

Two area students spend a week in D.C.

What do you get when 71 students from 27 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives join more than 1,800 of their peers across the United States? You get the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth to Washington Tour.

Two local students were selected from a diverse group of applicants to represent Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC) on an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. from June 8-15 as part of the annual Youth Tour.

The 2018 Youth Tour delegates from SEC were Ashley Bartels of Cowden and Yeager Minott of Moweaqua, pictured with Congressman John Shimkus. Both were selected to go on the trip during the Youth Day visit to Springfield in April. “I can’t express my gratitude enough to SEC for giving me this opportunity to visit our nation’s capitol and be part of this amazing experience,” exclaimed Bartels. Minott agreed and added, “Not only was it fun meeting people from all over the country, we were

able to experience so many things in a short period of time. This was just a great trip.”

The students toured Capitol Hill and met with U.S. Senator Dick Durbin and Congressman John Shimkus. They also visited historical and cultural sites including Arlington National Cemetery, the Supreme Court, Newseum, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, a variety of memorials, and the U.S. Capitol. Among fun activities the students enjoyed were the Marine Corps Sunset Parade, the Smithsonian Museums, and an assembly of Youth Tour participants from across the nation.

“Youth Tour is a great opportunity that changes these students’ lives,” said SEC’s President/CEO Josh Shallenberger. “This experience helps prepare them for their future. After touring our nation’s capital, meeting congressional representatives and learning firsthand how our government works, they return home with valuable knowledge and memories that will last a lifetime.”



Since 1964, the nation’s cooperative electric and telephone utilities have sponsored more than 60,000 high school students to visit Washington, D.C. To learn more about the Youth to Washington Tour, go to www.youthtour.coop. You can also visit shelbyelectric.coop and look at Youth Programs under the “Community” tab.



Annual Meeting highlights

Members of all ages enjoyed themselves at Shelby Electric Cooperative's 80th Annual Meeting held Friday, June 8, at the Shelby County 4-H Fairgrounds in Shelbyville. Youngsters were delighted by balloon animals, face painting, bounce houses, and more. Others enjoyed the barbecue pork chop dinner, prepared by the Pork Producers of Shelby County, while being entertained by the Hood Family Band and Live Line Demo, Inc.

At 1 p.m., members gathered to hear updates and information regarding their cooperative during the business meeting. Board Chairman Brent Lively explained how co-ops are truly a grassroots movement and focus on rural members. He added how the board of directors is careful with how they spend funds. Lively told a story of a cooperative lineman who was severely injured and noted, "The board of directors passed a resolution this year that says we will support any expenditure that promotes safety."

Lively reported how Shelby Electric promotes the cooperative principle of commitment to

community. The co-op has obtained a USDA zero-percent interest loan in order to give a Rural Economic Development loan to the Pana Community Hospital for \$1 million. "While the hospital isn't one of our members, it helps our members, and we are committed to supporting them. As the hospital pays the money back, we will take \$300,000 of it to use as seed money to loan to other businesses in our area."

In closing, Lively encouraged members to get involved in the democratic process of the co-op by running for a seat on the board of directors.

Shelby Electric President/CEO Josh Shallenberger paid homage to the original founding board members and all who governed the cooperative over its past eight decades.

"Over the years, Shelby Electric has extended our original core mission of providing safe, reliable electricity at an affordable price into other areas that have enhanced your quality of life," said Shallenberger. "Shelby Energy, the co-op's propane subsidiary, is celebrating 25 years in business, and PWR-net, our broadband internet division, is embarking on 10 years. All of this has been done because of the needs of our members and these services complement our core mission."

Shallenberger said Shelby Electric recognizes its job is "not to hamper innovation, but to embrace it all while being mindful of its financial responsibilities to members to ensure current investments provide returns."

Safety is taken very seriously at the cooperative, and Shallenberger noted the importance of getting all employees home safely each night. He explained the co-op's commitment to a safety improvement plan and how



During the 80th Shelby Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting, members re-elected three directors. Shown left to right are: Bennie Clawson, District 2, Tower Hill; Brent Lively, District 7, Taylorville; and Robert Holthaus, District 1, Stonington.



Zebert Dunaway, Owaneco, was the grand prize-winner of \$250 Shelby Electric Dollars awarded at the cooperative's 80th annual meeting. Pictured from left, cooperative President/CEO Josh Shallenberger and Dunaway.



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employees have embraced it.

Board Treasurer Mark Lash reported the cooperative had margins of \$3,438,854 for the year ending Dec. 31, 2017. Total income was \$36,019,456 and expenses, including \$20,940,118 for the purchase of electric power, were \$35,180,617.

Thank you for 80 years of support!



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Power your community with solar by supporting the Prairie Power, Inc. Solar Farms. Your monthly investment helps us continue to provide renewable power to our area.

This program is an added cost on your electric bill and does not offset your energy use.

Visit shelbyelectric.coop to learn more.



REAL LIFE  REAL POWER

Getting Real with Marla and Summer Heat

Summer electricity bills tend to rise in accordance with the mercury in the thermometer. Members are often surprised to see their summer bills may be the highest of the year. The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that 18 percent of annual household electricity use is for air conditioning.

Locally, the temperatures in May and early June were consistently at or above the historical averages. Even if the thermostat is set at 78 degrees F, when the temperature and humidity are high, the air conditioner runs a lot to maintain that temperature.

Following are some tips to help you stay comfortable while also keeping your electricity use in check through the dog days of summer.

- ⚙️ The most important maintenance task that will ensure the efficiency of your air conditioner is to routinely replace or clean its filters. Chances are, by this time of year, dust, dirt, and who knows what else has taken up residency in your air conditioning filter. Dirty filters block airflow and can reduce a system's efficiency significantly. With normal airflow obstructed, air that bypasses the filter may carry dirt directly into the evaporator coil and impair the coil's heat-absorbing capacity. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), replacing a dirty, clogged filter with a clean one can lower your air

conditioner's energy consumption by 5 percent to 15 percent.

- ⚙️ A cost-effective way to stay comfortable at a higher thermostat setting is to make good use of fans. Due to the wind-chill effect, a fan can make a person feel cooler than the room temperature indicates. Always remember to turn fans off when you leave the room. Fans cool people, not rooms.
- ⚙️ The U.S. DOE recommends that during summer days, you should close draperies on windows receiving direct sunlight to prevent heat gain. Studies demonstrate that medium-colored draperies with white-plastic backings can reduce heat gains by 33 percent.
- ⚙️ As the saying goes, if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen. Literally! Using the stove and oven can really heat up the kitchen and neighboring rooms. If you must use the oven, try to plan it for the cooler times of the day. Summer allows for creative options, such as grilling outside, enjoying fresh produce, cooking over a camp fire, and ice cream. Add some nuts and fruit to your ice cream and call it a meal!
- ⚙️ Many appliances, electronics, and lighting generate heat. That extra heat adds to your cooling load. Not only are those items making the room



warmer, they could be influencing your thermostat. For example, if a lamp or television that is producing heat is located near your thermostat, the thermostat may register that it needs to kick on the air conditioning when the rest of the house is actually at the desired temperature.

- ⚙️ Plan your laundry and dishwasher use for early morning and evenings. Let dishes and laundry air dry.
- ⚙️ Unplug! Turn the thermostat up a couple of degrees, unplug all electronics, turn off the lights, and visit the local pool, beach, or watering hole. You will feel much more comfortable upon returning home.

It won't be long, and we will be enjoying the cooler evenings that come with fall. Hopefully, you can make the most of the remainder of Summer 2018.

*~Marla Eversole,
Communication Specialist*