



NEW PRESIDENT & CEO NAMED AT CWEC



Lila Shower,
President & CEO

First, I'd like to say that I am very honored that the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWEC) Board of Directors chose me to be the president and CEO of CWEC.

I have a long history with CWEC, and the co-op has a special place in my heart.

For those of you who don't know my history with CWEC, I originally got a taste of working for the co-op when I was a high school student at Iola-Scandinavia High School. At the time, there was a program for students who were business majors called – the Co-op Program. This program placed students in local businesses to gain first-hand business experience. I was assigned to CWEC, which was located in Iola at that time.

I worked at the electric co-op for two hours each morning, five days a week. I worked at the front desk, did filing, and any other tasks assigned to me. This program provided me with many valuable skills.

After college I spent 10 years working in Milwaukee, but decided to move back home. Back home, one day I decided to stop by the co-op to say hi to former

co-workers, and ask them to keep their eyes open for any job openings in the area. As it turned out, the CEO called me three weeks later to ask if I wanted to interview for an accountant position, as the person who held that position put in their two-week notice.

I got the accountant job in April of 1994 and have been with CWEC ever since, most recently the vice president of accounting and finance. Never during my time working at CWEC while I was in high school did I think that one day I would be the president and CEO of the co-op.

The longer I worked at CWEC, my thinking about becoming president and CEO began to change. It eventually became a goal of mine to pursue the position because I felt like my role as vice president of finance and accounting gave me the experience needed to handle the many aspects associated with being president and CEO.

The CWEC Member
Appreciation
Breakfast
will be held
Saturday, Oct. 28



There are so many great employees who work here, and I want them to get the chance to be as good as they can be. I believe that I can help them do that.

We also have a great co-op membership. I want to make CWEC the best co-op it can be, and serve our membership to the fullest. One of the goals I have is to ensure that the co-op's financial future is secure.

I look forward to working with all of our members.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know ceiling fans can make a room feel 4 degrees cooler? To save energy through ceiling fan use, remember to raise your thermostat a few degrees while fans are turned on. Ceiling fans can help improve comfort year-round. In the summer, operate ceiling fans in a counterclockwise direction. Reverse the direction to clockwise during winter months and set fans on a low speed so warm air can circulate from the ceiling to the lower levels of the room. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not spaces. Be sure to turn them off when you leave the room.

Source: Dept. of Energy



BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The May regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative was held on May 25, 2023 at 8:02 a.m. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda, minutes of the April 27, 2023 meeting, new and terminated memberships, monthly safety and compliance report, and estate capital credit retirements were approved.

Action Items

- Monthly Financial Statements and Reports were approved. Finance Committee reviewed checks written and the board and co-interim CEOs expenses.
- Representatives from PGA Inc. and GA Larson Company presented their proposal to the board on options to replace our current geothermal HVAC system. Additional information will be gathered and discussed at a future meeting.
- The board approved holding the 2023 Member Appreciation Breakfast on Saturday, October 28, 2023 at the Rosholt Headquarters shop.
- As a continuation of last month's discussion regarding the changes to CoBank's Sharing Success Program's funding limits, the board approved a \$2,000 donation coming from the Federated Youth Foundation's fund account to each of the following: Rural Health Initiative, Bowler Fire Department, and Iola Fire Department, as presented by Brenda Mazemke.
- The board approved a \$1,000 donation from the Federated Youth Foundation fund account toward the Cooperative Family Fund Donation Assistance Program as presented by Kevin Kurtzweil.
- Brad Koester from NRTC gave an information presentation via Teams meeting to the board on broadband.

Operations – Kevin Kurtzweil reported on the rotation of the service foreman position, with Nate Singer currently covering that position. The installation project of the 70 ft. AMI Gateway poles finished this week, thanks to the help of a lineman from Oconto Electric Cooperative. Jarret Brow and Alex Lutz will give a presentation to the board at the June meeting on the Navajo Nation Lighting Project. Starting Tuesday, May 30, crews will be switching at the Groenier Sub so ATC can complete work. Project should be completed by Friday, June 2. Our fire pump suppression system had a power surge last week; we will be filing a claim with Federated Insurance for this.

Accounting and Finance – Lila Shower reported on the addition of the power bills cost per kilowatt numbers to her monthly report. We received a tuition reimbursement check from the state for our two fourth-year apprentices. An update on Marco was reported on. We currently have one member still disconnected from last month.

Member Relations – Brenda Mazemke reported she will be presenting an Economic Development REDLG loan for the Village of Rosholt at the June meeting. Paula Rew is stepping down from the Member Advisory Group (MAG), creating a vacancy in Sub-District 1(b). All non-member employees have been added to receive the CWEC monthly newsletter.

Administrative Services – Lori Patoka reported on the WECA Education Committee Meeting, noting the changes in the employee training classes to be offered in 2024. Lori also reported on the WECA Electric Utility Fundamentals for Non-Operations Personnel class she attended at Eau Claire Electric Cooperative.

Interim CEO's – Kevin Kurtzweil and Lila Shower reviewed their co-interim CEO submitted report.

Meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2023 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

With donations from Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative's members through the Operation Round Up program, \$24,375 has been awarded to students pursuing a post-high school education. Of that total, \$19,975 was approved by the Operation Round Up Trust Board, to be awarded to first-time scholarship applicants who will be attending a technical college or university. The 47 students who will be receiving a \$425 scholarship are listed below.

CWEC also awarded \$200 Operation Round Up scholarships to 22 repeat scholarship applicants.

We thank our members who participated in the Operation Round Up program; more than \$638,314 of Operation Round Up funds have been paid to worthwhile charitable and educational purposes.



Erica Beilke, Wittenberg, Northcentral Technical College, Foundations of Teacher Education

Lauren Bessette, Wittenberg, UW-Stevens Point, Finance

Lilly Betry, Hatley, UW-La Crosse, Legal Studies

Jada Deruchowski, Wittenberg, Northcentral Technical College, Nursing

Payton Foster, Wittenberg, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, NICU Nursing

Caitlin Fuhs, Ogdensburg, Ferris State University, Nursing

Lillian Fuhs, Scandinavia, UW-Oshkosh, Nursing

David Gauderman, Wittenberg, University of Minnesota-Duluth, Business

Jackson Graff, Eland, UW-Eau Claire, Business Administration

Samuel Graff, Eland, UW-Stevens Point, Education

Ryder Graham, Tigerton, UW-Stevens Point, Graphic Design (Photo not available)

Bailey Grosskopf, Bowler, UW-Stevens Point at Wausau, Business Administration

Parker Gullixson, Iola, UW-Whitewater, Marketing (Photo not available)

Emma Haines, Rosholt, UW-Eau Claire, Education

Skyler Hauser, Tigerton, UW-Green Bay, Art Education

Morgan Kluck, Rosholt, UW-Platteville, Forensic Science

Zachary Kolodziej, Stevens Point, UW-Stevens Point, Accounting & Finance

Aurora Krause, Mosinee, UW-Eau Claire, Education (Photo not available)

Jacob Lashua, Iola, UW-La Crosse, Pre-Med

Nathan Lemanczyk, Rosholt, Mid-State Technical College, Civil Engineering Technology

Lily Lorbiecki, Rosholt, Northcentral Technical College, Radiology Technician (Photo not available)

Braden Louison, Iola, Fox Valley Technical College, Residential Construction Management

Marcus Malone, Bowler, UW-Green Bay, Business Management

Wesley McAuly, Birnamwood, Northcentral Technical College, Automotive Technician Program (Photo not available)

Josephine Miller, Scandinavia, Minnesota State University Mankato, Anthropology

Harry Nowinsky, Eland, University of Oregon, Advertising

Hailey Peterson, Amherst, UW-Whitewater, History Education

Brandon Phillips, Iola, UW-Platteville, Industrial Engineering

Elizabeth Raczek, Mosinee, Western Governors University, Business Administration-Management

Kalene Rasmussen, Bowler, Advance Welding Institute, Welding

Reese Rogowski, Wittenberg, North Dakota State University, Nursing

Josie Russ, Mosinee, Michigan Technological University, Biomedical Engineering

Morgan Sawyer, Stevens Point, UW-Eau Claire, Biochemistry

Olivia Schultz, Stevens Point, Mid-State Technical College, Nursing

Sydney Seefeldt, Tigerton, Marian University, Mathematics Education

Jayden Singh, Iola, UW-Whitewater, Experiential Marketing/Sports Marketing

Jaelyn Sivertson, Tigerton, UW-La Crosse, Physical Therapy

Jayden Sivertson, Tigerton, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Prototype & Design (Photo not available)

Brady Strassburg, Bowler, Northcentral Technical College, Business Management

Malea Tessen, Scandinavia, UW-Oshkosh, Nursing

Chloe Timdal, Iola, Minnesota State Technical and Community College, Nursing

Angela Ward, Custer, UW-Milwaukee, Psychology

Rachael Wedemayer, Tigerton, Fox Valley Technical College, Nursing

Ava Wepner, Wittenberg, University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), Clinical Psychology

Briannyn Whitt, Mosinee, UW-La Crosse, Education & Teaching English as a second language (Photo not available)

Jalyn Yenter, Hatley, Northcentral Technical College, Agribusiness

Katelyn Yenter, Hatley, UW-Oshkosh, Nursing

STAY FOCUSED ON SAFETY DURING HARVEST SEASON

It's right around the corner—harvest season. The time of the year that can be an exciting and exhausting time, the culmination of a season of hard work. However, the rush to harvest can also yield tragic outcomes. Each year, dozens of farm workers are killed and hundreds are injured in accidents involving power lines and electrical equipment.

Putting safety first requires alertness, focus, and knowledge of potential hazards and safety steps. Regardless the technol-

ogy used on the farm, keep the following electrical safety guidelines in mind:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines. Do not let the spotter touch the machinery while it is being moved anywhere near power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines—above, below, and to the side—a 360-degree rule.
- Look up and use care when moving any equipment such as extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead power lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.
- Never attempt to move a power



Erica Beilke



Lauren Bessette



Lilly Betry

Jada
Deruchowski

Payton Foster



Caitlin Fuhs



Lillian Fuhs

David
Gauderman

Jackson Graff



Samuel Graff

Bailey
Grosskopf

Emma Haines



Skyler Hauser



Morgan Kluck

Zachary
Kolodziej

Jacob Lashua

Nathan
Lemanczyk

Braden Louison



Marcus Malone



Josephine Miller



Harry Nowinsky



Hailey Peterson



Brandon Phillips

Elizabeth
RaczekKalene
Rasmussen

Reese Rogowski



Josie Russ



Morgan Sawyer



Olivia Schultz



Sydney Seefeldt



Jayden Singh



Jaelyn Sivertson

Brady
Strassburg

Malea Tessen



Chloe Timdal



Angela Ward

Rachael
Wedemayer

Ava Wepner



Jalyn Yenter



Katelyn Yenter

line out of the way or raise it for clearance.

- Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside bins. Know where and how to shut off the power in an emergency.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative at 715-677-2211.

If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew

to cut the power.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

It is very important that all farm workers and seasonal employees are informed of electrical hazards and trained in proper procedures to avoid injury.

Farm equipment and power poles don't mix. This broken power pole illustrates what can happen when farm equipment gets too close to a power pole.



WILLOW SPRINGS SELLS PRODUCTS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

Dan Higgins said that he always had the drive to be his own boss and not punch a timeclock. That was part of the ambition for him and his wife, Karen, to purchase a piece of property in Wittenberg, along State Highway 45, in 1993. Prior to that, they both lived in Davenport, Iowa, and looked all over the country for the right piece of property for them to eventually start a business on.

"We always liked the rolling hills and the trees and everything in Wisconsin," Dan Higgins said. "We looked at property in the Wild Rose area, Green Bay area, and kept on telling the realtors, it's not quite what we're looking for. We knew having good highway access was important. And we wanted to get some land."

Higgins acknowledged that back in 1993 they extended themselves in order to purchase the Wittenberg property, but everything "worked out great" over the next 30 years.

Their business, Willow Springs, had a humble beginning, as it was started in the garage attached to their house. It started with Higgins selling outdoor wood burners. This eventually led Higgins to expand his product offerings to radiant floor, gas boilers, gas furnaces, mini splits, and more.

Over the years, Willow Springs shifted from selling those products to focusing on its own product label "WSD." This includes fabricating and marketing its own private-labeled line of products under the WSD brand. Willow Springs also sources and offers products manufactured by third-party companies. The company has a line of products available to HVAC, plumbing, and concrete wholesalers, fulfilling orders from coast to coast.

The expansion of the business led to five building additions, and let Higgins add additional employees. Willow Springs currently has eight employees, including Higgins and his wife. In addition, the company has independent sales reps from different states.

Alan Hanke, general manager at Willow Springs, said heat exchangers and copper manifolds are two popular items that are

assembled and sold by the company.

"We've been called the 'go to guys' for heat exchangers," Higgins said.

Hanke added, "What's unique about it and what I find from a lot of our customers is that we're kind of a one-stop shop for a lot of different products. And we also are very flexible. Like with the copper manifolds, we'll make whatever you want. We'll cut them. We'll put different sizes together and whatever else. So, we're really quite flexible for what we do."

Before Willow Springs sells a product, Hanke said the company does a lot of research and development in an effort to verify it is a worthy product to sell.

"We try to pride ourselves in really vetting a product we pick quite well, because nothing tarnishes your name more than a product that doesn't work that great," Hanke said.

"We've hit some home runs and we've had some flops," Higgins admitted.

The wide variety of products offered in one of the 236-page Willow Springs

catalogs helps set the company up to thrive in an environment in which larger companies are consolidating their vendor lists.

"You don't want to have to buy from 3,000 different vendors," Hanke said. "They're narrowing it down, and the vendors that can offer them the widest range of stuff seem to be the ones that they're picking and sticking with."

As an example, Higgins said if someone is ordering tubing from a tubing manufacturer, all they can order is the tubing. But if they order from Willow Springs, they can order the tubing, the manifolds, the clips, and all the other components to go with the tubing.

Willow Springs also has designed a custom heat exchanger that is used by the U.S. military. The heat exchanger is used on Humvee-type ambulances, Hanke said.

Higgins added that Willow Springs also sells the U.S. military material to secure rooms. The rooms are lined with the material so sensitive plans and data can be discussed without it being transmitted out of the room.



Since its beginning in 1993, Willow Springs has consistently grown over the years. Some of the current employees include (L-R): Alan Hanke, general manager; Debbie Resch, office director; Dan Higgins, president/CEO; and Paul Pehlke, IT/sales.





**Central Wisconsin
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Our Mission

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