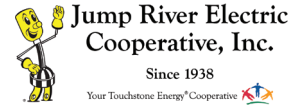


IT'S TIME TO MAKE A CHRISTMAS WISH



By Michael Schaefer, Interim Manager

I believe it was during the holiday season of 1996, I was driving back from a meeting to my home near Medford, when I heard a La Crosse radio station dialing someone in that area, talking to them about an anonymous wish that had been requested by a friend or family member of theirs because the person they were calling had a special need. I was intrigued by the surprised, appreciative response of the caller on the other end of the line as the wish was granted, and I thought to myself, “Why can’t we do something like this back in our hometown?”

I spoke to Karen and Brad Dahlvig, owners of Medford’s WKEB/WIGM radio station, about my idea and soon we were on our way to creating our own Christmas Wish program. Here we are, 25 years later, and the program has grown each year. It remains a co-op-sponsored event with the supporting member co-ops getting all the publicity from the program. Other businesses have asked about joining the program, but if they’re not a co-op, they can donate but do not get any of the radio advertising and promotion.

The donations and giving keep growing each year. This program has grown from a meager budget of just over \$3,000 to more than \$20,000 in recent years. Many of the sponsoring co-ops’ employees and directors donate non-perishable items for the gift boxes, or simply give a cash donation. There is also the opportunity to have some of those employees and directors help deliver the “wishes” that are granted. Donations have also come from other area businesses and individuals off the street who have heard about the program.

We see people who were given a spark of hope and a little bit of help get back on their feet and become future donors to the Christmas Wish program. One area business thinks so highly of the Christmas Wish program that it has provided \$1,000 worth of gas cards each of the last several years.

Over the years, one of the biggest highlights has been providing an Angel of Remembrance in honor of a loved one who passed within the last year, or an Angel of Hope for someone fighting a disease or serious injury. Granting a simple wish of a food basket or food box, a bouquet of flowers, a gift certificate, help paying a utility bill, gas money for medical visits, and more can bring so much joy and let the recipient know that someone cares and is thinking of them. Or maybe it’s someone who is alone and just needs to spend a bit of time talking with another human being—the Christmas Wish delivery people report many teary-eyed encounters.

One of my earliest memories from the program involved reuniting a mother with her son, whom she had given up for adoption years before. After finding him, Christmas Wish paid for a plane ticket for the son (who was in the military), drove the mother to the Central Wisconsin Airport, and paid

for them to have a nice meal together. Even the Wausau TV station picked up on that story. Santa has a part each year too, delivering toys, food boxes, and gifts to families with small children.

Personally, for me, the best part of the program has been when my family and I can deliver some wishes to a deserving person or family. I remember taking my wife and five children to visit a family between Thorp and Gilman, where the father—the breadwinner of the family—had an accident that severely injured his back so he couldn’t work. You realize how blessed you are, and it makes a lasting impression, when you step into a simple home with wood floors, simple holiday decorations including a rope with stockings hung from it, and see the eyes of the eight or nine children just light up when they see the presents and food boxes you’ve brought them. The parents were gone at the time to a doctor’s appointment, but those kids were so proud and excited to show our family the stockings that were hung on that rope. I know that made a wonderful impression on my family about the season of giving.

I don’t think there is anything in life that makes me feel as good as sharing the Christmas Wish program and all it has to offer. If you’d like to become a part of this tradition, contact the WKEB/WIGM radio station at K99@K99WIGM.com, fax to 715-748-4752, or call at 715-748-2566. They will be more than happy to accept requests for consideration, and/or donations for the Christmas Wish program.



District 6 Director Bill Amery accepts his Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) Certificate from Interim General Manager Mike Schaefer at a recent board meeting. Bill received this certificate after completing five courses designed by National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. These courses help newly appointed directors obtain a better understanding of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills, and a solid knowledge of the cooperative principles and business model.

INTERRUPTIBLE HEAT TEST NOV. 17

On Wednesday, November 17, residential electric heating on our dual fuel program will be interrupted for a test of the load management system. The test will begin at 5 p.m., with all electric heating to be restored by 10 p.m. If everything is working properly, a yellow light will be visible in the window of the load management receiver. If your electric heat remains on during the test, or if you experience any other problems, please contact our office at 715-532-5524.

Reducing your consumption between the hours of 5 to 10 p.m. on the coldest winter days will reduce the number of peak alerts and dual-fuel electric heat interruptions. This also helps the cooperative save on our wholesale power bill, and this savings is passed on to you.

Tune in to the following stations to hear peak alert messages on those coldest winter days.

WOJB 88.9 FM	WLDY 93.1 FM
WRLS 92.3 FM	WIAL I-94 FM
WECL 92.9 FM	WAXX 104.5 FM



DIRECTORS BRING U.S. CAPITOL FLAG TO JREC

Senator Robert W. Kasten purchased the above flag, held by JREC board members Jane Reich and Bill van Doorn. This flag flew over the United States Capitol on May 18, 1983, and was purchased by Reich and van Doorn during the governor's fishing opener auction held in Hayward this past May.

"We thought it was an appropriate gift for the members of our cooperative. To see it wave in the breeze at Jump River Electric will be a fine reward remembering all who gave their lives for our freedom," said Reich.

The board and employees would like to honor the men and women whose courage never faltered as they served the United States and gave the ultimate sacrifice, their life. We remember the missing, celebrate the living, and recognize all past and present who defend our country and our freedom. Thank you for your service.

IS YOUR CHILD SAFE AT HOME?

November is National Child Safety and Protection Month

Children often do not understand the danger of electricity and electrical equipment. In their innocent and imaginative minds, what can be potentially dangerous may go unnoticed or even appear enticing and fun. Take an opportunity to point



out overhead power lines and how they should never climb a tree near those power lines or play around pad-mounted electrical equipment.





Safety Sadie is here to help teach your child how to be safe around

electricity while playing outdoors or when inside your home or other buildings. Go to safeelectricity.org or our website at jrec.com/kids-safety-zone and find fun interactive ways to teach electrical safety to your children.

24-HOUR OUTAGE REPORTING

*When the lights go out,
so do we*

Winter snow and ice storms increase the likelihood of unexpected outages. Are you ready?

-  Be sure your emergency kit is ready. If not, go to jrec.com/electrical-safety-information for a list of kit supplies.
-  Post JREC's office and after-hour emergency phone numbers in a spot where everyone in the house can find them. Add these same numbers to everyone's cell phones or iPads.
-  Report your outage through SmartHub or by calling one of these numbers:
 - 715-532-5524 or 715-634-4575 Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., or
 - 866-273-5111 any time outside the above office hours or on holidays
-  Call even if you think your neighbors already called.

SHARING SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAM RECIPIENTS

GIVING A HAND TO LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

For the first time, JREC participated in a unique matching grant program allowing us to double our donations to four organizations. These matching grants came from CoBank, a national nonprofit cooperative bank owned by the rural American cooperatives it services, including JREC.

CoBank established a fund to match charitable contributions made by its cooperative members. Their Sharing Success Grant Program is designed to

celebrate the vital role that cooperatives play in individual communities across the country. CoBank states that partnering with their customers to support worthy causes is a great way for them to make a positive difference and fulfill their mission of service to rural America.

JREC can make up to four matching donations per year through the Sharing Success Grant Program. The 2021 recipients are: The Christmas Wish program, Rusk County Safe Driving

Program, Boys & Girls Club of LCO, and the Hayward Chapter of Fishing Has No Boundaries.

We are thankful that, through these donations, we can play a small part in their success. More importantly, we are thankful for the wonderful job that these and other organizations within our community do to better the lives of others. JREC was founded on people helping people, and donations like this help us continue to do just that.

Christmas Wish

The Christmas Wish program is in its 25th year of spreading holiday cheer. At right, Interim GM Mike Schaefer presents the JREC and CoBank Sharing Success checks, totaling \$600, to



Karen Dahlvig from WKEB/WIGM radio station. This program is sponsored by several north central Wisconsin electric cooperatives, including JREC; Dairyland Power Cooperative; other local cooperatives, including farm supply, ag lending, and credit unions; the Taylor County Association of Cooperatives; and the WIGM/WKEB radio station in Medford. The promotions and wishes that are granted are for recipients residing within the service territory of one of the sponsoring cooperatives and in the broadcast area of WKEB/WIGM radio. Learn more about this program in the manager's column on page 15.

Safe Ride

Several Rusk County taverns have been working throughout the summer to raise enough money to start a Safe Ride program for the community. A donation of \$500 was presented to Jared Prokop, owner of Cedar Lodge. With this donation, Jared said he believed there would be enough to start the Safe Ride program in Rusk County this year.



Fishing Has No Boundaries:

Fishing Has No Boundaries (FHNB) volunteer Bill Annala accepted a \$500 JREC and CoBank donation last month. Many volunteers work together to help this organization provide fishing opportunities for all anglers with disabilities regardless of age, race, gender, or disability. FHNB also works to bring public awareness of the problems facing persons with disabilities and the lack of recreational opportunities. It is a resource for adaptive fishing equipment and accessibility. FHNB Office Manager Sabrina Morgan said the organization also seeks to make friendships between participants and volunteers. In a recent FHNB newsletter, volunteer Mark Kauffman recounted a day he spent with local Hayward Fisherman Wade Hamlet: "So as usual Wade put us in a hot spot and was able to reel in a fish of a lifetime. I have to say fishing with champion fisherman Wade and having the opportunity to share his 'Big Catch' on his birthday was one of the best days of my life and a day I will never forget. Another FHNB memory for the ages."



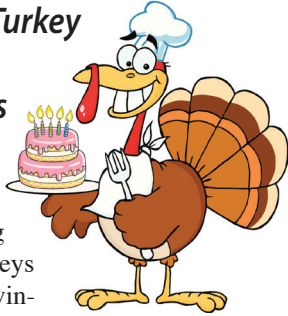
Boys & Girls Club of LCO

Heather DiCosimo (left), executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of LCO, accepted the checks from CoBank and JREC, totaling \$500. Founded in 1996, the Boys & Girls Club of LCO became the first club of its kind on a Native American reservation. This club provides a safe, positive place for kids to go to after school. This club offers a variety of activities for all ages. We are thankful that this donation will help the club continue to meet the needs of the youth within the Lac Courte Oreilles community.



MAKE IT 533 TURKEYS

Lucky 13 Turkey Drawing Celebrates 40 Years



The tradition of giving away 13 turkeys to 13 lucky winners started way back in November 1981, and it's been a members favorite ever since. If you haven't won one of the 520 turkeys previously given out, don't give up—this could be your year.

Each day during the weekdays of November 8–24, a name will be drawn, bringing the total number of turkey winners to 533. Good luck!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE # _____

EMAIL _____

ACCT. # _____

Return to JREC, P.O. Box 99, Ladysmith, WI 54848

Two entries per family, one winner per household.

Turkeys need to be picked up by December 8.

PREPARING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

It's November and that means the holiday season is just around the corner. It's the time of year for family gatherings, indoor and outdoor decorating, and the increased use of kitchen appliances cooking up some family favorites. With all this good cheer comes the increased likelihood that you may need to use your *working* smoke alarms and fire extinguishers.

Don't delay; do this today:

- Replace the batteries in all your smoke detectors/alarms.
- Check all fire extinguishers to be sure they are working and strategically placed.
- Check to be sure you have enough fire extinguishers for the number of rooms/levels within your home.
- If you don't have an evacuation plan, put one together and practice it. If you do have one, practice it.
- Know your fire extinguisher's limits and your own before fighting the fire.
- Always keep your back to an unobstructed exit that is free from fire and aim at the base of the fire.
- If you do use your fire extinguisher, get it immediately recharged or replaced.

Before hanging your holiday lights, inspect your ladder to be sure it is in good condition and can support you. You may want to consider switching your home and decorative lighting to LEDs. LEDs are roughly 80 percent more efficient than traditional lighting. Be sure to use a timer to help manage when your electrical displays are on.

These are just a few things to keep in mind. We have a lot more at jrec.com/electrical-safety-information.



Having a safe home includes periodically checking appliance cords for damage.

START SNAPPING

It's time for our next photo contest

Dust off that camera and submit up to three photos that capture life in rural Wisconsin. Photos must be taken within the JREC service area. Whether your photo is a scenic landscape, a snapshot of everyday life, or an action photo, we want it to evoke the heart of the cooperative lifestyle.



Photo by member Cathy Metnik

Go jrec.com/photo_contest for contest guidelines and consent form. Please email your digital image to dzimmer@jrec.com by January 18, 2022. You may see your photo in a future issue of this magazine, co-op calendar, website, or other marketing/media platforms.

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After-hour emergency service, call 866-273-5111

Pay by Phone: 888-255-6489

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JREC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Denise Zimmer, Editor



Jump River Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Since 1938

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

JREC offices will be closed November 25 & 26.