MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Tiny Tots Childcare Center

Education is the Key to Success

Economic development is important to our community, and that's one reason why Clark Electric Cooperative participates in all of our local developments. Tiny Tots Childcare Center, owned and operated by Clark Electric member Jessie Nye, has opened in Stanley. The new business is also served by Clark Electric, and it's located at 1123 Pine Street, which is right by the new Our Lady of Victory Hospital.

Tiny Tots applied for an economic grant from Clark Electric. The sole purpose of this grant is to help new business owners with employee training. Tiny Tots will be using the money for CPR and First Aid training as well as instruction in American Sign Language. This will open several doors for hearing-impaired kids and adults.

Tiny Tots' new building provides an excellent environment for kids and assures parents their children are at a good place. The center provides care for children 6 weeks through 12 years of age. The center serves a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and a snack to the kids. Tiny Tots offers a morning preschool program, as well as before- and after-school programs for school-age children. My favorite as a parent is the open door policy, which means parents are welcome at all times. In addition, there are viewing windows so that you can peek in and watch your child having fun.

For more information about the services Tiny Tots Childcare Center has to offer, contact Jessie or Jeret Nye at 715-644-0700, 5 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Children's Safety Tip

If your kite gets caught in a power line, leave it there. Call your power supplier. A person trained in working around power lines will retrieve the kite for you.

Tim Stewart, CEO of Clark Electric, presents Jessie Nye, owner of Tiny Tot Childcare Center, with an economic development educational grant. The grants are available to qualifying members.

CLARK ELECTRIC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

This year's scholarship winners have been announced, and the awards were presented to the recipients. At a banquet in honor of the winners, a brief description of the origins of the cooperative and the scholarship program was presented. The winners were presented with a certificate and a small gift.

The scholarship program is made possible by the unclaimed capital credits of the members of Clark Electric. Each year, the local schools are sent applications to be given out to their graduating seniors whose parents are members of the cooperative. Clark Electric's scholarship committee then decides who the winners of the individual schools are.

Front Row

Ashley Zimmer
Owen–Withee High School
Daughter of Douglas and Brenda Zimmer

Caitlin Kallian
Neillsville High School
Daughter of Scott and Cathy Haines

Brittany Schmitt
Colby High School
Daughter of Russell and Janet Schmitt

Kalli Schindler
Abbotsford High School
Daughter of Leonard and Diane Schindler

Not Present For Picture:

Tait Turnquist
Greenwood High School
Son of Eugene and Linda Turnquist

Nicole Kmieciak
Stanley–Boyd High School
Daughter of Dave and Kim Kmieciak

Back Row

Philip Stolp
Home Schooled
Son of Arther and Carmen Stolp

Kayla Lewien
Thorp High School
Daughter of Michael and Kim Lewien

Caryn Hoffarth
Pittsville High School
Daughter of Bryan and Peggy Hoffarth

Danielle Thomas
Medford High School
Daughter of Hayden and Tammy Thomas

Michael Wolf
Loyal High School
Son of Dale and Kathleen Wolf

Brittney Gallion
Spencer High School
Daughter of Terry and Cheryl Gallion

Energy Conservation: It's Back in Style

Little Steps Can Make a Big Difference

It looks like energy conservation is back in style. There's nothing like rising fuel prices to make us think harder about when and how we use energy.

The hurricane season has taken its toll on some of the nation's systems for reaching, refining, and transporting our oil and gas supplies. In the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, TV news shows carried images of vehicles lined up at gas stations and plastic bags on pump handles.

Demand for petroleum products continues to rise against a supply that sometimes cannot meet it entirely. So we have seen prices rise at the gas pump, which affects any goods and services whose delivery relies on transportation by cars and trucks, trains and planes, even fishing boats. All of us also are seeing prices rise for the fuels that run appliances and systems in our homes, farms, and businesses.

These dynamics naturally cause us to adjust and manage our personal use of energy as best we can.

But energy conservation never went out of style in our business. Not a month goes by when this publication doesn't print something on how to conserve energy: tips for watching and controlling the operation of heat pumps and water heaters, how to plug energy leaks in homes, how to judge the efficiency of appliances, how to build or renovate buildings that require minimal energy consumption.

As the price of energy fluctuates, and as the technology of appliances and vehicles changes accordingly, your electric co-op will continue to pay attention to smart energy use.

Why? It just makes sense. It makes sense to consumer–members, considering that you own the utility that supplies your electric power. It's in your interest to make sure your own plans—and by extension those of the co-op—include conservative ways of using electricity and all other forms of energy you pay for.

Touchstone Energy cooperatives, individually and with state and national partners, have been involved for many years in supporting research and testing technology designed to conserve energy and enhance service reliability.

Whether it's for larger customers who are always looking for ways to improve energy management or the residential member who wants advice on the smartest, most efficient appliances, we offer services that can help you use energy wisely.

Some of us remember when the nation's highway speed limit was lowered to 55 mph. (I'm trying to think if I can remember that.) Others may also remember the "oil embargo" of the 1970s and the 45-mpg VW Rabbit diesel automobile, the rising popularity of wood-burning stoves and furnaces, and President Carter's plea to turn the thermostat down a few degrees in winter and up a few degrees in summer.

We're not likely to see a return to those specific events and trends, but we are likely to see a stronger emphasis on conserving energy, not only in our own consumption practices, but also in how industry designs and manufactures vehicles, buildings, community infrastructure, and appliances. Such a trend can only benefit everyone.■

Load Management System

The Load Management System (LMS) is managed by Dairyland Power Cooperative. The LMS controls water heaters, electric heat, air-conditioning systems, grain-drying systems, or other large controllable loads. The LMS is used to help keep energy purchasing costs down, which helps to keep the cooperative's rates stable.

When it gets very cold or very hot, the LMS is operated so that Dairyland does not have to buy very power when it's most expensive. Our members, along with thousands of other cooperative members from the 25 other Dairyland system co-ops, use the LMS together to keep the cost down.

You as the member benefit in several ways, either by receiving a credit on your electric bill or by taking advantage of special electric rates.

The LMS is a solution that truly comes out of doing things the cooperative way—working together to keep costs as low as possible. If you do not have a load management device for your water heater, call today to find out how to get one.■

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONGRESS

Sign Up and Explore New Ideas and Friends

Clark Electric Cooperative is offering our young co-op members an opportunity to participate in the 43nd WECA Youth Leadership Congress (YLC). Sessions aimed at identifying the traits of leaders and understanding the value of cooperation will highlight this year's event.

Students from throughout the state participate in YLC. The conference, co-sponsored by Wisconsin's electric cooperatives and the University of Wisconsin–River Falls, is scheduled for July 19–21, 2006. It will be held on the UW–River Falls campus.

Through a mix of seminar sessions, hands-on activities, and team-building experiences, participants will be exposed to a variety of real-life issues and will be given the opportunity to identify and explore their leadership potential. Top-notch professional speakers, teenage peers, and exceptional cooperative employees will provide participants with information and tools to deal with the weighty issues high school students face every day.

Dr. David Trechter, UW–River Falls, will open the YLC with an interactive session on "The Cooperative Difference." Also featured at this year's YLC will be nationally acclaimed speaker Craig Hillier. As a part of his dynamic presentation, Hillier will enlighten students about being leaders, stretching their creativity and discovering the value of cooperation.

Other sessions will focus on how and why co-ops operate and the benefits they provide members. Students will also form and operate a working cooperative.

The YLC is a fun, educational, and unique event that is planned by and for teenagers. Six students are elected by their peers to serve on the Youth Board. The Youth Board then plans and conducts the next YLC. More information is available at your high school from your FBLA and FFA advisors. If they don't have the information and you would like to attend, contact us at the cooperative. We are also offering a couple of spots to our local home-schooled students.

For 43 years, Wisconsin electric cooperatives and UW–River Falls have co-sponsored this event to demonstrate to high school students the basics of cooperatives and how they can apply the ideals and philosophies of cooperation directly to their lives.■

ARE YOU PROTECTED?

Do you have a surge protector or a UPS on your electronic equipment? If not, you should. A simple device like this can save you lots of money in repairs or replacement costs if you get a surge or a lightning strike. Surge-protection equipment comes in different types, from whole-house models to little devices that protect the microwave.

When buying a surge protector, you should look for certain things. Does it have outlets for plugs, cable/antenna connectors, and phone jacks? To properly protect your devices, you need to cover all the connections. And the most important thing to remember when buying a surge protector is that, as with most things, the cheapest is not often the best.

One thing that we have seen is that insurance companies are now starting to require some sort of surge protection. If there is none, coverage will not be given on the second incident. We suggest you protect your computer, TV/satellite equipment, stereos, answering machines, and everything that might have a circuit board.■