

## MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY Friday, June 14, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Pulled pork sandwiches, root beer floats, kids bucket truck rides, win electric yard tools and \$50 electric bill credits!

## 86TH ANNUAL MEETING Friday, June 14, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Co-op update, financial report, board election results, Q&A member forum, win \$50 electric bill credits!



### Members, we look forward to seeing you June 14!

by General Manager Steve Stroshane, left, and Board President Ed Gullickson, right

Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative will hold its 86th Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Day Friday, June 14, at the co-op in Centuria, 1001 State Road 35. Our Member Appreciation lunch begins at 11 a.m., followed by the Annual Meeting at 1:30 p.m. It's the perfect time to have fun, meet co-op directors and employees, and learn about your co-op membership. All Polk-Burnett members are encouraged to attend. The Annual Meeting and member participation are essential to the co-op business model.

#### Member Appreciation Open House

Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. with BBQ pulled pork sandwiches from Hog Wild and root beer floats served by co-op directors and employees.

All members who attend will be entered into drawings for ten \$50 electric bill credits and three electric yard tools. The co-op will award an additional \$50 bill credit to a member who's attending the annual meeting for the first time. This year's appreciation gift is an ice-cream spade, and the first 150 children will receive a \$5 DQ card.

Open house guests can see Polk-Burnett's electric Ford F-150 Lightning and learn about the co-op's solar developments. SunTuria Solar in Centuria was energized in 2017 and is the area's first utility-scale solar. The new Georgetown Solar array was energized outside Balsam Lake in December 2023.

Kids are invited to take a bucket truck ride with co-op lineworkers, meet our Solar Sam mascot and try on safety gear at a selfie station. The event will also have mini hard hats and activity books for young guests, along with music and corn hole games for all.



#### 86th Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting begins at 1:30 p.m. The agenda includes a cooperative performance report by the two of us, Polk-Burnett General Manager Steve Stroshane and Board President Ed Gullickson. We'll share updates on reliability and system improvements, co-op financials, technology and innovation, and community engagement. Results of the 2024 board election in districts 7, 8 and 9 will be announced, and the meeting will conclude with a Q&A member forum, where you can submit questions and comments to us and other co-op leaders. All members who stay for the meeting will be entered into the Annual Meeting attendance prize drawing for ten \$50 electric bill credits.

We look forward to gathering with you to share our appreciation and visit with you. Our co-op was established in 1938 with lines, poles and the notion that we all prosper by helping each other. Today, our cooperative spirit continues. We hope you'll join us Friday, June 14, for our 86th Annual Meeting.

Annual Meeting guests are asked to enter Polk-Burnett on the north side of the building. All activities take place in the garage and outside. Doors open for registration and lunch at 11 a.m. Meeting highlights, election results and a list of drawing winners will be shared in the cooperative's Powerlines newsletter and on polkburnett.com later this summer.

**MAY IS ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH ⚡ DON'T OVERLOAD OUTLETS ⚡ DON'T USE DAMAGED ELECTRICAL CORDS**

## Three co-op board directors are unopposed in spring election

Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative is holding an election this spring for board directors serving co-op districts 7, 8 and 9. Ballots were mailed May 1 to members in those districts with instructions to vote by mail or online.

**District 7** includes Webb Lake, Scott, Jackson, Chicog, Casey and Rusk townships. Incumbent director **Jerry Okonek** of Spooner is running unopposed.

**District 8** includes Swiss, Oakland, Union, Meenon and Sand Lake townships. Incumbent director **Chuck Brookshaw** of Webster is running unopposed.

**District 9** includes Marshland, Lincoln, Grantsburg, Wood River, Daniels, Siren, Anderson and Trade Lake townships. Incumbent director **Tom Swenson** of Webster is running unopposed.

As a co-op, Polk-Burnett is owned by its members and governed by a board of directors elected from its membership. "Co-op directors are local members who live and work here; they understand and listen to our community, and local board governance is one of the greatest advantages of our co-op business model," said General Manager Steve Stroshane. Board directors serve a three-year term and attend monthly meetings to guide policy and budget decisions for Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative. Election results will be announced at Polk-Burnett's 86th Annual Meeting, Friday, June 14.



### SPECIAL CO-OP MEMBER PRICE ON MARATHON WATER HEATER 100-GALLON ON LOAD CONTROL

**\$850** plus tax

A 100-gallon Marathon® water heater is an investment that pays for itself in energy savings. When you install it on the off-peak rate, it's one of the most cost-effective ways to heat water for your home.

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## Nick Kuechenmeister promoted to general manager of Polk-Burnett Propane

**Congratulations and thank you to retiring General Manager Todd Miller for 23 years of service and leadership!**

Nick Kuechenmeister, right, was promoted to general manager of Polk-Burnett Propane by the propane board. He takes over for Todd Miller, left, who retired May 2.

As general manager, Nick provides leadership and direction to propane employees and ensures that Polk-Burnett Propane goals are carried out effectively and efficiently. This includes hiring and training employees, and maintaining the highest levels of safety in compliance with state and federal regulations.

A large part of the general manager's job is also purchasing bulk propane so it can be sold at a competitive retail price. This means understanding external factors that affect the propane market, including domestic rail shipping and global oil supply.

Nick was hired by Polk-Burnett Propane in September 2019, the same day he retired from the Army National Guard with 27 years of service. During the past five years, he quickly moved up to serve as assistant manager, and now general manager.

Nick said his work today for Polk-Burnett Propane relies on many of the same skills he used in the National Guard, where he coordinated supply chain and logistics. The main difference he said, "I'm home in Frederic every night."

"In both the military and at Polk-Burnett, my job is to take care of people. I'm here to make sure our people have the supplies and equipment they need," said Nick. "I'm grateful for my coworkers and the great team at Polk-Burnett."

In a conversation with both Nick and Todd, they shared that one of the greatest challenges Polk-Burnett Propane will face is finding good employees to cover upcoming retirements, especially qualified CDL drivers. Also challenging is finding trucks and equipment to keep propane deliveries, installations and service running smoothly; although, this is getting easier.

Looking to the future, Nick said Polk-Burnett Propane has a vision for controlled growth, especially in locations where we already have a dense customer base and efficient delivery routes.

"We have to take good care of the customers we currently have," he said. "We know they like personal service, a live voice and convenient online options for ordering propane and making payments."

**Polk-Burnett Propane** is a for-profit subsidiary of Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative. It was established in 1996 by the electric co-op board to provide affordable propane with friendly service, competitive pricing and the highest safety standards.

### Considering electric yard equipment?

Battery powered. Zero emissions. No gas or oil. Quiet.

May cost more up front. Consider battery run time, especially for larger lawns.



## Co-op awards \$144,000 in scholarships to Class of 2024

Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative will present 96 scholarships to the Class of 2024. Each recipient will receive \$1,500 to continue education after high school. A total of \$144,000 will be awarded to graduating seniors whose parents are co-op members and who demonstrate community service. Since 1987, Polk-Burnett has awarded more than \$1 million in scholarships without affecting electricity rates for members. Scholarships are funded with unclaimed Capital Credits that would be forfeited to the state if not used for education, and by the generosity of co-op members who donate Capital Credits. To donate your Capital Credits and learn more about Polk-Burnett scholarships, visit polkburnett.com or call 800-421-0283.

### Congratulations, 2024 Polk-Burnett scholarship winners (by name and high school):

- |                                       |                                    |  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Zoe Allen, Luck                    | 33. Stuart Hellie, Amery           | 65. Ethan Ruud, Siren                  |
| 2. Gavin Almlie, Osceola              | 34. Cooper Hennemann, Osceola      | 66. Hannah Sagness, Osceola            |
| 3. Beau Baillargeon, Osceola          | 35. Lauren Hetfeld, Webster        | 67. Josephine Sawicki, St. Croix Falls |
| 4. Michael Betz, Hudson               | 36. Madisyn Hohler, Somerset       | 68. Megan Schafer, Grantsburg          |
| 5. Jacob Brinkman, Luck               | 37. Mason Hughes, New Richmond     | 69. Ayla Schmidt, St. Croix Falls      |
| 6. Connor Brown, Osceola              | 38. Kendra Jackson, Webster        | 70. Nick Silvis, Amery                 |
| 7. Andrew Cebery, Unity               | 39. MerriAnna Johnson, Osceola     | 71. Ellianna Smith, Webster            |
| 8. Mara Christensen, Osceola          | 40. Morgan Johnson, Webster        | 72. Lauren Sobczak, Deerfield Academy  |
| 9. Kylee Christianson, Turtle Lake    | 41. William Johnson, Webster       | 73. Kateri St. John, Siren             |
| 10. Wyatt Connors, St. Croix Falls    | 42. Alayna Kelch, Luck             | 74. Cole Steffen, St. Croix Falls      |
| 11. Teigan Corder, Osceola            | 43. Joseph Kelling, Amery          | 75. Griffin Stone, Stillwater          |
| 12. Kaleb Cox, Unity                  | 44. Kellen Kelly, St. Croix Falls  | 76. Ericka Strenke, Clear Lake         |
| 13. Curtis Craig, Minnehaha Academy   | 45. William King, Frederic         | 77. Kallysta Svoboda, Luck             |
| 14. Claire Danniger, Wausau West      | 46. Lillian Kirkpatrick, Hudson    | 78. Allitny Swanson, Frederic          |
| 15. Morgan DeMoe, Osceola             | 47. Carter Kurtzhals, Amery        | 79. Ethan Swanson, Osceola             |
| 16. Emelia DeWolf, Webster            | 48. Lauren Laier, Stillwater       | 80. Mackenzie Symbol, Turtle Lake      |
| 17. Adelyn Ellefson, Osceola          | 49. Tianna Lochner, Amery          | 81. Jupiter Taylor, Siren              |
| 18. Ellen Fohrenkamm, Somerset        | 50. Benjamin Lorsung, Amery        | 82. Blake Terpstra, Osceola            |
| 19. Owen Fohrenkamm, Somerset         | 51. Ryan Lundmark, Cumberland      | 83. Addison Thayer, Amery              |
| 20. Emma Gahm, Mahtomedi              | 52. Sinyala Lupo, Frederic         | 84. Amber Tice, White Bear South       |
| 21. Mazie Gillespie, Osceola          | 53. Grace Mangelsen, Siren         | 85. Stephanie Tice, White Bear South   |
| 22. Allison Gingras, Unity            | 54. Xander Mattson, Frederic       | 86. Raegan Tims, Shell Lake            |
| 23. Victoria Gomez, Somerset          | 55. Emily McManus, St. Croix Falls | 87. Ava Troff, Amery                   |
| 24. Lillia Gray, River Falls          | 56. Gabbie Neumann, Osceola        | 88. Ava Urquhart, Somerset             |
| 25. Lily Greene, Osceola              | 57. Cassandra Nicholas, Amery      | 89. Mason Utke, Osceola                |
| 26. Selah Greenquist, St. Croix Falls | 58. Adam Nick, Luck                | 90. Jadyn Werle, Amery                 |
| 27. Sidney Gronski, Grantsburg        | 59. Emma Ogren, Unity              | 91. Lewis Williams, Southwest          |
| 28. Paige Haaf, St. Croix Falls       | 60. Jenna Peper, Somerset          | 92. Rylee Williamson, St. Croix Falls  |
| 29. Daniel Haase, Osceola             | 61. Alexander Peterson, Grantsburg | 93. Ashley Wolf, Webster               |
| 30. Kelsey Handy, Grantsburg          | 62. Eli Prokop, St. Croix Falls    | 94. Kruse Yuhass, Amery                |
| 31. Mary Harrold, New Richmond        | 63. Jaxon Reynolds, Siren          | 95. Isaac Zahler, Unity                |
| 32. Paige Hebert, Stillwater          | 64. Carter Ronayne, New Richmond   | 96. Peyton Zipperer, Unity             |

### IF YOU RECEIVE AN EMAIL SURVEY, WE APPRECIATE YOUR FEEDBACK TO HELP US IMPROVE.

All members who submit a survey will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 bill credit.

Polk-Burnett is your local Touchstone Energy Cooperative. Reliable power with efficiency and extraordinary service.

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