



YLC: A Cooperative Tradition

For 29 years, Oakdale Electric Cooperative has sponsored area students to attend Youth Leadership Congress (YLC). This is a three-day program for attendees to develop and maximize their leadership skills, study the cooperative business model, and get a taste of college life. A group of 30 students, selected by their high school guidance counselors, traveled to the University of Wisconsin–River Falls July 26–28, ready to immerse themselves in this long-standing cooperative tradition.

In order to attend YLC, it is required that youth must be the son/daughter of an active member of the cooperative, and entering his/her senior year of high school in the fall (2017) at a local public high school. The year ahead is an exciting, sometimes scary time as students find themselves having to finalize important decisions on their future education and work plans. For many of the youth in attendance, attaining either a two- or four-year college degree is in their immediate goals. YLC provides real college experience including living in the dorms, with a random roommate and no air conditioning, dining at the cafeteria, and learning in academic lecture halls.

Students engaged with professional motivational speakers (most notably Craig Hillier), participated in outdoor team-building activities, listened to a lecture on the cooperative basics, and discussed cooperative career opportunities with current industry professionals.

It's not just all work and no play

at Youth Leadership Congress. Dr. Al Snyder entertained the 130 teens with his hilarious hypnosis show, and Melissa Wilson, director of career services, oversaw a five-course etiquette dinner that provided the golden rules to follow when dining out. Following the meal, students swapped their formal attire for more casual clothing and finished up the night with a rocking dance party.

The Youth Leadership Congress program is unique because it is always planned with the assistance of the previous year's youth board members. A youth board term is one year, and attendees had the opportunity to apply and earn one of the open six positions. Becoming a youth board member is not an easy feat, as students must first complete a panel interview, followed by a speech presentation to their fellow peers, who vote on their top six candidates. Sam Peterson (Tomah High School) and Conor O'Donnell (Nekoosa High School) will proudly represent Oakdale Electric



Conor O'Donnell (left) and Sam Peterson were elected to the 2017–18 Youth Board.



Cooperative this coming year. Not only will Sam and Conor oversee the 2018 YLC planning sessions, they will also be traveling to Washington, D.C., on next year's Youth Tour. Congratulations, Sam and Conor. We are honored to have you both representing Oakdale Electric Cooperative this coming year!

Upon returning from YLC, students have the opportunity to submit essays vying for an Oakdale Electric Cooperative and Wisconsin Electrical Cooperative Association Scholarship to use for post-secondary education. Scholarships are awarded annually to students at each of the 12 high schools in the co-op's service territory. Since 1988, Oakdale Electric has awarded \$359,000

to deserving students throughout the cooperative service area. Oakdale Electric's scholarship program does not affect electric rates; it is funded with unclaimed capital credits that otherwise would be forfeited to the state.

The 30 youth representing Oakdale Electric Cooperative included: Lea Britzman, Nick Murray, Zack Trepes, Tristan Welchin (Royall High School); Brandon Scholl (Sparta High School); Trey Gnewikow, Abbey Larsen, Sam Peterson, Mallory Pierce, Ariel Rezin (Tomah High School); Conor O'Donnell (Nekoosa High School); Nolan Buss, Crystal Cafferty, Erich Heath, Daniel Raabe, Mya Scully, Preston Shields, Ryan Williams (Mauston High School);

Kaylee Hanson (Brookwood High School); Ashley Baumgart (New Lisbon High School); Kim Rhinehart, Lexi Wohlrab (Wonewoc High School); Dylan Brown, Allison Colwell, Cheyanne Grundahl, Ben Horzewski, Logan Judd (Reedsburg Area High School); Tyler Reichel, Jillian Vandaver, Kayden Yoss (Necedah High School).

Are you currently a junior in high school and interested in attending the 2018 YLC?

Check with your high school guidance counselor this coming spring for registration information, and watch for notices in the local pages of the WECN magazine!



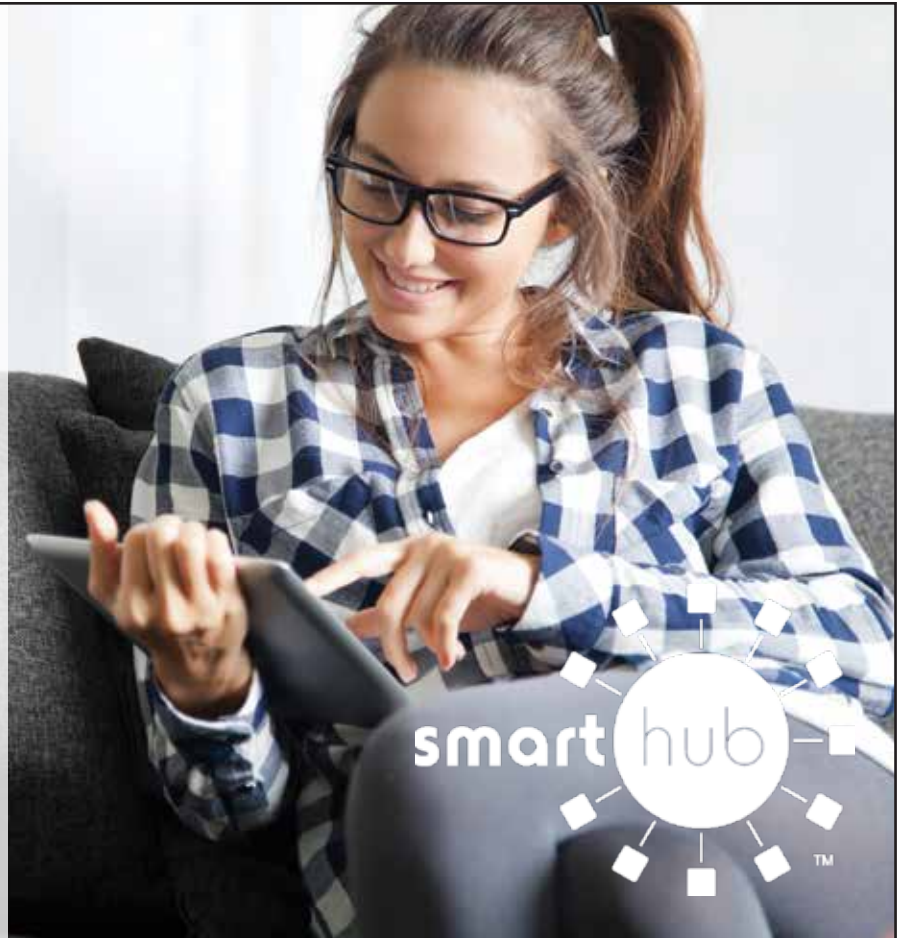
Highlights of this year's YLC included outdoor team-building exercises (opposite page), a hypnosis show (right), and the always-popular presentation by Craig Hillier (below).



Life can be hectic! Why not make life a little easier, by signing up for the Auto Pay Program through SmartHub. You can rest a little easier knowing that your monthly electric bill will be paid on time, every month.

When your credit card or banking information is added to the Auto Pay Program through SmartHub, you are enrolled in the recurring Auto Pay Program starting with the next billing cycle. Any current bills that have already been generated will need to be paid manually by the bill due date. To review bill payment options, visit oakdalerec.com and select Payment Options, located under the Billing menu option.

Contact Member Representatives at 1.800.241.2468 Monday–Friday from 7:30 a.m.–4 p.m. with any questions.



MY CO-OP



Mark your calendars for Oakdale Electric Cooperative's **MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY**

Saturday, October 7

Oakdale Electric Cooperative

Hwy. PP just north of Interstate 90/94

- Pancake breakfast
- Cooperative booths and displays
- Bucket truck rides
- Flu shots
- Donuts and popcorn
- Chance to win \$100 credit on electric bill
- Giveaways

Especially for the kids!

- Petting zoo
- Bounce house
- Face painting
- Balloon animals
- Kids' prizes



CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Oakdale Electric takes part in National Night Out

Oakdale Electric Cooperative participated in the 15th Annual Monroe County National Night Out on August 1. More than 700 people made their way to Winnebago Park, Tomah, where they learned how to keep their families safe and healthy. Tomah Police Department and Tomah Memorial Hospital co-hosted the event, but were joined by hundreds of community volunteers, organizations, and businesses. National Night Out is an example of community cooperation at its best.

In addition to running an educational booth with kids' games, the co-op participated in the mock crash for the first time this year. A realistic automobile crash scene was prepared, complete with an injured driver and passenger, which included a full electric pole and wire enveloping the vehicle. Safety Coordinator Ben Bella narrated the scene, providing viewers with life-saving survival skills and knowledge. Journeymen Linemen Brock Brown and Tommy Liddane demonstrated their role and responsibility to assist at the scene. This powerful safety lesson can never be taught enough. Oakdale Electric is proud to make a positive difference in the lives of our community, our members.



COMMUNITY SOLAR GARDEN OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION

SoCore Energy welcomed subscribing members, cooperative employees, directors, and local legislators on Wednesday, July 12, at the SunnyOak Community Solar Garden open house. Group tours of the facility were led by project engineers from SoCore Energy. More than 50 members attended this exciting event. They had the opportunity to speak directly with representatives from SoCore Energy, Oakdale Electric, and Dairyland Power Cooperative and learn more about their investment in renewable energy. In keeping with the solar theme, solar cookies and sunglasses were available.

SunnyOak Community Solar Garden went live on June 12, 2017. Participating members saw their first bill credit on their August billing statement. Solar subscriptions are still available for members to purchase. The subscription units were recently revised to limits of 75 percent of previous calendar year electricity usage.

If you want to get involved with the SunnyOak Community Solar Garden, contact the cooperative at 800-241-2468 and speak with a solar representative. You can also learn more on our website, www.oakdalerec.com.

Bruce Ardel, General Manager

P.O. Box 40, Oakdale, WI 54649
608-372-4131 • 800-241-2468
info@oakdalerec.com

Deana Protz, Editor



Oakdale Electric
Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
24-Hour Emergency Power Restoration: 800-927-6151
Toll-free Online Bill Payment 866-392-4307

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