



# 85<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING RECAP



**Clark Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Wednesday, June 15, 2022



By Tim Stewart,  
CEO/Manager

Ever since the creation of Clark Electric Cooperative, back in 1937, the cooperative has held an annual meeting. The annual meeting is a time for members to come together to learn more about their organization, conduct business, enjoy a nice meal, and socialize with their friends and neighbors. For many, it is an

event that members look forward to year after year.

As you know, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the last couple of years saw significantly declining attendance and changes to the annual meeting program to accommodate conditions. This year, we returned to more of a routine annual meeting with increased attendance. The following is a recap of the day's events.

### President Seebandt's Report

The following is an excerpt from President Seebandt's report to the members.

**Change in Governance Process:** President Seebandt began his presentation by discussing Clark Electric Cooperative's bylaw changes that were approved last year that took effect for this year's meeting. This is the first year that balloting has been available either in person or by mail ballot. In addition, formal director districts have been established as well as nomination of directors by petition. Overall, the process worked very well.

**Clark Electric Cooperative/Greenwood FFA Program:** President Herman Seebandt discussed our newest youth program, which partners with the Greenwood FFA and FFA Alumni. This program allows the Greenwood FFA students real hands-on experience in managing crop land, which

is located adjacent to the cooperative's headquarters. The students learn about cooperatives, the Seven Cooperative Principles, and the not-for-profit business model that makes cooperatives unique.

**Farm Technology Days:** President Seebandt reported that Farm Technology Days is scheduled for July 12–14, 2022, in Clark County and discussed the cooperative's involvement in the event.

### CEO/General Managers' Report

The following is an excerpt from CEO/GM Stewart's report to the members.

**2021 Financial Review:** Clark Electric Cooperative continues to report solid financial performance. Total kWh sales set a new all-time high in 2021, eclipsing the previous high set in 2020 by 1.72%

The total cost of providing electric service decreased 0.78% over last year, resulting in operating margins of \$1,255,794, down slightly from the 2020 level. Wholesale power cost decreased for a second consecutive year by 1.60%. Our debt ratio decreased to 26.28% of assets in 2021 while equity was 67.56%. Assets and liabilities, as well as various operating statistics, were reviewed as well. The cooperative has met and exceeded our financial metrics required by our lenders. In addition, the cooperative has not had a change to base electric rates going on six years.

Clark Electric Cooperative's average interruption duration index (SAIDI), a system reliability index, increased in 2021 primarily because of two events. The first was hoarfrost in January 2021. The excess weight caused by the frost on the lines and trees contributed to blinks and outages.

The second event occurred in December 2021 when



Left: CEO/General Manager Tim Stewart addresses the annual meeting crowd. This year's meeting marked a return to pre-pandemic gatherings, with a room full of members enjoying dinner, socializing, and learning about their cooperative's operations. Right: Among the guests were directors from neighboring Taylor Electric Cooperative, Chuck Zenner (second from left, speaking with Stewart), and Patricia Waldhardt, right (speaking with Clark Electric Director Scott Johnson).



**Brent Ridge, CEO of Dairyland Power Cooperative, was on hand to explain trends in the energy industry.**

our service area was hit by three tornadoes. The event had wind speeds in excess of 111 mph and affected over 80% of our system. We did exercise Restoration of Power in and Emergency (ROPE), a mutual aid protocol, and received assistance from Polk Burnett Electric Cooperative, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, Taylor Electric Cooperative, Barron Electric Cooperative, and Zielies Tree Service. Power was restored to all areas within three days.

The cooperative retired over \$1.3 million in capital credits in 2021. In addition, last year over \$811,000 was applied as billing credits to members' bills. In January of 2022, an

additional \$1.0 million was retired to members. Over \$7.23 million has been retired between 2015–2021.

The cooperative invested in excess of \$2.89 million in distribution plant during 2021. This represents new construction and replacement of electric lines and infrastructure, new service extensions, and member service upgrades. We will continue to strive to keep the price of electricity as low as possible while meeting our capital needs.

Finally, as this was the 85th Annual Meeting, Stewart reviewed some of the cooperative's early history and how it was started.

### Other Annual Meeting Highlights

**Guest Speaker:** Brent Ridge, president and CEO of Dairyland Power Cooperative, discussed industry trends; sustainability; reliability; Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO); generation mix (current and future goals); RockGen Energy Center gas plant; the new NuScale non-carbon emitting, 24/7, small-modular nuclear reactor technology; and transition and integration of renewable energy.

**Director Elections:** Directors Allen Jicinsky and Chuck Lindner were each elected for a three-year term.



Allen Jicinsky    Chuck Lindner

## SYSTEM MAINTENANCE IS AN ONGOING PROJECT

Clark Electric Cooperative has many maintenance programs that help provide safe reliable electricity.

One of the most important programs the cooperative preforms is our Vegetation Management Program. This program is two-fold. First, trees are cut and trimmed from within the right-of-way. Once the trimming and clearing process has been completed, a herbicide application is applied to help reduce regrowth within the right-of-way.

In today's high-tech electronic world it's more important than ever to provide safe, reliable electricity to our members. Trees continue to be one of the leading causes of blinking lights and power out-



ages. The cooperative has an extensive tree-clearing program that is performed on a five-year rotation by professional tree-clearing contractors. The contractors are instructed to cut, clear, and mow the right-of-way to provide 15 feet of clearance to the primary power lines. Clearance of 3 to 6 feet is required on overhead secondary service wires, depending on the type of service you have.

The cooperative also has a herbicide program that is completed on a two-year rotation. This program is also completed by professional contractors that are all state certified and licensed through the Department of Agriculture. The use of

herbicides to control small trees and brush is far more economical compared to the use of heavy machinery such as bucket trucks, chippers and mowers.

It's important to remember that a single tree can cause blinking lights and power outages that can affect hundreds of customers for miles around. A tree-clearing program in combination with herbicide treatments is the most economical way to maintain a clear right-of-way corridor.

These very important maintenance programs are just two examples of many that are needed to help keep the lights on when you, the member, flip the switch.

### Working for you

Don't be surprised if you see Clark Electric employees on or around your property in the next few months. These employees will be testing poles—necessary work to ensuring safe, reliable electricity.



# MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY & Kick-off to Cooperative Month

**A FREE Pancake, Egg  
& Sausage Breakfast**  
*Activities for kids of all ages*




**Saturday, September 24**

7 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the  
Clark Electric headquarters,  
just west of Greenwood on CTH G



**Clark Electric Cooperative**

1209 W. Dall-Berg Rd. P.O. Box 190, Greenwood, WI 54437  
715-267-6188 • 800-272-6188

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

**River Country Co-op**

P.O.Box 260  
Dorchester, WI 54425  
1-800-521-2021

## **“Take Back” Initiative** **7–11 a.m.**



Bring your unused, controlled, non-controlled, and over-the counter medications in their original containers to be dropped off—free, with no questions asked.

*Questions? Clark County Sheriff's Department at 715-743-3157.*

## **Food Drive for** **Local Food Pantries**



Help us demonstrate the 7th Cooperative Principle, Commitment to Community, by bringing a non-perishable, non-expired food item to be donated to your local food pantry.

## **Pumpkins • Crafts for Kids** **Giant Inflatables**



## **Greenwood Fire & EMS**

will provide free blood pressure testing.

## **Marshfield** **Medical Center**

will be here to provide community health information.  
— free of charge.



# POSTING ITEMS TO UTILITY POLES CREATES SAFETY RISKS

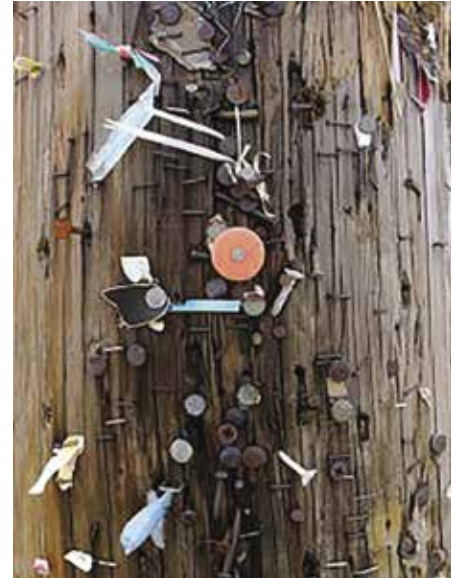
Signs, balloons, and other materials on utilities' poles are more than just an unpleasant neighborhood eyesore; they can be dangerous—even life threatening—to the professionals who maintain our vital lines of electricity, communication, and other services. Safe Electricity urges everyone to help keep utility poles free of such materials.

The clamped safety boots used by line workers to climb power poles are vulnerable to becoming snagged on staples and nails embedded in posts. Foreign objects can also tear utility workers' protective clothing, which is the first line of protection from an electric shock. These objects can also injure workers despite the safety gear they wear to

avoid contact with rough surfaces.

Posting items to power poles can also be a public safety hazard. The materials posted on the poles not only distract people as they drive, but they also degrade the quality, effectiveness, and stability of the wood. Posting items to utility poles is usually a violation of local ordinances as well.

It is also just as important to avoid tampering with or disrupting the guy wires that surround utility poles. Please inform children not to play or swing on them, and maintain your distance when performing yard work. If you see the poles or guy wires are disrupted in some way, please call your electric cooperative immediately.—*SafeElectricity.org*



## CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

It's Easy! It's Free!

**Planning a digging project in your yard or on your property? If you dig without knowing what is located below, you could damage an underground line.**

**Not only could you become seriously injured, but you will be responsible for the cost of repairs. To avoid hassles and fines, call 811, the Call Before You Dig number, at least three**

**business days prior to breaking ground. (811 locators do not mark privately owned underground lines or pipes, such as service to outbuildings, sprinkler systems or invisible fences.)**

**An uneventful digging project is the best kind to have.**




**Tim Stewart, CEO/Manager**

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[www.cecoop.com](http://www.cecoop.com)



**Clark Electric Cooperative**

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