




**Oneida-Madison  
Electric Co-op., Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

September 2023

# COOPERATIVE NEWS

## ONEIDA-MADISON TELEGRAM



SENDER: *Oneida-Madison Electric Cooperative*

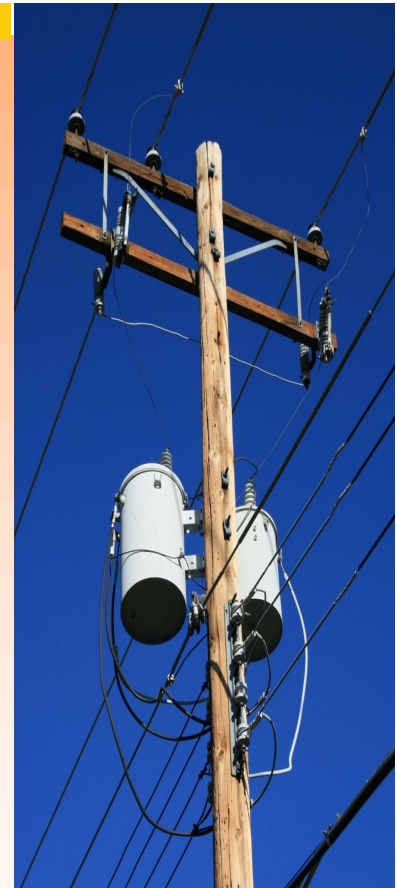
RECIPIENT: *our valued members*

PURPOSE:  INVITATION     IMPORTANT  
 DON'T MISS IT     SEE YOU THERE

ONEIDA-MADISON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.  
CORDIALLY INVITES YOU AND YOUR FAMILY TO THE  
80TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2023  
MADISON CENTRAL SCHOOL

DINNER \* ENTERTAINMENT \* FELLOWSHIP



### Notes & Information

Normal Office Hours are as follows:

7:30am-4pm, Monday-Friday

Office Location: 6630 State Rt 20

Bouckville, NY 13310

Call (315) 893-1851 **24 hours a day**  
for assistance with power outages  
and/or emergencies

### Your Board of Directors

Rudy Brouillette, President

Tom Stone, Vice President

Dan Saulsgiver, Secretary/  
Treasurer

Seth Howard

John Lehr

James Nassimos

Kurt Peavey

## The 80th Annual Meeting is Coming and This is Why You Should Care (and ATTEND!)

Oneida-Madison Electric Cooperative was born right here in Central New York, in the hills and dairy-lands that no one wanted to electrify because the terrain is too tough, the area too remote, the homes and farms too far apart.

In the middle of the Great Depression when 9 out of 10 farms (more than 5 million nationwide) had no electricity, President Franklin Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) to help areas like ours come out of the dark and into the current times.

*Continued on page 2*

## OMEC By the Numbers

**1760** Members

**2080** Accounts

**2067** Residential  
Accounts

**13** Commercial  
Accounts

**7.87** Meters/Mile

**264** Miles of line

**4978** Poles

**\$249,418** Capital  
Credits returned to  
Members in 2022

**\$3,988,340** Capital  
Credits returned to  
Members since 1942

**80** Annual Meetings

**11** Townships

**8** Employees

**7** Directors

**4** Linemen

**2** Counties

## *80th Annual Meeting continued...*

By the time Oneida-Madison Electric Cooperative came to fruition in 1942, the United States was enthralled in World War II. But here at home, the cows still needed milking and there were significantly less young men to do it.

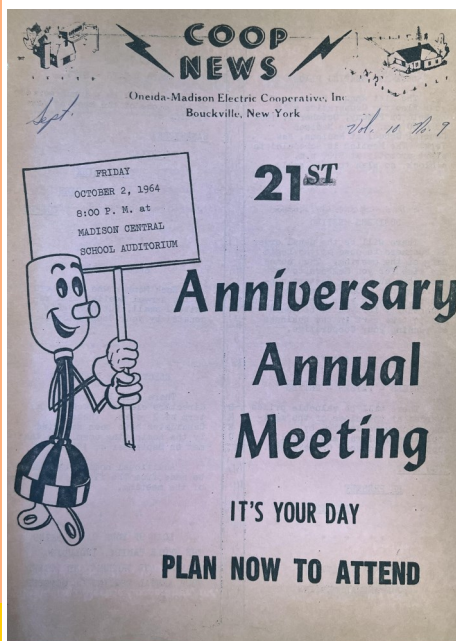
Those farmers that were left, along with other neighbors and entrepreneurs worked tirelessly to bring electricity to our area; setting poles, stringing line, signing up members and turning the lights on.

And while there may not be many left who remember those dark days before refrigerators and automatic milking machines, we must still pay homage to those men and women who worked so hard to bring us into the 20th century, years after our urban counterparts.

***“Electric cooperatives were constructed with lines and poles and the foolhardy notion that we all prosper by helping each other”***

These days, that “cooperative” spirit still lives! We are a not-for-profit utility, meaning that after we’ve paid for our operating expenses, we give the excess back to you; our members, our owners. When we say we care about you, we truly mean it, because you are our literal neighbors and friends.

We all live locally, coming from humble roots. We care about our community because we too, live in this community. And the Annual Meeting is not just a bunch of boring businessy stuff— it is an opportunity to catch up with old friends, share a meal, learn about the projects OMEC has completed and the ones on the horizon. It is a time to find joy and belonging among neighbors and it is a celebration of 80 years of affordable, reliable electric service that may have otherwise passed us by if not for the dedication and perseverance of those who came before us. So bring the family, let us provide an inexpensive, delicious meal, and join in the comradery that is YOUR cooperative.



Left: Cover of Coop News, Sept 1964

## Saulsgiver Celebrates 40 Years as a Director

We would like to congratulate Board of Directors Secretary/Treasurer, Dan Saulsgiver on 40 years of service to the Oneida-Madison Electric Cooperative! Dan started his tenure here with us on October 1, 1983 and continues to be a driving force and wealth of knowledge to all things co-op related. In 1974, Dan began teaching high school science at Madison Central School and retired in 2014.

In addition to serving OMEC and MCS, Dan also represents New York State on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Board of Directors. His dedication to keeping our cooperative, and cooperatives across the country, operating and providing reliable, affordable electricity is hard to dispute. Dan has been travelling to Washington, D.C. with our student delegates for the Legislative Rally for decades; teaching young people about what co-ops like ours do, as well as lobbying politicians for legislation and advocating for New York electric cooperatives.

Dan is an educator, a mentor, a role model, one of the most selfless people we've ever met, and the longest serving director in OMEC history. We are so lucky to have him on our team! Thank you, Dan, for all you do and all you continue to do for the members, employees, and directors! Congratulations!



Left:  
Dan Saulsgiver with Otsego Electric Cooperative student delegate, Madison Reinert. 2020

Right:  
Dan Saulsgiver, US Congressman, George Wortley, former OMEC Board President, Jerome Malinowski, and Delaware County Electric Cooperative Director & first National Director, Tom Harris. 1983— Congressman Wortley's DC office



### Save the Date!

We will be closed for the following holidays:

Labor Day: Mon, Sept 4

Veteran's Day:  
Fri, Nov 10 (observed)

Thanksgiving Day:  
Thurs, Nov 23

Day After Thanksgiving:  
Fri, Nov 24

Christmas Day:  
Mon, Dec 25

Day After Christmas:  
Tues, Dec 26

New Year's Day:  
Mon, Jan 1

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## 80th Annual Meeting

Fri, October 6  
Madison Central School  
5:30PM

For the most up-to-date information and news, Like and follow us on Facebook!





*Planning to get solar, an electric vehicle (EV), heat pump, or other distributed generation? Please send any questions and the specifications of the unit to: [office@oneidamadison.com](mailto:office@oneidamadison.com)*

*Your map location number, found on your billing statement, may be found somewhere in this newsletter! If you find it, contact our office by Dec 1st and your account will be credited \$10!*



## Shedding Light on Hidden Costs: Unveiling the Real Expenses of Solar Installation

The allure of solar panels is undeniable: harnessing the sun's energy, reducing your carbon footprint, and potentially saving on electricity bills. While the benefits are certainly appealing, it's crucial to peel back the layers and shine a light on the hidden costs that can catch homeowners off guard. Before you jump into the solar revolution, let's explore the often-overlooked expenses that come with installing solar panels.

### Upfront Installation Costs

While the promise of future energy savings is alluring, the initial investment can be steep. The cost of purchasing and installing solar panels can vary significantly depending on factors such as the size of your system, the type of panels, and the complexity of your roof. Remember to consider costs like permits, labor, and equipment, which can add up quicker than expected.

### Rooftop Repairs and Modifications

Before panels can be installed, your roof might need attention. If your roof is aging or requires repairs, these costs can sneak up on you. Ensuring your roof is in excellent condition before installation is essential to avoid complications down the road. Sometimes, panels may need to be temporarily removed for roof maintenance, incurring additional costs.

### Monitoring and Maintenance

Solar panels are touted as low maintenance, but that doesn't mean zero maintenance. Cleaning, checking for debris, and occasional repairs are necessary to keep your system operating efficiently. Consider the long-term expenses of maintenance, especially as warranties may not cover all potential issues.

### Inverter Replacement

Inverters, which convert the DC electricity produced by solar panels into usable AC electricity for your home, have a lifespan of around 10 to 15 years. Replacing an inverter can be a significant expense, often amounting to thousands of dollars, depending on the type and size of your system.

### Battery Storage

Battery storage can provide energy during cloudy days or power outages, but it's an added cost that can significantly increase the upfront expenses. While battery prices have been decreasing, they still constitute a considerable investment, and it's essential to assess whether the benefits align with your needs.

### Grid Connection

While solar panels can help you generate your electricity, staying connected to the grid is almost always necessary. It's important that you thoroughly review OMEC's policies and procedures regarding Member-Owned Distributed Generation and Member Generation Buyback Rate. These policies contain important information regarding maximum size of an interconnected system and fees associated with connecting to OMEC's distribution system.

### Insurance and Warranties

Your homeowner's insurance might need adjustments to cover the added value of solar panels and any potential risks associated with them. Additionally, while solar panels come with warranties, not all warranties cover all possible issues, and extended coverage could incur extra costs. Always do a background check on the vendor and the product they're selling. Product warranties can easily become worthless if a company shuts its doors or sells out.

### Removal and Reinstallation Costs

If you need to replace your roof or move to a new home, removing and reinstalling solar panels can be a pricey process. Consider these potential expenses if you plan to make significant changes to your home.

### Financing Interest

If you're financing your solar panel installation through a loan, keep in mind that interest rates can impact the overall cost of your investment. Make sure to calculate the total repayment amount over the life of the loan to understand the true financial impact.

Being informed is the first step toward making sound decisions. As you delve into the world of solar panels, remember that while the benefits are compelling, the costs can be multifaceted. Research thoroughly, ask questions, and consult professionals to ensure you have a comprehensive understanding of both the upfront and ongoing expenses.



## **Operation Round Up Begins!**

Operation Round Up is a charitable and voluntary program that started at Palmetto Electric Cooperative in South Carolina and has been adopted by hundreds of rural electric cooperatives across the country. This program requires members to opt-in to participate. On average, members will pay 50¢ more per billing statement with no more than \$11.88 annually. These donations are completely tax deductible. And while less than \$12 a year doesn't sound like much, multiplied by hundreds or thousands of members, it then becomes a substantial donation that can assist several worthy causes.

One of the seven Cooperative principles is Concern for the Community, and here at OMEC, we take that seriously. Starting September 1st, we will be implementing Operation Round Up. This program “rounds up” your bill to the next dollar amount (e.g. if your bill is \$103.92, it then becomes \$104). The extra money raised from this program will be given back to local charities in and around our service area in Madison and Oneida counties. To join this program, nominate a charity or organization, or for more information, give us a call at 315-893-1851 or email [kyla@oneidamadison.com](mailto:kyla@oneidamadison.com).

## **September 19-25 is National Farm Safety & Health Week!**

This year's theme is “Protecting Agriculture's Future” where we are reminded that the sustainability of successful farming is based on the health and safety of it's workers. This includes not only being mindful of large equipment, but also of mental health struggles. Farmers and other ag workers tend to work long and vigorous hours, resulting in fatigue; which can sometimes become chronic during stressful and busy times of year. Proper diet, rest, and a safe space to vent frustrations are just a couple of things that can help alleviate the stress that accompanies this industry. YOU can help those in agriculture by buying local meat, dairy, maple and produce, and slowing down and sharing the road with trucks, tractors, and equipment.



# *At Home with Hazel*

## *Pumpkin Sausage Pasta*

*Pumpkin is an often underutilized addition to savory dishes. This meal is ready in 30 minutes and is the ultimate comfort food for a crisp, fall evening*

### Ingredients

1 lb. short pasta  
1 Tbsp olive oil  
1 lb. Italian sausage  
1 medium onion,  
chopped  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1/2 tsp nutmeg  
1/4 tsp cinnamon

1 bay leaf  
1/2 tsp dried oregano  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp black pepper  
1 C white wine (dry)  
1 C chicken broth  
1 C canned pumpkin  
1/2 C heavy cream



**Cook the Pasta**– Cook pasta according the package instructions. Drain, set aside.

**Brown the Sausage**– Meanwhile, in a large skillet or cast iron pan, heat olive oil to medium heat. Remove sausage casings if needed and brown sausage, breaking it with a wooden spoon into small pieces.

**Sauté the Aromatics**– Add onion and garlic to skillet and sauté for 3-5 minutes or until onions are tender.

**Make the Sauce**– Add nutmeg, cinnamon, bay leaf, oregano, salt, pepper, and wine to skillet. Cook until wine has reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Add chicken broth, pumpkin, and heavy cream. Stir to combine until sauce comes to a bubble. Lower heat and simmer to thicken sauce, about 5 minutes. Remove bay leaf and discard.

**Finish the Dish**– Add cooked pasta to skillet and toss with sauce. Simmer for another couple minutes. Garnish with parmesan cheese and fresh parsley if desired.

**Notes**- Don't have wine or don't want to cook with it? Double the amount of chicken broth and omit it altogether. For extra veggies, add spinach or arugula at the end to wilt down. Use any kind of short pasta– rotini, penne, farfalle, rigatoni are all great! Any kind of sausage will work as well– mild, sweet, medium, or hot, depending on your taste. For extra heat, add 1/4-1/2 tsp of red pepper flakes. Enjoy!

# 80th Annual Meeting of the Members

Friday, October 6, 2023

Madison Central School

Pre-meeting meal provided by:



**\$10.00 PER PERSON**

**Doors open at 5:30 PM**

**SERVING TIME: 5:30-6:45 PM**

**MEALS WILL NOT BE SERVED BEFORE 5:30 OR AFTER 6:45 PM**

**CHOICE of 1/2 BBQ Chicken OR BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwich served  
with Baked Potato, Cole Slaw, Rolls with Butter,  
Cake & Drinks**

**DINNER RESERVATIONS AND FULL PAYMENT MUST BE IN TO YOUR  
COOPERATIVE OFFICE NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2023**

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**RETURN THIS PORTION WITH PAYMENT**

**Name of Member(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Service Map Location (located on your billing statement)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number Attending choosing CHICKEN** \_\_\_\_\_ **X \$10.00 =** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number Attending choosing PORK** \_\_\_\_\_ **X \$10.00 =** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL=** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEALS ARE AVAILABLE BY ADVANCE PURCHASE ONLY  
NO REFUNDS \* NO TAKEOUTS**