

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* August 2016 NEWS

Building a Lake, Building a *Community*



TAYLOR ELECTRIC
Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

6 COOPERATIVE VALUES

Co-ops have adopted a set of values that helps put the Seven Cooperative Principles into practice.

1 SELF-HELP

CO-OPS TAKE ACTION AND GET THE JOB DONE.

SELF-RESPONSIBILITY 2

CO-OPS ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO MEMBERS.

3 DEMOCRACY

EACH CO-OP MEMBER HAS ONE VOTE.

EQUALITY 4

DEMOCRACY ENSURES EQUALITY FOR ALL CO-OP MEMBERS

5 EQUITY

MEMBERS HAVE OWNERSHIP IN THE CO-OP.

SOLIDARITY 6

PARTNERING WITH OTHER CO-OPS AND LIKE-MINDED ORGANIZATIONS BENEFITS MEMBERS.



YOU ARE A MEMBER, NOT A CUSTOMER

That's the Co-op Difference!

By Adam Schwartz

Many businesses use the word “member” to describe their customers. Places like Sam’s Club or Costco and even American Express like to refer to their customers as members. You pay a fee to buy their goods and services, but that is really all you get for the “membership.” No right to vote for the board of directors or to participate in any meaningful way in the organization.

In cooperatives like Taylor Electric Cooperative, membership really does mean something more than just the right to buy electricity. Co-ops of all types are founded on seven cooperative principles that give us guidance and strategic direction. Membership also gives you rights as an owner of this co-op.

Brett Fairbairn is the director of the Center for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. He makes the case that member relations is not just part of what co-ops should be doing, but in fact is the fundamental core business of the cooperative.

He further lays out the three strategic concepts that any co-op must get right in order to survive and thrive:

Economic linkage

Taylor Electric is connected to you. There is a business relationship that serves you (the member) and the co-op. Since co-ops are solely owned by people in the community, they have a mutual interest to ensure that both the co-op and the member do well and prosper.

Transparency

As an owner of the co-op, you have a right to know how it operates and how decisions are made that directly impact you. If the co-op is transparent and combines this trait with integrity and fairness, it will build trust with the members.

Cognition

In this case, cognition is best defined as how your co-op thinks. It includes the current and historical identity, the mission, and the sense of shared values with co-op members. Research, education, and training are critical functions that Taylor Electric must conduct on an ongoing basis to ensure that we always have the best information to make decisions.

The cooperative business model is the best one on earth, but like any enterprise, it is up to the human beings who work at the co-op, who serve on the board, and the members like you to ensure that the principles and values do not fade over time. First and foremost, Taylor Electric strives to be thought of as a member-owned cooperative that gives you the best value of any utility. If we succeed, our community thrives and you will always value being a member—not a customer.

Adam Schwartz is the founder of The Cooperative Way a consulting firm that helps co-ops succeed. He is an author, speaker and member-owner of the CDS Consulting Co-op. You can follow him on Twitter @adamcooperative or email him at aschwartz@thecooperativeway.coop.



Congratulations

to our 2016 scholarship winners



Taylor Electric Cooperative \$500 Scholarship Winners

Medford Area Senior High School

Sydney Elsner is the daughter of Evan and Amy Elsner, Medford. She will attend UW–Oshkosh where she will study to become an athletic trainer. Her ultimate goal is to be employed by the Brewers. Sydney enjoys playing softball and volleyball and hopes to play at UW–Oshkosh. This summer she will play softball for Mosinee Impact.



Heidi Flihs is the daughter of Steve and Luanne Flihs, Medford. She will be attending Augsburg College in Minneapolis and will pursue a degree in music therapy. She



loves music and has been singing since she was a little girl. She also enjoys traveling and camping. She would like to participate in dance while in college.

Colby High School

Dylan Brusky is the son of Melissa Weinzatl and Jason Brusky. He will attend UW–Green Bay in the fall and will major in mechanical engineering. His interests include football, basketball, softball, hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling.



Abbotsford High School

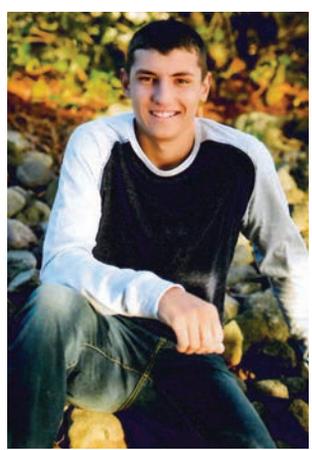
Talon Laabs – Photo and information not available.

Athens High School

Miranda Grabowski is the daughter of Jesse Grabowski and Terri Roesler. She will be attending St. Norbert College in the fall for elementary education and then for special education. She enjoys hanging out with friends, shopping, listening to music, and spending time with family.



Rib Lake High School



Joe Scheithauer is the son of Jon and Jill Scheithauer, Medford. He will attend Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton to obtain his general credits. He will also be playing basketball for the Fox Valley Foxes. Joe plans to transfer to the UW system where he will study either education or business. He enjoys playing basketball, baseball, and hanging out with his friends.

Taylor Electric Board of Directors \$200 Scholarship Winners

Medford Area Senior High School

Brandon Rudolph is the son of Charlie and Dawn Rudolph, Medford. He plans to attend UW–Platteville and hopes to become an engineer. He will major in industrial management and would like to work in product efficiency. Brandon spends his free time working on wood projects for the Taylor County Fair and also enjoys singing. He is an active member in the Liberty 4-H club.



Colton Nelson is the son of Brian and Shelley Nelson. He will be attending Chippewa Valley Technical College's automotive technician program in the fall. His hobbies include riding bike and supporting JDRF, along with being a snowboard instructor for teens living with Type 1 Diabetes. He works at a local supper club at night and a local automotive shop during the day.



Cody Brost is the son of Lisa Olson, Medford. He is planning to attend NTC and will pursue a degree in human resources. His interests include geology and reading. This past year he completed a mentorship at Sandbox Daycare and Stepping Stones.



Sydney Emmerich is the daughter of Al and Michelle Emmerich. In the fall she will attend UW–La Crosse and major in finance. While in high school, she was involved in various organizations, such as FBLA and Student Council. She was also a member of her high school tennis, track, and soccer teams. She also enjoys reading, playing board games, and spending time with family and friends.



Lakyn Kummer is the daughter of David Jr. and Kris Kummer, Medford. She will attend UW–Eau Claire and will major in elementary education. Her hobbies include basketball, track, and show choir.



Northland Lutheran High School

Rebekah Edelburg is the daughter of Rob and Lori Edelburg, Rib Lake. She will attend Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minn., where she plans to double major in early childhood education and elementary education. She enjoys reading, playing piano, singing, babysitting, teaching, volleyball, basketball, track, and spending time with family and friends.



Colby High School

Jordyn Halopka is the daughter of Steve and Beverly Halopka, Colby. She is planning to attend UW–Eau Claire and will major in physical therapy. Her interests and hobbies include camping, softball, kayaking, spending time outdoors and with her family and friends.





A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

By Anne Prince

It's the little things

When it comes to energy efficiency in the home, sometimes small changes can make a big impact. A small, unglamorous task like changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently—keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. It also saves money. And the savings gained from having your system run more efficiently can be applied to more fun or entertaining pursuits that your family can enjoy together.

The lowdown on dirt

As you move around your home, you drive dust into the air from carpets, furniture, and drapes. Regardless of where it comes from, dust and dirt trapped in a system's air filter leads to several problems, including:

- Reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs
- Costly duct cleaning or replacement
- Lowered system efficiency

Making the switch

Now that you know the facts, it's time to get busy changing or cleaning the air filter in your heating/cooling system. Many HVAC professionals recommend that you clean or change the filter on your air conditioner or furnace monthly. It's simple and easy, and in many cases, it only takes a few minutes.

Filters are available in a variety of types and efficiencies, rated by a

Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV). MERV, a method developed by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, tests filter effectiveness. The higher the MERV number, the higher the filter's effectiveness at keeping dust out of your system. While most types of filters must be replaced, some filters are reusable. And don't forget about the winter months. Your heating system needs to work as efficiently as possible to keep you warm (and your loved one feeling snuggly), and a clean air filter helps it do just that.

Heating and cooling professionals recommend turning your system off before changing the air filter. Make sure that the arrow on the filter—which indicates the direction of the airflow—is pointing toward the blower motor. When

you've made the change, turn your system back on.

A teachable moment

Beyond saving money and improving the air quality in your home, changing your air filter is a great opportunity to teach your family more about energy efficiency. Consider getting everyone involved, and the entire family will learn how simple changes can make a big difference.

For other tips on how to save, visit www.togetherwesave.com

Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Maintaining Your Air Conditioner

Annual maintenance can help improve your comfort and the efficiency of your air conditioner while prolonging the life of your unit. Hire a certified professional when your unit needs more than basic maintenance.

1

Routinely replace or clean your air filters. This can lower your air conditioner's energy consumption by 5-15 percent.



2

Check your air conditioner's evaporator coil every year and clean it as necessary.

3

If your coil fins are bent, use a "fin comb" to straighten them.

4

If you have a split system, be sure to clean debris and leaves from the fan, compressor, and condenser.



5

Occasionally pass a stiff wire through your unit's drain channels to prevent clogs.

6

For window air conditioners, inspect the window seals to keep cool air from escaping.



Source: Department of Energy

Michael Schaefer, President/CEO

N1831 State Highway 13, Medford, WI 54451
715-678-2411 • 800-862-2407
email: taylrec@tayloelectric.org
website: www.tayloelectric.org

Lainie Kellnhofer, Editor



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner