

# JO-CARROLL

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative  **HI-LINES**



## CEO'S REPORT

by Mike Casper

# Cooperatives commit...to members

Along with the nation's 40,000 other cooperative businesses, Jo-Carroll Energy is celebrating National Cooperative Month in October with the theme "Cooperatives Commit."

As we celebrate, it is a great time to take a look back – and a look forward – at how your co-op commits to meeting the needs of our members and communities every day.

Take the history of your co-op. Jo-Carroll Energy was founded by neighbors working together to bring electricity to our rural area. Back then, there were frequent meetings among neighbors to discuss the formation of an electric co-op. Once Jo-Carroll was established, annual meetings were the "must attend" event of the year.

The co-op – on behalf of the member-owners – committed to provide the rural communities with electricity and a better quality of life.

Fast forward to today. Although we started out to provide electricity, our impact has grown with your support. Jo-Carroll Energy now delivers electricity, natural gas and/or broadband services to about 19,400 members and 25,000 accounts. The co-op is a major employer in the region. Through the real estate, sales and payroll taxes it pays, Jo-Carroll is a large contributor to the tax base of our local governments, helping support schools, police and fire protection and other vital community infrastructure.

This year's co-op month theme is right on target because co-ops commit in so many ways

to meeting the needs of their members and building stronger communities. Jo-Carroll has been your energy partner for years, working with members to find solutions to reduce consumption through conservation and new technologies.

When members need ways to save energy and cut costs, our energy advisor works with them to recommend energy efficiency measures.

Interest in renewable energy brought about the South View Solar Farm, offering members a renewable energy option through a community solar array.

Last year, the cooperative's broadband division, Sand Prairie, undertook a fiber-to-the premise pilot project to bring fast, reliable internet service to businesses and residents. We think access to high-speed broadband is as important today as electricity was 80 years ago.

We understand that the spirit that helped create this co-op must be continually nurtured. While times and technology will continue to change, our commitment to members will not. Four values are the foundation of that commitment: safety, accountability, integrity and reliability. These values represent the cooperative difference and how we work with all of you every day.

As we continue to look toward the future, you can be confident that Jo-Carroll Energy will commit to explore new ways to help our members and our communities – safely and reliably.

A frequent question we receive is "Why don't you have someone personally answer the phones?"

The answer to that question is simple: to better serve you when you call in. Over the course of the month, Jo-Carroll Energy receives more than 6,000 calls during business hours. Those calls range from the routine payment to emergency outages that require immediate responses. We understand the automated message at the beginning of each call seems impersonal, but that is our way of ensuring all calls will be routed to representatives trained to take care of your account needs, and in an emergency to quickly dispatch a technician. It minimizes call transfers and holds, and puts you in contact with who you need to talk to quicker.

Our main call options are as follows:

- Option 1** – Natural Gas Leak
- Option 2** – Electrical Outage
- Option 3** – Member Services
- Option 4** – Site Survey for Sand Prairie
- Option 5** – Technical Assistance for Sand Prairie

Have feedback? Please feel free to send us your suggestions at [info@jocarroll.com](mailto:info@jocarroll.com).

## Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll Energy member who is eligible to win a monthly \$25 readership prize. If your name is printed in this month's edition, and not a part of any article, contact Jo-Carroll Energy and claim your prize no later than the 10th of the month following publication.

# Resume of minutes

## July 18, 2017

### For your information

#### Your Board of Directors:

**David Senn**  
*Chairman*  
District 7

**Russell Holesinger**  
*Vice Chairman*  
District 8

**Marcia Stanger**  
*Secretary*  
District 3

**Martin Werner**  
*Treasurer*  
District 1

**Joseph Mattingley**  
District 2

**Dan Tindell**  
District 4

**Patricia Smith**  
District 5

**Thomas Lundy**  
District 6

**Larry Carroll**  
District 9

**Robert Kuhns**  
District 10

**Ronald Hallendorff**  
District 10

**Office Hours:**  
Monday–Friday

**Elizabeth**  
793 U.S. Route 20 West  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Savanna**  
103 Chicago Ave.  
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

**Geneseo**  
1004 S. Chicago St.  
7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
1:30 to 4 p.m.

**Services and  
Billing Questions:**

(800) 858-5522  
www.jocarroll.com

**For emergencies  
and outages call:**  
(800) 858-5522

The board met on Tuesday July 18, 2017, at the Jo-Carroll Energy Headquarters. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The Agenda, as amended, and the Consent Agenda were approved.

**Chairman's Report** – Chairman Senn discussed how quickly technology is changing and benefitting members, noting that more and more people are using connected devices and with that, higher internet speeds are required, further emphasizing the need to bring broadband and fiber to rural America.

**Dairyland Report** – Director Mattingley discussed the Dairyland Report. Mattingley informed the board that his first meeting serving on the Governance Committee will be July 19th.

**AIEC (Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives) Report** – No report was given due to the upcoming AIEC Annual Meeting that will be held in Springfield, IL on July 27th and 28th. During the AIEC Annual Meeting, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) will be recognizing our very own lineman, Kurt Krohmer, for his work helping to electrify rural areas of Bolivia. The trip was part of the annual international volunteer effort coordinated by the NRECA, which was also sponsored by the AIEC.

**APGA Report** – Director Carroll provided an update on regulatory matters being followed by the American Public Gas Association (APGA). Carroll will be attending the APGA Annual Conference from July 23-26.

**PPI Report** – Director Hallendorff reported on Prairie Power Inc. (PPI's) most recent generation figures and provided operational highlights from Prairie State Units 1 and 2.

#### Monthly Committee Review

**a. Policy 109** - Policy 109 was approved with no changes.

#### CEO's Report

President and CEO Mike Casper announced that Jo-Carroll Energy Members now have the option for an e-bill vs. a paper bill. In addition to his written report, Casper informed the board of potential dates for open board meetings, as well as operational highlights of Jo-Carroll Energy.

**a. Financial Operating Report** – Casper reported that the Cooperative's operating margins for the year to date were approximately \$1.4 million, compared to a budgeted amount of approximately \$1.7 million. The current equity of the cooperative is approximately 24.82%, compared to 23.65% at the end of 2016. By general consent, the board moved to file the financial

operating report with the auditor.

**b. Tech Update** - Casper provided information on the topic of "smart" homes and the peak-shaving benefits of managing loads through Cooperative Information Systems (CIS) and Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) technology.

**c. Senior Vice President and Assistant General Manager Report** – Kyle Buros, Senior Vice President and Assistant General Manager, discussed Jo-Carroll Energy's Strategic Initiatives and their development.

**d. External Relations Update** – Chris Allendorf, Vice President of External Relations & General Counsel, provided the board with an update on matters concerning the State of Illinois, noting that a budget and revenue bill have been passed over the Governor's veto. However, a comprehensive school funding bill still needs to be passed. The Federal Government is allowing up to 11 weeks to pass various appropriations bills; most committees are proposing cuts. Allendorf also updated the board on Tri-County Economic Development Association's (TCEDAs) upcoming events and projects.

#### Board Issues

**a. Discounted Estate Capital Credit Retirements- Discounted Estate Retirements Approval**– A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the discounted estate retirements, as presented.

**b. Voting Delegate/Alternate Delegate for NRECA 2017 Meeting (Region 5 & 6)**-The Voting Delegate and Alternate Voting Delegate were selected for the NRECA 2017 Region 5 & 6 Meeting.

**c. Rate Policy 801** – A motion was made to approve the updated rate policy for Fiber Services Standard Packages, which was seconded and carried unanimously.

#### Executive Session

A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to go into executive session at 10:30 a.m.

#### Out of Executive Session

A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to come out of Executive Session at 11:45 a.m.

#### Consideration of Matters discussed in Executive Session

a. Pursuant to discussion in executive session, a

Continued on 18c ►

# Jo-Carroll Energy plans open board meeting

The Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Directors will hold an open board meeting at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 25 at the cooperative's Elizabeth headquarters.

This is the regular October meeting of the board. Members may speak during the "Member Comment" period or if requested by the board chair. The member comment period will be limited to a total of 30 minutes; each member may speak for a period of time not to exceed three minutes.

Members are encouraged to speak on issues raised by the agenda, however they are free to comment on any subject.

# Local agencies announce assistance programs

Agencies in Northwestern Illinois have announced the 2018 LIHEAP Program

The agencies receive funding from the Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity to assist residents of the counties they serve with home heating utility costs through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Payment Plan.

In October, income eligible seniors (age 60 and older) and people receiving Social Security disability benefits are able to schedule appointments to apply for assistance. In November, income eligible households without home energy service (are disconnected from their primary and/or secondary heating utility) as well as income eligible seniors, people receiving disability benefits and families with children age 5 and under may call to schedule an appointment to apply. In December, all other low-income

eligible households may apply.

Eligible households in Jo Daviess County may call 800-883-1111 or 815-232-3141 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment to apply for assistance at one of the following locations:

- NICAA Main Office – Freeport
- Stockton Banking Center
- Warren Township Library
- Hanover Village Hall
- Citizens State Bank of Lena
- East Dubuque Library
- Illinois Bank & Trust – Galena Downtown

For information on assistance available in Carroll and Whiteside counties, contact the Tri-County Opportunities Council at 800-323-5434.

In Henry County, contact Project Now at 309-852-4565.

## Income Eligibility Requirements

| Family Size | 150% 30 Day Income* | 150% Annual Income |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1           | \$1,508             | \$18,090           |
| 2           | \$2,030             | \$24,360           |
| 3           | \$2,553             | \$30,630           |
| 4           | \$3,075             | \$36,900           |
| 5           | \$3,598             | \$43,170           |
| 6           | \$4,120             | \$49,440           |

\*Figures based on 2017 Federal Poverty Guidelines. To qualify, a household must have income at or below the income level for 30 days, including the application date.

### Minutes continued from 18b

motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to authorize the President and CEO to enter into a contract for an insurance policy, as presented.

- b. Pursuant to discussion in executive session, a motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to authorize the President & CEO to facilitate

and effectuate the transfer of the Cooperative's existing Interstate Power & Light/Alliant load to Dairyland Power Cooperative, as Class A membership, effective on April 1, 2018.

### Reports

Reports were heard on: The Audit Committee Meeting and the Annual

Meeting Planning Committee Meeting.

### Other Business

None.

### Adjournment

Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives  
The power of human connections®

#WHOPOWERSYOU

# Your community. Your inspiration.

➔ [WhoPowersYou.com/Enter](http://WhoPowersYou.com/Enter)

Nominate someone today for  
the **#WhoPowersYou** contest

This is your chance to honor someone in your community and celebrate the power of human connections. Visit [whopowersyou.com/enter](http://whopowersyou.com/enter) between 10/2/17 and 11/4/17 and submit a photo of your nominee. Then tell us why that person inspires you and how they make a difference in your co-op community—and they could win a cash prize!

#### CONTEST PRIZES

GRAND PRIZE **\$5,000**

SECOND PLACE **\$2,000**

THIRD PLACE **\$1,500**

HONORABLE MENTION **\$500**

## Together, let's celebrate the power of human connections

As the national network of more than 740 co-ops, Touchstone Energy Cooperatives value the people who elevate and energize our communities. That's why we are launching a contest to honor inspirational community members across the country.

Winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact they have on the community. All entries must be submitted by November 4, 2017. Winners will be announced in January 2018. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. Visit [whopowersyou.com](http://whopowersyou.com) for full contest rules.

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CO-OPS  
COMMIT  
Co-op Month 2017

## Jo-Carroll Energy observing National Co-op Month in October

Jo-Carroll Energy is joining 30,000 cooperatives nationwide in October to celebrate National Co-op Month, which recognizes the many ways cooperatives are committed to strengthening the local communities they serve.

“Co-ops Commit” is the theme for this year’s celebration, spotlighting the countless ways cooperatives meet the needs of their members and communities.

Rural America is served by a network of about 1,000 electric cooperatives, most of which were formed in the 1930s and 40s to bring electricity to farms and rural communities that large, investor-owned power companies had no interest in

serving because of the higher costs involved in serving low-population and low-density areas.

Consider these ways that co-ops commit:

**Cooperatives commit to community.** The seventh cooperative principle is Concern for Community. Cooperatives work for the development of their communities through employee involvement in local organizations, contributions to community efforts and support for youth and schools.

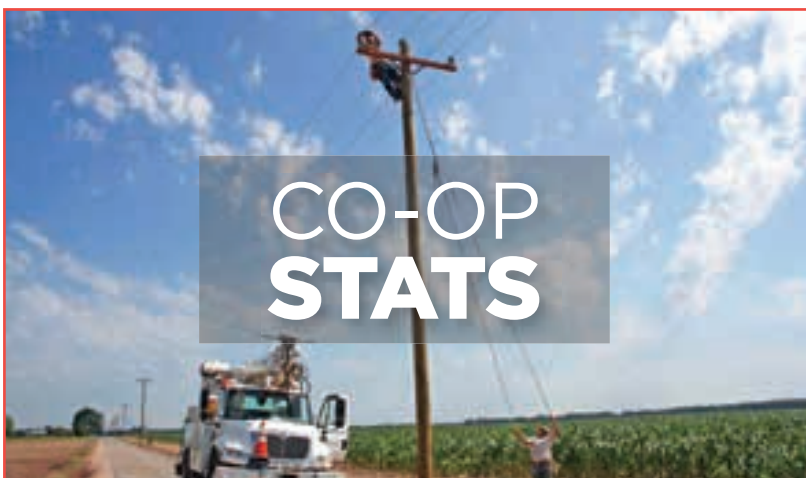
**Cooperatives commit to jobs.** Cooperatives generate jobs in their communities, keep profits local and pay local taxes to help support community services.

**Cooperatives commit to members.** One out of three Americans is a member of a cooperative. Consumer cooperatives have a membership base of over 343 million.

As a local energy and broadband co-op, Jo-Carroll Energy is a part of our communities.

During Co-op Month, Jo-Carroll Energy will utilize its social media channels and other media outlets to share more of the cooperative’s story, highlight employees and showcase programs and services.

Follow #CoopMonth on Facebook and Twitter to see how co-ops across the country are celebrating National Co-op Month.



**There are 900 electric cooperatives located in 47 states.**

**Electric co-ops provide power to 18 million homes, schools and businesses.**

**Electric cooperatives serve 56 percent of the nation.**

#coopmonth

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR CO-OPS DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

# National Co-op Connections® Day is October 6

October is National Cooperative Month and the members of Jo-Carroll Energy are getting ready to celebrate the cooperative business model by saving big and shopping local with their Co-op Connections® Card this October.

On Oct. 6, Jo-Carroll Energy invites you to take advantage of the benefits the Co-op Connections® Card provides by participating in the second annual National Co-op Connections Day, sponsored by Touchstone Energy. Cooperative employees and member-owners can celebrate this money saving program and receive even more benefits when they use The One Card

That Does It All® at participating national and local retailers.

Co-op Connections Day will feature special flash deals and a social media photo contest that runs throughout the first week of October. Be sure to get involved by sharing photos featuring your Co-op Connections Card with the hashtag #ImConnected on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. You may be announced as the photo contest winner!

Jo-Carroll Energy encourages all members to get involved and take advantage of the savings and discounts offered on Oct. 6. If you need a new card, download the



“Co-op Connections” app, print one from [connections.coop](http://connections.coop) or contact your local Jo-Carroll office.

If you are a local business wishing to be part of the Co-op Connections Program, you can join for no cost to you. Just contact Jamie Lockwood at [jlackwood@jocarroll.com](mailto:jlackwood@jocarroll.com) to sign up. For more information on National Co-op Connections Day, visit [jocarroll.com](http://jocarroll.com).

**Bonnie Gibbs**  
For more information on the Co-op Connections Program and benefits, visit [connections.coop](http://connections.coop).

## Fight- energy vampires Cut electricity waste, cost

Did you know that electric devices can continue to use energy even when not in use? Equipment that’s plugged in and left idle leads to energy waste known as “phantom” or “vampire” energy. Common phantom power culprits include computers, battery chargers, DVD players and treadmills.”

Up to one-tenth of electric bills are from phantom energy loads. Safe Electricity provides the following tips for saving energy and reducing the cost of standby power draws.

- When possible, unplug all electronics that are not in use, especially those that you do not use often.

- Consider powering down devices rather than leaving them on standby mode for extended periods.
- Power strips can aid efficiency as they can turn off all devices that are plugged in with flip of a switch.
- Smart power strips use advanced technology to turn off the power from idle electronics automatically.
- When shopping for new electronics, invest in Energy Star products, which have a



lower standby rate of energy consumption.

- By using an electronic timer, you will be able to reduce the standby load on items like coffee pots that are used only for select periods of time.

For more information on energy efficiency, visit [EnergyEdCouncil.org](http://EnergyEdCouncil.org) or [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

# Jo-Carroll Energy participates in National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Jo-Carroll Energy is participating in National Cybersecurity Awareness Month (NCSAM) this October. By participating, the cooperative will help raise awareness about cyberthreats and ways to stay secure.

The goal of NCSAM is to provide every American with the resources they need to enhance their online safety and security. Since its inception under leadership from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the National Cyber Security Alliance, NCSAM has grown exponentially, reaching consumers, small and medium-sized businesses, corporations, educational institutions and young people across the nation.

Co-ops remain cyber aware by taking a number of preparations, including:



- Implementing rigorous security standards and technology to protect systems,
- Forging close partnerships to protect our systems, and
- Engaging in active information sharing about threats and vulnerabilities.

You have a role to play in ensuring the security of your personal and professional data. Use the tips below to safeguard your computer:

- Keep all software on

internet-connected devices – including PCs, tablets and smartphones – up to date to reduce risk of infection from malware.

- Create long passwords that only you will remember, and change them every six months. Remember, a strong password is at least 12 characters long.
- Avoid the use of thumb drives and other portable memory devices.
- Don't click on weblinks or attached files in emails when you're not certain of who the sender is.
- Keep pace with new ways to stay safe online. Check trusted websites for the latest information. Share security tips with friends, family and colleagues, and encourage them to be web wise.

Use and follow #cyberaware on social media to show and share your support. To learn more about NCSAM, visit [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org).



- Week 1: Stop. Think. Connect. Simple steps to Online Safety.*
- Week 2: Cybersecurity in the Workplace is Everyone's Business.*
- Week 3: Today's Predictions for Tomorrow's Internet*
- Week 4: The Internet Wants You: Consider a Career in Cybersecurity.*
- Week 5: Protecting Critical Infrastructure from Cyber Threats*

Follow [#cyberaware](#) for cybersecurity tips!



# 2017 Coloring Contest winners receive awards

Jo-Carroll Energy sponsors a coloring contest each summer for children throughout the cooperative's service territory. Three children were selected recently as the winners of the 2017 Coloring Contest.

The winners received school supplies before the start of the school year. Five books were donated to the area library in their hometowns as well.

This year's winners were from Galena, Fulton and Erie.



▲ Jamie Lockwood, Jo-Carroll Energy digital media coordinator, is pictured with Alaina Winter, 5, of Galena, a winner of Jo-Carroll Energy's coloring contest.

Paige Emerson, 8, of Fulton, receives her school supplies. With her is Gwen Smith, children's librarian of Fulton Library. ▶



Kennady Gehrking, 9, of Erie was named a winner of Jo-Carroll Energy's coloring contest. Jamie Lockwood, of Jo-Carroll Energy, presents her with school supplies. ▶

