

Since 1940

# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

May 2026

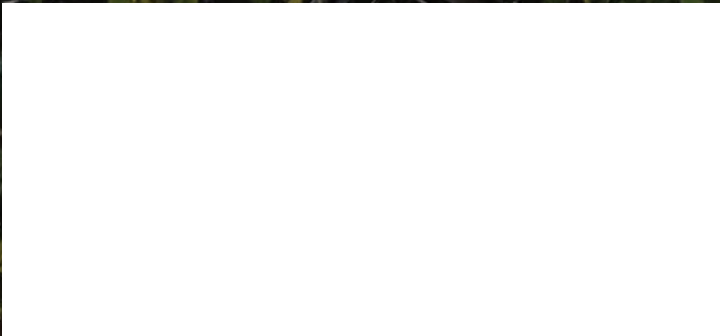


## POWER PLAYERS OF THE GRID

**FEMA FOLLOW UP**

**COOPERATIVE LEADERS  
MAKE THEIR CASE IN WASHINGTON**

**KIDS AND CRITTERS**



# Congratulations

Oconto Electric Cooperative is proud to announce our 2026 scholarship recipients. This year OEC was able to award fifteen scholarships each in the amount of \$2,500. Scholarships are made possible through unclaimed capital credits.



**William Allen**, son of Tim and Connie Allen, senior at Oconto Falls High School, will be attending Northeast Wisconsin Technical College to be a lineman.



**Emily Elliot**, daughter of Mike and Kristen Elliot, senior at Oconto Falls High School, will be attending Marquette University to study Cognitive Science (pre-law).



**Samuel Peterson**, son of John and Jessica Peterson, senior at Lena High School, will attend UW-River Falls to study Agricultural Business/Dairy Science.



**Anya Baeten**, daughter of Danny and Demetria Baeten, senior at Oconto Falls High School, will be attending Bellin College of Nursing.



**Addison Kluth**, daughter of Chad and Laurie Kluth, senior at Oconto Falls High School, will be attending UW-La Crosse to be a Dentist.



**Natalie Rieth**, daughter of Brian and Beth Rieth, senior at Oconto Falls High School, plans on attending UW-Madison for business, marketing, agribusiness.



**Nicholas Blaser**, son of John and Amanda Blaser, senior at Oconto Falls High School, plans to attend UW-Green Bay to major in Spanish Education and Translation.



**Alec Krejcarek**, son of Doug and Correna Krejcarek, senior at Oconto Falls High School, will study Power Distribution at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College.



**Matthew Tedtman**, son of Scott and Ruth Tedtman, senior at Coleman High School, plans on attending NWTC for Welding.



**Megan Borchert**, daughter of Jeremy and Kristin Borchert, senior at Coleman High School, plans to study Occupational Therapy at Concordia University Wisconsin.



**Jaelin Kumhala**, daughter of Joseph and Cristine Kumhala, senior at Oconto High School, will be attending NWTC for Elementary Education.



**Paige Tuell**, daughter of Chris Tuell and Jaime Waller, senior at Coleman High School, plans on attending NWTC for Nursing.



**James Caine**, son of James and Stacey Caine, senior at Crivitz High School, plans on attending Marquette University to study Dentistry.



**Bailey Peterson**, daughter of Norman and Jessica Peterson, senior at Oconto Falls High School, will be attending Bellin College of Nursing.



**Ella Van Ermen**, daughter of Tara Langin and Sean Van Ermen, senior at Coleman High School, is attending Wisconsin Lutheran College to be a physician.

# 2026 YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



## PARTICIPATE

in fun, hands-on, educational activities



## DISCOVER

your leadership skills, and the purpose/value of cooperatives



## EXPERIENCE

a typical college environment

# JULY 14-16 | UW-STOUT

For students entering their sophomore, junior, or senior year in fall of 2026

Students parent(s)/legal guardian must be an active OEC member.  
All costs covered by OEC, including transportation to and from UW-Stout.

Space is limited. Deadline to sign up is June 19.



Interested? Here's how to apply...  
Contact Katie Jagiello at 920-846-2816 or  
email [kjagiello@ocontoelectric.com](mailto:kjagiello@ocontoelectric.com)

Scan For More Info





## Cooperative Gathers for 89th Annual Meeting

On Saturday, April 11, members gathered at the Oconto Falls Performing Arts Center for the cooperative’s 89th Annual Meeting. Coinciding with the first truly pleasant spring day of the year, the event drew strong participation, with 228 registered voting members and more than 300 people in total attendance.

Members elected two directors to the board. Incumbent Director Jan Stranz was re-elected to represent District 4, while Tony Sailer was elected to represent District 6.

A guest presentation by Brent Ridge, President and CEO of Dairyland Power Cooperative, which will become the cooperative’s new wholesale power provider beginning in June. Ridge discussed Dairyland’s resource portfolio, outlining how the partnership supports long-term reliability and cost stability for members.

CEO Ryan Miller provided an update on the cooperative’s recently completed cost-of-service study. The study carefully evaluates the rate structure to ensure fairness and equity

across all member classes, providing fact-based data to guide responsible decision-making. Based on the study and rising industry costs, the board made the difficult decision to implement a 7.5% overall rate increase. Impacts will vary by rate class, with a typical residential member seeing an average increase of approximately \$5 per month.

As the cooperative transitions to Dairyland Power Cooperative, new initiatives are being developed to help members reduce energy use and manage costs. (960201) More details on these programs will be shared in the coming months, reinforcing the cooperative’s continued commitment to affordability, reliability, and member value.

The meeting ended with a particularly moving moment as members and board colleagues honored Dan Kanack, who is retiring after an extraordinary 51 years of service as a director. Kanack was recognized for his decades of dedication and leadership and was met with a standing ovation and heartfelt appreciation from those in attendance.



Members casting their ballots, actively shaping decisions through democratic member control, cooperative principle #2.



Brent Ridge, Dairyland Power Cooperative, president and CEO awards a \$1,000 scholarship to Jacob Telford.



District 3 director Chad Fradette applauded long time director Dan Kanack, retiring from the board after 51 years of service.



Congratulations to Tony Sailer and Jan Stranz on their election onto the board.



## Oconto Falls Youth Awarded FYF Van Sickle Scholarship

Emily Elliot of Oconto Electric Cooperative is the recipient of this year's Charles Van Sickle Scholarship from the Federated Youth Foundation (FYF). The \$5,000 scholarship is awarded to a pre-law or law student who has an interest in cooperative law. The scholarship is made possible by an endowment established in 2013 to honor Wisconsin's renowned electric cooperative lobbyist and attorney, the late Charles Van Sickle.

Emily Elliot will graduate from Oconto Falls High School this spring and will be attending Marquette University where she will major in cognitive science (pre-law). Congratulations Emily!

*Photo: Rob Richard, Executive Director of Federated Youth Foundation and President/CEO of Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association attended the April OEC Annual Meeting to present the Van Sickle Scholarship to Emily Elliot.*

## TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

If you receive a call from someone stating you have overpaid your energy bill and you should provide your banking information or a credit card number to receive a refund, hang up because it's likely a scam. If you overpay your bill, your utility will apply the overpayment credit to your account balance or mail a check. They will not call and request your banking information to issue the refund.

*Source: Utilities United Against Scams*



## HIDDEN ACCOUNT NUMBERS

Oconto Electric Cooperative hides two account numbers in the local pages of the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* each month. (68761) If you spot your account number, call our office before you receive the next issue, and OEC will give you a \$15 credit on your electric bill or a \$25 credit if you have a load management receiver. The April account numbers belonged to Teri Augustian, Abrams and Taylor Maroszek, Oconto Falls.



Ryan Miller, CEO

Katie Jagiello, Communications and Marketing

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www.ocontoelectric.com

**Hours of Operation:** 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

**Hours of Lobby:** 9:00 a.m.– 3 p.m. Friday

**Non-emergencies:** 920-846-2816

**Emergencies & outages:** Toll FREE 800-472-8410  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week