

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative*

March 2016

NEWS

Escape to an era of *Elegance*

**Taylor Electric
Cooperative celebrates
80 years at annual
meeting March 12**

TAYLOR ELECTRIC
Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



Celebrating Taylor Electric Cooperative 1936–2016

80 Years



Taylor Electric Cooperative's 80th annual meeting will be held at the Medford Area Senior High School in Medford on Saturday, March 12, 2016. Come join your friends and neighbors to learn about your cooperative.

One of the most important duties of the members at this meeting will be to elect members to fill three seats on the board of directors. These seats include those currently held by Dennis Engel, JoAnn Smith, and Raymond Henrichs, all three of whom are eligible for re-election. Engel has just completed the unexpired, one-year term that was vacated with the passing of Brian Kulas, and Henrichs and Smith will each have completed three terms of service on the board (members are eligible to serve up to five three-year terms).

The nominating committee met on January 15, 2016, and approved the three incumbents listed above as well as Steve Suchomel for placing into nomination at the annual meeting. Please remember that any additional member who wishes to be on the 2016 ballot needs to be nominated by petition, which involves getting signatures of not less than 25 members and delivering that nomination petition to the co-op not less than seven days prior to the annual meeting (by March 4, 2016, for the upcoming annual meeting).

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MY CO-OP





THE IMPORTANCE OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

In 2012, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the premier trade association representing approximately 900 electric cooperatives in 47 states, released a report entitled, “The Electric Cooperative Purpose—A Compass for the 21st Century.” The findings of the blue ribbon task force comprised of a dozen co-op leaders from across the country were that an electric cooperative’s purpose is to, “Power communities and empower members to improve the quality of their lives.”

Taylor Electric Cooperative is a member of NRECA and firmly believes that you, our members, need to be at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of the fact that we are different from investor-owned utilities like Xcel Energy, where the primary purpose is to generate profit for their

Serving you and your neighbors is our number one priority.

stockholders. Many of those stockholders don’t live in the communities served by the utility. While Taylor Electric must of course generate enough revenue to cover our costs, profit is not our primary motive. Serving you and your neighbors is our number-one priority.

As the Electric Cooperative Purpose report noted, “Our story is about ordinary people that banded together to improve the quality of life by providing electricity to our community when no one else would do it.” But that was 80 years ago. As we celebrate this landmark anniversary, we once again need your active participation in determining the future of our cooperative.

Cooperatives enjoy the support of people from all walks of life. We operate in every type of business from agriculture,



The annual meeting offers an opportunity for members to engage in discussion with co-op directors and, as is shown here at a previous Taylor Electric annual meeting.

housing, finance, health care, technology, small business, food and many more. Co-ops can be found in the most rural to the most urban areas.

We welcome your input on what we can do to ensure we are meeting your needs. Plan to attend this year’s annual meeting being held on Saturday, March 12, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Medford Area Senior High School. Get involved with your cooperative’s operations.

One thing you can absolutely count on from your locally owned electric co-op: We will never be moving to Mexico or China like you hear of so many other companies doing. We will always be local—right here and ready to serve our members.

Source: Adam Schwartz, founder of The Cooperative Way, a consulting firm that helps co-ops succeed. He’s an author, speaker, and member-owner of the CDS Consulting Co-op. Follow him on Twitter @adamcooperative or email him at aschwartz@thecooperativeway.coop

TESCH, WALDHART EARN DIRECTOR GOLD CERTIFICATES



Taylor Electric Cooperative directors Dean Tesch and Patricia Waldhart recently were presented with Director Gold Certificates and lapel pins by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The achievement recognizes their commitment to cooperative education and reinforces their stature as part of a group of experienced and educated electric co-op directors.

To earn the Director Gold designation, Tesch and Waldhart first had to earn their Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate (CCD – five courses) and Board Leadership Certificate (BLC – 10 courses), then successfully complete three additional BLC courses.

Director Gold demonstrates to co-op members and other stakeholders the directors’ ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty to the best of their ability.

PREVENT FIRES BY USING LIGHT BULBS SAFELY

The science of electricity led to the development of a very practical and convenient home lighting device—the light bulb. Ever since, light bulbs have been lighting up our nights and allowing us to work, read, and see for longer periods of time. They are such an integral part of our everyday lives that it is all too easy to forget important safety precautions.

Safe Electricity offers the following safe lighting reminders to help you and your family stay safe:

- Closets and storage areas are especially dangerous for light bulbs, particular the older incandescent bulbs, which generate a lot of heat. Light bulbs could easily start a fire when clothing, boxes, and other stored goods are in contact with them. Keep everything 12 inches away from surface-mounted lighting and 6 inches from other types of lighting. Do not use uncovered light bulbs.
- Use only bulbs that match the wattage of a lamp or outlet. A bulb with a higher wattage than is specified is a fire hazard.
- Lamp cords should be kept in good working condition. Damaged, worn, cracked, or frayed cords and power plugs with the third grounding pin removed should be repaired or replaced.
- Do not place lamp cords under rugs or in high-traffic areas, and do not tack them to a wall.



- Turn off the lights before you switch out a bulb.
- Secure light bulbs tightly in their sockets.
- Lights that flicker or light switches that are discolored or hot to the touch should be immediately shut off. Have a qualified professional replace them.
- Be especially careful using halogen light bulbs. They run hotter than any other type of light bulb.
- Consider using LEDs or CFLs. They do not give off as much heat and last much longer than incandescent bulbs, so you will not have to replace them as often.

For more tips on electrical safety around the home, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Check out our solar production!



See just how much energy our community solar project is producing by visiting us online at www.taylorlectric.org and clicking on the Bright Horizons link. We still have units available for purchase! Contact us today for more information on how you can purchase local, clean, renewable solar energy!

What is the new offer and how does it work?

Shares can now be purchased, and then donated to a charitable organization served by Taylor Electric Cooperative. The charity will then receive a monthly credit on their electric bill for each share of the project, the same as if they had bought the share.

What charities are served by the Co-op?

The list includes:

- Centennial Community Center in Stetsonville
- Medford Area Public Schools (School Forest account)
- Stetsonville Volunteer Fire Department
- Whittlesey Lions Club
- Nine rural churches (ask us for a list)



GROUND FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTERS SAVE LIVES

Since the 1970s, ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) have saved thousands of lives and have helped cut the number of home electrocutions in half.

GFCIs are electrical safety devices that trip electrical circuits when they detect ground faults or leakage currents. Electricity is always looking for a path to the ground. A ground-fault is an unintentional electrical path from the power source and a grounded surface. Under normal conditions, current flows in a circuit, traveling from the source, through the device it operates, and back to the source.






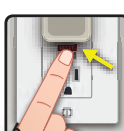


If an electrified appliance gets damaged by water, that flow is broken. Without a GFCI, your body could become that path to ground for the electrical current. A person who becomes part of a path for leakage current will be severely shocked or electrocuted. GFCI outlets prevent deadly shock by quickly shutting off power to the circuit if the electricity flowing into the circuit differs by even a slight amount from that returning.

A GFCI should be used in any indoor or outdoor area where water may come into contact with electrical products. The National Electrical Code currently requires that GFCIs be used in all kitchens, bathrooms, garages, and outdoors.

How to Test a GFCI

ESFi

GFCIs can be damaged by voltage surges by lightning, utility switching or simply from normal usage. If they are not working properly, they are not protecting you from shock or electrocution. Follow these easy steps to test your GFCIs every month:

1. Push the RESET button. 
2. Plug in a nightlight or similar device. 
3. The nightlight should be ON. 
4. Press the TEST button. 
5. The nightlight should turn OFF. 
6. Push the RESET button again. 
7. The nightlight should turn back ON. 
8. If the nightlight did not turn OFF, the GFCI is not working properly. 

Malfunctioning GFCIs do not provide shock protection. Have a licensed, qualified electrician check the GFCI and correct the problem if your GFCI is not working.


Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Consider purchasing rechargeable batteries—and an ENERGY STAR charger for them—which are more cost effective than disposable batteries. In the United States alone, more energy-efficient battery chargers could save families more than \$170 million annually.

Source: energy.gov

Taylor Electric Cooperative will be closed March 25 for Good Friday.



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