



# 2017 Richland Electric Cooperative

## From the Manager...

### Everyone has a role to play

**M**any brick and mortar retailers are failing as people change how they do business. Some are failing due to their inability to meet customer expectations, not only in terms of price but also service and selection. Our community is seeing the impact right here at home. JC Penney and Gordy's Market closings have been headline events.

Amazon and Wal-Mart are often accused of driving out small and medium sized business, but even the larger retailers such as JC Penney, Gander Mountain, Best Buy, Macy's, Sears have been hit hard by online retailers and other fast-moving retailers.

If you visit many small towns that used to serve as the hub of their rural community you hear remarkably similar stories. Sometimes the few remaining residents will reminisce about the small-town clinic or local doctor they used to have, or the school and playground just down the road. The hardware store, movie theatre, corner drugstore all closed shortly after the new school was built in the city down the road. The feed mill kept running for a few years but it, along with the last grocery store closed not long ago. There's still a small gas station that has a few convenience items and a discount store on the edge of town, but now it's mostly older homes and the people who aren't farming are either retired or driving to their jobs in other communities.

Twenty years ago, the small-town demise was targeting villages and towns whose population was a few hundred. Ten years ago, even communities of a couple thousand were sensing something was different—things were getting worse. Now, even communities with five to eight thousand residents are starting to get that gut feeling of despair. The closing of two major retailers in Richland County has a lot of people anxious about where our community is heading.

Recognizing the signs of a waning small-town rural economy is vital to changing its course. Efforts to raise awareness about the need to patronize local businesses is a start. 'Buy Local' campaigns serve as a friendly reminder to all of us that local businesses need our business or one day we will find ourselves traveling to getting what we need. On the other hand, local businesses must adapt to the changing consumer by learning from their customers during every interaction. In order to

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## CALENDAR

### of events

#### September

- 6 – 10 Richland County Fair
- 8 Richland County Demolition Derby
- 22-23 Viola Horse and Colt Show

#### October

- 6-7 Pine River Sports Association Gun Show
- 6-8 Center Color Fest
- 7-8 Oakwood Fruit Farms Customer Appreciation Days
- 7 Memorial Horseshoe Tournament
- 7 UW-Richland Brew Fest
- 14 REC Member Appreciation Picnic
- 14 Hybrid Redneck Rally
- 14 Passages Annual Fall Bounty Dinner

#### November

- 11 Veterans Day
- 23 Thanksgiving – REC Offices Closed
- 24 REC Offices Closed



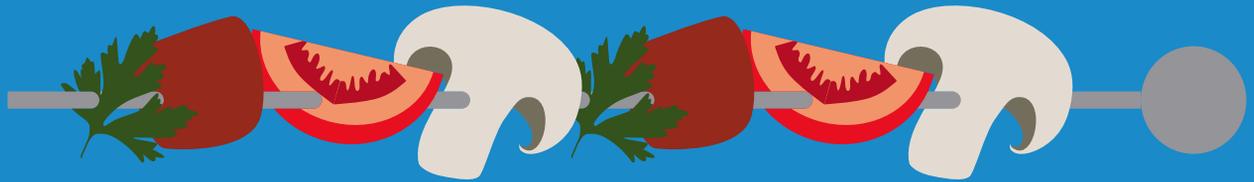
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# PICNIC TIME

## Member Appreciation Picnic



**Saturday,  
October 14th, 2017**

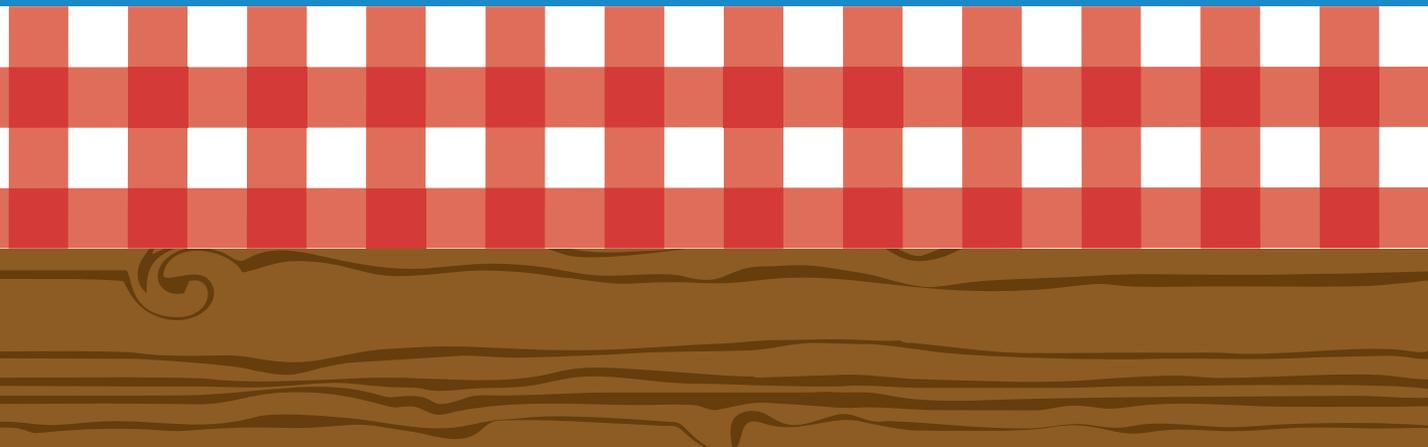
Please mark your calendar for Saturday, October 14th to join us for our REC Annual Member Appreciation picnic. It will be held at the Richland Electric Cooperative warehouse at 30 E. Robb Road in Richland Center. The picnic gives us a chance to meet and visit with our members and is held in October to commemorate Cooperative Month.

Our menu includes grilled chicken breast sandwiches, beef, hotdogs, brats, potato salad, beans, cheese curds, apples and beverages. The food is prepared and served by REC directors and employees with picnic beginning at 11:00 a.m. and ending at 2:00 p.m.

Please reserve October 14th for the picnic and bring your family to join us for good food and friendship and allow us to say "thank you" for being a member of Richland Electric Cooperative! To help show the cooperative spirit, we are asking everyone attending the picnic to bring a cash or check donation for the Greater Richland Area Cancer Elimination (G.R.A.C.E). Please make checks out to G.R.A.C.E.

**Richland Electric  
Cooperative  
Warehouse**

30 E Robb Road,  
Richland Center  
**11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.**



## **Cooperative Principle #7: Concern for Community**

# **In partnership to raise money for G.R.A.C.E.**

Throughout the month of October Richland Electric Cooperative and Genuine Telecom have partnered together to raise money for G.R.A.C.E. (Greater Richland Area Cancer Elimination)

REC and Genuine Telecom will match up to \$2500 of what is donated. Cooperative Principle #7 states: Concern for Community: While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.

We take our cooperative principles very seriously and this is one way we can contribute. Co-op Month and Breast Cancer awareness share the month of October. We greatly believe in this cause and hope that you will contribute!

A donation box will be on the front counter of the REC and Genuine Telecom office. We will accept cash or check. If you donate a check please make the check out to G.R.A.C.E. We will collect them at the office. If you would like to mail a check, you may do so with your with your payment but please keep them separate.

We will also be collecting donations at the Member Appreciation picnic on October 14 instead of food pantry donations. We will still accept food pantry donations but would prefer a donation to the G.R.A.C.E fund.



**October is  
Cooperative  
Month**



**Breast Cancer  
Awareness  
Month**

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## **From the Manager... Everyone has a role to play**

learn from customers, you must have a relationship that is trusted. Employees must make it clear to every customer that their business is valued by providing friendly and knowledgeable service- they are not only ambassadors for that business, but for the community in general.

Those businesses that are vital to our community also need the support of other businesses and government for them to succeed. A good system of roads and transportation, reasonable rates and reliability for services such as electric, gas, water, wastewater and telecommunications, repair services that are available and fairly priced, and a tax environment that encourages growth are but several of the needs.

Whether it is a consumer giving a local merchant a fair chance at winning their business based on value that goes beyond price, an employee that wants to make sure that all customers enjoy shopping local, a supplier that listens to the needs of our local business and provides a quality service for a fair price, or an elected official that realizes rural small-town America is something that must be nurtured, we all have a role to play.

As always, thank you for your business and if you have comments or questions about this commentary or anything related to your electric cooperative please give me a call at the office or send an email to [sclark@rec.coop](mailto:sclark@rec.coop)

# Fall Puzzle Fun...



# 2017 Richland Electric Cooperative

1027 N. Jefferson Street  
P.O. Box 439; Richland Center, WI 53581

[www.rec.coop](http://www.rec.coop)

### Office Hours

Monday-Friday; 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

### Outages

Call (608) 647-3173; 24 Hours

### Board of Directors

Calvin Sebranek-President  
Gerald Wendorf-Vice President  
Judy Murphy-Secretary  
Dan Hillberry-Treasurer  
Donald Huffman  
Tim Tiller  
Steve Fuller  
Jeff Monson  
Jim Goplin

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Jeff Joseph, Director of Energy Services  
Amy Martin, Chief Financial Officer  
Kim Cejpek, Operations Assistant  
Nicole Prochaska, Billing Assistant  
Ellen Deets, Clerk  
Trevor Clark, Director of Outreach Services

### Linemen

Mike Horter  
Ken Wymer  
Curt Brockway  
David Darling  
Grant Worthington

### Apprentice Linemen

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Casey Bartels

### First Call Representatives

Doug Hill  
Marilyn Hill



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Cooperative**

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