

ADLER IS AN ACE

Adler Receives the Ally of Cooperative Electrification Award

Clark Electric Cooperative CEO and General Manager Dick Adler received the Wisconsin electric cooperatives' highest honor the Ally of Cooperative Electrification (ACE) Award; Adler is the 37th recipient of the award.

Adler had words of thanks for his mentor, former Clark Electric General Manager Harland Bergemann, now 95. Adler said he and Bergemann continue to keep in touch "and he's still giving me good advice."

The award was presented during the awards banquet at the annual WECA Education and Legislative Day in Madison; a co-op manager who called the recipient his mentor handed the plaque to Adler. Adams-Columbia's Marty Hillert, hired by Adler for his first co-op job, said it was "a privilege and an honor" giving the award to a man he had "worked with and for and learned so much from."

Through his 43 years of service to electric cooperatives, Adler has been "a person of uncommon patience, fairness, good-nature, intelligence, goodwill, and generosity," said WECA Statewide Manager David Jenkins. Adler has been employed at Clark Electric since 1960 and became its manager in 1978. ■



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

2003 ANNUAL MEETING

March 26, 2003

Looking back we can say that 2003 was another successful year. The area economy has been hurting for the past few years now. The number of farms on our system is decreasing; however, with the Amish and Mennonites buying farms, the numbers are pretty much still there. We are becoming more of a residential and recreational area. Most employers are holding their own or expanding some. There are always seasonal fluctuations, and right now many are unemployed. Regardless of the economy, we need to keep our system in shape; maintenance is costly, but uninterrupted service is the desire of all members.

How are we holding costs? We have held back on new employees. We have a larger wage base because of the higher skills level. We control those areas where we can save by hiring contractors that can do it cheaper. For examples: tree trimming, right-of-way maintenance, meter testing, underground testing, maintenance of cabinets, and computer programming. All of these items we used to do "in house" with our own employees. We do continue to construct and maintain the electric system, and the older it gets there are always replacement needs. As employee retirements begin, more replacement employees are needed to train, to take over.

As I mentioned in the financial report, our costs are very comparable—lower in many cases. Our members have enjoyed lower rates (however, they keep increasing their usage, which makes their bill higher)—some of the lowest in the state of rural electric cooperatives and in many cases lower than our major investor-owned competitor.

General Rate Increase Coming

We have not had a general rate increase since late in 1999, for our own use. Only the increased costs from the wholesale end have been passed on. Now we begin the task of looking at our rates, fair rates, rates that still promote growth as growth does help keep costs down. Our system is built for much more usage than we are currently selling. If we had the same density as our competition, rates could be much lower. But that is part of the cost of living in rural areas.

It looks now like a 6–8 percent increase, but because we need recovery in this area, one-half may be delayed until possibly September 2004. We need to maintain

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ARE YOU SAFETY AWARE

May is Electrical Safety Month

We take certain things for granted, like air, water, food—and power to run the things we use for entertainment, home maintenance, and work. That power is electricity. There have been advances in many things, including how we generate and transmit that power, but it is always converted to electricity for immediate consumption. Electricity is both a blessing and a hazard.

As daily hazards go, electricity is uniquely unforgiving. Even the smallest mistake can result in death or traumatic, disfiguring, and disabling injury. Each year, hundreds are killed and thousands more injured in preventable electricity-related accidents, whether through electric shock or electrocution, or in electrically related fires. And yet our dependence grows. Worse, as safety engineering in our products improves, we grow complacent.

Whether we get our power from the sun, wind, water, coal, or oil, the end product—electricity—needs to be respected. For that reason, education and awareness about electrical safety is crucial, and National Electrical Safety Month each May is a cornerstone for that effort. The aim of this article is to help support the efforts of teaching electrical safety, in May and throughout the year.

Here are a few of many tips that you can follow to help prevent an electrical accident or mishap from happening to you, a loved one, or



Always have a trained professional work on your electric service; look for a licensed electrician. If you live in an older house, an electrical inspection could be a good, safe idea.

Some Simple Safety Questions to Ask Yourself

Are lamp, extension, telephone, and other cords placed out of the flow of traffic?



Are cords out from beneath furniture and rugs or carpeting?

Are electric cords in good condition, not frayed or cracked?

Outdoor Power Tools

Make sure the tool is intended for outdoor use. It should be used with a GFCI, either permanently installed



or a plug-in type that is plugged into a three-pronged outlet that is known to be grounded.

These little questions are just a few that you should ask yourself. Always read the owner's manual on any electrical product that you buy and intend on using. A little common sense can go a long way, but you would be surprised how often that we take the shortcut. Be safe around electricity—you don't always get a second chance. ■

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

NEW DIRECTORS ELECTED

Members Vote in Two New Directors to Fill Vacancies

Three directors were elected at this year's annual meeting. Board President Tony Jarocki was re-elected to another three-year term. New as directors are Chuck Bena and Howard Schultz.

Chuck Bena replaces Henry Janezich on the board. Chuck is from Mead Lake and brings with him lots of experience from service on boards and committees.

Howard Schultz is from the Town of Weston and replaces Jerry Smith's board position. Howard also brings experience to this board as a dairy farmer and with 10 years on the Clark County Board of Supervisors.

Both new directors are ready to participate in your cooperative and theirs; both will bring new experiences and perspective to the board for the next several years. ■



Clark Electric's newest board members, left to right, Howard Schultz and Chuck Bena. Both are very motivated and ready to participate in running your cooperative.

25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Three Clark Electric Employees Receive Awards at Annual Meeting

Long term is what you see in Clark Electric Cooperative employees. This year, Clark Electric recognized three dedicated employees with 25-year service awards.



Jim Rust, Sandy Herrick, and Frank Arch each holding their 25-year service awards, which were presented at the annual meeting.

Jim Rust, Sandy Herrick, and Frank Arch were each awarded inscribed watches for their years of dedication. The awards were presented by Board President Jarocki.

Rust is an equipment operator and has recently been working in the meter department helping in the installation of our AMR system and helping with the load management system.

Arch is also an equipment operator and maintenance person for the heavy equipment. Frank takes great pride in making sure the equipment is working and ready for the job. During the winter time, he gets the plows and trenchers ready for their spring and summer work.

Working with all the men in the operations department is the sole woman, Sandy Herrick. Sandy is responsible for so much that is done, but she's behind the desk where no one can see her except her coworkers. Sandy is an important part of making sure that the jobs are done, and all the material and paperwork is accounted for.

Clark has many employees, all with many years of service—some more, some fewer—but all are important to the cooperative. This year, we thank these three hard workers. ■

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Clark Electric

66th Annual



Board President Tony Jarocki addresses the membership during the meeting. Jarocki was re-elected to another three-year term on the board.



Saying thanks for a job well done, Board President Tony Jarocki presents outgoing Board Secretary/Treasurer Jerry Smith a plaque for his years of service to the cooperative.



Jr. Board Representative Kim Artac describes her experiences as one of Clark Electric's representatives who attended the Youth Leadership Congress at River Falls this past year.



Representing Dairyland Power Cooperative was Chuck Sans Crainte, Vice President of Generation. He gave an informative update on what Dairyland is doing and talked about planning for the future power supply of electricity for the cooperatives.

Clark Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting



Director Henry Janezich, who also reached his term limit on the board, accepts a plaque recognizing his service to the board and to the cooperative.



Dave Jenkins, General Manager of the WECA Division of the Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives, comments on Dick Adler's winning of the "ACE Award" and how fortunate we at Clark Electric are at having him as our general manager.



Senator Dave Zien and Assemblyman Scott Suder comment on what is happening in Madison and how they are representing us back in the Capital.



ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Investment in the Future

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financial stability because we still need to borrow money in the future. We invest well over \$1 million each year in plant and equipment and we have to prove we can repay our debts. In the past we've had no problems, so now is the time to prepare for the future.

We went 20 years without a new loan, but last year, as we reported, we borrowed \$2 million and another \$2 million this year. To our benefit, we are getting very good interest rates—currently below 4 percent on the open market and 5 percent from Rural Utility Services, formerly REA.

Barring anything unforeseen, this rate increase should last for a number of years, but then who really can predict the future?

Our Appliance and Satellite Subsidiary continues to do well. This past year we began leasing one of our big digger-derrick basket trucks through them. It helps our cash flow, and they can use the revenue and depreciation of the lease. We look forward to additional services in the future.

Announces Upcoming Retirement

I will also let everyone know today that I will be retiring next year. I started here in 1960, almost 43 years ago and over 25 years as your manager. In the president's report, he mentions the large change over of employees in

the next six years. The first of that group to leave will be Harry Johnson, line superintendent, who plans to retire in February 2004.

The board will begin their search for my replacement this fall by advertising nationwide in our *Rural Electrification* magazine. Hopefully the right person will be found and be on board by February 1, 2004, to work with me and other employees and take over by year-end. The new manager will be looking at some management retirements

in 2005 and 2007 plus numerous other employees. We have an outstanding staff of employees, so hopefully this great organization will continue to be successful for many years.

Thanks to two of our board members retiring from the board today. Jerry Smith leaves after nine years, of which he spent six years as secretary-treasurer. Thank you, Jerry, for your leadership and kindness. Henry Janezich also leaves today, having served nine years on the board, six years as our director to Dairyland Power Cooperative, seven years as secretary-

treasurer on our Appliance and Satellite board, and 25 years as an appliance serviceman for the cooperative prior to all of that. Thanks to you too, Henry, for your friendship and dedication to the cooperative.

This concludes my report, and I ask for any questions now, or you can submit them to the question box and I will answer them prior to adjournment today. ■



CEO / General Manager Dick Adler explaining to the members the financial strengths of the cooperative.

Are You Connected to Life-Saving Equipment that Requires Electricity to Operate?

If so, please contact the electric billing office as we need to put you on a special list for priority power restoration. This does not mean that your power will be restored first; however, it does let our crews know that your electric distribution line is a priority to restore.

Please fill in the information part of this message and return it with your next electric bill payment.

Such as Oxygen Machines, Breathing Devices, or Special Monitoring Equipment...

Name: _____

Acct #: _____

Telephone#: _____

Type of Equipment: _____

MORE LOCAL NEWS



Clark Electric Cooperative Economic Development Center

Commercial Building
6,600 sq.ft. for Rent
Located in Greenwood, WI



3 loading docks, free office space, heat/air & water provided
with many other unique features to promote comfort and production.

For Information Contact

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or

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



SAFETY FIRST

Grant & Loan Program Available Statewide for Cooperative Members

Loans and Grants

- A loan/grant combination is available up to \$20,000.
- Grants are available for 20 percent or up to \$4,000 from the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association.
- Loans are available for 80 percent or up to \$16,000 from your electric cooperative.
- Take up to 5 years to repay.
- 5-percent interest applies.

Requirements

- Dairy farms only
- Existing farmstead
- Pre-program inspection
- Electrician's estimate
- Service agreement for length of loan
- Credit eligibility requirements

Wisconsin electric cooperatives have developed a uniform statewide farm wiring program entitled "Safety First!" The purpose is to assist dairy farmers with the cost of rewiring projects and to promote safety.



Contact The Operations Department Today for More Information, 800-272-6188

WE SALUTE THE AMERICAN TROOPS

Clark Electric Appliance & Satellite, Inc.

A Community Project... For Those In Our Community... To Those Who are in Our Thoughts and Prayers.

In an effort to support our troops overseas, to help their families and the communities that our service personnel are from, we are working with the American Red Cross in collecting items that can be sent to the troops to help make their lives a little easier.

You can help by donating the items below; these items will be assembled in care packages for the service personnel. There are strict guidelines as to how this can be done. That's why we are working together with the American Red Cross. Clark Electric Appliance & Satellite, Inc., will take care of the cost involved in packaging and shipping these special care packages. Show that you care... donate today by bringing these items into our store. This is an on-going program that will continue based on your continued support.

Items Needed for Our Troops



ITEMS MUST BE NEW AND UN-OPENED

We are working with the American Red Cross
to send the items to our troops.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner
The power of human connections

