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# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

April 2022

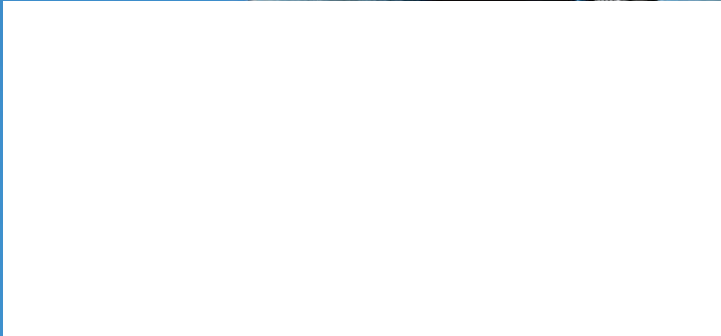


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RICE RECIPES



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# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

April 2022 Vol. 82 No. 10

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The Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News (Formerly Wisconsin R.E.C. News) has been published monthly and distributed since July 1940 to members of Wisconsin's non-profit, consumer-owned rural electric cooperatives. It is available to non-members for \$13 per year or \$35 for three years. Member co-ops pay \$6.93 per year.

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Tommy Liddane helps us salute our lineworkers for Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 11. *Photo courtesy of Deana Protz, Oakdale Electric Cooperative*

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# SYMBOL SEARCH

## HIDDEN OBJECT GAME



Winning our March kitchen kit is **Price Electric Cooperative** member **Rick Candos**. He found the hidden globe on, "page 21, top left picture, in the dark green rim of the bowl. I'm new to the area and I really like the way information is laid out in WECN, making everyone aware of things going on, and how and why they are done this way. It just feels friendly!"

This month we challenge readers to find this lineworker's hard hat, as part of our salute to lineworkers.

Remember that the symbol can be anywhere and any size. One randomly selected winner will receive a **Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News** kitchen kit. One entry per household, please. Send entries by April 18.

Enter via the "Symbol Search" link on the homepage of [wecnmagazine.com](http://wecnmagazine.com).

You can also enter by mail (don't forget to include the name of your cooperative):

### SYMBOL SEARCH

WECA

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# Good luck!

# THANK YOU!



## WE SALUTE OUR LINeworkERS

We've talked about it on our pages many times before, but here's a refresher: Cooperatives are governed by the Seven Cooperative Principles. These principles are at the heart of everything we do.

On page 13, we take a look at a lineworker training program at Southwest Technical College in Fennimore. Not one but two of the principles can be found in action. The Fifth Cooperative Principle concerns education, training, and information. Cooperatives make sure their employees, boards, and members know everything they need to know for the cooperative to run efficiently.

The story also touches on the Sixth Principle of Cooperation Among Cooperatives. Oakdale Electric Cooperative contributed some materials to develop the skills and expertise of lineworkers trained in the program, whether they work at Oakdale or another co-op.

Yet another example of the Sixth Principle: A March storm knocked out power at several cooperatives, and line crews from other co-ops came to aid the affected co-ops. No doubt, lineworkers have demanding jobs that have to be done under challenging conditions. Yet, they work together when necessary and share their skills and equipment to help keep rural Wisconsin's lights on. We salute our lineworkers this and every April!



**Dana Kelroy**  
Editor

WISCONSIN  
**ENERGY**  
*Cooperative*  
NEWS





# How to Be Cut Off From Civilization

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This knife boasts a full tang blade, meaning the blade doesn't stop at the handle, it runs the full length of the knife. According to Gear Patrol, a full tang blade is key, saying "A full tang lends structural strength to the knife, allowing for better leverage ...think one long steel beam versus two."

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Wisconsin's \$92 million Help for Homeowners Program will provide financial assistance for mortgage payments, property tax bills, utility and internet bills for people who have experienced financial hardship due to the pandemic.

Homeowners who have experienced a "qualified financial hardship" since January 21, 2020, and earn a household income at or below 100 percent of the area median income (basically anything at or below average income in the area) are eligible to apply. Homeowners without a mortgage who meet income requirements may also be eligible for assistance to pay bills.

There is also still time to apply for utility assistance under the WIHEAP program. Residents can call 800-506-5596 or go to [Energybenefit.wi.gov](http://Energybenefit.wi.gov). The deadline to apply is May 15. Those facing disconnection can apply for crisis funds through September 1, 2022. See more information on page 19.

## Dairyland to Explore Nuclear Technology

Dairyland Power Cooperative announced it has entered into a partnership to explore nuclear technology, which would support both the renewable energy transition and energy independence.

Dairyland has entered into an agreement with NuScale to explore the deployment of NuScale's advanced small modular reactor technology. According to the memorandum of understanding, the two will collaborate to evaluate the potential deployment of the nuclear technology and support Dairyland's due diligence process in evaluating affordable, reliable, and carbon-free energy solutions.

"Dairyland is examining carbon-free power supply technologies including NuScale's small modular reactor nuclear plants," said Brent Ridge, Dairyland president and CEO. "This agreement provides Dairyland an opportunity to explore this technology and evaluate whether it might be a viable long-term alternative to provide our members with safe, reliable, and cost-effective electricity in a lower carbon future."

Nuclear energy production emits no greenhouse gases and its expansion has bipartisan support as one pathway to reaching emissions-cutting goals to combat climate change.

## Eau Claire Energy Selects Obrycki as Next CEO



The Board of Directors of Eau Claire Energy Cooperative has announced the appointment of Monica Obrycki as the co-op's next chief executive officer. She will succeed Lynn

Thompson, who is retiring in May after serving as CEO since 2009.

Obrycki joined the senior management team of Eau Claire Energy Cooperative more than nine years ago, serving as chief administrative officer overseeing marketing, communications, human resources, and member services. She holds a BA in Business Management and is a recent graduate of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Management Internship Program.

## Tool Identifies Solar and Wind Affected Areas

A new tool aims to alleviate renewable development conflicts by identifying which areas would be hardest on wildlife habitat. The Nature Conservancy

has developed the "Site Renewables Right" online tool that it says identifies land where wind and solar energy can be developed with the least impact on sensitive habitats. The group said by analyzing wildlife habitat and land use data, it identified 1.8 million useable acres in Wisconsin (about 5 percent of total land) that would have minimal impact.

Rather than showing the most eligible areas, the tool identifies which spaces should be avoided. The mapping shows most of the northern half of Wisconsin and a wide swath on both sides of the Mississippi River as areas not optimal for renewable development.

## In Memory: Clyde Shipman 1933-2022



Clyde Shipman, a longtime Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative director, passed away at Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire on February

9. He was 88. Shipman served on the board for nearly 26 years, including many years as secretary-treasurer. He is remembered as a strong supporter of the co-op, WECA, and his community as a whole and will be greatly missed by those who knew him.

Born in New Auburn, Shipman served in the Air Force for 20 years, retiring as a Master Sergeant. He was a farmer for 20 years and also worked for several agriculture-based businesses.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 63 years, Marian, who passed away in 2019. Shipman is survived by their five sons, 19 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and many other family members and friends.

Services are planned for April 21-22, 2022, in Bloomer and Spooner.



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## ACT LOCALLY, THINK GLOBALLY

In the March issue, our feature story “Powering Through the Potential Perfect Storm” focused on your local utility’s ability to keep the lights on despite significant supply chain disruptions. After experiencing firsthand supply chain challenges in my local town government, I wanted to use this column to bring awareness to the vulnerabilities we face as a state and nation.

It hit home for me recently when it took 32 days to get parts and have our town’s snowplow serviced for a repair that would typically have taken only days. This is all before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Not only is the entire world watching a devastating humanitarian crisis unfold, but we are also seeing markets affected everywhere, especially as it relates to energy. Higher gasoline and diesel prices will follow as major energy disruptions occur and the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserves are tapped. But I believe there is another imminent threat at our doorstep.

China is watching very closely how the United States and the rest of the free world are responding to the invasion of Ukraine as it considers its own desire to take control of Taiwan. Why should we care about China’s posture towards Taiwan? In 1979 the United States passed the Taiwan Relations Act to help maintain peace, security, and stability in the Western Pacific and promote the U.S.’s foreign policy by authorizing the continuation of commercial, cultural, and other relations between our country and the people of Taiwan. Provisions of the Act say we are to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character.

In 1998 I witnessed firsthand the defensive response to a military alert about an impending attack from mainland China. Serving as an election observer in Taipei’s mayoral election, our delegation was not allowed to leave our plane when Taiwan’s air force scrambled about 140 F-16 fighter jets. The attack never materialized, but I saw the fighter jets take off, which made my heart beat a lot faster. Much to China’s indignation, our country continues to provide defensive weapons to Taiwan. So, how might China react if we were drawn into

Steve Freese (far right) and the rest of the American delegation served as election observers in the 1998 Taipei mayoral election of Mayor Elect Ma Ying-Jeou (fourth from left) who served as mayor from 1998-2006.

a major Taiwan/China conflict? I will use two examples that affect virtually every American in their daily life.

The first is pharmaceutical supply chains. Janet Woodcock, FDA’s director of the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, said in testimony to Congress in 2019 that the U.S. is the world leader in drug discovery and development. But we are no longer at the forefront of drug manufacturing. She shared that of all active pharmaceutical ingredients made, the actual drugs formulated into our medications, only 28 percent of the manufacturing facilities are in our country. The remaining 72 percent are manufactured overseas, with 13 percent in China alone. So, could

China use lifesaving pharmaceuticals as a sanction target against us for supporting Taiwan?

Secondly, many of us have experienced how hard it’s been to buy a new car or truck, a smartphone, computer, or any device that needs a computer chip. Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. (TSMC) and Samsung Electronics Co. are responsible for making the vast majority of the world’s computer chips. TSMC, with 25% of its business coming from Apple, also manufactures for chip designers and semiconductor firms, which supply major makers of consumer electronics and automobiles. An emboldened China threatening to invade Taiwan instantly becomes a national security risk as our uninhibited supply chain of chips would now come into question. Any conflict between Taiwan and China will almost certainly result in all auto and truck manufacturing coming to a halt without a supply of chips.

Our reliance on the production of critical medicines and products outside of the United States could be our Achilles heel. Bringing production back home is in the best interest of our citizens and our national security. It is time for us to act locally and think globally.



Steve Freese  
President and CEO



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# 5

# QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HOME INSPECTOR

**Q: I'm planning to buy a new home this year, and I want to know how efficient it is. What questions should I ask my home inspector?**

**A:** Many factors go into buying a home. For most people, energy efficiency does not top the list, and unfortunately, houses don't typically come with energy efficiency ratings.

It can be difficult for a buyer to know how efficient a home is when viewing the listing online or taking a tour. But your home inspector can help you identify potential energy costs and energy-efficiency upgrades.

Some homes may already be efficient, while other homes may need improvements. Buying an inefficient home can lead to unexpectedly high energy bills down the road, so you will want to know what you're getting into and can afford the energy costs once you get the keys.

Here are five questions to ask your home inspector:

1. What is the condition of the electrical panel and wiring throughout the home?

A panel upgrade or rewiring can be a costly endeavor. An older panel and wiring aren't inefficient, but they can delay or make some energy-efficiency projects more expensive. In several homes I have worked on, older wiring had to be replaced before insulation could be added.

Make sure the panel can accommodate any new appliances you might want to add, such as air conditioning or an electric vehicle charger.

2. How old is the HVAC system, and how efficient is it? Has it been maintained?

The typical lifespan of an HVAC system is 15 to 25 years. As the largest energy user and often the most expensive equipment in the home, you will want to know the energy, maintenance, and replacement costs. If the HVAC system is old, consider the cost for a replacement.

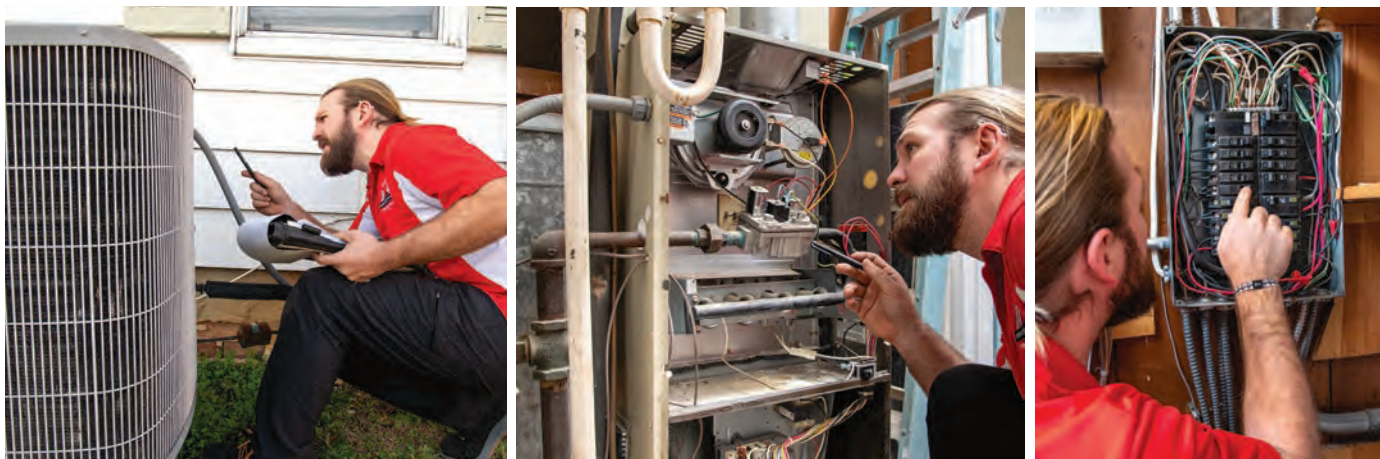
3. How old is the water heater?

The lifespan of a storage water heater is about 10 years. The cost to replace a water heater ranges from \$400 to \$3,600, depending on the unit type and installation costs. If an older water heater is in a finished space or on a second

floor, replace it before it fails and potentially causes water damage.







As it's the largest energy user and often the most expensive equipment in the home, you'll want to know the age and efficiency of the home's HVAC system. Ask your home inspector if the electrical panel can accommodate new appliances you might want to add, such as air conditioning or an electric vehicle charger. *Photos courtesy of Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources*

#### 4. What are the levels and conditions of insulation in the attic, walls, and floor?

Insulation is one of the easiest and most beneficial energy-efficiency upgrades you can make. It isn't as pretty as new countertops, but it can make a home more comfortable, waste less energy, and reduce outdoor noise.

To cut down on drafts and make insulation more effective, air seal before insulating. Seal cracks, gaps, or holes in the walls, floors, ceiling, and framing between heated and unheated spaces.

If your new home needs insulation and air sealing, make this your efficiency priority. The sooner you do it, the more energy you will save over time. Recommended insulation levels vary by location. You can find information about insulation and air sealing at [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov).



#### 5. Are there any extras in this home that will increase my utility bills?

Any motors in the home or on the property should be assessed, including pumps for wells and septic systems. When it comes to extras, remember life's luxuries aren't free. You will want to be able to afford the cost of operating amenities, such as pools, hot tubs, and saunas.

#### Additional considerations

You can request the home's utility bills for the previous two years from the seller or realtor. Your bill will not be the same due to your personal energy habits, but this information will give you an estimate of the home's energy costs.

Electric rates vary across the country. If you are moving to a new city, be sure to check the rates at the local electric utility.

When buying a home that checks all your boxes, ask your home inspector the right efficiency questions. Understanding the condition of appliances, features, and building materials can save you from hidden surprises in your home and on your first utility bills.

*Miranda Boutelle writes on energy efficiency topics for NRECA, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.*



# HELPING DREAM JOBS COME TRUE

**H**unter Fortney had his heart set on a career as a lineworker. He was ready to do whatever it took to make that happen, even if it meant he had to move away from his hometown of Gays Mills for a while. He was 20 years old in 2017 when he put his dream in motion and enrolled in a nine-month course at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College in Fennimore.

“The general education coming from



Hunter Fortney

Southwest Tech was very beneficial because I got my feet wet in the trade, and I was able to use that in my apprenticeship,” Fortney said. “It was very beneficial for me. I wasn’t just starting from scratch. I had a great baseline.”

Fortney is one of about 400 students who have gone through the program since it started in 2011. Joe Randall is a former lineman and the lead Electrical Power Distribution instructor for the program. He keeps in contact with most of his students, including Fortney, after they complete the rigorous nine-month course.

“It’s pretty hard,” Randall says. “We climb poles, we string lines, we use shovels and







Oconto Electric Cooperative Apprentice Lineman Jake Baldwin demonstrates plowing in the underground cable. At this location, the cooperative was transitioning from overhead to underground powerlines. Photo courtesy Katie Jagiello, Oconto Electric Cooperative

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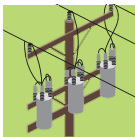

heavy machinery a lot. We’re out in the mud, we’re out in the cold, we’re out in the rain; it’s just like you’re working on the job.”

And for students like Fortney, that hands-on learning is key. “I’m a very visual learner. I can read, read, read, and still not gain as much knowledge as when I’m actually doing the work. Hands-on training is critical.”

But real-life training requires actual equipment, and that can be expensive and hard to come by, especially now with the added challenge of supply chain issues. So to help ensure the program has what it needs, Randy Larson, MEUW electric utility safety & training coordinator and journeyman lineman, put out the call for donations. Some municipal utilities and electric cooperatives, including Oakdale Electric Cooperative, stepped up and pitched in. Larson delivered cables, transformers, pad-mounted

transformers, junction boxes, etc. Students got to work almost immediately, learning how to put powerlines in the ground.

“It helps us train our students in that actual type of world because more and more things are going in the ground now and not up in the air,”

The Pros and Cons of <b>OVERHEAD AND UNDERGROUND POWER LINES</b>	
OVERHEAD	UNDERGROUND
 <p><b>PROS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less expensive to build and repair</li> <li>• Easier to spot faults/damage</li> <li>• Can be built on any terrain</li> </ul> <p><b>CONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Susceptible to wind, ice and snow</li> <li>• More vulnerable to damage from trees and vegetation</li> <li>• More vulnerable to blinks caused by animals</li> <li>• Susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions</li> </ul>	 <p><b>PROS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less susceptible to vehicle collisions</li> <li>• Not impacted by trees, wind, ice and snow</li> <li>• Less vulnerable to blinks caused by animals</li> </ul> <p><b>CONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More expensive to build and repair</li> <li>• Susceptible to flooding</li> <li>• Difficult to locate faults/damage</li> <li>• Vulnerable to damage from digging</li> </ul>



Randall said. “And it’s hard to buy these things because it’s really pricey and very hard to get right now. The things we got were not brand new, but they don’t need to be. They served our purpose perfectly.”

“It’s so important to support training programs like this one, because they are laying the foundation for our workforce of the future,” said Oakdale General Manager and CEO Chris Tackmann. “Equipment that is older or unusable to us is still very valuable to them, and we are happy to help.”

“These donations support the underground distribution power field program, which is a great addition to any sort of underground utility training for utilities such as cable, fiber, and electric,” Larson said.

As thankful as Randall is for what they’ve received, there is still more they need. “We could use anything that deals with three-phase metering, three-phase services, three-phase power, secondary services. That would all be very helpful,” he said. “But we appreciate it all. This cooperation from co-ops is extremely important because it means we have their support, and it helps us actually take a student and make them better trained, which is beneficial because they could potentially be working for a co-op down the road.”

While many industries are struggling to find skilled workers to fill jobs, Randall says their program is going strong, and the training is just as in-demand as it was pre-pandemic.

“Our waitlist has not gone down. It’s actually gotten longer,” he said. “It has not gone down since I got here in 2015.” The current wait to get into the program, according to Randall, is well over a year. And he says those who complete the program have no problem finding jobs.

Such was the case for Fortney, who worked briefly for an underground contractor after completing the program at Southwest Tech. Then, in July of 2018, he was hired on at Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative, where he became a full-time apprentice the following November.

“I love it,” Fortney said. “I didn’t for one second think that I would be in the position that I’m in right now—just eight days away



Loads of donated supplies are dropped off at Southwest Technical College in Fennimore for the training program.

from taking the journeyman’s test.” And he didn’t even have to leave the Wisconsin region where he grew up.

“This is my dream job, to work in the area where I was born and raised,” he said. “I feel very fortunate. I love it.”—*Julie Lund*



As we have mentioned numerous times, the possibility of winning the grant from the NTIA for our fiber project was “pie in the sky,” which usually means you have had a pie thrown at you. Now, although we have not received any official notice as required by the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), there have been awards announced for the grant program and unfortunately, we were not in the listed awards.

We have asked the NTIA’s broadband infrastructure group for clarification and have not received an answer. Per the NOFO, we were to have received a notice of award or a notice that we were not selected along with a debrief of our project so we could use the information to improve future applications. None of this has happened.

Of the \$288 million available, \$277 million was awarded per a news release from the NTIA. This leaves \$11 million still to be accounted for. Those in the know believe that this money is being held in reserve for program administration (can you say \$640 toilet seats?). This does not jibe with the NOFO, so who knows. Maybe our slim chance of winning has become a sliver and maybe we will still hear something. We had a good application by all accounts and intend to use it as the basis for additional applications. On the surface,

some of the announced awards do not seem to fit the requirements of the grant. This is disappointing, but it will not stop us from moving forward as the economics of the project work.

There is a whole lot of money that our great-grandchildren are throwing around again in the upcoming programs associated with the infrastructure and jobs program, so we will be sure to be waiting with an application ready.

...we will keep a tiny sliver of hope that we could still potentially be funded, but are moving forward as if we won't.

the infrastructure and jobs program, so we will be sure to be waiting with an application ready.

Please keep in mind that we have already brought \$2 million in grant and partner funding to the project (and over \$4.5 million overall including the submarine cable project), which dramatically offsets any debt that we will incur. With this funding and our match, we have plenty of work to do!

Since we have not received official notice, we will keep a tiny sliver of hope that we could still potentially be funded, but we are moving forward as if we won't.



# WASHINGTON ISLAND SCHOOL CONTRIBUTES TO FIBER PROJECT

At the time of this writing, the school board still needs to vote to officially contribute the ARPA funding it has received to our fiber project. This discussion started when the announcement was made that the Washington Island School would receive \$600,000 in ARPA funding for E-Rate or technology-related projects. This later was reduced as part of the state budget process to \$140,000.

Much like the Town of Washington's funding, this ARPA funding could only be used for limited projects. You will remember that the Town of Washington partnered with us and contributed their \$75,000 in funding to the project. Part of our grant applications have included the internal network requirements for town anchor institutions, which we have written about in the past. The school is one of these anchor institutions.

Of the \$140,000 in funding, 20% must be spent on "learning loss" due to the pandemic. Don't ask me to explain exactly what that is, but after this is deducted, that left \$112,000, which the technology committee recommended (and hopefully by the time you read this the board will have approved) be applied to the fiber project. This will offset the cost of the internal work needed in the school but will also leave a sizeable balance to apply to the project in general. It should provide enough to cover the drop costs for every year-round home with school-age and younger children, which is significant.

Per regulation, this money needed to be allocated by April 2022, but can



Tom Nikolai and Zak Hirn evaluate the Washington Island School's network.

be spent as late as 2024. It is our intent (the school and cooperative) to hold this money in reserve as a match for a future grant application and hopefully we can turn \$112,000 into \$224,000 or more. Regardless of grant status, the money will be applied to the project before regulations require that it be spent.

The cooperative would like to thank the school for allocating this unplanned-for money (which really could not be spent for general use) to a project that benefits the whole community as well as the children in it. As a former school board member, I would personally say that this is how true transparency is supposed to work. The school has been the beneficiary of the community's support in the passage of referendum after referendum, and this is one way for at least part of that support to be returned and recognized.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When streaming content, use the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop.

Streaming content with electronic equipment that has earned the ENERGY STAR® rating will use 25% to 30% less energy than standard equipment.

Source: Department of Energy







# WORK CONTINUES ON FIBER PROJECT

You have probably seen your crew, along with Quantum personnel, on Green Bay Road and tributaries hanging messenger wire and strand, in preparation for lashing fiber. We hope to have some fiber hanging from this messenger by the time you read this. We have a few adjustments to make in order to maintain our 15' 6" road clearance and then we should begin to lash fiber.

This is a process, while similar to hanging primary electric wire, that we have never done before. We set up a practice strand in the shop in order to familiarize ourselves with the lashing tool, and with the help of some instruction from Mike Schmaling of Quantum, hopefully we will not struggle too much when it comes to the real thing. Both Don and Mike have attended a class put on by Mike Schmaling at Quantum in the use of our fusion splicing equipment, and while we are expecting Quantum personnel will be taking on the majority of the splicing while we hang line, we will be participating in this part of the project as well.

Karcz Utility Services personnel were on the Island doing pole reinforcements earlier in March, and that work will be



Don and Mike practice with the cable lasher.

ongoing, especially as the ground thaws and poles off the road become more accessible. We are doing this work as part of the “make ready” required by the fiber project, but the benefit is that the poles being reinforced likely would have had to be replaced in the near future regardless of the project.

As you likely already know, the cooperative has purchased the property and building that once housed John

Rose’s car museum across the street from the cooperative. This will provide much-needed shop and warehouse space as well as storage for the equipment we have purchased associated with the successful grants. Related to this, we were notified that we were successful in our grant application with the Main Street Bounce Back program and although the award is only \$10,000, every dollar counts.



Quantum personnel lead the WIEC crew through training on fiber splicing.

# QUANTUM OFFICIALLY JOINS ISLAND BUSINESS COMMUNITY

With a closing date of April 1, it should be safe to announce (if you haven't already heard) that Quantum has purchased the "Brother's Too" building from Mack and Jim Gunnlaugsson. This gives them a permanent location on the Island to work out of and, with the apartment in the back, a place to house crews. They have a long-term intent to open a store front here and do similar work to what they already do in Sturgeon Bay and Algoma. This will be a nice benefit to the Island and we have asked them to provide us with some details as to the services they expect to provide once they have done some necessary

renovation. Look for it in a future issue of this magazine. Many of you have already utilized Quantum's services in Sturgeon Bay and we would like to officially welcome them to the Island business community (even though we have been working together for close to a year now).

They have also hired an additional new employee. Walker Rugeley (*pictured at right*), formerly of Texas (and yes, you can and should maximize the Walker Texas Ranger jokes), has moved to Wisconsin and will be another of the Quantum regulars on the Island as part of the project.



## IN OTHER NEWS, WE CONTINUE TO KEEP THE LIGHTS ON

It sometimes seems like the only thing we talk about in these center pages is the fiber project, and that is because it is a big project. However, as you are all aware, our primary mission is keeping your lights on, and your refrigerator running, and your television spewing.

The cooperative has a number of new home services on the docket for the upcoming months. We continue regular trimming (which we continue to partner with the Town crew on). We have had a few small outages (a squirrel suicide, a failed transformer, and a tree on the lines). We have had numerous meter replacements to do as well as all the day-to-day maintenance and general duties.

As noted in previous articles, we are far from immune from supply chain issues. Transformer lead times are terrible and prices are even worse. Surprisingly, new transformers are cheaper than rebuilt. Line material is equally difficult to come by, and simple items like guy wire splices are 13 weeks out. We are trying to stay on top of this as best we can.

Everyone is suffering with the price of fuel, and our operation depends on it. And we are not just talking about

the diesel fuel we keep on hand for the generators or the fuel we buy for our trucks. The fuel used to generate the wholesale electricity we buy is also not only constrained more than we have seen in history, but damned expensive. This is indicated to us by almost weekly economic interruptions that are largely due to the market cost of natural gas. There have been no weather events that account for the constraint and the one-hour and two-hour interruptions (that, by the way, are nearly impossible to react to in a way that makes economic sense to do anything except buy on the wholesale market). These conditions continually add to the bill we pay WE/WPS each month and quite honestly, there is not a lot of relief in sight in certainly the near term.

Back to diesel fuel, we were lucky to purchase when the price was still reasonable and as such currently have roughly 20,000 gallons on hand to fuel our engines in an emergency. This equates to roughly 200 run hours, or something less than 10 days. Other than price, we don't see an issue with availability, so, with a little luck, we can weather the cost increases. You will remember though, that we ran on engines for 12 days when the cable failed.

### Robert Cornell, Manager

1157 Main Road, Washington Island, WI 54246  
920-847-2541  
info@wiecoop.com  
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.





# HAPPY TO HELP

Being there, every minute, or every day. As your hometown electric cooperative, it's not just our way of doing business, it's our way of life. And as a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative member, that means value that goes far beyond the energy we provide, value you can't really put a price on.

**YOUR SOURCE FOR POWER. AND INFORMATION.**



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives  
of Wisconsin

*The power of human connections*



## ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE



### NEED HELP WITH BILLS?

Programs exist to help Wisconsinites struggling financially. Below are some resources to consider. Scan the code with your smartphone camera.



### HOMEOWNERS

The Wisconsin Help for Homeowners program can help with overdue bills like mortgage payments and property taxes.



[doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Homeowner-Assistance.aspx](http://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Homeowner-Assistance.aspx)  
1-855-2-HOME-WI



### RENTERS

Funds are available to renters through the Wis. Emergency Rental Assistance program.

[doa.wi.gov/Pages/WERA.aspx](http://doa.wi.gov/Pages/WERA.aspx)  
1-833-900-9372

### UTILITY ASSISTANCE

General assistance for utility bills is available through the Home Energy Plus program.



[energybenefit.wi.gov](http://energybenefit.wi.gov)  
608-266-8234

WISCONSIN  
**ENERGY**  
*Cooperative*  
NEWS



# RICE IS NICE

All recipes and photos courtesy of USA Rice.

## Layered Rice Pesto and Pepper Bake

3 cups cooked rice  
1-3/4 cups Parmesan cheese,  
shredded, divided  
Salt and ground pepper, to taste  
Nonstick vegetable spray  
1/2 cup prepared basil pesto sauce;  
divided  
4 oz goat cheese, crumbled, divided  
10 oz roasted red peppers, drained,  
patted dry, and chopped

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a 7-inch diameter soufflé dish or spring form pan with nonstick vegetable spray. Combine rice, 1-1/2 cups Parmesan cheese, salt, and pepper in a medium bowl. Place half of rice mixture in the bottom of the prepared dish; pat down well. Spread half of the pesto evenly over rice and sprinkle with half of the goat cheese. Layer half of the red peppers over goat cheese. Repeat layers. Sprinkle remaining 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese over top. Bake 12-15 minutes in preheated oven. Cut into wedges to serve.



## Philly Cheesesteak Stuffed Peppers

A tasty (and rice-filled) twist on a classic dish!

- 5 green bell peppers
- 1/2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup beef broth
- 1 cup mushrooms, chopped
- 1 lb deli-style shaved roast beef, chopped
- 2 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 Tbsp cream cheese
- 6 slices American cheese, divided
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1-1/2 cups cooked brown rice
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 7 slices provolone cheese, divided

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Gently slice the tops off each bell pepper and remove the membrane and seeds. Place peppers into an oven-safe baking dish or sheet pan. Roast in preheated oven for 10 minutes before stuffing.

While peppers are roasting, prepare the filling. Add olive oil, onions, garlic, and beef broth to a large skillet over medium heat. Cook for 3–5 minutes or until onions are translucent. Stir in mushrooms, chopped roast beef, Worcestershire sauce, cream cheese, 4 American cheese slices, and black pepper. Stir until cheese is melted and combined. Stir in cooked brown rice. Add additional broth if mixture seems dry. Taste for seasoning and adjust salt and pepper if desired. Stuff a piece of provolone cheese into the bottom of each green pepper. Chop the remaining 2 slices of American cheese and 2 slices of Provolone cheese into small squares and set aside. Fill each pepper with rice and beef mixture. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and top each pepper with chopped American and Provolone cheeses. Return to oven for about 5 minutes, or until cheese is melted. Serve immediately.



## Tangy Lime Rice Pudding Squares

### Crust

- 2 cups crumbled gingersnaps
- 1/3 cup butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine gingersnap crumbs and melted butter in medium bowl; stir until blended. Press mixture along bottom and sides of 13-x9-x2-inch baking dish. Bake for 10 minutes.

### Filling

- 3 cups cooked medium grain rice
- 2 cups milk
- 1 (14 oz) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1/2 cup fresh lime juice
- 1 cup whipping cream, whipped
- Lime peel (optional)

Combine rice, milk, and sweetened condensed milk in a 2-quart saucepan. Cook over medium heat until thick and creamy (approx. 20 to 25 minutes), stirring frequently. Remove from heat and stir in lime juice. Pour filling into prepared crust; chill. Spread whipped cream over pudding. Cut into bars and garnish with lime peel, if desired.



## Shrimp and Rice Patties with Creamy Cilantro Sauce

### Sauce

- 1 cup cilantro leaves, chopped
- 16 oz light sour cream
- 2 jalapeno peppers, seeded
- 1/2 tsp salt

Combine cilantro, sour cream, jalapenos, and 1/2 teaspoon salt in food processor and puree until smooth. Spoon into bowl; refrigerate.

### Patties

- 3 cups cooked medium or long grain rice
- 1 lb medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup green onions, chopped
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- Lime wedges, for garnish

Combine rice, shrimp, green onions, pepper, and 1 teaspoon salt in food processor; pulse until texture is coarse. Shape into 12 patties\*, approx. 3 inches in diameter. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add 6 patties and cook 2 to 3 minutes on each side or until lightly golden; remove. Cook remaining patties, using additional oil, if needed. Serve with sauce and lime wedges, if desired.

\*Note: May be shaped into 24 (2-inch diameter patties) for appetizers.





Submit your favorite recipes to be featured on our reader recipe page. Email to [jennifer@weca.coop](mailto:jennifer@weca.coop) or submit directly at <http://wecnmagazine.com/submit-a-recipe/>. Due to food safety issues, we cannot accept canning recipes.

## Carrot Cake

ANNIE GRAVES, TIGERTON

### Cake

- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- 3/4 cup vegetable or canola oil
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1-1/2 cups light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1-1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 cups grated carrots, lightly packed

Whisk together first 12 cake ingredients, then mix in flour and grated carrots. Prepare two 9-inch-round cake pans and line the bottoms with parchment paper. Pour batter into pans and bake in 350 degree oven for 30–35 minutes. Place wire rack on top of pan and flip to release cakes from pans. Leave on rack to cool completely. Remove parchment paper.

### Frosting

- 2 (8 oz) pkgs cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla

Beat cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add powdered sugar and vanilla, continue mixing until smooth. Frost layers as you would a layer cake: center, sides, then top. Store in refrigerator.

## Chicken Lasagna

DOROTHY SHIRK, THORP

- 1 (10.5 oz) can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 (10.5 oz) can cream of chicken soup
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/4 tsp garlic salt
- 4 cups cooked chicken
- 6 lasagna noodles, cooked
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded

Mix cream of mushroom and cream of chicken soups, onion, sour cream, and garlic salt. Spread a third of the mixture in the bottom of a 9-x13-inch baking dish, layer one third of the chicken, and top with 3 noodles and half of the cheese. Repeat layers. Bake at 375 degrees for 45 minutes.

## Lasagna

ROMAYNE LINDSTROM, IOLA

- 1 lb ground Italian sausage, pork, or beef
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp dried parsley
- 1 Tbsp dried basil
- 1-1/2 tsp salt
- 1 (16 oz) can tomato sauce
- 2 (6 oz) cans tomato paste
- 2 (12 oz) cartons lasagna noodles
- 3 cups cottage cheese
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1 lb mozzarella cheese, thinly sliced

Brown ground meat of choice, spoon off fat, and add the next six ingredients to the meat. Simmer uncovered until thickened (approx. 45–60 minutes), stirring occasionally. Cook noodles in boiling water until tender. In a bowl, combine cottage cheese with eggs, salt, pepper, parsley, and parmesan cheese. Place 4 noodles in the bottom of a 9-x13-inch casserole pan, layering with cottage cheese mixture, half of the meat, and half of the mozzarella. Repeat layers. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Let stand for 10–15 minutes before serving.

## Lemony Spinach Florentine

BARB MARTIN, GREEN BAY

This is a very delicious and favorite recipe in our family.

- 2 (10 oz) pkgs frozen, chopped spinach, cooked and well-drained
- 1 (12 oz) box spiral-shaped pasta, cooked (approx. 3 cups cooked)
- 1-1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 (10.5 oz) can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 (4 or 8 oz) can mushrooms
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/3 cup onion, finely chopped
- 2–3 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp celery salt
- 1/4 tsp ground pepper

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl; mix well. Pour into a shallow 1-1/2-quart baking dish and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Top with additional cheese to taste.

### REQUESTS FROM OUR READERS

Favorite recipes using ramps.

**SEND TO:** WECN, Reader Recipes, 222 West Washington Ave., Suite 680, Madison, WI 53703-2719 or [jennifer@weca.coop](mailto:jennifer@weca.coop).

# SPRING CLEAN FOR HOME SAFETY

As you scrub away the last of winter's dust and grime, take a moment to wipe away safety hazards as well!

## Deep Clean Your Dryer

Even if you clean the lint trap after every load of wash, your dryer is still accumulating flammable lint particles in other areas. Move the dryer away from the wall and wipe down every surface. Thoroughly clean the lint trap inlet and vent pipe with a vacuum hose attachment or long, flexible brush.

## Declutter Your Cords

As you clean each room, watch for placement of power cords and extension cords. Make sure they're not hidden under rugs where they could overheat, or placed where they could create tripping hazards. Inspect all cords and replace any that are cracked, frayed, or show other signs of wear in the insulation. Store extra cords neatly; tangled piles of cords are susceptible to damage that can make them unsafe to use.

## Inspect your Fire Extinguisher

As you work through your home's closets and tucked-away corners, check to make sure your portable fire extinguisher is stored in an accessible, visible location. Give it a visual inspection to make sure it's full and the pressure gauge is in the operable range or position. If you don't have a fire extinguisher in your home, it's time to get one.

## Freshen Up Your Furnace

After a long winter you might not want to think much about your furnace, but before you transition fully into air-conditioning season take a moment to vacuum up any dust and debris that might have built up around the unit. Also, keep the unit clear of any combustible items like paper, paint, or fuel. If you didn't get your furnace tuned up last year, don't skip it this year—a professional inspection is your best defense against heat exchanger cracks that can release carbon monoxide into your home.

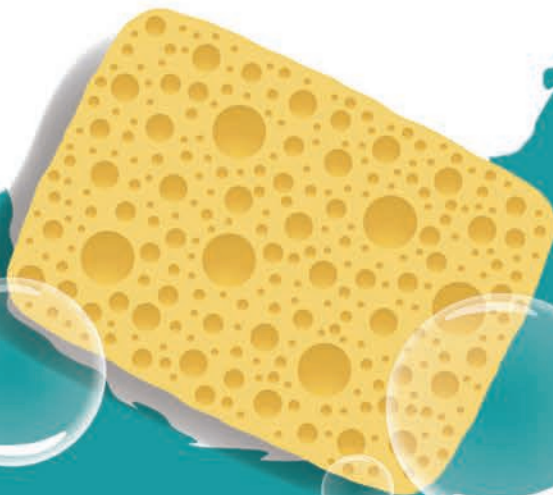
## Maintain Your Emergency Detectors

Dust off your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors with a dry cloth and check them with the test button. Replace the batteries if they're more than six months old, and replace the entire unit if it's past its printed expiration date.

## Audit Your Emergency Kit

Winter storms might be over for a while, but spring and summer bring weather issues of their own. Make sure your emergency kit is ready by checking items like batteries and canned goods. Replace anything that has expired.

Sources: SafeElectricity,  
National Fire Protection  
Organization





# GLOBE TROT

## WITHOUT LEAVING WISCONSIN II

*This is the second in a two-part series about Wisconsin communities with strong ethnic ties.*



This month we continue our journey around the world within Wisconsin, where many rural communities reflect the ethnic traditions and customs practiced by the immigrants who settled here starting in the mid-1800s. These communities celebrate their heritage with pride, creating opportunities for visitors to explore and experience different cultures without ever leaving the state. In the March issue we took a look at Sweden via Stockholm, Norway via Iola, and Germany via Chippewa Falls. This month, we invite you to explore three more unique stops in Wisconsin that take you to faraway places.

**Czech Republic/Slovakia via Phillips** The northern city of Phillips, where Price Electric Cooperative is headquartered, was founded in 1878 by Czech immigrants who resettled here after the once-thriving lumber industry in this area had cleared much of the land, making it suitable for farming. The farming lifestyle more closely resembled what the Czech immigrants had left in Eastern Europe, and they created an active community in their new home with a fraternal organization where they practiced and preserved their ethnic heritage.

Those ties to the homeland are still evident today. Perhaps the most visible of them is a monument to Lidice, a small village near Prague that was completely eradicated by the Nazis in June 1942 in retaliation for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, appointed as Reich protector of the former state of Czechoslovakia after the Nazis overtook the area during World War II.

Information—or rather, misinformation—that the small village somehow played a role in harboring the assassins made its way to Hitler, who was determined to make an example of Lidice for any other groups that resisted Nazi rule. The men of Lidice were all killed and the women sent to concentration camps, as were any children deemed unsuitable for “Germanization.” The village was bulldozed and burned to the ground.

As it was meant to terrorize, the atrocity was widely publicized by the Nazis. The images were horrifying, and for the tight-knit Czech/Slovak/Moravian community in Phillips, also deeply personal.

“There were a lot of people that lived here who had family in Lidice,” said Jody Kadlecsek, a member of Price Electric Cooperative and chair of this year’s Czech-Slovak Festival. Phillips’ Czech community built a memorial to remember the people of Lidice and serve



1. The Lidice Monument in Sokol Park, Phillips, stands in memory of the people of Lidice, a village that was destroyed by the Nazis in 1942. The three rods at the left represent the Czech, Moravian, and Slovak peoples who lived in the former Czechoslovakia; the granite pillar represents the United Nations, into which the three rods are leaning for support; the evergreen swath symbolizes everlasting life for the Lidice victims; and the round stone symbolizes hope that Lidice would rise again. *Photo courtesy of the Czech-Slovak Festival.* 2. The Wisconsin State Czech-Slovak Queen Pageant is held in conjunction with Phillips’ Czech-Slovak Festival. In front are the “little sisters,” who get to shadow a pageant candidate. *Photo courtesy of the Czech-Slovak Festival* 3. Participants in the Miss Czech-Slovak Pageant wear the traditional kroj folk dresses. *Photo courtesy of the Czech-Slovak Festival*



1. Norwegian immigrants brought their skiing heritage to Westby and established what came to be known as the Snowflake Ski Club. The club has hosted a ski-jumping tournament every year since 1923. *Photo courtesy of the Snowflake Ski Club* 2. Syttende Mai celebrations include demonstrations of rosemaling, the decorative Norwegian folk painting of Norway. *Photo courtesy of the Westby Area Historical Society* 3. Westby residents have been celebrating Syttende Mai since the community was founded. This image is from the 2000 Syttende Mai parade. *Photo courtesy of the Westby Area Historical Society*

as a symbol of freedom. The monument was completed and dedicated in 1944; a rededication in 1984 led to the creation of the Czechoslovakian Community Festival, which evolved into the Czech-Slovak Festival that is celebrated every year in Phillips.

“Part of the festival’s mission is to not forget about the past and to try to preserve it for those that come after us,” Kadlecek said.

The memorial still plays a key role in the annual Czech-Slovak Festival, held the third full weekend in June each year, as the festivities are preceded by a Lidice Memorial Service on the Friday evening of the festival. This year’s service will take on special meaning as 2022 marks the 80th anniversary of the Lidice massacre and destruction. Special guest will be the Czech consulate general from the Czech Consulate in Chicago.

While the monument is the foundation of the festival, not all is somber with this annual celebration. Held this year June 17–18, the Czech-Slovak Festival is a fun-filled weekend that incorporates many elements of Czech culture, including traditional food like Czech brats and sauerkraut, music by the Czech Slovak Community Singers, and displays of kroj, the traditional Slovak folk costumes worn by both men and women. There are also historical displays as well as information about genealogy and historical research.

The festival is also site of the

Wisconsin State Czech Slovak Queen Pageant, which draws young women of Czech/Slovak lineage from all over the state. The winner serves as an ambassador of the Czech/Slovak culture, traveling throughout the state and sharing her heritage before going on to compete at the national pageant in Nebraska the following summer.

Another major competition held in conjunction with this festival is the State Kolache Baking Contest, open to anyone in Wisconsin who wants to test their skills at creating the traditional Czech pastry. Not a baker? Not a problem—to enter the Kolachy Eating Contest, all you need is an appetite.

*The Lidice Memorial is located at Sokol Park, 140 Fifield St., Phillips, WI 54555. The Czech-Slovak Festival will be held June 17–18 at Elk Lake Park, 585 County Rd W H, Phillips, WI 54555. To learn more, visit [www.czech-slovak-festival.com](http://www.czech-slovak-festival.com).*

**Norway via Westby** In the Driftless Area of southwest Wisconsin, Westby, home to Vernon Electric Cooperative’s headquarters, reflects the Norwegian culture established by the immigrants who settled this community in 1848. Many of these immigrants came from the Biri and Gausdal parts of Norway, drawn to the familiar-looking hilly terrain.

“It reminded them a lot of the areas

they came from back in Norway,” said Blaine Hedberg, president of the Westby Area Historical Society. “I’ve been to Norway 15 or 16 times myself, and it’s amazing—some of those areas look just like Vernon County.”

Hedberg has extensively researched and written about the history and heritage of Westby, which got its name from Tosten Olsen Westby and his son, Ole. Tosten was one of the Biri immigrants who arrived in 1849, buying 40 acres of land on what is known as Coon Prairie. Later, Ole put up a frame building used as a store and hotel, and it came to be known as the Westby Stop.

The Westby Stop eventually became Westby, which retains a distinctive Norwegian identity today. Norwegian flags frequently fly alongside American flags, and many shops and houses are adorned with Vikings, the gnome-like goblins of Scandinavian folklore known as Nisse, and Velkommen signs painted with the swirly flourishes of traditional rosemaling.

Many of the shops and restaurants themselves are immersions into Scandinavian culture, most notably Dregne’s Scandinavian Gifts. This longstanding business attracts visitors from all over the Midwest, who come to browse the authentic Scandinavian gift items including clogs, collectibles, Christmas gnomes, and even candy.

Another can’t-miss stop with Norwegian flair is Borgen’s Cafe, which



serves up traditional meatballs and lefse meals and is known for its wide selection of homemade pies. Visitors might even find themselves sitting within earshot of a table of regulars chatting in Norwegian, as Hedberg did on a recent visit.

“We have generations of people in this community that go way back,” he said. “The interrelationships in the community are incredible. It’s the most amazing community I’ve ever researched.”

Norway is also reflected in Westby’s signature events. The Norwegian immigrants brought their skiing traditions with them, forming the all-volunteer Westby Ski Club in 1922 and holding their first ski-jumping tournament a year later. Now known as the Snowflake Ski Club, the club is still operated by all volunteers, and it hosts a ski tournament every February that attracts some of the best ski jumpers in the world. Many Olympic and world-class ski jumpers have competed at the Snowflake Ski Jumping Contest.

Another big event on the Westby calendar is Syttende Mai, Norwegian Constitution Day. This celebration marks the signing of the Constitution of Norway on May 17, 1914, and it had been observed with fanfare in Westby on and off since the community was founded. Syttende Mai was relaunched as an annual celebration in 1969. Planned this year for May 14–15, the celebration features traditional food like the rich Norwegian pudding known as rommegrot, and an arts and crafts fair featuring lots of rosemaling and wood carving, educational offerings, and the crowning of the Syttende Mai princess.

Syttende Mai is also typically a busy time for the Westby Area Historical Society, located in the historic Thoreson House. Open on Saturdays from Memorial Day through Labor Day and by appointment at other times, the museum has exhibits on, among other topics, the area’s ski jumping heritage and Syttende Mai celebrations through the years, as well as displays of Norwegian immigrant artifacts.

“One of the big things we’ve done in the last couple of years is put together a genealogy research room, with

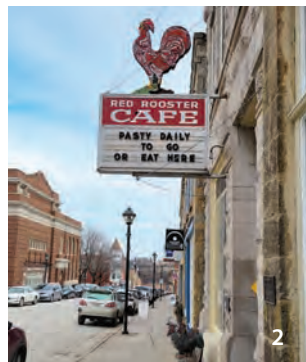
family history, church records, school attendance records, so if someone’s researching their family we can help them,” Hedberg said. “Last Syttende Mai we had a constant stream of people coming into the museum, saying ‘My family’s Norwegian and I don’t know anything about them,’ and we could help most of them.”

*For more about Westby and its events, visit [cityofwestby.org](http://cityofwestby.org). To learn more about the Westby Historical Society’s offerings, visit [westbywihistory.com](http://westbywihistory.com). The Thoreson House Museum is located at 111 N. Bekkedal Ave., Westby; call 608-634-4478 to arrange a visit.*

**Cornwall via Mineral Point** Also in southwest Wisconsin, at the edge of Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative’s territory, is Mineral Point, named for the “mineral” that was once plentiful in the hills around this area. That “mineral” was lead ore, and it had long been mined by Native Americans. By the mid 1820s, lead was widely used in the manufacture of paint and ammunition for the growing U.S military. This abundant, easily extracted mineral attracted thousands of settlers who hoped to cash in on the demand and make a living as miners.

Lead mining—and later, zinc mining—eventually gave way to agriculture as the dominant industry in southwest Wisconsin. However, the culture of the immigrants who mined the minerals is very much still evident in the Mineral Point community.

“As mining developed in this area, it just happened to coincide with a period in Cornwall, which is a part of Britain, when mining was declining and the mines were closing,” said Glen Ridnaur, president of the Cornish Society of Mineral Point. “They were primarily mining copper, and the copper was running out, so people were leaving Cornwall just as they were leaving Ireland because of starvation and politics and the potato famine. They began coming to Mineral Point largely because they had heard that mining was available.”



1. The Pendarvis House in Mineral Point is the centerpiece of the Wisconsin Historical Society’s Pendarvis complex, a museum of Wisconsin’s early lead mining history. The site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. 2. With its historic significance and unique culture, Mineral Point is a haven for artists. Many of the community’s stone buildings house galleries and studios, and the historic downtown has specialty shops and longstanding restaurants like the Red Rooster Café, which serves up the traditional Cornish meat pies known as pasties. Across the street is the fully restored Mineral Point Opera House, which hosts a mix of cultural, musical, visual/film, and community events year-round. 3. Mineral Point’s historic downtown is filled with beautiful stone buildings constructed by Cornish stonemasons.

The Cornish immigrants' mining expertise lent itself to other skills that were put to good use in the community.

"In Cornwall, most of the architecture is built out of granite because that was the stone that was available," Ridnaur said. "When the miners came here the stone was limestone and sandstone, which to them was like cutting through butter. Many of the miners were also stonemasons, so we have a wonderful collection of stone buildings in Mineral Point, most of which were built by Cornish stonemasons."

In addition to the beautiful stone buildings in Mineral Point's historic downtown, miners built the smaller stone cottages scattered along Shake Rag Street, the original settlement of Mineral Point. The popular story behind the street's unusual name is that it was inspired by the miners' wives who would shake rags from their doorways to signal to the men mining the hillside across the way that it was dinnertime.

However, Ridnaur, who has done extensive research into Cornish history, says that story is likely grounded more in marketing appeal than historical accuracy, especially considering the miners worked underground. The likelier explanation, he said, is that Shake Rag Street has a broader, historical British connection, stemming from "shag rugs"—rugs made from rags and then used as beds in the poorer parts of town.

"Essentially, Shake Rag is it applies to a geographical area refers to what someone once said back in the 1700s, 'the unkempt edges of a community,'" Ridnaur said. "What it boils down to is it's sort of the rough, primitive part of town where people are getting by living in shacks and sleeping on rags."

Many of the original stone buildings along historic Shake Rag Street have been restored, preserved, and repurposed. Among them is the cluster of buildings that form the State Historical Society's Pendarvis House complex, a living history museum site that's listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Farther down the street, a series of nine buildings has been transformed into

the Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts, a nationally known non-profit school of arts and crafts founded in 2004. This 2.5-acre campus hosts workshops, retreats, and events year-round.


Mineral Point has walking and driving tours available that make it easy to explore the city's unique history and Cornish influence at any time of year. For an even greater immersion into Mineral Point's Cornish culture, plan a visit for the third weekend in September for the annual Cornish Festival, which is operated by the Cornish Society.

The Cornish Festival is a family-friendly event filled with activities that teach and explore the area's Cornish heritage, including a pop-up museum with historical displays, a pasty dinner, children's activities at Cornish Heritage Park, and often a Cornish musical performance at the restored Mineral Point Opera House downtown. Ridnaur said special programs are frequently held at Pendarvis and Shake Rag Alley

for the Arts in conjunction with the festival, and the Chamber of Commerce hosts a Taste of Mineral Point event that includes some traditional Cornish treats like pasties and the rich dessert pastries known as figgyhobbins.


One way or another, a visit to one of these unique communities will fill you with appreciation for the ethnic traditions that shaped them.—Mary Erickson

*For more information on Mineral Point, including maps for driving tours and walking tours, visit [mineralpoint.com](http://mineralpoint.com) or call 608-987-3201. Pendarvis is located at 114 Shake Rag St., Mineral Point, WI and is open for tours Fridays and Saturdays from June 2–October 23. Visit [pendarvishistoricsite.org](http://pendarvishistoricsite.org) or call 608-987-2122 for more information. The Cornish Society is planning a return to a full, in-person festival September 23–25, pending any further public health concerns. For updates, watch the website [mineralpointcornishfestival.com](http://mineralpointcornishfestival.com).*



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**1 Fish Fry**—Jim Falls. Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, 4:30–6:30 p.m. Potato soup, 3 pieces of deep-fried fish, baked potato, beans, coleslaw, dinner roll, and pudding. \$12. Carryout only with drive-thru service.

**1, 8 Fish Fry**—Rosholt. St. Adalbert Parish, 4–7:30 p.m. Fish, shrimp, or combo. Raffles. 715-592-4416.

**2 Maple Festival**—Poynette. MacKenzie Center, 8 a.m.–2 p.m. Past and present maple sugaring practices. Live music, horse-drawn wagon rides, interpretative displays, scavenger hunt, ice cream, and more! Rain or shine. 608-635-8105.

**2 Spring Art and Craft Sale**—Chippewa Falls. Senior High School, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Admission \$1. Concessions and raffles on-site. Food drive to help our local families in need. 715-382-3453.

**2 5 Star Telecom Event**—LaCrosse. Fox Hollow Banquet Hall, 5:30–10 p.m. Food, amazing prizes, and the chance to win up to \$1,000 cash at our ACS fundraiser. Tickets are \$50 per person and includes catered meal and beverages. Make checks payable to The American Cancer Society. 608-519-3584.

**10 Chicken Que & Bake Sale**—Chaseburg. Tippy Toe Inn, 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Continues until all chicken is gone. Homemade pastries and baked goods will also be available.

**10 Pancake Supper**—Medford. Senior High School, 4–7 p.m. All you can eat potato, regular, and blueberry pancakes, sausage, cheese, applesauce, juice, milk, coffee, and desserts. Adults \$8, ages 6–11 \$5, and age 5 and under are free.

**10 FFA Pancake Breakfast & Silent Auction**—Chippewa Falls. Columbus Association Hall, 9 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Adults \$8, children 5–12 \$4, and under 5 eat free. Pancakes, eggs, sausage, sweet rolls. All you can eat. 715-568-1672.

**15 Good Friday Fish Fry**—Durand. St. Mary's Assumption Catholic Church, 4:30–6:30 p.m. Three-piece batter fried or baked fish dinner \$12.

**16 Bloomin' Greenhouse Tour**—Clark county area. All-day, April–October. This self-guided tour directs visitors to Clark County's many greenhouses and garden centers. Annuals, perennials, vegetables, herbs, grasses, trees, shrubs, hostas, daylilies, mums, fairy garden supplies, pumpkins, corn mazes, garden art, home décor, and so much more! For a brochure call 715-255-9100.

**22 Rummage Sale**—Willard. Holy Family Church, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

**22 Bingo**—Cadott. Rick's Halfway Hall, 7–9 p.m. Great prizes—hams, turkeys, gift cards, and cash. For more info, call 715-313-0461.

**23 Spring Craft and Vendor Fair**—Eau Claire. Chapel Heights United Methodist Church, 9 a.m.–2 p.m. Featuring local artists/crafters and vendors. All-church bake sale also. Lunch will be served.

**23 Brat, Burger, Bake, and Rummage Sale**—Willard. Holy Family Church, 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

**23 Carve-In 6 at the Bekkum**—Westby. Bekkum Memorial Library basement, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Award-winning woodcarvers demonstrate, sell, and share their art. Free admission. Multiple prize drawings for carvers and the public as well.

**23, 24 Quilt Show**—Medford. Simek Recreation Center, Sat., 10 a.m.–4 p.m. and Sun., 10 a.m.–3 p.m. The featured category for 2022 is paper piecing.

**23 Spring Thaw Celebration**—Galesville. Old Main Historical and Community Arts Center, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Join us for speakers and vendors celebrating spring. We will have speakers regarding native plants, beekeeping, hydroponics, herbalist, and mycology, among others. There will also be vendors selling their homemade goods.

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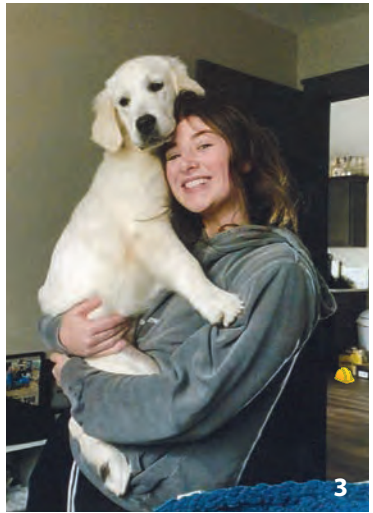


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1. Daniel helps mom feed calves.  
Photo submitted by Danielle Kmiecik, a member of Eau Claire Energy.
2. Brooklynn and two of her kittens enjoy the fall leaves. Photo submitted by Mark Forseth, a member of Central Wisconsin Electric.
3. Paige holds her dog Paisley (or is the dog holding her?). Photo submitted by Grandma Judy Ferguson, a member of Dunn Energy.
4. Deloris the chicken runs towards Trace, knowing he brings dinner. Photo submitted by Shelby Scott, a member of Oakdale Electric.




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