

What's Inside

Petition Process 2

How to nominate someone to the board of directors

Representative Board District Descriptions 3

More about new voting districts

Make the New Year a Time of Reflection 4

Learn what guides your cooperative

Directors Authorize Sale of Propane Division..... 5

Information on changes to your propane service

WildBlue Coming Soon 6

Local residents gain access to satellite broadband Internet

Project ChildSafe 8

ChildSafe Gun Locks still available

Members should carefully read these instructions to assure their ballot is completed correctly and not voided due to incorrect completion.

Upcoming Meeting and Board Elections Bring New Procedures

At the Special Meeting of Members on August 26, 2004, EnerStar members approved bylaw changes that overhaul the director election process. In order to institute the bylaw amendments, the current board districts were redistricted into nine Representative Districts, which were then assigned three to a Voting District. Although the Voting Districts range in size, they contain approximately equal numbers of members.

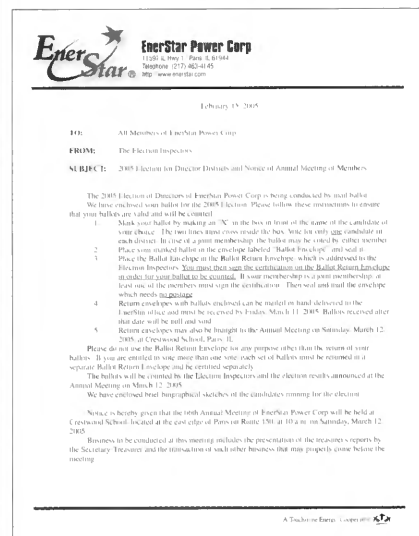
The bylaw changes approved at the Special Meeting were two fold. The December issue of this magazine highlighted the first part of the change - new procedures for director nomination. This issue will highlight the second part - new voting procedures.

Previously when voting in director elections, all voting was done in person or by proxy at the annual meeting. The new procedure allows for mail-in voting prior to the meeting.

EnerStar Board Chairman Tom Murphy said, "Co-ops are owned by the membership, but members can't maintain control of the co-op through their elected local member representatives unless they vote. We are glad that it will now be easier for members to participate in the democratic process. I'm confident that over time these changes will lead to a more involved membership."

Via mail in late February, members will receive an envelope containing all necessary voting documentation for the EnerStar board elections. The following items will be included: Official Notice, Voting Ballot, Ballot Envelope, and a Return Envelope.

Official Notice - Each year, EnerStar sends every membership an announcement of the meeting as required by the bylaws. With the bylaw amendments, the format will be different but the information will remain the same. The notice will include the meeting date, time, and location. It will contain election information and voting instructions. Members should carefully read these instructions to assure their ballot is completed correctly and not voided due to incorrect completion. The notice will also include a brief candidate biography. The candidates are solely responsible for the content provided in the candidate biographical information.



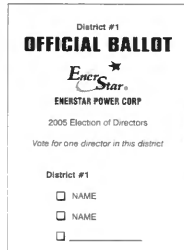
SAMPLE

continued on page 16b



continued from page 16a

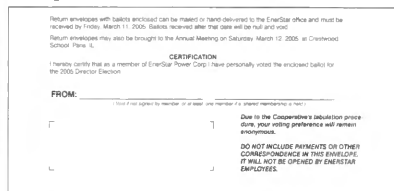
Voting Ballot – Normally, there are three Voting Districts from which a candidate is chosen to complete a three-year term. Ballots are color coded by Voting District. To properly complete a ballot, members should mark an “X” in the box. The two lines of the “X” must cross inside the box. Members must not color in the box or use a check mark when voting. The Election Inspectors are required to void any ballot incorrectly completed. The completed ballot should be placed inside the Ballot Envelope and sealed. Election Inspectors will open the ballot envelopes and count the ballots at the Annual Meeting. The Election Inspectors Committee consists of



EnerStar members who are not current EnerStar employees or directors. Members' voting preferences will remain anonymous. Election results will be announced at the close of the meeting after all business properly brought before the meeting has concluded.

Ballot Envelope - This envelope is smaller than the return envelope with the words “Ballot Envelope” clearly stated on the front. Completed ballots should be sealed inside this envelope. The ballot envelope should be placed in the return envelope and sealed.

Return Envelope – The return envelope is the larger of the two envelopes. For the convenience of our



members, the return envelope will be stamped and self-addressed to the attention of the Election Inspectors. Members are required to sign the back of the return envelope where indicated. This certification verifies that the member personally voted the enclosed ballot. If the account is a joint membership, only one member is required to certify the ballot.

Members may return their ballots one of three ways. Return envelopes with ballots enclosed can be mailed or hand-delivered to the EnerStar office and must be received by **Friday, March 11, 2005**. Ballots received after that date will be null and void. Return envelopes may also be brought to the Annual Meeting on **Saturday, March 12, 2005**.

Members with questions regarding the new voting procedures should contact EnerStar's Vicki Ewing at (217) 466-7601 or Angela Griffin at (217) 466-7603.

Board Election Dates To Know:

JANUARY 11, 2005

Last day to turn in petitions and personal biography at the EnerStar office. Biography will be published in the Official Notice of Meeting and must be 250 words or less.

As a result of the redistricting, four director positions will be open for election at the forthcoming 66th Annual Meeting of Members on March 12, 2005. Open positions are:

For 3-year terms:

Voting District A, Representative Board District 1, *currently served by Jeff Zimmerman.*

Voting District B, Representative Board District 5, *currently served by Carrol Drake.*

Voting District C, Representative Board District 9, *currently served by Danny Gard.*

For 2-year term:

Voting District B, Representative Board District 6, *currently served by Tom Murphy.*

Petition Process

In the December issue of this magazine, the new director petition process was outlined. Because the petition period does not end until January 11, 2005, it is important to again outline the new nominating procedures to the EnerStar membership.

New nominating procedures and rules will also be in place for the 2005 Annual Meeting. All candidates will now be nominated by petition only. The bylaw changes abolished the former practice of nominating committees and nominations from the floor.

Petitions will require the signatures of 15 EnerStar members who live in the candidate's Voting District. All members signing petitions must have an original membership card on file and must be currently receiving electricity from the cooperative. Candidates will also need to check with cooperative personnel to make certain they reside within the newly mapped Representative District.

Petitions first became available for pickup at EnerStar headquarters on December 1. Members can continue to pick up petitions until Janu-

ary 11, 2005, the day that completed petitions must be returned to the EnerStar office.

Candidates should also provide a short biographical sketch, 250 words or less, to be published with the Annual Meeting Notice. These should be turned in with the petitions in order to meet publishing deadlines.

Members wishing to receive an election petition, or who have questions regarding the petition process, should contact Vicki Ewing at (217) 466-7601 during normal business hours.

Representative Board District Descriptions

District – Year Open for Election

Voting District A

District 1-2005

The Townships of Newman, Bowdre, and Sargent in Douglas County, Illinois; the Townships of East Oakland and Ashmore in Coles County, Illinois; the Township of Embarrass in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Shiloh lying south of the 1800th Road in Edgar County, Illinois.

District 2-2006

The Townships of Carroll and Love in Vermilion County, Illinois; the Townships of Young America, Ross, Prairie, Edgar, and Brouillets Creek in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Shiloh lying north of the 1800th Road in Edgar County, Illinois.

District 3-2007

The Townships of Buck, Paris, Hunter, and Stratton in Edgar County, Illinois.

Voting District B

District 4-2006

The Townships of Kansas and Grandview in Edgar County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying south of the 400th Road and west of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying south of the 300th Road and east of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois.

District 5-2005

The Township of Elbridge in Edgar County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying north of the 400th Road and west of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying north of the 300th Road and east of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois.

District 6-2005

(for two year term)

The Townships of Westfield and Douglas in Clark County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Dolson lying north of the 2000th Road in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Wabash lying north of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois.

Voting District C

District 7-2006

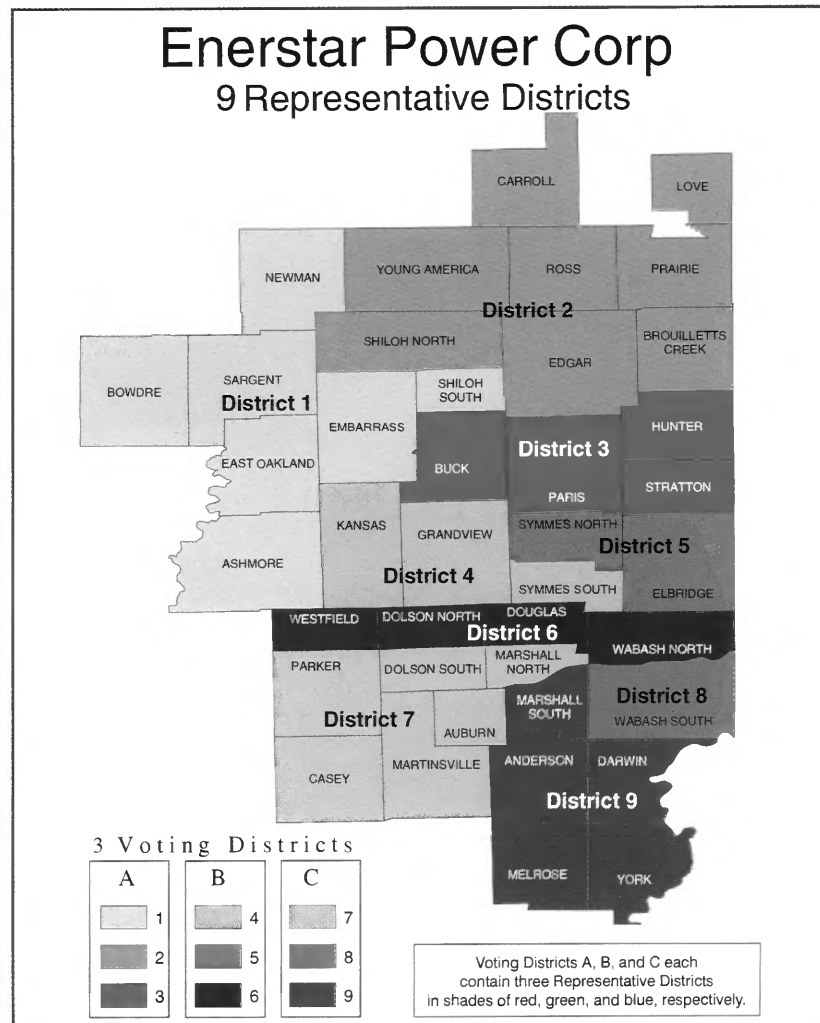
The Townships of Parker, Casey, Auburn, and Martinsville in Clark County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Dolson lying south of the 2000th Road in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Marshall lying north of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois.

District 8-2007

All that portion of the Township of Wabash lying south of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois.

District 9-2005

The Townships of Anderson, Darwin, Melrose, and York in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Marshall lying south of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois.





Make the New Year a time of Reflection...

A Great Time to Review What Guides Our Cooperative.

Your electric cooperative, EnerStar Power, is a not-for-profit cooperative business. As a member of the cooperative, you enjoy privileges that customers of other electric companies do not have. Electric cooperatives are special businesses because the members we serve own us. The New Year is a great time to review the seven cooperative principles that guide our business and reflect the best interests to our members.

1) Voluntary & Open Membership - Our cooperative is a voluntary organization, open to all persons able to use our services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

2) Democratic Member Control - EnerStar is a democratic organization controlled by our members. Members serving as elected representatives of the board of directors are elected by the membership. Members have equal voting rights—one member, one vote.

3) Members' Economic Participation - Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of our cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, setting up reserves, and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4) Autonomy & Independence - EnerStar is an autonomous, self-help organization controlled by our members. If we enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, we do so on terms that ensure democratic control by our members and maintain our cooperative autonomy.

5) Education, Training & Innovation - Our cooperative provides education and training for our members, elected representatives, officers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of our cooperative. We inform the general public—particularly young people and opinion leaders—about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6) Concern for Community - While focusing on our members' needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by our members.

7) Cooperation Among Cooperatives - Our cooperative serves our members most effectively and strengthens the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and national structures.

It is worthy to note how electric cooperatives in Illinois were organized. During the 1930s, as

our country was emerging from the throes of economic depression, electricity use was becoming widespread in our nation's cities. However, rural Americans were still in the dark. Investor-owned utilities would not invest in rural America. They simply felt that it would not be profitable to serve rural areas.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt saw the benefits electricity provided and wanted all Americans to share in the value it offered. Roosevelt signed federal legislation that offered the investor-owned electric companies low-interest loans to finance the construction of electric facilities in rural areas. To his surprise, the investor-owned electric companies still had no interest in serving rural areas, even though there was great interest by rural Americans to receive the benefits of electricity in their homes and on their farms.

So rural Americans took their future into their own hands. Local groups across the country came together and formed electric cooperatives. These were 'grassroots' efforts with volunteers often going door-to-door to solicit interest and collecting memberships. The low-interest loans were leveraged with private dollars to build a system based upon cooperative principles that continues to enhance the quality of life of rural Americans.

Rural cooperatives like EnerStar, then known as Edgar Electric Cooperative, are an excellent example of the power of community. When one person joins with many people, great things can be accomplished together.

While the cooperative may have changed greatly in the last 65 years, the basic principles that drive the cooperative remain unchanged. Our mission is to improve the quality of life in the rural communities we serve. Your electric cooperative will continue to grow, advance, and be a much stronger organizations for those who will inherit it from us.



"The New Year is a great time to review the seven cooperative principles that guide our business and reflects the best interests to our members."



Directors Authorize Sale of Propane Division

At the 2004 Annual Meeting of Members, on behalf of the board of directors, EnerStar Board Chairman Tom Murphy addressed the cooperative membership. Murphy reviewed the board's accomplishments from the previous year and outlined the vision for the future.

"Our job as directors is to develop the vision, to tell management where we want this cooperative to go," said Murphy. "We have accomplished a lot over the last couple of years. We are definitely heading in the right direction, and I am proud of what this board and the employees at EnerStar are doing." He added his emphasis on the fact that EnerStar continues to fulfill the responsibility launched 65 years ago when Edgar Electric (now EnerStar Power) became an electric cooperative.

Two of the goals highlighted by Murphy were subsidiary profitability and cooperative equity. Murphy explained the board felt strongly about improving the financial status of the cooperative.

With those goals in mind, EnerStar recently signed an agreement to sell its propane business, EnerStar Resources. "It is a good business decision to sell at this time," emphasized Murphy.

In a transaction closed on November 15, 2004, and effective November 1, 2004, the propane assets were sold to Vanson, LLC, an independent propane marketer with locations in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois. Vanson has nearby plants in Lafayette, Crawfordsville, and Mount Carmel, Illinois, and Princeton, Indiana.

Vanson has hired the employees of EnerStar Resources and as part of the agreement, will change the name from EnerStar Resources in the near future. The propane office will remain at the cooperative headquarters through the winter heating season until new office space can be located.

Vanson has an excellent reputation in the propane industry, and we believe this will be a smooth and seamless transition for EnerStar Resources' propane customers. The telephone numbers will remain the same, and Vanson has committed to honor all existing budget and contract agreements.

EnerStar Power will continue to honor the total energy electric rate for propane customers through the winter heating season. Information regarding the phase-out of this rate will be mailed directly to customers towards the end of April 2005.

Member News

Planned outage call list if you are on life support, let us know

EnerStar Power does its best to keep your electric service on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. Yet despite our best efforts, there are many reasons why an outage may occur, be it inclement weather or birds looking for a crevice to nest or malfunctioning equipment.

For most members, this is merely an inconvenience. But for those who depend on electricity to power life support equipment, an outage can present a severe hardship.

If you or a relative depend on electrically powered life support equipment, it is important to inform EnerStar regarding your situation. The cooperative maintains a Planned Outage Call List and you may qualify to be included. A planned outage is an outage in which the cooperative is aware in advance that an electrical outage will occur. This does not include outages caused for any other reason.

The notification list is not necessarily limited to health issues, and in some instances, considerations will be given to businesses. For instance, businesses may request to be on the planned outage call list if their confinement livestock is dependent on electricity for survival. EnerStar accounts classified on commercial rates automatically qualify for the call list.

It is important to stress that by being placed on the planned outage call list, EnerStar is in no way guaranteeing uninterrupted power supply. If you or your business depends on uninterrupted power supply, the use of an electric generator is highly recommended. It is also recommended that computers have some sort of battery back up systems.

To be considered for the Planned Outage Call list, members should contact EnerStar's Tim Haddix at 217-466-7617 during normal business hours.

Do You Have Story Ideas? Call us!

EnerStar is looking for new ways to promote area communities and the service territory that it serves. Do you have an interesting story you would like to share? A unique activity or hobby? A unique business you would like to promote? Maybe you know of some interesting local history? If so, then tell us about

it so we can tell others!

What stories would you like to see included in this magazine? If you have an idea of an appropriate story, call Angela Griffin at (217)466-7603 and tell her about it. You can also e-mail her at agriffin@enerstar.com. Thanks!



Mission statement

EnerStar Power Corp exists to serve the changing needs of its members by improving their quality of life, by actively supporting community development and serving their energy needs.



WildBlue Coming Soon

Local Residents Gain Access to Satellite Broadband Internet

Computer Wares in Paris, a wholly owned subsidiary of EnerStar Power, will offer WildBlue satellite-delivered broadband Internet access to homes and businesses throughout the east central Illinois and west central Indiana area. This service will be available around mid-May 2005.

WildBlue will be available virtually anywhere in the continental United States, regardless of geographic location. It can be used where cable modems, fixed wireless technologies, and digital subscriber line (DSL) Internet access are not available.

With service that is up to 25 times faster than standard 56K dial-up connections, WildBlue allows users to retrieve information quickly and access rich content that is not available through dial-up modems. The service will be a continuous on-line connection that does not require a telephone line.

The WildBlue equipment will consist of a mini-dish to be put on the roof or a wall of homes and small offices. The WildBlue Service will be available at low consumer prices starting at \$49.95 per month. There will be several packages to choose from featuring different speeds.

"We look forward to providing broadband Internet access to the communities we serve," said Jim Lewis, Manager of Computer Wares. "We are pleased to bring Edgar and Clark Counties affordable, two-way high-speed Internet access with no phone lines, no cable, and no dial-up, that is always on and available anywhere our members work or live."

Those who wish to receive additional information and updates on WildBlue should e-mail Computer Wares at wildblue@enerstar.com. To sign up for the priority waiting list, log on to the Computer Wares Web site at www.comwares.net.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – *Information is still somewhat tentative and is therefore subject to change at service launch.*

What is WildBlue?

WildBlue is a leading satellite Internet company, providing high-speed data services to homes and small offices in unserved or underserved communities.

How does it work?

Each subscriber will have a small satellite dish connected to a modem similar to a cable modem. This modem will have an Ethernet port that can be connected directly to a personal computer or an internet router. The modem will communicate through the dish with the WildBlue satellite that will in turn relay communications to one of five gateways around the country. These gateways are connected to the Internet backbone.

How does WildBlue differ from current satellite offerings?

WildBlue's Ka-Band Satellites are optimized for broadband. They use multiple spot beams pointed at different geographic regions rather than one beam that covers the continental United States. Spot beams



allow a large degree of frequency re-use; i.e., multiple beams can re-use the same frequency as long as they are aimed at different parts of the country. By contrast, Ku-Band satellites, primarily used for broadcast applications, have a single beam covering the entire continental United States. This limits frequency re-use and reduces broadband capacity to a fraction of the comparably priced Ka-Band satellite.

How fast is WildBlue's service? How does it compare to cable modems and DSL?

WildBlue's always-on broadband Internet connection provides speeds that are comparable to DSL and cable modem service. At launch, we will offer downstream speeds of up to 1.5 Mbps - more than 30 times faster than today's dial-up speeds- and upstream speeds of up to 256K, which exceed most current satellite broadband providers. WildBlue's high bandwidth also opens up a window to a world of rich content that is largely unavailable through dial-up modems.

What will it cost?

Computer Wares will offer high-speed Internet access at \$49.95 per month for 512kbps download, \$69.96 per month for 1mbps download, and \$79.95 per month for 1.5mbps

download. All upload speeds will be 256kbps. The installation fee will be \$299.00 and will include both equipment and a standard installation. A 1-year initial commitment will be required.

What will the installation process be like? Can a customer install his own dish?

Computer Wares' certified WildBlue professional installation specialists will quickly and efficiently install equipment and activate WildBlue's broadband service. The satellite mini-dish is about 26x28-inches and can be easily mounted on a roof or outside wall. A cable from the dish will connect to a satellite modem (a small box placed next to the PC), which will connect to a customer's PC via standard Ethernet. Installation will require trained and certified installation professionals to make sure that the dish is pointed at the satellite accurately and all connections are made properly. Self-installation is not currently being offered.

Do I need a southern line of sight to receive a signal from your satellite?

Yes. You will need a view of the southern sky to receive a signal from the WildBlue satellite.

Are there any time limits?

This service is always on. Your monthly fee pays for unlimited Internet service at no additional cost.

Is there an additional cost for more computers?

No additional monthly fees; however, additional hardware will be required to connect additional computers. An Internet Router/Firewall is recommended.

What other services will be included?

Your monthly fee for WildBlue service will include e-mail accounts, Web hosting, and 24-hour 7-days-a-week support.

What is the impact of latency? Can I play real-time Internet games or make Internet phone calls on your service?

The WildBlue system is engineered to help offset the impact of latency. However, there is a delay of about a quarter second as the signal travels up to the satellite and back down to the ground. For most Internet applications this latency does not affect performance; however, there are some applications, like voice over IP or real-time interactive gaming, where latency will have a noticeable affect on performance over the WildBlue network.

Employee Spotlight

Serving as Interim CEO and President of EnerStar Power since April 2004 is Peter Kollinger. He previously served as EnerStar's Chief Financial Officer for 12 years.

Peter has a bachelors of science degree in business with majors in accounting and management from Eastern Illinois University, as well as extensive training specific to the electric utility industry.

He has worked in the electric co-op industry for 23 years. His

previous employment includes Clay County Electric in Flora and Jo-Carroll Energy in Galena. Peter was also employed at Adams Telephone Co-operative in Golden.

"I have worked in the cooperative world for most of my adult life. In general, I would say the cooperative work environment is very pleasant and the people I have worked with are very nice. A common thread is that they are all local employees serving local members, and they enjoy what they do," said Peter.

Peter and his wife, Kate, have two children and reside in Paris, Illinois. Peter enjoys motorcycling and exercising. He has completed two extensive hikes at the North and South Ridges of the Grand Canyon

National Park in Arizona. He also enjoys spending time on his family's farm near Beecher City, Illinois.



Peter Kollinger
Interim President/CEO
EnerStar Power

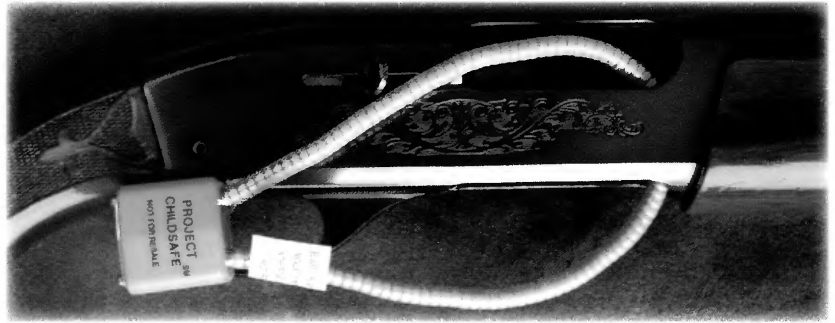
Project ChildSafe - Putting a Lock On Gun Safety

The Illinois electric cooperatives, including EnerStar Power, have joined the Project ChildSafe program. Electric co-ops across Illinois will distribute free gun-locking devices and safety instructions at local co-op offices, annual membership meetings, safety programs and other events.

The free gun-locking device distributed in the Project ChildSafe program is a vinyl-covered steel cable with one end permanently secured to a keyed padlock. The lock prevents the firearm's action from closing.

Project ChildSafe has already distributed more than 6 million safety kits to 35 states.

Sponsored by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the program is funded by a grant from the Department of Justice and is a component of Project Safe Neighborhoods. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a comprehensive,



In Illinois, Project ChildSafe is distributing 257,000 safety gunlocks like this one for free. The gunlocks are available through local electric co-ops, law enforcement offices and other outlets.

strategic approach to reducing gun violence in America.

For more information contact your local law enforcement office or go to www.projectchildsafesafe.org. For Illinois gun safety tour schedules, visit www.ProjectChildSafe.il.gov.

To pick up your free gunlock, stop by the EnerStar offices located at 11596 Illinois Highway One in Paris, just north of Twin Lakes.

Touchstone Energy Nationally Trusted

Harley and Ann Bennett of Marshall, IL took this photo at a balloon festival while on vacation in Albuquerque, New Mexico in early October. The couple saw the balloon and recognized the Touchstone Energy logo because EnerStar Power is a part of the national alliance of electric cooperatives.

All across the nation, Touchstone Energy cooperatives have the same four core values: innovation, accountability, community, and integrity. Members everywhere know they can trust electric cooperatives that have proudly formed an alliance with other electric cooperatives to become Touchstone Energy cooperatives.



Photo by Harley and Ann Bennett of Marshall, IL.

Happy New Year!

*Our
offices will
be closed
December
30 and 31
in
observance
of the
New Year's
Day
holiday.*

EnerStar[®] HomePage

www.enerstar.com

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

27

What's Inside



Attend Your Annual Meeting..... 3

This year's meeting set for March 12

Upcoming Meeting and Board Elections Bring New Procedures..... 4

Learn how to vote for your local board representation

Don't Get Caught in the Phishing Net 6

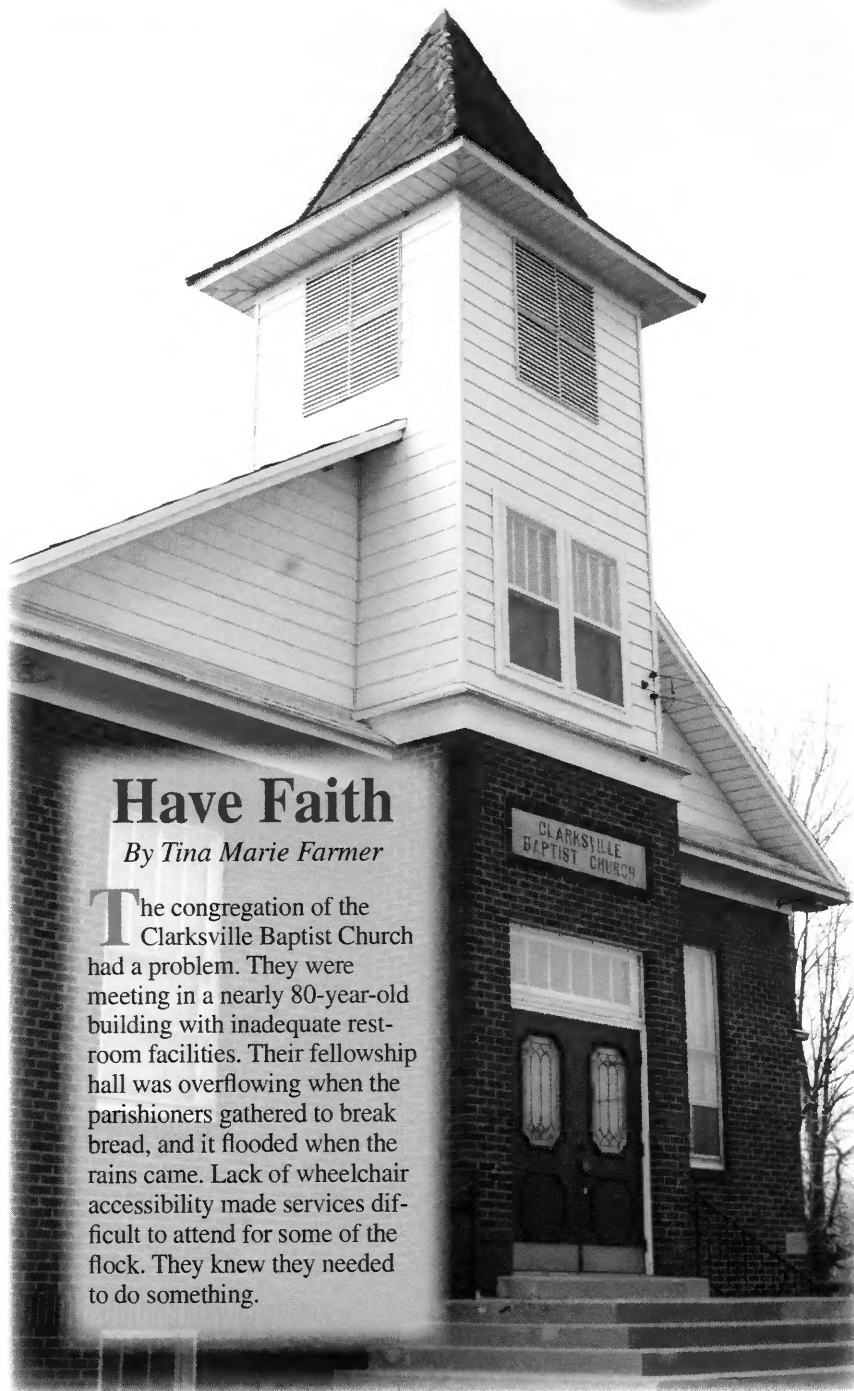
Beware of fraudulent e-mails

Employee Spotlight 7

Meet Journeyman Lineman Keith Borchers

Helping the Sun Heat Your Home in Winter 8

How to take advantage of free solar energy



Have Faith

By Tina Marie Farmer

The congregation of the Clarksville Baptist Church had a problem. They were meeting in a nearly 80-year-old building with inadequate restroom facilities. Their fellowship hall was overflowing when the parishioners gathered to break bread, and it flooded when the rains came. Lack of wheelchair accessibility made services difficult to attend for some of the flock. They knew they needed to do something.

continued on page 16b

Organized in 1857, the Clarksville Baptist Church met in a schoolhouse for its first two years, then held services in a log building until 1875 when a frame structure was built. In 1926 church members erected the brick building that still stands on their property, and in 1995 they decided to build a new place to worship.

“We didn’t have a fundraising goal to start with,” says Evan Lycan, a church elder. “We decided to contact a contractor to explore building options and then formed a feasibility committee to decide on our course of action.” The prohibitive cost of renovating the existing structure made the decision easier; the committee decided to build a new church, a scary prospect—even when you have friends in high places.



Church Elder Evan Lycan was very involved in the construction planning of the new church.



The new Clarksville Baptist Church was built through the cooperation and faith of its members and community.

“We didn’t know exactly what the project would cost, and I had my doubts that we would be able to raise enough money to build what we needed,” reflects Lycan. “I was really skeptical.” The Clarksville congregation sent out a call for help through their state association’s Web site. The response they received was invaluable. “Thanks to the volunteer labor and generosity of many people, we built our new building for half of what the building is actually worth,” says Lycan. Groups from Paducah, Kentucky, and Springfield, along with members of Clarksville’s congregation combined forces for the cause. In fact, Tom Murphy, Chairman of EnerStar Power’s Board of Directors, helped complete the parking lot.

Besides seating capacity to accommodate 200 attendees, nearly double that of the old building, the church’s new home features speakers feeding into the nursery and kitchen so that the parishioners working in those areas are included in services. The building also has separate water heaters for each set of restrooms. “Since we only use the restrooms here one or two days a week,” says Lycan, “it is more cost effective to heat water only when we need it.”

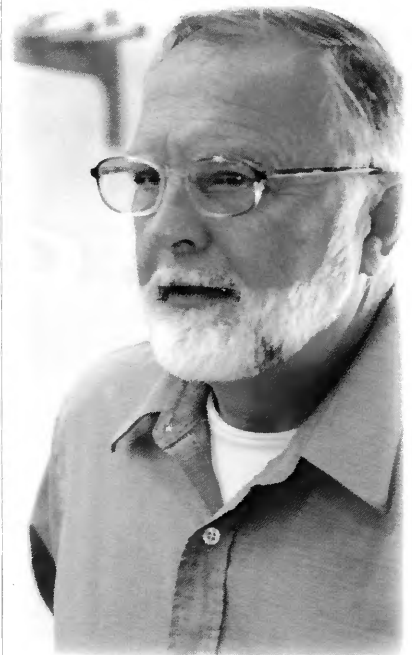
Donations and items from the old building also helped keep costs down. Simonton Windows in Paris donated all of the church’s windows

and a member-donated amplifier and 13 new Bose speakers enhanced the existing sound system. The original communion table, choir chairs, and entryway chandeliers were salvaged from the old brick building as beautiful accents to the new sanctuary, reminding members of their congregation’s history.

Reverend

Jeff Loper and the rest

of the Clarksville flock are delighted with their new building and invite the



Reverend Jeff Loper is grateful for the generosity of the Clarksville community.

community to join them in worship. Services are held Sundays at 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. and Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. For more information about Clarksville Baptist Church, call (217) 889-5588.

Attend Your Annual Meeting

Date set for March 12, 2005

A farmer giving witness in a Tennessee church in the early 1940s said, "Brothers and sisters, I want to tell you this: The greatest thing on earth is to have the love of God in your heart and the next greatest thing is to have electricity in your house."

Through the years, EnerStar Power, like many electric cooperatives, has promoted the fact that rural electric cooperatives are owned by, controlled by, and exist to benefit the membership. A perfect example of this is the Annual Meeting of Members.

The annual meeting is an excellent opportunity to take part in the business of your member-owned cooperative. During the annual meeting, reports will be provided by the cooperative management and the board of directors. And with the new voting procedures, hopefully even more members will participate in the democratic election process and vote for representation on the EnerStar Board of Directors.

Members should mark their calendars for Saturday, March 12, 2005, for the 66th Annual Meeting of Members. Detailed information will follow in the March issue of this publication and in the area newspapers. In

addition, the cooperative will provide detailed information on new voting procedures as part of the Official Mailing Notice that will be mailed to members in late February.

While investor-owned utilities serve the interests of out-of-town shareholders, EnerStar Power is here

to serve its members. It is a responsibility enjoyed by our cooperative members since 1939. We invite you to take this opportunity for fellowship with other cooperative members, enjoy a great breakfast served by EnerStar employees, and take part in the business of your cooperative.



Rural electric cooperatives are owned by, controlled by, and exist to benefit the membership.



66th Annual Meeting of Members



- Saturday, March 12, 2005
- Crestwood School, east on Route 150, Paris, IL
- 7:00 – 10:00 Registration
- 7:00 – 9:30 Member Breakfast served by EnerStar employees
- 10:00 Business Meeting

We hope to see you there!



Upcoming Meeting and Board Elections Bring New Procedures

As of the petition deadline on January 11, 2005, the following nominations were made and four director positions will be open for election at the forthcoming 66th Annual Meeting of Members on March 12, 2005. Open positions are:

For 3-year terms:

Voting District A

Representative
Board District 1,
Jeff Zimmerman
Oakland, IL

Voting District B

Representative
Board District 5,
Carrol Drake
Paris, IL

Voting District C

Representative
Board District 9,
Danny Gard
West Union, IL

For 2-year term:

Voting District B

Representative
Board District 6,
David Sprigg
Marshall, IL

Members should carefully read these instructions to assure their ballot is completed correctly and not voided due to incorrect completion.

At the Special Meeting of Members on August 26, 2004, EnerStar members approved bylaw changes that overhaul the director election process. In order to institute the bylaw amendments, the current board districts were redistricted into nine Representative Districts, which were then assigned three to a Voting District. Although the Voting Districts range in size, they contain approximately equal numbers of members.

The bylaw changes approved at the Special Meeting were two fold. The December issue of this magazine highlighted the first part of the change - new procedures for director nomination. This issue will highlight the second part - new voting procedures.

Previously when voting in director elections, all voting was done in person or by proxy at the annual meeting. The new procedure allows for mail-in voting prior to the meeting.

Previously when voting in director elections, all voting was done in person or by proxy at the annual meeting. The new procedure allows for mail-in voting prior to the meeting.

EnerStar Board Chairman Tom Murphy said, "Co-ops are owned by the membership, but members can't maintain control of the co-op through their elected local member representatives unless they vote. We are glad that it will now be easier for members to participate in the democratic process. I'm confident that over time these changes will lead to a more involved membership."

Via mail in late February, members will receive an envelope containing all necessary voting documentation for the EnerStar board elections. The following items will be included: Official Notice, Voting Ballot, Ballot Envelope, and a Return Envelope.

Official Notice

Each year, EnerStar sends every membership an announcement of the meeting as required by the by-laws. With the bylaw amendments, the format will be different but the information will remain the same. The notice will include the meeting date, time, and location. It will contain election information and voting instructions.



Mission statement

EnerStar Power Corp exists to serve the changing needs of its members by improving their quality of life, by actively supporting community development and serving their energy needs.

Members should carefully read these instructions to assure their ballot is completed correctly and not voided due to incorrect completion. The notice will also include a brief candidate biography. The candidates are solely responsible for the content provided in the candidate biographical information.

Voting Ballot

Normally, there are three Voting Districts from which a candidate is chosen to complete a three-year term. Ballots are color coded by Voting District. To properly complete a ballot, members should mark an "X" in the box. The two lines of the "X" must cross inside the box. Members must not color in the box or use a check mark when voting. The Election Inspectors are required to void any ballot incorrectly completed. The completed ballot should be placed inside the Ballot Envelope and sealed. Election Inspectors will open the ballot envelopes and count the ballots at the Annual Meeting. The Election Inspectors Committee consists of EnerStar members who are

not EnerStar employees or directors. Members' voting preferences will remain anonymous. Election results will be announced at the close of the meeting after all business properly brought before the meeting has concluded.

Ballot Envelope

This envelope is smaller than the return envelope with the words "Ballot Envelope" clearly stated on the front. Completed ballots should be sealed inside this envelope. The ballot envelope should be placed in the return envelope and sealed.

Return Envelope

The return envelope is the larger of the two envelopes. For the convenience of our members, the return envelope will be stamped and self-addressed to the attention of the Election Inspectors. Members are required to sign the back of the return envelope

where indicated. This certification verifies that the member personally voted the enclosed ballot. If the account is a joint membership, only one member is required to certify the ballot.

Members may return their

ballots one of three ways. Return envelopes with ballots enclosed can be mailed or hand-delivered to the EnerStar office and must be received in the office by **Friday, March 11, 2005**. Ballots received after that date will be null and void. Return envelopes may also be brought to the Annual Meeting on Saturday, **March 12, 2005**.

Members with questions regarding the new voting procedures should contact EnerStar's Vicki Ewing at (217) 466-7601 or Angela Griffin at (217) 466-7603.

Knowing How to Vote

Because there are certain rules regarding voting procedures for the Annual Meeting of Members, it is important to remind members of their voting rights and responsibilities. The following points explain who can and cannot vote in the director election and at the annual meeting. By knowing these points, you can be assured your vote counts at the meeting.

- If only one person signed the membership application, then only that person is allowed to vote. The membership belongs to the person who signed the membership application. This is known as a Single Membership. With this membership, only one name is printed on the billing statement.
- If a husband and wife both signed the membership application, then either party may cast one vote for

that membership. This is known as a Joint Membership. With this membership, both names are printed on the billing statement. Sometimes, a membership was taken out before the member was married. In that case, the new spouse may not vote for the membership. A single membership can easily be converted to a Joint Membership.

- If you pay your landlord for the electrical usage at a location and

their name is on the top line of the bill, you are not able to vote. The membership belongs to the landlord, who would vote for this membership.

- If you have power of attorney for a member, you may vote that membership as long as the form is on file at the co-op office.

If you have any further questions regarding your membership status, please contact the EnerStar Power office at (217) 463-4145 or (800) 635-4145 during normal business hours. We will be more than happy to assist you with any questions you may have regarding your account.





Don't Get Caught in the Phishing Net

By Jim Lewis, Manager of Computer Wares

Phishing is an increasingly common type of fraudulent e-mail that spoofs a legitimate address in an effort to steal personal information. These e-mails appear to come from companies you may know and do business with, but in fact are sent from impersonators through e-mail servers used by spammers, many of which are overseas.

In order to get an immediate reaction, phishers often include sensational messages in the e-mail, such as "urgent – your account details may have been stolen."

The e-mails contain links to Web sites that are spoofed to look like the real company, with logos and a familiar look. The most common spoofed addresses are eBay and Paypal, but others include large banks such as USBank and CitiBank, and common names for banks such as Citizens Bank.

Take for example this actual e-mail:

From: eBay Billing department <aw-confirmation@ebay.com> • **Subject:** Please update your billing information

As you can see, this certainly looks official. It has company logos and other icons to make it look legitimate. These items are easily obtained from Web sites.

This e-mail did not actually come from eBay, the from address has been spoofed. The e-mail actually came from a server in Florida named sync.surpasshosting.com. The headers in the e-mail message that you don't normally see indicate this. The link above that says "Click here to complete our Web form" does not connect to eBay, but rather to a server named www.your-accounts-safety.com.



How can you avoid being caught in the phishing net?

1. Never click on a link in an e-mail. It is too easy to spoof a link in an e-mail. Even if it looks correct, it could be an embedded image that looks like a correct address that actually links to somewhere else.
2. Always type in the address you want to connect to in your Internet browser's address box. If this is a frequently used address then you can bookmark it.
3. Always make sure that when entering personal information in a Web page, that the address begins with https://. Notice the "s" after http. This indicates that it is a secure connection. You would also see a lock or some other indication on your Internet browser's

status bar that indicates that it is a secure connection. You can click on this lock and get more information about this Web site.

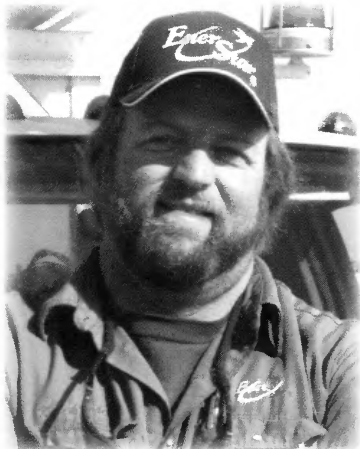
4. Verify the address following the https:// is the domain of the company that you think you are connecting to. For example https://www.mybank.com. If it says something like https://192.168.232.232/secure/mybank.com then it probably is not legitimate. The key is to make sure that the domain name (mybank.com) is the last item before any slashes, if any, on the address line. Again you can click on the lock on the status bar and see that this site is registered to mybank.com.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F

Employee Spotlight

Keith Borchers



*Keith Borchers,
Journeyman Lineman for
EnerStar Power*

Keith Borchers has been on the job for 11 years at EnerStar Power. He is employed as a journeyman lineman for the cooperative.

An Iowa native, Keith graduated from the Northwest Iowa Technical College in Sheldon, Iowa, with a degree in Power Line Technology. With this degree, he began his career at EnerStar as an apprentice lineman and moved up the ranks to his current status.

"I take a lot of pride in a job well done," says Keith. "I want to make sure we do a good job for our membership." He added that he enjoys meeting and talking with the membership.

Keith resides in Paris with his wife, Shelly, and four children, Jennifer, Amber, Kyle, and Kristen. Keith enjoys a variety of community activities. The children keep him busy with band, drama, and sports activities. The children are also involved in 4-H. Keith has had the opportunity to share his job knowledge with the 4-Hers through their electricity projects. Keith also enjoys lots of other activities such as paintballing, camping, fishing, barbershop chorus, and woodworking.

Pole Inspection Underway in Clark County

EnerStar members living in the Clark County area will most likely see crews from Lee Inspection as the cooperative begins its annual pole-testing program. Mike Clark, EnerStar's Construction Foreman/Superintendent, announced the inspection would begin around January 24, 2005. The crews will be working the Marshall substation and will test 3,000 poles on nearly 150 miles of line.

The cooperative reinstated the pole-testing program last year with the completion of the West Union substation. Following a systematic plan, EnerStar will eventually inspect all poles on the electric system in an eight-year rotation cycle. It is anticipated that in 2006, the cooperative will test the Kansas substation.

Clark stated the purpose of the program is to improve line safety by locating and replacing defective poles and extending the life of the poles by treating them with a wood preservative. The program also reduces unscheduled outages due to maintenance issues.

When testing the poles, Lee Inspectors uses a "Sound and Seldom Bore" technique. The pole is

sounded at the ground level. If the pole is suspicious, the inspector will drill a hole at the base of the pole in a downward direction. The particles are checked for signs of decay. Some decay can be treated with a wood preservative but if necessary, the cooperative will replace the pole.

"While on the job, the inspectors serve as another set of eyes for the cooperative and they give us a different perspective," said Clark. "They check for maintenance issues, look for broken hardware, clearance issues, trees that need trimmed, and other possibly dangerous situations." In addition, the crews will map each pole with global positioning satellite (GPS) technology and take a photo of every pole top. The information is used in the cooperative's mapping system.

Clark stated that Lee Inspectors will have EnerStar signage on their vehicles and will be able to provide personal identification if needed. He concluded, "The end result of this program is a safe electric system for both our members and our employees. It also will result in a more reliable system."

The gift that lasts:

Give your valentine a healthier heart



Instead of wrapping up a box of chocolates for your Valentine this year, surprise the one you

love with a far more enduring gift, a healthier heart.

February is National Heart Month, after all. And healthy hearts begin with the food we eat. Healthy food begins with cooking. This year, consider giving a kitchen appliance that helps your honey cook without so much fat and calories. Microwaves, bread makers, special indoor grills and rice steamers, for instance, make quick work of a low-fat dinner.

Nutritionists claim the microwave is one of the best appliances for preparing heart-healthy, low-fat

meals. Microwaves can steam vegetables or cook meat and potatoes without added oils.

Likewise, convection ovens allow fat to drip from baked, boiled or roasted meat, making for a lower-fat meal. And smokeless electric indoor barbecues are great for grilling a low-fat wintertime meal.

Cooks who use crock-pots and slow roasters need to add little or no extra fat to their recipes.

And for snacks, food dehydrators turn fruits and vegetables into tasty, reduced-fat treats. Bread makers allow the cook to control the amount of sugar, fat and salt added to breads, pastries and other baked goods.

So cheers to a healthier heart starting this February!

Helping the Sun Heat Your Home in Winter

Every home can benefit from free solar energy in the winter. The first step to taking advantage of this solar heat is to understand where the sun moves around your home. In summer, the sun rises in the east or even a little north of east. It rises high overhead and heats your home's east walls, its roof, and then its west walls. It sets in the west or northwest. In winter, the sun takes a low arc across the sky, moving from the southeast to the southwest. Most of the sun's winter heat falls on the south-facing walls of your home.

The key features for harvesting solar heat are your windows. If you replace your windows, select the glass according to which way the window faces. Most newer windows have insulated glass, which means that they are double-pane windows.



This is good in both winter and summer. Many of these double-pane windows also have glass that is coated with a very thin and almost invisible layer of reflective metal. This low-e coating reduces radiant heat loss from rooms through the window. The new types of spectrally selective glass, like low-e² and Sungate II, are an excellent choice for east and west-facing windows

because they also block solar heat in summer. But don't use a spectrally selective glass on the south-facing side if you want solar heat in winter. Standard low-e glass is a better choice for the south-facing windows, but clear double-pane glass is the best choice.

If you have trees or bushes on the south side of your home, be sure they don't block your winter sun. Observe the pattern of shadows on your home in both winter and summer. Remember that the shade cast by tall trees helps block that high summer sun, and this helps keep your home cool. But low-hanging bushes or trees may be blocking your winter sun, just when you need it the most. Prune these lower branches to let the sun enter your windows in winter.

A handshake still means something



Remember when a handshake was all it took to seal a deal? It's still that way at your local electric cooperative.

The Touchstone Energy® logo you see on our trucks, hats, and on our sign outside, along with our co-op name, stand for our promise to you that you'll receive the best electric service at the best possible price.


We're here only to serve you. And in a world where not much is certain, you can count on that.

We are the power of human connections.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

EnerStar[®] HomePage

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

www.enerstar.com

What's Inside

Election of Directors 2

Learn which directors are running for re-election at this year's annual meeting.

Locally Owned and Operated 3

EnerStar Power is owned by its members.

The Mademoiselle of Meat 4-5

Jena Martin supplies Paris and surrounding areas with 100% natural meat and poultry.

Cooperative Recommends Replacing Meter Rites 6

Some members can experience problems with old technology.

Employee Spotlight 7

Meet Journeyman Lineman Brent Reyher.

The Annual Meeting is a Unique Opportunity for Member Involvement

Locally owned and community focused... your cooperative working for you. For EnerStar members, service means not only making sure the electricity is flowing, but also demonstrating a strong commitment to our local community.

As a cooperative business, we are owned and democratically controlled by our members. It is the democratic control that affords you, the member, the privilege of attending the annual meeting each year.

The 66th Annual Meeting of Members will be on **Saturday, March 12, 2005**, at Crestwood School in Paris, Illinois.

This is your opportunity to be

updated on the business of the cooperative from the past year and take part in the election of directors.

But our annual meeting is not all business! Come early and indulge yourself in a hot breakfast of pancakes and sausage, served by cooperative employees. Breakfast is served from 7:00 to 9:30 a.m. And don't forget the exciting cash prizes given away at the close of the meeting!

We hope to see you there so you can learn a little more about your cooperative and we can learn a little more about you.

EnerStar Power...locally-owned, locally-controlled, locally-operated.



66th Annual Meeting of Members



- Saturday, March 12, 2005
- Crestwood School, east on Route 150, Paris, IL
- 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Registration
- 7:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Member Breakfast served by EnerStar employees
- 10:00 a.m. Business Meeting

We hope to see you there!



**Representative
District 1**
three-year term
Voting District A

JEFF ZIMMERMAN



The board member serving EnerStar's most western region is Jeff Zimmerman of the Oakland area. He has served on the board for three years.

Jeff is a 1974 graduate of Oakland High School and earned his B.S. in Accountancy from the University of Illinois in 1978. He is a certified public accountant and a certified financial planner.

Jeff has accounting and financial planning practices in Oakland and Bradenton, Florida. The professional services offered include, tax planning and preparation, financial planning, client write-up and management advisory services. He is also the Vice President of Finance & CFO for Manatee County Rural Health Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation that operates fourteen community health centers in west central Florida.

Jeff serves as Vice Chairman of the EnerStar board of directors. He is a member of EnerStar's Ethics and Audit Committees. He completed the required educational courses and became a Credentialed Cooperative Director in 2003.

Jeff believes strongly in the cooperative form of ownership as it allows members, who are owners of the cooperative, to participate in the governance and direction of the cooperative.

When asked what is the most important fact about the coop that members may not realize, Jeff explained, "It is important to understand how the cooperative came into existence and the social and economical benefits they bring to our communities."

Jeff enjoys camping, canoeing and sports. He and his wife, Diana, have two children, Zack and Vanessa.

**Representative
District 5**
three-year term
Voting District B

CARROL DRAKE



Carrol is a native of Edgar County and graduated from Paris High School. He served in the Army Reserve from 1957 to 1963, including 15

months active duty.

He was an employee of Illinois Cereal Mills from November 1957 through the summer of 1963. He then worked as a millwright in Gibson City until early 1969. He farmed from 1969 through 2003.

Carrol has been a member of the Edgar County Farm Bureau Board of Directors since 1987. He has been a member of the Enerstar Board since December 2000. In 2003, he completed all courses of study to become a Credentialed Cooperative Director.

Carrol believes Enerstar's main focus should be reliable electric power at the lowest possible cost. He also believes the recent change in management and the sale of the propane division to be positive.

**Representative
District 6**

(formerly Tom Murphy)

two-year term

Voting District B

DAVID G. SPRIGG



David and his family have resided in rural Clark County for the past eight (8) years. He grew up in central Missouri, and graduated from

Boonville High School in 1974, before attending college first at the University of Missouri and then Tarkio College. He received his B.A. in Management and Marketing. For the past 15 years, David has been engaged in commercial lending and business banking in the Wabash Valley area and is employed with Citizens Bank of Paris as Vice President of Business Banking.

David has been actively involved in the community for many years and currently serves on the board of directors for HRC (Human Resources Center) in Paris and the local chapter of the Emmaus Community. He has served in leadership at First Christian

Church of Marshall for the past several years and continues to be actively involved in teaching and other ministries. Before moving to Marshall, David helped initiate an Economic Development Group in Sullivan County (SUCCEED) and served as its President.

David and his family strongly believe that we all must do our part, giving back to the community that gives us so much to be thankful for. It is for this reason that he would like to serve the community as its District 6 representative for the Enerstar board.

In his free time, David enjoys fishing, racquetball, and outdoor activities. He and his wife, Paula, have two sons at home, Nathan and Caleb.

**Representative
District 9**

three-year term

Voting District C

**CLAYTON DANIEL
"DANNY" GARD JR.**



Serving as director in EnerStar's most southern district since December 2000 is Danny Gard Jr. Danny has been a resident of West Union his entire

life and has farmed in the area since 1973. He is a graduate of Marshall High School.

Danny and his wife, Barbara, have three sons. Daniel, a 2nd Lt in the Marine Corps, and his wife, Sherri, are stationed in Kingsville, Texas. Sons Seth and Jacob both attend Lakeland College in Mattoon.

Danny has been involved in many community activities including the Lions Club, the Masonic Lodge, the Clark Co Ag and Youth Councils, and youth football coach.

He has been a past trustee and road commissioner of Darwin Township and a fireman at the West Union Volunteer Fire Department. He is also a member of the First United Methodist Church in Marshall.

Danny states, "I feel we've made strides in providing quality services to our members with the sale of the propane division and changes made in staff. I want to continue to find ways to provide quality services for as low a rate as possible and increase members' equity. I look forward to working together as a board and with our staff members toward these goals. Because of the recent changes made in districting, it required me to run again for office in 2005. I appreciate the cooperative members' support I have received in the past as well as in the upcoming election."

Knowing How to Vote

Because there are certain rules regarding voting procedures for the Annual Meeting of Members, it is important to remind members of their voting rights and responsibilities. The following points explain who can and cannot vote in the director election and at the annual meeting. By knowing these points, you can be assured your vote counts at the meeting.

- If only one person signed the membership application, then only that person is allowed to vote. The membership belongs to the person who signed the membership application. This is known as a Single Membership. With this membership, only one name is printed on the billing statement.
- If a husband and wife both signed the membership application, then either party may cast one vote for

that membership. This is known as a Joint Membership. With this membership, both names are printed on the billing statement. Sometimes, a membership was taken out before the member was married. In that case, the new spouse may not vote for the membership. A single membership can easily be converted to a Joint Membership.

- If you pay your landlord for the electrical usage at a location and their name is on the top line of the bill, you are not able to vote.



The membership belongs to the landlord, who would vote for this membership.

- If you have power of attorney for a member, you may vote that membership as long as the form is on file at the co-op office.

If you have any further questions regarding your membership status, please contact the EnerStar Power office at (217) 463-4145 or (800) 635-4145 during normal business hours. We will be more than happy to assist you with any questions you may have regarding your account.

NOTE - You can vote by mail, but ballots must be received in our office no later than Friday, March 11. Otherwise **bring your ballot** with you to the annual meeting.

Locally Owned and Operated

When you hear the word local, think of your electric cooperative, EnerStar Power. The fact that we are a locally owned company, owned by the members we serve, keeps us focused on your needs and local priorities.

Because electric co-ops are so closely linked to their communities, there are countless examples of activities that have the "co-op touch:" conducting safety programs at schools; donating books to local libraries; working with community organizations to get new businesses started; participating with civic groups in developing and improving community programs. The list goes on and on.

It is precisely because EnerStar is a local business, staffed by local professionals, which puts it in a good position to listen and respond to your needs. Helping consumers save energy, economic development, and volunteerism indicate that EnerStar and its staff are more than just an electric utility. They are an integral part of the community. That's why



electric co-ops will continue to do everything they can to improve the quality of life in your community.

EnerStar is a company that cares about the people it serves. Service means not only making sure the electricity is flowing but also mak-

ing sure that the community and its citizens are thriving and prospering. Service means helping friends and neighbors on a day-to-day basis. That is what it is all about, and that is the electric co-op tradition.



The Mademoiselle of Meat

By Tina Marie Farmer

In 1997, Jena Martin packed up her kids, loaded down the family car, and turned her back to the glitz of Los Angeles. Shucking her city duds in favor of jeans and muddy boots, Jena headed east in search of a better place to raise her children and ended up in America's heartland.

"When I was a little kid," recalls Jena, "I told people that I was going to be a farmer. They'd laugh at me and try to talk me out of it." Given the glass and concrete maze of Southern California, the reaction is understandable. But Jena is not a woman easily daunted by a little discouragement.

While working for EnerStar Power Corp, Jena met and married Ron Martin, a farmer and then EnerStar employee. "When I married Ron, I still didn't know anything about farming, but I got on the Internet and started reading up on cattle and agriculture. We decided to buy a farm together, and he told me I could run it," says Jena. Abandoning her original intent to breed horses, Jena began her venture with Ron's 50 cows and added 50 more. Today, her operation also includes pork and poultry (chicken and turkey).

With the shadow of Britain's mad cow scare looming over Jena and her fledgling business, she turned once again to the Internet. "I read everything I could about mad cow disease and found that it is thought to come from animal proteins ground into the cow's feed. I decided right then and there to feed my cows corn and soybean meal because there is absolutely zero risk [of their contracting mad cow disease]."

In fact, Jena has determined not to feed animal proteins to any of her livestock. "Chickens and hogs are omnivores that can safely eat animal proteins, but if I put those proteins in *their* feed, I could cross-contaminate all of the feed." The solution was simple to Jena, "I just don't use them at all."

In fact, Jena has adopted an all-natural approach to raising her animals. "Some say that you can increase the growth of your cattle by 10-15 percent by feeding them a low dose of antibiotics all the time," says Jena. "I tried that the first year, but I aban-



"When I was a little kid," recalls Jena, "I told people that I was going to be a farmer. They'd laugh at me and try to talk me out of it."

doned it when I didn't see a return from it. I do not use hormones either."

Jena's commitment to selling all-natural meat products extends past routine care to the treatment of her sick animals. "If I have an unhealthy calf that needs antibiotics, I treat it. The difference is that I keep track of which one I treated and when it is healthy, it goes to my sale barn. It does not get mixed in with the meat cows."

Jena has heard the words "organic" and "free range" attached to her meats, but she insists they are neither. "I do not use the word 'organic,'" emphasizes Jena. "I try to avoid labels, but I will tell you anything you want to know about how I raise my animals."

So how is the natural approach different from "organic" or "free range" techniques? "A lot of people think organic and natural are the same thing. What prevents my meat from being organic is the way Ron and I raise our crops. Ron would not be allowed to use the fertilizers he uses if our meat were organic. To be certified organic, I would have to pay a \$500 a year fee, keep even more extensive paperwork than I already do, and my entire operation would have to be organic."

The "free range" label is also a bit confusing. "Free range used to mean that the animals were out running around in a pasture. Then the USDA stepped in and said that

we need a definition for the term,” explains Jena. “Now free range only means that the animals have access to the outside. A farm can have a huge poultry house with a little door leading to a small gated plot and the meat can be called free range. The problem is that the chickens may never decide to go outside.”

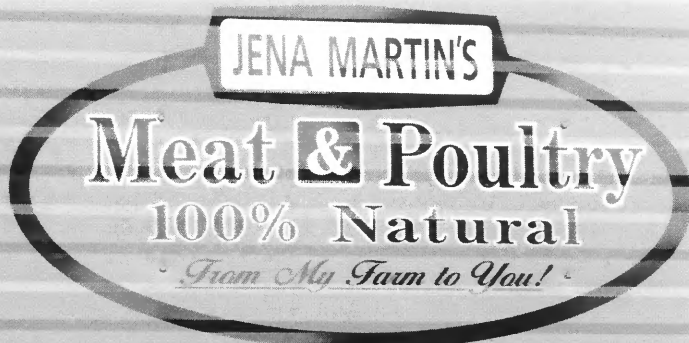
The reasons Jena’s customers love her products vary from health concerns to food safety. But the best reason? “It tastes incredible,” she says. Jena sells whole chickens, lean hamburger, fresh pork sausage, and a variety of pork and beef cuts. She also sells hard-to-find soup bones and organ meats.

Jena Martin’s Meat and Poultry is licensed by the Illinois Depart-



ment of Health and inspected by the USDA, as well as the Edgar County Health Department. For more infor-

mation about Jena Martin’s Meat and Poultry, call (217) 822-7501 or e-mail Jena at jenamartin@comwares.net.



217·822·7501

PARIS, ILLINOIS



“I do not use the word ‘organic,’” emphasizes Jena. **“I try to avoid labels, but I will tell you anything you want to know about how I raise my animals.”**

Look for Jena Martin’s Meat and Poultry trailer at the...

- Paris bowling alley parking lot every Saturday 8 a.m.-3 p.m. until June
- Paris farmer’s market every Saturday 8 a.m.-12 p.m. beginning in June
- Charleston farmer’s market every other Wednesday 6-10 a.m.
- Mattoon farmer’s market every other Friday 2-6 p.m.
- Call ahead for pick-up at the Martin’s home.

Jena also offers free home and office delivery



Better Ideas for Your Home

New Construction Guidelines Booklet Still Available

New materials and techniques for building a comfortable, energy-efficient home are included in the Certified Comfort Home manual now available from the Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

This booklet, first written in 1995, offers advice on many details of construction, as well as broad guidelines on issues such as insulation levels and high-efficiency heating systems. The new edition includes recommendations for spray-on cellulose insulation in walls, airtight recessed light fixtures, and windows with invisible low-e film between the panes.

Alternative construction techniques such as structural insulated panels (SIP) and insulated concrete forms are also recognized for their high efficiency and strength.



"This manual shows the proven construction practices that our co-

operatives have seen used around the state to build houses that are super-efficient, affordable and very comfortable year-round," says Tim Haddix, EnerStar's System Engineer. "Some of the tips are basic while others go right down to the detail of how to build an airtight soffit or where to put vapor barriers in a crawl space," he adds.

The 16-page Certified Comfort Home manual is offered free of charge to EnerStar cooperative members and area contractors. You can request a copy by calling Haddix at (800) 635-4145, extension 617. You may also drop him an e-mail at thaddix@enerstar.com. Haddix would also be the contact for questions regarding electric build-ins or upgrades at your property.

Cooperative Recommends Replacing Meter Rites

There is a potential maintenance problem that could affect some EnerStar members. The problem is with a piece of customer-owned equipment called a meter rite.

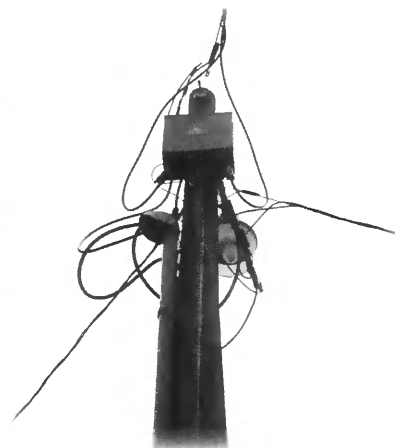
A meter rite is a pole-top disconnect with a load-measuring device that sends a signal to the meter. Often these units were installed for their auxiliary generator contacts. Members can recognize a meter rite as a large metal box located on the top of the meter pole. There is a large switch next to the meter that can be used to turn the service off.

Meter rites were installed on the EnerStar system in the 1960s and the 1970s. Nearly 1,000 of these units are still in operation today on EnerStar lines.

These units require a considerable amount of maintenance that, in the past, the cooperative has provided. Meter rites have caused several member outages and have increased the frequency of blinking lights. There is no breaker protection with a meter rite. Therefore, a fault on the member's side of the meter could blow the cooperative's transformer fuse, resulting in an outage.

Member Incentive

Mike Clark, EnerStar Superintendent/Construction Foreman, recommends that members schedule an appointment to replace meter rites before they cause an unwanted power outage. "This is a precautionary move on a member's part," Clark stated.



Members may contact an electrician to do the work or EnerStar will replace the meter rite with an appropriate sized meter loop. Meter loops will cost approximately \$500 or more depending on the type of service. As an incentive to the member,

EnerStar will give members a \$100 credit on their electric statement and provide installation free of charge. Members would, however, need to contact an electrician if there is any deviation from a basic 200-amp change-out.

"The cooperative will eventually stop maintenance on meter rites so I encourage members to take advantages of the incentives through 2005," stated Clark.

To schedule a meter rite replacement, members should contact EnerStar's Tim Haddix at (217) 466-7617 or (800) 635-4145, extension 617.

"Meter rites were installed on the EnerStar system in the 1960s and the 1970s. Nearly 1,000 of these units are still in operation today on EnerStar lines."

Employee Spotlight



Brent Reyher
V.P. Energy Resources
EnerStar Power

Brent Reyher, has been on the job for 8 years at EnerStar Power. He is employed as the V.P. Energy Resources for the cooperative.

Originally from Brazil, Ind., Brent now resides in Marshall, Ill. He graduated from Rose-Hulman in Terre Haute, Ind., with a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering. His wide array of job duties includes energy and transmission scheduling, rate design, and preparing the construction work plan. Brent serves as a Member Service Representative at Wabash Valley Power, a generation and transmission cooperative where EnerStar purchases wholesale power.

"I enjoy the day-to-day interaction with my co-workers," says Brent. "We have a great team whose commitment and dedication is all about serving our cooperative member." He feels the local touch is a benefit to the communities served by EnerStar.

In his spare time, Brent and his daughter, Alyssa, enjoy four-wheeling on their ATVs and in their Jeep. Brent also enjoys woodworking and racquetball. He is a member of the First Christian Church of Marshall, where he teaches first and second grade Sunday school.

Pole Inspection Underway in Clark County

EnerStar members living in the Clark County area will most likely see crews from Lee Inspection as the cooperative begins its annual pole-testing program. Mike Clark, EnerStar's Superintendent/Construction Foreman, announced the inspection would begin around January 24, 2005. The crews will be working the Marshall substation and will test 3,000 poles on nearly 150 miles of line.

The cooperative reinstated the pole-testing program last year with the completion of the West Union substation. Following a systematic plan, EnerStar will eventually inspect all poles on the electric system in an eight-year rotation cycle. It is anticipated that in 2006, the cooperative will test the Kansas substation.

Clark stated the purpose of the program is to improve line safety by locating and replacing defective poles and extending the life of the poles by treating them with a wood preservative. The program also reduces unscheduled outages due to maintenance issues.

When testing the poles, Lee Inspectors uses a "Sound and Seldom Bore" technique. The pole is

sounded at the ground level. If the pole is suspicious, the inspector will drill a hole at the base of the pole in a downward direction. The particles are checked for signs of decay. Some decay can be treated with a wood preservative, but, if necessary, the cooperative will replace the pole.

"While on the job, the inspectors serve as another set of eyes for the cooperative and they give us a different perspective," said Clark. "They check for maintenance issues, look for broken hardware, clearance issues, trees that need trimmed, and other possibly dangerous situations." In addition, the crews will map each pole with global positioning satellite (GPS) technology and take a photo of every pole top. The information is used in the cooperative's mapping system.

Clark stated that Lee Inspectors will have EnerStar signage on their vehicles and will be able to provide personal identification if needed. He concluded, "The end result of this program is a safe electric system for both our members and our employees. It also will result in a more reliable system."

Drive Up – Don't Get Out!

In a hurry? EnerStar's convenient drop box is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Located on the east side of the EnerStar parking lot.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F

Are Electrical Hazards Cooking in Your Kitchen?



From coffeemakers to toasters, blenders to waffle irons, microwaves to ovens — today's modern kitchen includes more electrical appliances than ever before. These appliances, like other electrical devices in your home, need to be operated safely and conscientiously in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines. As an increasing number of electrical appliances in our homes become necessities, our home's power circuits will grow more overloaded. This puts you and your family at risk. To ensure you don't have a potential safety hazard brewing in your kitchen, the Leviton Institute urges you to follow these important safety tips:

1. Unplug kitchen appliances like toasters and coffeemakers when you're not using them, and never allow appliances like a stove or microwave to remain running when you leave home.
2. Never use a fork, knife, or other metal object that conducts electricity to clean debris from "live" kitchen appliances like toasters and toaster ovens. For routine cleaning, make sure these appliances are switched off and disconnected before you clean their internal parts.

3. Avoid using electricity near water and other liquids. Clean up all spills in or around an electrical appliance after making sure the power supply has been disconnected. Never submerge an appliance or its electrical cord or plug in water or any other liquid.
4. Install a sufficient number of ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in your kitchen. GFCIs are designed to prevent shock hazards by interrupting power if electrical current leaks from a damaged cord or appliance.
5. Always check your kitchen appliances for damaged cords or plugs before you use them. Contact with a faulty or frayed power cord or a broken appliance can cause electric shock. If an appliance malfunctions or ap-

pears to be damaged in any way, make sure the appliance is disconnected from the power outlet and have it repaired or replaced immediately.

6. Never let power cords or plugs dangle over the edge of counters or come in contact with hot surfaces. Dangling cords are a danger to small children who might pull them. Kitchen appliances should never be placed near a hot gas or electric burner.

Tips for Using Your Microwave Oven

In recent years microwaves have become among one of the most popular kitchen appliances. Be wary of the dangers associated with using them.

- To prevent facial burns or exposure to radiation from a defective appliance, microwaves should be kept high above the reach and eye level of children.
- Use only containers and tableware stamped "microwave safe." Cooking trays made of metal or aluminum should never be used to heat meals. Never put aluminum foil in a microwave since it can ignite.
- If food you're preparing catches on fire, unplug the cord immediately but do not open the door. This will only feed oxygen to the fire. Wait for the fire to extinguish, then remove the contents from the oven.
- Always use caution when removing items from your microwave. While your microwave stays cool, what's being cooked inside becomes very hot.

Source: Leviton Institute

Office Closing

EnerStar Power's offices
will be closed Friday, March 25
in observance of Good Friday.



EnerStar[®] HomePage

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

www.enerstar.com

What's Inside

Cooperative Members Offer Input to Cooperative.....2

Survey results show 90 percent of members satisfied with service.

Changes in Meter Reading.....3

New meter reader means no more estimated readings for members.

Discount for Propane Usage No Longer Available.....4

Sale of EnerStar Resources means elimination of Total Energy Rate.

Employee Spotlight.....5

Meet Warehouseman Greg Ghent.

The Cooperative Difference.....6

What is Touchstone Energy?

Computer Wares Acquisition.....7

Computer Wares now largest local Internet service provider.

New President/CEO named at EnerStar Power

At the Annual Meeting held on March 12, 2005, EnerStar Power's Board of Directors announced that Peter E. Kollinger has been named President/CEO of EnerStar Power. Board Chairman Tom Murphy of Marshall made the announcement.

"At this time in our history, the board of directors felt Peter was the right person to lead our cooperative," emphasized Murphy. "His accounting background and cooperative experience will be important as we move towards the future."

Peter served as Interim President/CEO since April 2004 and previously served as Chief Financial Officer for 12 years. He holds a B.S. in Business with majors in Accounting and Management from Eastern Illinois University. In addition, he has extensive training specific to the electric utility industry.

With over 23 years of experience in the cooperative industry, Peter's previous employment includes positions at Clay Electric Co-operative in Flora and Jo-Carroll Energy in Galena. He was also employed at Adams Telephone Cooperative in Golden.

"I am very pleased to accept the position

at EnerStar. I really enjoy working at cooperatives and I especially enjoy working for the local membership at EnerStar," said Peter. "Cooperatives are unique businesses. They all share a common theme of support among cooperatives and a genuine concern for the community."

As he takes the lead position at EnerStar, Peter emphasized that charting the course to a solid future at EnerStar will take center stage over the next couple of months.

"Based on member input, the board and staff are identifying the goals for the future. We will be focusing on improving the reliability of our electric system and meeting our members' needs," Peter added.

Peter and his wife, Kate, have two children and reside in Paris, Illinois.





Cooperative Members Offer Input to Cooperative

A few months ago, many EnerStar members received a survey coordinated by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. Individual cooperatives like EnerStar Power could “piggyback” onto the survey to receive a breakout of local results.

“We appreciate the time and effort of the 309 EnerStar members who completed and returned the survey. Their responses provided a great resource to the cooperative,” says Angela Griffin, EnerStar’s Director or Marketing and Member Relations. “This significant response gives the survey a confidence factor of 95 percent. This means the survey results give us a statistically correct snapshot of the cooperative membership as a whole.”

Members might wonder why a local, not-for-profit electric cooperative surveys the membership from time to time.

“We do it for a number of reasons. The purpose is to determine the overall member perception of the cooperative and compare trends to previous surveys,” Griffin says. “It allows us to measure our quality of service, courtesy to our members, and promptness in responding to member requests. Sometimes we think we know how members feel but a survey provides us the verifica-

tions we need as we move forward.”

When asked how members feel about EnerStar Power, almost 84 percent of the survey respondents said they have either a “very positive” or “positive” view of the cooperative.

“While this is a good number,

“We appreciate the time and effort of the 309 EnerStar members who completed and returned the survey. Their responses provided a great resource to the cooperative.”

the cooperative’s goals for the future will take steps towards increasing this number,” Griffin adds. Regarding how satisfied members were with the service they receive from the cooperative, 90 percent were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied.”

Members say they get most of their cooperative information from reading this monthly magazine. Al-

most 79 percent read the publication every month and almost 17 percent read it most of the time. Just more than 90 percent said they were satisfied with the information received from the cooperative.

Nearly 74 percent indicate that the cooperative’s annual meeting, and the election of directors that takes place there, is important. “With the vote-by-mail changes approved by the membership in August 2004, we hope more members will take the opportunity to exercise the democratic opportunity and vote in the director elections,” stated Griffin.

Besides surveying perceptions about EnerStar, the survey also included information about electricity and usage patterns, interest in various cooperative services, and demographic information.

“I started working at EnerStar in 1989. It is interesting to see how the membership has changed in the last 15 years,” Griffin says.

Griffin reminds the membership that they do not have to wait until the next survey to share thoughts, concerns or praise. She says, “We love hearing from our members because our focus is you and with your input, we can always find ways to improve our cooperative.”

Annual Meeting News Delayed

Highlights of the 66th Annual Meeting of Members held on Saturday, March 12, 2005, will be published in the May 2005 issue of this publication. Submission deadlines for this issue fell before the annual meeting.



We're here for you . . .

Large corporations use “just in time” inventory procedures, getting product just when they need it. But at EnerStar, we maintain a reasonable amount of transformers and poles in inventory so we are ready at a moment’s notice. We don’t know when a storm will hit or equipment will malfunction, so we’re prepared. We also work closely with nearby electric cooperatives on larger, expensive items, which are needed from time to time. We’re here for you...right when you need us!

Changes in Meter Readers

Cooperative No Longer Estimating Readings

Most EnerStar members will be glad to learn that the cooperative will no longer estimate monthly meter readings. The cooperative began using estimates in September 2002. One half of the EnerStar system was read one month, and the second half was read the following month. At the request of many, members could call in their monthly meter readings to the cooperative to avoid an estimated billing statement.

Estimated meter readings were a short-term solution while the cooperative studied the potential conversion to Automatic Meter Reading (AMR). AMR is still under consideration but will not likely be implemented in the near future. During that time, the cooperative will continue to review the program and future meter replacements will be equipped with an AMR device.

In late February, EnerStar employed a part-time meter reader. Thad Martin, who has previously worked for the cooperative, easily stepped in the role as meter reader. He was already familiar with the



EnerStar members may see Jon Farris and Thad Martin out reading electric meters. Martin has been employed as a part-time meter reader.

cooperative's meter reading routes. Jon Farris, EnerStar's full-time meter reader, will work with Martin and oversee the routes.

"As members have called in their monthly meter readings, we

have told them about the upcoming change," says Kelly McCrocklin, Member Service Representative at EnerStar. "They are even more excited when they call in their meter readings on those cold, snowy days!"

New Mission Statement

As announced at the Annual Meeting, EnerStar Power's Board of Directors, with input from staff, recently adopted a new cooperative mission statement. The new mission statement reads: **EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability, and commitment to our community.**

"When we look at the mission statement and the way we do business, as a board and as employees, we want to know that our activities,

whatever they may be, are consistent with the criteria of the mission statement. This mission will serve as the guiding force for our board and for our employees in the future," said Chairman Tom Murphy. The new mission statement includes four key pieces:

- Reliably distribute affordable electricity. We have renewed our focus on our core business.
- Member-Owners. This will continually remind us that you are not customers, you are member-owners, with elected representatives and a voice in how your coopera-

tive operates.

- Integrity and Accountability. Our values are your values. The board and employees work with integrity and are accountable to you, the members. Board members faithfully attend board meetings and pursue further education to make well-informed decisions on your behalf.
- Commitment to our community. What is good for our member-owners is good for our community and we want to help our communities prosper.



Mission statement

EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability, and commitment to our community.



Discount for Propane Usage No Longer Available

As a result of a January 2005 announcement regarding the sale of the cooperative's propane division, the Total Energy Rate available to those members who used EnerStar Resources as their primary propane supplier, will be eliminated.

In a transaction that closed on November 15, 2004, and became effective November 1, 2004, all propane assets were sold to Vanson, LLC, an independent propane marketer with locations in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois. Vanson has nearby plants in Lafayette, Crawfordsville, and Mount Carmel, Illinois, and Princeton, Indiana. Vanson

hired the employees of EnerStar Resources and recently changed their name to Nu-Gas.

The Total Energy Rate for propane customers, shown on the electric billing statement as the Rate RES1P, was not immediately eliminated at the time of Vanson's acquisition. The EnerStar Power board of directors voted to continue the special rate through the winter heating season and phase it out with the April billing cycle.

"The special rate had been offered as an incentive to those members who purchased propane through the cooperative. We felt it was impor-

tant to honor that discount during the heating season," says Brent Reyher, EnerStar's VP of Energy Services.

Members on the RES1P rate will be switched to the cooperative's residential rate. Those same members should also receive an April billing statement insert regarding this change.

Reyher added that members who average less than 300 kilowatt hours per month should contact the cooperative regarding the Seasonal Rate. "We can look and see if that rate will be more beneficial to them," concluded Reyher.

In Memory of former EnerStar employee Bud Walls

EnerStar was saddened to learn of the death of former employee Bud "Buddy" Walls of Paris. Buddy passed away Feb. 24, 2005.

Buddy was retired after 36 years, serving as Assistant Manager at the time of his retirement. After retirement from EnerStar, he was also owner and operator of his own business, Energy Concepts, LLC.

He was born Oct. 2, 1938, in Paris, the son of Foster St. Clair and Ruth Ellen (Gill) Walls. He married Wanda L. Nail May 29, 1959, at Otterbein United Methodist Church in Paris, and she survives. Also surviving are his mother, Ruth Walls of Paris; three daughters, Kimberly Henry, Pamela Arrasmith, and April Young, all of Paris; two brothers, Phillip Walls of Corunna, Michigan, and James Walls of Paris; a sister, Betty Young of Paris; and five grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his father and a daughter.

Buddy was active both professionally and in the community. He was a former Job Safety and Training Chairman for Illinois Electric

Cooperatives. He was an active member of Trinity United Methodist Church of Paris and served in a number of capacities.

He was a charter member and Past President of Kiwanis Early Risers, and had served as a District Lieutenant Governor, served on the Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors, was past Chairman of City of Paris Park Board, a former Boy Scout leader, served on the Cancer Crusade for more than 20 years, and with the Paris Hospital Cancer Support Group. He was a member of the American Legion Post 211, Paris Lodge 268 A.F. & A.M., Danville Scottish Rite Consistory, and Zorah Shrine Temple.

He was proud of his military service. He served for 28 years with the Illinois National Guard 1544th Transportation Company, earning the



rank of Tech Sergeant. He was a 1958 graduate of NCO School at Ft. Benning, Ga., and was the first recipient of the Chicago Tribune Soldier of the Year Distinguished Service Award in 1984.

The family suggests memorials to Trinity United Methodist Church of Paris or the D.O. It! Edgar County Cancer Support Group, c/o Sutton and Son Funeral Home in Paris.

Employee Spotlight



Greg Ghent
Warehouseman

Greg Ghent's employment at EnerStar Power began in 2000. He is employed as the Warehouseman at the cooperative. His job duties include controlling inventory, purchasing material, and performing other miscellaneous jobs around the cooperative as needed.

When asked about what he like best about working at EnerStar, Greg replies, "I enjoy the friendly atmosphere of working for a rural community business."

Originally from Marion, Greg resides in Ashmore with his wife, Linda. In the fall of 2003, he graduated from the East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina, with a bachelor's of science degree in industrial technology and a minor in business. Greg is currently enrolled in the safety management master's program at Indiana State University.

Before joining the EnerStar team, Greg gained electric cooperative experience at Wake EMC in Youngsville, North Carolina where he worked from 1988-2000.

When asked about the benefits of a local cooperative that most people do not understand, Greg emphasizes, "Since EnerStar Power is a local utility, money is reinvested back into the community through the creation of jobs and the purchase of goods and services at local businesses."

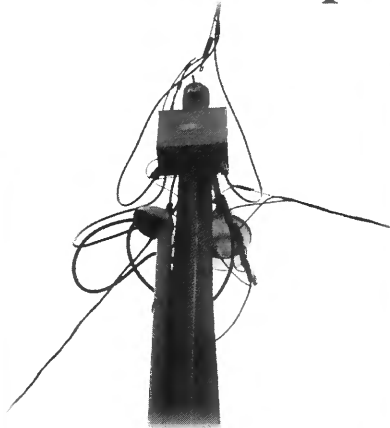
Cooperative Recommends Replacing Meter Rites

There is a potential maintenance problem that could affect some EnerStar members. The problem is with a piece of customer-owned equipment called a meter rite.

A meter rite is a pole-top disconnect with a load-measuring device that sends a signal to the meter. Often these units were installed for their auxiliary generator contacts. Members can recognize a meter rite as a large metal box located on the top of the meter pole. There is a large switch next to the meter that can be used to turn the service off.

Meter rites were installed on the EnerStar system in the 1960s and the 1970s. Nearly 1,000 of these units are still in operation today on EnerStar lines.

These units require a considerable amount of maintenance that, in the past, the cooperative has provided. Meter rites have caused several member outages and have increased the frequency of blinking lights. There is no breaker protection with a meter rite. Therefore, a fault on the member's side of the meter could blow the cooperative's transformer fuse, resulting in an outage.



"Meter rites were installed on the EnerStar system in the 1960s and the 1970s. Nearly 1,000 of these units are still in operation today on EnerStar lines."

Member Incentive

Mike Clark, EnerStar Superintendent/Construction Foreman, recommends that members schedule an appointment to replace meter rites before they cause an unwanted power outage. "This is a precautionary move on a member's part," Clark stated.

Members may contact an electrician to do the work or EnerStar will replace the meter rite with an appropriate sized meter loop. Meter loops will cost approximately \$500 or more depending on the type of service. As an incentive to the member, EnerStar will give members a \$100 credit on their electric statement and provide installation free of charge. Members would, however, need to contact an electrician if there is any deviation from a basic 200-amp change-out.

"The cooperative will eventually stop maintenance on meter rites so I encourage members to take advantages of the incentives through 2005," stated Clark.

To schedule a meter rite replacement, members should contact EnerStar's Tim Haddix at (217) 466-7617 or (800) 635-4145, extension 617.



The Cooperative Difference

What is Touchstone Energy®?

Since 1998, EnerStar members have become familiar with the Touchstone Energy logo. It can be seen on EnerStar's letterhead, trucks, and substation signs. The logo is also visible on both a regional and national level. But what is Touchstone Energy and why should members care?

Touchstone Energy was created as a brand awareness program for the nation's electric cooperatives. It did not take over the co-op; it was simply added as an enhancement. Touchstone Energy's roots lie in the universal cooperative principle of cooperation among cooperatives. The Touchstone Energy alliance represents more than 600 cooperatives in 44 states that collectively deliver power and other services to more than 16 million members everyday. Cooperative leaders across the country saw a need to do a better job of explaining the co-op difference and benefits to new members and businesses.

Co-ops provide superior service to their members. They are committed to the communities they serve and provide solutions to members' problems. After all the mergers and changes in the investor-owned sector of the utility industry, it is nice to know that local Touchstone Energy co-ops like EnerStar are still committed to personal service. That human touch has been lost in too many companies. That's why the slogan you'll hear from Touchstone Energy co-ops is "The Power of Human Connections." Here the member is number one.

Today, America's electric cooperatives continue to answer the call of providing affordable, reliability electric service. They are committed to improving the quality of life in their communities and for the member-owners who live there. EnerStar joins with cooperatives across the country in rededicating ourselves to the four Touchstone Energy core values of accountability, integrity, innovation, and community commitment. By combining the resources and clout of all Touchstone Energy coop-



EnerStar employees like Susan Watson, Kelly McCrocklin, and Jennifer Hird are committed to providing members with exceptional customer service.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



eratives, cooperatives comprise one of the largest electric utilities in the country. Together these cooperatives have been able to offer programs in the areas of community enhancement, economic development, school improvement, child safety and electric safety just to name a few. The alliance gives cooperatives the political clout necessary to fight for the issues and protect the programs available to rural Americans.

Electric cooperatives are small

enough to listen and close enough to notice the needs of a single member. Each coop employee is committed to meeting higher standards of customer satisfaction.

The next time you see the Touchstone Energy logo know that it is backed by co-op employees across the country and here at your local co-op. Electric cooperatives, like EnerStar, are here to serve the membership through the power of human connections.

Computer Wares Acquisition

As announced in early March, Computer Wares recently purchased another Internet Service Provider, Tigerpaw of Paris. Computer Wares is now the largest local Internet Service Provider (ISP).

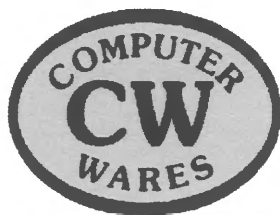
"We were approached by Tigerpaw about their decision to sell their business," said Jim Lewis, ISP administrator. "It was a good deal and we didn't want to see an out-of-town company take over the local accounts."

Lewis pointed out that the acquisition allows Computer Wares to maintain all Tigerpaw, I-Choice, and EIIS dial-up accounts that at one time provided local Internet Service. "Customers will be able to maintain their e-mail addresses, so the transi-

tion will be as smooth as possible."

Lewis established Computer Wares in 1977. EnerStar Power purchased the business in 2000.

Computer Wares provides local Internet Service to Paris, Brocton, Casey, Chrisman, Hume-Metcalf, Kansas, Marshall, Martinsville, Redmon, Vermilion, Westfield, West Union, and Greenup.



"Customers will be able to maintain their e-mail addresses, and Web sites hosted by Tigerpaw will remain unchanged."

Members May Take Advantage of "Trade-a-Tree"

The same trees that beautify your landscape and provide shade for your home can also be responsible for problems with your electrical service. Trees growing too close to electric lines are the primary cause of momentary short circuits and flickering lights. In the case of a storm, snow or ice, the limbs on those trees are likely to knock power lines out completely and create a threat to your safety.

To protect your family, property, and power service, EnerStar offers free right-of-way tree trimming and clean up as part of a comprehensive community plan. EnerStar has taken an aggressive approach to tree trimming in an effort to reduce power interruptions.

But sometimes, high maintenance trees create a situation that calls for more intense measures. Trees planted under power lines should be removed for the safety of everyone. Therefore, EnerStar has developed the Trade-A-Tree program.

The program, which began last year, allows EnerStar to remove trees that grow directly beneath high voltage power lines. For each tree removed, EnerStar will provide an ornamental tree that has limited growth. Members will pick up the new trees at the EnerStar office and should plant them in an area away from the power lines to avoid a



repeat situation later. Last year, EnerStar distributed approximately 100 trees to members willing to replace a problem tree.

Should a tree need removed in a member's yard, EnerStar personnel will attempt to notify the member by telephone or a personal visit. The Trade-A-Tree program only affects trees that are located in landscaped or mowed yards directly under or within close proximity to high voltage power lines. Trees located close to service drops and other low voltage secondary lines are not part of the Trade-A-Tree program.

Though some members may be inconvenienced by the temporary loss of a yard tree, we are hopeful the long-term advantages of lower operating costs and a safe, more reliable service will convince members to participate in the Trade-A-Tree program. For more information regarding the program, contact Mike Clark at (217) 466-7616 or Greg Hollingsworth at (217) 466-7619.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F



Eliminate Top Safety Threats to Prevent Electrical Injuries

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) wants to remind consumers that taking steps to eliminate the top electrical safety threats in and around the home may prevent numerous injuries and deaths that needlessly occur each year.

According to data from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), top electrical safety hazards include: electrical fires caused by aging wiring and misuse of surge suppressors, and electrocutions from wiring systems and large appliances.

CPSC research indicates that each year we can expect more than 40,000 electrical fires, which result in hundreds of injuries and deaths. In addition, electrocutions associated with wiring and consumer products cost hundreds of lives annually.

"Despite the fact that many of these electrical hazards can be eliminated, we often fail to take steps necessary to protect ourselves from harm." Michael G. Clendenin, Executive Director of ESFI noted. The following electrical safety tips may help avoid tragic and costly injuries:

- Make certain that all appliances

and equipment are approved by an independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Canadian Standards Association (CSA), or ETL-SEMKO (ETL).

- Use appliances and equipment according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Replace damaged electrical equipment or have it repaired at an authorized repair center. Replace frayed cords, broken plugs, or cracks that could cause hazards; cut and throw out damaged cords.
- Use ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection when working where water is near electricity, in areas such your kitchen, laundry room, bathroom, or outdoors, to protect against electric shock.
- When using a generator, plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty outdoor-rated extension cord that is free of cuts and tears and has a 3-prong plug. Never try to power the house wiring by plugging the generator into a

wall outlet, a dangerous practice known as backfeeding. If you must connect the generator to the house wiring to power appliances, have a qualified electrician install a power transfer switch in accordance with local electrical codes.

- Be alert for hazards of old wiring. Have wiring in homes 40 years old or more, or those more than 10 years old that have had major renovations, inspected by a licensed electrical inspector.
- Add protection by installing a new electrical safety device—an arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI)—to detect and stop electrical arcs that can cause fires. Arcs are not detected by most breakers and fuses.
- Make sure power strips and surge suppressors are designed to handle the loads for their intended use. Avoid overloading circuits by plugging too many items into the same outlet.

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International



EnerStar® HomePage

www.enerstar.com

What's Inside

The Year in Review 2-3

- New mission statement adopted
- New President/CEO announced
- Voting changes a success
- Propane division sold
- Computer wares bigger and better

A Look Into The Future 3-4

- No more estimated meter readings
- Stable, long-term rates
- Increasing Equity

Employee Spotlight..... 5

Meet Meter Reader Jon Farris

Plan Ahead for Your Upcoming Projects 6

Call JULIE before your next digging project

May is National Electrical Safety Month 7

Follow these tips to keep your family safe

Women in the Outdoors 8

Mill Creek Park hosts Women in the Outdoors May 21.

Changes and Updates Announced at Annual Meeting

Change was the focus of EnerStar's Annual Meeting of Members held March 12, 2005. We would like to thank all members who attended the annual meeting. The meeting provides an excellent opportunity for members to learn more about their cooperative. But equally, it gives cooperative board members and employees an opportunity to learn more about the membership.

We hope you enjoyed the pancake and sausage breakfast, meeting with your directors, learning of our services, and hear-

ing the changes happening at your co-op.

For those of you who missed the meeting, this issue highlights the meeting's topics. In the months to come, look for future issues to highlight topics important to the membership.

That is the beauty of an electric cooperative: being able to stay abreast of what is going on at the cooperative is as easy as opening this magazine or walking through the front door! *EnerStar Power is locally owned, locally controlled and locally operated!*



Standing from left are new President/CEO Peter Kollinger and newly elected director David G. Sprigg of Marshall. Seated from left are Danny Gard of West Union, Carrol Drake of Paris and Jeff Zimmerman of Oakland. Sprigg replaces Tom Murphy, who announced his retirement from the board this year.

The Year In Review

Your elected directors were focused last year on preparing EnerStar for the future. Special meetings in addition to regular board meetings have given directors time to focus solely on where the co-op is headed. The annual meeting was presided by Board Chair-

man Tom Murphy of Marshall.

Murphy emphasized that changes to the co-op's mission statement, management, voting procedures, and subsidiaries are designed to prepare EnerStar for the goals the board has set.

continued on page 2



New Mission Statement Guides Co-op

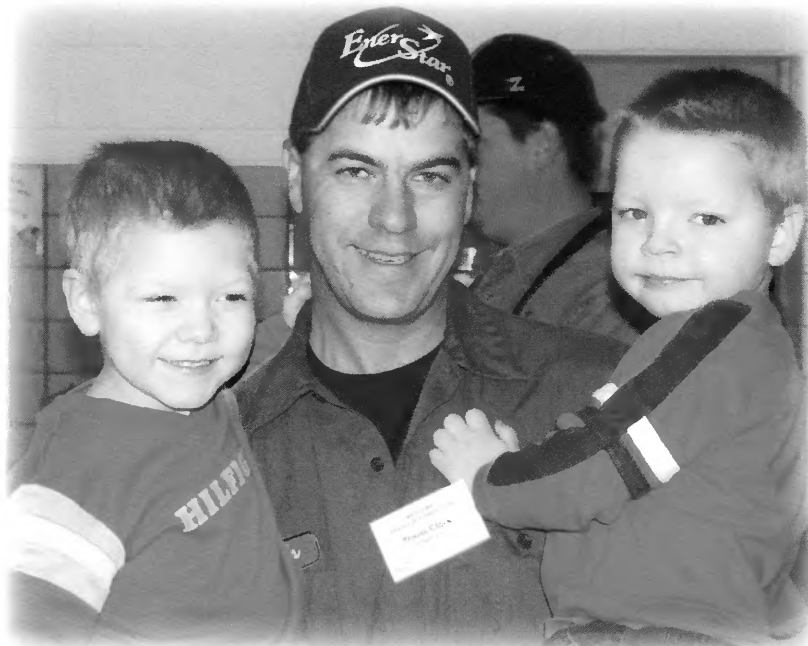
In February 2005, the board adopted a new cooperative mission statement. As announced at the Annual Meeting, the new statement reads: *EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability and commitment to our community.*

Murphy informed the membership that the mission statement describes the cooperative's unique purpose and reason for existence. It captures the qualities we want to develop and what we want to accomplish.

According to Murphy, the statement contains four key elements that will serve as the guiding force for our board and employees in the future:



EnerStar's Jon Farris (left) serves sausage to longtime EnerStar member Garold Farthing. Garold served on the EnerStar Board of Directors from 1962-2002.



It's a family affair! Travis Clark (center) stops for breakfast with sons Garrett (left) and Tanner (right).

■ *Reliably distribute affordable electricity.* A renewed focus on the stability and reliability of our core business - electricity.

■ *Member-owners.* You are not customers, you are member-owners with elected representatives. You have a say in your cooperative. This is what sets us apart from the investor-owned utilities.

■ *Our values are your values.* Employees work with integrity and are accountable to you. Board members faithfully attend board meetings, pursue further education, and make well-informed decisions on your behalf.

■ *Commitment to our community.* Community improvement is good for the membership. Your communities are ours too, and we want them to prosper.

“Three main goals for the future – system reliability, long-term stable rates and a financially secure cooperative.”

New President/CEO Peter Kollinger Announced

Changes to the co-op have also meant changes to management. In April 2004, the board and then President/CEO Tom Hentz felt EnerStar would be better served by a different type of leader and Tom offered his resignation. “Tom brought a lot of good things to EnerStar Power in his 18 years of leadership and we thank him for his contributions,” said Murphy.

Murphy then introduced the cooperative's new President/CEO Peter Kollinger to members. “His accounting background and cooperative experience, both at EnerStar and other cooperatives, make him a valuable asset,” stated Murphy. “EnerStar has a good team of employees in place and we feel Peter will lead this group with a ‘team concept’ that will serve the cooperative well.”

continued on page 3



EnerStar employee Kelly McCroclin registers member Thelma Carver before the annual meeting.

Voting Changes Are a Success

As a result of one of our commitments at the 2004 Annual Meeting, a blue ribbon committee, comprised of both electric members and board members, met to propose new director voting procedures. The meetings also gave members an opportunity to discuss other issues with the board and employees. The proposed changes were communicated to the membership through this magazine and at two area meetings. At a Special Meeting in August, EnerStar members voted to change the director election process to include voting districts and ballot voting.

"These changes were implemented to make it easier for members to participate in the democratic process, and the new procedure increased member participation to 848 ballots cast this year. We expect the number of members voting to increase each year," stated Murphy.

Propane Division Sold

In 2001, a board resolution stated that subsidiaries must show profitability according to an approved business plan. In 2003, the board adopted another resolution stating that profitability must be equal to or greater than the rate of return on commercial paper. During 2004, the board determined that the propane division could not meet these resolutions. After six months of negotiations, the



EnerStar's Dana Young serves pancakes to the membership prior to the start of the meeting.

board reached an agreement to sell the propane division to Vanson LLC, a regional propane supplier, with a presence in five states. Vanson offered all present employees new positions, met the asking price, and agreed to maintain the business and hopefully expand it in our service territory.

Computer Wares Bigger and Better

Computer Wares is a co-op subsidiary that provides the co-op with technological assistance and offers Internet service. The subsidiary recently purchased another local

Internet provider, Tigerpaw of Paris. In addition, the subsidiary will offer WildBlue, a new high-speed satellite Internet service, in May 2005. Murphy encouraged members wanting more information about WildBlue to visit www.comwares.net/wildblue.

A Look Into The Future

Murphy emphasized that EnerStar's board of directors have adopted three primary goals for the co-op's future. They include improving system reliability, creating long-term stable retail rates, and remaining financially secure.

Improving System Reliability

In September 2004, EnerStar completed a five-year construction work plan. The plan's purpose is to identify weaknesses in our system in order to

enhance system reliability, upgrade facilities as the load changes, and prioritize projects while minimizing outage time. "We will continue to look at new technologies to enhance our system and will implement them when it is economically feasible," stated Murphy.

No More Estimated Meter Readings

Meter readings will no longer be estimated every other month. The process was implemented to save costs while the co-op investigated

continued on page 4



Automatic Meter Readings (AMR). The board has decided not to implement AMR at this time because the cost of equipments is decreasing while the technology is improving, and the board believes this will continue to happen in the future. Members voiced their dislike over the estimated meter reading system, and the board was in agreement with their concerns. "Therefore, the board recently hired a part-time meter reader to eliminate estimated readings until AMR is installed," said Murphy. To implement AMR, meters will need to be replaced on the entire system. He added that in the normal process of changing meters, replacements will be solid-state meters that are AMR compatible. "The new meters are very accurate and tamper-proof," Murphy said.

Stable, Long-Term Rates

"We will be reviewing the current rate schedule over the next few months. We do not anticipate any changes to rates until 2006 or early 2007," Murphy said.

In October 2004, the board reactivated a Power Cost Adjustment, which had not been used since 1997, to cover variable energy costs. "One can only look at the signs at the gas stations to see how energy costs fluctuate, and the cost of electricity is no exception," explained Murphy.

Remaining Financially Secure By Increasing Equity

The financial goals of the cooperative are to lower debt and build equity.

"Those goals are foremost in staying consistent with our mission statement to distribute reliable and affordable electricity to you," said Murphy.

He explained that the board's overall goal is to reach 40 percent equity. In 2004, the cooperative lowered debt by paying \$2,334,000 in principal and increased equity to 26 percent. The projected equity for 2005 is 29 percent. "We are moving in the right direction, by consistently building equity and meeting our projections, without compromising reliably distributing affordable electricity to you, the member. Because we are still focusing on improving equity, we did not feel the cooperative could financially sustain returning capital credits at this time," Murphy stated. He emphasized that the board continues to review the capital credit policy, and a committee had met as recently as December 2004.

How Our Rates Compare

EnerStar is the fourth most rural cooperative in the state and averages only 3.5 members per mile of line. But at 1,000 kilowatt-hours per month, EnerStar ranks 13th out of 25 Illinois electric co-ops. The average consumption for EnerStar residential members is 973-kilowatt hours per month.

"Compare our low density with a large utility such as AmerenCIPS or a municipality who has 40 customers per each mile of line in their towns and cities. Their costs and overheads are much cheaper than ours, and they can afford to pass this savings on

as lower rates," Murphy said. "Actually that's why the big utilities didn't want to serve the rural areas in the first place—density was too small and there wasn't enough money in it! They didn't want to string a whole mile of line to serve only three or four customers. That's why cooperatives were born."

Murphy emphasized that the EnerStar board strives to provide the lowest possible rates and has been able to do so through favorable energy contracts and market timing. "Even in this past year when prices for energy and fuel has been soaring, we have remained steady with our rates," he concluded.

Thanks



A big thank you to Tom Murphy of Marshall for 15 years of dedicated service on the board of directors.

Thanks

We would like to thank the following vendors who donated door prizes to the 66th Annual Meeting of Members.

Your support is greatly appreciated!

Brownstown Electric
Citizens National Bank of Paris
Clear Talk Communications
Computer Wares
Delta Mobile Testing
Dewitt Advertising
D-I Supply
Done Right Small Engine
Service & Repair
Drake Scruggs
Dueco, Inc.

Dynamic Print Solutions, Inc.
Edgar County Bank & Trust
First Bank & Trust
First National Bank of Newman
Fletcher-Reinhardt Co.
Henigman Oil
Hoof N Paw
Hughes Supply (Elasco)
Keys Fertilizer Sales
Lanman Oil
Max & Diane's

Murphy Farm Seeds
Nu-Gas
Paris First Bank/Branch of State
Bank of Chrisman
Pools True Value
State Farm Insurance - Terry Elston
State Farm Insurance - Kelley Potter
T & R Electric
Weir's Florist

A special thank you goes to Specialty Battery for the use of golf carts!

Employee Spotlight



Jon Farris
Meter Reader

EnerStar members often see employee Jon Farris traveling around the countryside. Jon has been employed as the cooperative's Meter Reader since 1998.

Jon's job functions include much more than just reading meters. While driving along the electric system, Jon patrols the lines and checks for any equipment problems. If he sees a problem, like a loose guy wire or a bad anchor, he will create a job ticket for the operations department. "I am an extra pair of eyes on the electric system," Jon says.

"I drive more than 25,000 miles per year on my meter reading routes," Jon says. "We have these routes down to a science. I can tell you every nook and cranny of our electric system and give you the absolute shortest route to get there."

Jon enjoys meeting the membership on a routine basis. "I see a lot of members throughout the month, and I really enjoy getting to know them. I get asked all kinds of questions, so I feel I have a pretty good knowledge of cooperative activities. But there are times I get asked something, and I won't know the answer. If that happens, I will find out for the member and get back to them," says Jon.

Jon graduated from Young America High School and then attended college for four years. He also has attended many cooperative training classes sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

In his youth, Jon was a self-proclaimed ski bum living in the Rocky Mountains near Vale, Colorado, and later Aspen, Colorado. But these days, he spends what little free time he has golfing, hunting, and fishing. He is a member of Pheasants Forever and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Most of his time outside of EnerStar is devoted to his farming operation in northwestern Edgar County.

Jon lives in the Hume area with his two children, Ryan and Paige.

Wood Chips Anyone?

Do you need wood chips for your garden? We would like to collect a list of names of members who want us to deliver chips if we happen to be in their area. When and where we have chips available depends on our workload.

If you are interested call Mike Clark at (217) 466-7616. But keep in mind, your name on the list does not guarantee chip delivery.



Mission statement

EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability, and commitment to our community.



Plan Ahead for Your Upcoming Projects

Digging Responsibly is the Only Way to Dig

Are you considering new landscaping this spring? Planning on a new deck? Building a new house? Or maybe you have some digging to do around the farm? If you answered "yes" to these questions, read on. According to Illinois law, anyone planning an outdoor project that requires excavation, regardless of depth, must contact JULIE first.

What is JULIE?

JULIE, Inc. (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators), also known as the "Illinois One-Call System," is a not-for-profit corporation that provides contractors, homeowners, and others who may be disturbing the earth, with a **FREE** service through a single toll-free phone number. Anyone can call (800) 892-0123 for locating and marking of underground utility facilities.

JULIE is not a utility. JULIE owns no facilities and does not locate underground facilities. JULIE serves as a message handling service for utilities, taking information about planned excavations and distributing this information to its utility membership. It is then the responsibility of each utility to mark the location of their underground facilities at the excavation site.

Necessary Information for Each Call

Safe digging starts when you contact JULIE. According to state law, the person actually doing the digging is required to make the call to JULIE with the locate request information at least 48 hours (two working days, excludes weekends and holidays) in advance of the start of excavation. If a contractor is doing the work for you, suggest that they make the call to JULIE for their protection.

Illinois Law also requires that you start your project within 14 days from your call to JULIE. If the markings become unclear at any time before or during your project, you must contact JULIE to have the markings refreshed. Be prepared to wait an additional 48 hours.



If possible, mark the area where you will be digging with white paint or flags. This will help the utility locator properly identify your project area.

Do not call JULIE on Saturday or Sunday for a project to be marked on the same weekend. Member companies only respond to emergencies on these days--not routine projects.

When you call, be prepared to give the JULIE operator the following information:

- Your name, address, and a phone number at which you can be reached, a fax or pager number. (This is essential in case the utility has questions. Delays may occur if the utility locator is unable to contact you.)
- The county and city or county and unincorporated township name where you will be digging. (If you're digging in an unincorporated area be prepared to give the operator directions.)
- The location at which the excavation will take place, such as the

address, cross street (within 1/4 mile), subdivision name (if it applies), etc.

- The start date and time of the planned excavation.
- The type and extent (size of excavation area) of the work involved, including if white paint, flags, or stakes were used to outline the proposed excavation area.
- Section and quarter-section numbers from your plot survey if available.

AT the end of your call, the JULIE operator will verify all the information you have given. It is very important to listen and make sure it is correct. The operator will then give you a Dig Number. This number is proof of your call to JULIE. It is important you write it down and keep it with your records. If you need to call back for any reason, such as to refresh the marks on your project, you will need this Dig Number.

What Happens After the Call

Within two working days of your call to JULIE, a representative from each member utility company will mark the location of their underground facilities with paint and/or flags at the excavation site. The utilities are only required to mark the facilities that they own, not privately installed lines or facilities.

May is National Electrical Safety Month

Make safe connections: Plug into electrical safety

We take certain things for granted, like air, water, food, and the electricity we use for entertainment, home maintenance, and work. But electricity in our home poses both a blessing and a hazard. Electricity needs to be respected.

For that reason, education and awareness about electrical safety is crucial. Electric cooperatives like EnerStar participate in a number of safety efforts all year long but also recognize the National Electrical Safety Month each May as a cornerstone of that effort. Electrical safety is a 24-7 issue, 365 days a year.

According to a recent estimate, approximately three people die each day in residential electrical-related incidences in the home. A great many of those are related to problems at the outlets, power cords and extension cords. To help reduce those numbers, the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) encourages consumers to "Plug Into Electrical Safety?"

Following are just some of the safety tips offered by ESFI:

Outlets

- Have a qualified electrician inspect your outlets and electrical system.
- Plugs should fit fully and securely into outlets but should not be forced.
- Make sure there are safety covers on all unused outlets to protect children.
- If an outlet or a switch wall plate is hot or discolored by heat, shut off the circuit and have it professionally checked.
- Have additional outlets installed where you need them instead of relying on extension cords and power strips.



According to a recent estimate, approximately three people die each day in residential electrical-related incidences in the home.

Power and extension cords

- Check that all electrical items, including extension cords, are certified by a nationally recognized independent testing lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), CSA Group, ETL and MET Labs.
- Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis; unplug and safely store them after every use.
- Do not place power cords and extension cords in high traffic areas or under carpets, rugs or furniture, and never nail or staple them to the wall or baseboard.
- Never remove the ground pin (the third prong) to make a three-prong plug fit into a two-prong outlet.

- Make sure extension cords are properly rated for their intended use, indoor or outdoor, and meet or exceed the power needs of the appliance or tool being used.
- All electrical items and extension cords should be kept in good condition. If damage is discovered, take the item to an authorized repair center or cut the cord and dispose of it safely.

GFCI's and AFCI's

- Make sure your home includes ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), which prevent accidental electrocution by shutting off the circuit when they sense a "leak" of current off the circuit, and arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs), which help prevent fires by shutting off the circuit when they sense arcing. Consider installing GFCIs and AFCIs on all circuits except those serving major appliances, which may cause nuisance tripping.
- Test your GFCIs monthly and after every major electrical storm.

These and other electrical safety tips are available at ESFI's Web site, www.electrical-safety.org.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F



“Women in the Outdoors” Coming Soon to Mill Creek Park

Attention ladies! Do you love the outdoors but cannot find the time to enjoy it? How about an opportunity for the perfect escape and a chance to rekindle old outdoor interests or learn new ones? And you do not have to be in tip-top shape or handy with an ax!

If you want to learn new skills, meet people with similar interests, and kick back in the great outdoors, your opportunity is just around the corner with an upcoming Women in the Outdoors event, an outreach program of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF).

Today millions of women across the country are discovering that camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, shooting, canoeing, boating, and bird watching are fun and relaxing. And the number of women involved in these outdoor activities is growing.

This year, 480 Women in the Outdoors events will be held throughout the United States with upwards of 45,000 women attending. Area women have an opportunity to for hands-on, in the field learning at a local Women in the Outdoors event to be held on Saturday, May 21, 2005, at the beautiful Mill Creek Park in Marshall, Illinois.

In cooperation with several organizations, the Millcreek location is hosted by two local chapters of the NWTF - the Lincoln Trail Turkey Chapter and the Edgar County Longbeards.



Join other women and get hooked on Women in the Outdoors!

Women in the Outdoors
Saturday
May 21, 2005
8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Mill Creek Park
Marshall, Illinois

Participants will be able to select from the following courses: Outdoor cooking, Prairie Walk, Attracting Wildlife, Outdoor Photography, Bird Watching, Archery, and more.

Other hosts include the Clark County Park District, Mill Creek Park, Clark County Soil and Water Conservation District, USDA-NRCS, and the Clark County University of Illinois Extension Service.

The combination of sponsorship and local chapter support make it possible for the NWTF to offer Women in the Outdoors and other educational programs at low cost to participants. The registration fee is \$35 per person if received prior to May 7, 2005, or \$40 if received after that date. With your paid registration for a Women in the Outdoors event, participants become a member of the NWTF and receive four issues of the program's own entertaining and informative magazine, *Women In The Outdoors*.

The program runs from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., rain or shine. For more information about the Women in the Outdoors program, call Teresa Herrington at the Clark County Park District at (217) 889-3901 or visit their Web site at www.clarkcountyparkdistrict.com.



Women in the
OUTDOORS
NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION

EnerStar® HomePage

www.enerstar.com

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

What's Inside

Youth Day4

Two students learn about local government

Better Ideas for your home4

Certified Comfort Home Manual available

Employee Spotlight ...5

Meet Journeyman Lineman Dana Young

Electricity Books Provided to Area Public Schools and Libraries6

EnerStar's New Year, New Book program

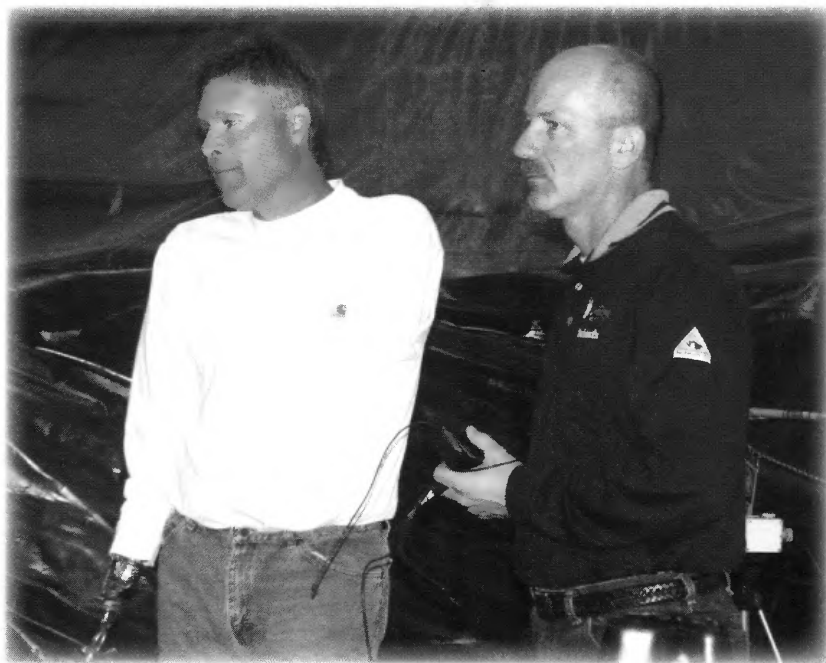
Progressive Farmer Safety Day Camp7

EnerStar educates children on electrical safety

Keep Your Green Thumb.....9

Outdoor safety tips

Safety Day Teaches 4th Graders About Electricity



Delmar Bell, left, spoke to students about his electrical accident and how it changed his life. Kyle Finley, right, performed a live line demonstration to show students how electricity works and how to stay safe.

The safety of our members is important to EnerStar, so throughout the year, EnerStar does its part to promote consumer education about how electricity works and how to prevent electrical accidents. We consider it part of our responsibility to our communities to make sure people of all ages respect electricity and know how to be careful around it.

A perfect place to spread the word is with the youth in our community. Teaching electrical safety at a young age ensures those thoughts and concepts will remain with the children as they mature into adults. That is why EnerStar Power

sponsored an Electric Safety Day for area fourth graders in late April. The event was a prelude to the cooperative's observance of Electric Safety Month in May.

"Events like these are an important part of EnerStar's mission," said Angela Griffin, EnerStar's Director of Marketing and Communications. "It gives us a chance to showcase the cooperative's role in the community while educating our young on how to handle an electrical emergency. We normally have the program in May but have moved it up a couple of weeks to avoid end of the school year conflicts."

continued on page 16b



Students were able to try on linemen gear like hardhats, rubber gloves, and tool belts to give them an idea of how linemen stay safe around electricity.

The innovative safety day program was designed to educate the young participants about electrical safety and the role of the cooperative in the community.

The students watched a demonstration presented by Kyle Finley, owner of Live Line Demo, Inc. Finley showed the students how electricity travels through wires, and what happens when a kite hits a power line or a truck backs into a utility pole. The Live Line display contains 7,200 volts of electricity and is constructed with

the same poles, transformers, and line hardware used by EnerStar Power.

Finley uses props such as a fake squirrel and bird, a hot dog, and a balloon to show the effects of electricity. The children especially seemed to like these props and the loud “booms” that Finley created. Through these aids, students learn about the many dangers of electricity and how to be careful around it.

The Live Line Demo presentation was followed with the testimonial of EnerStar member Delmar

Bell, a Paris farmer who was injured in a power line accident just over 20 years ago. The accident cost Bell the loss of his arms. He says he spoke to the students because, “I want young children to learn from my mistakes. I never knew the slogan ‘Look up and Live.’” Bell says he learned a lot from Finley’s presentation and expressed that he felt it is very important for EnerStar Power to host these kinds of safety programs.

“Delmar always says that he isn’t much of a public speaker, but I think otherwise. He is much better than he thinks he is,” says Griffin. “I admire the fact that he can take a horrible experience and turn it into a positive experience. His message really drives home the importance of being safe around electricity.” Griffin stated that many of the students’ thank you notes made reference to the valuable lesson they learned from Bell.

Madison, a student at Kansas Grade School, wrote a thank you note to EnerStar that read, “Thank you EnerStar for the 4th Grade Safety Day. I enjoyed the part where we saw the balloon get shocked. That was cool...I thought Mr. Bell’s story was very interesting and amazing. I learned a lot of things like the part where they said how many volts of electricity is in your wall. 120 (volts) is a lot and if you get in a wreck, you should stay in the car.”

Following Bell’s discussion, the students also had the opportunity to witness the important role of the utility lineman. They watched Journeyman Lineman Troy Lewis climb a utility pole and lift the bucket in a utility truck. Lewis and fellow Journeyman Lineman Keith Borchers told the children about their job and why it is important, and allowed the children to try on their gear. The children were amazed that the equipment was so heavy, especially the 20-pound tool belt. Borchers demonstrated a hands-on small safety display unit that was also available for the kids to use.

Students and teachers all raved about how wonderful the experience was. Mrs. Cummins, a 4th grade teacher at Kansas Grade School, was one of many teachers who sent EnerStar a thank you packet with drawings and letters from all her stu-



Mission statement

EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability, and commitment to our community.

dents. She said, "Mr. Finley does a great job relating to the students and keeping them interested. His presentation was very educational for both the students as well as myself. One of the best ways to educate children is to make learning fun. Mr. Finley does a wonderful job educating while entertaining."

Mrs. Cummins continued, "Mr. Bell's story is what made the information real to the students. I am glad Mr. Bell is willing to share his story as part of the program. The students were able to see first hand and understand the effects electricity could have on their life if they are not careful."

Overall, the event was a huge success and many students learned the importance of safety around electricity, and learned about what their cooperative does to improve their lives. EnerStar hopes to continue the tradition of hosting the program again next year, with more students and schools participating.



Journeyman Lineman Keith Borchers, right, shows a student how the rubber gloves he uses protects him from high voltage.



Thank you for the 9th grade Safety Day.
I learned that there are a lot of things that can be done to make the world a safer place.
If you are interested in a career in the industry
Thank you!
Bryanna Moore-Kramer



get that
with 10 feet
away from
the power
line.

Dear Enerstar,
I thank you for helping me
learn about electricity. I
thought it was fun and it's
really nice of you to
do this every year. Kyle's
small design of a power
line was awesome. Making
it as they explained
to us. I would and use
my utility are GFCI
and I'm happy and the
we were cool. I had a lot
fun and learned about
electricity too.
Sincerely,
Phyllis Ragle





Youth Day

EnerStar provides two local students with a chance to learn about local government

Senator Dale Righter and Representative Roger Eddy met with two students representing EnerStar Power Corp during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives' Youth Day on Wednesday, April 13, in Springfield. While in the state capital, students had an opportunity to view state government in action, speak with Secretary of State Jesse White, and tour the State Capitol, Lincoln's Tomb and the Illinois Supreme Court. From left are Senator Righter, EnerStar chaperone Angela Griffin, Madden Wright of Paris, John Michael of Marshall and Representative Eddy. The day was sponsored by the Illinois electric and telephone co-ops and is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government.



Better ideas for your home

New construction guidelines booklet updated



New materials and techniques for building a comfortable, energy-efficient home are included in the Certified Comfort Home manual available from the Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

This booklet, first written in 1995, offers advice on many details of construction, as well as broad guidelines on issues such as insulation levels and high-efficiency heating systems. The new edition includes recommendations for spray-on cellulose insulation in walls, airtight recessed light fixtures, and windows with invisible low-e film between the panes.

Alternative construction techniques such as structural insulated panels (SIP) and insulated concrete forms are also recognized for their high efficiency and strength.

"This manual shows the proven construction practices that our cooperatives have seen used around the state to build houses that are super-efficient, affordable and very comfortable year-round," says Tim Haddix, EnerStar's System Engineer. "Some of the tips are basic while others go right down to the detail of how to build an airtight soffit or where to put vapor barriers in a crawl space," he adds.

The 16-page Certified Comfort Home manual is offered free of charge to EnerStar cooperative members and area contractors. You can request a copy by writing our office, or by calling Haddix at (800) 635-4145, extension 617. You may also drop us an e-mail at power@enerstar.com. Haddix would also be the contact for questions regarding electric build-ins or upgrades at your property.

**THIS IS THE GOOD LIFE.
IT DESERVES FASTER INTERNET.**



WILDBLUE
REACHES YOU WildBlue Satellite Speed Internet connects almost any computer in the U.S. at lightning-fast speeds for as little as \$49.95 per month. Surf up to 30 times faster than dial-up. No more dial-up delays waiting to be connected. No more wondering if high-speed Internet will ever arrive in your town or neighborhood. There's a great big WildBlue world out there. Get connected the way you've always wanted to: fast!



www.comwares.net
(217) 465-5233



Not available in all areas. Requires a clear view of the southern sky. Downstream speed comparison between Pro Pak and 42Kbps dial-up. Value Pak is up to 10x faster than dial-up. Speeds are not guaranteed. Usage subject to WildBlue's Fair Access Policy. Monthly fees refer to Value Pak. Equipment and installation charges, taxes and minimum term commitments also apply. Prices subject to change. ©2004 WildBlue Communications, Inc.

1204

**Co-op[★]
News**

Employee Spotlight



Dana Young
Journeyman Lineman

Journeyman Lineman Dana Young is a familiar face in the EnerStar countryside. He has been on the job since 1990. Dana performs line construction and maintenance but also assists with locating underground power lines and trimming trees. Of course, he responds to power outages when necessary as well.

Dana serves as Steward for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 51 based in Springfield, Illinois, and currently holds the position of EnerStar's Safety Coordinator.

Prior to joining EnerStar, Dana worked at his family's plumbing and heating business for eight years and worked as a correctional officer with the Illinois Department of Corrections in Danville, Illinois. He is a 1978 graduate of Paris High School.

"I enjoy doing all aspects of line work, and working for EnerStar gives me that chance," says Dana. "When Mother Nature is at her worse, we are working our hardest. We strive to take care of our members as quickly as possible but we are a relatively small cooperative with a small work force. We really appreciate the patience and understanding of our members during those rough times."

When not working, Dana enjoys hunting, fishing, and participating in a local dart league. He and his wife Mary live in Paris. He has two children and two stepchildren.

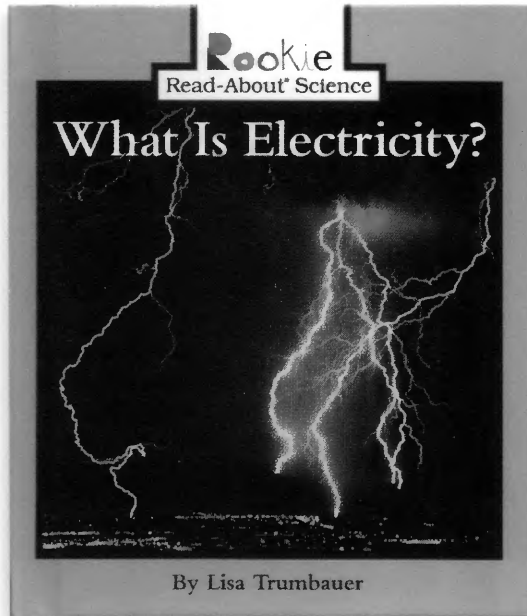


Electricity Books Provided to Area Public and School Libraries

Nearly every school and public library in the EnerStar service area is participating in EnerStar's "New Year, New Book" program. A program developed with EnerStar's mission statement in mind.

"The purpose of the program is simple. EnerStar is committed to community improvement projects and good libraries improve our rural communities. We simply want to help stock the library shelves with books that students need and community residents will enjoy," stated Angela Griffin, Director of Marketing and Communications at EnerStar.

Griffin added she was very pleased with the initial response. The first book distributed in 2004 was *The Next Greatest Thing*. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), of



which EnerStar Power is a member, authorized the publication of the book, and long-time NRECA employee, Richard Pence, served as

editor. Many past and current EnerStar employees had the privilege of meeting Pence. "This is obviously a book that is near and dear to our hearts so we thought it would be an appropriate first choice," added Griffin.

This year's selection is geared towards the younger crowd and is entitled, "*What is Electricity?*" Written for ages four through eight, this Rookie Read-About Science book introduces young readers to electricity. Colorful photos and simple text encourage children to read on their own as they learn about the energy they use every day.

According to Griffin, topics will vary each year and range in such subjects as energy and water, the environment and conservation, rural America and community development, and general history, just to name a few.

The EnerStar[®] Team



The EnerStar employees work hard to impress the owners of the electric co-op: you.

Only your local electric co-op makes every customer an owner of the business. Unlike other electric utilities, your co-op exists to make sure your needs are always met, not to make a profit. And since every electric co-op is locally owned and operated, your co-op is always there with you, reinvesting in your community.

That's why in an electric co-op, the people have the power.

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

EnerStar participates in the Progressive Farmer Farm Safety Day Camp®

The Kansas schools were busy on the morning of April 8th as EnerStar and several other area companies participated in the Progressive Farmer Farm Safety Day Camp. EnerStar, represented by Journeyman Lineman Keith Borchers, was pleased to participate in the program with its electric safety display. The program was geared towards students ranging from kindergarten to sixth grade.

Electricity is the most common and most useful forms of energy in the home and on the farm. But it is necessary to observe important safety considerations regarding electricity and teach our children to be safe around it. By participating in events such as the Farm Safety Day Camp, EnerStar can teach children about the dangers of electricity and how to avoid accidents.



Borchers, along with help from Neon Leon and Lightnin' Liz, uses a tabletop electric safety display that uses real electricity. Leon and Liz are two glass figurines that light up throughout the presentation as they

face possible electrocution in their rural farm setting.

EnerStar Power is pleased to donate its time and expertise toward these types of worthwhile events. By working together, we all can improve the health and safety of children in the home and on our farms.

The event is coordinated by the Carle Center for Rural Health and Farm Safety, the Edgar County University of Illinois Extension, and the Kansas FFA.



Three Ways To Stay Cooler For Less

The trick to reducing your summer air conditioning costs is to reduce the amount of time that your air conditioner runs. There are three basic ways to reduce operating hours. The first is to make sure your system is running properly with good maintenance and service. The second is to increase your thermostat setting either manually or automatically. And the third is to employ low-cost cooling methods.

Your system's filters and coils should be cleaned periodically. A dirty system deteriorates air conditioning performance and increases operating time. Ask your service technician how to change filters and how to clean your outdoor coil. The filters should be changed every one to three months and the outdoor coil should be cleaned every year.

If your home is vacant for part of the day, use a programmable ther-



mostat to turn the temperature up before you leave and down before you return. You will need to experiment with different time settings to test how long it takes the system to recover from the higher temperature.

By the way, closing registers in unused rooms doesn't usually help to reduce operating hours and may reduce your system's efficiency.

For low-cost cooling methods, try these effective improvements to reduce air conditioning operating hours.

- Set your thermostat up 4 degrees and run room fans to move the air and cool your family by the wind chill effect. Fans can counteract the higher thermostat setting.
- Install shades, blinds, awnings, sun screens, or window films to your sunny-side windows.
- Insulate your attic to the maximum practical depth of insulation.
- Line-dry your clothes if possible.
- Don't use your oven on hot days.
- Install compact fluorescent lamps in the fixtures you use the most. Old-fashioned incandescent lamps produce 10 percent light and 90 percent heat.

Source: John Krigger, Saturn Resource Management (www.srmi.biz).



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F



Keep Your Green Thumb

Spring is the time to get out and get working in the yard – safely. According to U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 145,000 people are treated in emergency rooms for injuries by garden tools. Please keep in mind the following precautions from Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. before you head out with your tools.

- Before using any appliance or tool, read and follow the manufacturer's use and care instructions.
- Before each use, inspect tools for frayed power cords and cracked or broken casings. If the product is damaged, DON'T use it or attempt to repair it yourself. Return the product or have a qualified repair shop examine it.
- Always wear proper attire. Keep your clothing, hands and feet away from cutting blades at all times. Never wear jewelry when working with tools. Always wear safety glasses.
- Pay attention to warning markings. Don't allow tools to get wet unless they are labeled "submersible." When using tools outside, make sure they are appropriate for outdoor use.
- Never alter a product or remove safety features such as blade guards or electric plug grounding pins.
- Use only properly rated outdoor extension cords with outdoor electrical tools.
- Check the switch on a power tool or garden appliance to make sure it's "OFF" before you plug it in.




- Unplug all portable electrically operated power tools when not in use. These tools contain electricity even when turned "OFF" but still plugged in.
- Have a qualified technician install ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) receptacles in all outdoor outlets. After installation, test your GFCIs monthly.
- Never carry an appliance by the cord, and never yank the cord when removing it from a receptacle. When disconnecting the cord, always grasp the plug - not the wire. Keep the cord away from heat, oil and sharp edges.



EnerStar[®] HomePage

www.enerstar.com

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

27

What's Inside

Rusty Bucket Proves Inspiration to Start New Business16b-16d

Greenhouse in southern Edgar
County provides new start for
owners

Employee Spotlight . . 16e

Meet Billing Supervisor Susan
Watson

EnerStar Powered by Ethanol and Biodiesel . . . 16f

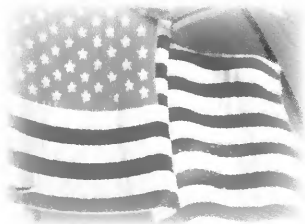
Using biodiesel and ethanol, Ener-
Star is helping the co-op, its mem-
bers, and the environment.

Safe Summer Play . . .16g

Play up outdoor electrical safety
to children

A Salute to the Red, White and Blue! 16h

Test your American Flag IQ



EnerStar Introduces Energy Advisor Program

Effort builds upon what cooperative has been doing for decades

For decades, local residents and businesses have turned to EnerStar Power for friendly, knowledgeable advice about getting the most value and efficiency from electricity. Now there's an easy-to-find source for that help: Energy Advisors Brent Reyher and Tim Haddix.

"As our co-op's Energy Advisors, it's our job to make sure that our members have all the information they need to

get the most from electric power," Reyher explains. "Whether that involves helping them understand the choices available for heating and cooling their homes, showing them simple steps they can take to lower their energy bills, or just answering their questions, we're here to help."

Haddix adds that providing such information has always been a part of EnerStar's commitment. "Electric cooperatives like ours were created as an affordable way to bring electricity to areas that weren't being served by investor-owned utilities. When we started serving the area, electricity was something that was brand-new and often misunderstood. So the co-op employees had to educate the community about this new source of energy. Over time, homeowners and business people became accustomed to turning to us for help."

"Today's electric power is more reliable than ever, our co-op is serving members in ways our founders probably never



EnerStar's Energy Advisors, Tim Haddix (left) and Brent Reyher.

imagined, and we're still the primary source of information," explains Haddix.

As the co-op's Energy Advisors, Reyher and Haddix received special training to develop a better understanding of the needs of members. In addition to their assistance, EnerStar offers a variety of brochures and other publications to build knowledge of heat pumps, geothermal energy, and other matters that draw frequent questions.

EnerStar's Energy Advisor Team

Brent Reyher

Telephone: (217) 466-7606 or
(800) 635-4145, extension 606
E-mail: breyher@enerstar.com

Tim Haddix

Telephone: (217) 466-7617 or
(800) 635-4145, extension 617
E-mail: thaddix@enerstar.com



Rusty Bucket Proves Inspiration to Start New Business

When you think of the tools you need to tackle your latest garden project, a shovel, work gloves, a tiller, and a bucket may come to mind, just to name a few. But when you think about your bucket, you probably are not thinking about an old rusty bucket. One that is worn with a bottom so rusty that it no longer can hold the water you may need.

Believe it or not, an old rusty bucket was just the inspiration one Paris woman needed to make a change in her life and take it in a new direction. Debbie McConkey, along with her husband Mike, are the proud owners of The Rusty Bucket, a greenhouse full of fresh flowers located in southern Edgar County.

The inspiration for the business is actually from a poem by an unknown author entitled "The Old Rusty Bucket." When Debbie stumbled upon the inspirational poem several years ago, the words not only helped lift up her spirits but sparked an interest in taking her life in a new direction.

The business started out slow but soon bloomed and now flourishes with bright colors and an even brighter future. "This started out as a hobby. We enjoyed working with vegetables and flowers and soon we were planting things for family. Then it was friends, and eventually we realized we had a great opportunity right here at home," said Mike.

The first two years proved a challenge for the McConkeys as they learned from their mistakes. "Like most new gardeners, there was a lot of trial and error," said Mike. "We made a lot of mistakes but we learned from them. We want to pass on that knowledge to our customers." He added that they had considerable help from area folks who gave them advice and pointers along the way. Mike credits Randy Weir, owner of Weir's Florist in Paris, as being a great help to the McConkeys from day one.

"This business has been a blessing to us," said Debbie. "The Rusty Bucket has been more than a green-

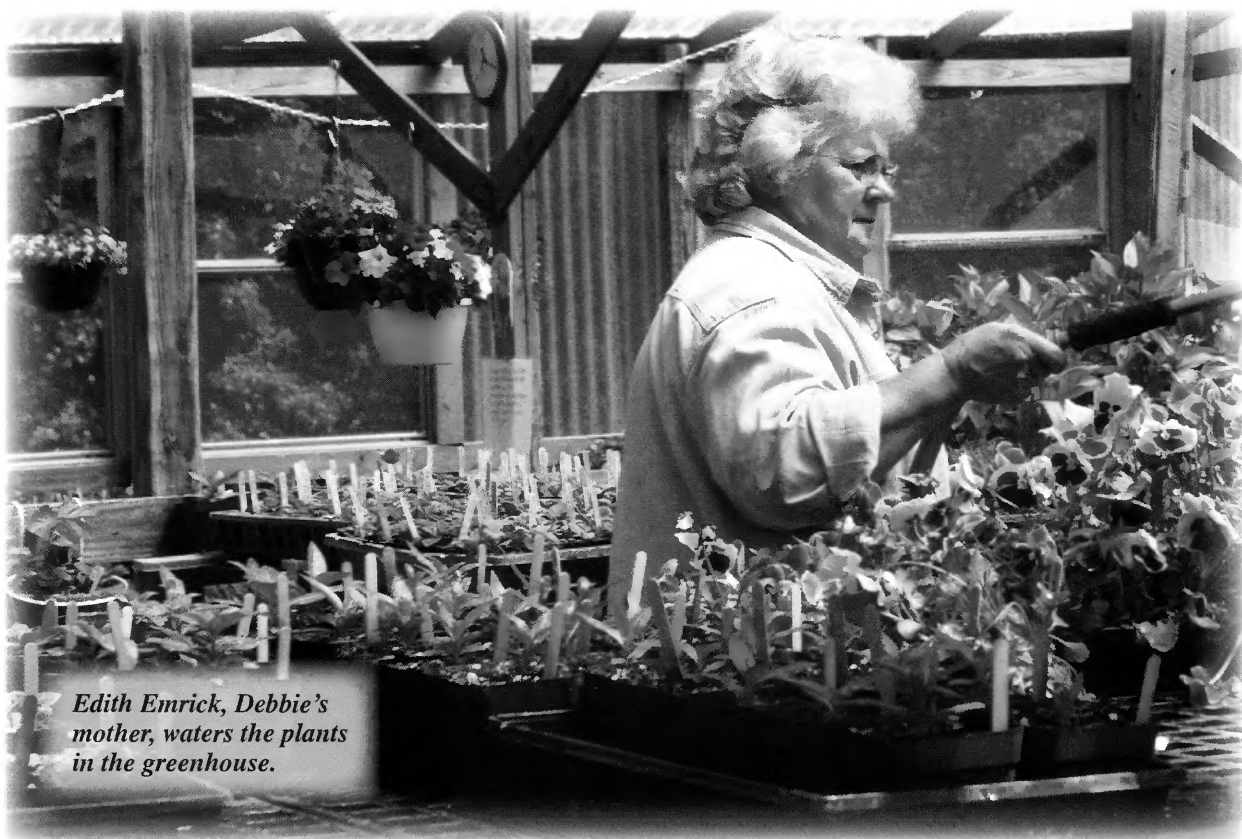


house to our family and our customers. It has given us a place where we all can tend to something as a family and watch it grow together. We spend a lot of time here together."

Customers come from all around the area and often make The Rusty Bucket a stop on their way to another location. For example, a group of Champaign women have made multiple stops on their day trips to Terre Haute. "It gives them an opportunity for a beautiful ride through the country," stated Mike.

With a little planning on the part of the customer, The Rusty Bucket can research flowers and vegetables and place special orders during the

"This started out as a hobby. We enjoyed working with vegetables and flowers and soon we were planting things for family."



Edith Emrick, Debbie's mother, waters the plants in the greenhouse.

winter months. Mike will plant the seeds and tend to the plant until the customer is ready to pick it up at planting time. The Rusty Bucket has access to many unique and one-of-a-kind special orders through their wholesaler.

"It might be necessary to purchase 30 to 60 seeds in a packet but the person will only want a couple of plants. We then will sell the extra plants," Mike said. "Just the other day, someone said to me 'I bet you don't have any Abe Lincoln tomatoes do you?' and I gave them a 'funny you should ask' answer, because we did have what they were looking for," Mike said with a grin.

The McConkeys feel the country setting is appealing to most customers and that is what keeps them coming back. The business has a quiet, laid-back manner that you often do not find at other locations. "We are not looking to be the biggest in the area. We like our quaint country setting and personal touch. We think our customers like it too," said Mike.

Debbie enjoys putting her floral design diploma to work creating cus-



In a quaint country setting, the greenhouses are full of colorful blooms.



tom hanging baskets and boxes. "Just give us a call and tell us what you are looking for, we will see what we can do," said Debbie.

As the McConkeys look to the future, an additional greenhouse is planned for next year and the couple will increase their perennial offerings. "We don't have aspirations to expand The Rusty Bucket into a big business. Just a family-run greenhouse where people can come and enjoy the country, and of course, the plants," said Mike.

The Rusty Bucket is a seasonal operation and is open April 1 through the end of June. Their hours are 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. For more information, call 275-3663 during seasonal hours. Those with special requests during the winter months should contact the McConkey's home at 275-3755. The Rusty Bucket is located at 19295 E. 400th Road (turn east just north of Nevins Church on the Lower Terre Haute Road).

The Old Rusty Bucket



*There is an old water bucket,
Lying out beside the fence,
Why anyone would keep it,
To me just makes no sense.
The bottom is so rusty,
No water will it hold,
The handle is all twisted,
The bucket is so old.*

*For many years I kept it,
For the good that it had been,
It used to serve a purpose,
But that was way back then.
Now it's just an eyesore,
A useless piece of rusty tin,
I thought that I would trash it,
With other junk and then...*

*I heard the sound of thunder
In the distant sky,
And then a softer, sweeter sound,
And this one was near by.
Was the sound of summer raindrops,
Beating a rhythm like a drum,
I listened in amazement,
Then began to hum.*

*I noticed a sparrow taking refuge,
Underneath a big green tree
And he began to sing along...
With the raindrops and with me.
I saw the leaves were dancing
And flowers swayed, beautiful and bold,
As raindrops on an old rusty bucket
Made music to cheer the soul.*

*I lifted my eyes toward Heaven
And thanked my Father there,
For teaching me this lesson
And now with you I share.
I was feeling just as useless
As that bucket seemed to be,
Just going through a season
Of thinking no one needed me.*

*But then I was reminded that to
Give an encouraging word or a smile,
Could mean the world to others
And that makes my life worthwhile.
All things serve a purpose,
So look around and consider again...
The things you thought were useless
Like the rusty bucket made of tin.*

****Author Unknown****

Co-op News

Employee Spotlight



Susan Watson

In 1998, Susan Watson began her employment at EnerStar Power and currently holds the position of Billing Supervisor. There rarely is a dull day as she tackles billing issues, software changes, meter readings, or capital credits. "There is always a new challenge at our ever-changing cooperative," Susan says with a smile.

But her employment at an electric utility did not begin at EnerStar. Prior to joining the EnerStar team, she worked at AmerenCIPS since 1982, becoming a full-time employee after completing a part-time internship during her senior year of high school. During her tenure at Ameren, she worked in a variety of positions including cashier, bookkeeper, customer service representative, and even a meter reader!

When asked how it is different working for EnerStar, Susan replies

that there is much more customer, or member, input as it is called at the cooperative, in how the cooperative is run. "Either it is the Annual Meeting or simply coming through the front door, cooperative members have much more of a say in their company than customers at an investor-owned utility," states Susan. "We really try to accommodate their requests and listen to their suggestions on how we can improve the cooperative."

Originally from the Paris area, Susan resides in Charleston with her husband Marty, who happens to be employed at Ameren in the gas division as a Corrosion Technician. Her three children Maegan, Bailey, and Thomas (T.W.) keep her busy with "sports, sports, and more sports!" She is very involved with her children's activities and volunteers at many of their events.



Thanks to the military personnel who have fought for all of us, the star-spangled banner yet waves O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave. Brought to you by your local cooperative.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Office Closing

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



What Do 4th Of July and Electric Cooperatives Have In Common?

When Benjamin Franklin signed the Declaration of Independence, he is credited with saying, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

No wonder Franklin was also the founder of the first successful cooperative formed in the United States. He organized the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire in 1752.

The principles behind the Declaration of Independence that form the basis of American democracy are also the beliefs that form the basis of cooperatives.

A cooperative is owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services. Each member-owner has one vote regardless of their equity in the company; that is, wealthy members cannot buy more control and everyone has an equal say. This is in contrast to investor-owned businesses where only shareholders have a vote in how the business is run; and even among shareholders, some have more votes than others depending on their shares of stock.

The Declaration of Independence also declared the equality of rights of its citizens and that people had the right to organize

to secure their futures when their rights were infringed upon.

At the time the Declaration was written, democracy was a pretty untested idea — but the founders of our country were determined to make it work.

So when you celebrate the 4th of July with your families and friends this year, think about those principles that inspired our Founding Fathers. They also inspired the founders of rural electric cooperatives, who were determined to provide reliable, affordable power to secure the futures of their rural communities.

EnerStar Powered by Ethanol and Biodiesel

EnerStar Power uses ethanol and biodiesel fuel in its trucks. Why? Because this fuel is created by the corn and soybeans our local farmers grow. And in addition to helping farmers, these fuels help keep the environment and our air cleaner while helping the country reduce its dependence on foreign petroleum.

It is just one more way EnerStar Power helps the communities we serve.



EnerStar's Mike Clark (left) is shown with former EnerStar Board Chairman Tom Murphy.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F

Safe Summer Play

Play up outdoor electrical safety to children

Sunny summer days beckon the child in us all to head outdoors to play. Before you start summertime activities, Safe Electricity and EnerStar Power recommend that families review and stress to children to follow simple electrical safety rules for safe outdoor play.

"Go over these rules with your children. And set a good example by following safety rules yourself and installing safety equipment such as GFCI outlets," says Tim Haddix, System Engineer at EnerStar.

- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines aren't touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch.
- Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines. If a kite gets stuck in a tree that is near power lines, do not climb up to get it.
- Never climb a utility pole or tower.
- Don't play on or around pad-mounted electrical equipment.
- Never go into an electric substation for any reason - even on a dare. Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment that can kill you. Never rescue a pet or retrieve a ball or toy that goes inside. Call your electric utility instead.

When designing an outdoor play



area for your children, do not install playground equipment or swimming pools underneath or near power lines. Protect all family members from serious shock and injuries by installing and using outdoor outlets with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI). Use portable GFCIs for outdoor outlets that don't have them.

Keep electrical appliances at least 10 feet away from pools, ponds, and wet surfaces.

For more information on electrical safety, and on-line games and activities that teach kids to safely use and play around electricity, Haddix recommends visiting the website www.SafeElectricity.org.



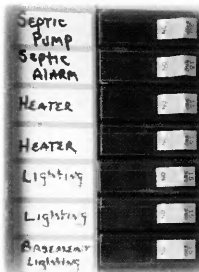
Mission statement

EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability, and commitment to our community.

To Report a Power Outage Emergency

Call us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at
(217) 463-4145 or (800) 635-4145

1. Check the fuses or breakers in your home.
2. Check the breakers below the meter if the meter is located on a yard pole.
3. Call your neighbors. If their power is also off, ask if they have reported the power outage. Please do not assume the outage has been



reported. Your home may be the only home experiencing the outage.

4. Call EnerStar Power to report your power outage. In order for us to process your call more quickly, please be prepared to give the name,

address, account number and telephone number for the account without power.



A Salute to the Red, White and Blue!

This Independence Day, Test Your American Flag IQ

The American flag is one of the most recognized symbols in the world. It may have many names—the Star-Spangled Banner, the Stars and Stripes, Old Glory—but it has one clear meaning: it stands for unity and freedom.

Our flag has earned our respect: handle it with care! In that spirit, we invite you to find out just how much you know about caring for and flying our national banner.

To determine your flag IQ, answer each of the following questions, then check below for the answers and figure out your score.

1. How do I fly the flag on a flagpole?

(One answer is false—which one?)

- a. When on the same flagpole, always fly the U.S. flag above any state, municipal or social-organization flag
- b. When on the same flagpole, the U.S. flag should be above any other nation's flag
- c. Raise the U.S. flag briskly and lower it ceremoniously
- d. When flying the U.S. flag near flags of other nations, it should be positioned on its own right

2. How do I hang the flag indoors?

(One answer is false—which one?)

- a. The flag may be used to cover a ceiling
- b. The flag can be hung horizontally or vertically
- c. The union, or canton (the blue field of stars), should be on the flag's right and the viewer's left
- d. If hung in a window, the canton should be on the viewer's left

3. When properly folded, the flag takes what shape?

- a. A rectangle
- b. A triangle
- c. A square
- d. A hexagon

4. When is a flag not flown at half-staff?

- a. Upon the death of a president or former president
- b. When the president or the governor of a state declares an official period of mourning
- c. On Memorial Day, honoring those who have died while serving the U.S.
- d. When a member of your family dies

5. How do I raise a flag to the half-staff position?

- a. Raise it slowly to half-staff
- b. Raise it slowly all the way to the top, then slowly to half-staff
- c. Raise it all the way to the top, then all the way to the bottom, then to half-staff
- d. Raise it briskly all the way to the top, then lower it slowly to half-staff



6. What should a civilian do when a flag passes by in a parade or procession?

- a. Salute and stand at attention
- b. Place the right hand over the heart while the first U.S. flag passes by
- c. Place the right hand over the heart while each U.S. flag passes by
- d. Place the left hand over the heart while the first U.S. flag passes by

7. What do I do with my flag when it's worn out?

(One answer is false—which one?)

- a. Burn it in a private place
- b. Organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Boy Scouts of America or the Girl Scouts can dispose of your flag
- c. Fold it, then carefully place it in the trash
- d. Contact your town or city officials for more information

Answers

- 1. (b) is false. The U.S. flag should never share a pole with another nation's flag. International law forbids the display of one nation's flag above another in times of peace.
- 2. (a) is false. The flag should never be used to cover a ceiling.
- 3. (b) is correct.
- 4. (d) is false. Flags are flown at half-staff only during official periods of mourning. On Memorial Day the flag is flown at half-staff until noon and then at full-staff for the remainder of the day.
- 5. (d) is correct.
- 6. (b) is correct. People in military uniform salute as the first U.S. flag passes; the remaining flags in the parade do not need to be recognized.
- 7. (c) is false. When the U.S. flag is no longer in a condition to be displayed with honor, it should be destroyed in a dignified way.

Score

- 1-2:** Not too good. Back to Civics class!
- 3-5:** Impressive, but there's room for improvement.
- 6-7:** Well done! Stand tall, patriot!

Presented by



Touchstone Energy
Cooperatives

We gratefully acknowledge for their expertise the National Flag Foundation—the foremost authority on the U.S. flag and the U.S. Flag Code of 1923 as amended through the last edition in 1998. The Code offers the official way to show respect for the flag, but has no enforcement power or rigor of law. If you would like additional information please visit: www.americanflags.org

HomePage

www.enerstar.com

What's Inside

Deposit Procedures Strengthened.....16c

Deposits help protect your cooperative. Find out if you'll be affected

Blue Sky Outages . . . 16d

You can't always blame the weather for power outages

Employee Spotlight ..16e

Meet Member Accounts Representative Jennifer Hird

Cooperative's New Energy Advisor Program . . . 16f

Get free personalized energy efficiency information for your home

JAKE'S Outing16g

Teaching children about the great outdoors Saturday, August 27

When Household Appliances Wear Out Their Welcome. 16h

Learn how to properly dispose of appliances

A Wabash River Town's Asset - The Darwin Ferry



A semi uses the ferry to cross the Wabash River, saving the driver more than 40 miles.

The word ferry can be a verb, as in to transport by boat, or it can be a noun, naming the site of transport or to describe the type of boat that provides the transportation. In all of its meanings it adequately defines the ferry at Darwin in Clark County, but it is the history of the ferry that fully fleshes out this bare-bones definition.

Darwin is a small, unincorporated town of about two hundred people who live on the west bank of the Wabash River approximately seven miles south of where the Wabash forms the Illinois-Indiana boundary. The Darwin Ferry is the sole survivor of what was once a thriving form of transportation on the Wabash River. As many as 30 ferries once crossed the river at the peak of

river transport, but by about 1970, the Darwin Ferry became the lone survivor when the ferry closed at nearby Merom, Indiana. Local citizens in 1976 could remember as many as 16 operating ferries in their lifetime, probably dating as far back as the turn of the 20th century.

It is not altogether surprising that Darwin should bear the distinction as the sole survivor of a once common transportation link, since the town originally ranked at the forefront, high among Illinois settlements. When Illinois entered the union in 1818, the Wabash Valley was one of the hearths from which Anglo-American pioneers advanced the frontier across the prairie. Darwin served as the Clark County seat for 15 years, from 1823 to 1838, having taken that role from the town of Aurora. Money-making was on the mind of the town's early boosters.

continued on page 16b

*Reprinted with permission by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
Written by Keith A. Sculle, Head,
Research and Education*



Thirty-four lots were sold on the first day of the land sale, and businessman John McClure spurred further prospects of settlers and profits when he established a ferry. His prominent role in the community was reflected in the town's original name--"McClure's Bluff."

Further sign of the town's vaunted future came later with its renaming for Charles Darwin, the distinguished British scientist who developed the theory of biological evolution. Business in the community bustled because Darwin townfolk processed and distributed agricultural commodities, assisted partly by the ferry that carried goods across the Wabash. Traffic up and down the river to Terre Haute began with pole barges and flatboats, followed by the first steamboat in 1822. The region's economic future was vibrant, but Darwin's role in the boom dwindled well before transportation shifted from waterways to improved roads, highways, and railroads. Marshall, platted nine miles north when the National Road was cleared and graded, became the county seat in 1838. Despite Illinois' failure to fully develop the National Road, it nevertheless contributed to the decline of the Darwin Ferry, and the construction of the St. Louis, Vandalia, and Terre Haute Railroad immediately north of Marshall in 1870 further hurried the ferry's demise. Railroads created a radical shift in transportation throughout the area, and soon after the Civil War, steamboat service to Terre Haute, Indiana, came to a halt.

The crossing at Darwin has never merited the expense of a bridge, but area farmers who farmed land in adjacent Indiana relied on the ferry to get them and their farming equipment across the river. Sometime in the 1910s, interested farmers partnered up to purchase the ferry from the Terre Haute owner who planned to move the ferry south from Darwin because it no longer yielded the profit he expected.

Later changes improved many aspects of service. The ferry was relocated about a mile downstream to its present site, to allow for crossing at both high and low water levels; a gasoline engine was installed to provide a consistent source of power (at low levels the river did not provide a strong current); a heavy cable was installed to keep the ferry on course



This view of Darwin's Ferry faces southeast across the Wabash River.

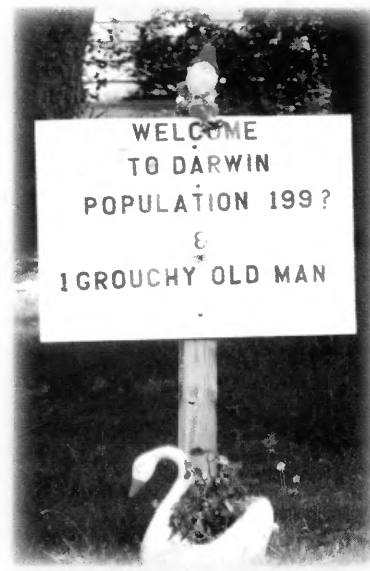
from shore to shore; and a concrete apron was installed to improve the landing on the Illinois side.

According to a traffic count taken in 1971, 50 to 60 vehicles still crossed the river every day. But the economy was fragile. A poorly phrased press release on a study about the unhealthy quality of carp in the Wabash--the news item left the impression that it covered all fish--temporarily hurt commercial fishermen in the area. By the 1980s, high insurance rates restricted the ferry's usage only to its owners.

For outsiders looking in on Darwin, the ferry has taken on the quaint quality of an item of Illinoisiana. By the early 1970s, curiosity seekers comprised most of the traffic on Sundays and a newspaper article was headlined "Feeling nostalgic?...visit Darwin ferry." Stories about various sinkings date to the recent past, and the long list of its operators are recounted by name like heroes in a hall of fame. The Darwin Ferry, still an important link in the local economy, also conjures a strong sense of place with deep historic roots.

Darwin, Illinois History of the Town

According to the Illinois State Historical Society, on a marker located in the center of the town, Darwin was the Clark County seat from 1823 to 1838. The county courthouse was one block south of the marker. From 1819 to 1823, the county seat was Aurora, once located two miles north. Two blocks east of the marker was the Darwin Steamboat Landing on the Wabash River. The Darwin Ferry, established in 1818, still operates just south of the landing. River traffic once made Darwin the leading distributing point for towns as far as 60 miles away.



A little local humor on the welcome sign at Darwin.

EnerStar's Deposit Procedures Strengthened

An article regarding meter deposits does not directly impact most members reading this column. A majority of our members, nearly 85 percent, have been with EnerStar for four or more years. In addition, a vast majority of EnerStar Power members pay on time. Therefore, the fact that EnerStar has strengthened its membership deposit policy does not directly affect most members, but indirectly it does.

When EnerStar has a large amount of bad debt left by people who have left the system without paying their final bill, it impacts the cooperative by increasing our expenses.

While not an overwhelming problem, it is an area of the business we continually monitor. And it is not just a problem at EnerStar. Electric cooperatives across Illinois are responding to this situation. EnerStar Power, like these other electric cooperatives, has revisited the meter deposit policy and credit worthiness procedures in order to protect against unnecessary losses.

Q: Why is EnerStar strengthening its deposit language?

A: We have situations where past deposits were inadequate to offset final bills of "skip" accounts. Therefore, it is necessary to change the policy. We prefer not having to handle deposits, but that is not a reality.

Q: What is a skip account?

A: A skip account is when members vacate the premises and leave without paying their final electric bill. We live in a transient society. On occasion, members leave for their next destination without paying their final electric bill.

Q: How does this affect good paying customers?

A: Most EnerStar members are responsible and take their responsibility of paying their electric bill seriously. This new policy will not have any affect on those members. EnerStar works hard at collecting



delinquent accounts, and we have a relatively low bad debt write off; but we must also look into the future and take action to ensure it stays that way. If we can keep bad debts to a minimum, we can reduce our expenses.

Q: Who will be charged a higher deposit?

A: All new member applications will be reviewed for credit worthiness. Their deposit will be based on their credit history. After November 1, 2005, existing cooperative members who are disconnected for non-payment will have their credit worthiness reviewed. Depending on the information obtained, they may be required to pay a higher deposit along with the past due amount and any service trip charges, prior to being reconnected.

Q: Is the deposit returned?

A: If the member shows a good payment record with EnerStar, and has no delinquent payments for 12 months, then the member may

request a review of their credit history. Upon a satisfactory review, the member's deposit will be adjusted accordingly. Otherwise, the deposit is returned at the time the service is disconnected.

Q: Do you work with members having difficulty paying?

A: We do indeed, but the member must be responsible enough to call or come in to the office to make payment arrangements. Once payment arrangements are agreed upon, the member must follow through on the commitment or else be subject to disconnect of service.

Q: Do you do credit checks on all new customers?

A: Yes, all new member applications at EnerStar will be subject to a credit check.

Q: Is it fair?

A: Absolutely! We work hard to protect our total membership. And the vast majority of members are responsible payers.

EnerStar[®] Mission statement

EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability, and commitment to our community.



Blue Sky Outages - You can't always blame the weather for power outages

Imagine sitting watching television or baking a pie when all of a sudden the lights go out. Outside it is beautiful with hardly a breeze or a cloud in the sky. What could have caused an outage on a blue-sky day like this?

Most people can understand a power outage during a severe storm. They do not like it, but they can understand why it happens. What is hard to understand are all the other reasons for power outages that do not have anything to do with the weather.

Some of the reasons can sound pretty strange. Would you believe a bird? How about a squirrel? Last summer, several members experienced a power outage because of a frog climbing on a transformer!

Sometimes the very next day after a storm, when the bad weather is all out of the area, a fuse that is weakened during a previous outage will fail, causing another outage in the same area.

Sometimes outages are caused by vandalism. Last year, another Illinois co-op had several outages caused by someone throwing a log chain across the power lines. In another case a beer party turned into a lumberjack contest, and a nearby power pole became the victim of the drunken chop job. Besides causing outages, this type of criminal activity could land someone in jail, or worse, six-feet under!

Then there are the times that construction equipment and farm equipment that can take out a line. Car wrecks can wipe out a pole and line in the middle of the night or on a clear weather day. Power line equipment can also fail.

And then there are the trees. Trees cause many outages during both good weather and bad. Trees also cause most blinking light problems. For a rural electric cooperative like EnerStar with thousands of miles of line in rural areas, trees can be a real frustrating problem for both members and linemen.

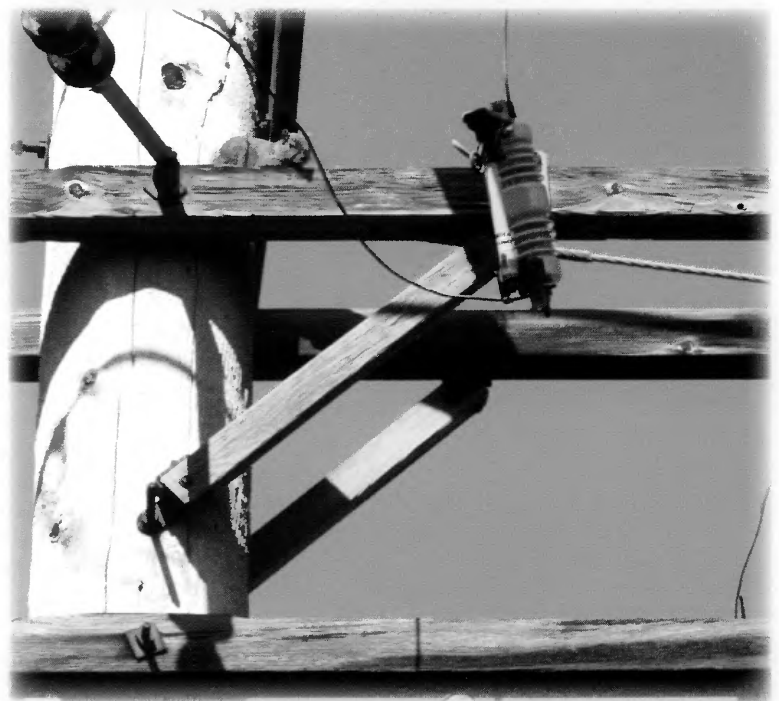
So have patience, EnerStar is aggressively trimming trees and adding squirrel guards in areas prone to outages caused by squirrels and other small animals. Our linemen work hard to keep your power on, and are finding new ways to keep blue sky outages to a minimum.



Last year, this frog caused an outage at EnerStar when it climbed across a transformer.



Vandalism has been known to create outages on cooperative lines.



Squirrels can cause outages even on a clear, blue-sky day. The little guy hiding out on this pole lost his friend when he wandered too close to one of the fuses protecting the phase on the far right. The blown fuse had to be replaced by a lineman to restore power.

Co-op News

Employee Spotlight



Jennifer Hird

Member Accounts Representative

You see the EnerStar linemen up and down the country roads, but have you ever wondered about the people who answer the telephone at EnerStar?

Serving the cooperative since 2000 as a Member Accounts Representative is Jennifer Hird. She now makes her home in Chrisman, but is originally from the state of Washington. Her office is decorated with scenic photographs of mountains back home, including several photos of Mount Rainier. "I miss Washington sometimes but I have come to enjoy living here. This is my home now," says Jennifer.

Jennifer was once employed as an Information Receptionist with the United States Forest Service in North Bend, Washington. But her degrees are actually in the area of education. She holds Associate Degrees in both Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education. "I spent several years working as a nanny and that is how I made it to this area," Jennifer says.

Besides answering the telephone, Jennifer's main duties include billing, payments, and collections. She completes many work orders from member requests for the Operations Department. Throughout her tenure at the cooperative, Jennifer

has attended several cooperative training courses and customer service courses.

Jennifer has been a member-owner of the cooperative since 2001. "It helps that I am both a member and an employee. I feel it gives me a greater level of understanding when talking with the membership." She emphasized that members should understand that they make up the cooperative, and without them, the cooperative would not be here.

"The voice of the membership is very important and their involvement in the cooperative is the only way to help make the cooperative what they expect it to be," Jennifer stated.

Jennifer is very active with area fundraisers and Harley Davidson events. She has been very involved in organizing the Gary Simpson Memorial Ride from which the proceeds have gone to benefit the *DO IT!* Edgar County Cancer Society.

When not riding motorcycles, Jennifer is busy planning a September wedding. She, along with her two cats and two dogs, are engaged to Brian Martin of Chrisman.

We Go To School, Too

CPR Training-The Latest Part in the Lesson Plan

The end of summer is coming soon. Big yellow buses will travel down the country roads taking our children back to school. EnerStar employees go to school, too.

But "school time" is all year long for EnerStar employees. Employee training is a vital part of being prepared for the everyday problems encountered and the unforeseen occurrences that may arise when least expected. By taking advantage of educational opportunities and new technologies, EnerStar can improve your service and stay safe at the same time.

Recently, EnerStar employees received CPR and first-aid training. During a classroom session, employees watched videos of reenactments



of ordinary people dealing with real life situations. After practicing life saving techniques on a lifelike mannequin, all employees in attendance took an exam in order to receive a certification card from the American Red Cross.

The CPR training is coordinated by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC), the Springfield-based organization that represents electric co-ops throughout Illinois.

While on the job, EnerStar employees are the "eyes and ears" of the community, and they always stand ready to assist in emergencies.

Our employees are in our five-county service area daily, and are always ready and willing

to help handle emergency situations as they arise. It's just one way we show concern for our community, one of the four Touchstone Energy® program's core values. We do it because we care.



Cooperative's New Energy Advisor Program



EnerStar's Energy Advisor Team

Brent Reyher

Telephone: (217) 466-7606 or
(800) 635-4145, extension 606
E-mail: breyher@enerstar.com

Tim Haddix

Telephone: (217) 466-7617 or
(800) 635-4145, extension 617
E-mail: thaddix@enerstar.com

In today's world, home comfort decisions can be quite complex. Advances in heating and cooling technologies, improved home construction techniques and new building materials can be confusing. More information is available to the homeowner than ever before.

That is why EnerStar Power recently "introduced" Tim Haddix and Brent Reyher as the cooperative's new Energy Advisors. They are not new employees by any means. Haddix, who began his career at EnerStar in 1989, and Reyher, who has been employed since 1997, received additional training through Wabash Power to develop a better understanding of the needs of today's members. They can help homeowners sort it all out.

As Energy Advisors, they are not selling specific products; just providing information. The two will simply give you the best advice they can with the information you give them. Their advice can greatly assist you in planning your building or remodeling

project and dealing with contractors.

Some questions you might consider:

- What is geothermal heating and cooling and is it right for me?
- Is an electric water heater really more energy efficient than a gas or propane-fired unit, especially with the spiraling cost of propane?
- How can I make my home more energy efficient?
- Are the new high performance heat pumps now a viable option?
- How stable is the cost of electricity versus other fuel options?

Information from the Energy Advisors is free, of course. They may not have all the answers, but can generally help you get started on your decision process. So if you are planning a new project, call EnerStar's Energy Advisors and let them act as your trusted resource with honest, straightforward solutions to your energy questions and concerns.

*We have advice when you want it,
help when you need it.*

EnerStar Urges Members To Generate Safely During Outages

As consumer reliance on electricity has increased, tolerance for power outages has declined. To combat the havoc wreaked by ice storms, thunderstorms, high winds, and even small animals and vehicle accidents, many homeowners turn to portable electric generators.

"Portable electric generators are a good source of power for heat, light, refrigeration, and cooking during electrical outages. But, if generators are improperly installed or operated, they can become deadly," noted EnerStar's Brent Reyher. "Every year across the country, people have been killed needlessly in accidents that involve portable electric generators. Safety awareness can prevent those deaths."

EnerStar recommends following these portable electric generator safety precautions to avoid dangerous situations.

- Keep children away from por-

table generators at all times.

- NEVER operate the generator in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces, including homes, garages, and basements. Generators produce high levels of carbon monoxide, which is a colorless, odorless, deadly gas.
- Keep the generator dry. To protect it from moisture, operate on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure.
- Do not connect your generator directly to your household wiring, as this can backfeed along the power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including EnerStar's linemen making repairs.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator. Or, use a heavy-duty outdoor-rated extension cord that is rated in watts or amps at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads.
- Make sure the generator is properly grounded.
- Do not overload the generator. A

portable generator should be used only when necessary, and only to power essential equipment or appliances.

- Make sure fuel for the generator is stored safely, away from living areas, in properly labeled containers, and away from fuel-burning appliances. Before re-fueling, always turn the generator off and let it cool down.
- Turn off all appliances powered by the generator before shutting down the generator.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance.

"Following these safety precautions can help keep you, your family, and our employees safe," concluded Reyher.

If a more permanent installation is desired, contact EnerStar's Brent Reyher at (217) 466-7606 or Tim Haddix at (217) 466-7617 for more information on how to properly install your generator.

JAKE'S Outing – Just around the corner

If you're looking for a unique way to spend the day with your children and bust some of their boredom away, then all you need to do is head to the Wilson family farm for the 4th Annual JAKE'S Outing.

Sponsored by the Edgar County Longbeards, a chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, this outreach program is a fun way to get youth excited about outdoor sports and conservation with a variety of outdoor activities. JAKES stands for Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship.

At this year's event on Saturday, August 27, children ages 17 and younger will learn basic outdoor skills as well as how to be responsible in the outdoors through a variety of hand-on activities. It is a great opportunity to teach children the value of our natural resources and the importance of conservation.

Activities for the local outing include fishing, skeet/trap shooting with a shotgun, target shooting with a rifle, and archery. Simple survival skills and first aide training are also available. The Wildlife Education trainer, Dale Warren, local conservation officer with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, will be on hand to allow the children to feel tanned pelts and see several trophy animals.

Hundreds of JAKES events are held across the nation each year and reach thousands of kids. Area residents are encouraged to watch the local news media for further information. It is definitely worth the trip!

Event Information:

Saturday, August 27, 2005

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Dale Wilson farm in southern Edgar County - 2939 Preston Street, Paris
Two ways to get there – either way, watch for signs to direct you

Option #1: From Paris, go south on the Preston Road about 6 miles to site

Option #2: From Route 1, turn west on 300th North Road, travel about 1/2 miles to Preston Street



Frog and tadpole catching was an "unofficial" activity that the children enjoyed.



Morrie Heelen assists a budding archer, Janelle Griffin, in the finer points of bow shooting.



There's nothing like relaxing on the side of a pond.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F



When Household Appliances Wear Out Their Welcome

Safety and environmental considerations must be taken into account when disposing of old electrical household appliances, according to the experts at Safe Electricity. Computers, televisions, stereos, refrigerators, water heaters, and many other smaller electrical appliances are wonderful life-enhancing conveniences, but when the time comes to replace and dispose of them, they can become a dangerous nuisance and hazard if not discarded properly.

"Unfortunately, many second-hand unsafe appliances wind up in other people's homes as electrical shock or fire hazards," says Safe Electricity Executive Director Molly Hall, "or they are illegally dumped in ditches, back alleys, vacant lots, or other places where they become serious safety and environmental hazards.

"Safe Electricity warns people to never attempt to use a malfunctioning or previously discarded electric appliance, and to beware of old appliances sold in flea markets and garage sales. "Such appliances may pose a fire or electrocution hazard, and may be no 'bargain' in the long run," cautions Hall.

"Managing the safe disposal of the vast amount of electrical ap-

pliances that wear out, become obsolete, or are damaged can be a challenge," says Hall, "but there are safe disposal alternatives."

Take advantage of local recycling opportunities. Before throwing away electronics, check on programs such as those that collect and repair unwanted phones and computers for contribution to charitable organizations and schools. Many communities sponsor collection events that accept electronic appliances. However, be aware that stringent state and federal laws now govern the disposal of many electrical appliances. Most electronics have parts that contain hazardous materials, such as lead, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, PCBs, and Freon. In most states, landfills can no longer accept certain appliances unless banned materials and components are first removed. Safe Electricity offers these guidelines for safe appliance disposal:

- Have a qualified professional remove Freon, PCBs and mercury switches from old appliances. For assistance, contact your local public works department or appliance service provider.
- After removal of unsafe materials and components, arrange to have

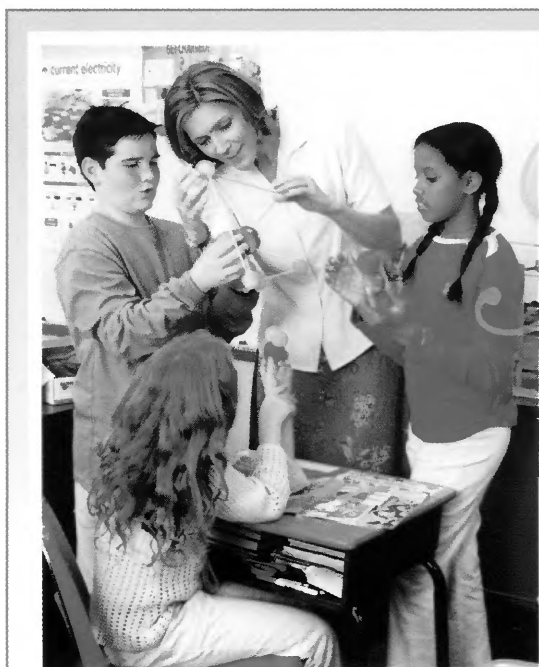
the old appliance taken to a scrap yard where the metal can be salvaged for recycling. High steel prices have made old appliances attractive to scrap dealers.

- Never leave or store an unused or damaged appliance in an open, unsecured area. Discarded appliances are a safety hazard, especially for children. In addition, discarded appliances may provide shelter or a breeding place for vermin.
- Before disposal, remove electrical cords from damaged items so they can't be recycled or reused by someone else.
- If larger household items, such as washers, dryers, stoves, and refrigerators, need to be replaced, have the dealer remove the old appliance.

"Don't keep old inefficient appliances that are costly to operate and will pose a future disposal problem," says Hall. "Replace old, worn appliances with new, high-efficiency models, and make certain that all new electrical equipment you purchase is safety-tested and bears the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) label," says Hall.

For more information on electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

Source: Safe Electricity



Get Charged!

The kids will soon be heading back to school, and we would like to shine a little light in your science classroom this year. Contact us to receive a Discovery Channel "Get Charged! Electricity and You" interactive electricity curriculum kit for middle school students. It's just one way we're showing that electric cooperatives are about more than just kilowatt hours and meters. We're the power of human connections.

For more information about the kits, log on to www.touchstoneenergy.coop, and double click on the Discovery Channel logo.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

HomePage

www.enerstar.com

What's Inside

Why We Reach Out to You
..... 16d

The cooperative difference

Employee Spotlight . . 16e

Meet Greg Hollingsworth,
Assistant Superintendent/
Maintenance Foreman

**Farm Electrical Safety is
Never Out of Season.** . 16f

Tips to stay safe this harvest
season

**Operate Computers
Efficiently**16g

Five ways to reduce your
computer's energy usage

Area Festivals 16h

Visit the Paris Honeybee
Festival and the Casey
Popcorn Festival this month



Dale Haymaker proudly sits on his Dad's 1955 WD-45, the first Allis-Chalmers tractor his family used.

A Passion for Orange *Allis-Chalmers Museum is hidden treasure in Paris*

About seven miles east of Paris sits a farmhouse flanked by steel buildings and surrounded by fields. It's a common sight in our part of the world. But what lies within those unassuming steel buildings is anything but common. It's the largest general collection of Allis-Chalmers items in the country, according to owner Dale Haymaker. "There's people who have more tractors, machinery, toys, literature, or small stuff, but I've got a pretty good collection of all of it because I didn't specialize in something," he says.

Dale turned his collection into the Allis-Chalmers Museum so he could share his passion with others. Visitors

begin their tour inside a replica of a 1950s Allis-Chalmers dealership, complete with operators' manuals, advertisements, parts, apparel, dealer gifts, purchasing gifts, and much more. "I didn't know Allis-Chalmers made as much stuff as they did," says Dale. "I didn't know they made refrigerators, but I have two." Many visitors are also surprised to see chain saws, mini bikes, a snow blower, tillers, welders, a power washer, generators, and an all terrain vehicle called a Terratiger. Also inside this building are the lawnmowers, something more familiar to many Allis-Chalmers fans. "I have all the models of

■ *continued on page 16b*



This 1950s Allis-Chalmers dealership replication is the first thing Visitors experience when they visit the museum. It features a little bit of everything that dealers sold and used throughout the lifetime of Allis-Chalmers.

■ continued from page 16a

lawn mowers since they began making them in 1961. I still mow my yard with the 900 series, which was made in the 1970s," says Dale.

Dale's favorite piece in the dealership is a clock hanging behind the counter. "That came out of the dealership in Paris where Dad bought his first Allis-Chalmers tractor. I gave \$600 for it and my wife had a fit I spent that on a clock, but just a short time later I saw it on eBay for \$1,200," says Dale with a smile.

Once visitors have toured the dealership and lawnmowers, they move onto the next building, housing another part of Dale's passion – toys. "I have every one of the pedal tractors made, and three custom made ones," he says. Surrounding the small orange tractors are shelves of more than 100 replica toys, both old and new. It would certainly be a young farm boy's

ultimate toy store.

Moving on from there, visitors are met with a sea of orange as they come to the next building where the tractors are stationed. But the first few tractors aren't the famous Allis-Chalmers orange, the hues known as Persian 1 and Persian 2. The first few tractors made were green. Dale says there are two stories explaining why Allis-Chalmers changed to orange. One is that when the company partnered with United Tractor Company, who made an orange Fordson, they just kept the color. The other story is Dale's favorite. In 1929, the CEO of the company went to California on vacation and fell in love with the orange poppies growing there.

Dale has the very first farm



tractor Allis-Chalmers ever made, back in 1914. It was a Model 10-18, built from 1914-1923. It featured a horizontally opposed two-cylinder engine with 5.25 inch bore and 7.00 inch stroke, a one-piece cast steel frame, one gear forward and one reverse, and was rated at 720 r.p.m with a 303 cubic engine displacement. No one knows how many were originally built, but only 12 are known to be in existence today.

Dale has a wealth of knowledge about all 63 tractors currently in his building, each featuring a card on the front touting all the specifics. He has each model of tractor made through the A series. Starting with the U series, all the models feature variations. Then is the WD series, the 45, the B, C and D series. He has most of them all.

He has a 1944 model M-7 snow tractor that was made for the army in late 1944 for use in World War II. The vehicle features tracks and skis so it

EnerStar Mission statement

EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability, and commitment to our community.

could be used to rescue down pilots and take supplies in snow country. Only 291 were made. Allis-Chalmers also made tanks, but that's one thing Dale hasn't added to his collection.

He has several special tractors, two of which are model B tractors from 1940, the asparagus and potato specials. They all have slight variations to make them applicable to particular needs. He also has a special set of two-way plows, and other unique equipment as well as more than 80 pieces of machinery.

But his favorite tractor is the one that started it all for him, a 1955 WD-45. Dale's father James F. Haymaker bought the tractor on May 3, 1955, Dale even has the canceled check to Ace Implement Co. from the purchase. James paid \$2,000 for the tractor and a 3-14 snap-coupler plow. Dale knows the tractor was built between 1953 and 1957, and included a 226 cubic inch engine that replaced the WD 201 cubic inch engine. "I've spent more time and money on that tractor than I have on any of them. We used and abused that tractor over the years and I went through everything on it. It's probably in as good a shape now as it ever was," says Dale.

His next tractor he's scheduled to restore is the first tractor that sold out of the dealership in Paris where his dad bought the tractor. "I had to have it," he says. "I'll start on it later this fall. I try to get two to four tractors done each year but so far this year I've done four tractors and one piece of equipment, so I've already reached my goal."

But how does a man grow such a passion? "We farmed Allis-Chalmers machinery since 1955. In April 1995, my Dad bought a dealership in Indiana. He died in October 1995, six months after he bought it. My sister and brother-in-law took it over and ran it, but they closed it down four or five years ago," says Dale. So Allis-Chalmers is a family affair. And once Dale began restoring his father's tractor, he just couldn't stop. "This hobby has sent me to 25 states and put pretty close to 50,000 miles on my truck," he says.

But Dale says he's certainly not the only one passionate about Allis-Chalmers. Shows pop up all over the country saluting the tractors and a magazine called the Old Allis News, which has featured Dale several times,



Sixteen original and three custom-made pedal tractors join hundreds of smaller toys in this part of the museum. A sign stating "Dale's Hopes and Dreams" was put up on the building as a jest from Dale's wife.



This 1914 Model 10-18 is the first farm tractor ever built by Allis-Chalmers. The orange color didn't appear until later. This is one of only 12 known to exist today.

puts on a Gathering of the Orange twice a year. Dale no longer brings his tractors, but enjoys attending and searching for new models he doesn't yet have. But he's had to stop looking online for new finds. "I was spending money every week on things I couldn't live without on eBay, so I had to start pacing myself," he laughs.

But rest assured Dale will continue acquiring more pieces, and restoring pieces, as long as he is able. Give him a call and come out to see for yourself the little slice of history that Dale has gathered.

ALLIS-CHALMERS MUSEUM

Dale J. Haymaker

9688 N 2200th St, Paris, IL
(217) 275-3428

Go east on U.S. Hwy 150 out of Paris about 7 miles. Turn north on 2200th Street (look for sign) and go ½ mile to Museum on east side of road. Please call for an appointment.



Why We Reach Out to You

If you're reading this message, you are likely to be a member of EnerStar Power. As a member, you, along with other members, own the cooperative. Are you aware of the special benefits and advantages as a member-owner?

Recent research by Touchstone Energy®, the national network of more than 600 local electric cooperatives, of which EnerStar belongs, indicates that when as members, you realize you are more than just a customer, that it is meaningful to you. The research also indicates that when you identify with cooperative membership so well that you refer to yourself as a member, you report the greatest level of consumer satisfaction.

The principles that guide electric cooperatives call for us to educate and inform our members about the cooperative way of doing business so that you can contribute effectively to your cooperative's development. Cooperatives use a variety of ways to educate and inform members about the cooperative difference.

This difference includes having a board of directors who are members themselves and serve as the trustees of the members' business. Directors are elected by the membership during an Annual Meeting of Members.

The cooperative difference also is a commitment to provide highly reliable electric service. That means EnerStar invests in the latest technology to ensure reliability and provide you with the highest level of service.

As local, private businesses, owned by those we serve, cooperatives have a higher degree of care and concern for our local communities. Supporting education, health care, economic development, and other



areas that contribute to quality of life is an important mission of every cooperative.

And the list goes on. Reaching consumers of various ages and backgrounds to educate, inform, and train is a challenge in today's environment of information overload. Reaching younger members is an even greater challenge. This is why cooperatives use a variety of communication tools.

Magazines like this one with a local insert are one way we reach out to members and the research shows most of you read them. EnerStar has also updated its Web site, where members can learn more about the cooperative or provide feedback online.

Cooperatives also are reaching younger generations through programs like the 4th Grade Safety Expo held each spring and by offering scholarships through the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. The national Rural Electric Youth Tour also provides students the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., where they learn about

how government works and also about the cooperative form of business.

Some people ask why cooperatives make such efforts to communicate with members when we "don't have to." They reason electric utilities operate in a regulated industry where our consumers are assigned to us. The answer is quite simple. Cooperatives are different from other businesses because consumers we serve own us. Instead of answering to stockholders in some faraway city, cooperatives are accountable to our "stakeholders." These are our members: the individuals and businesses in the communities served by the cooperative.

And while Touchstone Energy's research reveals that consumer satisfaction scores for electric cooperatives exceed utility industry averages, cooperatives understand their responsibility to continue communicating with our members. That is why you will continue to hear from us in this publication, on our Web site, and through many other programs and avenues to reach you. It's the cooperative way!

Linemen are Part of Our Electric Cooperative



Our linemen have a special level of devotion to the communities we serve. They live in those same communities, attending the same churches, sending their children to the same schools, and participating in the same local events.

That is why our linemen go above and beyond the call of duty. They are committed to you, their neighbors and friends, and in serving you the most reliable, safety power available.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Blinking Digital Clocks and Trimming Trees

An annoying way of indicating the system is working properly!

“Ugh! My clocks are flashing again! We must have had another power outage!”

Coming home to a flashing digital clock is an annoyance at best. It is a telltale sign that your power has been interrupted, even if for only less than a second. It is hard to believe that this annoyance is an indication that the electrical system is working properly.

It may be a small consolation, but it is highly likely that the power “outage” lasted only as long as it takes a tree limb to touch a power line while swaying in the breeze. That is why most electric utilities, including EnerStar Power, have an aggressive tree-trimming program.

But back to lights blinking; as stated this is an indication that the cooperative’s equipment is operating properly. If a fault or short circuit happens on a power line, a device called an oil-circuit recloser (OCR) opens to stop it, then quickly closes back in. Although the process is quick – and usually temporary – it may cause your lights to blink, making it necessary to reset digital clocks and appliances with digital displays.

The OCR is essentially a breaker, functioning much like a breaker in the



electrical panel in your home. It permits power to continue flowing through the line with only a brief interruption of service – rather than causing an extended power outage. If the short circuit continues, the OCR will operate or “trip” three times before eventually stopping the flow of electricity and causing a power outage. This process protects the lines from damage, cutting off power to the affected section of the line and isolating the problem until it can be repaired.

Although the weather and nature’s creatures are beyond our control, you

can lessen the effects and inconvenience of “blinks” when they occur. When purchasing small appliances and digital clocks, consider a model with battery backup. And don’t forget to check the battery regularly.

You may also want to install meter-base surge protection for the major appliances in your home and surge protection with built-in uninterrupted power supply (UPS) for your computer or other electronic devices whose “memory” would be lost with a power interruption.

Co-op News

Employee Spotlight



Greg Hollingsworth

*Assistant Superintendent/
Maintenance Foreman*

Greg Hollingsworth, EnerStar’s Assistant Superintendent/Maintenance Foreman, has been on the job since 1988. His job duties include overseeing daily maintenance on EnerStar’s electric system. It can mean anything from tree trimming to adjusting electronic circuitry on a substation regulator. “With the technology that exists now, everything is moving towards total automation. The substations are much more sophisticated and computer skills are becoming increasingly important in the electric world.”

Greg graduated from Paris High School in 1985. A Journeyman Lineman since 1993, he worked through a four-step apprenticeship while on the job at EnerStar. Besides his on the job training, he has attended many additional “cooperative classes” like safety, technical, and leadership classes throughout his career at EnerStar.

Greg is very involved in the community and volunteers much of

his time. His volunteer work might be work-related like repairing ball diamond lights or personal like coaching his son’s bitty basketball team. He has been involved in organizing several “motorcycle poker runs” which benefit organizations like the Edgar County Cancer Support Group, *Do It!* He has also served as past chairman of the Sugar Creek Chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. In his free time, Greg loves to ride his Harley Davidson Roadglide along the countryside, and hunt for the likes of deer, turkey, and elk.

Greg is an EnerStar member as well as an employee. When asked what Greg thought was important for members to understand about EnerStar Power, he said ownership was the key. “Everything we do at the cooperative is with the interest of the membership in mind. Our decisions are based on how will this benefit the membership.”

Greg and his wife Jami live in Paris with their son Cole.



Farm Electrical Safety Is Never Out Of Season

The risk of electrocution remains one of the greatest hazards on today's farms. Before heading back into the fields this fall, Safe Electricity and EnerStar Power remind farm workers to be particularly alert to dangers working near overhead power lines, and urges review of work practices that take place around all electric lines.

"Educate all who work on the farm about power line hazards," says Molly Hall, Executive Director of Safe Electricity. "Make sure everyone knows the location of overhead power lines and remind workers to keep farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them. Keep in mind, the minimum 10 foot distance is a 360-degree rule – below, to the side and above lines." Simply coming too close to a power line while working is dangerous as electricity can arc or "jump" to conducting material or objects, such as a ladder, pole or a truck.

"Many farm electrical accidents involving power lines occur when loading or preparing to transport equipment to fields, or while working on farm machinery near power lines," notes Tim Haddix, EnerStar's System Engineer. "Sometimes a power line is closer than it looks. When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter to help ensure that contact is not made with a line."

Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Also avoid raising the arms of planters, cultivators or truck beds near power lines. Be aware that many tractors are now equipped with radios and communications systems that have antennas extending from the cab to 15 feet above the ground that could make contact with power lines.

When performing other farm chores, as in any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles, or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes, and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness and dirt contamination. Do not try to



clear storm-damage debris and limbs near or touching power lines or near fallen lines.

The overhead electric wires aren't the only electrical contact that can result in a serious incident. Pole guy wires are grounded to the neutral; but, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can cause an electric current disruption. This can make neutral wires anything but harmless. Haddix emphasizes that if you hit a guy wire and break it; call EnerStar to report the problem. "Don't fix it yourself. When dealing with electrical poles and wires, always contact us," Haddix emphasized.

"Operators of farm machinery or moving equipment also should know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line," Haddix said. "It's almost always best to stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives to disconnect power."

"If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground and electrocution is the result," Haddix said. "Even if a power line has landed on the ground, there is still the potential for the area nearby to be energized. Stay inside the vehicle unless there is fire or imminent risk of fire."

In that case, the proper action is to jump – not step – with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground

at the same time. Continue to shuffle or hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Many electrocutions occur when the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment.

Farmers may want to consider moving or burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways where many farm activities take place. "If planning a new out building or farm structure, contact EnerStar in advance for information on minimum safe clearances from overhead and underground power lines," added Haddix.

Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including electric cooperatives, educators and other entities committed to promoting electrical safety.

Office Closing



EnerStar will be closed on Monday, September 5 in observance of Labor Day.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F

**THIS IS THE GOOD LIFE.
IT DESERVES FASTER INTERNET.**



WILDBLUE
REACHES YOU WildBlue Satellite Speed Internet connects almost any computer in the U.S. at lightning-fast speeds for as little as \$49.95 per month. Surf up to 30 times faster than dial-up. No more dial-up delays waiting to be connected. No more wondering if high-speed Internet will ever arrive in your town or neighborhood. There's a great big WildBlue world out there. Get connected the way you've always wanted to: fast!



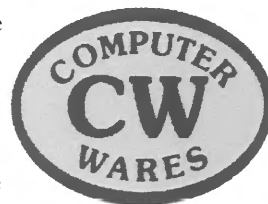
www.comwares.net
(217) 465-5233



Not available in all areas. Requires a clear view of the southern sky. Downstream speed comparison between Pro Pak and 42Kbps dial-up. Value Pak is up to 10x faster than dial-up. Speeds are not guaranteed. Usage subject to WildBlue's Fair Access Policy. Monthly fees refer to Value Pak. Equipment and installation charges, taxes and minimum term commitments also apply. Prices subject to change. ©2004 WildBlue Communications, Inc.

Operate Computers Efficiently

If you have a home computer, your family may spend hours a day doing homework, checking e-mail, or surfing the



Web. Although computer equipment uses less electrical energy than many other home appliances, there are a few things you can do to reduce your computer's electrical consumption.

Most types of computers use similar amounts of electricity, but monitors vary in their consumption depending on their size, with small screens using less. Compare the consumption figures of competing equipment when you purchase your next computer equipment and be sure to look for the Energy Star® logo. This is your assurance that your computer will use the minimum power necessary.

Follow these tips to reduce the energy consumption and operating cost of your computer equipment:

- Activate your computer's sleep setting. This shuts down your computer and monitor after any period of inactivity. This is the single most important step you can take to reduce consumption, since most equipment uses almost no power during sleep.
- If your printer does not automatically sleep between jobs, shut it off manually when you are not using it.
- Do not print any more documents that you need to, since printers use electricity, paper and ink or toner. Try reading documents on screen and saving them to electronic files instead of printing and filing unimportant documents.
- If you need to send documents to someone, send an e-mail. It is quicker, it saves energy and does not require postage.
- For more information on energy saving computer equipment, visit www.energystar.gov.

Source: John Krigger, Saturn Resource Management (www.srmi.biz)



Paris Honeybee Festival – Paris, Illinois September 23-25, 2005 in Paris

Things will be buzzing in Paris as the Paris Honeybee Antique Association (PHAA) and the Kiwanis Clubs of Paris host the Paris Honeybee Festival. In its 25th year, the event will be held September 23-25, 2005, in Paris. All Antique Association activities are located at the Edgar County Fairgrounds while the Kiwanis clubs host the downtown events.

Throughout the weekend, the Antique Association offers an array of activities. As always, antiques, collectibles, and craft vendors will be available. The crowd-favorite chainsaw carvers will be on hand and there will be a basket weaver from the Longaberger Basket Company. There will be a flea market, an auction, and many demonstrations along with gas

engines, steam engines, and antique farm machinery. There are many new children's activities and games, some with old fashioned themes.

The fairgrounds are packed with activities for young and old, at minimal fees for some entertaining fun!

The Kiwanis Clubs of Paris strive to provide something downtown for everyone. Entertainment abounds with Karaoke on Thursday night and a variety of music on Friday and Saturday night. A good old-fashioned gospel sing will be held on Sunday morning.

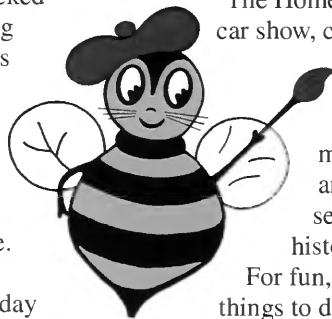
On the north side of the square, pancakes and sausage are served by the Paris Noon Kiwanis on Friday

and Saturday. On Friday night, the Pancake tent is home to a cash bingo game followed by a teen street dance.

The Homecoming parade, a car show, children's games, sidewalk sales, food and craft vendors, and much more line the streets and offer an exciting selection on the historic courthouse lawn.

For fun, food, and lots of neat things to do with the family, buzz over to Paris for the 25th Annual Honeybee Festival.

For more information as well as a printable schedule of events please check the Honeybee Festival Web site at www.honeybeefestival.com.



Casey Popcorn Festival–Casey, Illinois Labor Day Weekend

This Labor Day weekend, if your family is looking for something fun to do, take the short drive to Casey to attend the Annual Casey Popcorn Festival!

The children can enjoy kiddie carnival rides, games, and shows that will have them singing and dancing. There will be a great variety of craft vendors and premiere musical stage shows, along with a car show and even some karaoke. There are plenty of yummy food booths but more importantly, all the FREE popcorn you can eat!

EnerStar Power, along with several other electric utilities, will be sponsoring Kyle Finley's Live Line Demo showings. The demo shows how electricity moves through wires, and what happens when a kite hits a power line or a truck backs in to a utility pole. The Live Line Display contains 7,200 volts of electricity and is constructed with the same poles, transformers, and line hardware used by EnerStar



Power. Finley uses props such as fake squirrel and bird, a hot dog, and a balloon to show the effects of electricity in this fun but educational program. Check the schedule for show times.

The friendly citizens of Casey,

Illinois invite you to attend the Annual Casey Popcorn Festival and enjoy Fairview Park, the perfect setting for all of the family-oriented entertainment. For detailed information regarding the festival visit www.popcornfestival.net.

HomePage

www.enerstar.com

What's Inside

Assisting Hurricane Victims.....16c

EnerStar donates phone cards, and linemen aid in power restoration.

Co-op News..... 16d

EnerStar donates to Coalition Against Methamphetamine Abuse.

Deposit Procedures Strengthened.....16e

Revised meter deposit policy and credit worthiness procedures.

Employee Spotlight .. 16f

Meet Office Manager Jane Brazelton.

Do Phantom Loads Haunt Your Home?16g

Learn how to eliminate energy wasting.

Fire Prevention Month16cg

Tips to protect your family.

Kids Love Halloween! 16h

Ways to keep your kids safe this Halloween.



Llamas on the Prairie

In Oakland, amidst all the corn and soybean fields is an unusual farm. A log cabin basks in the sun. The surrounding fields are fenced for livestock. The barn is filled with hay. A barn cat patrols the barn while her kittens play in the sun. But instead of cows grazing in the fields, you'll find llamas.

Ulin and Debbie Andrews' farm,

Log Cabin Llamas, is home to 37 llamas, many award winners. The Andrews show the llamas at Alpaca and Llama Show Association shows all over the country. They have so many ribbons and awards crowding the walls and shelves of their home that they have started piling them on the floor in

continued on page 16b



an out-of-the-way corner.

Debbie will point out her favorite award, a 2003 Best of Show in North Carolina. "This is really hard to win. And I raised the llama that won that. He was one of my favorites," she says.

Debbie says she and her husband Ulin started working with llamas at a friend's farm in Arcola and fell in love with them. She bought her first llama, Sombrero, in 1996. "We were at a fair in Peoria, and I saw this gorgeous red and white male. I bought him and brought him home," she says. She had him gelded and started showing him that same year.

But, she explains, llamas are addicting. "They're like potato chips. You can't have just one." So she bought a second llama and then, for an anniversary gift, Ulin bought Debbie her first female and soon they were breeding and selling.

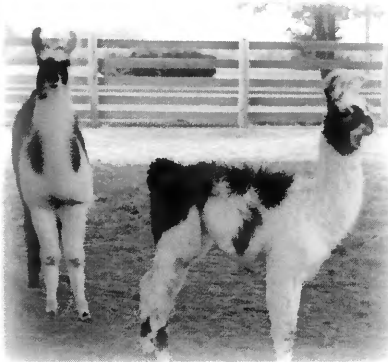
The Andrews compete in 30 to 35 shows a year. There are three divisions of llamas in the shows - light, medium, and heavy wool. They show in all divisions.

The Alpaca and Llama Show Association has several awards a llama can win. The Recognition of Merit is awarded when a llama accumulates 25 points in any number of shows. In each show there is the National Grand Award and the Reserve Award. And then there is the Halter Champion. "The Halter Championship is awarded to llamas that have won four Grands under at least three different judges or three Grands and two Reserves under at least three different judges," says Ulin. "So to us the Halter Championship means so much."

Showing the llamas has been a wonderful experience for the Andrews, but the llamas did pose some challenges since they are still unusual in this area. For example, their veterinarian was unfamiliar with them. "Vets don't know a whole lot about a llama, and they'll tell you that," says Debbie. But Ulin adds that llamas are not high maintenance. "They need good care. They need to be wormed. You need to trim the hooks on their toes," he says. But they are hardy and as far as breeding, "Unless there is a problem, we just let nature take its course."



Ulin and Debbie Andrews bring out just one of their llamas on their farm, Log Cabin Llamas.



The llamas also must have their wool shorn. As natives of the Andean Mountains and highlands of Peru their wool grows very thick. The llamas can easily become overheated in the heat of Midwestern summer days.

The llama wool is very soft and highly prized for yarn and weaving. In fact, Debbie is looking forward to a shipment of yarn made from her llama's wool that she says she will crochet this winter. She says she also has some wool being made into rugs and blankets for her home.

Besides being shown, llamas can be used as pack, cart, or guard animals. They can carry about 60 pounds as a pack animal, according

to Debbie, and she says they can pull two people in a cart. Ulin and Debbie also explain that older female llamas make especially good guard animals for small livestock like sheep or goats. "They'll go after a canine if it gets in their pen. They're protective of the other animals," says Ulin.

Llamas are also used for working with disabled children. The Andrews donated a llama to a handicapped children's camp in Texas. Ulin says, "I'd always heard that they were good with handicapped children, and it's true. They do bond. We gave a llama to a little autistic girl. She can do things with that llama that her parents can't."

The Andrews are passionate about llamas. They shower their llamas with care and attention. They want others to love the animals as much as they do. "I just hate them using a llama in a petting zoo because they're all... nasty," says Ulin. "They've probably never been brushed," says Debbie. And that's not the impression of llamas they want to share.

For information about Log Cabin Llamas, contact Ulin and Debbie Andrews at P.O. Box 1015, Oakland, IL 61943 or call (217) 346-2372.

All of us at EnerStar Power are deeply saddened by the loss and devastation resulting from Hurricane Katrina. This magazine was published just after the hurricane devastated the Gulf Coast. EnerStar Power was able to organize a Red Cross donation of phone cards and send linemen crews to the devastated area immediately. Below are summaries of press releases sent out September 1, 2005.

EnerStar Donates Phone Cards to Hurricane Victims

In an effort to assist Hurricane Katrina victims, EnerStar Power has donated approximately 150 telephone calling cards. The American Red Cross, through local efforts of the Edgar County Chapter, will distribute the cards directly to victims. Each card 30 minutes of free calling.

"Every little bit helps," said Jim Englum, the local chapter coordinator. "And we can get these cards directly to those in need. Once communications have been restored, they will be able to contact their families."

Linemen Help Alabama and Mississippi Victims

Linemen from EnerStar Power volunteered to aid Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana cooperatives in restoring power to members affected by the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

The first crew, consisting of Greg Hollingsworth and Troy Lewis, began working at Tombigbee Electric Cooperative in Guin, Alabama, and moved to Singing River Electric Cooperative. Singing River serves about 62,000 members in southeast Mississippi.

Keith Borchers and Kent Milbourn later traveled to this area to relieve the first crew. At this time, it is unknown how long EnerStar crews will be in the region.

The Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana cooperatives requested help through the

victims of Hurricane Katrina need all the assistance they can get. Monetary financial contributions enable the Red Cross to support the greatest needs in the most efficient manner. Cash can be used to purchase items in adjacent staging areas, and eliminate the added costs involved in transporting goods. If you would like to make a financial contribution, call the Red Cross at 1-800-HELP-NOW or visit www.redcross.org.

emergency work plan through the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. The association contacted EnerStar on August 29 and the volunteering linemen left for Mississippi the next day. Electric co-ops that receive assistance repay their counterparts who provide emergency assistance once service restoration has been completed.

"Cooperatives helping cooperatives is one of the core principles EnerStar operates under. Our employees who have volunteered to travel for an unknown length of time to help restore power to cooperative members of another state are living this principle," says Angela Griffin, EnerStar's Director of Marketing and Member Relations.



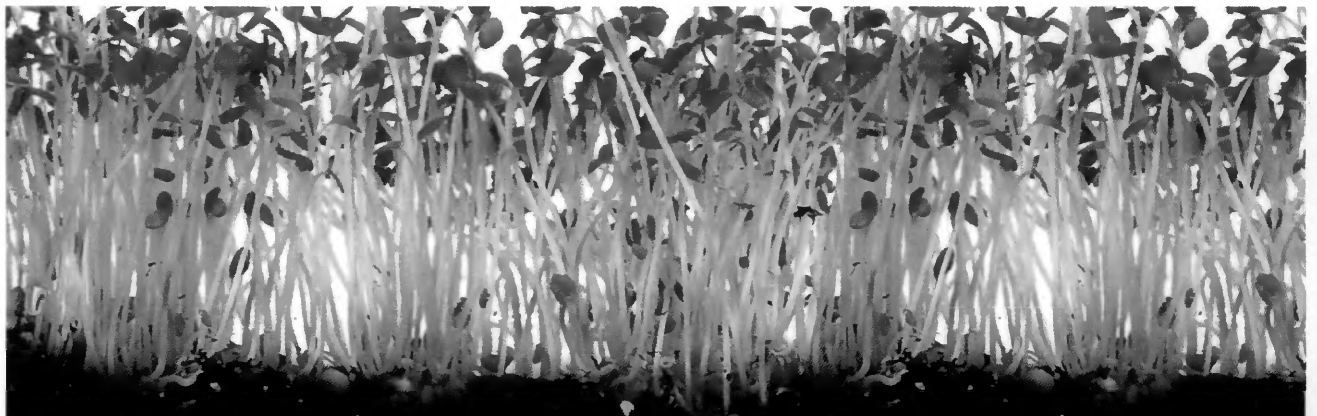
Photo by Jay Swindle





Co-op News

EnerStar's President/CEO Peter Kollinger (left) presents a donation to Carrie Miller (center) and Kristin Chittick (right) of the Coalition Against Methamphetamine Abuse. CAMA, whose efforts to reduce meth abuse have been recognized across Illinois, works diligently to fight meth use in Clark and Edgar counties. CAMA's recent fundraiser was attended by many governmental officials including State Representatives Roger Eddy and Chapin Rose, State Senator Dale Righter, and United States Representative Tim Johnson.



Lots of businesses talk about growing their communities. For cooperatives, it's not just talk. It's what we're all about.

We're owned by our members, and our mission is to serve and nurture them and the communities in which they live, work and shop.

We're in it for the long haul ... strengthening communities through jobs, service and community involvement.

Cooperatives.

Owned by Our Members,
Committed to Our Communities.



EnerStar's Deposit Procedures Strengthened

An article regarding meter deposits does not directly impact most members reading this column. A majority of our members, nearly 85 percent, have been with EnerStar for four or more years. In addition, a vast majority of EnerStar Power members pay on time. Therefore, the fact that EnerStar has strengthened its membership deposit policy does not directly affect most members, but indirectly it does.

When EnerStar has a large amount of bad debt left by people who have left the system without paying their final bill, it impacts the cooperative by increasing our expenses.

While not an overwhelming problem, it is an area of the business we continually monitor. And it is not just a problem at EnerStar. Electric cooperatives across Illinois are responding to this situation. EnerStar Power, like these other electric cooperatives, has revisited the meter deposit policy and credit worthiness procedures in order to protect against unnecessary losses.

Q: Why is EnerStar strengthening its deposit language?

A: We have situations where past deposits were inadequate to offset final bills of "skip" accounts. Therefore, it is necessary to change the policy. We prefer not having to handle deposits, but that is not a reality.

Q: What is a skip account?

A: A skip account is when members vacate the premises and leave without paying their final electric bill.

Q: How does this affect good-paying customers?

A: Most EnerStar members are responsible and take their responsibility of paying their electric bill seriously. This new policy will not have any effect on those members. EnerStar works hard at collecting delinquent accounts, and we have



a relatively low bad debt write off; but we must also look into the future and take action to ensure it stays that way. If we can keep bad debts to a minimum, we can reduce our expenses.

Q: Who will be charged a higher deposit?

A: All new member applications are reviewed for credit worthiness. Their deposit is based on their credit history.

After November 1, 2005, existing cooperative members who are disconnected for non-payment will have their credit worthiness reviewed. Depending on the information obtained, they may be required to pay a higher deposit along with the past due amount and any service trip charges, prior to being reconnected.

Q: Is the deposit returned?

A: If the member shows a good payment record with EnerStar and has no delinquent payments for 12 months, then the member may

request a review of his/her credit history. Upon a satisfactory review, the member's deposit will be adjusted accordingly. Otherwise, the deposit is returned at the time the service is disconnected.

Q: Do you work with members having difficulty paying?

A: We do indeed, but the member must be responsible enough to call or come in to the office to make payment arrangements. Once payment arrangements are agreed upon, the member must follow through on the commitment or else be subject to disconnect of service.

Q: Do you do credit checks on all new customers?

A: Yes, all new member applications at EnerStar will be subject to a credit check.

Q: Is it fair?

A: Absolutely! We work hard to protect our total membership. And the vast majority of members are responsible payers.



Co-op News

Employee Spotlight



Jane Brazelton

Jane Brazelton, EnerStar's Office Manager, does not qualify for "senior discounts" yet, but she is considered one of the "senior employees" at the cooperative. She began her employment at the cooperative in 1970. She took two years off, returning in 1982, and has been going strong ever since.

A graduate of Kansas High School, Jane's job duties include supervising the billing department and performing accounts payable and many accounting functions. She has attended many conferences and training relating directly to the electric cooperative.

Besides her training, Jane is very familiar with the cooperative way of life. Many of her family members live on the cooperative electric lines. She and her husband, Ivan, were EnerStar members for more than 15 years prior to moving to the Chrisman area. In her free time away from the cooperative, Jane's main hobby is spoiling her grandchildren!

During her tenure, Jane has witnessed many procedural changes at the cooperative. When she was first hired, she worked in the billing department. At that time, members read their own meters, figured their own bills, and then mailed in a payment. "The girls in billing" used an NCR posting machine, an addressograph machine for addresses, and used a mimeograph machine for forms.

"At that time, the cooperative only had two telephone lines that rang into the office on the cooperative's rotary phones - one public line for incoming calls and one private line for outgoing calls," said Jane.

After some time, Jane helped convert the billing system from a

manual system to an computerized system. All of Edgar Electric's billing records, as the cooperative was known back then, were transferred to Central Area Data Processing (CADP). CADP is a cooperative created entirely to benefit electric and telephone cooperatives across the nation. Today, CADP, later renamed National Information Systems Cooperative, maintains most of the cooperative's records system including work orders, inventory, service orders, inventory, billing, accounting, and transportation systems. And Jane is involved in about every one of them.

Jane recalls how CADP processed the bills, printed them on a postcard, sent them back to the coop where they were sorted and mailed out to the members. "We used a Sycor machine by which data was processed on tape and then transmitted via telephone. The process was slow and before long, data was sent via satellite," Jane said. She recalls how everyone shared the cooperative's first computer.

In closing, Jane emphasized that it is important for members to understand that cooperative employees are open to thoughts and suggestions from the membership. "Since we are local, members can come into our office, pay their bills, sign up for service, or discuss a concern," Jane said.

Time to Reset Clocks and Change Smoke Alarm Batteries

You may be familiar with the yearly reminder to change your smoke alarm batteries when you set your clocks back to Central Standard Time. But there are several other steps to make sure your smoke detector is in good working order.

Taking the following steps after turning back your clocks on October 31 could help ensure your family's safety in the event of a fire:

- Replace smoke detectors that are more than 10 years old.
- Test smoke detectors to make sure alarms are working.
- A smoke detector alarm that goes off for no apparent reason could be reacting to dust buildup. Vacuum detectors periodically to remove cobwebs and dust.
- Change smoke detector batteries once a year.
- "Chirps" coming from a smoke detector mean batteries are running low.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F

Do Phantom Loads Haunt Your Home?

Many devices in your home consume electricity even when they appear to be off. These phantom energy wasters include instant-on TVs, microwave clocks, VCR displays, telephones, and computer peripherals. Phantom, or standby loads, add up to a huge waste of electricity in the United States that costs consumers more than a billion dollars per year and many billions of kilowatt-hours. The total phantom load in most American homes varies from 1.5 to 4 kilowatt-hours per day, or several dollars per month for most families.

One way you can eliminate phantom loads like TVs, stereos, VCRs, and computer externals like printers is by plugging them into a plug strip that is equipped with its own power switch. Simply switch the power strip on and off when you need to use the appliance. For appliances that have remote controls, this method will disable the unit's remote control until you turn the power on,

though it will operate normally after you turn the power on. Note also that any appliance that has a cube-shaped transformer on the end of its cord is creating a phantom load. That's why these transformers feel warm even when the device is off.

In July of 2001, President Bush signed an executive order directing federal agencies to buy appliances that

consume less than one watt of standby power. In doing so, the federal government hopes to stimulate manufacturers to produce appliances with minimal phantom loads. Consumers can benefit from these low-consumption appliances by always looking for the ENERGY STAR® label when buying appliances.

Typical Phantom Loads in U.S. Households

How Many	Type of Appliance	Phantom Load (Watts)	Consumption (Watt-hours per day)
1	Instant-on TV	28	672
1	Video Cassette Recorder	14	336
1	Microwave Oven with Clock	8	192
2	Wall Cube Power Supply	5	240
1	Stereo with Remote Control	8	192
1	Stove with Electronic Ignition	14	336
	Total	77	1968 watt hours (1.9 kilowatt hours)

Courtesy of Home Power Magazine www.homepower.com.

October is National Fire Prevention Month

Tips to Protect Your Home from Electrical Fire

During National Fire Prevention Month, Safe Electricity and EnerStar Power urge everyone to perform an electrical hazard check to help keep their homes and families safe from fires.

Fires are among the leading causes of accidental death in the United States today. Nationally, it is estimated that nearly one-third of residential fires are related to electrical distribution or appliances and equipment. These electrical fires cause hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries, and translate into more than a billion dollars in property damage each year.

Many avoidable fires can be traced to poor maintenance and misuse of electrical appliances and electric cords. Don't place cords underneath rugs and furniture and do not run cords behind baseboards, curtains, or in high-traffic areas. Damaged, abused, or worn extension cords can pose a major fire hazard.

Some suggested home appliance safety checks and measures to prevent shocks, burns, and fires include:

- If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet. Never remove the grounding pin or force it to fit into a two-slot outlet or extension cord.
- Replace any appliance or tool if it causes even small electrical shocks, overheats, shorts out, or gives off smoke or sparks.
- Do not use light bulbs with wattage that is too high for the fixture.
- To prevent overheating, allow air space around heat-producing appliances.
- Do not plug more than two home appliances into an outlet at one time.
- Do not exceed 1500 watts for each outlet or circuit. Cut down on appliances plugged into a circuit if the breaker trips or the fuse blows frequently.
- Check for loose wall receptacles, wires, and lighting fixtures. Immediately shut off, then have a qualified electrician replace light switches that



are hot to the touch and lights that spark and flicker.

- Install Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) outlets.
- Call a qualified electrician if your electrical system is overloaded. Dimming lights, slow-heating appliances, and frequently blown fuses are all signs.

For more fire prevention information, visit the Web site www.SafeElectricity.org.



Boo-tiful Lighting Safety Tips

Don't let electrical hazards haunt your house this Halloween. While decorating for fall festivities, Safe Electricity and EnerStar Power advises checking electric lights and decorations for potential dangers that could cause fires and injuries.

Before decorating indoors or outside this fall, take a moment to review safety tips to avoid risk of electric shock or fire:

- Use only lights that have been safety tested and approved by Underwriters Laboratory (UL).
- Make sure extension cords are in good condition. Use only UL-ap-

proved cords rated to carry the electrical load you will connect to them.

- Keep all flammable materials away from lights.
- Don't staple or nail through light strings or electrical cords
- Do not attach cords or lights to metal objects.
- Outdoors, use only lights and cords rated for outdoor use.
- Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don't have them.



- Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.

For more information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

KIDS LOVE HALLOWEEN!

They get to dress up and get free candy! What a perfect holiday! Give your kids some precious Halloween memories that they'll have for life.

Trick or treating isn't what it used to be. It's not as safe to let kids walk the streets alone. Send a responsible adult or older teenager with them.

A few safety tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission can protect children who plan to go trick-or-treating this Halloween.

Treats

Warn children not to eat any treats before an adult has carefully examined them for evidence of tampering.

Flame Resistant Costumes

When purchasing a costume, masks, beards, and wigs, look for the label Flame Resistant. Although this label does not mean these items won't catch fire, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly once removed from the ignition source. To minimize the risk of contact with candles or other sources of ignition, avoid costumes made with flimsy materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves or billowing skirts.

Costume Designs

- Purchase or make costumes that are light and bright enough to be clearly visible to motorists.
- For greater visibility during dusk and darkness, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that

will glow in the beam of a car's headlights. Bags or sacks should also be light colored or decorated with reflective tape. Reflective tape is usually available in hardware, bicycle, and sporting goods stores.

- To easily see and be seen, children should also carry flashlights.
- Costumes should be short enough to prevent children from tripping and falling.
- Children should wear well-fitting, sturdy shoes. Mother's high heels are not a good idea for safe walking.
- Hats and scarves should be tied securely to prevent them from slipping over children's eyes.
- Apply a natural mask of cosmetics rather than have a child wear a loose-fitting mask that might restrict breathing or obscure vision. If a mask is used, however, make sure it fits securely and has eyeholes large enough to allow full vision.
- Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be of soft and flexible material.

Pedestrian Safety

Young children should always be accompanied by an adult or an older, responsible child. All children should WALK, not run from house to house and use the sidewalk if available, rather than walk in the street. Children should be cautioned against running out from between parked cars, or across lawns and yards where ornaments, furniture, or



clotheslines present dangers.

Choosing Safe Houses

- Children should go only to homes where the residents are known and have outside lights on as a sign of welcome.
- Children should not enter homes or apartments unless they are accompanied by an adult.
- People expecting trick-or-treaters should remove anything that could be an obstacle from lawns, steps, and porches. Candlelit jack-o'-lanterns should be kept away from landings and doorsteps where costumes could brush against the flame. Indoor jack-o'-lanterns should be kept away from curtains, decorations, and other furnishings that could be ignited.

EnerStar[®] HomePage

A Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

www.enerstar.com

What's Inside

Electric Co-ops Rise to the Occasion in Times of Great Need 16c

Co-ops have more resources than even the biggest power companies when it comes to recovering from disasters.

Increased Power Cost Adjustment on Your Bill 16e

Learn why EnerStar must raise its PCA charge.

Employee Spotlight . . 16e

Meet Member Accounts Representative Kelly McCrocklin.

Myths About Thermostats 16f

How and when you should adjust your thermostat.

Updated EnerStar Web Site Launched 16g

Visit www.enerstar.com, your co-op's information warehouse.

EnerStar Offers Support to Reserve and Guard Units 16h

Active duty military service personnel may qualify for reduced bills.

Brocton Grandma Lends a Helping Hand



As this article is being written, the Gulf Coast is in a state of recovery just weeks after being ravaged by Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. It is hard to imagine the amount of resources needed to repair and rebuild the area. Americans across the country are extending a helping hand, whether that means writing a personal check or driving home a nail.

For Brocton grandma Helen Taylor, 84, helping others has always been a way of life. It is what keeps her young today. Taylor operates the House of Refuge Christian Outreach, just west of Brocton in an area where the county lines of Edgar, Coles, and Douglas meet.

Taylor's mission work actually began in Florida where she had moved to retire. "I accepted the Lord when I was 11 years old but in Florida is where I received the call to mission work," said Taylor. While in Florida, she helped feed the homeless and worked at a local pregnancy crisis center. "When people think of Florida, they think of the glitz and glamour of Disneyworld. But that is hardly the case," she said.

A car wreck involving her son was the reason she came back to Illinois. After deciding she did not want to return to Florida, she realized she wanted to start a mission in the area. "There

continued on page 16b



“In 2004 more than 2,047 families received food and soap from the House of Refuge.”

was such need here. So many people need a helping hand and a little compassion,” said Taylor.

She had sold the home place and its furnishings long before her return to Illinois but her son had an older home that Taylor knew she could fix up. “When I moved back, the house and barns looked hopeless. I never would have started all this if God didn’t point me in the direction,” said Taylor with a smile. It was Thanksgiving in 1983 when she opened the doors to the House of Refuge.

“In 2004, through the kindness of all in sharing, more than 2,047 families received food and soap from the House of Refuge. In addition, 239 children received necessary school supplies,” said Taylor. She often expresses her gratitude to those who help make it all possible.

Taylor also thanks everyone who gave to a toy drive for Christmas. “Through the love and sharing of others, we were blessed to give more than 850 gifts to Christmas from the mission,” said Taylor. She explained that some of the gifts were distributed by a prison ministry and were labeled to the child from the one incarcerated. “That brought joy and healing for both parties at the time of separation,” she said.

Taylor credits the help of loyal volunteers who assist her with the mission. “It is the faithful laborers who work without pay that help keep the mission doors open. The shelves are stocked with food and soap, the lawn is mowed, the garden is tended,



the repairs are made, and the book-keeping entries are entered. There is no end to the labor; may the Lord bless every one of them," wrote Taylor.

Knowing that many families are victims of disaster and medical or financial problems, Taylor is always ready to encourage them to seek education and never give up.

Taylor does not solicit donations or receive any governmental food subsidies on behalf of the House of Refuge. She said it is not necessary because God provides what she will need. "It seems when I am starting to

get low on funds or food, someone walks through the door with a donation," she said.

She emphasized that while mission work can be hard, it can be very rewarding as well. "Mission work is a very different line of work in that you may only help one person and you may never see them again," said Taylor. "Some people want to see instant results. You may never see the results of your work."

Taylor compared mission work to the ripples from throwing pebbles in a lazy summer pond. "The blessings

keep going, and going, and going. You never know where it may end and who knows, maybe that one blessing doesn't end. Only God knows for sure," said Taylor with the wisdom of a woman strong in her faith.

Anyone wishing to visit the House of Refuge Christian Outreach near Brocton may contact Helen Taylor for an appointment on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. by calling (217) 385-2423. The address is 405 N. 2560 E, Brocton, Illinois.

Electric Co-ops Rise to the Occasion in Times of Great Need

As we enter the season of Thanksgiving and other holiday celebrations, our electric cooperative colleagues in the South are still figuring the toll of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita's devastating blow to the Gulf Coast. During that horrendous time, we witnessed Mother Nature at its worst—and human nature at its best.

Nowhere was the spirit of giving, sacrifice, and cooperation more evident than in the community of electric cooperatives that responded to virtually unprecedented destruction.

They demonstrated what cooperatives are capable of doing during times of great need—offering assistance where it is needed, not only near their own communities but to communities hundreds of miles away. Electric co-op crews were on the ground in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama in only the time it took to drive there, bringing food, water, equipment, technical skill, and hope.

Never mind that diesel prices skyrocketed in the days following the hurricane or that the crews headed into unfamiliar territory with few available hotel rooms, no phones, and short supplies of food, fuel, and fresh water.

This was not the first time electric co-ops rose to the occasion in a time of great need. Through floods, tornadoes, wildfires, and ice storms,

we have demonstrated time and time again that collectively we have more resources available than even the biggest power companies when it comes to recovering from disasters.

Electric cooperatives' standard engineering design plays an important role in recovery efforts, but our greatest resource is the dedicated people who trudge through waste-deep water

to repair the lines or prepare meals for days on end, and those who keep the office going, often in the midst of great personal loss.

Our cooperative mission energizes us during trying times. We show that the cooperative spirit cannot be dimmed; it shines brightly even in the face of darkness and despair, and for that, we are truly thankful.



Last year after Hurricane Ivan, Illinois co-ops sent line personnel and trucks, like this one from EnerStar Power, to restore power to members of Baldwin Electric Membership Corporation in Alabama. Baldwin EMC General Manager Bucky Jakins, Jr. said, "When disaster strikes it's nice to know you have friends you can count on. Across the country we have those friends in the co-op family." After hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Illinois co-op employees once again answered the call for help.



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F



THIS IS THE GOOD LIFE. IT DESERVES FASTER INTERNET.



WILDBLUE
REACHES YOU WildBlue Satellite Speed Internet connects almost any computer in the U.S. at lightning-fast speeds for as little as \$49.95 per month. Surf up to 30 times faster than dial-up. No more dial-up delays waiting to be connected. No more wondering if high-speed Internet will ever arrive in your town or neighborhood. There's a great big WildBlue world out there. Get connected the way you've always wanted to: fast!



www.comwares.net
(217) 465-5233



Not available in all areas. Requires a clear view of the southern sky. Downstream speed comparison between Pro Pak and 42Kbps dial-up Value Pak is up to 10x faster than dial-up. Speeds are not guaranteed. Usage subject to WildBlue's Fair Access Policy. Monthly fees refer to Value Pak. Equipment and installation charges, taxes and minimum term commitments also apply. Prices subject to change. ©2004 WildBlue Communications, Inc.

1204



Students Encouraged To Apply for 2006 IEC Memorial Scholarships

EnerStar's CEO/President Peter Kollinger has announced that for the eleventh consecutive year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award academic scholarships to high school seniors. The five scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative's (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

High school seniors pursuing a college education anywhere in the United States are eligible to participate in the program. Three \$1,250 scholarships will be awarded to the son or daughter of an electric cooperative member. A fourth \$1,250 award will go to the son or daughter of an electric cooperative director or employee. A fifth scholarship of \$1,250 will be reserved for use at a two-year Illinois community college, and sons and daughters of electric cooperative members, employees and directors are eligible. Deadline for applications to be returned to the cooperative is January 1, 2006.

"The purpose of the scholarship program is to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders through memorial gifts," said Kollinger. "EnerStar 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 to demonstrate 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 Angela Griffin at EnerStar Power at (800) 635-4145, or ask your high school guidance counselor.

You may recognize the face or just know the voice. Filling an important role at the cooperative is Member Accounts Representative Kelly McCrocklin. Kelly is a 28-year veteran of EnerStar and a cooperative member as well. Probably one of the best-known EnerStar employees, Kelly works the front counter and answers the telephone, along with a host of other job duties.

Kelly says that while working at the cooperative can be hectic at times, she really enjoys her job. "We work hard to keep things in line so members requests are met. Sometimes the phones and the counter get a little crazy but we somehow get it all done. Not sure how, but we get it done!" laughed Kelly.



When asked what she liked best about working for EnerStar, Kelly replied, "I have worked at EnerStar for a long time so I have really become friends with and gotten to know the membership personally. I like to answer their questions and I understand their concerns."

Kelly is very involved in the Otterbein United Methodist Church and with the Paris Antique Honeybee Association.

Most of Kelly's free time goes to following her daughter's high school sports activities. Kelly and her husband, Dave, can often be seen on the sidelines cheering for the Paris Tigers at basketball and volleyball games.

EnerStar Forced to Increase 'Power Cost Adjustment' Beginning October 1

Beginning with October 1 statements, EnerStar Power will raise its power cost adjustment to .009304 cents per kilowatt-hour from .005083 cents per kilowatt-hour. The power cost adjustment is used to "adjust" the rates charged to members when the price of wholesale power changes. EnerStar began charging a power cost adjustment in October of 2004, for the first time since 1998.

"Nobody likes to see increases in their electric bills. The EnerStar board carefully considered this increase," said Peter Kollinger, EnerStar President and CEO. "Unfortunately, the reality behind the headlines describing increases at the gas pump, higher heating oil prices, record natural gas levels, and inflated coal expenses have direct bearing on the cost of wholesale electric power."

According to market data, the current and projected prices of natural gas, oil, and coal used to generate electricity for all consumers have skyrocketed this year, along with all other fuels in

the marketplace. Other rising costs that impact electric utilities are higher rates for transporting coal and the cost of meeting environmental regulations related to power plant emissions.

Kollinger added that cooperative strategies put into place some time ago have eased the burden of rising costs.

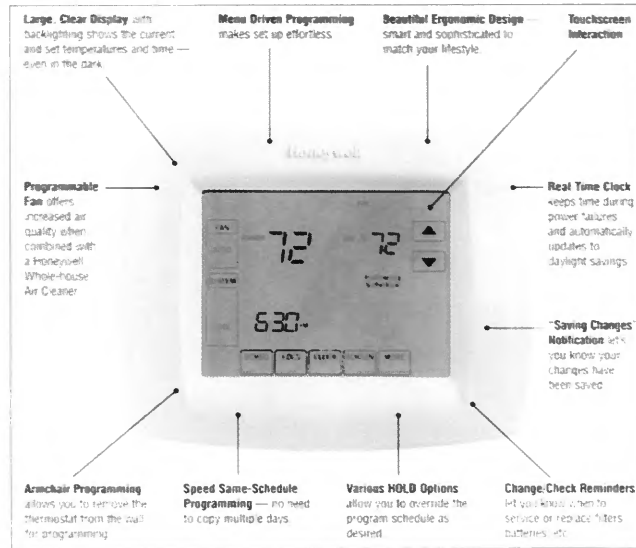
Based on the increased power cost adjustment that will be effective October 1, a member who uses 1,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity will now pay a PCA charge of \$9.30 per month. The power cost adjustment appears as a separate line item on each month's bill.

"We would rather not have to charge the power adjustment at all, but it is the most prudent and fiscally responsible action we can take with regard to 2005 costs," Kollinger said. "With the energy market as volatile as it is, we are unsure how long the PCA will be necessary. We monitor our costs monthly and the board considers adjusting the PCA quarterly."

Kollinger added that cooperative strategies put into place some time ago have eased the burden of rising costs. "We definitely benefited by joining with other local co-ops at Wabash Valley Power Association. This association allows us to pool our energy needs with others and buy electricity for less than we could on our own," stated Kollinger.



Myths About Thermostat Setback



A setback thermostat automatically adjusts your home's temperature at pre-set times. These thermostats can range from relatively simple to containing all the extras as shown above.

The thermostat in your home controls how long your heating or cooling system operates. EnerStar Power encourages you to save energy and money by learning how this simple device operates.

"One common myth is the higher you set your thermostat when you return home, the faster your furnace will heat up your house," said Brent Reyher, Energy Advisor at EnerStar Power. "This is not true since most furnaces deliver heat at the same rate no matter how high the thermostat is set. So just set your thermostat at the temperature you would like, and your furnace will heat your home as fast as it can."

Reyher added that another common myth regards the efficiency of setting your thermostat down when you do not need heating or cooling, such as at night or when no one is home.

"This myth states that a furnace works harder than normal to heat your home back to a comfortable temperature after the thermostat has been set back, resulting in little or no savings," Reyher

said. He stated this is not true and has been proven by years of research and field observations. He added that the longer your house stays at a reduced temperature when heating—or at an increased temperature when cooling—the more energy and money you will save.

Your heating or cooling cost depends mostly on the temperature difference between indoors and outdoors. When you adjust your thermostat down in the winter—or up in the summer—you simply reduce this temperature difference. If you set your temperature back 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours while you are asleep or at work, your energy savings can be 5-15 percent on your energy bill.

"By the way, you can install a setback thermostat that automatically adjusts your home's temperature at pre-set times. They are available at most home and hardware stores. But you can achieve the same savings if you faithfully remember to change your thermostat whenever you leave home or go to bed," Reyher concluded.

When Should You Shut Your Lights Off?

Many members wonder whether it saves energy to turn their lights off every time they leave a room. The answer depends on two things: the type of lamp (the technical term for what most of us call light bulbs) in your fixtures, and how long you'll leave it off.

If you are still using old-fashioned incandescent lamps, then you should shut them off whenever you will be out of the room for at least four minutes. But experts from the U.S. Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory advise that fluorescent lamps are different, whether you are using the long tube-type fluorescents or the compact fluorescent lamps that screw into standard light fixtures. They suggest turning fluorescent lamps off only when you will not need them for 10 to 15 minutes. The recommendations for these two types of lamps are different because the lifespan of incandescent lamps is not affected by the number of times they are switched on and off, while the lifespan of fluorescent lamps is slightly shortened every time they start up.

These recommendations also account for the varying life span of fluorescent lamps, depending upon the number of hours they are used per start. For example, if you use a fluorescent lamp for three hours per start, it will last for about 20,000 hours; if you use it for six hours per start, you'll get an increased lamp life of about 24,000 hours.

You also may have also heard that switching off a fluorescent lamp does not save much energy because the savings are erased by a surge in current when it is first switched on. This is not really true: there is indeed a startup surge, but it lasts only a fraction of a second and the energy consumption during this small time interval is negligible.

For information on energy conservation, visit Energy Advisor area at www.enerstar.com and see the cost benefits of compact fluorescent lights.

Mission statement

EnerStar Power exists to reliably distribute affordable electricity to its member-owners while upholding our values of integrity, accountability, and commitment to our community.

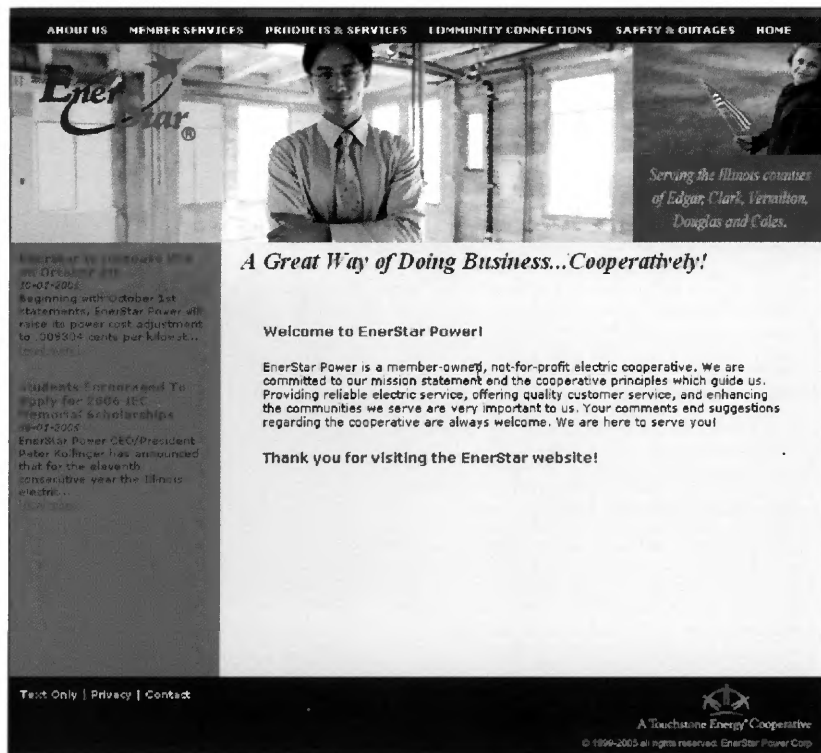
Updated EnerStar Web Site Launched

One of the seven cooperative principles that guide electric cooperatives calls for us to educate and inform our members about the cooperative way of doing business.

Reaching members of various ages and backgrounds is a challenge in today's environment of information overload. Reaching younger members is an even greater challenge. That is why the cooperative uses a variety of communication tools to educate and inform members about the cooperative difference.

In addition to our monthly magazine and EnerStar's many community activities and safety demonstrations, the cooperative recently unveiled a new Web site at www.enerstar.com.

"We want EnerStar's member-owners to be better informed about the many services the cooperative offers," emphasized Angela Griffin, EnerStar's Director of Marketing and Member Relations. "The Web site is one more avenue to accomplish this goal." She added that she envisioned the Web site to become an "information warehouse" where answers to member questions can be easily obtained with great detail. "I encourage members to check back



often as enhancements to the Web site are completed," she said.

The cooperative will be adding online bill payment and account history

information in the near future. Griffin added that member comments and suggestions are welcome and encouraged.



HAPPY THANKSGIVING

*Your turkey may not want
you to have power on
Thanksgiving Day, but we do!
And while you're enjoying
your holiday festivities,
don't forget who's keeping
the lights on.*



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections



EnerStar Power's employees and directors would like to wish our members a very Happy Thanksgiving. Our office will be closed on Thursday, November 24 and Friday, November 25 so our employees may enjoy Thanksgiving with their families.



Remembering the Protectors of Our **FREEDOM**

As families gather for their evening meal, many are faced with an empty seat at the dinner table, a reminder that they have a father, mother, son, or daughter serving in the military. The soldier's contribution to the family's nightly conversation may be an e-mail dashed off before attending to duties, a quick phone call, or a letter written in precious, spare time.

This scene has been played out countless times, as men and women have served our country from the American Revolution to our current war in Iraq. In peacetime and in war American soldiers have given up their lives, time with their families, and their everyday living in order to protect our freedoms, and their valor should be remembered and honored.

On Nov. 11, we celebrate Veterans Day to honor all veterans who have served their country in the armed forces. The holiday is often marked



with a local parade or memorial service at a military cemetery. In Arlington, Va., a national memorial service is held at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery.

Originally Armistice Day, Nov. 11, was the day that Germany and the

Allied Forces signed a peace treaty ending World War I in 1918. In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed Nov. 11 a day to honor World War I veterans. In 1954, the name was changed to Veterans Day to honor all veterans, living and deceased, who served during war or peacetime.

This year, as you sit down to dinner with your family on Veterans Day, remember all those who can't be with their families because they are serving our country. Think about all the people who sacrificed their lives to protect our freedom and add them to your list of things for which you are thankful.

Reflect on Woodrow Wilson's words from 85 years ago proclaiming Armistice Day - words that are still true today.

"To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nation."

EnerStar Offers Support to Reserve and Guard Units

As announced in the February 2004 issue of this magazine, EnerStar Power is pleased to offer an outstanding program for its electric members who are also military service members of the National Guard or reserve units who have been called to active duty.

As a part of this program, EnerStar will reduce the member's electric bill by 50 percent during the term of active duty. There are a few program conditions:

- The member must be in a National Guard unit or reserve unit, with the call to duty being a career interruption.
- The account must be in the member or member's spouse's name

and must be the member's primary residence immediately prior to deployment.

- The member must notify EnerStar of the deployment and verify it with a copy of the military or gubernatorial order calling him/her to active duty and any orders further extending his/her period of active duty.
- The member's monthly billing must remain in good standing during deployment.
- If the member's electric account is not maintained in good standing the discount will be discontinued, and the member will be obligated to pay his/her full electric bill according to conditions set forth in the Illinois Patriot Plan-Senate Bill 2060.

- The member must notify EnerStar in a timely manner upon his/her return from active duty. Upon timely notification, a grace period may be granted, depending on the length of active duty served and the status of the account.

If you have any further questions or would like to apply for the program, please call an EnerStar Member Accounts Representative at (800) 635-4145.

Our members, board of directors, and employees value the sacrifice made by those who interrupt their lives and we are glad to offer our support during this time.

**EnerStar Power's office will be closed on November 11
in observance of Veterans Day.**

HomePage

www.enerstar.com

What's Inside

Voting Districts

..... 16b-16c

Learn what voting district you are in.

Classroom in the Sky

..... 16d

IEC Memorial Scholarship

..... 16d

High school students need to apply by January 1.

Employee Spotlight

..... 16e

Meet Journeyman Lineman Chad Cornwell

A Safer Home for the Holidays

..... 16f

Electrical safety tips from an EnerStar Energy Advisor.

Clearing ROW Means Better Service For You

..... 16g

Learn why we trim your trees.

10 Ways to Save Energy and Cut Winter Heating Bills

..... 16h

Simple steps you can take now to save money all winter.

Annual Meeting Just Around the Corner *Petitions Available for Board Elections*

At a Special Meeting of Members in August 2004, EnerStar members approved new board nomination procedures and rules. First used at the 2005 annual meeting held in March, all board candidates are nominated by petition only. The bylaw changes abolished the former practice of nominating committees and nominations from the floor.

The petition process is now underway for the 2006 Annual Meeting board elections. Petitions require the signatures of 15 EnerStar members who live in the candidate's Voting District. All members signing petitions must have an original membership card on file and must be currently receiving electricity from the cooperative. Candidates will also need to check with cooperative personnel to make certain they reside within the Representative

Districts.

Beginning December 1, 2005, members wishing to receive a petition can pick one up at the EnerStar headquarters in Paris. They may also be obtained via mail or e-mail by calling the cooperative office at (217) 463-4145 during normal business hours.

Petitions may be turned in to the cooperative from January 3, 2005, to January 17, 2005. This fulfills the bylaw amendment of Article IV, Section 6, which requires petitions be turned in "not more than 75 nor less than 60 days prior to the annual meeting."

Candidates should also provide a short biographical sketch, 250 words or less, to be published with the Annual Meeting Notice. Biographies should be turned in with the petitions in order to meet publishing deadlines.



**SATURDAY,
MARCH 18,
2006**

VOTE

**Crestwood
School
Paris, Illinois**



Member News

VOTING

Three director positions are open for election at the forthcoming 67th Annual Meeting of Members. All positions are for three-year terms. If you have questions regarding what voting and representative district you are located in, consult the map on page 16c or contact an EnerStar Members Accounts Representative at (800) 635-4145 during normal business hours.



Voting District A

Representative District 2, currently served by Tom DeWitt

Voting District B

Representative District 4, currently served by John Fell

Voting District C

Representative District 7, currently served by Gene Higginbotham

Representative Board District Descriptions

District – Current Director – Year Open for Election

Voting District A

District 1- Jeff Zimmerman-2008

The Townships of Newman, Bowdre, and Sargent in Douglas County, Illinois; the Townships of East Oakland and Ashmore in Coles County, Illinois; the Township of Embarrass in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Shiloh lying south of the 1800th Road in Edgar County, Illinois.

District 2- Tom DeWitt-2006

The Townships of Carroll and Love in Vermilion County, Illinois; the Townships of Young America, Ross, Prairie, Edgar, and Brouilletts Creek in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Shiloh lying north of the 1800th Road in Edgar County, Illinois.

District 3- Dale English-2007

The Townships of Buck, Paris, Hunter, and Stratton in Edgar County, Illinois.

Voting District B

District 4- John Fell-2006

The Townships of Kansas and Grandview in Edgar County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying south of the 400th Road and west of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying south of the 300th Road and east of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois.

District 5- Carrol Drake-2008

The Township of Elbridge in Edgar County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying north of the 400th Road and west of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying north of the 300th Road and east of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois.

District 6- David Sprigg-2007

The Townships of Westfield and Douglas in Clark County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Dolson lying north of the 2000th Road in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Wabash lying north of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois.

Voting District C

District 7- Gene Higginbotham-2006

The Townships of Parker, Casey, Auburn, and Martinsville in Clark County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Dolson lying south of the 2000th Road in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Marshall lying north of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois.

District 8- Don Baggs-2007

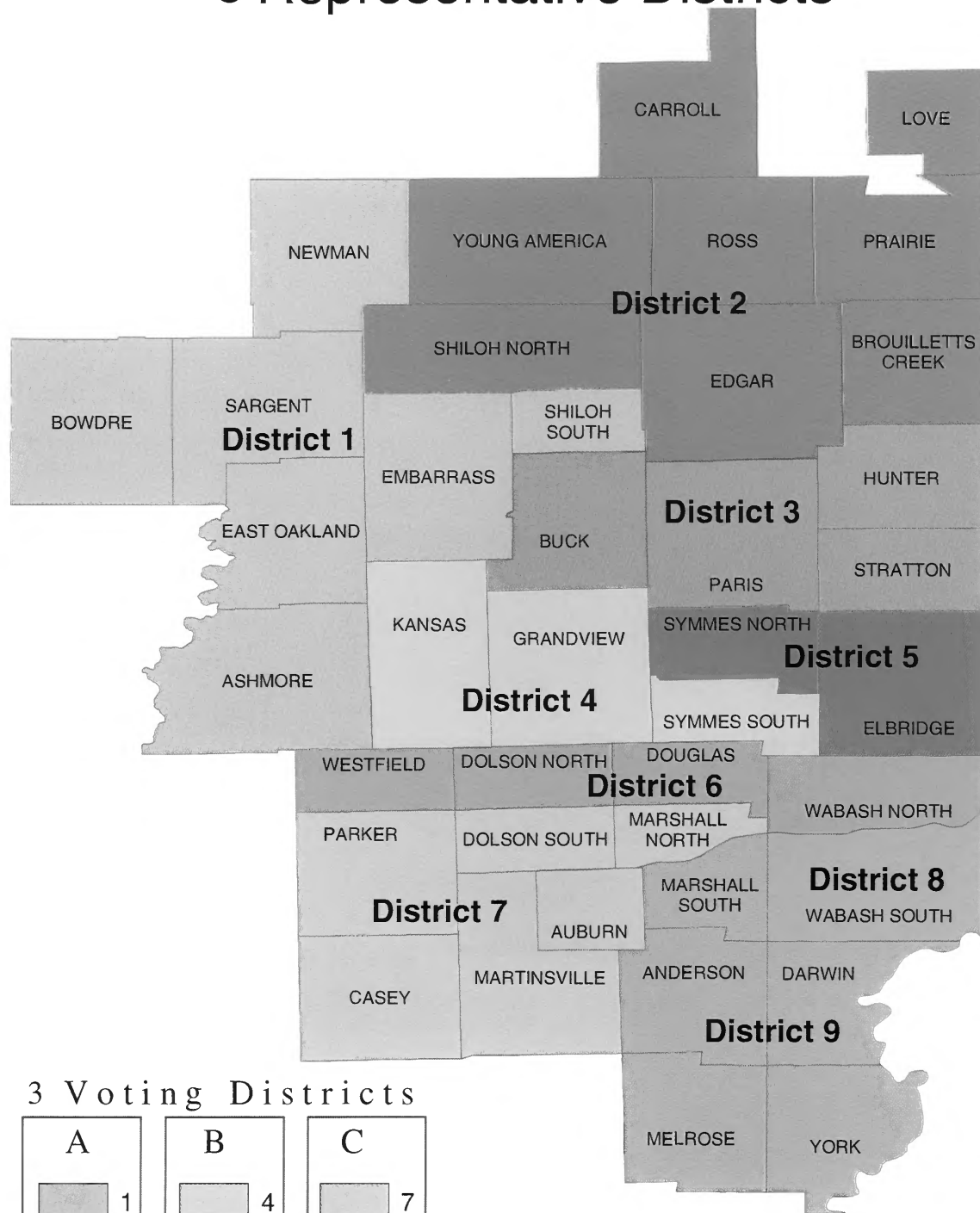
All that portion of the Township of Wabash lying south of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois.

District 9- Danny Gard Jr. -2008

The Townships of Anderson, Darwin, Melrose, and York in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Marshall lying south of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois.

Enerstar Power Corp

9 Representative Districts



3 Voting Districts

A	B	C
1	4	7
2	5	8
3	6	9

Voting Districts A, B, and C each contain three Representative Districts in shades of red, green, and blue, respectively.



Classroom in the Sky

Learning can take place in many different venues. Some people learn better in a classroom, while others learn by getting their hands on the work. The job of an EnerStar lineman is not easy. It requires focus, concentration, and a lot of hands-on learning.

During the monthly safety meeting held in October, the Safety Division of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives conducted its annual "Pole Top Rescue" training at EnerStar Power, reviewing with the linemen how to safely rescue an injured worker from the top of an electrical pole.

This learning is somewhat like a "classroom in the sky." Each EnerStar lineman takes his turn putting on his climbing gear, climbing up the pole, and safely securing a rope around "Tuff-Kelly," a life-size mannequin designed especially for pole top rescue

training. The lineman then must carefully lower the mannequin to the ground, descend back down pole, and prepare to offer the appropriate first aid, if needed. All this is to be done in four minutes or less so as to give quick care to a victim, should a rescue situation arise.

Like CPR, this is one of those training topics we hope a lineman never has to use, but should a situation ever present itself, the time spent training and reviewing pole top rescues will be time well spent.



Journeyman Lineman Kent Milbourn demonstrates pole top rescue training.

PCA Increased in October

Costs of natural gas, oil, and coal used to generate electricity have skyrocketed this year. Other rising costs that impact electric utilities are higher rates for transporting coal and the cost of meeting environmental regulations related to power plant emissions.

Because of these rising wholesale power costs, EnerStar Power raised the power cost adjustment with the October billing statements. The new PCA rate is .009304 cents per kilowatt-hour, an increase from .005083 cents per kilowatt-hour. The power cost adjustment is used to "adjust" the rates charged to members when the price of wholesale power changes. EnerStar began charging a power cost adjustment in October of 2004, for the first time

since 1998.

"The EnerStar board carefully considered this increase," said Peter Kollinger, EnerStar President and CEO. "Unfortunately, the reality behind the headlines describing increases at the gas pump, higher heating oil prices, record natural gas levels and inflated coal expenses have direct bearing on the cost of wholesale electric power."

Kollinger added that cooperative strategies put into place some time ago have eased the burden of rising costs. "We definitely benefited by joining with other local co-ops at Wabash Valley Power Association. This association allows us to pool our energy needs with others and buy electricity for less than we could on our own," stated Kollinger.

Students Encouraged To Apply for 2006 IEC Memorial Scholarships

EnerStar's CEO/President Peter

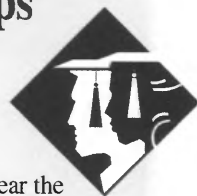
Kollinger has announced that for the eleventh consecutive year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award academic scholarships to high school seniors. The five scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative's (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

High school seniors pursuing a college education anywhere in the United States are eligible to participate in the program. Three \$1,250 scholarships will be awarded to the son or daughter of an electric cooperative member. A fourth \$1,250 award will go to the son or daughter of an electric cooperative director or employee. A fifth scholarship of \$1,250 will be reserved for use at a two-year Illinois community college, and sons and daughters of electric cooperative members, employees and directors are eligible. Deadline for applications to be returned to the cooperative is January 1, 2006.

"The purpose of the scholarship program is to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders through memorial gifts," said Kollinger. "EnerStar 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 to demonstrate 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 Angela Griffin at EnerStar Power at (800) 635-4145, or ask your high school guidance counselor.



After graduating from Paris High School in 1990, EnerStar's Chad Cornwell attended Lakeland College for a couple of years. When a friend told him about the rewarding opportunities of power line work, he headed in a new direction.

He went on to graduate from Northwest Iowa Technical College in Sheldon, Iowa. The college is well known as the Midwest's premiere "lineman school." Chad graduated with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Powerline Technology. Class subjects range from Transformer Theory to Transmission & Distribution.

His EnerStar employment began in 1999 where he completed his apprenticeship. While he has many years of experience at the cooperative, he actually began his career at two other electric utilities. His previous employment includes over three years at AmerenCIPS and about one year at the City of Mar-



shall. Besides his class work and on the job training, Chad has attended many additional "cooperative classes."

Chad, like the rest of the EnerStar line crew, recently returned from working in Louisiana in areas ravaged by Hurricane Rita. Working along the Texas-Louisiana border at Jeff Davis Electric Cooperative, Chad was part of an electric system rebuild. "There was not much to salvage," he said.

Previously, Chad volunteered to work in Alabama after Hurricane Ivan and Hurricane Dennis. When asked about his experiences after working the hurricanes he said, "After Hurricane Rita, you really didn't see many people. Most of them had left. After Hurricane Ivan, people were around still. They would put up signs indicating they needed power and would often turn those signs around and write a thank you note on the back once power had been restored."

When asked why he put up with 16+ hour days and living in a tent city, Chad emphasized that it was all about helping others. "You really are giving a helping hand to those who do not have anything left."

During times of great need, it is nice to see that so many cooperative employees are willing to offer assistance not only in their back yard, but also in communities hundreds of miles away.

Low Income Energy Assistance Available

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is designed to assist eligible households pay for winter energy services. LIHEAP will provide a one-time benefit to eligible households to be used for energy bills. The amount of the payment is determined by income, household size, fuel type, and geographic location.

An overdue bill or cut-off notice is not required. You do not have to own your home or pay energy bills directly to be eligible for assistance. Emergency assistance may be available if your household is disconnected from an energy source needed for heating and/or if a delivered-fuel supplier has refused to deliver and the tank contains 10 percent or less.

In east-central Illinois, monies from the LIHEAP program are administered through the Embarrass River Basin Agency (ERBA). Assistance for reconnection will only be provided to households that have

made a good faith effort to maintain their energy services or can pay a portion of the amount owed for reconnection.

ERBA accepts applications for assistance by appointment on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. When applying for assistance, you need the following information: (1) Proof of gross income from all household members for the 30-day period prior to application date; (2) A copy of your current heat and electric bills; (3) Proof of Social Security numbers for all household members; (4) If a member of your household received TANF or AABD, you must bring their "Medical Eligibility Card"; (5) If you rent your home, proof of your rental agreement, which must state your monthly rent amount may be necessary.

ERBA will determine if you are eligible for assistance. If you are eligible, ERBA will make the appropriate payments to your energy provider(s)

on your behalf or, in some cases, directly to you.

If you think you might be eligible for assistance, you should contact ERBA directly. Representatives can be reached at 465-4911 in Edgar County or 932-5272 in Clark County.

Below are the income eligibility guidelines for the LIHEAP program. For more information, contact the office nearest you.

Income Eligibility: 30-day period to application

FAMILY SIZE	30 DAY INCOME
1	\$1,196
2	\$1,604
3	\$2,012
4	\$2,420
5	\$2,828
6	\$3,236
7	\$3,644
8	\$4,052

** For each additional family member, add \$408*



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F



A Safer Home for the Holidays

Electrical shocks and fires kill more than a thousand people, and result in tens of thousands of injuries each year. Overloaded outlets, misused and faulty cords, and electrical devices are leading causes of home electrical fires.

Tim Haddix, an EnerStar Energy Advisor, encourages you to give your family the gift of a safer home this Christmas. "Check your home for these electrical fire and shock hazards," says Haddix.

Some of his suggestions include:

■ **Electrical outlets.** Check for loose-fitting plugs, which can be a shock or fire hazard. Replace missing or broken wall plates so wiring and components are not exposed. If you have young children in the home, check that unused outlets are covered.

■ **Plugs.** Never force them into outlets. Don't remove the grounding pin (third prong) to make a three-prong plug fit a two-conductor outlet. Avoid overloading outlets with adapters and too many appliance plugs.

■ **Cords.** Make sure they are not frayed or cracked, placed under carpets or rugs, or located in high traffic areas. Do not nail or staple them to walls, floors, or other objects.

■ **Extension cords.** Use them on a temporary basis only. They are not intended as permanent household wiring. Make sure they have safety closures to protect young children from shock and mouth burn injuries.

■ **Light bulbs.** Check the wattage to make sure light bulbs match the fixture requirements. Replace bulbs that have



higher wattage ratings than recommended. Make sure they are screwed in securely so they don't overheat. Consider compact fluorescent lamps. They use less energy and produce considerably less heat.

■ **Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs).** Make sure GFCIs are installed in your kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, workshop, basement and garage as well as on outdoor outlets. Test them monthly to ensure they're working properly.

■ **Circuit breakers/Fuses.** Fuses should be properly rated for the circuit they are protecting. If you don't know the correct rating, have an electrician identify and label the correct size to be used. Always replace a fuse with the same size you are removing. Check that circuit breakers are working properly by operating each breaker once a year.

■ **Appliances/Electronics.** If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker, or has given you an

electrical shock, immediately unplug it and have it repaired or replaced. Look for cracks or damage in wiring and connectors. Use surge protectors to protect expensive electronics.

■ **Electrical wiring.** Wiring defects are a major cause of residential blazes. Check periodically for loose wall receptacles, loose wires, or loose lighting fixtures. Listen for popping or sizzling sounds behind walls. Immediately shut off, then professionally replace light switches that are hot to the touch and lights that spark and flicker.

■ **Service capacity.** As you continue to upgrade your home with more lighting, appliances, and electronics, your home's electrical service capacity may become overburdened. If fuses blow or trip frequently, you may need to increase electrical service or add new branch circuits. A qualified, licensed electrician can determine the appropriate service requirements for your home.

"Paws" and take steps to keep pets safe from electrical hazards

“Your family pet can turn anything it finds in and around the home into a play or chew toy,” says Brent Reyher, Energy Advisor at EnerStar. “It’s important to make sure your pets don’t add electrical devices to their toy chest. They can cause an electrical hazard or fire in ways you may not have thought about.”

Reyher advises the following:

■ Keep electrical cords away from puppies and kittens so they don't chew on them and receive a severe shock. If you have difficulty getting your pet to stop chewing on the cord,

you can paint it with a bitter tasting polish or wrap the cord in a thick plastic sleeve.

■ Make sure nightlights and appliances are completely plugged into wall outlets. Partially exposed prongs are a hazard for curious children, puppies, and kittens.

■ Keep halogen lamps away from play areas for pets and children. Some halogen bulbs can reach very high temperatures, and if knocked over during play, could easily start a fire.

■ Keep appliances that are commonly near sinks and bathtubs a safe

distance away from the water source. Playful pets can knock radios, curling irons, and other items into the water, creating a dangerous, life-threatening situation.

■ Discourage cats and dogs from curling up for a nap behind warm computer equipment. Pets need to be kept away from all electrical connections.

For more information on electrical safety, the EnerStar Energy Advisors encourage members to visit www.safeelectricity.org.

Clearing ROW Means Better Service For You

Whether it is lightning strikes or a blanket of ice on the power lines, the EnerStar electrical system is designed and maintained to withstand these forces. One way the cooperative prepares for severe weather is through an aggressive vegetation management program. While that may sound impressive, vegetation management is just fancy words for the cooperative's tree trimming and spraying activities.

"Vegetation management is an important part of EnerStar's goal to deliver power that is safe, reliable, and environmentally responsible," says Line Superintendent Mike Clark. "By preparing ahead of the winds and rains, we can reduce outages caused by branches falling on lines, trees interfering with voltage levels, or brush in right-of-way areas making access to equipment difficult." He explained that trees touching power lines actually drain electricity off the electrical system. In severe cases, this can cause the cooperative's line-protection devices to take a circuit out of service and your lights to go out.

EnerStar has been aggressively tackling tree-related outages for the last couple of years. In November and December, efforts focused on right-of-way clearing. Clearing rights-of-way allows EnerStar line workers to get necessary equipment into the power lines for pole changes and maintenance.



This machine can cut down and chip an 8-inch by 30-foot tree in a matter of minutes.

With the use of a rubber-tracked loader and a brush attachment, EnerStar crews can quickly and efficiently clear a power line in a matter of hours compared to what used to take days by more conventional means. Once an area has been cleared, a carpet of chips is all that remains.

"Ultimately through this program, our goal is more reliable service to our members," concludes Clark. For more information about EnerStar's vegetation management program, visit www.enerstar.com or contact Clark at (217) 466-7616.



During November and December, EnerStar's Galen Satterfield (left) and Mike Huddleston have been clearing rights of way to improve system reliability.

We hear you loud and clear



At EnerStar, we listen to what you have to say.

Whether you are a big or small consumer, we are committed to providing you with affordable reliable power using state-of-the-art technol-

ogy and service.

We are part of our community because co-op employees not only work here - we live here too. We are your neighbors and friends.

You have a voice with us.

Co-op News

Visit EnerStar's updated Web site at www.enerstar.com to find out what's new at your co-op. Be sure to check our products and services, learn about staying safe around electricity, and learn ways we can serve you. And check back often for updates.

www.enerstar.com

10 WAYS

to Save Energy and Cut Winter Heating Bills

Some simple energy efficiency steps can make your home more comfortable while lowering your heating costs. Have the furnace checked by a service professional and take these steps to cut down on your energy use this winter:

1

Caulk and seal air leaks inside and around the exterior of the home, targeting fixtures that penetrate walls like exhaust fans and outlets.

Homes may lose 15-30 percent of their heat through air leaks. Check gaps near dryer vents, chimneys, and around plumbing lines. Use minimal expanding foam when sealing spaces around doors and windows to ensure they will continue to operate properly.

2

Weather-stripping is inexpensive and prevents heat loss along doors and windows. Weather-stripping on doors and windows may last for up to

20 years

3

Burning fireplaces suck air from some areas of the house, leaving other rooms cold. Adjust the furnace thermostat to correspond with the lower temperature. Install a glass door on the fireplace and close the damper when not in use.

4

Clean air filters in the furnace monthly, and more frequently if pets live indoors. A dirty filter prevents efficient air movement and causes the furnace to run longer. Furnaces over 30 years old usually are less than 50 percent efficient.

5

Use ceiling fans, especially in rooms with high ceilings. Blades should be switched to draw air up from the living space and push warm air down along the walls.

6

An easy-to-install clock thermostat can automatically raise and lower home temperatures for energy savings day and night.

7

Flooring above unheated spaces, such as the crawl space and garage, should be treated like a ceiling. Insulate these areas.

8

Replace screens with storm windows and doors. Double-paned glass plays an important role in reducing heat loss.

9

Close off any area of your home that is not used frequently. Also, be sure to close registers in these areas.

10

If you use a portable heater, keep combustible materials away from the heating elements. Make sure you have adequate ventilation if you are using a kerosene heater.



OFFICE CLOSING

Our offices will be closed December 23rd and 26th for Christmas and December 30th and January 2nd for the New Year.