



BLACK RIVER FURNITURE OUTLET CELEBRATES 30 YEARS



Former Jackson County Youth Returns Home to the Family Business

Black River Furniture Outlet is more than just a furniture store. It's a locally owned family business that values its customers and the community. These values created the strong foundation that has helped owners Troy and Julie Skroch succeed over the past 30 years. Now Troy and Julie's adult children, Gabe and Zoe, are taking on more responsibilities with the business and practicing these same values. We had an opportunity to talk with Gabe about his role in the family business.

"We conduct business at a level that provides value for the business and the customer," shares Gabe Skroch. "Taking care of the community is our top priority."

After graduating from Lincoln High School (Alma Center) in 2014, Gabe attended the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, where he graduated in 2018 with a degree in business management and marketing with a psychology minor. "I lived and worked in Green Bay for a few years, gaining entry level experience," he says. "The pandemic eventually solidified my decision to return home in mid-2020."

Gabe was no stranger to the family business when he returned home, as he had always been involved in some way and worked for the business throughout high school. He has been able to apply his previous job experience and degree to his current management role. "I've essentially been job shadowing and learning from my Dad throughout the years," shares Gabe. "As a manager, my top priorities are taking care of the customer and ensuring that my employees have what they need to succeed."

As a manager, Gabe is faced with new situations and decisions each day. He has seen personal growth in this position and has learned to get outside of his comfort zone. "I enjoy the level of involvement I get to have with the customers and the problem-solving," Gabe says. "I've learned I want to be the manager that leads by example and treats everyone with respect."

If you don't already know Gabe, you may recognize his voice from the

radio ads on WWIS-affiliated stations or the store's advertising on a local news station. He applies his marketing degree in managing the business's social media platforms as well as advertising. "I've enjoyed writing ads and learning more about the videography process," he shares.

Observing the traits of his entrepreneurial parents, Gabe has learned what it takes to be a successful business owner or to simply have an enjoyable career. "You need to have an understanding of yourself," Gabe explains. "You need to enjoy your business/career and be in it 100 percent. Choose the problems you're going to enjoy solving."

While Gabe gained valuable experiences and enjoyed living in Green Bay with access to more amenities, he realized what he enjoys about this area is the quietness and proximity to nature. "It's important for people to take the time to connect with nature," he explains. "What people also need is purpose. My goal is to get more involved in the community and

find an organization to volunteer with."

Gabe grew up with the family business, and he has witnessed the changes in products and services. He recalls memories of the Black River Surplus Store on the west side of town and the transition to the current store on the east side several years ago. He now sees generations of customers and families walk through the store. "It's amazing how many people remember me from when I was young," he says. "Over time, the products have changed, but it's the lasting connections that have allowed us to make it 30 years."

Pork for the People

Black River Furniture Outlet is hosting their annual Pork for the People and Customer Appreciation event on Saturday, September 21. They've been doing this event since 2012, which features donation-based food, free cake and coffee, great deals, and camaraderie.

"It's one of the ways that we give back to the community. I enjoy seeing all the community members talking and interacting," Gabe shares. "All donations go to the Veteran's Association. My Dad is a veteran, and our family has high respect for the military."—Brandi Shramek, Member Relations Advisor



Zoe, Troy, Julie, and Gabe Skroch

CAPITAL CREDITS ALLOCATION

Membership has its rewards

September is the month to notify members of their capital credits allocation. This is one of the benefits of belonging to a member cooperative. Each year, your Jackson Electric board of directors determines the portion of capital to allocate based on the cooperative's net margins for the year. This amount is allocated back to the membership proportionately based on the member's previous year patronage. This allocation is called capital credits.

Allocated funds are set aside for a period of time before they are paid back (retired) to the membership. During this period, the funds are used by the cooperative as operating capital for reliability improvements and maintenance.

Your September billing statement shows the amount of capital credits allocated for the year 2023 along with the total amount of unretired capital credits in your account. **This is not a capital credits retirement check or billing credit.** The allocation is set aside in your account and will be retired (cash out) when the board feels it is financially feasible to do so.

Capital Credits Allocation Notice

Capital Credits Allocation for 2023	\$112.55
Total Unretired Capital Credits.....	\$1912.64

Members may receive a retirement check in December or credit on the December billing statement. The Jackson Electric board of directors decides each year the total amount of capital credits to retire based on the current financial needs of the cooperative.

NOTE: Please be sure to always keep your mailing address up to date with Jackson Electric. This is especially important for any members moving off the Jackson Electric system. A current mailing address will ensure that any allocation notices and any eligible retirement funds are sent to the correct address.




Members are invited to attend the

ANNUAL MEMBER PICNIC

Wednesday,
October 2, 2024
4 – 7 p.m.

Jackson Electric
Cooperative Building
N6868 County Road F
Black River Falls, Wis.

Serving brats and hotdogs with the traditional picnic sides

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Jackson Electric employees will be wearing pink to show their support.




MEMBER PHOTO CONTEST

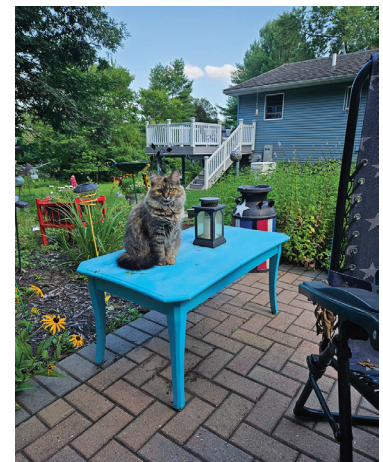
Submit your photos September 1-30, 2024, to be considered in the September contest.



THERE'S NO BETTER TIME TO GET OUT YOUR CAMERA

September marks the end of summer and transition into fall. Apple picking, hot cider, changing leaves... submit your favorite fall moments to jackelec.com and click the Photo Contest button to enter your photo for a chance to win a \$25 energy credit.

Congratulations to Margaret (Maggie) Rewald, who won the July photo contest with her photo "Enjoying Our Courtyard." She will receive a \$25 energy credit on her August billing statement.





MEMORIES ARE IN THE PHOTOS



This was a fly-in for the Wisconsin Flying Farmers, September 1963. If anyone knows about this organization or where this was held, please let us know.



"Look Out for Planes," September 1963.



Barbara and Cheryl Nemec are getting ready to go to school, not forgetting their lunch bucket, September 1953.



Mrs. Milton Nemec and Barbara prepare lunch as part of the Jackson County school lunch program, September 1953.



Carl Ruf holds one of his minks at his farm, September 1951.

YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Develop your skills
out of the school classroom

**Leadership • Cooperative Model • Business Skills
Service & Volunteer Opportunities**

High school juniors & seniors are eligible

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO APPLY!

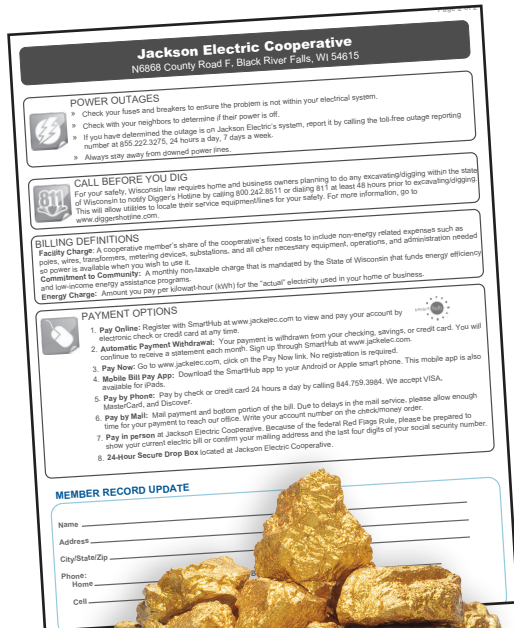
Contact Jackson Electric immediately to join
www.jackelec.com/youth-ambassador-program



Jackson Electric's youth ambassador program was established in 2010. The purpose has always been to fill the need to educate the youth in our service territory on the cooperative business model and provide training to develop important leadership and life skills. Jackson Electric has educated over 100 students! This program is for junior and senior high school students. Jackson Electric membership is not a requirement to apply.

WHAT YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT YOUR BILLING STATEMENT

If you receive power from Jackson Electric, then you receive a bill every month whether it's through the USPS or email. Have you ever looked at the back side of your billing statement? There is a gold mine of information! Let's explore the last three features! (See the *WECN* August edition for the first two.)



BILLING DEFINITIONS

WHAT ARE THESE CHARGES ON MY BILL?

- **Facility Charge:** There is an expense to keep the power available for the moment a member needs it. Every member pays a facility charge to help maintain the electrical system, which includes poles, wires, transformers, meters, substations, and all other equipment. Also included is the everyday maintenance of the lines and equipment so that reliable power is available.
- **Commitment to Community:** The State of Wisconsin mandates funds be collected for energy efficiency and low-income energy assistance programs. Jackson Electric keeps these funds local by directing this mandated portion to the Jackson Electric rebate program and local energy assistance programs.
- **Energy Charge:** This simply is the amount of energy consumed and charged at the current rate per kWh. You can control this charge by using energy wisely.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

HOW DO I PAY MY BILL?

There are eight options!

- ***Pay Online** – Pay anytime at your convenience – Registration required.
 - ***Automatic Payment Withdrawal** – Auto withdrawal from checking, savings accounts, or credit card on the due date – Registration required.
 - ***Pay Now** – Pay online immediately – NO REGISTRATION NEEDED.
- *All online options can be accessed at: <https://jackedec.com/payment-options>*

- **Mobile Bill Pay App** – Download the SmartHub app to Android or Apple smart phone – Must be registered on SmartHub.
- **Pay by Phone** – Call 844-759-3984 to pay by phone. (*Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express*)




- ****Pay by Mail** – Mail your payment to the Jackson Electric office.
 - ****Pay in Person** – Bring your payment to the Jackson Electric office.
 - ****24-Hour Secure Drop Box** – Located in Jackson Electric's parking lot.
- ** Office Address: N6868 County Rd F, Black River Falls, WI 54615**

MEMBER RECORD UPDATE

HOW DO I UPDATE MY INFORMATION?

Use this portion of your bill to communicate any changes to your mailing address, phone numbers, or email address. Submit this portion to the Jackson Electric office in person or by mail. Members can also update their contact information through the SmartHub portal.



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 844.759.3984
www.jackedec.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 to 11:00 a.m.
Board of Directors: Gary Woods, President
Chris Curran, Vice President
David Peasley, Secretary-Treasurer
Jerry Huber, Dairyland Power Representative
Dan Smrekar, Kristi Hanson, Brian Huber,
Troy Torkelson, Les Dokkestul

Kevin Babcock, General Manager/CEO

Jackson Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 