



**Robert Cornell,
Manager**

FIRST-TIMERS

This year has certainly been a year of firsts for all of us. In many cases, we hope that these “firsts” are also “lasts.”

By the time you read this article, your cooperative will have held its first outdoor annual meeting. It will be the second time

the annual meeting was held in a location other than the Island Community Center (first at the old Gislason Store and since it was constructed, at the existing building). The annual meeting was held at Nelson’s Hall in 1969 while the “new” community center was being constructed

As I write this and look at the long-term forecast, there is a chance of rain, another first that we haven’t had to worry about in the past. Although, there was an April meeting with heavy snow in the early 2000s where Don, Randy, and I had to leave shortly after adjournment to deal with an outage. Hopefully the meeting will go off without a hitch. Part of our intent in joining the other cooperatives who send this magazine to their members was to take advantage of the center pages to send out the meeting notice and financials; however, magazine deadlines and the fact that the date of this year’s meeting was most definitely a moving target made that impossible.

Another first for the cooperative is the transition to our updated accounting system and the link to automated meter reading. Our goal was to have our first round of billings in July; however, we did not make that goal and are now set to do our first run for the August billing period. Again, by the time you read this, the August billing period will have passed, so right now we are crossing our fingers. As part of this, you will soon be receiving a mailer from a company that is affiliated with our accounting software. Payment Services Network/Invoice Cloud will be setting us up so that we are able to not only email bills, but also text them to your phone. If the member desires, they will have access to a cloud portal where they can set up ACH payment of their bills as well as use a credit card. Of course you can always send/drop off a check or cash as in the past, but this should provide a level of convenience that our members who reside elsewhere have not had before.

This is also an appropriate time for a reminder, which is not a first! In order for our billing system to be efficient

and in order for you to receive this magazine in a timely fashion, we need to know current addresses and when there is a change of address. The new system allows us to input both your Island mailing address as well as your home mailing address and we will use this information to update our mailing information so that you receive this magazine at wherever you are residing (your electric bill too if it is mailed). Unfortunately, it seems that we cannot count on the forwarding ability of the postal service and we have had a number of members who, when at an alternate address, have not received the magazine. It is up to you to follow up with the post office if your mail is not being forwarded, but we can avoid some of this if we are aware of your current mailing address when it changes.

**Payment Services
Network/Invoice Cloud
will be setting us up so
that we are able to not
only email bills, but also
text them to your phone.**

We still want email addresses as well and current phone numbers too. There have been plenty of times when the crew has been out trimming or responding to an outage or just patrolling lines where we have seen a tree

down on someone’s boat or home that the owner might not otherwise find out about until they come back.

Another first for the cooperative will be when we transition all members to monthly reads starting in January. This means, for the first time since the Island was electrified, we will no longer have seasonal members.

A final first was our participation in June Dairy Month. You will recall that 57% of dairy farms in the state are located on cooperative lines. Even though there are no dairies on the Island, the pain that the dairy industry was feeling associated with the pandemic was being felt by our fellow cooperatives who helped us in our time of need. We had a total of 106 coupons redeemed between Mann’s Store and Renard’s Cheese. This might not seem to be a huge number, and in the grand scheme of things it isn’t; however, it represents about a 13% redemption rate of the coupons printed in the magazine.

FIBER TO THE HOME A REALITY?

Fiber on the deck of Tom Jordan's barge waiting to be pulled up conduit to Plum Island

We have spoken in previous issues about the underground project that will be occurring this fall along Lobdell Point Road. You may have noticed the reels of not only primary cable in conduit, but also orange conduit and fiber cement hand holes. These are here because, as has also been previously detailed, the cooperative is working with NSight (parent company of Cellcom) to install middle mile fiber from where the fiber comes ashore on cooperative property on Green Bay Road to the cooperative, and then on to the Cellcom tower on Little Mounon. This conduit and the fiber cement hand holes will be installed in conjunction with the electrical installation. Along with this project, it is our intent to install a pilot fiber to the home project along the Green Bay Road/ Lobdell Point Road loop.

All this leads to the questions that every cooperative member has been asking since we installed the fiber across to the mainland as part of the submarine cable project: When? How soon does the rest of the Island get done?

It has certainly become apparent during the current pandemic that the ability to work from home, school from home, and just generally communicate from home has become more important than ever. The reliability of the incumbent phone company and their unwillingness to improve service has also become a larger and larger issue.

Not just rural internet, but rural communication in general seems to be following the path today that rural electrification followed in the 1930s. It seems likely that ubiquitous service, that reaches EVERY member of the cooperative, will not come unless we do it ourselves. This was always the thought, even back when we initially offered the BPL service. Even with the cooperative's agreements with Frontier to make service available to every member, not only have they not followed through, but it seems they have gone backwards.

To help facilitate the process, the cooperative has joined the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative in order to utilize the resources that they have available to help us figure out the details behind doing this. In the grand scheme of things, we are not a large network and would require something in the neighborhood of 70 miles of fiber installation and ancillary equipment in order to provide service. It may not be a large network, but for our little operation, it is a large potential project. Expect an interest survey in the near future and return it to the cooperative so we can work on figuring out the answer to those questions of when and how soon the rest of the Island gets done.

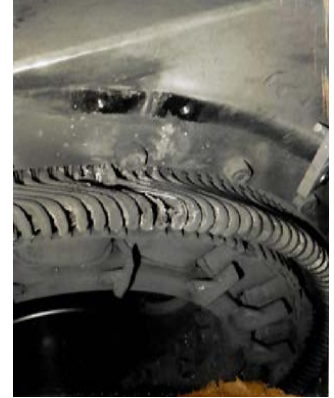
The underground work will be happening sometime after Labor Day weekend, so watch for activity on Lobdell Point Road.

WASHINGTON ISLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

We are continuing our perusal of board meeting minutes throughout the years.

1969 The cooperative purchased a used bucket/ladder truck from Taylor Electric Cooperative. This tradition of “Cooperation Amongst Cooperatives,” the sixth cooperative principle, was not only a continuation of the spirit of purchasing the first generator set from Waushara, but is continued today. Our older digger derrick belonged to Jump River Electric Cooperative and the newer unit was purchased from Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative. Work began on building a truck garage as generating plant and fuel storage made access to the old garage attached to the back of the office difficult, especially in winter. Of particular note in 1969, the board of directors, after discussion during the previous couple years, decided that the level of work, with increased monitoring of engines, was more than one lineman and some part-time/summer help could reasonably be expected to handle. After interviewing numerous candidates, Orville “Butch” Jess was hired as the second lineman and joined Leonard in the job of keeping the Island’s lights on.

1970 In 1970, the stator for engine #5 (which had been purchased used in 1968) burned up and a Murphy diesel rental unit was temporarily installed behind the engine room until the stator could be rewound and #5 made operational. This failure and the continually growing load requirements made it obvious an “engine #6” would be needed sooner rather than later. The cooperative began the process and at that time even considered the cost of running a cable to the mainland to purchase power from Wisconsin Public Service. The last time this was discussed was during Ray Krauss’ investigations prior to the organization of the cooperative. In addition, fuel storage capacity became a concern and investigations into additional storage began.

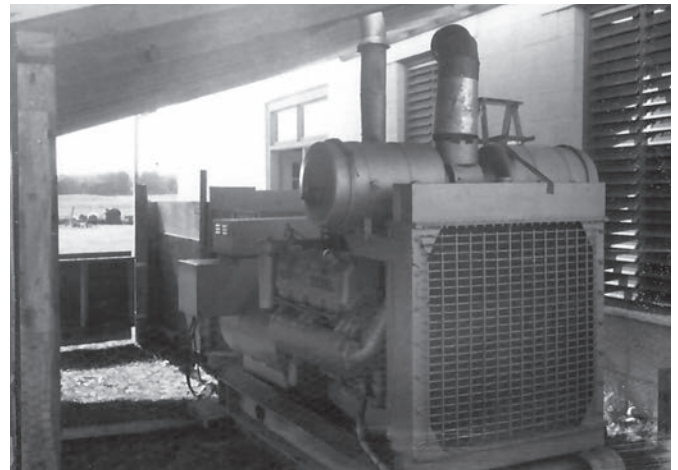


Stator failure engine #5



Ray Krauss monitors the temporary Murphy Diesel.

1971 Two 30,000-gallon fuel tanks were installed behind the plant. These are the same tanks that you see today, the spill containment being built in 2002. The board requested loan funds from REA totaling \$320,000 for line construction, plant/substation expansion, and generating capacity. The price of fuel oil/diesel fuel was rising and the cooperative purchased 25,000 gallons of premier diesel fuel from Standard Oil for just under \$.12/gallon. After looking at numerous bids and consulting with REA and our engineer, Carl Crane, the cooperative began the process of purchasing a DeLaval Turbine – Enterprise Engine generator with a target install date of June 1972. This engine was originally slated to be sold to the United States Government as part of its nation-building efforts in Viet Nam; however, as we all know this was not to be.





STILL TIME TO ENTER WIEC'S ISLAND SUMMER PHOTO CONTEST

Send in your pictures by October 1

As noted in last month's center pages, due to a lack of entries, we were forced to extend the contest deadline until October 1 with entries and winners being published in the November and December issues. Get us those photos of Island Summer! Some entries are starting to trickle in and here are a few examples. Send in those photos to info@wiecoop.com!



Above: Gabe Miller and family have been a Washington Island family since Great Grandfather Christian Saabye arrived on the island in 1868. Gabe has been fishing the East channel for his 23 years. He pulled out two big smallmouths out of the water July 7. The first fish weighed 3.15 lbs. and the second 4.2 lbs. Gabe practiced catch and release with these beauties.

Below: Lorel Gordon sent us this picture of a Turtle and its reflection basking in the sun.



Above: Dick Purinton took this picture of Little Lake on an early July morning.

SAFETY CORNER

If you feel a SHOCK, swim AWAY from the DOCK!

Did you know? Electricity can enter water from energized boats and docks.

If you are in the water and feel electric current:

1. SHOUT to let others know.
2. TUCK your legs up to make yourself smaller.
3. Try to get AWAY from anything that could be energized.
4. Do NOT head to boat or dock ladders to get out.

If you are on the dock or shore when a swimmer feels electrical current:

1. Do NOT jump in.
2. THROW them a float.
3. Eliminate or TURN OFF the source of electricity as quickly as possible.
4. CALL for help.

Safe Electricity.org Learn more at



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Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.