



## **From Here to There**

*By Michael Wade,  
President and CEO*

**I**t was Dwight D. Eisenhower who said, "In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless but planning is indispensable." Not that I believe that operating an electric cooperative is on the same level with leading the allied invasion of Europe, but like Ike, we believe that planning is a very important part of what we do each year. Recently, we worked with our board of directors to develop goals and a financial budget for a new year. Here are some of the new projects we will be working on in 2015:

To give our members more convenient access to their account information, we will begin use of a software product called SmartHub. SmartHub is a mobile and web app that allows members to access account information remotely to pay bills, report service issues, and check energy usage.

2015 will see the completion of a demand response study which is designed to analyze our load management program. This program allows us to curtail our energy demand during peak periods in order to reduce our overall peak demand costs. We want to ensure that the program is cost effective and that we are maximizing our peak load reduction savings.

We will perform a new Construction Work Plan (CWP) in 2015. The CWP allows us to project future load and decide the system improvements needed for our electric distribution system. We use the CWP to develop our annual capital budget and determine the priority for system improvements and replacements.

To keep our service rules and regulations updated, we will review our fee schedule and line extension policy. Some of the fees we charge for special services are outdated and may not accurately reflect the cost of providing the service. We will perform an analysis of these fees in 2015 and ensure they are adequately set.

In the early part of 2015, we will contract with an outside survey company to perform a Member Satisfaction Survey. The goal of the survey will be to gauge how effective we are at meeting your expectations and provide us valuable insight into how we can better serve

your needs. In addition, the survey will provide us with an American Customer Service Index, which will help us compare our customer service capabilities to our peers and other industry groups.

As part of our effort to provide renewable energy options to our members, we will begin formal evaluation of a community solar project. The goal will be to allow interested members to invest in solar energy and receive the benefits directly in the form of a credit on every bill. There has been considerable development in this area from Wisconsin electric cooperatives, and our hope is to find a solution that might work for our members that is supported by those interested in participating.

As part of our annual system inspection program, we will develop a formal underground equipment inspection program. This program helps ensure we have a reliable electric system and that outages are kept to a minimum. Vegetation management and pole inspection are the heart of this program, but we will be enhancing it with the addition of underground equipment inspection.

These are just some of the new and exciting projects we have in store for the new year. It has been my pleasure to work with the dedicated employees and directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative in 2014. We remain dedicated to being member owned, member controlled, and a not-for-profit cooperative. Together, we can meet the challenges that lie before us, and I look forward to a bright year ahead. ■

## **Energy Conservation Appliance Rebate Changes**

**A**ppiances that receive the Energy Star label meet strict energy efficiency guidelines and will save you money. To assist you in your purchase of one of these appliances we are pleased to offer a

\$25 rebate. The following appliances qualify for the rebate: refrigerator, washer, dryer, dishwasher, freezer, microwave, air conditioner, air exchange, dehumidifier, and water

softener. To receive your rebate, submit a copy of the receipt of purchase along with a copy of the appliance energy guide label to CWEC. ■





## Christmas Coloring Contest Winners!

Christmas is such a special time of year, especially for children. They have so many opportunities to display their talents, whether it is performing in a Christmas program at school or church, or drawing a reindeer to bring the Christmas spirit to the CWEC office. We had a record number of submissions this year, making it very difficult for our judges. We thank all the kids who entered for their hard work; we look forward to seeing your great drawings each year. Here are our choices in each category:



\$25 Winner – Jazmine Barth



\$15 Winner – Joshua Miller

### 6 & under



\$10 Winner – Jacob Trzebiatowski

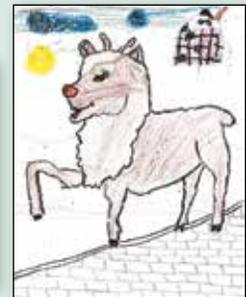
### 7 to 10 years old



\$25 Winner – Rachel Kurszewski



\$15 Winner – Gracie Casper



\$10 Winner – Kaydence Burclaw

## Dates to Remember in February

### 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Iola Winter Carnival

#### Friday, February 6

- 6 p.m., Fat Bike Race at Iola Winter Sports Club

#### Saturday, February 7

- 8 a.m.–noon, Ice sculpting at Iola-Scandinavia High School
- 1 p.m.–6:30 p.m., Norwegian Dinner and Indoor Craft Sale, includes lutefisk, lefse, Norwegian meatballs and all the trimmings, plus a craft show held at the Iola-Scandinavia High School.
- 2 p.m., Skijoring at Iola Winter Sports Club

#### Sunday, February 8

- Noon, Central Ski Jumping Championship at Iola Winter Sports Club

For more information about the outside events go to [www.iolawintersportsclub.org](http://www.iolawintersportsclub.org) or call 715-445-3411.

### Walls of Wittenberg Presents: “Talk About Murder”

February 20, 21, 27 & 28

Crossroads Community Theatre returns with its fourth murder mystery dinner theatre event: “Talk About a Murder” by Lee Mueller. Tickets are \$30 and must be purchased in advance; doors open at 5:30 followed by dinner at 6 every night. WOW Space, Wittenberg. For more information go to [wallsofwittenberg.com](http://wallsofwittenberg.com) or call 715-253-3525.

To submit your community events email [brenda.mazemke@cwecoop.com](mailto:brenda.mazemke@cwecoop.com) or call Brenda at 715-677-2211.

## Essay Winners Named

Scholarship winners in the Annual WECA Essay Contest have been notified, Cooperative Network Director of Member Services David Erickson confirmed this week.

Second place and a \$500 scholarship went to Emily Bonikowske, a senior at Iola-Scandinavia High School sponsored by Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative. Her creative essay envisioned the discontents that motivated the 19th century creation of the first cooperative in England, and noted that her grandparents “remember first getting electricity on their small farm,” yet because of the cooperative, “electricity is a luxury I take for granted each day.”

Emily is the daughter of CWEC members John and Michelle Bonikowske.

All awards may be collected upon showing proof of registration at any accredited university, college, or technical school in any state. ■



Emily Bonikowske

# **Toys for Tots Drive Helps Area Children**

Christmas was made a little brighter for more than 890 area kids thanks to the generosity of many of you and with the help from the local businesses and organizations. Each year, Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative partners with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve to coordinate a Toys for Tots campaign. The toys were given to children in the Tigerton, Bowler, Wittenberg, Birnamwood, Rosholt, Manawa, Iola, and Scandinavia areas. In addition, this year we helped children through area churches, food pantries, Waupaca County Health and Human Services, and the Waupaca Miracle Tree. We would like to thank all of those who made this year's program a huge success and helped put a smile on a child's face for Christmas. Pictured here are some of the wonderful people who lent a hand and donated toys to the Toys for Tots program. ■



Manawa School District "elves" (l-r) Caleb Knutson, Jordan Jeager, Desmond Frenche, Jenny Bessette, and Megan Driebel.



Above: Bowler Area Fire District "elves" (l-r) Tim Kraft, Tim Clauss, Tom Smith, and Otto Maves. Right: Iola-Scandinavia High School Student Council "elves" donated toys for the Toys for Tots program.



Above: Premier Bank Tigerton "elves" (l-r) Diane Koepke, Amy Minniecheske, and Tim Kraft.





Above left: Iola-Scandinavia School District “elves” (l-r) Keith Fenn, Ashleigh Bruette, Hayden Nelson, Melanie Sauve, Anna Rustad, and Jon Carper. Above: Rosholt Alumni FFA “elves” donated a bag full of these wonderful John Deere toys. Below: Wittenberg Giving Tree “elves” (l-r) Isaac Rouse, Wesley Piotrowski, Jose Torres, Jack Stewart, Nancy Nueske, Landon Smith, and Dennis Magee.

Above: New London Community Cupboard “elves” Kim Ebert and Barb Quinn. Below: Donaldson Company UAW 2020 “elves” gave a generous monetary donation and toys (l-r) Brenda Mazemke, Scott Jackson, Terri Biadasz, Lyn Britz, Kim Simcakoski, U.S. Marine Jared Plamann, Sally Hofer, Lena Noth, and Bill Cook.



Above: Toys for Tots shopping day with “elves” from the Iola Leos Club (l-r) Michelle Ellie, Megan Mazemke, Matt Michalak, and Maddi Russ. Left: Rosholt School District “elves” (l-r) Dennis Magee and Caitlin Young.

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