

# Connect to MEC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## Two members utilize new ways to treat large animals

Seeing the local veterinarian drive onto your property to take a look at your cow or horse isn't as common a sight as it used to be. One reason is there simply aren't as many large animal vets as there used to be; and that means those who are around have patients a greater distance away, more than 50 miles in many cases, which creates a lot of down time and less animals who can be served.

In-the-field work also means walking into situations where facilities are unknown and could be inadequate.

One way veterinarians are seeking to change things is by building facilities where owners can bring their large animals to the clinic. We've learned of two of our members, Veterinarians George Eales and Terry O'Brien, who have done just that.

Dr. Eales is co-owner of Greenhaven Animal Clinic in San Jose, which built a new clinic with a large animal section in 2002. Dr. O'Brien is owner of Petersburg Veterinary Clinic, which built a new clinic last year and is finishing up its large animal area now.

Both men emphasize the same advantages to a large animal clinic: less chance of injury for the veterinarians, technicians and animals, as well as the ability to provide better care to the animal.

Dr. Eales says his clinic does more in-house care on large animals now. "You couldn't get me to go back to doing it the way we used to. We had a



▲ Dr. Terry O'Brien completes an examination on "Misty" in the equine area of his new indoor large animal clinic.  
◀ Dr. George Eales outside the Greenhaven Animal Clinic.

lot of down time traveling place to place that we can avoid now; we're indoors instead of outside in the rain and low temperatures; and we are able to provide a better quality of care," he says.

Both facilities have some similarities, including chute systems for cattle designed with help from Temple Grandin, an animal behavior specialist, who is well known for her agriculture and autism work. Dr. O'Brien says, "She's spent a lot of time studying animal behavior to know how to move cattle through with a lot less stress. She helped me design this place with things like non-slip floors and

solid sides to keep the animals in a less agitated state so they are calmer when they come in."

Hydraulic "squeeze chutes" are used in both facilities. The cows walk into the device and "walls" move in to secure them in place. This allows the veterinarians and technicians to work on the animal safely. The chutes even rotate to allow them greater access to the animals' hooves.

"Before this you'd go out to work on a big bull and tie a foot back and he's thrashing around and you could

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*"Peter" the calf is secured in the hydraulic chute at Petersburg Veterinary Clinic*

really get hurt," says Dr. O'Brien. "This is safer for everyone."

Large animals include species other than cows, of course, and the vets accommodate a variety from pigs and sheep to alpacas and more.

Horses are a big part of each practice as well. With the nice riding areas in SandRidge State Park, and Jim Edgar Panther Creek nearby, it's no wonder so many horse owners reside in the area. Dr. Eales performs a lot of

equine dentistry and does standing or short equine surgeries.

Having surgical facilities at the ready is a big bonus; it's certainly more sterile as well as comfortable than performing surgery in an open field or barn, and all the equipment and diagnostic equipment needed are at the ready.

Dr. O'Brien is nearing completion on his equine surgery suite, featuring a padded room he can use to anesthetize the horse and an I-beam to hoist the animal into a surgery area; it's a setup not common outside of the University of Illinois.

Both places offer a few overnight accommodations if needed. Dr. O'Brien says, "We may see something an owner could miss and it saves the owner or us from having to make multiple trips for one condition."

With all the advantages of an in-house large animal clinic, both veterinarians also have ambulatory services available and still make house calls as needed. Both clinics are "mixed," meaning they have a small animal practice and offer emergency services for both large and small animals.

Both clinics feature ICU areas for small animals as well as surgical rooms, diagnostic and x-ray services and lab work, boarding services, pharmacy and pet products. Each offers just a little different additional services as well to fit the needs of the surrounding community and the individual specialities of the veterinarians at the clinics.

Veterinary medicine, like regular healthcare, continues to become more and more "high-tech." These two members are certainly utilizing the technology available to create veterinary facilities that serve the needs of their local communities.

To find out more about each clinic you can contact them at: Greenhaven Animal Clinic, [www.greenhavenanimalclinic.com](http://www.greenhavenanimalclinic.com), 309-247-3231; Petersburg Veterinary Clinic, [www.petersburgvetclinic.net](http://www.petersburgvetclinic.net), 217-632-7713.



*Care is given utilizing the rotating hydraulic chute at Greenhaven Animal Clinic*

# New Year's resolution time!

It's the time of year many people make resolutions. In keeping with that spirit we offer 5 resolutions to improve your home's energy efficiency and 5 to keep your family safe. Yes, we know, you're not really going to make these official resolutions, nor will you be agonizing in March if they haven't been kept, but we hope we've given you some good points to consider.

## 5 energy efficiency resolutions

### 1) I will set my thermostat for energy savings!

I will set the temperature at 68 or less in the winter and 78 or more in the summer. I will consider programming my thermostat if it offers that feature, I am gone more than eight hours a day, and I don't have a heat pump or geothermal system.

### 2) I will pay attention to energy efficiency when making purchases

I will look for the energy star label on appliances and electronics and compare energy usage of different products if able. I will also educate myself on light bulb choices.

### 3) I will do my chores efficiently

I will buy multiple air filters to keep on hand and mark it on my calendar monthly to check the filter for replacement. I will wash full loads of laundry only, in cold water when possible. I will air dry laun-

dry or use the sensor setting on my dryer; and always clean the lint filter. I will use only the dishwasher cycles I need, run it when it's full, and select air dry.

### 4) I will eliminate phantom load

I will physically unplug or shut down power strips to items that continuously use energy even when off. This includes items with remotes, digital clocks or large "box" plugs such as televisions, video game systems and cell phone chargers.

### 5) I will budget for home improvement

I will commit to saving a bit each month to make one needed improvement to my home this year. This could include an energy audit, weatherizing with caulk/weatherstripping, adding insulation, or \_\_\_\_\_ (so many possibilities).

## 5 safety resolutions

### 1) I will check my GFCI (ground-fault circuit interrupter) outlets monthly.

If I do not have GFCIs in my bathrooms, kitchen and outdoor receptacles I will budget to have an electrician install them.

### 2) I will check outlets and cords to be sure none are hot to the touch or show any damage.

### 3) I will always call JULIE at 8-1-1 before digging in my yard.

### 4) I will finally get around to labeling my fuse/circuit breaker box correctly.

I will call an electrician if I have repeated tripping of any breakers.

### 5) I will slow down and always keep safety in mind as I complete chores/projects at home.

## Have you tried online bill pay?

Want to pay your bill with a credit card? See a record of your past usage and payments? Get an e-mail reassuring you the bill has been paid?

If you answered yes then we encourage you to try out our online bill pay service. Visit our website at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) and click on the online bill pay icon (left side). You'll visit a page asking you to login or set up your account.

If it's your first visit you'll need to register and will need your account number, social security number and an email address. **Note:** If the system denies your registration, chances are we don't have your social security number on file and you'll need to contact the office at 800-872-1203 before you can finish logging in.

## Rebates

We offer rebates to members installing geothermal heating, whole house air-source heat pumps and electric water heaters. Restrictions apply, call the office or visit [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) for details.

Geothermal .....	\$300
Heat Pumps.....	\$200
Electric Water Heaters .....	\$100

# Board Meeting Report

For full minutes please visit our website at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) or contact our office.

**P**resent were Manager Lynn Frasco, Attorney Charles Smith and Directors Gary Martin, Jerry Brooks, Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Michael Patrick, Roy Seaney and Steven Worner. Donald McMillan and Jodine Tate were absent.

2014 Budgets were presented by employees.

Frasco advised co-op received CFC capital credit retirement for 2013 of \$266 and an interest check for Capital Term Certificates of \$16,232.

He reported a meeting with Cass Communications about Internet service revealed the company is studying the

possibility of expanding Internet service in the co-op's territory. He reported they generally need 10 customers per mile for Internet service to be feasible/profitable; the co-op averages 4 members per mile. He provided service territory maps so density requirements could be reviewed.

Frasco reported co-op has received 13 new irrigation requests. He reviewed a load control summary report. He discussed ACRE membership enrollment.

Frasco also reported that Brian Adams, Engineer at the Assoc. of IL Electric Cooperatives, had begun devel-

oping a plan for new commercial rates and for implementation of a power cost adjustment. He reviewed a Residential Rate Comparison received from AIEC.

September year to date margins were \$2,445,665 compared to \$1,202,260 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of September was 35.65% and the number of members served was 10,700 compared to 10,557 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of September was \$40,973,832 compared to \$38,358,142 last year. Co-op continues to meet requirements of RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

## LIHEAP

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides payment directly to us on behalf of those who qualify based upon household 30-day gross monthly income.

### Contact your local county's office for information:

Cass 217-243-9404  
Logan 217-732-2159  
Macon 217-428-0155  
Mason 309-543-2594

Menard 217-632-3878  
Sangamon 217-535-3120  
Tazewell 309-266-9941

## Space heater basics

**W**e all know that turning down our thermostats in the fall and winter saves us money. The standard recommendation from energy efficiency experts is to set your thermostat on 68 degrees or less. Is your home comfortable at that setting?

If you find yourself continually turning up the thermostat every evening and heating your whole house when you are sitting in one room a space heater might be right for you. If one keeps you from turning up the thermostat, or allows you to turn it down that is. On the other hand, using several space heaters instead of turning up the thermostat could cost you more.

If several rooms in your home feel cooler than others, it would be a much wiser investment to solve

the problem. It could be as simple as sealing a window or door with weath-erstripping. Using a space heater in a room with considerable air leaks will likely cost you more than you planned.

Even a fairly small space heater can consume 1,500 watts of electricity, the same as 20 standard 75-watt light bulbs. A good general formula for calculating cost is this: kilowatts (divide watts by 1,000 to get kilowatts) x cost of electricity per kilowatt x amount of time running = cost of heating. A 1,500 watt space heater running for 10 hours at a rate of \$.10 per kilowatt hour will cost \$1.50 per day, which could add \$45 to your monthly bill!

The National Fire Protection Association says space heaters are one of the leading causes of home fire deaths. The leading factors contribut-

ing to home heating equipment fires were: heat source too close to combustibles, equipment malfunction, and improper cleaning of the device. If you do decide to use a space heater, keep these safety tips in mind:

- keep three feet from flammable items like curtains
- don't use in a bathroom—the moisture can cause damage
- don't use with an extension cord
- always use a UL listed unit with a heating element guard and a tip-over shut-off feature
- don't leave unattended and keep pets and kids away
- don't fall asleep with it on—look for one with a timer if you need it.