

March 2021

# *Cooperative* **Connection**

QUALITY CONNECTIONS TODAY, TOMORROW, AND ALWAYS



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Photo by: Kathy Thiemke



# CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!



Soon, the snow will melt, the grass will turn to green and robins will be hopping around your yard. Yes, spring is nearly upon us, and traditionally that means that homeowners all over our area begin planning their long list of outdoor projects for the coming months. Whether you intend to plant a garden, build a deck, install a fence, or take on any initiative that involves breaking ground, Diggers Hotline wants you to complete these projects safely by following these steps along the way:

## 1. NOTIFY:

Notify Diggers Hotline by calling 811 or making an online request at [DiggersHotline.com](http://DiggersHotline.com) three business days before the work begins. Diggers Hotline will transmit information to affected utility operators.

## 2. WAIT:

Wait 3 business days for affected utility operators to respond to our request. On average, between 7-8 gas, electric, cable, water and sewer utility operators are notified for each request.

## 3. CONFIRM:

Confirm that all affected utility operators have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities Diggers Hotline notified.

## 4. RESPECT:

Respect the marks. The marks provided by the affected utility operators are your guide for the duration of your project. If you are unable to maintain the marks during the project, please contact Diggers Hotline to ask for a relocate.

## 5. DIG CAREFULLY:

If you can't avoid digging near the marks (within 18 inches on all sides), consider moving your project to another part of your yard. If you must dig near the marks, no mechanized equipment can be used within 18 inches of the marks; only hand digging allowed.

You can quickly identify the utility by the various flags, stakes or paint used to mark your property:



Electric



Gas, oil, or petroleum



Communications



Potable water



Reclaimed water, irrigation



Sewer



Proposed excavation



Temporary survey



## GOOD LUCK ON YOUR NEXT PROJECT!



# MEET THE TEAM: *SPLICING CREW*

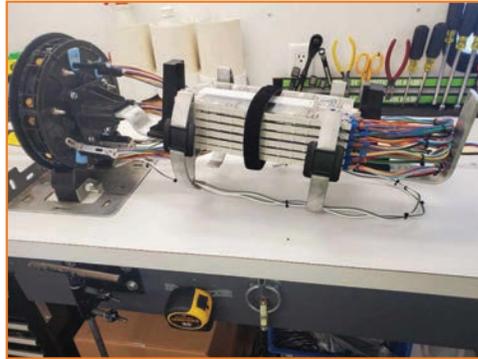
As your local cooperative, we pride ourselves on employing some of the most talented individuals in our industry. Some of them you know, and others you may not. Our "Meet the Team" section allows you to take a peek behind the curtain at some of the work our team members do behind the scenes. In this issue we will showcase Jake Van De Voort and Zach Lasee, our splicing crew who play an enormous role in helping us deliver our services to you.

When Marquette-Adams expands our infrastructure into a new neighborhood, we begin by burying the fiber along the roadway. However, before our drop crew can come out to connect the fiber to your home, Jake and Zach must first work their magic.

They begin by linking the fibers from one hand hole to another, connecting and installing them within the Multiport Service Terminal (MST). The next step requires the fiber line to be fed into our splicing trailer, which essentially operates as a workshop on wheels.

The fiber lines are then separated so that each can be manually spliced. Color-coded fibers are lined up with their partners in order to create continuous lines through which the light feed travels. As you can imagine, this step is extremely complex and requires sophisticated tools to complete.

Next, the integrity of each fiber is thoroughly tested with an Optical Time Domain Reflector (OTDR) that is designed to verify whether the light is freely moving through the newly spliced fiber line. If an interruption of any kind is detected, which may be caused by



debris or a broken fiber, the line is cut, respliced and retested. This process continues until our splicers determine a successful, uninterrupted transfer.

Once splicing and testing is completed in the field, one final and crucial step remains. Jake and Zach head back to the office to construct pathways within our network, ensuring that our telecommunications services can now reach your home without interruption.

In addition to expansion splicing responsibilities, Jake and Zach are part of the fiber repair team that is dispatched when a fiber line is damaged either by a bad storm or by a member of the community who was digging where they shouldn't have. Either way, these gentlemen are essential in maintaining the integrity of our fiber infrastructure, whether they're splicing new fiber or repairing our existing lines.

So, if you see our splicing trailer in your neighborhood, just know these men are inside, working hard to get you connected and ensuring that our services continue to perform at the highest level.

## *Easter Coloring Contest*

Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative invites kids ages 3-10 to participate in our annual Easter Coloring Contest. We have lots of pictures to choose from, so stop by and grab one from our office atrium. Entries must be submitted no later than Monday, April 5th. We judge on creativity, not perfection, so have fun with it! Winners will receive a special Easter prize and have their photo displayed in our e-newsletter. All entries must include the child's name and age, as well as the name and phone number of the child's guardian to qualify.

*Good Luck and Happy Easter!*





# Thank You



## FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

We would like to take a moment to thank the numerous customers who contributed so generously to some of our recent community-support initiatives.

Our **Toys for Kids** program enjoyed yet another successful year. Thanks to your tremendous generosity, we were able to pass along Christmas gifts to hundreds of children within Marquette and Adams counties. These small efforts can make a big difference, and putting smiles on the faces of children during the holiday season is certainly something to celebrate.

Additionally, our **Food Pantry Challenge** also resulted in an overwhelming number of contributions. We asked and you delivered. Our shelves overflowed with nonperishable items that have since been delivered to the Marquette County Food Pantry. As a reminder, donations are welcome year-round, as there is always a need for more contributions.

We continue to feel inspired by the support our community shows for those in need, and we're so grateful for your support in making these two charitable programs such an overwhelming success once again.

*On behalf of all of us here at Marquette-Adams, thank you.*

## 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 in April, 2021.

1. What are the two ways in which you can contact Diggers Hotline prior to breaking ground on a new outdoor project?
2. What is the deadline to submit entries for our 2021 Photo Contest?
3. What is Goal #1 for Building Blocks Childcare?
4. In addition to expansion splicing responsibilities, Jake Van De Voort and Zach Lasee are part of what team?
5. Which two charitable programs were successful thanks to our customers' generous support?

Name:  
Account Number:



## Sign up for AUTOMATIC BILL PAY

Automatic Bill Pay is a carefree solution that allows you to breathe easy knowing that your bill will be paid on time each month without ever having to mail a check or even call in a payment.

With Automatic Bill Pay, your Marquette-Adams account balance will automatically be withdrawn from either your checking or savings account, or from a credit or debit card on the 20th of each month. It's that simple.

Sign up for Automatic Bill Pay by visiting [MarquetteAdams.com](http://MarquetteAdams.com) and selecting *Online Account Access* from the dropdown menu under our Customers tab.

If you have any questions about our online account setup or automatic and delayed payment options, please call our office at (608) 586-4111 for assistance. Our representatives can even help you to set up an online account and automatic withdrawal over the phone.

## CALL TODAY!



# COMMUNITY IN FOCUS:

## Building Blocks Childcare, LLC



In our rural areas, nothing means more to the local economy than the success of our small businesses. Some of these businesses create new jobs, while others provide critical resources to the families in our communities. Building Blocks Childcare, LLC is a childcare facility located at 110 W. Ormsby Street at the center of Oxford and is offering a solution to local families that are in need of safe and reliable childcare.

We recently sat down with the facility's owner and director, Samantha Hicks, to discuss all that she has accomplished since assuming ownership of the facility, as well as some of the plans she has in mind for the center moving forward.

When asked what led to her to pursue childcare as a career, Samantha stated, "You could say childcare is in my blood, as I grew up in a family that provided childcare, and I am currently one of three family members still in the childcare business. I am one of 10 biological, adopted, and foster siblings, and I have been caring for children since my teen years." She then went on to add, "For the past 12 years, I have worked in the childcare industry in various roles. I completed my Administrator Credentials in the fall of 2016, and became the director of a 50-child, nonprofit center where I gained additional administrative experience in licensing, tuition assistance for families, budgeting, staffing, and planning. Since then, I've also acquired my CDL to drive a school bus and have worked for Wisconsin Early Autism Project."

It is evident from her list of credentials that Samantha is ready to take on the challenge of providing care for children in our area. The actual physical location of the center, on the other hand, needed a little more elbow grease in order to get into shape for such a challenge. As such, Samantha and her team continue to work diligently to make upgrades and improvements to the facility that will help them meet their goals, which have been clearly defined and are

the motivation behind every decision made at Building Blocks Childcare:

- GOAL 1:** Provide a safe and nurturing environment where children are engaged, having fun, and learning.
- GOAL 2:** Provide quality childcare that is accessible to all families who reside or work in our community.
- GOAL 3:** Provide a variety of developmentally appropriate activities using arts and crafts, self-directed play, dramatic play, indoor and outdoor physical activity, reading and quiet.
- GOAL 4:** Provide children with a stable and consistent group of caregivers through staff development, continuing education, and staff support.
- GOAL 5:** Sustain a financially viable, strong, and effective business.

Recently Samantha reached out to Marquette-Adams to inquire about our community grant program that is designed to support small businesses that add value to our community while providing jobs for local residents. Not only does Building Blocks Childcare check both of these boxes, but by providing a sufficient childcare option for local families, the center effectively provides working parents the opportunity to continue their careers in addition to raising a young family. As a result, Marquette-Adams chose to award grant funding which will further assist in providing the necessary upgrades to the facility.

*We're proud to support Building Blocks Childcare and encourage you to reach out to Samantha at (608)586-5838 if you're in search of a quality childcare option for your own family.*



# PHOTO CONTEST 2021

It's time once again for our annual photo contest! We will choose one winner to display on our 2021 directory, and four additional entries to feature on the cover of our quarterly newsletters. The pictures can be of just about anything. If you think it would look good on the cover of our directory or newsletter, send it in!



SUBMIT ENTRIES TO  
[PSCULLY@MAADTELCO.COM](mailto:PSCULLY@MAADTELCO.COM)  
BY MARCH 31st  
**GOOD LUCK!**



**Manager and CEO: Jerry Schneider**  
**Newsletter Editor: Brenda McCue**

Ph: 608-586-4111 • 800-331-5619  
Fax: 608-586-5209  
113 N. Oxford St. • P.O. Box 45 • Oxford, WI 53952  
[www.MarquetteAdams.com](http://www.MarquetteAdams.com)

## HOLIDAY HOURS:

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

Friday, April 2	Good Friday
Saturday, April 3	Easter Holiday
Saturday, May 29	Memorial Day Holiday
Monday, May 31	Memorial Day

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.