

THE GRID

**P.O. Box 709
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Phone: 217/235-0341
or **Toll-Free:**
1-888-661-CMEC (2632)
Office hours:
Monday-Friday
7:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.

Chairman

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2019 Employee Service Awards

- Sandra Fisher - 40 Years
- Summar Smith - 20 Years
- Shaun Vester - 3 Years
- Kellie Kastl - 1 Year
- James Geldert - 1 Year

Congratulations!



Our new Distribution Automation Technician - David Shain, from Sullivan.

We want to hear from you

We live in a device-driven world. Our smartphones, tablets, laptops and an assortment of other devices help us communicate and connect. Companies spend billions pushing out a steady drumbeat of messages and information, and we are constantly bombarded with one-way communication. But is anyone listening on the other end?

At Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative, CMEC, we are not only listening, we are eager to hear from you. Whether you text us, respond to a survey or social media post, send an email or simply stop by

and chat in person, we thrive on your feedback. Connecting with you helps us keep pace with our community's priorities and needs.

Because we are a cooperative, we have a different way of operating. CMEC 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. We hope you will consider us more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

You will notice that throughout the year, we create opportunities for you and other community members to attend co-op gatherings and events in order to hear from you. These include our Annual Meeting at Peterson Park and Coffee on the Co-op, as well as events like participating in the annual Mattoon Expo at the Cross County Mall.

We value member feedback so that we can plan for new initiatives, technical upgrades and improvements on existing co-op programs and services. Our planning is led by local members just like you who understand the needs of the community and are looking out for the long-term interests of the larger community. In addition, we host an annual

Key Accounts Conference and Member Advisory Committee (MAC) meetings each quarter as an additional way of obtaining your feedback.

We are amid significant

changes in the energy sector, as technology and the drive for more renewables **Larry Kingery** and a more balanced energy mix is impacting long-term planning. These are complex issues that we will be navigating in the coming months and years. This is why it's so important that we hear from you and other community members as we plot our course for the future.

CMEC works to continually learn from our members about their priorities so we can better serve you - because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community. We can only improve, adapt and effectively plan for the future if we have two-way communication.

For our co-op and community to thrive now and in the future, we depend on hearing from you. We hope you will connect with us and let us know your perspective. You can always reach us directly at 217-235-0341 or email info@cmeccoop.com - We are listening.



Capital Credits

Please take notice that on Nov. 25, 2019, Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative (CMEC) retired capital credits for the years 1980-1982. Any person or entity who has not received payment and believes they were a member of CMEC at any time during 1980-1982 should contact our office, #217-235-0341, info@cmeccoop.com or in person at 104 DeWitt Ave East, Mattoon, IL. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

PRESIDENT/CEO REPORT - October 2019

Marketing Member Services

- We need to replace two of our Member Advisory Committee members due to departures from the group. We are looking at dates in February 2020 for our next meeting. We plan to explain to the MAC group what it means to be a cooperative member through the Cooperative 101 class. We plan to increase the correspondence to a monthly publication to help keep this group engaged in activities of the cooperative.
- Sam Adair attended the 2nd annual Aikman Wildlife fundraiser and auction. Sam donated a fallow deer antler pen and business card holder for the event. This donation raised \$180 for SABLE, the non-profit arm of Aikman Wildlife.
- CMEC employees have already begun meeting to plan the 81st CMEC Annual Meeting. We went over the successes and failures of the past meeting as well as new ideas and thoughts for 2020. Our annual meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 19, 2020.
- Sam Adair and Carla Bradbury were visitors on the WTIM Radio show in October 2019. They were on air to speak about the upcoming events for cooperative month. In addition to cooperative month, they also discussed information about safety around downed power lines. This was a topic that was brought up in the safety committee meeting.
- CMEC had a booth in both the Mattoon Chamber of Commerce Business Expo at Cross-County Mall as well as "the Our Town" display featuring Shane Ruppert who spoke to the audience about his job as a journeyman lineman. This was CMEC's fourth year to be involved in this event.
- Sam Adair met with a graduate

assistant at Eastern Illinois University. She is looking into what it takes to start a new cooperative in under-developed countries. She also has a large interest in power production and what part renewables can play for CMEC as well as other power utilities. Sam continues to work with her as she moves toward her year-end project.

- The American Red Cross set up a bloodmobile in the CMEC parking lot during cooperative month. CMEC employees were encouraged to give and we had over 10 donors.
- Carla Bradbury attended the SBLHS Paint the Town 5K event. CMEC sold pink gaiters for \$5 each. All proceeds went to the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center Mobile Mammography Services.
- Each Wednesday in October, CMEC had a giveaway on Facebook. All giveaways were CMEC logoed gifts, as well as tickets to the EIU homecoming football game and the Douglas Hart Haunted Hike.
- Sam Adair met with 20 MHS and CHS students that are in the Class E CEO class. Students were given a tour of our facility as well as taught what the cooperative difference is and why cooperatives are different than investor owned utilities.
- Carla Bradbury, Drew Haumesser, Heather Hakman, Shaun Vester, Tim Genta, Kelsey Hawkins, Julie Butler and Sam Adair participated in CMEC volunteer day at Douglas Hart Nature Center for cooperative month. Employees planted, spread mulch, made crafts for the haunted hike and picked up trash in order to help one of CMEC's members.

Safety

- CMEC Safety Committee met for its monthly meeting. Topics covered included cooperative month, near

misses, safety visits, community safety and training opportunities.

- Rusty Endicott, from Federated Rural Electric, came to CMEC to talk about what types of accidents are happening and when they occur according to the data that the insurer collects. Rusty's hands-on experience at an electric co-op as a safety coordinator was well received by employees.
- CMEC closed its doors on Oct. 25, 2019 from 7:30-10 a.m. for all employees to attend the presentation of the real-life story of Gerry Kinney, a lineman who was repairing a transmission line and came into contact with 7,200-volts.
- CMEC led a harvest safety campaign on Facebook this month. Posts were made all week in order to remind farmers and those around the area to watch for overhead lines and keep an eye out for safety during fall harvest.

Key Accounts

- Sam Adair attended Egyptian Electric Cooperative's 2nd annual Key Accounts Luncheon. Sam worked with Brooke Guthman of EECA to help guide them on their way to having their own event.

Information Technologies

- David Welsh has been working on integrating the voltage regulator list into our customer information system.
- During September, there was an extender bridge added on Western Avenue in Mattoon to help with signal issues.
- David Welsh continues to install and deploy the automatic vehicle location (AVL) system. We plan to demonstrate this for the board when we have it fully operational.

- Continued on page 20D

Find Your Name and Win \$25

Find your name hidden inside this issue of The Grid and receive a \$25 bill credit. Credit must be claimed by the end of each month in which this newsletter is published.



- Research is being done on mobile staking opportunities.
- Amy Borntrager, Jim Wallace, David Welsh, Shaun Vester, Jef White and Dennis Ray attended training hosted by NISC for their product called MapWise, which is an integrated intelligent mapping solution designed to help visualize data-enabling us to find relationships that might not be as easy to connect on a spreadsheet, which helps to identify trends in customer information and accounting data as it relates to other variables.

Geographical Information System

- Shaun Vester has been working on the integration of the GIS mapping system and AVL system as well as setting up our own REST API server for the GIS.
- Shaun is also generating scripts to automate outage management system exports.

Operations and Engineering

- Brock Cook began his employment with CMEC as a journeyman lineman. Brock comes to the cooperative from the City of Sullivan.
- Bob Schafer participated in 2nd Year Distribution School as a trainer for the AIEC. The school took place at Lincoln Land Community College training facility in Springfield. Thad France, the training coordinator for the AIEC, has resurrected a practice from nearly 15 years ago of using current linemen at the co-ops to assist in training. This helps expose co-op apprentices to the most up-to-date practices for linework in use today.
- Jim Wallace attended the ICUEE (International Construction and Utility Equipment Expo) Show in Louisville, KY. This showcases all types and brands of utility equipment in one location and is valuable in evaluating equipment in one setting. Several budget item requests were decided upon at this show.
- Jim Wallace and an outside crew completed a final drawing review with Altec for the new digger truck ordered to replace Unit #15, a 2000 GMC. The review finalizes

the specifications to begin the build process. The new truck is estimated to arrive in March/April 2020.

- The Rubber Gloving Committee consisting of Shane Ruppert, Bob Schafer, Jake Logue and Mitchell Stanciu, along with Jim Wallace, attended gloving training at the IBEW Local 702 training facility in West Frankfurt. The opportunity to receive this training from Local 702 proved valuable in that it brought the parties involved in negotiating the conversion process from hot sticking to rubber gloving closer together in reaching a contractual agreement. A draft is currently being produced for the parties to review and approve in order to move forward with the process.
- The visit to West Frankfort and the Local 702 training facility also opened the door to opportunities for future training for operations personnel at no cost to the co-op other than travel expenses. Benefits will be more personnel allowed to have the training and the training can be provided on CMEC's schedule, not the one date that the AIEC sets for the year.
- Lilly Timber Services, Inc., from Shelbyville, has been brought on to perform ROW mowing for the co-op in the last quarter of this year. This period will be used to evaluate the company and could potentially lead to the use of the company for ROW trimming in the future. It's a potential opportunity to have a local company provide a service in which communication with the ownership is important.
- David Welsh and Jim Wallace met with G&W to discuss final approval on the drawings for the new G&W Viper breakers to be installed in the substations over the next several years as part of the 4 Year Work Plan.
- The monarch butterfly is currently under review by the Fish & Wildlife Service as a potential endangered species candidate. There is a CCAA (Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances) that, if the co-op chooses to participate, will provide assurances from the F&WLS that additional conservation measures

beyond those in the agreement will not be required and restrictions or limitations will not be imposed should the species become listed. CMEC would commit to adopting conservation measures to sustain, enhance and restore conditions favorable for monarch breeding and foraging.

- The Coles Centre Business Park project is moving forward. The infrastructure work order has been released to operations and work will begin on the installation of the infrastructure. There has been no progress on the hotel/convention center or the Blue Cross Blue Shield call center yet due to no requests from the entities, however, the HSHS medical facility is nearly framed. The current priority is to complete the installation of the infrastructure to that location.

Accounting and Finance

- Sandra Fisher and Aimee Boswell are preparing for the retirement of capital credits for the years 1980-1982.
- CMEC 2020 Capital Budget process has been completed and will be presented for board approval at the October 2019 meeting.
- Amy Borntrager attended the Accountant's Meeting in Springfield, which was presented by CFC employees and encompassed equity management.
- We are developing new accounting processes and procedures for the CONNECT business.
- Amy Borntrager attended the Prairie Power, Inc. board meeting where the 2020 Capital and Operating budgets were reviewed. Those budgets flow into our operating budget as well.
- We continue to work with our accounts payable work-flow module to improve efficiencies within all the departments approving invoices for payment.

Human Resources

- We have currently posted for the CFO position on Facebook, Indeed and Cooperative.com.
- The NRECA met with employees to discuss retirement plans.

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed on our website: cmeccoop.com