

Since 1940

# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* June 2026 NEWS



Oakdale Electric  
Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## SAVOR

**JUNE'S DAIRY DAYS**

**SHINE ON**

**LOW- TO NO-COST WAYS  
TO SAVE ENERGY**

**KIDS AND CRITTERS**





# ANNUAL MEETING REFLECTED ON THEN AND NOW

On April 24, 1936, Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) was organized and incorporated by the signing of the Articles of Incorporation. Ninety years and one day later, 106 registered members and 147 total attendees were present at the 89th Annual Meeting, held on Saturday, April 25, at Tomah Recreation Park.

General Manager & CEO Chris Tackmann spoke on how far the cooperative has come from the very beginning. Back in the 1937 timeframe, there were 221 members, 132.01 miles of line, 51.5 average kWh consumed per member, \$0.02 per kWh, and \$62,503.48 in construction costs. Fast forward to today those numbers are 14,983 members, 2,866 miles of line, 972 average kWh consumed per member, \$0.11 per kWh, and \$12,320,275 in construction costs.

Tackmann spoke on the demand charge that was implemented earlier in 2026 for residential members at the cost of \$0.25 per kW, which averages to about \$3 to \$4 per month. He mentioned how material costs continue to steadily rise, which may result in smaller increases of \$1 to \$2 over the next couple of years. "I can tell you though that looking at our financial forecasting and budget time, we only get what we feel we need to do to improve our electric service for you," Tackmann added.

Plans for 2026 include rebuilding approximately seven miles of line and converting about three miles of overhead line to underground in the Mauston, Plymouth, and New Lisbon areas. He explained, "The reason for the transition from overhead to underground is mainly to decrease outage situations from storms and trees." Along with the Oakdale area, there will be a tie line between Oakdale and Clifton substations to assist during outage situations.

Tackmann applauded the members who participate in Operation Round Up that set a new annual record of \$105,600

donated back to communities in 2025. He concluded that Capital Credit allocation will take place in October with \$1.2 million going back to members.

The floor was open for member questions and comments. Concerns about AI data centers coming to the area were addressed by Chris Tackmann. "If a data center wanted to come here, we unfortunately cannot stop them." "However, we have established a policy that if a data center were to come in, whether it's small or large, they have to pay for all the upgrades to whatever substation they go onto, so it is not subsidized by the rest of the member's rates." He also mentioned that the co-op's generation and transmission provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, (DPC) has also adopted that policy to help avoid any cost going down the line to distribution co-ops like OEC.

A dedication to longstanding District 1 Director Bob Hess was held to honor his commitment to the co-op. Bob joined the board on April 13, 2002, and wore many hats including Secretary, Vice Chairman, and Board Chairman. For eleven years, Bob served as Dairyland Director, providing steady leadership and collaboration. Bob reflected with, "I will say it has been an interesting journey seeing the changes within the industry over the past 24 years and I'm grateful to have been part of it along with my 11 years on the board at Dairyland Power Cooperative."

Cooperative members exercised their equal voting rights in the contested director election. In district 1, Beau Krostag was elected against opposing candidate



Bob Hess retired from District 1 after 24 years on the board of directors.

Bradley Geist. Incumbent Robin Craker for district 7 was re-elected against opposing candidate Darren Fortney.

Attorney John Behling presented the proposed bylaw amendments, which were approved and can be found on the website.

Special guests in attendance were OEC's attorney John Behling, Wisconsin State Representative Nancy Vandermeer, and Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association's Director of Compliance Services Ben Bella.

Bill credits totaling \$750 and various other prizes were drawn. Those winners can be found on the website at oakdalerec.coop.

At the reorganizational meeting, all officer positions remained unchanged except for the DPC director seat. They are as follows: board chairman, Richard Barrett; vice chairman, Gregory Eirschele; secretary, Jonathan Williams; treasurer, James Van Wychen; assistant secretary, Deana Protz; DPC director, Jon Williams; and alternate DPC director – Richard Barrett.

Refreshments and donuts were served prior to the meeting. Each member account received a 90th anniversary water tumbler, Swedish dishcloth, and everyone in attendance went home with a \$15 Culver's gift card and fresh frozen Culver's custard.



New District 1 director Beau Krostag

# CONGRATULATIONS 2026 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



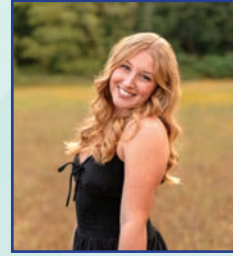
Entering its 38th year, Oakdale Electric Cooperative's (OEC) scholarship program continues to grow and is funded from unclaimed capital credits of former co-op members. With over \$567,000 awarded to date, OEC believes in the future of these young leaders and is dedicated to the education of our community's youth.



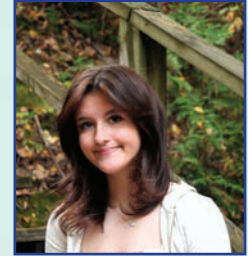
**Brynn Thurston**  
Brookwood High School  
Kay and Guthrie Thurston  
Viterbo University  
Nursing



**Natalie Anderson**  
Mauston High School  
Jolene and Troy Anderson  
UW-La Crosse  
Forensic Dentistry



**Emalee Bohnert**  
Mauston High School  
Rob & Kayleen Bohnert and  
Ashley Bohnert  
Winona State University  
Biology



**Alize'e Forster**  
Mauston High School  
Valerie and Joshua Forster  
University of Oshkosh Honors  
Pediatric Nursing



**Ella Franek**  
Mauston High School  
Shannon and Jasan Franek  
UW-Eau Claire  
Nursing



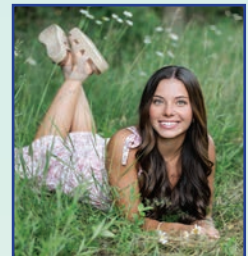
**Madalynne Gosda**  
Mauston High School  
Jon and Melissa Gosda  
University of Dubuque  
Nursing



**Ivon Heinrich**  
Mauston High School  
Adam and Amie Heinrich  
UW-Milwaukee  
Actuary Science



**Audrina Velazquez**  
Mauston High School  
Edna Federico and Greg Hadju  
UW-Platteville  
Psychology and Early Childhood  
Education



**Dylan Walsh**  
Mauston High School  
Justin and Kim Walsh  
Marquette University  
Exercise Physiology



**Brielle Anderson**  
Pittsville High School  
Alyssa and Jesse Anderson  
Madison Area Technical College  
Professional Dog Grooming



**Bria Gruen**  
Royall High School  
Mark and Sarah Gruen  
UW-La Crosse  
Biology



**Laney Champlin**  
Tomah High School  
Travis and Erica Champlin  
Winona State University  
Nursing



**Brede Franks**  
Tomah High School  
Kevin and Amy Franks  
UW-Stout  
Construction Management



**Karli Hall**  
Tomah High School  
Eric and Tiffany Hall  
Saint Mary's University  
Healthcare



**Cale Ollendick**  
Tomah High School  
John and Kelli Ollendick  
College: Undecided  
Occupational Therapy



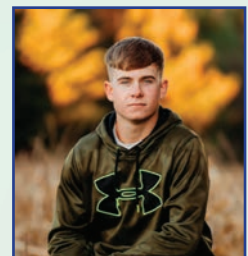
**Delaney Spolum**  
Tomah High School  
Kurt and Jobi Spolum  
UW-La Crosse  
Diagnostic Medical Sonography



**Morgan Squires**  
Tomah High School  
Todd and Kelley Squires  
Western Technical College  
Occupational Therapy  
Assistant



**Michael Zastoupil**  
Tomah High School  
Gina and Paul Zastoupil  
Milwaukee School of  
Engineering  
Mechanical Engineering



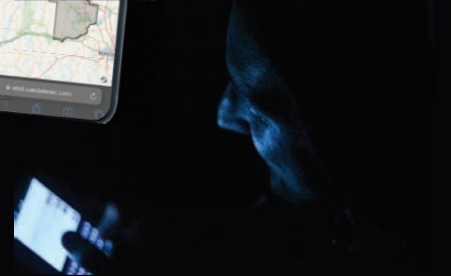
**Haakon Ashburn**  
**Lineworker Scholarship**  
Rural Virtual Academy  
Eric and Jennifer Ashburn  
Northcentral Technical College  
Electrical Power Distribution



# POWER OUTAGES 101

## REPORTING

- Call **1-800-927-6151** to report an outage.
- Log into your SmartHub account and follow the prompts for outage reporting. Don't have SmartHub? Scan the QR code to sign up for a free secure account. SmartHub is available on Android and iOS smartphones, tablets, and on the web. With just a few clicks you can:
  - Make a safe & secure payment
  - Review bill & payment history
  - View energy usage graphs
  - Setup energy usage alerts
  - Sign up for Auto Pay
  - Go paperless for billing statements
  - Receive outage notifications



## MONITORING & UPDATES

- View the live outage map by visiting [oakdalerec.coop](http://oakdalerec.coop) and clicking Outage Map at the top navigation bar or scan the QR code.
- Enroll in outage notifications through SmartHub. For assistance with setup, contact our office at 608-372-4131 and ask for Maribeth for step-by-step instructions.



## POWER OUTAGE TIPS

- When storms are forecasted, keep your cell phone fully charged.
- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- Try to use flashlights instead of candles.
- You may consider turning off appliances and unplugging major equipment until power is restored.
- Avoid travel and don't drive through flooded roads.
- Stay away from downed powerlines and warn others to stay away at least 50 feet.
- Please avoid area where lineworkers are working to restore power.

**Buying a generator?** Always hire an electrician to ensure your generator is installed properly. An improper install puts lineworkers and the homeowners at great risk. We ask that members with generators contact our office at 608-372-4131 so it is noted for safety purposes.



## SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FARMERS THIS JUNE DAIRY MONTH

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**June 6 – Monroe County Dairy Breakfast | 7 – 11 a.m.**  
**Trescher Town-View Dairy**  
 829 Cashton Ave, Cashton, WI 54619

**June 6 – Farm to Fork Breakfast FFA Fundraiser | 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.**  
**Wisconsin Dells High School**  
 1501 Brew Farm Rd., Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965

**June 13 - Sauk County Dairy Breakfast | 7 – 11 a.m.**  
**Windi Ridge Farm LLC**  
 S5424 County Hwy G, Hill Point, WI 53937

**June 28 – Juneau County Dairy Breakfast | 7:30 – 11 a.m.**  
**Elroy Fair – Entertainment Tent**  
 301 S Main St., Elroy, WI 53929

**July 12 – Jackson County Sundae on the Farm | 10 a.m.**  
**Peasley Dairy Farm**  
 N7271 Hwy 12, Black River Falls, WI 54615



# Chronicles of the Co-op

## 1986-1996

As we continue to celebrate Oakdale Electric Cooperative's 90th anniversary, we round out the 90s this month with highlights from 1986 – 1996.

**1986** – Oakdale Electric and their generation and transmission Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) joined in facility upgrades to construct a switching station. The new station allowed for the direction of transmission feed coming into the Oakdale area to be changed without having a DPC crew travel to the site. This meant that co-op members could be picked up from another direction, with only minimal outage time experienced.



**1990** – Linemen Jim Hayward and Scott Brookman received a special citation from Senator Rod Moen for heroism in saving Stacey Pasch's life during an August flood. Despite 23 hours of storm repair, Jim and Scott sprung into action when Stacey was stranded, hanging onto a tree limb in rushing water.

**1992** – Whistling Wings substation was added to serve the growing Castle Rock area population and Best Power at the time, making it the 15th substation.

**1993** - Village of Oakdale proclaimed September 13 as "Lloyd McCaskey Day". Lloyd was the general manager from 1937-1979. Pictured is Lloyd and Vella McCaskey.



**1995** – Youth Leadership Congress became a family tradition for many including the Bass family of Reedsburg. Richard and Janice Bass had six of their eight children attend the three-day event held at UW-River Falls. Richard reflected with, "I like the Youth Congress Program because it tries to teach kids about life, honesty, fair play, and cooperation."

**1987** – Attendance topped 2,300 at the Monroe County Dairy Breakfast held on the Ken and Lela Brown farm in Oakdale Township. Several employees assisted and Scott Brookman conducted four hotline demonstrations throughout the day. Pictured is Ken and Lela Brown and their children, Brittany, Dane, Derek, and current Area Service Foreman Brock Brown.



**1988-1989** – Various businesses came to the co-op's service area to be served, while many continued to thrive. Some of those being Meadow Valley Log Homes, Midor, Ltd., Handishop Industries, Inc., Bar Bel Fabricating Co., and Elroy's quarry Arthur Overgaard—a division of Mathy Construction Company. Other entities include Volk Field's Hardwood Range, The Dells Motor Speedway, O'Dell's Bay, and Americold that first housed crated cranberries from the neighboring Ocean Spray receiving station.

**1991** – Premiered at the annual meeting, a display of co-op photo history from 1936 – 1990, highlighted cooperation through the years. This same history board is displayed in the current headquarters and continues to grow every year.






**1994** – New office hours were adopted with the goal to better serve the membership. The hours changed from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 – 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

**1996** – Expansion at Ocean Spray, along with anticipated load growth in the north Tomah intersection of Highways 12 and 21, prompted the new Ocean Spray substation that became the 16th substation.

### Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO


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   info@oakdalerec.coop

Jackie McGlin, Editor



**Oakdale Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

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