




**Central Wisconsin  
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



By Mike Wade,  
President & CEO

## LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR CO-OP AT ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, April 21, to attend the 82nd annual meeting of the membership at the Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School in Wittenberg. The meeting will be a great opportunity for you to visit with your friends and neighbors and learn more about your cooperative and the programs we offer. Come join us for an informative meeting and an opportunity to win some fabulous door prizes donated by our corporate partners.

Special thanks to the Nominations Committee for their work in interviewing candidates for this year's board election. The committee has the responsibility of selecting candidates who meet the qualifications defined in our bylaws and policies and who are committed to serving in the best interests of all members. In addition, the committee

approves the rules that we follow at each year's annual meeting of the membership. Thank you for your service to our cooperative.

I would also like to thank the Operation Round Up Trust committee for their work in helping our communities and our members. They spend considerable time reviewing applications and ensuring that our Operation Round Up funds are used to support needs in our service area. By "rounding up" your electric bill and contributing a few cents each month, we are able to do great things for our members and our communities.

In January, the board and I spent a day in Madison talking with our legislators about broadband internet expansion and the dangers of wild parsnip. We also thanked them for their support of previous legislation that has been beneficial to electric cooperatives. Our

own Mackenzie Yarbrough was part of a panel discussion on his recent trip to Guatemala to extend electric service to a remote village. We are very proud of the young leaders within our cooperative and look forward to their contributions in the future.

I know each of you has a busy schedule, but I hope you will make time to come to our annual meeting April 21. I look forward to seeing you there.

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Placing hot food in the refrigerator makes the appliance work harder than necessary, using more energy. Allow food to cool down before you place it in the fridge.



MY CO-OP

## BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative was held at the headquarters in Rosholt at 8:03 a.m. on December 27, 2019. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda, minutes of the November 21, 2019 meeting, new and terminated memberships, and the monthly safety and compliance report were approved.

### Action Items

- a. Monthly Financial Statements and Reports were approved. Finance Committee reviewed checks written and the board and CEO expenses.
- b. The board approved recommendations from the Governance Committee for a new policy, Retirements of Capital Credits for Deceased Patrons, and modifications to Policy 101 – Qualifications for Eligibility to Serve on the Board of Directors.
- c. The board approved the write-off of uncollectable debt from 2018.
- d. The board agreed to continue investing in ATC as part of the first capital call of 2020.
- e. The board approved Helen Basinski to fill the vacancy in Sub-District 3(b) on the Member Advisory Group.
- f. The board approved the recommendation that members may

- purchase their own GenerLink generator transfer switch and CWEC will install the unit with no installation fee.
- g. The board approved discontinuing the maintenance-only outdoor lighting program and providing members a six-month notice with an option to purchase a 42-watt LED fixture.
- h. The board reviewed the proposed 2020 budget in detail and approved as presented.
- i. The board reviewed the current employee RS and 401(k) pension plans.
- j. The board reviewed a dental insurance benefit plan option.
- k. The board approved all directors to attend workshops in Black River Falls on January 6 and 7, 2020.

Operations and Engineering – Mr. Kurtzweil reported on the operations/line crew updates. A new underground location contractor has been approved. The Groenier Substation will be back fed January 6–9 so ATC can do transmission line work.

Accounting and Finance – Financial reports were reviewed. Ms. Shower reported on the Iola nursing home closure.

Member Services – Brenda Mazemke reported Toys For Tots has wrapped up with another successful year of helping over 1,000 children.

President and CEO – Mr. Wade reported on his submitted report.

Meeting adjourned at 1:44 p.m.



# CWEC ANNUAL MEETING TUESDAY, APRIL 21

## NEW LOCATION!

**Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School  
400 W Grand Avenue, Wittenberg, WI**

**REGISTRATION BEGINS: 5:15 P.M.  
BUSINESS MEETING: 6 P.M.**

Join Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative on Tuesday, April 21, 2020, for our 82nd Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held at the Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School.

President & CEO Mike Wade and Board Chairman Anthony Buss, Jr. will keynote the meeting's business session, which begins at 6 p.m. During the business session, members will have the opportunity to hear how their co-op is faring financially, learn details about various services offered by their member-owned power supplier, and receive updates on state and federal

regulatory issues of importance to electric co-ops. CWEC Operations Crew Leader Mack Yarbrough will give a presentation about his trip to Guatemala. The trip was part of the Partners for a Brighter Tomorrow program in partnership with NRECA International to help bring electricity to a remote village. Tyler Tautges, who represented CWEC at the Youth Leadership Congress last summer and represents CWEC on the WECA Youth Leadership Board, will also give a presentation about his experience.

An election of three board positions will be held.

As a member-owner of an electric cooperative, you can voice your opinions at the annual meeting, observing the annual meeting rules. This is an advantage that cooperatives have over the investor-owned utilities, whose customers have no say in the management of the company and cannot vote for their board of directors.

Prizes will be given to all in attendance. In addition to many door prizes, one lucky member will have a chance to win a grand prize consisting of an electric grill. For all of the drawings, winners need to be present.

## HELP FILL OUR LOCAL FOOD PANTRY SHELVES

**CWEC will be kicking off its food pantry drive at the annual meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2020. Bring three or more non-perishable food items that are not expired, and you will receive a FREE LED bulb. (Limit of three bulbs per family)**

**Your generous donation helps fill the shelves of food pantries in our service area.**

**If you cannot make it to the annual meeting, we will be collecting food pantry donations at our office, located at 10401 Lystul Road, Rosholt, throughout the year, and you will still receive the free LED bulb.**

**For more information call 715-677-2211.**



## RICHARD LASHUA RETIRES AFTER A HALF-CENTURY AT CWEC

Richard Lashua is one of probably only a few people who can say that he worked at one organization for more than 50 years. After 50 years, 6 months and 11 days, to be exact, Lashua retired from Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative in early January.

“I basically did what I could do to help those that hired me, the members,” Lashua said. “If you do your best, that’s all you can do. Sometimes you have to tweak a few things here to get them taken care of, and you do it.”

When asked if he had originally expected to be employed by CWEC for more than 50 year, Lashua responded, “No.” Originally hired as an apprentice, Lashua said his original intention was to eventually do commercial and residential wiring.

“But there is a lot of traveling involved to get the job,” he said. “I thought I would try this for a while.”

Not only did he try it for a while, he wound up working at the co-op through some major technological advances. When he started, the use of a bucket truck wasn’t prevalent yet.

“We had one when I started and that was a decoration in the shop because you couldn’t use it unless you absolutely had to,” Lashua said.

A bucket truck is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity to get the job done.

Lashua also witnessed the introduction of computer technology at the co-op. While this technology may have made things more efficient, Lashua said computers also helped supply one of his most memorable moments at CWEC. As the year 2000 approached, concerns developed around the country about computer systems switching from 1999 to 2000—otherwise known as Y2K.

“We were even working that day (News Year’s Eve) at the substations waiting for something to happen,” Lashua said. “We were on call for that just in case something did happen.”

As it turned out, there were no problems when the clock



struck midnight, but it provided a memory that would not soon be forgotten by Lashua.

Past storms are also firmly seeded in Lashua’s memory. He couldn’t remember exactly when the storm took place, other than it was “many, many years ago,” but the clean-up after that storm, he remembered working 44 straight hours.

“We got pretty much everything cleaned up by the next day and then we got hit again,” Lashua said. “We worked through the night again.”

The July 19 and 20 storms that took place last year also provided a one-two punch, but Lashua said last year’s storms were worse than the storms that he worked 44 straight hours.

“You had more damage (during the July 19 and 20 storms). More damage, more people out of power,” he said. “We never had the entire system down before. Never. We never had that many ROPE people here either, and tree-trimming crews here.”

In the above situations, as well as after any other storm, there was always only one goal.

“It was all in an effort to get everybody’s electricity back on as soon as we could,” he said. “That’s always been our number one goal – get it back on. Get it on good enough to stay on.”

Lashua said it was a difficult decision to retire from CWEC, but a decision that he has been pondering for the past two to three years.

When asked what he will miss the most, Lashua said with a laugh, “It’s sure not going to be the trouble calls.”

He quickly added that he will miss the camaraderie he had with his co-workers.

Staying busy during retirement won’t be a problem, as Lashua said his wife has two pages of things she would like to have done. He added that his daughter also has a “To-Do List” for him.

“We’ll chip away and get that stuff done,” Lashua said. “I’ve got plenty of stuff to do. I might even get a chance to do a little bit of fishing.”

CWEC thanks Lashua for his many years of service and dedication to the members of CWEC.



### Electric Utility Worker Scholarship

CWEC is proud and excited to once again offer a \$1,000 Electric Utility Worker Scholarship. Traditional and nontraditional students are encouraged to apply. Applicants need not be a member of the co-op, but preference will be given to qualified CWEC members.

Scholarship applications and guidelines are available online at [www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com) (Member Services tab), by calling 1-800-377-2932, or by email at [bert.lehman@cwecoop.com](mailto:bert.lehman@cwecoop.com). The deadline for returning completed applications is Friday, May 1, 2020. Students can mail the completed scholarship application to the address below, or drop it off in person at the CWEC office located at 10401 Lystul Road, Rosholt. Scholarship winners will be chosen shortly after the deadline.

**CWEC**

**Attn: Electric Utility Scholarship**  
**PO Box 100**  
**Rosholt, WI 54473**

If you have any questions please call Bert Lehman at 800-377-2932.



# SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Once again, scholarships will be available to college, vocational, and technical school bound students through the CWEC Operation Round Up program. Both traditional and nontraditional students are encouraged to apply. To be eligible, either the student or parents must have their primary residence located on CWEC lines and participate in Operation Round Up.

Applications are available from your high school guidance counselor, online at [www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com) (Member Services tab), by contacting Bert Lehman at 715-677-2211, or by email at [bert.lehman@cwecoop.com](mailto:bert.lehman@cwecoop.com).



Since the CWEC scholarship program began in 2005 CWEC has provided more than \$240,000 in scholarships to area students. Giving back to the community is one of the cooperative principles; furthering the education of our members is another.

The deadline for returning completed applications is **Wednesday, April 1, 2020**. Please mail your completed scholarship application to the address below, or drop it off in person at the CWEC office located at 10401 Lystul Road, Rosholt.

CWEC  
Attn: Scholarship Program  
P.O. Box 100  
Rosholt, WI 54473

Scholarship winners must maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average and full time student equivalent during their first quarter or semester of college or vocational-technical school. Payment will be made upon completion of the first quarter or semester of college, vocational, or technical school and will be issued to the student. The recipient will need to provide CWEC with a copy of their grades and proof of enrollment for the second semester.



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10401 Lystul Rd., P.O. Box 100,  
Rosholt, WI 54473  
715-677-2211 • 800-377-2932

[www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com)

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**Mike Wade, President & CEO**  
**Bert Lehman, Editor**

## Board of Directors

### District 1

Anthony Buss, Jr.  
Chairman  
715-701-1358

Tom Smith  
715-701-2051

Ronald Onesti  
(At Large)  
715-701-2283

### District 2

Lee Lehrer  
920-851-4545  
715-677-3850

Leonard Oppor  
715-701-2042

### District 3

Sue Rombalski  
715-701-2053

Elaine Eckendorf  
Secretary-Treasurer  
715-701-2052

## Our Mission

We are your trusted energy partner and provider of valued community support.

**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME**  
**MARCH 8, 2020**

Remember to move your clock forward one hour before you go to bed on Saturday, March 7.

## DATES TO REMEMBER IN MARCH & APRIL

**St. Adalbert Parish Fish Fry**  
Every Friday February 21 through April 3

4-7:30 p.m. Serving fish and shrimp. Includes choice of potato, coleslaw, bread and one dessert. Coffee and milk included in the dining room. Domestic and craft beers and flavored malt beverages available. Adult meal – \$11, Child Meal – \$7. Large and weekly raffle. Take-out orders call 715-677-4518, Rosholt.

**Crossroads Community Theatre**  
presents a Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre "My Fatal Valentine"  
Friday & Saturday, February 28-29; March 6-7

Doors open at 5:30 p.m.; Dinner at 6 p.m. \$40 per person – Available at Hanke's Sentry Foods (Wittenberg), cast members, or by calling 715-253-3525, WOWSPACE, 114 Vinal St., Wittenberg. For more information call 715-253-3525 or go to [www.wallsowittenberg.com](http://www.wallsowittenberg.com).

**CWEC office will be closed**  
Friday, April 10

**Easter Sunday**  
April 12



**Zion Lutheran Church**  
Spring Luncheon  
Sunday, April 19

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Tigerton. Call 715-535-2312 for more information.

**CWEC Annual Meeting**

Tuesday, April 21  
5:15 p.m registration; 6 p.m. business meeting. Wittenberg-Biramwood High School. For more information call 715-677-2211 or go to [www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com).

**Walls of Wittenberg "Wine, Beer, & Cheese Gala", Art Show Opening**

Friday, April 24  
\$25 per person tax-deductible donation

(advance); \$30 at the door the night of the opening. Fabulous food, winning wines and brewer-fresh beers will abound at this annual event. WOWSPACE, 114 Vinal St., Wittenberg. For more information call 715-253-3525 or go to [www.wallsowittenberg.com](http://www.wallsowittenberg.com).

**Walls of Wittenberg: "Artists' Free Play: VIII" Juried Art Show**

April 24-May 10, Saturday and Sunday only  
11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. WOWSPACE: 114 Vinal St., Wittenberg. For more information and contest details call 715-253-3525 or go to [www.wallsowittenberg.com](http://www.wallsowittenberg.com).

To submit your community events email [bert.lehman@cwecoop.com](mailto:bert.lehman@cwecoop.com) or call Bert at 715-677-2220.

The April Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News magazine will include your 2019 Annual Report.