

Jo-Carroll Hi-Lines

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc., Elizabeth, Illinois A Touchstone Energy® Partner 1(800) 858-5522

PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Connie M. Shireman



Shireman

The consumer comes first

No one knows what is best for a community more than the men and women who live and work there. Your friends and neighbors at your local electric cooperative have a long history of working as your partners in bringing jobs and opportunity to the communities they serve. Every day, cooperatives make a positive difference by bringing people together in a unified effort to improve the quality of life in their communities.

Just as rural communities came together to form electric cooperatives some 60 years ago, other communities are coming together today to do the same thing. While the consumers of these new cooperatives may already have electric service, they want something more. They want the promise that electric cooperative service makes to consumers every day: to put their priorities first three-fourths above all others. They want what consumers of electric cooperatives already have: a voice in determining the direction the co-op takes.

We are in business to serve you. Our rules are simple three-fourths what is best for the consumer is best for us. What hurts the consumer hurts us. To that end, we're committed to fighting for what helps the consumer and against what hurts the consumer.

Our history of working for the best interests of consumers puts us in a unique position as electric utilities. No other type of utility can claim the remarkable record of consumer advocacy that we can. No other utility can claim the high level of consumer satisfaction and loyalty that we can.

While our commitment to current consumers remains as strong as ever, electric cooperatives are also committed to helping others gain the benefits of electric cooperative service as well. Our work is based on the belief that consumers in any part of the country ought to have the opportunity to benefit from having their own, locally controlled electric cooperative. That is the fight we will carry forward in the continuing effort to change the electric utility industry.

Deniece Holman

A Touchstone Energy® Partner
The power of human connections



Schuelke joins Jo-Carroll

Pete Schuelke has recently joined Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative as a lineworker. Pete started with Jo-Carroll the end of October and has been working with the overhead line crew installing new services and changing out poles.

Originally from Watertown, SD, Pete was previously employed as a lineworker for five years at Harrison County Electric Cooperative located in Woodbine, IA. Pete also gained electrical experience while working for a municipal and an electrical contractor. Furthermore, Pete graduated from Northwest Iowa Community College with a degree in powerline technology.

Pete along with his wife Laura and four children are looking forward to getting acquainted with the area and people of Jo-Daviess and Carroll counties. With his knowledge of electric cooperatives and experience as a lineworker, Pete is a great addition to Jo-Carroll's line crew.

Please welcome Pete, and his family, as the newest employee of Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative.



Pete Schuelke

A couple of degrees equal a bunch of dollars!

Office hours

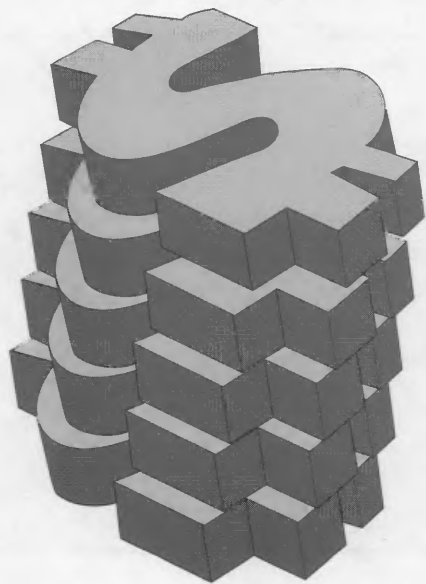
7:30 a.m. to
4 p.m.

Monday through
Friday

During hours call
815/858-2207
or 1-800-858-5522.

Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll 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 story, contact Jo-Carroll and claim your prize no later than the 10th of the month following publication

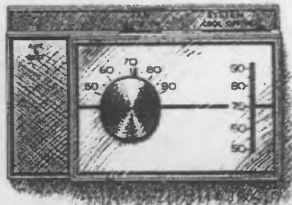


A degree here or there and pretty soon you are talking real money. Lowering your thermostat by one or two degrees in the winter can mean real savings on your heating bills. Raising the temperature can also result in much larger heating bills.

For example, lowering your thermostat to 68 degrees from 70 degrees will save you 6.2 percent on your heating bill. Lowering the thermostat just one degree will save you 3.1 percent. However, let's say you like to keep your home toasty warm in the winter. Cranking up the thermostat to 76 degrees will increase your heating bill by 18.6 percent. Remember, each degree that you raise or lower the thermostat from 70 degrees means you will pay 3.1 percent more or less on your heating bill.

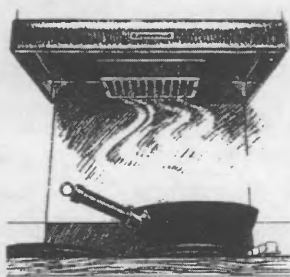
5 FREE

QUICK-AND-EASY WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY IN YOUR HOME THIS WINTER



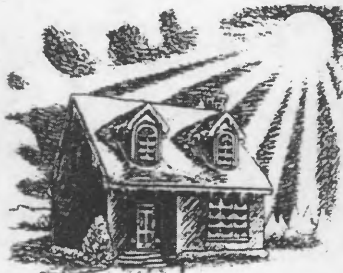
1 Use your thermostat like the gas pedal in your car.

When you're driving your car, you know what happens when you constantly speed up and slow down — or run at high speeds for an extended period: You waste gas. The same thing happens when you frequently change the temperature setting on your thermostat: You waste electricity. So set your thermostat and forget it, once in the morning and once at night. Or install an automatic setback thermostat to handle the settings for you.



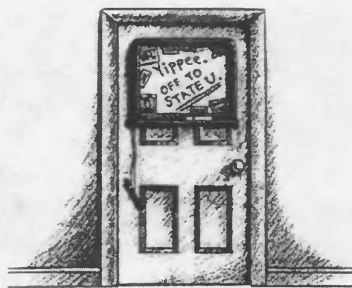
2 Turn off exhaust fans as soon as you're done.

Exhaust fans are pretty handy in a kitchen or a bathroom. But as soon as the fan's job is finished, turn it off. Otherwise, you'll pump an enormous amount of heated air outside, and your heating system will have to work extra hard to catch up.



3 Take advantage of the sun.

Contrary to what some people think, you don't need a sophisticated solar heating system to take advantage of the sun's warmth during winter. Just watch the sun's movement across your home to see which windows get plenty of sunlight — and open the blinds, shades and draperies on those windows to let the sun shine in to supplement your home's heating system.



4 Close the door on wasted energy.

Are you heating a room you don't use? If so, close all registers, doors and windows — and check to make sure none of the items you've stored in the unused room need to be kept at normal room temperature.

If you fixed all the energy wasters in your home, you probably could save a considerable amount on your energy bill every year. Of course, every home is different — but imagine the impact five- or ten-percent savings could have! Best of all, none of the ideas shown here will cost you anything but a little time — so why get started right now?



5 Close your fireplace damper.

Up to eight percent of the warm air from your heat pump or furnace will go right up the chimney every day you leave your fireplace damper open. When there's no fire, close the damper. And even when a fire is burning, it's a good idea to use glass doors to keep any of your home's heat from escaping.

Jo-Carroll Electric wishes you warm holiday greetings

It is holiday time and with the holidays come twinkling colored lights stung everywhere, wonderful warm gingerbread cookies just pulled from the oven and the aroma of hot spiced cider brewing. These holiday traditions are made possible by the energy you receive through Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative.

When the weather outside is frightful

Traditions may warm your heat, but what about the rest of you? Keep your family warm and toasty when the winter wind blows with heating systems recommended by the energy professionals at Jo-Carroll Electric. We can advise you on a heating system that will be safe and efficient for years to come. And, just in time for the holiday spending crunch, we can also recommend energy saving ideas to save you money on your heating bills.



Safe holidays are happy ones

A happy holiday is a safe one too. Be sure to check your holiday lights when you bring them out of storage. Damaged cords can be unsafe and could cause a fire. Be sure that you do not overload outlets or extension cords. Remember that fresh Christmas trees require regular watering. Check the water level daily to keep the tree from drying out and to avoid a potentially dangerous fire hazard.

Holiday candles are very popular. But keep them away from your tree, curtains or any other flammable material. Candles can be very intriguing to small children, so take extra precautions if little ones are in the house. And always remember to extinguish them when no one is in the room.

The warmth of the holidays

The employees and directors of Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative would like to extend our warmest greetings to you and your family during this holiday season. From the glow of the lights on the tree to the sound of holiday music, we are a part of your annual celebrations. Whatever your holiday traditions may be your electric co-op is there for you, providing reliable electric service and state-of-the-art electrotechnology solutions.

When your power is out . . . we're on the line!

Check your circuit breakers or fuses. If possible, determine if your neighbors have electricity. Then call Jo-Carroll Electric's Outage and Emergency Report Line. Please have your account number and location readily available so we may restore your service quickly.

During office hours (800) 858-5522

After office hours — dial (800) 927-5254





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M.
Shireman

A new cooperative era



A Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Hi-Lines

Jo-Carroll

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc., Elizabeth, Illinois • 1(800) 858-5522

America's electric cooperative network is celebrating the new millennium with a clear vision of what our priorities need to be in order to continue our strong consumer protection mission that began more than sixty years ago. And while it is a new era of opportunity, it will also be an era that is more complex and challenging than ever before.

The first few months of this year will undoubtedly be the most challenging and important 100 days in the history of the electric cooperative movement in 60 years. This spring, the House Commerce Committee is expected to consider legislation regarding the restructuring of the electric utility industry. However, the Committee, along with a good portion of the rest of Congress, still does not have a clear vision of how an electric cooperative is different from other players in the industry.

Therefore, our challenge over the next few months and for the years to come is to provide Congress with that vision — a clear idea of who we are and whom we represent. As the House Commerce Committee prepares for hearings on restructuring legislation, we can expect to face an intensive lobbying effort against electric cooperatives — the likes of which we have never seen. The sole purpose of this effort is to convince the Commerce Committee, and ultimately the rest of Congress, that electric cooperatives do not belong in a competitive marketplace.

They will say that we do not deserve the distinction that we've been fighting

for. The distinction that allows us to protect our consumers and live up to our responsibility to offer choice.

They will say to anyone who will listen that our job is done — that we are relics of the past that no longer deserve the consideration of Congress. In short, they believe that we are no longer needed.

For our directors, managers, employees and consumers, these attempts to harm electric cooperatives ought to serve as the rallying call for all of us to pull together and unite in a common effort to defeat these anti-consumer initiatives.

We must let everyone who we come into contact with know that there are very real differences between electric cooperatives and other power suppliers in the electric utility industry. We must continually inform and remind consumers, opinion leaders, and elected officials why our consumer protection responsibilities are unique.

We must work together to explain who we are and whom we represent to the policy makers that do not yet have a clear understanding of our role in the marketplace.

By working together, we can aggressively fight for the right to meet growing consumer needs; for the right to stay and work together as cooperatives; and for the ability to protect the privacy of consumers.

These are our unique responsibilities, and these are the reasons why our job as electric cooperatives is not yet finished.

A Touchstone EnergySM Partner



Office hours

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday through
Friday

During hours call
815/858-2207
or 1-800-858-5522.

Board of directors voting process

Ballots for the Jo-Carroll board of directors election will be sent out soon. By returning your ballot you are participating in the democratic process of election. Each vote counts, so please remember to return your ballot immediately.

There are a few important procedures to remember when completing your ballot:

- The ballot must be filled out by the person whom the membership is listed under.
- The return envelope must be signed or the ballot is invalid.
- All ballots must be received by 4 p.m. Friday, March 10.

Strict anonymity is enforced when tallying the ballots. By signing the return envelope, your ballot is in no way associated with your account. Thank you for your participation and we hope to see you at the annual meeting on March 11.

Return envelope

I hereby certify that I personally marked the enclosed ballot.

Voter

Sign Here  _____

Individual Member or Joint Member.

Guardian or Legal Representative of:

Chairman of:

Designated Voting Representative of:

(Name of Organization, Ward, or Person Represented)



**Certification must be signed by voter
for the ballot to be counted**

Annual meeting reminder

The 60th annual meeting of the members of Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative is just around the corner, so mark your calendars today. This year's meeting will be held on Saturday, March 11, at the River Ridge School Gymnasium in Elizabeth.

Attending the annual meeting makes you eligible for a number of prizes. Lunch will be provided, along with live entertainment. The annual meeting is a great opportunity to meet the directors and employees of your member-owned electric cooperative. See you on March 11.

Look for additional information in next month's issue.

Safety first

Avital part of providing reliable electric service to our members starts with safety. At Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, safety is considered job one. The focus of establishing a safe working environment stretches from the office to the job site.

On a monthly basis, safety meetings are held to train employees on the latest safe working practices. Safety instructors from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) assist in training by providing their industry expertise. A variety of topics are discussed and a wide range of skills is developed at these meetings. Training on topics such as CPR, tree cutting, chainsaw operation, pole top rescue and working around high voltage lines are performed on an annual basis.

As a credit to the excellent safety record of the employees of Jo-Carroll Electric, a safety accreditation award was recently presented to the cooperative. By maintaining safe working practices, the employees of Jo-Carroll Electric are able to provide our members with first class and reliable electric service.



Foreman Bill Allen performs the annual pole-top rescue certification.

Energy tips

1 Help out your water heater — your water heater represents one of the biggest energy users in your home. Here's a quick, easy tip you can use to help your water heater work more efficiently and last longer. Drain a bucket of hot water from the faucet at the base of your water heater several times a year. This will reduce sediment buildup and make the heating elements last longer.

2 Seal that leaky ductwork — a national study found that leaky ducts waste about 16 percent of all heating and cooling energy each year. To stop this energy loss, your ductwork should be made airtight. Make sure your ducts are firmly attached to the vents, to each other and to the heating/cooling unit with foil tape or adhesive.

3 Shed some light on energy efficiency — here's a surprising fact: one 100-watt bulb gives off 50 percent more light for the same energy than four 25-watt light bulbs. If you need more light in an area, try using one higher-wattage bulb rather than several smaller lights.

When your power is out . . . *we're on the line!*

Check your circuit breakers or fuses. If possible, determine if your neighbors have electricity.

Then call Jo-Carroll Electric's Outage and Emergency Report Line. Please have your account number and location readily available so we may restore your service quickly.

During office hours 800-858-5522
After office hours — dial (800) 927-5254



Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll 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 story, contact Jo-Carroll and claim your prize no later than the 10th of the month following publication.

Frequently asked questions

Why do electric bills go up in the winter?

Even if you do not have electric heat, several factors can contribute to higher winter bills. Warm baths on cold days feel great - and heating extra water can increase your electric consumption. Winter holidays often mean additional cooking, baking and bright holiday lights. Shorter days and longer nights mean lights stay on longer. Most heating systems use electricity for some functions, such as operating the fan, and many run almost continuously when it's very cold. Clothes dryers are generally used more in the winter. Space heaters and electric blankets that provide additional comfort also use additional electricity to operate.

What is load management?

Load management is a technique used by our wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, to reduce peak demand. Peak demand is the greatest demand placed on our electric system. Peak energy demands are generally on the coldest winter days and hottest summer days. Jo-Carroll Electric's load management system allows us to reduce our load by shutting off various items via remote control at times of high electrical demand. This cooperative currently has several thousand members participating in our dual fuel and water heater programs.

Why do you receive the Illinois County Living magazine?

Electric cooperatives began publishing periodicals such as this in the 1940s to communicate with our members when cooperatives were being attacked in extensive advertising and publicity campaigns. Today, distorted and otherwise inaccurate information is still a problem and the attacks by our competition continue.

Jo-Carroll Electric relies on the Illinois Country Living not only to relay information about the cooperative, but also to encourage you to use electricity wisely and safely. Promoting electrical safety can help save lives and money.

What do the lights in my water heater control mean?

Radio receivers (controls) are used to

shut off water heaters and electric heat systems during peak energy use periods. By looking at the lights on the control you can determine if there is a control period.

The green light will be on at all times or will frequently flash on and off. This light indicates there is a proper power supply and radio signal to the control.

The red light indicates that your water heater is shut off for load control. If you are out of hot water, check for the red light and check your water heater breaker and reset button. If power to your water heater is switched off and then turned back on, a red light will remain on for about 10 minutes. This is a safety delay built into the radio receiver.

If you are on Jo-Carroll's dual fuel program an amber light will appear in the receiver window when your electric heat is being controlled (shut off). Absence of an amber light indicates normal operation of your electric heat.

What is a kilowatt-hour?

A kilowatt-hour (kWh) is the method utilized by electric companies to measure, through the use of a meter, how much electricity a customer consumes. A kilowatt-hour can be defined as the amount of electricity used by a 100-watt light bulb burning for 10 hours. In terms of human, physical exertion, a kilowatt-hour can be compared to climbing a thousand-foot flight of stairs 18 times or shoveling snow from a driveway 10 feet wide and two miles long!

What is the Facility Charge?

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative's facility charge is used to pay for the cost of providing electrical service at your location. The investment associated with maintaining the electrical facilities of this cooperative not only include the material and labor needed to maintain lines and trim trees, but also cover other fixed costs such as taxes, insurance, debt and interest. Jo-Carroll Electric incurs these costs whether or not any kilowatt-hours are used. The facility charge of \$15 per month is a fee that every Jo-Carroll customer on our regular rate pays. However, the actual cost of providing service is nearly double the amount that is being charged.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M.
Shireman

2000 Annual Meeting



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Hi-Lines

Jo-Carroll

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc., Elizabeth, Illinois • (800) 858-5522

Your member-owned, member-controlled electric cooperative will conduct two of the most important events in the cooperative's year during the next few weeks.

The first event, one that is very significant in that it firmly places democratic control of your rural electric system in the hands of its member-owners, is that of director elections. This year the directors representing Districts 3, 5, 7 and 8 will be up for election. The nominating committee met at the cooperative headquarters on January 13, 2000 and selected the following candidates for election:

District 3

Chuck Stevenson, 4 Pheasant Walk,
Galena, IL 61036

Jack Polly, 15 Beacon Trl,
Galena, IL 61036

Bernard Bosch, 44 E. Point Dr,
Galena, IL 61036

District 5

Richard Reusch, 6998 S. Derinda Rd,
Elizabeth, IL 61028

Wayne Krohmer, 620 E. Reusch Rd,
Elizabeth, IL 61028

Eldon Carroll, 6246 S. Gras Rd,
Elizabeth, IL 61028

District 7

Russ Simpson, 12727 West Point
Rd, Mt. Carroll, IL 61053

Nancy Gable, 1705 Blue Mountain
Rd, Mt. Carroll, IL 61053

District 8

Vernon Law, 12572 Airport Rd,
Savanna, IL 61074

Allen J. Beyer, 11477 Dauphin Rd,
Savanna, IL 61074

The election for directors from these districts will be conducted through the mail. Only members who reside in the districts in which elections are being held this year will receive ballots. Members in those districts should carefully review the material they will receive in the mail and promptly return their completed ballots to Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op.

The second upcoming event, perhaps the most important of the year, is the 61st annual meeting of Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative members. This meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2000 at the River Ridge High School Gymnasium in Elizabeth. As in the past we will feature reports of directors, officers and the President/CEO of your cooperative. Musical entertainment, a box lunch and attendance prizes will be provided to all Jo-Carroll members who attend. Michelle Maves, a 16 year-old singing sensation from Freeport, IL, will be the featured entertainer. We urge all cooperative members to make plans now to attend.

Mark your calendar!

MARCH 11

Registration at 11 a.m. • Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative
Annual Meeting • River Ridge High School Gym • Elizabeth, IL

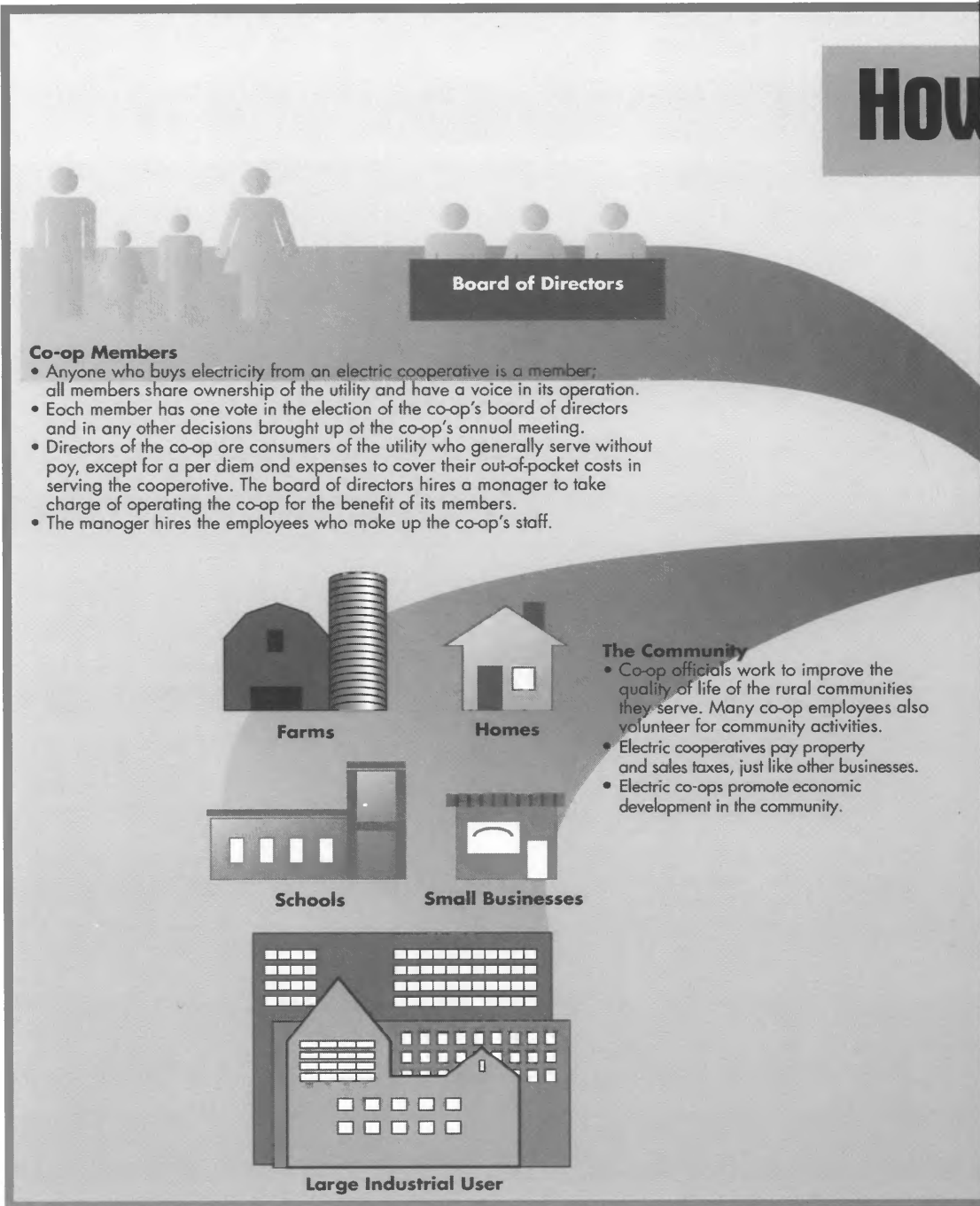
**Jo-Carroll
Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

793 U.S.
Route 20 West
P.O. Box 390
Elizabeth, Illinois
61028-0390

(815) 858-2207 or
(800) 858-5522

OFFICE HOURS:
7:30 a.m. — 4 p.m.

How



Electric fireplaces offered through Jo-Carroll

Considering installing a fireplace in your home...how about an electric fireplace? Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op is currently offering various models of Dimplex electric fireplaces and electric stoves. These 1500-watt units require only a standard 120-volt plug-in making installation easy. Furthermore, the fireplaces and stoves have independent heat/flame control and adjustable flame brightness to suit each occasion. Stop by our office in Elizabeth to take a peek at these units on display.

Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op is proud

to announce the availability Dimplex electric fireplaces and electric stoves. The addition of an electric fireplace or stove will bring value and convenience to every household. It is a direct result of feedback from our members that these products are made available. Call our office today at (800) 858-5522 to inquire about this incredible product.

** Dimplex electric fireplaces and stoves are not exclusive to Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op members.*

your electric co-op works

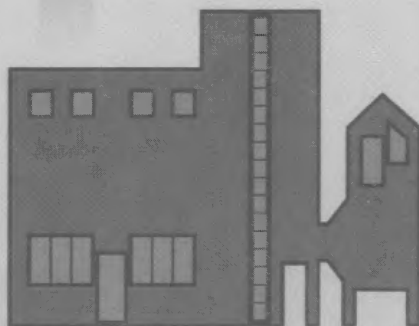


The Co-op

- Because the co-op is owned by the consumers who buy its electricity, it is responsive to their needs and to the needs of their community.
- Your co-op is organized as a not-for-profit utility. It does not sell stock and is not under pressure to earn profits for out-of-state stockholders.
- If a co-op collects more money than it needs to operate, it reinvests that money into the system—keeping its need to borrow high-interest capital to a minimum. Eventually, those margins are refunded—in the form of capital credits or patronage dividends—to the people who paid for the electricity in the year the margin occurred.
- Each year, the co-op holds a membership meeting at which consumers may vote for members of the board of directors.

Electricity Generation

- The principle task of the electric cooperative is to supply its members with safe, reliable power at reasonable rates.
- Co-ops distribute the electricity they buy from larger, power-supply cooperatives. Power-supply cooperatives often are referred to as generation and transmission cooperatives (G&Ts).
- There are two parts to power supply: *generating*—or contracting for bulk supplies of—electricity at wholesale prices and *transmitting* it to the co-ops for distribution to the co-ops' members. Electricity is produced by the spinning of a generator; most generators are driven by steam (of fossil fuel or nuclear power plants) or falling water (at hydroelectric plants).
- The co-op delivers reliable power to homes, schools, farms, small businesses, industries, government buildings and other locations within the boundaries of its service territory.



Power Plant

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Teen singing sensation to perform at annual meeting



Michelle Maves

Mark your calendars for March 11th, this is one annual meeting you won't want to miss. This year's featured entertainer is Michelle Maves, a 16-year old singing phenomenon from Freeport, Illinois.

Michelle performs a variety of music styles, including pop, jazz, gospel and country, to cater to her audience's entertainment desires.

Michelle will be performing "Give My Regards to Broadway," a musical tribute to your favorite Broadway musicals complete with New York street setting, elaborate costumes, and fun for the entire audience. This show is a real crowd pleaser.

At the age of 16, many think that Michelle is just getting started in her career. However, this talented young star

has been entertaining crowds since the age of three. She has performed the National Anthem for several professional sports teams including the Milwaukee Bucks, Chicago White Sox and Chicago Cubs. She has opened shows for country music stars Ronnie Milsap and Johnny Paycheck and performed in a showcase at Branson, Missouri. During a 1998 concert in Rockford, IL, Michelle shared the stage with country music superstar Shania Twain performing one of Twain's hit singles.

Michelle's magnificent voice along with her acting skills has helped her land roles in Timber Lake Playhouse productions. She has also performed in several Highland Community College productions. Michelle's wonderful talents helped her earn the 1998 Rockford Area Music Industry "Star of Tomorrow" award.

For an afternoon of enjoyable entertainment, attend this year's annual meeting to witness the musical talents of Michelle Maves, the 16-year old with a million-dollar voice. **Sue Tippett**

SEVEN cooperative principles

1st principle: voluntary and open membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2nd principle: democratic member control
Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights — one member, one vote — and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

3rd principle: member's economic participation
Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. They usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities by the membership.

4th principle: autonomy and independence
Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations, controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

5th principle: education, training, and information
Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. They inform the general public — particularly young people and opinion leaders — about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6th principle: cooperative among cooperatives
Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

7th principle: concern for community
While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M. Shireman

Seven cooperative principles that guide Jo-Carroll Electric



Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Hi-Lines

Jo-Carroll

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc., Elizabeth, Illinois • 1(800) 858-5522 • www.jocarroll.com.

The importance of staying "On Message"

We are in a period of history during which the way we do business is being redefined.

But what we are going through is not just about doing business.

It's also about *why* we are in business.

The lives of more than 100 million Americans are improved by more than 48,000 cooperative private businesses that generate more than \$100 billion in annual economic activity. Cooperatives enrich our communities, large and small. Through cooperatives, those who work together to build a business can attain all its benefits and those who need service can get it on their terms.

The unsurpassed ability of cooperatives to give people economic opportunity must be guarded for the enduring good they create for our nation. As one of the nation's largest cooperative enterprises, we would be irresponsible if we did not vigorously defend our right to provide our consumer-members any service or product they demand of us. We would not be serving our membership well if we could not explain and demonstrate that the only reason our customers demand more from us is because they believe they can do it better and/or cheaper themselves.

Cooperative businesses are created through the self-reliance of Americans who come together to meet their com-

mon economic, social and cultural aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise. The benefits that cooperative businesses create have long been recognized and their role in our society has been confirmed year after year. Today, cooperative businesses are an irreplaceable part of our economy.

We have a historic opportunity now to reach out to all Americans and help them understand how they can become more self-reliant during these uncertain times. We are already doing a lot. Through Touchstone Energy's aggressive marketing programs, we are telling America why we are unique and why we are the best hope for consumers. But, to be most effective, we cannot rely upon advertising and special events alone. We must hammer the message home in all that we say and do, and we need to stay "on message" because we cannot be sending the public mixed messages at this critical time.

To be understood, our message about *why* we are in business must be clear and uncomplicated. I would suggest that nothing could be more compelling than to simply remind Americans that electric cooperatives have been serving their communities for more than 60 years. They are guided by their members. They are privately owned businesses that empower the consumers that own them.

Office closing

Our offices will be closed on Friday, April 21, in observance of Good Friday.



Office hours

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday through
Friday

During hours call
815/858-2207
or 1-800-858-5522.

Jo-Carroll website ready to surf

Recently, Jo-Carroll Electric finished our website and it can now be viewed on the World Wide Web. So the next time you are surfing the Internet, be sure to drop by Jo-Carroll Electric's website at www.jocarroll.com.

Earn money while viewing Jo-Carroll's site. Each month in the "What's New" section we will print the name of one of our members in an article. If you spot your name, give us a call and you will win a \$25 credit on your next electric bill. Kids, also check out the "At School" section to see how you can win prizes.

Remember to fill out your census form

The importance of census 2000 to rural regions cannot be understated. Here are some of the reasons why the census is so crucial: **Ronald Rahm**

Help your community thrive

Does your neighborhood have a lot of traffic congestion, elderly people living alone or overcrowded schools? Census numbers can help your community develop public improvement strategies.

Get help in times of need

Many 911 emergency systems are bases on maps developed from the last census. Census information helps health providers predict the spread of disease through communities with children or elderly people. When floods, tornadoes

or earthquakes hit, the census tells rescuers how many people will need their help.

Make government work for you

It's a good way to tell our leaders who we are and what we need. The numbers are used to help determine the distribution of more than \$200 billion in federal funds and even more in state funds. We're talking hospitals, highways, stadiums and school lunch programs.

Reduce risk for American business

Because census numbers help industry reduce financial risk and locate potential markets, businesses are able to produce the products you want.

Home sweet home office — keep it safe

With the growth of telecommuting, more Americans are setting up shop at home and equipping their home offices with computers, fax machines, modems and other office equipment. However, many homes — especially older ones — are not really equipped for these highly sensitive electronics. Look carefully around your home office for these hazards:

- Insufficient outlets. Do not resort to a tangle of extension cords to hook up all of your equipment. Use a surge suppressor or safety-rated power strip to connect and protect your computer, fax machine, copier and printer.

- Ungrounded outlets. Many older homes may not have three-prong outlets to ensure that your equipment is safely grounded. Make sure to have an electrician

come in and install grounded outlets where they are needed. Do not cut off the third prong to make the plug fit.

- Don't overload the circuits. Check your breaker or fuse box to determine which outlets are on the same circuit, and be sure that all the equipment you have on a single circuit draws no more than 1,500 watts.

- If you do not have surge protection, unplug your computer directly from the wall during a lightning storm. Also, unplug the phone line to your modem and fax machine.

- If you lose power while working on your computer, turn the computer off. When the power comes back on, a voltage spike could damage your equipment.

Source: National Electrical Safety Foundation

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc.

793 U.S. Route 20
West
P.O. Box 390
Elizabeth, Illinois
61028-0390

(815) 858-2207 or
(800) 858-5522
Office hours:
7:30 a.m. — 4 p.m.

Call JULIE before you dig

Effective Jan. 1, 1991, it is now state law to call JULIE before you dig. JULIE is a free notification service that alerts utility companies of planned digging activities in areas with underground utility facilities. JULIE operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can be contacted toll free at (800) 892-0123.

So, if you are a homeowner/renter, contractor or excavator planning to dig anytime this year, e.g., putting up a fence or clothesline, planting a garden or shrubbery, building a home, etc. — Call JULIE first!

It is necessary to utilize this Illinois one-call system so the appropriate JULIE member utility can mark the location of its buried facility. Calling JULIE can save you time, problems and money. This is a free service; you will incur no charges. Just remember to call toll free 48 hours before you dig (two working days).

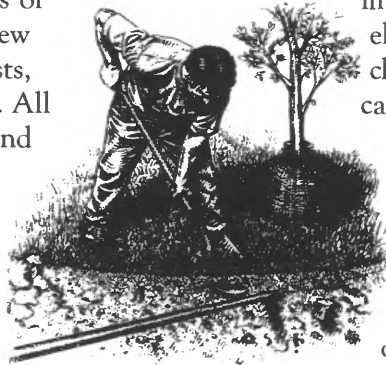
Help avoid service interruptions — call JULIE before you dig.

JULIE (800) 892-0123



Some people are shocked by what they find when they dig in their yards

It's that time of year when people begin poking all kinds of holes in the ground. New trees, shrubs, fence posts, mailboxes; you name it. All require some digging, and a hole from a foot to several feet deep. The problem these days is that you don't really know what you are going to dig into. It may only be a few earthworms or the ballpoint pen you lost a few years ago. On the other



hand, it could be a buried utility line, like 220 volts of electricity. Or you may chop right into the cable TV line just in time for your favorite program. All of which would be unpleasant and some of which could be downright dangerous. So, call your local utility before you start to dig. They'll help you avoid the shocks.

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative
(800) 858-5522

When your power is out . . . *we're on the line!*

Check your circuit breakers or fuses. If possible, determine if your neighbors have electricity.

Then call Jo-Carroll Electric's Outage and Emergency Report Line. Please have your account number and location readily available so we may restore your service quickly.

During office hours 800-858-5522
After office hours — dial (800) 927-5254




Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll 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 story, contact Jo-Carroll and claim your prize no later than the 10th of the month following publication



Our energy comes with a little extra warmth.

 Let there be light.
But not just any light.

When you get your electricity from a cooperative energy provider, it makes for a glow that only local ownership and superior service can provide.

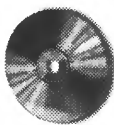
But energy is changing. And we want to make sure that the change is good for you.

That's why we've come together to create a nationwide partnership of cooperative energy providers. Together, we're known as Touchstone Energy®.



As Touchstone Energy® Partners, we can pool our resources, offer you better services, and participate in a nationwide commitment to be the

best energy providers possible.

 Of course, some things should never change, which is why Touchstone Energy® Partners will always mean locally owned, locally based energy co-ops that are more concerned with people than with profits. After all, what good is light, without a little warmth?

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative
(800) 858-5522



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M.
Shireman

Members hear of vision for future



Hi-Lines

Jo-Carroll

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc., Elizabeth, Illinois • 1(800) 858-5522 • www.jocarroll.com

During this year's meeting, held Saturday, March 11, at River Ridge School in Elizabeth, the member-owned co-op presented its vision for the future. That vision includes the possibility of a new subsidiary to provide new services. For example, the local-co-op is studying the possibility of providing electricity using a new technology called a fuel cell. Sitting next to your house like an air conditioner and powered by natural gas or propane, a fuel cell could provide all your electricity and most of your hot water. This clean, efficient power source is being tested and will be marketed through a national cooperative-owned business called Energy Co-Opportunity that Jo-Carroll has joined.

Jo-Carroll Electric leaders also talked about preparations for deregulation. Members passed new bylaw provisions that will prepare the co-op for the future. To promote the values of electric co-ops in a deregulated market, a new cooperative brand called Touchstone Energy® was recently launched. A Touchstone Energy hot air balloon, built in Hanover, will be used across the country to spread the word about the core values shared by Jo-Carroll Electric and the other 570 Touchstone Energy cooperatives that provide electricity and other services to over 15 million consumers. The balloon was inflated for only the second time at the meeting.

Jo-Carroll Electric is also joining new alliances with other cooperatives to expand its services, improve the efficiency of its operations and lower costs. Jo-Carroll Electric Electric Cooperative is joining with five other cooperatives to hire a consultant to oversee tree-clearing operations. The co-op has also committed to an alliance with the Savanna Army Depot, and is currently providing outage restoration for the Army.

Deregulation of the electric utility industry was a major topic discussed during the meeting. Richard Reusch of Elizabeth, in his chairman's report said, "Deregulation of other industries has not always been a friendly change for the better for the members we serve. Promises of better service and lower cost sometimes evaporate for the less profitable areas where our members live and work." Electric cooperatives and municipal systems have local-decision making authority on deregulation under the Illinois deregulation law. The member-elected board of directors will make the decision on when and under what conditions Jo-Carroll will participate in the deregulated market.

"The board must weigh all the risks, costs and benefits and decide what is beneficial to all of our members, not just a few," said Connie M. Shireman, president and CEO. "The board has decided to have a study done by an outside consultant to help them in this very important decision," said Shireman.

Shireman in her report also noted that the co-op is preparing for the future in other ways. For example, the co-op owns over 1,000 miles of electric line that will be surveyed using new GPS (global positioning system) technology. GPS technology will aid the cooperative in accurately mapping all its facilities and will help linemen in restoring power during an outage.

With all these changes, the cooperative's leaders have recognized the need for increased communications. Shireman said, "To better keep our members informed, we have tried to keep our employees informed regarding the deregulation process. An informed employee can also better inform members of the products and services we offer." In

(Continued on page 16b)

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Office closing



The offices of Jo-Carroll will be closed Monday, May 29, in observance of the Memorial Day holiday.

(Continued from page 16a)

addition to its monthly newsletter in *Illinois Country Living* magazine, Jo-Carroll will also make current information available to members through its website at www.jocarroll.com.

John Janssen of Chadwick gave the treasurer's report. He said that although net operating margins were down slightly in 1999 compared to 1998, the co-op is in good financial condition. Total assets

of the cooperative have grown to \$18.7 million.

The evening before the annual meeting, votes were tallied for director elections. A new director for district three, Bernard Bosch of Galena, was elected to fill the seat of Charles Stevenson, also of Galena. Re-elected were Vernon Law, vice chairman, of Savanna, Russ Simpson of Mt. Carroll, and Reusch. **Michelle Johnson**

May is electrical safety month

Each year thousands of people are injured or die from electrical fires and electrocution. An estimated annual average of 150,000 residential fires claim more than 700 lives, cause roughly 7,000 injuries, and result in over \$1 billion in personal property damage each year.

Jo-Carroll Electric, as part of an overall effort to reduce these accidents, has joined forces with the National Electrical Safety Foundation (NESF) in a public education program to raise the awareness of electrical safety.

In May, the NESF kicks off national electrical safety monthly to remind people about the four Rs of electrical safety:

- **Respect** the power of electricity.
- **Read** and follow the operating instruc-

tions that come with every that come with every electrical product.

- **Replace** worn or frayed electrical cords.
- **Relocate** appliance cords so that grownups won't walk on them and children can't pull on them.

You can provide help to the success of national electrical safety month by practicing electrical safety habits. Additional information on electrical safety can be found at the National Electrical Safety Foundation website www.nesf.org.

Jo-Carroll Electric is proud to be an integral part of moving this important initiative forward to promote and increase the awareness of electrical safety. Visit Jo-Carroll's website at www.jocarroll.com to learn more about electrical safety.

Bosch elected to board of directors



Bernie Bosch

Bernie Bosch of Galena was recently elected to the Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative board of directors. The announcement was made at the 61st annual meeting held in Elizabeth on March 11, 2000. Bernie will be replacing Chuck Stevenson and will be representing the third district.

Bernie was born on a farm in central Illinois near Champaign. Utilizing a football scholarship to the University of Illinois, he enrolled in the School of Engineering and received a BA in civil engineering. After a two-year tour of duty in Korea with the Army Engineers, Bernie returned to work for a civil consulting firm in St. Charles, Illinois. Over time, Bernie became president and principal owner of the firm that grew to 35 employees with nine registered professional engineers until selling the firm to the employees. Bernie still maintains his professional license

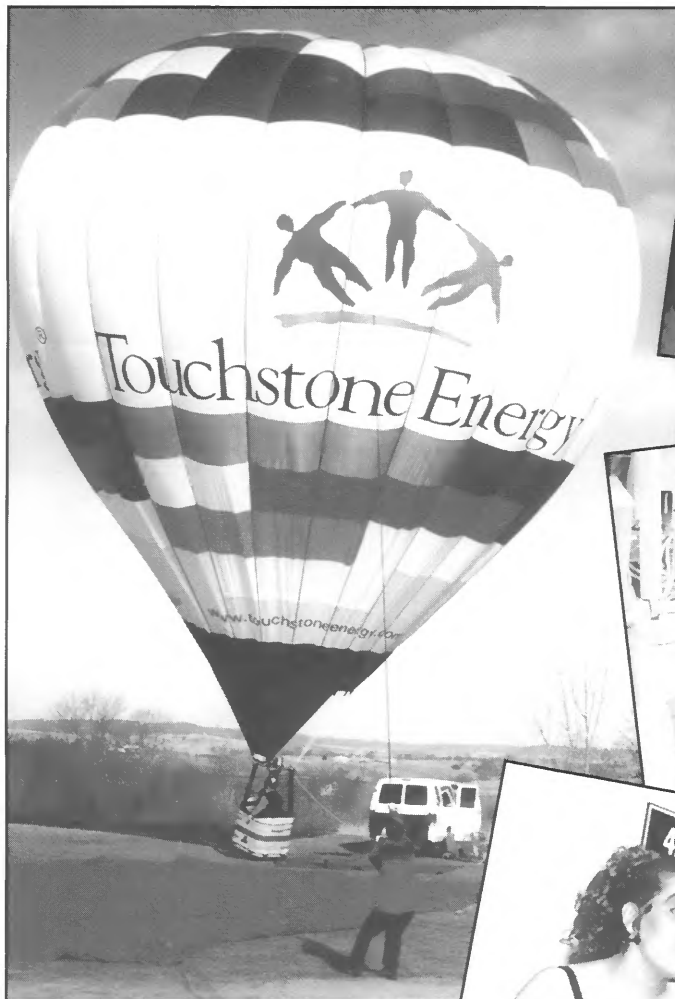
and does consulting work from his home office.

Bernie and his wife, Georgia, have been property owners in Jo-Daviess County since 1987 and built their retirement home in the Galena Territory in 1994. Their four children and eight grandchildren enjoy spending time with them at their home in the most beautiful part of the Midwest, northwest Illinois.

Not only being the president of his own company, Bernie has board experience having served six years at a bank on their board of directors. Bernie is looking forward to the possibility of using his past experiences to contribute to the continued good service of Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative and to meeting and working with people throughout Jo-Daviess and Carroll counties.

Jo-Carroll Electric is pleased to welcome Bernie Bosch as the newest member of your board of directors.

Some scenes from our annual meeting



Top photo: Jo-Carroll's membership in the Cooperative Balloon Associates made it possible to have the Touchstone Energy Balloon on hand.

Top Right photo: District 7 Director Russ Simpson speaks with Member Loyal Siedenburg.

Right center photo: A youngster inspects one of Jo-Carroll's line trucks.



Michelle Maves entertained the crowd with her tribute to Broadway.

Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll 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 story, contact Jo-Carroll and claim your prize no later than the 10th of the month following publication.

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Then call Jo-Carroll Electric's Outage and Emergency Report Line. Please have your account number and location readily available so we may restore your service quickly.

During office hours 800-858-5522
After office hours — dial (800) 927-5254



Automatic Bill Payment

Presenting the Easy, No-hassle Way to Pay Your JCE Bill

We'd like to answer your questions, if you have others, just contact us.

- Q.** From what types of accounts can payment be made?
- A.** You can specify your checking or savings account at any bank, savings and loan, or credit union that offers automatic payment. Most financial institutions do, but you might call yours to confirm.
- Q.** How will I know the amount of my bill and payment date?
- A.** Your JCE bill will show your monthly use and the date and amount of your payment. This will help you track your use and give you ample time to update your account register and make sure you have adequate funds. The payment will appear on your checking or savings statement.
- Q.** What if I don't have sufficient funds on the payment date?
- A.** It would be as if you'd written a check with insufficient funds; you may incur fees from your financial institution and JCE.
- Q.** When will automatic payments start?
- A.** Please allow up to two billing cycles. Your JCE bill will indicate when automatic payments will begin.
- Q.** What if I disagree with my bill?
- A.** Call JCE at least five days before the bill's due date.
- Q.** Where do I mail my enrollment form?
- A.** Just drop it in the return envelope with your JCE payment, or mail it to: Jo-Carroll Electric, P.O. Box 390, Elizabeth, IL 61028-0390.

Do away with dozens of bill payments

Complete this form and enclose a voided check from the checking or savings account you want to debit and mail it along with your Jo-Carroll payment.

It will be one of the last stamps you ever use for your Jo-Carroll bill payment!

Customer Information (please print)

Name _____

Daytime Phone (_____) _____

Service Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Required Financial Institution Information

Name of Institution _____

Phone Number (if credit union) (_____) _____

Address of Institution _____

Account Number _____ (please enclose a voided check or deposit slip)

Account Information

Write your JCE account number as found on your bill. _____

For additional information, contact Jo-Carroll Electric at (800) 858-5522



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M.
Shireman

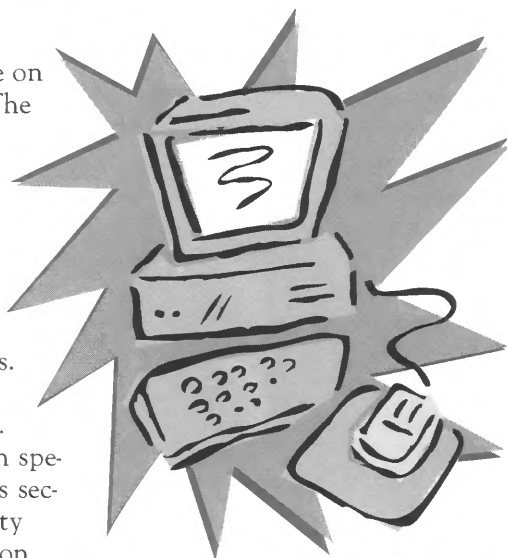
**Jo-Carroll
Electric
has
presence
on the
Internet**

Hi-Lines
Jo-Carroll

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc., Elizabeth, Illinois • 1(800) 858-5522 • www.jocarroll.com

If you haven't already heard, Jo-Carroll Electric has a Web site. Jo-Carroll can now be found worldwide on the Internet at www.jocarroll.com. The next time you're surfing the Web, make sure to check out our site.

By utilizing Jo-Carroll's Web site you will be able to find information about our products and services, what's new at the co-op, Touchstone Energy, and safety tips among many other informative issues. Not only will adults find Jo-Carroll's site interesting, but children will too. There is a special "At School" section specifically designed for children. In this section you will find games to play, safety tips, and a question and answer section where you can win a prize.



Jo-Carroll Electric's Web site is not only informative, but also interactive. We encourage people to view the site and e-mail us with any questions or concerns you have regarding your cooperative. Also, by checking the "What's New" section on a monthly basis, you have a chance at winning a \$25 credit on your electric bill. If you spot your name in an article, drop us an e-mail or give us a call to claim your prize.

Remember, the address is www.jocarroll.com so check out the site to learn a little more about your local electric cooperative.

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Monday through
Friday

During hours call
815/858-2207
OR 1-800-858-5522.

Illinois electric co-ops launch Touchstone Energy Balloon

It soars high in the vast blue skies, proclaiming the Touchstone Energy name that electric cooperatives across the country have developed to represent their core business values.

The new Touchstone Energy hot air balloon was introduced to the nation's co-op leaders at their national association meeting in Orlando, Florida, held March 20-23. Attendees saw the colorful eight-story balloon, met the world-class professional flight team, and learned about opportunities to bring the Touchstone Energy Balloon to events in their areas.

The purpose of the Touchstone Energy Balloon is to spread the word about Touchstone Energy, a national branding program adopted by 570 of the nation's rural electric cooperatives and their subsidiaries. The balloon comes with a highly qualified team of pilots and crew and a complete package of services for Touchstone Energy cooperatives on a daily rental basis. Co-ops may sponsor the Touchstone Energy Balloon at the annual meetings, local festivals or sporting events, or actual balloon competitions.

The Touchstone Energy Balloon is owned by Cooperative Balloon Asso-

ciates, LLC (CBA), a limited partnership company made up of ten electric co-ops in Illinois. Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative in Elizabeth is one of the CBA partners, along with Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative, based in Mattoon; Corn Belt Energy Corporation, Bloomington; Eastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, Paxton; McDonough Power Cooperative, Macomb; Norris Electric Cooperative, Newton; Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative Co., Auburn; Shelby Electric Cooperative, Shelbyville; Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, Marion; and Soyland Power Cooperative, Inc., Decatur.

CBA has the exclusive rights for the Touchstone Energy Balloon through the national Touchstone Energy organization, and will offer it to co-ops in other states (for a rental fee) as well as flying the balloon at some major events in Illinois. The Touchstone Energy Balloon is a goodwill ambassador, promoting the values of Touchstone Energy cooperatives: providing service with integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. **John Nickels**

In addition to the public awareness that the balloon generates, it will also benefit a good cause whenever it makes an appearance. Part of the daily rental payment that co-ops make will go toward a philanthropic organization of their choice, and the sponsoring co-op can also use the event to raise even more money for their favorite cause. For events in Illinois, the CBA co-ops have selected the Illinois Special Olympics as the recipient of these charitable donations.

The balloon program put together by CBA is personalized by the excellent pilots and ground crew that are included in the sponsorship packages. The main pilot of the Touchstone Energy Balloon is Cheri White, an attorney and young mother from Houston, Texas, who won the first Women's National Hot Air Balloon Championship last year in Rantoul, Illinois. Alternate

(continued on 16c)



pilots include Sam Edwards, who has competed in 21 National Championships and three World Championships; and Bill Arras, the 1999 World Hot Air Balloon Champion.

Cheri White is highly respected by other successful pilots, and she was impressed by the high standards set by the Touchstone Energy cooperatives. "I enjoy speaking to people about the values and benefits of electric co-ops. We'll take that message across the

country with the Touchstone Energy Balloon, as we meet with land owners, local leaders and spectators at various events," Cheri said.

To learn more about Touchstone Energy or the new balloon, you can visit two Internet Web sites. The national Touchstone Energy program is described at www.touchstoneenergy.com, and the CBA has a site about its balloon at www.cbaballoon.com.

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc.

793 U.S. Route
20 West
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Elizabeth, Illinois
61028-0390

Tips for maintaining air conditioners

What can a person do when the temperature rises and the air conditioner breaks down? Perhaps an ounce of prevention can avoid that frantic call to the service technician when the system is on the brink.

If properly maintained, your central or room air conditioner should keep cooling even during the hottest of days. You can perform many preventive measures to ensure the reliability and durability of your cooling equipment. Try following these tips to ensure that your central air conditioner or room air conditioner is kept in tiptop shape:

Preventive maintenance — central air conditioners

- Have your central air conditioning system inspected by a qualified service technician or contractor at the beginning of the season.
- Remember to clean the standard air filters once a month. The newer, high-tech filters need to be cleaned only every three to five months.
- When changing a filter, be sure to install a replacement that is the same size as the original.
- The outdoor unit or condenser of the central air conditioner should be free of debris. Trim or remove shrubs within one foot of the unit.
- Be careful when mowing the lawn near a condenser unit and make sure that grass clippings and leaves are not blown toward it.
- Never try to add refrigerant to an air conditioner yourself. Call a trained service technician, who has

the knowledge and equipment to do this job properly. New regulations require that the unit be serviced in such a way that no refrigerant escapes into the air.

- Do not run a central air conditioner when the outdoor temperature is below 70 degrees. Operating a residential air conditioner in cool temperatures may cause compressor failure.
- Always unplug unit before removing front cover.

Preventive Maintenance — Room Air Conditioners

- Inspect your window air conditioner at the beginning of the season and check the filter.
- Clean the filter once a month. The filter is very efficient in removing airborne particles. More frequent cleaning may be necessary depending on outdoor and indoor air quality.
- The filter may be vacuumed or washed by hand in warm water.
- Remove the filter. Consult the owner's manual for instructions on how to remove. After washing, dry thoroughly and replace filter by sliding it downward behind the front grille.
- Do not obstruct the front grille air intake section. Do not obstruct the top air discharge section. Allow air to circulate freely around the outside of the unit without obstruction.
- Make sure the unit is properly caulked to prevent warm air drafts from blowing in or cool air from escaping.



Reader prize

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Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative offers renewable choice

Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op is always looking for ways to provide members with the best possible choices for electricity needs. In order to respond to the increasing interest in and demand for electricity generated from renewable sources, Jo-Carroll Electric joined with the other electric cooperatives in the Dairyland system to offer the Evergreen program.

A wind farm located in Southwestern Minnesota went online in December of 1998. Three giant wind turbines generate approximately two megawatts of power, enough to power approximately 670 homes. The wind turbines, mounted on 65-meter high towers, are quite impressive with rotors measuring 47 meters across (more than half the length of a football field). Energy produced by this wind farm is fed into the local utility grid and is distributed to consumers just as it is with conventional power plants. The Dairyland Power Cooperative system receives one-third of the total output.

Since its inception, the Evergreen program has been a great success. "With 24 member co-ops participating, we not only met our goal of 1,800 blocks (100 kWh each) of energy per month, but are now generating a waiting list of interested co-op members," says Julie Plath,

EnPower's manager of market planning & research. "After a year of operation, the wind farm production met our expectations."

Cooperative members who participated in the Evergreen program should be proud to know that the program helps save up to 2.7 million pounds of coal annually during a period of increasing electric demand.

Electric Cooperative members participate in this program on a voluntary basis and commit to a certain number of energy blocks per month. Participants agree to take part in the program for at least one year. The program has been designed for customers who want electricity produced from a renewable resource and are willing to pay more for it. The power costs \$3 more per 100 kWh. Choosing to participate by purchasing one block of energy would, for example, raise a \$75 monthly bill to \$78. Customers who are satisfied with the efficient coal-fired and hydroelectric power they currently receive do not pay a higher bill to cover this new resource.

If you would like more information on the Evergreen program or would like to be included on the Evergreen waiting list contact Jo-Carroll Electric's office at (800) 858-5522 and ask for Brad Pecinovsky.

Jo-Carroll goes digital

Jo-Carroll Electric, along with Osrose and Chapel Mapping, began the process of gathering information to digitize our mapping system last fall. Osrose, the same company that tests our electrical poles, will be gathering information about Jo-Carroll's physical plant (power lines and poles). The field information will then be utilized by Chapel Mapping to design and implement a computerized map and outage program for the Jo-Carroll system.

The data collection process must be completed by walking pole to pole. A complete inventory and a digital picture of each pole will be taken. This process also involves implement-

ing a Global Positioning System (GPS). Every pole, meter and underground cabinet will be geographically located using GPS. Once the field information is gathered we will have an accurate inventory of every pole, including wire sizes, materials on the pole, pole attachment information and a GPS location for each unit.

The digital mapping program is scheduled to be implemented and operational by the end of 2000. So if you see some workers inspecting your electrical facilities and carrying around a large backup don't be alarmed, we are just in the process of upgrading our mapping system to better serve your needs into the future.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M.
Shireman

Cooperative spirit the antidote for tough times



There is no question that the crisis in rural America is reaching unprecedented levels. The growing gaps in investment and infrastructure—already too wide—are growing every day and making it harder and harder for rural Americans to participate in the 21st century economy. Without serious attention, the entire country will suffer as rural America falls behind.

Electric cooperatives and our consumer-owners live these challenges every day. And while the crisis in the agricultural economy certainly plays a big part in this crisis, other infrastructure gaps contribute to the barriers that exist in overcoming these challenges.

Internet use by rural households, for example, falls far below the rest of the country. In addition, education and health care services are suffering, and income levels lag far behind our counterparts in other regions of the country.

But, for more than 65 years consumers in rural America have come together using cooperative efforts to overcome the challenges facing our communities. We are doing a great deal to close these gaps. But more needs to be done and we cannot do it alone.

Congress recently recognized this

fact when it took a giant step forward in closing the technology gap by enabling the delivery of local television broadcasts over satellite receivers to rural families that are unable to receive these signals over the air. The overwhelming votes in both the U.S. Senate and House are an indication that Congress recognizes the need for more attention to be paid to the needs in rural America.

But industry is ignoring rural America. Just as the big power companies ignored us 65 years ago, companies cashing in on the technology gold rush are ignoring rural Americans. For them, there is no gold in the hills and valleys of rural America. But we know it's there.

It is there in the will of rural Americans to succeed. It is there in a labor market hungry for new opportunity. It is there in the resilience of rural people that has helped them through tough times before.

With that resilience we're going to do it again. Working in a strong public-private partnership, we are going to close the prosperity and infrastructure gaps present in rural America, and bring better times to many more families across this country. After all, we know how to do this—we've done it before.

Joe & Sheri Koos

OFFICE CLOSING

Our office will be closed July 4, in observance of Independence Day holiday.

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Monday through
Friday

During hours call
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or 1-800-858-5522.

Dennis Wurster retires from JCEC

After nearly 37 years of dedicated service to Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Dennis Wurster, general foreman, decided to call it a career. Many of you know and have interacted with Dennis throughout his career at Jo-Carroll Electric. Whether he was restoring power to your house during a storm or building your new service, Dennis was always looking out for the best interests of our members and the cooperative.

How many of you remember what you did the first day of your job? Dennis recalls changing out transformers by Chadwick, which was not an easy task. Since JCEC did not have a bucket truck, linemen had to climb each pole and pull the transformer up using a hand line and rope blocks. When Dennis first started, all the holes for the electrical poles were dug by hand. Dennis noted that the addition of bucket trucks and digger derrick units increased the efficiency and safety of working on Jo-Carroll's electrical system.

Throughout Dennis' career many

storms have rolled through this area. It was those winter ice storms and summer wind storms which Dennis comments as some of his most memorable experiences while working for the co-op. Many times Dennis had to travel to downstate Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin to help neighboring co-ops restore power after a storm, often spending several days away from his family. Dennis commented that it is exciting to restore power and a challenge to keep the lights on.

Although Dennis is retiring, he still has plenty to keep him busy. Now that he has a little free time, Dennis and his wife Marilyn plan on spending more time with their two sons and five grandchildren. They also plan on traveling and catching a few fish at Apple Canyon Lake.

The experience and dedication that Dennis brought to Jo-Carroll Electric is immeasurable. The directors and employees of Jo-Carroll Electric thank Dennis Wurster for his dedicated service to the cooperative and wish him the best during retirement.



Dennis Wurster

When your power is out . . . *we're on the line!*

Check your circuit breakers or fuses. If possible, determine if your neighbors have electricity.

Then call Jo-Carroll Electric's Outage and Emergency Report Line. Please have your account number and location readily available so we may restore your service quickly.

During office hours 800-858-5522
After office hours — dial (800) 927-5254



Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc.

793 U.S. Route 20 West • P.O. Box 390 • Elizabeth, Illinois 61028-0390

Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op committed to electric reliability

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative is devoted to providing you reliable, responsive electric service year-round by investing in the construction and maintenance of quality facilities. However, as summer approaches, we are reminded that Mother Nature has been known to occasionally challenge utilities with damaging storms.

During the past few summers, utilities have also been challenged by high heat and humidity levels, combined with growth in the region, that increased the demand on electric systems throughout our region and across the nation.

One key component of our reliable, low-cost system that helps balance these challenges is Jo-Carroll Electric's load management program. "We have created an innovative load management system which enables our power supplier to manage the energy supply to water heaters for short periods of time, without inconveniencing our members," says Brad Pecinovsky,

Member Service Supervisor. "This program enhances reliability for all members during extraordinary times. It also helps reduce costs for all co-op members with additional savings for participating members. On average, members participating in the load management program are saving approximately \$100 each year."

In addition, Jo-Carroll Electric and its partners in the Dairyland system of electric cooperatives are together achieving a total savings of about \$4 million a year. Because power suppliers need to own or purchase enough power capacity to meet their needs during peak periods, load management decreases our costs by reducing the total capacity that our power supplier needs to have available. It also decreases the total amount of energy that we need to produce overall. Finally, load management frees up additional capacity, lowering the cost for all co-op members.

Tips to beat the summer heat.

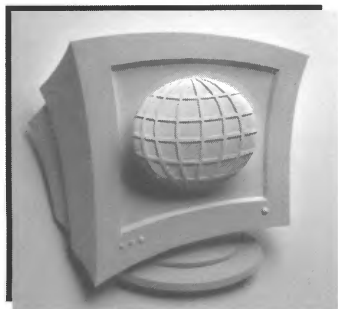
The hot summer weather can be challenging for all of us, but if you keep in mind a few tips, you can save your household valuable energy dollars:

- When using an air conditioner, set the thermostat no lower than 78 degrees.
- Shut lights and other appliances off when not in use.
- Draw shades or blinds to prevent the sun from adding more heat to the room.
- Postpone chores requiring electrical use until the temperature drops in the evening.
- Try using fans instead of air conditioners. Fans use as little as one-tenth the energy as air conditioners.

If you have any questions about participating in the load management program, feel free to call the energy professionals at Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative at (800) 858-5522.

Reader prize

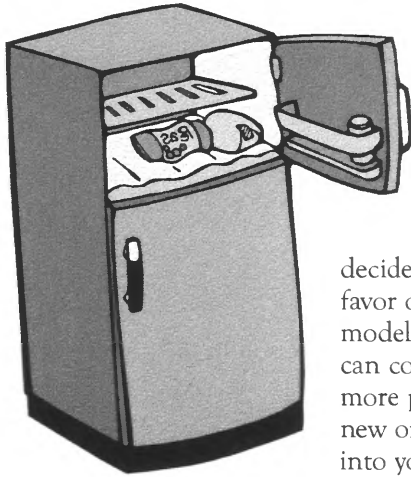
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Jo-Carroll website ready to surf

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Earn money while viewing Jo-Carroll's site. Each month in the "What's New" section we will print the name of one of our members in an article. If you spot your name, give us a call and you will win a \$25 credit on your next electric bill. Kids, also check out the "At School" section to see how you can win prizes.



Is it time to retire your fridge?

Refrigerators are among the biggest energy-users in American homes. You might want to take a look at yours and decide if you should retire it in favor of a new, more efficient model. An old inefficient model can cost you more than \$100 more per year to operate than a new one and puts more waste heat into your home, too, putting an extra strain on air conditioning. The good news is that the most efficient standard refrigerators are less expensive. The bad news is that many of the features consumers want, such as automatic icemakers and on-door ice and water dispensers, make refrigerators less efficient. You have to consider your family's needs to make the best choice.

Some points to consider if you're refrigerator shopping:

- Side-by-side refrigerator/freezers use more energy than top-freezer models.

- It costs much less to buy and operate one large refrigerator than two small ones.
- Piling things on top of the refrigerator can affect air circulation. Keep it clear.
- Check the interior temperatures of your fridge and freezer with a separate thermometer. For maximum food safety and energy efficiency, the refrigerator should stay around 35 to 40 degrees F, the freezer from 0 to 5 degrees F.
- Clean the condenser coils once a year to help the fridge run efficiently. Mount your refrigerator on a wheeled platform or slides to make access to the coils in the back simpler.

Would you like more information on how to cut your home electric bills? Call your local electric cooperative for more information. As a consumer-owned utility, your co-op is always happy to help you save money.

Touchstone Energy





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M.
Shireman

An inside look at customer choice



Customer choice, deregulation, re-structuring, retail wheeling - we have all heard these terms numerous times, but seldom ponder on their meaning or impact. The deregulation of an entire industry can be a confusing time for both consumers and companies as is evidenced in the telecommunications field. A method in helping to clear some of the confusion surrounding deregulation is education. Hopefully this article will help shed some light on customer choice and your future electrical needs.

In order to gain an understanding of deregulation one must first have knowledge of the terminology. The following are definitions of words often used when referring to deregulation of the electric industry.

Customer choice - A term used interchangeably with retail wheeling in the electric utility industry. It means customers would have a choice of power suppliers.

Deregulation - Reduction or elimination of government oversight of a segment of a private industry - usually a basic public service such as electricity, telecommunications, or transportation.

Restructuring - Changes in the electric utility industry as a result of deregulation trends. Also refers to the reorganization of an electric utility. Sometimes used interchangeably with the term deregulation.

Retail wheeling - A system in which individual retail electric customers are allowed to choose their electric energy supplier. Also known as retail competition or customer choice.

The Illinois Electric Service Customer Choice and Rate Relief Law of 1997 was passed with the hope of restructuring the state's electric utility industry and offer customers choices and competitive prices. The law provides for a phased-in schedule for customer choice. By May 2002 residential electric customers of Illinois investor-owned utilities will have an opportunity to choose electric suppliers. As an electric cooperative, Jo-Carroll Electric may elect to enter the competitive marketplace and offer our customers choice. Currently, we are studying the impact of the legislation on our members and developing a timeline for implementing customer choice.

In order to better understand how deregulation will work, one must realize that there are three major paths to follow in getting electricity to your home - generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. Many electric utilities combine these three services into one company. Jo-Carroll Electric is a distribution cooperative that relies on Dairyland Power Cooperative, LaCrosse, WI, for the generation and transmission of electricity.

Restructuring, or deregulation, refers to separating or "unbundling" these three major segments of the industry - treating each as a separate business. Power plants, producers of electricity, are the generation side of the business. The generation side is what will be open to competition allowing consumers to choose their power supplier. Transmission is the transportation of electricity over high voltage power lines from the power plant. As mentioned, Jo-Carroll handles the distribution of electricity, which is the final delivery of electricity to the consumer.

For more information on electric service restructuring, please give us a call and request "A Consumer's Guide to Electric Service Restructuring" or visit the Illinois Commerce Commission's web site at www.icc.state.il.us/pluginillinois.

The restructuring of the electric industry will take time. There are many questions still left unanswered. One thing is for certain, Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op will be around for the duration providing reliable power and first class service. Who better to rely on and trust during this period of uncertainty than your locally owned and operated electric cooperative?

Office hours

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday through
Friday

During hours call
815/858-2207
OR 1-800-858-5522.

Use light, but cut costs by lighting wisely

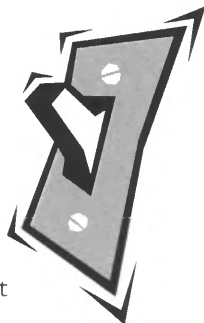
Light is wonderful! During winter, when days are short, many people suffer from “the winter blues.” They’re caused partly by the shortness of the days and partly by the weakness of the light during daytime hours.

But as wonderful as it is, artificial light is relatively expensive. About 15 percent of the electricity used in the average home goes for lighting.

Here are some suggestions to help you reduce your real “light bill.”

Indoor lighting

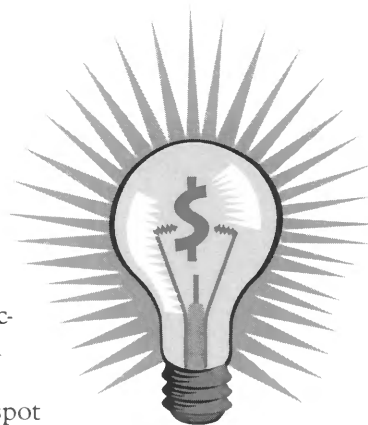
- Turn off lights in any room not being used.
- Light-zone your home. Concentrate lighting in reading and working areas and where it’s needed for safety (in stairwells, for example).
- Reduce overall lighting in non-working areas by removing one bulb out of three in multiple light fixtures. Replace it with a burned-out bulb for safety. Replace other bulbs throughout the house with bulbs of the next lower wattage.
- Consider installing solid state dimmers or high-low switches when replacing light switches, so you can reduce lighting intensity in a room and save energy.
- Use one large bulb instead of several small ones in areas where you need bright light.
- Use compact fluorescents when you can: They’re far more energy-efficient than incandescent lights. These lights can fit into many incandescent lamp sockets and provide the same quality of light. Compact fluorescent lamps are three to four times more efficient than conventional bulbs and last 10 times as long. For several years, they were very expensive, but many electric co-ops and building supply stores offer them on sale at very reasonable prices.
- Consider fluorescent lighting for the kitchen sink and countertop areas. These lights, set under kitchen cabinets or over counters, are pleasant and energy-efficient.
- Fluorescent lighting also is effective for makeup and grooming areas. Use 20-watt deluxe warm white lamps in these areas.
- Need new lamps? Consider the advantages of



Fred Paschke

those with three-way switches. They make it easy to keep lighting levels low when intense light is not needed. Use the “high” switch for reading or other activities that require brighter light.

- Turn three-way bulbs to the lowest lighting level when watching TV. You’ll reduce glare and save energy.
- Use low-wattage night light bulbs. These come in 4-watt and 7-watt sizes, and the smaller one may work well for you.
- Try 50-watt reflector floodlights in directional lamps (such as pole or spot lamps). These floodlights provide about the same amount of light as the standard 100-watt bulbs at half the wattage.
- Try 25-watt reflector flood bulbs in high-intensity portable lamps. They provide about the same amount of light but use less energy than the 40-watt bulbs that normally come with these lamps.
- Keep all lamps and lighting fixtures clean.
- You can save on lighting costs through decorating. Light colors for walls, rugs, draperies and upholstery reflect light and reduce the amount of artificial light needed.



Outdoor lighting

- Have decorative outdoor gas lamps turned off, unless they’re essential for safety. By turning off one gas lamp, you might save from \$40 to \$50 a year in gas costs. If you need an exterior light, you might consider replacing your gas model with an electric unit.
- Use outdoor lights only when they’re needed. One way to make sure they’re off during the daylight hours is to put them on a photocell unit or timer.
- Consider installing solar-powered pathway lamps or high-efficiency sodium lamps for outdoor security lighting. They are available at many local hardware stores and building suppliers.

Building a new house

A book on new home construction “do’s and don’ts” produced by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA), is now available. This book will help cooperative members, who are considering building a new home, communicate more intelligently with their designer, architect, builder, inspector, and trades people.

The book is entitled “Build Comfort into your New Home - A Practical Guide to Energy Wise Strategies” and is free for the asking. The purpose of the book is adequately stated in the book’s forward, “If you know what exists and what is possible, you’ll be better able to direct the builders to build the house you want.”

To order a copy of the book contact DCCA at (877) 818-7127.

Jo-Carroll
Electric
Cooperative,
Inc.

793 U.S.
Route 20 West
P.O. Box 390
Elizabeth, Illinois
61028-0390



It's fair time once again.
Stop by our booth at the
Carroll County fair being
held in Milledgeville —
August 7-12th.

When your power is out . . . *we're on the line!*

Check your circuit breakers or fuses. If possible, determine if your neighbors have electricity.

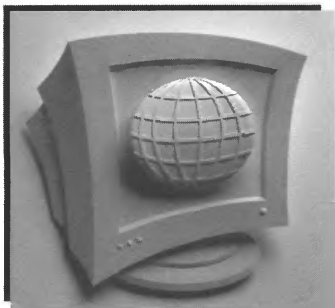
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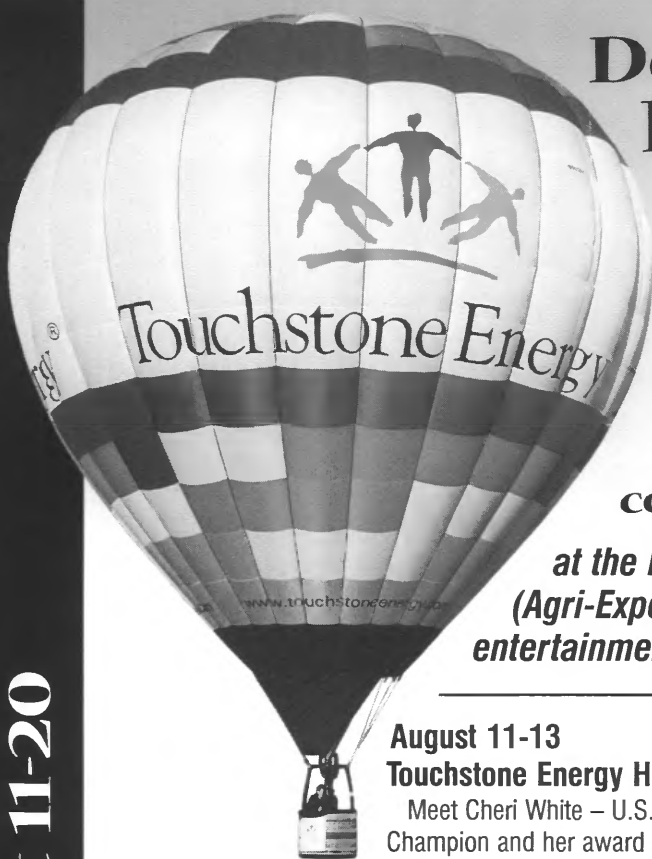


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Illinois State Fair August 11-20



**Do we
have fun
planned
for you!**

**Join Illinois'
Touchstone
Energy® electric
cooperatives**

**at the Illinois State Fair
(Agri-Expo area) for fun,
entertainment and prizes**

August 11-13

Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon

Meet Cheri White – U.S. Hot Air Balloon Ladies' Division
Champion and her award winning crew.

Kyle Finley's Live Line Safety Demo

During several 30-minute daily shows, using live electric wires, Kyle will educate spectators on how to protect themselves and others from injuries or even death caused by electricity.

Touchstone Energy booth

See the latest products and services offered by Illinois' electric cooperatives, and pick up your **free gifts**.

Complete the attached registration form, bring it to the Touchstone Energy booth and you could win a Touchstone Energy T-shirt or a Char-Broil® Patio Bistro electric grill.

Registration for Char-Broil Patio Bistro electric grill

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Electric Provider _____

Must be 18 to enter.

Bring registration form to the Touchstone Energy booth at the Illinois State Fair, August 11-20. Names will be drawn daily for Touchstone Energy T-shirts. Final drawing for the grill is on August 20.

Grill valued at \$325 • T-shirt valued at \$11





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M. Shireman

Consumer empowerment



A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Hi-Lines

Jo-Carroll

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc., Elizabeth, Illinois • 1(800) 858-5522 • www.jocarroll.com

With each passing day, the news carries stories of how companies are getting bigger and more distant from the people they serve.

Investor-owned utilities have closed local service offices and moved out of town. Air travel-already tough for rural America-gets more frustrating every year as airlines merge and limit options for consumers.

From the big airlines to the big utilities, mergers today are being driven by a rush to stay ahead of the competition. "Get bigger or get eaten" seems to be the mindset in most corporate boardrooms today.

Lost in those boardroom debates is the consumer. And that isn't right.

Others in the electric utility industry, I believe, are dangerously close to turning the benefits that choice can provide into a myth as average consumers, discarded in the spoils of mega-mergers, get left on the boardroom floor.

Electric cooperatives, however, have been offering consumers a real choice from the day we opened our doors. The consumer gets to decide how the cooperative is run and what services it offers.

It is a choice that empowers consumers with a network of private, independent utilities focused on their needs. Local electric cooperatives are community advocates. Through a unified cooperative network that reaches 70 percent of the nation's landmass and 83 per-

cent of its counties, cooperatives help and rely on each other to meet the needs of their local consumers and communities.

From providing energy service to economic development efforts aimed at closing the prosperity gap in rural America, the consumers of America's electric cooperatives are already empowered with choice.

Under the watchful eye of locally elected boards of directors, the country's nearly 1,000 electric cooperatives are focused on delivering high-quality, reliable and affordable service every day to the people and businesses they serve.

Our record of accomplishment cannot be matched.

And just watch us succeed in the coming years. Already new cooperatives in Chicago, New York City and California are providing new choice and options for consumers where none existed before.

In the future, more and more consumers will make the cooperative choice as the way to empower themselves in a competitive marketplace dominated by a few large corporations.

The electric cooperative choice offers consumers a way to pick themselves up and have a seat at the table in a marketplace that will otherwise ignore them.

Empowerment and trust-that is what the cooperative difference is all about.

Orland Gates

OFFICE CLOSING

Your cooperative office will be closed Monday, September 4, in observance of Labor Day. The office will be open for normal business hours on Tuesday, September 5. Enjoy your holiday!



Office hours

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday through
Friday

During hours call
815/858-2207
or 1-800-858-5522.

Member memo

The Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative Board of Directors has announced a small increase of 3.18% in the regular energy rate. As a result, the cost of each kilowatt-hour will be raised to 8.1 cents from the current rate of 7.85 cents. This increase will be in effect beginning with the August bills due on September 15, 2000. The primary reason for this action is the increase in wholesale power that Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative purchases for use by its members. As we are all aware, the cost of fuel has risen drastically this past year.

In response to the deregulation of the electric power industry in Illinois, the board has also enacted an increase in the facility charge for each service location on the regular rate

from \$15 to \$20. In the future, Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative members may have the opportunity to choose alternative energy suppliers, but the energy will still be delivered over Jo-Carroll lines.

The board was pleased that the rate increase could be kept to a minimum. It has been nine years, since May of 1991, that Jo-Carroll Electric has had an increase. A rate adjustment at this time will enable Jo-Carroll Electric to remain a viable organization providing reliable power and first class service to its members. The Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative Board and employees are committed to providing continued good service to the people of Jo-Davies and Carroll counties as we progress into the 21st century.

Call JULIE before you dig



Effective January 1, 1991, it is now state law to call JULIE before you dig. JULIE is a free notification service that alerts utility companies of planned digging activities in areas with underground utility facilities. JULIE operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can be contacted toll free at 1-800-892-0123.

So, if you are a homeowner/renter, contractor or excavator planning to dig anytime this year, e.g., putting up a fence or clothesline, planting a garden or shrubbery, build-

ing a home, etc. - CALL JULIE FIRST!

It is necessary to utilize this Illinois one-call system so the appropriate JULIE member utility can mark the location of its buried facility. Calling JULIE can save you time, problems and money. This is a free service; you will incur no charges. Just remember to call toll free 48 hours before you dig (two working days).

Help avoid service interruptions - call JULIE before you dig.

This message is brought to you by your friends and neighbors at Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative in Elizabeth, your Touchstone Energy Cooperative.

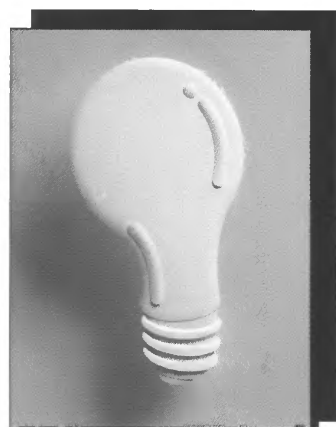
JULIE 1-800-892-0123

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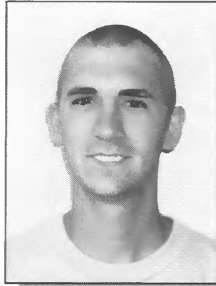


Meet our summer employees

This past summer Jo-Carroll Electric had some additional helping hands around the cooperative. We want to thank our summer employees for their hard work and dedication in providing service to the members of Jo-Carroll and wish them the best in their future endeavors.

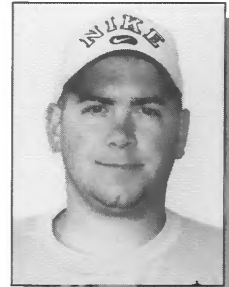
Paul Stadel

Paul is the son of Gary and Carla Stadel of Schapville. Paul is a graduate of Northeast Iowa Community College in Calmar, IA with an Associates of Applied Science with an Industrial Electrician emphasis. He has been assisting our lineworkers performing system maintenance and metering. Paul's future plans are to hire on as an apprentice electrician with an area contractor.



Nick Thompson

Nick is the son of William and Theresa Thompson of Warren. Nick has been installing and inspecting load control devices on electric water heaters. He has also been assisting the underground crew with routine maintenance. Nick is utilizing his experience at Jo-Carroll as an internship towards his degree at the University of Wisconsin - Platteville where he is majoring in Industrial Technology with an emphasis in Power and Control Systems.



Jeremy Werner

Jeremy recently graduated from Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon, IA with a Powerline degree. He has been busy this summer trimming trees and assisting the underground line crew with new service installations. Jeremy is currently seeking full time employment as an apprentice lineworker for an electric utility. Jeremy is the son of Terry Werner and Sue Young of Galena.



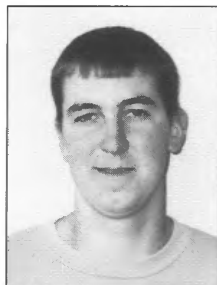
Ashley Brown

Ashley is a recent graduate of River Ridge High School and completing her second summer as an office assistant in the Operations Department. Ashley has been electronically upgrading documents used by Jo-Carroll members and employees. Her current plans are to work at Fried Green Tomatoes and continue her education next fall. Ashley is the daughter of Darcy & Mike Speaker and Richard & Barbara Brown of Hanover.



Brad Travis

Brad Travis has been assisting the underground crew with new service installations and trimming trees. Brad has also assisted in various warehousing activities this past summer. He is the son of Larry and Karen Travis of Scales Mound. This fall Brad will be attending Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville, WI to work towards a degree in Electric Power Distribution.



Kristen Allen

Kristen is the daughter of Bill and Cheryl Allen of Galena. This summer Kristen has been working at electronically scanning and archiving records maintained at Jo-Carroll. Kristen will be a senior at Galena High School this fall where she actively participates as a member of the varsity volleyball team.





Petitgout Brothers, Inc. use a directional drilling machine to assist JCEC with cable replacement.

Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op upgrades electrical system

Reader prize

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Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative is currently in the process of upgrading some of the underground facilities located in our service territory. Over the years, certain sections of the existing electrical cable has begun to decay causing it to fault. Electrical faults are a breakdown in the insulation of the cables that causes an overcurrent situation and a breaker to "trip", similar to what would happen in a home. However, in this case the cable runs can be hundreds of feet in length, all buried over 40 inches deep. Since this cable can fault at any given time it is nearly impossible to notify our members of this unforeseen inconvenience.

Maintenance of an electrical system is an ongoing project. This summer our crews, along with Petitgout Brother's Inc., have been working at

replacing underground cable. This year, Jo-Carroll Electric plans on replacing an estimated 25,000 feet of underground electrical cable. Also as part of our summer maintenance, Jo-Carroll Electric has worked toward upgrading overhead lines and trimming trees in right-of-ways. Jo-Carroll's effort to replace cable and trim trees allows our members access to an efficient electrical system with increased reliability.

Jo-Carroll Electric would like to thank our members for their patience during these system upgrades. As a locally owned and controlled electric cooperative, Jo-Carroll is here to better serve you, our members. If you have any questions regarding these or any other issues pertaining to your local electric cooperative, feel free to call us at 1-800-858-5522 or stop by our headquarters located in Elizabeth.

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc.

793 U.S. Route 20 West • P.O. Box 390
Elizabeth, Illinois 61028-0390



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M.
Shireman

October is Cooperative Month



As you all know, Jo-Carroll Electric is a cooperative serving the electric needs in Jo-Daviess and Carroll counties. But did you realize that other cooperatives exist outside of the electric industry? As a matter of fact, there are more than 48,000 cooperatives serving almost 40 percent of all Americans and generating in excess of \$500 billion in economic activity.

From childcare to healthcare, agriculture to housing, electricity to telephone service, hardware stores to grocery stores, credit unions to media outlets, cooperatives provide Americans with the basic services they use everyday. In fact, about 4 in 10 Americans receive some type of important service through a co-op. Co-ops include such well-known names as Land O' Lakes, Inc., Ocean Spray and ACE Hardware.

As we begin to see advertisements for the upcoming presidential election in November, we are reminded that cooperatives epitomize the democratic and moral principles upon which this country was founded. This fall's national election and Jo-Carroll's annual director elections highlight the ideals shared by the founding fathers of this nation and the pioneers who launched the cooperative movement based on the practice of one person, one vote.

Cooperatives generally abide by a set of principles, below are the seven principles that guide Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative.

1st Principle: voluntary and open membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership

2nd Principle: democratic member control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies

and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership.

3rd Principle: members' economic participation

Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. They usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership.

4th Principle: autonomy and independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

5th Principle: education, training, and information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives.

6th Principle: cooperation among cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

7th Principle: concern for the community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for community development through policies accepted by their members.

Electricity Rates by State

Residential Rates (¢ per kWh) U.S. Average 8.3¢



NOTE: The rates shown are residential revenue/kWh (in cents) for all utilities.

Residential electric rates vary greatly across the United States. The accompanying map allows one to visualize the average cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) for all fifty states. Examination of the rates in Illinois reveals that Jo-Carroll Electric Co-op is more than 1.5 cents below the average

price per kWh in this state. Jo-Carroll Electric is also lower than the national average. Your local, member-owned electric cooperative is proud to offer our consumers with exceptional service at a competitive price. That's the way it has always been and will always continue to be.

Amanda Soldwisch

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Monday through Friday

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OR 1-800-858-5522.

When your power is out . . . *we're on the line!*

Check your circuit breakers or fuses. If possible, determine if your neighbors have electricity.

Then call Jo-Carroll Electric's Outage and Emergency Report Line. Please have your account number and location readily available so we may restore your service quickly.

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Play it safe during harvest

They say you reap what you sow. If in fact actions lead to the resulting consequences, many accidents could be avoided if time is taken to think safety first.

All year around, on the farm, in the home, or driving down the road, safety must be a conscious priority. Specifically during harvest time, many avoidable accidents occur in rural areas.

Modern farming requires the use of large complex machinery. Each year many tragic accidents are caused by careless handling of farm equipment around electric power lines. Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative urges you to use caution at all times — to watch for overhead power lines and utility poles to avoid any contact with this potentially lethal power equipment.

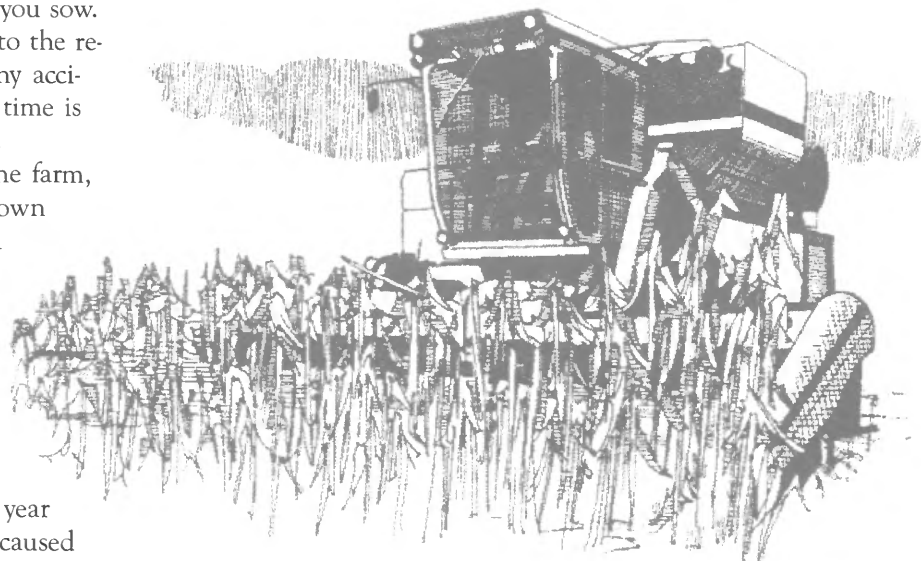
Insist that hired hands and family members learn to survey their working area carefully before operating farm equipment. Have every worker make sure the equipment he is using will not come into contact with power lines, poles or power-support equipment.

Although you may have no power lines in your fields, they are usually present in equipment storage areas and grain storage areas.

Be sure paths from equipment storage areas to fields and from fields to grain storage areas are seen routes. There should be ample clearance for combines, pickers, balers, front end loaders, stackers or any other equipment you're moving about your farm.

If there is any question about whether equipment will clear a power conductor, assume it won't and take a different route.

More often than not, power lines follow property lines. When you reach the end of a field and turn your equipment, there's a very good



chance power lines will be nearby. Always be alert to power lines along your property lines. They may even be hidden by trees or brush, so take precautions to ensure your equipment doesn't make contact.

Grain augers and bins are often used along property lines, too, since such placement makes the best use of the land. Again, be sure the augers don't contact power lines.

Crop-storage equipment such as augers, balers and stackers can be extended in height to exceed electric code clearances for power lines. Take precautions to be sure the stacking equipment won't contact the lines. It takes only one mistake to bring tragedy.

If contact is made while you are on the equipment, remain on the machine and call for help. Have a family member or neighbor call the cooperative and a lineman will be sent to disconnect power.

If no one is around to help, jump free of the equipment to the ground. Be sure that at no time you or anyone touches the equipment and the ground at the same time.

Make it a safe autumn season. Think 'safety first.'



**Reader
prize**

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Co-ops. . .

Helping You Solve the Puzzle

When folks have a problem, they often find the best solution by working together. That's what co-operatives are all about.

A cooperative business belongs to the people who use it – people who have organized to provide themselves with the goods and services they need.

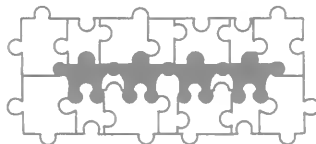
All across America, 120 million people are solving problems and

enjoying a better life because of their co-ops. People have formed 48,000 co-ops for farming, banking, housing, child care, health care, electric and telephone service, food retailing and other goods and services. They trust their co-ops to help them find solutions.



**For more information
about Jo-Carroll Electric,
visit www.jocarroll.com**

COOPERATIVES



Businesses People Trust

Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc.

793 U.S. Route 20 West • P.O. Box 390 • Elizabeth, Illinois 61028-0390



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M.
Shireman

Dual Fuel System Testing



Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative, Inc., Elizabeth, Illinois • 1(800) 858-5522 • www.jocarroll.com

As cooler temperatures and fewer daylight hours arrive with autumn, the energy professionals at your electric cooperative are preparing for another Illinois winter. This includes a test of the cooperative's load management system.

If you currently participate in a residential dual fuel or heating load management program, the system will be tested beginning at 5:00 p.m., **Wednesday evening, November 29**. This means that controlled electric heating will be turned off at 5:00 p.m. and remain off throughout the evening. During the time the electric heat is off, customers will rely on their backup heating system. All electric heating systems will be turned back on by 11:15 p.m.

If you experience any problems with your heating system during this test, please contact Jo-Carroll Electric at 1-800-858-5522.

Why is load management important?

Why is load management important to Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative members? The answer is simple. Load management helps us control our peak demand, which is the greatest demand placed on our electric system. This helps manage our energy costs today and into the future.

Electricity cannot be stored and must be produced at the time it is used. There are no storage alternatives for excess energy, and battery storage is not yet an economic alternative.

The moment you flip a switch in your home or business, electricity flows from a power plant to your home. In order to meet your electrical needs, power plants operate 24 hours a day.

Load management is a technique used by our wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, that allows us to reduce our load by shutting off various items by remote control at times of high electrical demand. Our cooperative currently has sev-

eral members participating in the dual fuel and water heater program.

How does it work?

The load management system was designed to save you money not to inconvenience you or your family. Load management is used during peak energy periods (highest demands on our system). Typically, our cooperative's highest demand is on the coldest winter days when electric heat is used more, cars and tractor engine heaters are plugged in and more people are spending time indoors. Hot summer days also create high demand with air conditioning and irrigation use.

Dairyland Power Cooperative operates a special network of radio transmitters that send out load-control signals. These signals are received by a special load management receiver installed in your home or business.

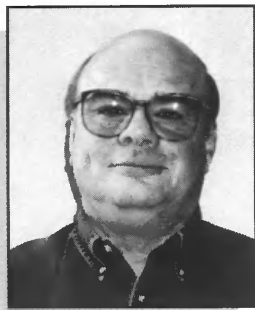
The load management system is flexible to allow the most efficient use of the electrical system. For example, electric water heaters can be controlled during morning and evening peak energy periods to save you money. Rather than starting up a power plant for a short period of time or purchasing more expensive power from another utility, electrical demand is reduced by shutting off water heaters for a while. Most water heaters are large enough to provide your family with hot water during these control periods.

Participants in these programs realize immediate and future savings by reducing their energy costs. You are also helping to reduce future energy costs by deferring construction of costly new power plants. All consumers can help reduce their energy costs by being conscious of their energy use - especially on the coldest winter days.

For more information on Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative's load management program alternatives, contact Brad Pecinovsky at 1-800-858-5522.

Ellen Willis

Knipfer hired as Operations Manager



Jo-Carroll Electric is pleased to announce that Rick Knipfer has recently accepted the position of Operations Manager for the cooperative. Rick brings over 30 years of electrical industry experience in the operations and engineering field to Jo-Carroll.

Having most recently worked for Cloverland Electric Cooperative near Sault St. Marie, Michigan as the Operations Manager, Rick is no stranger to the cooperative way of business. Rick also worked several years in the engineering and operations departments at Wisconsin Electric Power Company and as the Superintendent of Water and Electric in New Glarus, Wisconsin. At Jo-Carroll, Rick will be manag-

ing the operations and engineering portion of the co-op. He will be in charge of scheduling work for the linemen, safety and engineering.

Rick is excited about coming to work for Jo-Carroll and eager to use his experience and knowledge to the benefit of the membership. One of Rick's primary objectives in the operation of an electric utility is the safety of the employees and of the public. As Operations Manager at Cloverland Electric Co-op, his emphasis on safety was evident since they did not have a lost time accident in five years.

Outside of work, Rick is an avid hockey and football fan. He also enjoys bow hunting for deer and motorcycling.

Please welcome Rick Knipfer and his wife, Gloria, as the newest members of the Jo-Carroll family.

Envirowatch monitors home when you cannot

Do you worry about the loss of power or heat in your home when you are away? Do you have a second home that you cannot check each day in the winter? Are you concerned about a confinement building losing power? Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative can now monitor your home or confinement building when you are away.

The Envirowatch is a product that uses advanced technology and Jo-Carroll's answering service to bring peace of mind to those who rely on knowing that the power and heat is on. If the furnace breaks down or the power goes off, you can be notified immediately.

Power outages can and will happen for many reasons, and Jo-Carroll Electric has no way of knowing the power is off until someone calls to report the outage. The same is true of furnace failures.

The Envirowatch monitors both

the power and the temperature in your home. If the power goes off or the temperature falls below 42 degrees, the unit will automatically call the Response Center's 800 number to report the condition. The Response Center's 24-hour operator will immediately call one of your listed contacts to correct the situation for you.

The same is true of confinement buildings - if there is a problem, the Envirowatch will notify you or whomever you list to be contacted.

The Envirowatch has been designed for easy installation and use. The unit plugs into a telephone jack and electrical outlet and features a test button and monitor light that allows you to verify the unit is correctly connected to the phone line.

Contact Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative and gain peace of mind with an Envirowatch monitoring system.

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Jo-Carroll provides important new service to seniors

Jo-Carroll Electric is now offering FirstCall emergency response services to seniors. This service is offered to seniors in the tri-state area.

As we grow older, we find ourselves becoming more concerned about personal safety or the safety of our elderly parents. We want to feel safe and secure in our homes while enjoying our independence.

The FirstCall emergency response service is the perfect solution. With the push of a button, access to emergency help is available 24 hours a day. And it's affordable. The FirstCall system can be leased through Jo-Carroll Electric for only \$22.50/month. It costs about the same as buying a daily cup of coffee. That's a small price to pay for independence and assurance

of 24-hour security!

Since electric cooperatives such as Jo-Carroll first 'turned on the lights' in rural America, they have been constantly challenged to find new, affordable services to offer their changing communities. Jo-Carroll and hundreds of cooperatives nationwide are offering FirstCall services in response to the rapidly growing population of seniors. By providing low cost services such as FirstCall, cooperatives can help seniors remain independent longer, reducing the extremely high costs of long-term care.

For more information on how FirstCall can provide you or your parents with security and peace of mind contact Helen Kilgore at 1-800-858-5522.

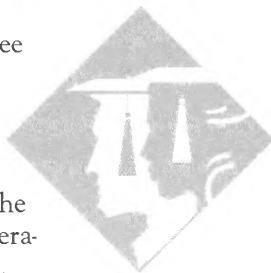
Electric cooperatives provide scholarships

For the fifth consecutive year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award \$1,000 academic scholarships to high school seniors. The three scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Council (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program. Because of the scholarship program's success, an extra scholarship was added last year for children of cooperative members.

High school seniors pursuing a college education in the state of 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 award will go to the child of an electric cooperative director or employee.

The deadline for applications to be returned to the cooperative is January 1, 2001. Contact Brad Pecinovsky at Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative for more information.

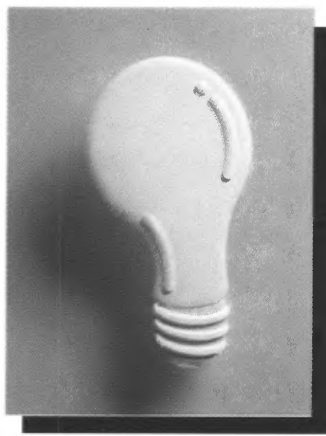


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7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday through
Friday

During hours call
815/858-2207
or 1-800-858-5522.

Cut trees safely

As the winter season approaches and people began to cut wood for heating systems, paying close attention to safety is essential. Cutting trees is serious busy that demands attention to safety measures. You can avoid needless tragedy by observing some simple rules.

Put on work gloves to protect your hands, safety glasses to protect your eyes from flying chips, wear a properly fitted hard hat to protect your head from falling branches, and step into steel-toed boots to protect your feet from mishaps with the saw or axe. Now, think you are set to start cutting?

Some of the most serious accidents while cutting trees occur because no attention is paid to the presence of electric power lines. Careful surveillance of the vicinity is essential before you begin any tree work.

Look overhead and to all sides of your cutting site. Be very sure your tree will not come into contact with any power line when it falls.

Wood can be a conductor of electricity. Each year several deaths and serious injuries are reported involving trees falling into power lines. Don't become another statistic - take a few minutes to survey your cutting site.

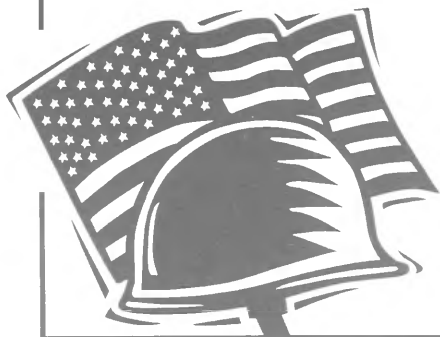
Above all, if you do cause a tree to fall into a power line or you come across a tree that has fallen into a line, do not - under any circumstances - attempt to remove the tree. Stay clear of the tree and the line. Call your cooperative as soon as possible. We will see that the problem is taken care of right away.

Exercise responsible electric accident control today. Trees and electric power lines don't mix.

OFFICE CLOSING

Your cooperative office will be closed on Friday, Nov. 10, 2000 in honor of **Veteran's Day**.

The Cooperative office will also be closed on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 23 and 24 to observe the **Thanksgiving Holiday** with family and friends.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Connie M. Shireman

Board election



One of the most important principles of a cooperative is the democratic election process that decides which of the cooperative's members will serve on the board of directors. Prior to the annual meeting, a special mailing is made to elect directors for a three-year term. Only the members who receive electric service in the district may vote for the director from their district, on the basis of one vote per membership.

The nominees who will appear on the ballot are chosen by a nominating committee of Jo-Carroll Electric members. This year's nominating committee will meet at the headquarters building on January 10, 2001, at 7:30 p.m. to submit names. Any member interested in becoming a candidate should contact this committee. Directors are to be elected in Districts 1, 3 and 4 this upcoming year.

Members of the committee include:

District 1

(Incumbent: Leonard Ricke) Dave Becker, 112 Smoke Signal LN, East Dubuque; Richard Kaiser, 7157 N. Menominee Rd, East Dubuque; Howard Schonhoff, 5740 N. Menominee Rd, East Dubuque.

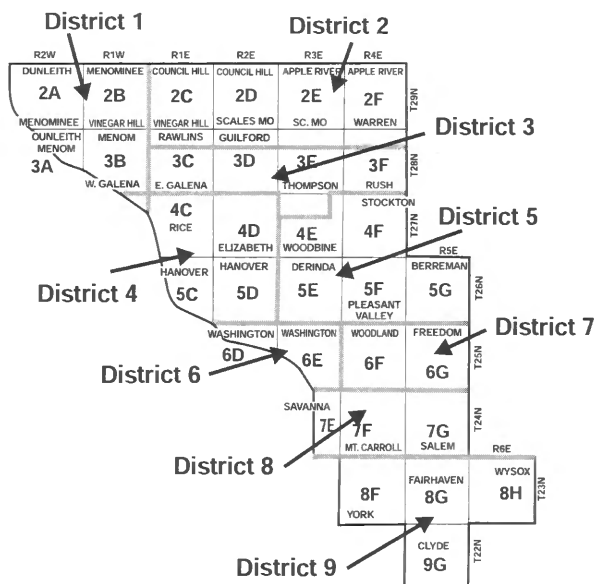
District 3

(Incumbent: Bernie Bosch) Chuck Stevenson, 4 Pheasant Walk, Galena; Gene Bell, 17 Southridge Dr, Galena; Dick Gross, 8 Southridge Dr, Galena.

District 4

(Incumbent: Gary Holland) Eugene Steele, 6150 S. Elizabeth-Hanover Rd, Elizabeth; Randy Holland, 310 Dayton St, Hanover; Don Edgerton, 6996 W. Blanding Rd, Hanover.

Director districts



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High bill or high usage?

Of the many bill-related questions we receive each month, only a small percentage actually involves high bills that were computed incorrectly. Most of them turn out to be cases of high usage where the members used more electricity than they wanted or expected.

One of the reasons why members may be surprised at the usage listed on their bill is that electricity is one of the few things they use before paying for it. People pay for groceries before they eat, they buy clothes before wearing them, and in some instances people make installment payments on items while they are using them. But they always know how much the payments are and how long they will continue.

Electricity is different. When the bill arrives, the electricity has already been used. If a member bought more than was intended, it's too late for the member and the cooperative to change this. Electricity is one commodity that cannot be returned.

Members may use more electricity because it is so convenient and so automatic. They forget all the kilowatts required to power the numerous devices in their homes that provide comfort, save work, entertain or perform many other services. Electric heating and cooling systems maintain our homes in comfort; electric water heaters provide hot water for cleaning and sanitation; refrigerators and freezers preserve our food; ranges, microwave ovens and toasters prepare our meals; electric alarm systems and security lights provide safety; radio, television and stereo systems inform and entertain us; and the list goes on and on.

But the wonderful services electricity provides may be of little consolation to those who have high bills but cannot determine the source of their high usage. Members with high usage problems may want to check out the following list of suggestions.

- Check the two elements in your water heater. Is one burned out? If so, the other one is working full time to heat your water, causing a

tremendous increase in your electric usage. A new element costs about \$20.00. You may want to check to ensure your thermostats are working properly and double check your water temperature setting. It should normally be at 120 degrees. If you have a dishwasher, 140 degrees is the recommended setting.

- Is your well pump running all the time? It shouldn't be. Remember that your pump should only run once in a while, not every time you turn on a faucet or flush a toilet. If your well pump is running constantly, have a plumber or an electrician examine it. It's consuming electricity unnecessarily.
- Don't forget all of those appliances. How many refrigerators are plugged in? What about that old freezer in the garage? Many times those old appliances use a lot of electricity - thus running up your bill.
- Space heaters or heat tape are also easy to overlook. As cold weather sets in, people sometimes wrap water pipes with heat tape and plug in an extra electric heater to take the chill out. Remember, most of these heaters run constantly - thus causing your usage to increase.
- Daily meter readings for one month will help you understand how and when you use electricity. Take a few minutes each day, preferably at the same time, and write down the reading on your electric meter. Then, by subtracting the previous day's reading from the current reading each day, you can determine the number of kilowatt-hours used during that 24-hour period. This will help you pinpoint activities that cause higher electrical consumption, such as washing and drying larger amounts of laundry, doing more baking than normal, or increasing heating or cooling needs. By identifying such activities, you may be able to reduce your usage through more efficient measures.

Touchstone Energy Balloon generates over \$2,300 for Special Olympics

Jo-Carroll Electric, along with the Illinois Touchstone Energy cooperatives, are pleased to announce that donations totaling \$2,380 have been given to the Illinois Special Olympics on behalf of the 17 Illinois Touchstone Energy Cooperatives who sponsored the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon at various community events in the year 2000. The donations were part of over \$7,000 donated to different charities nationwide through appearances of the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon.

Touchstone Energy cooperatives introduced the balloon in March 2000 at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida as a goodwill ambassador for Touchstone Energy Cooperatives around the country. Manufactured by Lindstrand Balloons in Hanover, the balloon is designed to compete in balloon and special events around the country. The Touchstone Energy Balloon makes a monetary contribution on behalf of the sponsoring electric cooperatives for every day the balloon is flown. During 2000, the balloon traveled to more than 20 events covering ten states around the U.S., including Jo-Carroll's annual meeting, Macomb Balloon Rally, the Du Quoin State Fair and the Illinois State Fair.

The balloon is a colorful, attention-getting demonstration of the brand identity and core values of Touchstone Energy cooperatives - integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. With its professional flight team, the balloon promotes these values at each competition or appearance.

"I think the Touchstone Energy Balloon is a great way for electric cooperatives to convey the message of Touchstone Energy and what it means to both the general public and their member/owners," said Byron Denhart, General Manager of Cooperative Balloon Associates, the cooperatively owned company that manages the Touchstone Energy Balloon program. "To my knowledge, the Touchstone Energy Balloon is one of few business-



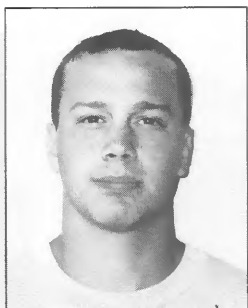
sponsored balloon programs to give back to the communities in which it appears."

Touchstone Energy is an alliance of local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country committed to providing superior customer service at affordable rates to all customers, large and small. Touchstone Energy was created by electric cooperatives in 1998. Today, Touchstone Energy is comprised of more than 550 cooperatives in 38 states, representing the largest utility network in the country. The Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon stands more than seven stories tall and could hold over 2 million light bulbs. Led by veteran pilot Cheri White of Houston, Texas, current Women's National Champion, the balloon and flight team promote "The Power of Human Connections."

For more information visit www.touchstoneenergy.com or www.cbaballoon.com.

Shane and Kimberly Hyde

Werner hired as apprentice lineman



Jeremy Werner of Galena recently accepted the position of apprentice lineworker with Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative. In this position, Jeremy will be assisting the lineworkers with all facets of installing and maintaining the underground and overhead electrical lines that supply power to our customers. The apprenticeship program is an intense four-year program which requires the participant to complete numerous hours of field and classroom training. Upon completion, Jeremy will be considered a journeyman lineworker.

Jeremy is a graduate of Galena High School and recently received a Powerline degree from Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon,

IA. He was hired at Jo-Carroll as a part-time employee this past summer to assist the line crews. This summer's experience allowed Jeremy to become familiar with Jo-Carroll's service area and the operation of our electrical system.

In his spare time Jeremy enjoys riding motorcycles and participating in snowboard competitions. Jeremy is the son of Terry Werner and Sue Young of Galena.

Jeremy is looking forward to his new career at Jo-Carroll and serving the customers of Jo-Daviess and Carroll counties. Please join us in welcoming Jeremy as Jo-Carroll's newest employee.

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Holiday Greetings

The employees, staff and board of directors of Jo-Carroll Electric Cooperative would like to wish all our members a joyous holiday season.

office closing

Jo-Carroll Electric will be closed Dec. 25 and 26 in observance of Christmas. The office will also be closed Jan. 1 for the New Year's Holiday.

