

Since 1940

# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* December 2022 NEWS



**Richland Electric  
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## A CHRISTMAS CO-OP MYSTERY

**HURRY UP AND WAIT.**

**ROTARY LIGHTS IN THE PARK**

**HOLIDAY CHEERS!  
DRINKS FOR THE SEASON**





# CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY



**Richland Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Kickapoo Science Club uses donation for Sea Perch competition

A few months ago, Richland Electric Cooperative partnered with Vernon Electric Cooperative and Dairyland Power Cooperative to bring the Touchstone Energy Balloon back to the Viola Horse & Colt Show for the second straight year. What you might not realize is this opportunity is 100% donated by the cooperatives. Not only that, part of that donation is what Touchstone Energy contributes to a local charity.

In 2021 the Touchstone donation was made to the Kickapoo Science Club, which used the donation for their Sea Perch competition. Sea Perch is an underwater robotics program that provides students and educators the ability to build an underwater remotely operated vehicle. The Kickapoo students were 1 point away from reaching the national competition.

This year's donation of \$510 will once again go to the Kickapoo Science Club and will be used towards their Sea Perch robotic build. Kickapoo will host the regional competition at their facility in spring of 2023.



## Come see us at Rotary Lights in the Park!



Richland Electric employees and directors will once again staff an evening at Rotary Lights in the Park at Krouskop Park in Richland Center. This year, REC's night is Tuesday, December 7.

If you can't make it that night, be sure to catch the holiday light show another night during its November 23–December 31 run.

You can find more about Rotary Lights in the Park in Richland Center on page 24 of this issue.

# FIVE WAYS TO FIGHT THE WINTER CHILL AND SAVE ENERGY



We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all the fun outdoor activities that go with it. But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

## 1 Mind the thermostat.

This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.

## 2 Button up your home.

The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

## 3 Use window coverings wisely.

Open blinds, drapes, or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.

## 4 Consider your approach to appliance use.

When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.

## 5 Think outside the box.

If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks, and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit our website at [www.rec.coop](http://www.rec.coop) for additional energy-saving tips.



# WELCOME, NATHAN



We would like to introduce you to our newest hire, Nathan Roesch. Nathan started with us on October 31 and we are excited to have him on board. He graduated from Southwest Wisconsin Technical College in Fennimore with a degree in Electrical Power Distribution in May of 2022. Following his graduation from SWTC he was employed by KS Energy Services installing fiber.

Nathan and his fiancé, Jen, originally hail from the La Crosse area and have a one-year-old son named Wyatt.

Nathan served three years in the United States Army out of Fort Hood, Texas, and although he was never deployed, he was placed at the border

wall mission welding pickets 40 feet in the air from a telehandler boom. It may have played a role into why he decided to become a lineman as he does enjoy heights. He was trained as a combat engineer dealing with explosives. When he decided to leave the Army he was unsure what he wanted to pursue until his uncle suggested he become a lineman; Nathan reiterated he likes heights.

Nathan will receive a lot of on-the-job training, but he will begin the first year of his apprenticeship next fall. We are very happy to have Nathan as a part of our team. Please help us welcome him!

# Holiday Giveaway



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 at right and bring it to the REC office. The drawing will take place on **DECEMBER 16**. The winners will be able to pick their prize up directly from the Richland Locker. Prizes must be picked up December 21!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to Richland Electric Cooperative,  
30 E. Robb Rd., P.O. Box 439, Richland Center, WI 53581.



## TRANSITIONING TO A TRACTOR

By Al Cornell

One cold winter day when I was in second grade, Dad drove a little Ford tractor home from where he had purchased it at an auction. Soon the long tongues on the wagon, mower, rake, corn planter, and cultivator were cut back from horse-drawing length for use with the tractor. Wow! We had come up in the world.

The mower, rake, corn planter, and cultivator were designed for use with horses. They had seats for the driver and controls that had to be worked from those seats. When pulled by a tractor, you needed a second person on the implement to work the controls. Some designated tractor implements had long-handled controls that could be reached from the tractor seat, but Dad never purchased any of those.

When Dad got the tractor, Terry was old enough to operate the controls on the implement seat. After a few years, I often ended up on the implement seat while Terry drove the tractor. Later, when I was driving tractor, Dad was on the corn planter. On a loose-soil slope, the tractor was slipping down a bit, and I made a sudden correction. Then Dad made a correction by hollering, "Whoa!" He was used to hollering at the horses. Then he said, "You can't make those sudden turns, look back at that crooked row. I've got to cultivate that." Duly noted.

In the winter, the 16 cows were kept in their stanchions except for when they were turned out for water. The shallow gutter had to be cleaned twice a day. Manure was shoveled into the wagon and forked out in the field. If the snow got too deep, it was piled outside the back barndoor beside the ramp. That resulted in excessive hauling in the early spring.

Then we got a manure spreader. The limited budget dictated getting one that had not been assembled. We set

to work assembling it. To this day I have no moon on my right thumb nail because I was headed toward manhood and already knew not to pay close attention to assembly directions. For one part, I was supposed to use four-sided nuts, but I figured out that a small punch stuck down in beside six-sided nuts kept them from turning while I tightened them. The punch stuck and when I yanked it loose, my thumb hit a sharp edge that cut through the base of the nail. I still grew up to be a man and did not overly learn from that experience.

Years later, on a winter's Saturday morning, it was my responsibility to haul out the manure. The full spreader set in the barn near the back door. To hook onto the spreader, I needed to back the tractor up a concrete ramp. The ramp was slick, and I spun out every time I tried to back up it.

What to do? The jack mounted on the front of the spreader had about a six-inch square shoe that tipped upward on the front edge like a ski. I got a hay rope, tied it to the spreader tongue and hitched it to the tractor. Now the front of the manure spreader could ski down the ramp on that shoe. I hadn't considered how enthused the spreader would be about skiing. It hit the bottom going a little too fast, and when it struck a clod of frozen dirt the jack collapsed. I fetched a jack to jack up the front of the spreader, removed the bent up attached jack, and spread the manure. I took the bent jack with me on the school bus, got a pass to shop during my study hall period, and repaired the bent parts.

Twenty years later, I got hired as a wildlife technician. Later my supervisor told me that my farm background had an influence on the decision to hire me. Probably good he didn't know the whole story.



**Shannon Clark, Manager/CEO**

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