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The Wire

McDonough Power Cooperative • Macomb, Illinois 61455



Mike Smith
President and CEO



Annual Meeting 2018

Consumer-members of McDonough Power Cooperative enjoyed music by regional band Crossover and a pork chop sandwich dinner prior to the start of their 81st Annual Meeting of Members held at The Crossing on Tuesday, Aug. 21. The annual meeting helps members participate in the Cooperative Principle of Democratic Member Control by voting on a slate of candidates to serve on the McDonough Power board of directors.

During his address to the crowd, Board Chairman Jeff Moore reported that McDonough Power had a very good 2017 and ended the year with operating margins of over \$272,000. He explained that any margin achieved by the cooperative is returned to the membership in the form of capital credits. Moore said, "The McDonough Power board of directors approved a capital credit refund to the membership in the amount of \$396,226, which was

allocated to those who were members in 1989 and 1990. It is representative of one of the seven cooperative principles which is Member Economic Participation."

Concern for Community is another cooperative principle, he explained. "Since its approval by members in 2016, the Operation Round-Up program has provided \$65,112 in donations to local groups and organizations. The monies are voluntary donations by members who choose to round up their bills to the next dollar," he said. "In 2017, the Coats for Kids program provided about 250 coats across school districts located in and around the McDonough Power service territory." In addition, McDonough Power's primary lender exhibited the cooperative principle of Cooperation Among Cooperatives by providing a \$5,000 matching grant to help with the Coats for Kids program and donations to the Warren County

Agricultural Fair and McDonough County 4-H building and grounds.

Mike Smith, McDonough Power president/CEO, educated members on rates. "Rates themselves are not difficult to understand," Smith said. "We need to return enough revenue from our membership to the cooperative to provide 24-hour service, seven days a week. We are a non-profit organization, which means we do not benefit from excess margins. The first rule of rates is to return enough money to keep the minimum service going without interruption. Not intermittent, not sometimes, all the time." **525HH67-951B**

He explained the facility charge on the monthly bill is for all facilities that make up each member's electric service including poles, wires, trucks and more. However, that charge of \$45 a month doesn't cover all the costs to provide electricity. The kWh charge helps

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DIRECTORS

Jeff Moore, Chairman

Walt Lewis, Vice Chairman

Steve Youngquist, Secretary

David Lueck, Treasurer

Jerry Riggins

Mike Cox

Bob Dwyer

Steve Hall

Steve Lynn

John D. McMillan, Attorney

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supplement the difference to help keep the lights on. As costs increase, rates change; and all members that take service from McDonough Power must pay their fair share of the fixed cost.

In closing, Smith said, "We rely heavily on increasing our fixed charges like our facility charge and lowering the variable rate charge like our kWh rate. We need to make rates fair to all. We are going to continue to be a provider of power for years to come and adapt to any changes that come

our way. We run as lean and efficiently as possible and will do all we can to provide reliable power to you, our members, seven days a week, 24 hours a day."

Members re-elected three directors during the meeting to serve for three-year terms on the board of directors: Jerry Riggins, District 1, Macomb; Steve Lynn, District 5, Macomb; and Robert Dwyer, District 8, Roseville.



Bushnell ESDA (Emergency Services Disaster Agency) received an Operation Round-Up grant in July toward the purchase of a prescription drug drop off box for the community. Jeff Rench stated, "The box will help keep opioids off our streets, provide a convenient, safe place for our citizens to properly dispose of their medications, and help protect the environment." The box is located inside the Bushnell City Hall and is available Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Pictured L to R: Jeff Rench with Bushnell ESDA, Dan Roberts with TEST and Kelly Hamm with McDonough Power Cooperative



Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout The Wire. If you find the map location number that corresponds to the one on your bill (found above the usage graph), call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.

Cooperatives See the Future

By Anne Prince

Dramatic changes are transforming all aspects of the energy industry. Interest in renewable energy is at an all-time high, and ultimately consumers want greater control over their energy use and payment methods. The prevalence of smart-phone apps and “smart” technology for the home is increasing, and consumers and businesses are showing greater interest in electric vehicles. There’s no denying it: electric utilities will have to make changes to the way they provide energy to accommodate these trends. Luckily, McDonough Power Cooperative is uniquely positioned to meet these changing energy needs because we are a cooperative.

Co-ops are community-led.

October is National Co-op Month, which is the perfect time to highlight the many ways electric cooperatives are unique.

Cooperatives are locally governed, looking out for the long-term needs of their consumer-members.

Mike Smith, President and CEO of McDonough Power explains that, “Electric cooperatives belong to the communities they serve. This heightened community focus allows us to quickly

adapt to evolving consumer expectations. Our closeness to the community ensures a better response to these needs because we are led by the people that we serve.”

Co-ops are a catalyst for good.

Electric co-ops, like McDonough Power, are a catalyst for good in their communities. Co-ops engage their consumer-members to do things that might otherwise be impossible or difficult, like more than 80 years ago when electric co-ops brought power to areas where other utilities did not find it economically feasible. Today, it means we offer an online member portal, net metering, automated meter reading, and youth programs.

Cooperatives exist to meet a need that was previously unmet in the community, and they are ever striving to anticipate and plan for the future needs of their consumer-members. **914B5-452A**

Electric cooperatives often partner with local groups to bring economic opportunity to their local community. It is this facilitation role that is often the most valuable strength of the co-op. Right here in

our seven-county service territory, we assist various organizations through our Operation Round-Up program.

The co-op business model is unique. It is pragmatic, mission-oriented and puts people first. Co-ops strive to be a trusted voice in their communities. Co-ops have earned that trust because, while not perfect, they always have their members’ best interest at heart and are determined to enrich the lives of those living and working in the communities they serve—now and in the future.



OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

Join us at the polls on November 6

By Dan Riedinger

Our co-op's number one priority is providing our consumer-members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. But doing this job requires more than stringing and maintaining power lines throughout our service territory. It requires political engagement. That may seem far removed from our core mission, but it's essential to serving you, our consumer-members.



National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the service organization representing the nation's electric co-ops, launched Co-ops Vote in 2016. Co-ops Vote started as a national non-partisan get-out-the-vote initiative that helped drive rural voter turnout in the 2016 presidential election.

Through this program, electric co-ops realized they had a unique advantage: As co-ops, the civic virtue of voting is in our DNA. We show concern for community—one of the seven cooperative principles—through participation in our democracy. **10123A6A-416A**

That's why we're participating in a national program of America's electric cooperatives called Co-ops Vote.

Co-ops Vote encourages all co-op members to participate in national, state and local elections while educating political candidates and elected officials about the important role played by electric cooperatives in their communities. The

Co-ops have another advantage. Elected officials and decision-makers across the political spectrum trust us because of the work the electric cooperative family has put into political engagement.

When we all get involved, we can make things happen politically and in our local communities.

Our participation in Co-ops Vote helps to ensure that rural issues remain part of the national discussion—and are supported by our elected officials. But Co-ops Vote isn't just for co-ops. It's for co-op members just like you.

You can participate by registering to vote and committing to cast your ballot on November 6. If you're interested in getting more involved, visit www.vote.coop to learn more about the upcoming elections and access online tools that can help you participate. We look forward to seeing you at the polls on Election Day!

Dan Riedinger writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the NRECA, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.

Distracted driving injures and kills – Zone in on safety

Stay focused in roadside utility work zones

Electric linemen put their lives at risk each day, and distracted drivers add even more hazards to an already dangerous job.

It's always important to drive fully focused; however, drivers should pay special attention when approaching work zones. Slow down and refrain from any activity that would distract from driving.

Cell phones play a huge role in distracted driving. If you use it while driving, you're 23 times more likely to be in an accident. Although better than holding your phone, a hands-free call is still a bad idea.

In addition to nixing distractions, be sure to slow down when approaching a work zone. Frenzied drivers or drivers of big rigs going too fast could also brush or rattle a utility truck. Even the slightest movement could cause a line worker in a bucket to move a few feet, putting his or her life in jeopardy while working on equipment that can carry high voltages.

In addition to a growing number of work zone close calls, at least four utility workers have been killed and several more injured in roadside work zone incidents since 2015. Utility crews are not the only workers putting their lives on the line. According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA):

- 1 work zone crash occurs every 5.4 minutes
- 70 work zone crashes result in injuries each day
- 12 work zone crashes result in fatalities each week

Before leaving home, be sure to research your route, and avoid work zones and use detours whenever possible. Use your phone settings to automatically advise others you are driving and can't respond. In addition, Safe Electricity reminds you to take the following steps to save lives and avoid accidents: **6222A2-116B**

1. Be aware of your surroundings. This includes other drivers, utility and road crews, pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists.
2. Pay attention and stay focused. Always keep your eyes on the road, especially in work zones. Avoid distractions such as using your cell phone, eating/drinking, adjusting the radio, using GPS and conversing with passengers.
3. Slow down when entering a work zone where lane closures, traffic pattern shifts, and reduced speeds are expected.
4. When approaching a work zone, move into the open lane as soon as possible. Watch for vehicles that could be in your blind spot.
5. Rear-end crashes are extremely common in work zones, so keep your distance. Maintain extra space between your vehicle and the one in front of you, and do not cut off any driver.

Safe Electricity reminds you that distracted driving injures and kills utility crews and other workers who put themselves in danger every day by sharing their workspace with vehicles on the road. There isn't a text or a phone call that is worth it. Remember to zone in on safety and save lives. For more information, visit SafeElectricity.org.