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JO-CARROLL

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



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Michael Hastings

We at Jo-Carroll Energy have deep connections to the members and communities we serve here because northwestern Illinois is our home and you are our neighbors. It means we care about improving the quality of life in our area.

We take our jobs seriously, but we also take our community roles seriously, too. That's why we offer scholarships to college-bound students and send two high school students to Washington, D.C., every summer to learn about history and government.

Outreach with youth is just one more way Jo-Carroll Energy looks out for its members. We know these young adults will one day become community and possibly co-op leaders. We don't participate in these activities simply because it's nice to do, or even the right thing to do. We do it because we remain committed to making life better in the areas we serve.

Last month we announced our Youth Tour recipients and inside this issue you'll find the names of our scholarship winners. We have another group of young adults we want to recognize – the interns and 1,000 hour workers who will be working with us and for our members this year.

Millions of people in today's workforce got their start with an internship – a short stint working for a semester or a summer at a job they would like to pursue as a career. At Jo-Carroll Energy we have offered internships that cover

a wide range of areas, including communications, member services and other areas as well as 1,000 hour workers in our line department. We do this because internships provide many benefits – for the intern and the employer. Internships give students the opportunity to check out possible career options.

An internship allows students – or recent graduates – an opportunity to get “real world” experience. And, they give the employer an opportunity to check out the intern to see if they would be a good fit for the business, post-graduation.

Within the next five years, 20 percent of America's electric cooperative employees will be eligible for retirement. We are looking to the future generations to move us forward, to help us prepare for an evolving global economy and the changes that will come with new policies and regulations, both in the environmental and security sectors. Building and strengthening our community has always been our top priority. Building the next generation of employees is critical to maintaining the success of our mission and our business model.

Whatever your need may be at your business, non-profit or cooperative, there is likely a young person with the skills you are looking for. Give them a chance. It's likely your business will benefit, and you may even sway a young person to plant roots right here in our local communities.

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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.

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For your information

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Resume of Minutes

Regular Board Meeting • April 30, 2015

The board met on Wednesday, April 30, 2015, at the Jo-Carroll Energy Headquarters. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The Agenda and the Consent Agenda were approved.

JDCF Presentation – The board heard a presentation by Christie Trifone-Simon of JDCF regarding the “Sunshine Acres” program for at-risk kids.

Chairman’s Report – Chairman Senn thanked the staff and directors who helped make the annual meeting of the Cooperative, held in Geneseo, a huge success.

Dairyland Report – Director Stadel reported that Dairyland’s margins are trending positive so far. DPC is investigating alternative retirement plan options and the board also approved looking at a target equity number of 25% for the cooperative by 2020.

APGA Report – Director Carroll reported on his attendance at the recent APGA Legislative Conference.

Monthly Committee Review

(a) Policy Report – Policy 138 – Arbitration Procedures – Approved unanimously as is.

CEO’s Report – The CEO reported on the following in addition to his written report:

a. Financial Operating Report – Hastings reported that the Cooperative had an unaudited margin of \$187,000 in March, which was below budget. The Board accepted the March Financial Operating Report for filing by general consent.

b. Power Supply Report – CEO Hastings reported on meetings with Rentech and Interstate Power & Light.

c. CFO Report – Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Heidenreich reported to the board on preliminary results of reallocating certain broadband assets and expenses among the other business units to which they are attributed.

d. Sr. Vice President and Assistant General Manager Report – Sr. Vice President and Assistant General Manager Burows reported on various operations projects.

e. Culture of Excellence and Communications – Merri Sevey, Vice President of Human Resources informed the board of numerous positions currently open at the Cooperative, as well as announcing that recipients of the Cooperative’s scholarships have been chosen.

f. Member Services – Jennifer Skien, Vice-President of Member Services, was absent. CEO Hastings informed the board that V.P. Skien was recently successful in obtaining a \$90,000 USDA grant for energy audits.

g. External Affairs Update – Chris Allendorff, Corporate Counsel, reported on various legislative matters, including bills in Illinois that would create a subsidy for Exelon’s nuclear fleet and another that would privatize most of the state’s economic development efforts. Allendorff also

updated the board on the current work being done by TCEDA.

Board Issues

a. Cyber Security – Staff presented to the board on current cyber-security topics and initiatives at the Cooperative.

b. FS Presentation – Representatives from the Stephenson Service Co., also a cooperative, made a presentation to the board asking them to apply on their behalf for a USDA RED loan for an upcoming project.

c. Board Committee Assignments – Directors were assigned to committees.

d. NRECA International Foundation – A donation of \$1000 to the NRECA International Foundation was approved unanimously.

e. Delegates to Dairyland’s Annual Meeting – Any director who is attending the Dairyland Annual Meeting is considered a delegate.

f. PPI Delegate/Alternate – Director Holesinger was selected as the delegate and Director Hallendorff as the alternate for the PPI Annual Meeting.

g. PPI Director/Director/Alternate Director – Director Hallendorff was selected as the PPI Director, with Director Kuhns as the alternate.

h. October 28, 2015 Open Board Meeting – The board selected October 28, 2015 as the date for the next open board meeting.

i. Policy Committee Meeting Date – The board chose a date for the next policy committee meeting.

j. JDCF Donation/Match with CoBank – The board unanimously approved a donation to the JDCF, to be used for the Sunshine Acres program, which will be matched by CoBank.

k. CoBank Proxy Authorization – The board unanimously approved filing the necessary proxy authorization paperwork for the CoBank Annual Meeting.

Financial Statement – Troy Swinford of BKD reported to the board on the Cooperative’s 2014 financial statements.

Executive Session

Executive Session was held to discuss pending and possible litigation and employment matters.

Consideration of Matters discussed in

Executive Session – The board unanimously approved a motion to exercise an option to purchase certain real estate in Carroll County, while letting another option on different real estate expire.

Reports – Reports were heard on: Member Meeting, Galena, Congresswoman Bustos event, Jo-Carroll Energy Annual Meeting, APGA Government Relations Conferences, and Employee Breakfast.

Upcoming Meetings – Legislative Conference
Other Business – None

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 P.M.

Ralston receives statewide scholarship

Christy Ralston of Savanna is one of eight winners of this year's Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. Ralston is the daughter of Jo-Carroll Energy member Christina DeMoss. She is a senior at West Carroll High School.

Ralston competed for the scholarship with 272 other students from across the state. The \$1,500 awards are given each year to seven sons or daughters of electric co-op members, and one to the son or daughter of a co-op employee or director.

Candidates were judged on grade-point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities and a short essay demonstrating their knowledge of energy cooperatives.

Michael Hastings, president and CEO of Jo-Carroll Energy said, "All cooperatives live by a principle of commitment to community. The employees and board members of Jo-Carroll Energy have always been involved in our local schools and communities.



Merri Sevey, vice president of human resources for Jo-Carroll Energy (left) presented a plaque to Christy Ralston for the 2015 Thomas H. Moore IEC Memorial Scholarship.

We live here. As a local, member-owned cooperative we all have a vested interest in the future of our children. This scholarship is just

one small way we can help make a difference for a student like Christy."

Sand Prairie Wireless upgrades in Fulton, Hanover and West Galena

Scott Hanson, manager of IT and broadband services, announced that Sand Prairie Wireless, a service of Jo-Carroll Energy, has recently completed upgrades in the cities of Fulton, Hanover and West Galena in their Illinois service area. "These completed upgrades allow us to accept new members or provide packages with greater speeds

to our existing members," said Hanson.

Future upgrades are planned throughout the service area. For more information about Sand

Prairie Wireless and to find out if they can reach you with fast, reliable and affordable internet service, visit www.connectSP.com or call 877-571-9851.



Invest in efficiency and watch your savings grow

By Meghaan Evans

It is the middle of the summer, temperatures are rising and so are your electric bills. It might be time to make a big investment, an investment in energy efficiency.

Making your home more energy efficient is still one of the safest investments you can make. Try employing these energy saving measures to collect major returns on your investments:

- Install a programmable thermostat
- Install a hot water heater “blanket”
- Change your shower heads
- Upgrade appliances like your clothes washer or your refrigerator
- Replace old windows with energy efficient ones
- Install water efficient toilets

Making all of these changes at once could be difficult – if not impossible – but investing in just one of these measures can yield a significant return on your investment.

For example, installing a new, energy efficient clothes washer can yield around a 24 percent return on investment. Do your research, and make sure you are purchasing the right size appliances. A small, energy efficient washer will save you money, but if you have a larger family, having to do multiple loads could negate your energy savings.

Multiple energy efficient upgrades will help you save no matter where you live or what time of year it is, but upgrading to efficient home cooling systems will help lower energy costs significantly during the hotter months of the year.

Six percent of American energy consumption goes toward space cooling and it costs \$11 billion per year for homeowners to power their air conditioners. You can reduce your energy use by 20 to 50 percent when



you upgrade to an energy efficient home cooling unit. One option is to install a split unit air conditioner and heating unit—they can be more expensive, but they are highly efficient, especially in homes without ductwork. Another option is to invest in an ENERGY STAR approved air conditioning unit, which can be 15 percent more efficient than a standard unit.

If buying a new cooling unit isn't in the cards for you this summer, no need to worry! Replacing appliances isn't the only way to lower energy costs, one of the most important energy efficient improvements to make during the hot summer months is air sealing and insulating. By adding insulation in attics, floors over crawl spaces and accessible basement rim joints, you can reduce your heating and cooling costs by an average of 15 percent (and it could lower your overall energy costs by an average of 11 percent!).

You can also lower your air conditioners energy consumption by

between 5 and 15 percent by cleaning your air ducts. You can install energy efficient window treatments, which can reduce energy costs by around 10 percent. Or, you can simply turn on a ceiling fan, which will allow you to raise your thermostat temperature by four degrees, without impacting your comfort.

Investing in any of these energy efficient improvements will keep you cool in the summer, warm in the winter and will make significant changes to your energy bills. So do yourself, and your wallet, a favor and invest in a more energy efficient home!

Sources: Energy.gov, EnergyStar.gov, NRDC.gov

Meghaan Evans 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.

Jo-Carroll Energy asks your help in limiting summer energy costs

Do the Summer Shift: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Weekdays

As member-owners of Jo-Carroll Energy, you have proven your ability each summer to help limit power costs for the membership. We appreciate your participation in the cooperative's Summer Shift program, as it has helped control wholesale costs in the past several years.

While changing the time of day you use electricity in the summer doesn't appear as a line item credit or obvious reduction in price on your utility bill, it actually limits exposure to price increases for the cooperative and our members. It truly saves all members from costly power surcharges each summer. We call it avoided cost.

It may seem odd, but it costs less to provide electricity for your use during certain hours of the day and days of the week. Because consumers in our regional energy pool use more electricity summer weekdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., it is most costly to provide our members with adequate power during those hours. As an analogy, think of the maximum electricity use in those hours as "electricity rush hours" for the large population in our regional energy pool. Adequately providing as much electricity as consumers need causes power generation of every sort to be maximized, transmission routes to reach capacity and costs can become extremely high – reaching many multiples of our typical rates.

We do have options, though. Our energy provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, continues to encourage us to help limit Jo-Carroll Energy's summer wholesale electricity costs by shifting members' electricity use to lower cost times on summer weekdays—either before 11 a.m. or after 7 p.m.

Do the Summer Shift to help control costs. It's easy and the kids can help:

- Shift energy use outside the hours of 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. summer weekdays.
- Delay the dishwasher.
- Turn up the thermostat.
- Shift the start of the laundry.
- Be conscientious of the time of day when using computers, televisions and electronic games.
- Take advantage of day time natural light in offices and homes.

We're confident that our members' combined efforts to move electricity use outside the hours of 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. summer weekdays will make a difference.

Over the next couple of months, we'll share more specific suggestions for how you can continue to participate by shifting some electricity use outside of these more costly hours.

Thank you for your participation in this valuable effort. Do the Summer Shift!



Roy's Taco House, Geneseo

Kayleen Fulcher, owner, and Liz Holt, cook, at Roy's Taco House in Geneseo are closing the doors this coming January, 2016.

After serving friends and family 33 of the 45 years of business, the two friends are -- in their words -- "hanging up their aprons" for retirement.

Roy Garza founded this Geneseo household restaurant in 1971. He sold the business to John and Kayleen Fulcher in 1982 just a few years before he passed away.

The Fulchers, whose former lives included owning Little Red Riding Hood restaurant on Wolf Road and managing the Geneseo Happy Joe's, brought their customers' favorite recipes to Roy's Taco House. Today the menu features a mix of Mexican and American dishes.

Liz began working for the Fulchers at Little Red Riding Hood and was invited to be a cook at Roy's Taco House in 1987.

John managed the restaurant until 2002 when he passed away from cancer. Against the odds and expectations, Kayleen and Liz decided to keep the business open.

"There is something about this building that makes you want to come back," Holt stated. Built from two World War II train cars, the restaurant has a unique character—almost as unique as the people inside.

Kayleen joked that nepotism is encouraged in this family business. Several generations of their families have worked and contributed to its legacy. The Country Fried Tenderloin, or CFT, is a customer favorite dish created by Kayleen and John's daughter, Margo. According to Liz, "It's awesome!"

Both friends and co-workers, Kayleen and Liz have stood by each other during the highs and the lows of life and business. People thought they wouldn't survive in the restaurant industry, but they never gave up. Liz expressed it well when she said, "Don't underestimate older women."



Although the two will be sad to see the restaurant close, they are excited for what comes next.

"Who knows what fabulous thing will sit on this property in the future," Kayleen pondered.

Kayleen and Liz want to take a long goodbye before they close the doors. Stop in and see them before January and use your Co-op Connections® Card.



Jo-Carroll Energy members receive the "Sweet Treat Discount" when they show their card. Ten percent of the food and beverage tab equals a dessert allowance. Roy's Taco House is located at 732 N. College, HWY 82 N. in Geneseo. Visit www.roystacohousegeneseo.com to read their full story.

Stay safe exploring the great outdoors this summer

By Abby Berry

Summer is in full swing, and that means it is time for fun in the sun! As you find yourself spending more time outdoors, Jo-Carroll Energy reminds you to stay safe.

Planning a home improvement project? When working outdoors, you may be using tools, such as ladders, power tools, shovels – or even paintbrushes with extendable arms. These items help you get the job done but have the potential to be dangerous if used improperly.

Pay attention to where you place metal ladders or dig for fence posts. Before you start any project, always look up and avoid overhead power lines. Keep a minimum of 10 feet between you and overhead lines.

If you are planning a project that requires digging, remember to dial “811” first to find out if the area you will be working in is clear of underground power lines. Power tools should be kept away from wet surfaces, and outlets should not be overloaded.

Exploring the great outdoors is a great way to spend time with the family, but keep these safety tips in mind.

Children should never climb trees near power lines – always assume a wire is live. Fly kites and remote controlled-airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines.

Planning to take a dip in the pool? Electrical devices, such as stereos, should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources, and outdoor electrical outlets should always be covered. If you hear a rumble of thunder, exit the pool right away.

Speaking of thunder, summer storms can be dangerous if you're caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. If you find yourself outdoors during a storm, move toward suitable shelter with covered sides, and stick to low-lying ground if possible.

These are just a few tips to remember when you are spending time outdoors this summer with your family. Have some fun out there, and always keep safety in mind!

Abby Berry 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.



Scholarships

Six area high school seniors were awarded the 2015 Jo-Carroll Energy Scholarships recently.

Receiving awards were: Tyler Konzett of Galena, Morgan Wheelwright of Elizabeth, Rachel Badtke of Mount Carroll, Christy Ralston of Savanna, Brandi Pessman of Fulton, and Cassidy Bos of Geneseo.

This year, the cooperative awarded six, \$500 scholarships, two each in Jo Daviess and Carroll counties and one each in Whiteside and Henry counties.

Recipients were selected based on grade-point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and community activities and a short essay demonstrating their knowledge of cooperatives.

Information about the 2016 Jo-Carroll Energy Scholarships will be available early this fall.



Tyler Konzett, presented by director Pat Smith.



Cassidy Bos, presented by director Robert Kuhns.



Brandi Pessman, presented by director Russell Holesinger.



Rachel Badtke (left) and Christy Ralston (right), presented by Merri Sevey, vice president of human resources (center).



Morgan Wheelwright, presented by director Chris Stadel.