

## 2018 A YEAR OF CHANGE



James Anderson  
General Manager

2018 will see your cooperative making changes to better serve you, our member-owners.

So, how do we serve you better in 2018? By finding ways to better commu-

nicate with you. In our offices, on telephones, through social media exchanges, and in our face-to-face meetings, we're ready to listen. It's amazing what we learn through listening and observation. Good communication improves understanding, builds trust, strengthens relationships, and fosters cooperation. It's also crucial to collaboration and success of your cooperative. This isn't a big change here at JREC, but it's something we will improve on this year.

JREC is updating our logo, and by doing so we are getting back to our cooperative roots. Willie Wiredhand is making his return to JREC. You can read more about Willie on page 16. Our website will be changing to a new, more user-friendly site. You will find information such as notices of meetings, projects, and messages from the staff and board. You will be able to see district maps and follow as we update our mapping software; outage information will be available on these maps as well.

The current billing software has reached the end of its useful life. We will have a new and much improved billing software in place by summer. This software will make us more efficient and reduce staff time that can be utilized in other areas. This new software will allow you to access information on energy usage and take advantage of other features currently not available with our existing software.

JREC crews will be replacing some of our overhead power lines with underground lines in all areas of our system. Crews will also be replacing poles that have been tested and no longer meet our safety standards. Line equipment is going to be tested and replaced if necessary; this will help improve safety, reliability, and voltage issues. We will continue to work on changing our meters to the Advanced Metering Infrastructure.

Your board of directors and employees will be conducting a strategic planning session to help establish a list of priorities and set operating goals. The board will also be re-evaluating our Mission Statement and Values and will update as needed.

2018 is going to be a year of change at JREC. A lot has happened over the past few years, and we have learned valuable lessons to take into the future. All of us at JREC are looking forward to 2018 and the changes that will help us provide efficient and reliable power to you.



More than 100 students participated in the 54th annual Youth Leadership Congress at UW-River Falls. Watch this publication for more details about the 55th Youth Leadership Congress, scheduled for July 26–28 on the campus of UW-River Falls.

## HERE'S WHAT'S COMING

Watch for more information in coming months of this magazine:

### 2018 Energy Sense Program

Do you like to receive money back? If so, be sure to look for more information on the Energy Sense Program that offers you rebates on appliances, lighting, farm programs, water heaters, heating, cooling, and home energy efficiency changes.

### Scholarships

Scholarships will be available in 2018 for graduating seniors as well as for adults continuing their education. JREC is committed to helping our members in continuing their education opportunities.

### Youth Leadership Congress

This annual event is another great opportunity for our area youth. Teens are given an opportunity over the course of three days to learn more about how to become a great leader and about cooperatives in general. They're also able to get a taste of college life as this event is held at the UW-River Falls campus. Students are sponsored by your cooperative to attend this event.

### High-Speed Internet

Exede High Speed Internet, soon to be known as Viasat Internet, will be offering more packages with faster speeds in 2018. Be sure to watch for more details within this magazine and at [www.jrec.com](http://www.jrec.com).

# BACK TO THE FUTURE

“He’s small, but wirey.”

Who? Willie. Willie Wiredhand, who is the stalwart yellow figure that became the embodiment of the fighting cooperative spirit and the symbol of dependable, local, consumer-owned electricity all over the world many years ago. In fact, Willie will once again be part of JREC’s cooperative logo starting this year.

Willie came to life in 1950, created by the late Andrew “Drew” McLay, a freelance artist working for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), in collaboration with then-*RE Magazine* editor William Roberts.

Since then, Willie has appeared on scores of promotional items—signage for buildings and substations, T-shirts, ball caps, golf balls, Christmas ornaments, beach towels, fly swatters, aprons, night lights, marbles and other toys, and much more. As you can see by the photos on this page, Willie was also used by Jump River Electric Cooperative over the

years in promoting the many services and programs offered by the cooperative, including electric appliance sales, electrical week (as shown on the photo to the right), and on many of our promotional items handed out to our member-owners over the years.

Willie Wiredhand embodies what a cooperative is about and came to symbolize more than cooperative friendliness—he was the true embodiment of cooperative spunk, willing to stand up for consumers in the face of impossible odds against the entrenched might of huge investor-owned utilities. The phrase “He’s small, but wirey” became part of the trademark Willie was granted by the U.S. Patent Office in 1957.

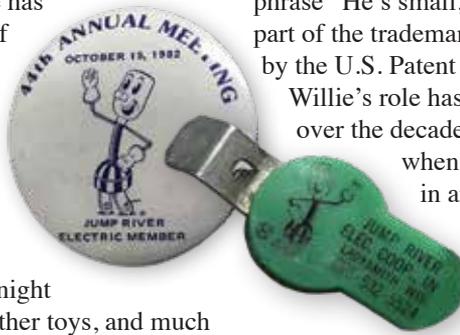
Willie’s role has continued to evolve over the decades. For example, when the 1970s ushered in an energy crisis, he donned a sweater and hopped on a bicycle, caulked windows, and weather stripped doors in new ads pushing energy conservation and efficiency tips. Later, he became more of a pop-art



celebrity, appearing on novelty items like coffee mugs and watches.

But no matter his persona, Willie Wiredhand has been a recognizable and dedicated friend to millions of electric co-op consumers, faithful and enduring for decades. We are glad to have Willie, once again, featured within our cooperative logo and are excited to move forward with Willie leading the way.

Your cooperative was founded on people helping people, and we will continue to work together as we work for you!



## GENERATOR SELECTION

### So you think you need a portable generator

If you live somewhere where storms and severe weather cause frequent power outages, you may be considering purchasing a generator to hold you over during outages. Jump River Electric Cooperative wants you to understand the benefits, limitations, and safety considerations of generators before you even enter a store.

Before anything else, you need to know where you will put a generator. Never use a generator in your home or garage. They give off deadly carbon monoxide. You should operate your generator outdoors on a dry, level surface. Your generator should be under a canopy. Remember, water and a generator is a dangerous combination.

After you know where you will run a generator, you should decide what electronics the generator will power. A portable generator cannot meet all your electric needs. You must decide what electronics would be most important during a power outage. Add up the wattage of these appliances. Your generator should have more output than the wattage of your require electronics. This way, the generator will be able to create the extra electricity it takes to start up some appliances.

“If installed and operated correctly, use of standby or portable electric generators poses little danger,” said Molly Hall, executive director of Safe Electricity, “But improper installation or use could be dangerous to you and threaten the lives of your family, friends, neighbors, and electric utility crews trying to restore service.”

An alternative to the portable generator is a permanent generator. These generators are wired directly into your home by a qualified electrician. The electrician should also install a transfer switch. A transfer switch prevents energy from leaving your generator and getting into power lines where it could injure a line man. This is known as “back feed.”

“Safety of our members, cooperative employees, and users of a generating system in the home cannot be over-emphasized,” said General Manager James Anderson.

Anderson also reminds the members that, “Upon installation of a generator, JREC would like to be advised so we can verify that your equipment is protected, and all safety guidelines are followed.”

To learn more, please visit [www.jrec.com](http://www.jrec.com).

# HEY KIDS! Color Willie and this page for a chance to win \$25!

Color this page and \$25 could be yours! Bring or mail in your completed coloring page to JREC, P.O. Box 99, Ladysmith, WI 54848. This coloring contest will be broken into two age groups: 4–7 years and 8–12 years. All participants' parents must be current members of JREC. Pages will be displayed at the Ladysmith co-op office.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names \_\_\_\_\_ Acct No. \_\_\_\_\_

*All employees' and directors' families are ineligible.*



# Top 10 Home Electrical Safety Tips



use a qualified electrician for repair work	repair loose outlets; replace cracked, worn electric cords	watch for hot or discolored switch plates, flickering lights, or buzzing sounds.
get regular check-ups for older homes	use bulbs with correct wattage for the fixtures	if children are present install tamper resistant outlets to protect against shock
use extension cords temporarily, not as permanent wiring	unplug electrics if you smell something burning	keep cords out of walkways and high traffic areas
educate the household on electrical safety		

Learn more about home electrical safety at



## 13 DAYS – 13 WINNERS

As in the past, the Lucky 13 drawing saw a lot of entries from members throughout the service territory. Starting November 6, a name was drawn each day and by November 22, 13 turkeys were given out just in time for Thanksgiving dinner. Here are the 13 members who won a turkey:



Pat Coon, Bruce; Stanley Wojtysiak, Conrath; Geralyn Felske, Glen Flora; Bette Bohmann and Ken Proden, Ladysmith; Kay Sokolowski, Hawkins; Janice Anderson, Renee Cleland, James Hagen, Ed Martin, and Pamela Smith, Hayward; Marlene Ludescher, Sheldon; Julian Symbal, Stanley

**NEW**

# UNLIMITED INTERNET DATA PLAN

**\$89.99**  
PER MONTH

**exede**  
INTERNET

**CALL TODAY!** Jump River Electric Co-op  
715-532-5524 • www.jrec.com

After 150 GB of data usage, we may prioritize your data behind other customers during network congestion. Free standard installation fee promotion available only to new customers in limited areas who order service during the promotion period. Minimum 24-month service term. Taxes apply. Speeds are "up to," are not guaranteed and will vary. Service is not available in all areas. Offer may be changed or withdrawn at any time. Exede is a registered service mark of ViaSat, Inc.

### James Anderson, General Manager

1102 W. Ninth St. North, P.O. Box 99, Ladysmith, WI 54848

715-532-5524 • www.jrec.com

After-hour emergency service, call 866-273-5111

JREC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



## Jump River Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Since 1938

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

**Happy New Year from the board of directors and employees of Jump River Electric Cooperative.  
JREC offices will be closed Monday, January 1.**