

73rd Annual Meeting review



Steve Epperson
President/CEO

Members of McDonough Power Cooperative learned of ways the co-op is improving power quality and service while helping members save money on power and other costs during the organization's 73rd Annual Meeting held Thursday, August 26 at The Crossing.

Cooperative President/CEO Steve Epperson said that the co-op's mission is to provide the best possible service at the lowest possible price. "Unfortunately, the cooperative is very limited in its ability to control the wholesale price of electricity; in other words the power we procure on your behalf. The price for this power is largely dictated by changing market conditions due to legislation and regulation." Because of this the cooperative has been proactively seeking ways to help members reduce their energy usage and provide options for reducing the cost of other goods and services.

The co-op is offering two kinds of energy audits through GreenUp Technologies to help members understand how they can make their homes more energy efficient. One audit is more basic and the other is more comprehensive and provides more information to the member. The co-op partially underwrites both audits and allows members to spread the remaining cost over a period of months. The cooperative's new "smart metering" technology allows its employees to help members evaluate their energy usage any hour of any day to identify usage patterns and learn how they can change those habits.

Kill A Watt™ Electric Usage Monitors can be checked out from the co-op and plugged into members' appliances to record their energy use on any given day. The cooperative also provides energy efficiency information and updates in Illinois Country Living magazine, which members receive each month. The Touchstone Energy® togetherwesave.com website gives members many interactive examples of reducing their energy use and many "how-to" videos and applications to show members how to make their homes more energy efficient.

The co-op provides the Touchstone Energy Co-op Connections member benefit card to all members, which offers 10-60 percent discounts on prescriptions and more than 16,000 local product and service offerings across the country and national discounts.

Cooperative Chairman Mike Cox discussed the measures the co-op has taken to improve service and reduce outages for members. One major undertaking has been taking control of vegetation in right-of-way areas. The co-op is in the third year of a five-year



Three area men were re-elected to the McDonough Power Cooperative board of directors during the organization's 73rd Annual Meeting held Thursday, August 26 at The Crossing. Shown with the President/CEO Steve Epperson, right, are (l-r): Walter Lewis of Blandinsville, Steve Hall of Roseville and Mike Cox of Macomb. V80LME24-708A 6315ME24-708A

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McDonough Power Cooperative

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

DIRECTORS

Michael Cox, Chairman

Steve Lynn, Vice Chairman

Steve Youngquist, Secretary

Stan Prox, Treasurer

Robert J. Dwyer

Steve Hall

Walter Lewis

Jeffrey Moore

Jerry Riggins

John D. McMillan, Attorney

**All Co-op Electric
Outages 837-1400**

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◀ *Continued from page 16a*

plan to clear and contain vegetation, which is resulting in better power quality and fewer outages. Cox said, "This endeavor not only improves service to members but also saves thousands of dollars in future line repair and line loss." **8712-1218 871919**

The cooperative is also replacing sections of line, poles and underground facilities to also improve power quality and reduce outages. Cox said, "The board and I would like you to know that your cooperative is doing all it can to respond to current issues requiring improvement as well as attempting to prevent future ones by proactively planning and budgeting in a responsible manner."

During the meeting three local men were re-elected to the cooperative's board of directors. The re-elected directors are Mike Cox of Macomb,

Steve Hall of Roseville and Walter Lewis of Blandinsville.

McDonough Power Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy® — an alliance of more than 705 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country. McDonough Power is committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves more than 5,166 members over 1,411 miles of line in parts of Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough, Schuyler and Warren counties. For more information visit www.mcdonoughpower.com.





Co-op Connections Featured Business Western Illinois Credit Union

By: Abby Ala

Western Illinois Credit Union first began on November 10, 1959 by a small group of WIU employees seeking an alternative financial institution. Together, they pooled their money into savings accounts in order to have funds to lend to each other at reasonable rates of interest. Those spirited individuals began what is today a \$14 million, full service financial cooperative serving more than 2800 members.

There are many benefits when you join a credit union. Each member is an "owner" of the credit union; every member has a say in the operations of the credit union and has a vote for any business conducted at the credit union's annual membership meeting. Any member in good standing may be elected to the credit union's Board of Directors or serve on a variety of committees if they choose deeper involvement. Credit Unions are in essence very similar to electric cooperatives; like the one you belong to.

Other benefits include higher interest accrued through savings accounts, CD's, and Traditional or Roth IRA accounts. There are also lower fixed interest rates on personal unsecured loans, new and used vehicle loans, and various other loans. Free checking accounts, free debit card with checking account, free internet home banking, free bill pay, and free online statements are some of the other luxuries members of Western Illinois Credit Union enjoy among many others.

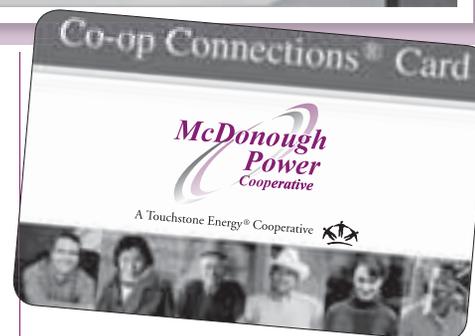
To join Western Illinois Credit Union just stop at their location, 322 W. University Drive, and set up an account. You must show identification and your Co-op Connections card to verify you're a member of McDonough Power Cooperative. To be eligible for loans, you must have at least a savings account. **800-232-2325**

Western Illinois Credit Union currently serves current and former employees of Western Illinois University, current and former employees of



McDonough County School System, current and former employees of First Student (formerly known as Laidlaw Education Services), current and former students of Western Illinois University, McDonough Power Cooperative Members, and family members of each group mentioned above.

Western Illinois Credit Union joined our Co-op Connections Program in April 2010. They are currently offering credit union membership eligibility for all McDonough Power members. You can find this Co-op Connections special at 322 W. University Drive in Macomb. You must bring



your Co-op Connections card or key fob to receive this deal. Business hours for the lobby are Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and Friday 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. The drive-thru hours are Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.



The Power of Membership

Now, as always, it's a good time to be a member of an electric cooperative.

Not only are co-ops locally owned and controlled — by you, our members — they are locally run to serve your needs.

While many McDonough Power electricity consumers pay power bills to companies that answer to far-away stockholders who demand a healthy profit every quarter, local members call the shots at electric co-ops like ours. Co-ops aren't under pressure to keep rates high enough to generate big profits. Instead, co-ops try to keep your bill as low as possible while providing high-quality service. Co-ops invest money in excess of operating costs back into the business locally or return the excess (known as margins) to you in the form of capital credits.

And unlike the boards of directors of investor-owned utilities who keep an eye on generating profits for people living far away, your co-op's directors (fellow members, by the way) have only one thing in mind: keeping lights on safely, reliably,

and keeping costs affordable in our local community. That's why you elected them. And that's what's so great about co-ops. If you don't like the direction your co-op is taking, you have the power to change the leadership through democratic means.

You may know the history of the electric cooperative movement, how seven decades ago rural residents banded together to bring the conveniences of electricity to their communities when investor-owned utilities would not extend service. The associations they formed, on the same democratic principles as this great nation, are as strong and relevant today as they were back then.

But co-ops are not just products of a proud past. These days, Americans from all walks of life have come to recognize the co-op approach — members working together to achieve price and service benefits — can work for other needs just as effectively as it delivered affordable power to rural Americans.

The seven principles upon which

electric co-ops were founded — voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, and members' economic participation, among others — are as meaningful today as they were when electric co-ops began in the 1930s.

Leadership at McDonough Power Cooperative shares the same concerns as you, our members. We are accessible. You can give us a call or send us an e-mail and know someone here is listening. And at our annual meeting next August, visit with us in person and share insights on how you want your business operated.

In these days of economic turmoil, folks who receive electricity from co-ops are lucky. As locally owned and operated businesses, electric co-ops understand the people they serve. Directors and employees at your co-op share the same values and have the same pride of place as you do because it is our community, too. We act like neighbors because we are neighbors.

That's the cooperative difference.

Touchstone Energy Balloon Fest on Lake Shelbyville October 8 - 10



McDonough Power Cooperative and ten other Illinois Touchstone Energy Cooperatives have teamed up to bring in the Touchstone Energy Hot Air balloon team to Lake Shelbyville. Come see hot air balloon pilots from Chicago, Iowa, Missouri and Central Illinois fly Lake Shelbyville with flights Friday night, Saturday and Sunday mornings and enjoy a night glow Saturday night (weather permitting). The Saturday night glow will be held on the dam off Route 16 in Shelbyville. Touchstone Energy Balloon Fest is being held in conjunction with Scarecrow Daze. There will be plenty to see and do Columbus Day weekend. Call the Shelbyville Tourism office for more details 217-774-2244 or go on line www.lakeshelbyville.com. Follow the Balloon Team via their Face Book page search Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon Team. **V056-V7QZS**



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 ENERGY 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

MAP LOCATION GAME

Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout *The Wire*. If you find your map location number, 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.