

SPRING REMINDERS

By Jay A. Porter, General Manager

It's time to spring forward. Don't forget, March 8 is when daylight savings time begins. Set your clock ahead one hour on Sunday.

Save the Date

ACEC's Annual Meeting is fast approaching. Be sure to mark the date on your calendar.

Thursday, May 21
Pardeeville High School
Registration: 5:15 p.m.
Meeting Start: 6 p.m.



Patronage Capital Allocations

The board of directors will be reviewing the co-op's financials and authorizing allocations at an upcoming board meeting. At the end of the year after expenses have been paid, remaining funds—called margins—are allocated to members. This year's finances should allow the allocation of over \$5 million to members. You will see your patronage allocation on either March or April's bill statement.

Please note, this is not your refund. Refunds, or patronage capital retirements, are done later. The board of directors will approve the retirement amount in the coming months. Once this is done the refunds are processed.

Moving?

Keep your address update with us. As you just read above, members of ACEC earn patronage allocations. These are always yours, whether you live in the same house for 50 years or are only on our lines for a short time. When it's time to return allocations, we will try to reach you via the address you have on file with us. If we don't have it, we can't return any money to you.

Steinhaus Scholarship

I would like to encourage men and women seeking a career in electric line work to apply for the Jon Steinhaus Line Worker Scholarship. This scholarship was introduced in 2003, honoring the former general manager who worked at ACEC for 40 years.

To qualify for this \$1,500 scholarship, applicants must be a high school senior or older and enrolled in an Electrical Power



I'd like to extend a sincere thanks to John (standing at my right) for his 22 years of service as ACEC's finance manager. We wish the best to John in his retirement and also to Liz.

Distribution program at a certified EPD school in the United States. Preference will be given to members of Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative. Applications are available starting March 1 on our website. The deadline to submit applications is Friday, April 10, 2020.

Craft & Cork – Register Now

Visit our website March 2–27 to register for Craft & Cork at Fawn Creek Winery. Fifty members will be randomly selected to win free tickets for them and a friend for this event. There will be a selection of designs to choose from to make a 12"x12" wooden sign. Fawn Creek also offers free wine tasting. We anticipate this event to fill up fast, so don't wait to register!



SAFETY MESSAGE



As spring approaches we all seem to get a little bit of cabin fever. Be aware of slippery surfaces. With (hopefully) warmer temperatures, we become less cautious of slipping. However, puddles in garages or entryways can be just as dangerous as ice patches. Think about investing in a non-slip mat and replacing any burnt-out light bulbs in these areas. No one wants to end up with a broken leg and a few more months of being cooped up!

Operation Guatemala:

One ACEC employee tells of his mission to do good.

In December you may have read an article featured in this magazine about four linemen from Wisconsin co-ops who traveled to Guatemala to bring electricity to the people there. Those linemen worked in a village called Tierra Blanca Chixoy. About 250 miles away lies the village of Santa Lucía, Milpas Altas. It is here, in the mountains of Santa Lucía that our very own Adams-Columbia employee has dedicated his time and efforts.

Meet Randy! Randy has been an employee of Adams-Columbia for 19 years and has traveled to Guatemala an astounding *13 times!* It all started 10 years ago when he chaperoned a youth trip to Guatemala and fell in love with the country.



"On my first trip, several people warned me that once you visit Guatemala, a part of your heart remains there," says Randy. "That is certainly the case! The beauty of the countryside is truly stunning, and the warmth and graciousness of the people keep drawing me back."

A few months after he returned from his first trip, Randy saw a flyer looking for volunteers to help in Guatemala through an organization called Mission Impact. Calling the number on that flyer started a lasting relationship with the people of Guatemala.

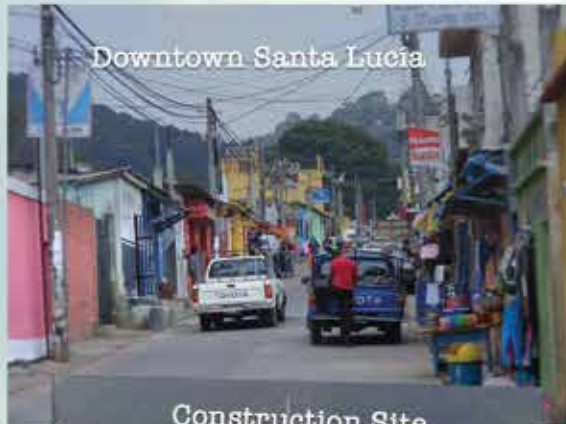
There are many teams that work on different projects through Mission Impact. Randy's team is a construction team that is made up of a diverse group of individuals from communities throughout the southern half of Wisconsin. Over the years, Randy and his team have helped many villages surrounding Santa Lucía. They have built two schools, a clinic, a community center, dug rainwater cisterns, and have constructed and installed fuel-efficient cookstoves.

Thanks to Randy's efforts and efficient upgrades approximately 250 children are now attending one of the schools they built. The community center his team built is used to hold community events and offers educational opportunities for adults. Classes are offered in areas like welding and car repair, to sewing and soap-making. The goal is for these individuals to have their own entrepreneurial skills to help them overcome poverty. And it seems to be working! Randy has seen many of the individuals he's met on past trips with their own small table of wares for sale in the city.

"The projects that we tackle are all related to the same goal, and that is to improve the quality of life of the Guatemalan people through education, health, and Godly values. I feel that if people are well equipped to make good life choices, and possess a solid set of skills, then they can overcome adversity and poverty," says Randy.

While the majority of Guatemalans are living in severe poverty, each village is different. Some are in very rough shape, with homes constructed of only a few scraps of metal and wood, while other villages have homes made of concrete.

Randy discusses how this has been an eye-opening experience to see different kinds of poverty. "While there may be severe material poverty in Guatemala, the people there are wealthy in other ways. They focus on relationships, generosity, and hospitality. I think that many of us Americans live with more material wealth than we realize, but we may fail to place enough value on, or invest in, the interpersonal aspects of life, like family, faith, and friendships."



Downtown Santa Lucia



Construction Site



Guatemalan House



Little Helper



Brother & Sister

Q & A with Randy

Where do you sleep?

The school we built keeps a few rooms open for us to bunk in. We bring sheets and an occasional blanket.

What kind of food is there?

There is a market in town. It's a lot like a farmers market — lots of fresh fruit and veggies. There's meat, but it hangs out in the heat and sun all day. A lot of guys were getting sick from the food, so we actually bring our own cook now. For breakfast we will have fruit or granola and yogurt. Lunch we will pack a sandwich to eat on the job site, and dinner we will have a nice big meal. We switch off on traditional Guatemalan dinners and things like spaghetti.

What about water?

In Guatemala the water is very polluted because people tend to throw garbage into it. There is a big water truck that drives around to sell bottled water. It actually has an armed guard with a shotgun.

So you have power where you stay?

Yes, we have power, but it's spotty. Same with running water. They don't always work.

Do you get to shower everyday?

If the water is running we do. All the water is cold. There's actually a 240 Volt coil in the shower head to heat the water. It's scary! There's metal on the middle of the shower handle. You have to be real careful about not touching it, or it will get you!

What about TV, internet, or phone?

The school has Wi-Fi now, but there is no TV. I usually go to the city when I arrive and buy one of those throw-away burner phones so I can call home to my family.

Is there crime?

In Guatemala City there is, and it's bad. But we work in the small villages on the outskirts of the city. There all you have to worry about is theft. The Guatemalans have an interesting way of looking at possessions. They believe if something is important to you, you wouldn't just leave it lying out. So we can't leave screwdrivers or anything at the job sites or they will be gone the next day.

What about snakes, bugs, or monkeys?

No, no, and no. There are no screens on any of the windows and there are never any bugs. There might be an occasional spider, but that's it. There are thousands of wild dogs, though. You're lucky to get sleep at night with all the howling and fighting.

Whats the average temperature?

About 70°F. It's perfect.



Board Meeting Summary

December 30, 2019

The monthly board meeting of Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative was held at the cooperative's office in Friendship, WI on Monday, December 30, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.

Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by Director Fahey's invocation. A Safety Message was provided by Director Ebert.

All directors were in attendance. The agenda was approved as sent. Following is a summary of the meeting activities.

The agenda, consent agenda items, board expense vouchers and the minutes of the November 26, 2019 board budget/workplan and regular meeting minutes were approved.

Director Reports: Olson and Gibeaut thanked Porter for his mid-year self-assessment. Gibeaut contacted another cooperative's chair for discussion on board meetings. Several board members had member interactions, with a few items needing follow-up by staff.

Financial Review Committee: The Financial Review was completed by Hoernke, Link and Vedder, noting no further review necessary.

Board Action Items:

- The next board meeting will be Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. at the Pardeeville Service Center.
- Fahey will attend the upcoming February training, Time to Re-Think our Approach to Governance. Alexander and Vedder will attend the Legal Seminar for Directors and Employees.
- Board approved moving forward with the early retirement for former (inactive) members' patronage capital on discounted basis based on Board Policy #8-6: Table A.
- Board approved the discounting rate applicable for estate patronage retirements and early retirement of former (inactive) members' patronage capital: Table A of Board Policy #8-6 Financial Policy.
- Board approved the review of Board Policy #11-1 Rate Design.
- Board approved the Resolution for the CFC PowerVision loan.
- Board approved the Resolution of Appreciation for employee George Ritchie on his retirement.
- Board approved the changes to the Rules & Regulations, effective January 1, 2020 with minor adjustments.
- Board requested cost of water heaters and a more comprehensive analysis of this service offering at a future board meeting.
- Vedder requested the board review and forward any comments to him regarding the voting at the annual meeting report, suggesting a final review at the January meeting and then counsel to review the options at the February or March meeting.

Departmental Reports: Monthly financial statements and departmental reports were reviewed.

- West noted a large power theft was uncovered when switching out a meter to the new AMI meter.
- Roberts presented an informative Rate Setting 101 session.

Meeting adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

Board approved the December meeting minutes on January 29, 2020.

Please note any confidential or sensitive information has been edited for this summary.



Adams-Columbia
Electric Cooperative

Friendship Service Center

401 East Lake Street • P.O. Box 70
Friendship, WI 53934-0070

Office Hours: Monday – Friday,
7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

www.acecwi.com

Customer Service & Billing
800-831-8629

Power Outage Reporting
888-928-2232

Diggers Hotline
800-242-8511

**To make a payment anytime 24/7,
please call 1-844-219-1223.**

Jay A. Porter—GM
Ashley Miller—Editor

ACEC Board of Directors

District 1

Gene Alexander
Term Expires 2021

District 2

Karen Fahey, Secretary
At-Large
Term Expires 2020

District 2

Ethan Olson
Term Expires 2022

District 3

Aaron Hoernke
Term Expires 2022

District 4

Jon Ebert
Term Expires 2022

District 5

Vacant

District 6

Cheri Gibeaut, Chair
Term Expires 2021

District 7

Dietrich Vedder, Vice Chair
At-Large
Term Expires 2021

District 7

Scott Link, Treasurer
Term Expires 2020