





Winter Checklist for Your Home


If you're wondering what you can do to reduce your heating bills immediately, consider the suggestions below. They are arranged in order of urgency and importance.


 Use a programmable thermostat that automatically adjusts your thermostat set-point back at night, and during the day when no (9419-1) one is home. Or remember to change the temperature set-point manually every day.


 If you stay alone in a large house, try to confine your activities to one room and leave the remainder of the house at the low nighttime set-point. Heat your daytime activity room to a comfortable temperature with an electric space heater.


 Use electric blankets or quilts for sleeping comfort and to allow a lower nighttime thermostat setting.


 Change your furnace filter as often as it gets dirty. Buy several when you shop so that you will have one when you need it.

 Seal large air leaks around plumbing pipes, wires, chimneys and other penetrations through your floors and ceilings. You can find these in your attic or basement.

 Make sure that all your storm windows are closed during winter weather. If your storm windows are broken or missing, repair or (5612-49) replace them.

 Open drapes and blinds on your home's south-facing windows during the day to let solar heat in.

 Be sure that your walls are filled with insulation and that your attic has at least 8-inches of insulation. Nothing can compensate for lack of insulation. Insulate your walls and attic if they need it.

 If you must replace a gas furnace, choose a 90 percent efficient model to save on heating costs.

The last two ideas may require some planning and budgeting. Your local utility or energy expert can provide advice.

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

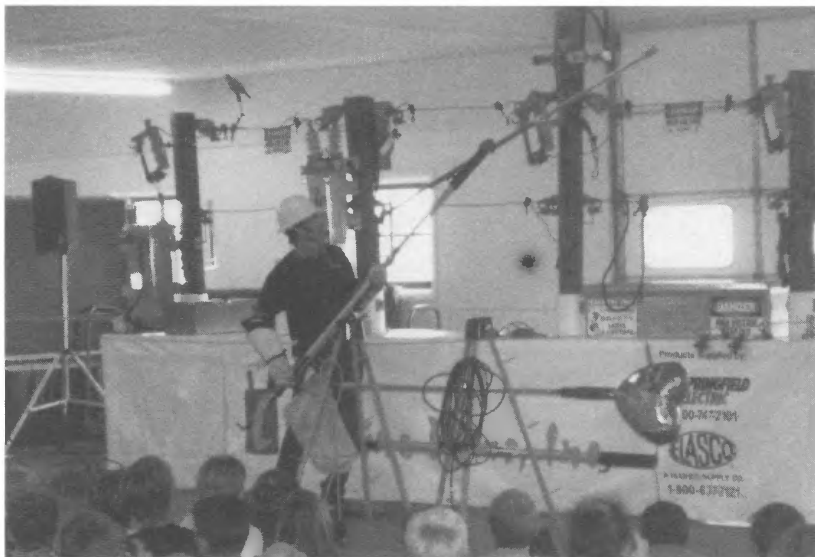
*John Krigger is a nationally recognized author of numerous energy efficiency books, including *Surviving the Seasons*, and *Residential Energy: Cost Savings and Comfort for Existing Buildings*. For more info, visit his Web site www.srmi.biz.*



WIEC's 10th Annual Safety Fair

For the past 10 years, your cooperative has invited the 5th graders from all nine elementary school districts in our service territory to come to the co-op for our Safety Fair. We have had all sorts of weather during the past 10 years, from sunshine to rain, from warm breezes to chilly gusts. But no matter what kind of weather Mother Nature throws at us, the kids always seem to have fun. (567-21-74)

During those 10 years, more than 3,000 kids have come to hear the message our presenters try to impress upon them of "living smart, keeping safe and having fun."



Kyle Finley of Live Line Demo, Inc. starts out the day with his awesome demonstration that shows the power of electricity. Most kids see electricity as a necessity for lights or TV, but Kyle impresses upon them that electrical equipment, including the wires and poles that give them electricity, should be respected.



At the boating safety presentation, kids were challenged to keep their hand in a bucket of ice-cold water for a specific amount of time. This illustrated just how dangerous it can be if someone is submerged in cold water for even a short period of time.



Presenters do a great job of keeping the kids attention. One teacher wrote, "The presenters are great with involving the students and reaching them on their level."



One of the highlights for the kids each year is their hot dog lunch. We usually serve it on a Frisbee "plate" that they can take home.

Hancock County 9-1-1 Coordinator Maria Hopp staged a "mock emergency" where a student fell from a ladder and another student had to call 911. The ambulance and paramedics came to treat the injured child and put them on the gurney. In real life, this accident may have ended with an ambulance ride to the hospital.



The Carthage Clipper Fire Department brought their smoke house for the kids to go through. It simulated a room filled with smoke and instructed the kids what to do if they are ever in this situation.



The dessert on the day's menu of learning was magician Chris Egelston. He captivated the kids with his magic while emphasizing his message of being drug free.



Melita Finney and Julie Courtois of the Hancock Co. Health Dept. presented a program on bicycle safety that stressed the importance of bicycle helmets. The Health Dept. gave away seven helmets to fair attendees.




WIEC's own linemen, Scott Carle, Cody Grainger and Andy Lafeber, spoke to the kids about their jobs, the equipment they use, and the tasks they perform.



WIEC NEWS

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ www.wiec.net ■ 800/576-3125

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Red Hat Ladies

What kind of group has officers who are called the Queen Bee, the Note Keeper, and the Kitty Keeper? It's the Carthage chapter of the Red Hat Society (RHS), the Chatterboxes. This isn't our great grandmothers' type of sewing circle

In the summer of 2004, a group of Carthage women were interested in starting a Red Hat chapter. They were invited to a meeting of the Basco Beauties RHS and used that chapter as a model for their own. At this time they only allow 20 members but constantly have a waiting list. WIEC member Esther Cokel is one of the charter members of the Chatterboxes and is the current Note Keeper and Kitty Keeper for the group. "It would be so easy if someone would want to start another chapter. You just fill out a form and pay the \$35 registration fee," says Esther. There are also chapters in Keokuk, Burlington, Quincy, and Ft.

Madison listed on the Web site www.redhatsociety.com.

The Chatterboxes get together once a month, usually for an eatin' meetin' at various local restaurants. The Carthage group marched in three parades last year - the Plymouth Old Settlers parade, the Keokuk Labor Day parade, and the Carthage Homecoming parade. "We don't have to have a meeting to get together. We just put on our hats and go," says Esther.

The Red Hat Society was started by Sue Ann Cooper in 1997 and was based on the poem, Warning, by Jenny Joseph. There are three levels of membership within the society. If a member is between the ages of 50 and 80, they are to wear a red hat. Those



The Red Hat Society is a lighthearted group of ladies whose only purpose is to get together to have fun.

or recipe swap. In case you haven't heard, the Red Hat Society is a lighthearted group of ladies whose only purpose is to get together to have fun. The phenomenon is sweeping the country as a way to promote sisterhood as women go through the aging (7815-13) process together. They tend to thumb their noses at the traditional notion of formal meetings and would rather celebrate with spontaneity and silliness.

Continued on 16b ►

Call toll free (800) 576-3125



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Monday - Friday

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MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four member's map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

under 50 wear a pink hat and lavender clothes. They are called "pinkies" until they celebrate their 50th birthday. Members over 80 wear purple hats. All are encouraged to wear clashing purple or lavender clothes, shoes, jewelry, and whatever else they dare to wear in public that completes their look. Esther says, "Some

of our members wear the purple clothes, but it's not required. But they have to wear the hats!"

If you happen to see a group of ladies in red hats and outlandish attire, stand back and enjoy their enthusiasm. They are the Red Hat Society ladies and these girls just want to have fun.

WARNING

by Jenny Joseph

W

hen I am an old woman, I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick the flowers in other peoples' gardens
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practice a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

FAQ

Do you have any used poles?

We have numerous calls asking for used poles. Occasionally, we do have used poles for sale to members. However, we ask members to understand that we do not keep an up-to-date listing in the (7511-53) office. We urge members to come by and look at our used pole inventory. It is located in the northeast corner of our parking lot.

We charge \$15 per pole and they are available on a first-come,

first-serve basis. We do not reserve poles for members. We will help load poles onto the member's truck or trailer when we have equipment and men available, which is usually first thing in the morning.

Please remember that these poles have been retired because WIEC feels that they have outlived their useful (958-17-1) life for our system. We offer these poles as a service to our members.

The Life You Save May be Your Own

"The Older You Get the More You Need a Mammogram" is the title of one of the American Cancer Society's new brochures. The pamphlet stresses the need for mammograms in the older woman and addresses commonly used excuses made by women who choose not to have this life-saving exam. Do you see yourself, a treasured friend, or a beloved family member using some of these excuses?

"I've lived this long without getting breast cancer. Why should I bother with a mammogram?"

FACT: The risk of developing breast cancer increases with age. More than three-fourths of the breast cancer cases diagnosed each year occur in women who are 50 and over. A woman aged 70 is almost twice as likely to develop breast cancer in the next year as a woman who is aged 50.

"But no one in my family ever had breast cancer."

FACT: It is true the risk is greater if a close relative such as mother, sister, or daughter has had breast cancer. However, more than 80 percent of breast cancer cases are diagnosed in women who have no family history of this disease.

"If I'm going to get breast cancer, there is nothing I can do about it."

FACT: Early detection increases a woman's options and her chances for successful treatment. When breast cancer is confined to the breast, the five year survival rate is more than 95 percent.

"Mammograms are x-rays. I don't want to be exposed to all that radiation."

FACT: In the last 20 years, mammography techniques and equipment have improved. Today, the level of radiation is very low and harmless.

"I can't afford a mammogram."

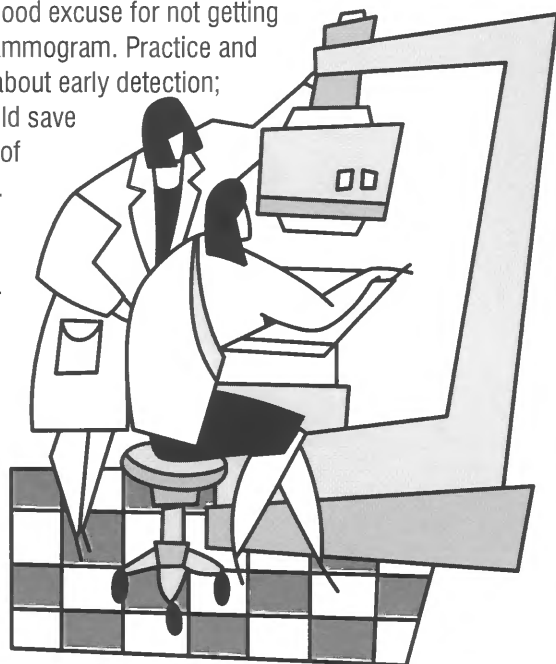
FACT: Medicare, Medicaid, and most health insurance plans cover all or part of the cost of mammography. The Hancock County Health Department also offers free mammograms to county women who have no insurance or can prove their insurance does not cover this screening. These women must also meet age and income guidelines. The free screenings are made possible by grants from the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IBCCP) and in part by The Peoria Memorial Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc.

Early detection increases a woman's options and her chances for successful treatment.

Please remember there is NO good excuse for not getting a mammogram. Practice and talk about early detection; it could save

your life or the life of someone you love.

Article supplied by the Hancock County Health Department in Carthage. For more information contact them at (800) 422-8218 or (217) 357-2171.



COOP FACT:

Do you realize that today's rates for electricity are lower than they were in 1985? And the good news is that, barring any unforeseen catastrophes, we do not foresee raising those rates in the near future.

WIEC joins Touchstone Energy® Alliance

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. has become a Touchstone Energy cooperative. The Touchstone alliance represents



more than 600 cooperatives in 44 states that collectively deliver assistance to more than 16 million members every day. It will provide WIEC with the resources of a national brand. By overseeing an array of services and programs, such as national

marketing and communication campaigns, employee educational programs, and numerous events and projects, Touchstone can

"Touchstone Energy provides us with a good public image for our cooperative," says Manager Paul Dion.

help WIEC strengthen and cultivate relationships with members both locally and across the nation. **(6615-23)**

WIEC is a small cooperative and does not have the financial resources or personnel to undertake this type of project by ourselves. By belonging to Touchstone, WIEC is not just one small cooperative in Illinois, we will become part of the Touchstone family of cooperatives. "We will benefit because it provides us with a good public image for our cooperative on a wider scale than we could do alone," says Manager Paul Dion. "By joining Touchstone, it will allow us to belong to a larger network of cooperatives that have banded together for a common goal – to make sure the core values of integrity, accountability, innovation, and commitment to the community are known."

Because we are a small cooperative, new members, both residential and commercial, may have never heard of WIEC, but hopefully they will have heard of Touchstone Energy and realize that we have the same values as the other cooperatives affiliated with the Touchstone brand.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Atherton, Donald L. & Janet L.,
Middletown, IA
Bair, Charles H. & Ada M., Carthage
Belville, Rick A., Lomax
Eckhart, Paul T. & Lynn A., Gladstone
Hillier, Jodie, Dallas City
Huffman, Marion T., Niota
Jones Farms, LaHarpe
McPherson, Roger & Renee, Minooka
Moore, Michael Shane & Rachael Ann,
Carthage
Payne, Lewis A. & Margaret A., Quincy
Pence, Rodney, Dallas City
Siepel, Vernon K., Canton
Staley, Scott, Niota
Walker, Robbie, LaHarpe

Youth to Washington Tour Deadline Approaching

The Youth to Washington essays are due at the WIEC office by

February 15th.

For addition information, see your high school guidance counselor, call the WIEC office or go to the WIEC Web site at www.wiec.net.

(Approved minutes are available from the WIEC office. Regular board meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month at the WIEC office.)

WIEC NEWS

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

2004 in Review – Outages

Outages! No one likes them, and despite our best efforts they do happen. Sometimes we purposely make them happen so we can do maintenance on our lines or upgrade our system. Sometimes they just happen and it's usually when we least expect it.

Last year was a good year for WIEC and for our members because our outage time was considerably lower than in previous (7719-8-1) years. Last year, the average time a meter was out of service was 1.62 hours, compared with 4.63 hours the previous year.

Below is the breakdown of the types of outages that can occur and the percentage of the total outage time per meter for 2004.

24 % of all outages were due to Power Supply – This happens when we lose the transmission of electricity from Ameren and Soyland. (Remember, WIEC uses Ameren's transmission lines to get power to our substations. When those transmission lines are down, we can't get power to our substations, which means our members won't receive power either.) These

outages are beyond WIEC's control. Example - lines moved due to road jobs, switching feeds by the transmission utility, or storms causing loss of transmission feeds to our subs.

1 % of all outages were due to Planned Maintenance – This represents the loss of services due to planned maintenance on lines by WIEC. Your cooperative performs many hours of planned maintenance on the lines every year. However, our personnel

are trained to work on the line energized. This means we can do the work that needs to be done without disrupting power to our members, which makes this percent very low. Members who are on our prearranged outage list are notified before any planned maintenance is done. What is a prearranged outage list? See the FAQ section of the WIEC news.

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Continued on 16b ▶

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◀ Continued from 16a

40 % of all outages were due to Storms – This is the loss of power due to storms, lightning, and/or high winds. Once in a while, Mother Nature lets us have it and we pay the price.

7 % of all outages were due to Equipment Failure – These types of outages could be due to faulty underground primary, line breaker, transformer failure, or overhead conductor failure.

Less than 1% of all outages were due to Equipment Overload – This occurs when the member needs more electricity than the transformers can handle. This is why it is so important to install a service or upgrade your service so it's big enough to handle your needs.

2 % of all outages were due to Trees – Wind and ice can be a tree's enemy. When trees are either growing in the lines or falling into lines during wind or ice storms, outages can result. Our tree trimming and brush control programs help keep this number low.

10 % of all outages were due to Animals and Birds – Animals can wreak havoc with our equipment. It can happen on our primary lines, and also in substation structures. We have had outages caused by birds, raccoons, tree frogs, and possums. One time a

hawk dropped a snake on the top of a pole, which caused an outage.

6 % of all outages were due to Vehicles and Machinery – This category includes car accidents and farm machinery nudging a pole or getting into the lines. Contacts such as these usually mean a portion of line will go dead due to a line breaker kicking out.

Less than 1 % of all outages were due to Member Facilities – This represents the wiring on the member side of meter. Examples of this might be underground wiring flopping together and causing the breaker to trip.

Less than 1 % of all outages were due to Other – This covers outages not covered by the above categories, such as broken fuses, jumpers, etc.

9 % of all outages were due to Unknown – Sometimes we just never know what caused the power to go out.

Be assured that no matter what caused the outage, we will be out to restore power as quickly as we possibly can. WIEC has a supervisor and two linemen on call 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week who are there to answer the phone just in case there is an outage. We are very proud of our quick response and our low outage time.

FAQ

What is a prearranged outage list?

This is a list kept in the office of member's names that rely on electricity for medical reasons and other loads that are deemed critical. Medical reasons could include oxygen tanks, apnea monitors, or any other of the number of medical wonders a physician may prescribe. Critical loads may include computer-based businesses, livestock operations, or commercial services.

Just call our office and ask to be put on this list if this applies to your situation. We will call you and let you know ahead of time when the

electricity will be out for a planned maintenance. That way, you'll know ahead of time when the electricity will be out and for how long.

For unplanned outages due to weather or other acts of Mother Nature, we make every effort to get your power restored as quickly as possible. We understand that electricity is not just a convenience, it's a necessity.

We also ask that when notification is no longer needed, please call our office and have your name removed from the list.

For the next several months, we will be publishing interviews with the men and women who serve on our Board of Directors. We hope this will enable our members to get to know their directors a little better. They are a fine group who take pride in their job of guiding Western Illinois Electrical Coop.

Haven Vaughn, Director for District 1

Eighty-two years ago, Haven Vaughn was born. He grew up with kerosene lamps and wood-fired cook stoves. Getting water for drinking, cooking, or bathing meant pumping water by hand from the well or cistern. Haven tells of the "two-holer" out by the backyard fence. He grew up knowing what life was like "B.E." (before electricity - as he calls it) and appreciates now the benefits electricity brings. "Most of our members now consider electric power as a way of life, not being able to remember anything different," says Haven.

Haven has been a member of Western Illinois Electrical Coop. for 40 years and has been on the WIEC board for the last 20. He represents District 1, the northern most district of the WIEC service territory, which is mainly in Henderson County. He has served as vice president of the WIEC board and also serves on the Soyland Power Cooperative board and on the Continental Cooperative Services power supply and ethics committees.

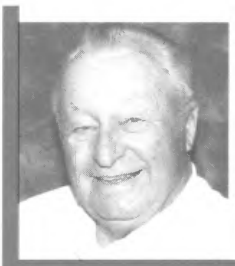
"I was drafted for it (the WIEC Board) by a group of dissatisfied members back in 1985 who thought the rates were getting out of hand." Over these 20 years, he has learned a lot about the industry. "I don't think most members understand how much the cost of generating and transmission of electricity is before it gets to us for the distribution," shares Haven. He adds that the soaring cost of liability and health insurance are also persistent problems for the cooperative.

During his career on the WIEC board, Haven has met many politicians, mostly at the Legislative Conference held in Washington D.C. each spring. Coop. leaders from around the nation converge on Washington to discuss with their state legislators matters of importance to electric coops. Haven was most impressed with Dick Durbin, although he has good things to say about several legislators, both past and present.

Away from his duties as a director, Haven is an outdoorsman. When he was an avid duck hunter, he used to schedule one hour of duck hunting, then come back and start picking corn during harvest time. He also loves to fish, having went to Minnesota with three other friends many times to fish for small mouth bass. He was so successful that his picture appeared on the bro-

chure for the lodge where he stayed. He also fishes in local ponds, lakes, and rivers. If it has fish in it, Haven will go there and try his luck. (778-2)

When he's at home, Haven is a Mr. Fix-it type of fellow. He can take things others cast off and make useful items. He was given an axle from an old wagon and designed a garden cart he uses when



Haven Vaughn



he works in the yard. He has retired from grain farming but still raises cattle. He has brought Limousins, Charolais, and Simmental stock into his predominately Angus herd.

Family is an important part of Haven's life. He has been married to Betty, his high school sweetheart, for 62 years. They have two children, Joyce and Jeff, two grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter.

Over the last 20 years, Haven has had a stable influence on the WIEC board. He understands exactly what electricity can mean to the people in the rural area of west central Illinois. In closing, Haven says, "In my humble opinion, I think a long outage once in a while after a bad storm is good. Maybe that will help them put a better value on our coop. and its loyal employees and linemen who keep our lights on for us."



Haven (right) is shown here with his children, Joyce and Jeff, and wife Betty at his grandson's wedding.

Director Nomination and Election Process

In accordance with Article IV, Section 4, of your cooperative's by-laws, a nominating committee must be appointed between 30 and 120 days prior to the Annual Meeting of Members (June 23, 2005). **(6817-54)**

Directors shall be elected by and from the membership by ballot and shall serve for a term of three years, or until their successors shall have been elected and qualified. The terms of directors from Districts No. 6 and No. 7 will expire this year.

District No. 6, currently represented by Robert Gronewold, is Augusta, St. Mary's, Hancock, and Harmony Townships in Hancock County, Illinois.

District No. 7, currently represented by Janet

Spory, is Wythe, Wilcox, Rocky Run, and Walker Townships in Hancock County, Illinois.

The nominating committee must post a list of nominations at the cooperative office at least 20 days before the annual meeting. Any 15 cooperative members may act together and nominate another member by petition. These nominations will be posted with those made by the nominating committee. Nominations made by petition at least 10 days before the annual meeting will be included on the official ballot. Later nominations by petition shall be treated as nominations from the floor. The chairman shall call for additional nominations from the floor. No member may nominate more than one candidate.

Please Dig Safely This Spring

Remember to call WIEC and J.U.L.I.E. before you begin your outdoor projects this spring.

Before beginning any digging projects, keep in mind that there may be underground utility lines in the way that could prove to be harmful. Even

when digging down only a few inches, it's important to know what's there. Many utilities are buried just inches below the surface.

Please call the WIEC office to locate underground electrical lines on either side of the meter. We ask for 24-hour notice. To locate water, sewer, phone, gas, cable, and all other utility lines, call JULIE at (800) 892-0123. They require 48-hour notice. **(8610-62)** Both services are free.

By having professionals mark any underground lines in the area, you will avoid any potential serious injury and prevent possible damage to the utility lines that could disrupt service to your home and your neighbors. Besides being a good idea, calling J.U.L.I.E. is the law.



Call WIEC

(217) 357-3125 • (800) 576-3125
Weekdays 8-5

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Brightwell, Mary Ann, Hamilton
Dykema, Larry E. & Coral L., Viola
Herriman, Scott, Colusa
Johnson, Bonnie J., Carthage
Miller, Joshua A., Sutter
Pilkington, Shane & Amanda, Hamilton
Snyder, Steve & Pamela, Bushnell
Wyatt, Chris, Sutter

OFFICE CLOSING

Our office will
be closed
March 25 due to
Good Friday.

HAPPY EASTER!

WIEC NEWS

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Paul Dion

From the Manager

Congratulations! You are a member/owner of Western Illinois Electrical Coop. and I'm happy to report that last year was a good one for WIEC. We made margins in 2004, so we are allocating back to our members their share of those margins, in the form of capital credits. That's one of the reasons cooperatives are so unique.

We inform our members their share of the allocation by printing it right on the bottom left side of their April electric bill, which should be in the mail around April 8. By printing the allocation amount right on the bill, we reduce labor expenses, postage expense, and printing costs.

This is for your information only. You do not need to do anything, so please do

not pay this allocation amount or subtract this amount from your bill. **(9528-64)**

For members who have had their service disconnected during 2004 and no longer receive a bill, they will also receive a separate allocation notice in the mail in April.

Capital credits are allocated every year, but not necessarily paid back every year. Typically, electric cooperatives reinvest capital credits back into the business operation, which reduces the need for WIEC to borrow money and also reduces the amount paid by the cooperative in interest payments. Capital credits will be returned to the member when Western Illinois Electrical Coop.'s board of directors decides that the cooperative is strong enough financially to do so.

Nominating Committee Appointed

WIEC's board of directors recently appointed the following members to serve on the 2005 nominating committee: District No. 1 – Alan White, Lomax; District No. 2 – Spencer Berry, Nauvoo; District No. 3 - Richard Douglas, Burnside; District No. 4 - Rodney McGaughey, Carthage; District No. 5 – Ron Howell, Carthage; District No. 6 – Robert Menn, Plymouth and Gary Akers, Carthage; and District No. 7 - Max Roskamp, Sutter and Victor Kerr, Warsaw. **(4832-17)**

Two members are appointed from the districts whose board terms expire each year, with one being appointed from each of the remaining districts. These members will nominate at least one member for a three-year term to represent Districts 6 and 7.

Rob Gronewold represents District 6 and Janet Spory represents District 7.

Due to the advance printing of this issue, a meeting date has not been set. Call our office for more information about the first nominating committee meeting.

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- **Haven Vaughn** — Director,
Lomax

STAFF

- **Paul Dion** — Manager
- **Tommie Long** —
Mgr. of Operations
- **Becky Dickinson** —
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MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four members' map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

Rob Gronewold – Director District 6

Robert Gronewold has been a director for district 6 of WIEC for 15 years. He was approached by an outgoing member to consider running for the board. Rob said, "I took the opportunity to serve and learn more about the coop." He has served as President for the last two years and also has served as Secretary/Treasurer and assistant Secretary/Treasurer.

Rob feels the greatest assets of Western Illinois Electrical Coop. are that it is member owned and member driven. He doesn't take his position on the board lightly. He adds, "I would like members to understand that the board is constantly striving to make the best decisions possible for them, the member, versus a "for profit" organization who is strictly trying to show a profit."

When he's not attending to his director duties, Rob is a city mail carrier in Macomb. Although he changes routes quite often, the average city route is usually nine-ten miles in length and has around 600 customers. Like most mailmen, Rob has his dog bite story, his occurring just last summer. He was leaving a porch after delivering the mail and an old, small dog got him in the back of the leg. Rob learned later that the dog didn't see or hear

well, so he assumed that the dog was surprised and that was the reason for the attack. "I like dogs," says Rob, "and usually I don't have any trouble with them."

Rob is also a grain farmer in addition to his full time carrier duties. As for other activities, Rob says that between the mailman job and his family there isn't a lot of free time. In the past, he has been a councilman at his church, Trinity Lutheran Church of Carthage, and has been a representative of Aid for American Lutherans.

Rob and his wife Kristine have a daughter, Laci, who is 18 months old. She is the apple of her daddy's eye who proudly tells of just spending the days goofing around with her and enjoying her. However, Laci will have to share her daddy's attention soon, as she will have a new little brother or sister arriving later this summer.

He is no different than most farmers when he lists his hobbies; he just likes to spend time outside. His hobbies include cooking out, gardening, riding go-carts or ATVs, and mowing the lawn.

When not at work or attending to his board duties, Rob could probably be found outside with his daughter beside him. And that's just the way he likes it.



Rob Gronewold is shown here farming with his daughter, Laci, (above) and carrying mail in Macomb (right). Though he wears a lot of different hats, Rob always has time to devote his full attention to serving the members of district 6 on the WIEC Board of Directors.

Stay Safe During Spring Planting Season

Many farm workers are killed each year when their farm equipment makes contact with overhead power lines. These tragic accidents are preventable. Before heading back into the fields, Western Illinois Electrical Coop. and Safe Electricity urge farm workers to review farm activities and work practices that take place around power lines.

"Make sure everyone who works on the farm knows the location of power lines and keeps farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them," says Molly Hall, Director of Safe Electricity. "Keep in mind, the minimum 10 foot distance is a 360-degree rule – below, to the side, and above lines. It may take a little more time, but ensuring proper clearance can save lives."

Today's larger farms require transporting tractors and equipment to fields several miles away. Before transit, avoid raising the arms of planters, cultivators, or truck beds near power lines. Many tractors are now equipped with radios and communications systems, and have antennas extending from the cab to 15 feet above the ground that could make contact with power lines.

Some other equipment safety considerations:

- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level – under 14 feet – before moving or transporting; use care when raising them.
- When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter, or someone to help make certain that contact is not made with a line.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!

"It's also important for operators of farm

equipment or vehicles to know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line," Hall says. "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 make sure power to the line is cut off."

"If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result," Bob Aherin, University of Illinois Agricultural Safety Specialist says. "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's 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.

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 Western Illinois Electric Coop for information on minimum safe clearances from overhead and underground power lines.

For more information visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

Make sure everyone who works on the farm knows the location of power lines and keeps farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them."

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Gerald Brackensick Trust, Quincy
Burkey, Michael A., West Point
Bushong, Anthony & Shawnda,
Carman

Crabb, Gregory L., Gladstone
Harl, Wil J., Nauvoo

Hickenbottom, Kurt & Terri L. Cameron,
Carthage

Kelly, David & Chrystal Steele, Plymouth
Spangler, Tim J., Carthage

Spangler's Day Lilies & Perennials, Carthage

CONGRATULATIONS

Virginia Benjamin
% Francis Delany

Myron Leenerts

Geane M. Reed

These members won \$10 because they found their map location numbers in recent issues of the WIEC News. Each month we hide four map location numbers in the WIEC News. It's so easy; find your number, call our office and you'll receive a \$10 bill credit on your next electric bill

Remember, you can't win if you don't look!

Director's Responsibilities

According to information compiled by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) in Washington, D.C., a director's responsibility consists of having the ability and knowledge to set policy and approve programs that are the basis for operating the cooperative. A director must have the time to attend monthly board meetings, other (3927-17) special meetings, and seminars. These special sessions are necessary to keep directors informed on the various aspects of the cooperative and the electric utility industry. Other criteria of a board member as identified by NRECA include:

- Be an independent thinker, but also a co-operator;
- Be capable of acquiring the knowledge necessary to cope with the issues of a modern electric utility, including finances, management and public issues;

- Possess the character and demeanor that will reflect favorable on behalf of the cooperative;
- Have the willingness to listen and learn;
- Be one who can accept and direct change;
- Be of sufficient stature to command the respect of management, employees, fellow board members, cooperative members and the public;
- Be willing to commit adequate time to the work of the board to be an effective member and properly discharge the duties of the board;
- Subordinate personal and other business interests to the needs of the cooperative when making a decision;
- Be willing to accept the unpleasant moments of a director's experience;
- Let management manage.

What the Board Does and Does Not Do:

- The board does not oversee WIEC's day-to-day operations. Directors establish policies and point the cooperative in the direction they want employees to follow. The employees decide the best way to get the job done.
- Directors aren't required to be walking encyclopedias about electric utilities when they are elected. But it is their job to become knowledgeable about issues facing Western Illinois Electrical Coop. so they can make

intelligent decisions.

- Directors must be accessible to people in their district. While it helps to be sympathetic to the needs of the members, the director must keep the best interest of the entire cooperative in mind.
- It is expected that each director will be able to attend most regular board meetings and any special meetings that come up from time to time.

Do You Take Your Electricity For Granted?


Do you always expect a light to turn on with a flip a switch? Do you expect your stove burners to get hot when you turn them on? Do you expect your television set or computer to come on at the press of a button? As your local electric cooperative we make taking electricity for granted easier. You can count on clean, reliable electricity to keep you warm, fed, and entertained.

*Brought to you by
Western Illinois Electrical Coop.*



WIEC NEWS

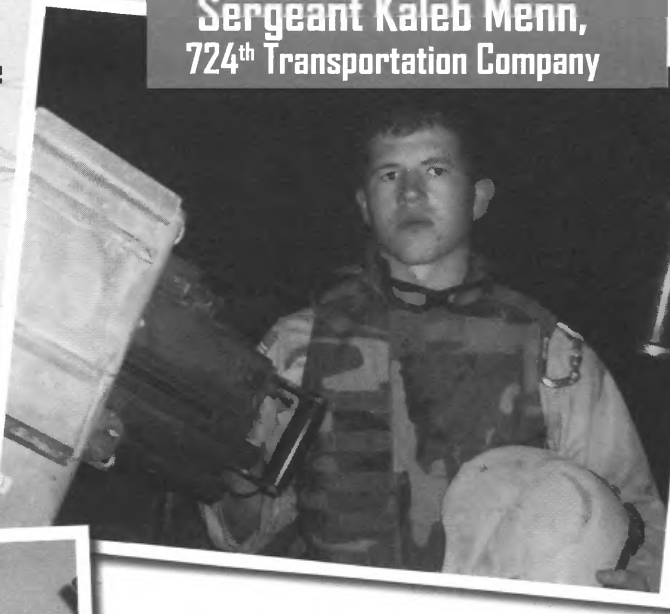
P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ www.wiec.net ■ 800/576-3125

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

(On this Memorial Day, there are many sons and daughters, husbands and wives, friends and neighbors who are away from their families because they are serving their country. Below are one soldier's thoughts, written January 22, 2005. The poem was originally written to be shared with family and friends; however, Sgt. Menn has graciously allowed it to be printed in the WIEC News.)

Some of y'all are military and some aren't, but I'd like to share this with all of you. Since I've been in Iraq, from my company I've had two of my battle buddies killed in action, and one is still currently a POW. I was on mission one night and just started writing and ended up with my tribute to them. It's just a short poem but I'd like to share it with you. - **Sergeant Kaleb Menn, 724th Transportation Company.**

**Sergeant Kaleb Menn,
724th Transportation Company**



Sergeant Kaleb Menn, son of WIEC members Robert and Jane Menn, recently returned from a year long tour of duty in Iraq. Kaleb is a 2003 graduate of Carthage High School. He joined the army in 2002 as a reservist and was called up to active duty in December 2003.

Sergeant Menn belonged to the 724th Transportation Company, a reserve unit based in Bartonville, IL. They were deployed to Iraq in (369-33) February 2004. His unit was responsible for transporting fuel and supplies to different areas in Iraq.

During an ambush near Baghdad on April 9, 2004, two members of his unit were killed and one was taken prisoner. As of March 18, 2005, (the printing of this issue) the whereabouts of this soldier remains unknown.

Continued on 16b ▶

Call toll free (800) 576-3125



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Secretary/Treasurer, *Carthage*
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◀ *Continued from 16a*

Sergeant Kaleb Menn, 724th Transportation Company



After spending many months,
a year in Iraq.
I can't believe it,
I'm finally heading back.
Thoughts of pride and happiness,
should be running through my head,
but instead, as I lay in bed,

I wonder why I am not one of the dead?

Why may I go on,
living everyday.

While some of my friends,
they had to pay.

They paid deaths toll and gave their soul,
So that a foreign land could be free.

And while I feel pride that I stood by their side,

I wonder how can this be?

Krause was a gentle giant,
who would never hurt a fly.

Surely someone so gentle,
didn't deserve to die.

Then there was Goodriche,
who was a genius in his own way.

He was always waitin with a challengin conversation,
to start out your day.

And we'll never forget Maupin,
Who's held somewhere amidst the sand.

Held captive somewhere in,
this cruel desert land.

I ask why is Maupin captive?

Why is he still lost?

And why did so many others,
have to pay freedoms cost?

I ask God why,

why did this have to be?

Why did they have to sacrifice,
so others could go free?

Then as I lay there praying,
I found comfort in my beliefs.

Through my trust in God,
a strange sensation of relief.

Because I knew all these men served with honor,
integrity and pride.

And God now has some of Earth's Angels,
standing by his side.

Briscoe Menke – Director for District 4

I was brought into this world during the era of the Great Depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s by a rural farm tenant family in northeast Missouri. As with many other farm families during that time, it was due to my parents' hard work that me and my younger siblings had the necessities of life. They did the best they could. It might be said that we were not poor; we just did not have any money. (353-63)

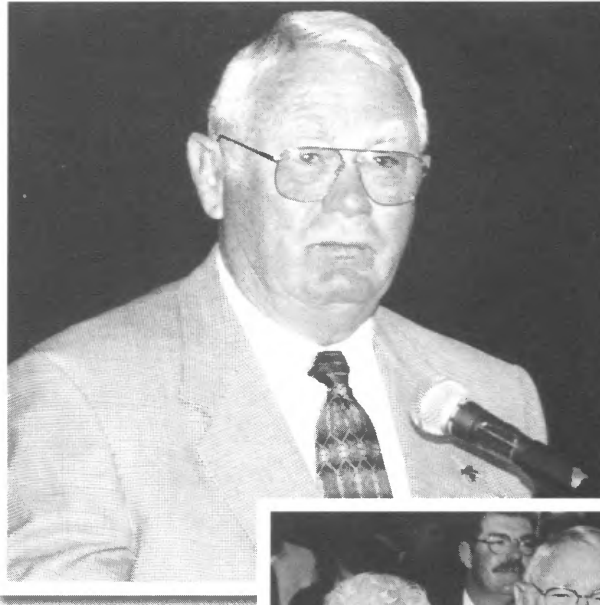
My education came about in a one-room school house and our method of transportation was by foot. All eight grades were taught in one building where one teacher had to teach all subjects to all grades. The teacher also had the responsibility of keeping the building clean and making sure it was warm in the winter. After grade school, I attended high school in a rural community 12 miles from our home, walking the first mile and a half each day to meet the school bus.

During those early years of my life, electricity was only available to our "city-cousins." The rural communities had to survive without the conveniences provided by electricity because the electrical providers determined it was not economically feasible to bring that energy to rural areas. Try to imagine today what it would be like not to have that convenience available with a flick of a switch. Many of the younger generation have not had to do without electricity for any extended period of time and do not realize how our rural lives have changed since electricity arrived.

Anyway, thanks to those early farm families a cooperative was born that would provide the rural areas with precious electricity. Along with the help of a new governmental entity, the Rural Electrical Administration, the rural areas were beginning to see the conveniences that electricity could bring into their lives. To this day, many of the electrical cooperatives are still thought of as the "REA" to their long-time members.

My high school days were completed during the early 1940s when World War II was in full swing and many young men were being drafted into the Armed Services. I opted to volunteer into the Navy Air Corps immediately after graduation. My military time was spent in the States with schooling in the field of aviation ordnance.

When WWII was over, I returned to the Colusa area. I started working part time with the local Farm Program Office in Carthage as a field crop reporter. In 1954, I accepted the job of County Executive Director and remained in that position until my retirement in 1983. Then I was asked if I was interested in a job as a loan officer with



Marine Trust Bank in Carthage, which I accepted and worked there for 10 years.

I have been affiliated with several different organizations during the past years, some of which have been very important to me. These include the Dallas Rural Fire Protection District, Nauvoo-Colusa School Board, the Colusa and Elvaston Church boards, the Enhanced 911 Board during formation of the 911 system, and a Director of Western Illinois Electrical Coop. Basically, all of these groups were in one form or another, a cooperative effort to work together to get a task completed.

As I look back, I really feel that because of that Great Depression, rural electrical cooperatives were formed as a necessity. Rural families worked together to get a job done of which no one could do alone. It was a cooperative effort, even though at the time, we did not realize what was happening.

My involvement with rural communities has been very satisfying to me. I have enjoyed the years of service working with the rural families in an attempt to make life more comfortable. There have been many changes over the years, some good and some not so good, but we all have benefited so much because of those changes. Thank you all for being part of my life.



Jeanne and Briscoe Menke

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Briscoe has been on the WIEC board for 13 years serving as President, Vice-President and Secretary/Treasurer. He also represents WIEC as a Director of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives board.

Briscoe has three sons and six grandchildren. His wife, Jeanne, passed away this past January after a courageous battle with cancer.

Vegetation Management Schedule

We plan to have crews performing routine brush spraying beginning May 1, 2005, in all or parts of the following townships: (959-21)

In Hancock County:

Augusta, Chili, St. Albans, Walker, Rocky Run, St. Mary, Harmony, Bear Creek, Wythe, and Wilcox.

In Adams County: Lima



Vegetation management—including brush spraying—is an important aspect of WIEC's goal of delivering power to you that is safe, reliable, and environmentally responsible. In fact, our vegetation management program can help reduce outages caused by things such as branches falling on lines during storms, shrubbery interfering with voltage levels, or weeds in right-of-way areas making access to equipment difficult.

Due to the advanced printing of this issue of the WIEC News, these plans are subject to change. If there are questions or concerns, please contact our office during normal business hours at (217) 357-3125 or (800) 576-3125. For more information concerning our vegetation management policy, check out our Web site at www.wiec.net under the program tab.

Paying Your Bills On Line?

The Internet offers many conveniences to us who live in rural areas. Even though we don't live near a large city, we can still get a bestselling book or a DVD delivered to our home, chat with a family member 300 miles away, or pay a bill, all with just a click of a mouse. More and more WIEC members are using their bank's e-pay service or another online bill paying service to pay their electric bills. Most of the time, this is a great way to get your bills paid fast with little effort. (10532-79)

However, the billing department at WIEC has noticed a growing trend of problems that are surfacing with the members who use these services. We are told that when members pay their WIEC bill on line, the service immediately takes the money out of their checking/savings account and issues a check to WIEC for payment. Unfortunately, these checks are getting lost in the mail or are addressed incorrectly and do not reach our office by the bill due date. The result is that the electric bill is deemed delinquent by WIEC and penalty may be added even though it was taken from the member's bank account a week or so before.

There are several ways to correct this problem. The first is to forgo these types of services to pay your electric bill and use WIEC ACH transfer program. It's free, so you won't have service charges from your bank. All the transactions are handled here

by the WIEC billing department, so we can make sure everything is handled correctly and in a timely manner. The amount of your electric bill will be taken from your checking/saving account on the due date. There are no worries about late mail or lost checks.

If you still wish to use a bill paying service, please make sure that they use our correct address. Make sure they send the payment to:

**Western Illinois Electrical Coop.
(or WIEC)**
PO Box 338
Carthage, IL 62321

Unless the address appears as above, the post office could return the check to the check issuer, which makes it that much longer before your bill is paid.

If you have any questions, please contact the WIEC office.



WIEC's office will be closed on May 30 in observance of Memorial Day.

As always, in case of power emergencies, call (217) 357-3125 or (800) 576-3125.

Please wait and call for questions concerning billing, payment arrangements, or other non-emergency matters until normal business hours.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

David L. Duncan, Dallas City
Tiffany L. Marshall, Nauvoo
James & Andria Moser, Burlington
Western Creek Farms L.L.C., Camp Point

WIEC NEWS

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ www.wiec.net ■ 800/576-3125

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

WIEC Purchases Air Evac Memberships for Employees

Air Evac is an air ambulance service that provides rapid medical transport for small communities, such as those in Hancock and Henderson counties, who otherwise might not be able to support an air ambulance service.

Air Evac offers annual memberships, which entitle the member to call Air Evac Lifeteam during a medical illness or injury that is life or limb threatening. The annual fee is considered pre-payment for all covered flights.

WIEC recently purchased on-the-job Air Evac memberships for our employees. The

lineman profession can be a dangerous one and if an accident were to happen, it would be crucial to get our employees the medical attention they would need as quickly as possible. For that reason, WIEC has decided to

cover the employees if injured while on the job by air ambulance transport.

We have invited an Air Evac representative to come to WIEC's Annual Meeting and visit

with our members before our meeting begins. We hope to have an Air Evac helicopter on the Hancock County Extension grounds for our members to look view.




Annual Meeting June 23!

See page 9 for more information.

Call toll free (800) 576-3125



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WIEC Announces "Youth to Washington" Tour Winner

Karen Jacquot, daughter of Charles and Connie Jacquot of Carthage, has been named WIEC's "Youth to Washington" tour winner. Karen, a sophomore at Carthage High School, will visit Washington D.C. with thousands of other high school students from all over the United States. She will tour historic sites, meet her state's legislative leaders and get to know other high school students from across the country. Many participants refer to it "as a trip of a lifetime."

In addition to visiting our nation's capitol, Karen also earned

a trip to Springfield, IL for Youth Day on April 13 and met with Sen. John Sullivan and Rep. Rich Myers. While in the state capitol, Karen had an opportunity to speak with Secretary of State Jesse White, and tour the State Capitol, Lincoln's Tomb, and the Illinois Supreme Court. **(7814-58)**

Josh Siverly, son of Bill and Marlena Siverly, and Sarah Carroll, daughter of Dan and Carrie Carroll, also won a trip to Youth Day in Springfield but were unable to attend.

WIEC congratulates all the winners!



Manager Paul Dion (L) and Board President Rob Gronewold (R) congratulate "Youth to Washington" winner Karen Jacquot.

Free Blood Pressure Checks

As in past years, the Hancock County Health Department has agreed to come to our annual meeting and make available free blood pressure checks to our members.



Know If You Can Vote!

The easiest way to determine who can vote a particular membership is to look at the label for the current issue of the WIEC News that you are reading. That will tell who can (or can't) vote for the membership. Determining voting rights appears to be complicated, but for most of our members, it's really not. Just remember these points:

- If there is only one name on the label, then only one person signed the membership application, then only that person votes.

Example: Bob Smith
1830 E. County Rd 2300
LaHarpe, IL 61450

The membership belongs to who signed the membership application. A single membership can be made joint by simply filling out a form. Call our office for details or go to www.wiec.net to download the necessary form. **(5831-61)**

- If there are two names on the mailing label, then either may cast one vote for that membership.

Example: Bob Smith
Mary Smith
872 Main St.
Basco, IL 62313

If the label does not show the current husband and wife's name, it may be because there has been a divorce or death and a subsequent remarriage. If the names are not correct, please call our office and we can explain the process necessary to cor-

rect them.

- If someone else's name is on the top line, sent in care of your name below, the membership belongs to whose name is on the top line.

Example: Bob Smith
% Roger Jones
PO Box 777
Stronghurst, IL 61480

The membership belongs to Bob, so he votes for the membership, not Roger.

- If the first name on the label is an estate, the executor cannot vote for this membership. If the membership was a single membership, this membership terminates upon the death of the member. It does not transfer. If the original membership was joint, the membership will be passed on to the surviving spouse.

- For corporate, partnership or other types of memberships, please contact our office and we can explain your particular situation to you over the phone.

If you have any questions concerning your membership status, please call the office. We will be happy to answer your questions. We would much rather take care of potential problems before the night of annual meeting.



Child ID Kits will be given out at Annual Meeting

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. will be handing out National Child Identification Kits at our Annual Meeting. These kits will allow parents or guardians to gather important information about their children, such as height, weight, a current picture, DNA samples, and current fingerprints. This information could give authorities important details that would assist their efforts in locating a missing child. **(6817-51)**

We invite members who are parents or grandparents to bring their children or grandchildren to our annual meeting. The Carthage Police Dept. will assist by getting accurate fingerprints as part of the kit.

These kits will also be available for our members to take home.



Nominating Committee

Nine members of Western Illinois Electrical Coop. were appointed to the 2005 nominating committee. The committee met at the WIEC office on April 5 and April 11 to make nominations for directors. Two directors will be elected at the cooperative's annual meeting on June 23.

Serving on the committee were Alan White, Lomax; Spencer Berry, Nauvoo; Richard Douglas, Burnside; Rod McGaughey, Carthage; Ron Howell, Carthage; Robert Menn, Plymouth; Gary Akers, Carthage; Max

Roskamp, Sutter; and Victor Kerr, Warsaw.

The following were nominated for director positions: **(4618-31)**

District 6 – Robert M. Gronewold

District 7 – Janet Spory

Any nominations made by petition will be included on the official ballot if they are brought to the WIEC office at least 10 days before the meeting. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the annual meeting.

From left are Rod McGaughey, Alan White, Robert Menn, Max Roskamp, Ron Howell, and Gary Akers.



The WIEC office will close Friday, June 24 at Noon.

Watch for the Annual Meeting Notice in your mailbox. It will contain the registration card, proxy card, and other important information. To save time, please bring the registration card to annual meeting!

WESTERN ILLINOIS ELECTRICAL COOP.

2005 ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, June 23
7:00 p.m.
Hancock County Extension Center
Carthage, IL

NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

WIECO NEWS

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ www.wiec.net ■ 800/576-3125

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Incandescent, Halogen, or Compact Fluorescent?

The least expensive bulbs may cost you the most.

In 1879 Thomas Edison had a bright idea. A very bright idea. Popular lore has it that Edison invented the light bulb, but in actuality he merely improved upon the already 50-year-old idea with the advent of the incandescent bulb. Up to that time, electric lighting was not practical for residential use. While many of us still use incandescent bulbs, grabbing the first one we glide past while speeding through the supermarket aisles, this least expensive of bulbs may not be the most economical in the long run.

Shopping for new light bulbs can be confusing. Which is best? Which lasts longest? **(9522-11)** Which will save you money? Below, we have broken down and simplified the different bulb types to make the comparison easier.



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

HALOGEN- Halogen bulbs are more efficient than incandescent bulbs and burn longer. They have a standard life of

approximately 2,250 to 3,500 hours and with continued use maintain their clean white light without fading. Unfortunately, these energy gluttons create four times more heat than incandescent bulbs and, with temperatures reaching about 1,200 degrees, they can be serious fire hazards.

COMPACT FLUORESCENT- The words "fluorescent light" may bring horrifying recollections of buzzing light fixtures and visions of dull, sickly, institutional type lighting. But it's time to rethink that image. Today's fluorescent bulbs are the most energy efficient form of lighting out there and the most economical to operate. New electronic ballasts have quieted the buzz and the phosphor-coated glass tubes produce a soothing spectrum of light that closely mimic that of the incandescent bulbs. Fluorescents consume only about one-quarter to one-third of the energy as incandescents and last 10,000 hours or more! Replacing the high-use bulbs in your home with fluorescent bulbs can greatly reduce your lighting bill.

The initial cost of fluorescent bulbs is higher (\$5-\$15 per bulb as compared to the \$0.75 incandescent bulb), but consumers must keep in mind that the operating cost of a 75-watt incandescent bulb will be about \$6 over its relatively short life span.

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

Call toll free (800) 576-3125



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Monday - Friday

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Let The Night Breezes Cool Your Home

You can take advantage of cool night air to reduce your indoor temperature at almost no cost if you live in a region where the nights are cool. Every sunny, hot day charges your home with heat. Starting in the late spring, you can begin removing this daily heat charge by circulating cool air through your home during evening, nighttime and early morning.

The more air you move and the longer you ventilate, the more heat the cool air removes from your home. You can ventilate your home by either passive means—opening doors or windows—or by active means such as fans. Most families use a combination of the two. Nighttime cooling works best during weather when the summer nights are cooler than the days by at least 10-15 degrees. The greater this temperature difference, the more air-conditioning cost you can save. (9622-11-28)

Take advantage of any cool nighttime breeze by opening the doors or windows that will direct that moving air into your home. The outside air will be coolest on the shady side of your home or underneath trees or bushes. Install screens on the doors or windows you find work best for ventilation to keep bugs, leaves, and debris from getting into your home.

Use a portable box fan mounted in an open window, or a pedestal fan near an open door to blow air in the same direction as the natural ventilation flows.

Nighttime cooling works best if your home doesn't get overheated during the day. Close your doors, windows, shades, and blinds in the morning when the outside air starts to heat up.

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

WIEC's Annual Meeting Recap

Watch for the September issue of the WIEC News for the recap for WIEC's Annual Meeting that was held June 23. There will be a list of prize winners, election results, pictures, and other news.

If you can't wait until September to see who won the grand prizes, check out our Web site, www.wiec.net for a complete listing of prize winners.

How much is your old air conditioner costing you?

Does it feel like your old air conditioner is costing you too much? Now is the perfect time to consider geothermal heating and cooling. It's clean, it's efficient, and with WIEC's 6-cent year around rate, it's the smart way to go.

Call our office for more details!



F

or the next several months, we will be publishing interviews with the men and women who serve on our Board of Directors. We hope this will enable our members to get to know their directors a little better. They are a fine group who take pride in their job of guiding Western Illinois Electrical Coop.

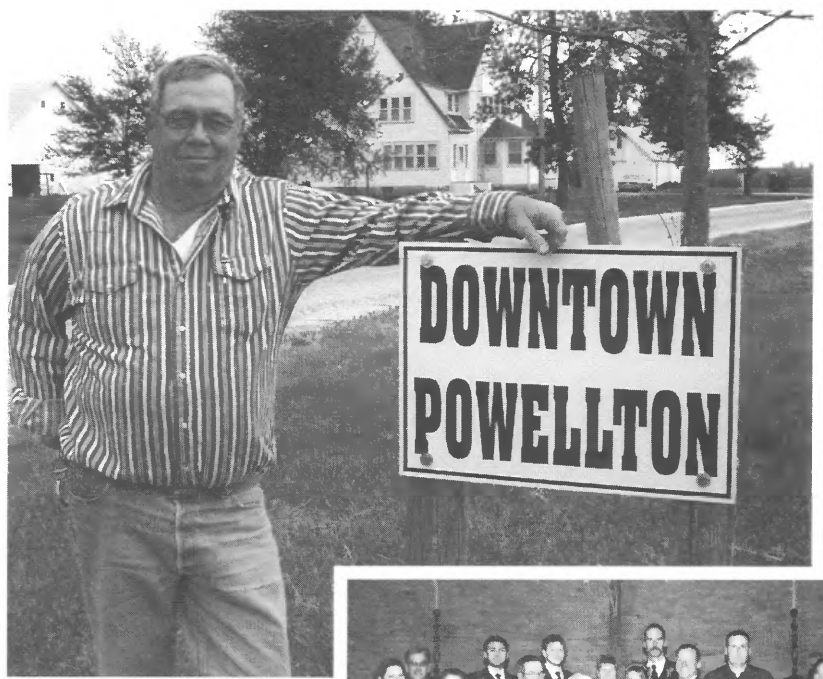
Bill Newton – Director for District 2

“I just live life one day at a time, as it happens,” begins WIEC director Bill Newton. He began life a half of a mile from his current home in Powellton, and except for a brief stint in Peoria and Carthage, hasn’t lived more than one mile away from that spot for most of his life. His roots are deep in the community he calls home. His ancestors date back to 1843, some buried at a nearby cemetery. He feels a special closeness to the people he calls friends and neighbors. “People get married. Good friends pass away. It’s all part of the fellowship of the community, the closeness and the caring.”

After losing an arm in an accident one autumn, his neighbors came in to harvest his crops. He feels that his neighbors didn’t really do it for him, they did it simply because that’s the type of people they are. Bill proudly tells of a 3rd of July party given by one of his neighbors. It’s an annual hog roast that’s been taking place for 15 years, sometimes having as many as 150-200 people in attendance. It’s open to all; all who attend are deemed family and no one is a stranger. **(6830-4-3)**

“I began life farming and I’ll die farming,” Bill reveals. However, there is a lot he has done in between. His mother taught him to always ask why and question things around him. This natural curiosity has led Bill to many different occupations during his life. He taught school for seven years, was an agriculture consultant for the University of Iowa, owned a computer software company, was a district sales manager for a computer software firm, and raised livestock. He has served on his church council, served on the Hancock County Extension board and also on the University of Illinois Agronomy Advisory Board.

Bill met his wife Ruth, while they were attending Carthage College. They have been married 44 years. “I’ve been very blessed with a loving wife, four children, and eight grandchildren. My parents instilled in me the



search for knowledge and a positive outlook and the community enhanced these values and honed my love of teasing,” tells Bill.

Years ago, Bill and Ruth both decided to get into some type of non-traditional farming. Bill chose growing alfalfa, while Ruth picked growing asparagus. Seventeen years later, the alfalfa is long forgotten, but the Newtons continue to grow asparagus. Many spring afternoons, Bill can be found at the four-way stop in Carthage or at the foot of the Ft. Madison Bridge selling their asparagus.

He is proud to be a director of WIEC. He feels that the employees are the best asset the coop has. “The employees take a certain personal ownership taking care of the needs of the coop and its members,” says Bill. “It’s a great group to be associated with.”

Yes, Bill Newton has certainly lived life. He’s done it surrounded by family and friends who are most important to him in the place he calls home - downtown Powellton.



TOP PHOTO: Newton - at home in Powellton

BOTTOM PHOTO: The Newton Clan

Changes in Air-Source Heat Pumps

For many years, WIEC has shared with our members the benefits for geothermal heating and cooling. However, we realize that for various reasons, geothermal may not be the best choice for everyone. Many homeowners do not have the space for horizontal loops or the soil condition for the vertical wells. Some homeowners may not want to invest in a geothermal system, as they may not be living in their current home long term. Whatever the reason for not choosing geothermal, there are other types of electric heating and cooling systems on the market today. One type that has undergone big improvements is the air-source heat pump.

Basically, an air-source heat pump pulls its heat indoors from the outdoor air in the winter and from the indoor air in the summer. Like a refrigerator, a refrigerant, such as Freon-22, flows continuously through pipes, back and forth from the outdoor coils. The direction it flows depends on (6719-64-1) whether it's heating or cooling. For more detailed information, check out the Web site, www.howstuffworks.com.

The efficiency and performance of today's air-source heat pumps are one-and-a-half to two times greater than those available 30 years ago. Today's air-source units are much quieter than their predecessors, some even boasting they are as quiet as a household refrigerator.

Many companies are developing a new type of coolant, as a replacement of Freon-22. The Clean Air Act of 1990 ruled that this type of coolant can no longer be placed in HCFC-based air conditioners and heat pumps after 2010. It will be completely banned from production by 2020. Until then, prices of Freon-22

will probably rise due to decreased production.

When selecting an air-source heat pump, look for the energy efficiency ratings. This compares the heat pump's heating and cooling efficiency performance rating to other makes and models. Also, look for the HSPF (Heating Seasonal Performance Factor) which rates the efficiency of the compressor and the electric-resistance elements. The most efficient pumps have an HSPF of between 8 and 10. Look for the SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio), which rates the heat pumps cooling efficiency. Efficient units have a SEER between 14 and 18. In 2006, a new standard for central heat pumps will take effect requiring heat pumps to meet a minimum of 13 SEER and 7.7 HSPF. Many new heat pumps exceed these ratings, but using these numbers is a good place to start.

When considering air-source systems, don't forget the incentives offered by Western Illinois Electrical Coop. We offer rebates and a reduced rate of 5 cents per kWh for usage to heat during the months October through April. Members can even apply for loans to help pay for electric heat. For more specific information, contact the WIEC office.

Sources: www.eer.energy.gov and www.howstuffworks.com.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

If you are interested in enrolling in
BUDGET BILLING
You'd better hurry!

This plan will average your electric payment for the next 12 months, based on your previous 12 months usage. Assuming your usage remains consistent with the previous years; your electric bill will be the same until July 2006, which is the catch-up month.

Deadline for enrollment is July 22
Call our office for details! 357-3125 or (800) 576-3125

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

IN MARCH:

Mark Hutchison, Colchester
Larry & Claire B. Klingler, Tucson, AZ
Douglas Lloyd Lovell, Niota
Jeffrey & Catherine Wepner, APO, AE

IN APRIL:

Grayling Akers & Steve Goris, Quincy
Broc Finch, Blandinsville
Charlie Ford, Lomax
Randy & Kathleen Gerhardt, Hamilton
Patrick F. Haigh & Kayla D. McQuigg, Carthage
Joshua Horton, Niota
Roger & Sarah Kerfoot, Augusta
Middle Creek MX Raceway, Inc., Carthage
Joseph D. Moyers & Jill R. Lenahan, Gladstone
Chris A. & Kimberly J. Nettles, Basco
Glen E. & Carla M. Schwartz, Quincy
Village of Plymouth, Plymouth
Jesse Whitson, Dallas City

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WIEC Employees Receive Air Evac Preparedness Training

Recently, WIEC purchased on the job memberships to Air Evac for their employees. Air Evac is an air ambulance service that provides rapid medical transport for small communities, such as those in Hancock and Henderson counties.

According to <http://money.cnn.com>, the electrical lineman profession is among the top 10 most dangerous professions. "If an accident were to happen, our employees deserve the quickest medical attention they could get," says WIEC Manager of Operations Tommie Long.

If an Air Evac helicopter needed to be called to an accident site, our employees need to know how to prepare a landing zone for the helicopter to land safely. An Air Evac crew came to WIEC and instructed WIEC employees about the factors that need to be considered in preparing a landing site, such as wind speed, landing surface conditions, and general helicopter safety rules. (5819-32)

Usually these details are handled by first responders; however, due to the remote areas that our linemen routinely work in, they may have to prepare a sight if the EMTs are not there.

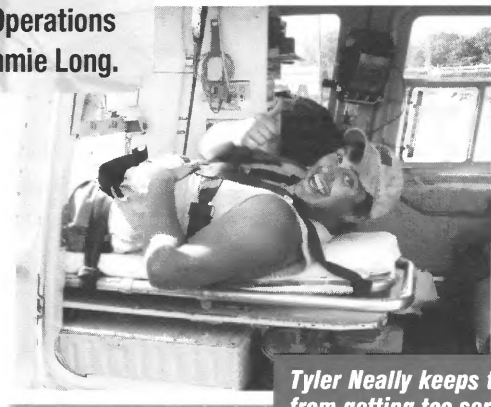


Air Evac crew explains how to prepare a landing zone

"If an accident were to happen, our employees deserve the quickest medical attention they could get," says WIEC Manager of Operations Tommie Long.



WIEC employees learn proper lifting techniques



Tyler Neally keeps the training from getting too serious

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Efficient Computer Operation

If you have a home computer, your family may spend hours a day doing homework, checking e-mail, or surfing the Web. Though 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 to a minimum.

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 next buy computer equipment. And be sure to look for the ENERGY STAR® logo as you shop because this is your assurance that your computer will use the minimum power (8614-63) 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 com-

puter 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 doesn't automatically sleep between jobs, shut it off manually when you're not using it.

Don't print any more documents than you need to, since printers use electricity, paper, and ink or toner. A computer can save a lot of time and energy if you use it efficiently. 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's quicker, it saves energy, and doesn't require postage.

For more information on energy-saving computer equipment visit the Department of Energy ENERGY STAR® Web site at www.energystar.gov.

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

Tommie Long Runs in the River to River Relay

Tommie Long, Operations Manager at Western Illinois Electrical Coop., was one of 1,920 runners who competed in the 17th Annual River to River Relay last April. The 80-mile race began at Pine Bluffs, IL on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River and ended in Golconda, IL at the Ohio River. There were 240 teams that consisted of eight team members each. The racecourse was divided into 24 (568-60-



Tommie was a member of the Touchstone Titans, a team made up entirely of Illinois cooperative personnel and their family members.

3) sections, with each team member running three sections. Each section varies in length between 2.5 miles and 4 miles with varying levels of difficulty and road surfaces. It was a test of endurance while enjoying the camaraderie of other runners from throughout the Midwest.

F

or the next several months, we will be publishing interviews with the men and women who serve on our Board of Directors. We hope this will enable our members to get to know their directors a little better. They are a fine group who take pride in their job of guiding Western Illinois Electrical Coop.

Jay Morrison – Director for District 3

Multi-tasking may be an over-used cliché, but the term seems to describe Jay Morrison's life perfectly. This Colusa native is the Executive Vice-President and Loan Officer at State Bank of Colusa. He also helps his brother and brother-in-law farm during fall harvest and serves on the boards of the State Bank of Colusa, First State Bank of Western Illinois, Nauvoo Colusa Education Foundation, and WIEC. His life is busy and his calendar is packed with meetings.

In addition to all these activities, he also is a volunteer fireman for the Colusa Fire Department. Since he works in Colusa, Jay feels it's his duty to be available to go to any fires that may occur during the day. "It's hard to find people to serve (on the Fire Department) in the daytime," Jay says. Many of the other department members are farmers who may not be able to leave their fields to get to a fire in time.

What precious time that is left on Jay's calendar is devoted to family. When he was younger, Jay enjoyed water skiing behind his older brother's boat. Several years later Jay and his wife Lisa decided to get a boat of their own so they and their children Rachel, 14, and Ryan, 10, could enjoy boating. For the past five summers, the Morrison's have joined his twin brother's family and other friends to go to the Lake of the Ozarks for a week. They have lots of fun boating on the lake and enjoy being together. They also try and visit his sister in Milwaukee each summer, taking advantage of the museums, the IMAX theatre, and the summer festival held along Lake Michigan.

Jay is a graduate of Nauvoo-Colusa High School and received his bachelor's of science degree from Western Illinois University. Jay and Lisa were introduced by mutual friends at Western and have been married 18 years.

Jay Morrison has been a director of WIEC for 11 years, serving as Vice-President and



Assistant Secretary-Treasurer. He was asked to run for the board in 1994 because members thought that his financial background would be helpful.

He thinks the future looks bright for Western Illinois Electrical Coop. "Good service never goes out of style," explains Jay. He was once told a story by a member about a bad experience with his out-of-state phone company. The member had to wait awhile to get his phone service repaired. When the phone repair man finally came, his car plates were from Arkansas. The member told Jay that he really appreciated WIEC having a local office and local servicemen for prompt service.

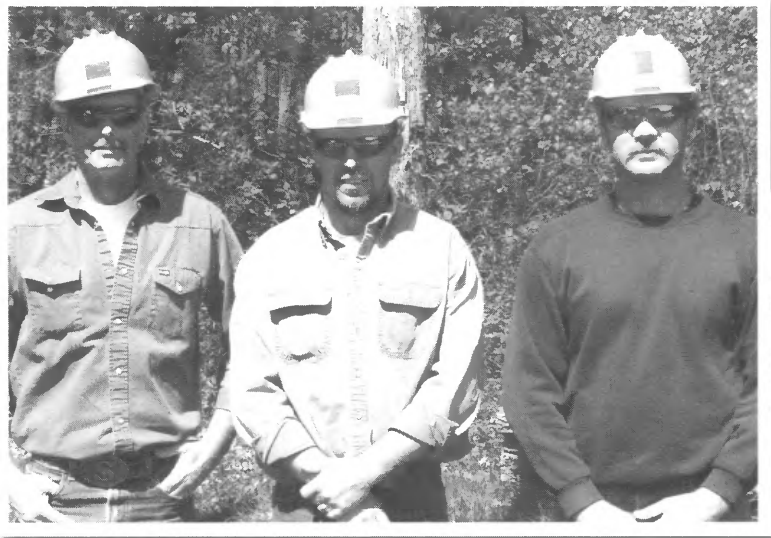
Jay feels that most members aren't aware of the additional member services WIEC provides its members, such as geothermal heating and cooling, water heater sales and service, and wiring advice.

Yes, Jay Morrison's plate is full with his job, his volunteering, and his family, yet he finds time to work it all in. He has mastered the art of multi-tasking.



From left are Rachel, Lisa, Ryan, and Jay.

WIEC Linemen Attend Training



Last May, WIEC sent three employees to a line clearance/tree trimming school sponsored by the Association of Illinois Electrical Cooperatives. Scott Carle, Cody Grainger and Andy Lafeber spent three days in Findley, IL

learning ANSI (American National Standards Institute) A300 pruning standards and ANSI 2-133.1 Safety Requirements.

They attended classes on many relevant topics, such as chain saw and chipper safety, tree identification, and the importance of proper utility pruning. They had hands-on field work and field demos throughout the school. By the end of the three days, they each became a certified "Line Clearance Arborist".

Tree trimming and line clearance are essential components of Western Illinois Electrical Coop.'s vegetation management program. This program helps reduce outages caused by branches falling on lines during storms, shrubbery interfering with voltage levels, or weeds in right-of-way areas making access to equipment difficult. For more information about our summer vegetation management schedule, visit our Web site at www.wiec.net

Check Electrical Outlets

Never overload electrical outlets and circuits. Overloaded electrical outlets, or overloaded circuits that supply power to several outlets, are a major cause of residential fires. Overloaded outlets and circuits carry too much electricity, which generates

heat in undetectable amounts. The heat causes wear on the internal wiring system and can ignite a fire.

All wiring systems should have circuit breakers or fuses that disconnect power when circuits become overloaded. However, an improperly

sized fuse or breaker can cancel this built-in safety feature.

To prevent overloading, never plug more than two appliances into an outlet at once or "piggyback" extra appliances on extension cords or wall outlets. Use only outlets designed to handle multiple plugs.

Give special consideration to appliances that use 1,000 or more watts, such as air



conditioners, refrigerators, hot plates, irons, microwave ovens, dishwashers, heaters, and deep fryers. Avoid plugging them into the same outlet or circuit. To use these appliances safely, know which outlets are connected to the same electrical circuit in your home. Do not exceed 1,500 watts for each outlet or circuit. Wattage requirements are listed in appliance manufacturer's instructions.

Begin a habit of regularly checking electrical cords and outlets. Fires that begin in these areas are difficult to detect, yet easy to prevent. **(10533-24)**

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

John V. & JoAnne Churchill, Tennessee
FEN Corporation, Niota
David B. & Angela Holbrook,
North Salt Lake, UT
Christina Johnson, Plymouth
Adam & Amy Lucie, Tennessee
Jared Prickett, Burlington
Chad Stewart, Carthage

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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Western Illinois Electrical Coop's 66TH ANNUAL MEETING



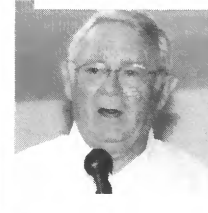
Members of Western Illinois Electrical Coop. (WIEC) re-elected Rob Gronewold and Janet Spory to the co-op's board of directors during its 66th Annual Meeting of Members held Thursday, June 23, at the Hancock County Extension Center.



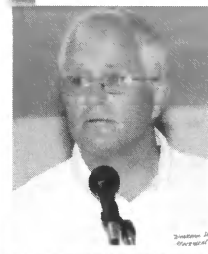
Co-op Manager Paul Dion thanked the members for the many things they do throughout the year to assist the co-op in operating more efficiently. He also thanked them for choosing electricity for cooking and to heat and cool their homes. He said that trust has always been an important factor in the relationship between the co-op and its members.

He explained, "Twenty years ago, the geothermal concept was new and radically different than fuel oil or propane furnaces on the market. WIEC saw geothermal technology as a way for our members to heat and cool their homes efficiently and economically. Our members trusted WIEC enough to try geothermal and have endorsed this program thoroughly. Today, we have more than 220 members whose homes and businesses are using geothermal heat pumps." (10532-45-9)

Before the meeting, members were able to have their blood pressure checked by the Hancock Co. Health Dept. and talk to Air Evac representatives. Members with small children or grandchildren were encouraged to take home a Child ID kit. The children who attended were invited to have their fingerprints done onsite by the Carthage Police Department.



Treasurer Briscoe Menke reported that the co-op is in good financial condition, with total margins of \$354,408. He said that 60 new services were installed in the past year.



Board President Rob Gronewold discussed how WIEC has always been an integral part of the community. He said, "WIEC is a company (574-4) that cares about the people it serves. That service goes a long way beyond keeping the lights on. It's neighbors helping neighbors. That's what it's all about — that's the electric co-op tradition."

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2005

Annual Meeting Prizes

NO	GIFT	DONOR	RECIPIENT
1	Document Bag	MARINE TRUST CO. OF CARTHAGE	Myron & Virginia Huls, Hamilton
2	\$25 Gift Certificate to Plum Tree Supper Club	FIRST STATE BANK OF WESTERN IL	Euvon Radel, Nauvoo
3	\$25 Cash	PETERS HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING	Ruth Iutzi, Hamilton
4	50' Outdoor Extension Cord	HEINTZ ELECTRIC COMPANY	Mary Grauf, Elvaston
5	12" Oscillating Table Fan	FLETCHER-REINHARDT COMPANY	Mark Burling, Carthage
6	2 Hats	VAN METER INDUSTRIAL INC.	Chris Dickinson, Carthage
7	\$25 Gift Card to The Hawkeye	VAN METER INDUSTRIAL INC.	Dale & Verna Rawhouser, Biggsville
8	Certificate for One Tire Rotation and Balance for Auto or Light Truck	J & R TIRE SERVICE, INC.	Alfred & Helen Kunz, Basco
9	Ribeye Loin	SLY FOX	Raymond Ferguson, LaHarpe
10	Rival 5 Qt Crock Pot	REED CITY POWER LINE SUPPLY CO.	Lenora Bunnell, Hamilton
11	3 Beanie Babies	RIDDERS BUSINESS SUPPLY	Charles Kost, LaHarpe
12	3 Beanie Babies	RIDDERS BUSINESS SUPPLY	Jack & Donna Metternich, Nauvoo
13	Certificate for Two Sunday Breakfast Buffets	PLUM TREE SUPPER CLUB	Robert & Helen White, Carthage
14	\$50 Gift Certificate for WIEC Electricity Bill	SHERRILL'S ELECTRIC UTILITY SERVICES	Arthur & Janis Hartweg, Hamilton
15	\$50 Gift Certificate for WIEC Electricity Bill	SHERRILL'S ELECTRIC UTILITY SERVICES	Robert & Mary Johnson, Carthage
16	\$50 Gift Certificate for WIEC Electricity Bill	SHERRILL'S ELECTRIC UTILITY SERVICES	Mary Scheetz, Nauvoo
17	\$50 Gift Certificate for WIEC Electricity Bill	SHERRILL'S ELECTRIC UTILITY SERVICES	Donnie Rosenboom, Niota
18	\$50 CASH	DREYER & KELSO, P.C., PA.	Arlene Lantz, Carthage
19	\$25 Gift Card to Sears	UNITED UTILITY SUPPLY COOPERATIVE	Robert & Vera Roskamp, Sutter
20	Yearly Household Membership to Air Evac	AIR EVAC	Joe Matthews, Carthage
GRAND PRIZE #1	\$100 Cash	WIEC	Robert & Alice Bolton, Hamilton
GRAND PRIZE #2	\$100 Cash	WIEC	James & Linda Harnetiaux, Tenn.
GRAND PRIZE #3	\$100 Cash	WIEC	Don & Tamera Sewell, Nauvoo
GRAND PRIZE #4	\$100 Cash	WIEC	Charles Jacquot, Carthage
GRAND PRIZE #5	\$100 Cash	WIEC	Pat Dickwisch, Sutter



Grand Prize Winners! (l-r) Linda Harnetiaux, Pat Dickwisch, Robert Bolton, Charles Jacquot, and Don Sewell.

For the next several months, we will be publishing interviews with the men and women who serve on our Board of Directors. We hope this will enable our members to get to know their directors a little better. They are a fine group who take pride in their job of guiding Western Illinois Electrical Coop.

Janet Spory – Director of District 7

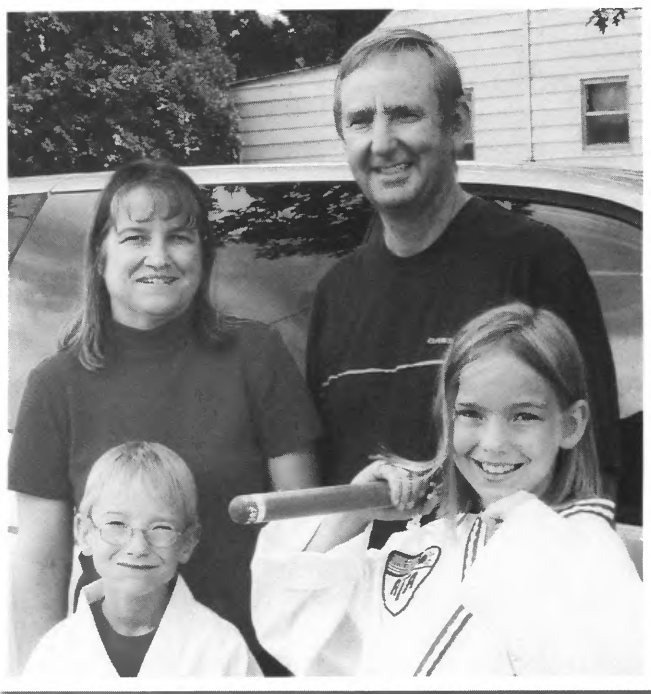
Janet Spory and her husband of 15 years, Wayne, seem to have two homes. One is in rural Sutter and the other is a Honda Odyssey mini-van. The house in Sutter is their home base, where they usually sleep, pick up their mail, and do chores. Their van may seem like their second home due to the amount of time they spend in it taking their kids to their activities.

The Sporys are in that stage of life where they are constantly on the road. Janet says, "I live in the van; sometimes I don't even go home after work. Wayne brings the kids to Quincy and I meet them somewhere." They are parents of a daughter, Faith, 11, and a son, Ryan, 7. The Spory children are in AWANA, a Christian based group whose activities are similar to scouting, which meets one night a week.

Plus, Faith is beginning her second year taking lessons in Tae Kwon Do, a form of Korean martial arts. Her competitions have taken her to Jefferson City, MO, Columbia, MO, and Little Rock, AK. With her lessons three days a week, plus being on the demonstration team, the Sporys seem to be constantly in their van going to lessons, demonstrations, or competitions. Ryan is following in his older sister's footsteps and is beginning the sport too.

Janet received associate degrees from John Wood Community College and Gem City College. She is the operations manager of the Trust Department at Mercantile Bank in Quincy. Janet explains that a trust department can handle other people's finances when they are unable to do so themselves, or when they would rather let someone else handle it. **(7626-63)**

Janet feeds her passion for music by serving as the church organist for Sutter Salem Bible Church and plays trumpet in the Quincy Community Concert Band. Janet joined the band in elementary school because she realized that later on it would be a good way to get in free to the ball games. She originally wanted to play the trumpet, however was told it was not an instrument for girls and should learn the clarinet, a "girl's" instrument, which she did. About 10 years ago, Wayne surprised her with a trumpet for her birthday because he realized that it was something she had always wanted to do. She took lessons, abandoned the wood-



wind section in the Quincy group, and began playing the trumpet in the band.

Janet was elected to the Western Illinois Electrical Coop. board of directors in 2002 and was recently elected as secretary-treasurer by the other directors. She originally agreed to run for the board as a way to be involved in the community and get to know her neighbors better. By serving as secretary-treasurer, she can learn a whole **(688-63)** different facet of the cooperative and how it operates.

She feels that some members may not understand how the cooperative works. "I would like to see more members take advantage of the opportunities that are offered by the coop.," Janet says. "There are programs, such as the water heater, the geothermal, and the tree trimming that are available." However, she feels that the members are the cooperative's greatest asset. "Without our members, we wouldn't be here."

Someday, Janet and Wayne will remember this period in their lives with amazement, wondering how they did it all. But for now, if you see a Honda mini van headed toward Quincy, go ahead and wave. It's probably the Sporys off to another one of their kids' events.

On the road again to Tae Kwon Do is Director Janet Spory with husband, Wayne, and children, Ryan and Faith.



Member Communication Committees are Forming

During the month of November, approximately 40 WIEC members voluntarily give up an evening to come to Carthage and learn more about their cooperative. They have willingly agreed to serve on WIEC's Member Communication Committee. The committee members serve a three-year term and each year they learn about a different topic such as finance, member services, and operations. They learn about how electric bills are calculated, the different services WIEC provides, upgrading lines, installing new services, and just exactly where the money comes from and also where it goes.

What is the purpose of these meetings? Manager Paul Dion says, "We try to inform the members about their cooperative with the hope that they'll pass that information along. The feedback we receive from members is also very beneficial. We learn what concerns the members have, so it's a two-way communication tool."

The WIEC staff, along with the board of directors, conducts the meetings. It's a

great way to learn more about your cooperative and have your questions answered. The atmosphere is informal and all are encouraged to talk about what's on their minds, even if it isn't on the evening's agenda. Members tell us that they didn't realize how much everything costs, such as building new line, insurance rates, or our wholesale power costs.

The staff and directors also learn from the members. We ask questions on what the members would like in the way of new services. We also ask their opinion about important topics, such as deregulation. We value the input we receive and use that information to improve your cooperative.

We encourage all members to serve on this committee to learn more about your cooperative. Members will be reimbursed for their time and mileage to the cooperative. If you would like to serve on the Member Communication committee, fill out the coupon below, call our office or drop us an e-mail at westelec@adams.net. Hope to see you there!

YES,

I would like to know more about Member Communication Committees.

Please send more information to:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Phone _____

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Charles L. & Susan T. Bowlyou, Lomax
 Lawrence & Susan Brown, West Point, IA
 Hilary M. Carel, Hamilton
 Paul R. Clatt, Carthage
 Roger Countryman, Lomax
 Raymond Durkee, Braverton, MI
 Ruby Lynn Farrell, Carthage
 Amy Fitch, Augusta
 Andrew Geissler, Carthage


David Gunkel, Hamilton
 Dale D. Hunt, Hamilton
 Ryan Johnson, LaHarpe
 Brenda & Tim Lafeber, Nauvoo
 Jill R. Lenahan & Joseph D. Moyers, Gladstone
 David L. & Pamela D. Madden, Downs
 Chad Mustread, Niota
 Thomas E. Ohnemus, Quincy
 Randy Sattler, Gladstone

James & Cheryl Schroeder, Basco
 LeRoy J. Sheppard, Niota
 Teresa L. & Tim Snodgrass, West Point
 Luella A. Spees, Carthage
 Tyrrell Development LLC, Cedar Rapids, IA
 Thomas D. Wright, Quincy
 Jerry W. Young, Hamilton
 John J. Yuskis, Warsaw

Published for members of Western Illinois Electrical Coop.

WIEC NEWS

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ www.wiec.net ■ 800/576-3125

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

You're Invited!

Please help us celebrate October as cooperative month by joining us for

Member Appreciation Day

October 25

8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
at the coop office

Cookies, cider, and coffee will be served.
All registered members will receive a free gift.



Western Illinois Electrical Coop.
524 N. Madison • PO Box 338 • Carthage
(217)357-3125 • (800)576-3125

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Call toll free (800) 576-3125


OCTOBER 2005

ILLINOIS COUNTRY LIVING

16a



WESTERN ILLINOIS ELECTRICAL COOP.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

524 North Madison | P.O. Box 338
Carthage, IL 62321
www.wiec.net | 800/576-3125

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday

DURING OFFICE HOURS, OR AFTER HOURS TO REPORT OUTAGE

(217) 357-3125
(800) 576-3125

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President, *Carthage*
- **Jay Morrison** —
Vice President, *Niota*
- **Janet Spory** —
Secretary/Treasurer, *Sutter*
- **William R. Newton** —
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,
Burnside
- **Dave Biery** — Director,
Carthage
- **Briscoe N. Menke** — Director,
Carthage
- **Haven Vaughn** — Director,
Lomax

STAFF

- **Paul Dion** — Manager
- **Tommie Long** —
Manager of Operations
- **Becky Dickinson** —
Office Manager

MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four member's map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

Guided Hunting Available in Western Illinois

Western Illinois is known for great hunting. It doesn't matter if it's deer, turkey, pheasant, or quail; if it's here, someone will hunt for it.

We would like to highlight three outfitters who are on WIEC lines that have recognized the bounty of Western Illinois and have invited others to come and enjoy what this area has to offer. By encouraging out-of-state sportsmen to come to western Illinois, they are boosting the local economy by bringing in new dollars to local businesses.

All three lodges offer hospitality that only Midwesterners can provide with home cooked meals, lodging, and guided hunts, yet each has their own niche that their customers appreciate. (6813-10)

LONG CREEK ADVENTURES

Long Creek Adventures can accommodate bow and/or shotgun hunters for deer or turkey. For those who like both bow and shotgun, they also offer combo hunts. This converted farmhouse sits on the Gronewold Family Farm that has been in their family for three generations. Merlin Gronewold and his wife, Jolene, make sure their guest hunters are treated like family.

The lodge can accommodate six hunters at a time, has four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a pool table, washer and dryer, and a TV/VCR. This is a family endeavor with their son, Ashton, currently away at college, who enjoys setting up the deer cameras during the summer so they know the movement of the game across their 1,000 acres of land. Their daughter, Brooke, helps her mom with the delicious meals that are served.



The guests of Long Creek Adventures have access to a guide, Chris Nettles, who enjoys talking about the sport. He receives calls from hunters year-round, just to talk about the upcoming season and gear up excitement for the actual event. (9622-11-37-1)

Their Web site is www.longcreekadventures.com

BROOKS RANCH

The Brooks Ranch is owned by John and Bernadette Brooks. Their operation began 45 years ago, when owner John Brooks read an article in this magazine about recreational farming. John built a huge lake on his centennial farm to raise fish for market. Later, he changed his opera-

tion to host fishermen who wanted to fish and camp near his beautiful, well-stocked lake. Fast forward 35 years, and the Brooks Ranch was born as a way for the Brooks to share the bounty of their land with hunters as well as

■ *Continued on 16d*



his is the last interview of the board members of WIEC. We hope you enjoyed getting to know the person behind the picture printed in the WIEC News.

Dave Biery - District 5

Dave Biery's heritage runs deep in the community. He has lived in Carthage most of his life, with a brief stint in Macomb while he was attending Western Illinois University. He lives with his wife, Joyce, in the house where his grandmother lived. Just west of them is where his son and daughter-in-law, Ryan and Erin, live in the house that Dave grew up in. That house is also the one his dad and grandfather were born in. "There have only been Bierys or Wrights living on this road since 1870," Dave says with a smile. "We've been part of the coop. since the beginning."

Dave was elected to the board in 2004 and is currently serving his first term as a director of WIEC. "I feel strongly about having local control of as many things in a person's life as possible. I wanted to participate in the cooperative." (7535-62)

He believes that there are a lot of programs besides the everyday delivery of electricity that the members may not be aware of. "There are programs such as water heater sales and installation or financing of electric heat and ground source heat pumps available to members, all at very affordable rates," he reminds members. "The greatest strength of the cooperative is how the members and employees work together toward a common goal of reliable and affordable electricity."

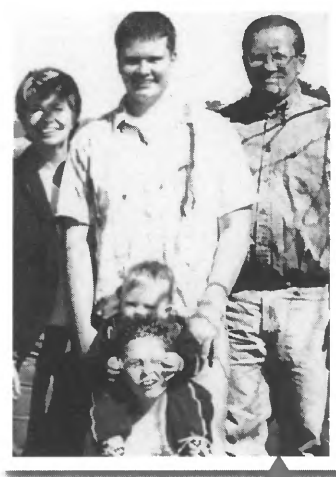
After earning his Bachelor's of Science in agriculture from Western, Dave went to work for Bentley Elevator and is currently Manager. Joyce works there too, making their marriage a true partnership. They started dating when Dave was 16 and have been together ever since.

They have two children; Tera, who is a teacher in Mattoon, and Ryan, who is a carpenter. They have three grandsons; Scott, Matt, and Rylan, and another grandchild on the way. Scott, who lives with Dave and Joyce, is a junior at Carthage High School and plays center for the Carthage Blueboy Football team. On Friday nights, the Biery's will be found in the bleachers, cheering for Scott and the rest of the team.

Dave and Scott raise Duroc hogs and show them at the county and state fairs. Biery was a member of 4-H as a kid and was a leader for his own kid's 4-H clubs. He believes that working and showing hogs, or whatever 4-H activity chosen, is a lot of work and teaches youth responsibility. At this last year's Illinois State Fair, the Biery's placed several hogs and received 1st place in the Land of Lincoln category.

Dave is also a part time farmer, raising cattle as well as his hogs. The Biery's belong to the United Methodist Church in Carthage and Dave is active in the Carthage Lions Club, most recently serving as President.

It won't be long until the newest Biery grandbaby will be living in the same house that his or her great-grandpa and great-grandpa did. Only time will tell if they grow up to be a WIEC director like Grandpa Dave.



Dave, Joyce, and their three grandsons



Dave and Scott at the Illinois State Fair

Being a cooperative member... What it all means



As WIEC celebrates October as Cooperative month, we would like to remind you what being a member means. Although many of our members were born and raised on coop. lines, sometimes we have a tendency to forget that some of our members are new to the cooperative philosophy. These members may not know about the advantages of receiving electricity from a cooperative - their rights, privileges, and responsibilities.

When you receive your electric service from an electric cooperative, you should know:

- Local advocates established your cooperative at a time when existing utilities refused to provide service to the rural area. When deregulation was knocking on rural Illinois' door, the investor-owned utilities still stayed away; they determined that they could not make the profit they needed by serving the rural areas.
- You are a member of the cooperative, and as a member, you are part owner of the cooperative.
- You have the right to attend Western Illinois Electrical Coop.'s annual meeting

- of members held each June to vote for the board of directors who govern the cooperative and to be updated on the condition of the cooperative.
- You have the responsibility to keep up with developments affecting your cooperative.
- Your cooperative will communicate with you. Our members are sent the WIEC News insert along with the Illinois Country Living magazine. We have a Web site that tells of our news, programs, and rates. In October, we hold our Member Appreciation Day for members to come into our office and share with cooperative employees what's on their minds. (7516-68)
- We also have Member Communication Committee Meetings, which are an excellent way for members to learn about the cooperative way. These are the ways we communicate the happenings of the cooperative with our members, promoting electrical safety and conservation. It is the member's responsibility to read this information and attend these meetings.
- WIEC is there for its members. Members can use the toll free number or e-mail to let the coop. know what's on their mind. If an outage should occur, WIEC has employees on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to be sure power is restored as quickly as possible.

■ Continued from 16b



fishermen.

They have several local guides, nicknamed "John's Disciples," to assist in locating game across the 3,000 acres available. They have hosted past world championship indoor and outdoor bow hunters; however, they welcome the beginners as well. Several past hunters have donated their deer heads to John's trophy room located in the dining/lounging area of their lodge.

Now in its 10th season, Brooks Ranch offers semi-guided deer and turkey hunts for bow and shotgun hunters. They can handle up to 15 hunters at a time, with out-of-state archery and hunting shops handling the reservations. For late season hunts, John asks that hunters contact him directly.

SMOKIN' GUN HUNTING LODGE

Located along the Connable Blacktop north of Hamilton, Smokin' Gun Hunting Lodge offers a variety of different types of hunting. They have trap and skeet shooting, along with deer, turkey, pheasant, and quail hunts across their 300 acres.

The Lodge, built in 1992, has six bedrooms with a total of 21 single beds. There is a large two-story great room with several deer mounts showcased on the wall. One interesting mount has two deer with their antlers locked together. Be sure to ask Terry or Karen, the caretakers, the story about these deer. The great room can seat up to 150 people and is available to rent for weddings, parties, and business meetings.

During trap season, they host leagues that go through a semi-load of targets every year. They have two automatic trap throwers that can accommodate different skill levels.



Smokin' Gun Hunting Lodge will host the Illinois State Pheasant Championships during the first

week in November of 2005 and will host the National Pheasant Championships in 2007.

Check out their Web site at www.smgun.com.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Thomas E. & Melissa J. Adams, Niota
 Joy Deming, Bowen
 Thomas Dorch, Dallas City
 Rusty & Gail Dowell, Burlington, IA
 Susan Dowell, Carthage
 Jesse W. & Kathryn L. Evans, Nauvoo
 Randy J. Fitch, Pittsfield
 Joseph & Maryann Gera, Elk Grove
 Larry & Carolyn Grainger, Carthage
 Don Horton III, Niota
 Corey & Amy Housewright, Carthage
 Darrell W. & Judith A. Knorr, Carthage


James & Gina K. Lanning, Basco
 Andrew Lotz, Carthage
 Chris Murphy, Carthage
 P & H Farms, Dallas City
 Brent Reneau & Emilee Swiderman, Hamilton
 Tim Rosenboom, Berrien Springs, MI
 Sonora Gardens Farmstead B & B, Nauvoo
 Sandra Kay Twidwell, Plymouth
 Tyson Fresh Meats, Carthage
 Jennifer Ward, Elvaston
 Todd & Chandra Woodbury, Media

October Begins the Rate 40-41 Heat Rate!

For those WIEC members who have non-geothermal electric heat (rate 40 or 41), October marks the beginning of the FIVE cents per kilowatt heat rate that will be in effect until April 30. With electric heat, there are no worries about price fluctuations that occur with LP or natural gas. So curl up and enjoy the warmth of your electric furnace.

WIEC NEWS

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Cody Grainger Helps in Katrina's Recovery

Cody Grainger, WIEC Apprentice Lineman, left September 9 for Mississippi to help restore power to the gulf coast area devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Cody went to gain experience, yet he also wanted to help the people affected by the hurricane. He joined Mike DeWitt and Roger Stegeman, Jr. from Adams Electric Cooperative in Camp Point to help Coast Electric Power Association in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, restore power to their members. Later, Cody teamed up with another crew from Clay Electric Co-operative in Flora, and later worked with a group from an Iowa cooperative.

The crew's main duties were to help hang transformers and build single phase line along the main streets of Diamondhead, MS served by Coast Electric.

Along the way, Cody saw abandoned cars scattered along the interstate, looking like forgotten toys. Most of the residents he encountered were very appreciative to have the crews there trying to restore power. "They were pretty patient, considering they had been off (without power) for two weeks," says Cody. After an 18-hour work day, the linemen slept in tents as all the hotels in the area were destroyed. Cody and the linemen from Adams Electric Cooperative crew returned home on Sunday, September 18.

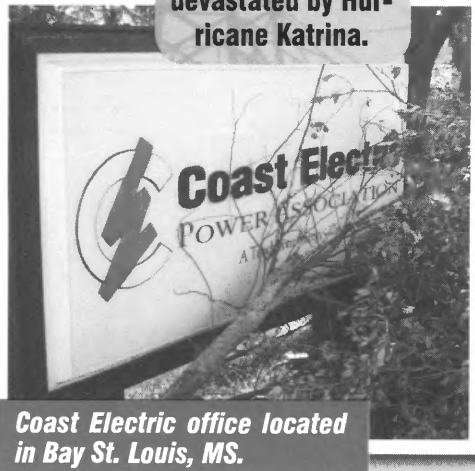
There were 20 Illinois cooperatives with 139 linemen that went to help clean up after Katrina. In all, over 10,000 co-op crew members from Mississippi and 19 other states assisted in restoration of power in the state.



Cody Grainger, Apprentice Lineman, helped restore power to the gulf coast area devastated by Hurricane Katrina.



High Winds snapped trees and utility poles.



Coast Electric office located in Bay St. Louis, MS.



High winds evident at the Gulf beach.

Visit our Web site at www.wiec.net



WESTERN ILLINOIS ELECTRICAL COOP.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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Secretary/Treasurer, *Sutter*
- **William R. Newton** —
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,
Burnside
- **Dave Biery** — Director,
Carthage
- **Briscoe N. Menke** — Director,
Carthage
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Lomax

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Natural Gas Prices Projected to Increase This Winter

You've seen the headlines. There is much uncertainty in the natural gas and propane market. Natural gas that was \$2.00 in 2002 hit \$8.47 in November 2004 and is projected to be \$9.00 this winter. If the winter is colder than normal, the prices may rise even more. (854-41)

If newspaper stories such as these have you worried, maybe it's time to consider geothermal heating and cooling for your home. It's clean, quiet, and so efficient!

For more information about geothermal, visit our Web site at www.wiec.net or call our office.

Just Say "Charge it!"

If your credit card company awards you points or cash back for using your credit card, it makes sense to take advantage of this feature. So it just makes sense to use your card to pay your WIEC electric bill.

WIEC members have three different ways to use their Master Card, VISA, or Discover:

1. Come to the office and pay at the counter.

2. Call our office and give us the credit card number and expiration date for a one-time payment.
3. Enroll in our automatic credit card payment program, which will automatically pay the electric bill each month via credit card. Members should call our office so we can send them the enrollment form or they can simply go to our Web site, www.wiec.net, to download the necessary form.

It just makes sense.

Lineman Climbing School

Tyler Neally, Groundman for Western Illinois Electrical Coop., Carthage, was instructed on his climbing skills during an electrical lineman climbing school held August 22 to September 2, 2005, at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield. The school was hosted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. (7717-34)

Tyler completed the school with high marks and is now qualified to climb up to 60 feet.



Students Encouraged To Apply for 2006 IEC Memorial Scholarships

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. manager Paul M. Dion 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. **(9622-11-28-E)**

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 hon-

oring past rural electric leaders through memorial gifts," said Dion, "WIEC and the other Illinois electric cooperatives want to make a difference in their communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by lending a hand to our youth."

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

The IEC Memorial Scholarship Program was established in 1994 by the board of directors of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. For further information on the IEC Memorial Scholarship Program, contact Western Illinois Electrical Coop. at (217) 357-3125 or (800) 576-3125, or ask your high school guidance counselor.



Early Retirement of Capital Credits

There are many things to think about when a loved one dies; there are many decisions to be made. One detail that many people may overlook is that if the deceased was a member of WIEC, the estate may receive the deceased's capital credits at a discounted value. Capital credits are normally paid back a year at a time on a first-in, first-out method, but only when the board of directors determines that it is financially feasible. However, WIEC will pay back capital credits early to an estate if requested to do so.

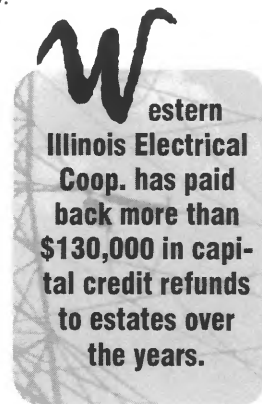
Here are the steps necessary for an estate or a decedent's beneficiaries to receive early retirement of capital credits.

1. Determine the deceased's membership status in WIEC. If the membership was single or in his/her name only, capital credits may be refunded early. However, if the membership was joint with the surviving spouse or other person, the membership and any capital credits earned over the course of the membership would become theirs upon date of death. If there are any questions, contact the WIEC office to determine the status of the membership.
2. The deceased must not have an active electric account in their name at the time of early retirement of capital credits. All accounts must be disconnected or transferred to another mem-

ber.

3. The lawyer handling the estate or the executor/administrator of the estate must contact our office requesting to receive the decedent's capital credits early. WIEC will send a request form along with a detailed account of the capital credits earned and their discounted value.
4. A copy of the letters of office for open estates or a small estate affidavit must be returned to the cooperative along with the signed request form. These forms give WIEC the legal direction needed to issue any refund.
5. The WIEC Board of Directors must approve all capital credit refunds. They generally meet the 4th Thursday of the month.
6. If approved by the board, a check will be written to the estate and mailed usually within a week or two of the board meeting.

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. has paid back more than \$130,000 in capital credit refunds to estates over the years. We do it as a service to our members to help make the sometimes tedious process of settling an estate a little easier.



Low Income Energy Assistance

If you need financial assistance to pay your electric bill, you may be eligible to participate in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). They began accepting calls for appointments on September 1 for households that have elderly or disabled. Calls for appointments for all others will be accepted starting November 1, 2005. Applicants must call for an appointment and bring with them proof of income for the last 30 days, their most recent electric bill, and Social Security Cards for all in the household.

Assistance is based on combined household income. If it is at or below the levels shown below, you may be eligible. Good faith effort to maintain electric service may also be required.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	30 DAY INCOME
1	\$1,196
2	\$1,604
3	\$2,012
4	\$2,420
5	\$2,828

(add \$408 for each additional house member)

If renting and your heat and/or electric is included in the rent, then the rent must be greater than 30 percent of your income in order to be eligible for benefits. **(398-36)**

For more details, contact the following:
Members in Hancock, Henderson and McDonough Counties:


Western Illinois Regional Council
223 S. Randolph
Macomb IL 61455
(309) 837- 2997

Members in Adams County:

Two Rivers Regional Council
1891 Maine St. Suite 4
Quincy, IL 62301
(217) 224-8171

In addition, members may also find help from The Salvation Army, their township supervisors, the Veteran's Administration, and area churches.

OFFICE CLOSED
WIEC office will be closed on November 11 in observance of Veterans Day.




WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

David E. Jr. & Heather L. Avery, Gladstone
Nick Dadant & Tim Dadant, Hamilton
James E. Dunning, Island Lake
Dale E. & Carol A. Griffiths, Nauvoo
Richard J. Krbavac, Niota
Tina M. Lawson, Hamilton
Neil & Ashley Little, Bowen
Chelsie E. Lotz, Carthage
Daniel K. & Brenda S. Simmons, Canton, MO
Jason & Laura Skog, Nauvoo

HAPPY THANKSGIVING


Western Illinois Electrical Coop. employees and directors would like to wish our members a very Happy Thanksgiving. Our office will be closed on Thanksgiving so our employees may enjoy the day with their families. Our office will reopen on Friday, November 25.

As always, in case of power emergencies, call (217) 357-3125 or (800) 576-3125. Please wait and call for questions concerning billing, payment arrangements, security lights or other non-emergency matters until normal business hours.



WIEC NEWS

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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Youth to Washington Tour Program

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. invites the sons or daughters of WIEC members to enter the Youth to Washington Tour contest. This program awards six deserving students a trip to Youth Day in Springfield to visit the Illinois State Capitol on April 5,



Karen Jacquot meets with State Senator John Sullivan and State Representative Rich Myers.

2006, and see state government in action. One of those six students will be awarded the trip to Washington, D.C. and be among the 1,500 students who descend on our nation's Capital during the "Youth to Washington" tour during the week of June 9 - 16, 2006. Last year's winner, Karen Jacquot, sent a postcard to WIEC during her stay in Washington saying, "I'm having soooo much fun! Thanks for the opportunity."

During the time in D.C., students will learn about American and rural electric history, as well as state and federal government. Last year, they visited representatives in the House and Senate, and took in

an impressive list of historic sites, such as Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian Museum, the White House, Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum. This year, the itinerary should be very similar. For more information about the trip, go to the www.aiec.coop Web site and look under the youth program tab.

Students can go to our nation's capital two different ways. They can earn an all expense paid trip to Washington that includes transportation, lodging, and meals or they can pay for it outright. To earn the trip, the applicant must be a son or daughter of an active WIEC member or have a legal

guardian that is an active WIEC member. The student should be a sophomore, junior, or senior student. The winners will be determined based on the applicant's original essay that demonstrates their knowledge and understanding of electrical cooperatives.

Application packets will be available at the WIEC office and high school guidance counselors' offices on December 1,

2005. Applications are due back to the WIEC office by February 15, 2006.

The second option is to purchase the trip to Washington, D.C. for \$950, which includes transportation to Washington, D.C. from Springfield, lodging, and meals. This is open to any high school sophomore, junior or senior students regardless of their electric service provider. Those who want to use this method should contact the WIEC office soon, as it is subject to availability.

Application packets will be available at the WIEC office and high school guidance counselors' offices on December 1, 2005.

Visit our Web site at www.wiec.net



WESTERN ILLINOIS ELECTRICAL COOP.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

524 North Madison | P.O. Box 338
Carthage, IL 62321
www.wiec.net | 800/576-3125

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday

DURING OFFICE HOURS, OR AFTER HOURS TO REPORT OUTAGE

(217) 357-3125
(800) 576-3125

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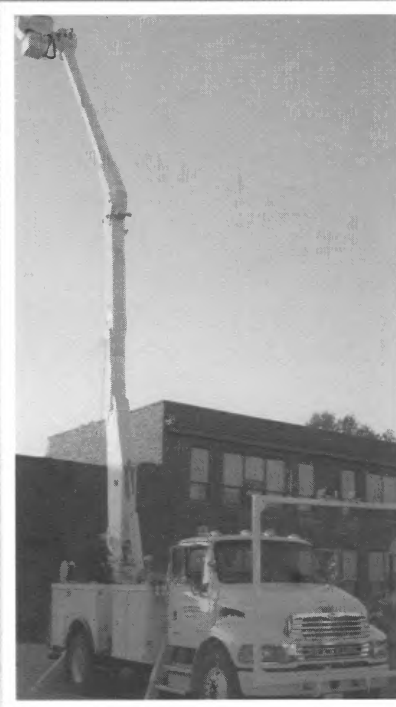
- **Paul Dion** — Manager
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MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four member's map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

Big Truck Night

On September 27, WIEC employees Scott Carle and Tyler Neally took a WIEC bucket truck to the Nauvoo-Colusa Preschool event called Big Truck Night. Organized by Valerie Fink and Angela McConnell, Nauvoo-Colusa preschool teachers, the event began in 2003 and proved so popular that it was decided to have this event every other year. The children and their families were able to go to the Nauvoo elementary school to look at the trucks, get inside of them, ask questions, and find out more about each truck. This year, more than 20 businesses and individuals from the area participated. (387-17)



Learning to Save Lives



Ken Macken, Safety Instructor of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in Springfield (right), observes WIEC employee Cody Grainger applying CPR to a training dummy during re-certification training. All WIEC linemen are trained in First Aid and CPR and must be re-certified every three years in first aid and every year in CPR.

Eric Johnson, WIEC Line Foreman, says, "In case of electrical contact, we need to know CPR to save a fellow employee's life or the life of anyone involved in an accident."

OFFICE CLOSINGS

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. office will close at Noon on December 23 and reopen December 27 for the Christmas Holiday. In observance of the New Year's holiday, the office will close at Noon on December 30 and reopen on January 3.

WIEC's board and employees wish our members a Merry Christmas and a bright, Happy New Year.

Generator Use

These tips will keep your family and linemen safe

Many rely on backup electric generators for emergency power when the electricity goes out. If you are considering purchasing a backup generator, Safe Electricity and Western Illinois Electrical Coop. want you to know how to take proper safety steps before operating an electric generator in your home or business.

Properly connecting the generator into the system is a critical step for safe and effective use. A professional should install a permanent, standby electric generator. Consider consulting a qualified electrician to be sure electrical grounding requirements, circuit overload protections, and local codes are met.

An electric generator wired directly into a building's electrical system must have a transfer safety switch to prevent (3532-53) electricity from traveling back through the power lines, or what's known as "back feed."

"Our linemen work around the clock in bad weather to restore your power during an outage. Improper use of generators can make that work unsafe and the electricity flowing through lines that we think are safe can seriously injure or kill those linemen," warns Paul Dion, WIEC manager.



This lineman is trying to restore power. Improper generator use puts his life in danger.

Follow these tips for safe use of portable generators used to power essential electrical equipment during outages. Keep this list posted by your generator.

- ▶ Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions.
- ▶ Make sure the generator is properly grounded.
- ▶ Never plug a portable electric generator into a wall outlet or connect directly to a home's wiring. This can energize utility power lines and injure you or others working nearby. Electrical back feed also can damage the generator and home electrical equipment.
- ▶ Don't overload the generator and plug in more appliances than the generator is rated to handle.
- ▶ Use only safety-tested, shop-type electrical cords designed and rated for heavier, outdoor use to connect appliances. Many generators are equipped with twist-lock connects to reduce the chance of accidental disconnections due to vibrations.
- ▶ Always keep the generator outside in a dry, protected area, away from windows or air intakes where deadly exhaust fumes can enter living spaces. Equip homes with Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms with battery backup.
- ▶ Turn off generator and allow to cool before refueling.
- ▶ Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.

For additional electrical generator and safety information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

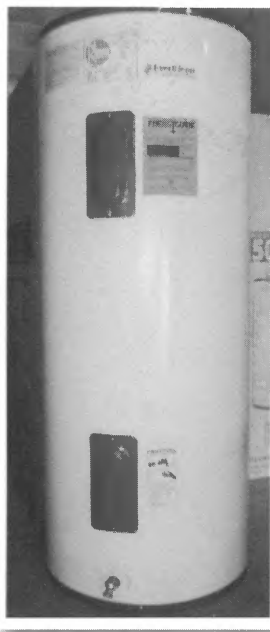
Help keep WIEC linemen safe!

**"Our
linemen
work
around
the clock
in bad
weather
to restore
your
power."**



WIEC employees wish you the best this holiday season.

Installing Water Heater Blankets



Water heaters use a lot of energy even when you're not using hot water. This stand-by loss happens when heat travels through your water heater's walls, and can account for a substantial portion of your water heating costs.

Most older water heaters have only an inch of fiberglass tank insulation, and most newer ones have just an inch of foam insulation. You can reduce your **(9527-49-1)** energy consumption by installing an additional blanket of fiberglass insulation. This is one of the most common and effective energy-conservation measures available.

Water-heater blankets come in kits that contain a blanket, straps, and tape. The straps hold the insulation to the water heater, and the tape seals the seams in the insulation.

- Turn the water heater off before installing the blanket. Read all the instructions that come with the blanket.
- Identify the areas where the blanket will be

taped to the water heater. Wash these well so the tape will stick.

- Cut the blanket to size with scissors or a sharp knife. Leave some extra until you know for sure how much you'll need.
- Identify the pressure relief valve on either the top or side. Don't cover this important safety device.
- For electric water heaters, you can insulate the top of the tank as well as the sides. Note where two rectangular covers provide access to the thermostats and elements. Cut small flaps in the insulation to provide access to these panels.
- Install the blanket so it is snug, and fasten it well so it will stay in place.

This long-lasting conservation measure will save energy day and night for the life of your water heater.

Source: Saturn Resource Management

Vegetation Management Schedule

We plan to have crews performing routine tree trimming starting December 1, 2005, in all or parts of the following townships:

In Hancock County:

Augusta, Chili, St. Albans, Walker, Rocky Run, St. Mary, Harmony, Bear Creek, Wythe, and Wilcox

In Adams County:

Lima

Due to the advanced printing of this issue of the WIEC News, these plans are subject to change. If there are questions or concerns, please contact our office during normal business hours at (217) 357-3125 or (800) 576-3125. **(10532-76)**

For more information concerning our vegetation management policy, check out our Web site at www.wiec.net under the program tab.

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