

# Co-op Welcomes Back Member Appreciation Day

Event Finds New Home At Rock County Fairgrounds



A MESSAGE FROM:

**Shane L. Larson,**  
Chief Executive Officer

Member Appreciation Day is one of our favorite days for those employees and board members who participate at this wonderful event. On August 5, we brought Member Appreciation Day back after it was shelved for three years due to COVID. This year's event also took place at a new location—the Rock County Fairgrounds in Janesville, WI.

While delivering pancakes to tables and talking with members, I was overwhelmed by the sense of community as people of all ages gathered to have some fun and enjoy fellowship.

The weather for our event was as close to perfect as possible, and smiles were seen on faces everywhere. Workers from Chris Cakes flipped pancakes right onto members' plates (see the picture to the right). Members took turns spinning the prize wheel and collecting a small token of our appreciation, and the health fair, sponsored by Mercy Health System, offered very important and helpful healthcare advice.

For the first time at our Member Appreciation Day event, the smell of freshly popped kettle corn filled the air. The sweet and savory kettle corn was made and served by local vendor Pop'n DeLites Kettle Corn.

Members stopped at our information tables to learn about the importance of calling 8-1-1 before every digging project, natural gas safety, tree trimming, and other insightful items about the co-op.



**Pictured above, Rock Energy members enjoy a pancake breakfast at the 2023 Rock Energy Cooperative Member Appreciation Day, which was held at the Rock County Fairgrounds on August 5.**

Also on display this year was the Rock Energy Youth Education station, where board members Marian Trescher, Barb Miller and Bill Fischer spoke with members about all the ways Rock Energy supports our youth. On hand at the youth station were some of our teen members who recently took part in the Youth Leadership Conference at UW-Stout (see more information about the conference on pages 17-18). Two of them, Emma Steinke and Samantha Hopkins, also took part in the Washington D.C. Tour this summer.

Throughout the Craig Center building and the fairgrounds, members were catching up with old friends and making new ones. Outside, bucket truck rides provided a spectacular view of the city of Janesville and kids enjoyed two bounce houses.

Balloon artists from Funny Faces Family Entertainment transformed ordinary balloons into everything from pirates to frogs to rainbows. Other artists decorated faces with dolphins, baseballs, cats, and more. Parents and grandparents looked on as children were beaming. I hope you had the opportunity to see some of their handiwork.

On behalf of all the employees and directors here at Rock Energy, I want to thank everyone who attended Member Appreciation Day. If you couldn't come this year, we hope you'll consider joining us next year.

*NOTE: More pictures from the 2023 Member Appreciation Day event will be published in the October magazine.*



**Pictured above, a group of youngsters pop bubbles during the 2023 Member Appreciation Day at the Rock County Fairgrounds.**



# YOUTH MEMBERS REPRESENT ROCK ENERGY ON YLC BOARD

The 60th Annual Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) took place at UW-Stout in July, with 73 young people in attendance representing 15 Wisconsin electric cooperatives. During the three-day event, attendees learned about electric cooperatives and the 7 Cooperative Principles, as well as leadership skills and networking, all in a campus setting. The 2023-2024 Youth Board was also elected. Of the seven youth elected, two were Rock Energy Cooperative members, Thomas Peters and Jayden Mosley.

Those elected to the Youth Board serve in a leadership position working to engage more young people with electric cooperatives, they lead the planning of the 2024 Youth Leadership Conference, and they have the opportunity to participate in the 2024 Youth Tour of Washington, D.C.

Fourteen YLC attendees ran for the Youth Board this year, delivering spirited and entertaining speeches to the group, making their case on why they would be good candidates. Six of the candidates were elected, plus one alternate.

## 2023-24 Youth Board Members:

- Carson Welter, Oakdale Electric Cooperative
- Thomas Peters, Rock Energy Cooperative
- Mya Petersen, Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services
- Helen Clements, Vernon Electric Cooperative
- Jayden Mosley, Rock Energy Cooperative
- Ryther Gehrke, Richland Electric Cooperative
- Johnnah Vircks (alternate), Clark Electric Cooperative

Activities this year at YLC also included a presentation from Packer great Gilbert Brown, “The Gravedigger;” a motivational team-building presentation by motivational speaker and author Craig Hillier; a safe driving presentation; an etiquette dinner; a hypnotist; and a presentation about cooperative careers from Beth Knudson, NRECA youth programs and training manager. The youth groups also produced their own videos demonstrating cooperative principles.

“What an incredible experience,” said Barb Miller, Rock Energy Cooperative director and WECA board member, who attended YLC for the first time. “Kids are networking, they’re learning leadership, and all about what a co-op is about, at a very young age. This event is very well organized and an advantage for all co-ops. Compliments to everybody that’s involved.” On Thursday as YLC was wrapping up, Miller gathered a group of young people, including those from Rock Energy, and asked about their takeaways. All responses were positive.

“YLC has changed the trajectory of my life,” said Youth Board member Emma Steinke. Emma, a Rock Energy member, was selected to represent Wisconsin youth at the 2024 NRECA Annual Meeting.

Source: WECA



**Congratulations to the 2023-24 Youth Board! These seven students were elected by their peers at this summer's Youth Leadership Conference. They will be involved all year in activities promoting and supporting electric cooperatives, including planning the next Youth Leadership Congress. They will also participate in the National Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., in the spring. Front (from left): Helen Clements, Vernon Electric Cooperative; and Mya Petersen, Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services. Back (from left): Thomas Peters, Rock Energy Cooperative; Jayden Mosley, Rock Energy Cooperative; Carson Welter, Oakdale Electric Cooperative; Johnnah Vircks (alternate), Clark Electric Cooperative; and Ryther Gehrke, Richland Electric Cooperative.**





### **"Gravedigger" Gilbert Brown Featured Speaker at 2023 YLC**

**BELOW/RIGHT:** Green Bay Packer Hall of Famer Gilbert Brown, aka "The Gravedigger," (pictured below/right) was the featured speaker at the 60th Annual Youth Leadership Conference at UW-Stout in Menomonie.

**ABOVE:** Attendees at the 2023 YLC.

**LEFT:** Rock Energy youth members who attended the event, along with Barb Miller, Rock Energy Board Member. From left to right: Aiden Steinke, Samantha Hopkins, Emma Steinke, Barb Miller, Thomas Peters, Jayden Mosley and Garret Schneider.

**BELOW/LEFT:** Emma Steinke (right) and Mallori Oyen (left) participate in group activities during the YLC event.



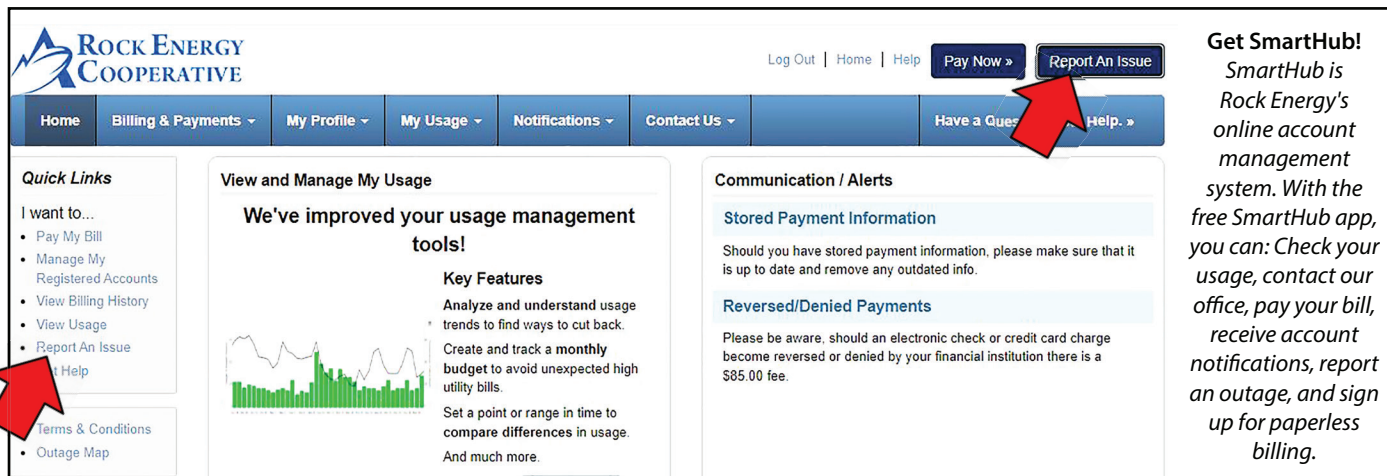


# LIGHTS OUT? USE SMARTHUB TO REPORT THE OUTAGE

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](http://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 An Issue" button in the top right corner (see image below). This link is also on the left side under "Quick Links." You will be directed to a page where you can report the outage by clicking on the "Power Outage" button.



**Get SmartHub!**  
SmartHub is Rock Energy's online account management system. With the free SmartHub app, you can: Check your usage, contact our office, pay your bill, receive account notifications, report an outage, and sign up for paperless billing.

## ENERGY SAVING TIP

### HEATING SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system.

Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings can save a lot on your energy bill.



Source: Dept. of Energy



# HAPPY LABOR DAY

## REC OFFICES CLOSED SEPTEMBER 4

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 4, in observance of Labor Day. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m., Tues., Sept. 5. Members can make payments in the drop boxes at both offices on Sept. 4. 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 incident, please call 866-752-4550.

**Shane Larson, CEO**

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**Jonas Berberich, Editor**

