

# "NO GOOD-BYES"

## Final Words From Former General Manager Dick Adler



Former General Managers Harland Bergemann and Dick Adler at Dick's last board meeting in December 2004.

In my career, one person has been so influential that I cannot begin to tell how much I learned from him—Harland Bergemann. Harland became general manager in 1964 and we worked very closely for the next 14 years. Harland is the type of people-person who always considers the members and who owned this business first. If an idea wasn't good for the vast majority of the members, it soon disappeared. Working with a union contract was just that—a contract to be abided by. If we or the employees didn't like something, we lived by it and waited to try to change it in the next negotiations. He taught me to listen and not interrupt or interpret before all the facts were known.

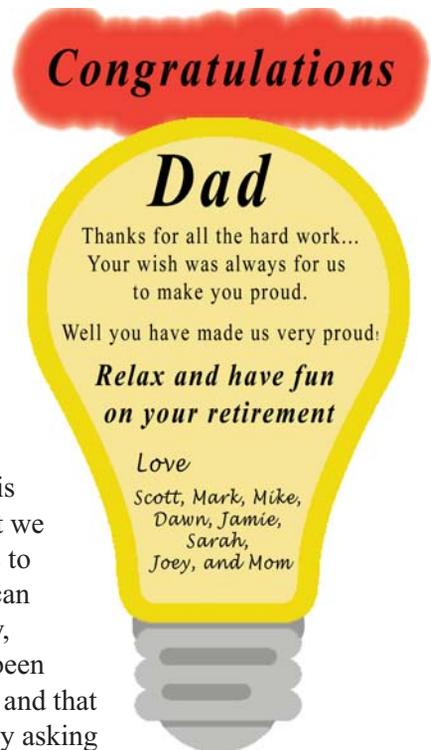
Don't try to know it all—that's where the professional engineers, attorneys, state and national organizations can help. Support the organizations that we need for the jobs we can't do by ourselves. Well, Harland and I were a great team, and eventually in the mid '70s he hinted that maybe I should prepare for the general manager position. Oh no, I told him, as I really enjoyed the

office routine and the coming of computers and such. Well, in later 1976 we talked again and he said, "I really need to know—give it some thought." Well, I did and the big questions I had was, "Could I work for someone other than Harland Bergemann?" The answer was, "Probably not," so I told him I would go for it.

Harland retired in February 1978 and I have been at the reins since. My office manager then was Marty Hillert Jr. from Granton, who was following my footsteps, learning and studying as he went. Marty eventually left to become a general manager in Minnesota and later became manager of Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative in Friendship, Wisconsin. We still see each other at various meetings and seminars. Yes, we are still learning.

So now I am at the chief executive officer/general manager (titled has changed over the years), and I continue to be blessed by some great board of directors with leadership that anyone would envy. Presidents of Clark Electric under whom I served were Louis Dux, Ralph Woik, Dick Eibergen, LeRoy Fravert Jr., and Anthony Jarocki. They, of course, were supported by a host of dedicated directors, all of whom I was proud to be associated with.

The board has been very progressive and cost conscious, always looking out for our members. In tough times and when rates needed to be adjusted, you'd better come prepared and informed. Although rates have been increasing the past number of years, it is for good reason, but we must be watchful as to what the members can afford. Traditionally, electric costs have been way under inflation and that is the reason for only asking



for what we really need. Throughout my career, most of the increases have come on the wholesale level; however, inflation hits at our doors just as it does our members.

I have tried diligently to maintain a financially strong organization. We have some of the lowest debts and electric rates of any electric cooperative in Wisconsin. Our system is constantly being rebuilt and maintained to the specifications of the Rural Utility Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Your board of directors has selected Tim Stewart as my successor, and I feel very good about leaving the business guidance to him. We have spent countless hours together these past five months to cause a smooth transition. Tim does have a big job of filling the upcoming retirements that will be occurring in the next couple of years.

So now what? I will not say good-bye. I am not leaving, only now I won't have an office and I will be at the call of Tim Stewart. I will stop in but give no advice unless asked for. What are my plans? Some traveling. I'm on the executive committee for Farm Technology Days in Clark County 2005, on the board of St. Mary's Memorial Fund, coordinator for Greenwood Festivals, Inc., and chairman of the Branstiter's Old Streets of Greenwood museum. So I have some things still ongoing as well as growing bedding plants February through June of each year.

Special thanks to my management staff: Bob Moseley, director of operations; Donna Abel, office manager; John Knox, director of member relations; Rick Suda, line superintendent; and recently retired Harry Johnson and all the employees. You are doing an outstanding job and you have made me proud over the years. Eighteen years of achieving safety accreditation is quite an accomplishment, as it is a team effort.

A big thank you to the board of directors—not only the present directors but also those who served in the past. Thank you for the challenge, your kindness, and for not



*New General Manager Tim Stewart and former General Managers Harland Bergemann and Dick Adler.*

interfering. I always looked forward to board meetings because of the great support I received. You entrusted the operations to me, which were not always perfect, but you gave me the tools to assemble a great staff of people to work for the members and meet their expectations.

Lastly, thank you to the members for your understanding when the lights were out, including the times when there were persistent problems and outages may have occurred more than once in a short period of time. Thank you for all your support at the annual meetings, which I plan to attend in the future. So, I'll be around, only not in the operations. So there is no need to say "good-bye," only "we'll see you soon again."

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

May the Lord give you each a special blessing for your needs. Amen. ■

### Dick's Service at Clark Electric Cooperative

- 44 Years of Service
- 11,484 Days of Work
- 91,872 Hours of Worked
- 137,808 Papers Shuffled
- 312 Board Meetings
- 538 Pens
- 5.8 Million Miles To La Crosse (Just Kidding)

*Numbers gathered  
by Dick's Sons*

**Dick Adler**

*CEO/General Manager  
(Retired)*

## CAPITAL CREDITS

### Your Business...

### And A Return On Your Investment



The board of directors has announced that Clark Electric approved a \$557,611.08 capital credit retirement to be made this year. This marks the 42nd consecutive year that a capital credit retirement has been made, for a total in excess of \$12,780,000 being returned to the membership since inception.

As a rural electric cooperative member, you are part owner of Clark Electric Cooperative. Basically, you've pooled your money with thousands of other members and created equity for your rural electric

As a locally owned business, Clark Electric Cooperative is committed to the people, businesses, and communities we serve. Because we are member owned and operated, one of the fundamental principles we follow is a commitment to returning your investment. This is done in the form of capital credits. Since Clark Electric Cooperative operates on a not-for-profit basis, we return margins to members and former members through the capital credit allocation and retirement process.

The amount returned is in relation to the individual member's transactions with the cooperative. Capital credits are returned to cooperative members on a rotating schedule. Currently the

cooperative is retiring 4 percent of our allocated capital and applying that amount against the oldest capital credits assigned to the members. This retirement will affect capital credits assigned in 1984 and 1985.

At Clark Electric Cooperative, we are working hard to earn the right to serve you, our customer and owner, and to provide the most responsive and cost-effective services available. ■

**\$12.7 Million over 42 Consecutive Years**

**Benefits of Membership**

cooperative to buy electricity and provide services at an affordable cost.

# Get Wild



**Clark Appliance & Satellite, Inc. will soon be offering WildBlue... High Speed Broadband Internet Services. Internet service over satellite. From someone who knows satellite service... WildBlue Communications will give you a whole new outlook on why a computer can be so much fun. Get Ready to Get Wild...WildBlue.**

# WILDBLUE<sup>SM</sup>



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**Watch For Annoucments For Availability**



# Happy Holidays From us at

**Tim Stewart**  
*CEO / General Manager*

*Donna Abel*  
*Dick Adler*  
*Frank Arch*  
*Scott Bailen*  
*Troy Bauer*  
*Jeff Block*  
*Dick Braun*  
*Josh Burns*  
*Gary French*  
*Mike Hackel*  
*Amanda Hensiak*  
*Sandy Herrick*  
*Kyle Johnson*  
*Burton Jolivette*

*Arnie Kappus*  
*John Knox*  
*Pat Krause*  
*Cathy Langrek*  
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*and*

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