



Meet your DIRECTOR CANDIDATES

Each year members of the Richland Electric Cooperative (REC) nominating committee take time out of their busy schedules to provide REC with several potential candidates to run for a seat on the board of directors. On the following two pages are profiles of the candidates for this year's election. These profiles offer a brief insight into the lives of our candidates, so members can make an informed decision when selecting the best candidate to represent them on the REC board of directors. Please take a moment to educate yourself on our candidates and place your vote when you receive your ballot.

Calvin Sebranek

Calvin was elected to the REC Board of Directors in 1990 and is currently the board president. He lives on his 375-acre beef farm near Gillingham with over 400 head of livestock. He has three children, Tim, Kimberly, and Terry, all of whom are married, and he has 12 grandkids—seven grandsons and five granddaughters.

Since his last election Calvin has retired from S&S Cycle as a CNC machinist. He is a Marshall Township supervisor, 4th Degree Knights of Columbus member, a member of the Honor Guard at St. Mary's church, and he's involved with the Richland County Beef Producers. Calvin has also twice traveled to Jamaica on mission trips to help build sustainable agricultural throughout the island. Most recently they completed a chicken coop that can hold 150 meat hens. He lives by the motto of "faith, family, and farming."

When he's not on the farm you can find Calvin spending a great deal of time with his grandchildren. He takes an active part in their lives, especially when it comes to farming. He believes that this type of work will prepare them for their future. He helps his grandchildren by providing them with beef to show at the Richland County Fair and rewards them with their earnings. He has spent more time traveling with his family and volunteering for mission trips.

Calvin has been asked numerous times why he continues to serve as a REC director. "This will be my 30th year on the board of directors of Richland Electric Cooperative and I can honestly say nothing is ever the same," he said. "Our main goal is always to provide our members with safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. But we also strive to be ambassadors for our community. I have gotten to witness many exciting things at the co-op and would like to continue to be a part of the advances we make. The energy sector is constantly advancing with new technology. We are on the brink of more energy being generated by renewables and that replaces coal-fired electricity generation, and electric vehicles are coming. I think this is a very exciting time to be a director because of the advancements, but these advancements must serve the member well. I am a lifelong resident of Richland County and I will continue to do what is best for the member, many of whom are my friends."





Daniel Hillberry

Dan and his wife, Cheryl, currently reside in Richwood Township. They have three children, Jacob (Robin), Caleb (Brienne), and Tristan. They have one granddaughter, Ila, age one and will be welcoming a grandson in April. Dan and Cheryl live on their Century Farm with 300 acres, 185 wooded and 115 tillable.

Dan holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in forestry management with a minor in soil science. Dan is an operator and mechanic for the Hartung Brothers seed corn division. In the past Dan milked cows for 30 years and was employed by the Department of Natural Resources as a field technician. He is also involved with the Blue River Fire Department and the Greenwood Cemetery Association.

In his limited spare time Dan enjoys hunting, bowling, and forestry consultation. He always enjoys traveling with his wife to various destinations.

Dan was elected to the REC Board of Directors in 2000. He stated, "As a director I enjoy helping our board decide policy for our co-op and to keep it strong by maintaining affordable prices for our members. I want to make the best-informed decisions for our membership by continuing to work with REC employees and board. I feel it is important for the cooperative to keep up with the variety of fuel-based resources. i.e. solar, wind, battery storage, natural gas, and phase out the older coal-fired power plants with an eye towards protecting our environment for future generations."

This past year Dan received his NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership Certificates, showcasing his commitment to being a director by continuously gaining knowledge on electric cooperatives.



Jack Knowles

Jack and his wife, Julia, live on their 80-acre farm in Richwood Township. They have three grown children, Tyler, Ariel, and Miranda. They also have what they like to call "a dangerous band of outlaws," four grandchildren all under the age of six.

Jack holds a bachelor's degree in political science and Asian studies from St. Olaf College. He also holds an industrial technology education/teaching certification from Western Washington State College. He is semi-retired but working to promote and protect our local water resources, soil and air quality through Driftless Fine Water, Sustainable Driftless (producer of the movie "Decoding the Driftless"), and local conservation organizations.

In 1989 Jack invented a machine to help move helicopters on the ground—the Chopper Spotter. He manufactured them at his farm and shipped units all over the world until he sold the business to a metal fabricator and helicopter owner in 2015. He is also the co-founder of Driftless Brewing Company, which began on his farm.

When asked why he was interested in serving on the REC Board of Directors, he stated, "I want to contribute to the continued success and quality of our co-op. Within the next 10 years we will find that our charging station is more important than our filling station. The era we live in presents challenges to preserve God's incredible gift of our water, air, and soil and REC can be instrumental in that."

He went on to say, "Our electrical infrastructure will be even more challenged by weather events, and the international digital infrastructure presents both dangers and opportunities. A priority should be to ensure that our little section of the grid is safe and secure as possible by making it as smart as possible. New technology in production and storage of electricity is providing unprecedented opportunities to those who understand it, and it is to our advantage to keep moving forward. I hope you take the time to vote, and you stay aware of the challenges and opportunities that face us as a cooperative. We are in this together."



Judy Murphy

Judy currently resides on her Bosstown farm in Sylvan Township. She has two children, Dan and Dianna, both of whom live in the La Crosse area. She also has two grandchildren, Luke and Riley Clements.

She is currently a teacher at the St. Mary's School in Richland Center. Judy and her late husband, Joe, dairy farmed in the Bosstown area.

She received her bachelor's degree in social sciences from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and completed her graduate studies at Viterbo University. Judy is the Town of Sylvan clerk and a member of the St. Mary's Catholic Church. Her hobbies include reading, walking, watching football and PBS.

Judy is the longest tenured board member of REC, having served on the board since 1987.

She was asked why she is interested in continuing to serve on the board of directors. She replied, "I am interested in continuing to serve because I find pleasure in serving others. Holding the title of director has many obligations. One must continue to study and read available information to make intelligent decisions. My interest is to serve our members by bringing safe and efficient energy to their homes and businesses at the most economical price. I pride myself in the fact that I have served REC in this capacity, working with other directors and staff as a team. I would like to continue as a director so that I may be able to serve the needs of our members."



You're invited to attend Richland Electric Cooperative ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, April 4

Richland Center High School
Breakfast served beginning at 7 a.m.
Business meeting at 8 a.m.

WATCH YOUR MAIL FOR YOUR DIRECTOR BALLOTS

Director votes are cast by mail. Ballots are typically mailed to members approximately 21 days prior to the date of the cooperative's annual meeting.

Why should you vote?

- ★ **It's a privilege.** Voting for the directors who represent your interests is one of the benefits of co-op membership. If you got your electricity from an investor-owned utility, you'd have no say in the matters involving your utility.
- ★ **It's your responsibility.** You're not a customer of Richland Electric—you're a member, and that makes you a part owner. You share a responsibility in the co-op's well-being.
- ★ **It matters.** Many elections have been decided by just a handful of votes. Every vote counts.
- ★ **It's healthy, and not just for your co-op.** Studies have shown that those who vote regularly report greater well-being and life satisfaction, and stronger social connections.
- ★ **It's easy.** REC directors are elected by mail ballot only. Ballots are mailed to you in mid-March. All you have to do is make your choice and return your ballot!



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 16

Richland Electric Cooperative offers scholarships to qualified members or their children who are enrolling in a post-secondary degree program or vocational program. Applications are available at the Richland Electric Cooperative office and from area high school guidance counselors. Completed applications should be returned to the office of Richland Electric Cooperative by March 16. To learn more, please visit www.rec.coop and click on Scholarship under the News and Events tab.



SKUNK GREASE AND WHISKEY SLINGS

Often when I am talking to groups about what it was like on the farm back in the 1930s and 1940s, the question often comes up, “What did you do when you got a cold?” As anyone knows who lived on a farm during those couple of decades, you never saw a doctor unless you were near death. The idea of going to a doctor with a cold, no matter how bad, was just not done.

What was done? A teakettle stood on the back of our wood-burning kitchen stove, a bit of steam trickling from its spout. The teakettle was our sole source of hot water, as we had no indoor plumbing and I had never heard of such a thing as a water heater. Upon noticing that one of my brothers or I was coming down with a cold, before going to bed, my mother poured some hot water from the teakettle into a glass. She let it cool a bit and then added a jigger of “medicinal” whiskey, kept on the shelf for just this, and this only purpose. She also added a little honey. “Drink this,” my mother would say. It was the most awful thing I had ever tasted—and to this day I cannot stand either the smell of or the taste of whiskey. She called the concoction a “whiskey sling.”

On my chest she would rub, not Vapor Rub, which I suspect they couldn’t afford, but—don’t fall over now—skunk grease. My Uncle Fred, a farmer but also a trapper, regularly trapped among other critters in the wild, skunks. He would render the grease from them, and give my dad a small jar of this “special” grease as my dad sometimes called it. By the way, skunk grease has no smell at all.

My mother would rub an ample amount of skunk grease on my chest, and then cover it with a piece of red flannel. Still wearing my long underwear, which I did both day and

night, she would paddle me off to bed. As many others who grew up on farms during the time when I did, woodstoves provided the heat for the house. My brothers and I shared a bedroom through which the stove pipe from the dining room heater passed. The stove pipe was supposed to keep the bedroom warm, which it did when the stove was going. But usually around midnight, the stove would sputter out, and great chill came over our old farmhouse, especially our upstairs bedroom.

With a whiskey sling on the inside, and healthy dose of skunk’s grease on the outside, I crawled under a pile of covers that allowed no movement once all the quilts and blankets were in place. After a few minutes I would begin to sweat, and sweat all night I did. Usually, not always, but by the next day I was considerably better, at least I said I was because I didn’t look forward to another evening treatment of skunk’s grease and a whiskey sling.



Go to www.jerryapps.com to learn more about Jerry’s work.

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Richland Electric Cooperative

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