



NEWS

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ www.wiec.net ■ 800/576-3125

Students Meet with Rep. Frese

Two students win trip to Springfield

Representative Randy Frese met with two students representing Western Illinois Electrical Coop. during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day on Wednesday, March 25, in Springfield. Going on the trip from Illini West was Katlyn Pollock, daughter of Mike and Angela Pollock of LaHarpe. Representing Hamilton High School was Samantha Metternich, daughter of Aron and Karmen Metternich of Hamilton.

The day was sponsored by the Illinois electric and telephone co-ops. It is designed to bring together over 200 of Illinois' best and brightest high school students to introduce them to state government.

The students had an opportunity to visit with Rep. Frese who spoke of his duties as a representative. During lunch, Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti addressed students and chaperones and challenged them to take an interest in the political process and encouraged them to talk to their state senators and representatives about issues that interest them. Secretary of State Jesse White welcomed the students into his office and spoke of his previous careers before being elected to Secretary of State, such as a Chicago Cub baseball player, American soldier and teacher. Even, Abe Lincoln, portrayed by impersonator David Nance, came out to encourage the youth to be involved in their government.

After lunch, they toured (5816-8-2) the Old Capitol Building where Director Justin Blandford, a Youth Tour alumnus, explained the historical importance of the building. It was built in 1839 and served as the state capital until 1876 and was completely reconstructed during the 1960s. It was where Lincoln's body lay in state before being transported to his tomb in Oakridge Cemetery.

The students won this trip by entering the Youth to Washington Web Quiz offered by Western Illinois Electrical Coop.



Samantha Metternich, Rep. Randy Frese and Katlyn Pollock met at Youth Day in Springfield.



Abe Lincoln impersonator, David Nance



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OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday

BUSINESS OFFICE

217-357-3125

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

800-576-3125

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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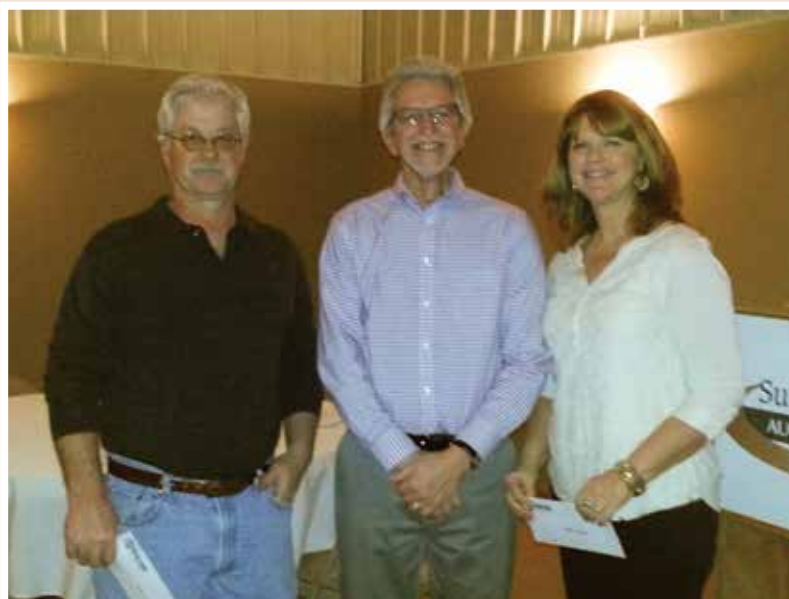
MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four members' map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

Need to contact WIEC after normal business hours?

If you need to pay a bill or report an outage, please have your WIEC bill nearby when calling after hours. It has information on it that will help CRC, our after- hours answering service, find you in the system.

- ✓ **Name on the account**
 - This is particularly important if it is under someone else's name, like a landlord, family member or business.
- ✓ **Phone number on the Account**
 - This also appears on your bill on the lower return portion of your bill
 - If it is blank, CRC will be happy to add your phone number when you talk to them.
- ✓ **Service Address of the Account**
 - This appears on the top line of your bill. It may be the actual address of the account or something else, such as Bins or Cattle Barn.



Employees honored for service

Three WIEC employees were recently honored for their ongoing commitment to WIEC and its members. Those pictured are (l-r) Greg Bolton, Mechanic, 25 years; Tommie Long, Manager, who made the presentation, and Becky Dickinson, Office Manager, 20 years. Also recognized was Tyler Neally, Journeyman Lineman, for his 10 years of service.

WIEC welcomes new employee



On March 16, WIEC welcomed Ryan Biery as he began his duties as our Electrical Staking Technician. He will be working in the operations department with the new GIS mapping system. Ryan will also be trained on the SCADA and AMR systems, as well as handling material in our warehouse. Operations Manager, Todd Grotts says, "Ryan will be a great asset to WIEC members."

This is Ryan's second time at working at WIEC. While in college, he worked part-time as a meter reader for

the area southeast of Carthage. Now twenty years later, Ryan will be working with the next-generation of meter readers, our Automatic Meter (5518-23) Reading system.

Ryan earned a BS in Agriculture from Western Illinois University. He and his wife, Erin, have three children, Katherine, (9) Anna (8) and Lucas (3). They attend Trinity Lutheran Church in Carthage. In his spare time, Ryan likes to hunt and fish.

Welcome to the WIEC family, Ryan.



WIEC's office will be closed
May 26th in observance of
Memorial Day.

Mark Burling appointed to the WIEC Board

During the March WIEC Board meeting, Mark Burling was appointed to the WIEC Board to represent District 5. This seat was vacant due to the resignation of Dave Biery on March 13, 2015.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Keep cool this summer! ENERGY STAR certified refrigerators are about 9-10 percent more energy efficient than models that meet the federal (6616-5) minimum energy efficiency standard.

Source: energystar.gov

Along with the April bills that will be mailed in the first week of May, there will be a letter explaining changes to your WIEC bill. We urge our members to take the time to read this.

A buyer's guide to residential generators

By Tom Tate

Let's face it: rough weather happens. At WIEC, our goal is to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. But when a major storm hits, power may be out for an extended period of time. Anyone who has experienced an extended power outage has likely mulled over the idea of buying a generator, but before you do – make sure you have all the facts.

The purchase and installation of a generator is an important and serious decision. Properly done, you gain peace of mind knowing your family can ride out any outage with some degree of comfort. But an incorrectly implemented generator can become deadly to you, your family, your neighbors and your electric cooperative's employees.

So, let's look at the decisions you'll need to make when it comes to purchasing a residential generator. First, do you want to back up your entire home or just portions? The biggest drawback to a permanently installed, whole-house generator is the cost. While the advantages are significant, it is a large expense for most folks to cover. The table below illustrates several characteristics of each alternative.

The next decision is sizing the

generator to your particular situation. Online tools abound, so if you like to research, just type "generator sizing guide" into your browser and off you go. Or, contact WIEC electrician Mark Kissinger so he can discuss the size needed. A nice portable generator size is at least 6,500 watts with a startup capacity of around 8,000 watts. When motor loads start, they draw more power than they use when running. This "in rush" of power gets them spinning. Afterwards, their demand for electricity decreases.

The third consideration is how to integrate the generator with your home. Automatic models have dedicated switching devices that handle this chore, while portable models require you to remove them from storage, set them up, connect them and start them up. Here is where the danger mentioned above comes in to play. Improperly connected generators can easily back feed into WIECs grid. As electricity flows back into the lines, the transformers boost the voltage to lethal levels. Be sure to closely follow connection instructions, and contact WIEC if you have any questions regarding connecting your generator safely.

Use of the generator can be as simple as plugging appliances directly into it. This is cumbersome and very limiting. Better yet, have a transfer switch installed by a qualified electrician. This device connects to the circuits you want to power. Connect your generator to the dedicated plug, follow the disconnect (6720-5) procedure and fire it up. Now you've got power for your home that's safe for all.

Next, a word about quality. With generators, you definitely get what you pay for. Cheap models are just that. They may last a couple of years, but after that, parts can be impossible to get. Few things are worse than your generator failing to operate when the lights are out. Definitely go for engines with recognizable brand names. They may cost more, but it will certainly be worth it.

It's important to exercise your portable generator regularly. Don't worry, you don't need to walk your generator - it's not that type of exercise. Exercising means connecting load to it and turning it on to be sure it will run when you need it.

Residential Generators

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU BUY

INSTALLATION TYPE	PRICE	OPERATION ¹	CAPACITY	LENGTH OF OPERATION ²
permanent	expensive	automatic	whole house	can be indefinite
portable	more affordable	manual	typically partial ³	depends on fuel tank size



¹Permanent generators start upon loss of grid power. They also exercise themselves automatically.

²Frequently powered; refrigerator, pumps (well, sump, septic), furnace, some lights, stove.

³Permanent generators use propane or natural gas, portable use gasoline. Permanent models offer significantly longer operating times.

Image of portable generator provided by SafeElectricity.org

Need more information? Stop by the WIEC office and pick up a free brochure about operating a generator safely.

How to Operate A Portable Generator

Safely



You can use a portable generator to supply electricity in some situations if an emergency arises during a power outage. But if used improperly, they can kill you and the people who are working hard to get you back on line. They also can damage the appliances in your building.

Generator safety tips: Connectors are not connected to the main electrical supply. Connectors are not connected to the main electrical supply. Connectors are not connected to the main electrical supply.

Before connecting the generator to your household circuit, notify your electric cooperative.