

NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 07/18

Meet Your Board of Directors

Tom Meehan, President



Tom Meehan, Board President, at his grocery store, Meehan's, in Roodhouse.

Tom Meehan is no stranger to community involvement. In fact, he and his two brothers own grocery stores in Roodhouse, Greenfield, and Bunker Hill, where the name Meehan is practically inseparable from grocery.

As a fourth generation grocer, Tom knows what it takes to succeed in business, and he knows the work required to remain successful. Apart from his 40-year run as a business owner, he has also served nearly 20 years as a trustee and treasurer for the Roodhouse Fire District.

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Tom joined the Board in September of 1994, bringing the fresh perspective of a retailer to a group made up largely of farmers. At first, Tom knew little about the position into which he was stepping, because it was very different from his experience as the eldest son—the decision maker—in a family business environment. “To go there and sit on a Board which I knew nothing about—I didn’t even know what a co-op was—and to be one of eleven, that’s a very strange feeling for a person who is a very well-meaning controller.” The older generation of Directors served as mentors for Tom in the early years, as he began to adjust to his new responsibilities and grow into his position. Almost 24 years later, he remains one of the longest-serving current board members.

Adaptability defined Tom’s personal growth as a Director. An adaptability to a new situation, coupled with a natural work ethic, gave way to an enthusiasm for his role on the Board. He has also grown to recognize the value of understanding differences in opinion, as well as developing a desire to better grasp the roots of differing views. More than anything, he is humbled by the opportunity to serve in such a well-managed organization. “I don’t know anybody else in the state of Illinois, a cooperative in the state of Illinois, which is run any better than we are, and that’s kudos to management.”

Along the way, Tom has been involved with numerous projects, developments, and undertakings. He is particularly proud of the work done in expanding the cooperative’s reach into the areas of wireless and fiber internet technologies, areas in which he sees great potential for the future. Among the most rewarding parts of being a Director has been watching the Board increasingly resemble the cooperative’s membership, creating a diverse array of backgrounds, professional experiences, and personalities to better serve the members.

“Once you get on this board, it just becomes a passion. I can’t explain it. And everybody around the table acts that way.” It is this passion which compels him to continue to dedicate time and energy to his position—time and energy aside from that which he already contributes to his business, community, and family. “Nobody told me this was going to be a part-time job, never even thought about it. It is.” Tom feels the work he does on the Board is well worth the time he devotes to it, and he is confident his fellow Directors feel the same. To him, the cooperative is run like a family business, something he can certainly recognize and appreciate.

Ultimately, Tom Meehan is a man wearing many hats, all of which command his full attention. But it is not the grocery business, nor his work with the fire district, or even his role as President of the IEC Board of Directors which defines him most. That claim is held by his family, where his wife, Karen, of 43 years, along with his four children and five grandchildren, demand his most true passion, and his most unwavering love. Though Tom is a man of many families—the grocery store, the fire district, the co-op—it is his true family which, without question, remains most important to him.

This article on Tom Meehan is the first in a series of written profiles on Illinois Electric Cooperative’s Board of Directors, which have been compiled and written by Noah Sellars, one of our college interns.



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Saturday, July 14th

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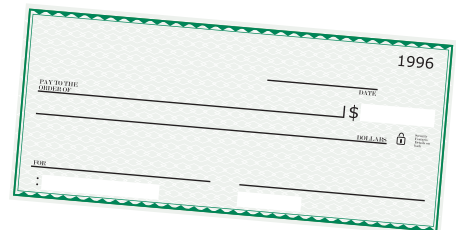
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