



## THE POWER BEHIND YOUR POWER



Steve Lucas, CEO

April brings with it the beginning of spring storm season. Springtime in Wisconsin often comes with lightning and thunderstorms, occasionally mixed with the last stubborn snowstorms of

the year. All this works together to create some often challenging weather conditions, including lightning, high winds, and sometimes flooding.

Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort and convenience of our homes. However, there is a group of professionals that springs into action when the weather takes a turn for the worst—co-op linemen. When the weather turns nasty and most of us are hunkering down inside, our linemen are heading outside, no matter what day it is, what time of day, or what else they might have had going on. No matter what, they're ready to stop everything to make sure our members have power.

Although spring brings stormy weather, this is not the only challenging time for linemen. Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the United States, linework requires employees to perform detailed tasks next to high-voltage power lines, wearing special protective equipment that helps keep them safe, but also weighs them down and makes their work even harder. At its essence, linework is an inherently dangerous job, requiring linemen to work in the worst of conditions, at any times of the day or night.

And these days, linemen have to be just as handy with technology as they are with heavy-duty physical labor. Line crews today use iPads and cell phones to map outages and troubleshoot problems. It truly is a demanding profession, on a variety of levels.

April may bring spring showers, but it also comes with a day set aside to thank lineworkers for all they do, year-round, to keep the power flowing. April 9 is Lineworker Appreciation Day, a time to give thanks for the power behind your power. Our own linemen are as follows:

Lancaster office: Jason Knapp, Shane Crowley, Joe Ihm, Travis Klein, Patrick Pennekamp, Matt Rasmussen, Tory Henkel.

Darlington office: Jim Wolf, Lucas Ritchie, Kevin Weber, Matt Ritchie.

Gays Mills office: Andy Kilcoyne, Derrick Heisz, Robert Tank, Daniel Welsh, Earl Winsor.

Staking Engineers: Chad Olmstead, Phil Schneider.

April also comes with a day to appreciate the other employees who work hard to provide you with reliable, safe electric service. April 25 is Administrative Professionals' Day, a time to give thanks for the dedicated, quality administrative professionals who work for you at SREC: Linda Bendorf, Amanda Downing, Leann Handel, Barb Murphy, Heidi Pierce, Carrie Olmstead, Julie Ostby, and Tammy Stoney.

Together, our employees make one great team.



## MEMBER PHOTOS OF THE MONTH

Laura Coglan of Blue River took the winning picture for March (left) in SREC's 2017 Member Photo Contest. She labeled this picture: "Yellow warbler in the Forsythia." Ron Uhe of Readstown took the winning picture for April (right). He captioned this picture: "Moth at blooming phlox." Both pictures appear in SREC's 2018 Member Photo Calendar. The 2018 Member Photo Contest is underway; please visit our website, [www.sre.coop](http://www.sre.coop), for contest details and application forms.



# BARN QUILTS COVER LAFAYETTE COUNTY

**Q**UILTS for all seasons tie together heritage, art, and agriculture in Lafayette County. Barn quilts are wooden square quilt blocks on barns, shops, and outbuildings throughout the county. Patterned after similar initiatives that sprung up across the country, the 150 barn quilts bring vibrant color to the landscape and add surprising scenery for passersby. And especially for people who grew up on farms, barns and quilts are emblems of home.

When the Lafayette County project started 10 years ago, “We were hoping to get five or six, and we got 50 or 60,” said Pam Teasdale of rural Shullsburg, secretary of the barn quilt



Larry and Pam Teasdale, of rural Shullsburg, have a barn quilt block called “County Auction.” Pam is a committee member of Barns of Lafayette County.

committee. “It does take a long time if you drive around and look at them. It’s loads of fun.”

A permanent quilt show can bring people to the countryside and show them what the county and its communities have to offer. Part of the goal of the perennial crop of quilts is economic development and tourism.

The plywood quilts showcase individual creativity. Designs range from double wedding ring to bear paw to flowers and flags. Just as quilting offered an artistic outlet for generations, barn quilts are folk art that combine the warmth and comfort of a quilt with the warmth and comfort many farm families felt in the barn.

“There are two hard things about doing a barn quilt,” said Heidi Brenum, of Pins and Pieces Quilt Shop in Darlington, president of the barn quilt committee. “One is picking the pattern, because there are so many. Two is waiting for the paint to dry. It’s not like painting your living room. You have to tape off all the areas of different colors.”

**“We were hoping to get five or six, and we got 50 or 60.”**

—SREC member Pam Teasdale

Each color needs four coats to preserve and protect the wood from the elements. Just as in quilting with fabric, design and geometry go into the barn quilts, Brenum said.

Sue Rielly, of rural Darlington, chose Dublin Steps for her first barn quilt because her husband Jim “was all Irish.” Then she made one related to cards for a bare spot on a building addition.

She is planning a third that she can see when she looks out her window, and a fourth for her daughter.

“They’re fun. I like doing them. I just like putting it together, making it work out like a puzzle,” she said.

## Creating Quilt Blocks

Some people stop and ask how you go about making a barn quilt. Break it down into fourths or thirds, she said, use a lot of painter’s tape.

Others have quilt blocks made for them.

Mary Jo Stutenberg, of rural Cuba City, part of the original committee, had seen a barn quilt and mentioned to her children that “I really wanted one.” They surprised her with one as a Christmas present.

“American Pride” has a patriotic theme that doubly resonates with her. “When we moved up here, my son was in Iraq,” Stutenberg said. Both her father and father-in-law served in World War II, and her father always took pride in flying the flag. “The barn quilt does the same thing for me,” Stutenberg said.

She had just moved to Lafayette County when she and others simultaneously had the idea to put quilt blocks on barns. “It definitely helped me gain some friendships with people who had the same interests as me,” she said.

Pam Teasdale has a “County Auction” block at her home. “We put it up because I really liked the philosophy and idea behind it—to make a ‘clothesline’ display across America,” she said.

Sizes range from two feet by two feet to eight by eight. Installing the larger ones takes a lift truck and manpower. Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative installed Stutenberg’s 10 years ago, and mounted others as well.

Although the pace has slowed, new barn quilts are still added. “We’re seeing them pop up all over the place,” Stutenberg said.

In 2000, Donna Sue Groves of Ohio, whose mother admired both quilts and barns, wanted to honor her and create a “National Clothesline of Quilts” stretching across the nation. In Lafayette County, the collaborative project began with some grants and donations, the University of Wisconsin Extension, Home and Community Education clubs, 4-H leaders, civic groups and individual volunteers.



Mary Jo Stutenberg of rural Cuba City has “American Pride” at her home.



Sue Rielly of rural Darlington poses with her second barn quilt, and is now choosing the pattern for her third and fourth.

A set of four blank note cards with photographs of barn quilts is on sale at Pins and Pieces, and proceeds go to pay for promotional brochures. A map is available at the website, [www.barnquiltsoflafayettecounty.com](http://www.barnquiltsoflafayettecounty.com).

### Quilt Block Wind Farm

Barn quilts are so much a part of the landscape that they inspired the name of Quilt Block Wind Farm, dedicated in Lafayette County last fall. EDP Renewables operates the wind farm, with 49 turbines.

“When we build a wind farm, we try to name it for unique elements in the surrounding community, and reflect the cultural identity of the community around the wind farm. The logo for the wind farm is meant to evoke quilt blocks,” said Bevan Augustine, external communications analyst for EDP Renewables North America. The logo is a red and yellow wind turbine within a quilt block.

Dairyland Power Cooperative purchases all 98 megawatts of power produced by the wind farm, said Katie Thomson, senior communication specialist with Dairyland. Scenic Rivers is one of Dairyland’s member co-ops. The Quilt Block Wind Farm can power more than 25,000 homes in Dairyland’s service territory with renewable energy.

So the tie to the area’s history is now part of its present and future.—*Mary Glindinning* 



# YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONGRESS

## Three-day conference planned by and for teens offers abundance of opportunities

We've got a great opportunity for high school students of SREC member families who are looking for something exciting to do this summer!

The annual Youth Leadership Congress (YLC), sponsored by Wisconsin's electric co-ops and facilitated by the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association, brings together more than 100 high school students from around the state for three days of fun, leadership development, and cooperative education. The event is held on the campus of UW-River Falls, this year July 25-27.

The YLC is unique in that it is planned and developed by a youth board elected at the previous year's event. These students plan a jam-packed program featuring renowned motivational speakers, interactive team-building activities, and hands-on sessions led by cooperative leaders.

There's even a banquet and a dance!

This event is filled with opportunities—all students have a chance to run for a spot on the seven-member youth board, which is eligible to attend the annual National Rural Electric Cooperative Association National Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., the following June. Students may also enter an essay contest for a chance to earn college scholarships.

Perhaps the best part is there's no cost to the participating student. Costs are covered by Wisconsin's electric cooperatives and the Federated Youth Foundation. SREC will even provide transportation to and from the conference.

To learn more about this exciting opportunity, visit [www.weca.coop](http://www.weca.coop) and click on Youth/Foundation, or contact SREC by calling 608-723-2121 and asking for Heidi. You can also learn more on our website, [www.sre.coop](http://www.sre.coop).



## SREC Annual Meeting is Saturday, April 14

at the Youth & Ag Building in Lancaster (916 East Elm St.)

Doors open at 9 a.m.

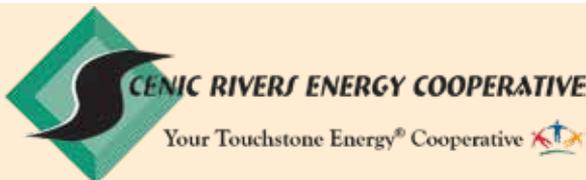
Business meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.

- Election for directors in Districts 3, 4, and 8
- Eligible students can enter drawing for college scholarships **Deadline to apply is April 9.**
- Lunch will be served following the business meeting



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