

Oakdale Electric Celebrates 75 Years

Milestone Marked at Annual Meeting

Oakdale Electric Cooperative celebrated its 75th anniversary on Saturday, April 9, 2011, as 300 members and guests gathered for the annual meeting at Tomah Senior High School. They heard reports on the co-op's financial performance, construction, and maintenance activities; learned about statewide, regional, and national energy issues, and conducted elections for two seats on their seven-member board of directors.

Treasurer James Guilbault of Necedah noted that trust and accountability have taken on extra importance in today's difficult economy. The cooperative's largest expense during the past year was \$18.7 million paid to Dairyland Power Cooperative for wholesale electricity purchases, he said. Wholesale power consumes 62 percent of every dollar in revenues collected by the co-op, Guilbault noted.

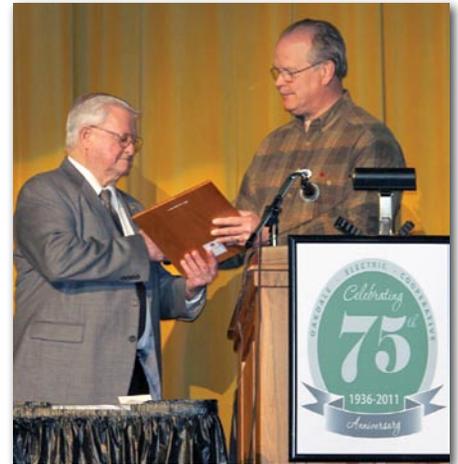
Oakdale Electric last October refunded \$903,000 in capital credits to members and has paid back approxi-

mately \$15.7 million since its founding, Guilbault said. The cooperative's financial performance "has been a bright spot amid the negative economic news we've grown accustomed to hearing," he said.

Electric cooperatives "are there for the moments that matter," said Board President Ron Churchill. "Cooperatives changed the economies of small towns and lives of farmers," he added, reflecting on the initial appearance of electric cooperatives in the mid 1930s.

Because we've come to take energy in the home and workplace for granted, "It's easy to forget its value, but electricity is one the biggest bargains around," Churchill said.

On the other hand, affordable electricity is an issue that won't go away, Churchill warned. "Government regulations will increase the cost of power," he said, admonishing members to "put aside our political differences and tend to the needs of all our



State Senator Dale Schultz, right, presents a Senate Citation honoring Oakdale Electric Cooperative's 75 years of service to Board President Ron Churchill.

members," in particular maintaining contact with elected officials and delivering the message that keeping energy affordable is a paramount concern.

General Manager Bruce Ardel reported that the cooperative installed 169 new services during 2010 and now serves more than 17,000 meters. Commercial and industrial consumers now being served include a new sand-washing facility and Toro distribution center, he said.

Ardelt provided a detailed summary of maintenance work and system upgrades performed during 2010 and planned for 2011, noting that the cooperative spent \$900,000 over the past year on right-of-way clearing to ensure safety and system reliability.

He encouraged members to participate in "Operation Round-Up," a voluntary program in which monthly bills are rounded to the next higher even dollar amount, with the difference donated to local charities. "Small change changes lives," Ardel said, noting that voluntary member contributions to the program have been help-



Two incumbent directors—Robert Hess and Ron Churchill—were re-elected to the board. Pictured left to right are Oakdale Electric directors James Van Wychen, Jonathan Williams, Churchill, Hess, Greg Eirschele, and Edwin Shie. Also on the board is Jim Guilbault.

ing to support area food pantries.

The cost of providing power has been rising and will continue to do so, Ardelt said, stressing that “now more than ever it’s important to work together to keep power affordable,” through conservation and efficiency efforts and by making elected officials aware of the costs state and federal regulation add onto electric bills.

Members enjoyed a short video presentation featuring images of Oakdale Electric employees and directors going about their daily routines of keeping the co-op operating and serving members’ energy needs.

Dairyland Power Cooperative Vice President Chuck Callies presented a profile of Oakdale Electric’s La Crosse-based wholesale power supplier. The Dairyland cooperative is well along with plans for dry-cask storage of spent fuel from its small nuclear power plant near Genoa, shut down since 1987. Final installation of security systems is expected to be completed this month, Callies said, with full project completion by the end of this year.

Responding to a member’s question, Callies said Dairyland expects to recover money as a result of the federal government’s failure to provide a permanent storage site for spent power plant fuel. A law passed by Congress in 1982 required the government to have such a facility operating by 1998 and compelled the addition of a fee to utility bills to pay for it. A number of utilities, including Dairyland, sued several years ago to recover funds paid to support the stalled program, which would be terminated under the Obama administration’s pending federal budget proposal.

Callies also explained Dairyland’s participation in the Midwest Independent System Operator (MISO), a transmission operator and wholesale



Following the business meeting, members were treated to Oakdale Electric’s traditional post-meeting Kentucky Fried Chicken lunch. Below: General Manager Bruce Ardelt and Board President Ron Churchill draw names for \$100 gift certificates.

power market spanning a region from Kentucky to Manitoba.

As a MISO member since last June, Callies said, Dairyland bids its generation into the regional wholesale market. The result is that Dairyland members are not necessarily served at all times with power produced by Dairyland, but they are receiving the lowest-cost power available as costs vary depending on demand and the relative ease or difficulty of delivering power over the regional transmission grid at any given time.

Two directors were up for re-election. Incumbent Robert Hess of Pittsville was the sole nominee in District 1, the northeast corner of the Oakdale service area. No challengers were offered in response to an invitation to submit nominations from the floor, and Hess was re-elected by unanimous voice vote.

Incumbent Ron Churchill of Reedsburg faced a challenge from Lowell Andreessen in District 7, the southernmost tip of the Oakdale area. There were no additional nominations from the floor, and balloting by members returned Churchill to the board. Both he and Hess will serve new three-year terms.



State Senator Dale Schultz (R-Richland Center) presented a plaque bearing a Senate Citation honoring Oakdale Electric’s 75 years of service in its five-county area. Oakdale was not necessarily the first electric cooperative to commence operations in this state, “but it has been serving members since the very first year that electric co-ops existed in Wisconsin and that’s something you should all be proud of,” Schultz said.

The meeting wrapped up with drawings for \$100 gift certificates, followed by Oakdale’s traditional Kentucky Fried Chicken lunch. ■

Scholarship Available for Student Enrolled in Lineworker Program

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is offering one \$1,000 scholarship to any applicant pursuing a post secondary education in an electric lineworker program. To be eligible for this scholarship, applicants must prove they are enrolled in a lineworker program or on the waiting list for the next open enrollment period. Preference will be given to OEC members and residents of Monroe, Juneau, Jackson, Sauk, and Wood counties. Applicants must complete and submit the scholarship application to Oakdale Electric Cooperative by September 30, 2011. Please visit www.oakdalerec.com for more information and to print the applications, or e-mail Nicole Modl at nmodl@oakdalerec.com. ■



Are You Interested in Serving as a Co-op Delegate?

Are you interested in learning more about how rural electric cooperatives work for you? Would you like to represent Oakdale Electric Cooperative at various functions?

If so, interested members are needed for our volunteer delegate program. You're an owner of this business, and service to our members is our sole reason for existing.

Member involvement is the key to our continued success. Our volunteer delegate program helps keep the communication lines open so that your Oakdale Electric Cooperative continues to be responsive to your needs. Sincerely interested members, serving as delegates, provide an information link with other cooperative members in their township.

Members who served as delegates for 2010 should submit a new application by June 15, 2011, if they wish to be a delegate during 2011. ■

Oakdale Electric Delegate Application

I would like to represent the township of _____ as a delegate.

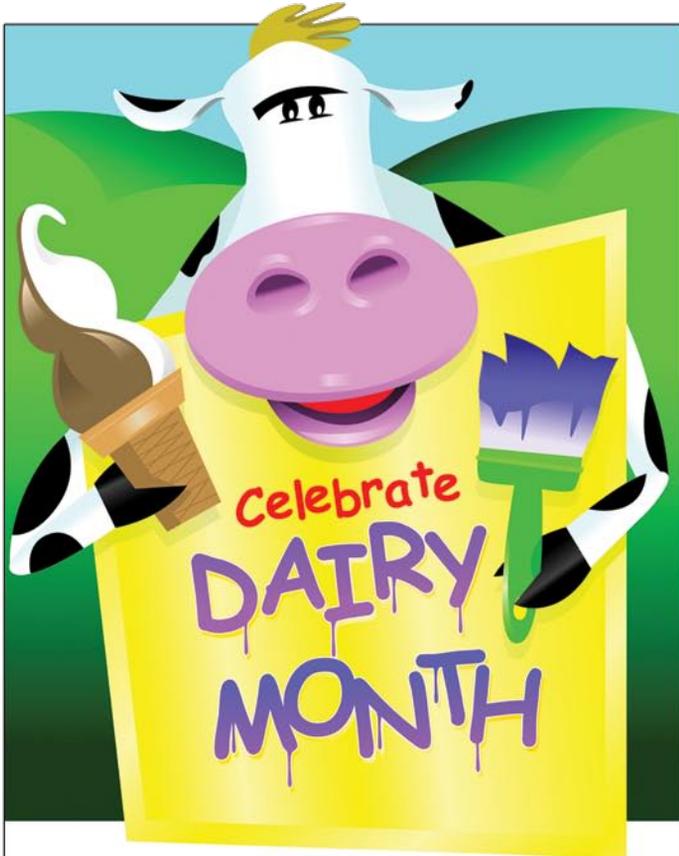
I have been a member-consumer of Oakdale Electric Cooperative _____ for years.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Deadline: June 15, 2011



Since 1937, June has been dedicated to celebrating delicious dairy products, including the more than 600 varieties of cheese produced right here in the Dairy State each year. As a leader in cheese production, Wisconsin wins more awards for its American, international-style, and original cheeses than any other state or country. To help celebrate June Dairy Month, we offer these fun dairy facts courtesy of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB).

Did You Know...

- The average dairy cow weighs in at around 1,400 pounds, which is approximately the weight of a small sailboat.
- It takes 10 pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese.
- There are more dairy cows in Wisconsin (1.25 million) than people living in the Dallas metropolitan area.
- Wisconsin produces 25 percent of U.S. cheese, totaling nearly 2.5 billion pounds of cheese.
- Each Wisconsin cow produces 19,546 pounds of milk, or 2,273 gallons of milk per year. ■

For Your Security

To protect our members' information, and in order to ensure that we are speaking to our member, we will now ask you for the last four digits of your Social Security number before doing any changes to your information or giving out information. If we do not have a Social Security number on file, we will ask you for that so we have it for future use. Thank you for your cooperation.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Does your home have a window air conditioner? Make sure that your window unit is properly weatherstripped, and clean the filter monthly. Keep "fresh air" vents on window A/C units closed.

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives



Oakdale Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Bruce Ardelt, General Manager



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Office Hours: Mon.–Fri. 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

24-Hour Emergency Power Restoration: (800) 927-6151

Toll-free online bill payment: 866-392-4307

FAX Number: (608) 372-5173

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