

Co-op Member Scores 25 Years as Beloit Snappers Volunteer



Dennis Conerton started his volunteer work with Beloit's Minor League Baseball team in 1990 when he was working full time. Now, 25 years later, he is retired, president of the team's board of directors, and still works some 12-hour days.

"I'm working as hard as I did before I retired," Conerton said with a smile.

When the Beloit Snappers are in town during baseball season, he is busy at Telfer Park's Pohlman Field. Things are less hectic when the team is on the road and slow down even more during the off-season, but the president's position is definitely a hands-on one.

Conerton has been a member of Rock Energy Cooperative since 1978, when he moved to rural Boone County from Milwaukee. He initially was skeptical that a cooperative would be supplying electricity to his home, but now he wouldn't have it any other way. In fact, when he later moved to the Villas of Oakfield in South Beloit, he was concerned that the co-op might no longer be his energy provider. But he was relieved to learn that he still lives on co-op lines.

Conerton said he not only appreciates the reliable service that Rock Energy provides, but he also likes that members have a financial interest in the co-op. "The service is as good, and with the co-op there's a sense of ownership with the capital credits," he said.

The similarities between Rock Energy and the Beloit Snappers are apparent, Conerton said. Both are

not-for-profit organizations that exist to serve the community, not to make money. "We put everything back into improvements," he said of the Snappers.

That not-for-profit connection perhaps is responsible for the link between the two groups growing stronger over the years. In 2002 Rock Energy sponsored its first Family Night at the Ballpark with discounted ticket prices, food specials for members, and a fantastic fireworks display after the game.

Shane Larson, the co-op's chief executive officer, recalled that the event was started as a way to bring families together for a fun summer evening. Fourteen years later, the event is as strong as ever and continues to be a favorite among co-op members.

"I've said it before, and I'll say it again, there's something special about watching a Snapper game at Telfer Park in Beloit," Larson said. "The facilities aren't quite major league, but neither are the prices.

With the large, mature trees providing a picturesque background, the feeling of going back to when

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Discounted Tickets Available

You still have plenty of chances to see a Beloit Snappers game this summer.

Rock Energy Cooperative members can buy discounted tickets for \$2 each at the Janesville or South Beloit co-op offices. They can be used during any 2015 regular season game.

The tickets are originally priced at \$7.

A link to the Snappers schedule is available online at www.rock.coop. Pocket schedules can be picked up at co-op offices.



Back to School Supplies Drive



Rock Energy Cooperative is sponsoring a School Supplies Drive so our employees and members can donate back-to-school items to help families who are having difficulty providing the proper tools for their children to succeed in school.

Needed supplies

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| #2 wooden yellow pencils | Zipper binders |
| Ballpoint pens | Protractor |
| Plain pocket folders | Ruler |
| Spiral notebooks – wide ruled | (1/8 scale and metric) |
| Notebook paper – wide ruled | Scissors |
| 3-ring binders | (preferably Fiskars) |
| Box of 24 or 64 crayons (preferably Crayola) | Backpacks |
| Pink erasers | Kleenex |
| Glue bottles | Deodorant |
| Glue sticks | |
| Dry erase markers | |
| Colored pencils | |
| Washable markers | |
| Watercolor paints | |
| Highlighters | |

Donations will be delivered to the following school districts for distribution to needy families:

Beloit	Durand	Milton
Beloit Turner	Edgerton	Parkview
Brodhead	Evansville	Prairie Hill
Clinton	Hononegah	Rockton
Dakota	Janesville	South Beloit

**Donation
deadline is
July 31!**

Drop-off locations

Rock Energy Cooperative offices

2815 Kennedy Drive
Janesville, WI
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday

15229 Willowbrook Road
South Beloit, IL

Lake Summerset Association

1202 Lake Summerset Road
Davis, IL
8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 8 a.m. to noon Saturday

Snappers Volunteer

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baseball was played for the game and not the millions in guaranteed contracts permeates throughout the park.

“Mix together a handful of hokey between-inning contests, a dancing turtle mascot, a bunch of ball players who are younger than some of my neckties, two hot dogs, a bag of peanuts, and one enthusiastic 50/50 raffle guy, you definitely have a recipe for a fun evening at the ballpark.”

That sense of community is exactly what Conerton likes about Minor League Baseball in general and the Beloit Snappers in particular. The backbone of the Snappers is its network of volunteers from the community, he said.

“We couldn’t do it without the volunteers,” Conerton said. “We have seven full-time employees, 25 to 30 game-day employees, and 130 to 140 volunteers. We figure that about \$40,000 a year in hourly wages is saved by having the volunteers.”

The volunteers not only staff the concession stands, take tickets at the gate, serve as ushers, and work in the information booth on game days, but they also open up their homes and hearts to players by serving as host families during the season. Volunteers also have spearheaded many improvements at the ballpark, Conerton said. An indoor batting cage facility was built this spring using all volunteer labor. “It was like an old-fashioned barn raising,” he said.

Conerton’s favorite Snappers memory occurred in 1995 when the team won the Midwest League Championship. After the game in Battle Creek, Mich., champagne was flowing and players were all checking their ring sizes

so they could order their championship rings.

“I remember coming back to Beloit,” he said. “The TV cameras were here. We arrived back at 3 a.m., and the crowds were waiting to welcome the team home. That team was one of the best I’ve ever seen.”

Conerton has appreciated Rock Energy’s support over the past 14 years. “It’s been great from the Snappers’ standpoint,” he said. “Rock Energy Night is always one of our biggest nights of the year attendance-wise.”

In addition to the annual night at the ballpark, Rock Energy also partners with the Snappers to sell discounted tickets to co-op members. The popularity of that

member perk has grown through the years. In the first few years of the promotion, co-op members bought about 500 tickets each season. That number has jumped to more than 2,000 during the 2014 season.

Conerton started his volunteer work in the community as an employee of Regal Beloit when a co-worker asked if he wanted to help out the organization known as the Beloit Brewers at the time. Through his years working at Regal Beloit and later at Blackhawk Bank, Conerton has given many volunteer hours to various organizations, including United Way, Junior Achievement, Hands of Faith, and Beloit Health System Foundation.

“You do what you can for the community,” said Conerton, who retired as president of Beloit’s Blackhawk Bank in 2001. “That’s what makes Beloit unique.”

Volunteers like Conerton who give freely of their time and talent are truly a treasure to the groups they serve. If you see him at the ballpark or around town, take a moment to introduce yourself and thank him for all he does to make our community such a special place to call home. ■



Get Connected

Check out these great deals offered with your Co-op Connections Card.



Indulge Spa & Salon, 807 Brown School Road, Evansville – (608) 882-6391

Full-service salon offering hair, nails, pedicures, massages, facials, and tanning.

\$5 Off Any Service Valued at \$20 or More

indulge
spa & salon

Premier Technologies, 617 E. Grand Ave., Beloit – (608) 361-1000 – www.premier-technologies.com

Providing professional computer services to south central Wisconsin and north central Illinois. We focus on small businesses and can set up an individual PC, home network, or total business computer solution. We have invested in the resources to make us the best choice for knowledgeable professional technicians with on-demand repair service and complete IT outsourcing solutions. We also have a full line of leading computer products and a full-service repair facility. No job is too small or too large. Ensure less down time and increase your productivity and efficiency. See why hundreds of satisfied clients have chosen Premier Technologies to support their business.



15% Off Carry-in (labor only)

For a complete listing of current deals, visit www.rock.coop and click on the Co-op Connections Card. Terms and conditions are subject to change as desired by participating businesses. Printable coupons also are available online.

Healthy Savings Discounts

The same program that offers discounts at local merchants and has saved Rock Energy members \$105,000 on prescriptions also provides significant savings on dental, vision, hearing, lab and imaging services, and chiropractic work. To locate providers that participate in the Healthy Savings program, call (800) 800-7616 or go to www.rock.coop, click on the Co-op Connections Card, and look under the Healthy Savings tab. Be sure to have your Co-op Connections Card handy.



Add Up Your Savings!

Tell us how much you have saved by using your Co-op Connections Card. If you have a story you'd like to share, e-mail Barbara Uebelacker at BarbU@rock.coop or call her at (866) 752-4550.

Have a Safe and Happy Independence Day!

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Friday, July 3, in observance of Independence Day. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Monday, July 6. Members can make payments in the drop boxes at both offices throughout the holiday weekend. Even though our offices are closed, standby crews are always available 24 hours a day. If you need to report a power outage, please call (866) 752-4550.

Mark Your Calendar!

Member Appreciation Day 2015 Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, Sept. 12

8 to 10:30 a.m.

REC Headquarters, 2815 Kennedy Road, Janesville, Wis.

Watch for details!



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