



www.mcdonoughpower.com

The Wire

32

McDonough Power Cooperative • Macomb, Illinois 61455

Co-op Officials Advocating in Washington

Please Join Us...

78th Annual Meeting

Thursday, August 27
at The Crossing in
Macomb
Registration begins
at 5 p.m.

Business Meeting
at 7 p.m.



Pictured outside of Congresswoman Bustos office are McDonough Power Cooperative President and CEO Mike Smith and Western Illinois Electrical Cooperative Manager Tommie Long



Pictured outside of Congresswoman Bustos office is McDonough Power Cooperative Director Mike Cox

Every May, NRECA welcomes co-op grassroots advocates to Washington for the annual Legislative Conference. Directors, managers, and employees of member-owned electric cooperatives come from across America to spend time on Capitol Hill talking to their congressional delegations and congressional staff about legislative issues affecting electric

cooperatives and their member-owners. This year, over 2,000 electric cooperative representatives attended. Safe, affordable, reliable power is our policy; that's why we keep current in Washington. Representing McDonough Power Cooperative were president and CEO Mike Smith and director Mike Cox. 5322C2-252A



Our office will be closed for Independence Day on Friday, July 3



McDonough Power to Retire \$346,000 in Capital Credits to Members

“The Cooperative Difference”

1210 West Jackson Street
P.O. Box 352
Macomb, Illinois
61455-0352

309-833-2101

www.mcdonoughpower.com

Office hours:
7 a.m. - 4 p.m. - Weekdays



DIRECTORS

- Steve Lynn, Chairman
- Jerry Riggins, Vice Chairman
- Steve Youngquist, Secretary
- Jeffrey Moore, Treasurer
- Mike Cox
- Robert J. Dwyer
- Steve Hall
- Walter Lewis
- David Lueck
- John D. McMillan, Attorney

It's time for you to get the credit-capital credits, that is—for helping build, sustain, and grow your member-owned electric cooperative.

McDonough Power Cooperative Board of Directors voted in May to retire \$346,000 to members across portions of seven counties served by the co-op. This marks the eighth consecutive year that a capital credit retirement has been feasible.

When you signed up to receive electric service from McDonough Power you became both a member and an owner of a not-for-profit electric utility. While investor-owned utilities return a portion of any profits back to their shareholders, electric co-ops operate at cost. So instead of returning leftover funds to folks who might not live in the same region or even the same state as you do, McDonough Power periodically retires a portion of your allocated excess revenue (in the form of a capital credit refund) based on the electricity that you have purchased and the amount of time you have been a member.

“Allocating and retiring excess revenue to members helps distinguish cooperatives,” points out Mike Smith, McDonough Power president & CEO. “We're proud to support our communities by putting money back into the local economy and into the pockets

of those we serve. It makes our business model quite unique, in this day and age.”

The return of capital credit retirement checks to members reflects their contribution of capital to, and ownership of, the cooperative over time. Your cooperative is extremely proud to return this money to its member-owners, and it's important that you understand how these funds have benefited us. These funds have helped your co-op keep rates competitive, reduced the amount of money we needed to borrow from outside lenders to build and maintain a reliable electric distribution system, and helped cover emergency expenses such as those incurred during major storms.

If you had service with us in 1986 and 1987, you should expect to receive a check in the mail mid-August for your share of the margins made and invested during that time. 527SG14-950A

“Capital credits are paid back in cash to the members as the cooperative is financially able to do so,” notes Smith. “Retiring capital credits is the Cooperative Difference, and it's just one more way McDonough Power is looking out for our members.”

More details regarding capital credits can be found on our website at www.mcdonoughpower.com.

McDonough Power has a new online presence; check us out at www.mcdonoughpower.com!



All Co-op Electric Outages 837-1400

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections



It Starts with Power: McDonough Power Lineman Gives Back

It wasn't easy, but that's what made it worthwhile. It wasn't comfortable, but that's what made it real. Joe Wernsman's journey to Haiti was challenging, but equally rewarding.

McDonough Power lineman Joe Wernsman joined two other volunteer linemen, Adam Brendsel and Todd Moore, from Corn Belt Energy in Bloomington Illinois to work in Coteaux, Haiti through

a partnership with NRECA International Foundation. The three traveled to Haiti to work as a part of a monthly rotation NRECA International coordinates; the linemen help with construction and physical labor, but another important piece

is the knowledge and training of safety and linework they pass on to the Haitian linemen.

Twenty-one days; approximately 60 ethnic meals-goat meat and all; and many poles moved, set, or replaced; the linemen were able to boast putting up the first electric wire to be strung for the budding co-op, Cooperative Electrique de l'Arrondissement des Coteaux (CEAC).

"They're just in massive poverty down there and I've never seen anything like that before. So to be able to see how people live like that without all the little things that we take for granted is pretty amazing," Wernsman said.

When the linemen left the airport, they were struck by the hustle of the town; amazed at the crazy environment. They say even though they were told to expect the culture shock, it was a different story entirely to witness it firsthand.

"Once we got to Coteaux, it was a totally different atmosphere. The people were very friendly and welcoming," Wernsman said. "Everywhere we went, we were swarmed by people smiling and talking away in

Creole. Of course we had no idea what they were saying, and it was so fast...we were constantly looking to our hosts to translate what they were saying."

With three weeks ahead of them, line construction mode kicked in. Wernsman described early mornings loading the co-op's little pickup truck provided there was fuel available to use it, and long, hot hours of setting poles in the seven-foot-deep

holes dug by local hands. In a sense, the linemen embarked on a modern mission very similar to the renowned 1930s-era rural electrification movement—that of bringing electricity to rural and remote areas.

"There is literally no work for these people there, and they were happy to dig the holes to set the poles in. They got \$10 per hole, and they showed up wherever we were and used whatever they could find to dig with," Wernsman said.

The work day ended around 3:30 in the afternoon, or whenever a project was complete. The crew would head in for the day to unload and secure co-op equipment and remaining supplies, before returning to their hotel to take advantage of the few hours they had electricity—provided by a diesel-powered generator, an uncommon amenity there.

Models of energy conservation—mainly due to pure appreciation for its limited availability—electricity was only available from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. at the hotel where Wernsman, Brendsel and Moore stayed. Even then, the generator was often turned off when the crew was off site to further conserve.



Continued on page 16d ▶

Continued from page 16c ▶

To people living in impoverished communities who eagerly anticipate a single light bulb's worth of illumination to their home, the stringing of wire marks real and tangible progress toward reliable electricity. NRECA International's constant presence and efforts in Haiti, combined with volunteers from electric co-ops around the United States, ends years of repeated, unsuccessful attempts at power grid and line construction by other entities—projects generally abandoned, leaving only shallowly-set poles.

To McDonough Power, the progress is not only a testament to the work ethic and initiative Wernsman and the other Illinois co-op linemen possess, but one of impassioned desire to share their training, skills and physical labor to improve the quality of life for others. The imprint the three linemen left undoubtedly extends far beyond the electrical infrastructure they helped build.

The guys said they will remember the people most. "They're just so supportive and happy to see us there," Wernsman

said. "It's one of the most gratifying things I've done." 7328A7-600B

For 50 years, NRECA International has provided women, men and children in developing countries with access to safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. There are 110 million people in 42 countries that have benefitted from the Foundation's endeavors to pioneer low-cost rural electrification in all of its various facets, from design and construction to training local staff on how to successfully run a power utility.

Introduction to Operation Round Up

McDonough Power Cooperative is introducing Operation Round Up, a new opportunity for the Cooperative and its members to partner in strengthening our communities.

McDonough Power was established by neighbors helping neighbors to electrify their homes and farms. With this mission accomplished, focus shifted toward providing reliable, affordable electricity. Now, after 75-plus years, the Cooperative is embarking on a new initiative to improve the quality of life for communities in which our members live.

Operation Round Up allows us to turn a few cents from each member

into a powerful force for good in our communities. 739B9-670B

Members will automatically be enrolled in the program; meaning that your bill will rounded up to the next whole dollar each month. For example, a bill of \$87.68 would be rounded up to \$88.00. On average, \$6 per member is donated each year. While that may sound like a small amount, the potential for positively impacting our communities is tremendous. Those wishing to not participate may simply opt out by contacting the cooperative.

The McDonough Power Cooperative Cares charitable foundation, represented by a committee of volunteer members

appointed by the board, will guide the program and determine how to distribute the funds, beginning in early 2016.

Palmetto Electric Cooperative of South Carolina created the first Operation Round Up program in 1989. Their program has distributed more than \$5.7 million dollars in grants, which have made dramatic impacts in improving quality of life in the communities they serve.

The launch of the program will be decided upon by a vote of the membership at the annual meeting on August 27.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



By cleaning your air conditioner's air ducts, you can lower your energy consumption by between 5 and 15 percent.

Source: energy.gov



Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout The Wire. If you find the map location number that corresponds to the one on your bill (found above the usage graph), call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.