



**Richland Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Among those participating in Transition Energy's groundbreaking were, left to right: Rep. Ed Brooks; Dan Korn, chairman of Dairyland Power's executive committee; Brian Rude, Dairyland vice president, external & member relations; Sen. Jennifer Schilling; Dairyland President & CEO Barb Nicks; Karrie Jackelen, representing Rep. Ron Kind; Richland Electric CEO & General Manager Shannon Clark; WECA General Manager Steve Freese; and Rep. Lee Nerison.

Transition Energy breaks ground

It was a beautiful day that will go down in history for Richland Electric Cooperative as the co-op teamed with Dairyland Power Cooperative for a groundbreaking ceremony of their solar projects. Members who purchased subscriptions, legislators, environmental advocates, and media were invited to attend the ceremony.

The groundbreaking event was held at the intersection of Hwy. 56 and County Highway A on May 23. Richland Electric Cooperative member Heavenly White catering provided food for the event. Heavenly White baked two beautiful cakes with the logos of all parties involved in the project.

"For me, the recent groundbreaking event really showed the level of collaboration that is making clean, cost competitive, renewable energy a reality for communities in Wisconsin," said Rob Scheuermann, president & CEO of SoCore Energy. "Seeing the teams from Richland Electric, Dairyland, and SoCore Energy alongside community, business, and political representatives initiate this unique project was truly exciting. And it was a perfect 'solar' day!"

In attendance from the Wisconsin Legislature was Representative Lee Nerison of the 96th Assembly district, Representative Ed Brooks of the 50th Assembly district, and Senator Jennifer Shilling of Senate District 32. Deputy District

Director Karrie Jackelen represented Congressman Ron Kind.

Richland Electric Cooperative first announced its plans to pursue a community solar project at its 2015 annual meeting. Meanwhile, Dairyland Power had also released information that it was planning to build large-scale solar projects throughout its territory. Through much collaboration and discussion, Richland Electric, Dairyland Power, the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC), and SoCore Energy came to an agreement to build large-scale solar for Dairyland, with a community solar project for Richland. NRTC was responsible for creating a nationwide relationship with SoCore Energy to bring SoCore and local cooperatives together to gain economy of scale and to bring project expertise. SoCore Energy is the owner of the generation equipment and related equipment on the site.

"Dairyland is a cooperative dedicated to providing safe, reliable, and sustainable energy for Richland Electric



Cooperative and all our members. As Dairyland celebrates our 75th anniversary this year, we are excited to increase our renewable energy portfolio by breaking ground on a solar farm in Richland’s service territory,” said Barb Nick, Dairyland president and CEO.

The Transition Energy Community Solar Project will consist of approximately 396 photovoltaic tracker

“This event added to a long list of innovations that Richland has led over its 80-year history.

–Shannon Clark, CEO & General Manager

panels and will sit alongside the Dairyland Power Cooperative Utility Scale Solar project, which will consist of approximately 1,980 photovoltaic tracker panels. Richland Electric Cooperative served as a leader in the project, which will reach well beyond the borders of Richland County. To date, the co-op has put over 800 hours of staff time into ensuring the success of this and

other related projects.

“NRTC is very pleased to be part of this unique, state-of-the-art project that brings value to Richland Electric and to their consumer members,” said Brad Seibert, NRTC’s vice president, business development. “The combination of multi-megawatt systems and smaller community-sized systems makes this project a model that we can replicate nationwide for G&Ts, distribution co-ops, and consumers. We look forward to deploying this solution together and seeing the positive impact that it will make.”

After the construction of the solar project is complete, Richland Electric Cooperative plans on using the area for education on electrical distribution. The site consists of a substation with incoming transmission power lines, distribution power lines, solar power, and fiber optic cable. To grow the environment even more, the co-op plans to host an Arbor Day celebration in 2017 at the site. Trees will be planted on the north side of the site to create a wind break for the solar panels. The decline in the monarch butterfly population has created an opportunity for Richland Electric to develop a pollinator garden. This garden would be catered towards monarch butterfly habitat.



Richland Electric Cooperative is currently selling subscriptions for Transition Energy for \$699. Depending on your energy usage for the year, you may purchase up to 10 subscriptions. A single panel is projected to produce approximately 475 kilowatt-hours per year. A near real-time internet video camera will be available, which will allow anyone interested in seeing what is happening on the site to visit remotely.

For more information on Transition Energy, please stop at the office or visit the website at www.rec.coop.

“Today we moved from the planning stage to the deployment stage in our effort to meet the needs of our members, as it relates to solar energy, but so much more is on the horizon,” said Shannon Clark, CEO & general manager. “This event added to a long list of innovations that Richland has led over its 80-year history.”



Directors and employees of Richland Electric Cooperative took a turn with the shovels at the Transition Energy groundbreaking.



Among the speakers in a tent filled with guests including members, legislators, industry representatives, and renewable energy advocates were Dairyland Power President CEO Barb Nick and Richland Electric CEO & General Manager Shannon Clark.



About NRTC

The National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC) represents the technology interests of 1,500 rural utilities and affiliates in 48 states. NRTC helps rural electric and telephone utilities strengthen their businesses with solutions uniquely suited to the needs of rural consumers.

About SoCore

With hundreds of designed installations across the United States, SoCore Energy and its partners have the experience to provide customer offerings in a wide variety of sectors with energy cost savings and carbon reduction metrics that are more valuable than ever. At the same time, SoCore's projects offer real, demonstrable benefits at the community level, including local jobs and economic development.

Congratulations

to the winners of the Richland Electric Cooperative Scholarships. We wish you all the best of luck in your future endeavors!



Ithaca High School
Bethany Osborne

Kickapoo High School
Jocelyn Parker
Cheyenne Larson

Richland High School
John Luttig
Madison Cooper
Alexys Stibbe
Evan Stanek
Aubrey Huth
Milann Thiede

Weston High School
Mark Klang



THE WATKINS MAN

He stopped by our farm once a month. I don't think I ever heard his name;

we simply called him the Watkins Man. He was a frail little fellow, scarcely as tall as Ma, with a chalky white face, long skinny fingers, and thick glasses that slid down his nose when he talked. He always wore a necktie, even on blistering hot days in summer.

Ma dreaded his coming because he took up a lot of time with his sales pitch—and it was always the same. Ma once said she hoped he'd change his talk some, but he never did. She never complained to him, and never hid in the closet when his car pulled into the yard. Some of the neighbor women did that.

Upon his arrival, he would sit his black display case on a kitchen chair, unbuckle the strap that held it together, and push back the glasses on his nose.

"How's your supply of vanilla, Mrs. Apps?" He set a big bottle on the table. A cork was stuffed in the bottle's opening.

"Here," he said. "Have a whiff of it." He uncorked the vanilla bottle and handed it to me. It smelled good. My brothers each smelled the open bottle and then Ma did too.

"Don't need any vanilla," Ma said.

"How about liniment, how you fixed for liniment? Good for about everything. Use it on a lame horse, put in on your sore back; even pour a little in a glass of water and it'll calm an upset stomach. Want a smell?"

"No thanks," Ma said. "I know how liniment smells, and I don't need any."

"Then how about salve? Good for cows' udders, good for your hands, too. Makes 'em all soft and nice. You get a little cut, well, it keeps infection out."

"I don't like the smell," Ma said.

"Cinnamon, you need any? Goes good on rice pudding and on sweet rolls. Tops off sweet rolls real good."

"Don't need any cinnamon," Ma said. "Do you have any pepper?" I could see that Ma wished the Watkins man would pack up his bottles, boxes, and tins and be on his way so she could get back to her canning project.

"Sure I got pepper. He took an immense can of pepper out of his case and set it on the table along with the vanilla, liniment, salve, and cinnamon.

"You got a smaller box?"

"Yup," he said. He pulled out a drawer near the bottom of the case and took out a little can of pepper.

"How much is it?"

"A quarter."

The Watkins man packed up his samples while Ma went to the cigar box on the clock shelf in the dining room, where she kept her egg money.

The Watkins man put the money in his pocket, grabbed up his black case, said thank you and closed the screen door so it wouldn't bang.

Ma put the little box of pepper on the shelf in the cupboard, along with four other little unopened boxes of pepper.



Excerpted from *Humor from the County*, Amherst Press, 2001.

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Go to jerryapps.com for further information about Jerry's writing and television work.

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