



Kevin Babcock,
General Manager/
CEO

FOCUS ON SAFETY DURING THE HARVEST SEASON

It's harvest season, and many farmers reap the benefits of advancement in agricultural technology. With the help of GPS auto-steer devices, farmers are able to decrease driver error and maximize productivity. Yet despite these advances, safety risks remain.

It's important to remember that because of the large size of today's farm machinery, the potential of hitting a power line has a higher probability. Being aware of the location of overhead power lines and planning a safe equipment route can help reduce accidents.

In addition, less focus may be needed on steering in equipment with auto-guidance systems. This may lead some drivers to think they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. However, even while using a GPS with auto steering, farm workers need to keep safety in mind and be attentive of their surroundings. With a GPS, power poles may not be correctly plotted in the system. This reinforces the idea that drivers need to stay focused on the location of the farm equipment while in the field and be ready to take action if necessary.

If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power. The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Keep the following electrical safety guidelines in mind:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Look up and use care when moving any equipment such as extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead power lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact Jackson Electric Cooperative.

#supportingourcommunity

Jackson Electric Cooperative purchased two market hogs, two broiler chickens, and a dairy basket at the Jackson County Fair auction. The hogs were processed for the pulled pork sandwiches served at the annual member picnic in August.

1. Vanessa Ponterio of Melrose holds one of the broiler chickens purchased by Jackson Electric. Vanessa's parents are Frank and Kim. 2. Directors Chris Curran, left, Brian Huber, right, and General Manager Kevin Babcock, middle, pose with Jason Waldera, son of Josh and Gabriella, of Taylor. 3. Kyle Gilbertson, left, son of Mike and Tina from Hixton, has a huge smile after Jackson Electric purchased his market hog. 4. Director Dave Peasley purchased a dairy basket from Samantha Huff, daughter of Arnold and Sandra, from Hixton.



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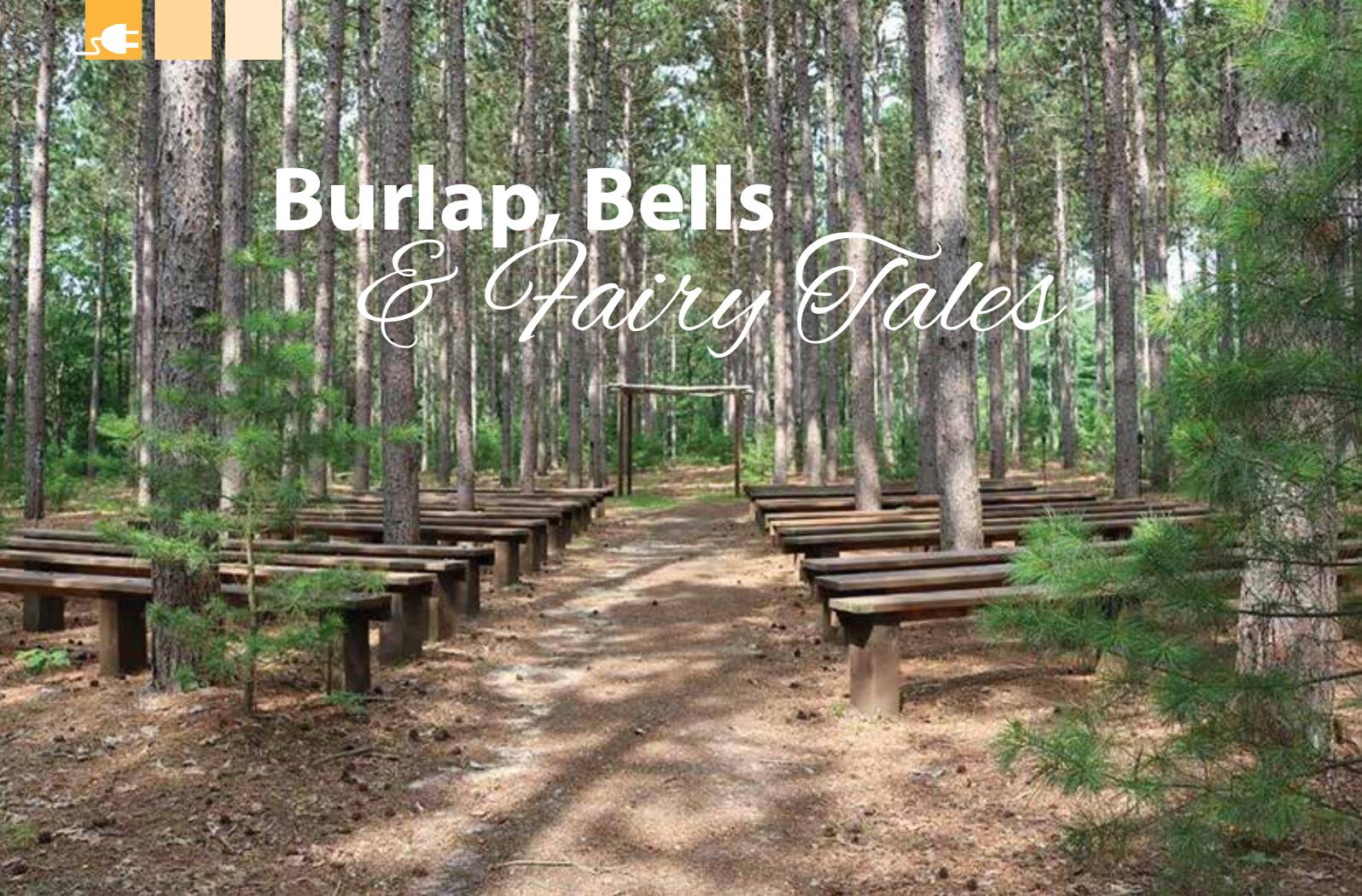
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Burlap, Bells & Fairy Tales



Once upon a time, there was a plantation of Norway Pines with arms that reached 50 feet into bright, blue skies. Their legs were firmly planted in neat rows, spaced apart in natural aisles. In the distance, they saw many villagers riding in a wagon. The wagon came to a halt before a sign with an arrow that pointed in the direction of the “Ceremony.” The villagers began to fill the empty benches nestled in the midst of the enchanted forest. The pines watched as the ceremony started at the strike of 12 and the princess made her way down a rustic aisle lined with small tea lights that flickered in the summer breeze. She was united with Prince Charming, and there was a grand ball afterwards. They lived happily ever after. The end.

This fairy tale does not have to end there. It can come to life and become a cherished family story for years to come. At Burlap and Bells you can have the enchanted wedding you’ve always imagined. It’s more than just a wedding venue—it’s all about family. Located outside of Black River Falls, the family-owned and operated venue is an ideal location for those with family dispersed throughout the Midwest.

Amie Smetana, events and marketing manager for Burlap and Bells, shares how the venue was established: “A family member was about to get married and was looking at other outdoor wedding venues in northern Minnesota that were charging more than \$10,000 for the weekend to rent their property. We felt we could make something just as unique and way more affordable for the Wisconsin area.” That’s exactly what the family did. The first wedding took place on the property in

July of 2013. Since then, business continues to grow each year.

Amie’s parents, James and Pamela Smetana, own the venue and acreage. Amie remembers her childhood of horseback riding, hiking, and cross-country skiing with her close-knit family on the property’s trails made by her grandfather, James V. Smetana. The family holds onto this close-knit value by working together. Amie says, “All of our staff we employ for events is either a friend or family member. It’s very much a family affair.”

Amie’s grandfather continues to contribute to the venue by making and painting all of the wooden signs and refurbishing the antique chairs in the venue’s inventory.

The venue’s focus on family is evident every step of the way. “We love the full circle that we get to go through with the couple. From the tour where they sometimes shed a tear

and get so excited, to the event where we meet and work with their families for the whole weekend,” Amie shares.

Burlap and Bells is well acquainted to the Black River Falls area, so they’re anxious to let couples know about local vendors and “gems.” The venue is rented out for the whole weekend with the intent “that people will come and not only have time to set up their space, but also to experience all that this area has to offer.”

Since the first wedding in 2013, the family has made many additions to the venue. The property now includes a building complete with a kitchen, dressing room, and bathrooms. A new pavilion project completed in May offers another option for rainy days, instead of a traditional tent. “Since then, every wedding this year has used it in some way,” Amie adds. The scenic location with tree plots, valleys, cliffs, and ponds offers plenty of opportunities for capturing photos of a couple’s special day.

Weather and the time of year are important factors to consider when planning an outdoor wedding. When

asked what advantage or disadvantage each season adds to an event, Amie has an experienced answer: “It depends on the look that they’re going for. If you’re going for spring, you probably want to shoot for the end of June if you’re worried about rain because you still get the flowers and moss. If you’re thinking you definitely don’t want rain, then July and August are the best bets. But, when [it’s] too early of spring and too late of fall, the temperatures at night get really cool, so sometimes [couples] have to rent heaters. [There’s] always something you have to contend with an outdoor wedding.”

Amie recommends that a couple book their date at least a year in advance. “We do a lot of tours. Most of the tours we do will be the spring the year before they’re planning, but we usually book up quite quickly through the spring,” adds Amie. The venue is fully booked for 2017 with a waitlist and already booking and touring for 2018. The venue will book the first weekend of May through the first weekend of October.

Are you looking for that happily

ever after story to share with your family? Imagine your story’s beginning by visiting the venue’s website, www.burlapandbells.com. Imagine the details as you view their inventory and prices. Imagine your dream day as you browse the photo gallery. As you tour the venue, imagine the pieces of your story that fall into place. You no longer need to imagine. Happily ever after has become a reality not far from your home. Your perfect day can begin by messaging Amie through the Contact link on the venue’s website. 

*By Brandi Shramek
Jackson Electric Summer Employee*



Just a few of the many inventory items and necessities available:

- hay wagons
- bridal preparation suite
- mason jars
- beverage coolers/dispensers
- wooden plank tables
- antique wooden chairs
- table runners
- tableware
- assorted vases
- dance floors
- yard games
- photo booth props
- s’mores station
- full onsite kitchen with buffet
- indoor restrooms
- parking area

1. Burlap and Bells was established in 2013. 2. New cliffside ceremony site doubles as great spot for photos. 3. One of the many beautiful signs available for your event. 4. Bridal preparation suite.

Opposite page: Tree Grove ceremony site offers a rustic natural aisle.



JEC EMPLOYEE UPDATES

Jackson Electric Cooperative announces the following employee updates:

Steve Wold has been promoted from information technology (IT) support specialist to IT manager. Wold started his career at the co-op in 2014. He is responsible for the planning and oversight of the technology needs of the cooperative, including employee and board training. He manages the backup and security of the co-op's network. As management, he will continue his current responsibilities along with the supervision of staff.



Steve and his wife, Mary, have three grown children. In their free time, they enjoy bowling, golfing, and hiking in Wisconsin's state parks.

Pam Bjerke has been named member relations advisor. She began working at the co-op in 2006 as a receptionist. Soon after, she worked with the member services department processing rebate and water heater information along with front counter responsibilities. Pam moved from the front desk and now discusses the co-op's programs and services with new members, explains rebates and heating options, and processes water heater paperwork and coordinates repairs.



Pam and her husband, Randy, have two grown children and three grandchildren. Pam is actively involved with several community organizations including the Black River Falls Chamber of Commerce, the Community Band, and the American Legion Auxiliary. She enjoys knitting, spinning, and gardening.

Bertina Zager has been named accounting clerk. She began her career at the co-op in 2010 as a receptionist/operations assistant. She worked at the front counter greeting members and assisting the operations department. Her responsibilities have shifted to include day-to-day accounting operations, such as bank reconciliations, updating accounting databases, processing accounts payables, and some support to the operations department.



Bertina and her husband, Gary, have four children. Bertina enjoys running and other outdoor activities to include camping, kayaking, and biking.

CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATION

Soon you will be receiving your capital credit allocation notice in the mail. This notice shows the amount earned and credited to your capital credit account for the year stated on the notice. This is notification of your allocated capital credit amount in the cooperative, not a capital credit retirement check.

Allocation of net margins are set aside into the member's account to be used by the cooperative as operating capital for reliability improvements and maintenance over a period of years. An allocation is made annually based upon the member's patronage from the previous year.

Some members may receive a capital credit retirement check in December. The board of directors annually decides the amount and years to retire based on the financial needs of the cooperative.

If you move from our service lines, please inform us of your new address so we can keep you updated on your capital credit account and send any retirement you are eligible to receive.

PHOTO CONTEST REMINDER

We are looking for your best photography shots to hang on the walls of Jackson Electric. Members are encouraged to take photos in Jackson Electric's service territory and submit your favorites to Jackson Electric. Every month, until June 30, 2017, a winning photo will be selected and the member-photographer will receive a \$25 energy credit.

Go to www.jackelec.com, Jackson Electric's Facebook page, or contact our office for photo contest rules and release for photo use.

July's top photo pick submitted by Charlie and Betty Janke of rural Hixton



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Diggers Hotline 800.242.8511
www.jackelec.com

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 546
Black River Falls, WI 54615
Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Board of Directors: Gary Woods, President
Jerry Huber, Vice President
David Peasley, Secretary-Treasurer
Daniel Smrekar, Junior Jacobson, Stanley Gran, Brian Huber, Chris Curran, Jerry Wagner
Kevin Babcock, General Manager/CEO

Jackson Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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