

OAKDALE ELECTRIC BOARD ELECTION ON THE HORIZON

Districts 1 and 7 are up for election

Members in Districts 1 and 7 have an opportunity to serve on the Oakdale Electric Cooperative board of directors by running for a position on the board in the April 2016 co-op election. Two positions will be up for election; terms are expiring for **Bob Churchill**, La Valle, representing District 7. Both incumbent directors have announced their intentions to seek re-election in the Districts they represent.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is

owned by its members and guided by directors elected from the membership. Board directors serve three-year terms and represent co-op members at monthly meetings. Candidates must meet the qualifications outlined in the cooperative's bylaws and be full-time residents of the district they represent. For applications or more details about board elections, visit oakdalerec.com or contact Cherlyn at cmoseley@oakdalerec.com or 800-241-2468.



Oakdale Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Director Qualifications

In order to serve as a representative on the Oakdale Electric Cooperative Board of Directors, a member must...

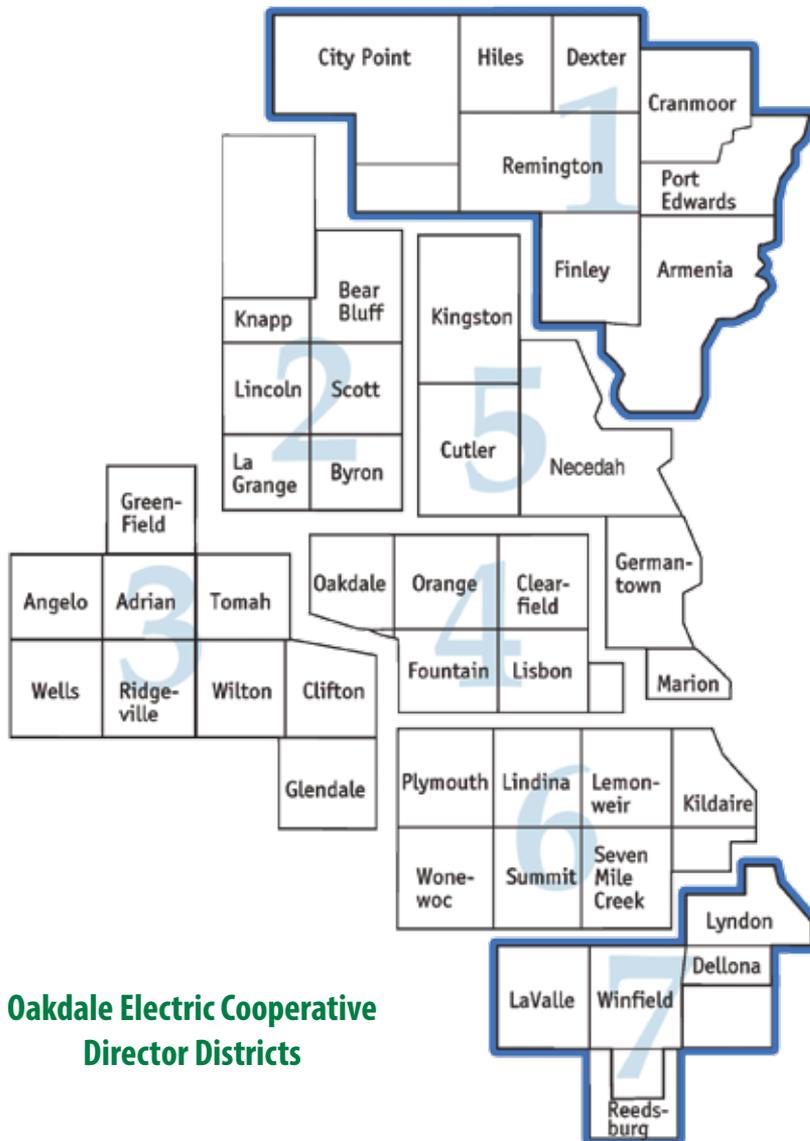
1. Be a member and primary resident in the district from which elected.
2. Not be employed by or have any financial interest in a competing enterprise or business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative or engage in selling electrical or plumbing appliances or supplies to members of the co-op.
3. Not be employed by the cooperative.

Director Duties

A director must have the time to attend monthly board meetings, other special meetings, and educational seminars that are designed to keep directors informed on the various aspects of Oakdale Electric Cooperative and the electric utility industry. Their decisions are made in the best interest of the cooperative, and they represent the entire membership.

Grassroots democracy is one of the hallmarks of belonging to an electric cooperative. Two directors will be elected at the annual meeting of Oakdale Electric Cooperative on April 1 at Tomah High School. Cooperative members will vote for directors in Districts 1 and 7. Are you interested in serving as a board member for Oakdale Electric Cooperative? Do you reside in one of the two districts listed above? Consider becoming a part of your electric cooperative by submitting your name as a director candidate in this year's election.

The deadline to file to be a nominee is February 10, 2017, by 4 p.m.



Oakdale Electric Cooperative Director Districts

MY CO-OP



“I was always willing to do whatever was asked of me,” stated Scott Brookman, engineering superintendent, as he reflected on his 39 years of employment at Oakdale Electric Cooperative. His positive can-do attitude and belief to always go the extra mile ensured a successful career at the co-op.

When Scott graduated from UW–La Crosse, he was ready to tackle the classroom head on teaching health education to middle school students. After one year of shuffling books from room to room due to a shortage of classrooms, Scott decided to make a career change. He had delivered appliances for Oakdale Electric Cooperative the prior summer and was told a full-time position would be waiting if he ever had a change of heart. With the school year finished, the very next day Scott started working at the co-op and hasn’t looked back since.

Scott went on to complete his electrical power distribution education and training at Chippewa Valley Technical College. Following the fulfillment of a four-year apprenticeship, he worked for nearly a decade as a journeyman lineman before being promoted to an area foreman. Scott made the transition to the engineering department a few years later.

“Line design and the challenge of a different area of work in the co-op appealed to me,” stated Scott, who advanced into his current role of engineering superintendent 10 years ago.

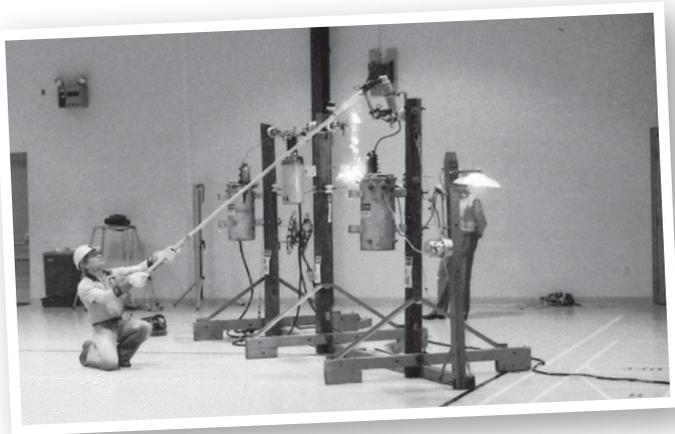
In every position Scott held at the co-op, he found

enjoyment and challenges. That included testing over 4,000 poles in one summer or line construction.

“Even though it was nasty weather at times, restoring power was one of the most rewarding parts of my job,” he said. “I liked trying to figure out the cause of the outage and then getting the lights back on for our members.” There are always rainy days to be had in any position, but Scott said, “They were all interesting and all good.”

With his teaching background, Scott was the perfect fit to oversee hotline safety demonstrations, which spanned a decade. During the winter months, Oakdale Electric Cooperative would visit area elementary schools to teach youth about the dangers of electricity and how to stay safe around it. The original hotline demonstration equipment took one hour to set up and take down, but the demo “lit the sky up” and made a powerful impact on many young minds. One year, Scott recalled reciting the presentation 60 times, in 50 places, over 40 days.

Junior achievement, local county fair livestock auctions,



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and career fairs were just a few of the additional community programs Scott participated in while representing the co-op. He also assisted other electric cooperatives in their times of need through ROPE (Restoration of Power in an Emergency) calls, as well as restoring power for a week in Louisiana after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. For 25 years Scott served on the Oakdale Volunteer Fire Department.

Over the course of Scott's career, a plethora of memories was made, but those that stand out include the 1980 Farm Progress Days held in Monroe County. Oakdale Electric Cooperative was responsible for rebuilding the line through Tomah's countryside (now called Sunny Hills subdivision) in order to host this annual statewide event. An aerial photograph of the grounds hung in Scott's office, providing a daily memory of the successful event.

Long days and nights working on outages in the early days brought back emotional memories, especially the night when the crew was called back in before power was restored to everyone.

"That was really hard," Scott admitted. "It was the first time we ever came in without getting everyone back on. We went back to work early the next morning, and had power fully restored by that evening."

On another call, Scott recalled rescuing a woman stranded by a telephone pole in waist-deep water. Helping people has always given Scott a feeling of accomplishment and pride, and working for the co-op over the years has provided him with plenty of those opportunities.

"There have been a lot of changes

over the last 39 years at Oakdale Electric," said Scott. "In looking back, we have grown as a cooperative, we have newer and better equipment, and the line crews are great. The technology has also changed, from handwritten staking sheets and mapping to computerized maps, from physically reading meters to new automatic reading meters. In fact, we now have fewer employees and serve more members than we did 25 years ago."

Scott stated patience is a skill he learned at the co-op, especially while working in dispatch. Time would slowly creep by for those working inside while waiting for crews to finish the job outside. Scott also learned the value of being able to see both sides of a situation, and he learned how to

work cooperatively with people from all different walks of life. These are lessons that he will take with him as he begins his next chapter in life.

Life after retirement will continue to stay busy for Scott, especially during the winter months. He has been an integral part of the WIAA's high school wrestling program, refereeing the sport for 45 years, and will continue this passion for as long as his body allows. Additionally, his three children and five grandchildren, including a newborn, will keep him moving. Luckily, Scott is not one to sit still for very long.

For 39 years, Oakdale Electric Cooperative was a major part of Scott's life, and in his words, "It was a good life. It went by fast. When I look back, I think, where did the years go?"

During his career, he had the opportunity to work for four general managers, as well as many great co-workers and members. "I will miss the people," Scott declared. "I feel very fortunate and very lucky to have been with the co-op for so many years."

Scott would have made an excellent teacher, but we are sure glad that things turned out the way it did because he was a true gift to Oakdale Electric Cooperative. We wish him and his wife, Steffanie, the very best in this next chapter of their lives!—Deana Protz



Left: A special cake for a special person. Right: Scott received a tribute and fond farewell from fellow employees Cheri Ness and Roy Boyles.



2017 MEMBER PHOTO CONTEST

"Life in Rural Wisconsin"



Oakdale Electric Cooperative is holding our annual photo contest for members' photos to be featured in our 2018 calendar. Winning photos may be used in future newsletters or cooperative publications.

Photo Contest Criteria:

- Photos must be taken within the Oakdale Electric Cooperative service area.
- Photos should capture life in rural Wisconsin (seasons, wildlife, landscape, people, etc.).
- Photos must have a horizontal (landscape) orientation.
- Photos can be in color or black and white.
- **Only high-resolution photos can be used. Photos must be at least 300 dpi.**

Photo Contest Rules and Details:

- Contest will run from February 1, 2017 until August 25, 2017; however, submitted photos can be taken outside of this date range.
- Three (3) photos per member will be accepted.
- All Oakdale Electric Cooperative members 18 years old and over are eligible to submit photos.
- An Oakdale Electric Cooperative member under the age of 18 years old is eligible to participate, but must submit a parent/guardian form with entry.
- **A completed entry form must accompany each photo.**
- Member must own rights to photo.
- OEC employees will determine the winning photos.

Photo Contest Entry Options:

- **Upload** using the Photo Contest Entry Form. 
- **Mail** to P.O. Box 128, Oakdale, WI, 54649. (photo(s) must be 8"x10" in size, and 300 dpi)
- **Drop off** at Oakdale Electric Cooperative Office --489 N. Oakwood St., Tomah. (photo(s) must be 8"x10" in size, and 300 dpi)

Bruce Ardel, General Manager

P.O. Box 40, Oakdale, WI 54649
608-372-4131 • 800-241-2468
info@oakdalerec.com

Deana Protz, Editor



Oakdale Electric Cooperative

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Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
24-Hour Emergency Power Restoration: 800-927-6151
Toll-free Online Bill Payment 866-392-4307

Diggers Hotline: For underground cable locates and power line clearance information, call 800-242-8511.