

Menard Electric Cooperative's

Connect to MEC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



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Menard Electric Cooperative

cordially invites you and your family to attend their

73rd Annual Meeting of Members

*for an evening of dinner, entertainment,
voting, gifts and prizes*

Saturday, June 5, 6 p.m.

PORTA High School, Petersburg

No RSVP required



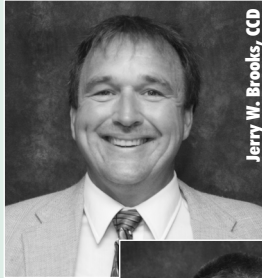
**Please see pages 16b-c
for information on our
director election**

Office Closings

Good FridayApril 2

14300 State Hwy 97
P.O. Box 200
Petersburg, IL 62675

1-800-872-1203
217-632-7746
www.menard.com



Petitions due soon for Board of Directors

Petitions for candidates for the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative must be submitted to the cooperative's office by 4:30 p.m. on April 21, 2010. Petitions are available at the office for Districts 1, 4 and 6. One cooperative member will be elected from each district to serve a three-year term. Incumbent directors Roy Seamey of Tallula, District 1; Jerry Brooks of Oakford, District 4; and Steve Worner of Manito, District 6, will seek re-election. Nominating petitions can be picked up now at the co-op office and must be signed by no less than 10 members.

What does a director do?

Have you ever thought about running for the Board of Directors? Here are a few basic qualifications for becoming a board member. If you're interested see the article at left about petitions.

Directors are ...

- Accessible to other members within their district. While sympathetic to the needs of each member, directors always keep the best interest of the entire cooperative in mind.
- Able to attend most regular board meetings (the fourth Tuesday evening of each month) and any special meetings that may come up from time to time.
- Always willing to listen and learn, be independent thinkers and cooperate with others.
- Willing to accept and direct change.
- Able to command the respect of management, employees, fellow board members, cooperative members and the general public.
- Committed to spending adequate time on the work of the board to be an effective member.
- Willing to accept the unpleasant moments of a director's experience.
- Able to let management manage. The board of directors of MEC does not oversee the cooperative's day-to-day operations. Directors establish policies and point employees in the direction they want the cooperative to follow. Employees decide how best to get the job done.
- Capable of acquiring knowledge about the electric utility, including finances, management and public issues. Though board members are not expected to be walking encyclopedias about electric utilities when they are first elected, they are expected to become knowledgeable over time about issues facing MEC and aspects of the electric industry so they can make intelligent decisions. It takes time to learn the system and for that reason our directors have made long-term commitments to being on the board of directors.

Member Marketplace

Looking for a way to reach new customers? Join us at our annual meeting June 5. Any of our members with a qualifying business can set up a booth in our Member Marketplace at our meeting to sell their products. We normally have more than 300 members and their families attend. It's great exposure for local and at-home businesses.

Please contact Michelle McNeal or Trish Michels at the cooperative for more information or to sign up at 217-632-7746 or mmcneal@menard.com.

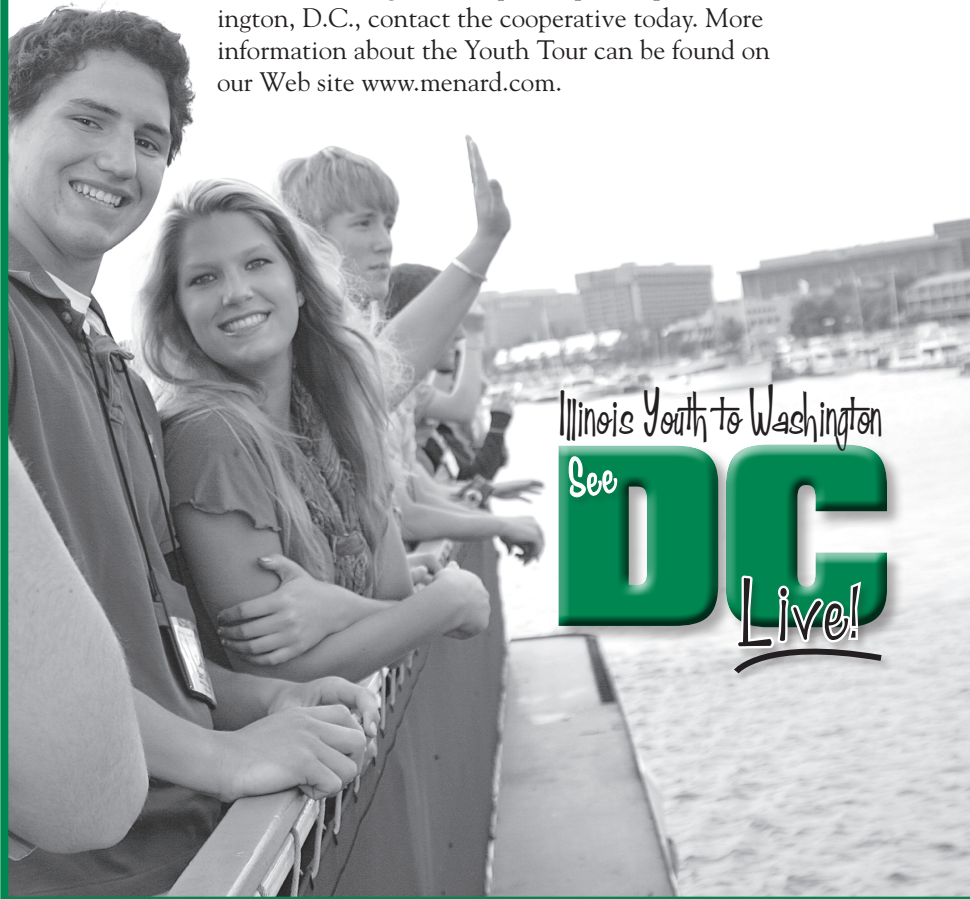
Reminder of new billing dates

You'll receive your bill a week later beginning this month. We'll mail your bill on March 7 for your usage Jan. 27 through Feb. 28. It will be due March 28.

Just a reminder if you're an automatic draft participant we'll draft your account on the 17th of March instead of the 10th to coincide with our new billing dates. Call Trish Michels at 632-7746 with questions.

Students: *Act fast to win trip*

If you're a junior or senior in high school interested in winning an all expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C., contact the cooperative today. More information about the Youth Tour can be found on our Web site www.menard.com.



Rebates available from Menard Electric

If you're making home repairs for energy efficiency this year to take advantage of the federal tax credit and/or the EnergyStar rebates (see the Currents section of this edition), don't forget about Menard Electric Cooperative's rebates as well. They can help reduce your costs even further. In addition, installing a geothermal heating system, a heat pump or an electric water heater could help qualify you for a cheaper electric rate. Call our office at 800-872-1203 or visit our Web site at www.menard.com for more information on rates and for a rebate application.

- \$100 rebate if replacing an existing fossil-fuel fired water heater with an electric water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity.
- \$100 rebate if electric water heater is installed in a new structure.
- \$75 rebate if a new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater.

Geothermal rebate

One-time rebate of \$600 for any size system installed in a new or existing home.

Heat pump rebate

One-time rebate of \$200 for any size system installed in a new or existing home.

Electric water heater rebates

All are one-time rebates. Member must sign up for co-op's load management program. Tankless or on-demand water heaters do not qualify for rebates or load control programs.

Certified Comfort Home rebate

One-time \$100 rebate if new home is built to the energy-efficient standards described in the Certified Comfort Home booklet. Call our office and we'll mail you a booklet.

Break the Silence • Report Elder Abuse • Break the Silence

Were you the victim of a home repair scam?

Don't let it happen again!

- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Get estimates before doing home renovations.
- Do not pay for work in advance.
- Never do business without checking references.
- Don't be afraid to call the police and have them check out the credentials of someone who is working in your area.

Were you the victim of a telemarketing scam?

Don't let it happen again!

- Don't pay for any prize or send money to improve your chances of winning. It's illegal to ask you to pay to enter a contest.
- Don't be bullied into buying something "right now." If the caller persists, end the call.
- Don't give your credit card number to anyone over the phone unless you made the call.
- Don't give any caller your bank account number.

Break the Silence



If you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam, Break the Silence. Call the Department on Aging to talk confidentially with someone who will help you to alleviate the situation.

Illinois Department on Aging
Elder Abuse Hotline:
1-866-800-1409 (Voice)
1-888-206-1327 (TTY)

Break the Silence • Break the Silence • Break the Silence • Break the Silence



I THOUGHT I WAS TIGHT WITH MY MONEY. NOW I'M AIRTIGHT.

All it took was a tube of caulk and half an afternoon. Now, I'm saving \$212 a year by sealing a few cracks around the house. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at TogetherWeSave.com.



TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

Save Time and Money with Automatic Payment

Our Automatic Payment Plan allows you to have your electric bill automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 17th of each month. It's always on time and you don't need checks, envelopes or stamps! We will deduct the net amount shown on your bill, and proof of payment will appear on your monthly statement. This form must be received in the co-op office by the 20th of the month prior to the month you wish payments to begin.

Mail with a voided check to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.

Name: _____ SS# _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone#: _____ Map Location # _____

Bank Name: _____

Bank Account # _____

Checking acct. Savings acct.

I, _____, authorize Menard Electric Cooperative (MEC) to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying MEC in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with 10 days written notice. I understand that MEC reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 17th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my MEC account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.



Signature: _____ Date: _____



10 WAYS

to keep your kids safe around electricity



1. Protect your outlets

It's easy to do and many affordable and aesthetically pleasing options are available. Some include: traditional plastic covers inserted into the plug, replacement pieces featuring covers that slide across automatically when plugs are removed and replacement outlets that look like regular outlets but feature internal safety mechanisms.

2. Install GFCIs

GFCI outlets protect against shocks in wet conditions by shutting off power to the outlet when a problem is detected. They can save your child's life. Install them in your bathroom, kitchen, garage and in outdoor areas around pools or hot tubs.

3. Unplug appliances

Unplug all small appliances that are not in use. Look at your kitchen counter. Does your toaster, coffee pot and microwave need to be plugged in? Eliminate the hazards. This could save you money as well if these appliances use power even when they seem off (those with clocks or that use remotes for example).

4. Model good behavior

Don't yank on cords to unplug items, don't overload outlets and always work safely around electricity. Tell your kids what you're doing and why and emphasize safety.

5. Teach young drivers

Tell your young drivers to stay in the car if it comes into contact with an electrical line. See www.safeelectricity.com for more information on what to do during accidents and to read a success story of two teenagers whose lives were saved by staying in the car.

6. Keep cords safe

Repair cords that are worn, don't use extension cords on a long-term basis and inspect all plugs before using them.

7. Take the time

Teach young children to always ask for help when they want to use something that requires electricity. It won't take long for you to plug in that radio or video game for your child, giving you the opportunity to check the cord/plug and do it correctly.

8. Don't use mylar balloons outdoors

These balloons, popular for parties, can conduct electricity if they come into contact with a line. Never release them outdoors; even if you are a safe distance from lines, they can cause big and expensive problems for your co-op if they become tangled in lines or cause transformer problems.



9. Read the signs on substations and transformers

Now that the weather is warmer and kids are outside reiterate that substations are off limits, even if a toy or pet goes inside the fence. Also teach them not to play around pad mounted transformers (those large green boxes sometimes located in subdivision yards).

10. Trim trees near power lines

A child's added weight to a tree branch can cause a limb to come into contact with nearby lines. Or a child could reach out to catch themselves and touch a line. Tell your kids which trees are safe to climb and what to watch out for.



Students in Mrs. Fox's second-grade class at Virginia Elementary School show off their new Touchstone Energy Super Energy Saver Program.

Students learn how to save electricity

Menard Electric delivered a Touchstone Energy Super Energy Saver Program to Mrs. Fox's second grade classroom at Virginia Elementary School earlier this year. The program provides educational materials to help Mrs. Fox teach her students about electricity, electrical safety, energy efficiency and renewable energy through fun activities. Parents will benefit as well with take-home materials that help students walk through their homes identifying energy-saving practices.

Menard Electric Cooperative Director Mike Carls of Virginia says, "Anything we can do to help our local schools helps our communities, and as a locally-owned and operated cooperative, we have a strong commitment to the communities we serve.

"We are always striving to educate our members about using energy safely and efficiently. This program offers us an opportunity to teach these lessons to not just these second grade students, but to their families as well."

Keep this in mind: In the United States each year, electrical shock or burns injure more than 4,000 children and kill about 25 kids under age 15.



Check out www.safeelectricity.org and click on electric safety world for electrical safety games for kids and more learning fun. The site also includes parent/teacher guides under youth and teacher materials.



Board Meeting Report

Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
December 22, 2009

The monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of Menard Electric Cooperative was called to order by President Gary L. Martin at 6:00 p.m. at the headquarters of the cooperative, 14300 State Highway 97, Petersburg, County of Menard and State of Illinois.

On roll call the following Directors were present: Jerry W. Brooks, Michael L. Carls, D. Jay Frye, Warren D. Goetsch, Gary L. Martin, Donald E. McMillan, Michael E. Patrick, Roy H. Seaney and Steven L. Wornor. Also present was Manager of Accounting & Information Systems Chris Hinton, Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith.

President Martin reviewed the Consensus Agenda. It was moved and seconded that the Consensus Agenda be approved. Motion carried.

Manager of Accounting & Information Systems Chris Hinton and Manager Frasco reviewed again with the Board the proposed 2010 Budget. After discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Budget be approved and adopted. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month of November 2009. He reviewed the Balance Sheet, Budget, Outage Summary and Safety Report.

Under the Operations Report, Manager Frasco advised that a letter had been sent to irrigators advising that some of them would have a credit on their bills. Manager Frasco discussed the sale of the golf course at East Bluff and advised that Security Bank had paid off the electric contract that had been entered into with the cooperative for installation of services for the golf course.

He advised that Athens State Bank had purchased property immediately south of the cooperative headquarters with plans to construct a banking facility at that location. He advised that the cooperative was moving ahead with AVL (automatic vehicle locating equipment) to be installed.

He advised that General Foreman Terry Entwistle was retiring. The retirement date would officially be the end of February 2010, but that January 8, 2010, would technically be his last day as he was using up accrued vacation days in the interim. He also advised that during the interim period of time, Bob Burris would be acting as General Foreman. Manager Frasco advised that the cooperative would have a retirement lunch for Mr. Entwistle.

Manager Frasco advised that he had interviewed a student who would be graduating as an electrical engineer as the cooperative would need to be considering a replacement for retirement of engineering employees.

Manager Frasco reviewed the results of the AIEC Statewide Member Survey. Manager Frasco advised, that in an effort to address some of the Union concerns, he was proposing some revisions to the health insurance plan changes made by the Board. He reviewed those proposed changes. It was moved and seconded that those proposed changes to the health insurance plan be approved and adopted. Motion carried. It was moved and seconded that the Manager's Report be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco presented the Financial Report for the month of November. Year to date margins were \$1,260,307 compared to \$1,805,506 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of November was 34.63% and the number of members served was 10,512 compared to 10,479 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of November was \$35,363,214 compared to \$34,242,233 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC Activities.

Director Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc. He reviewed the November Energy Charge and the President's Report. There was then discussion about certification of the Delegate and Alternate Delegate for

the Prairie Power Annual Meeting. It was moved and seconded that Director Carls be certified as the Delegate with Manager Frasco as the Alternate Delegate. Motion carried. It was moved and seconded that Director Carls and Manager Frasco be certified as Directors for Prairie Power with President Martin as the Alternate. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed the Sick Leave Bonus Program. It was his recommendation that the cooperative continue the program for 2010. It was moved and seconded that the cooperative continue the Sick Leave Bonus Program for 2010. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed, for second reading, the Policy entitled Section IV - "Billing and Terms of Payment." It was moved and seconded that the Policy be adopted. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed, for second reading, the new Policy - Section V - "ARC Rated Apparel & Personal Protective Equipment." It was moved and seconded the Policy be adopted. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed the adjustment to the 2009 Inventory, which was a net expense of \$1,340.56. It was moved and seconded that the adjustment be approved and adopted. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board the RUS Statistical Profile for 2008.

Manager Frasco reviewed the Capital Credit Estate Refunds Report.

President Martin advised that next month's Board Meeting was scheduled for January 26, 2010, at 6:00 p.m. He reminded the Board Members that the Prairie Power Annual Meeting was scheduled for February 10, 2010, in Jacksonville, Illinois and that the NRECA Annual Meeting was scheduled for February 14-17, 2010, in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Board discussed the employee newsletter.

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.