



Kevin Babcock,
General Manager/CEO

THE SACRIFICE GIVEN FOR OUR FREEDOMS

As a nation, we celebrate Veteran's Day on November 11. It is a day to honor those who have served to protect

our way of life. Our veterans did not serve a president or congress, but took an oath to defend and protect an idea. That idea is called the Constitution.

In our country, many of our citizens say it is their right for this or their right for that. I wonder how many ever reflect and truly know the sacrifice that was given to provide for their rights. Our founders were brave enough to sign the Declaration of Independence. They were willing to sacrifice everything they owned, and even their lives, with a signature for an idea.

Since the beginning of our nation, someone was needed to protect and provide the freedoms we all enjoy: freedoms we tend to take for granted without thought. Many of our veterans volunteered for service, but a large number were called to duty by the government.



That idea of itself is hard to imagine. One day you are living your life as you choose, and in a short time you are in the military.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau from 2014, there are 21.8 million veterans in the United States. As of 2017, there are approximately 325 million people in the United States. Roughly 6 percent of our nation's population has provided us with the rights we so enjoy. Where else can we find where so few have given so much for so many?

I would like to thank our veterans past and present. Keep our military in your thoughts and prayers as they serve to protect our way of life at home and abroad. I especially want to thank our Gold Star families, who will forever wait for their loved ones to come home.

WINTER LOAD MANAGEMENT HOURS

Daily Energy Storage

The daily energy storage load management schedule is for those members who have dual fuel water heaters and off-peak electric thermal storage (ETS) units. Beginning November 1 through April 30, these units will be controlled Monday through Friday, 5:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. and from 3:30 to 10 p.m. Typically, there is no control on weekends and cooperative-recognized holidays.

Full Load Control

Full load control (peak alert) events may be issued during the months of December, January, and February. If issued, these events will be from 5 to 10 p.m. on days when there is high demand for electricity. It is during this time that we ask members to minimize their electric usage. An automatic backup source of heat is needed during this period for members who have electric heat on the dual fuel program. Electric heat and water heaters are controlled during this period.

Our power supplier anticipates three events throughout the winter season. Full load control (peak alert) events are announced on WWIS and WAXX affiliated radio stations, Jackson Electric's Facebook page, and www.jackelec.com.

DUAL FUEL LOAD MANAGEMENT RECEIVER TEST NOVEMBER 15

Jackson Electric Cooperative members who participate in the dual fuel (off-peak) heating program will experience an interruption in their electric heat on Wednesday, November 15, starting at 5 p.m. At 9 p.m., a gradual restoration of heating systems will begin, with all heating systems back on by 11 p.m. Please make sure your backup heating system is operational before this date.

This system-wide test is administered by Dairyland Power. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jackson Electric's office.

November Office Hours

Jackson Electric's office will be closed:

- Friday, November 10, from noon to 1 p.m. for employee training
- Thursday, November 23, and Friday, November 24, for Thanksgiving

Any outages can be reported to 855.222.3275.





FAMILY ROOTS

are Grounded with

Respect



Siblings Derek and Ashley Ahl are Northern's third generation of leadership.

When it comes to the products you buy, how often do you think about where they originated? Do you ever take a moment to think about the nursery that produced those flowers in your front yard? They look great, right? However, there's more to a product than the appearance or the sticker price. Behind those qualities is a team of individuals with a common objective to sell quality products and service. Quality service begins with respect, and that respect originates in the workplace. Respect. It's only seven letters, but when they're put together they can change the atmosphere of an entire business and industry. How does Northern Family Farms define respect?

Responsibility: Northern Family Farms (formerly known as Northern Christmas Trees and Nursery) is focused on family and respect. Established in 1955 by Calvin and Arlene Frelk, the family business has welcomed its third generation of leadership with the addition of siblings Derek and Ashley Ahl, children of John and Ginger Ahl. Having grown up with the family business, Derek and Ashley say it has always been a part of who they are and what they wanted to be.

"We felt a responsibility to carry on what our grandparents established and continue on with the tradition," shares Ashley.

Education: Derek and Ashley each have an educational background that provides them with the knowledge necessary to their roles in the business. Ashley is a graduate of the University of Michigan where she studied economics. She works with finance, planning, market trends, and manages accounts. "Everything takes time (years)," Ashley comments, "so we have to plan in advance." Ashley gained experience with sales when she worked for a hedge fund firm in Chicago for 10 years before returning to the family business. Derek always planned on coming back, however. After graduating with his degree in horticulture from the University of Minnesota, Derek returned to Northern where he executes plans and manages the outdoor operations. The siblings respect each other's strengths, using them in ways that best suit the daily operations of the business.

Service: The main goal of the business is to provide quality service with someone always available to answer the phone within the first two rings. Northern wants each customer to feel important. With this small business approach, Northern can be flexible and price competitively.

"It's an extremely competitive industry, but it's not all about the price," shares Derek. "It's about selling service and a quality product."

Service also includes service to the community. Asked about their involvement with community activities, Ashley and Derek say, "We try to be involved by donating trees and/or money. We donate and volunteer locally because otherwise there isn't a lot of community interaction within day-to-day operations."

Ashley is a volunteer coach and serves as a trustee on the Black River Area Foundation. Derek is currently president of the Wisconsin Christmas Tree Producers Association.

Product: When it comes to product, Northern is about quality. "The greatest reward," shares Derek, "is selling a great product that is nice looking and going right to consumers."

Products are sold wholesale, meaning they are transported from Northern directly to retailers. The service area covers the Greater Midwest, including states as far east as Ohio and Michigan, as far south as Kentucky and Kansas, as far west as Wyoming, Montana, and Colorado, and everything in-

between. Their product inventory includes shrubs, perennials, shade trees, flowering trees, fruit trees, roses, and evergreens. When it comes to bestsellers, lilacs, maples, spirea, fruit trees, and Christmas trees appear at the top.

Members of Jackson Electric can find Northern’s products at retailers and businesses such as Coulee Region Landscape, Falls Florist, Scholze Ace Hardware, all in Black River Falls; Stockman’s in Osseo; and All-American in Tomah and Sparta.

Employees: Asked what the business values most, Ashley and Derek both agree it is the employees. “Everyone is important and respected,” shares Ashley. Each employee has a purpose at Northern whether their role is in accounting, sales, growing, or mechanics. The work environment of Northern is a small business feel, but the employees are like family.

“All partners are equal,” adds Derek, “and long-term decisions go through everyone.”

Competition: The tree farm and nursery industry is very competitive. However, the culture of this industry is different than you would normally expect out of a competitive industry. This industry truly is all about respect.

“The industry is small, but friendly,” shares Derek. “It’s not secretive. We watch out for each other and help each other.”

When it comes to marketing the business, it is primarily done through word-of-mouth. However, the business does have sales representatives, and they have a presence at trade shows. Northern Family Farms attends state shows: ILCA (Illinois Landscape Contractors Association), WNLA

(Wisconsin Nursery and Landscape Association), IGC (Independent Garden Center) Chicago, and the Northern Green Expo in Minnesota.

Time: In this industry, time must always be accounted for. Time can be both a challenge and a reward. The business faces its biggest challenges during winter and early spring. April through May 15 is a critical time because of frost and freezing temperatures.

“Many of our plants are breaking dormancy during this period,” explains Ashley, “and cold weather can injure our product and make it unsaleable.”

Preventative measures are taken to prevent cold injury by covering plants or irrigating during frost events. Customers want perfect plants. The frost may only injure them, but scorched leaves are unacceptable in the nursery industry. For the nursery, March through June are the busiest months for business, while October through December 1 is the busy season for Christmas trees.

There is also a time for growth. Market trends may change over time. The types of plants that people grow in their yards may shift in our ever-changing world. For example, consumers may decide to start growing fruits and vegetables in their yards instead of traditional plants. Northern is prepared to adapt to changes in trends. Steady growth is anticipated in the future of the family business.

“There are always new products, new processes, and an increase in the use of technology,” Ashley concludes.—*Brandi Shramek, communications intern*



1. The nursery is always preparing a variety of quality products.
2. Pink Knock Out Rose.
3. Pretty in Pink Eden.
4. Spanish Lavendar.



ENERGY ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE

During times of hardship, there are programs available to help families and individuals financially endure the heating season.

Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. administers the low-income portion of Jackson Electric Cooperative's Commitment to Community funds for electric bill assistance and home weatherization. Contact 800.782.1063, ext. 231, for more information on this program.

Agencies That May Provide Assistance

Jackson County Health & Human Services	715.284.4301
Clark County Social Services	715.743.5233
La Crosse County Human Services	608.784.4357
Monroe County Human Services.....	608.269.8600
Trempealeau County Social Services	715.538.2311
Wisconsin's Energy Help Initiative	800.522.3014

Jackson Electric Cooperative may arrange payment plans with members who are having difficulty paying their electric bills during the winter months. Jackson Electric will cycle meters on 30 minutes, off 30 minutes during warmer temperatures for non-payment. To avoid disconnect fees because of delinquent payments, it is important for the member to contact Jackson Electric as soon as possible to discuss the situation.

By not paying your electric bill during the winter months, you only put off the inevitable until spring. Disconnection of your electric account may occur in April if insufficient payments have not been credited to your electric account during the winter months. In addition, late fees will add to the burden of paying off a delinquent account.

REBATE DEADLINE IS JANUARY 3, 2018

All rebate applications need to be submitted to Jackson Electric by January 3, 2018. Rebates may be available until funds are depleted. Any items purchased after December 31, 2017, will receive the 2018 rebate amount, if available.

Please plan accordingly. If you submit an application after the deadline, your application may be denied or the 2018 rebate may be applied.

MEET YOUR DIRECTOR, DAVE PEASLEY



Dave Peasley, District 5 representative, is a dairy farmer from the Black River Falls area. He and his wife, Tammy, have four grown children and seven grandchildren.

Asked what he is most proud of, Dave shares, "Carrying on the family farm, now in its sixth generation, with my youngest son, William. He is taking the lead as we transition to organic and are rotationally grazing the dairy herd." Dave's hobbies include mountain biking, cross country skiing, and kayaking.

Dave is the secretary-treasurer on the board of directors. He also serves on the finance committee. By becoming a director, Dave has followed in his father's footsteps. "My father served on the board, and it was instilled in me to take seriously the concerns of the co-op from a young age," he says. Dave adds that his family farm has utilized and supported other co-ops, as well.

He believes that it is important for rural farms to have an energy source that is both economical and reliable for their energy needs.

"I want to see that those needs are met and that we stay current with the new technologies available to us," he says.

His favorite part of being a board member is seeing the changes in technology and how they relate to the electrical industry.—*Brandi Shramek, communications intern*

COMPUTER UPGRADE COMING IN 2018

Jackson Electric will be upgrading its customer information system in February 2018. This upgrade will enable staff to handle member inquiries more efficiently, and provide user-friendly bill pay options for members.

As we get closer to the "go-live" date, it will be important for you to watch your mail for updates regarding the upgrade. Until then, we'll continue to keep in touch with you through this magazine, the December newsletter, Jackson Electric's Facebook page, and our website.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Customer Service 715.284.5385
800.370.4607

Outage Reporting 855.222.DARK (3275)
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, Kristi Hanson, Stanley Gran, Brian Huber, Chris Curran, Jerry Wagner

Kevin Babcock, General Manager/CEO

Jackson Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner