

Clay Electric sponsors students at Youth Day

More than 200 students from downstate Illinois traveled to Springfield on Wednesday, April 17, for the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day.

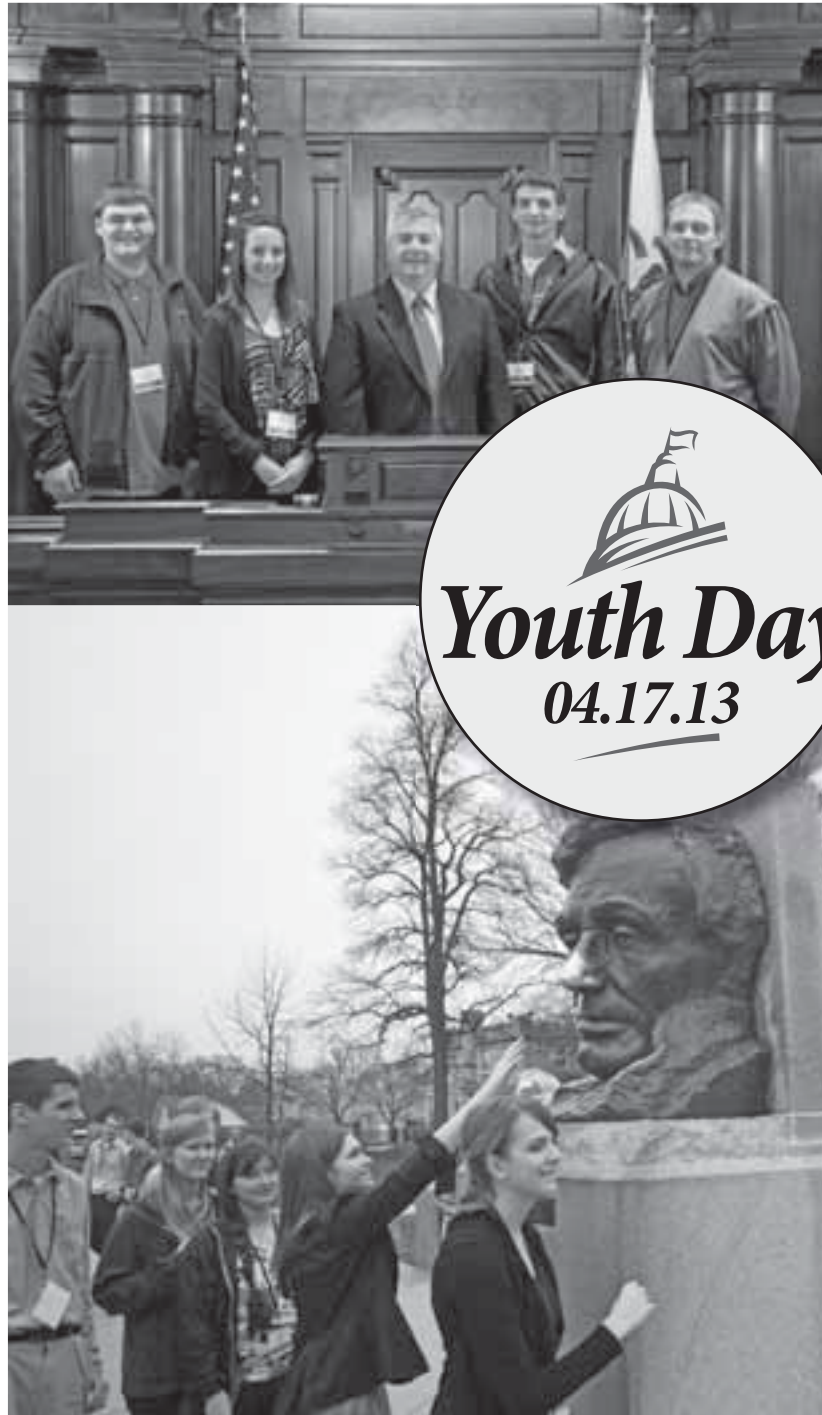
With rural areas losing population, fewer legislators are serving downstate. The need for citizens to take active roles in making sure their legislators are aware of rural issues is of critical importance.

“Elected officials enjoy the opportunity to meet with students and learn first-hand their concerns. Many issues debated in the General Assembly personally affect their lives,” said Duane Noland, President and CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC).

Rep. David Reis met with students representing Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc. The students had an opportunity to view state government in action and question their legislators on key issues. While in Springfield, the students also visited the Illinois Supreme Court, Lincoln’s Tomb, the War Memorials, the Old State Capitol and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

Pictured from left are: Johnathon Hinton, Ava Ludwig, Rep. David Reis, Andy Kessler, and Doug Hockman, Member Services Director for Clay Electric

The day was sponsored by the AIEC and is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government. There were 24 co-ops from across the state represented at the event.



Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

Regular meeting March 25, 2013

Trustees present were: Frank Czyzewski, Bill Croy, Neil Gould, Frank Herman, Kevin Logan, Bob Pierson, Richard Rudolphi, Danny Schnepfer and Greg Smith. Also present were Executive Vice President/General Manager John Meng, and Cooperative Attorney Melanie Pearce. The invocation was given by Greg Smith.

Approved the minutes of the regular meeting held March 4, 2013.

Accepted 10 new members for service.

Canceled 10 members no longer receiving service.

Approved work orders in the amount of \$21,999.10.

Discussed and **Accepted** the disbursement list for the month of February, 2013.

Heard a report by Trustee Logan

concerning the recent AIEC Board meeting including the Executive Summary.

Reminded of the upcoming SIPC Annual Meeting.

Heard a report by Trustee Herman concerning the recent SIPC Board meeting, including the financials.

Approved the Managers report as presented by Gen. Mgr. Meng including Financial and maintenance reports, Rate of Return %, Tier, Equity Level, Line Loss, and Operating Expense.

Reviewed and **Readopted** Policy 800-7 regarding safety, with no changes.

Heard a report by Gen. Mgr. Meng as to the Cost of Service Study, with Discussion following.

Heard a report by Gen. Mgr. Meng concerning Succession

Planning, with Discussion following.

Discussed Office Building revisions to address energy efficiency and safety concerns.

Approved attendance of NRECA Legal Seminar by Attorney Pearce.

Informed that the audit report would be presented on April 29, 2013.

Informed that the winners of the Youth Tour were Jonathon Hinton of North Clay H.S., Ava Ludwig of Flora H.S., and Andy Kessler of Clay City H.S.

Discussed 2014 NRECA Annual Meeting.

Informed of various equipment repairs to Cooperative owned vehicles.

Disbursed Touchstone Energy EXTRA magazine.

Adjournment.



Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.

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Office hours: 7:30 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.
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Update on Clay County Water

By the time this issue of Illinois Country Living goes to press, all members of Clay County Water (CCW) that wanted water, and were included on the Phase 3 construction, should have received notice that the line was ready for them to connect to the system. There were some funds left over, and CCW is in the process of expanding water lines in unserved areas for members that had already paid tap fees. This phase should bring total users on the Clay County Water system to around 670. If you see construction in your area, and are not yet members of CCW, and would like to be, please contact Doug Hockman at 618-662-6666 to get signed up.

Fathers power our community

As a child, you probably followed your dad around the house, copying his moves. You wanted to be just like him. For years he worked hard and was good at what he did. You were only a kid but you knew your family was part of something special.

Children of linemen that work at Clay Electric Cooperative look up to their fathers, too—40 feet up. Fathers at Clay Electric Cooperative work in rain and snow, day and night, when duty calls. If a storm triggers outages, these fathers don't play Monopoly by candlelight or tell bedtime stories. They charge into the fray to fix what is broken.

Some dads work in the eye of the storm. Others take action behind

the scenes in our dispatch center, tracking problems and directing crews to trouble spots. They answer calls from members and share the latest news with the media.

Working together, these brave men (and strong women, too) restore power to our community. You can hear their children cheering them on.

You probably wanted to be just like your Dad when you grew up. The children of Clay Electric grow up with men who dedicate their lives to connecting neighbors to comfort. It's not an easy job. The hours are long, and tasks are dangerous. But the payoff—making life better for all of us—fuels these resilient men.



June's a time to celebrate fathers. My dad taught me to think about the bigger picture, to find a job I'm passionate about that helps the community. I believe the men of Clay Electric found their calling.

Let's honor the fathers who keep our community strong. Happy Father's Day.

Copper theft: gain a buck, lose a life

Copper theft has reached an epidemic level that is not only affecting the United States, but is international and creating immense global havoc. According to the U.S. Department of Energy the theft of copper costs the national economy around \$1 billion per year. The increase in copper theft has disrupted the flow of electricity, created electrical hazards, slowed down construction projects, and knocked out irrigation networks across the United States.

Additionally, when thieves cut locks or chain link fencing surrounding an electric substation they leave a highly dangerous area exposed for Copper wire spooling children and animals.

Stealing material from an electric substation or utility pole can cause not only serious injuries and death, but extensive outages, fires and explosions – consequences that impact innocent people. The minimum damage that can occur is an outage, which may affect thousands of individuals.

Hemmer stated that deaths and damages related to copper theft are completely unnecessary and could happen anywhere.

People must be aware of this kind of theft and that tampering with electric power facilities can result in extremely dangerous situations. Always alert your utility provider when you see or suspect suspicious activity.

Safe Electricity offers these tips to help safeguard against electrical dangers and prevent copper theft:

- Never enter or touch equipment inside a substation; stay away from power lines and anything touching a power line.
- If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, hanging wire, etc. contact your electric utility immediately.
- If you see anyone around electric substations or electric facilities other than utility personnel or contractors, call the

police.

- Install motion-sensor lights on the outside of your house and business to deter possible thieves.
- Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, and never leave them out while away.
- If you work in construction, do not leave any wires unattended or leave loose wire at the job site, especially overnight. Consider hiring a night security guard.
- Help spread the word about the deadly consequences that can result from trying to steal copper.

Copper theft is not harmless.

Dealing with any metal and electricity is a dangerous combination, especially when it is done without permission or training. Copper theft places the thief and others in danger.

People who think stealing electric wire is a quick way to earn some easy money should think again. The value of metal is not worth losing a life.

Safe Electricity urges caution around electric meters and equipment

Electric meters, poles, and lines play important roles in keeping electric systems running smoothly, but they are often overlooked and even abused. Safe Electricity urges everyone to stay away from and be respectful of utility equipment in order to keep electrical systems running safely and reliably.

Don't tamper with your electric meter for any reason. Tampering with your meter is illegal in many states, but more importantly, can cause electrocution and fire, resulting in injury and damage, even death. If you think there may be a problem with your meter, call your local electric provider – don't try to fix it yourself. Electric meters

Exercise caution with and around electrical equipment to protect yourself and others:

- Never try to prune trees that appear to be growing into power lines. Contact your electric provider. Utilities have skilled professionals trained to safely prune and trim trees for electric line clearances.
- Don't post fliers or posters on electric poles. Damage to the poles can create a dangerous situation for those around them, and can cause outages affecting many more. Posters,



nails, and staples can make it dangerous or impossible for linemen to climb the poles if needed and protruding nails are a danger for anyone who needs to remove the poles.

- When landscaping, plant tall-growing trees safely away from power lines; seek help in choosing and planting trees and bushes that won't grow to interfere with electrical equipment.
- Do not plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow and interfere with underground wire, pipes

and cables. Future repairs to these facilities also could damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees.

- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.
- Before digging, call the local underground utility locator service to mark location of underground utilities so that accidental contact, damage and injuries can be avoided.



UNLOADING OUR SECOND FRIDGE HELPED US STOCK UP ON GROCERIES.

That old, empty beast was costing us money on our electric bill, so we kicked it to the curb for recycling. Find out what you can do at TogetherWeSave.com.

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