



ANNUAL MEETING KEEPS US CONNECTED



Steve Lucas, CEO

I want to extend a sincere thank you to all the members who braved the unseasonably cold and blustery weather on Saturday, April 14, to come to the Youth & Ag Building in Lancaster for their electric cooperative's annual meeting. The turnout exceeded my expectations, considering the weather was harsh enough to force another electric co-op farther north to postpone its own annual meeting originally set for the same day as ours.

Thankfully we had a full crowd and were able to carry on. I've been working in the cooperative world for my entire adult life, so I wasn't surprised by the commitment shown by so many members to the co-op they own. In fact, this connection is what appeals to me so much about cooperatives, and why I've chosen to keep working in this form of business. Co-ops are all about their members—people of all ages, from different walks of life, who are connected to one another through their ownership of the co-op.

This was our 81st annual meeting as an electric cooperative. Among the 350 or so members and guests who attended were David Spink and his wife, Karen. David is 82 years old—about the same age as the cooperative. He still lives in the farmhouse in Smelser Township in which he was born, so he's been a co-op member his entire life. He remembers when electricity was first extended to his family's

farm when he was 4 years old, and what a difference it made in his family's life.

David and Karen don't claim to have attended all 81 co-op annual meetings, but they've sure been to lots of them. David said they've been attending off and on for 55 years; as young parents, they made the annual meeting a family affair by bringing their six children with them.



Lifetime member David Spink and his wife, Karen, were among the approximately 350 members and guests on hand at Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative's 81st annual meeting on April 14. They've been attending their co-op's annual meeting off and on for 55 years. (More photos from the annual meeting can be found on page 18.)



MEMBER PHOTOS OF THE MONTH

Ana Ramaker of Prairie du Chien took the winning picture for June in SREC's 2017 Member Photo Contest. She says of this photo, "Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it." The 2018 Member Photo Contest is underway; please visit our website, www.sre.coop, for contest details and application forms.

Seated in the building around David and Karen were lots of other bright young members, attending in hopes of securing one of the 52 \$1,000 college scholarships that were awarded at the annual meeting (scholarship recipients were listed and pictured in the May issue). Like the Spinks, these teens might have been co-op members all of their young lives. However, very much unlike the Spinks, none of these young people can remember a time without electricity.

These young members undoubtedly feel a different sort of connection to their co-op than longtime members like the Spinks do, but they're connected just the same. As members of SREC, these students have access to special opportunities such as the college scholarships, funded by unclaimed capital credits via the Federated Youth Foundation. We appreciate that these young members took the time to attend the annual meeting for the chance to win a college scholarship as much as we appreciate longtime members such as the Spinks attending simply for the privilege of participating in the cooperative that's played a big part in their lives. We're all connected, after all. We're co-op members.



Alan and Kathy Flansburgh and their son Devin stand in the machine shed that will be the location for the Crawford County Dairy Breakfast June 2.

A DAIRY GOOD TRADITION

Flansburgh family to host Crawford County Dairy Breakfast

The tradition of dairy breakfasts on the farm continues June 2 when Alan and Kathy Flansburgh and their sons host the Crawford County Dairy Breakfast.

The dairy breakfast runs 6 to 10 a.m. at the Flansburgh heifer operation at 61341 Old State Highway 18, about two miles south of Prairie du Chien.

The Flansburghs have 70 heifers at that farm. At their home farm, they milk about 120 cows.

A machine shed, which is handicapped accessible and near a shuttle drop-off, will be emptied and used for the breakfast.

“It’s a lot of work” to get ready for the breakfast, said Kathy Flansburgh, but much of it is touch-up painting and other work that needs to be done anyway.

Both Kathy and Alan, as well as their five sons—Derek, Dustin, Dylan, Devin, and Dalton—grew up on dairy farms.

Although Kathy and Alan grew up on farms two miles apart, they didn’t know each other until after high school because he went to school in Wauzeka and she went to Prairie du Chien.

“When we got married, I asked her if she wanted to milk cows, because I wasn’t going to do it alone,” Alan said.

Kathy works at a dentist’s office part-time, but helps with field work, including running the chopper.

The four older sons have established their own homes but all help during the busiest times, including haying and other harvesting and filling in so their parents can go on vacation. Three have jobs off-farm, and Devin works with his parents full-time. Dalton is a high school sophomore.

“I was interested in farming,” Devin said. “I’ve done it ever since I was little.”

The Flansburghs hope more young people see a future in farming.

“We’re hoping to help kids be interested, so future generations will still want to farm,” Kathy said. “It’s tougher to keep going now. It’s going to be very difficult for younger generations to get going. If you’ve got to borrow a lot of money, how are you going to make it? You have to be able to work together as a family unit.”

The state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection said the number of dairy farms in Wisconsin dropped by 500 over the past year.

“Drink more milk,” said Alan, when asked how people can support dairy farmers.

The Crawford County Dairy Promoters put on the break-



Left: The Flansburghs have 70 heifers at the farm near Prairie du Chien.
Right: Devin Flansburgh feeds heifers at the farm that will host the Crawford County Dairy Breakfast June 2.

fast, where pancakes, sausage, applesauce, cheese curds, pudding, cottage cheese, cheese, milk, and coffee are on the menu. Culver's will serve custard cones and shakes.

Shuttle buses will leave every 15 minutes from Riverside Square Shopping Center, where the Piggly Wiggly in Prairie du Chien is located. There will be a petting zoo, children's activities, machinery display, and door prizes, including pounds of cheese. About 2,500 people are expected.

The breakfast runs smoothly, Kathy said, because of experience and cooperation. People loan picnic tables, roasters, and coffee makers for the morning.

"We want to remind people how good dairy products are, how good they are for them, and where they come from."

—Mary Jo Johnsrude

And volunteers cook and serve the breakfast. Alan's parents—who once hosted the breakfast—got them started volunteering at the breakfast, Dustin said, and now it is a tradition.

Donations from dairy co-operatives, fertilizer and feed dealers, financial institutions and others allow the price to be kept at \$2 for adults, \$1 for children ages 6 to 12, and free for children 5 and under.

"We're not out to make a lot of money. We're not in it for a fundraiser," said Mark Forsythe, co-chair of the dairy promoters breakfast subcommittee. "We get a lot of people from far away just to see what an actual farm looks like. We serve a wholesome dairy breakfast and show them where dairy is produced."

"We want to remind people how good dairy products are, how good they are for them, and where they come from," said Mary Jo Johnsrude, the other co-chair. "That's why we have it on a farm—to bring people back to where their food comes from." —Mary Glindinning



JUNE IS DAIRY MONTH

Crawford County Dairy Breakfast Saturday, June 2

Al & Kathy Flansburgh Heifer Facility
61341 Old State Highway 18, Prairie du Chien, WI
6–10 a.m.
Adults \$2, Kids 6–12 \$1, Kids 5 and under free

Lafayette County Dairy Breakfast Saturday, June 9

UW-Platteville Pioneer Farm
29200 College Farm Road, Platteville
6:30–10:30 a.m.
Adults \$4, children under 10 \$2, preschool free

Grant County Dairy Breakfast Sunday, June 10

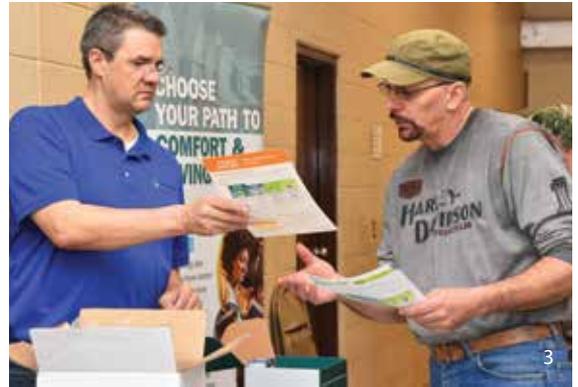
Banner Ridge Farms, LLC
7573 Banner Road, Platteville
7–11:30 a.m.
Adults \$5, children 6–11 \$2, under 6 free



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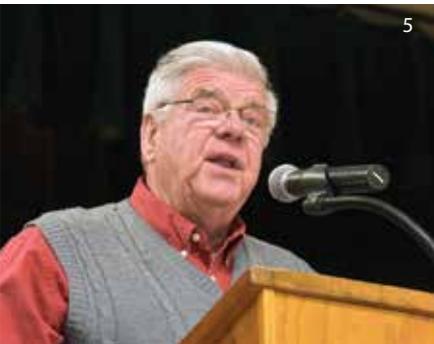
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81st Annual Meeting Highlights

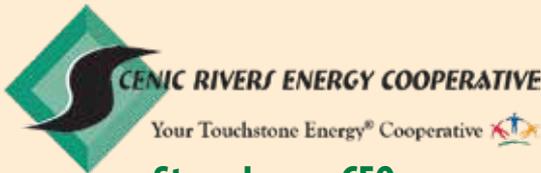
1. At Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative's annual meeting on April 14, CEO Steve Lucas delivered his report in the form of a question-and-answer session, responding to questions that were submitted by members beforehand. 2. Board Chairman Chuck Simmons greets SREC member Mary Lund, who recently retired as Dairyland Power Cooperative's executive vice president of human resources. Another notable retirement that was recognized at the annual meeting was that of longtime lineworker Bob Olson, who capped off a 35-year career in 2017. 3. Before the business meeting began, members had the opportunity to learn about energy-saving information and services available through SREC's partnership with Focus on Energy. 4. Touchstone Energy's LED Lucy and Solar Sam were on hand as usual, only this year's wintry weather kept them greeting guests inside. 5. Pastor Wayne Goplin delivered the invocation and led the crowd in singing "God Bless America." 6. One of the most important parts of a co-op annual meeting is the election, when members get to vote for who they want to represent them on the board of directors. This year, all three incumbents up for election ran uncontested and were returned to their seats for another three-year term: Simmons in District 3, Ellen Conley in District 4, and Steve Carpenter in District 8.



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