

## Area youth visit the nation's capital



What do you get when 62 students from 26 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives join 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 from Shelby Electric Cooperative's (SEC) service territory were selected from a diverse group of applicants to represent their cooperative on an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. from June 14-21 as part of the annual Youth to Washington Tour.

The 2019 Youth Tour delegates from SEC included: Jacob Beyers (son of Duane and Rebecca Beyers) from Pana and Kelsey Partlow (daughter of Scott and Leslie Partlow) from Neoga.

"What a great opportunity! Thank you to the cooperative for this amazing trip!" exclaimed Beyers. Partlow agreed and added, "It was the trip of a lifetime. We experienced so many things in a short period of time yet learned so much."

The students toured Capitol Hill and met with U.S. Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth and U.S. Representatives Rodney Davis and John Shimkus. They also visited historical and cultural sites including Arlington National Cemetery, the Supreme Court, President Lincoln's Cottage at First National Cemetery, a variety of memorials, and the U.S. Capitol. The students enjoyed many fun activities like an assembly of more than 1,800 Youth Tour participants from across the nation and a special farewell event at the Newseum, scheduled to close later this year.

"Youth Tour is a great opportunity that changes these students' lives," said Josh Shallenberger, president/CEO of Shelby Electric. "This experience helps prepare them for their futures. 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 utilities have sponsored more than 60,000 high school students to visit Washington, D.C., talk one-on-one with their U.S. congressional delegations, and learn from energy and grassroots government education sessions. To learn more about the Youth to Washington Tour, go to [youthtour.coop](http://youthtour.coop). You can also visit [shelbyelectric.coop](http://shelbyelectric.coop) and look at Youth Programs under the "Community" tab.

NRECA is the national service organization representing the nation's more than 900 consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives, which provide service to 42 million consumer-members in 47 states.



*Pictured from left: Kelsey Partlow, Congressman Rodney Davis, and Jacob Beyers.*



*Pictured from left: Kelsey Partlow, Congressman John Shimkus, and Jacob Beyers.*

# Visit us at the Farm Progress Show

**August 27-29**

The Farm Progress Show is back in Illinois this year, and we want to see you there!

The nation's largest outdoor farm event will be held at Progress City in Decatur August 27-29. Look for the Illinois Touchstone Energy® Cooperative's exhibit at its **NEW LOCATION** on Lot 217 on Second Street between Central Progress and East Progress Avenue, near Gates 7 and 8. Find us next to the new Grain Systems Inc. display.

Representatives from Shelby Electric Cooperative and several other Illinois electric cooperatives will be on hand to share information about cooperatives, safety, energy efficiency, and much more.

Be sure to catch a Live Line Safety Demo, sponsored by Corn Belt Energy Corporation, to learn from a safety expert about

electricity and how to stay safe around electrical equipment. You can also see a pole climbing demonstration.

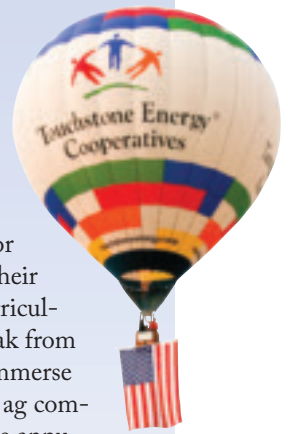
Stop by the booth to charge your phone at one of our charging stations. While there, play a game for a chance to win a prize. Cooperative members who present their Co-op Connections card or show the Co-op Connections app will receive a special gift.

Weather permitting, the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon will be flying the American flag each morning of the show. Plans are for the balloon to also fly late afternoon on the first two days of the show.

For 66 years, the Farm Progress Show has celebrated agriculture by bringing tradition and business together. It is where people from all over gather to meet,

observe, and learn. Major manufacturers roll out their newest offerings, and agricultural families take a break from their daily routines to immerse themselves in the wider ag community. The show rotates annually between Decatur, Illinois and Boone, Iowa.

Check out Prairie Farmer Magazine or visit [farmprogressshow.com](http://farmprogressshow.com) to learn more about the 2019 Farm Progress Show.



*Hope to see you there!*



## SHELBY News

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**Office Hours:**  
**7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Routinely replace or clean your air conditioner's filter. Replacing a dirty, clogged filter can reduce your air conditioner's energy consumption by 5 to 15 percent.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



# Red Cross visit highlights cooperative annual meeting

Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC) consumer-members enjoyed a porkchop lunch and a variety of activities for the young and old alike at their 81st Annual Meeting of Members held at the Shelby County 4-H Fairgrounds on June 7, 2019. Prior to the business meeting, the crowd was entertained by The Hood Family Band and Live Line Safety Demo, Inc. Youngsters were treated to balloon animals, face painting, and a bounce house.

Following the national anthem and introductions, Congressman John Shimkus talked briefly to those in attendance. "I'm honored to have the opportunity to speak to you. I would like to commend [SEC] for their work bringing high-speed internet to the underserved rural areas, as well as their support with rural economic development efforts. Cooperatives, like [SEC], create the success stories I like to bring back to Washington, D.C.," noted Congressman Shimkus.

The highlight of the meeting was when the American Red Cross presented its Certificate of Merit to the 14 linemen instrumental in saving the life of fellow lineman, Kevin Carlen, during pole top rescue training last year. The Certificate of Merit is the highest award given by the Red Cross to individuals who save or sustain a life using skills learned in a Red Cross Training course and is signed by the President of the United States.

"This is the reason I get up in the morning and come to work everyday – to meet people like Kevin Carlen and the guys who used their Red Cross training to save his life," commented Traci Johnston of the Red Cross who coordinates health and safety training regionally. After handing out the awards, American Red Cross South Central Region Executive Director Dawn Morris expressed, "I was able to meet Kevin as he was being interviewed. To hear his story gave me chills. I even found a few tears coming down my face. What an honor to be here today handing out the Red Cross's top life saving award."

SEC Board Chairman Brent Lively greeted members and guests and explained the cooperative does not generate the power it sells to its members; that power is generated by its power supplier, Prairie Power, Inc. Lively noted he is very proud of the fact that SEC elected their first woman to the board of directors. Katie Ohmes will be serving a three-year term.

Outgoing directors Mark Lash and John Scott were recognized with plaques of appreciation for their years of sincere service to the cooperative and mentoring of new board members. They were also presented with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Porcelain Eagle Award on behalf of the cooperative.

Josh Shallenberger, Shelby Electric president/CEO, reported that the cooperative is in good financial condition and has been able to continue giving capital credits. He also explained the cooperative's efforts to remain relevant for more than 80 years and the most recent survey to gauge members' interest and satisfaction with the co-op.

## Linemen Receive National Award



*Kevin Carlen, pictured far left, assisted the American Red Cross in handing out their top award to the linemen who helped save his life.*

Shallenberger said Shelby Electric scores well on member satisfaction due to its knowledgeable and courteous employees, service reliability, and storm outage restoration.

"Overall, member satisfaction on the American Consumer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) stands at 84, which is higher than well-known companies such as Apple, Cadillac, and Coca-Cola."

He encouraged members to stay engaged with the cooperative and reminded them how they exercised the cooperative principle of democratic participation by electing two new members to the board. David Keown, Findlay, District 3 and Katie Ohmes, Pana, District 6 were elected to three-year terms. They replaced outgoing directors J. Mark Lash of Findlay, who served for 18 years and John Scott of Pana, who served for 24 years.

To learn more about your cooperative check out their webpage, [shelbyelectric.coop](http://shelbyelectric.coop) and like them on Facebook @YourCoop or search Shelby Electric Cooperative.

## New Directors



*David Keown, Findlay, newly elected director from District 3*



*Katie Ohmes, Pana, newly elected director from District 6*



REAL LIFE  REAL POWER

## Getting Real with Marla and solar safety

Using the sun’s energy has been around for years as anyone that remembers the first, and most economical, clothes dryer (a clothesline) can attest. Technology is allowing us to harvest and utilize more of the sun’s powerful energy.

Solar, or photovoltaic (PV), systems generate direct current (DC) electricity from sunlight. Inverters then convert the electricity into alternating current (AC) to power up homes and businesses. Not only do PV systems generate electricity, they also generate interest and curiosity.

As with any electrical equipment, safety precautions must be implemented. A disconnect switch is often located near the electric meter. However, it is extremely important to note that the disconnect switch will disrupt power to the home or business,

but the panels may still be generating power if *any* light reaches the panels. Additionally, if the PV system has a battery backup, it will continue to produce power.

To prevent accidents and injury, not only should you adhere to the following precautions but also help educate others that may come in proximity of a PV system.

- Never enter a solar farm without authorized permission.
- Stay at least 10 feet away from a PV system.
- Educate children to never go near a PV system. Kids may be tempted to retrieve a ball or toy that lands near a rooftop or ground-mounted system. They should be instructed to always ask an adult for assistance.
- Never walk on solar panels.
- Do not attempt to clear leaves, branches, or other debris from around a solar system.

- Never touch a damaged system.
- Leave repairs to the professionals.
- If the PV system is on your property, ask the installer for contact numbers in case of emergency assistance.
- In the event of a fire, notify 911 and emergency responders of the PV system.

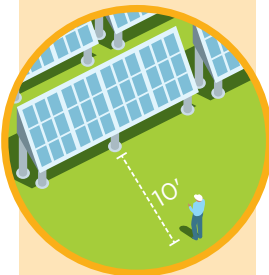
As renewable energy systems become more commonplace, we want our members to be educated on the necessary safety precautions around these electricity-producing structures. The best “sunscreen” protection around a solar system is applying educated safety measures.

~Marla Pruemmer,  
Communication Specialist

Sources: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov), [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org), [smeco.coop](http://smeco.coop)

# SAFETY NEAR SOLAR

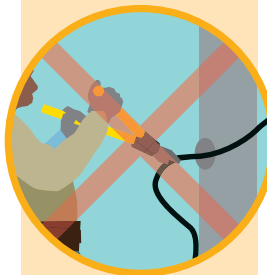
Like any other source of electricity, solar panels can pose potential hazards. Keep these safety tips in mind when you are near solar panels.



Stay at least 10 feet away from the installation.



Never walk on solar panels.



Never cut any wiring to the solar panels.



Never touch broken or damaged solar panels.