

Influence Through Engagement (continued)

organization focused on creating better workplaces and maximizing human potential.

Ethan Hofland, Health, Safety, and Environmental Manager, is currently serving on the Pierce County Economic Development Board, working to improve the county’s environment for business and job growth.

Adam Prill, Wohlt Creamery Director of Operations, serves on the City of New London Public Works & Economic Development committee to promote economic growth of the city.

Dean Hines, Field Rep Supervisor, is Past-President of the Wisconsin Association of Dairy Plant Representatives, an organization dedicated to improving the professional standing of dairy plant field representatives for the good of the entire industry.

John Freeman, Sr. Manager of Retail Stores, is active in the Ellsworth Area Chamber of Commerce serving as a committee chair for their Future Leaders & Entrepreneur Exchange (FLEX). This group works to connect with young professionals to grow the next generation of community and business leaders.

Cristy Wanner, HR Business Partner, works to preserve local history by serving on the Friends of the New London Museum Board.

Several staff members serve their local communities as volunteer firemen and EMTs including, Mike Steele and Dan Daleidon (Volunteer Fire Department, Ellsworth, WI), Kari Skibbie (EMT, City of Thorp, WI), and Anthony Pinnerud (Fire Department, Cumberland, WI).

In addition, you’ll find many of our team members playing active roles in their churches, coaching sports and youth programs, and volunteering their time to fundraise and support with their time and talents other causes that are important to them.



Senior Director of Sales and Marketing, Kari Skibbie, is just one of several ECC team members serving their community as first responders.

Think of this outreach of an extension of your farm—these connections are important to building a solid reputation both locally and nationally as a leader and employer in the dairy industry.

Workforce Development Innovator (continued)

makes it 6-months past their hire date, our turnover rate drops to less than 5%. Considering the impact turnover can have on our organization’s bottom-line, we now know our retention strategy. How can we help our new team members reach this milestone? How do we make them feel like a valued part of the team in a shorter period of time?

We’re honored to be recognized with this award; however, the timing is ironic. Our HR team recently began a strategic effort to look at our employer brand as an organization in an effort to support ongoing recruitment and retention efforts. Branding is a hot-button topic in the sales world. However, the importance of having a strong “employer brand” in today’s tight labor market is also critical.



Quarterly Newsletter - August 2021

ECC Named Workforce Development Innovator

Recently we learned Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery was named Workforce Development Innovator by the Pierce County Economic Development Corporation. The Workforce Development Innovator Award is presented to an employer who uses innovative methods to recruit, retain, and develop their workforce.

Our organization’s human capital is an asset we work hard to maximize and develop. For so long we have been catering our efforts to Millennials. Now that Gen Zers are entering the workforce we must refine our recruitment and retention strategies. A Millennial is anyone born between 1980 and 1995. A member of Gen Z is anyone born between 1996 and the early-mid 2000s. To attract the next generation of workers, we need to be asking: What do our younger workers want from a job?

Millennials value stability, while Gen Zs puts more of an emphasis on finding their dream job. Millennials want to form strong connections with their coworkers and integrate their work into their lifestyle. Gen Zs tend to be more competitive and focused on their individual success, preferring to be in control of the end product of their work. Both Gen Z and Millennials want employers who care about their wellbeing and demand transparency and ethical leadership in their place of work.

At Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery we’ve been working hard to make every team member feel part of something bigger—a larger mission and world-view.

We’ve been remembering their need for recognition and taking the time to get to know them as individuals to support their personal interests and goals.

Our Internships Programs have been particularly successful by providing opportunities for those just entering the workforce to uncover hidden talents and hone their skills. Pre-Covid, we planned regular meals in the plants. During the pandemic we recognized the added pressures and stress on employees and sent them home with meals to enjoy with their families. Providing tickets to local community events helps our team members enjoy fun together and with family while supporting community initiatives important to them. Offering opportunities for our young professionals to network with their peers outside of work helps them build relationships and ties to the community, leading to greater retention.

The above are just a few examples of how we are working to meet not only the expectations that our Millennial and Gen Z team members have, but making all employees feel valued and appreciated.

We’ve made some interesting discoveries along the way. For example, we’ve learned that when a new hire

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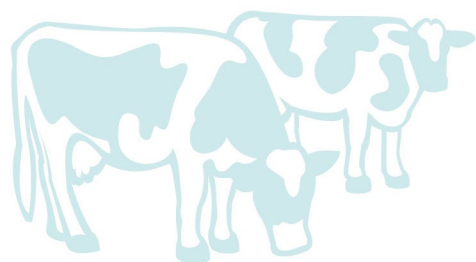


Val Schneller, Age 61

We are saddened to share the news of the passing of a member of the Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery family. On Wednesday, May 19, 2021, Val Schneller died from injuries sustained in a motor vehicle accident in Clay, NY.

For the past 11 years, Val was a valued member of the Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery sales team, most recently as Director of Retail Sales covering the east coast sales region. Val was a skilled networker and relationship builder, establishing many friendships with coworkers, customers, and industry professionals throughout her career. We not only lost a team member, but a dear friend—she will be greatly missed by everyone who knew her. We extend our deepest sympathies to Val's family.

Photo: Val represented Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery at many shows and expos. Pictured here with Tony Birkel at the New York Restaurant Show.



Influence Through Engagement

We are part of an ever-evolving industry. A change in the market, consumer trends, workforce patterns, regulations, and government policy can all have a substantial effect on how we do business. Waiting and reacting to change isn't an option – to grow as a company and successfully navigate the business landscape a proactive approach is needed.

Rather than come to the table in times of volatility, our strategy is to already be at the table. We have been strategic in placing representatives inside key organizations to ensure we're in the right place, in front of the right people, at the right time. We also recognize the value of have team members out representing our organization locally. This allows us to have our ear to the ground on local issues and quickly address problems and gossip that could reflect poorly on our organization.

Here are just a few examples of our involved team members and the roles they play in organizations influential in our industry and the communities where we do business.

Paul Bauer, CEO/Manager, makes a legislative impact serving on the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). He works closely with lobbying groups to influence and guide Federal Milk Marketing Orders and farm bill issues. Paul is also passionate about making an impact locally, taking a leadership role to address



Paul Bauer joined Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Director, John Umhoefer on a visit to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls to meet with Chancellor Connie Foster and rally support for completion of the dairy processing plant project.

community challenges such as broadband connectivity, workforce housing and development, education, and more. Serving on the Chippewa Valley Technical College District Board, and spearheading important community initiatives such as the Ellsworth Public Library Building Committee and presiding over the Ellsworth Area Chamber of Commerce, requires building alliances and partnerships with fellow community leaders and local government officials to become a trusted ally.

Kari Skibbie, our Senior Director of Sales and Marketing, has been actively involved in the American Cheese Society (ACS). The ACS is a leader in promoting and supporting American-made cheeses. She was recently named Executive Board Secretary.

Michelle Steen, Human Resource Director, is an active member of the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), an

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Menomonie Project Update: If Those Walls Could Talk



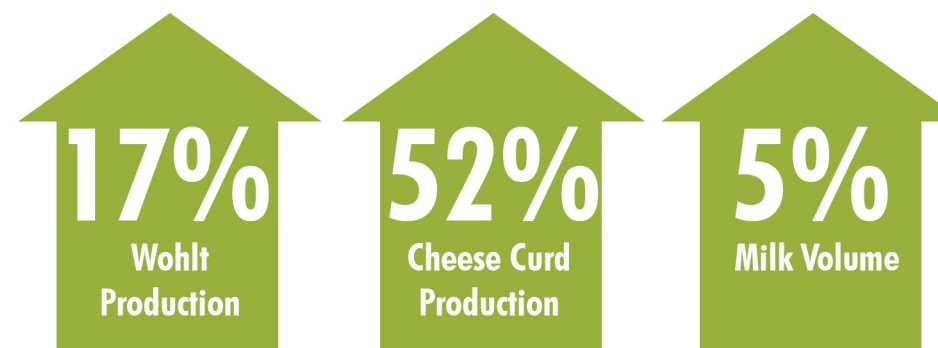
While it may not look like it on the outside, the Menomonie Plant project is coming along, and just in time, too! Despite losing farms, milk volume is up again this year. This combined with increased sale volume applies added pressures to all aspects of our organization. To say we're working at maximum capacity is an understatement and the question remains, how much longer we can continue pushing production processes and our equipment? Menomonie's opening can't come soon enough—while many factors remain out of our direct control, the focus is to get the Menomonie plant operational.

If you could look inside you would see progress is being made. "Every week there's something new," said Paul Bauer, Manager/CEO.

The walls are complete and the epoxy is being applied to surfaces. The intake is in the final stages of completion. The wastewater building is in position, although we're awaiting parts to arrive from Germany to complete the system.

The exact date of the project's completion is yet to be determined as there are many remaining supply chain issues that could still cause extensive delays. However, recruiting for employees to staff the production and retail areas is already underway and it is hoped that the retail space can open in early November to take full advantage of the busy holiday shopping season.

Stay tuned for more details!



By the Numbers

Continued growth throughout the organization.

