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Hi-Lites

Lineman's Safety Rodeo

Linemen from Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative participated in the 19th annual Lineman's Safety Rodeo sponsored by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) on Friday, Sept. 30. This year 16 teams participated in the competition. The rodeo gives linemen the opportunity to showcase their skills in front of families, friends and fellow linemen. It's a chance to network and show their pride in the special skill sets that keep our lights on in a way that makes sure they also return home safely after a long day or night of work.

The Lineman's Safety Rodeo is held on the Chuck West Lineman Training Grounds at Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC) in Springfield. The college also offers an associate's degree and a certificate in Electrical Distribution Lineman, the majority of which is coordinated by the AIEC. Courses are designed for new linemen and to help existing electric line personnel improve their work skills in safe and efficient ways. Each year at the rodeo, teams of linemen from Illinois electric cooperatives participate in competitive events using skills that focus on agility, speed and accuracy. While these skills are part of

the judging, above all the linemen are judged on safe work practices.

Line personnel competed in five team events and three individual events. Team events included Hurt Man Rescue, Egg Climb (linemen climb a 30-foot pole with a raw egg in their mouth), H-Structure Obstacle Course, and two Mystery Events. Individual linemen and apprentices competed in the Egg Climb,

Hurt Man Rescue and H-Structure Obstacle Course. Scores for each event use a 100-point scale and are based upon completion time and proper execution of the task including safe work practices. Deductions were made to a team or individual's overall performance score due to such things as slipping when climbing poles, dropping tools or executing inappropriate procedures or methods.



Pictured are (l-r) Jake Logue, Shane Ruppert, and Mike Stuckey who participated in the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative's 19th Annual Lineman's Safety Rodeo held in Springfield, Ill., September 30.

*The Cooperative office will be closed Friday, December 23,
Monday, December 26, Friday, December 30 and
Monday, January 2 in observance of the holidays.*



P.O. Box 709 (104 Dewitt Ave., East)
 Mattoon, Illinois 61938

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

Chairman

Jeffery D. Hudson..... Charleston

Vice Chairperson

Debbie Albin.....Mattoon

Secretary

John Bowers Lovington

Treasurer

Steve Shrader..... Westfield

Director

Dean Robison..... Windsor

Chris Christman..... Sullivan

Scott Uphoff.....Mattoon

President/CEO

Kim Leftwich

To report an outage

- First check your fuses or circuit breakers and see if your neighbors have power.
- If the problem appears to be with the cooperative's lines, call the office at the toll free number (888-661-2632), give the name the service is listed under, and report any hazardous conditions.

Board Report

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative was held at the offices of the Cooperative at 104 Dewitt Avenue, East, Mattoon, Illinois at 7 p.m. on the 29th day of September, 2016, pursuant to notice duly given. The meeting was called to order by Jeff Hudson, Chairman. After calling the roll, the following directors were present: Scott Uphoff, Chris Christman, Jeff Hudson, Steve Shrader, Debbie Albin, Dean Robison, and John Bowers being a quorum of the directors of the Cooperative. Also present were Kim Leftwich - President/CEO, Amy Borntreger - Chief Financial Officer, Jim Wallace - Director of Operations & Engineering, Sam Adair - Manager of Marketing and Darla Powell - Director of Human Resources/Office Manager.

Motion was made by Christman to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Albin to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted, the August Safety & Training report and the 08/25/2016 Regular Board meeting minutes. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

Charleston Stone has committed to the improvements and is seeking financial support through a Rural Economic Development Loan.

Motion was made by Uphoff to approve the resolution for the Rural Economic Development Loan - REDLG Loan for Charleston Stone. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Uphoff to move the regular Board meeting for November to December 1st. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

Wholesale Power Contract/Transmission Services Agreement for PPI was presented to the Board. Both agreements have been approved by the Prairie Power, Inc. (PPI) Board of Directors. Each member cooperative must consider and approve the Amendments for them to become effective.

Motion was made by Shrader to approve the Wholesale Power Contract amendment as presented. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Christman to approve the Transmission Services Agreement amendment as presented. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

Recent review of the Strategic Plan outline developed in November 2014, emerging events, and the current pace of change in the industry suggest that the Board may wish to consider adjusting its Strategic Plan.

After discussion, motion was made by

Robison to have staff begin setting up a strategic planning session for the Board of Directors. Motion seconded. Motion carried.

NRECA provides help and preparation of a Performance Appraisal for the new President/CEO under provisions of the original search contract. The assistance would be provided at no additional charge except for travel and expense reimbursement for the facilitator.

After discussion, motion was made by Albin to have Dan Brewer of the NRECA conduct the CEO evaluation. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

Amy Borntreger gave the financial report. Sales of kWh are 13.66% higher than August, 2015 and revenue is up 10.02% from last year as well. August did prove to be higher than anticipated budgeted sales and higher in the residential revenue class than August 2015.

In the Distribution Expense-Operations we have paid \$19,345 for the GIS project. We have increased our Right of Way trimming contractors for August to help with the extreme growth we have seen this season and internal staffing changes.

Total Operation & Maintenance Expense total \$8,924 more than 2015.

Kim Leftwich reviewed the 2016 Capital Budget & Work Plan.

Patronage Capital of \$38,243 allocated from CFC (National Rural Cooperative Finance Corporation) was reviewed.

Kim Leftwich gave an overview of his attendance of the NRECA Region V meeting and highlighted topics from sessions that he attended.

Kim Leftwich gave the President/CEO report.

President/CEO Report – September 2016 CMEC Board Meeting – Sept 23, 2016

NRECA Regions 5 & 6 Meetings

■ KBL attended the Region 5 Meeting in Minneapolis, MN, September 20-22; a report detailing events in enclosed elsewhere in the Board Report.

Live Line Safety Demonstration

■ Coles-Moultrie joined with Consolidated Communications September 19th to host three sessions through the day for the Live Line Safety program. Nearly all CMEC employees, Consolidated operations employees, and local, nearby EMT, police and fire participated.

■ On September 23rd, a farmer called in notifying Carla Bradbury that he had

struck a pole and the line was on his combine; Carla instantly advised him to stay in the combine and await arrival of CMEC personnel; she further advised him that all others should be told to stay away until CMEC could insure safety. Carla had just completed training at the demo and knew immediately what to do!

NISC Member Information Conference (MIC)

- Seven CMEC employees attended the three-day conference; KBL attended a one day executive session; feedback from all our participants has been incredibly positive; participants attended numerous training and orientation sessions, learning the power and depth of the systems that are part of the NISC platform and its application packages; the payoff has been better and fuller utilization of the systems.
- Many new uses and applications were viewed leading us to understand more fully the capabilities of the platform and new solutions we may employ to benefit CMEC and its members.
- NISC met independently with our GIS representatives – Jim Wallace, David Welsh, and Shaun Vester. The group exchanged vital information and verified the CMEC approach matches the NISC application seamlessly assuring ease of integration.
- All participants completed “after action” reports detailing their discoveries and experience to share with other employees; all have provided KBL reports with details of what they learned, contacts they made for future reference, and overall outcomes from their perspective – very thorough!

Lake Land College Foundation

- *Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative Annual Scholarship* has been approved by the Foundation Board; awards scholarships in GIS/IT and technology.

Collections

- As a reminder, a member had been remiss in paying charges from 2012; we continue to monitor and they have paid past due charges on time as set out in the agreement we reached; originally they owed some \$48,000; the outstanding balance is now down to \$30,860.
- A residential customer disconnected for non-payment in March, 2015, tampered with the metering and reconnected himself. Total charges and tampering fee, once discovered, came to a total of \$4,224. Further collection efforts bore no results. CMEC instructed Tapella and Eberspacher to file a citation for payment with the court against the customer. The

former customer must arrange through the court to make payment; failure to show up in court would result in a warrant for his arrest.

- Six incidents where parties damaged CMEC equipment (hit a pole, etc.) had languished for multiple months without reply from the responsible parties totaling nearly \$14,000. CMEC instructed Tapella and Eberspacher to notify the parties that absent payment, CMEC would seek judgment through the courts. Notices recently were sent to each party.

GIS

- 27,000 poles with attributes completed to the present.
- GIS map now loaded to computers throughout the organization for use by employees; though not a completed project, it is becoming a useful resource already.
- As noted earlier in the MIC conference report, we are well down the path to easy integration with NISC
- Now beginning the “mark” underground cable routes which will provide direct GPS notations for easy locate of UG cables – beneficial to CMEC crews and to other entities who must dig; GPS coordinates associated with UG means we can likely provide to outside entities and not have to actually go out and mark locations – saves time and money!
- PPI has interest in CMEC’s approach to developing/building its GIS.
- Attached map shows CMEC territory already complete.

LED Lighting

- 894 LED lights have been installed replacing a like number of high pressure sodium and mercury vapor lights; a sample ornamental LED light head has been ordered to satisfy locations with that type of lighting.

Engineering

- Field engineers are presently handling many member requests for new services and service upgrades, typical for this time of year.
- New regulators have been ordered for Work Plan projects.
- New voltage regulator panels have been ordered to upgrade our system with modules for substation communications; purchasing them now through a trade-in offer from Siemens will save nearly \$40,000.
- The W1D/W1E and H4 mile projects are on schedule to complete this year.
- Premier Maintenance, chosen as a new supplier, will perform our substation transformer testing this fall; former supplier

was not delivering timely information and outcomes.

Operations

- Faulted UG cable in Meadowlake subdivision is complete; South Shores and Heritage Woods have experienced faults as well and efforts are being made to replace that UG cabling as well.
- PPI transmission pole replacement has been delayed until October 3rd.
- An additional Shade Tree forestry crew is being brought on to perform transmission trimming; PPI will reimburse CMEC.

CMEC Connect

- Fairgrange and Ashmore towers have been upgraded to the new Cambium equipment alleviating bottlenecks at those towers; 5 times as many customers may now be added to the towers and 20 Mbps now available.
- A routing device, Nomadix brand, has failed and is no longer supported meaning we must upgrade from the Nomadix device; new, more comprehensive and sustainable devices are being installed; the devices permit enhanced troubleshooting and a standalone billing feature.
- Added a new main fiber line into the building for backup services as well as provide internet to the building; CMEC now connected to Adams Telephone Cooperative with a 250 Mbps circuit, sufficient to manage all traffic for our office, AMI system, radio system, and CMEC Connect; cost per Mbps went down to \$4/Mbps from \$13; Windstream brought down from \$13 to \$8; with the enhanced service, we will be discontinuing service with Consolidated.

Marketing/Member Services

- Bright Options Solar, developed by PPI, will be introduced to CMEC members beginning in October.
- USDA and CMEC met with Mattoon Precision Manufacturing Inc. as follow up to the REDLG loan made in 2015; no concerns or issues were discerned.

VMI

- CMEC and Anixter have invited electric cooperatives to a Vendor Managed/Vendor Owned Inventory seminar on October 19th; the seminar will introduce the VM/VOI concept and financial benefits to other coops in Illinois.

The Outage report was reviewed. State of Illinois accounts that are currently in arrears were reviewed.

Motion was made by Robison to adjourn. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

Giving back is the co-op way

By Meghaan Evans

As some of you might know, cooperatives across the globe adhere to the same Seven Cooperative Principles that guide all of our decisions—from how we run the co-op, to how we engage with our local communities. Concern for community is the seventh principle, and it is one that all employees of Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative value year-round. But during the holiday season, concern for community seems especially important.

Electric cooperatives have a proud history of giving back. Many of our employees serve within their churches, volunteer as coaches, serve on community boards, help at the local food pantries, in addition to many other community service projects.

Coles-Moultrie members help us give back, too. Through the collection of food items during the month of October for donation to One-Stop Christmas, members are helping those in need, right here in our community.

Our commitment is also global. We have donated equipment and sent line-workers overseas so they can help bring power to thousands of people who have never experienced the benefits of electricity.

So many families go without daily and struggle to make ends meet. This struggle can be especially hard during the holiday season.

There are many ways you can give back to the community that go beyond dollar donations. Take some time to go through your closets and find clothes

that no longer fit or have lost their use. Bag those items up and take them to your local Salvation Army, Goodwill or church clothing drive. Volunteer for a local food or toy drive, deliver meals to the sick and the elderly or simply make a meal for a neighbor in need.

No matter how great or small the act, every time we give back, we strengthen our community. So, take the time to give back this holiday season. You'll be glad you did.

Meghaan Evans writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Scholarship Deadline Approaching

Ten \$2,000 academic scholarships are being awarded through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program to high school seniors. Five of the scholarships will be awarded to the child of an Illinois electric cooperative member. A sixth award will go to the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative director or employee. Three additional scholarships will be reserved for use at a two-year Illinois community college. Deadline for applications to be returned to the cooperative is December 31, 2016.

Candidates are judged on the basis of grade point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay that demonstrates their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

The tenth annual scholarship, the "LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship," was awarded for the first time in 2011. This \$2,000 scholarship will help pay

for costs to attend the lineworker's school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Ill. LaVern McEntire served as a lineworker for McDonough Power Electric Cooperative from 1949 until 1991. He and his wife, Nola, helped to endow and establish the new scholarship to financially assist deserving individuals in becoming trained lineworkers. Relatives of co-op employees or directors are eligible for the lineworker's scholarship, as are individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard. The deadline for this application is April 1, 2017.

For further information on the IEC Memorial Scholarship Program, contact Kelsey Hawkins at Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative at 235-0341, toll-free 1-888-661-2632, khawkins@cmeccoop or ask your high school guidance counselor.



For Sale

- 2013 Kawasaki Teryx 4X4, excellent condition, must see, custom cover included. Call 217-345-5917. Charleston area.
- Seasoned firewood, cut into logs 16" - 20". 6 1/2 ft level pick-up bed - \$33. 8 ft level bed - \$38. Charleston. 217-345-5048.
- Wooden yard pattern; Flymo for steep embankments. Call 217-234-8702.

This is a free service offered to CMEC members.