

Jump River Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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## SOME CERTAINTY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES



#### By James Anderson General Manager/CEO

Least this month's addition of *Wisconsin Electric Cooperative News* finds you and your family safe and well. From all of us at JREC we would like to say "Thank You" to all health care and critical workers for all they have done during this pandemic.

This pandemic was unprecedented, and this has been a time of uncertainty and stress for us all. To help our members during the COVID-19 pandemic, JREC temporarily suspended service disconnections due to nonpayment of bills. Electric co-ops are built by, and belong, to, the communities we serve. That community focus drives our co-op as we respond to evolving COVID-19 challenges and local concerns. Suspending service disconnections was one of the many steps that JREC took to reduce stress on our members and provide local families and businesses with certainty during an uncertain time.

We know our members may be facing financial challenges and we understand you may have had trouble paying your electric bill during this pandemic. If you have fallen behind on your power bill, please contact our office as soon as you can to discuss making a payment or setting up a payment plan to keep your lights on.

We are in the process of preparing to re-open our offices. Please keep in mind that there will be changes as we will still maintain social distance for your safety and ours.

We are also looking at the possibility of having our annual meeting on July 25 this year. We will let you know as soon as the date and the location are finalized. Stay safe and well, Jim.



Every one of us can probably say that life, or most recently COVID-19, has given us an opportunity to take a very difficult situation (the lemon) and turn it into something very positive (the lemonade). One way many talented sewers were able to do that recently was by making face masks and donating them to people in need.

Member Bev Lazar is one of those sewers who did just that. She dusted off her sewing machine, found fabric, and through a local source, received elastic—all she needed to go to work making face masks.

The employees of Jump River Electric Cooperative were just one of the lucky recipients of her generosity (pictured above). I know there were other members doing the same. In fact, this local effort could be described as a community of strangers coming together.

If asked, Bev would likely say her work was no big deal; however, the employees of JREC disagree. It was a big deal, and we thank her and all the others who took part in the effort to sew and donate face masks to those in need.

There are so many ways we all can help ourselves and others when difficult life events occur. One is to find positive distractions like Bev did when she used her talents to make face masks. Pick up the phone and call a friend, family member, or neighbor who lives alone or may be struggling. Get groceries for someone who cannot risk getting out due to health issues.

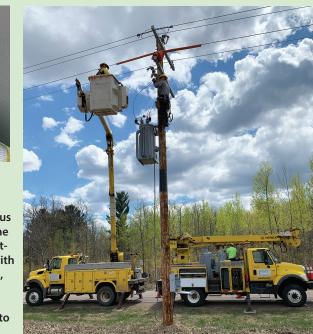
Managing stress and building your resilience are keys to getting through any challenge you are faced with. The best thing you can do for yourself and your loved ones is to know the signs of stress, how to relieve stress, and when to get help. Pay attention to your body, mind, and spirit. Read more on managing stress and building resilience at jrec.com, dhs. wisconsin.gov, or cdc.gov.

We WILL survive this storm together!



#### Apprentice to Journeyman

Congratulations to Marcus Olesiak (above and on the pole at right) for completing his apprenticeship with JREC. Thank you, Marcus, for working day-in and day-out, getting the job done, and for all you do to keep the #POWERON.





## **USE CAUTION ON DPC RESERVOIR**

Fishing and boating are two great summer activities, and with so many local lakes, who can resist the opportunity to enjoy a day on the water? Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC, our wholesale provider) offers a word of caution to those who may decide to fish or boat by DPC's Flambeau Hydroelectric Station, located on the Flambeau River five miles northeast of Ladysmith.



DPC reminds us all that caution should always be used when near the spillway, since hazardous currents can develop as flows increase. At all times of the year, dangerous reverse currents in the tailwaters of dams can cause fatalities. Please obey all warning signs, staying away from restricted areas. Here are a few other safety tips that could save your life:

- · Always stay outside buoy lines and away from restricted areas near dams
- Always wear a personal flotation device when near water
- Always be alerted to flashing lights, sirens, and rising water levels
- · Always understand and respect the danger zones near dams
- Always have an escape route planned
- Never swim near a dam
- Never boat or fish below a dam
- Never be alone when near a dam

This hydro station has been generating clean, efficient electricity since 1951. This water-powered facility can generate 25 MW of electricity. DPC welcomes area residents and visitors to enjoy the many recreational opportunities available on both the reservoir and the public land surrounding it.

# HOW DO YOUR HABITS AFFECT YOUR BILL?

Go to https://www.jrec.net/use-energywisely-guide-efficiency-tips to get your answer. You'll find a link to the recently updated "Use Energy Wisely" guide. This guide can help create an awareness of how your lifestyle and daily habits affect your electric bill.

You'll find many energy conservation tips, website resources, powered smart suggestions, and an appliance use guide that will help you determine where the energy dollars are going in your home. You can obtain a hard copy of this guide by calling our office.

Don't forget the new Electric\$ense online store that will deliver energyefficient products right to your door. As a JREC member, you qualify for additional incentives on LED bulbs, water conservation resources, advanced power strips, and much more. Be sure to check out the June specials. Start shopping today at https:// electricsense.amcgmarketplace.com.

#### **EMPLOYEE RECIPE CORNER**

It's been 32 years since Lori Davis first began working for the members of Jump River Electric Cooperative as the manager's secretary. She has held other roles since then, but today you'll find her working hard for you as your finance manager.



One way to describe Lori is hard-working and very conscientious. You'll see this not only in her professional life, but also in her personal life. Community service is important to Lori as she currently belongs to the Ladysmith Lions Club, but has also served on many boards, committees, and organizations in the past. However, what's most important to her is her family.

Married for 35 years, she and her husband, Greg, have raised three children and are now enjoying being grandparents to four grandchildren. Together they love camping, boating, and cooking with their family.

Lori also loves working on crafts and has been known to write some neat poems for special cooperative occasions. Scrapbooking is another hobby; however, she is no amateur at this. Much love, sweat, and crafting skill are put into each one of the family scrapbooks she has made over the years.

As mentioned above, she loves cooking and her co-workers

frequently benefit from this. In fact, the recipe she is sharing with you is one that has been enjoyed often at the cooperative. Lori said, "It is a healthy treat that is great for picnics, potlucks, or around the campfire!"

#### Cowboy Caviar

- 2 10 oz cans Rotel diced tomatoes with green chilies
- 1 15 oz can black beans
- 1 15 oz can black-eyed peas
- 1 bunch Cilantro
- 1 Red or orange bell pepper
- 1 Red onion
- 1 15 oz bag of frozen corn thawed, not cooked
- 1 15 oz bottle Italian Dressing
- 1 Tsp Kosher Salt
- 1 TBLS Course Ground Black Pepper
- 1 TBLS garlic dropped very fine

Cut all fresh veggies into fine pieces. Add Rotel tomatoes, juice and all. Rinse and drain black-eyed peas and black beans. Gently mix all remaining ingredients together in large bowl. Let sit four hours or longer to allow flavors to blend. Serve with tortilla chips, the Scoop ones work the best.



# NO FARMER, NO FOOD,

recently came across the above Facebook post and it reminded me of how important farmers are to each of us. Since it's June Dairy Month, I thought it would be appropriate to not only pay tribute to dairy farmers, but to all farmers who help support America's food supply.

But first a little about the dairy farmer. Wisconsin has 7,198 licensed dairy herds as of April 2020, according to Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service. Having grown up on a dairy farm, I know firsthand the hard work, long hours, and sweat that go into making this business a success. I am confident the same could be said for farmers who produce crops like cran-

berries and soybeans, or livestock farmers who raise beef or bees along with many other types of farming businesses.

Truth be told, I still consider myself a farm girl, even though it has been more than 25 years since I milked a cow or worked the fields. I am a good example of that old saying, "You can take the girl out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the girl."

One of my favorite things to do in the summer is to visit local farmers markets. What a treat to walk away with fresh produce, my favorite honey, a beautiful bouquet of flowers, and I must admit...usually a bakery item or two.

Farming is a business, and I encourage you to support farms as you would any other local businesses. We cannot buy a gift certificate or order take-out from a farm, but we can buy a farmer's product, and buy locally whenever possible. Many local products are organically grown and highly nutritious, from milk, cheese, cranberries, vegetables, to beef, chicken, pork, and honey,

The dairy farm I grew up on would be considered a small business today as we milked fewer than 100 cows. Many farms find themselves struggling to survive, and many are vanishing. According to the state Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection, Wisconsin lost 551 dairy farms in 2019.

One reason for the decline in dairy farms is a decrease in



cereal consumption. More and more Americans are switching to power bars and other breakfast options that can be consumed on the go. As prices continue to fall, increasing production and farm size is often the only way to survive.

Paul and Nancy Augustine have owned and operated Augustine Dairy for the past 38 years, and Nancy agrees that the economics of this industry is a reason why they decided to expand, allowing them to stay in business. Augustine Dairy, located in Sheldon, made the decision to go big about 12 years ago. And big they went, from a herd of six heifers at the start of their farming career, to a herd of 1,050 dairy cows, and this doesn't include the springing heifers or calves.

This farm has been in the Augustine family since 1915. "We have always been passionate about it and farming is something that we have wanted to do since we were in college," Nancy explained. When asked what she enjoys most about farming she said, "I enjoy the cows."

> Like many farmers, the Augustines also struggled in the earlier years and found themselves starting to lose their passion for farming. They knew they either needed to get larger or get out of farming altogether. With three of their five children interested in helping out with the farm, the decision to go big was much easier. Nancy is glad they made that choice. She adds, "By expanding the

farm, it has brought the fun and passion back into farming,"

In 1995, Nancy, who is the herd manager of Augustine Dairy, received the Wisconsin Farm Women of the Year award. The Augustine Dairy has also held the honor of being the Rusk County Farm Family of the Year.

A strong work ethic is one of the traits I have always felt I gained from growing up on the farm. Nancy agreed and said her children have never been lacking for jobs because of it. In fact, she has seen her children move to the top of the list as job candidates because they could say they worked on a farm.

In addition to the family, the Augustines employ 11 fulltime employees and 12 part-time employees. Adhering to COVID-19 stay-at-home rules has made farming a little more difficult, but Nancy feels the volatile markets and delivery chains have had a bigger impact during the pandemic.

You can show your support for farmers by buying their products and shopping locally when you can. Thank you, farmers, for all you do to feed America.—*Submitted by Denise Zimmer* 



# We may be looking for you!

Jump River Electric Cooperative has several former members who have not cashed their capital credit checks that were paid out in 2017. The list of names is also published on our website at www.jrec.net. Please contact us at 715-532-5524 or at jrec@jrec.com ONLY if you know the current address of someone listed. In cases where the person is deceased, please call us if you know the contact information for a relative or benefactor who may have rightful claim to the capital credits. Any unclaimed checks will revert to the Wisconsin Federated Youth Foundation, Inc. The Foundation is a charitable tax-exempt trust established by the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association for educational purposes.

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### James Anderson, General Manager/CEO

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## Jump River Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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**Denise Zimmer, Editor**