

Menard Electric Cooperative's

Connect to MEC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 2
PORTA High School-Petersburg
Registration begins at 4 p.m.



Attendance Gifts

- 75th Anniversary commemorative insulated tote bag
- Cookbook featuring nearly 400 member and employee recipes (one per membership, additional cookbooks will be sold at the meeting and in the office after June 4 as supplies last).

Family Activities

- The Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon will provide tethered rides, weather permitting.
- Tim the Twister and Sunshyne the Clown to provide face painting and balloon animal creations.
- Free pork chop dinner prepared by the Mason County Pork Producers.
- Free blood pressure and glucose screenings from the Menard County Health Department.
- 75th Anniversary Video featuring retired and current employees and directors outlining highlights of the last 75 years.

Business Meeting

The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. and include voting on bylaw changes and the director election. Directors from Districts 2, 5 and 9 will be elected this year. At the time of this printing we have not received any petitions from members wishing to run for the board. All candidates will be profiled in the Official Notice. Incumbents in the districts are District 2, Gary L. Martin; District 5, D. Jay Frye; District 9, Donald (Chuck) McMillan.

Grand Prize - \$300 bill credit

Keep an eye out for your Annual Meeting Official Notice booklet to arrive in the mail later this month for more details.

75th Anniversary

Annual Meetings of Members

Our bylaws state that we will hold an annual meeting of members each year, where 4 percent of our membership is present in person or by proxy, to elect directors, approve reports of the past year and vote on other business as needed.

The first annual meeting occurred just two months after the first lines were energized, when we had approximately 255 members. On October 9, 1937, at 2 p.m., 10 people entered the Farm Bureau Building (another 46 members were present by proxy) and conducted business such as approving bylaw changes updating director terms to three years (previously one year).

Meeting attendance varies each year depending on weather, other local

events, what's happened at the co-op the past year, and what the meeting will offer. We have always sought to offer members some enjoyable activities — what that entails has changed over the years.

For several years our meetings were held outdoors underneath large tents. Persons from the REA (Rural Electric Association) came and gave demonstrations on how to use appliances to benefit the farm and home. New appliances were revealed and cooking demonstrations were given. People came and spent the day. The venue has changed over the years but PORTA High School has been our spot for many years now. The high school is air conditioned, holds a lot of people and

features a nice stage and comfortable seats; it has been a good location for us.

Entertainment at the meeting has varied widely over the years and we've had a little bit of everything, from accordion players and singers to humorists and speakers. But these days our members have so many entertainment options available it is a less significant part of the meeting.

For 19 years, from 1957-1975, a major entertainment portion of the meeting included the Miss Menard Electric Cooperative Beauty Contest. The contest included formal wear and swimsuit modeling as well as personal interviews with the judges.

Similar contests were held at other electric cooperatives in Illinois and the winners of each participated in the Miss Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative contest at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives annual meeting. The winner then went on to the Miss Rural Electrification contest at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association annual meeting.

In 1966, Miss Menard Electric Cooperative winner Gay Damery went on to become Miss Rural Illinois Electric Cooperative and placed second runner up at the national competition. The contests ended after 1975 – articles said it was due to a lack of interest among participants in the area.

Other “regular” parts of the meeting have changed over the years. For example, we used to sell small appliances and light bulbs purchased by our statewide association in bulk pricing that we were able to sell cheaper than what members could find at local stores. Of course, as more discount stores opened the need for that dwindled.

Food and prizes, of course, have always been a part of our meetings,



The queen contest was in full swing in 1968. Second from the left, Patricia Cline, won the title. Notice the selection of electric appliances on the front of the stage set up as the door prizes. We do the same thing today, only the prizes are different of course. In 1968 two big prizes were a dishwasher and an outdoor post lamp.

Youth Day

Secretary of State Jesse White met with students representing Menard Electric Cooperative in Springfield on Wednesday, March 28, for the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day.

The students were among more than 250 students from the rural areas of Illinois who had an opportunity to

view state government in action and question their legislators on key issues. The students also met with Senators Larry Bomke, David Koehler and John Sullivan and Representatives Rich Brauer, Norine Hammond and Michael Unes. In addition, they heard from Lt. Governor Sheila Simon and toured the Old State Capitol.



Pictured are Nick Clement and Hollyann Rogers of Virginia, Secretary of State Jesse White, MacKenzie Case and Bridget Redmond of Havana, and Ross Cloninger of Chandlerville.

Youth Tour winners selected

MacKenzie Case and Bridget Redmond were chosen as this year's winners of the Youth to Washington Tour. Ross Cloninger was chosen as alternate.

Menard will sponsor the students on a one-week tour of Washington, D.C. They will visit the White House and U.S. Capitol Building; meet Illinois Congressmen and

Senators; and tour Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery, Iwo Jima, the Holocaust and Smithsonian Museums, the Saudi Arabia Embassy, the Washington Monument and the Memorials of Lincoln, Jefferson, Korean War, Vietnam War, World War II, U.S. Marine Corps and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

eBill is coming

You'll be able to log on to our website in June and access your payment history, review monthly usage and pay your bill online. Look for more information next month.

Trivia

WIN
\$75!

Every few months we'll have a trivia question concerning our history (you'll have read the answer in past issues). Please mail us your answer by the 28th. We'll put all the correct answers in a drawing each month and one lucky winner will receive a \$75 credit on their next month's bill.

Question:

What new technology in the 1960s greatly increased our electric load?

Answer:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Congratulations!

Richard L. Stiltz of Topeka is the winner of the March Trivia Question. His entry was drawn from all submitted. Question: How many additional linemen came to help with the 1978 ice storm? Answer: More than 90.

Richard will receive a \$75 bill credit this month. Thanks to all who entered.

Board Meeting Report

For full minutes please visit our website at www.menard.com or contact our office.

Present were Manager Lynn Frasco, Attorney Charles Smith and Directors Gary Martin, Jerry Brooks, Michael Carls, Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Donald McMillan, Michael Patrick, Roy Seaney and Steven Worner.

Discussed proposed Sunrise Ag Merger and the issue of Menard's proxy.

Discussed member phone calls with regard to the facilities charge increase.

Discussed schedule for ATS Software conversion training sessions; conversion taking place week of April 16.

Discussed increase of irrigation systems from 29 last month to 38.

Approved Burton Tree Service Contract renewal.

Frye discussed worker's compensation insurance change from United Heartland/Assurance to Federated.

Frasco authorized to accept lowest bids from contract laborers to build co-op lines so long as bid met requirements and standards of the co-op.

Carls reported on Prairie Power, Inc., advising the Pike property had sold at auction for approx. 3.9 million and the Pearl Power Plant would be closed June 1.

Amendment to the Joint Pole Use Agreement with AT&T approved, with one dissenting vote, of Frye.

Frasco will review concerns and address next month.

Changes to ByLaws Section IV approved; policies not containing fee adjustments effective immediately, fee adjustments effective July 1, 2012.

Proposed rate adjustments adopted, as presented to the Board, effective Sept. 1, 2012.

Year to date margins were (\$105,582) compared to (\$7,052) a year earlier. Equity end of Jan. was 33.22% and number of members served was 10,530 compared to 10,501 a year ago. Net Utility Plant end of Jan. was \$36,947,866 compared to \$35,560,334 last year. Co-op continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

Fee Changes

The Board of Directors has recently updated member policies, including fee charges, which will be effective July 1, 2012.

Service charge for meter tampering:	\$250	Reconnection charge:	\$50	Security deposit for single phase: ...	\$250
Service charge for unauthorized connection or reconnection:	\$50	Security light connection charge if disconnected and reconnected by same member within 12 months:	\$50	or 1/6 estimated annual energy charge; for irrigation, three-phase and commercial:	\$250
Tap fee for line extension:	\$2,500	Overtime service connection:	\$75	plus other connection charges	
Membership fee:	\$25	Meter testing requested by member: ...	\$50	for members who sign up for the automatic payment plan and provide proof of acceptable payment history.	
Collection charge:	\$50				
Bad check processing fee:	\$25				

75th Anniversary Annual Meetings of Members

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and will probably remain so for many years to come. We're not sure how many years we've served pork chops, but we've seen an article from 1976, for example, mentioning the annual meeting pork chop dinner. For the last several years we've received rave reviews about the pork chop dinner prepared by the Mason County Pork Producers. Last year they served over 700 pork chops.

And don't forget the prizes. We've given away small electric appliances, items donated by our vendors, bill credits, gift cards and more each year

as door prizes. It seems every collection of annual meeting photos feature one of a line of appliances setting across a stage. Every registered member has the chance to win. Grand prizes vary each year and have included televisions, laptops, large appliances, gift certificates, and bill credits.

And of course all members appreciate the attendance gift. Each year the co-op has sought to come up with something our membership will find useful. We still see members using the yard sticks, lunch coolers and umbrellas we've given out in the last decade.

While all of these things mentioned have changed over the years, the most important things have not. We still hold a meeting to tell members about what the co-op is doing; one member is entitled to one vote, always has been, always will be; directors will be elected by the membership from the membership; financial reports will be given and approved; and members will leave knowing they've played a part in making Menard Electric *their* electric cooperative. It's YOUR cooperative, always has been, always will be.