

## WIEC holds 77th Annual Meeting

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. (WIEC) held its annual meeting of members on June 23 at the Hancock County Extension Center. Members enjoyed a light dinner and heard about the condition of their cooperative, the importance of service to members and communication.

WIEC Secretary-Treasurer Janet Spory explained the cooperative's mission to meet its members' needs on an at-cost basis and its goal to collect just enough to cover the costs and maintain the appropriate level of margins required by its lender. The co-op looks for ways to tighten its belt and hold down expenses by keeping bucket trucks longer, partnering with other co-ops to do group purchasing and investing in technology.

Spory said, "At a time when Americans' electric bills are going up, the cooperative way of doing business is an important way to keep costs manageable. We are service-driven and operate at cost. You can bank on the cooperative difference."



Manager Tommie Long stressed the importance of service and reminded members they are owners, not customers, of WIEC. Service is a top priority of the cooperative and the board and employees take that very seriously.

Long discussed the member survey that was conducted earlier this year. WIEC received an American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score of 86, which was higher than the statewide average of 85 and the national cooperative score of 80. In fact, cooperatives scores were higher than both the investor-owned utilities score of 74, and the municipal utilities score of 73.

Excellent service was one of the highest marks on the survey which displayed the cooperative's priority of providing excellent service. Long said, "We will continue to provide the communication that is essential between members, employees and your board of directors."



*During the WIEC annual meeting, members re-elected two directors to new three-year terms. From left: Mark Burling of Carthage, WIEC Manager Tommie Long, and Kent Flesner of West Point.*

Board President Robert Gronewold stressed the importance communication plays to its members



*2016 Grand Prize Winners*

See page d for a list of prize winners.

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#### OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
 Monday - Friday

#### BUSINESS OFFICE

217-357-3125

#### TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

800-576-3125

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Rob Gronewold** —  
President, **Carthage**
- **Jay Morrison** —  
Vice President, **Burnside**
- **Janet Spory** —  
Secretary/Treasurer, **Sutter**
- **William Newton** —  
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,  
**Burnside**
- **Mark Burling** —  
Director, **Carthage**
- **Kent Flesner** —  
Director, **West Point**
- **Kim Gullberg** —  
Director, **Stronghurst**

#### STAFF

- **Tommie Long** — Manager
- **Todd Grotts** — Manager  
of Operations
- **Becky Dickinson** — Office  
Manager

#### MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four members' map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

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and thanked members for attending the meeting because it gives them a chance to "see the face that answers the phone and meet the lineman who restores your power. While this simple act of speaking with directors and employees may seem unimportant to some, it is what makes membership in WIEC unique. It is the personal touch that many companies lack."

Gronewold (6822-58) reminded members about looking for the WIEC News in the center of each Illinois Country Living magazine. These center sections provide news of the co-op, energy saving information and contests. Additionally, letters have recently been inserted in member's bills to reach them regarding topics such as rate adjustments.

"Taking care of customers is not a unique practice," said Gronewold. "However, at WIEC, you are more than customers, you are members, and that makes all the difference in the world."

Nick Reitz, Vice President of Government Relations for the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, addressed members and discussed the importance of making



their rural voices heard. The Co-ops Vote initiative encourages rural members to register to vote and then exercise that right in November.

Prairie Power, Inc. (PPI) Interim President & CEO Dan Breden, WIEC's generation and transmission provider, discussed the issues facing cooperatives and their members and brought them up-to-date on the Prairie State Generating Campus, which set new productivity records in 2015.

During the meeting, members re-elected two members to the board of directors: Kent Flesner of West Point, District 4; and Mark Burling of Carthage, District 5.

## How to be energy efficient in humid climates

Why does a 95°F day in one of the Gulf Coast states feel hotter than the same temperature in the Southwest? Why do dry heat and humid heat feel so different, and how does this affect your strategy for home energy efficiency? While there are many common ways to achieve energy efficiency across all warmer climates, there are some important differences that vary by geography.

#### Heat and humidity vs dry heat

Generally speaking, when there is more moisture in the air, the temperature feels hotter than it actually is because moist air is closer to saturation than dry air. On a humid day, when the air is saturated with water, evaporation is much slower. Simply put, high humidity will make the air feel hotter while low humidity will make the temperature feel (5725-42) cooler.

#### Heat reduction is priority one

In warm climates, the majority of energy used to make the home feel comfortable is spent on home air conditioning and cooling. The first priority is heat reduction. However, in humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature. If a home has too much moisture, indoor air quality can be comprised and mold and mildew problems can develop.

#### Energy efficiency for hot and humid climates

The first line of energy defense is to ensure that your home is properly insulated and sealed in order to keep the heat and humidity that surround the house from getting inside. Leaky ducts, windows and doors can cause energy loss, making the HVAC system work much harder to wring the moisture out

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of the air and exacerbate potential indoor air quality issues. Homes that are “sealed tight” are easier to keep cool and dry.

Next, make sure your HVAC system is the right size. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that most current residential systems are oversized. If your unit is too big, you will pay higher energy bills, and you won't get the efficiency level or comfort you want and expect. It is also likely that the unit is “short cycling,” constantly turning off and on, never achieving optimum efficiency. When the unit runs in short bursts, it will not operate long enough to eliminate all of the humidity in your home. Damp, cool indoor air creates a muggy atmosphere that can lead to the growth of mold and mildew. This can be a particular concern for those who suffer from allergies, as many allergens thrive in damp conditions.

**In humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature.**

#### DIY humidity reduction

There are some basic steps you can take to lower the humidity in your home to help make it feel cooler and more comfortable. Start by reducing the humidity you are already producing. The kitchen and bathrooms are the biggest contributors to higher humidity levels. Check to ensure that your range hood is ducted to the outside, as recirculating range hoods are not effective in controlling moisture (or odors). When cooking, and especially when boiling water, run the vent fan. In the bathroom, run the vent fan when bathing or showering. Keep the fan on up to 30 minutes after you have finished

in order to eliminate the residual moisture in the air.

If you can reduce the indoor humidity level, you may be able to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature with a higher thermostat setting and ceiling fans. The air movement from the ceiling fan will create a “wind chill” effect, lowering the temperature and increasing comfort. Finally, check gutters and downspouts for leaks or blockage. If rainwater leaks out and saturates the ground surrounding your home, some of the moisture can eventually migrate into your house.

*Anne Prince 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.*

## Co-ops launch non-partisan voter engagement program

By Justin LaBerge

America's electric cooperatives have launched a non-partisan, nationwide effort to promote civic engagement and voter participation in the communities they serve.

Jeffrey Connor, interim CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, unveiled the Co-ops Vote program at the association's 74th annual meeting in New Orleans.

“Through Co-ops Vote, we want to help our members know when elections are, what's at stake and how to make their voices heard,” Connor said. “Whom (4527-8) folks vote for isn't really as important as the fact that they do vote.”

The Co-ops Vote initiative will focus on eight issues that are important to health and prosperity of communities served by electric cooperatives:

- Rural Broadband Access
- Hiring and Honoring Veterans
- Low-Income Energy Assistance
- Cybersecurity
- Water Regulation
- Rural Health Care Access
- Affordable and Reliable Energy

#### ■ Renewable Energy

“Electric cooperatives are perfectly designed to help address these important issues,” Connor said. “We can make politics ‘local’ again because civic engagement is part of our DNA.”

A new website, [vote.coop](http://vote.coop), offers co-op members information on the voter registration process in their state, (4612-64) information on the candidates running in those elections, and explanations of the eight key issues the campaign aims to address.

In keeping with its non-partisan goals, the initiative will not be endorsing specific candidates for office.

Mel Coleman, president of NRECA and CEO of North Arkansas Electric Cooperative said the program would help ensure the voices of rural Americans are heard.

“We want to make sure our government knows that rural America matters,” Coleman said. “This campaign isn't about divisive, partisan issues. It's about real people in real places facing real challenges. It's about our co-ops living out the principles of our movement: Concern for

community and democratic control.”

“The electric cooperative movement has always been non-partisan,

and our communities are facing too many challenges to have a government crippled by bickering,” Coleman said. “When our parents and grandparents set out to electrify rural America, they didn't have time to ask the person next to them about their views on economic or social policy. Their economic policy was ‘we need to save this community’ and their social policy was ‘let's do it together.’ I hope the Co-ops Vote program can help rekindle that spirit of cooperation.”

*Justin LaBerge 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.*



# Annual Meeting Prizes - 2016

GIFT	DONOR	RECIPIENT
\$25.00 Amazon Gift Card	ACLARA	John R Twaddle
\$25.00 Amazon Gift Card	ACLARA	Donald Vaughn
\$25.00 Visa Gift Card	C & S TESTING COMPANY	Robert Bolton
\$75.00 Amazon Gift Card	CRC	Morrison Farms by James Morrison
1 Oil Change & Mitt Wash	CARSON MOTORS, INC	Alfred Huston
5Qt Oil Change & Tire Rotation	J & R TIRE SERVICE, INC	Glen White
PADDED FOLDER & COOLER	MARINE TRUST COMPANY	Rosemary Faye
PADDED FOLDER & COOLER	MARINE TRUST COMPANY	Julie Weber
Gift Certificate good for one Free General Service on Furnace or AC	PETERS HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING	Ed Owen
Gift Certificate good for one Free General Service on Furnace or AC	PETERS HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING	Hancock Township by Tom Jefferson
\$25.00 Gift Card to Bass Pro Shop	TALLMAN	Jerry Schmitz
Backpack Sprayer	TERRY ALLEN UPA/ TIMBERLAND	Tim Rosenboom
Gift Basket - Barbeque Sauce, Rubs and \$10 Gift Certificate	WEBER MEATS	Steven Renard
PACKAGE OF 24 GOLF BALLS	WIEC	Tracy Sparrow
<b>GRAND PRIZE #1 Bill Credit for 1000 kWh of Electricity</b>	<b>WIEC</b>	Jim Bolton
<b>GRAND PRIZE #2 Bill Credit for 1000 kWh of Electricity</b>	<b>WIEC</b>	Carol Bollin
<b>GRAND PRIZE #3 Bill Credit for 1000 kWh of Electricity</b>	<b>WIEC</b>	Beverly Dowdall
<b>GRAND PRIZE #4 Bill Credit for 1000 kWh of Electricity</b>	<b>WIEC</b>	Edward Wilson
<b>GRAND PRIZE #5 Bill Credit for 1000 kWh of Electricity</b>	<b>WIEC</b>	Melvin Wetterich

## Welcome New Members

Steven & Ronald Blue, Carthage  
 Albert Boehm, Niota  
 Renald S Bolduc & Scott Jones,  
 South Burlington VT  
 Sarah Gronewold, Niota

Rachelle Hackett, Danville IA  
 Happy R Securities, LLC,  
 Gladstone  
 Terrence Mertens, Nauvoo  
 Richard A Rehman, Burlington

Jay & Kayla Roskamp, Sutter  
 David Shipman & Marilee M  
 Papell, Deerfield IL  
 Greg Smith, West Point