

# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 1/00

## Illinois Rural Electric Members' Community Fund

### Questions and Answers

1. Why is the Trust being created?

A. We expect that it will be an excellent way for members to help the communities we live in. Other electric cooperatives have been successful in helping their areas, and we should be able to do so as well.

2. How will the money be collected?

A. Participating members will be billed the next higher, round dollar amount, so that the maximum monthly contribution for each account would be 99¢.

3. Could you give some examples of where the

money might go?

A. Possible examples could be things like the following: Community organizations (VFW, Lions and Kiwanis, as examples) fund raising activities. A volunteer fire department's efforts to buy an ambulance. Building or restoring a park or playground. Helping an individual with extraordinary medical expenses. School enrichment and sports programs.

4. How much money do you expect to raise?

A. If we do as well as other cooperatives, we expect to raise about \$40,000 a year.

5. Will donations be tax deductible?

A. We're applying for a 501(c)(3) exemption so that donations will be deductible. In the really unlikely event that the application is denied, we'll offer to give all of the money back to the donors.

6. How will donors know where the money went?

A. We'll report on that here in the center section.

7. Who is going to decide where the money goes?

A. The Cooperative's Board of Directors will appoint a Board for the Community Trust, and those individuals will make the decisions.

8. How can someone apply for help from the Community Trust?

A. Just write to it at the same address as the Cooperative.

9. When do you expect to begin?

A. We hope to begin with the March billing.

10. What if I don't want to give?

A. No problem, just fill in one of the forms that will be sent with your monthly statement in February.



## Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 80, Two South Main Street  
Winchester, Illinois 62694

1-800-468-4732

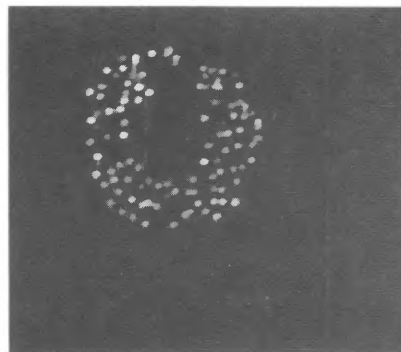
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We noticed increased electric use in Greene County this past month.

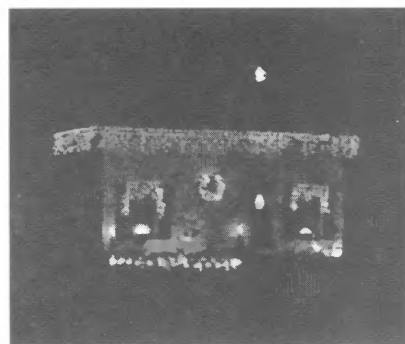
It turned out to be one of the best displays of lights we've seen in a long time. One of the nice things about this one was that adjoining neighbors both had great shows.



Another wonderful set of Christmas lights was on the old highway from Winchester to Pittsfield on the north side of the road, on the west of Detroit.



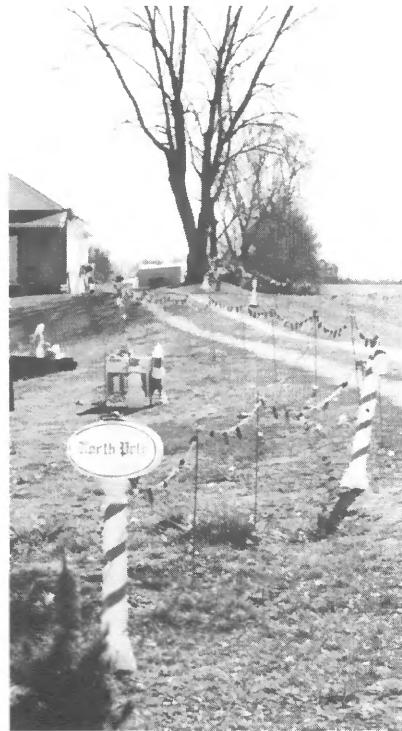
So, people sometimes ask, "Very pretty, but how much does it cost?"



Naturally, it depends on the size of the bulb and how many hours it's on.

A large Christmas light bulb will use 1.5 watts.

If one that size is on for six hours a day for 20 days, that would amount to 180 watt hours.



The arithmetic is like this:

$$\text{watts X hours} = \text{watt hours}$$

$$1.5 \text{ X } 120 = 180$$

The Cooperative bills for kilowatt hours, just another way to say 1,000 watt hours.

So the 180 watt hours equal 0.18 kilowatt hours.

$$\text{watt hours divided by } 1,000 = \text{kilowatt hours}$$

$$180 \text{ divided by } 1,000 = 0.18$$

Even at the unusually high prices for electricity at the end of 1999, the cost isn't a lot for that much electricity.

$$\text{average cost} = \text{kilowatt hours X } .12$$

$$\text{average cost} = .18 \text{ X } 12\text{¢}$$

$$\text{average cost} = 2.16\text{¢}$$



**Worth the wait.** As we've expected for some time, the commercial development at Village Acres in South Jacksonville has started. That's a motel under construction. Development in the near term is expected to include a major restaurant and a convenience store and service station.

# MAYTAG

## ★ BRIGHTEST ★

# STARS

*on*

# SALE

*Introducing New Cleaning Performance*



**OUTSTANDING CLEANING**

— and —  
**KEEPS WHITES  
WHITE!**

## **MAYTAG**

### **ATLANTIS™ WASHER**

- Unique TurboRinse™ System Powers Residue Out of Clothes for **Outstanding Cleaning**.
- Swirl-Away™ Water Extraction System Draws Residue Out of the Tub, **Keeping Whites White**.

**Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative**

**(217) 742-3128 or (800) 468-4732**

# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 2/00

## Outlook for 2000 Electric Prices

We expect electric prices to the Cooperative, and therefore to you, to be more stable this year than last year.

Our electric supplier, Soyland Power Cooperative, has a contract for its purchased wholesale power at level prices for 2000 through 2002. Soyland will naturally need to operate its generating facilities — principally the coal fired plant at Pearl and the natural gas peaking turbines at Aley — as part of that contract.

Soyland is arranging insurance to cover the availability of its plants. If a generating unit fails to operate when needed, there will be insurance to cover any excess costs for replacement power.

During 1999, Soyland needed to purchase some power on a day ahead basis, particularly on days of heavy demand when the price would be at its highest. On July 30<sup>th</sup> last year, the price for wholesale power reached as much as \$9.00 a kilowatt hour, and we paid for those sky high prices over the course of the following six months.

Your first bill for 2000 electric use will come in March.

## Over 900 Automatic Meter Reading Devices Installed Last Year

We achieved our first year goal for installing automatic meter reading devices in 1999. We plan to have the entire Cooperative automatically read by the end of 2004.

Members immediately benefit because they don't need to read their meters themselves, and the Cooperative benefits from lower overall costs for annually reading the meters and processing the readings each month.

Everybody wins.

## Illinois Rural Electric Members' Community Fund

It looks as though about three-quarters of the Cooperative's accounts will participate by contributing to the fund.

It will work by increasing a bill to the next higher dollar amount — say from \$122.55 to \$123.00 — with the increase going to a fund to contribute to community needs throughout the Cooperative's service territory.

If you don't want to participate, return the form with your monthly statement.



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## We Got an 8.5

Late last year, we surveyed a random sample of members, asking them to rate organizations from one for very poor service to ten for exceptional service. We got an 8.5, an improvement from a year earlier.

Generally speaking, like all Americans, our members felt pretty good about the world at the end of the last century.

The typical respondents were high school graduates who owned their own homes and who had been a member of the cooperative for at least 10 years.

We're working to improve the way you rank us by improving the quality of service you receive and by controlling costs to the extent we can.

## Death Two Days after Christmas

Here's a heartbreaking story: On the Monday after Christmas, a Virginia man was electrocuted trying to free a model rocket from a power line. He'd just assembled it for his 6-year-old son.

The two shot the rocket into the air in a field behind their house. As the parachute opened and the rocket floated down it became tangled in a power line.

The man drove his tractor under the line and tried to free the rocket with a fishing rod, perhaps thinking that the fiberglass pole wouldn't conduct the current that killed him. Fiberglass poles contain graphite. Even if they didn't, any number of factors could cause the electricity to work toward ground. Don't ever believe that fiberglass or wood will protect you.

Please don't try to free anything from a power line anytime.



**What were they thinking? What were they doing?** We found out in the 1950s. (Wouldn't you love to have that Chrysler?) If you



Found this photo among the old files, and wondered what was going on. It must have been taken sometime in the 1950s. If anyone in the picture or knows what was going on; please give us a call.



## **Y2 Squirrel**

There was a state-wide command center to collect information about any electric power interruption from midnight January 1<sup>st</sup> to 6:00 p.m. that day.

As you know, the center didn't have much to do, just as we'd hoped because we and others had prepared.

Nonetheless, we were supposed to call in any outage, and there was one reported on Saturday afternoon. It was at a cabin so it could have happened anytime. We explained that it was caused by an animal and that it was clearly not a computer related problem. Not a Y2K outage.

Later that evening, we got a call from a major Chicago newspaper, wanting all the details. By that time, there was apparently no news, certainly no Y2K news.

We don't know exactly what happened from that point on, but later in the evening, one of the cable news services reported, "... a minor problem at a small Midwest utility."

Could it have been our outage?

## **Bylaws**

The Cooperative's Bylaws have recently been reprinted with all of the changes made at the last Annual Meeting.

They include material about Director districts and the years the terms for the eleven districts end.

If you want a copy, please give us a call or send a note with your next payment.

## **2000 Annual Meeting — June 10<sup>th</sup>**

Last year we held the meeting with most people indoors so that we could have air conditioning. Unfortunately, that meant that a few people had to sit outside and watch the proceedings on closed circuit TV. It also turned out that it was a day that really didn't need air conditioning anyway. In short, a well-intentioned flop.

In 2000 the meeting will be outside under the clear span building at the Scott County Fair Grounds in Winchester. It's our hope that the weather will be comfortable for everyone. We'll have plenty of cool drinks on hand in any case.

## **Work on Customers' Premises**

It was great when we could afford it, but last year we reached an annual rate of providing in excess of \$100,000 of "free" labor, doing what amounted to electrical work on customers' premises.

Unfortunately, we can't afford that anymore. If we spend a few minutes to fix something on the member's "side of the meter," we're not going to charge the member for that. But if we need to spend hours fixing a member's wiring, we need to charge for the related costs including wages, benefits, transportation and insurance.

If all members benefited equally from that \$100,000, it wouldn't be so bad, but the fact is that many, many members didn't benefit.

One of our overall goals is to keep costs to you and all other members at the lowest level consistent with reliable, safe service. We can't achieve that goal if we continue to provide costly services to relatively few.



# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 3/00

## **Members Will Elect Four Directors at the 2000 Annual Meeting on**

**June 10, 2000**

The first of the seven cooperative principles is democracy, and having democratic control of the cooperative is one of the three keys to keeping its income exempt from state and federal taxes.

### **There are two ways to be nominated to serve on the Board of Directors.**

The Board of Directors will appoint a Nominating Committee not later than March 10, 2000, as described in Article 4, Section 4, of the Cooperative's Bylaws.

Fifteen or more members may also nominate candidates to serve on the Board. That process is also described in Article 4, Section 4.

### **Nominations for the 2000 Election Must Be Posted in the Cooperative's Office Not later than April 26, 2000.**

Both the Nominating Committee and members acting on their own initiative must meet the April 26 deadline.

If you wish to communicate with the Nominating Committee, simply send a letter to the Committee at the Cooperative's address, and it will be given — unopened — to the Committee. You'll receive an acknowledgement.

Here's the part of Article 4, Section 4 which addresses the timing:

"It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than ninety (90) days nor more than one-hundred sixty days (160) days before the date of the meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of not less than five (5) nor more than eleven (11) members who shall be selected so as to give equitable representation on the committee to the geographical areas served or to be served by the Cooperative. No officer or member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed a member of such a committee. The committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least forty-five (45) days before the meeting a list of nominations for directors and such nominees shall be selected from the respective director districts of the Cooperative service area scheduled for election under Section 2 of this Article.



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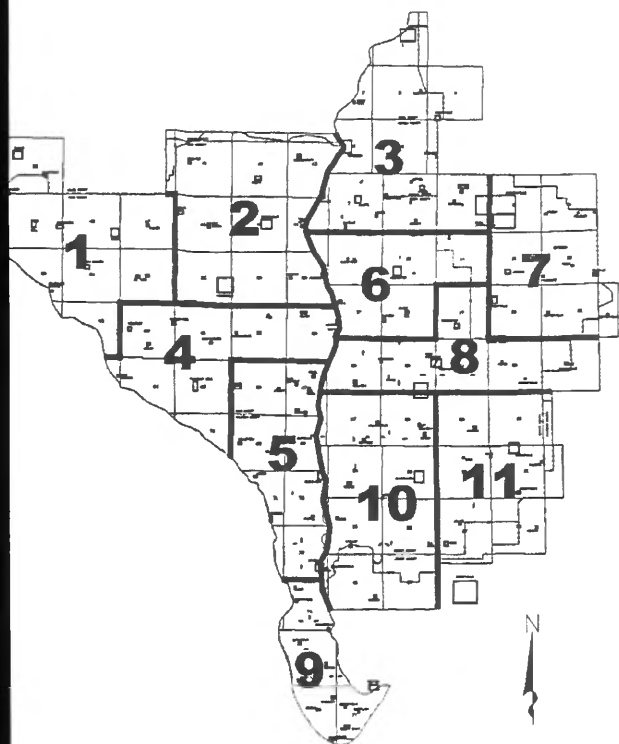
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“In addition, any fifteen (15) or more members may make other nominations for directors in the respective director districts scheduled for election under Section 2 of this Article, in writing, over their signatures not less than forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting and the secretary shall post the same where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. The secretary shall mail with the notice of the meeting a statement of the number of directors to be elected from each district and showing separately the nominations made by the committee on nominations and any nominations made by petition for each director district.”

**In all there are eleven districts,  
and directors serve staggered  
three year terms.**

This map shows the districts, and the Bylaws give the legal descriptions.



At the 2000 meeting, directors from districts 5, 9, 10 and 11 will be elected. The present directors from those districts are

**District 5**

Robert Reed  
Nebo



**District 9**

Julia Eberlin  
Brussels



**District 10**

Thomas Camerer  
Eldred



**District 11**

William Griswold  
Rockbridge



Mr. Reed has served on the Board since 1997. He filled the un-expired term of Jeral Miller who died that year.

Ms. Eberlin has served on the Board since 1999, filling the un-expired term of Francis Toppmeyer who resigned his seat.

Mr. Camerer has served on the Board since 1989, and Mr. Griswold has served on the Board since 1975.

### **Section 3 of Article 4 of the Bylaws Sets Qualifications and Tenure.**

"At the annual meeting of the members in 1980, four of the members elected shall serve for three years and four members to be elected shall serve for two years, the eight so elected shall determine their respective terms by lot. Each year thereafter only the number of directors shall be elected each for a term of three years to fill vacancies of those directors whose terms are expiring. Directors so elected shall serve until their respective term expires or until their successors have been elected and shall have qualified. No member shall be eligible to become or remain a director or hold a position of trust in the Cooperative who is not an actual consumer of electric service provided by the Cooperative, or who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing, appliances, fixtures or supplies to the members of the Cooperative, and no person shall take or hold office as a director who is the incumbent of or candidate for an elective public office in connection with which a salary is paid. Upon establishment of the fact a board member is holding the office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the board shall remove such board member from office. When a membership is held

jointly by a husband and wife, either one, but not both, may be elected a director, provided, however, that neither one shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold a position of trust in the Cooperative unless both shall meet the qualifications hereinabove set forth. Nothing in this section contained shall, or shall be construed to affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board of directors."

### **On average, a director spends the better part of two days a month on Cooperative business.**

In addition to regular board meetings, held once a month, directors attend committee meetings, take courses related to electric cooperatives, sit on the board of Soyland Power Cooperative and other cooperative organizations, and represent the Cooperative at state, regional and national meetings.

Directors do not receive a salary for their service, but they are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses and receive a fixed sum for each day devoted to the Cooperative's affairs.

**If you would like to get a copy of the complete Bylaws, please send us a note or call the office.**

**There are two ways members can vote in the election. First, by being present at the meeting, or, second, by sending your proxy with a member who is attending. Members can vote up to three proxies at the annual meeting.**

**touch·stone** \ˈtəch-,stōn\ *n* **1** : stone related to flint and formerly used to test the purity of gold  
**2** : a test or criterion for determining quality or genuineness **3** : **Touchstone Energy<sup>SM</sup>** : a nationwide alliance of electric co-ops

NO MATTER HOW YOU DEFINE IT, ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES ARE GOOD FOR AMERICA. WE PROVIDE AT-COST POWER, RELIABLY AND AFFORDABLY, TO BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS ALIKE. THAT'S THE WAY IT'S BEEN FOR DECADES. AND THAT'S THE WAY IT WILL STAY.

NOW, ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES ARE COMING TOGETHER IN A NATIONWIDE ALLIANCE CALLED **TOUCHSTONE ENERGY<sup>TM</sup>**.

WE'RE NOT CHANGING OUR NAME, OUR OWNERSHIP, OR OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU. YOUR BUSINESS AND YOUR VOICE ARE STILL VERY IMPORTANT TO US.

AS A **TOUCHSTONE ENERGY<sup>TM</sup>** PARTNER, WE'LL BE SHARING IDEAS AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES WHILE CONTINUING OUR DEDICATION TO BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS IN THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE.

**TOUCHSTONE ENERGY<sup>TM</sup>**. IT'S THE DEFINITION OF WHAT SERVICE SHOULD BE.

## Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

<http://www.touchstoneenergy.com>

## Fuel Cells Promise Clean, Quiet On Site Generation

Fuel cells have been in development for a long time — around 100 years — and we may be getting close to their use for residential and small commercial applications.

What's a fuel cell?

It's an electrochemical device that converts commonly available fuels directly into electricity. Propane or natural gas goes into the fuel cell, and electricity and hot water come out. There's no combustion, no flame.

How does it work?

First, hydrogen is stripped from propane or natural gas (You could use pure hydrogen if you could get it). The hydrogen molecule ( $H_2$ ) enters the cell. Like a battery, the cell has positive and negative ends. The electrons go to the negative side and flow out as electricity. The protons in the hydrogen go to the positive side, combine with oxygen and create hot water. The hot water is used to preheat domestic hot water or for heating.

In theory, it's all pretty simple, but the engineering is pretty complex.

Illinois Rural Electric will begin tests with one type of fuel cell this fall. We'll let you know how it goes. Units may be available commercially in 2002.

There may be additional tests in 2001. Let us know if you're interested.

## Annual Meeting — June 10, 2000

On Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, we'll hold the annual meeting of the members of the cooperative.

While much larger, investor-owned utilities may do as good a job as we do, invitations to their annual meetings only go to shareholders. Since we're a cooperative, owned by the members who use the service, the invitations go to customers.

Members will elect four directors. If you want more information how to become a director, please call the office.

We'll naturally have door prizes, refreshments, and great weather, we hope.



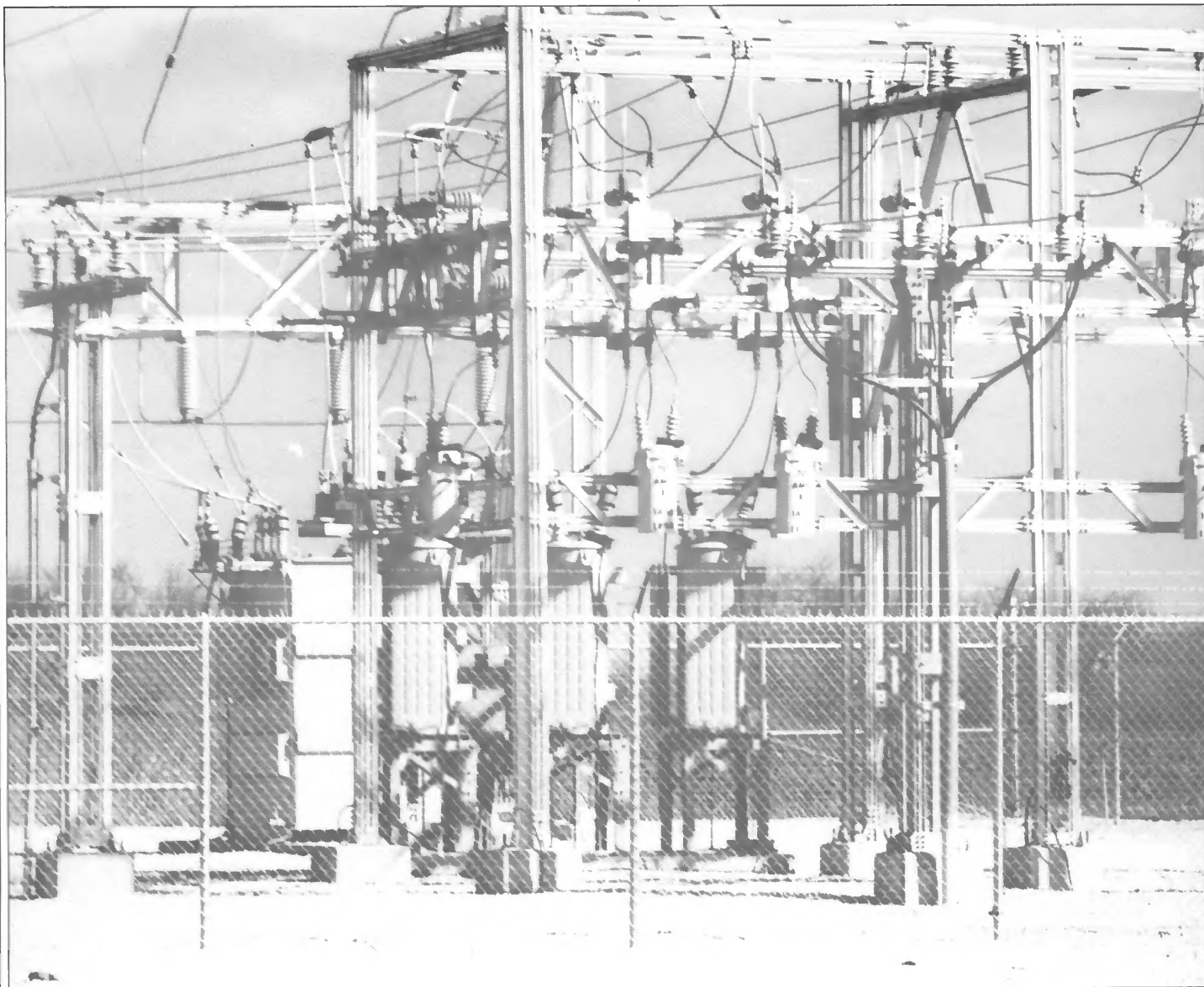
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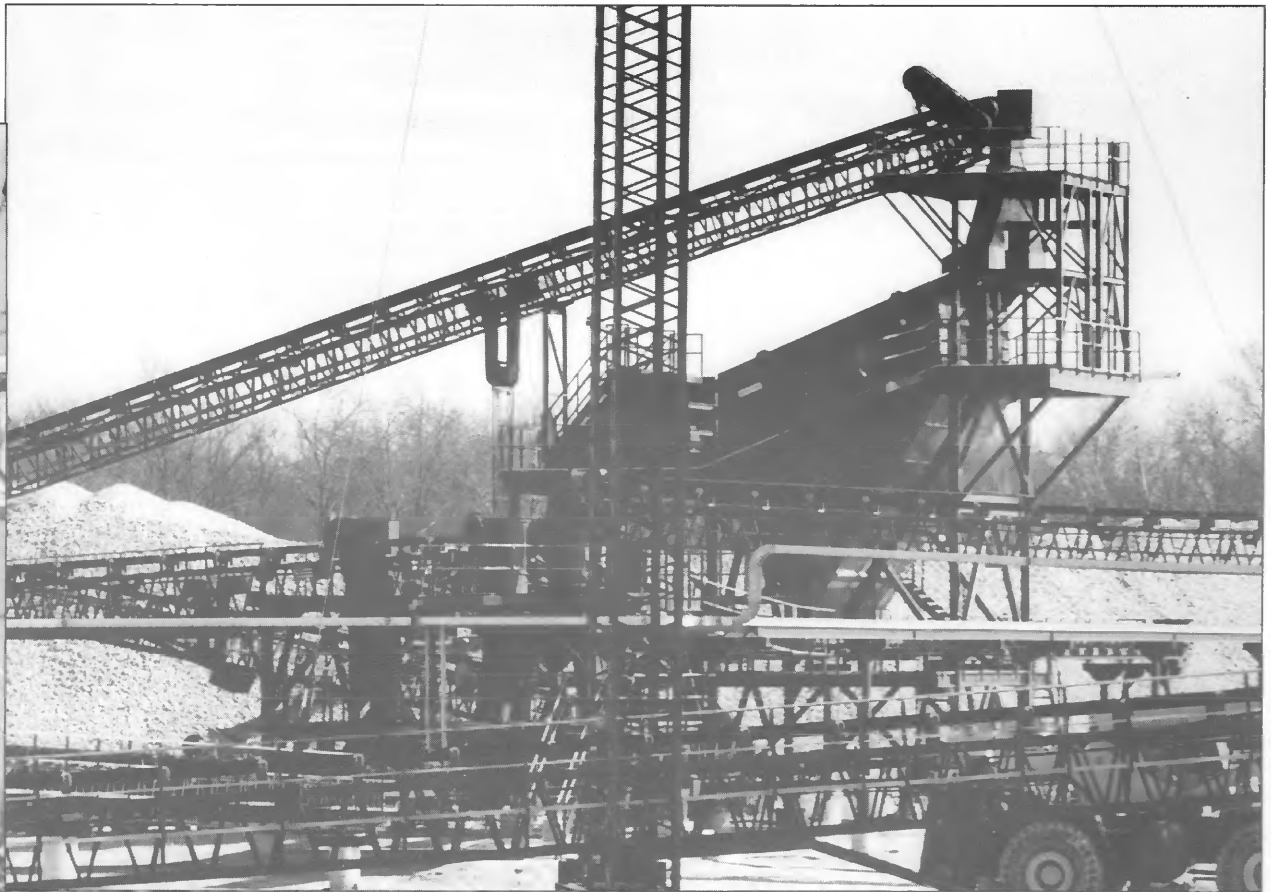




## **Tollgate Substation Goes Into Service**

The new Tollgate substation east of Detroit in Pike County went into service recently. It will meet the increasing needs of a nearby quarrying operation, and it will improve the quality of service throughout that eastern section of the county.

A substation reduces the voltage from 60,000 or 34,500 to 12,500 volts for distribution throughout the cooperative's system. The transformer which serves you reduces the voltage again to that needed in your home or business.



## **Here We Go Again! THE GREAT PIE CONTEST, PART TWO: PIZZA**

Last year we had fun with recipes for pie crust. This year, we're interested in pizza pie.

Once again, the capable students at West Pike High School will test the recipes and select the winners.

Send your recipe for your favorite pizza — crust and topping — to us by the end of April. (If you have a great topping, commercially available crust is OK).

We'll print the winning entries here. First prize will receive \$100, second \$75, and third \$50.

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We believe that pizza was invented in new Haven, Connecticut, not Italy, and we could tell a couple of stories about that. Throw in a good pizza story with your entry, and we'll add \$50 if you're a winner.

### **Work on the Customer's Side of the Meter**

The "customer's side of the meter" is from the bottom of the meter throughout the home or business. A couple of months ago, we noted here that we couldn't continue to perform as much work on customers' wiring as we had in the past without charging for that work.

There were a few questions and comments. Let us try to respond. First, we're never going to charge members for responding to a trouble call. Second, it's a matter of degree. If we're out on a legitimate trouble call and make some very minor repair on the customer's side of the meter, there's not going to be a charge. It's the big jobs that concern us.

### **Members' Fund Off to a Good Start**

In March, members donated \$2,900 to the Fund, which will make contributions to organizations, which make a positive contribution to the quality of life, and to individuals throughout the cooperative's service area.

Other cooperatives have used funds like ours to help fire departments, school enrichment programs, and service clubs. Individuals with extraordinary medical bills, for example, have also been helped.

The experience at other cooperatives indicated that more members than not would want to participate. Because of that, we decided to let people choose not to participate and let us know with forms sent with the bills in December, January and February.

If a member didn't want to contribute but failed to let us know earlier, we'll gladly return every penny. Just let us know.

### **2,000 More Accounts to be Automatically Read in 2000**

We're continuing to install automatic meter reading devices in an effort to improve service and create efficiencies. By the end of this year, more than one in four accounts will be automatically read.

There will continue to be a place to enter meter readings on all bills, but if you've received a letter telling you about our installing automatic meter reading at your home or business, you simply need to read your meter one last time.



# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 5/00

## 2000 Annual Meeting

**June 10<sup>th</sup> at the Scott County Fair  
Grounds, Winchester,  
Registration at 9:30 A.M.  
Business Meeting at 10 A.M.**

### **\$5,000 in Door Prizes for Members**

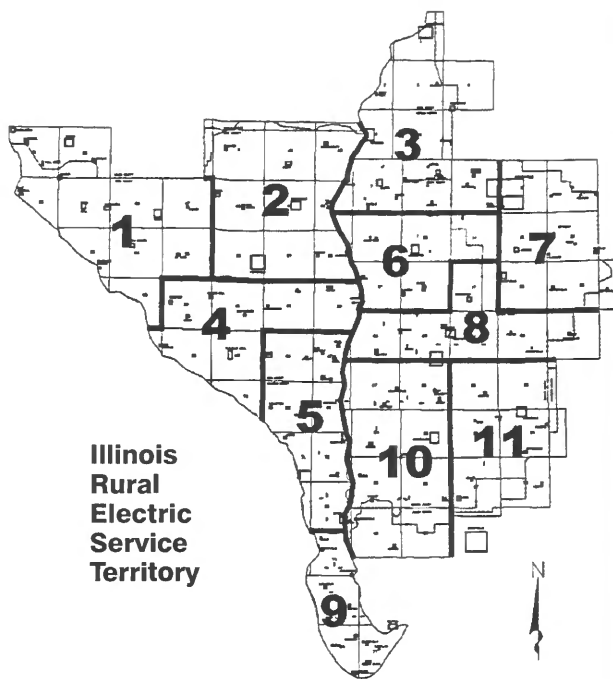
We'll draw five \$500 prizes and twenty-five \$100 prizes throughout the meeting. The bigger prizes will be awarded first so that every member has an equal chance.

### **\$5,500 from the Members' Fund for Local Charitable Organizations**

Members will also have the opportunity to put the name of their favorite local charity in one of eleven boxes — one for each of the eleven director districts.

If, for example, you live in Golden Eagle, you'd put your favorite local charity's name in Box 9.

A winner will be drawn from each box. It's always been our intention to distribute the Members' Fund money throughout the service area, and making the first distribution this way ensures getting off to a good start.



Illinois  
Rural  
Electric  
Service  
Territory

**We meant "over time,"  
not "overtime."**

In one of our bill inserts, we said that "over time" the Fund would be a real benefit to the community. Unfortunately, that came right after saying we'd use the money for local charitable organizations, followed by "and, over time." We will use the Fund to help local organizations; it won't be used for overtime.



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## Soyland Power Cooperative and Allegheny Power Cooperative Form Alliance

Soyland Power Cooperative, owned by twelve Illinois electric cooperatives including Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative, has formed a strategic alliance with Allegheny Power Cooperative which serves fifteen electric cooperatives in Pennsylvania.

Both Soyland and Allegheny will continue to own their assets, but some administrative functions, accounting as an example, will be shared in a new organization, now called Continental Electric Services Cooperative.

It's expected that the alliance will better position the two relatively small organizations for a deregulated future, and that they'll achieve some economies of scale by working together.

We don't, however, expect any changes in power costs in the near future. Soyland's present contract with Ameren Energy runs through 2002.

## Internet Payments Soon

Pretty soon, we'll begin to offer a new easy to use service — called "Easy 2 Pay" — which will allow you to securely pay your electric bill on the Internet with funds from your checking account.

Following the introduction of "Easy 2 Pay," we expect to offer members the option of e-mail billing statements.

We'll have other payment options in the near future as well.

## Phone Calls Decline

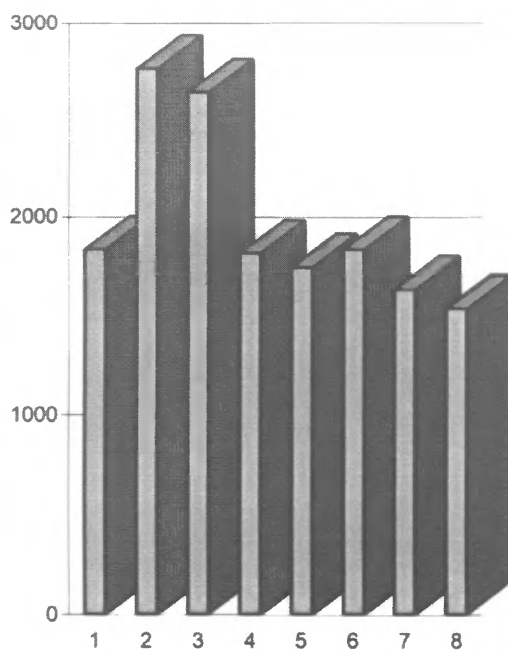
Generally speaking, most of our phone calls occur because the relationship between the member and the Cooperative isn't perfect — the power has gone out, the bill doesn't seem to be right, the purchased power adjustment is really high, one of our trucks ran over the flower bed in the front yard, and so on.

So one of the things we measure to measure customer satisfaction is the number of incoming phone calls. Actually, the computer, which monitors the phone system, counts the calls.

Over the eight months ending in February, the number of incoming calls has been generally declining. We think automatic meter reading and better right-of-way maintenance helps.

Nonetheless, if you have a question or a problem, we really do want you to call.

### Incoming Phone Calls



**“I didn’t like it very much during the first week ...”**

Julie Day began working for the Cooperative on September 11, 1978, and, as noted above, wasn’t very happy during the first week.

Since then, she says she’s always enjoyed her work here.

Julie manages customer relations, which includes the customer service representatives, billing activities, appliance sales and service, and wiring services for members.

She and her husband, Mancel, live in Winchester. They have two, grown children, Steven and Kelly.



# MAYTAG

★ **BRIGHTEST** ★

# STARS

*on*

# SALE

*Introducing New Cleaning Performance*



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Electric Cooperative**

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## **NOTICE OF THE 2000 ANNUAL MEETING**

To all active members of Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative:

The 2000 Annual Meeting of members will be held on Saturday, June 10, 2000, at 10:00 AM at the Scott County Fair Grounds in Winchester, Illinois. Registration will begin at 9:30 AM.

In addition to reports on the past year, members will be asked to elect four directors. The meeting also provides the opportunity for you to ask questions and make suggestions to the Cooperative's Board of Directors and management.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I urge you to attend. If you are not able to be there in person, please send your proxy with a friend or a neighbor.

We look forward to seeing you on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

F. Alan Heaton,  
Secretary

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**YOU COULD WIN PART OF A TOTAL \$5,000 IN DOOR PRIZES FOR MEMBERS — FIVE \$500 PRIZES AND TWENTY-FIVE \$100 PRIZES. YOUR FAVORITE LOCAL CHARITY COULD WIN \$500, ONE OF ELEVEN PRIZES FROM THE ILLINOIS RURAL ELECTRIC MEMBERS' FUND.**

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A Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Partner 

## **To Our Members:**

Since our Annual Meeting last summer, we've made progress in important areas, and we want to outline that for you here

### **Maintenance and Operations**

As you can see in the operating statement, expenses for operations and maintenance increased substantially - 11.5% in 1999. That's the third year of significant increases in taking care of the electric system which serves you. This year, in fact, we expect to spend about three times as much on taking care of the system as we spent in 1996.

The results will mean fewer inconveniences - outages and blinking lights - for you, and, over the long-term, less expense in responding to storms.

### **Automatic Meter Reading**

We continue to install automatic meter reading devices on members' meters, and we will have more than one in four meters automatically read by the end of this year.

Our initial plans were to have the entire system automatically read in six years, but we're considering ways in which we may be able to achieve that goal sooner.

Automatic meter reading means better service for you, and lower costs for the Cooperative.

### **Wholesale Power Costs**

Our supplier, Soyland Power Cooperative, is in the first year of a three year, fixed price contract for its supplies, and we, therefore, have every reason to expect more stable prices in 2000 through 2002 than we saw in 1999 when Soyland purchased its supplies in the open market.

Soyland's present contract is, we believe, a particularly favorable one with prices below current market costs, and Soyland is insuring the operation of its own generating facilities to assure your getting stable prices.

### **"Stranded" Costs**

In February 1999, we borrowed almost \$9-million to prepay Soyland for certain stranded costs — principally costs associated with the Clinton nuclear plant - which it would have otherwise collected from us through its wholesale rates. On a cash basis, we've paid back almost \$2-million of that amount while we are collecting it through the rates you pay over a period running until 2017.

## **Soyland's Strategic Alliance.**

Earlier this year, Soyland's board of directors, on which we both serve, voted overwhelmingly to proceed with an alliance with Allegheny Power Cooperative.

Soyland and Allegheny will become the only members of a new cooperative to be headquartered in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

While we believe that there will be some, relatively minor efficiencies with administrative costs, the greater opportunities should come from increased buying power for electric supply and from being part of an organization twice as large as we move forward toward a "deregulated" market for electric generation.

### **Illinois Rural Telecommunications Co.**

By the time our annual meeting comes, we expect that our subsidiary will serve 5,000 satellite dish customers and perhaps as many as 3,000 Internet customers in our service area and in the towns we surround.

We continually examine ways in which we can best use our resources to help the area we serve, and we'll report on telecommunications activities at the meeting this year.

## Doing Our Part

Cooperative members working together in the 1930s made it possible for rural areas to have electric service. Today we're working to do our part to help those working to get water to rural areas, and we're pleased to be able to be of some help.

We work with other cooperatives across America in the efforts of Touchstone Energy® to tell the important cooperative story of integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. That's particularly important as fewer and fewer of our members remember the first time the lights went on in rural America.

We contribute to research for better and more effective electric equipment through the Cooperative Research Network.

This fall we'll be a test site for a fuel cell in a program developed by Energy Co-opportunity, a relatively new organization of cooperatives working to make the best energy options available to their members and thereby to you, our members.

## Thanks to Our Employees

The Cooperative's members are fortunate to have the talents of a dedicated work force meeting their needs. Just over a quarter of our employees have worked for you for over 25 years.

We'll have a number of service and safety awards for employees at the meeting, and we look forward to thanking them again.

## Prizes for Local Charities this Year

To celebrate the beginning of the Illinois Rural Electric Members' Community Fund, we're going to set out eleven boxes — one for each director district. You'll get to drop the name of your favorite local charity in the box for the district in which you live, and we'll award eleven \$500 prizes — the first distributions from the Fund.

## Prizes for Members, Too

We'll also have, as usual, \$5,000 in prizes for members attending the meeting. There'll be five \$500 credits for members' electric accounts and twenty-five \$100 prizes!

In all we need 150 members for a quorum, so your odds for winning are pretty good.

## Please Try to Join Us on June 10th

Customers of investor-owned utilities don't get the chance to talk with or question management and directors. They certainly don't get to elect the members of the board of directors. But, as members of a cooperative, you are able to participate in the process.

We very much hope that you'll take advantage of that opportunity to participate, and we look forward to seeing you on June 10<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks for your continuing support.

Merton L. Pond,  
President of the Board of Directors

Bruce N. Giffin,  
General Manager

## Members of the Cooperative's Board of Directors



**Merton L. Pond,  
President, Bluffs**



**Thomas H. Camerer,  
Assistant Treasurer  
Eldred**



**Thomas D. Meehan III  
Roodhouse**



**Robert A. Brown,  
Vice President,  
Winchester**



**Gary K. Clark,  
New Canton**



**Robert Reed,  
Nebo**



**F. Alan Heaton,  
Secretary,  
Murrayville**



**Julia B. Eberlin,  
Brussels**



**James Gay,  
Rockport**



**Ronald K. Myers,  
Treasurer,  
Griggsville**



**William Griswold,  
Rockbridge**



# Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

## 2000 Annual Meeting

### Agenda

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Call to Order   | Merton L. Pond, President  |
| 2. Invocation  |                            |
| 3. Determination of a Quorum                                       | F. Alan Heaton, Secretary  |
| 4. Notice of the Meeting   | Mr. Heaton                 |
| 5. Approval of the Agenda  | Mr. Pond                   |
| 6. Adoption of Roberts Rules of Order                              | Mr. Pond                   |
| 7. Appointment of Robert V. Bonjean, Jr., Esq, as Parliamentarian  | Mr. Pond                   |
| 8. Approval of the Minutes of the 1999 Annual Meeting              | Mr. Bonjean                |
| 9. Treasurer's Report  | Ronald K. Myers, Treasurer |
| 10. President's Report   | Mr. Pond                   |
| 11. Illinois Rural Telecommunications Co. Report                   | Larry K. Black             |
| 12. General Manager's Report                                       | Bruce N. Giffin            |
| 13. Approval of the Actions of the Board of Directors and Officers | Mr. Bonjean                |
| 14. Report of the Nominating Committee                             | Eric Lakin, Chair          |
| 15. Election of Directors  | Mr. Bonjean                |
| 16. Other Business   | Mr. Bonjean                |
| 17. Introduction of Youth Day Winners                              | Mr. Pond                   |
| 18. Employee Safety and Service Awards                             | Mr. Giffin                 |
| 19. Drawings for Prizes for Local Charities From the Members' Fund | Mr. Pond                   |
| 20. Adjournment  |                            |

Copies of the minutes of the 1999 Annual Meeting will be available at the meeting.

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**Door prizes for members will be drawn throughout the meeting. Five \$500 prizes first, then twenty-five \$100 prizes.**

# Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

## Condensed, Comparative Income Statement

	1999	1998
Revenue	\$ 13,543,046	\$ 12,863,057
Purchased Power	6,496,331	7,791,454
Operations and Maintenance	1,781,128	1,597,535
Customer Accounting	578,218	497,885
Administrative & General	1,064,249	1,032,467
Depreciation	846,181	805,441
Amortization of Stranded Costs	459,800	-
Interest for Stranded Costs	453,004	-
Long-term Interest	834,389	813,706
Short-term interest	36,762	12,131
Other Income Net	134,609	24,950
Transfer to Deferred Revenue	480,000	-
Margin	\$ 647,593	\$ 446,212

## Condensed, Comparative Balance Sheet

<b>Assets:</b>		
Net Utility Plant	\$ 23,878,518	\$ 22,426,599
Investment in Subsidiary	837,794	632,956
Investment in Associated Organizations	978,536	1,013,292
Cash	94,171	276,241
Accounts Receivable	1,581,982	1,559,998
Materials and Supplies	534,456	458,647
Prepayments	6,564	22,927
Other Accrued Assets	1,169,404	1,265,747
Regulatory Assets	9,110,189	-
Other Deferred Debits	254,615	271,721
Total Assets	\$ 38,445,924	\$ 28,796,848
<b>Liabilities:</b>		
Equity	\$ 10,408,745	\$ 9,372,895
Long-term Debt	16,642,368	16,331,911
Debt for Stranded Costs	7,150,518	-
Capital Leases	712,760	437,718
Accumulated Operating Provisions	153,262	76,630
Notes Payable Short-term	1,400,000	400,000
Accounts Payable	610,585	988,357
Customer Deposits	116,552	92,395
Other Current Liabilities	1,247,883	1,092,085
Deferred Credits	3,251	4,857
Total Liabilities	\$ 38,445,924	\$ 28,796,848

## Voting by Proxy

The Cooperative's Bylaws allow a member to carry as many as three proxies and vote them at the Annual Meeting. You are urged to attend and vote in person if you are able to do so; but, if you are unable to attend, please send your proxy with a friend or a neighbor.

**PROXY** As a member of Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative, I, the undersigned, hereby appoint

\_\_\_\_\_

**My proxy to vote in my stead at the Annual Meeting of Members to be held in Winchester, Illinois, on June 10, 2000, and I hereby confirm and ratify my proxy's vote.**

**Witness my hand, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2000.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed Name**

## Report of the 2000 Nominating Committee

The 2000 Nominating Committee, duly appointed by the Board of Directors of Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative, met at the Cooperative's offices on Tuesday, March 28, 2000. After due deliberation, the Committee nominated Robert Reed of Nebo for the vacancy from District 5 on the Board of Directors; Julia Eberlin of Brussels for the vacancy from District 9 on the Board of Directors; Thomas Camerer of Eldred from District 10 on the Board of Directors; and William Griswold of Rockbridge for the vacancy from District 11.

Eric Lakin, Chair  
Fred Bradshaw  
John Early  
Francis Toppmeyer  
Larry Hoots

**touch·stone** \ 'təch-,stōn \ n **1** : stone related to flint and formerly used to test the purity of gold  
**2** : a test or criterion for determining quality or genuineness **3** : **Touchstone Energy<sup>SM</sup>** : a nationwide alliance of electric co-ops

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**TOUCHSTONE ENERGY<sup>TM</sup>**. IT'S THE DEFINITION OF WHAT SERVICE SHOULD BE.

## Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

<http://www.touchstoneenergy.com>

# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 7/00



*Joan Glenn (left) and Rose Mary Garrett remove suckers from the plants. At the left, nearly ripe Garrett Hygroponics, with a future specimen below.*

## **Garrett Hygroponics** **Locally Grown Goodness**

They're wonderful tomatoes grown without soil in a cluster of greenhouses on a hill just west of Chambersburg and north of Perry on Illinois Route 107, and you can buy some there — on the honor system, just the way we used to get vegetables from local growers for years.

**Continued on the next page.**



## **Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative**

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## Hygroponics

Continued from the preceding page.

You can also get them at markets in many local towns including, Pittsfield, New Hartford, Barry, Pleasant Hill, Mt. Sterling, Rushville, Beardstown and across the river in Missouri. Just look for the Garrett Hygroponics label on the tomato, or ask your grocer for some.

They're at farmers' markets in Jacksonville and Edwardsville. In Jacksonville, the farmers' market is held on Tuesdays and Saturdays at Lincoln Square and on Tuesdays and Thursdays on the green. In Edwardsville, on Saturdays.

Merle Garrett started the business on Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative's system 20 years ago. He, his wife, Rose Mary, and her sister, Joan Glenn, continue the work, which runs from January planting through picking in November. Actually, during the peak of the home garden season, mid July through September, the business slows down — "You can't give tomatoes away!" (We once knew a couple who would drive around in the dark of summer nights leaving zucchini at peoples' houses. Just a suggestion.)

We asked, "How many tomatoes do you grown in a season?" and the response was, "Oh, we picked 2,000 pounds last Monday. So, with some weighing as much as a pound, we may harvest as many as 3,000 tomatoes a day." We didn't bother to do the calculations for a whole season, but, in all, it's a great many beautiful tomatoes.

The varieties at the stores are *Blitz*, *Match* and *Goliath*. You'll find *Sweet Cluster*, along with yellow and pink varieties at the farmers' markets.

Like any other agricultural activity, this is a tough competitive market with low cost imports and other area producers, so quality and freshness are keys.

Taste them for yourself, and see how good they are.



## Illinois Ele

High school students from Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative's Youth Day" toured the State Capitol, Lincoln's Tomb, the Illinois Supreme Court and the Executive Mansion.

Seventeen area students met with Senator Laura Kent Donahue and Representative Art Tenhouse at the Capitol. In the front row, from the left, Kristi Brogdon of Chapin, Tonya Hoots of Franklin, Erin Prater of Pleasant Hill, Elizabeth Maggart of Greenfield, Lisa Marie Albrecht, Elizabeth Postlewait and Sami Kay



## ic and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day

Martin of Carrollton, Nicky Cortez of Hull, and Patty Brogdon, chaperone, from Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative.

In the back row, also from the left, Christine Kinscherff and Lacey Goewey of Pleasant Hill, Jeremy Reed of Hamburg, Emily Myers of New Salem, Amy Brokaw of Pittsfield, Senator Donahue; Representative Tenhouse, Mandy Bergschneider of Concord, George Metcalf of Jacksonville, Philip White of Kinderhook, Shirene Turpin of Franklin, and Teresa Sipes, Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative, chaperone.

**If you'd like your son or daughter to be included in the Youth Day next year and to have a chance of winning a trip to Washington, talk to your high school's guidance counselor.**



**Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative Director F. Alan Heaton from Murrayville and Congressman Ray Lahood during the 2000 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Legislative Conference in Washington. Leaders from rural electric cooperatives across the nation gather each year to meet with Congressmen and Senators to discuss issues which affect electric cooperatives and the rural communities they serve.**



## Members' Fund Distributes \$5,500 to Area Charities

At the Annual Meeting, held this past June, members had the chance to put the name of their favorite charity into a box representing the district in which they lived. A \$500 winner was drawn from each of the eleven boxes, one for each director district.

The winning charities and the members who put them in the boxes were:

**Cancer Society Relay for Life,  
Greene County**  
by Terry Edwards

**American Heart Association of Pike  
County**  
by Richard Johnson,

**Manchester Baptist Church**  
by Edward Johnson,

**Manchester Methodist Church**  
by Joann Stice,

(Edward Johnson and Joann Stice live in different districts, but, apparently both attend church in Manchester.)

**Blessing Hospice, Pike County**  
by Donna Thomas,

**South County Library (Calhoun)**  
by Julia Eberlin,

**Athensville Baptist Church**  
by Raymond Allen,

**Winchester United Methodist Church**  
by Matt Clayton,

**Pike County Cancer Society**  
by Harold Booth,

**Pike County Cancer Society**  
by Sharon Dressler, and

**Red Cross of Scott County**  
by Donald Schone.

(There are four Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative director districts with portions in Pike County and adjacent Brown, Adams and Calhoun Counties. There are two districts in Scott County.)

Continued on the next page.



## Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

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## Members' Fund

Continued on the preceding page.

The Members' Fund has a Section 501(c)3 designation from the Internal Revenue Service, and contributions to the fund are tax deductible.

The Cooperative rounds up the amount of a participating member's electric bill to the next highest dollar amount, from \$88.32 to \$89.00 for example, and puts the difference, 68 cents in this example, into the Fund.

Through the beginning of June 2000, contributions to the Fund and interest total \$11,099.98 – contributions total about \$2,700.00 a month.

Members of the Cooperative's Board of Directors sit on the Board of the Fund which can help local charities and, in some instances, individuals who have suffered from severe medical conditions or from the loss of housing.

### To Request Help from the Fund for Your Local Group Write a Note

If your community group wants support from the Fund, write to the Fund at the Cooperative. Describe how your group helps the community, what its needs are, how many people could be helped by a donation and provide any additional information that you feel would be helpful.

The Fund intends to make contributions throughout the Cooperative's service territory, but that depends upon getting requests from across the area.

The next distribution from the Members' Fund will be in late August 2000, so if your local group wants help, write now.





## At the 2000 Annual Meeting

Members listening to presentations at the left and in the registration line below. Our photographer also got a shot of the happiest person in the cookie line, below left.

Five members won \$500 credits on their electric bills, and twenty-five won \$100 door prizes.

Members re-elected four directors to the Cooperative's board: Tom Camerer of Carrollton, Julia Eberlin of Brussels, Bill Griswold of Rockbridge, and Robert Reed of Nebo.



## Excerpts from a letter from West Pike High School, Kinderhook:

Ms. Patty Brogdon  
Illinois Rural Electric

Dear Patty:

Enclosed you will find pictures I took of my students preparing the pizza recipes you sent...

All of my students really enjoyed the contest and loved eating the pizza. Our taste-testers, or judges as we referred to them, were students and staff members of West Pike Junior and Senior High School. Now they really enjoyed their part of the contest. They were glad to help out every time we asked...



Jared Borrowman during the vote tally.

... we began by making all of the crusts... and getting a feel for the dough... We made the crusts again and evaluated them. Then we put toppings on and judged them one more time. We used similar toppings for the pizzas when the recipe said, "add your favorite topping."

Finally we took the daily winners and made them all one last time. It was very hard to choose between the recipes for the final winners. Voting was very close. There were no recipes the students didn't like. When I told them they had to choose one, I would hear, "But I like them all. How can I choose only one?" On any given day every recipe was a hit for the kids. The fourth choice overall was the

Vegetable Pizza. It was a very close count with the 3<sup>rd</sup> place winner. Kids do like vegetables, too!... the contest was a great opportunity for the kids to evaluate and compare several different recipes in a situation other than their usual food labs. The contest provided an added awareness to carefully following the recipes as they were written in preparation and in baking.



Working on toppings from the left: Juanita Doil, Tony Anders, Jennifer Hathaway and Nathan Chapman.

The winners in order were: Donna Lawson, Winchester; Teresa Sipes, Aley; and Debbie Hazelrigg, Barry.

Once again, I would like to thank you for allowing my students to do the contest for you. It was not only a tremendous learning experience but also a very enjoyable time as well. Contests such as this go a long way in instilling a "love for cooking" in teenagers. An extra bonus was the real-life opportunity to be part of a team project that was not a normal part of our curriculum.

Sincerely,

Joan Dieker  
Food Science Instructor

**Should we do another contest next year? Let us know. Send us a note for the recipes.**

# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 10/00

## Why are we here? And, just who are we anyway?

An organization's mission statement and its definition of its values answer those questions, and it's an important task to re-visit those issues from time to time.

Over the course of the summer, a group of the Cooperative's employees spent some time working on a mission statement and on the underlying values.

The group included people from all parts of the organization: linemen, customer service representatives, engineering technicians, as examples. Their years of service ranged from as little as three years to well over twenty-five.

Here's the result:

### Mission

**In the cooperative tradition, Illinois Rural Electric is dedicated to improving the quality of life for our members through dependability and innovation.**

That mission will be achieved by living our values, put another way by working to answer that second question at the top. Those values are:

**Pride**, meaning hard work, quality, satisfaction, attention to detail and a job well done.

**Integrity**, meaning honesty, trust, commitment, loyalty, and being able to "walk the talk."

**Safety**, which comes first on any work we perform, commitment to employee and public safety, above and beyond what's required by law.

**Service**, meaning quality, the little things that set us apart, going the extra mile, the variety of things we provide and a caring attitude.

**Teamwork**, showing our unity, how we work together, building on each other's strengths, achieving synergy and harmony.

Our doing all of those things in support of our mission will produce measurable results. As examples, we're working toward members' giving us a better favorable rating when we survey them again at the end of this year. We're working toward reducing outages, and we're working toward your needing to call with a problem less often. We'll share the results with you here.



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## **Pea Ridge Elk Ranch Nebo, Illinois**

**Visit [www.elkranchers.com](http://www.elkranchers.com)**

Head south out of Nebo across the railroad tracks. Turn right at the stop sign. Then take your first left. It's a country road up a hill, through a valley, and then up a hill again. You could be on your way to Heartland Lodge, but this time we're going to take a right turn before getting to the Lodge, just a while after seeing some impressive fencing. (There's a slightly easier, but less interesting, way to get there from Illinois Route 96.)

The eight foot fencing is for the elk. The view out over the Mississippi bottoms beyond the steep hills, valleys and ponds is one of the most striking in Illinois Rural Electric's service area. Even if you're not in the market for an elk, it's a great trip.

Pea Ridge Elk Ranch was started in 1974 by John and Lisa Virgin and Jack and Sandy Buchanan. The present herd is made up of about 250 head of cows, calves and bulls.

"Elk offer several different avenues for income, such as breeding stock, the velvet market and game ranches. Other avenues include meat, leather and hard antler sales," according to Sheila Kroeschel, marketing director for Pea Ridge.

"Many of the elk will be sold to other ranches that want to incorporate different bloodlines into their herds to improve quality," she says, "A wellplanned breeding program is a must. Artificial insemination is also becoming an important part of any breeding program. We use it to take advantage of many outstanding bulls that we otherwise would never be able to use.

"From an established breeding program, you naturally achieve the heaviest velvet production. Velvet antler is a renewable resource, regenerating itself each spring. With an average bull harvesting 15 to 20 pounds of velvet and the price per pound any where from \$35 to \$110, you can reach \$700 and up per bull."

Velvet is formed into capsules and is taken in a largely Asian market for arthritis, muscle development, increased strength and endurance, and other uses.

Elk are native to Illinois and do well here, one acre will support three elk, and they require only a third of the feed that beef cattle need, according to Pea Ridge.

Heifers from high quality blood lines cost about \$2,250, while bull calves run about \$800 to \$1,000.

Sheila will be delighted to talk with you about elk ranching. You can reach her at 217-734-1511. The web site is excellent, and we recommend your visiting it first. Nothing, however, compares with the drive south of Nebo.



## Members' Fund to help Western Illinois 4H Camp

### Applications Needed from Pike, Green, Cass and Calhoun Counties

Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative Members' Community Fund will make a donation of needed appliances and wiring material to the Western Illinois 4H Camp which has benefited hundreds of members' children over the years. The Cooperative will donate the labor needed to improve the wiring in the dining hall.

The Fund will be making distributions after this is written, but before this magazine reaches you. The requests to date have come principally from Morgan and Scott Counties.

We plan a complete accounting of receipts and distributions for you in the next edition of *Illinois Country Living*.

But don't wait until then if you know of a local group that could use some help. We're especially interested in making distributions to groups in areas which haven't recently received funds. We want the Fund to help all of the Cooperative's service area.

Write to the Members' Fund at Illinois Rural Electric. Tell us how the money would be used to help a local organization. Your request doesn't have to be long. But it would be helpful if you could answer questions like these: How would a donation to a particular organization help the community? How many people would be helped? How long has the organization been in operation? Are the requested funds for a special project or for ongoing support?

**touch-stone** \ˈtɛch-,stɔn\ *n* **1** : stone related to flint and formerly used to test the purity of gold  
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# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 11/00



Board President Bob Brown, right, presents a check for \$1,000 from the Members' Fund to Bill McLaughlin, left, and Rev. Jim Mackey for the Scott County Food Pantry. It's the largest gift the pantry has ever received, and it's possible because of cooperative members' generosity.

## Thanks to You, the Members' Fund Keeps Giving

Since its inception earlier this year, members have donated \$18,631.03 to the Members' fund.

The first \$5,500 in distributions were made at the Annual Meeting in June.

The Fund's board made major gifts at its meeting in September. The next planned distribution will be in January.

The largest gift, \$3,000, goes to the YMCA of North Greene County to help with the new Y facility there.

The second largest gift, \$2,500, goes to Farm Safety Just for Kids. That gift will help kids - and their families - across our service area.

A \$1,000 went to the Newspapers in Education which will help 290 classroom teachers in Morgan, Cass, Scott, and Brown Counties.

*Continued on the next page.*



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*Continued from the preceding page.*

## **Members' Fund**

Another \$1,000 gift went to Scott County Unmet Needs which helps families get back on their feet and back to work.

\$500 gifts went to a youth program at All Saints Church in Roodhouse, and another to Learning in Love Preschool in Greenfield.

A \$100 gift went to American Legion Post 441, Bluffs. Another went to a family who had lost a member in an automobile accident and had significant medical bills for other members. Finally, \$100 went to Jacksonville Ambucs which provides medical assistance in the surrounding areas.

The Fund's board, made up of the executive committee of the electric cooperative board, also set aside \$3,000 for long-term savings. The plan is to set aside roughly 10% of donations so that when a major need arises, say something of the magnitude of the 1993 floods, the Fund will be able to respond appropriately.

The Fund's balance for distribution, including interest earned, was \$505.33 on September 30. About \$2,700 is added each month.

The Fund works by taking participating members' bills to the next highest dollar, for \$87.35 to \$88.00 as an example, with the 65¢ here going to the Fund. It's a great example of hundreds of small gifts really adding up.

Contributions to the Fund are deductible from federal income taxes. If you're not presently a member and would like to help, please give us a call.

## **Thank You, We Appreciated Your Business, and Your Call**

We got a call recently from a lady who lived near of White Hall who has been a member of Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative for over 50 years.

She said she hated to disconnect her service - Illinois Rural Electric has always been "very kind," but she was moving to town.

## **Happy Thanksgiving Everybody**

The office will be closed on the Friday after Thanksgiving, as it has been for the past several years.

If you have an emergency situation, call 1-800-468-4732.

## **Our Favorite Turkey Treatment? Brining**

We were skeptical at first, but it was the best bird we ever had. Not a bit dry.

Brining is a way to add free moisture to a turkey.

We've done this by rubbing the whole bird with salt (a lot of salt), putting it into a stainless steel stock pot, covering with water and letting it sit in the refrigerator over night. Rinse thoroughly before baking. And, try this too, bake for the first 20 minutes or so, breast side down.

Many of us will also do turkey for Christmas, let us have your favorite method, and we'll share it here.

## Illinois Electric Cooperative Memorial Scholarship Deadline January 1, 2001

For the sixth consecutive year, Illinois electric cooperatives will award \$1,000 academic scholarships to high school seniors. The three scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative Memorial Scholarship Program.

High school seniors pursuing a college education in Illinois are eligible to participate in the program. Two of the three scholarships will be awarded to the children of electric cooperative members. The other \$1,000 will go to the son or daughter of a cooperative employee or director.

Candidates are judged on the basis of grade point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay which demonstrates their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

The IEC Memorial Scholarship program was established in 1994 by the board of directors of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

For more information about the IEC Memorial Scholarship Program, contact your high school guidance counselor or Patty Brogdon at Illinois Rural Electric.

## Lineman to the Rescue

One of our Winchester based line crews was working in Martinsburg, south of Pittsfield, and lineman Sam Surratt heard the repeated sound of a car's horn blowing. The elderly man in the car had been missing for nearly two days, and we're happy that Sam responded to the call for help.

## Outlook for 2001 Wholesale Electric Costs

On the whole, we expect wholesale power costs to remain fairly stable next year. Natural gas costs have been higher this year, and that may continue into 2001. If the higher natural gas costs continue at their present level, the impact will add roughly 1% to Illinois Rural Electric members' bills.

## Bigger than Your Usual Standby Generator

The cooperative's 125 kW Cat diesel generator was acquired principally to provide emergency back up service for Winchester's wells. Winchester pays a monthly fee for the service, and, when it's not needed for backup, the cooperative has the equipment available to keep portions of the system "hot" while maintenance, which would otherwise mean turning off the electricity, takes place.



Control Panel on the 125 KW GENSET

# MAYTAG ★ BRIGHTEST ★ STARS *on* SALE

*Introducing New Cleaning Performance*



**OUTSTANDING CLEANING**  
— and —  
**KEEPS WHITES  
WHITE!**

## **MAYTAG ATLANTIS™ WASHER**

- Unique TurboRinse™ System Powers Residue Out of Clothes for **Outstanding Cleaning.**
- Swirl-Away™ Water Extraction System Draws Residue Out of the Tub, **Keeping Whites White.**

# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 12/00



## Want your own Web page?

If you're like us, (that is unlike our high school aged daughters and sons, who could well have designed and built their own Web pages) and need some help getting on line, call Vikkie Becker, pictured above, at Illinois Rural Telecommunications Co. E-mail [vbecker@irtc.net](mailto:vbecker@irtc.net).

Vikkie, a Greenfield native who now lives with her husband, Marc, and their son in Alexander, came to IRTC earlier this year.

She studied art at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield and at MacMurray College in Jacksonville, and using her graphic arts skills and talents to design Web pages was a natural fit.

Continued on the next page



## Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 80, Two South Main Street  
Winchester, Illinois 62694

1-800-468-4732

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



## Your own Web Page

You could have a simple one page presence on the Internet, or you and your company could have multiple pages promoting your business lines and products.

Every Web page option can incorporate the means for people to send you e-mail, and we can help you accept Master Card or VISA payments securely over the Internet.

Illinois Rural Telecommunications is located at 940 West Morton Avenue in Jacksonville. It's a subsidiary of the Cooperative, providing Internet access, DirecTV and competitive long-distance service.

The phone number is 1-800-713-4782. Vikkie is usually in the office on Mondays and Fridays.

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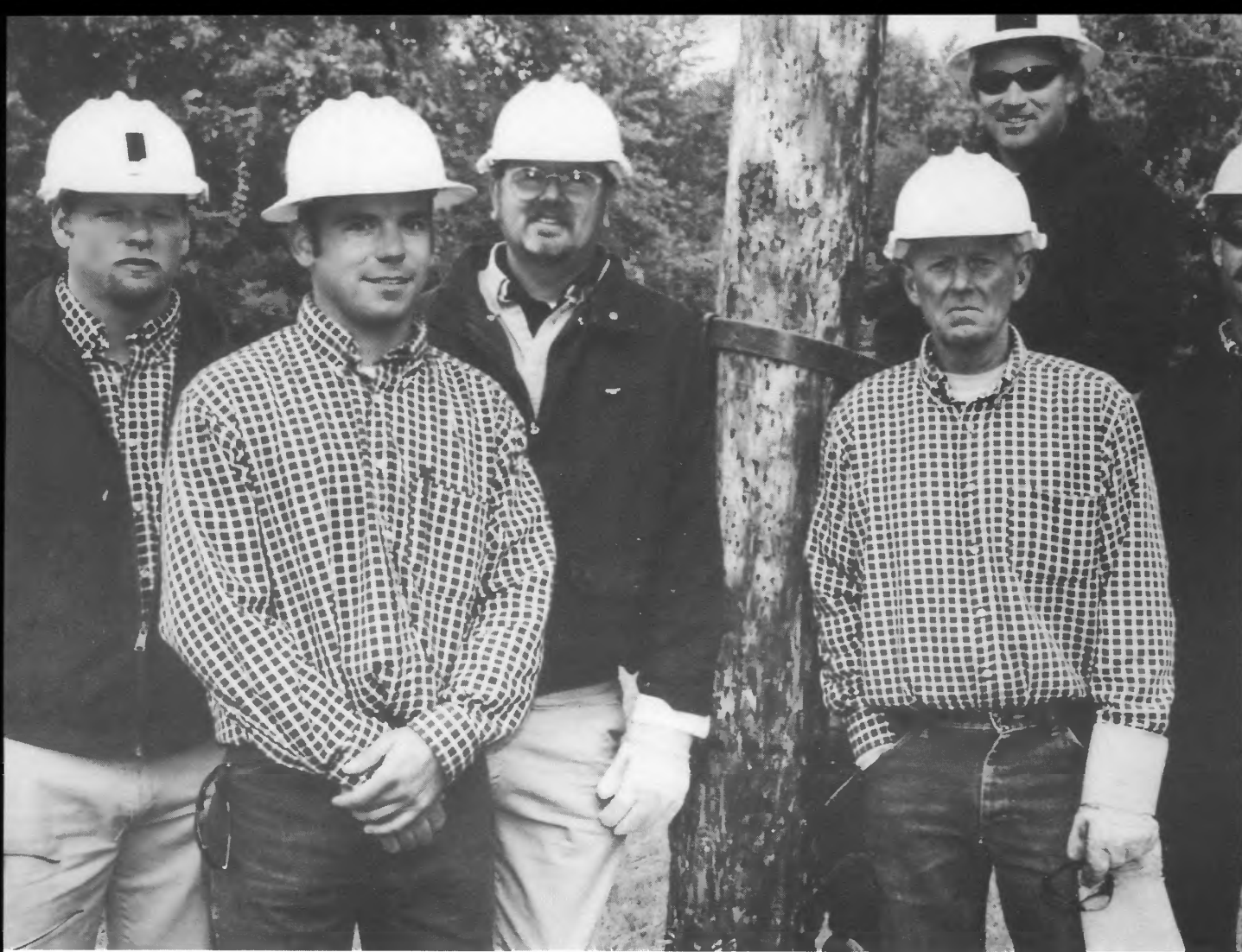
## **Happy Holidays Everybody!**

**Merry Christmas  
Happy Hanukkah  
Happy New Year**

**We hope your Holidays  
are filled with joy and  
your New Year filled  
with prosperity.**

**The office will be closed  
from December 22  
through December 25.**

**If there's an emergency  
anytime, call  
1-800-468-4732.**



## Championship Rodeo Teams

Two, three man teams from Illinois Rural Electric competed in the statewide Lineman's Safety Rodeo.

The first team, from the left, consisted of Brad Kemper, Nick Freeman and Kenny Roundcount, all of Winchester. The second team, continuing from the left, was Ed

Dolen of Winchester, Jamie Killday of Griggsville, and Randy Long of Murrayville.

The rodeo, now in its fourth year, provides the opportunity for friendly competition among electric cooperatives and municipal electric systems. This year 19 teams competed. Scores are based upon time and upon the work being performed safely and properly.



## Better Training Means Better Service

Pictured from the left are Illinois Rural Electric linemen Nick Freeman, of Winchester, and Sam Surratt of Beardstown, with "rubber gloving" school instructor Jeff Price of Shelbyville.

Nick and Sam completed the one week, "rubber gloving" course at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield this past fall. It's part of a comprehensive training program conducted at Lincoln Land and at cooperatives throughout Illinois by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

"Rubber gloving" means that a person is using rubber gloves to work on energized electric lines. Sometimes, instead of saying energized, we just say it's "hot."

Rubber gloves are rated to protect a lineman from twice the voltage of the electric system being worked on, and they aren't work gloves. A lineman wears work gloves over the rubber gloves.

What's the benefit to Cooperative members? The benefit is that necessary work can be

done without shutting off the power. No interrupted service and no resetting all those clocks.

## Rebuilt Transmission Lines Also Mean Not Resetting the Clocks

Illinois Rural Electric and eleven other electric distribution cooperatives own our/ their supplier, Soyland Power Cooperative, which delivers electricity to the Cooperative on Soyland owned transmission lines.

Our system is served by two major sections, the north and south loops. The south loop has been completely rebuilt over the past couple of years, and Soyland will begin rebuilding the north loop which serves the Pittsfield, Griggsville, Naples, Neeleyville and Arenzville substations.

Once complete, after approximately three years, something called "operations" will decline in a remarkable way. An "operation" is when the lights blink off long enough so that you have to reset your lights. Over the past year, that's happened about 70 times on the north loop. We'll all be glad when it's fixed.