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WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

December 2021

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from our
COOKS



Richland Electric
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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



2021, WHERE DID YOU GO?



**Richland Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

By Trevor Clark,
Director of Outreach Services

I think most of us can agree that we never seem to know where the time goes. How can it be almost 2022 already? We could argue that 2021 was a long year, and COVID-19 is most certainly the culprit. Earlier in 2021 we became optimistic that the worst was behind us, until the Delta variant reared its ugly head. But, we grew accustomed to the changes we had to make once again, and although COVID is still terrorizing us, it seems to have become old news that people are no longer interested in.

I want to be very clear that I'm not saying we should let our guard down, especially during the holiday season when families will be getting together. I am not going to go full Aaron Rodgers by saying something that sounds like what everyone wants to hear (i.e. "immunized") only to have it bite me in the butt later. That's another story.

In this last 2021 edition of the *WECN* magazine you will notice a wider variety of content in our local pages. We have photos of Larry Hallett accepting his 2021 Herman C. Potthast Award, cooperatives donating money to a local school, the winner of our co-op month drawing, a holiday giveaway, a new program for recycling holiday lights, and a call for photos

for our calendar. This issue is filled with joy, community involvement, hard work, giving back, and so much more—all things your electric cooperative takes great pride in.

We are all aware of the hard times families and communities have faced throughout the past two years, but there is always hope. We do our best to focus on the positives and the things we can control, which is why it's so important to us to end the year with a look back at the many highlights.

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One of the things we look forward to the most at the beginning of each year is the submissions of calendar photos provided by our members. We always receive a multitude of photos highlighting our region, and it is important to us that

we share those photos with our members. You don't need an expensive camera anymore as most phones are capable of capturing beautiful photos. We are thankful to our members who want to showcase their talents in our calendar.

This past year we were successful at hosting the second drive-in annual meeting, still necessary due to ongoing public safety concerns. Although it was no longer the novel idea it

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Richland Electric, Vernon Electric, and Dairyland Power Cooperatives donated \$510 to the Kickapoo physics class. This donation was made possible by the three cooperatives' joint hosting of the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives hot air balloon at the Viola Horse and Colt Show this fall, one of many highlights of 2021. Pictured here is the Kickapoo physics class with teacher (and REC member) Lori Martin (far left); Craig Buros, VEC, CEO & general manager (fourth from left); Patty Fetting, Dairyland Power, supervisor member services (center, behind the sign); and Shannon Clark, Richland Electric CEO & general manager (right of Fetting, behind the sign).



was last year, we were still able to reach a quorum and did not have to postpone the meeting.

This summer and fall we received more requests for line extensions and new service builds than we have in many years. Our staff makes sure these are done in a timely manner and works with members every step of the way.

We reached an agreement with Richland County for them to purchase our existing headquarters building for the ambulance service. Since building our service center in the industrial park several years ago, most of our equipment, including trucks and materials, have been located there. For convenience, our line staff reports there for work each day, while office staff reports to the headquarters building. Changing work methods and the move by Genuine Telecom to a new building gave us the opportunity to look at selling our building and constructing new offices at our service center location. Possible designs are being considered now, and plans are underway for providing ongoing services during the time between when we move out this coming spring and our when new offices can be ready.

We were one of three electric cooperatives that worked together to bring the nationally renowned Touchstone Energy Balloon to the Viola Horse and Colt Show to help check an item off people's bucket lists. By doing so we received a \$510 donation from the Touchstone Energy Balloon, which we presented to the Kickapoo Science Club.

Chief Operations Officer Larry Hallett received the prestigious Herman C. Potthast award, which recognizes

outstanding service, dedication, leadership, and cooperation among electric cooperatives, with a focus on safety.

Unfortunately, we were unable to host our member appreciation picnic for the second straight year; however, we countered that by providing gift cards to local businesses via drawings. We also wanted to make sure that our kids were involved by having the grand prize be for youth. This year we purchased a bike and presented it to Teige Perkins, our grand prize winner.

We will be participating in the Richland County Rotary Lights this year on December 14, and we hope that you will come out to see us. We will also be decorating a memorial tree for Brenda Wendorf, who passed this year. Brenda is the wife of longtime former director Gerald Wendorf.

We know how much negativity there is in the world and unfortunately it often seems the negative stories outweigh the positive ones. How many positive stories do you see compared to negative ones? We are trying to flip the script and you can help. This holiday season, let's focus on the positives.

In closing, all of us here at Richland Electric Cooperative wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. God bless.



Congratulations, Larry!

Larry Hallett, Richland Electric Cooperative's chief operations officer, won the prestigious Herman C. Potthast Award, given annually to the worker in Wisconsin rural electrification who best represents those qualities of dedication, leadership, cooperation, and service that were exemplified by Potthast, a state and national leader dedicated to safety and training in the electric cooperative field. Hallett's family was on hand at the recent Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association annual meeting in Stevens Point, when he was presented with the award by CEO Shannon Clark. Members of REC's board of directors and staff were also on hand for the honor.





Congratulations, Teige Perkins!

The grand prize winner of our October Month Drawing was Teige Perkins, who chose a Marin Fairfax 1 bike as his prize. Thank you to Main St. Hobby and Bike Shop LLC for helping us with a few bike selections.



RECYCLE YOUR OLD CHRISTMAS LIGHTS!

Do you have a pile of holiday lights that don't work anymore? Or maybe you're replacing them with ENERGY STAR LED lights because they are 75% more energy efficient, and last 25% longer, too.

No matter what the reason, don't throw out your holiday lights—**RECYCLE** them at Richland Electric Cooperative!

Bring your old holiday lights to our office at 1027 N. Jefferson St., Richland Center, anytime from now through January. Look for the bin in our entryway.

We're getting into Christmas spirit with our holiday giveaway! We will be giving away a ham or turkey to two lucky winners for Christmas. The ham and turkey will be prepared by the Richland Locker. Just fill out the form below and bring it to the REC offices. The drawing will take place on DECEMBER 17. The winner will be able to pick their prize up directly from the Richland Locker. Prizes must be picked up December 22!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE # _____

ACCOUNT # _____

EMAIL _____

Return this form to Richland Electric Cooperative,
1027 N. Jefferson St., P.O. Box 439, Richland Center, WI 53581.



CALLING ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS

We're looking for pictures of rural Wisconsin for our 2022/2023 calendar!

With the new year fast approaching, we'll soon begin working on our annual report. That means our search for photos for our calendar is underway! If you've taken a photo that shows off our beautiful rural part of the state, please share! And if you haven't taken any such photos yet, start snapping! We'd love to see your photos!

Photos can be submitted to tclark@rec.coop.




Shannon Clark, Manager/CEO

1027 N. Jefferson St., P.O. Box 439, Richland Center, WI 53581


608-647-3173

www.rec.coop

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