

December 2020

Cooperative

Connection

QUALITY CONNECTIONS TODAY, TOMORROW, AND ALWAYS



Food Pantry

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Photo by: Dave Johnson

Marquette **ADAMS**
Telephone Cooperative, Inc.

TECH HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS



- ▶ Aisuo Night Light is a bedside lamp, digital alarm clock, Bluetooth speaker and stereo all in one. Make getting ready for bedtime a bit easier, when you listen to your favorite bedtime story while you are falling asleep each night.

- ▶ Echo (4th Gen) has an updated new look, available in 3 different colors. This voice-controlled speaker (with Alexa) allows you to listen to your favorite music, have surround sound for your favorite movies and shows, and you can even ask Alexa how to cook a chicken breast. And on top of all that, Echo can even keep you connected to friends and loved ones handsfree.



- ▶ Facebook Portal with Alexa is a smart video device designed to fit your home. It has an active camera that will follow you around the room, which helps to keep you connected while you are talking to friends and loved ones.

- ▶ The Hercules Tuff charging station is perfect for charging multiple devices all at once. No more looking for that phone charger and trying to find a outlet to plug it into. Now you can have everything all in one place.



- ▶ The Huntkey Wall mount allows you to free up your electrical plugs in the house. This device allows you to have 3 AC outlets plugged in and 3 handheld devices, cell phone, tablets, or iPads all at the same time. Great for those hunting cabins or campers.

- ▶ With the Ring Video Doorbell, you can see, hear and speak with your visitors from anywhere. You will receive real-time notifications on your phone, tablet or other selected Alexa-enabled devices when there is movement at your door.



A Season for Giving: **MARQUETTE-ADAMS FOOD PANTRY CHALLENGE**

There's no question about it; this year has been a challenging one for many of the families, friends, and neighbors in our area. Countless residents have felt the impact of the pandemic in one way or another, and some are struggling to consistently keep food on the table for their loved ones. As such, the Marquette County food pantry has seen a significant increase in the number of individuals and families who have reached out for assistance this year.

We at Marquette-Adams are eager to do our part to see that the food pantry has the resources available to provide support for those who need it most. Our office at 113 N Oxford Street in Oxford has long served as one of the many drop-off locations for the Marquette County Food Pantry. Our shelves, which are reserved exclusively for food donations, are located between the front doors in our office entryway.

Our wish is to see these shelves overflow, but to achieve this, we are going to need your help. We're challenging you, our customer, to add a few items to your next grocery list or to take a look through your own cupboards and pantries to find non-perishable, non-expired items, toss them into a bag and bring them into our office. To show our appreciation, anyone who makes a donation will receive one raffle ticket for each donated item.

Simply show the items to the representative at the front desk when you bring them in. Your tickets will then be entered in a drawing for a \$50 credit on your Marquette-Adams bill.

You will have two chances to win: The first drawing will take place January 4th, selecting from all who donate food during the month of December, and a second drawing being held on February 1st from the pool of contributors who donate during the month of January.

As a community, we feel there's nothing we cannot achieve. This is our chance to prove it. Let's work together to put food on the table for those in need.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

**Answer the 5 questions and mail them in with your bill for a chance to win a FREE KINDLE!
Drawing will be held, Tuesday, January 5th. Good Luck Everyone!!!!**

Congratulations to the September Newsletter winner: Catherine Mikolajczak

1. How many new locations have services available to them due to Marquette-Adams' 2020 fiber expansion projects?
2. Who must you contact if you wish to become a member CREATE: Adams County?
3. Name one of the two ways in which you can access an application for a 2021 Marquette-Adams scholarship?
4. Which Holiday Gift will allow you to move about the room as you video chat with friends and loved ones?
5. How many \$50 bill credits will Marquette-Adams award to participants as part of the Marquette-Adams Food Pantry Challenge?

NAME:

ACCOUNT NUMBER:



2020 RECAP:

WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN!

As 2020 draws to a close, we'd like to take a moment to reflect on a year that has challenged us in ways we've never thought possible. In a year perhaps some would rather forget, we feel it is important to acknowledge and understand what we have achieved and overcome, so that we may be better equipped to navigate our course as we look towards the future.

The first quarter of the year began on a high note: Marquette-Adams learned in mid-March that grant applications that we submitted in late 2019 for broadband expansion funding had been awarded by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. These grants, combined with Cooperative funds, enabled us to expand our service area across five new townships on the periphery of our serving area: Newport, Marcellon, Scott, Randolph and Newton. These funds allow us to offer our fiber-based telecommunications services to over 300 potential customers who did not have access to robust broadband services. One grant had additional funds committed from Adam-Columbia Electric Cooperative (to provide fiber connectivity to two substations) and United Wisconsin Grain Producers (to help secure much needed access to our fiber based broadband services). Without assistance from these grants these projects would not have been a cost-effective investment for the Cooperative.

It was around mid-March that details of COVID-19 began to become available, alerting us to the myriad of potential risks associated with the virus. In response to the recommendations that were put forth by the CDC, the decision was made to temporarily restrict public access to our front office.

Despite our doors being closed to the public for a time, as well as much of our staff working from home, we never ceased operations. We made the appropriate adjustments to accommodate our new operating landscape, and we modified procedures for installations, troubleshooting, and various other customer interactions. We equipped our office with plexiglass dividers, masks, and hand sanitizer and other precautionary measures and were able to open our doors to the public again. To put it simply: we adjusted, and we pushed forward.

We broke ground on expansion projects across multiple counties beginning in April, with our crews flagging routes and burying mainline into new neighborhoods. Despite

the pandemic, and in many ways because of the pandemic, new orders began to roll in immediately. Though broadband has been a necessity for many years, it has never been as essential as it is today. Residents who are working from home or who have children who are distance learning online cannot do so without robust internet service. As a provider of consistent, reliable broadband services, Marquette-Adams was challenged with meeting the needs of those in our area who are faced with the test of doing more from home. We proudly met this challenge in our current operating areas and expansion areas.

We strengthened our technical, construction and splicing crews by adding qualified individuals who were eager to hit the ground running. Marquette-Adams buried over 40 miles of fiber, making our services available to over 300 locations that prior to 2020, did not have access to adequate broadband services. We've added over 400 customers as of mid-November, a number that will no doubt increase by the end of the year.

In this unpredictable technological landscape that our Cooperative exists in, Marquette-Adams continues to carve its own path by successfully growing and expanding while maintaining a strong financial position. We continue to be able to return capital credits to membership and provide network upgrades throughout our serving areas in the midst of a pandemic. This is a testament to the strength and stability of our Cooperative and its members.

Now, traditionally in this recap, or year-in-review, we talk of the parades we participated in, share photos of events we hosted, and elaborate on our experiences at various community engagements. This year, those experiences simply weren't possible. And, while this certainly has weighed on our collective minds throughout the year, we continue to be inspired by the tenacity and resiliency that the residents in our communities show in the face of unprecedented adversity. We look forward to a time when we can all be together again, but for now we will simply continue to do our job to the best of our ability by providing the very best communications services to our families, friends and neighbors in the communities we love.

During these difficult times, we can all keep moving forward together.

CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATIONS:

On November 18th, we mailed out a distribution of allocated patronage to our members for the final distribution of the year 2002 and partial distribution of the year 2003. This distribution of capital credits was approved by your Board of Directors after review of the Cooperative's financial position. In the ever-changing technological landscape that telecommunications companies exist in, Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative continues to carve its own path by successfully growing and expanding while maintaining a healthy bottom line. Continuing to return capital credits to membership during this expansion and network upgrades is truly a testimony to the strength and stability of our Cooperative and its members.

Note: if you had active service with Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative in 2002/2003, and did not receive a patronage check by the end of November, please contact Lori Lynn Podoll at (608)586-7032 to inquire about the status of your allocation.

COMMUNITY IN FOCUS:

CREATE: Adams County

In our rural areas, nothing means more to the local economy than the success of our small businesses. They create jobs, provide vital resources to families and community members, and draw visitors from all over to come and enjoy the areas that we proudly call home.

As a cooperative that has worked closely with the small businesses in our communities for nearly 70 years, Marquette-Adams understands the value of one business helping another. There is an old saying that states “A rising tide lifts all ships,” meaning when one succeeds, we all succeed. With that sentiment in mind, we’re excited to announce our support of Adams County Economic Development and their efforts to provide a unique space within the City of Adams that will serve as a diverse collaboration center for the local business community and residents.

This new space is affectionately referred to as CREATE Adams County. Located at 159 E. Ann Street in the City of Adams, CREATE first opened their doors earlier this year. The 2,500 square foot space consists of a large conference room, two private offices, and a small kitchen. It is designed specifically for businesses and local organizations to meet, collaborate, and exchange ideas, while also providing access to valuable business resources that otherwise may not be available to them. In a way it is a gift to the community, intended to provide support and tools which new and existing businesses as well as entrepreneurs may utilize to strengthen their foothold in the community and provide a real value to the local economy.

Recognizing the importance of this initiative, Marquette-Adams has partnered with Adams County Economic Development by providing our unique expertise and services to the center. We have supplied a robust high-speed internet connection that allows guests to make use of their wireless devices, utilize online communication tools and enjoy a seamless remote connection to businesses, schools, and various other entities outside of the community. Additionally, we have installed an IP video surveillance system that will help to ensure the safety and security of the facility and its guests.

CREATE Adams County was inspired by and developed in partnership with a similar facility called CREATE Portage County, located in Portage County. CREATE Portage County boasts a wealth of business resources, including a video production studio, podcasting equipment, and 3-D printers. The best part is, for a nominal fee, members will be given access to *both* the Adams and Portage facilities.

We must note that due to COVID-19 the facility is taking steps to limit exposure to residents, and thus the hours of operation are in a current state of flux. If you are interested in becoming a member of CREATE Adams County or simply have questions about the facility, please reach out to Adams County Economic Development Executive Director, Daric Smith at (608) 339-6945 or aced@maqs.net.





\$12,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS IN SPRING 2021

If you're planning to attend a college, university, technical or trade school in 2021, this opportunity is for you!

Visit www.MarquetteAdams.com/scholarship-opportunities for details.

A copy of the official scholarship application is available for download on our website. Or, if you prefer to collaborate with your high school guidance counselor instead, he or she can also provide you with a copy of the application. While you're there, be sure to check out the additional scholarship opportunities available through the Foundation for Rural Service and the Wisconsin State Telecommunications Association. You may be eligible to apply for all three!

Don't Wait. Apply Today!

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE IS MARCH 1, 2021.

HOLIDAY HOURS:

Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative's office will be closed on the following dates:

- ★ **Thursday, December 24 – Christmas Eve**
- ★ **Friday, December 25 – Christmas Day**
- ★ **Saturday, December 26 – Christmas Holiday**
- ★ **Friday, January 1 – New Year's Day**
- ★ **Saturday, January 2 – New Year's Holiday**

Our technicians are always available should a service issue arise, and our 24-hour Technical Support line will remain available during all holiday hours. To reach Technical Support, call (608)586-5910.

Wishing you a Happy Holiday!



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