

# Clay ELECTRIC News

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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7784 Old Hwy. 50 ■ P.O. Box 517 ■ Flora, Illinois 62839 ■ [www.ceci.coop](http://www.ceci.coop) ■ 618/662-2171 ■ 800/582-9012



## From the Manager

### *Merry Christmas!*

**A**nd to those of you of other faiths, I wish a very happy holiday season as well. Your cooperative has had a busy 2014. This year, there were several major line rebuilds done, our forestry program made great strides in helping keep reliability up, and we began the process of updating our front office technology.

All of these things were done in order to bring you, the member-owners of Clay Electric, a more reliable and resilient electric service. And, we plan to continue this work in 2015.

We also added a social media presence in 2014. Many of you have found our new Facebook page already. Thank you for taking an

interest and for sharing some of the photos and updates of your cooperative. To find it, visit [www.facebook.com/ceci.coop](http://www.facebook.com/ceci.coop). Stop by and check us out! And, thank you for keeping in touch. I have received many phone calls, and a few letters, of support for the new direction in which our cooperative is headed.

Looking ahead to 2015, I see some very good changes in store for your cooperative. We continue to make headway in our office efficiencies. The forestry program will be enhanced even further. We are working on new metering technologies in order to cut costs, and our line crews continue to have a focus on safety, reliability and resiliency.

I want to personally wish you the best for 2015. As always, if you have a question or concern, please don't hesitate to contact anyone here at Clay Electric. This is your cooperative, and we want to serve you to the best of our ability.



Ed VanHoose  
*Manager*

# Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

Regular meeting September 22, 2014

**T**rustees 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 Ed VanHoose, and Cooperative Attorney Melanie Pearce.

The invocation was given by Frank Czyzewski.

**Approved** the minutes of the regular meeting held August 25, 2014.

**Accepted** 15 new members for service.

**Canceled** 11 members no longer receiving service.

**Approved** work orders in the amount of \$272,683.00.

**Accepted** the disbursement list for the month of August, 2014.

**Heard** a report by Trustee Logan concerning the AIEC as no regular monthly meeting was held. Logan did report on the recent Region 5 meeting and the election of a new CFC Director, presentations and consideration of various Resolutions

**Heard** a report by Trustee

Herman concerning the recent SIPC Board meeting, including member rates, NRECA Benefit audit, topics for strategic planning, patronage capital retirements, unit operation of Prairie State, status of securing indenture, and credit rating.

**Discussed** CECI Annual Meeting, including attendance, quality of presentation, meal, and consideration of a new location for future meetings.

**Reviewed and Approved** Policy # 100-6, Office Hours and Holidays, in its current form, and Discussed alternate work schedules.

**Reviewed and Approved** changes to Policy # 100-7, Member/Consumer facilities in the form as presented.

**Reviewed and Approved** Policy 100-8, Confidentiality, in its current form.

**Heard** reports from Gen. Mgr. VanHoose as listed: Financial, Capital Credit Disbursement presentation, health insurance issues, maintenance of lines and substations to address line loss, Strategic

Planning, contract tree trimmers vs. in house tree trimmers, sale of Cooperative owned pickup by bid process, Manager MIP training dates, and thereafter approved Gen. Mgrs. Report.

**Disbursed** Thank You cards from Gene Carpenter, and Jack & Doris Wathan, recent winners of prizes at the CECI Annual Meeting of Members.

**Reviewed** various Committee seats held by CECI Board of Trustees and Appointed to the Labor Relations Committee: Frank Herman, Bob Pierson, and Bill Croy; to the Purchasing Committee: Danny Schnepfer, Neil Gould, and Kevin Logan; to the Building & Grounds Committee: Greg Smith, Frank Czyzewski, and Richard Rudolphi.

**Informed** of upcoming Labor Relations Seminar.

**Disbursed** Touchstone Energy Extra magazine.

**Adjournment.**



The Clay Electric Co-operative office will be closed on Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 24-25, to celebrate the Christmas holiday with family. The office will also be closed on Thursday, Jan. 1 for New Year's Day.

The Board of Directors and Employees would like to wish all Clay Electric Co-operative members a very joyous holiday season.



## Ten 2015 IEC Memorial Scholarships Available

**C**lay Electric Co-operative Executive V.P. / General Manager Edward VanHoose has announced that the Illinois electric cooperatives in 2015 will award nine academic scholarships to high school seniors through a memorial scholarship fund designed to financially assist deserving students in the “electric cooperative family.” In addition, a tenth scholarship – to assist with costs in attending an electric lineworker school – will also be offered.

The total of ten scholarships of \$1,500 each will be awarded in 2015 through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Five scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative. A sixth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative director or/ employee. Three additional scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

The tenth annual scholarship, the “LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker’s Scholarship,” was awarded for the first time in 2011. This \$1,500 scholarship will help pay for costs to attend the lineworker’s school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Ill. LaVern McEntire served as a lineman for McDonough Power Electric Cooperative from 1949 until 1991. He and his wife, Nola, endowed the new scholarship




to financially assist deserving individuals in becoming trained lineworkers. Sons and daughters of co-op members; relatives of co-op employees or directors; and individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard are all eligible for the lineworker’s scholarship.

“We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with these scholarships,” says Gen. Mgr. VanHoose. “Clay Electric and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth through programs like this one. In addition, we are very pleased to offer the electric lineworker’s scholarship. It will benefit not only electric cooperative youth but also those fine men and women who have served their country through their military service and may now be wanting to become a trained lineworker.”

For more information regarding the scholarships, contact your H.S. Guidance Office or Doug Hockman

at Clay Electric 618-662-2171. All necessary paperwork has been sent to area high school guidance counselors and is also available for download at the cooperative’s website at [www.ceci.coop](http://www.ceci.coop) or The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives website [www.aiec.coop](http://www.aiec.coop).

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Office hours:

7:30 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

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[www.facebook.com/ceci.coop](http://www.facebook.com/ceci.coop)



# 'Tis the season for family, fellowship - and lots of cooking.

By Katie Kothman-Haby, CCC

**N**o matter what or how you celebrate, energy use tends to increase over the holiday season. With more guests in your home and activities taking place, your electric meter spins a little faster than usual, costing you more money. Start the New Year off right. Celebrate the holidays *efficiently* so you don't have to worry about a high electric bill.

## Decorating

- If you choose to decorate with strings of lights, consider LED (light emitting diode) options. They use over 80 percent less energy than traditional strings of lights and have a longer life. Make sure to purchase high quality strings from reputable sources. Safety and the lifetime can be compromised in less expensive LED strands.
- Solar powered lighting options are also worth considering for decorations. Instead of having a plug handy, make sure you have a proper location for the solar panel that powers them.
- Place strands of electric lights on timers so they automatically turn on in the evening after the sun sets, and turn them off around bed time. You won't have to spend time thinking about plugging and unplugging them, and you won't have to spend money powering them when unnecessary.
- Decorate with less lighting. Consider a natural, vintage feel for your decorations. Use items like pinecones, greenery, candy canes, popcorn strings and gingerbread. The whole family can get involved with decorating the home with these safe and festive items.

## Cooking

- Cook with your microwave, toaster oven or slow cooker whenever possible. Small appliances cook quickly and more efficiently than your oven.
- When you do use the oven, cook more than one item at a time. Have a ham, sweet potato casserole and rolls that all need to cook in the oven? Make some adjustments to cooking temperatures and times, and put all your dishes in at once to take full advantage of the heat that's being produced.
- Don't peek! It's tempting to open the oven door to check on holiday treats. Use the oven light instead, and keep the door closed. This will keep the heat where it belongs – inside the oven.
- Glass and ceramic dishes allow you to cook food at a lower temperature than metal baking dishes. If the recipe calls for a metal baking pan and you substitute glass or ceramic cookware, reduce the temperature by about 25 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Have food defrosted before you cook. Simply planning ahead can cut cooking times and energy use in half. Place any frozen dishes in the refrigerator the night before so they are ready to go in the oven the next morning.



## Around the house

- Turn down your thermostat a few degrees. Extra people bustling around the home and the oven warming food will heat up your home a few extra degrees. Take advantage and adjust your thermostat accordingly. You will save some money on your bill, and your guests will still be comfortable.

*Katie Kothmann Haby writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*