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A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 



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The Brown Barn - Off the Beaten Path

When EnerStar member Dean Samford retired after 44 years of work, he knew he just could not sit around and do nothing during his retirement. So after some thought, he decided to turn a no longer used horse barn into a general store. His inspiration was fond memories of a little country store in Logan, Ill. where he had spent much of his childhood.

His wife, Sharon, thought it wasn't a bad idea but encouraged Dean to expand the business plan to include a restaurant. "People will come off the beaten path as long as you give them a good meal," said Sharon with a smile. And so, the Brown Barn General Store came to be.

The novelty of the Brown Barn, besides its location off the beaten

path, is definitely the old time décor. "I did not have much problem decorating the place as I had much of the stuff already, although the store did give me the opportunity to add to my collection," chuckles Dean, who admits to being a bit of a pack rat for most of his life. He added, "If it's old, I like it!"

"Many of my regular customers have added to the collection as well," says Dean. Joe Barkley, a regular every month since the Brown Barn

(Continued on page 16b)

▲ *Off the beaten path, the Brown Barn restaurant is located in Brouillets Creek Township in northern Edgar County.*

A 1924 National 3-Drawer Cash Register, purchased from a candy store that was closing, is just one of the many antiques throughout the Barn. ▶



▲ The inside of the Brown Barn is full of unique one-of-a-kind treasures. It's a perfect area to visit with friends and family.



▲ Sharon and Dean Samford take a break between the hustle and bustle of the restaurant.

opened its doors in September 2008, shares a love of the old west with Dean, and has added many Charlie Russell prints to the barn's decor. The Logan general store was always in the back of his mind as Dean went about decorating the Brown Barn. There is a little bit of everything in the store but two pieces of special interest are a 1952 Coca-Cola water bath cooler, a gift from their daughter, and a 1924 National 3-Drawer Cash Register, purchased from a candy store that was closing.

If the novelty and the location of the Barn bring people in, it's the food that keeps them coming back. "People love our comfort food and prefer the simple foods that we specialize in," said Sharon. Friday night is Italian night with spaghetti and chicken parmesan while prime rib gets center stage on Saturday night, both by reservation only. Sharon said other big hits are the biscuits and gravy and the potato soup.

When the Brown Barn originally opened, it was open for five-day-a-week operation. When "retirement" became a bit too hectic, Dean and Sharon scaled back the hours to 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday through Sunday.

"It's neat getting to meet new people and many of our regulars have become good friends," said Dean. "We also get a lot of people coming in from special activities like poker runs or Jeep clubs." He said the Brown Barn has also been used for special gatherings like church groups, club meetings, corporate events as well as showers and weddings. Normally, those events are held Sunday through Wednesday.

"Our customer base is different than I thought it would be," said Dean. "I assumed it would be local farmers coming in to drink coffee." But when the Brown Barn was featured on WEIU-TV's *Heartland Highways*, Dean says the show really expanded the area from which people were traveling to the restaurant. The restaurant has hosted people from 31 states and even four countries! The *Heartland Highways*' episode can still be seen in reruns and on the web at www.weiu.net/hh/.

As they have settled in to the day-to-day operations, the couple has rejected the temptation to enlarge the store and hire extra help. "It needs to be sized for convenience," said Dean. "We don't want it to be a hassle, just fun."

"It's a place you can come and spend time," added Sharon, "We want to visit with people, not rush them out."

For more information about reservations or how to find the Brown Barn General Store, call Dean and Sharon Samford at 217-666-3822. Just remember to follow the yellow signs to find the getaway that is off the beaten path.



Brown Barn

Thursday – Saturday
7 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Friday and Saturday night –
reservation only

For more information,
call 217-666-3822



New Cooperative Hours Announced

EnerStar CEO Peter E. Kollinger has announced that the cooperative office will have new hours. The new hours are 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

"We tried the new hours over the summer and our members really seemed to appreciate the extra half hour in the morning," said Kollinger. "It also helps out contractors and electricians who need information or material from the cooperative before they set out on their jobs at a member's home or farm."

Coop members needing assistance after hours will be served by the cooperative's 24 hour dispatch service, which can assist with payments and any power outages that may arise.



CO-OPS FIRST DELIVERED AFFORDABLE POWER TO RURAL AMERICANS 75 YEARS AGO. WHY STOP NOW?

October is Cooperative Month. And even though electric co-ops have been around for awhile, we're still finding new ways for you to save money. Find out how the little changes add up at TogetherWeSave.com.



TOGETHER WE SAVE.COM



Maybe it's time to upgrade your heating system.

SAVE UP TO
\$1500

WHEN YOU UPGRADE YOUR OLD ELECTRIC HEATING/COOLING SYSTEM
Promotion ends November 15, 2010

Right now, multiple rebates are being offered through the state and your local electric cooperative that can save you money and warm you up.

In addition, a federal tax credit worth up to 30% of your new system's cost is available until the end of the year.

Call your EnerStar Electric Energy Advisor at 217-463-4145 or visit www.enerstar.com for more details on current state and local rebates.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 217-463-4145 • Summer hours: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F



EnerStar ‘smart’ meter install project nears completion

As reported over the last year, EnerStar Electric Cooperative’s move to new digital meters is nearing completion. These meters are data collection points for a system known as Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI).

Through the use of AMI, the cooperative can gather specific data via two-way communications between the cooperative and the electric meter. Once complete, the cooperative will cease to manually read meters and automate the process. EnerStar employee, Jon Farris, who members are used to seeing out and about in the countryside, will see his job function move from reading meters to installing and maintaining the digital meters.

According to Mike Clark, EnerStar’s Operations Manager, data collected will be combined with other technologies the co-op uses to greatly improve operational efficiencies. “It gives us a wealth of information we simply did not have before,” said Clark.

Clark explained that meter reading is just one aspect of the project. “AMI will improve outage restoration, resolve power quality issues, investigate service theft, and offer many other engineering and operations functions,” said Clark. “On an individual level, the AMI system benefits individual members in many new ways as well.”

“The collected data will give the cooperative the ability to provide members with a good understanding of their energy use,” said Angela Griffin, EnerStar’s Manager of Member Services. “In the not too distant future, a day will come when members can monitor their energy use through in-home displays or by the Web. They will be able to take advantage of cost savings or other energy conservation measures that the co-op may provide.”



AMI technology is revolutionizing the utility industry. “Smart” meters allow the end-user to get involved in managing their energy.

EnerStar employee, Jon Farris, who members are used to seeing out and about in the countryside, will install and maintain the new AMI meters



“This system is really a win-win situation for both the cooperative and the individual member,” said Griffin.

According to Clark, the cooperative has installed 4,850 meters with about 500 remaining. Of that, the cooperative has about a 98 percent read rate and will install repeaters

where needed to improve the read rates.

For more information, please see the FAQ section below. If you have additional questions, please contact EnerStar’s Mike Clark at 800-635-4145, ext. 616 or via email at mclark@enerstar.com.

FAQ

Power Outages Still Need to be Reported

Smart meters do not automatically inform the cooperative of power outages. Members will still need to call the coop to report a power outage. The cooperative will be able to “ping” or send a signal to the meter during a power outage to determine if power has been restored.

Member survey to begin

Data gathered will help plan for the future

From October through December of 2010, EnerStar Electric Cooperative will be conducting a survey of residential co-op members. This telephone survey is conducted every two years, and helps the cooperative and its power supplier, Wabash Valley Power, determine how much power our cooperative will need in the near future.

According to Angela Griffin, EnerStar's Manager of Member Services, the survey will be conducted by Preston-Osborne Research, a Lexington, Ky. firm with experience in a wide variety of research methods as well as a strong history of satisfied customers. "Co-op members will be randomly selected, and 300 completed surveys will be done for our co-op," said Griffin. "The survey is designed to last approximately 10-12 minutes,



and will primarily focus on the appliances and items in and around your home that consume electricity."

Griffin said the survey does include a couple questions regarding member satisfaction. "These questions help us determine how we as

a cooperative are meeting the needs and expectations of our members. Hopefully, we will receive high marks for our service." She emphasized that members with concerns should contact the cooperative directly so coop personnel can try and remedy any problems.

The calls will take place Monday through Friday, beginning mid-afternoon and running until about 9 p.m. "If you are called and don't wish to participate, we understand. You will not be pressured to do so," said Griffin. "But we greatly appreciate those who do take the time to help us plan better for the future."

If you have any questions about the process, please call EnerStar during normal business hours of 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 217-463-4145 or 800-635-4145.



I THOUGHT I WAS TIGHT WITH MY MONEY. NOW I'M AIRTIGHT.

All it took was a tube of caulk and half an afternoon. Now, I'm saving \$212 a year by sealing a few cracks around the house. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at TogetherWeSave.com.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

TOGETHERWESAVE.COM



Time's Running OUT

to take advantage of federal Energy Efficiency Tax Credits

Incentives provided by the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to help you make energy efficiency improvements to your existing home expire **December 31, 2010**. You can receive a tax credit for 30 percent of the cost of materials for qualifying improvements--up to \$1,500 over 2009 and 2010.

For a list of qualified improvements visit www.energystar.gov/taxcredits

Check inside your monthly billing statement through November for Helpful energy efficiency ideas

Ways to save your energy dollars

Information on federal tax credits available

This month:
Energy-efficient windows

Savvy Saver

Seal out the cold before winter hits. Install energy-efficient windows and doors on your existing home. You'll get 30 percent of the cost -- up to \$1,500 -- returned to you in tax credits.

Hurry, deadline is Dec. 31, 2010.

Contact your local co-op for more details or see www.energystar.gov ... and be sure to keep receipts.

EnerStar
EnerStar Electric Cooperative
11501 S. Hwy 1
Paris, Illinois 61944
800.635-4145
217.463-4145
www.energystar.com

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

It may be time to replace your refrigerator. A fridge made before 1993 could cost more than \$100 each year to operate. A new EN-ERGY STAR qualified model could cut your related energy costs in half. In addition, newer models keep food fresher longer.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Call EnerStar for info on a free fridge pick up, \$35 reward!!

Energy Efficient Rebates Available!

With the HomE program, you can earn up to \$1500 in rebates for making energy efficient improvements to your home. Call EnerStar at 217-463-4145 or 800-635-4145 for more details. Below is a listing of upgrades that qualify:

- \$1,500 – Geothermal heat pumps closed loop (14.1 EER or 3.3 COP)
- \$1,500 – Geothermal heat pumps open loop (16.2 EER or 3.6 COP)
- \$1,000 – Air source heat pumps (16 SEER)
- \$350 – Natural Gas or LP furnace (95% efficiency)
- \$350 – Central air conditioner (16 SEER)
- \$250 – Heat pump water heater (2.0 Energy Factor)
- 30% of cost of insulation and weatherization (max of \$500)

Maximum rebate per household is \$1,500. Rebates began May 10, 2010, and will continue until the money is exhausted.

Some money still available but act quickly!!!

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Saving lives where the need is greatest

As a member of your area Emergency Medical Services team, Air Evac Lifeteam is committed to improving the quality of life for those it services. Air Evac Lifeteam has remained true to its mission and first focus by:

- Providing air medical services to medically underserved areas of rural America;
- Taking an active role in the advancement of health care services in the communities it serves;
- Providing superior patient care and safe aviation operations.

Become an Air Evac Lifeteam member through the EnerStar Electric Cooperative monthly billing plan for only \$5.00 per month, per household.

Simply complete the application form on the next page and mail with your EnerStar Electric Cooperative payment. That's it! Send no money, you will be billed \$5.00 on your current EnerStar Electric Cooperative monthly bill. It's just that easy.

For additional information about Air Evac Lifeteam,

Contact your local Membership Manager

Mike Mayle
1-812-691-2599





Air Evac Lifeteam Membership Registration - EnerStar Electric Cooperative Billing Plan

Name as it appears on Electric Bill: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 Physical Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____
 Main Tel. _____ Cell _____
 Work Tel. _____ Email: _____
 Your Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____ Do you live in City Limits Yes No
 EnerStar Electric Cooperative Account Number: (if known) _____

Please List Others Living in Household and Date of Birth (other than yourself)

Name: _____ Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____ Name: _____ Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____
 Name: _____ Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____ Name: _____ Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____
 Name: _____ Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____ Name: _____ Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____

Terms and Conditions: Please read and sign below. Registration not valid without signature
The price for an AEL household Membership will be \$5.00 per month

Air Evac EMS, Inc. (d/b/a Air Evac Lifeteam and d/b/a Texas Lifestar) ("AEL") offers memberships that provide prepaid protection against AEL air ambulance costs that are not covered by a member's insurance or medical benefits, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. A member's membership will be effective 15 calendar days after receipt by EnerStar Electric Cooperative of the member's first monthly Membership fee and will continue thereafter as long as monthly Membership fees are paid, but will terminate automatically without notice if no monthly Membership fee is received by AEL from member for a 60 calendar day period.
2. A member may discontinue their AEL membership at any time by signing a discontinuation notice (as provided by AEL).
3. EnerStar Electric Cooperative and AEL are not affiliated. EnerStar Electric Cooperative is not responsible for any of AEL's acts or omissions, and AEL is not responsible for any of EnerStar Electric Cooperative's acts or omissions. All AEL membership relationships are directly between AEL and its members.
4. Transport by an AEL helicopter will be to the closest appropriate medical facility for medical conditions that are deemed by an attending medical professional to be life- or limb-threatening, or that could lead to permanent disability, and which require emergency helicopter transport. A patient's medical condition, not membership status, will dictate whether or not air transportation is appropriate and required. Under all circumstances, AEL retains the sole right and responsibility for determining whether or not a patient is flown.
5. AEL services may not be available when requested due to factors beyond AEL's control, such as use of the appropriate aircraft by another patient or other circumstances governed by operational requirements or restrictions including, but not limited to, equipment manufacturer limitations, governmental regulations, maintenance requirements, patient size or weather conditions. Federal Aviation Administration restrictions prohibit AEL from flying in inclement weather conditions. The primary determinant of whether to accept a flight is always the safety of the patient and medical flight crews.
6. Members who have insurance or other benefits that cover the cost of ambulance services are financially liable for the cost of services up to the limit of any available insurance or benefit coverage. In return for payment of the membership fee, AEL will consider all air ambulance costs not covered by any insurance or benefits available to the member to have been fully prepaid. AEL reserves the right to bill directly the appropriate insurance or benefits provider for services rendered, and members authorize their insurer or benefits provider to pay any covered amounts to AEL directly. Members agree to remit to AEL any payment received from insurance or benefit providers for air medical services provided by AEL, not to exceed regular charges. AEL is not an insurance company. AEL membership is not an insurance policy and cannot be considered as a secondary insurance coverage or a supplement to any insurance coverage. AEL will not be responsible for payment for services provided by another ambulance service.
7. Membership starts 15 days after AEL receives a complete application with full payment; however, the waiting period will be waived for unforeseen events occurring during such time. Memberships are non-refundable and non-transferable.
8. Some state laws prohibit Medicaid beneficiaries from being offered membership or being accepted into membership programs. By applying, members certify to AEL that they are not Medicaid beneficiaries.
9. These terms and conditions supersede all previous terms and conditions between a member and AEL, including any other writings, or oral representations, relating to the terms and conditions of membership abuse of the program.

I have read and understand the AEL Membership Terms and Conditions. The information provided on my application is complete and accurate. I authorize my insurer or benefits provider to pay any covered amounts to AEL directly. By signing this authorization I agree to the terms stated above and acknowledge that I authorized to have the additional \$5.00 AEL dues added to my residential electric account. I also understand that I will communicate directly with Air Evac Lifeteam for Membership Member Service.

X

Member Signature

Date (must be dated)

For Air Evac Office Use Only

PLAN CODE

3048

Air Evac Lifeteam Membership Registration - EnerStar Electric Cooperative Billing Plan

EnerStar Electric Cooperative Member Name _____
 Primary Home Address _____

 Account Number (if known) _____ Primary Telephone Number _____

Authorization to add \$5.00 per month to EnerStar Electric Cooperative invoice to pay monthly Air Evac Lifeteam fees.

- A member's membership will be effective 15 calendar days after receipt by EnerStar Electric Cooperative of the member's first monthly Membership fee and will continue thereafter as long as monthly Membership fees are paid, but will terminate automatically without notice if no monthly Membership fee is received by AEL from member for a 60 calendar day period.
- A member may discontinue their AEL membership at any time by signing a discontinuation notice (as provided by AEL).
- **EnerStar Electric Cooperative and AEL are not affiliated. EnerStar Electric Cooperative is not responsible for any of AEL's acts or omissions, and AEL is not responsible for any of EnerStar Electric Cooperative's acts or omissions. All AEL membership relationships are directly between AEL and its members.**

By signing this authorization I agree to the terms stated above and acknowledge that I authorized to have the additional \$5.00 AEL fees added to my residential electric account. I also understand that I will communicate directly with Air Evac Lifeteam for Membership Member Service.

X

Member Signature

Date (must be dated)