



NEW JOURNEY

New CEO / General Manager Shares Some Insight

Hello members:

As I drive through the tree-lined roadways of Wisconsin I am still amazed at the beauty and grandeur of this area that I so fondly remember from my childhood. I am embarking on a new journey in my life as I join the Clark Electric Cooperative family. It has been an honor to be named as a replacement to long-time CEO/General Manager Dick Adler. I am blessed to have the opportunity to mentor with Mr. Adler before his retirement later this year. As I embark on this new journey, I realize that I can never fill the shoes of Mr. Adler. I will need to make my own path, continuing to seek the high road as Mr. Adler has always done for the membership and Clark Electric family.

I have been serving in the Rural Electrification (RE) program for the past 18 years, first as an accountant with Monona County REC, then as the director of finance at Clarke Electric Cooperative, and for the past 11 years as the general manager for Rideta Electric Cooperative. While serving as the general manager with Rideta Electric Cooperative, I was also a shared manager with

Guthrie County REC for two years. January 1 of this year, Rideta Electric Cooperative completed a successful consolidation with a neighboring system, forming southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative.

My family has also started a new journey. My two children, Molly and Matthew, will attend the Greenwood Elementary School this fall. My wife, Michele, will stay home for the first time, as she was an elementary teacher for the past 10 years. Our oldest daughter, Mikki, begins a new journey as well. She will attend nursing school this fall. We are excited about our new home and look forward to making new friendships and becoming ingrained in our community.

I look forward to working with the Clark Electric board of directors, management team, and the rest of the Clark Electric family. We will continually strive to serve our community and membership, demonstrating integrity, accountability, and innovation. I look forward to leading our Clark Electric team. Stop in anytime to get acquainted—the coffee is on me! ■

Cooperatively yours,

Tim Stewart
CEO/General Manager

POWER QUALITY

Helping Member Farmers

Realizing how important quality electricity is on your farm, Clark Electric is making sure that we have the tools and people to help. Clark Electric recently hired master electrician Jim Mertens from Thorp. “Jim brings a tremendous amount of experience and knowledge concerning farm wiring,” says Bob Moseley, director of operations.

Jim will be assisting members with farm wiring questions and helping with farm wiring inspections for our Safety First Wiring Program for those members who would like this free service. If members have questions concerning the Safety First Wiring Program, they just need to contact our Operations Department at 800-272-6188, or they can find more information on our web site at www.cecoop.com. ■



Clark Electric Master Electrician Jim Mertens checks on an electric service for problems.



Youth Leadership Congress 41st

2004 YLC is a Huge Success

Through a mix of workshop sessions, case studies, hands-on activities, and team-building exercises, nearly 120 high school students from around the state polished up their leadership skills during a three-day program in July at the University of Wisconsin–River Falls. The 2004 Youth Leadership Congress held July 21–23 was the 41st annual educational offering for youth to be co-sponsored by Wisconsin’s electric cooperatives and the College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences at UW–River Falls.

In sessions led by professional speakers, teenage peers, and cooperative employees, youth participants received information about and suggestions on how to deal with a variety of complex issues high school students face every day.

Clark Electric Cooperative, along with other electric distribution cooperatives, sponsors youths attending the three-day seminar, paying food, lodging, transportation, and program costs and supplying chaperones.

Highlights of this year’s congress included Craig Hillier’s Breakthrough Leadership Workshop; a session by hypnotist Franklin Winters; a dramatic theater presentation by SOS, a group of teenagers that emphasized the

Craig Hilliar with his unique style.



LOCAL TEENS HAVE IMPACT



Clark Electric’s 2004 YLC delegation was, from left to right, Krista Miller, Owen-Withee; Tait Turnquist, Greenwood; Michelle Stieglitz, Greenwood; Lyssa Seefeldt, Colby; and Rebecca Schoen, Neillsville.

power of choices on a variety of teen topics such as dating, drugs, alcohol, and driving; and team-building exercises lead by Lance Ross of the Leadership Center at UW–River Falls.

Faculty member Dr. David Trechter opened the Youth Leadership Congress with an interactive session on the “Power of Cooperation.” Dr. Trechter spoke about cooperative principles, cooperative operations, types of cooperatives, and their impact and importance in today’s business world.

Students also learned about life before electricity and how rural dwellers formed cooperative utilities to bring electrification to the countryside. The present-day operations of electric cooperatives were also illustrated, and participants viewed a hotline demonstration by line personnel from Dunn Energy Cooperative. Program presenters encouraged the young people to consider careers in cooperatively owned businesses such as electric co-ops.

A new feature at this year’s program was “Youth Congress Jeopardy,” where students were divided into teams and competed by answering questions in five categories: cooperative history, co-op principles, general co-op, electric cooperative, and general Youth Congress. The game helped students review what they learned from the various educational presentations.

According to David Erickson, director of member services for the Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives, the program for the Youth Congress is developed each

(Continued on page 28 ►)

MORE LOCAL NEWS

YLC Fun

(Continued from page 5)

year with the help of a group of six students elected by their peers at the previous year's event. The six high students serve as members of the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association Youth Board.

The individuals elected to the 2004-05 Youth Board who will plan next year's Youth Congress include Adam Frederickson, Mondovi, sponsored by Riverland Energy Cooperative; Scott Staehler, Wittenberg, sponsored by Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative; Andy Burns, Mauston, sponsored by Oakdale Electric Cooperative; Lance Olson, Nekoosa, sponsored by Oakdale Electric Cooperative; Melanie Jecklin, Cashton, sponsored by Vernon Electric Cooperative; and Jeanette Rothering, Cochrane, sponsored by Riverland Energy Cooperative.

Jeff Wittek, from Thorp, a former youth leader who now serves as a grain merchandiser for CHS Cooperatives of St. Paul, wrapped up the congress by encouraging youth to "make the best of every opportunity." He stressed, "Life is a journey, not a single destination. Enjoy every step of the way."

John Knox, director of member services from Clark Electric Cooperative, has been involved with the YLC program for the last seven years. He said, "These young adults keep impressing me each year; we have a great bunch of



One of several groups having fun while working on leadership and team-building skills.

young adults in our system. It's always a pleasure and a fun experience taking our kids to the YLC. Seeing them a year or two after the program and how much they have matured and hearing how the program really did help them is very gratifying."


Comments from the students themselves at the close of the conference clearly endorsed Knox's assertion: "Awesome!" "I really enjoyed the activities. Speakers were excellent! I had a blast learning how to be a leader and how to challenge myself. It made me a better person."

"This was a wonderful experience and I hope everyone gets to experience it." "It gave us an idea of what college life is like." "It was a great way to learn about cooperatives and how they are run. A way to remember safety while being around power lines and it was a great way to meet and connect with new people."


The summer youth program has been an annual offering since Wisconsin's statewide electric cooperative association first organized the event in 1964. Today, the Youth Leadership Congress is regarded as one of the premier educational programs of its type in the nation. ■



Zachary McCluskey was one of many students who performed during the talent show.



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