

Spoon River News

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

Your role in Co-op Nation

There is a reason we say member, not customer

Spoon River is connected to a network of cooperatives. You might be thinking, "Really? How does that work?" Spoon River is a member of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, www.aiec.coop. We do this to keep in close contact with our 'sister' utilities and to stay up to date on how to best serve you. They are there to assist with local training, legislative issues affecting us in Springfield and when we have a severe outage, we can call on them to assist in getting your electricity back on as soon as possible. This is one of the ways we live up to our seven cooperative principles, which includes "cooperation among cooperatives."

Spoon River is also a member of Prairie Power, Inc., www.ppi.coop. This is the organization that produces the power that we buy at the wholesale level and enables us to provide safe, reliable and efficient power to you at the lowest possible cost. Prairie Power is also a cooperative, and we hold a seat on the organization's Board of Directors to represent your interests.

But wait--there's more! Spoon River is also a member of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) www.nreca.coop that unites electric cooperatives in the 47 states we serve. NRECA provides important benefits such as representing our interests with federal lawmakers and the Administration (the executive branch of our government). NRECA also provides health and retirement benefits to our employees, as well as training for board members and employees.

NRECA is a member of both the National Cooperative Business Association www.ncba.coop and the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) www.ica.

coop, which is made up of a wide range of cooperative businesses including those in agriculture, banking (credit unions), health care, housing, purchasing and many others in more than 80 countries. Many of these businesses represent some of the best known global brands in the world.

In 2013, the ICA released the "Blueprint for a Cooperative Decade" designed to promote the cooperative business model as the best way to meet both the economic and social needs of individuals and communities.

The report (which is available for free at www.ica.coop) describes the five key areas that all co-ops emphasize:

- Participation (member engagement)
- Sustainability (how we help our communities prosper)
- Identity (making sure people understand and showcase the cooperative business model)
- Legal Framework (making sure laws and regulations help, not harm our ability to operate for your benefit)
- Capital (ensure we have the money we need to finance our operations)

Member owners like you at Spoon River have a role to play in all of these areas, but it is Participation (member engagement) that is critically important. We strive to have members actively participate in our governance through voting or running for our board of directors.

Back in the early days of Spoon River, we never could have existed without the active participation of all of our members. While technology and reliability have improved, we still need you to be involved. In many ways, it is more important than ever that you feel

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77th Annual Meeting of Members



President/CEO Bill Dodds recognizing Director Greg Leigh for his Prairie Farmer 2014 Master Farmer achievement.

Spoon River Electric Cooperative held its 77th Annual meeting of Members at Canton High School. Members were updated on the organization's financial condition, its system reliability, the results of the director election and pending regulations that could impact future power cost and supply. President/CEO Bill Dodds said there's been no real growth at the co-op, but that it ended 2013 with net margins of \$1,016,412. The cost of power represents more than 54 percent of the co-op's total expenses.

Several years ago, in an effort to trim expenses and improve reliability Spoon River Electric teamed up with McDonough Power Cooperative in Macomb to share the cost of right-of-way clearing. Since then, members in most areas are now experiencing far fewer outages and blinks. Dodds made reference to the Breeds area, saying that he is aware of the unacceptable occurrence of blinks and outages there, and efforts are being made to rectify the situation. Menard

Electric Cooperative in Petersburg recently joined with Spoon River and McDonough Power on cost-sharing of right-of-way clearing. Since the program began, the three co-ops have cleared 5,200 miles of line. Dodds said this is an example of co-ops working together.

Dodds also told members there is great concern among electric co-op leaders regarding future power cost and supply. He said, "Illinois' not-for-profit electric cooperatives support an 'all-of-the-above' energy strategy, one that incorporates natural gas, nuclear, renewable energy, and coal to generate power." This strategy was initially endorsed by President Obama in his January 2012 State of the Union Address, but the U.S. Environmental



Director's Lyle Nelson, District 1, Jim Banks, District 3, and Greg Leigh, District 2

Protection Agency (EPA) issued proposed regulations for both new and existing power plants that set tough limits on carbon dioxide emitted from the plants. The regulations mean utilities will be under great pressure to reduce, or eliminate coal altogether as a fuel source. Coal represents 39 percent of the electricity generated in the United States, and if it is eliminated, there is not currently a way to replace it.



Recipients of college scholarships from Spoon River Electric Cooperative at the 2014 Annual Meeting of Members at Canton High School

Re-elected to the Cooperative's board were Lyle Nelson, District 1, Greg Leigh, District 2, and Jim Banks, District 3.

The Cooperative also awarded a \$500 Scholastic Scholarship to Sarah Jones a graduate of Cuba High School. The Scott Parrish Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Carli Miller, a Lewistown High School Graduate, by Nancy Parrish. A \$500 Honorary Scholarship was awarded to Caitlin Suter, a graduate of Bushnell-Prairie City High School. Several other students who live in the Cooperative's service area were awarded \$100 scholarships.

Service awards were presented to employees and directors as follows:

- Mark Balbinot – 30 years of service
- Bill Dodds – 10 years of service
- Frank Romane – 10 years of service
- Bill Fletcher – 10 years of service
- Terry Ward – 5 years of service
- Bernard Marvel – 20 years of board service
- Lyle Nelson – 20 years of board service



2014 Grand Prize winners with their flat screen smart television!

Entertainment was provided by Nation Singer and Impressionist, Kevin Adams, "Revenue of the Stars"

Spoon River Electric Cooperative serves more than 4,892 members in the Fulton, Knox, Peoria, Schuyler, and McDonough counties. The locally owned cooperative has 1,266 miles of lines and a utility plant

valued at more than \$27.3 million.

The cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy® — an alliance of more than 750 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country, committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

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like you belong to our co-op.

Margaret Mead, the cultural anthropologist, once said, "Never doubt the ability of a small group of people to change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever has." Spoon River is connected to a world full of people who believe

in the cooperative principles and values, and we need you to be connected to us by more than just the electric line. So, get involved. Come to our annual meeting in June, and make your voice heard. Together, we can make Co-op Nation stronger than ever.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

During summer months, our homes can be extremely hot, making living conditions uncomfortable. Before you fire up your air conditioner, try cooling off with a ceiling fan first. Using ceiling fans can actually raise your thermostat setting by 4 degrees and still feel just as comfortable.

Spoon River Electric Cooperative

930 South Fifth Ave, PO Box 340, Canton, IL 61520
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
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President/CEO

William R. Dodds
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Chairman

Bernard Marvel, Browning

Vice Chairman

Terry Beam, Cuba

Secretary

Steve Pille, Glasford

Treasurer

Lyle Nelson, Abingdon

Assistant Treasurer

Robert Lascelles, Ipava

Board of Directors

James Banks, Canton
Jack Clark, Lewistown
Greg Leigh, Avon
John Spangler, Marietta

Editor of Spoon River News

Taryn Martin
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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,255 • Number of members served: 4,808
Number of power poles in territory: 29,255

Welcome to our new employees

Bill Sego, our new Line Foreman, comes to us from



Southern Iowa Electric. With 20 years of experience in the utility industry we are excited to see what Bill's leadership and experience has in store

for us at Spoon River! Bill, his wife, Lacy, and three boys have relocated to the Astoria area, which is closer to family. Welcome Bill!

Trent Ross, previously part of our Forestry Crew, has been selected to join



Spoon River's Apprentice Lineman Program. We are lucky to have Trent's mechanical expertise around the shop

and excited to watch him grow and develop as a Lineman at Spoon River!

Sean Koen, our other Apprentice Lineman, comes to us from



Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative (RECC). He graduated from Lineman School at

Lincoln Land Community College and since then has been working part time at RECC as a groundman, assisting the line crew. We are excited to have Sean join our team and watch him grow. Sean has made the relocation to Canton. Welcome Sean!