



GM'S REPORT

SAFETY ABOVE ALL ELSE

"Safety" is a universal word that is mentioned often and used loosely. Communities large and small, companies across all industries, and sports leagues at every level are committed to safety. Unfortunately, when it really counts, steps to keep the public, workers, athletes, and loved ones safe are often ignored in the interest of expediency or convenience.

However, safety is a serious issue, especially when it comes to electrical safety. It's the number one priority for Firelands Electric Co-op. This is not empty talk. Over time, the cooperative has created a culture of safety by putting our employees' welfare and that of the community above all else. At its essence, Firelands Electric's mission is to provide safe, affordable, and reliable electricity to its member-owners. The need to return our workers home safely to their loved ones is equally important. To do this requires ongoing focus, dedication, and vigilance.

Following leading national safety standards

Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous job, especially for our operations team. Firelands Electric has

a safety committee whose focus is keeping employees and the community safe around electricity. We established and follow protocols based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry. We require our linemen to wear specialized equipment when working with — or even next to — power lines. They must follow specific procedures, and our operations team has regular meetings to discuss upcoming projects from a safety perspective.

Equally important, we encourage all of our crews to speak up and hold each

other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving with regard to safety, rather than defaulting to a blame game. We examine the information and data gleaned from near-misses and accident reports to discern patterns and use safety metrics to improve in those areas where we have fallen short. When appropriate, we brief contractors on our safety protocols and set expectations for their interactions with the co-op.



Dan McNaull
GENERAL MANAGER

Keeping the community safe

We live and work in the community we serve; therefore, we care about our neighbors. Firelands Electric Co-op conducts electrical safety demonstrations in schools and for community events. We also engage with local civic organizations and youth organizations.

May is National Electrical Safety Month. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation, each year thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents, and electrocution in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable.

Firelands Electric wants to keep its members safe. Remember to never trim trees, work, or play near electric lines. If you have a concern regarding poles or overhead wires, contact the cooperative. Electricity powers lives, but it must be treated with respect — for everyone's safety.

For more electrical safety information, contact Firelands Electric Cooperative at 1-800-533-8658, or visit our Safety & Line Clearance page at www.firelandsec.com. Be mindful when it comes to electrical safety — pause and take the extra time to avoid danger.





CO-OP NEWS

Firelands Electric bids farewell to Neil Winslow



Neil Winslow

Due to a change in residency, District 9 trustee Neil Winslow has resigned from the Firelands Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees. Winslow has been a dedicated and committed member of the board.

“We are saddened that Neil is leaving,” says Board President Dan Schloemer, who represents District 1. “He has brought an incredible amount of knowledge and experience to Firelands Electric’s board. His leadership

will leave a lasting impression with the board and everyone who works at the cooperative.”

According to Firelands Electric Cooperative’s code of regulations, when such a vacancy occurs, the remaining board members must appoint an interim trustee to represent that district for the remainder of the term. The board plans to fill the vacancy through an election process that will take place during the cooperative’s annual meeting on June 23.



Thank you for your service

The Firelands Electric Co-op office will be closed on

Monday, May 28

in observance of Memorial Day, so that we may remember all those who gave the ultimate sacrifice serving our country.

As always, emergency service is available 24/7 by calling 1-800-533-8658.

TRUST

Firelands Electric Cooperative has been your trusted source for safe, affordable, and reliable electricity since 1936.

When other organizations come calling to offer energy advice or “savings programs,” remember that you can’t always be certain that they represent your best interest. However, Firelands Electric answers directly to YOU — not to investors. As a member of an electric cooperative, YOU own the company. YOU elect the co-op leaders to make decisions and offer programs that are in YOUR best interest.

Contact us to learn more about energy savings and renewable energy programs available to you as a co-op member — on the farm, at the office, or at home.

FIRELANDS
ELECTRIC CO-OP INC.



ANNUAL MEETING



SAVE THE DATE

YOUR ANNUAL MEETING IS JUNE 23

Join us for Firelands Electric Cooperative's 80th annual meeting on Saturday, June 23, at the Ashland University Myers Convocation Center. Members attending will elect trustee representatives for board districts 2, 7, and 9. A district map is available at www.firelandsec.com/content/board-trustees. Make a difference with your vote!

Your annual meeting will feature a complimentary hot breakfast buffet for members and their immediate families. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend the business meeting, but seating for the hot breakfast is limited, so make sure to RSVP.

Official annual meeting registration cards will be mailed to members in mid-May. Members must bring their official registration card on June 23 to receive a \$5 bill credit on their August electric bill; to get a complimentary membership bag and gifts; and to be entered in special prize drawings.

Prizes include: KitchenAid 5-qt. mixer; Milwaukee 18V cordless tool set; and \$300 in bill credits (4-\$25, 2-\$50, and 1-\$100).



- REGISTRATION BEGINS: 8:30 a.m.
- REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST SERVED: 8:30 to 9:15 a.m.
- BUSINESS MEETING AND CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES: 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.
- SPECIAL PRIZE DRAWINGS: 10:15 a.m.

Your RSVP for the breakfast must be submitted before June 15. It can be completed online at www.firelandsec.com/content/annual-meeting-members, OR by contacting Firelands Electric's office at 1-800-533-8658.



EMPLOYEE NEWS

BRINGING THE POWER

Firelands Electric Co-op participates in humanitarian project

Firelands Electric Cooperative's Journeyman Lineman Chris Rowland returned home from Guatemala on March 22 after assisting with Project Ohio, a rural electrification mission. Rowland was one of 17 volunteer co-op linemen from across the Buckeye State who constructed distribution lines, hung transformers, and installed electrical services, meters, and internal wiring for the villages of Las Tortugas and San Jorge in Guatemala.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) has been helping people for over 75 years through NRECA International. Created in 1962, the organization has brought safe, reliable, and affordable electric power to more than 126 million people in 43 countries — people located in some of the world's most isolated communities. The goal has been to share the information and know-how gained during the rural electrification of the U.S. with developing countries around the globe.

Ohio's 24 electric co-ops united for Project Ohio and contributed toward the personal needs of Guatemala village residents by providing supplies and workers. For two weeks, Rowland joined other co-op linemen, NRECA organizers, and locals in bringing electricity to the mountaintop villages of Las Tortugas and San Jorge — providing electricity to 140 homes that never had it before.

Rowland said his biggest challenge was the language barrier and communications. Adjusting to nearly 100-degree temperatures and mountain terrains was strenuous, and the area's limited technology made radio communications difficult.

Most village residents live on just \$2 per day, and a major challenge for many in Guatemala is obtaining clean drinking water. Project Ohio's generous donations provided a simple in-home water filtration system installed in each household, and many children even received shoes.

Project Ohio also installed wiring and electrical services, such as lights and much-needed ceiling fans, for both schools in Las Tortugas and San Jorge. Electronic technology items, like projectors and a laptop, were also donated by the group to help children with their studies.

"Installing lighting and fans for the children was most rewarding," said Rowland. "To see the kids' smiles and to watch the villages illuminate at night was very gratifying. I'm grateful for the opportunity to change lives and provide hope for the future — and would do it all over again if given the opportunity."

Rowland has been with the cooperative for over 10 years. A native of New London, Rowland resides in the area with his wife, Debbie, and their three children. He enjoys volunteering in his community and coaching his kids' sporting events. Rowland has been a volunteer fireman for nearly 23 years and is captain of the New London Fire Department.



Dozens of family members and friends waited at John Glenn Columbus International Airport on March 22 to welcome Project Ohio men home from their humanitarian trip. Chris Rowland, center, is pictured with his wife, Debbie, their three children, and Firelands Electric Co-op's General Manager Dan McNaul, right.

IN THE COMMUNITY

BY TRACY GIBB

FROM STEM TO STERN

Nearly every Sunday from May through October, sailboats dot the water just off a peninsula in the southwestern corner of Charles Mill Lake. After an afternoon of racing and sailing, those on board gather for a potluck dinner to socialize at the clubhouse above the docks. These families belong to the Mohican Sailing Club — a long-standing tradition dating back to the end of World War II.

Constructed in the mid-1930s, Charles Mill Lake is a 1,350-acre flood control reservoir located on the Ashland-Richland county line near Lucas. Managed by the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, the lake's layout and 10-horsepower limit make it ideal for sailing.

Local families formed the Mohican Sailing Club in 1945. According to Tom Wills, current commodore and self-proclaimed cheerleader of the group, the original objective of the club was simply to race sailboats. "But it quickly transitioned toward a social group, where families and friends could sail and spend time together," Wills says.

The clubhouse serves as the hub for the organization's weekly cookouts, meetings, and special events. In spite of several upgrades over the years, the facility has preserved its traditional charm with its three fireplaces, ballroom, and second-story wraparound porch. It also contains trophies

from races won, photos from days gone by, and a wall of past and present commodores — some of whom are third-generation members.

The 45 member-families that belong to the Mohican Sailing Club have a variety of small boats, ranging in length from the 13-foot, 9-inch Sunfish to the 18-foot Interlake. Boats compete against others of the same type during the club's Sunday races. Each vessel also has its own national race series, and the club has played host to a few of these events, including the Jet 14 Nationals and Interlake Haphazard.

Ultimately, Mohican Sailing members race for the sheer enjoyment of the sport. The club owns half-a-dozen Sunfish sailboats, so having your own vessel isn't necessary. And for the novice, they offer sailing lessons, instruction, and advice. "It's all about sharing our passion for the sport with others," Wills says.

For some members, sailing has been a lifelong hobby. Now in his 80s, Cecil Bazley joined the Mohican Sailing Club in 1968. While Bazley no longer sails, he still attends the club's weekly races and dinners. Sitting in one of the chairs he gifted to the club in memory of his late wife, Thelma, Bazley watches out over the lake, spending Sunday afternoons with his fellow sailors and friends.

The Mohican Sailing Club is located at 2187 Mifflin Township Road 1265 in Lucas. For information about club membership or events, visit www.mohicansailingclub.org.

PHOTOS BY MOHICAN SAILING CLUB



**Places
& Faces**
of Firelands Electric

Places & Faces is a monthly feature showcasing people, businesses, and organizations located throughout the Firelands Electric Cooperative service territory.



LAKE PARK EXPANSIONS

Pleasant Hill and Charles Mill Lake Parks undergoing renovations

The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District — 16 flood-control dams and reservoirs forming a chain of lakes down the eastern side of the Buckeye State — was literally born from a perfect storm.

It was 1913, and a low-pressure system had stalled over the Midwest, dumping as much as 11 inches of rain in four days. Being late March, few crops had yet been planted, so there was little to hold the water on farm fields. And to exacerbate the matter, Ohio had been denuded of most of its forest cover during the previous century.

During the extensive flooding that ensued — the worst natural disaster in Ohio history — an estimated 422 to 470 Ohioans lost their lives, and more than a quarter-million people in the region were left homeless. Hardest hit was Dayton, the water reaching 20 feet deep in downtown. Those who survived the statewide flooding vowed, "Never again!"

As a result, the Ohio General Assembly quickly passed the Vonderheide Act, enabling the formation of

conservancy districts throughout the state. The Miami Conservancy District, which included Dayton and the surrounding area, became the first major flood-control district in Ohio. Using that same blueprint, the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) was created in 1933.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of Pleasant Hill Lake Park, an MWCD facility located along the Richland-Ashland county border. To celebrate, the park is undergoing extensive renovations. Nearby, Charles Mill Lake Park is also renovating, but to a lesser extent. Deeply involved with the improvements at both MWCD parks is Firelands Electric Cooperative, which provides electric service to both locations.

"Due to Pleasant Hill's 80 years, much of our infrastructure is outdated, and Firelands is helping us upgrade our electrical service to better meet the needs of our guests," said Bill Martin, park manager. "Firelands is creating 50-amp service to all of our campsites, as well as upgrading from single-phase to three-phase electricity throughout the park."



Martin mentioned that the new electrical system will be “looped,” meaning that electricity will arrive from two directions. “We’ll have two, three-phase feeds coming into the park,” Martin said. “So, if for some reason there is a problem that knocks out power — such as a tree falling on an electric line — we can still power the entire park from the other feed.”

An entirely new lakeside campground at Pleasant Hill, featuring 59 sites, is already open. An existing campground, with 45 sites, is being upgraded to supply the same amount and consistency of electric power to campers as the new sites.

“The folks at Firelands Electric Cooperative have been phenomenal to work with,” concluded Martin. “Our plan is to have everything completed and up and running by summer.”

The current renovations and improvements happening at Pleasant Hill are just year one of a five-year master plan, in which Firelands Electric Cooperative will continue to play a key role. For instance, 10 new rental cabins are scheduled to be built this year for availability in 2019. In the meantime, the existing 10 rental cabins are still available for 2018.

Two more new attractions at Pleasant Hill this summer will be a handicapped-accessible fishing pier and a hand-launch site for kayaks and canoes. “Families can come learn to kayak, participate in a guided kayak tour

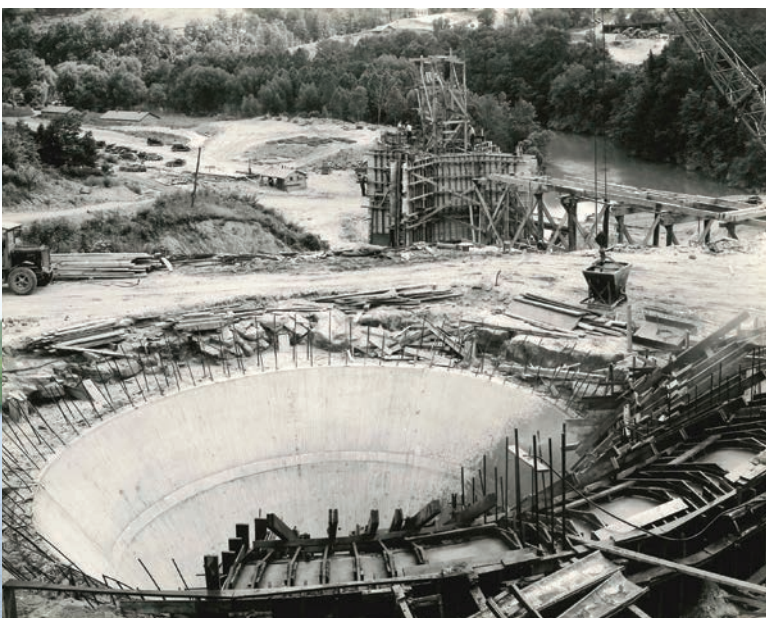


A great blue heron sits atop an osprey nesting structure erected by Firelands Electric Cooperative at Pleasant Hill Lake Park in 2000.

of the lake, or even paddle after dark on a moonlight trip,” said Louie Andres, park services specialist.

Pleasant Hill features an 850-acre unlimited horsepower lake with marina, surrounded by 1,350 acres of land on which to enjoy camping (including horses and pets), boating, fishing, hiking, hunting, picnicking, swimming, and boat-launch areas. Special themed weekends are also planned throughout the year, including live music, movies, fireworks, kids’ nature programs, and more. Visit www.pleasanthillparkohio.org to view the event schedule, and follow the park on Facebook and Twitter to receive updates.

W. H. “CHIP” GROSS IS OHIO COOPERATIVE LIVING’S OUTDOORS EDITOR.



The above photo from 1937 shows Pleasant Hill Lake Park Dam during construction. At left is Pleasant Hill Lake Park, dam, and lake as they appear today.



SAFETY

PLUG INTO **SAFETY** THIS MONTH

In May, electric cooperatives across the country promote safety awareness to coincide with National Electrical Safety Month.

Thousands of accidents occur due to shock hazards every year, and Firelands Electric Cooperative is committed to educating the public about potential electrical dangers both inside and outside the home.

In 2016, 475,500 structure fires (including residential fires) were reported in the U.S., causing 2,950 deaths, 12,775 injuries, and \$7.9 billion in property damage. According to the National Fire Protection Association, a residential fire was reported every 90 seconds. Many of these home fires occur when electrical equipment is outdated or improperly used.

"It is critical that members understand their home's electrical system and the safety concerns associated with the latest residential technologies before bringing them into their homes," explains Andrea Gravenhorst, director of member services and communications. "With newer technologies, electric vehicles, and more electronic gadgets in the home, people need to ensure they have an electrical system that's compatible with the increased load."

To raise awareness of the importance of electrical safety, the co-op promotes safety education in local communities all year long. Firelands takes part in first responder training, participates in safety demonstrations, and provides electrical safety information to area schools. Safety tips are frequently found in the local pages of *Ohio Cooperative Living* magazine, and safety information is available on the co-op's website at www.firelandsec.com/content/electrical-safety. The public is also encouraged to contact us if they see a downed power line or any other type of dangerous electrical situation.

Through electrical safety awareness and education, we all play a part in preventing electrical hazards and injuries. Together, let's plug into safety this May.

May is National Electrical Safety Month

 **plug into safety**



Never use electrical equipment near water and other liquids.



Never use electrical cords that are frayed or damaged.



Do not overload electrical outlets.



Never use lightbulbs that exceed the recommended wattage for any lighting unit or fixture.

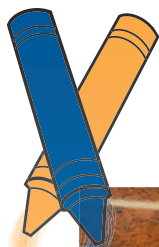


Never use extension cords or power strips with portable heaters or fans.

**Contact your cooperative for questions.
We care about our members' safety!**

**Firelands
Electric**
COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

YOUTH PROGRAMS



Electrical Safety Art Contest winners announced



Noel Lilly
FIRST PLACE, AGES 3-4



Meya Foss
SECOND PLACE, AGES 3-4



Hadley Young
FIRST PLACE, AGES 5-6



Aubrey Parr
SECOND PLACE, AGES 5-6



Jayla Mead
FIRST PLACE, AGES 7-9



Elijah Vasey
SECOND PLACE, AGES 7-9

Each year, Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) designates the month of May as National Electrical Safety Month.

In order to help raise awareness of the importance of electrical safety, Firelands Electric Cooperative sponsored an art contest for members' children ages 3 to 14. The top entries in each age group were awarded a trophy and \$10 restaurant gift card.

Firelands Electric Co-op is pleased to announce the winners of its 2018 Electrical Safety Coloring and Digital Art Contests:

- Ages 3 to 4: First place, Noel Lilly of New London; second place, Meya Foss of Perrysville
- Ages 5 to 6: First place, Hadley Young of Polk; second place, Aubrey Parr of New London
- Ages 7 to 9: First place, Jayla Mead of New London; second place, Elijah Vasey of New London
- Ages 10 to 14 (digital art): First place, Hunter Mantz of New London

"This contest is a great way for the co-op to teach children about potential electrical hazards, as well as reach its future members," says Firelands Electric's Communications and Member Relations Specialist Tracy Gibb.

Congratulations to all of this year's contest participants and winners!



Hunter Mantz
FIRST PLACE, AGES 10-14



YOUTH PROGRAMS



Emily Brannon
MAPLETON HIGH SCHOOL



Faith Griffiths
ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL

Co-op selects students for



Emily Brannon of New London and Faith Griffiths of Ashland have been selected to represent Firelands Electric Cooperative on the 2018 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. Emily is the daughter of Roger and Valeria Brannon and is a sophomore at Mapleton High School. Faith, a sophomore at Ashland High School, is the daughter of Tom and Deleasa Griffiths. The girls will join approximately 40 other students from rural electric cooperatives across the state of Ohio for an all-expenses-paid trip during the week of June 8 to 14.

Youth Tour, sponsored by Ohio's Electric Cooperatives and Firelands Electric, gives children of members the opportunity to travel to the Washington, D.C., area for an in-depth look at the nation's capital. Participants have the chance to visit sites such as the U.S. Capitol, Gettysburg, the Smithsonian Institution, the Vietnam

Memorial, Mount Vernon, the Kennedy Center, the Supreme Court, and many others.

Through educational and sightseeing activities, students gain a personal understanding of American history and their role as a citizen. They also have the opportunity to meet and interact with their U.S. representatives and senators. While student groups are organized at the state level, over 1,500 students from across the country come together for Youth Day, where they meet and hear featured speakers who provide insight into the important roles that electric co-ops play in the community.


During Youth Tour, students may also be selected to represent their state on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Youth Leadership Council (YLC). One student from each state is chosen to come back to Washington, D.C., in July for a leadership workshop, which focuses on the electric cooperative industry. YLC members also have the opportunity to attend NRECA's Annual Meeting the following February.

Firelands's Youth Tour contest is offered annually to high school sophomores and juniors who reside in a home served by the cooperative. Candidates are evaluated on school and community activities, demonstrated leadership, and a written essay. Up to two applicants are selected to represent the co-op on the annual tour. To learn more about Firelands' youth programs, visit www.firelandsec.com/content/youth-programs.



COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

HELPING THE HOUSE WITH A **BIG HEART**



Since 2009, Firelands Electric Co-op has served as a pop tab collection site for Ronald McDonald House of Akron (RMHA). Employees, trustees, members, and the community have donated 1,055 pounds of aluminum tabs over the past nine years — roughly 1.3 million tabs!

Firelands Electric's Tracy Gibb and Mindie Bucher recently delivered the cooperative's annual donation of tabs to RMHA. The co-op took things a step further this year by donating \$260 from its February jeans day program. For a \$5 donation, office employees have the option of wearing jeans and sneakers to work on Fridays, and the money collected is given to a different charitable organization each month.



The pop tabs that groups like Firelands Electric donate to RMHA are recycled, and the money is used to purchase items for the house, such as computers, TVs, games, or Christmas trees. Items like these offer a bit of “normalcy” to the families staying at RMHA — families who are going through an extremely stressful and emotional time.

RMHA has provided a supportive home away from home for families with children receiving medical treatment at Akron Children's Hospital since 1985. Whether it's a soft bed, a hot meal, or just a friendly face to share their day with, RMHA and its more than 130 volunteers work hard to make young patients and their families more comfortable during their stay.

The 20-bedroom facility at RMHA serves about 12,000 families each year. Another 3,800 are turned away due to lack of space, however. With this number increasing every year, RMHA embarked on a campaign to enlarge their facilities in 2015. Nearing completion, this expansion adds 42 guestrooms (including 10 for

long-term stays), a larger kitchen, a community room, and two playrooms.

Financial support for the expansion of RMHA has come from countless corporate and private donors, as well as numerous fundraisers. However, the day-to-day expenses of running the facility are mostly funded by individual donations. In fact, donors like Firelands' members account for 96 percent of RMHA's annual operating budget.

In addition to collecting pop tabs, those who would like to help RMHA can donate gift cards or other items from the facility's wish list, participate in the Share-a-Night program, or even volunteer to make a meal for the residents. Additional information on these programs and several others can be found online at www.rmhakron.org/how-you-can-help.

“Families in our very own cooperative community have benefited from the services at Ronald McDonald House of Akron,” says Tracy Gibb, Firelands Electric's communications and member relations specialist.

“Our members and employees are proud to continue supporting this amazing organization by collecting pop tabs at our office.”

Pop tabs may be dropped off at Firelands Electric's office, located at One Energy Place, New London, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The co-op will also be collecting tabs at its Annual Meeting of Members on June 23.

A long-awaited expansion, which will add 42 guestrooms, is nearly complete at Ronald McDonald House of Akron.





COOPERATIVE UPDATE

BOARD MEETING *highlights*

Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met Feb. 22 and covered the following items:

- Board President Dan Schloemer reported the cooperative received 22 membership applications for approval by the board.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd presented January financials and reported on accounting and billing department activities.
- General Manager Dan McNaull reported on a cost-of-service study with the board that was completed by National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC).
- The board reviewed a Jan. 16 safety and training report.
- McNaull reviewed subcontractor bids with the board for mechanical construction of the new co-op facility. Following review, the board selected Shakley of Ashland as the HVAC/plumbing contractor; after further discussion, Firelands Electric of Sandusky was the chosen electrical contractor, and Vulcan of Tiffin was named the fire suppression contractor.
- The board examined a list of expenditures from the co-op's general fund during the month of January.
- Denny Marugg was retiring after more than 28 years of service to Firelands Electric and was asked to review improvements made to the cooperative's system during his years of service with the board. Following the presentation, McNaull presented Marugg with a gift from the board for his years of dedicated service, and hard work done for the cooperative and its members.
- McNaull advised the board that panels had been installed for the cooperative's community solar project. The renewable system still needs to be connected to the grid.
- The board reviewed reports prepared by Director of Electric Operations Don Englet on recent projects and crew activities in the operations department and Director of Member Services Andrea Gravenhorst on recent communications pieces and upcoming activities involving the member services department.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, May 22, at Firelands Electric's office, located at One Energy Place, New London.

FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

OUTAGE HOTLINE

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OFFICE HOURS

Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
www.firelandsec.com



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GENERAL MANAGER

Dan McNaull

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

E-mail your ideas to:
members@firelandsec.com

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