



Purposeful Plants: HOW NATURE CAN NURTURE THE BODY

Nature is buzzing at the Botanical Bee Co., located on East Snow Creek Road, just a short drive outside of Black River Falls off US Highway 12. Owned and operated by Jackson Electric member Mackenzie Demers, the Botanical Bee Co. combines the beneficial properties of plants with the healing properties of beeswax and honey to produce all-natural homemade body care items, candles, oils, and sprays that are beneficial to the body, mind, and soul. “These products are better than commercially made products because they are free from harmful chemicals and preservatives,” says Mackenzie. “Botanical Bee focuses on how nature can nurture the body.”

Mackenzie’s interest in nature and plants began at a young age, and that energy grew when she was employed as a greenhouse garden coordinator in 2015. She gained valuable experience with various plants and herbs, taking advantage of every opportunity to learn about their use. She notes how excited she was to learn about a new herb that she hadn’t heard of and that it had beneficial properties. “It was then that I realized that plants were my dream,” she says. “I now look at every plant and learn how it can be beneficial.”

In 2019, Mackenzie started experimenting with making goat milk soaps and lotions for her personal use. Once Mackenzie grew confident in her product making, she had the idea of opening a storefront with the perfect

place in mind, her grandpa’s old farm. There was acreage and space to develop this type of business, and of course, an abundance of plants. “I pitched the idea to my grandpa, and he was on board to let me play with the land,” Mackenzie shares. “I officially opened in 2023.”

Botanical Bee Co. is open seasonally from April to October. During your visit, you can expect to find a storefront with beneficial products, pollinator plants, and Mackenzie’s new hive of bees (assuming they survived the winter). One of the products you can find is homemade soap made with goat milk or beer. “I use locally sourced goat milk and try to use as many local products as possible,” she says.

Mackenzie explains that the art of

soap making takes time to learn the correct ratios of the products, such as lye and goat milk, as well as the physical time of waiting four to six weeks for the soap to set. Goat milk soap is a gentle cleanser that’s rich in nutrients, improves dry skin, and acts as a natural exfoliant. “The beer soap is a popular product for men,” she says. “Similar to goat milk, it softens the skin and can improve skin conditions.”

She also learned how to make botanically infused products, which is now her favorite process. To make an infusing oil, you must start with wilted or dried plants or herbs. The plant product is cut and packed in a jar and covered with a choice oil, such as olive oil. A lid is placed on the jar, and the jar is placed in a sunny window for several weeks, shaking the jar periodically. The final oil product is infused in the body soaps, shampoos, and bath salts to gain the benefits from the plants, and in the lotions for scent. “It takes about four weeks for the plants’ properties to change and for the oil to be ready for use,” Mackenzie explains. “I enjoy the process as the colors and smells change. I use as many plants and parts of the plant as possible.”

Mackenzie also uses locally sourced beeswax and honey in her products, and she’s looking forward to learning more about her new hive of bees, with the hope they survived the winter. Beeswax

(Continued on page 16)



Mackenzie prepares a jar of dandelions to make a botanical oil. The dandelion salve is good for cuts and scrapes. It is also full of vitamins.



Mackenzie displays some of her Botanical Bee Co. products: goat milk soaps, candles, oils, and balms. The dough bowl candles are a best seller, and the bowl can be refilled.

is a natural moisturizer and contains nutrients that are absorbed by the skin, so it is great for use in her lip balm and lotions. Mackenzie also uses honey in her soaps and shampoo bars. “My first winter with bees was a learning curve, but with the help of mentors, beekeeping is not as complicated as you read,” she shares.



During the summer, Mackenzie plans to host workshops at her property to teach community members how to identify plants. She also has some plans that will remain a surprise for now. Throughout the winter season, Mackenzie travels across Wisconsin to vendor shows where she educates consumers about her products and meets new people who also share a love of plants and natural products. “The greatest reward is spreading knowledge,” she explains. “I’m able to have my six-year-old by my side, teaching her the ins and outs of nature and how to identify plants.”

If you’re new to natural products or looking for a specific remedy, you won’t want to miss your opportunity to meet Mackenzie and reap the benefits of the Botanical Bee Co. products this summer. Mackenzie will be happy to tell you the benefits of her products, from the aloe and nettle-infused goat milk soap to help with skin issues, such as eczema and acne, to the rosemary hair oil that promotes growth. Mackenzie concludes with a quote

she learned in the University of Wisconsin-Extension Master Gardener class: “There’s no such thing as a weed; it’s a plant out of place.”

—Brandi Shramek, Member Relations Advisor

Attend a 2025 Event

Check out the Botanical Bee Co. Facebook page for upcoming events, summer workshops, and store hours.

Opening Day, April 26—Earth Day Celebration:

This free event will feature various vendors, nature-related activities for the kids, a petting zoo, and an opportunity to raise funds for the adaptive sports league and pollinator projects.

End of Season, first week of October—Fall Festival:

This free event will feature vendors, food, pumpkins, and children’s activities.

Botanical Bee Co. is located at N7627 E Snow Creek Road, Black River Falls, WI. From Kwik Trip on County Road A in Black River Falls, turn left onto US-12 W. Follow US-12 W for 2.5 miles. Turn left onto E Snow Creek Road. The destination is on the left in 0.9 miles.

WHAT ARE THOSE CHARGES ON MY BILLING STATEMENT

Last month, we provided information on the second facility charge that some of our members may see on their monthly electric bill statement. This month, we’ll explain the PCA or Power Cost Adjustment. Read on to find out why and when Jackson Electric may implement the PCA to recover fluctuating power costs.

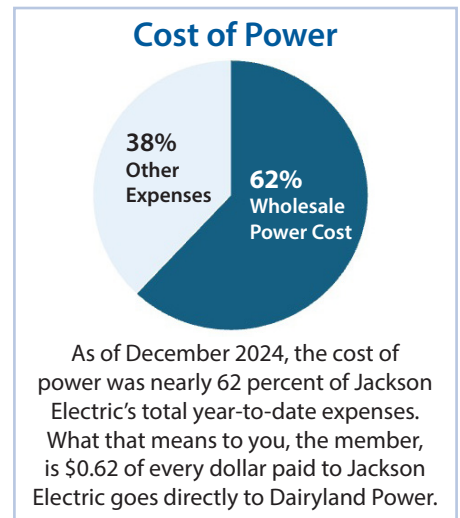
What is a PCA?

A PCA, or Power Cost Adjustment, is a mechanism put into place so Jackson Electric can either credit or recover unbudgeted wholesale power costs during the year without having to continually restructure energy rates. Wholesale power costs, which fluctuate, are billed monthly to Jackson Electric from our power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative.

In essence, a PCA calculates the difference between the actual cost of purchased power and budgeted cost of purchased power. This difference can either give rise to a credit or surcharge. A credit would arise if actual power costs were lower than budgeted, and a surcharge would arise if actual power costs were higher than budgeted. Budgeted power costs are based off historical energy usage (kWh) and current rates within the respective rate class.

Billing Statement Line Item

In 2023, the PCA line item was added to your monthly billing statement to familiarize members with this billing mechanism. The PCA line item on your billing statement has shown zero for quite some time as it has been several years since Jackson Electric issued a PCA. If or when a PCA is issued, the PCA line item on your billing statement will show either a credit or a charge and can be issued in any given month throughout the calendar year.



Current Service Detail		
Facility Charge		35.65
Facility Charge		5.00
Commitment To Community		1.40
Energy Charge	859 kWh @ 0.1188	102.05
DF Energy Charge	1120 kWh @ 0.0825	92.40
Demand Charge	9.424 kW @ 0.0	0.00
PCA	1979 kWh @ 0.0	0.00
Area Light (Qty: 1)		12.00
Total Current Charges		248.50



JACKSON ELECTRIC YOUTH AMBASSADORS

SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

Melrose-Mindoro High School

Reese Cowley



Why did you join youth ambassadors? “I joined to expand on my leadership skills and continue to find ways to make a difference in our community.”

Future career interest/career path: UW-Madison—Healthcare

Hobbies: Staying active, reading, going to concerts.

Extracurricular activities: National Honor Society, mock trial, musical, student council, soccer, Raise Your Voice, Elementary Teacher’s Assistant.

What’s something you are most proud of? “My ability to become friends with anyone.”

Viola Finch



Why did you join youth ambassadors? “I joined youth ambassadors because I wanted an opportunity to gain community service hours and to give back to the community with other kids my age.”

Future career interest/career path: Winona State University—Allied Health-PreMed

Hobbies: Hiking, hanging out with friends.

Extracurricular activities: Raise Your Voice, band, student council, National Honor Society.

What’s something you are most proud of? “I am proud of the effort I gave all my years of high school, in all areas of my life, like band, my grades, and making new friendships.”

Cadence Holliday



Why did you join youth ambassadors? “This is my second year participating in the program, and the reason I came back was for all the community service that I get to be a part of that might be difficult if I were just doing it on my own.”

Future career interest/career path: Winona State—Allied Health

Hobbies: Running, reading, watching movies with my friends.

Extracurricular activities: Drama, student council, Raise Your Voice, National Honor Society.

What’s something you are most proud of? “I am most proud of being a delegate for the Academy of Future Medical Leaders!”

Isabella Libke



Why did you join youth ambassadors? “I returned because of the amazing experience I had my junior year!”

Future career interest/career path: UW-Stevens Point—Conservation Law Enforcement—Political Science

Hobbies: Coaching youth sports, pole vault, reading, volunteering.

Extracurricular activities: Track, mock trial, student council, Raise Your Voice, Future Farmer’s of America, National Honor Society, financial quiz bowl.

What’s something you are most proud of? “I’m most proud of all the coaching I have done over the past 4 or 5 years. I’ve been able to build so many connections with so many amazing kids. I was able to help start the first all-girls flag football team in our area. I’m just so thankful to have had the opportunity to coach all of these kids and to see everything they have accomplished. I’ve gotten to watch them grow and they’ve helped me grow into the person I am today.”

Courtney Nicolai



Why did you join youth ambassadors? “I decided to return my senior year because it is a great opportunity to be involved in my community. I am able to participate in community projects and learn important life skills and leadership skills.”

Future career interest/career path: UW-Madison—Biology

Hobbies: Horseback riding, snowboarding, fishing.

Extracurricular activities: Volleyball, basketball, track, soccer, Future Farmer’s of America, student council, National Honor Society, Raise Your Voice.

What would your warning label say? “Warning: I do everything at the last minute.”

Mytchell Wollin



Why did you join youth ambassadors? “I decided to join the youth ambassadors because my sister did it in high school as well, and that, along with the joy and fun I had last year, led me to continue to be a part of the program.”

Future career interest/career path: UW-Stevens Point —Biology—Environmental Science

Hobbies: Reading, video games.

Extracurricular activities: Drama, band, choir, Academic Decathlon, piano.

What’s something you are most proud of? “I am most proud of the commitment and accomplishments I have achieved while being on the Academic Decathlon team all four years of high school.”

Foreign Exchange Student
Melrose-Mindoro High School
Brittany, France

Maena Branellec



Extracurricular school activities: Cross country, mock trial, drama/musical, Raise Your Voice, soccer.

What have you enjoyed about your stay in America? “I love discovering the culture. Every day I learn new stuff. I also really appreciate seeing my skills in English getting better, and I appreciate all the people helping me with this.”

What has been the biggest adjustment? “Something I don’t really like in the USA is the food. It’s fun the first couple of months, but after that it’s difficult because there is a lot of unhealthy food like fast food, pizza, candy, and snacks. In France, we cook a lot of vegetables, and the food has much more flavor. The food is very healthy and delicious.”

What level of school will you be at when you return to France? “When I go back to France, I unfortunately need to redo my senior year. In France, the senior year, called ‘Terminal’, is the most important one. So, I will still be in high school called “Lycée”.

What are your overall thoughts about your stay in America? “I really love my life in the USA, and I’m really glad I found such good friends!”

RESIDENTIAL CONSUMER SURVEY

A randomly selected sample of Jackson Electric’s residential members may receive a mail survey sometime in April at the request of our power supplier, Dairyland Power. The survey will request information about your home, appliances, energy efficiency, and opinions on specific energy topics.

The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete. If you receive a survey, we ask that you complete the survey and return it to the survey processor in the postage-paid envelope provided. An online survey link will also be provided.

If you receive a survey and have any questions or concerns, please contact Tyler at Dairyland Power at 608.787.1363.



BEWARE OF SOLAR SCAMS

Some Jackson Electric members are being contacted by third-party solar companies, some of which are out of state. These companies have never contacted Jackson Electric and are providing misinformation about how you are credited for your solar production and are not informing members of other related fees and policies that they’ll need to consider. They are also insistent on members signing a contract by a certain date.

Be an informed consumer. Solar is an investment, and we don’t want to see our members get scammed. Please contact our office before committing to a solar purchase and installation. There are policies, procedures, and fees that should be discussed with you before you sign a contract.

Contact our office at 715.284.5385.



JACKSON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 88TH ANNUAL MEETING

MAY
14

Wednesday, May 14, 7:00 p.m.
Lunda Theatre, Black River Falls

Watch for your 2024 annual report in next month’s *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News*.



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: 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

