

Steve Lucas, CEO

# IT'S A MATTER OF (CO-OP) PRINCIPLES

## Celebrating Co-op Month

**A**CE Hardware, State Farm, REI, Land O'Lakes, Heartland Credit Union, and Scenic Rivers Energy all share something in common: We're all cooperatives. We may be in different industries, but we all share a passion for serving our members and helping our communities to thrive. In fact, all cooperatives adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness, and service to the greater community good. October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time but also provide a framework for the future. Let's take a look at the first three cooperative principles.

### Principle 1: Voluntary and Open Membership

Just like all co-ops, SREC was created out of necessity—to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. So in 1938, a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op so everyone in our communities could benefit. For a modest membership fee to the co-op, any farmer could get electricity brought to his farm. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem that they all had but couldn't solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole, and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in our tri-county region.

While this history may be forgotten, key parts of that heritage remain—the focus on our mission and serving the greater good. In this, we include everyone to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the entire region. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective, or socioeconomic status.

### Principle 2: Democratic Member Control

Our co-op is well suited to meet the needs of our members because we are locally governed. Each member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is run, and each voice and vote are equal. SREC's leadership team and employees live right here as your friends and neighbors. Our board of directors, who set the long-term priorities for the co-op, also live locally

on co-op lines. These board members have been elected by neighbors just like you.

### Principle 3: Members' Economic Participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op, we are also motivated by service to the community, rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of SREC. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for co-op programs, initiatives, capital investments, and supporting other activities.

Because we are guided by seven cooperative principles, it's not just about dollars—it's about opportunity for all and being fair when engaging with our members. The cooperative way is a values-based business model.

SREC is a reflection of our local communities and the evolving needs. We view our role as a catalyst for good and making our corner of the world a better place. And by the way, that sums up the seventh co-op principle, "concern for community," which I'll elaborate on next month. In the meantime, we'll continue to work hard to keep your lights on.



Answers to trivia questions on page 17: 1. Franklin D. Roosevelt Bonus: 1935 2. Possible answers include energy conservation rebates, energy assessments, youth programming, scholarships, water heater sales, Safety First farm rewiring program, electrical safety demonstrations 3. Nine members 4. Clarence Jerrett 5. Steve Lucas 6. 1938 7. Varies 8. Seven Bonus: Co-op principles are Voluntary and Open Membership; Democratic Member Control; Members' Economic Participation; Autonomy and Independence; Education, Training, and Information; Cooperation Among Cooperatives; Concern for Community 9. Willie Wirehead 10. National Rural Electric Cooperative Association 11. October 12. April 13. Four 14. Dairyland Power Cooperative 15. Youth Leadership Congress 16. 52 Bonus: \$52,000 17. SmartHub 18. a 19. 25 Bonus: 832 distribution co-ops



# CO-OP MONTH

## A celebration of our members



Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative has a long history of member engagement. Hosting gatherings, meetings, and events in each district was common in the early years for all three of our original cooperatives (Crawford, Grant, and Lafayette, which make up SREC). Over time, these gatherings were held in more centralized areas which eventually led us to hosting gatherings in one location per county. COVID led us to cancel these events in 2020, and the board of directors made the difficult decision to cancel these gatherings again this year.

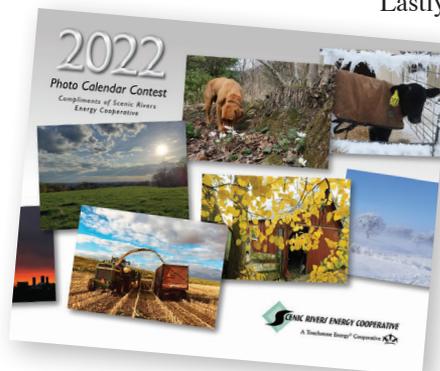
However, Co-op Month is a celebration of our members, and we do not have to gather to celebrate each one of you. We've all learned new ways to recognize each other safely. SREC will be sending all our members a complimentary 2022 Calendar with our members' winning photos. The photo contest winners are all members of SREC, and selecting the winners is never easy as there are many wonderful entries. We hope you'll see a familiar name or two when you open your calendar and that you'll let the photographers know that you enjoy their photos. There wouldn't be a calendar without our members.

Next, on the facing page we've included a fun trivia game. It's just for fun, and the answers are on the previous page (in case you get stuck). No need to return the trivia sheet, but we

know that many of our members enjoy games of all kinds, especially on a rainy day.

Lastly, every member will be entered into a daily drawing for a \$10 bill credit. Each day we'll draw an additional winner. Day 1 = 1 winner; day 2 = 2 winners; day 3 = 3 winners; until October 31, when we'll draw 31 winners of \$10 each! Each member can only win once, and will be notified by phone. Prizes will appear on your November 2021 bill statement. We'll also post the winners on our Facebook page each day, so be sure to Like us on Facebook if you haven't already.

Co-op Month may only come around once a year, but here at SREC, we know we need each and every member on our lines in order to be a strong cooperative. By working together, as a community, we've built more than miles and miles of lines and poles; we've built a community here in Southwest Wisconsin and we're proud to serve you every day.



October is also the time in which we traditionally return capital credits to our members. The board recently voted to retire over \$1 million in capital credits this year. Scenic Rivers has returned millions of dollars in funds to members over our 80-year history and we remain committed to adhering to that cooperative principle in addition to the other six.

# SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE TRIVIA GAME

*It is time to find out how much you know about your local electric cooperative!*

1 Which president signed the executive order that created the Rural Electrification Administration?



**Bonus Question:** In what year did he sign it? \_\_\_\_\_

2 Name three other services SREC offers its members.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3 How many directors are on the cooperative board? \_\_\_\_\_

4 Who was SREC's first board president?

\_\_\_\_\_

5 Who is the general manager & CEO of SREC?

\_\_\_\_\_

6 What year were the first farms connected to Scenic Rivers Energy's lines?



First members to receive electricity

\_\_\_\_\_

7 What is YOUR account number with SREC?

\_\_\_\_\_

8 How many cooperative principles are there? \_\_\_\_\_

**Bonus Question:** Name one of the principles.

\_\_\_\_\_

9 This little guy was adopted as the mascot of rural electric cooperatives in 1951. What's his name?



\_\_\_\_\_

10 Name the national organization of electric cooperatives.

\_\_\_\_\_

11 Which month is National Co-op Month? \_\_\_\_\_

12 When is National Line Worker Appreciation Month?



\_\_\_\_\_

13 How many years is an electric lineman apprenticeship?

\_\_\_\_\_

14 Who is SREC's wholesale power provider?

\_\_\_\_\_



Alex Downing, 2019 YLC

15 Name the youth conference SREC sends students to, to enhance team building and leadership skills while learning about cooperatives.

\_\_\_\_\_

16 How many scholarships does SREC offer? \_\_\_\_\_

**Bonus Question:** How much money is awarded each year in scholarships? \_\_\_\_\_

17 What is the name of the online app you can download on a computer or mobile device that gives you access to your account electronically?

\_\_\_\_\_

18 What is the average number of members SREC has per mile of power line?

- a. 5
- b. 35
- c. 60

19 How many electric cooperatives are in Wisconsin? \_\_\_\_\_

**Bonus Question:** How many in the United States? \_\_\_\_\_



Early linemen's truck



# 4 SAFETY TIPS

## TEEN DRIVERS NEED TO KNOW



### 1 THAT TEXT CAN WAIT

When texting while driving, the shortest amount of time a person takes his or her eyes off the road is five seconds. At 55 mph, that is like driving the length of a football field with your eyes closed.

### 2 DON'T GET OUT

If you are in a car accident involving a power line or padmount transformer ("green box"), stay inside the vehicle and call 9-1-1. Unless the car is on fire or giving off smoke, do not get out. If there is a fire, make a solid jump from the vehicle without touching it and hop with your feet together as far away as you can.

### 3 RESPECT WORK ZONES

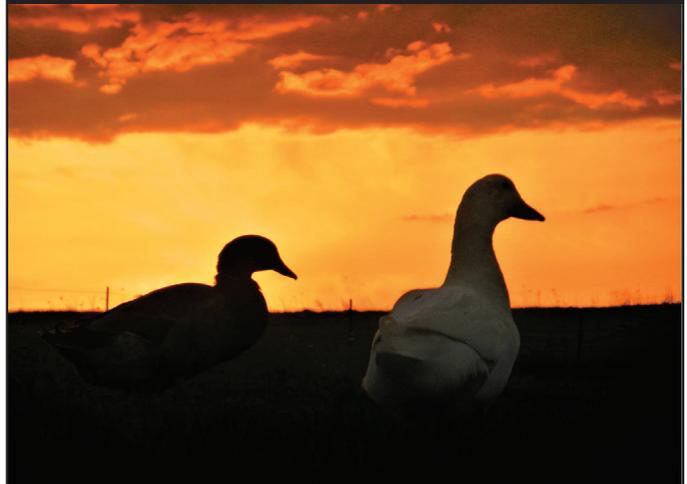
One work zone crash occurs every 5.4 minutes. Remind teen drivers to consider anyone doing their job in or near the road as someone they know and love. Encourage them to move over and slow down for workers.

### 4 DON'T DRIVE DISTRACTED

Texting is not the only form of distracted driving. Driving and doing anything else is multitasking. Eight deaths occur EVERY DAY due to drivers who drive distracted.

Learn more at [safeelectricity.org](https://safeelectricity.org)

## MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



The winning photo for October in SREC's 2020 Member Photo Contest was taken by Melissa Billings of Lancaster. Winning photos are featured in our 2021 Member Photo Calendar. Watch your mail for your 2022 Member Calendar!

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Old, uninsulated and improperly installed exterior doors can waste energy and money.

Shut the door on wasted energy by weather stripping and sealing all exterior doors. If you have an old exterior door, consider replacing it with a newer, energy efficient model.

Source: [energy.gov](https://energy.gov)

Would your teen know what to do if they got in a car accident involving a downed power line? Make sure they do: <https://safeelectricity.org/license-to-live/>  
#TeenSafeDrivingWeek  
#SafeElectricity



**CENRIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

**Steve Lucas, CEO**

231 N. Sheridan St.  
Lancaster, WI 53813  
[lancaster@srec.net](mailto:lancaster@srec.net)

300 Barth Drive  
P.O. Box 127  
Darlington, WI 53530  
[darlington@srec.net](mailto:darlington@srec.net)

15985 St. Hwy. 131  
Gays Mills, WI 54631  
[gaysmills@srec.net](mailto:gaysmills@srec.net)

608-723-2121 • 800-236-2141 • [www.sre.coop](http://www.sre.coop)

*This institution is an equal opportunity employer and provider*

## Board of Directors

Chuck Simmons, Chairman  
Donald Schaefer, Vice Chairman  
Sandra Davidson, Secretary-Treasurer  
Ellen Conley, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer  
Lily Long, Director  
Steve Carpenter, Director  
Delbert Reuter, Director  
Jack Larson, Director  
Marcus Saegrove, Director