



# THE POWER OF CONNECTION

By Jesse Singerhouse, General Manager

In Wisconsin our summer season is short, but we make up for it by packing a lot of things in a short amount of time. Almost every week there is some festival or event going on. From Dairy Breakfasts, live music events like Country Jam, small town festivals and county fairs, we have many local opportunities to have fun, catch up with friends, and enjoy our community. We've listed some of the upcoming local county fairs that you could attend to connect with friends, see all the projects those 4-H and FFA members are working on, and maybe enjoy some cheese curds!

Each of these events gives us an opportunity to connect with people. In early June I attended the Pepin County Dairy Breakfast. There I saw people connecting with each other and agriculture. Neighbors were catching up with each other, talking about the weather and the crops. Children were learning about agriculture while exploring the barn, watching the dairy calves and looking at the farm machinery. Countless volunteers were connecting to their community by giving their time to help make the event possible. Events like these undoubtedly show that connections are a powerful thing! (12096002)

With the power of connections in mind we announced a new program, The Power Connection: Conversations with your Cooperative. The Power Connection program is designed to

increase the connection we have with our members while having engaging conversations about the energy issues facing our industry. The group of roughly 10 members participating in The Power Connection will meet five times for about 90 minutes at each session. Members will learn cooperative basics; what it takes to deliver power to over 10,000 meters in our rural area;

## *The* **Power Connection** Conversations with Your Cooperative

how local, state, and national policies impact our cooperative; and much more. More information about the program will be available on our website soon. The program will begin in October and will meet monthly through March, except December. If you are interested in getting on the list for possible participation, please email [info@dunnenergy.com](mailto:info@dunnenergy.com) or call the office.

The cooperative becomes even stronger when members are positively engaged with their cooperative and aware of the challenges and opportunities we face. Cooperatives are truly special organizations because we were formed on the premise of serving our members. That basic founding principle still holds true today and guides our decision-making as we work to safely provide you with reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**IT'S FAIR TIME!**

**County fairs in July in Northern Wisconsin**

- State Fair**  
July 10–14  
Chippewa Falls
- St. Croix County Fair**  
July 17–21  
Glenwood City
- Barron County Fair**  
July 17–21  
Barron
- Dunn County Fair**  
July 24–28  
Menomonie

*Working for You*

# 87<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING:



## Full House as Directors Elected, New Program is Announced

The 87th Annual Meeting of Members for Dunn Energy Cooperative was a success as 157 people gathered to celebrate another solid year for their cooperative and elect three new members to the board of directors. The meeting was kicked off with a light dinner, catered by the Viking Bowl in Colfax.

Directors in three districts met their term limits in 2024. Those directors, Jim Wildner, Lee Jensen, and Tom Zwiefelhofer, each served four three-year terms for your cooperative. Dunn Energy Cooperative is unique amongst electric cooperatives as one of the few that have term limits. Not only that, but your cooperative practices good governance in making sure directors stand for election every three years. The

bylaws of your cooperative state that there shall be two directors on the ballot, so no one can run unopposed.

These outgoing board members did good and valuable things for your cooperative. All three became Credentialed Cooperative Directors through NRECA's continuing education program. They also represented and advocated for you at state and national meetings over the years.

Individually, Jim Wildner cares deeply for the safety of our members and employees. As a retired employee of West Wisconsin 24/7 Telcom, he came in with a greater knowledge of the cooperative business model and offered sound advice on technology efforts here at Dunn Energy.

Lee Jensen, from Five Star Dairy, is

an innovator and really knows how to take in the big picture. Not only did Lee care about what was happening now in our industry, but also what the future could bring. Developing sustainability in farming has made him and his farm leaders in our community. He always encouraged the cooperative to look at ways to make our energy more environmentally responsible, while continuing to maintain reliability.

Tom Zwiefelhofer has been a very engaged board member during his time on the board. He's held executive leadership positions on the board including the vice president positions on both the Dunn Energy board as well as the Dairyland Power board of directors. He has worked tirelessly for you, our members. (345002)



Three directors met their term limits in 2024. Those outgoing directors received a meter lamp as a token of the cooperative's appreciation for their 12 years of service. Pictured (L-R): DEC board President Jeff Gasteyer presents lamps to Jim Wildner, Lee Jensen, and Tom Zwiefelhofer with CEO Jesse Singerhouse.



Left: Three new directors were elected at the 87th Annual Meeting, held on Thursday, May 16. They are (L-R) Dennis Dvoracek, Jeff Wildner, and Michael Jenson Jr. Right and opposite page: Dunn Energy Cooperative CEO speaks to a full house at the 87th Annual Meeting of Members.

With their departure, we have three new board members to welcome to the cooperative, each elected to a three-year term. We are excited to work with Jeff Wildner, Dennis Dvoracek, and Michael Jenson Jr.

Guest speaker Ben Porath, executive vice president and chief operating officer at Dairyland Power Cooperative, spoke about the Dairyland Power Cooperative diversified energy portfolio. He noted that how you think about energy planning has changed greatly over the years, and now includes matters like reducing carbon, adding more renewable

energy, and how to cover consumer energy needs when intermittent resources don't produce enough energy. The key takeaway from the presentation was that the energy transition will happen, but we must maintain reliability and affordability at all costs.

This fit well with the theme of the evening as board President Jeff Gasteyer talked to members about the reliability of power and what that means to end users. Topics included brushing rights-of-way, work plans, having a diversified energy portfolio, and being fiscally responsible. He ended his speech by

The key takeaway from the presentation was that the energy transition will happen, but we must maintain reliability and affordability at all costs.

telling members that as our country transitions to a cleaner energy future, we must not lose sight of reliability and to let time be our friend in this endeavor.

Dunn Energy CEO Jesse Singerhouse spoke to the group about the state of the cooperative. He highlighted the addition of two one-megawatt solar arrays to the Dunn Energy system in 2023, of which all output is contracted to the cooperative. He noted a third is in the works for 2026. He then pivoted to the financials of the cooperative, noting that revenues of \$27.6 million in 2023 exceeded the prior year by \$429,000. Operating expenses were slightly higher in 2023 due to increased costs of materials and services needed to run the day-to-day business of the cooperative. All in all, however, it was a solid year for Dunn Energy. Singerhouse pointed out a letter from Bauman and Associates, our independent financial auditors. The letter stated that the 2023 audit has been completed and the cooperative has received a clean audit.

A few key facts about the cooperative were pointed out for members as well. In 2023 Dunn Energy returned



Guest speaker Ben Porath talks about energy planning to the members attending the 87th Annual Meeting of members at Dunn Energy Cooperative.

over \$1 million in capital credits to members, with over \$24 million having been returned since the cooperative incorporated. It was also noted that locally, the cooperative returned close to \$70,000 to members in the form of energy efficiency rebates, \$17,000 in scholarships, and over \$31,000 in Operation Round Up grants. These were all programs that align with Cooperative Principle 7: Concern for Community.

Another highlight of the meeting, which supports Cooperative Principle 5: Education, Training, and Information, was the announcement of a new program the cooperative is launching this fall. The Power Connection: Conversations with your Cooperative will be a five-session program where a small group of members will be invited to learn more about Dunn Energy Cooperative. Topics to be covered include:

**Co-ops 101:** The history, principles, and governance of Dunn Energy Cooperative.

**Our Energy Landscape:** Beneficial electrification, renewable energy, shifting energy resources and more.

**The Grid:** What makes up the grid and the entities involved in delivering your power.

**Future Challenges:** Grid stability, legislation, and member engagement.

The inaugural class will be small, but if you are interested in participating, please feel free to email Jolene at [jolene@dunnenergy.com](mailto:jolene@dunnenergy.com) for more details. Watch for more details on social media and our website.

We strive to do good things for you, our member-owners, each and

every year. The annual meeting is our opportunity to inform you of not only what happened in the previous year, but to showcase what we have coming up. It's also a time to celebrate you and thank you for your membership. So, thank you. We hope to see you out and about this year!



Members who attended the Dunn Energy Cooperative annual meeting on May 16 were given a pound of cheese from Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery – Menomonie as a parting gift.

## Hidden Account Numbers

If you find your account number hidden in the pages of this magazine and you call and tell us before the next issue is mailed, we'll put a **\$50 credit** on your electric bill. Happy hunting!

Last month's winners were Jake Wagner and Daryl Davis.

**Jesse Singerhouse, Manager**

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