

# NEWS, NOTES & VIEWS 05/19

## Meet Your Board of Directors

*Julie Rhoads*



Julie Rhoads does not step away from a challenge. "If you tell me I can't do something, I will prove you wrong every time." This quality has served her well in the personal and professional roles she assumes. Joining the Illinois Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors in 2007, Julie is no stranger to the duties required of the position. Aside from her work with the co-op, she is an agency owner at Whitworth Horn and Goetten Insurance Agency in Carrollton, where she has been for nearly 20 years.

When the opportunity arose 12 years ago to join the Board, Julie's hands were already full. "I work 24/7 most of the time...I work all the time." Still, she chose to take on the additional responsibilities of a Director, knowing it would require much additional time and energy. "It takes a lot more time than I originally suspected," Julie admits.

*continued...*



## Illinois Electric Cooperative

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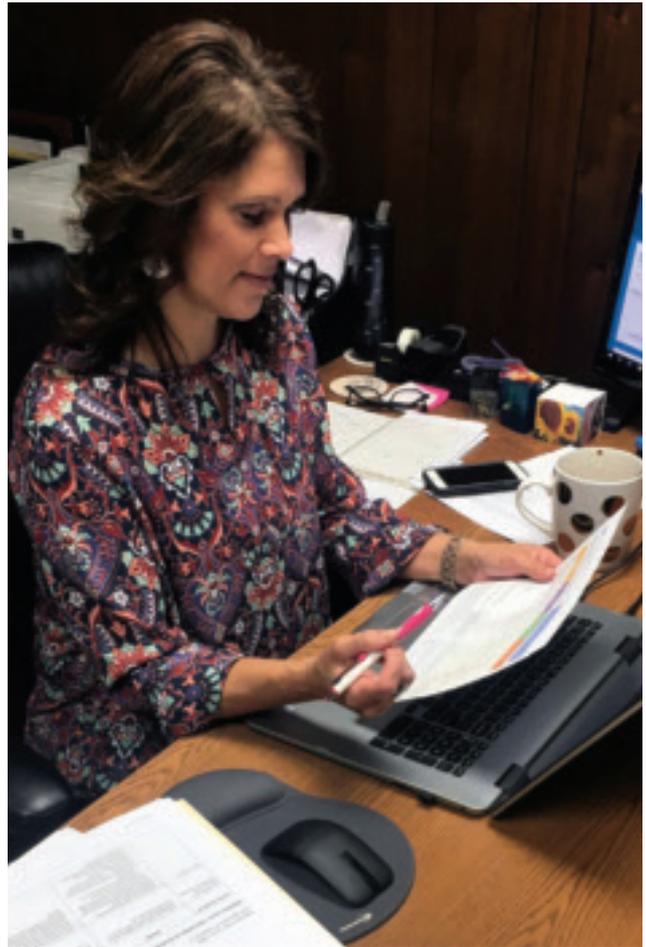
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Part of what makes the added commitment worthwhile for Julie is the rewarding nature of the position. “Personal growth—that has been the best thing about this.” She also enjoys becoming more connected to her community, as well as surrounding communities. “Being a better person to my community and the community service are most rewarding.” Much pride also comes from her role implementing the CEO (Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities) Program for high school students in Greene and Calhoun counties, a move which seemed futile to some in the beginning. “They said we couldn’t do it, they said we wouldn’t be able to get enough sponsors or enough students... We did.” For someone who takes ‘can’t’ as a challenge, this feat was both an accomplishment and a confirmation of hard work done well. Julie continues to serve as a chairperson for the Greene-Calhoun CEO program.

Within the IEC Board, Julie serves in numerous roles. She is the Assistant Secretary of the Board, and serves on the Economic Development Committee, the Tech Committee, and the Policy Committee. Her professional background selling insurance proves a great asset as a Director, and an earlier job in a law office gave her valuable proofreading and writing skills, for which she remains grateful. Working with a diverse group of Directors is also rewarding for Julie. “We all bring something different to the table, and that’s kind of a good thing... we are blessed by a diverse group.” Not only does this diversity better represent the co-op’s members, it leads to better-quality board decisions and actions. “Everyone has their niche, and its good getting to see what those are.”

In the future, Julie sees the possibilities for change and growth in the cooperative. Leadership and board turnover within the organization are normal occurrences, and they provide opportunities for the development and transformation which will drive Illinois Electric forward. She also sees current and future innovation in internet technologies as areas capable of changing the entire dynamic of the co-op’s business.



Director Julie Rhoads in her office at Whitworth Horn and Goetten Insurance Agency in Carrollton.

The self-proclaimed “insurance geek” does not only claim responsibilities professionally, but personally as well. She is a wife to her husband, Scott, as well as a mother to her son. If her dedication to her career and the Board is not clear, the dedication to her duties away from work—to her family—certainly is.

*This article on Julie Rhoads is the sixth 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.*



# Youth Day 2019

State Representative C.D. Davidsmeyer meeting students representing the co-op at this year's Youth Day in Springfield.

State Senator Steve McClure and Representative C.D. Davidsmeyer met with students representing Illinois Electric Cooperative during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day in Springfield on Wednesday, April 3. Youth Day is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government. More than 235 students representing 23 co-ops from across the state attended the event.

Students had the opportunity to visit the State Capitol, view state government in action from the Senate floor and question their legislators on key issues. They were also invited into the office of Secretary of State Jesse White.

During lunch, State Treasurer Michael W. Frerichs addressed students and chaperones and encouraged them to find where their passion lies. Frerichs said, "It doesn't matter what you do if you love what you are doing. Find your own path. There may be times when you start down a path and diverge from it but listen to your heart. Sometimes you have to immerse yourself in something and possibly fail. Even when we don't win, we learn from the experience."

Collin Moseley, the 2018-19 Illinois Youth Leadership Council representative from Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc., reflected on the past year and the experiences he had on the Youth to Washington tour and his opportunity to represent Illinois at various meetings. He encouraged everyone going on the 2019 Youth to Washington Tour to apply to represent Illinois as the YLC and not be afraid to connect with others on the trip.

After lunch, the students visited the Old State Capitol and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

At the end of the day, the students were interviewed for the chance to participate in the Youth to Washington tour, June 14-21, 2019.

# Illinois Electric Cooperative's 2019 Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 15th

\_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_  
**Winchester Grade School**

Registration at 9:00 a.m.  
Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

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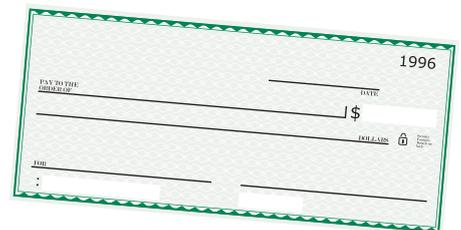
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