

MENARD



NEWS

Menard Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

122 SOUTH SIXTH STREET • P.O. BOX 200 • PETERSBURG, ILLINOIS 62675 • 1-800-872-1203 • 217-632-7746

<http://www.menard.com>

2004 ANNUAL MEETING

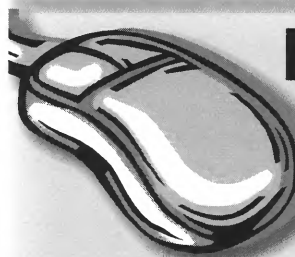
The 2004 Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2004, at PORTA High School in Petersburg. In addition to the election of three Directors, one each from Districts 1, 4, and 6, there will be door prizes and a free dinner. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m.



Used vehicle sale

The cooperative is accepting bids for a 1997 Chevrolet 3/4 Ton truck (125,465 miles) equipped with a service body. The vehicle will be available for inspection at the cooperative's

office in Petersburg, Illinois from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. until Friday, January 16, 2004, at which time the bids will be open.



Keeping in touch with your cooperative

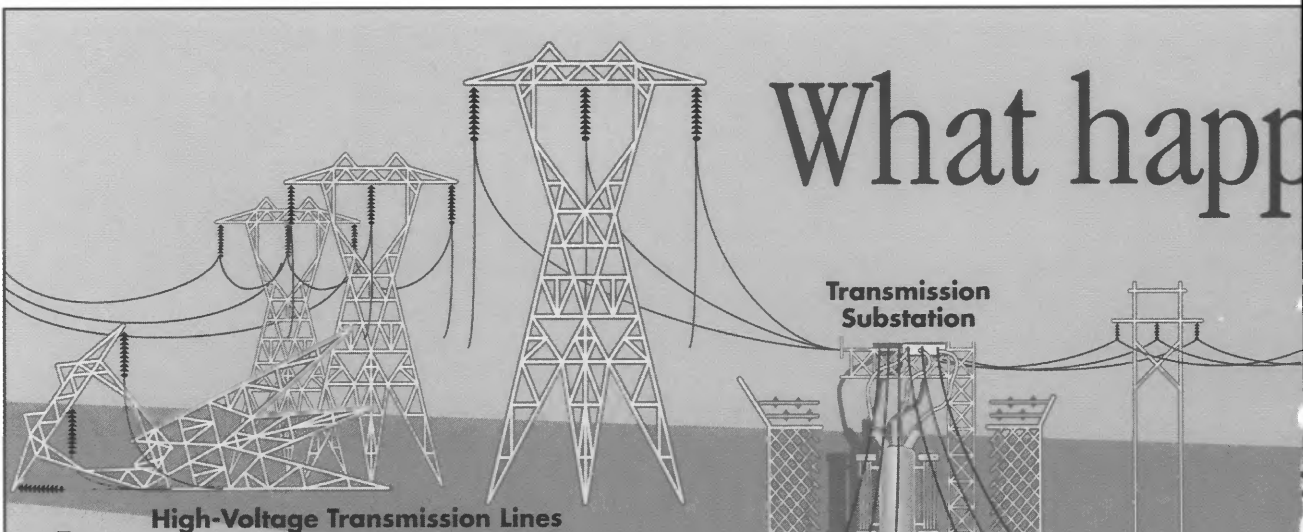
Your cooperative has had a homepage for six years. In that time it has been expanded and improved upon. The homepage has a great deal of information about your cooperative, from rebate programs to employee information, and links to informative sites for all members of your family. The next time you are surfing the net check out your cooperative's homepage. Visit the homepage regularly to keep in touch with what is going on at your cooperative. We will see you soon at:



www.menard.com

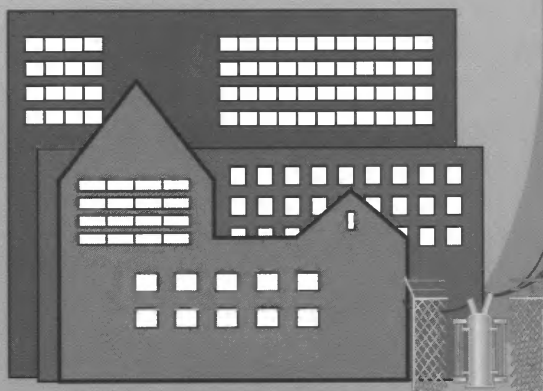
MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

What happens



High-Voltage Transmission Lines

1 Transmission towers and lines that supply power to one or more transmission substations rarely fail. However, when damage does occur—usually due to high winds or ice buildup—these towers and lines must be repaired before other parts of the distribution system are inspected, because they serve thousands (or tens of thousands) of people.

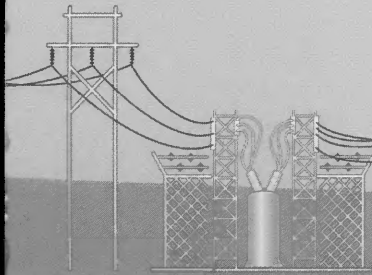


Large Industrial User

Restoring the power after a thunderstorm, tornado, ice storm or flood involves much more than just flipping a switch at a substation or pulling a tree off a downed power line. Highly trained workers from your rural electric cooperative, crews from neighboring co-ops and even specialists from the Illinois Association of Electric Cooperatives will work together around the clock to restore service in areas affected by severe weather.

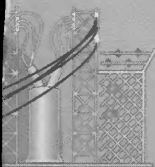
Shown here are the steps co-ops follow in restoring power. At each stage, the primary goal is getting the greatest number of co-op members back on line in the shortest time possible.

s during a power outage?



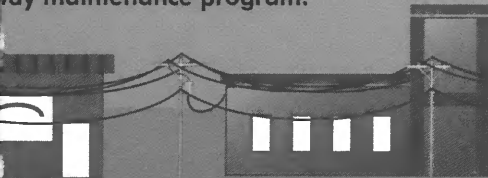
Local Distribution Substation

2. A co-op usually has several local distribution substations, each serving hundreds or thousands of co-op members. When a major outage takes place, these substations usually are checked first to see if the problem is in the transmission system to the substations or the substations themselves.



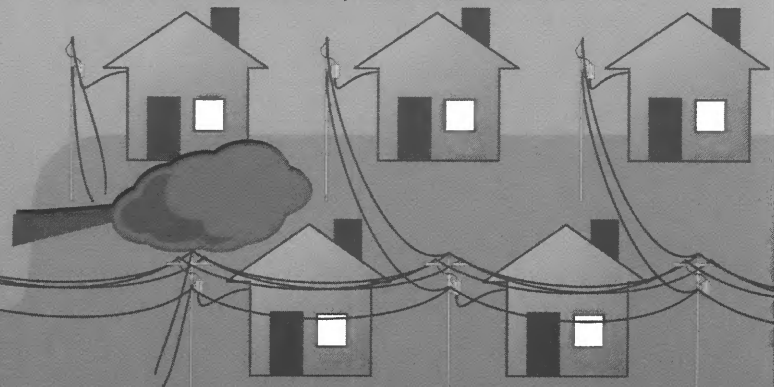
Distribution Substation

3. If the problem cannot be isolated at a local distribution substation, the next step is to check the distribution lines that carry power to groups of customers such as towns or housing developments. In Illinois, the largest cause of outages is fallen trees, which is why your co-op has an ongoing right-of-way maintenance program.



Businesses

Schools

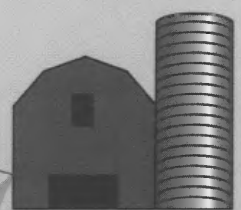


Homes

5. Finally, isolated outages-caused, for example, by a damaged service line between a transformer and an individual home-are repaired. If you or a family member depend on life support, call your co-op before an outage occurs. Then your co-op can make every effort to prioritize power restoration to you-or can advise you to seek shelter elsewhere.

Make sure you report any outage to your electric co-op. This will help line crews isolate the problem and repair it as soon as possible.

4. Then, line crews work on outages that are more localized by inspecting the final supply lines-called tap lines-that carry power to utility poles or underground transformers outside small businesses, schools and homes.



Farms

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
September 30, 2003**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 30, 2003, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Edward Allspach, Michael E. Carls, Jerry Brooks, James G. Graff, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch and Steve Worner. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the September 3, 2003, board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed and approved Inventory of Work orders for the month of August in the amount of \$116,591.31.

The board reviewed August 2003 General Fund Checks #11505 - #11729 amounting to \$2,050,399.61. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

The board reviewed 51 membership applications and 14 service permits for the month. The membership applications and service permits were approved and accepted.

It was moved and seconded that the agreement for electric service for Robert A. Dunton was approved as presented.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's report for the month. He reviewed the outage summary and safety reports. Manager Frasco reported on the Youth to Washington Trip, which is scheduled for June 11th through the 18th of 2004. The price has risen from \$850 to \$950 per student. He discussed the Sporting Clay Event, which was scheduled either for Saturday November 1st or 8th. The board had no preference as to either date.

The Manager advised the board that a few irrigators were waiting to pay their bills until the end of the harvest season. He advised that there were four or five irrigators who followed this practice, but they ultimately pay their bills in full. He inquired if the board was interested in making any changes as to the manner in which these accounts were handled. It was the consensus of the board to make no changes at this time. The Manager reported that there was 1,400 feet of new underground installed along with five new services and eight temporary services. He discussed the ATS/CIS installation.

Manager Frasco advised that the ATS Staff would be present next week to do the data conversion and that the cooperative would probably go "live" around November 1st with the new bill format. He reviewed the proposed new bill format with the board and also the format for past due notices. He discussed the status of the new building project. He advised that Adams & Associates had submitted a modified proposal and the latest proposal had removed about \$13,000 from the original price. The Manager reported that he had a couple of meetings with an Architect in Springfield to review the proposed plans. It was Manager Frasco's recommendations that that the board proceed with hiring Adams & Associates. He discussed with the board the reasons, and after discussion by the board it was moved

and seconded that the Manager proceed in such a manner to negotiate an acceptable contract with Adams & Associates.

There was a discussion about the possible joint meeting with Illinois Rural with possible dates during the latter part of January 2004. It was the consensus of the board that a meeting be scheduled for January 29, 2004. He reviewed with the board the IEC Continuing Education Program from the AIEC.

The Manager presented the financial report for the month of August 2003. Year to date margins totaled \$250,690 compared to \$944,058 for the same period in 2002. Equity as of August 2003, was 37.29 percent and the number of members served was 9,989 compared to 9,893 a year ago. The average farm and residential bill was \$135.59 compared to \$153.98 a year ago. Net utility plant at the end of August 2003 was \$25,990,497 compared to \$25,147,936 a year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders RUS, FFB, and NRUFCF. The Manager's report was accepted as presented.

It was moved and seconded that Director's special occasion vouchers in the amount of \$345.36 as presented be approved.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC activities

Manager Frasco reported on the capital credit estate refund report.

Manager Frasco discussed with the board the non-union salary adjustments. He reviewed a pay and range salary adjustment report. After discussion by the board, it was his recommendation that the cooperative implement a 3 percent COLA adjustment on each pay rate with four to five step increases for various employees at the discretion of the Manager.

Manager Frasco reviewed the NRTC "Wild Blue" business opportunity executive summary. It was the consensus of the board not to participate in the program.

Director Carls reported on Soyland/CCS activities for the month.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the board the AIEC annual meeting survey as submitted to the members at the last annual meeting.

Director Graff and Manager Frasco reviewed with the board the NRECA Region V Meeting they had attended.

President Martin called the board into Executive Session. President Martin reconvened the monthly board meeting.

President Martin reviewed the letter he had received from the Cass-Morgan Farm Bureau with regard to power outages. The letter discussed the fact that there had been services interrupted in their area. Manager Frasco advised that there had been ongoing construction in that area. The board discussed a draft response and the Manager advised he would send a response to the Farm Bureau.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, October 28, 2003, at 7:00 p.m. There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

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Menard Electric Cooperative employees support our troops

Lynn Frasco (right) General Manager of Menard Electric Cooperative, presents a donation to Stan Adcock (left), 7th Grade Math Teacher at Illini Central Middle School in Easton to be used for American Forces overseas during the Holiday Season. Menard Electric Cooperative employees raised the funds during a silent auction at the cooperative's annual Christmas party. The student body at the school has been receiving donations for the troops this Holiday Season. Items received will be shipped to the troops overseas courtesy of WNNS in Springfield.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

Employees recognized for their service

At the cooperative's annual Christmas party several employees were recognized for their years of service:

Five Years: Kevin Masten & Tim Schafer

Twenty-Five Years: Sue Freeland and

Ten Years: Leo Savage

Alan Horn

Twenty Years: Dwaine Heyen

Thirty-Five Years: Orene Lynn

2004 "Youth to Washington" Tour



Does your high school junior or senior have an interest in government and American history? Every June, the electric and telephone cooperatives in Illinois sponsor a group of young people to Washington, D.C. on the "Youth to Washington" program. During a full week in the nation's Capital, these students get an up-close look at democracy in action and get to meet with their downstate Illinois members of Congress.

Since 1957, hundreds of future leaders have been introduced to Government and the legislative process through this program. Many alumni of the program have gone on to leadership positions in our communities and government. Two current members of the Illinois General Assembly, State Representatives Tom Ryder and Art Tenhouse, are past members of the tour.

Menard Electric Cooperative has made the tour available to two high school juniors and

seniors through local schools. In addition, if your child would like to take the tour and is not selected, but would like to participate at his/her own expense, please contact the cooperative as soon as possible. The cost of the tour to you the member is \$950. This cost includes all travel, lodging, meals and tickets. Souvenirs and incidental items will be the only participants' expenses.

The "Youth to Washington" Tour is recognized as one of the best youth tours of Washington, D.C. The tour is well organized with good chaperones and is a bargain. Participants will see monuments and memorials, visit historical places and government offices and meet Illinois Congressmen and Senators and their staffs. Several fun and exciting activities are scheduled, and your student will meet others from across the nation. For more information, contact the cooperative office.

Annual meeting scheduled for June 5, 2004

The 67th annual meeting of the cooperative is scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2004, at PORTA High School in Petersburg, Illinois. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. Cooperatives are owned by those they serve. The annual meeting is your opportunity to participate directly in the operations of the cooperative by electing directors and voting on

other issues that arise. At this year's annual meeting, directors will be elected in districts 1, 4, and 6. Petitions for candidates for these districts must be submitted to the cooperative's office by April 25, 2004. Petitions are available at the cooperative's office. If you are interested, please drop by and pick one up.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
October 28, 2003**

Menard Electric Cooperative's board of directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 28, 2003, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Edward Allspach, Michael E. Carls, Jerry Brooks, James G. Graff, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch and Steve Worner. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the September 30, 2003, board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed and approved inventory of work orders for the month of September in the amount of \$78,702.93.

The board reviewed September 2003 general fund checks #11730 - #11928 amounting to \$2,799,095.17. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

The board reviewed 46 membership applications and 20 service permits for the month. The membership applications and service permits were approved and accepted.

The manager introduced the staff, who discussed their proposed budgets for fiscal year 2004. Manager Frasco presented the proposed General Manager's Budget and the proposed Director's Fees and Expense Budget.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the outage summary and safety reports. He advised that Leo Savage's truck had been received and has been placed into service. He reported that he had attended the Northern District Managers Meeting. McDonough Power Cooperative still had not reached final terms with the IBEW for their contract and they were still in negotiations with the IBEW. Spoon River Electric Cooperative announced that the proposed Ethanol Plant in their service area appeared to be stalled. He advised that the RECC board had increased its Director Per Diem to \$200 per meeting for Credentialed Directors and \$150 for non-credentialed Directors. Manager Frasco advised that the ATS billing conversion was going "fairly well." He stated that the cooperative was running both billing systems and that later that week the coop would be running bills on those systems. He discussed an e-mail from the cooperative's auditor discussing FASB

150. He advised that the Accounting Standards Board was proposing that the obligation to pay capital credits be shown as a liability rather than an asset. This would mean that the cooperative would reclassify capital credits as a liability on its balance sheet and obviously this would have an effect on the equity position of the cooperative. Manager Frasco discussed the fact that if this change were to occur it would take effect in December 2004. He discussed the need then to change the cooperative's by-laws with regard to patronage capital if this went into effect. He discussed the Broadband Over Power Lines Conference. He reviewed with the board correspondence from a member with regard to PowerNet Global. The member had checked other rates and felt that the cooperative could be more competitive. Manager Frasco discussed this correspondence and his proposed response.

The Manager presented the financial report for the month of September 2003. Year to date margins totaled \$626,937 compared to \$1,246,153 for the same period in 2002. Equity as of September 30, 2003, was 38.58 percent and the number of members served was 10,098 compared to 9,921 a year ago. The average Farm & Residential bill was \$123.44 compared to \$131.48 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of September 2003 was \$26,005,834 compared to \$25,173,605 a year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders RUS, FFB, and NRUCFC. The Manager's report was accepted as presented.

There were no Director's Special Occasion Vouchers for the month.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC activities

Manager Frasco advised that he had successfully negotiated a contract with Adams and Associates for Phase 1 and Phase 2. He discussed the changes that had been agreed upon to the original contract and reviewed the time frame schedule.

Manager Frasco advised on the status of the plans for the Sporting Clays Event scheduled for November 8, 2003.

Director Carls reported that the Soyland/CCS meeting was scheduled for the following week.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 25, 2003, at 6:00 p.m. There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

PowerConnect

PowerConnect is the new Internet product from PowerNet Global. Designed for residential customers seeking Internet connections from their home computer, PowerConnect offers fast and reliable connections, valuable add-ons, and technical support that delivers a robust Internet service at a very reasonable monthly price. You do not have to be a member of Menard Electric Cooperative to sign up for this Internet Service.

- \$12.50 per month
- Unlimited Access
- Speeds up to 56K
- 5 Email Accounts
- 10 MB of WebSpace
- Free Technical Support
- One bill for Long Distance and Internet
- Optional Filter Protection

Visit <http://support.pngusa.net> for local access numbers and more information. Some access numbers are listed below. PowerConnect utilizes a nationwide network providing extensive U. S. residential coverage.

CURRENT PNG CUSTOMERS:

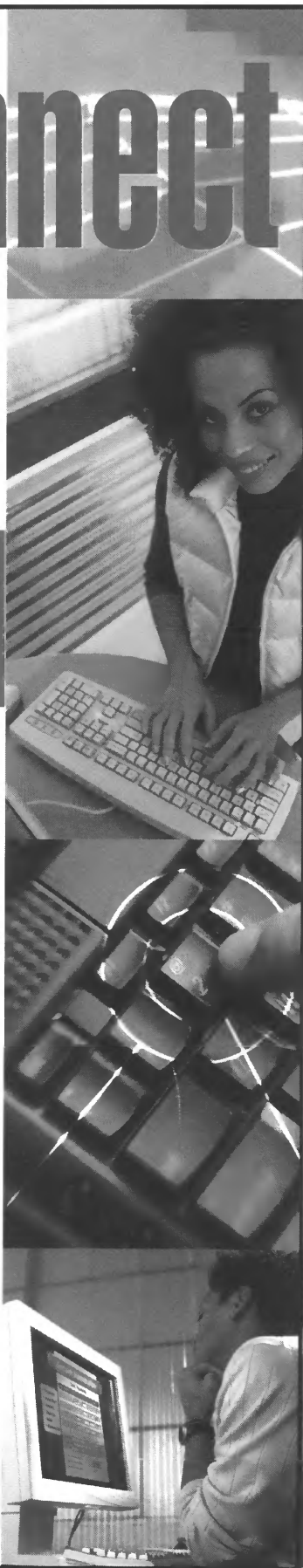
Call (877) 599-2295 to sign up for service. Current availability is limited to those who can dial the access numbers listed below as local calls. All others may have to pay long distance charges to access PowerConnect.

NEW PNG CUSTOMERS:

Current availability is limited to those who can dial the access numbers listed below as local calls. All others may have to pay long distance charges to access PowerConnect. Please call Menard Electric Cooperative at 1.800.872.1203 to receive an application for this Internet Service.

ACCESS NUMBERS:

Peoria – (309) 219-0005
Bloomington – (309) 831-0005
Springfield – (217) 303-0002
Lincoln – (217) 838-0005
Decatur – (217) 619-0005.



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Surge suppression program expands

Today, more than any time in the past, our homes are filled with sophisticated electronic equipment and expensive appliances that are more sensitive than ever before. As a result, voltage irregularities due to lightning can easily damage appliances, televisions, stereos, telephones and other electronic devices resulting in costly repairs. It is for this reason your cooperative has expanded its program even further in reducing this type of expense and allowing members a choice in the coverage they purchase.


Menard Electric Cooperative has a surge suppression program to include a premium monthly service in addition to the existing basic whole house protection service. The cooperative will continue to provide whole house protection for "white" appliances at a monthly cost of \$4.95, as it has in the past. In addition to this basic service, you can now protect the sensitive electronic devices in your home as well as electromechanical appliances for a minimal investment of \$49.95 and a monthly cost of \$5.95.

For members who want to protect the major electromechanical appliances in their home, such as the refrigerator, washer, dryer, range, dishwasher, etc. the cooperative will continue to offer the Basic Surge Protection Plan. For \$4.95 per month on your bill we will install a whole house surge protector on your electric meter which offers excellent protection for these "white" appliances. This is less than 17 cents per day and not only covers the cost of the surge protector and installation, but also all future maintenance.

For members who want to go one step further and protect the sensitive electronic equipment in their home such as a computer,

television, stereo, telephone, answering machine, clock radio, etc, the cooperative is now offering the Premium Surge Protection Plan. For an initial investment of \$49.95 and a monthly payment of \$5.95, you will receive a point of use surge protection package in addition to the installation of the whole house surge protector. This package includes four individual point of use surge protectors that can be used to protect a television, entertainment center or computer center, along with a cordless phone or answering machine and two or three other pieces of electronic equipment. This kit also includes a handy circuit receptacle tester to let you know if your home grounding is adequate or if changes need to

(Continued on page 16b) ▶



OFFICE CLOSING

Our offices will be closed Friday, April 9, in observance of Good Friday. We will resume normal business hours on Monday, April 12.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

Annual meeting scheduled for June 5, 2004

The 67th annual meeting of the cooperative is scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2004, at PORTA High School in Petersburg, Illinois. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. Cooperatives are owned by those they serve. The annual meeting is your opportunity to participate directly in the operations of the cooperative by electing directors and voting

on other issues that arise. At this year's annual meeting, directors will be elected in districts 1, 4, and 6. Petitions for candidates for these districts must be submitted to the cooperative's office by April 25, 2004. Petitions are available at the cooperative's office. If you are interested, please drop by and pick one up.



The most important people to you are also the most important people to us


Through a partnership among Touchstone Energy®, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the American Football Coaches Association and Menard Electric Cooperative is distributing free inkless child identification kits for kids in grades K-12 in your area. Parents can follow the easy directions in the kit, and once completed, the kit can be stored in a safe place.

Should your child ever disappear for any reason, you would forward the kit to law enforcement, and your child's information would be entered into a national database of missing children. Before now, only 2 percent of our country's children had been fingerprinted. Making these kits available is changing that statistic.

Children are a precious commodity, and the responsibility to keep them safe rests on all of our shoulders. Please contact Menard Electric Cooperative to obtain one of these kits.



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BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
December 22, 2003**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 22, 2003, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, Jerry Brooks, James G. Graff, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, and Steve Worner. Director Ed Allspach was absent. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco, and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the November 25, 2003 board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed and approved Inventory of Work orders for the month of November in the amount of \$61,332.31.

The board reviewed November 2003 General Fund Checks #12116 - #12279 amounting to \$1,327,063.16. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the Outage Summary and Safety Reports. Manager Frasco discussed the ATS Conversion and a problem that had arisen as to the manner in which the software handles staff members who were paid on a monthly basis. He updated the Board on the Low Income Energy Assistance Program. He reported that General Foreman Terry Entwistle had located a Vermeer Trencher that could be purchased for a substantial savings, \$14,000 under the list price. It was the consensus of the Board to authorize the purchase of the trencher. Manager Frasco asked Attorney Smith to give a report on the Horizon/Turris Bankruptcy and the effect it would have on the cooperative. The Manager advised the board of a \$500,000 grant the AIEC received from the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation to promote geo thermal systems. He reviewed the details of the grant program. He advised the Board that a member of the board had discussed the possibility of the cooperative paying interest on prepayments of electric bills. He reported that certain cooperative members had prepaid their power bill prior to the end of the year for income tax purposes. There was a discussion whether or not the cooperative would pay interest or would provide some sort of discount as was done by other businesses. After discussion, it was the consensus of the board to have Manager Frasco investigate whether or not the new software had a feature, which would deal with interest on prepayments of electric bills.

The Manager gave the Board an update on Menard Rural Water Cooperative and he advised that he attended the cooperative's annual meeting. He reviewed with the Board a map of the water cooperative which indicated the possible extension of service called Phase II. He also reviewed with the Board the status of the headquarters building project. He advised that he had received a copy of the drilling report that stated that soil conditions were more than adequate for construction of the new headquarters building. He reported that the percolation test would not support a standard septic system. He discussed the type of septic system that would have to be installed.

The Manager presented the financial report for the month of November 2003. Year to date margins totaled \$717,771 compared to \$1,154,668 for the same period in 2002. Equity as of November 30, 2003 was 39.17% and the number of members served was 9,944 compared to 9,984 a year ago. The average Farm & Residential bill was \$103.46 compared to \$104.90 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of November 2003 was \$26,392,197 compared to \$25,168,204 a year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders RUS, FFB, and NRUCFC. The Manager's report was accepted as presented.

There were no Directors' Special Occasion vouchers for the month.

Director Brooks reported on AIEC activities

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board the 2004 Budget. It was moved and seconded that the budget be approved as presented.

Manager Frasco reviewed the Touchstone License Agreement for 2004.

Manager Frasco advised that after completing the 2003 Inventory there was a shortage of \$3,826.81. It was moved and seconded that the inventory adjustment be approved.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board the PCB Spill Plan. It was moved and seconded that the plan be approved.

Manager Frasco presented a report on the 2003 Sick Leave Bonus plan. It was moved and seconded that the plan be continued.

Director Carls reported that there was no Soyland Board during the month.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 27, 2004 at 6:00PM. There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded that the Meeting be adjourned.

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Districts 1, 4 and 6, there will be door prizes and a free dinner. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m.

Co-op Honored for Safety at State Conference

Menard Electric Cooperative received a safety honor for “best lost-time accident record” recently during the Safety/Supervisory Technical Conference held in Springfield. The award is given to cooperatives with outstanding “lost time” safety records for 2003. The conference is sponsored annually by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). Accepting the award from AIEC Vice President of Operations John Freitag (right) is Area Serviceman Leo Savage.



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Pool Safety

It's prime time for installing swimming pools. So if you're considering adding a pool this year, make sure that you choose your site carefully, with an eye to any power lines that may be overhead or underground. When doing so, consider these key safety points:

- Make sure overhead electrical lines do not pass over the pool. In fact, it's best to keep your pool at least 25 feet away from power lines in all directions.
- Allow at least 18 feet of clearance between overhead power lines and a diving

board, deck, platform, slide or observation area.

- Never build an in-ground pool or set up an aboveground pool over underground electric cables. Pools and pool decking should be installed at least five feet away from all underground utility lines.

- Except for specially designed lighting fixtures, don't put electrical fixtures or receptacles within five feet of a pool. Any electrical wiring that is within 20 feet of a swimming pool should have protection from a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter.



The most important people to you are also the most important people to us

Through a partnership among Touchstone Energy®, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the American Football Coaches Association and Menard Electric Cooperative are distributing free inkless child identification kits for kids in grades K-12 in your area. Parents can follow the easy directions in the kit, and once completed, the kit can be stored in a safe place.

Should your child ever disappear for any reason, you would forward the kit to law enforcement, and your child's information would be entered into a national database of missing children. Before now, only 2 percent of our country's children had been fingerprinted. Making these kits available is changing that statistic.

Children are a precious commodity, and the responsibility to keep them safe rests on all of our shoulders. Please contact Menard Electric Cooperative to obtain one of these kits.



Menard Electric Cooperative

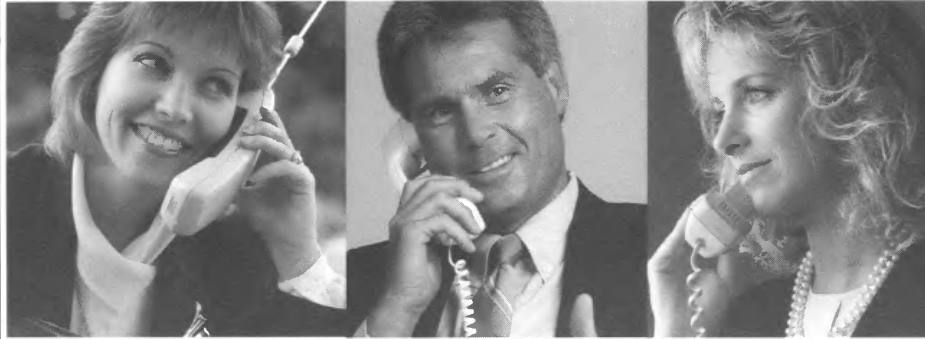
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MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

Long Distance Service

NEW LOW RATES!

Available from Menard Electric



**24 hours a day — 7 days a week
plus 6 Seconds increment billing**

- Free to join • No monthly fees • No monthly premiums
- No term agreements • Major carrier
- Free 800 number, no fees, same low rate
- Free calling cards 12.9¢ per minute (No surcharge)
- NO CODES TO DIAL
- Overseas calling e.g. United Kingdom 12¢/minute
- 6 second increment billing

Menard Electric Cooperative is offering long distance telephone service through Power Net Global Communications. Utilizing the Qwest Long Distance Network (The nation's 4th largest carrier). This long distance service is one of the lowest-cost long distance services available.

4.5¢

All calls in Illinois

4.9¢

All calls out of state

FREE
Personal
800 NUMBER
No fees
Same low rate

**For additional information, call (800) 872-1203 or mail application to:
Menard Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.**

Name _____ Social Security Number _____

Street _____ Estimated Monthly Usage _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Current Carrier _____

Telephone Numbers: () _____ - _____ () _____ - _____

Services Desired: Outbound 800 number New Existing To Ring To: () _____ - _____

Travel Cards Number Requested _____

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change. PowerNet Global will reimburse any such charges if you enclose a copy of said charge when remitting payment to PowerNet Global.

Customer Signature _____ Date _____

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
January 27, 2004**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2004, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, James G. Graff, Roy H. Seane, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch and Steve Worner. Directors Ed Allsach and Jerry W. Brooks were absent. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

The manager introduced Joe Van Lear, who was the representative for Menard Electric Cooperative on the Youth to Washington Tour. Mr. Van Lear was also selected to represent the State of Illinois at the NRECA National Convention in New Orleans in February 2004.

Minutes of the December 23, 2003, board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed and approved inventory of work orders for the month of December in the amount of \$106,587.99.

The board reviewed December 2003 general fund checks #12280 - #12433 amounting to \$3,450,542.31. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

Manager Frasco presented the manager's report for the month. He reviewed the outage summary and safety reports. Under the operations report the manager discussed work completed by Terry Entwistle and the operations department. The manager reminded the board that the Irrigated Growers Meeting was scheduled for February 20 at the Mason County Farm Bureau Building. He reported that Jim Rechner would be representing the cooperative at the meeting.

Manager Frasco discussed the proposed changes to the service area agreement between the cooperative and Illinois Power. He reviewed the proposed changes and advised that this matter would be referred to Attorney Tice for his review and comment. He advised that the cooperative would be conducting a hot water heater load control survey. He reminded the board that this survey was necessary because several load control receivers did not operate properly during the summer of 2003.

He reported on the ATS conversion and noted

that the staff had found many issues to deal with, but they were moving ahead with the conversion. He discussed the various problems, which had arisen as part of the conversion process. He reminded the board that there was a strategic planning course from NRECA scheduled at the AIEC headquarters on February 3 and 4, 2004. Manager Frasco reported on the various meetings he attended in the last month.

The manager presented the financial report for the month of December 2003. Year to date margins totaled \$680,142 compared to \$759,823 for the same period in 2002. Equity as of December 31, 2003, was 38.62 percent and the number of members served was 9,931 compared to 9,968 a year ago. The average farm and residential bill was \$113.58 compared to \$109.34 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of December 2003 was \$26,481,051 compared to \$25,304,025 a year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders RUS, FFB, and NRUCFC. The manager's report was accepted as presented.

There were no directors' special occasion vouchers for the month.

In the absence of Director Brooks, Manager Frasco reported on AIEC activities.

It was moved and presented that the uncollectible accounts as presented to the board be written off.

Manager Frasco discussed capital credit refunds for 2004. The board agreed to retire up to \$300,000 in general retirements of capital credits and up to \$100,000 to estates during calendar year 2004.

Director Carls reported on the Soyland/CCS activities during the month.

The manager reviewed with the board an analysis from Adams and Associates with regard to the design bid finalists. After discussion the board agreed to select the five design bid finalists.

The manager reviewed proposed rate adjustments from Burton Tree Service. After discussion the board approved an hourly rate increase of 3.00 percent for Burton Tree Service.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2004, at 6:00 p.m. There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

OFFICE CLOSING
Our office will be closed Memorial Day, Monday May 31st.

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NEWS

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67th ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, June 5, 2004
PORTA High School, Petersburg



Registration begins at 4:00 p.m. Dinner will be served at 5:00 p.m. by the Mason County Pork Producers. Bucket Truck rides will be provided, weather permitting, for those who want to participate and special prize drawings for children will be held.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this year's annual meeting. Cooperative's are owned by those they serve. The annual meeting is your opportunity to participate directly in the operations of your cooperative by electing directors and voting on other issues as they arise. We look forward to seeing you at this year's annual meeting.



Budget Billing begins in June - Sign up now

Your cooperative will once again offer budget billing to all Rate A (Farm & Residential) single phase services. The budget billing plan is a method where the member is rendered equal bills for a maximum of 11 months. The budget billing cycle will begin with the June 30 bill and end with the April 30 bill. The May 31 bill will show debits and credits, depending upon whether the member's usage was higher or lower than the estimated amount of the bill through the previous 11 months.

The monthly amounts are determined by estimating the average kilowatt-hours used based on the actual usage of the previous 12 months. For new members the budget amount will be determined from an estimated usage based upon the best available data.

If you have any questions or would like to sign up for the budget billing plan, please contact the cooperative office and we will be happy to send you the necessary information.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com



The most important people to you are also the most important people to us

Through a partnership among Touchstone Energy®, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the American Football Coaches Association, Menard Electric Cooperative will be distributing free inkless child identification kits for kids in grades K-12 in your area. Parents can follow the easy directions in the kit, and once completed, the kit can be stored in a safe place.

Should your child ever disappear for any reason, you would forward the kit to law enforcement, and your child's information would be entered into a national database of missing children. Before now, only 2 percent of our country's children had been fingerprinted. Making these kits available is changing that statistic.

Children are a precious commodity, and the responsibility to keep them safe rests on all of our shoulders. Please contact Menard Electric Cooperative to obtain one of these kits.



Menard Electric Cooperative

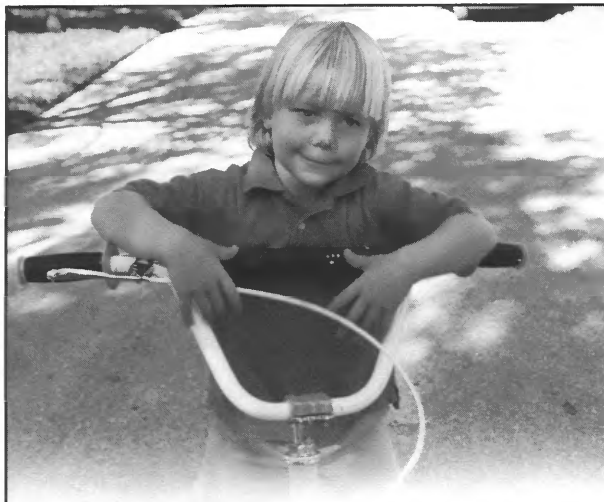
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MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com



Youth Day

Fourteen students representing Menard Electric Cooperative met with area legislators during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives' Youth Day on Wednesday, April 21, in Springfield. While in the state capital, students had an opportunity to watch government in action, speak with State Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka, and tour the Illinois State Capitol and the Illinois Supreme Court. Students are pictured with Representative Rich Brauer of Petersburg. Front row from left are Katie Nelson of Mason City, Tiffany Marsh of Green Valley and Cody Williams of Illiopolis. Second row from left are Sean Herrmann of Havana, Corey Hills of Havana, Chrissy Mathews of Petersburg, Melanie McLay of Sherman, Cory Pelc of Williamsville, Joseph VanLeer of Sherman and Representative Brauer. Back row from left are Daniel Lepper of Ashland, Joshua Pierce of Petersburg, Devin Buswell of Mason City, Scott Bergman of Mason City and Tony Martin of Green Valley. The day was sponsored by the Illinois electric and telephone co-ops to introduce young rural leaders to state government.



The school bells have stopped ringing for the summer, and the happy little feet that were running around the playground during the school year are now running in the yard, on the sidewalk and in the street. Kids don't always look before they run or ride their bikes into the street. Make child safety your first priority this summer, and keep those little feet happy.

This message brought to you from your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, the power of human connections.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
February 24, 2004**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, February 24, 2004, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, James G. Graff, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Steve Worner, Ed Allsbatch and Jerry W. Brooks. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco, and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the January 27, 2004, board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed January 2004 general fund checks #12434 - #12713 amounting to \$1,299,796.98. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

Agreements for electric service for John O. Willett, Dean Pfeiffer, Lloyd Behrends, John Ermeling, and Robert E. Fornoff were approved as presented.

Manager Frasco advised that for the month of November 2003 there were 31 membership applications and 13 service permits.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the outage summary and safety reports. Under the operations report the manager discussed work completed by Terry Entwistle and the operations department. The manager reported that he believed the Thompson case was finally drawing to a conclusion. He advised that there had been a hearing in the Menard County Courthouse and Mr. Thompson did not appear. An application would be made to the NRUCFC Integrity Fund for reimbursement of the legal fees that the cooperative had incurred with this case. He reported on the status of a small claims suit with regard to some tree trimming problems in Mason County.

The manager reported that he had signed addendums to the Power Net Global Agreement related to rate reductions for PNG Long Distance Service. He informed the board that the AIEC had sent a notice to the cooperative asking us to participate in Project Safe Child, which involved the distribution of gunlocks. He also advised that he had visited with individuals who were trying to develop the ethanol plant in Elkhart. He reported that things were going reasonably well with the ATS Conversion. He reported that next month the bills should have the historic usage graph on them. A review was made of the materials that detailed and described the new headquarters building and the status of the construction project. He advised that Jim Rechner and John Whitehurst attended the irrigated growers meeting.

Director Frye reported on the meeting and advised that he felt Jim Rechner had done a good job. He reviewed with the board the results of the water heater load control test conducted by the cooperative's staff. He reported that the results of the test had shown that it was necessary to check water heater switches. The test found that many of the switches were not operating properly. He also reported on the testing of the irrigation control switches.

The manager presented the financial report for the month of January 2004. Year to date margins totaled \$29,383 compared to \$38,325 for the same period in 2003. Equity as of January 31, 2004, was 37.86 percent and the number of members served was 9,902 compared to 9,940 a year ago. The average farm and residential bill was \$124.97 compared to \$121.08 a year ago. Net utility plant at the end of January 2004 was \$26,575,657 compared to \$25,410,921 a

year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders; RUS, FFB, and NRUCFC. The manager's report was accepted as presented.

Directors' special occasion vouchers for the month in the amount of \$5,528.39 were approved.

Director Goetsch reported that there was no AIEC meeting this month.

The board discussed in detail the Soyland CCS power supply options. Manager Frasco presented to the board, along with Director Carls, a detailed analysis of their thoughts and comments with regard to the Prairie State Proposal. After much discussion, it was the recommendation of Manager Frasco that the cooperative only consider participation in Prairie State with certain conditions, such as the participation be limited to 50 megawatts with RUS financing. Manager Frasco reported that he and Director Carls would be discussing and pursuing the matter further through the Soyland Board. It was the consensus of both Manager Frasco and Director Carls that this was something that Soyland should consider participating in, as it would provide for long time rate stability. They also discussed with the board the global energy option.

The board had previously asked Manager Frasco to prepare a report with regard to rebates provided by the cooperative. The board reviewed the report that compared the rebates given by the cooperative to other cooperatives and utilities in the area. After discussion it was the opinion of the board that the Manager come to next month's meeting with recommendations as to a revision of the rebate program.

Director Brooks reported on the annual meeting committee meeting and discussed the status of the plans for the 2004 Annual Meeting.

Manager Frasco discussed the capital credit refund report.

Director Carls reported on the Soyland/CCS activities during the month.

The manager reported that Cingular had contacted the cooperative with regard to its desire to place an antenna on the cooperative's tower east of Petersburg. The manager advised that he proposed that they construct a new tower on the cooperative's site, with the understanding that they permit the cooperative to place any and all of its equipment on the new tower. Cingular would own the new tower, but they would pay a monthly lease fee to the cooperative for the utilization of the cooperative site. He advised that Cingular had submitted a proposed lease and that he would get the lease to attorney Smith. It was the consensus of the board that the manager proceed with the negotiations.

Manager Frasco reported on the January 29, 2004, meeting with Illinois Rural.

Under other business Manager Frasco reminded the board about the NRECA Legislative Conference, which was scheduled for Washington, D.C. May 3-6, 2004.

It was moved and seconded that Director Goetsch be appointed as a delegate to the Illinois workers compensation annual meeting and that Manager Frasco would be the alternate.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, March 23, 2004, at 6:00 p.m. There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

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NEWS

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67th ANNUAL MEETING A SUCCESS!

Members of Menard Electric Cooperative were updated on the new headquarters building, power costs, new and updated services, and the financial condition of the organization during the co-op's 67th Annual Meeting of Members held Saturday, June 5, at PORTA High School in Petersburg.

Co-op Manager Lynn Frasco discussed the organization's power contract with generation and transmission cooperative Soyland Power that will stabilize rates through the end of 2008. According to Frasco, this is important for co-op members as nearly two-thirds of the co-op's total cost of operations is driven by the wholesale power cost.

Frasco said construction of the new centralized headquarters facility near New Salem will begin later this summer. He stated that during the past 67 years, expansion has forced the cooperative to be spread among four different buildings on seven sites throughout the community. Frasco said, "The primary reasons for this move are to improve operating efficiency and reduce future building maintenance or modernization costs for existing facilities that cannot meet current building codes and government regulations. This will greatly improve our overall productivity, and the resulting savings will offset the cost of the new headquarters."



Three area men were re-elected to the board of directors of Menard Electric Cooperative during the organization's 67th Annual Meeting of Members held on Saturday, June 5, at PORTA High School in Petersburg. The re-elected directors are (left to right) Jerry Brooks of Oakford, Steve Worner of Manito, and Roy Seaney of Tallula.

He also talked about implementation of the new customer billing and collection software system, and its member benefits. He said the new system will include additional information for members, such as a 13-month usage history and pertinent co-op updates. It will also allow

■ (Continued on 16b)

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

■ (Continued from 16a)

the co-op to offer a wider range of payment options, such as automatic bill payment.

Frasco also announced that PNG, the co-op's long distance carrier, has dropped its rates. The out-of-state rate decreased 2 cents to 4.9 cents per minute, and the in-state rate decreased from 4.9 cents per minute to 4.5 cents per minute.

Treasurer Roy Seaney said Menard Electric added 155 new services and 53 miles of distribution line in 2003. The co-op ended with margins of \$672,066, a slight decrease from the prior year's margins. Seaney added that the cooperative was able to retire \$389,254 of capital credits to members.

Board President Gary Martin discussed the theme of this year's annual meeting, "Grounded by Our Promise," saying that doesn't mean that the co-op can keep the lights on all of the time. "He said, "There are some things we can't control like the weather or the transmission grid, which would make that an impossible promise to keep. What we can promise is that we will do our best to serve your needs." He also said the co-op is not beholden to shareholders to make a profit. "Your board is elected from the membership and through us, you have a voice in the direction of your cooperative." That is the cooperative way.

During the meeting, Jerry Brooks of Oakford, Roy Seaney of Tallula, and Steve Worner of Manito were re-elected to the co-op's board of directors.

Menard Electric Cooperative is a not-for-profit cooperative serving 9,973 homes, farms, and businesses located in mostly rural areas of Cass, Logan, Macon, Mason, Menard, Morgan, Sangamon, and Tazewell Counties.

The cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy® — an alliance of more than 610 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country, committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.



MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

ATTENDANCE PRIZES

67th ANNUAL MEETING

Menard Electric Cooperative

June 5, 2004

SUPPLIER GIFTS

- BROWNSTOWN ELECT. - Marion Kay Spice Set - Robert Eck, New Berlin
- BURTON TREE - Japanese Lilac Tree - Robert Ranson, Kilbourne
- BURTON TREE - Japanese Lilac Tree - Mary S. Whitaker Trust, Petersburg
- DRAKE-SCRUGGS - Portable Work Lamp - S. Bart Henderson, Williamsville
- FLETCHER REINHARDT - Oscillating Table Fan - Harold Steele, Buffalo
- INTERNATIONAL PAPER - Rival Toaster Oven - Priscilla Reynolds, Tallula
- PSG ENTERPRISES, INC. - Surge Protective Device - Eva M. Walker, Kilbourne
- PSG ENTERPRISES, INC. - Surge Protective Device - William Markert, Tallula
- U. S. ELECTRIC - Dusk to Dawn Light - Donald Hamblin, Kilbourne
- U. S. ELECTRIC - Six (6) Fluorescent Light Bulbs -
 - (1) Kenton Bottens, Chandlerville
 - (2) Robert D. Lyons, Green Valley
 - (3) Albert Richardson Sr., Springfield
 - (4) E. Gary Ebken, Petersburg
 - (5) Velda M. Plopper, Athens
 - (6) Wayne Henderson, Williamsville

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE PRIZES

Harold V. Baker	Kilbourne	Black & Decker Handy Chopper
William Beatty	Petersburg	Surge Suppressor
George M. Brauer	Oakford	Surge Suppressor
Dean Broughton	Petersburg	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
C. W. Coddington	Petersburg	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
Dennis W. Drone	Tallula	Hamilton Beach Can Opener
Albert Glasscock	Springfield	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
Kathryn A. Howard	Sherman	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
Walter Jurgens	Petersburg	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
Duane Lee	Petersburg	Surge Suppressor
Gregory Manus	San Jose	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
Dorothy J. Milstead	Oakford	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
Melvin Nall	Bath	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
Douglas K. Penrod	Athens	Black & Decker Handy Chopper
Harold L. Peters	New Berlin	\$50 Credit to Electric Account
Darrell Pfeiffer	Forest City	\$250 Credit to Electric Acct - <i>Grand Prize</i>
Sylvia L. Schone	Tallula	Sunbeam Waffle Maker
Rebecca Rowe	Petersburg	\$50 Credit to Electric Account - <i>Early Bird</i>
Arnold Westerhold	Springfield	Mr. Coffee Coffeemaker

PROXY PRIZES

Donald L. Bell	Virginia	Sunbeam Toaster
Keith W. Cravens	Buffalo	Sunbeam Toaster
Clint Liesman	Mason City	Sunbeam Toaster
William McCubbin	Springfield	Sunbeam Toaster
Raymond Renken	Mason city	Sunbeam Toaster

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
March 23, 2004**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 23, 2004, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, James G. Graff, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Steve Worner, Ed Allspach and Jerry W. Brooks. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco, and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the February 24, 2004, board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed February 2004 general fund checks #12651 - #12831 amounting to \$1,354,867.51. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

Agreements for electric service for Dennis O. Hollenbeck and James W. Roberts were approved as presented.

Manager Frasco advised that for the month of December 2003 there were 47 membership applications and 19 service permits.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the outage summary and safety reports. Under the operations report the manager discussed work completed by Terry Entwistle and the operations department. He reported that things were continuing to go well with the ATS Conversion. He reported on the revised Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan and reported on the rate comparison with the current plan. He advised that Cingular was still investigating the possibility of utilizing the cooperative's tower site for the construction of its own tower. He advised that he signed a temporary access agreement for Cingular for them to go on the property and do their own site survey. He advised that the Thompson service was scheduled for connection this week. He advised that Sheriff Smith or a deputy would be present to enforce the cooperative's right to enter upon the Thompson property to provide electrical service.

The manager advised that he had gone to a meeting before the City of Virginia Board of Trustees to discuss the possible franchise agreement. He advised that he made a presentation to the trustees. The city attorney advised that he would be in contact with Attorney Smith to discuss the matter. The manager reported that Kevin Kelso would be present at the May meeting to present the results of the annual audit. The manager reported that he had a conference call with the Illinois Bio Energy Group to discuss the possibility of the cooperative supplying energy to the ethanol plant at Elkhart.

The manager presented the financial report for the month of February 2004. Year to date margins totaled \$125,269 compared to \$208,693 for the same period in 2003. Equity as of February 2004 was 37.37 percent and the number of members served was 9,885 compared to 9,909 a year ago. The average farm and residential bill was \$121.74 compared to \$121.04 a year ago. Net utility plant at the end of February 2004 was \$26,594,453 compared to \$25,430,348 a year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders, RUS, FFB, and NRUCFC. The manager's report was accepted as presented.

Directors' special occasion vouchers for the month in the amount of \$186.00 were approved.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC activities.

Director Carls reported on Soyland/CCS activities.

Manager Frasco reported to the board the details of the proposed new rebate program. The new program provides adjustments to the existing rebates. The board adopted the new program effective October 1, 2004. Director Brooks made a motion to drop the Certified Comfort Home rebate program entirely. Director Carls seconded the motion. By roll call vote there were four votes to adopt the amendment and four opposed to the amendment. President Martin broke the tie by voting against the amendment.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the board the tree trimming bids. There were only two bids, which were submitted by Burton Tree Service and Wright Tree Service. The manager recommended that the board accept the Burton bid.

Director Brooks reported on the annual meeting committee meeting and discussed the status of the plans for the 2004 Annual Meeting.

Manager Frasco discussed the capital credit refund report.

Under other business Manager Frasco reminded the board about the NRECA Legislative Conference which was scheduled for Washington, D.C. May 3-6, 2004.

The manager reported on the status of the building project. He advised that the project was let for bids and the bids were to be received the first week of April. He recommended that when the bids are received that the building committee meet to review and analyze the bids so that the committee could make a recommendation to the board.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, April 27, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

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Nathan Averbeck, center, the son of Donna Averbeck-Dace (right) of Petersburg, is one of four winners of this year's Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. Averbeck received his scholarship Saturday, June 5, at Menard Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting of Members held at PORTA High School in Petersburg. Co-op Manager Lynn Frasco (left) made the presentation.

Nathan Averbeck, the son of Donna Averbeck-Dace of Petersburg, is one of four winners of this year's Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. Averbeck competed for the scholarship with 184 other entries from across the state. The \$1,000 awards are given each year, three to sons or daughters of electric cooperative members, and one to the son or daughter of a co-op employee or director.

Averbeck received his scholarship Saturday, June 5, at Menard Electric

Cooperative's Annual Meeting of Members held at PORTA High School in Petersburg. Co-op Manager Lynn Frasco made the presentation.

During his high school years, Averbeck was a home-schooled, straight-A student, was involved in Explorer Computer Post 725, and was nominated in the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society based on early start college classes. He participates in numerous com-

munity service activities, and is very involved in his church through its youth group and as an assistant Sunday school teacher.

Averbeck plans to attend Lincoln Land Community College and major in mathematics, with an emphasis in computer science. After graduation, he plans to transfer to a four-year university, and complete a double major in math and computer science.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

Students Learn About Our Nation's Past, Present, and Future at Youth Tour 2004



Spencer Pillsbury, Chrissy Mathews, Daniel Lepper, and John Freitag, Vice-President of Operations at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in Springfield, pose outside Capitol after meeting with Senator Dick Durbin.

More than 1,400 students from 43 states descended on the nation's capitol in June for the 40th anniversary of the National Youth Tour. Sixty-four outstanding young leaders from throughout Illinois joined the tour this year. The students wrote essays, applications, or were personally interviewed by representatives of their local electric and telephone cooperatives for selection for the trip.

The participants saw some amazing sites in Washington, D.C., including Gettysburg; the Smithsonian Museums; memorials of Lincoln, Jefferson, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Vietnam War, the Korean War and World War II; the Washington National Monument and National Cathedral; an Iwo Jima Parade and Pageant; the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery; the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia; and the Memorial Holocaust Museum.

In addition to these sites that gave

the students a feel for their country, its wars, its presidents and its history, the students toured the Capitol, saw a debate in action in the House Gallery, and met with their local congressman and Senator Dick Durbin to discuss current events and what young voters can do to change their country for the better. Durbin discussed the current situation overseas, education and health care issues, current bills affecting energy prices, and other issues important to the students.

In addition to watching democracy in action, the students practiced democracy by voting for an Illinois representative to the National Youth Leadership Council. Max Nash-Howe of Macomb, sponsored by McDonough Power Cooperative in Macomb, was selected and will represent Illinois students at events throughout the year.

The students also learned about the democratic principles of a cooperative. They selected a board of directors, co-managers, and employees for a chip n' pop co-op. The board of directors (voted on by the members) held an annual meeting, and determined pricing of items, membership fees, salaries of employees and capital credit returns for members. All of the students who paid the \$.50 membership fee, and purchased from the co-op, received capital credits before going home. The chip n' pop co-op taught the students all the basic workings of a cooperative.

The Illinois students also joined the other 42 states for a National Youth Day Assembly. At the event the students learned about Touchstone Energy, the Rural Utility Service, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and cooperatives' roles in politics. Glen English, CEO of NRECA, encouraged the students to ask their congressman questions and become involved in their local communities as well as their state and national government. The keynote speaker was four-time Paralympic Medalist Mike Schlappi, who encouraged the large crowd with his inspirational, touching and humorous stories. His primary message was

"If you can't stand up, stand out!"

In addition to learning about cooperatives, our nation, and how to make a difference, the students learned about themselves. They formed friendships with students from across the state as well as meeting with students across the nation. The learned what issues were important to students in other communities, and how their rural area may be different from others. For some students, this was their first major trip anywhere beyond Illinois' borders. For others, it was one of many. But one thing that everyone had in common was the feeling that this was the trip of a lifetime, one that could not be duplicated even if the students are fortunate enough to return to the nation's capital.



Chrissy, Daniel and Spencer stopped at Gettysburg on their way to Washington, D.C.

Additional photos and information about the trip are available at www.aiec.coop. Contact Menard Electric Cooperative for information on how an outstanding youth in your life can participate in this "trip of a lifetime."



New Rebates Effective October 1, 2004

Water Heater Rebates and Rate

This water heater rebate program is available on a One-time basis to all members who install a new electric water heater or an existing fossil fuel-fired water heater with an electric water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater replaces an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

Geothermal Rebates & Rates

The rebate is \$600 per unit regardless of the size of the unit installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system in an all-electric home you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate. Under this rate you will be billed 5 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

Heat Pump Rebates

Your cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.

Certified Comfort Home Rebate

If you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a one-time \$100 rebate.

If you have any questions on these rebates give Menard Electric a call at (800) 872-1203 or check the cooperative's Web site at www.menard.com.

MENARD



NEWS

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<http://www.menard.com>

St. John's Hospital offers savings to Menard members

Members of Menard Electric Cooperative who have no medical insurance are eligible to save on the cost of services from St. John's Hospital in Springfield, under an arrangement that became effective on July 1, 2004. The savings are being offered by St. John's to help those who, for whatever reason, are uninsured and are not eligible for healthcare benefits such as Medicare or Medicaid.

"This new agreement will mean a huge savings for a co-op member who needs treatment and goes to St. John's Hospital," says Menard General Manager Lynn Frasco. "Today's medical procedures are often expensive, but this plan makes them more affordable for the consumers who may be most vulnerable to a financial hardship."

A 30 percent discount is available to active co-op members and their spouses and dependents. It applies to inpatient and outpatient charges from St. John's Hospital, but not to physicians' charges or services from other companies. Examples of covered outpatient services include Home Health Care, Home Infusion Therapy, AthletiCare, Wellness Care, and the Mind/Body Medicine Program.

St. John's is offering the savings to active members of Menard Electric Cooperative. Patients covered by insurance typically receive a negotiated discount on medical services provided by hospitals. St. John's also offers a prompt payment discount and will work with the uninsured patient to set-up an affordable monthly payment plan.

Co-op members can bring a copy of a recent electric bill to the hospital upon registration to

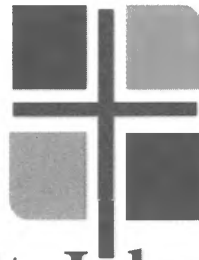
show their membership. The hospital will then issue a member card, to be used for subsequent visits. The 30 percent discount will automatically be applied to any charges billed for St. John's Hospital.

"St. John's has a long tradition of providing quality health care services to the people of central Illinois. We are pleased that we were able work with the Cooperative to offer a special savings plan to its members," said Richard Carlson, FACHE, executive vice president, St. John's Hospital. "We hope this agreement will serve as a model for other organizations.

These types of arrangements help us fulfill our commitment to providing the very best health care to all our patients."

Members with questions on eligibility or services included in the discount program can call (217) 544-6464, ext. 55615 at St. John's Hospital. Taking a recent electric bill is the easiest, fastest way to show membership when registering at the hospital, located at 800 E. Carpenter Street, just north of downtown Springfield.

More information about the hospital can also be found on their web site at st-johns.org. The Patient Services tab located at the top of the opening page includes a complete listing of services offered at St. John's. A Quick Links area explains services offered at the Bone and Joint Institute, the Carol Jo Vecchie Women and Children's Center, Prairie Heart Institute and the Cancer Institute at St. John's Hospital.



St. John's Hospital

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

Electronic Fund Transfer Now Available

Menard Electric Cooperative is now offering you the opportunity to pay your electric bills by EFT (electronic fund transfer). This is a quick, free, and convenient way to pay your electric bill. Your electric bill payment is transferred automatically from either your checking account or savings account to Menard Electric Cooperative. By using EFT, you can save yourself time and postage, and know that each month your payment has been made. Funds will be transferred from

your bank account on the 10th of the month or the next business day after. It's easy to sign up, just fill out the attached form and return to Menard Electric Cooperative with either a deposit slip or a voided check. You will still receive a detail billing statement at the beginning of the month, which shows all the current information and the amount to be drafted. Your information must be in the cooperative office by the 15th of the month in order to have your next electric bill drafted.

NEW REBATES

Effective October 1, 2004

■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

This water heater rebate program is available on a **one-time** basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater re-

places an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

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MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

APPLICATION AUTOMATIC PAYMENT PLAN

If you would like to sign-up for the automatic payment plan, then fill out the following form. Send form and a VOIDED CHECK or DEPOSIT SLIP to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, Illinois.

NAME: _____ SS#: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE# _____

MAP LOCATION# _____

BANK NAME _____

BANK ACCOUNT# _____

TYPE OF ACCOUNT Checking Savings

I _____ authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with ten (10) days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSE, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
May 25, 2004**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 25, 2004, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Steve Worner, Ed Allspach, and Jerry W. Brooks. Director James G. Graff was absent. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the April 27, 2004, board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed April 2004 General Fund Checks #13009 - #13209 amounting to \$1,270,980.42. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

It was moved and seconded that the inventory of work orders for the month of April in the amount of \$114,955.65 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Agreements for electric service for Linda Davis, David & Iodi Daykin, Candace M. Cooper, and Gary Hodgson were approved as presented.

Manager Frasco introduced the cooperative's auditor, Kevin Kelso, who reviewed the 2003 audit with the board. After Mr. Kelso's review the president called the board into executive session to discuss the audit further with Mr. Kelso. President Martin adjourned the executive session and reconvened the regular session.

The building committee presented its report with regard to the construction of the new cooperative headquarters. The board reviewed the proposed contract with Jones & Blythe. Manager Frasco reviewed in detail the committee's recommendations with regard to additions and deletions to the contract, and the final cost figure of the contract. After discussion it was moved and seconded that the design build contract with Jones & Blythe be approved. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco then introduced Aaron Johnson, General Field Representative of the Rural Utilities Service. Mr. Johnson presented three board resolutions for consideration related to the cooperatives new applications for loans and for a 10-year financial forecast.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the outage summary and safety reports. He advised that he had not been able to schedule a time to meet with Sherman's Mayor and the Attorney for the Village of Sherman to discuss further the cooperative franchise. He advised that staff had met with AmerenCIPS representatives to discuss territorial issues with regard to East Bluffs Subdivision. He advised the two entities had agreed upon a service area with regard to the new addition to the East Bluff Subdivision.

Manager Frasco advised that NRECA was canceling the Supplemental Life Insurance Program for cooperative employees. He discussed with the board the proposed Bad

Debt Policy and Collection Procedure. He advised that Wayne Jones had suggested changes as a result of the Menard County Circuit Clerk increasing filing fees substantially for small claims and other collection matters. Manager Frasco recommended that rather than pursuing matters in small claims court all unpaid bills would be turned over to a collection agency. He also suggested tightening up the cooperative's security deposit policy and raising such from \$100 to \$200 for new accounts. He suggested modifying the way security deposits were returned to members. He suggested that there would be a longer time that the security deposit was held before it was returned to the member and rather than sending a check it would be credited to the member's bill. After discussion it was the consensus of the board that the manager come back to the board with suggested modifications and changes to the policy.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the board the letter of agreement with St. Johns Hospital for the discount program to be offered to uninsured cooperative members. Manager Frasco reviewed with the board the contract extension for Park Place Subdivision. The board approved the extension. The manager presented to the board a two-year audit agreement with Dreyer & Kelso. The board approved the agreement.

The manager presented the financial report for the month of April 2004. Year to date margins totaled (\$43,023) compared to \$166,291 for the same period in 2003. Equity as of April 2004 was 38.10 percent and the number of members served was 9,919 compared to 9,922 a year ago. The average Farm & Residential bill was \$96.92 compared to \$96.24 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of April 2004 was \$26,601,402 compared to \$25,766,918 a year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders, RUS, FFB, and NRUCFC. The manager's report was accepted as presented.

Directors' special occasion vouchers for the month in the amount of \$829.14 were approved.

Director Goetsch reported on AIEC activities.

Director Carls reported on Soyland/CCS activities.

It was moved and seconded that the cooperative participate in the AIEC statewide survey. Motion carried.

Director Brooks reported on the Annual Meeting Committee meeting and discussed the status of the plans for the 2004 Annual Meeting.

Manager Frasco discussed the NRECA Legislative Rally scheduled for Washington, D.C. in May.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, June 22, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. There being no further business to come before the board, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Continued -
 Menard Electric Cooperative
 From the Board Room
 September 28, 2004**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 28, 2004, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Steven Worner, James Graff, and Jerry W. Brooks. Director Edward Allspach was absent. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco, and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the August 24, 2004, board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed September 2004 General Fund Checks #13867 - #14038 amounting to \$1,902,299.86. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

It was moved and seconded that the Inventory of Work orders for the month of August in the amount of \$425,716.18 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reported that there were 48 Membership Applications and 14 Service Permits for July and 60 Membership Applications and 15 Service Permits for August. Agreements for Electric Service for United Realty Consultants and Kathleen Davis were approved as presented.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the Outage Summary and Safety Reports. Under the operations report the Manager advised that the cooperative had done an automated meter reading test and the automated meter reading seemed to be working well. He advised that an appeal had been received by the AIEC from the Alabama State Wide Association for crews to assist with hurricane damage repair. He advised that Menard had sent men and equipment. He advised that there was an article in the State Journal Register with regard to assistance provided by local cooperatives to the Alabama Statewide. He anticipated that Menard men would be home shortly. Manager Frasco advised that he would be attending a Sherman City Council Meeting on October 5th to discuss the Sherman Franchise. He advised that the cooperative was involved in the new process of Dispute Resolution with Ameren/CIPS on the Latham Subdivision. He stated that Menard was one of the first cooperatives to enter into the new Dispute Resolution process.

The Manager presented the Financial Report for the Month of August 2004. Year to date margins were \$259,267 compared to \$250,690 the previous year. Equity as of the end of August was 37.72% and the number of members served was 10,019 compared

to 9,989 last year. Net Utility Plant at the end of August was \$26,801,101 compared to \$25,990,497 a year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of RUS, CFC and the FFB.

Director Goetsch presented the report of the building committee and discussed the status of the plans related to marketing the cooperative's property that would now be for sale as a result of the construction of the cooperative's new headquarters building. He advised that an analysis had been made of the asking price for the cooperative's existing properties. He discussed and reviewed those asking prices. Manager Frasco suggested that he contact the individuals who had informed him they were interested in purchasing certain properties. He would then give them the first chance to purchase the property or properties at the asking price. If the properties did not then sell they would then be listed with the realtors. The Board gave approval to the Manager to market the properties in such a manner. Manager Frasco reported on the status of the Headquarters building.

The Board considered the non-union salary adjustments. The board approved the same COLA and 401k adjustments as they did for the union employees in July.

The Board approved two resolutions related to the changes in the 401k plans, which are to become effective January 1, 2005.

Directors' Special Occasion vouchers for the month of \$802.50 were approved.

Director Goetsch reported that there were no AIEC activities for the month of September.

Director Carls reported on Soyland/CCS activities. Manager Frasco reported on the RUS meeting on October 7th, which he was attending.

The Manager reviewed the Capital Credit refund report.

The Manager presented a draft of a proposed policy with regard to System Reliability - End Gun. After review by the Board, the board thought the policy should be brought before the Board at next month's meeting.

Manager Frasco reported on the NRECA Region V Meeting.

President Martin called the Board into Executive Session for purposes of a Managerial Evaluation. President Martin reconvened the regular Board meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, October 26, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded that the Meeting be adjourned.

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Sign up today for Menard Electric's long distance business and residential phone service and call someone you love for less. Fill out the form below to get started today!

24 hours a day — 7 days a week
plus 6 Seconds increment billing

4.5¢ 4.9¢

All calls in Illinois

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FREE
Personal
800 NUMBER
No fees
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- Free to join • No monthly fees
- No monthly premiums
- No term agreements • Major carrier
- Free 800 number, no fees, same low rate
- Free calling cards 12.9¢ per minute (No surcharge)
- NO CODES TO DIAL
- Overseas calling e.g. United Kingdom 12¢/minute
- 6 second increment billing

Menard Electric Cooperative is offering long distance telephone service through Power Net Global Communications. This long distance service is one of the lowest-cost long distance services available.

**For additional information, call (800) 872-1203 or mail application to:
Menard Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.**

Name _____ Social Security Number _____

Street _____ Estimated Monthly Usage _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Current Carrier _____

Telephone Numbers: () _____ - _____ () _____ - _____

Services Desired: Outbound 800 number New Existing To Ring To: () _____ - _____

Travel Cards Number Requested _____

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change. PowerNet Global will reimburse any such charges if you enclose a copy of said charge when remitting payment to PowerNet Global.

Customer Signature _____ Date _____

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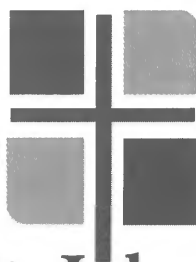
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St. John's Hospital

OFFICE CLOSINGS

Menard Electric Cooperative will be closed December 23 and 24 in observance of Christmas. The office will also be closed December 31 for New Year's Day.



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MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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NAME: _____ SS#: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE# _____

MAP LOCATION# _____

BANK NAME _____

BANK ACCOUNT# _____

TYPE OF ACCOUNT Checking Savings

I _____ authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with ten (10) days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

How to Calculate Your Capital Credits

For the fiscal year 2003, the capital credit allocation factor is .04214350. To determine the amount of capital credits on your account, multiply the allocation factor by the amount paid for electricity

excluding tax. For example, energy payments of \$1,000 X .04214350 = \$42.14. Please contact the co-op office for more information.



REBATES

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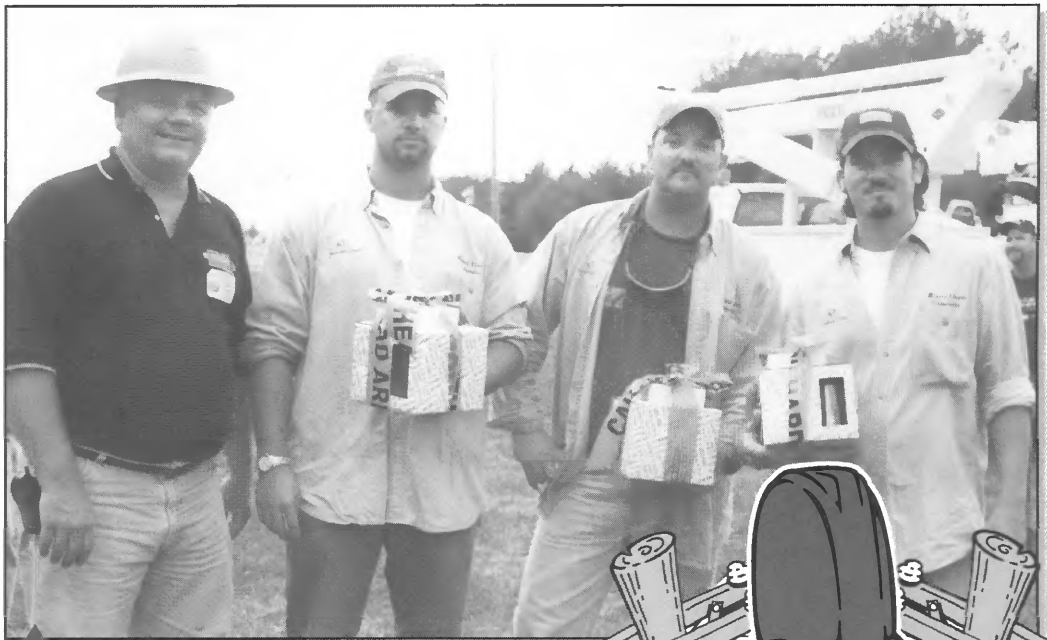
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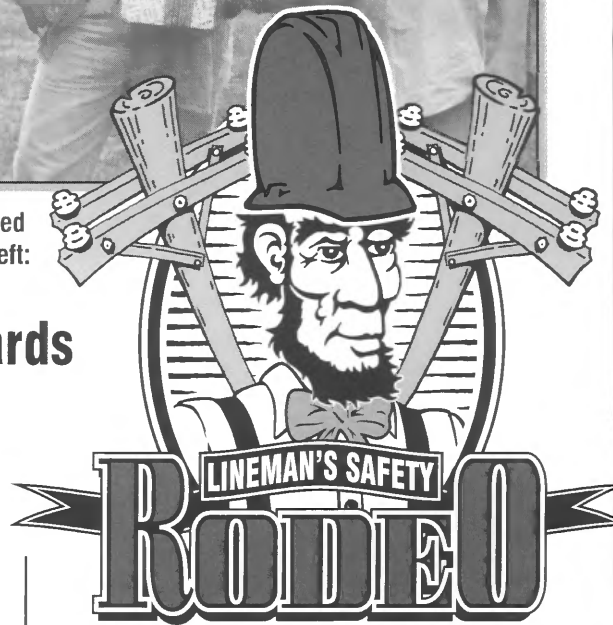
Menard Electric's winning team is congratulated by AIEC Manager of Safety Roger Larkin. From left: Larkin, Blair, Hanner and Parker.

Linemen Roundup Awards at Safety Rodeo

A team of Menard Electric Cooperative linemen from Petersburg received several awards at the recent statewide Lineman's Safety Rodeo.

The team of Seth Parker, Brandon Blair and Rob Hanner received second in the URD terminator and lightning arrestor events.

The Eighth Annual Lineman's Safety Rodeo, held at Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC) in Springfield on Friday, Oct. 1, coincided with a series of courses designed to help electric line personnel improve their work skills in safe and efficient ways. Several electric suppliers joined the Association of Illinois Electric Coopera-



tives (AIEC) and LLCC in co-sponsoring the event.

Line personnel from nine Illinois electric cooperatives and a municipal utility competed in five team events and two individual events. Team events included hurt man rescue, egg climb (linemen climbing a 30-foot pole with a raw egg in their mouths), rope splicing, and changing lightning arrestors and URD terminators.




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SEASON'S GREETINGS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gary L. Martin, President	Edward L. Allspach
Jerry W. Brooks, Vice President	Michael E. Carls
D. Jay Frye, Secretary	James G. Graff
Roy H. Seaney, Treasurer	Warren D. Goetsch
	Steve L. Worner

COOPERATIVE PERSONNEL

Lynn A. Frasco, Manager	Wayne E. Jones
Janey L. Ames	M. Orene Lynn
Randolph J. Avery	Darlene M. McGee
Brandon Blair	James K. Masten
Mark A. Bradley	Brock D. Meyer
Cheryl Buerkett	Trish Michels
Robert P. Burris	John D. (Dan) Morgan
Stuart Churchill	Seth Parker
Terry L. Cutright	Douglas S. Pettit
Pam Davis	Larry D. Power
W. R. (Casey) Duncheon	James Rechner
Terry W. Entwistle	Rhonda K. Satorius
M. Suzanne Freeland	Leo. P. Savage
James T. Haddick	Timothy Schafer
Robert Hanner	Troy S. Shafer
Dwayne E. Heyen	Corey M. Stone
Christopher P. Hinton	John H. Whitehurst
Alan D. Horn	



MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

BOARD MEETING REPORT

Continued -
**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
August 24, 2004**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 24, 2004, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Steven Worner, Edward Allspach, James Graff and Jerry W. Brooks. Director Warren Goetsch was absent. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco, and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the July 27, 2004 board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed July 2004 General Fund Checks #13678 - #13866 amounting to \$1,687,869.44. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

It was moved and seconded that the Inventory of Work orders for the month of July in the amount of \$121,865.23 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reported that there were 66 Membership Applications and 23 Service Permits for the previous month.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the Outage Summary and Safety Reports. The Manager reported on the meeting with representatives from Manito Investments with regard to electrical service to the Sand Plant. He discussed the Status of matters with regard to Turrus. Also discussed were the Cingular Lease and the Status of the Construction of the new cooperative headquarters building. There was some discussion among the Board as to how to market the cooperative's properties. After the discussion it was moved and seconded that the Manager and the Attorney negotiate with local realtors for the listing of the buildings and report back to the Building Committee. The Manager and the Building Committee also discussed with the Board the flooring, paint colors, wood trim, and exterior color selections for the brick stone and roofing. It was the consensus to schedule another Building Committee meeting. The Manager reviewed correspondence he had received regarding Missouri Electric Works. He advised that he discussed the letter with Kevin Kelso, the cooperative's auditor.

The Manager presented the Financial Report for the Month of July 2004. Year to date margins were \$49,212 compared to \$50,583 last year. Equity as of the end of July was 37.15% and the number of members served was 9,966 compared to 10,043 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of July 2004 was \$26,703,863 compared to \$25,907,855 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders: RUS, CFC and the FFB.

Directors' Special Occasion vouchers for the month in the amount of \$2,809.89 were approved.

Manager Frasco reported on AIEC activities and the

AIEC Annual Meeting. Director Brooks reported on the Training Class he had attended at the AIEC Annual Meeting.

Director Carls and Manager Frasco reported on Soyland/CCS activities. Manager Frasco reported on the outcome of the Ameren/CIPS intervention before the Illinois Commerce Commission, and reviewed the terms of the agreement with Ameren. He also discussed the Patronage Capital Allocation from Soyland. He advised that the total amount of the allocation for 2003 was \$176,418.94.

Director Frye reported on the meeting of the Irrigation Committee at which time the Committee discussed a policy with regard to end guns. Director Frye advised the Board of the discussions of the Committee. He advised that the Committee had instructed the Manager to prepare a policy. The Manager discussed the proposed policy with the Board. The Board advised that they were in agreement with the proposed policy and instructed the Manager to put the policy in written form for further consideration by the Board.

The Board discussed a revision to the 2004 - 2005 calendar. The Manager advised that the Union was requesting a change in the Union Holiday from January 3, 2005 to December 30, 2004. The Board approved the change.

Director Brooks discussed with the Board his concerns about the timeliness of the minutes from the Board meetings as printed in the Center Section of Illinois Country Living. Due to the time for the approval of the minutes and the publication deadlines minutes were generally three months behind in the Center Section. The board discussed ways of having more current minutes in the Center Section. Attorney Smith advised that he would prepare the minutes earlier and get them to Manager Frasco for review.

The Manager reviewed the Capital Credit refund report.

Manager Frasco reviewed the CFC Key Ratio Trend Analysis. He also advised that CFC had informed the cooperative of its 2004 Patronage Capital Retirement of \$19,336.73.

Manager Frasco reviewed with the Board both the Village of Mechanicsburg Franchise and the East Bluff Service Area Agreement. The Board approved both.

The Manager discussed with the Board the NRECA Region V Meeting scheduled in Lacrosse Wisconsin September 21st through the 23rd. He advised Director Brooks would attend the meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 28, 2004 at 7:00PM. There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded that the Meeting be adjourned.

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
July 27, 2004**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 27, 2004, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Steven Worner, Edward Allspach, James Graff and Jerry W. Brooks. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco, and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the June 22, 2004 board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed June 2004 General Fund Checks #13390 - #13726 amounting to \$2,043,686.26. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

It was moved and seconded that the Inventory of Work orders for the month of June in the amount of \$82,014.16 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Manager Frasco reported that there were 62 Membership Applications and 14 Service Permits for the previous month. Agreements for Electric Service for Dale Heye, Adam Schissler, Charles Cooper, and Dean Westergreen were approved as presented.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the Outage Summary and Safety Reports. Under the operations report the Manager reviewed the Phase II Service Area Agreement for East Bluff Subdivision with Ameren/CIPS. He discussed correspondence sent to Manito Investments, which contained an estimate to construct and install new electrical service for the Sand Plant. Jim Rechner prepared the quote. Manager Frasco discussed a request from the City of Oakford that he serves as a certified water operator for the village. After discussion by the Board, the Board advised that they had no objections to the Manager serving in that capacity. He discussed the status of operations with regard to the terms and provisions for the Cingular Tower Lease. He provided the Board with copies of the correspondence sent regarding the lease. Attorney Smith discussed the correspondence and changes to the terms of the lease. Attorney Smith advised that the matter was being transferred to the Cingular Attorney to put the lease in final form for approval by the Board.

The Manager presented the Financial Report for the Month of June 2004. Year to date margins were (\$5,943) compared to (\$33,694) the previous year. Equity as of the end of June was 37.49% and the number of members served was 9,954 compared to 9,995 last year. Net Utility Plant at the end of June was \$26,719,029 compared to \$25,858,286 a year ago. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of RUS, CFC and the FFB.

There were no Directors' Special Occasion vouchers for the month.

Director Brooks reported on AIEC activities and the plans for the AIEC Annual Meeting.

Director Carls reported on Soyland/CCS activities.

The Manager reviewed the Capital Credit refund report.

Manager Frasco discussed the status of negotiations with the IBEW. He advised that settlement had been reached with the Union. He reviewed the terms of the settlement, which covered years 2004 through 2008 with the Board. The Board approved the new labor contract.

The Manager discussed concerns with regard to end guns on irrigation systems and the effect the end guns had on cooperative transformers. After discussion by the board, it was the consensus of the Board to refer this issue to the Irrigation Committee.

The Board again reviewed the Security Deposit Policy. It was moved and seconded that the policy be approved as presented.

The manager discussed with the Board the CFC Training Schedule for November 3, 2004. It was suggested by the Manager that the Board/Spouse/Attorney Dinner be held at the conclusion of the CFC Training Session.

Manager Frasco presented to the Board an update on the Headquarters Construction Project. The board reviewed the most recent plans and specification for the building. The Board discussed the sale of the cooperative's existing facilities.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, August 24, 2004 at 7:00PM. There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded that the Meeting be adjourned.

Students encouraged to apply for 2005 IEC Memorial Scholarships

Menard Electric Cooperative Manager Lynn Frasco has announced that for the tenth consecutive year, the Illinois electric cooperatives will award \$1,000 academic scholarships to high school seniors. The four scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

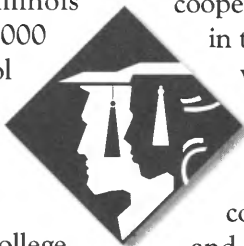
High school seniors pursuing a college education in the state of Illinois are eligible to participate in the program. Three of the four scholarships will be awarded to the child of an electric cooperative member. The other \$1,000 award will go to the child of an electric cooperative director or employee. Deadline for applications to be returned to the cooperative is January 1, 2005.

"The purpose of the scholarship program is to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural leaders through memo-

rial gifts," said Frasco. "Menard Electric Cooperative and the other Illinois electric cooperatives want to make a difference in their communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by lending a hand to our youth."

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

The IEC Memorial Scholarship program was established in 1994 by the board of directors of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. For further information on the IEC Memorial Scholarship Program, contact Menard Electric at (800) 872-1203, or ask your high school guidance counselor.



Thanksgiving brings visions of turkey, dressing and pumpkin pie, all under the warm glow of electric lights. Your local electric cooperative is proud to be a part of all of your holiday festivities.

Have a safe and blessed Thanksgiving.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

St. John's Hospital offers savings to Menard members

Members of Menard Electric Cooperative who have no medical insurance are eligible to save on the cost of services from St. John's Hospital in Springfield, under an arrangement that became effective on July 1, 2004. The savings are being offered by St. John's to help those who, for whatever reason, are uninsured and are not eligible for healthcare benefits such as Medicare or Medicaid.

"This new agreement will mean a huge savings for a co-op member who needs treatment and goes to St. John's Hospital," says Menard General Manager Lynn Frasco. "Today's medical procedures are often expensive, but this plan makes them more affordable for the consumers who may be most vulnerable to a financial hardship."

A 30 percent discount is available to active co-op members and their spouses and dependents. It applies to inpatient and outpatient charges from St. John's Hospital, but not to physicians' charges or services from other companies. Examples of covered outpatient services include Home Health Care, Home Infusion Therapy, AthleticCare, Wellness Care, and the Mind/Body Medicine Program.

St. John's is offering the savings to active members of Menard Electric Cooperative. Patients covered by insurance typically receive a negotiated discount on medical services provided by hospitals. St. John's also offers a prompt payment discount and will work with the uninsured patient to set-up an affordable monthly payment plan.

Co-op members can bring a copy of

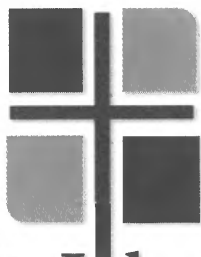
a recent electric bill to the hospital upon registration to show their membership. The hospital will then issue a member card, to be used for subsequent visits. The 30 percent discount will automatically be applied to any charges billed for St. John's Hospital.

"St. John's has a long tradition of providing quality health care services to the people of central Illinois. We are pleased that we were able work with the Cooperative to offer a special savings plan to its members," said Richard Carlson, FACHE, executive vice president, St. John's Hospital. "We hope this agreement will serve as a model for other organizations. These types of arrangements help us fulfill our commitment to providing the very best health care to all our patients."

Members with questions on eligibility or services included in the discount program can call (217) 544-6464, ext. 55615 at St. John's Hospital. Taking a recent electric bill is the easiest, fastest way to show membership when registering at the hospital,

located at 800 E. Carpenter Street, just north of downtown Springfield.

More information about the hospital can also be found on their web site at st-johns.org. The Patient Services tab located at the top of the opening page includes a complete listing of services offered at St. John's. A Quick Links area explains services offered at the Bone and Joint Institute, the Carol Jo Vecchie Women and Children's Center, Prairie Heart Institute and the Cancer Institute at St. John's Hospital.



St. John's Hospital

Used Vehicle SALE

■ 1997 Chevrolet 4X4 Short Bed Pickup. 135,000 miles.

Please submit bids by the close of business on Friday, November 19, 2004. The bids will be opened at 4:30 p.m. on this date.

OFFICE CLOSING

Your cooperative will be closed Thursday, November 11 in honor of Veterans Day.

The Cooperative office will also be closed on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 25 and 26, to observe the Thanksgiving Holiday with family and friends.



MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

Credit Card Convenience

Menard Electric Cooperative accepts VISA or MasterCard payments for all electric bills. A \$3 transaction processing fee will be charged for bills up to \$200. All electric bills more than \$200 will be charged 3% of the bill amount.

THREE WAYS TO SIGN UP:

- 1.** Come into the office and sign up
- 2.** Call the cooperative and give your information
- 3.** Fill out the authorization form below and mail to the office.



Mail Application to: Menard Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675

Menard Electric Cooperative – Credit Card Authorization

Name: _____

Menard Electric Account No. _____ - _____ - _____

	YES	NO
Charge My Credit Card One Time Only	_____	_____
Charge My Credit Card Each Month	_____	_____

Type of Card (Circle One) VISA MC

Credit Card No. _____ - _____ - _____

Expiration Date: Month _____ Year _____

Cardholder's Name: _____

I acknowledge and agree to have the transaction processing fee charged to my VISA or MasterCard. (Please Print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

APPLICATION AUTOMATIC PAYMENT PLAN

If you would like to sign-up for the automatic payment plan, then fill out the following form. Send form and a VOIDED CHECK or DEPOSIT SLIP to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, Illinois.

NAME: _____ SS#: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE# _____

MAP LOCATION# _____

BANK NAME _____

BANK ACCOUNT# _____

TYPE OF ACCOUNT Checking Savings

I _____ authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with ten (10) days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Electronic Fund Transfer Now Available

Menard Electric Cooperative is now offering you the opportunity to pay your electric bills by EFT (electronic fund transfer). This is a quick, free, and convenient way to pay your electric bill. Your electric bill payment is transferred automatically from either your checking account or savings account to Menard Electric Cooperative. By using EFT, you can save yourself time and postage, and know that each month your payment has been made. Funds will be transferred from

your bank account on the 10th of the month or the next business day after. It's easy to sign up, just fill out the attached form and return to Menard Electric Cooperative with either a deposit slip or a voided check. You will still receive a detail billing statement at the beginning of the month, which shows all the current information and the amount to be drafted. Your information must be in the cooperative office by the 15th of the month in order to have your next electric bill drafted.

NEW REBATES

Effective October 1, 2004

■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

This water heater rebate program is available on a one-time basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater re-

places an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

The rebate is \$600 per unit regardless of the size of the unit installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if

you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 5 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

■ Heat Pump Rebates

Your cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.

■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

If you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.

If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at www.menard.com.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

MENARD



NEWS

Menard Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

122 SOUTH SIXTH STREET • P.O. BOX 200 • PETERSBURG, ILLINOIS 62675 • 1-800-872-1203 • 217-632-7746

<http://www.menard.com>

New Security Deposit Policy Effective November 1, 2004

SECURITY DEPOSIT

At the discretion of the cooperative, a deposit of \$200, or one-sixth (1/6) of estimated annual energy charges for each service location is required of each member prior to installation or connection of a single phase, residential, or seasonal energy account, except those members who provide proof of acceptable payment history. Acceptable payment history is generally defined as having the current 12-month payment record free of collection notices or visits to a service location by a utility employee as certified by the electric utility providing service during that period.

Members who request installation, re-connection, or connection of irrigation, three phase, or commercial energy accounts will be required to pay a deposit for each service location in the amount of \$200 or 1/6 the estimated annual energy charge, whichever is greatest, except those members who provide proof of satisfactory payment history acceptable to the cooperative.

Members who have received service from Menard Electric Cooperative in the past and have a past due balance or have had amounts written-off, and who are requesting installation, re-connection, or connection of an

energy account, are automatically required to make security deposits as well as making payment to settle the past debt.

Current active members who have no deposit on file and are subject to collection for past due energy bills or other charges will be required to make a \$100 security deposit at the time the cooperative employee visits the service location for collections or reconnection.

Current active members who file Bankruptcy are required to make a deposit in the amount of 1/6 the estimated annual energy charge for each active residential service or 1/3 the estimated annual energy charge for each active nonresidential service.

The security deposit collected due to Bankruptcy will be refunded only toward the settlement of the final energy bill. All other security deposits will be refunded during the 25th month after the acceptable payment history as defined above, and having no late fees for the past twelve (12) months, has been met or subsequent to settlement of the final energy bill. The cooperative may choose to apply the security deposit refund as a credit to active accounts or to issue a refund check.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

BOARD MEETING REPORT

**Menard Electric Cooperative
From the Board Room
June 22, 2004**

Menard Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 22, 2004, in the office at Petersburg. President Gary L. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Directors present in addition to President Martin were: Michael E. Carls, Roy H. Seaney, D. Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, James Graff and Jerry W. Brooks. Directors Edward Allspach & Steven Wornor were absent. Also present were Manager Lynn A. Frasco, and Attorney Charles K. Smith. After roll call, the agenda for the meeting was approved.

Minutes of the May 25, 2004 board meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

Minutes of the Executive Session of the May 25th Board Meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

Minutes of the June 5th Organizational Meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

The board reviewed May 2004 General Fund Checks #13210 - #13389 amounting to \$1,260,679.77. After discussion, the payment of bills was approved.

It was moved and seconded that the Inventory of Work orders for the month of May in the amount of \$60,578.64 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

Agreements for electric service for Hugh McHarry, Randy Turner, and Gertrude Bruce were approved as presented.

Manager Frasco presented the Manager's Report for the month. He reviewed the Outage Summary and Safety Reports. Manager Frasco reminded the board that there had been a question about writing off a particular account. He explained that there was damage to the cooperative's facilities and the member refused to assume responsibility for the damage and had refused to turn the claim into his insurance company. The Manager then explained how this would be handled with regard to Capital Credits. He advised that the cooperative had received a lease agreement from Cingular with regard to the tower. He advised that he would review the lease agreement with attorney Smith and the Staff had suggested changes to the agreement. The Manager advised that Capital Credit Checks would be mailed by the end of the week. He discussed the St. John's discount program and how it would affect cooperative members. Manager Frasco advised that Mechanicsburg had approved their Franchise Agreement with the cooperative. He stated that nothing had been worked out with Sherman. He advised that the Staff had tested the Direct Deposit Program and it appeared to be working properly. He discussed the Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative Annual Meeting. He advised that the cooperatives would be conducting a TWACS study and that the equipment would be installed in the Saidora Substation for testing. President Martin called the Board into Executive Session to discuss Union Negotiations. President Martin reconvened the Board Session. Manager Frasco discussed with the Board the CFC Training for Directors. It was the consensus

of the Board to investigate participating in these Training Sessions.

The Manager presented the Financial Report for the Month of May 2004. Year to date margins were (\$192,463) compared to (\$1,008) last year. Equity as of the end of May was 37.78% and the number of members served was 9,945 compared to 9,961 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of May 2004 was \$26,636,952 compared to \$25,810,089 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of its lenders: RUS, CFC and the FFB.

Directors' Special Occasion vouchers for the month in the amount of \$985.38 were approved.

Director Goetsch reported that there were no AIEC activities. Manager Frasco reported on the upcoming AIEC Annual Meeting.

Director Carls reported on Soyland/CCS activities. He and Manager Frasco reported on the cooperative's participation in the Prairie State Project. They advised that it would be necessary for the cooperative, through its Soyland Board Members, to make a decision about a commitment to participate in the project. There was much discussion by the Board. It was the consensus of the Board to rely on the advice of the two Board Members as to the decision with regard to participation in the project.

The Board discussed the 2004 Annual Meeting.

The Manager reviewed the Capital Credit refund report.

Manager Frasco discussed with the Board the proposed changes to the Security Deposit Policy. The Board discussed two other changes to the Policy. With those changes the Board agreed that the policy should proceed to the second approval reading at next month's board meeting.

President Martin reviewed with the Board the meeting dates and times for 2004/2005. The President also discussed with the Board the various committee and delegate appointments. After discussion appointments were made to the various Board Committees and delegate positions for the next 12 months.

Manager Frasco discussed the construction project for the new office building. He advised that contracts had been executed and work was in progress on the construction plan. He discussed having a groundbreaking ceremony on July 22nd at 4:00 PM. He discussed who would attend the NRECA Region V Meeting September 21st through 23rd in Lacrosse Wisconsin.

There was discussion whether or not the Board should hold a strategic planning session in 2004. After discussion it was the consensus of the board not to hold a strategic planning session this year.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, July 27, 2004 at 7:00PM. There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved and seconded that the Meeting be adjourned.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

St. John's Hospital offers savings to Menard members

Members of Menard Electric Cooperative who have no medical insurance are eligible to save on the cost of services from St. John's Hospital in Springfield, under an arrangement that became effective on July 1, 2004. The savings are being offered by St. John's to help those who, for whatever reason, are uninsured and are not eligible for healthcare benefits such as Medicare or Medicaid.

"This new agreement will mean a huge savings for a co-op member who needs treatment and goes to St. John's Hospital," says Menard General Manager Lynn Frasco. "Today's medical procedures are often expensive, but this plan makes them more affordable for the consumers who may be most vulnerable to a financial hardship."

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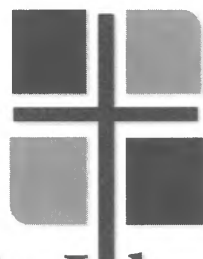
Co-op members can bring a copy of a recent electric bill to the hospital upon registration to show their membership. The hospital will then issue a member card, to be used for subsequent visits. The 30 percent discount will automatically be applied to any charges billed for St. John's Hospital.

"St. John's has a long tradition of providing quality health care services to the people of central Illinois. We are pleased that we were able work with the Cooperative to offer a special savings plan to its members," said Richard Carlson, FACHE, executive vice president, St. John's Hospital. "We

hope this agreement will serve as a model for other organizations. These types of arrangements help us fulfill our commitment to providing the very best health care to all our patients."

Members with questions on eligibility or services included in the discount program can call (217) 544-6464, ext. 55615 at St. John's Hospital. Taking a recent electric bill is the easiest, fastest way to show membership when registering at the hospital, located at 800 E. Carpenter Street, just north of downtown Springfield.

More information about the hospital can also be found on their web site at st-johns.org. The Patient Services tab located at the top of the opening page includes a complete listing of services offered at St. John's. A Quick Links area explains services offered at the Bone and Joint Institute, the Carol Jo Vecchie Women and Children's Center, Prairie Heart Institute and the Cancer Institute at St. John's Hospital.



St. John's Hospital



Meeting at St. John's Pavilion in Springfield to discuss the new co-op member savings program were (from left): David Stuva, President/CEO of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative; Lynn Frasco, Manager of Menard Electric Cooperative; Krista Rock, Director, Managed Care at St. John's Hospital; and Hugh Collins, Assistant Administrator, Fiscal Services at St. John's.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

October is cooperative month

Today many electric cooperative members don't remember the first day electricity came to their homes. In fact, your electricity was probably already there when you moved in – one of those automatic things like the telephone line and running water.

The day you joined your electric cooperative, you became a member of a unique organization. An electric cooperative is different.

Your electric cooperative is not-for-profit and consumer owned, like a credit union or your local FS plant. That means any rev-

enue above expenses is eventually returned to the members in the form of capital credit payments. Your electric cooperative is committed to providing the best possible service at the lowest possible cost. We take pride in our cooperative—a grassroots system of service started by pioneers like those who settled this area.

There is something different about receiving your electricity from an electric cooperative. We think it's a difference you can be proud of.

NEW REBATES

Effective October 1, 2004

■ Water Heater Rebates and Rate

This water heater rebate program is available on a one-time basis to all members who agree to replace an existing fossil fuel fired water heater with an electric water heater that has at least a 40-gallon capacity. If the new electric water heater is installed in a new structure or replaces a fossil fuel fired water heater you will receive a \$100 rebate. For the second new water heater you will receive \$75. If the new electric water heater re-

places an existing electric water heater you will receive a \$75 rebate. To qualify for the rebate you must sign up for the cooperative's load management program. In addition to the rebate above you will qualify for a 3 cent per kilowatt-hour rate reduction on kilowatt-hours used between 600 and 1,000 every month of the year. This could save you up to \$144 each year in addition to the rebate.

■ Geothermal Rebates & Rates

The rebate is \$600 per unit regardless of the size of the unit installed. The unit can be installed in either a new or existing home. If you install a geothermal heating and cooling system you will also be eligible for your cooperative's geothermal rate, if

you have an all electric home. Under this rate you will be billed 5 cents per kilowatt-hour for all kilowatt-hours used between 1,000 and 6,000 for the billing months of October through May each year.

■ Heat Pump Rebates

Your cooperative is offering a \$200 rebate regardless of the size of the unit installed.

■ Certified Comfort Home Rebate

If you build a new home to the standards described in the Certified Comfort Home book you will receive a onetime \$100 rebate.

If you have any questions on these rebates give the cooperative a call at (800) 872-1203 or check out the cooperative's Web site at www.menard.com.

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ■ OFFICE HOURS: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ■ WEB ADDRESS: www.menard.com

MENARD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

APPLICATION AUTOMATIC PAYMENT PLAN

If you would like to sign-up for the automatic payment plan, then fill out the following form. Send form and a **VOIDED CHECK** or **DEPOSIT SLIP** to Menard Electric Cooperative, PO Box 200, Petersburg, Illinois.

NAME: _____ SS#: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE# _____

MAP LOCATION# _____

BANK NAME _____

BANK ACCOUNT# _____

TYPE OF ACCOUNT Checking Savings

I _____ authorize Menard Electric Cooperative to draw monthly bank drafts through the automatic plan (ACH) on the account shown above for the payment of my electric bill in full and any other services I authorize. I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any time by notifying Menard Electric Cooperative in writing. Both Menard Electric Cooperative and the bank may terminate this agreement with ten (10) days written notice. I understand that Menard Electric Cooperative reserves the right to limit participation in this program to customers whose accounts are in good standing. I understand that the amount of my bill each month will be drafted on the 10th or next business day after. I understand that if funds are not available in my account for the draft to clear, there will be a charge posted to my Menard Electric Cooperative account, for NSF, and I will still be required to make full payment before the due date of the bill.

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Incandescent, Halogen, or Compact Fluorescent?

The least expensive bulbs may cost you the most.

By Tina Farmer, Intern

In 1879 Thomas Edison had a bright idea – a light bulb – now the icon for all bright ideas. While many of us still use a version of Edison's incandescent bulb, grabbing the first one we glide past while speeding through the supermarket aisles, this least expensive of bulbs may not be the most economical in the long run.

Shopping for new light bulbs can be confusing. Which is best? Which lasts longest? Which will save you money? Below, we have broken down and simplified the different bulb types to make the comparison easier.

■ **Incandescent**—The most common light bulbs are the incandescent bulbs. They cost about \$0.75 per bulb and last about 750 to 1,000 hours (long-life bulbs may last up to 2,500 hours). They give a comfortable spectrum of light and work well with the dimmer switches that are so popular in homes. They also waste energy. Lots of it. In fact, about 90 percent of the energy they produce is released not as light, but as heat. While this may be fine during the cooler months, it can mean higher air conditioning bills in the warmer ones.

■ **Halogen**—Halogen bulbs are more efficient than incandescent bulbs and burn longer. They have a standard life of approximately 2,250 to 3,500 hours and with continued use maintain their clean white light without fading. Unfortunately, rather than using energy efficient standard halogen bulbs, most halogen users employ high-wattage halogen tubes. These energy gluttons create four times more heat than incandescent

bulbs and, with temperatures reaching about 1,200 degrees, they can be serious fire hazards.

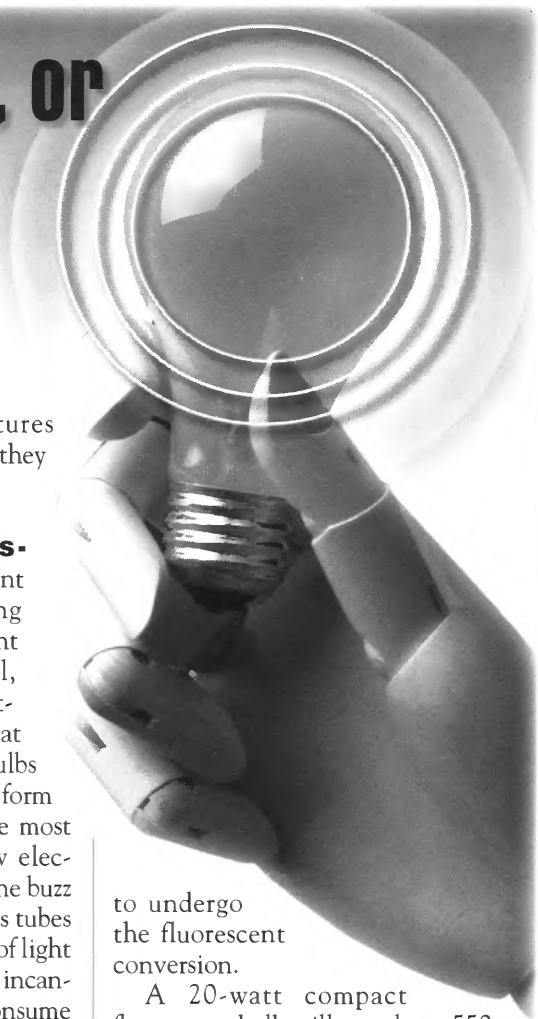
■ **Compact Fluorescent**—The words “fluorescent light” may bring horrifying recollections of buzzing light fixtures and visions of dull, sickly, institutional type lighting. But it's time to rethink that image. Today's fluorescent bulbs are the most energy efficient form of lighting out there and the most economical to operate. New electronic ballasts have quieted the buzz and the phosphor-coated glass tubes produce a soothing spectrum of light that closely mimics that of the incandescent bulbs. Fluorescents consume only about one-quarter to one-third of the energy as incandescents and last 10,000 hours or more! Replacing the high-use bulbs in your home with fluorescent bulbs can reduce your lighting costs by about half. The newest bulbs are about the same length as traditional bulbs and will fit in most light fixtures. And for those die-hard dimmer users out there, new dimmable fluorescent bulbs are being marketed for home use.

The initial cost of fluorescent bulbs is higher, around \$5 compared to the \$0.75 incandescent bulb, but you should keep in mind that the operating cost of a 75-watt incandescent bulb will be about \$6 over its relatively short life span. Replacing a 100-watt incandescent bulb with a 32-watt compact fluorescent bulb can save about \$30 in operating costs over the life of the bulb and provides the same light output. You should also consider the environmental benefits when deciding whether

to undergo the fluorescent conversion.

A 20-watt compact fluorescent bulb will use about 550 kilowatt-hours of electricity less than a 75-watt incandescent bulb. That equates to 500 pounds of coal that will not be used in coal-fired power plants and 1,300 pounds of carbon dioxide and 20 pounds of sulfur that will not be released as environmental pollution. The government estimates that replacing one incandescent bulb in every U.S. household with a compact fluorescent bulb would be the pollution-saving equivalent of removing one million cars from our streets.

There are several lighting options to choose from when illuminating your home. Many people will remain loyal to Edison's “bright idea,” but the new fluorescent lighting options are certainly worth a look. They are more energy efficient, more economical to operate, and environmentally friendlier. For more information about compact fluorescent lighting options, visit the federal government's ENERGY STAR Web site at www.energystar.gov.



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4.5¢

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**24 hours a day — 7 days a week
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- Overseas calling e.g. United Kingdom 12¢/minute
- 6 second increment billing

Menard Electric Cooperative is offering long distance telephone service through Power Net Global Communications. Utilizing the Qwest Long Distance Network (The nation's 4th largest carrier). This long distance service is one of the lowest-cost long distance services available.

**FREE
Personal
800 NUMBER
No fees
Same low rate**

**For additional information, call (800) 872-1203 or mail application to:
Menard Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 200, Petersburg, IL 62675.**

Name _____ Social Security Number _____

Street _____ Estimated Monthly Usage _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Current Carrier _____

Telephone Numbers: () _____ - _____ () _____ - _____

Services Desired: Outbound 800 number New Existing To Ring To: () _____ - _____

Travel Cards Number Requested _____

I hereby authorize PowerNet Global Communications, or its designator, to transfer my long distance service. I agree to financial responsibility for all charges arising from all long distance services provided. The service requested will be provisioned only on the approval of credit for the application. A service charge may be assessed by the local telephone company when they make the carrier change. PowerNet Global will reimburse any such charges if you enclose a copy of said charge when remitting payment to PowerNet Global.

Customer Signature _____ Date _____

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GEO THERMAL OPEN HOUSE

**Saturday, October 23, 2004
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

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Electronic Fund Transfer Now Available

Menard Electric Cooperative is now offering you the opportunity to pay your electric bills by EFT (electronic fund transfer). This is a quick, free, and convenient way to pay your electric bill. Your electric bill payment is transferred automatically from either your checking account or savings account to Menard Electric Cooperative. By using EFT, you can save yourself time and postage, and know that each month your payment has been made. Funds will be transferred from

your bank account on the 10th of the month or the next business day after. It's easy to sign up, just fill out the attached form and return to Menard Electric Cooperative with either a deposit slip or a voided check. You will still receive a detail billing statement at the beginning of the month, which shows all the current information and the amount to be drafted. Your information must be in the cooperative office by the 15th of the month in order to have your next electric bill drafted.

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MENARD



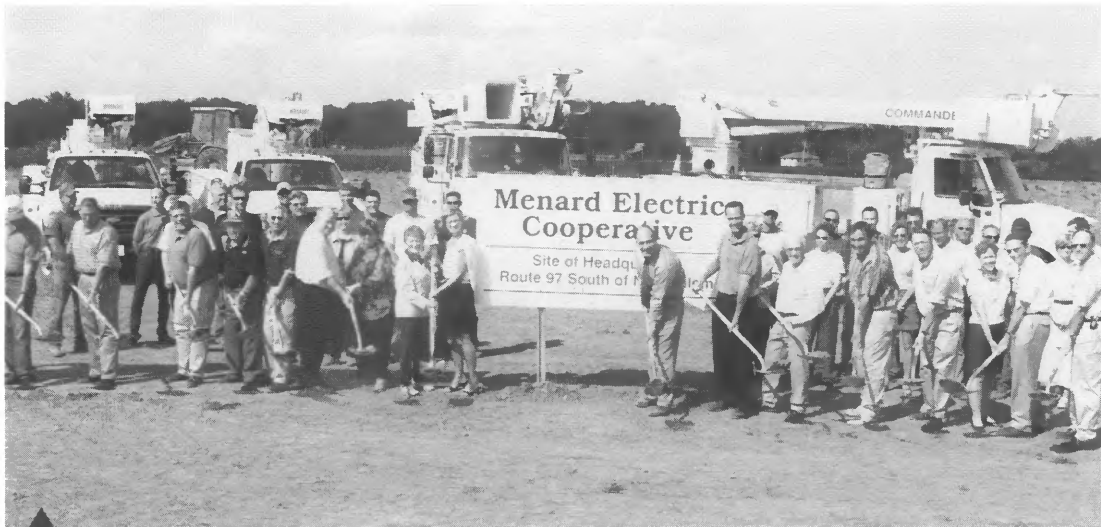
NEWS

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Employees and directors of Menard Electric Cooperative dug shovels into the dirt during a groundbreaking ceremony for the company's new facility that will be built south of Petersburg on Rt. 97 and Coal Mine Road. The new office building and warehouse should be completed by next May.

Menard Electric breaks ground for new facility

More than 40 employees, board members, local officials, and other participants were on hand last week when groundbreaking ceremonies were held for Menard Electric Cooperative's new facilities.

"I think this represents one of the defining moments in Menard Electric Cooperative's history," commented Board President Gary Martin. "It's very exciting to turn a new page and look to the future."

Two years ago the MECC board decided to build a new facility, and nine acres of ground located south of Petersburg on Rt. 97 at Coal Mine Road were purchased from Robert Sampson. Company officials say the move will allow them to increase efficiency by merging its seven current locations into one.

Co-op General Manager Lynn Frasco noted that business has been headquartered in downtown Petersburg for more than two-thirds of a

century, so leaving that area will bring definite changes. At the same time, he said, the move is a sign of growth for Menard County. "One of the big decisions was leaving downtown Petersburg," Martin said.

Adams and Associates of Nevada, MO designed the new facility, which includes an 8,500 square foot office building and 15,000 square feet of warehouse and garage space. Jones-Blythe Construction Co. of Springfield is general contractor for the facility, which should be completed by May 2005.

"We'll be able to offer better service to our members, and they'll be able to go to one place for all their needs," Frasco said. "This project demonstrates a commitment by Menard Electric Cooperative and its board to provide the best possible service to its members for the long term."

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