



Member Appreciation Day Is Right Around The Corner



A MESSAGE FROM:

Shane L. Larson,
Chief Executive Officer

2024 Member Appreciation Day

Saturday, Oct. 19 / 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Rock County Fairgrounds (Craig Center)

1301 Craig Ave. / Janesville, WI

It's just about that time of year once again as Member Appreciation Day is almost here!

Rock Energy's 2024 Member Appreciation Day Pancake Breakfast, along with all the activities you love, will take place on Saturday, October 19. This is an annual event that allows all of us at the co-op—employees and directors—to express our gratitude to all our great members.

Last year we changed the event location and it was held at the Rock County Fairgrounds, which is where it will be held again this year. The new fairgrounds location worked out perfect for the event last year, giving us much more space to use. For example, instead of having just one bounce house on-site, the extra space has allowed us to have TWO bounce houses for the kids. Using the fairgrounds also provides for more parking and overall more convenience for accessing the event.



Throughout the Craig Center building and the fairgrounds, members will be able to catch up with old friends and make new ones, as everyone enjoys the delicious pancake breakfast.

Outside, bucket truck rides will provide a spectacular view of the city of Janesville and kids can enjoy the two bounce houses. Also for the kids, balloon artists will be on hand to transform ordinary balloons into everything from pirates to frogs to rainbows. Other artists will decorate faces with dolphins, baseballs, cats, and more. There will also be fresh kettle corn!

The event is designed to have a carnival-like atmosphere to be had fun by everyone, and based on all the smiles I see every year, I think we've succeeded in that endeavor.

With that said, we would love to have you join us on Saturday, October 19, so we can express how truly important you—the members—are to the co-op.

SEE YOU THERE!

AN INCREDIBLE 'DONKEY VENTURE'

Rock Energy Board Member Serves Community Through A Unique Method Using Miniature Donkeys



Rock Energy Cooperative board member and board Vice-Chair Barbara Miller started a business venture in 2017 with her beloved miniature donkeys called Festive Donkey Ventures. They started out back in 2017 by just doing weddings, but since then, Miller's husband, Leon Maerz, has joined her in running things, and the operation has grown as they now take their donkeys to a wide-range of locations and event types.

"Our donkeys are delivering beverages at the Lake Geneva Country Club Sailing Regatta, golf outings, birthday parties, and other events," said Miller. "We also do educational exhibits like the Education Center at the Stoughton (WI) Fair, school visits, farm days, and all sorts of different outings."

The 'educational' events are done as a community service, Miller said, during which they look at it as an opportunity to educate people about the miniature donkeys she cares for and trains.

"As we visit festivals, weddings, nursing facilities, etc., we are always sharing information about the donkeys, as not many people know about them," said Miller. "Especially important is the educational events where we can talk in more depth about the care, history, the unique characteristics, personalities, and religious legends associated with our donkeys."

To read more (and see more pictures) about this incredible "Donkey Venture," scan the QR code below.





Pictured here are Barbara Miller, left, and her husband Leon Maerz, with their donkeys Dominic (left) and Dream, at Skaalen nursing home in Stoughton, WI.



Pictured here, Dominic the donkey gives a hug to Barbara Miller (owner & trainer).



A Long-Time Rock Energy Member

Miller lives in Porter Township, WI, just outside of Edgerton. She has a son, Joseph, who helps out with the donkey operation. Miller has lived on Rock Energy lines for more than 50 years, since 1963. She grew up on the family farm in Center Township in Rock County on co-op lines, and for the last 25 years she's been on her own farm in Porter Township, also on co-op lines. She was elected to the Rock Energy board of directors in 2017. She taught in the Brodhead School District for 30 years before retiring. Her mother, Jo Miller, was the first woman to be elected to serve as a director on the Rock Energy board and served for 26 years.

Concern For Community

"Concern for Community" is one of the 7 Cooperative Principles, and it's always top-of-mind with Miller when she plans the community events that she takes her donkeys to.

"When we visit a nursing facility, assisted living home, memory care facility or a traumatic brain injury facility, it is the reaction of those patients or residents, as well as the staff, that make our hours of preparation worth those few minutes of interaction," said Miller. "The facility where residents with traumatic brain injury receive specialty care, is probably the place that is most heartwarming. The residents are of a wide range and degrees of abilities, as some are ambulatory and some are confined to a bed. We visit those in their rooms, and see pictures from our last visit on their walls. We see staff members remarking how they have not seen a resident smile until they interact with the donkey, like when they touch the velvet muzzle of the donkey."

To read more (and see more pictures) about Barbara Miller and her donkeys, scan the QR code on page 16.

Pictured at left, Dream the donkey visits with a group of kids on hand at Skaalen nursing home.

LIGHTS OUT?

USE SMARTHUB TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

Rock Energy is notified of outages automatically through our metering system, but we encourage members to:

- **Sign up for outage text alerts.**
- **Utilize our web site (www.Rock.coop) to view the Outage Map (click on Outage button at the top).**
- **Use SmartHub to report an outage (preferred method) if there is an unusual situation that caused the outage (power lines down, there was a loud boom, etc).**

In order to report an outage through SmartHub online and with the SmartHub App, log into your account and click on the "Report Power Outage" button on the left (see below).

Check Circuit Breaker And Fuse Box First

Before you report an outage at your location, make sure to check your fuse box or circuit breaker first. This will determine if the problem is on Rock Energy lines or with your own electrical system. It might be as simple as a blown fuse or tripped circuit.

NOTE: In order to avoid any potential unnecessary charges, please make sure to check your fuse box and circuit breaker first, before reporting the outage.

The screenshot shows the SmartHub Home page for a Rock Energy Cooperative member. The left sidebar contains a menu with the following items: BILL & PAY, USAGE, DOCUMENTS, CONTACT US, SETTINGS, Report Power Outage (circled in red), Report an Issue, Make a Payment, Notifications, and Sign Out. The main content area is titled 'HOME' and includes a 'NOTIFICATIONS (2)' section with 'Outage Contact Information' and 'Reversed/Denied Payments'. Below this is a 'CUSTOMER OVERVIEW' section for 'John Doe' showing a 'Last Payment Amount' of \$1.00, a 'Past Due Balance' of \$0.00, and a 'Current Bill Amount' of \$227.14, with a 'Pay' button. A large red diagonal watermark across the center reads 'SMARTHUB HOME PAGE EXAMPLE'.



REC OFFICES CLOSED LABOR DAY

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 2, in observance of Labor Day. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m., Tuesday, Sept. 3. Members can make payments in the drop boxes at both offices throughout the holiday weekend and at the payment kiosk outside of the South Beloit office, 15229 Willowbrook Rd. Even though our offices are closed, crews are always available 24 hours a day. If you need to report a power outage or natural gas leak, call 866-752-4550.

Shane Larson, CEO

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Jonas Berberich, Editor

