



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# Clinton County Connection

Published by Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. • cceci@cceci.com • www.cceci.com



Mike Johnson

**What does your cooperative have planned for 2010 for you the member?**

## Letter from the President

**W**e have developed two initiatives for 2010; the first initiative is “Enhance our Member Communications.”

In order to accomplish this we will be reaching out to the community and reestablishing our Area Meetings and Open House. We strongly believe these types of gatherings will open up the one-on-one communication between you the member and your electric cooperative.

Area Meetings will be scheduled in the fall of 2010. As in the past, we will have three meetings. We have not selected the dates as of yet, but once we do we will pass that information to you as soon as we can.

The Open House will take place at our headquarters on Old Highway 50 on July 17. Members and visitors can tour our facility, meet our employees and see firsthand some of the equipment, tools and investment that is needed to ensure we keep your lights on. We will have food, drinks and maybe even some bucket truck rides for the kids.

Another piece of our Member Communication Enhancement plan is to provide each member with a paid subscription to the publication you are currently reading, “Illinois Country Living” magazine. Clinton County Electric Cooperative truly believes this magazine will be a great communication tool.

The final part of our 2010 member communication initiative is probably the most exciting. On or about Labor Day of 2010, Clinton County Electric Cooperative will be deploying an “e-business” solution. Our members will be able to go to our Website and transact business with us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You will have the ability to pay your bill online, look up your electrical consump-

tion, review past billings and see all kinds of other information. I understand the membership has requested this many times over the years and now we are only months away from implementing it.

Member communication is a responsibility that we take very seriously. As an owner of your cooperative you are entitled to be informed and we are committed to communicating that entitlement to you effectively and efficiently.

The second initiative that we will be concentrating on in 2010 and beyond is “Infrastructure Improvements.” Clinton County Electric Cooperative has continually made infrastructure improvements over each of its 70 years of existence; this year we are beginning a slightly more aggressive approach.

In the fall of 2009 we hired a firm to do pole inspections. Basically pole inspections validate the safety, integrity and reliability of an electric pole. We believe this pole inspection/pole replacement program just made us a safer/more reliable electrical system. We have made the commitment to inspect all poles (approx. 20,000) within a 5 year period; therefore we will inspect around 4,000 poles in 2010.

We are also committed to ensuring our linemen have all the equipment, tools, training and clothing needed to operate in a safe manner. Their job is one of the most dangerous jobs in the world and we need to make sure they are able to perform their daily functions without injury.

Another safety item that we want to be more proactive with is public safety demonstrations. We did a safety demonstration for some of Clinton County’s fire departments in January of this year. We want to do more of these for all the fire departments, schools and

*(Continued on page 16b)*



(Continued from page 16a)

civic organizations within our service area. If we can prevent just one injury to the public, then these safety demonstrations will be a huge success. If you would like to have us do a safety demonstration for your organization, please call the office to schedule it.

Our 2010 plan includes the before-mentioned pole inspection program and a significant increase in our tree trimming program.

Our capital improvement projects for 2010 include six large projects. In the past we generally did around three. Basically, a definition of a large project from a non-engineer would be simply, "fatter poles", "stronger wire" and "shorter spans". Once again, a stronger system translates to fewer

power outages to you the member.

Another aggressive capital improvement project planned for 2010 is our Copper Replacement Program. Our plan is to replace a significant amount of "old" copper wire. Copper wire was and still is a great conductor of electricity, however it is not the strongest wire available to us today. Our system has a lot of copper wire that has been "sleeved" or repaired due to a break. An ideal long-term goal would be to replace all copper within the system, but that may or may not prove to be a realistic goal.

The basic theme that continues to run through our 2010 plan is a stronger system, to increase our reliability to you the member.

The most exciting project we are undertaking in 2010 and 2011 is to GPS/GIS our entire system. The goal of this project is that by the summer/fall of 2011 our crews will have electronic maps on hand-held computers that will provide up-to-date accurate information to allow for quicker restoration in the event of an outage.

That is a short – well, maybe not short – description of what your cooperative is planning on doing for you, the member, in 2010.

Thank you for taking the time to read our first issue of Illinois Country Living magazine, and always, if you have any questions, concerns or comments please call me at 526-7282 or email me at johnson@cceci.com.



2010 Annual Meeting Safety Demonstration



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## Safe planting tips

Consider mature height of trees. Never plant a tree near a power line that could grow within 25 feet of it. Tall growing trees should be planted a minimum of 20 feet away from power lines, and 50 feet away to avoid future pruning. A mature height of less than 15 feet is recommended for trees planted near power lines.

Do not plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow to interfere with underground pipes, cables and wires. Future repairs to

these facilities also could damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees, or even require removal.

Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.

Before digging, call the local underground utility locator service to mark the location of underground utilities so that accidental contact, damage and injuries can be avoided.

# Two area schools receive Touchstone grants

Two teachers in the Clinton County Electric Cooperative area are the winning recipients of Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants. Touchstone Energy electric cooperatives from across the state distributed a total of \$20,000 in Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants to fund innovative, unfunded school projects or materials.

Ms. Tara Joiner, Special Education Teacher at Carlyle Jr. High School was awarded a \$500 grant for the school's iREADS Experience project. The grant money will be used to buy MP3 players and audio books for her 7th and 8th grade literature classes. The iREADS program will increase student comprehension, knowledge of literary elements, and also integrate technology into the students' class assignments.

The other award goes to the fourth grade classes at New Baden Elementary for their Electricity Exploration project. The grant money will be used to buy electric circuit kits, which the students will use to learn about series circuits, parallel circuits, insulators, and conductors. The project was submitted by Miss Hundelt, Fourth Grade Teacher, on behalf of the three fourth grade class teachers.

Mike Johnson, President of Clinton County Electric Cooperative, says, "As your local Touchstone Energy electric cooperative, our focus is on our community, and we are proud to be able to support local schools. We realize that school budgets are tight, and these



grants will empower schools to pursue projects that would not otherwise have been funded."

Clinton County Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy® — an alliance of more than 702 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country. As a Touchstone Energy cooperative, Clinton County Electric Cooperative is committed to

providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves more than 5,800 co-op members over 1,040 miles of line in parts of Clinton, Fayette, Madison, Marion, St. Clair and Washington counties. For more information visit [www.cceci.com](http://www.cceci.com).

## OOPS!!

Generally in our December issue of "Connections," we include on the back cover a picture of all of the Trustees and Employees of Clinton County Electric. This past issue, we forgot an employee — Tyler Koerkenmeier.



Tyler Koerkenmeier

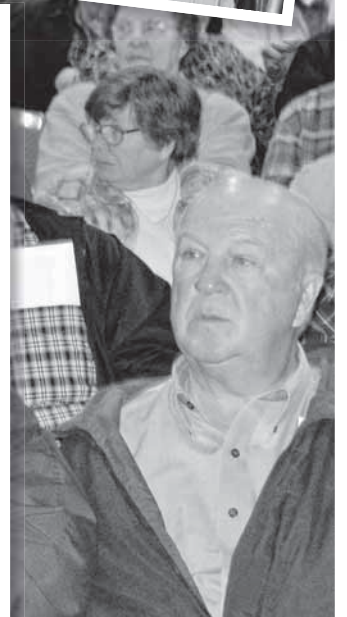
Tyler came into the office after the "Connections" went out to the membership and was wondering if he still had a job here. Even though he was a tad worried, and to be honest we did think about it for awhile, we decided to keep him around.

Sorry about the error, Tyler.

# 2010 Clinton County Electric's Annual Meeting



(from Left): Joe Voss of Carlyle – Re-elected for District 2, Cary Dickinson of Hoffmann – Re-elected for District 1, and Steve Kalmer of Damiansville – Elected for District 3.



## Employee spotlight - Ron Deien

Ron began his employment as CCECI's mechanic in 2008. Ron's main responsibility is to maintain and ensure the safety and reliability of our fleet of line trucks, pickups and other apparatus that we use in the course of our daily business. Ron also assists with operations when and if time permits. Ron constructed our new after-hours payment receptacle, which resembles a lamp. Stop by and see it if you get a chance. It looks great.



Ron Deien

Ron and his wife, Sherry, have two sons and reside in the Trenton area. Besides Ron's ability to make or fix just about anything, we get the added benefit of Sherry. She makes all kinds of wonderful desserts for the employees for their birthdays.

During his free time Ron enjoys antique malls, flea markets, camping, fishing and helping out friends with their repair projects.