

## By the community, for the community

October is National Co-op Month

By Anne Prince, NRECA

When you think of October, pumpkins, Halloween and beautiful fall foliage naturally come to mind. But October is notable for another reason – it's National Co-op Month! This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including Western Illinois Electrical Coop, celebrate who we are and more importantly, the members we serve. Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. When the market declines to offer a product or service, or does so at a very high price, co-ops intervene to fill the need.

Similar to how WIEC was built by members who came together to bring electricity to our community, cooperatives are conveners for the common good. Your electric co-op exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. WIEC's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board of directors, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected to the position by neighbors like you.

We know our members (that's you!) have a valuable perspective. That's why we are continually seeking your input.

Whether through community events, social media, or the annual meeting, we want to hear from you.

Our close connection to the community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on local priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as equipment and technology upgrades. **7631-57**

Another feature that sets our co-op apart from a traditional utility is one of our core principles, "Concern for Community." We partner with local entities like the City of Carthage, Memorial Hospital Association, Hancock County Nursing Home Association and Dearwester Properties, L.L.C. for building or expansion programs as well as needed equipment. We participate in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C. for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action. We also provide scholarships to graduating high school seniors every year.

Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs

because of you and your neighbors. You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

We hope you will think of WIEC as more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities so that we can better serve you – because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community.





**Western Illinois**  
ELECTRICAL COOP.  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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www.wiec.net | 800/576-3125

**OFFICE HOURS**

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Monday - Friday

**BUSINESS OFFICE**

217-357-3125

**TO REPORT AN OUTAGE**

800-576-3125

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- **Kent Flesner** —  
President, West Point
- **Mark Burling** —  
Vice President, Carthage
- **Janet Spory** —  
Secretary/Treasurer, Sutter
- **William Newton** —  
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,  
Burnside
- **Rob Gronewold** —  
Director, Carthage
- **Kim Gullberg** —  
Director, Stronghurst
- **Jay Morrison** —  
Director, Niota

**STAFF**

- **Todd Grotts** — General Manager
- **Ryan Biery** — Manager  
of Operations
- **Wendi Whitaker** — Finance and  
Accounting Manager

**MAP LOCATION CONTEST**

Every month we are printing four members' map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

**Prairie State Energy Campus tour**

A group of 13 employees and board members from WIEC recently had the opportunity to learn about and tour an active coal mine and power plant. The Prairie State Energy Campus in Marissa, Ill. is a technologically advanced electric generation facility owned by Midwestern public power entities that include WIEC. 7824-5 The campus contains a 1,600-megawatt supercritical power plant and adjacent coal mine. Prairie State's owners invested \$1 billion in the Best Available Control Technology (BACT) to create the cleanest coal-fueled power plant in Illinois and one of the cleanest in the world.



*Pictured front row, left to right, are Janet Spory, Mandy Steinkamp and Wendi Whitaker. Back row, left to right, are Garrett Kestner, Kyle Tanner, Cody Grainger, Wayne Spory, Andy Lafeber, David Peer, Bill Newton, Ryan Biery, Mark Burling and Rob Gronewold.*

**AND THE WINNER IS...**

**Ruth Burling**  
of rural Carthage  
Map Location Winner — August issue

*Congratulations!*

**Welcome New Members**

**July 2019**

Churchill, Mike  
Fisher, Lukes

Schwab, Mckenzie  
Shipman, Audie

Traff, Julie & Cassidy



## Member Appreciation Day is October 25th!

To celebrate Cooperative Month in October, WIEC will have Member Appreciation Day from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the 25th. 8628-8



Because we are owned by our members, electric cooperatives have strong commitments to the local communities we serve. The better we know you as individuals, the better we can serve you and meet your changing needs. Please stop by the office to say hello or ask questions and have a cookie and some cider. We'll have some special cookies for the little ones this year, so go ahead and bring them along.

The 2020 pocket calendars will be here so remember to pick one up while you're visiting.

## Smart devices: They're definitely smart, but not always secure

For many of us, buying and using technology to make our homes smarter and interconnected is as tempting as walking through a candy store as a kid.

Although not found in every household, many U.S. homes have one or two components, such as a smart security system complete with cameras, a smart thermostat, or a know-it-all "voice assistant" such as Amazon's Alexa. **8623-11** The rest of our homes range from doing things the old fashioned way (no smart devices at all) to having a home decked out in every smart technology one could imagine.

According to Statista, a company specializing in market and consumer data, North Americans are forecast to spend \$63 billion in the smart home market in 2022. And that's nothing to sneeze at. (But if we do, millions of Americans may hear Alexa say, "Bless you.")

Although convenient – who doesn't want real-time glimpses of who is ringing our doorbell or to hear Google Assistant recite a recipe – smart devices come with their own set of security concerns.

Canada's CBC News hired hackers (ethically responsible ones of course)

to hack a family's smart home and they got in, literally. "All it took was a white van, a team of three hackers and a phishing email to remotely unlock the front door."

This eye-opening scenario is not intended to scare people; rather we encourage you to give your smart devices serious thought before diving in. Security measures for smart devices are similar to the steps we should take in our daily life to protect us against seedy scammers and hackers everywhere.

For example, be leery of emails or calls asking for personal information such as login info or passwords. And although everyone loves to use the same passwords like "abc123" for everything, doing so can make your smart devices vulnerable. (Note: it's not a good idea to use "abc123." Be creative and make them hard to crack.) And although it seems obvious, never use the factory-set password; change it immediately.

Many tech companies are considering (and others have already switched) to two-step authentication for the smart devices they sell. Although the extra step can feel like a pain, the two-step process is a good thing; it is a

valuable step in keeping you and your family safe and your conversations private.

Without the code provided in the second security step, outsiders can't access your device or account — even if they guessed your SweetHomeAlabama1973 password (or whatever).

For more in-depth technology advice, consult an IT professional. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org. And if your password is actually SweetHomeAlabama1973, we apologize; it was used for illustrative purposes only.



# Uncashed 2018 capital credit checks

Check your kitchen counter, your desk, your glove box or your purse... wherever it is that you tend to hide things from yourself. Please take one more look to assure you've cashed your capital credits check from October 2018.

If you happen to have current address or phone information for someone appearing on the list of uncashed checks below, please contact our office to aid in our efforts to locate all members.

Alton Richard	Finch William	Last Adam Ministries	Oard Robert T	Smith Rick L
Anderson Larry G	Foster Jerry E	Launer Leo	Olson Frank L	Snyder Donna M
Balmer Levi E	Galbraith Max B	Leffler Brian C	Otte Darrell	Sparrow Jerry D
Bergmeier Eloise	Glisan Larry	Leffler David C	Overton Donald	Staff Arlene
Bigger Lonnie Jr	Gray Martha	Lillard Leora	Parquet Clara J	Steele L D
Booton Flossie	Gray Stacy L	Lion Hart Farm	Pence Beulah	Stephens Gladys F
Boughton Mark S	Green Jerry	Little Lois	Peterson Neola M	Stephens Robert F Jr
Brockmeier Ruth	Grogan Patricia A	Love Bros	Piper Frank	Stout Daniel R
Bubb Vernon	Hamman Kathryn D	Lukens Dale G	Powelson Tim	Summers Jennife R L
Buckert Danny	Hanson Brent	Lybarger Dale	Price Betty L	Sutton Steve
Buckert Rodney L	Hanson Mark E	Manley B J	Priebe Kris	Talbott Gary
Burton William	Harris Chuck	Marbol Cuft Inc	Purdy Darlene	Thompson Byron
Buswell Kevin M	Hart James E	Markey Wendell	Purtle Leona	Tisor Mark
C B S Reality	Hasten Cerece	Mcclister Norman	Randall John D	Todd Robert E
Carlisle Livestock & Grain	Heckenberg Caren A	Mcclintock Realty	Rang Morris E	Wadhams Kenneth
Coeur Bob	Hendrickson Michael	McDonald Rex E	Ray Scott E	Waterman Conda
Conover Glenda	Hester Helen R	Mcgaughey Donald E	Redding Russell	Waterman Harold L
Covert Darrell	Hitz Harold	Meado Robert W	Redenius Patricia	Waterman Richard
Cox Dixie L	Hocker R S	Meeker Arthur R	Roskamp David	Watts Robert E
Cox Fred	Holmes Lloyd	Meister Jack R	Rowland Margaret	Wildrick Jack
Cutler Michael	Housewright M O	Miller Daniel F	Rumsey James	Wilkens Paul
Dowden Comm Inc	Humphry Dola R	Mittermyer Oscar S	Sartorius Richard	Wilson Henry D
Dowell Kenneth	Illinois Natural History	Modrell Liz	Schiek Ben T	Wisheart Rock W
Dowell Madeline	Johnson Betty	Monnier David E	Schoch Alfred W	Wolford Frances
Dunham Lena	Jones Anna Mary	Morris Tim S	Scranton Shirley R	Wollbrink Kelly
Durocher Daneil J	Jones James C	Moss Duzansky	Setser John W	Wright John F
Dye Philip D	Kistler Co Contr	Mulch Donald A	Sherrick D W	Young Ellen M
Eddington Dean	Kreis Mike	Mynatt Rex D	Shields Mary K	Yuskis Doris
Erbland John A	Kruse Walter H	Nagel Walter	Shoen Debbie	
Farmers Home Adm	Kunz Irene	Neff Eldon	Siefken Roger	
Ferguson Randy	Kuper Randall	Nolden William E	Siegfried Clement G	
		Nye Frankli	Smith Jerry L	

## Tired of all the clutter?

Take advantage of our e-bill option. It's quick and simple! Contact the office today to provide your email address and we'll get you set up immediately.

