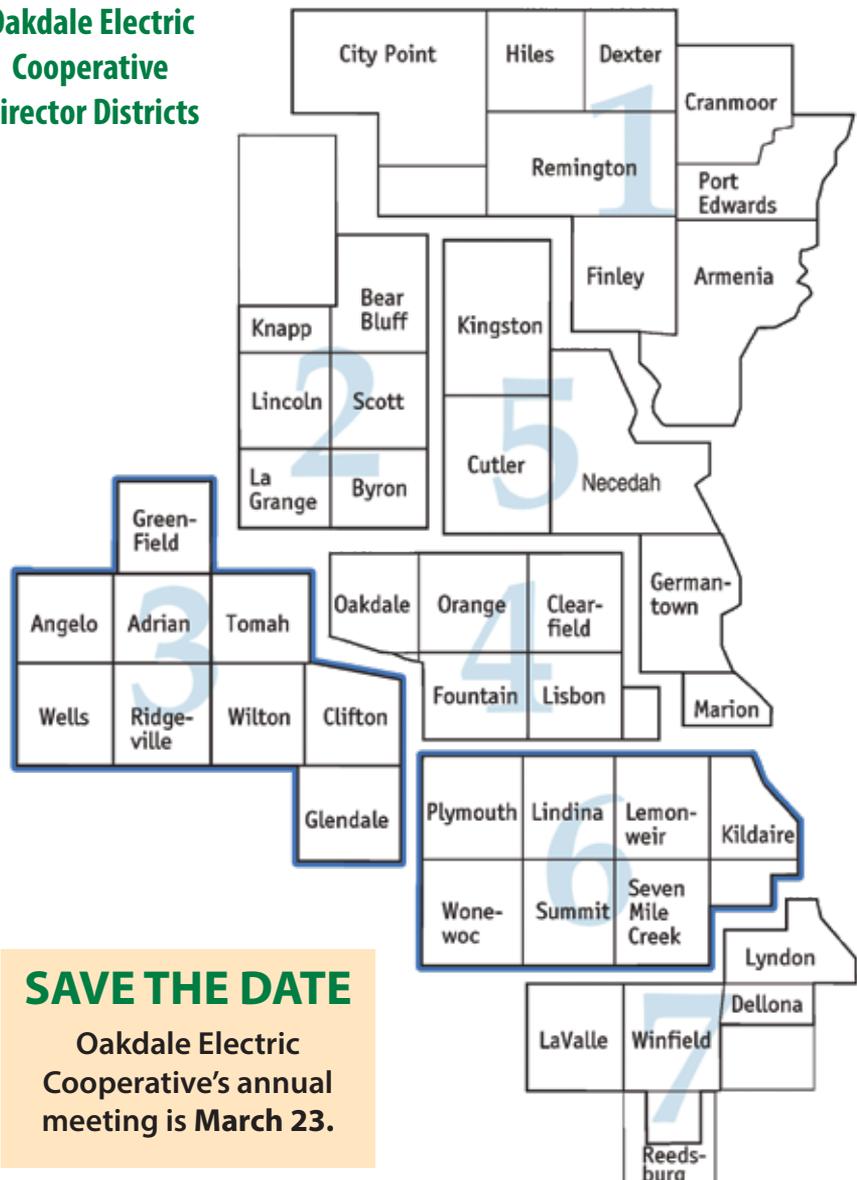
electric utility industry. Their decisions are made in the best interest of the cooperative, and they represent the entire membership.

Grassroots democracy is one of the hallmarks of belonging to an electric cooperative. Two directors will be elected at the annual meeting of Oakdale Electric Cooperative on March 23 at Tomah

High School. Cooperative members will vote for directors in Districts 3 and 6. Consider becoming a part of your electric cooperative by submitting your name as a director candidate in this year's election.

The deadline to file to be a nominee is February 1, 2019, by 4 p.m.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative Director Districts



SAVE THE DATE
 Oakdale Electric Cooperative's annual meeting is **March 23.**

MY CO-OP

BEST WISHES, DAVE AND DAN!

Longtime employees retire after 35 and 24 years, respectively

Oakdale Electric Cooperative recently celebrated the retirements of two longtime employees, Dave Stelter and Dan Kallies.



Dave Stelter

hung up his tool belt after 35 years of maintaining the co-op's fleet. Stelter began his co-op career as a

nighttime truck washer as a means of getting his foot in the door. His hard work paid off and shortly thereafter he assumed the position of nighttime mechanic, before eventually taking on his main role as daytime mechanic.

"It was a great job and a great place to work," stated Stelter proudly. "We made the place run."

Stelter's post-retirement plans include living the simple life. He's looking forward to tending to his cattle, ice fishing, and visiting a farm auction or two.

Dan Kallies spent 24 years keeping the cooperative warehouse stocked, organized, and the linemen equipped and safely outfitted. A journeyman

lineman by trade, Kallies spent 20 years working for a municipal utility before accepting the warehouse manager position at the co-op. It was a decision Kallies never regretted.

He credited the great friendships made as a highlight of his career. "I consider everyone at the co-op my friend," he stated. And even though you were his friend, that didn't mean you were spared from an occasional ribbing from Kallies. One such instance included moving the clock ahead during the lunch hour on an unsuspecting lineman!

Another career highlight for Kallies was packing, moving, and reorganizing the warehouse from the old building to the current building. The warehouse size and functionality increased substantially, and two major upgrades were implemented: a heating unit and a leak



proof roof. Kallies greatly appreciated both amenities, especially during the winter months and rain storms.

Technology improvements gradually overhauled Kallies' supervision of the warehouse. Most notably, inventory and purchase orders converted from traditional pen and paper to electronic processing.

Admittedly, Kallies is not going to miss year-end inventory; however, he will miss his co-workers and the many fun times they had. "The people and the daily interactions I will most definitely miss," he stated.

Kallies' immediate retirement plans do not include slowing down. He's looking forward to spending time with his grandchildren and beloved wife, Audrey. He also has plans for a few projects around the house, fixing up his father's shop, and exploring the outdoors on his UTV, with Audrey by his side.

Enjoy many more laughs ahead in retirement, Dan!



WELCOME, PAUL GERKE

Oakdale Electric Cooperative welcomed Paul Gerke, mechanic, to Oakdale Electric Cooperative.

Paul brings over 17 years of experience to the cooperative. He was previously employed for Peterbilt, where he worked for seven years. Paul has extensive mechanical knowledge, and received specialized engine certifications from across the country.

Paul and his wife, Katy, reside in rural Tomah with their four children, Westin (9), Brielle (8), Eden (8), and Eli (4). With four young, active children, Paul stays busy between baseball, gymnastics, and swimming practices. However, as time, and schedules allow, Paul enjoys spending some quiet time in the woods hunting.

CLEAN SWEEP

OEC students score a first by taking top three places in WECA essay contest

Our youth members truly understand The Value of Cooperation following their participation at Youth Leadership Congress. This was evident as all three WECA Essay Contest winners are members of Oakdale Electric Cooperative—a first for any cooperative in the 55 years of the program!

The contest rules asked for youth to focus their essays on the Value of Cooperation by choosing just one of the Seven Cooperative Principles and to elaborate on how cooperatives put that particular principle into action. Information presented at the WECA Youth Leadership Congress needed to be incorporated, as well as personal experiences to demonstrate their full understanding.

A panel of three judges reviewed the essays blindly and selected the recipients. First place (\$1,000) was awarded to Clara Krause, Tomah High School. Second place (\$500) went to Lizzie Patton, Mauston High School, and third place (\$250) honors were given to Adrian Rodriguez, Nekoosa High School. Students may only apply the scholarship towards their post-secondary education plans.

Please enjoy reading Clara Krause's award winning essay, titled "Concern for Community Around Wisconsin."



Clara Krause, Tomah High School
First place



Lizzie Patton, Mauston High School
Second place



Adrian Rodriguez, Nekoosa High School
Third place

MY CO-OP

Concern for Community Around Wisconsin

By Clara Krause

Millard Fuller once said, "For a community to be whole and healthy, it must be based on people's love and concern for each other." This philosophy and mindset is reflected and executed through the Seventh Cooperative Principle – Concern for Community. Electric cooperatives around the state of Wisconsin engage in many different community service opportunities to give back to and better their surrounding community.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative serves over 13,600 members in five counties in central Wisconsin. The co-op has many different ways in which it gives back to the community. One major way is through the program called Operation-Round-Up. Operation-Round-Up was founded in February of 2002 and since then has granted over \$57,000 in donations to non-profit organizations in and around the service area. Members simply apply to be part of the program and each month their electric bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar. The money that



is collected from the “round-up” is then used to support community service efforts decided upon by the Operation-Round-Up Trust Board. Past donations have been awarded to many local food pantries, fire departments, school programs, and non-profits!

Barron Electric Cooperative is located in northern Wisconsin. The co-op rewards its members through their Megawatt Community Service Award. Each month Barron Electric gives a \$50 bill credit to a deserving member who has shown tremendous dedication to others and to their community. Anyone can nominate a member to receive recognition. Hundreds and hundreds of dollars have been awarded to deserving people since the program has begun!

St. Croix Electric serves more than 11,000 accounts in northwestern Wisconsin. The cooperative works with local school districts to reach out to students in the area through the Cooperatives In Our Schools (CIOS) program. The program works in one of two ways: the school district’s frequent substitute teachers get trained in the CIOS curriculum and when they substitute teach for a day or two they teach the students the material, or the fifth-grade teacher in a school district will be trained in the CIOS curriculum and teach it to their class. CIOS consists of 12 lessons that teach students the value of cooperatives. The lessons are interactive including projects, speakers, and lectures. At the end of the program students create a radio ad which has the possibility to be aired on a local radio station to spread the wonderful aspects of a cooperative!

Oconto Electric Cooperative is located in northeast Wisconsin and serves around 9,600 members. Over the past 14 years the co-op has donated over \$82,000 to local organizations. Every spring the employees of the cooperative choose a charity/organization to raise money for during the year. Events such as jean days, raffles, charity lunches, and a golf outing all help to raise money for the cause! Organizations and groups that have benefited from the generous donations include health-care foundations, Old Glory Honor Flight, local humane societies, and tech ed programs around the area.

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative serves about

7,000 members in portions of four different counties. Every holiday season the co-op partners with the U.S. Marine Corp Reserves as well as local businesses to organize a Toys-For-Tots drive. The drive kicks off every year at the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative member pancake breakfast. Members are asked to bring a toy for children in need. Then, the co-op works with local school districts to get the names of children in need. Once all the toys are collected, the co-op delivers the toys to students! Nothing beats a brand new toy at Christmas time, especially when you may not get one otherwise. Last year Central Wisconsin Electric was able to help over 890 kids in the area! Imagine all the smiling faces after the toys were delivered!

Pierce-Pepin Electric Cooperative serves over 6,800 members in northwest Wisconsin. Starting in 2003 the co-op has partnered with local law enforcement agencies to fingerprint all first-grade students in local schools. The fingerprinting is done at school and is then sent home to the parents. In addition to the fingerprints being sent home, children and families also receive two swabs to collect DNA from the child. These materials are then able to be used in case of an emergency, such as a missing child. Since started, this program has fingerprinted over 9,200 kids.

The cooperatives and community service efforts listed above are only a sneak peek of all that Wisconsin cooperatives have to offer to their community! The events mentioned reflect the idea that an electrical cooperative is more than just a utility provider but rather the fact that they care about their members and the community around them. This philosophy, along with the other six principles, is what has allowed for cooperatives all across the world to thrive and flourish for 174 years since the first co-op opened in Rochdale, England in 1844! With the dedication and hard work from all cooperative employees as well as the support of members, co-ops will continue to succeed and will continue supporting people and organizations in need for years to come!

Bruce Ardel, General Manager

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Deana Protz, Editor



**Oakdale Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
24-Hour Emergency Power Restoration: 800-927-6151
Toll-free Online Bill Payment 866-392-4307

Diggers Hotline: For underground cable locates and power line clearance information, call 800-242-8511.