



*From the Manager's Desk:*

## THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

By Jesse Singerhouse, General Manager

As the calendar turns to late August and early September many families are getting back into their school-year routines. While we are sad to see another summer come to an end, we know how valuable education is for the future generation. Education doesn't stop when we graduate high school or even after post-secondary school. Each of us must continually try to educate ourselves on important issues. As Benjamin Franklin stated, "An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest!"

Your board of directors strongly believes in continuing education for our employees and our board members. We provide safety training to our employees so they can work safely and return home to their families each night. Employees attend educational seminars and workshops to keep current on industry issues and to better equip us to serve our members. Board members also attend training throughout the year to improve their knowledge of the energy industry and cooperative governance.

Recently several board members attended an Energy Issues Summit in Eau Claire put on by the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association. Attendees discussed the state of the rural economy, examined the latest trends in energy rate design, received an update on electric vehicles, learned about grant opportunities available for electric cooperatives, and heard about the power-supply challenges our region is facing. These are all issues your cooperative is working on each day in order to safely provide our members with reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy.

Your board of directors is also committed to investing in education for our members, the community, and our staff. With so many complex and challenging issues facing our energy industry it is more critical than ever for your electric cooperative to provide you with good information and innovative services. Being a cooperative, we work for our members, not for profits or shareholders. If we keep that at the forefront of everything we do, Dunn Energy Cooperative will continue to be successful in addressing the challenging issues our industry faces. (1745003)

### Capital Credit Payment Method Changing

Recently the board of directors approved a slight change to the way we distribute member equity, or capital credits, each year. Each member will still receive approximately 4% of their capital credit balance with the cooperative, plus any applicable capital credits from our power supplier, Dairyland Power. How you receive that money will be slightly different this year. Any amount less than \$50 will be credited on your energy bill in

October. Amounts greater than \$50 will continue to be mailed out via check.

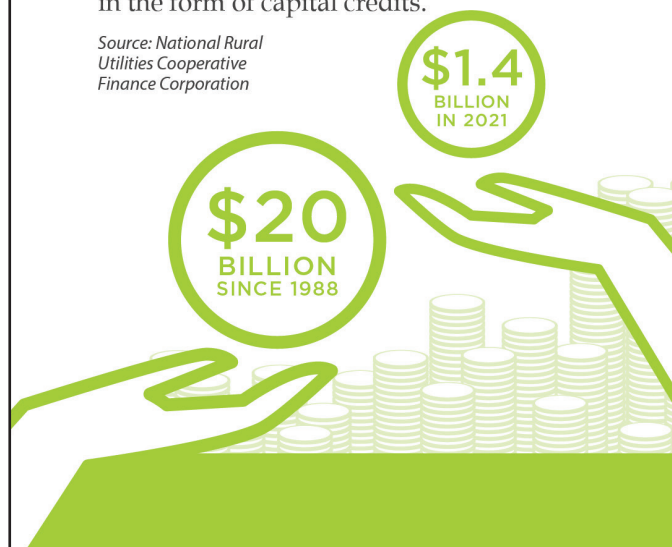
This change was made for a couple of reasons. First, as the cooperative has grown, we have more members to send checks to. We also are typically retiring 4% of all member equity, meaning more members are receiving capital credits than in previous years. By paying out some capital credits via bill credit we are able to reduce the cost of printing and mailing checks. We have started to see an increase in uncashed checks, as well as an increase in fraud attempts. Unethical people are stealing checks from the mail and trying to copy our account number to steal funds. These are all reasons for the change.

The goal of capital credits is to return those funds, over time, to the members who used the energy and thus helped generate the profits the cooperative realized. It is truly the cooperative purpose in action. Look for more information in an upcoming issue and be on the lookout for your bill credit (less than \$50) or check (\$50 or greater) in October.

## Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$20 billion to members since 1988 – \$1.4 billion in 2021 alone. Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation





# THE 60TH ANNUAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IS A WRAP!

**H**eld over July 11–13, the annual conference dedicated to educating youth about the cooperative way, the WECA Youth Leadership Conference, hosted over 70 students whose parents or guardians are members of electric cooperatives across Wisconsin. UW-Stout welcomed the Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) and gave high school students an opportunity to experience life on campus firsthand.

Students heard from inspirational speakers, like Gilbert Brown, the Packers infamous “Grave Digger.” Brown spoke to the group about bullying, hazing, and being a good human being. Craig Hillier spent time with the group talking about Breakthrough Leadership in a very interactive session. It was Hillier’s 35th year presenting at YLC.

Dunn Energy’s Jolene Fisher presented alongside Trevor Clark from Vernon Electric and Katie Jagiello from Octonto Electric on the Cooperative Principles and the cooperative business model. They discussed what makes cooperatives different from for-profit companies, how capital credits work, and recognizable brand names that are co-ops.

Dunn Energy was thrilled to take Mallory Wisemiller to YLC.







A bright young student, Mallory participated in all of the activities and may even return next year to run for the youth board. YLC is a conference organized by students for students. Members of the youth board are awarded a trip to Washington, D.C., for the history, the networking, and engaging in the political process by meeting with legislators.

If you have a student entering their sophomore or junior year check out the YLC website at <https://www.weca-coop/youth-leadership-conference>. If it's something your student would like, watch for communications from Dunn Energy announcing the registration process in early 2024. (140018172)



### In her own words, Mallory Wisemiller recounted her experience at YLC:

“When I went to the 2023 youth leadership conference it was a very positive and door-opening experience for me. Everyone who was running and participating in the activities were all so welcoming and kind. I got the chance to meet an abundance of close friends and enjoy my experience with them. I learned from inspiring speakers and experienced mentors about teamwork, problem-solving, and how co-ops are run. The conference offered a multitude of future boosting opportunities, such as getting elected to be on the board, and an essay contest for a \$1,000 scholarship. I also got the chance to stay two nights in a real college dorm, including getting a roommate. I am so thankful for Dunn Energy for sponsoring me, and my chaperone, Jolene Fisher, for attending with me.”

# POWER IN YOUR HANDS

Recently, one of our newer employees asked me what makes electric co-ops different than other types of utilities. This month, I thought I'd tell you of few of the things I told her.

Because we're a co-op, we operate a little differently than other utilities. Dunn Energy's decisions are made locally, by directors who also live right here in our community. Everyone who pays to receive electricity from the co-op is a member. When you pay your electric bill each month, your money stays here—to pay for the electricity used, or to make improvements to our local system to strengthen service reliability. The money you pay the co-op doesn't line the pockets of shareholders states away. We're a co-op, and we exist to provide a service to you, our local members.

You may notice that throughout the year, we schedule opportunities for you to attend co-op events, like our Annual Meeting or Co-op Month Appreciation Day, so we can hear from you. We conduct a survey every couple of years to gather your feedback on co-op programs and services so that we can plan and adjust for the future.

Our success lies in your satisfaction, which is why we offer these opportunities to engage and listen to what you have to say.

Because you're part of an electric cooperative, you can count on our team to maintain local jobs, at-cost electricity, and first-class service, no matter what the economy—and supply-chain issues—throw at us.

Dunn Energy is striving to keep our costs as low as possible so we can keep more money in your pocket. We want to help you maximize the value you can get from our services and offerings. For example, we can help you save

on energy bills through our energy audit program and efficiency rebates.

If you want to receive important information from Dunn Energy, such as power restoration updates, you can follow

our social media channels. You can also stay in the know with SmartHub alerts and our monthly newsletter.

Please know that you—the members of Dunn Energy—are at the heart of everything we do. Co-ops adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles that reflect core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness, and service. We exist to serve you and provide the quality, reliable, friendly service you expect and deserve. While we've grown over the years, we're still driven by the same guiding principles to serve our community. We hope to see or hear from you soon. This co-op was created for you, the members. The power is in your hands.

Dunn Energy's decisions are made locally, by directors who also live right here in our community.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing, and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy



## Hidden Account Numbers

If you find your account number hidden in the pages of this magazine and you call and tell us before the next issue is mailed, we'll put a **\$50 credit** on your electric bill. Happy hunting!

Last month's winners were Joe & Dawn Borofka and Danny Keck Jr.

*Working for You*

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**Dunn Energy Cooperative**

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