



By Mike Wade, President & CEO

# THANK YOU TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

Thank you to everyone who attended our 84th Annual Meeting in April at the Wittenberg-Birnhamwood High School. The meeting was well attended and we appreciated the opportunity to discuss the business of the cooperative from the previous year.

Also, thank you for your participation in this year's director election. Lee Lehrer and Allen Zander won their respective races and were seated as directors at the conclusion of the meeting. Service as a director is a challenging, but extremely rewarding experience. Our success depends on engaged and committed members willing to serve on our Board of Directors and our member committees.

Our member committees fill a vital role in the operation of our cooperative. Our Nominations Committee seeks qualified candidates to run in the director elections. It is important for this group to reach out to interested individuals and

help guide them through the nomination process. The Operation Round Up Trust reviews applications and ensures that our fund dollars make their way to individuals and organizations who need our help. The Operation Round Up program has been a powerful force to help our communities and those who have a special need.

Also, our Member Advisory Group meets several times per year to discuss co-op programs and services and to provide valuable feedback on how best to serve our members. We thank all of our committee members for their service to our cooperative.

June is Dairy Month and we want to thank the dairy farmers in central Wisconsin and those served by our cooperative. You have been a part of the cooperative since our creation 84 years ago, and we appreciate the value that you bring to our community and our state. I encourage our members to pay tribute to our dairy farmers and support them by purchasing dairy products found at our local merchants.

The cold weather has been replaced with warmer temperatures, so I hope you are spending time outdoors and are making your summer plans. Enjoy some fun this summer because it will pass quicker than you think. Be safe and stay healthy.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Even in summer months, adding insulation to your attic can keep your home more comfortable and save energy used by your cooling system. If your attic insulation is level with or below your floor joist (meaning you can easily see your joists), you should add more. If you can't see any of the floor joists because the insulation is well above them, you likely have enough insulation. Attic insulation should be evenly distributed with no low spots. Make sure the areas along the eaves are adequately covered.

Source: [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)



## BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The March regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative was held in-person on March 31, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda, minutes of the February 24, 2022 meeting, new and terminated memberships, monthly safety and compliance report, and estate capital credit retirements were approved.

### Action Items

- a. Monthly Financial Statements and Reports were approved. Finance Committee reviewed checks written and the board and CEO expenses.
- b. The Governance Committee did not meet this month.
- c. The board reviewed Board Policy 402 – Financial Goals and Capital Credits and will have the Governance Committee review it for updated changes.
- d. The board approved the proposed changes to the Membership Agreement as presented by Drew Parrish, legal counsel for the cooperative.
- e. The board approved ATC's Second Call for Voluntary Additional Capital Contributions for 2022 in the amount of \$20,761.
- f. Mr. Kurtzweil presented information on the bids received for the new storage building construction project. The project will not be completed this year but will be re-evaluated during the next budget cycle.

- g. Mr. Wade reviewed our current process for handling invoices from area fire departments for fire calls involving our electric distribution system. No action was taken.
- h. Discussion was held regarding the plan for selecting a new law firm to represent CWEC as a result of the Wheeler, Van Sickle & Anderson law firm closing the end of May.

Operations and Engineering – Mr. Kurtzweil reported the crews are wrapping up the hazard recognition inspection. Work has begun on the #6 hard drawn copper replacement. Crews continue to seek out old underground neutral bonds and isolate them.

Accounting and Finance – Financial reports were reviewed. Ms. Claussen reported the Eaton AMI contract was approved. A meeting with PSE will be scheduled soon to confirm the project and begin ordering material. Reports have been submitted for the Cost of Service Study to be conducted by CFC. Jim Halvorsen, CPA, will be at the April board meeting to review the annual financial audit report.

Member Services – Ms. Mazemke reported that Operation Round Up Scholarship applications are being accepted through April 1. Currently we received 19 new and 16 repeat applications. We have not received any Electric Utility Worker Scholarship applications to date.

Administrative Services – Ms. Patoka reported on her submitted report.

President and CEO – Mike Wade, CEO, reported on his submitted report.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.



## CWEC RETURNS TO IN-PERSON FORMAT FOR 84TH ANNUAL MEETING

For the first time since 2019, Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWEC) returned to an in-person format for its 84th Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting, held April 19 at Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School, drew 201 members and guests.

Although the CWEC Annual Meeting the last two years was held virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic, returning to an in-person meeting was always the goal of CWEC.

“The virtual annual meetings of the last two years allowed us to conduct the business of the cooperative and reach new members online, but nothing compares to being able to meet with the membership face to face to discuss the successes of the cooperative,” said Mike Wade, president and CEO of CWEC.

During the Board Chairman Report, CWEC Board Chairman Tom Smith highlighted many of the successes of the co-op over the past year. These included the investments the co-op made to strengthen its electric distribution system through its maintenance programs, as well as providing energy conservation rewards to residential and commercial members.

“We earned sufficient margins to satis-

fy our lender’s requirements and we were able to return a portion of your investment in the cooperative to you in the form of retired capital credits,” Smith said.

Smith also highlighted the numerous programs that CWEC offers its members and local communities. These include economic business loans to small businesses, donations to fire departments and community organizations, providing toys to needy children through its Toys for Tots program, and providing scholarships to students through its Operation Round Up program.

Wade highlighted the importance of the CWEC employees to the success of the co-op. He also explained how CWEC’s investment in the West Riverside Energy Center is benefiting members on their electric bills.

Kevin Kurtzweil, vice president of Operations, provided a recap of the outages in 2021, the types of distribution inspections that took place during the

year, and provided information about the projects the co-op completed.

Brenda Mazemke, manager of Member Relations, highlighted some of the programs available to members to help them save money, including energy conservation rewards the co-op offers. In 2021, CWEC provided \$54,801 in energy conservation rewards. Mazemke also explained the Home Energy Efficiency Kit each member attending the meeting received.

Key statistics for 2021, the statement of operations, and the balance sheet for the co-op were presented by Lila Shower, vice president of Accounting & Finance.

In the board of director elections, Lee Lehrer, who ran unopposed, was announced the winner and reelected in District 2. He received 201 votes.

Allen Zander was announced the winner of the District 3 election. He received 288 votes, while Rhonda Hollfelder received 160 votes. Zander fills the board seat that was vacated when Elaine Eckendorf retired.

A total of 26 door prizes were given away to members during the annual meeting. See list on page 17.

“I was amazed at the large turnout for the annual meeting,” Wade said. “I believe our new middle of the week format with a short business meeting works better for our members and fits well with their busy schedules.”





## ANNUAL MEETING DOOR PRIZE WINNERS

- Steven Marquardt** – \$50 electric bill credit, Courtesy CWEC
- Deann Godin** – \$50 Visa gift card, Altec Industries
- David & Barbara Kurszewski** – \$50 Kwik Trip gift card, American Transmission Company
- Rainold Mlodik** – Amazfit GTS 2 mini, The Benefit Works
- Maynard Lepak** – \$25 Exxon Mobile gift card, AJ Construction of Wisconsin
- Jeff & Rene Long** – \$50 UniFirst Online Store Gift Certificate, UniFirst Corporation
- Jeffrey Linke** – Backpack, NISC
- Linda Gamsky** – Seal a Meal, RESCO
- Gordon Spiegel** – \$50 Service & Repair gift certificate, Gordy's 66 Service & Towing
- Mary Ziegenhagen** – \$50 Kwik Trip gift card, Utility Sales and Service
- Rose Ann Mlodik** – gift basket, Power System Engineering Inc.
- Joanne & Steven Christian** – \$50 Walmart gift card, Recloser Services LLC,
- John Benson** – \$25 Exxon Mobile gift card, AJ Construction of Wisconsin
- Frank Groh** – Egg Drop Wireless Speaker, Irby Utilities
- Lori Rowe** – \$50 Kwik Trip gift card, American Transmission Company
- Kimberly & Patrick Habeck** – backpack, NISC
- Shirley & Verlyn Hanson** – DeWalt Compact Drill/Driver Kit, EIR Testing and Maintenance Co.,
- Susan & Kevin Wick** – \$50 Kwik Trip gift card, American Transmission Company
- Sharon Kassa** – \$75 Amazon gift card, Cooperative Response Center Inc.,
- Leonard & Clare Oppor** – Milwaukee Jobsite Radio, Electric Power System
- Vernon Brcko** – \$50 Kwik Trip gift card, Complete Office
- Glen Wiza** – backpack, National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC)
- Thomas Link** – \$50 Kwik Trip gift card, American Transmission Company
- David Kerneen** – \$50 Mobile gift card, Stop'N Go Food Market
- Steve Kozak** – \$100 Visa gift card, National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC)
- Patricia & Gerald Witkowski** – \$75 Kwik Trip gift card, Alliant Energy
- Gene Groshok** – MECO Easy Street Electric Cart Grill, CWEC

*We would like to thank all the vendors for their generous door prize donations to the 2022 CWEC Annual Meeting. We also congratulate the winners of those door prizes.*

## OPERATION ROUND UP KEEPS GIVING

During the first two quarters of 2022, Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up Program approved 10 grant applications and made two hardship donations for a total of \$9,431 in various types of community support. In addition, \$16,100 was approved to be distributed as scholarships.

Operation Round Up provides funds for worthwhile causes, including member hardship cases, educational purposes including scholarships, and charitable organizations. It is funded by volunteer donations from CWEC co-op members, allowing them the opportunity to give back to our local communities, a few cents each month. Electric bills are simply "rounded up" to the next whole dollar amount. The monthly "round up" could be as little as a single penny, but never more than ninety-nine cents. The average donation is \$6 annually, which is tax deductible. Operation Round Up is an opt-out program.

The funds are held separately from any Central Wisconsin Electric Coop-

erative funds and are administered by a member Board of Trustees. Applications are made for grants and these are reviewed quarterly for disbursement of funds.

Recent beneficiaries of Operation Round Up donations include:

- Bowler Area Fire District – \$2,331
- Hatley Area Fire & Ambulance District – \$2,000
- Waupaca County Sheriff's Office – \$1,000
- Wall of Wittenberg – \$500
- Mamas House of Hope – \$500
- Iola Historical Society – \$400
- STAR Treatments – \$250
- Iola Lions/Lioness Post Prom – \$250
- Boys and Girls Club of Portage County, Rosholt Extension – \$100
- Western Shawano County Special Olympics – \$100

To date Operation Round Up has donated \$594,539 to families in need, charitable organizations, and students in the form of scholarships.

Thank you for your generous support.



Top row, L to R: Boys & Girls Club of Portage County, Rosholt Extension; Iola Historical Society; Middle row, L to R: Waupaca County Sheriff's Office; Wall of Wittenberg; STAR Treatments. Bottom row, L to R: Hatley Area Fire & Ambulance District; Mamas House of Hope

# ZANDER ELECTED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Allen Zander has been a fixture in the Rosholt area his entire life. He graduated from Rosholt High School in 1978, worked at his parent's restaurant in Rosholt, and also drove school bus for a time.



Add in that Zander served on the Rosholt Fire Department for 18 years, and was a Rosholt First Responder for 16 years, and you understand his connection to the community.

"I've always been community minded, both working for the school and first responders and fire department," Zander said.

It's that community mindset that prompted Zander to seek a seat on the CWEC Board of Directors.

"When Mrs. Eckendorf retired last year, I was asked by a member of the nominating committee if I'd be interested," Zander said. "I applied at that time. I think the board chose to wait until the election in April, so when the nominations came out in April, I put my name in again, and was fortunate enough to be elected."

After hearing that he won the election, Zander said he was "very excited."

Zander isn't a stranger when it comes to CWEC.

"I've been a member for almost 39 years,"

he said. "My wife and I live on what was her grandparents' and great-grandparents' farm in the town of Alban. Her family has been members of the co-op since its inception."

Shortly after being elected to the board, Zander participated in his first CWEC board meeting.

"I was very pleased to see the interaction between board members, and also the employees of the co-op, and President and CEO Mike Wade," Zander said. "It's a very nice group to work with. They were very helpful with this being my first board meeting since I didn't know what to expect. They were good at explaining things to me if I looked a little puzzled or had a question."

Zander acknowledged that there is a lot to learn but is developing a strategy to obtain the education and training that he needs.

To help get him up to speed, Zander said he has reviewed the minutes from past board meetings, and attended the Member Advisory Group meeting held May 3.

"I was really interested in what people had to say and their thoughts on the co-op," he said.

Helping members get the most of their CWEC membership is one of the things Zander is looking forward to the most about being a director.

"I'm looking forward to helping our members get the most out of their association with the co-op, including energy efficiency and solar projects," Zander said. "It's about helping the members."



Central Wisconsin  
Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

10401 Lystul Rd., P.O. Box 100,  
Rosholt, WI 54473  
715-677-2211 • 800-377-2932

[www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com)

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**Mike Wade, President & CEO**  
**Bert Lehman, Editor**

## Board of Directors

### District 1

Ron Onesti  
715-551-9257

Tom Smith  
Chairman  
715-701-2051

### District 2

Lee Lehrer  
Secretary-Treasurer  
920-851-4545  
715-677-3850

Lou Oppor  
608-575-8653

Michael Schultz  
Vice Chairman  
715-370-1378

### District 3

Sue Rombalski  
715-701-2053

Allen Zander  
715-630-8239

## Our Mission

We are your trusted energy partner and provider of valued community support.

