



## BRAUNER'S GARAGE: 80 YEARS OF FAMILY, TRADITION, AND SERVICE ON THE ROADSIDE

**T**his year, as National Move Over Day approaches on October 18, it serves as a powerful reminder of the dangers emergency roadside workers face every day. For Brauner's Garage, a local towing and auto service business celebrating its 80th anniversary, that message hits close to home.

Founded in 1945 by Joe Brauner, Sr., Brauner's Garage has always been more than just a business; it's a family legacy rooted in hard work, ethics, and a commitment to community safety. "My grandpa was working at the Ford garage in town and decided to go on his own and start his own business, right here on this property," recalls current owner Pat Brauner, the third generation to lead the operation.

The Brauner legacy deepened in 1956 when Joe Jr. joined his father and later purchased the business in 1982. Tow trucks were part of the business from the beginning, with the iconic 1946 Chevy wrecker "Big John" purchase in 1960 becoming a symbol of service and reliability in the area.

Though the business once included used car sales, it became clear that

towing and service were its core strengths. Pat officially joined full-time after graduating high school in 1984 and wasted no time modernizing the operation. As car designs evolved, so did the tow trucks, including the flatbed truck he built himself. "That's when business exploded. No one else could provide this," Pat said, referencing the flatbed he custom-built by trading a tractor for a truck chassis and finding a tilt bed to finish the project.

Today, Brauner's Garage is a true family affair. Pat manages the administrative side but still gets behind the wheel when needed. His sons Mathew and Paul joined the team in 2015 and 2019 as the fourth generation in the business, focusing on towing and service, respectively. His daughter Stephanie handles marketing, and daughter-in-law Katie manages accounts payable. Pat's wife Judy has also always played a role in the business. "It's part of my family story and identity," Pat reflects. "I'm honoring my grandpa and dad's legacy, and knowing the hard work firsthand makes it deeply personal."

For Mathew, the passion for towing

started early, riding along with his dad at just 12 years old. "I used to get out of bed in the middle of the night just to go on calls with him," Mathew says. "I loved the excitement of it, and I knew this is what I wanted to do."

For Paul, it's remembering and carrying on the family stories, making connections with customers in the process. "People figure out who I am and share stories about how my grandpa pulled them out of the mud," he says.

In 2016, Brauner's added their first heavy-duty wrecker to the fleet, marking a major milestone in expanding their recovery capabilities. As business volume continues to grow, Pat looks forward to the next generation taking things even further, while always staying true to their roots.

Some family traditions may have shifted with the pace of modern business, but the memories remain dear. "Dad and Grandpa used to stop at 9:30 every morning to go to Grandma's for coffee and a donut, and again at 3," Pat recalls fondly. "It was a tradition we loved, even if we don't get to do it anymore."

Community involvement is another



Brauner hallmark. From supporting fire departments and EMS to wildlife groups, prom mock crashes, the Jackson County Fair demolition derby, and even towing a Zamboni for youth hockey, Brauner's continues to give back in meaningful ways.

As Judy reminds everyone, the job doesn't pause for holidays or weekends. "We spent one Christmas Eve cleaning up a crash together," she says. "These are husbands, sons, loved ones. When you see tow trucks or emergency personnel on the side of the road, please move over and slow down."

National Move Over Day may only

be once a year, but for the Brauner family, the message is lived out every single day. The fatality rate for tow truck operators is nearly 15 times higher than the national average, making awareness and compliance with Move Over laws a matter of life and death.

Brauner's Garage is celebrating 80 years thanks to the values of hard work, communication, ethics, and honesty. "People have had a good experience with us, and that's why they come back," Pat says. "I learned how to treat people by observing my grandpa and dad," he concludes. — *Brandi Shramek, Member Relations Supervisor*


## Celebrating 80 Years

**Join Brauner's Garage on September 13 from 3–7 p.m.** as they celebrate **80 years of service and tradition** with **live music, Firetruck Pizza, see the trucks, and watch a rotator demonstration.** Meet the family behind the legacy and help honor a business where family values drive everything forward. Brauner's Garage is located at N7630 County Road E, Black River Falls, Wis.




Left photo: The late Joe Brauner Jr. steers "Big John," the 1946 wrecker, through the parade — a true symbol of Brauner's Garage history. Right photo: Pat Brauner (right) is the third generation to own and operate Brauner's Garage. His wife Judy (left) has always been dedicated every step of the journey.

# Move Over. It's the Law.



**MOVE OVER FOR ALL  
FLASHING LIGHTS.**



**JACKSON ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVE**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**GENERAC** AUTHORIZED DEALER

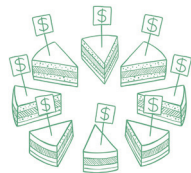


**POWER YOUR PEACE OF  
MIND BEFORE WINTER**

715.284.5385, PRESS 3



# CAPITAL CREDITS: YOUR SLICE OF THE COOPERATIVE PIE BECAUSE MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE REWARDING



September is the time when Jackson Electric members get to see just how big their slice of the cooperative pie is. As a member-owner of Jackson Electric, you’re not just paying a power bill; you’re investing in a not-for-profit utility that returns value back to its members. When we have a financially successful year, that success gets shared with you in the form of capital credits, your portion of the co-op’s margins, based on how much electricity you purchased.

## Here’s how your slice is served:

Every year, our Board of Directors decides what portion of the co-op’s financial “pie” to allocate to members. Your slice is based on your energy use from the previous year. You’ll see this allocation amount listed on your September bill, along with the total capital credits you’ve built up in your account over time.

Keep in mind, this isn’t a check or bill credit. Allocated funds are set aside for now and used by the co-op as working capital to maintain and improve our system. When it’s financially responsible, the Board will decide to “retire” a portion of those funds, turning your slice of the pie into real dollars, usually delivered in December.

## Don’t Miss Your Piece:

If you’ve moved or plan to move off Jackson Electric’s lines, make sure we have your current mailing address on file. That way, we can still serve you your slice without delay.

| Capital Credits Allocation Notice        |            |
|------------------------------------------|------------|
| Capital Credits Allocation for 2024..... | \$174.18   |
| Total Unretired Capital Credits .....    | \$2,413.68 |

# HEAT PUMPS SHINE IN THE SHOULDER SEASONS

As Wisconsin transitions between the extremes of summer heat and winter chill, the mild months of spring and fall, often called the shoulder seasons, offer the perfect opportunity for heat pumps to show their true value. Unlike traditional heating and cooling systems, a heat pump is a versatile, energy-efficient solution that both heats and cools your home by moving heat rather than generating it. During the spring and fall, when temperatures settle in that not-too-hot, not-too-cold range, heat pumps operate at peak efficiency, often costing significantly less to run than a furnace or central air conditioning unit.

## A Smart Financial Choice

Operating your heat pump in the fall at Jackson Electric’s residential rate of \$0.1188/kWh is equivalent to running a 95% efficient propane furnace at \$1.21 per gallon. When was the last time you bought LP at that price? If you’re looking for a smarter, more efficient way to heat and cool your home year-round, especially during those in-between months, a heat pump could be the ideal solution.


## Rebates Make It Even Better


Eligible Air Source, Mini-Split, and Ground Source Heat Pump installations on Jackson Electric’s service lines qualify for a \$500/ton rebate, often making the cost

comparable to a conventional cooling system. We’re here to help you stay comfortable and save money in every season. Learn more at [www.jackelec.com/rebates-and-incentives](http://www.jackelec.com/rebates-and-incentives).

# HEAT PUMP REBATES AVAILABLE

## \$500 PER TON



[www.jackelec.com](http://www.jackelec.com)




# JACKSON ELECTRIC WELCOMES MASTER ELECTRICIAN GARY HAMMOND



Jackson Electric welcomed Gary Hammond to the team on July 28, 2025, stepping into the Load Management/Meter Technician role. He will be training alongside a current employee as part of our succession plan for an upcoming retirement.

A longtime Jackson County resident, Gary lives near Taylor, Wis., and brings with him a diverse background in the electrical field. His career began on the dairy farm, where he spent many years before shifting gears into the electrical trade. "I spent most of my life as a dairy farmer," Gary shares. "Then I began

an electrical apprenticeship at an area company and also ran my own side business."

Through his employment and his personal business, Gary gained hands-on experience in industrial, commercial, agricultural, and residential electrical work. At his previous employer, he served as a lead electrician, managing projects from initial design to implementation.

Gary's decision to join Jackson Electric was driven by a desire to expand his knowledge and explore the utility side of the industry. "I heard Jackson Electric is a great place to work, it's local, and this role gives me the chance to learn something new," Gary says. "The utility side offers more than most electricians get to see."

Gary is looking forward to working with the team and connecting with our members. Outside of work, he keeps busy crop farming and working on old trucks.

We're glad to have Gary on board and look forward to the knowledge and experience he brings to Jackson Electric.

*Welcome, Gary!*

**Members are invited to attend the**  
**Annual Member Picnic**

**POWERING  
HOPE**

**Wednesday, October 8, 2025**  
**4 p.m. - 7 p.m.**

**Jackson Electric Truck Bay**  
**N6868 County Road F**  
**Black River Falls, Wis.**

**Food, Activities for the Kids, Prize  
Drawing for Kids Under 12**

**Opportunity to Support Local  
Cancer Patients**

**JEC JACKSONELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**  
 1937

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Customer Service 715.284.5385  
 800.370.4607  
 Outage Reporting 855.222.DARK (3275)  
 Diggers Hotline 800.242.8511  
 Card Payments 833.679.0919  
 www.jackelec.com



Mailing Address: N6868 County Road F  
 Black River Falls, WI 54615

Office Hours: Mondays – Thursdays, 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
 Fridays, 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Board of Directors: Chris Curran, President  
 Kristi Hanson, Vice President  
 David Peasley, Secretary-Treasurer  
 Jerry Huber, Dairyland Power Representative  
 Les Dokkestul, Brian Huber, Dan Smrekar,  
 Troy Torkelson, Gary Woods

Carol Blaken, General Manager/CEO

*Jackson Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

