

Jo-Carroll Energy • Elizabeth, Illinois • 800-858-5522 • www.jocarroll.com

# JO-CARROLL

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative  **HI-LINES**



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Michael Hastings

### LIVE WIRE:

# Metal theft threatens safety, lives

### Reader Prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll Energy member who is eligible to win a monthly \$25 readership prize. If your name is printed in this month's edition, and not a part of any article, contact Jo-Carroll Energy and claim your prize no later than the 10th of the month following publication.

### Office hours

**Elizabeth Office**  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Savanna Office**  
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

**Both Offices**  
Monday - Friday  
800-858-5522

**For all outages and emergencies call**  
800-927-5254

Would you risk being hit by lightning for \$100? Seems a bit ludicrous, but desperate times cause folks to do foolish things.

Thefts of copper, bronze and aluminum are on the rise nationwide, at abandoned commercial buildings, empty homes and — most dangerously — at power substations near neighborhoods. We need your help to keep our equipment safe, prevent outages and save lives.

At an electric co-op in Oklahoma last year, metal thieves took off with about \$100 worth of wire in a substation, but left behind a \$1 million repair bill after a fire destroyed regulators, switches and a \$600,000 transformer. More than 3,500 consumers were temporarily left in the dark after the incident, although the co-op moved quickly to reroute power to affected areas.

It's hard to understand why folks would put their lives on the line for a few dollars. Many law enforcement officials believe that methamphetamine users are responsible for much of the problem. And the damage done to systems packs a big punch, since equipment can be ruined without the protection copper wires provide. There's also the potential for loss of life. In 2010, metal theft-related deaths occurred in North Carolina, West Virginia, Illinois and Ohio.

Just this February another Oklahoma man

lost his life — authorities suspect he was attempting to steal a meter loop when he suffered fatal burns. Electric Co-op Today reported, "A standard loop has about 26 pounds of copper in it, so this man lost his life trying to take \$58.24 worth of copper. It just wasn't worth it."

The cost for scrap copper goes up and down, but recently it's been on the rise — and so have robbery attempts.

We use copper to ground our equipment, protecting it from electrical surges and lightning by giving electricity a safe path to ground. Copper is an essential component every step of the way in bringing you safe electricity.

Our linemen are highly trained professionals who understand the dangers of working with electricity and take proper safety precautions. To protect the public we surround our substations with secure fencing and post warning signs. But some thieves will not be deterred.

Please help us prevent these thefts. If you notice anything unusual, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, or hanging wire, call Jo-Carroll Energy immediately at 800-858-5522. If you see anyone other than our utility personnel or contractors around substations or other electric facilities, call the police.

# Resume of Minutes

## Regular Board Meeting • February 23, 2011

The board met at the Cooperative headquarters in Elizabeth, Ill. on Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2011. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda was approved as modified and the Consent Agenda was approved. No member presentation was made at the meeting.

**Chairman's Report**—Chairman Mattingley discussed the significance of the agenda facing the Board as well as the successful efforts of the Cooperative to positively affect the lives of the members of the Cooperative.

**Dairyland Report**—Director Stadel reported that he had no report for this month given the schedule of Dairyland District Meetings.

**AIEC Report**—Director Senn reported that the AIEC anticipated a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2010, reviewed important considerations related to capital credit payments and reviewed legislative issues raised at the AIEC meeting in Springfield.

**Strategic Activity**—Director Werner reviewed Policy 100 entitled **Board Policy – Development, Approval, and Distribution**. A motion passed approving the policy.

**CEO's Report**—The CEO reported on the following:

**Financial Operating Report** – The CEO reported that the Cooperative had an unaudited margin for January of \$529,701.00. A motion was passed approving the monthly Financial Operating Report.

**Power Supply Report** – The CEO reported on discussions with Interstate Power and Light (IPL) regarding possible improvements in rate structures.

**Danisco Update** – The CEO reported that a meeting was held with representatives of both Danisco and Jo-Carroll Energy present.

**Rentech Update** – Jo-Carroll Energy has clarified distribution issues with Rentech through the efforts of Ken Sivertsen and Pat Keleher.

**Biomass Plant Update** – CEO Hastings discussed the current status of the power plant, the possibility of partnering with a generation and transmission company and progress being made on obtaining an air permit from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

**Farmers Mutual Shared Services Report** – Hastings reported that arrangements are being finalized for Jo-Carroll Energy to provide billing and accounting services to Farmers Mutual.

**PPI** – The CEO met with leaders of Prairie Power, Inc. (PPI) along with Ed Smith and Bob Nespechal. He reported that PPI may contract with our consultants to study the conversion of an existing coal plant they have to biomass fuel.

**CFO Report**—CFO, Tracy Heidenreich, reported that the audit went extremely well. She stated she continues to work on a better format for Jo-Carroll Energy bills. She is working with Farmers Mutual and SEDC to improve processes.

**CAO Report** – The CAO, Russ Simpson, reported that the former Executive Director, Randy Prasse, has left TCEDA and that an Interim Executive Director has been appointed, Sharon Pepin. Simpson then discussed efforts regarding successful communities, a key target identified at the recent strategic planning sessions. He discussed working with the Mount Carroll City Council. The CAO then discussed his trip to Springfield to assist in obtaining the air permit for the biomass plant. He also discussed the progress continuing to be made in working with the Campbell Center in Mount Carroll.

**COO Report** – The COO, Kyle Buros, reviewed the numerous staff changes which have occurred recently, discussing retirements, reassignments, promotions and hirings. He stated that construction projects are moving

forward as planned with over \$5 million in projects currently in process. He reviewed status of broadband marketing. He then discussed the recent outage specifically describing how it occurred and actions taken to achieve the successful resolution thereof.

**External Affairs Update** – The General Counsel, John Cox, discussed numerous current affairs issues of concern to cooperatives in Illinois and around the country.

### Board Issues

**CRC Voting Delegate and Alternate** – A motion passed to appoint Michael Hastings and Tracy Heidenreich as CRC voting delegate and alternate for 2011.

**Legislative Conference Attendees** – Board members agreed to get back to Dorothy Young on whether or not they will be attending the 2011 NRECA Legislative Conference.

**Board Performance Evaluation** – Directors were advised to return their Board self-evaluation forms to John Cox or Dorothy Young by March 15<sup>th</sup>.

**RUS Loan Resolution – Biomass Plant** – A resolution was passed that provided the ability to borrow funds from RUS for purposes of construction of the biomass power plant.

The Chairman opened the discussion with general comments focused on power supply and issues related thereto. He stated that he felt the Board needed to have a discussion for purposes of reviewing options available to the Cooperative. The CEO led a discussion regarding future power supply options. A motion passed to authorize a study of the issue by Cooperative Staff.

**Reports**—The Board received various reports of board activities since the last meeting.

The board meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

## Budget billing accounts recalculate in May

Members with budget billing will have their budget amounts recalculated in May.

Your new budget amount is based on an average of the previous 12 months' actual charges and payments. The May recalculation could result in a higher or lower monthly budget amount than what you pay now due to increases or decreases in your usage over the prior year.

The billing statement you receive in May will show your new budget amount. A message will print on

your billing statement, indicating this new amount. If you do not see a message on your billing statement, your budget amount has remained the same.

If you have more than one billing account on budget, it is possible that one or both budget amounts may change. Your first new budget bill amount will be due in June.

Budget billing can help you manage your energy costs by allowing you to pay the same amount each month. Monthly utility bills can

vary significantly throughout the year due to cold winters and hot, humid summers. With Jo-Carroll Energy's budget billing plan you can levelize your payments throughout the year, removing the month-to-month fluctuations caused by changing weather.

If you have any questions regarding budget billing or your budget bill account with Jo-Carroll Energy, please contact the Billing Services Department at (800) 858-5522.

## Jo-Carroll Energy offers energy audits for farms, small businesses

Are you a farmer or rural business looking to replace a grain dryer, make other energy-saving improvements or produce renewable energy? If so, USDA Rural Development and Jo-Carroll Energy may be able to help.

USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program provides funds to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to make energy efficiency improvements to their facilities or farms or to purchase and install renewable energy systems. Grants can be up to 25 percent of total eligible project costs and are limited to \$500,000 for renewable energy systems and \$250,000 for energy efficiency improvements. Grant requests as low as \$2,500 for renewable energy systems and \$1,500 for energy efficiency improvements will be considered.

Popular uses of the program in the Midwest have been to assist in

the purchase of new, more efficient grain-drying systems or to install geo-thermal. Costs incurred before submitting an application are not eligible. In addition, funds are not available for residential use. Last year, 143 grants and guaranteed loans totaling \$6.7 million were awarded to rural businesses and producers in Illinois.

Jo-Carroll Energy can assist by completing the required energy efficiency audit on the proposed project. Audits cover a variety of aspects and can be project specific depending on your type of business.

The regular cost for this service is \$600, however because Jo-Carroll Energy received a grant through the USDA, the cooperative is able to offer this service to members for \$150, only 25 percent of the cost until Dec. 31, 2011. Non-members (within a 3-hour radius of the cooperative headquarters) are subject to additional mileage and

hourly travel fees.

All energy audits are performed to USDA standards. A report of recommendations is provided that discusses ways a business or farm could be improved through energy efficiency upgrades.

For more information on the energy audit, call 800-858-5522 and ask for the cooperative's energy advisor John Scott at ext. 1339 or Heidi Weber, Member Relations and Marketing Manager at extension 1208.

You can learn more about the grant programs by visiting the USDA Rural Development website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/9006grant.htm>.

Jo-Carroll Energy also offers its energy auditing services to not-for-profit, institutional, governmental and civic businesses and organizations. These audits are offered for \$300 to members only.



# 2011 Annual Meeting



About 300 members of Jo-Carroll Energy attended the cooperative's appreciation breakfast and annual meeting held Saturday, April 9, in Elizabeth.

Results of elections for three Jo-Carroll Energy board seats were announced. All candidates were unopposed. Re-elected were Marcia Stanger of Apple River, District 3, and Tom Lundy of Savanna, District 6. Larry Carroll of Thomson joins the board representing District 9.

John "Jack" Janssen, District 9, chose not to seek re-election after serving the cooperative for more than 30 years. Jo-Carroll Energy board chairman Joe Mattingley thanked Janssen for his years of service.

"Jack has been a cornerstone of Jo-Carroll Energy," Mattingley said. "He has been a major part of Jo-Carroll Energy for a long time. We appreciate his leadership, and know he loves the co-op."

Members also approved two bylaw amendments regarding the balloting process and capital credits.

With "Looking Out for You" as the meeting's theme, Mattingley noted the difference between cooperatives and other utilities. "Co-ops focus on solutions that will keep members' energy bills affordable; we look out for our members," he said. "Now, more than ever, that's important because we need to work together to keep your energy bills affordable."

One way the cooperative does this is to take an active part in the state and national affiliated associations, Mattingley said. He explained the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) resolutions process that provides guidance and direction in advocating for cooperatives and their member-owners, ultimately affecting national energy policy.

This past year, Jo-Carroll Energy

contributed to two resolutions regarding taxation and cooperative support for cost-effective renewable and environmentally-favorable energy. The taxation resolution opposes tax proposals similar to a "carbon" tax on fossil fuels and urges Congress to reject these taxes as a possible source of revenue. Also opposed are new "energy" taxes on all energy regardless of how it is produced.

The second resolution supports power developed from renewable resources that naturally replenish, utilize residual materials or recycle waste. Jo-Carroll Energy added language for biomass and wood to be treated as a carbon neutral fuel source.

Mattingley also discussed the need for more electric transmission lines. "Electricity must be used, or moved to where it can be used, the second it's produced," he said. "When new sources of energy come



on line, new transmission lines are ever more important to take the renewable power from the wind farms of the Dakotas, Nebraska and Iowa to population centers in Chicago, St. Louis and the Northeast. It will do no good if we can't get it where it is needed."

Jo-Carroll Energy President and CEO Michael Hastings' presentation focused on the recent rate restructure and rising costs due to government regulations, environmental requirements, prices for fuel, materials and equipment and coal transport.

Hastings outlined the components of the rate structure: the facility charge, the cost of electricity per kilowatt hour and the power cost adjustment (PCA). He explained that the facility charge is designed to cover fixed costs, such as poles, transformers, substations, labor costs, depreciation cost and interest cost. Because not all of the fixed charges are covered by the facility charge, some are embedded or reflected in the charge of electricity per kilowatt hour.

"The fixed costs occur whether we sell any electricity or not," Hastings said. "Currently, those costs are actually around \$45 per month per residential member. Of course it wouldn't make sense to increase our facility charge to \$45 per month. That's what it costs, but that would be too big an increase."

With the restructure, more of the fixed costs are now contained in the facility charge. All single-phase

members pay a \$25 monthly facility charge. Three-phase members pay a \$75 monthly facility charge.

Hastings noted the PCA reflects increases in costs for electricity the cooperative gets from its power suppliers not currently reflected in the rate structure.

"Keep in mind that when we set our rates, it's for that moment in time only," he said. "Next month or the month after, our costs from Dairyland and Interstate Power and Light may go up or down, depending on their costs. Rather than doing a new rate study every month, we put additional increases, or decreases, in the PCA."

About every one or two years, the cooperative does a new rate study "to make sure that your co-op's costs are fairly allocated among the member classes," he added.

Hastings reviewed several projects undertaken by the cooperative in its electric, natural gas and broadband divisions during the past year including an automated meter infrastructure system and system improvements in Savanna. He also stressed the cooperative's commitment to community, noting the annual Youth to Washington tour, scholarships and the annual food drive.

## Annual Meeting Prize Winners

### \$200 Bill Credit Grand Prize

Kenneth Parrott, Elizabeth

### \$25 Bill Credits (Meeting)

Myrna Duggan, Hanover

Dick Pouzar, Galena

Edmond and Nancy Ryan, Apple River

Calvin Bahr, Scales Mound

Melvin and Patricia Halstead, Hanover

Joyce Morgan, Mt. Carroll

Marcella Arnold, Elizabeth

Verle Winter, Galena

Geraldine Bottiglierio, Apple River

Ronald Dix, East Dubuque

### \$25 Bill Credits (Breakfast)

Virgil and Veronica Gehling, Galena

Ronald Boldt, Apple River

Imogene Miller, Elizabeth

Raymond Henningsen, Chadwick

William Abbot, Fulton

Gary Holland, Hanover

Charles Waser, Elizabeth

Charlotte Scharpf, Galena

Lloyd Haas, Mt. Carroll

Linda Zink, Mt. Carroll

# Stay safe all year long

May is National Electrical Safety Month, a time when electric cooperatives educate consumers on ways to stay safe at home and on the job. But safety awareness shouldn't stop on May 31.

The Electrical Safety Foundational Internation

(ESFI) provides a Home Safety Calendar to help you remember when to perform routine maintenance and safety checks around the house. Some things, like vacuuming coils and changing furnace or air conditioning filters, should be done every three

months. Other items, like testing GFCI outlets and smoke alarms, need to happen monthly.

Learn more about home electrical safety by visiting ESFI's Virtual Home at <http://virtualhome.esfi.org>.



## Electrical Safety Calendar

Use this handy calendar to help keep your home safe. For more tips, visit [esfi.org](http://esfi.org).

<b>JANUARY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check and replace furnace filters	<b>FEBRUARY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuum refrigerator coils	<b>MARCH</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Replace smoke and carbon monoxide alarm batteries if not done in last 12 months
<b>APRIL</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check and replace furnace filters	<b>MAY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Clean air conditioners or schedule annual inspection <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuum refrigerator coils	<b>JUNE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Dust light fixtures/lamps <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule annual inspection of gas-powered dryer
<b>JULY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check and replace air conditioning filters	<b>AUGUST</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuum refrigerator coils	<b>SEPTEMBER</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule annual furnace cleaning and inspection
<b>OCTOBER</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Check and replace furnace filters	<b>NOVEMBER</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuum refrigerator coils	<b>DECEMBER</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Dust light fixtures/lamps

**ESFI recommends hiring a licensed, qualified home electrical inspector if:**  
 Your home is more than 40 years old; your home had a major addition or renovation or major new appliance added in the last 10 years; and/or you are the new owner of a previously owned home.

*Every month you should:*

- 1. Inspect all electrical and appliance cords for damage**
- 2. Test GFCIs & AFCIs**  
 Whether you have a receptacle-type or circuit breaker-type ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI), pushing the TEST button should turn off power to the circuit. To restore power, press the RESET button. To test arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) push the TEST button. The breaker handle should go to the middle or off position. To reset, move the breaker handle to the OFF position and then to the ON position.
 
- 3. Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms**  
 Push the TEST button or use other procedures recommended by the manufacturer. Smoke alarm batteries should be changed at least once a year. If an alarm "chirps" or "beeps" to indicate low batteries, change them right away. Replace all smoke alarms at least every 10 years.
 

## Share your favorite photos in our calendar contest

Don't forget to enter your favorite photos in Jo-Carroll Energy's 2012 calendar contest. In honor of the International Year of Cooperatives in 2012, we're planning a commemorative calendar that captures the spirit of our cooperative community.

You can join us by sending in photos for Seasons of the Cooperative Photo Contest. Share your photos

that evoke the heart of the cooperative lifestyle. Share with us and your fellow co-op members the quiet scenes and breathtaking vistas that define our cooperative world.

Whether it's a scenic landscape, a snapshot of everyday life or an action photo, we invite you to share your images.

Winning entries will be featured in the 2012 calendar. Cooperative

members, directors, employees and their family members 18 years old and older are eligible to enter. Photos may be any appropriate subject or scene, but must be taken in the Jo-Carroll Energy service area.

An entry form and more information can be found on our website at [www.jocarroll.com](http://www.jocarroll.com). Deadline for entries is June 30, 2011.

# Cuttin' Loose w/ Style still growing

One hundred new clients walked into Cuttin' Loose w/ Style in Fulton within the first five months after the salon opened during the summer of 2009, and the business has been growing ever since.

Owner and hairstylist Judy Rock has been licensed in cutting and coloring hair for 28 years. She spent many years working in Clinton, Iowa, but just recently has started her own salon closer to home. She holds Illinois and Iowa licenses. Rock began her career in health and beauty during high school at the Sterling Co-op and continued her education at the Professionals Academy in Clinton.

Wherever Rock is working, her clients follow her. Her clients love the personal attention they receive with an excellent hair cut, color and style. Rock is now attracting clients from all across Whiteside and Carroll counties. **Casey Cokerham**

Hair styling is just one of the services Rock and her three stylists provide at Cuttin' Loose w/ Style. Facials, pedicures, body waxing, and spray-on tanning (which Rock calls "Fake Bake") are all available.

"I am not the boss," stated Rock, "I work alongside my girls. All but one of us is a mom and we know that we need to be flexible. I put my family first and so do my girls. I think that is why we have been so successful."

Every stylist has her own passions in life and loves to share them with their clients. This salon is not a place to share gossip, but instead share life.

One of Rock's passions is helping cancer patients live their lives.



She hopes to one day offer wig sales for cancer patients. She and her husband designed the building to accommodate one salon room that can be closed for the privacy of trying on wigs.

Rock also provides a unique service for the area that helps prevent cancer. The "Fake Bake" tanning is a healthy alternative to the harmful rays of a typical tanning bed. In eight minutes customers can get a dark tan look that lasts one to two weeks for the same price as a tanning bed service.

"It is quicker than a tanning bed and it is healthier for your skin," said Rock. She really believes in keeping her clients as healthy and beautiful as they are when they walk in the door.

The home-like design of the building creates a relaxing and comfortable experience for everyone who enters. Its cool colors and

beach décor help you escape a busy life to focus on helping yourself.

"Whatever we can't offer you, our neighbors next door can," stated Rock referring to the photography studio and massage therapist who share the building with her salon.

In years to come, Rock hopes to expand her salon by adding one more chair, but for right now, business is keeping the staff content to serve the health and beauty needs of the community.

*Jo-Carroll Energy members can receive one free eyebrow wax with the purchase of any service, 10% off facials or leg and bikini waxing, 10% off pedicures with massage chair and ottoman, 10% off wedding, prom and formal up-do's, and 10% off retail with their Co-op Connections Card. Call 815-589-4444 to schedule an appointment or visit [www.cuttinloosewithstyle.com](http://www.cuttinloosewithstyle.com) for more information.*

## Jo-Carroll Energy

793 U.S. Route 20 West • P.O. Box 390  
Elizabeth, Illinois 61028-0390

# Area students are "Super Energy Savers"



CFL Charlie®, Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives® energy efficiency mascot, headed into classrooms this spring to help educate kids about co-ops, energy efficiency, renewable energy and electric safety.

CFL Charlie accompanied Jo-Carroll Energy's Member Relations and Marketing Manager Heidi Weber on visits to area schools as part of the Super Energy Savers Kids classroom programs. Weber presented the program to more than 150 area school children, and with the help of CFL Charlie presented them with Super Energy Savers certificates.

The Super Energy Savers Kids Classroom program and other Jo-Carroll Energy education programs teach kids how to become "Super Energy Savers" at home, and include take-home checklists that walk kids and parents through their homes identifying energy-saving practices, activity sheets and more.

"Jo-Carroll Energy is using this program in conjunction with many other Touchstone Energy cooperatives, in an effort to better serve our member-owners nationwide, and help us educate our 'mini-members'," Weber said.

"These programs create an even greater sense of membership and reinforces Jo-Carroll Energy's long-standing commitment to the com-


munity," she added.

Pictured above are students from East Dubuque and River Ridge.


Watch our website at [www.jocarroll.com](http://www.jocarroll.com) for photos from more school districts.

Welcome to the

# Family




**Jo-Carroll Energy**  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**Sand Prairie**  
Powering our members for the future.

electric • natural gas • high-speed internet



**As a member-owner, you are a part of our family.**

We are dedicated to providing you a better quality of life and affordable, reliable services. We are here when you need us—live, local support to answer your questions 24/7.

Find out what Jo-Carroll Energy and Sand Prairie Wireless can do for you. Call or click today.

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WE  
care

Check out our new website and community links! [connectSP.com](http://connectSP.com)