

### Oakdale Electric Salutes Members at Annual Meeting

Oakdale Electric Cooperative's 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was held on Saturday, April 5, at Tomah Senior High School. Doors opened at 9 a.m. for registration, with the business meeting starting at 10 a.m. Members socialized with Oakdale employees and other members prior to the meeting, while enjoying coffee and doughnuts.

Ron Churchill, board president, called the meeting to order, Joan Spohn sung the national anthem, and Greg Eirschele provided the invocation. The theme of this year's meeting was "Our Members, Our Purpose" to which Churchill's opening remarks stated, "It's you—our members—who have ensured our success over all these years." He reinforced this fact by declaring it is *our members* who serve on the Operation Round Up board and director nomination committees, contribute to the Operation Round Up fund, read the *WEC News*, attend the annual meeting, and vote in our elections.

Bruce Ardel, general manager, continued on with the theme noting, "There's a deeper *purpose* for electric cooperatives...and that is to improve the lives of those we serve." Ardel highlighted Oakdale Electric's growth and accomplishments this past year that ensure the cooperative's bright



Bruce Ardel received two Wisconsin Electric Cooperative News awards from WECA Manager Share Brandt.

future continues. This included 179 new services added, increased kWh sales from larger loads, line and system upgrades, and right-of-way maintenance. Oakdale implemented automated vehicle location (AVL) systems in all trucks to increase effectiveness and safety. Ardel noted the cooperative's great commitment to the communities we serve through employee volunteerism, donations, and sponsorships.

Rates are always on the forefront of members' minds, to which Ardel was pleased to announce rates have been stable in 2013 and 2014; however, the future remains uncertain due to new sources and rules for energy provision.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is committed to working with our state and national organizations to ensure that reliability and affordability are maintained for the best interest of our members. Ardel wrapped up his presentation by promising, "Oakdale is genuinely concerned and focused on helping our members lead a better life now and for years to come."

Dairyland Power Vice President of Strategic Planning John Carr was the annual meeting's guest speaker.

Incumbent directors Ron Churchill and Bob Hess were up for re-election and retained their positions in a contested race. Both directors will serve an additional three-year term.

Members in attendance had the opportunity to participate in a solar survey, sign up for Operation Round Up, and win one of five \$100 electric bill credits. Following the business meeting, members were served a hearty Kentucky Fried Chicken lunch. Rain gauge door prizes were dispersed to members upon departure.

Incumbent board officers retained their positions in a reorganization following the meeting. Ron Churchill continues as president, Robert Hess as vice president, Jonathan Williams as secretary, and Jim Guilbault as treasurer. ■

The Oakdale Electric Cooperative board of directors with attorney Thomas Zaremba (far right). Left to right: James Van Wychen, Robert Hess, James Guilbault, Gregory Eirschele, Jonathan Williams, and Rick Barrett.





## Oakdale Electric Cooperative 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

*Clockwise, starting upper left: Sandi Bloom and Sherry Anderson pass out rain gauges; Al Taylor serving up a smile and doughnuts before the start of the business meeting; Joan Spohn singing the national anthem; members enjoying Kentucky Fried Chicken for lunch; Board President Ron Churchill (right) greeting OEC employee Jim Haywood; Linemen Kurt Starkey, Tommy Liddane, and Ethan Benson showing their Badger pride in front of the Touchstone Energy balloon.*





Each of these students received a \$1,000 scholarship from Oakdale Electric Cooperative. Winners were selected based on their essays on the topic of “Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World” following their attendance at the Youth Leadership Congress in UW–River Falls in 2013. Scholarships are funded directly through the Federated Youth Foundation by unclaimed capital credits.



**Danzic Balcom**  
Pittsville High School  
Parents: Lance and  
Stacey Balcom  
Mid-State Technical  
College in Wisconsin Rapids  
Criminal Justice



**Margaret Baumgardt**  
Nekoosa High School  
Parents: Julie Bennett  
and Tony Baumgardt  
UW–Platteville  
Pre-Veterinary Science



**Connor Coyle**  
Pittsville High School  
Parents: Tina Ellis Coyle  
and Scott Coyle  
UW–Platteville  
Public Relations



**Trystan Houzner**  
Royall High School  
Parents: Richard and Mary  
Houzner  
UM–Duluth  
Political Science



**Adrianna Jereb**  
Tomah High School  
Parents: Jeff and Amy  
Jereb  
Macalester College  
Journalism



**Josh Marten**  
Brookwood High School  
Parents: Jeff and  
Jean Marten  
Moraine Park Technical  
College  
Electrical Power  
Distribution



**Trae Ness**  
Royall High School  
Parents: Phil and Cheri Ness  
UW–Platteville  
Industrial Technology  
Management with an  
emphasis in Construction  
Management



**Tom Neumann**  
Royall High School  
Parents: Kayela and  
William Neumann  
UW–Eau Claire  
Business



**Anne Peterson**  
Tomah High School  
Parents: Brian and  
Patricia Ellsworth  
Viterbo University  
Nursing



**Thomas Sass Bio**  
Reedsburg Area High  
School  
Parents: William and  
Jeanne Sass  
Madison Media Institute  
Digital Art and Design  
Program



**Anna Blasco**  
 Mauston High School  
 Parents: Peter and Patricia Blasco  
 UM-Twin Cities  
 Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering



**Casey Brummund**  
 New Lisbon High School  
 Parents: Kirt and Connie Brummund  
 UW-Madison Farm and Industry Short Course



**Carly Johnson**  
 Mauston High School  
 Parents: J.C. and Christy Johnson  
 Edgewood College  
 Psychology



**John Costello**  
 New Lisbon High School  
 Parents: John Costello and Cindy Costello  
 Viterbo University  
 Pre-physical Therapy/  
 Nursing



**Cierra Coyle**  
 Pittsville High School  
 Parents: Tina Ellis Coyle and Scott Coyle  
 UW-Milwaukee  
 Marketing



**Ethan Karls**  
 Oregon High School  
 Parents: Randy and Nanette Karls  
 UW-Platteville  
 Electrical Engineering



**Angela Kimball**  
 Necedah High School  
 Parent: Susan Christopherson  
 Winona State University  
 Paralegal



**Jennifer Kosinski**  
 Necedah High School  
 Parents: Ronald and Susan Kosinski  
 UW-La Crosse  
 Art Education



**Alaina Laursen**  
 Mauston High School  
 Parents: Peter and Jennifer Laursen  
 UW-Madison  
 Engineering



**Nicole Lynch**  
 Necedah High School  
 Parents: Tom and Donna Lynch  
 UW-Oshkosh  
 Nursing



**Sydney Scott**  
 Tomah High School  
 Parents: Beth Oemichen and Craige Scott  
 UW-Madison  
 Business/Marketing



**Allison Woggon**  
 New Lisbon High School  
 Parents: Tom and Colleen Woggon  
 Western Tech of La Crosse  
 Early Childhood Education



## Oakdale Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



Bruce Ardelt, General Manager

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