

## Bright Options SOLAR Capturing energy from the sun

Who doesn't like to soak up some rays on a nice sunny day? Typically, you think of swimming, boating, baseball, cookouts and other outdoor activities on a nice sunny day; however, the sun's rays can also be used to generate electricity.

Prairie Power, Inc. (PPI), an electric generation and transmission cooperative headquartered in Springfield, Illinois, recently announced plans to offer its 10-member distribution cooperatives the opportunity for their member-consumers to purchase solar-generated electricity through the Bright Options Solar program. Bright Options Solar allows any member of Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC) the opportunity to buy blocks of solar energy generated from two 500-kilowatt solar farms operated by PPI subsidiaries.

The Shelby Solar Farm is located in Shelbyville, Illinois and the Spoon River Solar Farm is located near Astoria, Illinois. In the fall of 2015, both solar farms became operational. These two solar farms are harvesting energy from the sun to provide an opportunity for homeowners to receive some of their electricity from the sun.

"It is exciting to think we will be providing our members a means of participating in solar renewable energy without the risks, hassles and costs of having solar panels on their roofs," said SEC President/CEO Josh Shallenberger.

Under Bright Options Solar, a member agrees to purchase blocks of solar-generated energy, at an added



*The Prairie Power, Inc. owned Shelby Solar Farm became operational in the fall of 2015.*

cost, through the member's participating electric cooperative. There are three purchasing options available, namely blocks of 200, 400 and 600 kilowatt-hours (kWh).

The added cost for a 200 kWh solar block is \$12 per month; the added cost for a 400 kWh solar block is \$24 per month; and the added cost for a 600 kWh solar block is \$36 per month. Bright Options Solar participants may begin purchases at any time with an automatic renewal at the beginning of each calendar year. The cost associated with each block of solar energy purchased will appear as a separate line item on the member's electric bill and is in addition to all other normally billed charges.

"If you are an environmentally-minded consumer, Bright Options

Solar just might be what you have been waiting for to participate in renewable energy," said Shallenberger.

Any member of SEC is eligible to participate in the Bright Options Solar program. To learn more about Bright Options Solar call us at 217-774-3986.

*PPI is the supplier of wholesale electricity and electric transmission services to 10 member-owned distribution cooperatives in Illinois, which includes SEC. PPI also obtains wind-generated electricity from Pioneer Trail wind farm located just east of Paxton, Illinois, electricity from natural gas turbines located in Alsey, Illinois and electricity generated by Prairie State Energy Campus, a state-of-the-art coal-fired plant located near Marissa, Illinois.*

# Members attend 78th annual meeting

It was a beautiful sunny day as Shelby Electric Cooperative held its 78th Annual Meeting of Members on Friday, June 17, at the Shelby County 4-H Fairgrounds. Members were served a pork chop dinner and enjoyed a variety of entertainment for young and old alike including face painting and balloon animals.

Shelby Electric Board Chairman Brent Lively welcomed members and reminded them that they are the owners of the co-op; and as such, have a say in how the cooperative is run. Lively told members the cooperative is as important today as it was 78 years ago and continues to be a strong and viable source of power. He reminded members that the reason co-ops continue to exist today is because the investor-owned utilities didn't see a profit from the low density of members per mile of line.

Lively said the board of directors take the responsibility members have given them very seriously and continue to look for ways to improve the balance sheet. He explained ways the board has made cost cuts and that they are striving



*During the Shelby Electric Cooperative annual meeting held Friday, June 17, it was announced that members had re-elected Mark Lash of Findlay, District 3 and John Scott of Pana, District 6. Pictured left to right are Lash, Scott and Shelby Electric President/CEO Josh Shallenberger.*

for a 50 percent equity standing. He also thanked Shelby employees and all they do on a daily basis to make the cooperative strong.

President/CEO Josh Shallenberger addressed members and reiterated how the theme "Power for the Ages" is as vital today as it was in 1938. Also how the cooperative and its member/owners are participating in a community of friends, neighbors and businesses that support local jobs. Shallenberger stressed how Shelby Electric is building its balance sheet and has grown the equity from 28.63 percent at the end of 2006, to a near industry norm of 43 percent at the end of 2015.

"Greater emphasis has been placed on recovering the fixed costs of the cooperative such as those related to the capital required to build and maintain the grid itself," he said. "This pricing structure provides financial stability without the whipsaw effect of having those costs embedded in the energy charge, causing over-collection in times of extreme hot or cold weather."

Shallenberger also pointed out that the energy industry faces many challenges but Shelby Electric and its

board is well equipped to tackle those challenges and continues to look for ways to best serve its members.

During the meeting it was announced that Jade Bleskey, daughter of Jefferey and Jill Bleskey of Lakewood; Mallory Westrick, daughter of Heather Westrick of Taylorville; and Joanna Marley, daughter of George and Connie Marley of Nokomis, were the recipients of the three \$1,000 scholarships from Shelby Electric Cooperative.

The board met following the meeting and no changes were made to the current officers; Brent Lively remained as Chairman of the board, Brian Halbrook as Vice Chairman, Bennie Clawson as Secretary and Mark Lash as Treasurer.



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**facebook.com/YourCoop**

**Office Hours:**  
**7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

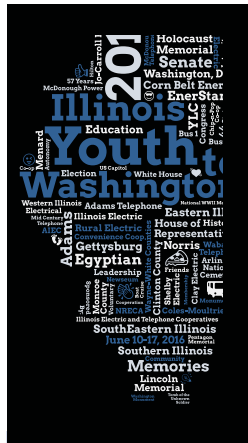


**Thomas Graham from Stonington was this year's annual meeting grand prize winner, receiving \$250 Shelby Electric Dollars.**

# Students spend week in our nation's capital

Several students from across Illinois started their summer break with a trip to our nation's capital. Marcail Clark of Strasburg and Sterling Howard of Windsor represented Shelby Electric Cooperative in Washington, D.C., during the annual "Youth to Washington" Tour, which took place June 10-17. This event, sponsored by the electric and telephone cooperatives of Illinois since the late 1950s, is an introduction to our democratic form of government and the cooperative way of life for rural youth.

The students met with Congressman John Shimkus and were among 64 rural Illinois youth leaders selected for the trip. The Illinois students joined more than 1,691 young leaders from across the country. In addition to the Capitol, they also visited Arlington National Cemetery, the Washington National Cathedral, several Smithsonian Museums, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the World War II Memorial, Memorials to Presidents Lincoln, Jefferson,



*Students representing Shelby Electric Cooperative were Sterling Howard and Marcail Clark. Pictured from left to right: Howard, Clark and Congressman John Shimkus.*

Washington and Roosevelt, the National Archives, the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, the Newseum and a number of other historical sites.

Howard and Clark were selected out of 16 students to represent the cooperative following Illinois Youth Day in Springfield, which was held in April.

Juniors in high schools that are within the service area of Shelby

Electric Cooperative are eligible to participate in the annual program. Check with your guidance counselor for more information or call the cooperative at 217-774-3986.

To learn more about the "Youth to Washington" Tour go to [www.youth-to-washington.coop](http://www.youth-to-washington.coop) or [www.facebook.com/ILYouthtoWashington](http://www.facebook.com/ILYouthtoWashington).

## Bill credit winners

Shelby Electric Cooperative would like to say **THANK YOU** for once again participating in the director elections via the mail. Members who returned ballots were entered into a drawing for 10 - \$25 bill credits. The following members were randomly selected and will receive a credit on an upcoming bill; Wayne Steel from Lakewood, Fox and Austin Masonry and Wilbur Kingston from Shelbyville, Robert Horsthemke, Billy Clawson and David Slater from Pana, Ronald Dewerff from Nokomis, Ralph Woehrmann from Taylorville, Bill Puyear from Dalton City and Janice Schmeski of Pahrup, Nevada.

**thank you!**



**Shelby Energy Company**  
1-217-774-2311  
24-hours-a-day

**PWR-net Broadband Internet**  
1-877-994-2323  
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Please leave a message after hours

**Shelby Electric Cooperative**  
1-800-677-2612  
1-217-774-3986  
24-hours-a-day

REAL LIFE  REAL POWER

## Getting Real with Marla and Internet Speed

Often, this article discusses energy hogs and energy efficiency. This month we will discuss Internet hogs, or more accurately, bandwidth hogs.

Sometimes phone calls coming in to Shelby Electric Cooperative's PWR-net office begin with, "My Internet isn't working." Now the trouble-shooting begins. If the signal is determined to be working, our team must dig deeper. If slow Internet is the issue, detective work gets underway.

A possible culprit is that your household's Internet demands exceed the capability of your plan. The more applications (Internet hogs) using

the Internet simultaneously will result in slower Internet responses for all. For example, if your plan is **PWR-net Tier 1** and your household likes to play on-line video games, stream movies or view YouTube video clips, your Internet will definitely be slower than when only one person is on the Internet checking email.

It is a matter of bandwidth congestion. Picture a large group of people walking quickly to a building. To enter the building, the people must slow down to pass through a door. The wider the door, the more people can pass through in less time. Passing data online is the same concept. If your Internet plan is for narrow amounts of data, yet your household Internet activities

use wide amounts, you may need to install a wider door (larger data package).

PWR-net currently offers four packages. To check which plan you currently have, look at your most recent billing statement or call PWR-net at 217-774-2323. Once you know your package, determine if your Internet activities fall under that package's capabilities. It is possible that your Internet needs have increased since your package was first established.

Use the chart below to help decide which Internet package best suits your needs.

**SPEED REQUIREMENTS FOR OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE**

Packages	1.0 Mbps	4.0 Mbps	10.0 Mbps	15.0 Mbps
<b>Download Speeds</b>	Up to 1.0 Mbps	Up to 4.0 Mbps	Up to 10.0 Mbps	Up to 15.0 Mbps
<b>Online Services</b>				
Web Surfing	✓	✓	✓	✓
Email	✓	✓	✓	✓
Online shopping	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pinterest, Facebook	✓	✓	✓	✓
Music streaming	✓*	✓	✓	✓
Short video clips	✓*	✓	✓	✓
Standard Definition (SD) video streaming		✓	✓	✓
Skype		✓	✓	✓
Facetime		✓	✓	✓
Online video gaming		✓	✓	✓
Online classes/education		✓	✓	✓
Video surveillance			✓	✓
Video conferencing			✓	✓
High Definition (HD) video streaming			✓	✓**
Multiple heavy users			✓	✓**

\* Requires buffering time      \*\* Optimal performance

*All packages may not be available in all areas. However, we are always working on upgrades. Call PWR-net to find out what is available in your area and current prices. You can also email them at [subscriberinterest@pwr-net.coop](mailto:subscriberinterest@pwr-net.coop).*

~ Marla Eversole, Member Services