



Richland Electric  
Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



# More than JUST A PICNIC

October tends to be one of the most popular months of the year as the leaves begin to change. Fall jackets come out of storage. Pumpkins get picked. And farmers have begun their harvest. But it is also a very important time for cooperatives around the country. October has been labeled cooperative month, and is a time when most will show appreciation for their members and community.

Richland Electric Cooperative (REC) held its first member appreciation picnic in October of 1999 and it has been growing in size every year. However, it was recently put into perspective for me that the member appreciation picnic is not just about one particular day a year. It is about the whole year and many years. We are often surprised by how much time passes between seeing friends and family. You hear the proverbial “It has been so long!” And the “What are you up to these days,” which often leads to reminiscing between friends. For us here at REC it is very much the same.

This is a great time for our employees and directors to talk with our members we see but once a year at our picnic.

It is a reminder as to how fast time flies and how fast our young ones grow. We will all mention how long it has been since we have seen each other or how much “little Jimmy” has grown these last few years, only to find out that he’s not so little anymore and is currently a freshman in high school.

Those are the moments as employees and directors that we truly cherish. Being able to provide a meal for our members is just a bonus.

This year was no different. October 14 rolled around and although it was a very gloomy day, our members didn’t hesitate to attend the member appreciation picnic. We happily served over 400 guests. Our menu this year



Serving up cheese curds...and smiles! Employees and directors served up dinner to more than 400 guests at our annual member appreciation picnic. Many guests showed up sporting the "pink" theme in recognition of October Breast Cancer Awareness Month, for which REC held a fund-raiser in conjunction with the member appreciation picnic.



**It's been *how* long?**

A lot has changed since Richland Electric Cooperative first began hosting member appreciation picnics in 1999. "Little Tyler Martin" is evidence; this little guy who happily tossed a football at one of the earlier picnics is now a freshman at UW-Platteville!

included grilled chicken, sliced beef, hot dogs, brats, potato salad, and cheese curds. And as expected on a cold, rainy, October afternoon, the hot apple cider was warm and refreshing.

Cooperatives are not the only campaign organized in October. Breast cancer awareness also has ties to the month of October.

**We could not be more thankful to our members, employees, and everyone who made a donation to our fundraiser.**

You will find people wearing pink ribbons in support of breast cancer awareness or even professional athletes sporting pink accessories to their uniform. In the past REC employees have worn the pink ribbon

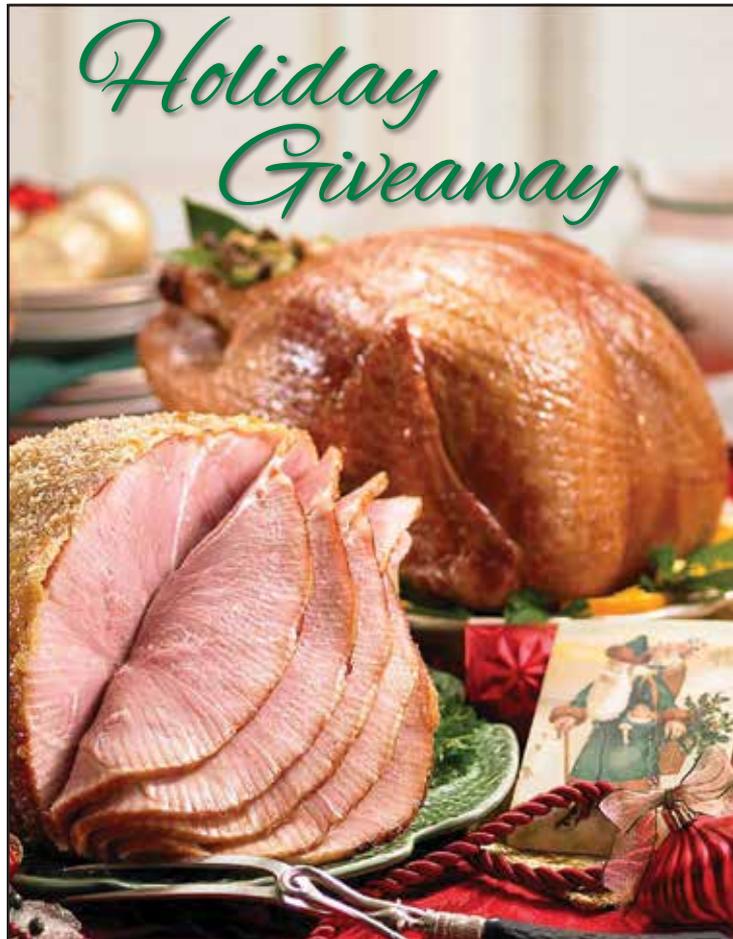
in support of the cause; however, this year we decided to take it up a notch.

Cooperative principle number seven is Concern for Community. In the Richland community we have a great organization known as Walk with G.R.A.C.E., which stands for Greater Richland Area Cancer Elimination. This year G.R.A.C.E. has raised over \$250,000 to help area cancer patients, so we decided to show our support.

Throughout the month of October REC and Genuine Telecom partnered to raise money for G.R.A.C.E. Together we would match up to \$2,500 of the total donations. We were beyond thrilled when we collected over \$500 in donations from our member appreciation picnic. Together we collected \$1,025 in donations from our fundraiser. We matched the donation amount and together we raised \$2,050 in the month of October.

We could not be more thankful to our members, employees, and everyone who made a donation to our fundraiser.—*Trevor Clark, Director of Outreach Services*

Michelle Harwick, director of subscriber services at Genuine Telecom, and Trevor Clark, director of outreach services at Richland Electric, with a \$2,050 check for Walk with G.R.A.C.E. The two organizations collected \$1,025 in donations during member appreciation day and matched that amount.



We are getting into the holiday spirit by doing a holiday give-away! This year we will be giving away a ham or turkey to two lucky winners for Christmas. The ham and turkey will be prepared by the Richland Locker. Just fill out the form below and bring it to the REC offices. The drawing will take place on DECEMBER 18. The winner will be able to pick their prize up directly from the Richland Locker. Prizes must be picked up January 1!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to Richland Electric Cooperative,  
1027 N. Jefferson St., P.O. Box 439, Richland Center, WI 53581.



## WOODSTOVE COOKING AND BAKING

### “Jerold, the wood box is empty.”

It was my mother’s voice and it is one of my earliest memories, for beginning when I was about three years old, one of my chores was to keep the wood box near the kitchen stove filled all months of the year. When I had other more important things to do such as playing with the little barn and toy animals I’d gotten for Christmas, or paging through an Uncle Wiggly book that my mother read to me at bedtime, she was calling for more wood.

A woodshed, really an extension on the west side of the kitchen, held the stove wood that Pa had earlier split and stacked there. It was mostly dried oak with a line pinewood that Pa called kindlin’. The oak he’d cut from the woodlot just north of our farmhouse, the pine from a dead tree in the windbreak just west of the buildings. Filling the wood box was not an especially difficult task. I merely had to trot through the kitchen, open the door to the woodshed, gather up an armful of wood, return to the kitchen, and dump it in the wood box, which seemed to be always empty. “Be careful you don’t make a mess,” Ma would say, meaning she didn’t want me to drop a stick of wood on the kitchen floor and stir up a bunch of dust.

Every morning, every day of the year, Pa started the cook stove before going out to the barn for the morning milking. Ma kept the stove going all day, until we all went to bed around nine every evening. I tried to keep the wood box filled until my twin brothers were old enough to take over the task and I moved to higher-level chores such as helping with the milking and other barn chores.

Ma did all the cooking, all the baking, all the canning, plus heating water for washday and Saturday night baths on the cookstove. The oven did not have a thermometer, but Ma knew the proper temperature for what she was baking

by opening the oven door and holding her hand inside for a moment. She adjusted the temperature by the kind and the amount of wood she put in the stove’s firebox. Oak wood gave off more heat and held the heat longer than pinewood, for instance. To know if the top of the stove was hot enough to fry eggs or potatoes, she would drop a little cold water on the stove’s lid. If the water sizzled and bounced she knew it was hot enough.

Cooking and baking with a wood-burning cook stove was clearly an art. The best woods for woodstove cooking are: hickory, white oak, black, oak, black locust, and birch. The best wood for starting a fire is pine. Knowing about wood and its heating abilities was important for wood stove cook to know.

*Excerpted from Old Farm Country Cookbook, Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2017.*



Go to [www.jerryapps.com](http://www.jerryapps.com) for more information about Jerry’s writing and television work. Contact Jerry at [jerryappsauthor@gmail.com](mailto:jerryappsauthor@gmail.com) with questions or comments.

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