



VETERAN'S DAY SPECIAL

As we have every November, we want to recognize and thank all our veterans. The men and women who have served and continue to serve to protect our freedom and ideals are truly folks to be proud of.

This year, in our ode to the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, we want to highlight Clifford Young. In last year's November issue we printed a copy of Jake Ellefson's stories about his and his brother's service. A small snippet in that interview by John Gay caught my attention, as it was a story that I had not heard before. Most likely, I had not heard the story because, like many veterans, Cliff did not discuss it. He did not even really discuss it with his family. I asked Lorel Gordon, Cliff's daughter, to write a bit about her dad and to try and put together what she could remember.

★ ★ ★ ★

Clifford Charles Young January 9, 1919 – April 16, 1990

★ ★ ★ ★

Cliff was born on Washington Island to John Benjamin Young and Agnes Sophia Jess Young. His siblings included Arthur, Lloyd, Mabel, Ruth, Percy, Howard (Fred), Laura Jess, and a Clifford that died in infancy. The brothers followed in their father's footsteps and became commercial fishermen.

His mother, Agnes, was a strong woman who repaired and strung nets for the fishing operation in the dining room area of their home up from Schoolhouse Beach. The boys helped as soon as they were able. They owned a fishing tug and dock and had a net shed at the large dock on the west side of Washington Harbor owned by a Ranney. The area soon became known as Young's dock, and, while long gone now, is remembered as such to this day. It was located down from the intersection of Main and Gudmundsen Roads. This was also the area where the Goodrich boats docked, due to the great depth of the water. The Goodrich Steamers created a lot of interest for Islanders to see who or what was being unloaded and others taking products or getting on board for the return trip. There was a "slip" there for docking boats in calm water, separated from the open waters of the harbor by a large wall of rock.

Cliff married Betty Greenfeldt on May 14, 1942 and he was sent "greetings" (a draft notice) the same year in December. After serving three years and three days in WWII in the Army Air Force as an aviation radioman/gunner on B-17 Flying Fortresses, he was critically injured by flak shrapnel during a bombing run over Germany.



He was bleeding badly and his crew discussed putting him in a parachute and dropping him from the plane in hopes that the Germans would find him and get him medical treatment even as a prisoner. They were concerned he wouldn't survive the return trip to England. Cliff overheard this conversation and he said "live or die, take me to England." He survived the return trip and he was hospitalized there until

Clifford Young (left), and with the crew of his B-17 (below, kneeling second from right).





Left: Cliff Young and his family at their home in Washington Harbor. In back are Betty and Cliff; in front are Ben, Lorel, and Jennifer.
Below: Betty and Cliff Young.



he could be transported to the U.S. for additional hospitalization. He was awarded an honorable discharge, a Purple Heart, and other medals for his service.

After Cliff came home from the war, he and Betty had three children, Jennifer, Benjamin, and Lorel. He rarely, if ever, talked about the war to anyone in the family and I believe no one else. Many nights he would have bad dreams and he always said it was about a big red dog that he was chasing. There was a big red dog that lived in Washington Harbor and when the doors were open in summer at Bethel Church, it would run inside and up the aisle. As an usher, Cliff had to chase it out. Looking

back, I believe from the sounds he made while dreaming, they were not about the big red dog, but rather from war memories.

As a child I was able to put magnets on his chest where a spattering of shrapnel remained embedded. It felt magical but I didn't know the cost he paid. And as I got older, I knew I couldn't ever know.

shrapnel: a projectile that consists of a case provided with a powder charge and a large number of usually lead balls and that is exploded in flight

An article that appeared about him after his service read as follows:

“Aviation Radioman From Island Has Air Medal, Purple Heart. On the O.D blouse worn by T/Sgt. Clifford Young of Washington Island can be seen ribbons indicating that he has been awarded the Purple Heart, Air Medal, presidential Citation and and two bronze battle-participation stars.

Sgt. Young is a ‘happy warrior’ – the unofficial army term reserved for those men who have completed their army missions and have been assigned to non-combat outfit. A former radio operator-gunner on a Flying Fortress, he is now assigned to an Air Service Command Transport Group in France as a radio operator. No longer does he carry bombs over France and Germany, his cargo is vital supplies for America’s ground forces pushing into Germany. On a 24-hour schedule, the giant Douglas C 47 transport planes rode into the sky for continental Europe and for airstrips often with earshot of enemy guns, but Sgt. Young’s job is less spectacular than flying the heavy bombers although no less important. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John B. Young. He was employed by the J.B. Young Fisheries. His wife, the former Miss Betty Greenfeldt, also lives on Washington Island.”

Aviation Radioman From Island Has Air Medal, Purple Heart

On the O. D. blouse worn by T/Sgt. Clifford Young of Washington Island can be seen ribbons indicating that he has been awarded the Purple Heart, Air Medal, presidential Citation, and two bronze battle-participation stars.

Sgt. Young is a ‘happy warrior’ —the unofficial army term reserved for those men who have completed their army missions and have been assigned to non-combat outfit. A former radio operator-gunner on a Flying Fortress, he is now assigned to an Air Service Command Transport Group in France as a radio operator. No longer does he carry bombs over France and German; his cargo is vital supplies for America’s ground forces pushing into Germany. On a 24-hour schedule, the giant Douglas C- 47 transport planes road into the sky for continental Europe and for airstrips often within earshot of enemy guns, but Sgt. Young’s job is less spectacular although none the less important. He is a the son of Mrs. John B. Young, Washington Island. Before entering the army in 1942, he was employed by the J. B. Young Fisheries. His wife, the former Miss Betty Greenfeldt, also lives on Washington Island.

Right: Some of Cliff Young’s war medals.





CHALLENGES

RISING COSTS, MARKET INSTABILITY PUTTING PRESSURE ON RATES

We have talked numerous times in this publication about the challenges that face the utility industry and specifically your cooperative moving forward. There have been many articles in the balance of the magazine illustrating these challenges. At the annual meeting, we spoke about the challenges, but it is always important to reiterate, especially with our policy of “no surprises.”

Rising costs of supplies and material affect us the same as they affect you at home. Transformers that were once \$200–\$300 a piece are now over \$1,000. Poles that were once \$100–\$150 are now \$500 (and this is just as of the last semi-load we purchased last year!). The cable in conduit that we stock for our members has gone from \$3.75 per foot to \$5.00 per foot. Fuel for the trucks, engines, and heating the building has skyrocketed. You know all this because you see parallels in your own home life.

All of these costs are before we even discuss wholesale power costs. Our monthly demand charges have gone from \$20/kW to \$22/kW. Under normal circumstances this means an increase just on this cost of over \$4,000 per month (\$4.00 per meter per month for perspective). Wholesale energy rates are trending upwards as well because fuel costs are increasing. Our wholesale costs have risen, on average, over \$0.01 per kWh (\$100,000 per year based on purchases over the last year).

To top it all off, we are paying more for less reliable power. As of the day of this writing, the day-ahead pricing will include one hour of economic interruption, meaning we will buy on the MISO wholesale market pricing rather than our formula pricing (refer back to previous issues for numerous explanations). These economic interruptions are wholly due to the ability of the MISO market to match generation capacity with demand, which has been adversely affected by the rapid transition from stable baseload power sources such as coal and nuclear to “use it as you get it” fuels like natural gas and unstable and unreliable renewables. You have heard me saying this for years, but finally now, regulatory entities and reliability organizations are echoing my concerns.

Legislation at the state and federal level will not alleviate this, but aggravate it. Third Party Ownership legislation, if passed, will allow outside entities to utilize the lines that our members have paid for to consolidate unreliable renewables. Transmission legislation favors large entities with guaranteed rates of return.

These issues and the legislation really force us to look at not only our existing rates, but also how our rates are structured. Cooperatives may have to lead the way in implementing rates that more accurately reflect actual costs, both fixed and variable. I brought this up at the annual meeting as well. Currently, all utilities, including cooperatives, bury some of the fixed costs in the energy rates, which means those who are using more energy are subsidizing those who use less. Base charges are meant to cover those costs that will occur whether the utility sells a single kWh or not. What should be happening—and it is a hard pill to swallow—is that we as utilities should be passing through our actual cost for energy in the kWh bucket and our actual cost for fixed costs (which as noted

You have heard me saying this for years, but finally now, regulatory entities and reliability organizations are echoing my concerns.

above are actually hardly fixed) in our base charges. More to come on this in the future, but as I have noted numerous times before, brace yourselves.

Another issue facing us all is what seems to be a general fall in the world into accepting incompetence. This adds not only to our costs, but to our general frustration as well. It seems to be pervasive. Damaged goods during shipping, late shipping, lost materials increase our costs and the costs of our suppliers. Recently, we have had issues with our meters where a faulty capacitor has caused them to stop communicating with our system and forced us to go out and manually read these meters. It has taken over a year to get replacements, and even though this is a manufacturing flaw, we still need to pay (although at a reduction) for the replacements (and this is not over). You all are aware that the U.S. Postal Service recently lost over 400 mailed invoices. I won't even go into the nightmare that this issue has been.

You have heard me note before that it is the intent of the cooperative to hire more employees. We have not posted these jobs yet, but will in the near future. However, based on manpower, skillset availability, and what we have seen locally, we wonder how quickly this can be accomplished once we do post.

As I have noted, all of these issues can certainly be paralleled in our daily lives, and unfortunately, I am sure that none of them come as a surprise.

FIBER UPDATE

IN-HOME WORK CONTINUES

At the time of this writing, we are at 250+ connected and close to 350 drops installed. Some of the in-home work will not occur until seasonal members return in the spring; however, we plan to work on them until we can't.

Michels has been working here (with a two-week hiatus in late September/early October) and expects to be here until mid-December. We hope to see Karcz, who has been sidelined by other work off Island, back in November, and they plan to work until it is no longer feasible. We will see what progress can be made during those cold months of January and February.

We have a large number of members whose electric service is underground from a pole. This means that in order to get the in-home portion of your work completed, we need to trench to the house from the pole. We are getting to this as we are able and with frozen ground right around the corner, this will become more and more difficult. We have had a number of members who, in the interest of speeding things up (bad pun here), have elected to install their own conduit. You are welcome to do this if you are able and we will supply you with the conduit to install, but we will get to you eventually.

Overhead connections are much easier and once the fiber is to your meter location and splicing has taken place at the cases that serve your drop, we will schedule the in-home work to occur with you directly. We prefer that you are present (and we suspect you would prefer this as well) for the in-home work.

Our goal is to get area 3 done (see previous issues) before the Michels crew leaves; however, there are some spots that will require significant trimming (and outages to go along with that) and we may end up moving into area 1B in the interest of getting as much fiber hung as possible.



STAY SAFE OUT ON THE HUNT

- Know the signs of a heart attack or other life-threatening condition.
- Have a way to get in touch with the outside world. 
- Always implement firearm safety techniques. 
- Do not lean a tree stand against a utility pole.
- Do not fire at power lines, insulators or conductor cans. 
- Carry a first aid kit. 
- Check the weather in advance and be prepared.
- Check tree stands regularly for stability.
- Survey the area for potential electrical hazards. 
- Be visible: Wear blaze orange.

Learn more at: 

Robert Cornell, Manager

1157 Main Road, Washington Island, WI 54246
920-847-2541
info@wiecoop.com
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

