


# Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



*Happy Holidays*  
*from Norris Electric Cooperative's*  
*directors, supervisors and employees.*



**Our office will be closed Monday, December 26, 2011  
and Monday, January 2, 2012**

# A gift of \$50: What could it mean to you?

**Y**our family doesn't know what to get you for Christmas, so you find yourself with \$50 in cash. Many of us are grateful for such a gift, but don't be too quick to spend that money on the newest gadget. There are wise options for spending the money that will give you returns.

- **Weatherize.** If your energy bills are creeping up as winter sets in, think about investing that money in caulk or insulation to seal out any windy breezes. You'll be warmer and when the bill arrives, you'll be happier.
- **Cut credit card debt.** If you put \$50 toward a \$2,000 credit card balance, you'll cut your payback time by around four



months if you usually pay a minimum of \$40 a month. Using the \$50 toward the debt can save you roughly \$103 in interest (calculated on 16 percent.)

- **Buy financial management software.** Use the \$50 to help you manage your money better by putting it toward some financial management software like Quicken. It'll help you keep better control of your checking account and help you identify other areas where you can save money.
- **Pass it on.** Buy something nice for your spouse, partner, friends, family or co-workers. Remember, there's more to life than money, and seeing someone else happy has its returns.

## The power to choose electric service

**S**everal Members of Norris Electric Cooperative and other electric cooperatives statewide are receiving telephone calls and letters encouraging them to switch their power generators (not power distributors), promising savings. The message is intended for investor-owned utility customers like Ameren and ComEd, not co-op members or municipal utility customers. These companies seem to just be marketing by zip code. Norris Electric Cooperative members should disregard the telephone calls and letters.

The Illinois deregulation/customer choice issue was debated nearly a decade ago. Legislation was passed that allows investor-owned utility customers to choose who their power is generated by. It does not change who distributes the electricity to the consumer. Deregulation was driven by and mainly benefited larger industrial loads. In general, the savings for residential consumers

and small industrial loads have been dismal or non-existent.

Power generators and the electric utility industry are facing unprecedented levels of risk and uncertainty in today's environment. Decisions made today could be the wrong decision for the future. Marketers make choice sound wonderful, but the risks for consumers can be high.

The legislation recognized that cooperatives are different and should have the right to make a local decision on whether or not to enter the deregulated market. A few did. Most cooperatives have not. Locally elected co-op board members can always decide to enter the dereg-

ulated market if circumstances change and it would benefit the co-op membership. In the meantime, your cooperative is working diligently to get the best rates for all the members of Norris Electric Cooperative. That is one of the key purposes of a cooperative. Great things can be accomplished by cooperative members working together.



# Co-op Connections Card featured local business

**L**asata Wines, LLC - Lasata is an Indian word meaning a place of peace. Our winery is located in a peaceful wooded setting near Robeson Hills across the Wabash River from Vincennes, Ind., one mile north of Westport, Ill., on scenic highway 33. It is a wonderful place to sit and have a glass of wine and enjoy the scenery. We are open Friday through Sunday from noon to five, Central Time.

Visit Lasata Wines gift shop and choose from a variety of wine related items. Looking for the perfect gift? Remember that Lasata Wines can make customized gift baskets for any occasion. You may also call the winery to schedule your very own private tasting, or call us to schedule your next catered event.

Lasata Wines L.L.C. creates a variety of wines, including a Sweet Blush, Dry White, Dry Red, and Sweet Whites all of which are available to enjoy at the winery.

Book your private party or group wine tasting today. We will be happy



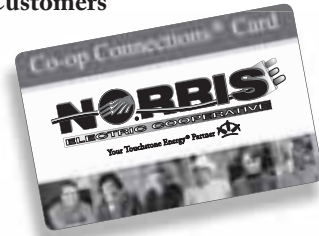
to help with catering or you can have your own caterer for your function. We can handle groups up to 40 comfortably. Lasata is a great place to have that special wedding shower or rehearsal dinner as well.

Lasata Wines is a proud member of the Wabash Valley Wine Trail. Please call the winery at 618-884-1200 during regular business hours or visit us at [www.lasatawines.com](http://www.lasatawines.com)

to place an order.

**Use your Co-op Connections card from Norris Electric and receive 10 percent off any purchase. Customers**

**must be 21 to purchase alcohol.**



# Board Director Elections

**W**e are nearing our annual meeting on Feb. 18, 2012. At that meeting we announce the results of the director election. This year there are four director seats up for election. The counties and the incumbents are:

County	Incumbent
Crawford	Larry Buser
Effingham	Gilbert Garbe
Jasper	Gordon McClure
Lawrence	Dan Scherer

All the incumbents plan to run for re-election. They must submit a

petition signed by at least 25 cooperative members to be placed on the ballot. Any other members that reside and take service in any of the previously mentioned counties may also submit a petition and be placed on the ballot. Petitions are available now and members may stop in the office to obtain a petition or call the office and one will be mailed to the member. Completed petitions must be in the cooperative office by noon on Dec. 21, 2011.

Petitioners with qualified petitions will be placed on the ballot. The ballots will be mailed to all members in January with instruction for voting. Votes may be cast by return mail or by Internet. The results will be announced at our annual meeting on

Feb. 18, 2012.

Norris Electric has historically been very successful in managing costs in the past and currently continues that trend. Norris Electric Cooperative enjoys the lowest electric rate in the state for a typical residential consumer and has about an 87 percent equity position. There tends to be a trend across the nation of voting against an incumbent no matter what kind of job they are doing. We hope that is not the case at Norris Electric and hope that you vote for who you think is the most qualified person for the position whether that is an incumbent or a new candidate. That being said, we welcome all petitions.

# Eight 2012 IEC Memorial Scholarships available

Norris Electric Cooperative Manager Keith McKinney has announced that the Illinois electric cooperatives will again in 2012 award seven academic scholarships to high school seniors through a memorial scholarship fund designed to financially assist deserving students in the “electric cooperative family.” In addition, an eighth scholarship – to assist with costs in attending an electric lineworker school – will also be offered.

The eight scholarships of \$1,250 each will be awarded in 2012 through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative. A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee. The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

A new eighth annual scholarship, the “LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker’s Scholarship,” was

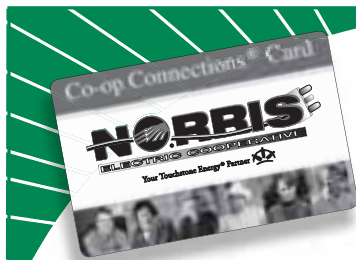
awarded for the first time in 2011. This \$1250 scholarship will help pay for costs to attend the lineworker’s school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Ill. LaVern McEntire served as a lineman for McDonough Power Electric Cooperative from 1949 until 1991. He and his wife, Nola, endowed the new scholarship to financially assist deserving individuals in becoming trained lineworkers. Sons and daughters of co-op members; relatives of co-op employees or directors; and individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard are all eligible for the lineworker’s scholarship.

“We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with these scholarships,” says Manager McKinney. “Norris Electric Cooperative and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth through programs like this



one. In addition, we are very pleased to offer the electric lineworker’s scholarship. It will benefit not only electric cooperative youth but also those fine men and women who have served their country through their military service and may now be wanting to become a trained lineworker.”

For more information regarding the scholarships, contact Norris Electric at 618-783-8765. All necessary paperwork has also been sent to area high school guidance counselors and is also available for download at the cooperative’s website at [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com).



## Co-op Connections® Card Saving Members \$\$\$

Norris Electric Cooperative members saved 44.8 percent on prescriptions in September 2011 using their Co-Op Connections card. A total of 255 prescriptions were filled for a savings of \$5,614.

Norris Electric Cooperative • 8543 N. State Highway 130 • Newton, Illinois 62448 • 618-783-8765

Office hours: Monday — Thursday

7:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m