

There's still time teachers ... apply for a \$500 classroom grant by November 5!

As a part of its commitment to community, Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) is offering six Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants to innovative, unfunded projects or materials. Qualifying projects are those that improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school.

K-12 school administrators or teachers must submit a grant application that can be obtained from SIEC. The application requests information about the project, the school and the applicant. A panel of judges will deter-

mine which projects will be awarded the six grants of \$500 each.

School administrators or teachers must complete and mail, e-mail or fax a grant application to the address or number on the registration form by **November 5**. The grant awards will be announced on December 10. For more information about Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants, please contact Jerri Schaefer at SIEC at 1-800-762-1400 or download a grant application from the SIEC website www.siec.coop.

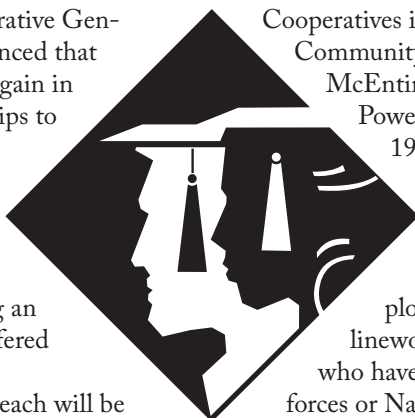
Important Scholarship Information for High School Seniors!

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative General Manager Larry Lovell has announced that the Illinois electric cooperatives will again in 2011 award seven academic scholarships to high school seniors through a memorial scholarship fund designed to financially assist deserving students in the "electric cooperative family." In addition, a new eighth scholarship – to assist with costs in attending an electric lineworker school – will be offered for the first time.

The eight scholarships of \$1,250 each will be awarded in 2011 through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative. A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee. The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

A new eighth annual scholarship, the "LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship," will be awarded for the first time in 2011. This \$1,250 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 lineman 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.

"We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with these scholarships," says Lovell. "Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth through programs like this one. In addition, we are very pleased to offer the new electric lineworker's scholarship. It will benefit not only electric cooperative youth but also those fine men and women who have served their country through their military service and may now be wanting to become a trained lineworker."

Jack E. Thompson
For more information regarding the scholarships, contact Jerri Schaefer at 1-800-762-1400. All necessary paperwork has also been sent to area high school guidance counselors and is also available for download at the cooperative's website at www.siec.coop.

Do-It-Yourselfers, make safety and efficiency a top priority

Fall can be a time of year when many individuals begin work on home improvements. While making a to-do list, keep in mind that there are many federal tax incentives for making efficiency improvements during repairs and new construction. Before you start tackling do-it-yourself projects, Safe Electricity and Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) ask everyone to take precautions before starting renovations or construction projects, especially when working around electrical equipment and overhead power lines. **Russell F. Davis**

Efficiency and safety can go hand in hand by thinking and planning ahead. Before tackling any project, prepare for the job. Make sure you have the right tools and materials and take note of any potential hazards in the work area such as overhead power lines or outdoor outlets that lack ground fault protection (GFCIs).

Simple actions like replacing standard light bulbs with compact florescent bulbs (CFLs) and sealing air leaks with weather stripping or caulk can produce substantial savings on your energy bill. You can also receive tax incentives for improvements such as replacing old windows with higher efficiency ones, and you'll be helping the environment as well.

Be willing to hire a licensed professional for projects that involve electrical wiring, or when working close to electrical equipment. Some work, like trimming trees near power lines and upgrading outdated electrical systems, is best left to professionals.

Safety tips to keep in mind:

- Make sure you have the right tools and equipment for the job. Use only extension cords that are rated for outdoor use when working outside. Keep your work area tidy and don't allow your power cords to tangle. Make sure outlets have ground fault protection. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) cord if your outdoor outlets don't have GFCIs.
- Look up and around you. Be sure to lower your long equipment when you are moving it. Carry ladders and other long items horizontally whenever possible. Remember, aluminum ladders, as well as wooden ladders, can conduct electricity. Fiberglass provides better protection against electric shock.
- Be especially careful when working near power lines attached to your house. Keep equipment and yourself at least 10 feet from lines. Never trim trees near power lines – leave that to the professionals. Never use water or blower extensions to clean gutters near electric lines. Contact a professional maintenance contractor.
- Use heavy-duty, three-prong extension cords for tools with three-prong plugs. Never remove or bend back



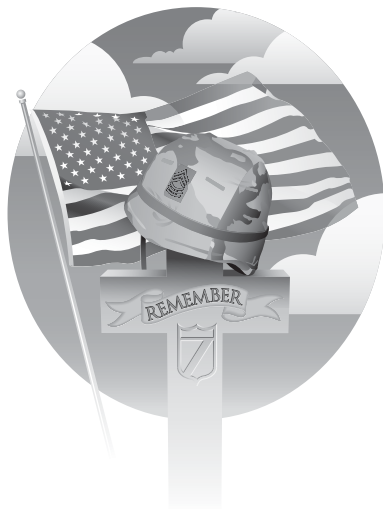
the third prong on extension cords. It is a safety feature designed to reduce the risk of electrocution or shock.

- If your projects include digging, like building a deck or planting a tree, call JULIE and your local utility before you begin. Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. This service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted, and can help you avoid serious injury.
- If it's raining or the ground is wet, don't use electric power yard tools. Never use electrical appliances or touch circuit breakers or fuses when you're wet or standing in water. Keep electric equipment at least 10 feet from wet areas.

Make certain home electrical systems and wiring is adequate to support increased electric demands of new electric appliances, home additions or remodeling projects. Home electrical systems age and deteriorate over time which means they are less efficient and more costly than newer means available today. Replace worn and outdated wiring, and add enough outlets for appliances and electronics. SIEC strongly recommends this NOT be a do-it-yourself project.

Hire a licensed professional to perform an electrical inspection and do any recommended electrical work or upgrades. Do-it-yourself projects are a great way to save money, but where electricity is concerned, it's always best to consult a professional.

For more information on electrical safety, please visit www.siec.coop and www.SafeElectricity.org. For information on federal tax incentives in 2010, visit www.energy.gov/taxbreaks.



Office Closed

*Veterans Day
November 11*

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**For Outages Call:
800-762-1400 * 618-827-3555**

Theis receives accounting degree

Stephanie Theis of Dongola has worked for SIEC since 1997. She began as Clerk, then moved into the billing department as Billing Clerk, then advanced to Payroll Clerk. She currently holds the position of Accountant. Theis recently graduated from Franklin University in Columbus, Ohio with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting.

“When the accountant’s position became available, I saw it as an opportunity for me to advance my career as well as work in a field I have always enjoyed. I knew it would be a challenge to return to school, since I work full-time and have two very active children, but I knew I could do it once I set my mind to it,” stated Theis. “My husband Daniel and I knew it would be a sacrifice for both of us, but I vowed to never let it interfere with being a good mom.”



Office Closed November 25-26

Member prize

In this issue of the JAMUP, we printed the names of three SIEC members who are eligible to receive a \$10 credit toward their utility bill. If you find your name printed in this center section and it’s not part of the story, call Jerri with your account number at 800-762-1400 to claim your prize.

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative

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 618-827-3555 • Office hours: 8 a.m. — 4 p.m. • Web address: www.siec.coop

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