

Wrap up the Year

With Project Christmas of Jackson County Wisconsin, Inc.



JACKSON ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Do you hear what I hear?
Jackson Electric is once again the site for Project Christmas. Throughout the year, we've highlighted in this magazine volunteer opportunities in Jackson County, and we understand that an ongoing volunteer activity may not fit with everyone's schedule. We're inviting you to wrap up the year by donating a few hours of holiday cheer to Project Christmas on the following dates:

- **Tuesday, December 10**, at 6 p.m. – wrapping gifts
- **Thursday, December 12**, at 6 p.m. – packing food boxes
- **Saturday, December 14** – delivery of gifts and food (please contact Ruth Buswell ahead of time if interested in helping deliver the items)



If you would like to donate to Project Christmas, there are several drop-off sites at various locations throughout Jackson County. Look for the red Project Christmas barrels. Project Christmas accepts non-perishable food donations (preferably not glass) and gifts for children (birth to 18). Please do not wrap the donated items. Gift guidelines:

- 1) no batteries;
- 2) non-violent;
- 3) \$12–\$20 price range.

Project Christmas accepts monetary donations year-round. Those can be sent to Project Christmas, c/o Co-op Credit Union, P.O. Box 157, Black River Falls, WI 54615.

Each year, more than 500 families, about 1,500 to 1,800 people, in Jackson County receive food boxes and gifts. If you would like to refer another family or your own family, call American Family



Insurance: 715.284.4113.

Project Christmas of Jackson County is an organization run with 100 percent volunteers and community donations. If you are interested in becoming part of the Project Christmas Committee, please contact Deb Horan at 715.333.6205. "We're always looking for younger people to get involved," says Deb.

YOU Get the Credit

Jackson Electric Cooperative Board of Directors recently approved the retirement of \$800,000 in capital credits. If you purchased electricity from Jackson Electric for a portion of the years 2002, 2007, 2008, 2012, and 2013, you may receive a retirement check in the mail or credit on your December billing statement. This is one of the many benefits you receive when you are a member of Jackson Electric.

Cooperative members share in the ownership, construction, maintenance, and prosperity of Jackson Electric. Capital credits represent your investment in Jackson Electric, and are one of the most unique and rewarding benefits you enjoy as a member.

Capital Credits Account Reminders

If you move from Jackson Electric's service lines, please be sure to contact our office with your new address. We will continue to send to you any capital credits retirement you are eligible to receive.

When a member passes away, the capital credits account is available for estate retirement. The representative of the estate should contact our office or go to www.jackelec.com to complete the required documentation.

Capital Credits Retirement Notice

- Jackson Electric shall not retire and pay capital credits in an amount less than \$25.
- Jackson Electric shall apply retired capital credits in the amount between \$25 and \$50 to the active member's billing account.
- Accounts with retired capital credits more than \$50 will receive a check to the patron's most current address on file at Jackson Electric.
- Retired capital credits check not cashed within 90 days from assignment will become null and void. There is a \$25 administrative fee to reissue that check.

LOAD MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATIONS AVAILABLE

Members can now be notified by email, text, and/or phone call of a load management event. Please contact the office to request a load management enrollment form or go to www.jackelec.com/content/dual-fuel-program to download a form. This form must be on file at Jackson Electric for you to receive notifications.

Jackson Electric's office will be closed:

Christmas Eve Day, December 24
Christmas Day, December 25
New Year's Day, January 1

All power outages can be reported to 855.222.3275.

Pay your bill with a debit or credit card at 844.759.3984 or use any of our online payment services.



BLACK RIVER AREA COMMUNITY BAND:

A community of musicians for the community

“A lot of people leave high school and put the drum sticks or instrument away because they don’t have an option to continue playing,” says Joe Williams of the Black River Area Community Band (BRACB). The band was created to offer musicians an opportunity to play again with an organized group. “I believe it’s a great asset to the community, and the community in general enjoys and appreciates the band.”

The BRACB, an all-volunteer band, formed as a not-for-profit organization in 1998, after Joe initiated the idea in 1997. Joe has played percussion since his freshman year of high school and was involved in a community band in Illinois. When he moved to this area, he realized there wasn’t a community band.

“I put an article in the paper to see if there were others interested in forming a community band,” Joe says. “Twelve community members were interested initially.”

Community members can enjoy the band at several community events throughout the year, from parades to festivals to indoor and outdoor concerts. “Caroling” around Black River Falls and nursing home visits are also popular activities amongst the band members.

“It’s a fun way to de-stress and connect with others from the community,” says Nathan Bruley. “It’s an opportunity to contribute the gift of live music to the community,” he adds.

In addition to the gift of music, the organization also contributes to the community through monetary donations to support music education. In the past, scholarships were

awarded to students desiring to attend band camp. In 2015, the scholarship program changed to a “Benefit the Band” program, which awards \$400 to a local school band program each year. “The BRACB was also instrumental in implementing the Lunda Park band shell,” adds Joe.

If your high school days are beyond you and your instrument has been collecting dust, there’s no need to worry. “We have had members who hadn’t played their horn for 20 to 40 years. Within a month or so, they regained many of their past skills,” says Dick Camlek.

Trisha Wagner adds, “Playing an instrument is like riding a bike. You may be a little rusty at first, but you never really forget how to play.”

If you don’t have your instrument anymore, you’ve misplaced it, or it’s seen better days, you should still consider joining the band. “If you are in need of an instrument, we can help you locate one,” says Marie Ruda. “If you played in high school and had fun, you will have the same experience with us.”

The band currently has members in their 80s still playing music, but that doesn’t mean there isn’t room for young members, too. The band welcomes any musician high school age or older to join. “Students who are serious about music should come play with us. Music is an activity a person can do for life,” says Randy Bjerke.

Cathy Whaley adds, “You’re never too young or old.” “BRACB members don’t just live in Black River Falls; they are from all over, and some travel 30 plus miles one way to rehearsal,” shares Kristi Hanson. “Jackson Electric’s service territory covers a large geographic area, so any cooperative members with an interest should dust off their instrument and consider joining the band.”

Past and current band members come from Black River Falls, Alma Center, Merrillan, Humbird, Melrose, Hixton, Taylor, Tomah, Sparta, La Crosse, Pigeon Falls, and Whitehall.

For some, joining the community band sparks lifelong

The Black River Area Community Band plays at several community events throughout the year, including parades and concerts. They even visit the nursing home during the holidays.





Jackson Electric's District 2 Director Kristi Hanson, Member Relations Advisor Pam Bjerke, and Executive Coordinator Brandi Shramek enjoy playing in the band.

friendships. "The most rewarding part of my involvement is the friendships I have formed with other musicians," says Diane Kujak. "The band is a community of people with a common interest—music. Many of us would probably not know each other any other way."

If you've lived in the area a short while or a lifetime, there's room for you in the band. "We have had several new members that joined after moving to the area," says Pam Bjerke. "It's a great way to meet new people and can especially be a great opportunity for young adults just out of high school/college, as well as empty-nesters looking for something to do in their spare time," adds Kristi.

The BRACB can also be a family-oriented activity. Jacob Buhl joined the band three years ago when his son was a junior in high school. Jessica Hangartner joined about a year and half ago, and she plans to invite her daughter to join when she starts high school. Pam shares, "Around 2000 my youngest daughter and I started going. Randy was already very active in the band, and I missed reading music."

The band celebrated 20 years in 2018 and continues to prepare music for the community to enjoy. "Lance Rohloff, director for 19 years, deserves a lot of credit for putting together a wide variety of musical selections to please all ages," says Mary Mack. "He is the reason we have so much fun performing!"

For Lance, the opportunity to experience great music is the most rewarding part of his involvement with the band. "There's also a strong social aspect to belonging to the band," says Lance. "It's an excellent way to be involved in community service."

If you're still not sure about joining the band, Jolene Janke shares some final words of encouragement: "It's good, clean fun! You get more out of it than you put into it in the ratio of enjoyment to time spent. Plus, studies show that one of the many advantages of playing music is that it helps slow the effects of aging."—*Brandi Shramek, Executive Coordinator*

"Haven't you ever wanted to be part of something?"

—*Barb McNulty*

If you have further questions, please reach out to any band member. If you would like to attend a rehearsal or are interested in joining, it is best to contact Lance Rohloff directly. Rehearsals are held on Monday nights from 7–9 p.m. in the band room at the Black River Falls Middle School.

DIRECTOR EARNS TRAINING CERTIFICATE

Jackson Electric's District 2 Director Kristi Hanson recently received her Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate from Board President Gary Woods. The CCD certification is the first part of the National Rural Electric Co-



operative Association's three-part director education program.

The CCD program consists of five courses that focus on basic governance knowledge and the essential skills required of cooperative directors. These courses prepare directors to fulfill their fiduciary duties as elected officials serving on behalf of their membership.

Kristi will continue taking courses in pursuit of obtaining the next level of director education, the Board Leadership Certificate.

WINTER MORATORIUM REMINDER

We are a month into the winter moratorium period. Please note that Jackson Electric can disconnect power during the winter moratorium for non-payment on an electric account. However, Jackson Electric, under the governance of its board of directors, does not initiate a full disconnection of power during the winter moratorium, but chooses to install a new electronic meter to a member's electric account which would be used to remotely disconnect and reconnect the member's electric service. These devices cycle the electric service on and off every 30 minutes.

As we continue through the moratorium season, past-due balances are carried by the entire membership of Jackson Electric. Not paying your electric bill during the winter months only puts off the inevitable until spring. Full disconnect of your electric account may occur in April if insufficient payments during the winter months have not been reconciled and credited to your electric account. In addition, late fees will add to the burden of paying off a delinquent account.

Members who are experiencing hardship during the heating season may be eligible for energy assistance. Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. administers the low-income portion of Jackson Electric's Commitment to Community funds for electric bill assistance and home weatherization. Call 800.782.1063, ext. 231, for more information on this program.

Agencies That May Provide Assistance

Jackson County Health & Human Services	715.284.4301
Clark County Social Services	715.743.5233
La Crosse County Human Services	608.784.4357
Monroe County Human Services	608.269.8600
Trempealeau County Social Services	715.538.2311

MY CO-OP



ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS ARE CONVENIENT, BUT ARE THEY COST-EFFICIENT?


Portable electric space heaters are convenient, but they have one purpose: supplemental heat. They're designed to heat a small area, not your entire home. When used improperly or beyond their intended use, space heaters can be costly to both your wallet and safety.

All portable electric space heaters

are 100 percent efficient; however, they still use a considerable amount of electricity if used regularly. This formula can be used to calculate the approximate operating cost of an electric space heater:

$$\text{Watts}/1,000 \times \$0.1130/\text{kWh} \times \text{hours of operation} = \text{cost}$$

For example, a 1,500-watt electric space heater operating eight hours a day for 30 days costs \$40.68 per month to operate. There are more economical choices available to heat your home. Contact Jackson Electric to learn more about cost-effective electric heat options.



SMART TIPS

SPACE HEATER SAFETY

Space heaters can be a cost effective option when heating no more than one or two small areas.

- Review and follow all manufacturer directions.
- Place them out of high-traffic areas and on a hard, level floor surface.
- Keep them at least 3 feet away from flammable items.
- Plug them directly into outlets. Avoid using an extension cord.
- Turn them off before you leave the room or go to sleep.

Learn more at: SafeElectricity.org

ADD ENERGY EFFICIENCY TO YOUR HOLIDAY LIST

Rebate submission deadline is December 31, 2019

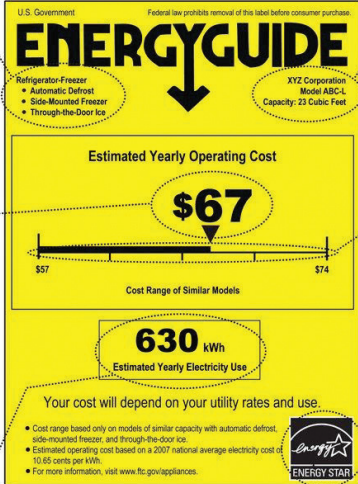
If you're planning to ring in the new year with new appliances or lighting, please keep energy efficiency, rebate qualifications, and the rebate deadline in mind. Funds are limited, so it's important to submit your rebate application to Jackson Electric before the December 31 deadline.

When out shopping, it can be tempting to pick the best bargain or gear towards the item with the lowest sticker price. However, it's also important to check the consumer guides for the products you're interested in purchasing. Looking beyond the sticker price can help you save money over time through energy efficiency and rebates.

If you're interested in receiving a rebate for an appliance purchase, please note that you must also look for an Energy Star rated appliance. Most of these appliances will have the Energy Star logo printed on the EnergyGuide. The yellow EnergyGuide alone does not qualify you for a rebate.

When shopping for new LED light bulbs or fixtures, shop by

lumens, not watts. Lumens measure how much light you receive from the bulb: the more lumens, the brighter the light. Like an EnergyGuide, the Lighting Facts label provides consumers with the lumens, energy cost, lifespan, and light appearance of the product. LED light-bulbs use 75 to 80 percent less energy than traditional bulbs (energy.gov). The purchase of these bulbs qualifies you for Jackson Electric's lighting reward rebate.



ENERGYGUIDE

Refrigerator-Freezer

- Automatic Defrost
- Side-Mounted Freezer
- Through-the-Door Ice

XYZ Corporation Model ABC-L Capacity: 23 Cubic Feet

Estimated Yearly Operating Cost

\$67

Cost Range of Similar Models: \$57 - \$74

630 kWh Estimated Yearly Electricity Use

Your cost will depend on your utility rates and use.

- Cost range based only on models of similar capacity with automatic defrost, side-mounted freezer, and through-the-door ice.
- Estimated operating cost based on a 2007 national average electricity cost of 10.65 cents per kWh.
- For more information, visit www.ftc.gov/appliances.

ENERGY STAR

Callouts:

- Lists key features of the appliance you're looking at and the similar models that make up the cost range below.
- The maker, model, and size tell you exactly what product this label describes.
- The cost range helps you compare the energy use of different models by showing you the range of operating costs for models with similar features.
- What you might pay to run the appliance for a year, based on its electricity use and the national average cost of energy. The cost appears on labels for all models and brands, so you can compare energy use just like you would price or other features.
- An estimate of how much electricity the appliance uses in a year based on typical use. Multiply this by your local electricity rate on your utility bill to better judge what your actual operating cost might be.
- If you see the ENERGY STAR logo, it means the product is better for the environment because it uses less energy than standard models.



JEC JACKSON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Customer Service 715.284.5385
800.370.4607

Outage Reporting 855.222.DARK (3275)

Diggers Hotline 800.242.8511

Credit Card Payments 844.759.3984

www.jackelec.com

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 546
Black River Falls, WI 54615

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Board of Directors: Gary Woods, President
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