

JAMMUP

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

You are what makes us different

Welcome! Welcome to the first of what I hope to be many informative columns from staff members of Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC). I feel communication is very important in any business, organization or relationship, so I hope this monthly column will help us to communicate better with you. Counting myself, there are eight staff members, each serving in various capacities for the Cooperative, and I have asked each one to be prepared to alternate writing a monthly column that will help our members to know what we do at the Cooperative. Sure, we sell you electricity, but couldn't anyone do that? What makes us different than any other electric utility out there? Good question!

Here's a simple, one word answer – you. You are what makes us different – you are a member of SIEC, and that membership makes you an owner of this Cooperative, giving you the opportunity to insure it is doing what it is supposed to be doing. I know those living on Main Street, USA can't say that about their electricity supplier, especially those that are now forming just to sell electricity, but not service it – they own no poles, wires, transformers – they just sell and collect your payments. At SIEC, we will proudly sell you all of the electricity you want, but when the electricity



goes off, we will also be the one to come out 24/7 to make any needed repairs and make sure your service is restored. We also work with our members when they have payment problems. Granted, we can only do so much, but we will work with our members as best we can, yet still protecting the rights of all other members. If you need electric service where it hasn't existed previously, we will get power to you! We know our business is not only electricity, it's "people" - serving people by striving to provide them a service better than anyone else can. We are working hard to control our costs, but so much of those costs are not ours to control – our own cost of power that we distribute to you takes about 60 cents of each dollar we receive, then other operating costs, such as insurance, taxes, postage, fuel, maintenance of plant, poles, wires, etc. – but those costs


we can control, we are making every effort to do so.

In closing, November is a special month – a time of reflection and being thankful for the countless blessings we all receive daily. At our annual meeting this past August, we celebrated 75 years of business, and we looked back at old pictures, read the stories and accounts of how electricity changed a standard of living – so many things we don't think of today – I can't imagine not being thankful for that, as well. I hope your Thanksgiving

Chris Bennett
General Manager



holiday is a special one.

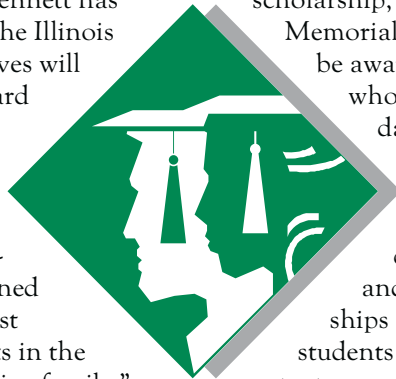
"We never forget who we're working for." 

2014 SIEC college scholarships available

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative (SIEC) General Manager Chris Bennett has announced that the Illinois electric cooperatives will again in 2014 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, an eighth scholarship – to assist with costs in attending an electric lineworker school – will also be offered.

The eight scholarships of \$1,500 each will be awarded in 2014 through the 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 coopera-



tive 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 or director. 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.

The eighth annual \$1,500 scholarship, the “LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker’s Scholarship,” was created to financially assist deserving individuals in becoming trained lineworkers. Sons and daughters of co-op members; relatives of co-op employees or directors;

individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard; and individuals participating in the Lincoln Land Community College lineworker’s program are all eligible for the lineworker’s scholarship.

“We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with these scholarships,” says Bennett. “SIEC 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.”

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

Dale Taake retires from SIEC Board of Directors

Dale was elected to SIEC’s board in August 1993 to finish an unexpired term for Pulaski County. He retired at the 2013 SIEC Annual Meeting of Members. Taake and his wife Amy have four children and make their home in rural Ullin. He and his brothers are fourth generation operators of their family farm. As an SIEC director, he also served on the Southern Illinois Power Cooperative board from 1997 to 2009. Thank you Dale for your years of dedicated service to SIEC and its members!



Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants

Attention local schools and teachers...The deadline to apply for seven \$500 teacher grants from SIEC is Nov. 5.

Go to www.siec.coop to download your application today!

Watch for your Co-op Connections® Card next month!

Please pay close attention to your December issue of the *Illinois Country Living* (ICL) magazine. It will be polybagged with a little Christmas gift to you from us. It's the NEW Touchstone Energy Co-op Connections Card! Keep this card with you to receive great discounts at local businesses.

We will send you an updated list of participating businesses and their specific discounts, so you can take advantage of being a member of Southern Illinois Electric Coopera-

tive. The list will be sent with your electric bill statements quarterly, and we will always keep an updated list on our website at www.siec.coop.

We will also feature participating businesses/discounts on our Facebook and Twitter accounts, and in the ICL on page 9. We plan to add new businesses throughout the year so always keep your eye out for updated and changing discounts.

Pharmacy benefits: the Co-op Connections Card is very valuable for our uninsured members. Al-

though we do not know what will happen with ObamaCare, for now, you can receive prescription benefits with our card. Present your card to your pharmacist at participating pharmacies.



When SIEC employees and directors heard that Meridian Elementary School lost all of its reading books due to a severe mold problem, we reached into our pocket books and donated \$400 toward the school's Accelerated Reading program. Pictured from left: SIEC Director of Engineering Michael Logeman, Meridian Guidance Counselor Corby Hight, SIEC Payroll & Capital Credit Specialist Bree Hileman and Meridian Principal Brent Boren.

How Do Capital Credits Work?

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits.

5 Your co-op notifies you of how and when you'll receive your capital credits retirements.

5

1 Your co-op tracks how much electricity you buy and how much money you pay for it throughout the year.

1

Electric co-ops have retired

\$11 billion
to members since 1988.

2 At the end of the year, your co-op completes financial matters and determines whether there are excess revenues, called margins.

2

4 When the co-op's financial condition permits, your board of directors/trustees decides to retire, or pay, the capital credits.

4

3 Your co-op allocates the margins to members as capital credits based upon their use of electricity during the year.

3

What is one of the most important characteristics of an electric cooperative which sets us apart from investor-owned utilities?

CAPITAL CREDITS

We are distributing over \$500,000 in capital credits to our members for usage for half of 1985. For active members, you will see a credit on your electric bill statements. For inactive members, a check will be mailed to their last known address. Distribution should take place in November or December of this year. Check your bill statements!

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation



From left: Warehouseman Todd Thurston and Linemen Allen Plott, Nathan Menees & Aaron Stover.

Live-Line demonstrations

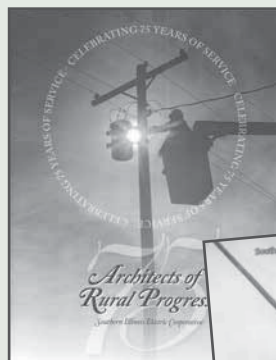
SIEC has a new focus on member education and safety. We are building a portable live-line and employees are volunteering their time on rain days to build it.

By building our own live-line, we plan on increasing community education. We can now attend local county fairs and schools, and provide demonstrations at our annual meetings and with emergency personnel, etc.

Look for greater involvement with our members regarding safety, electricity and Co-op education in 2014!

SIEC 75 year anniversary celebration history book and DVD

To commemorate our 75 years of serving you electricity, we created a special history book and DVD. The history book is free and the DVD is only \$5. They are available in our lobby (7420 U.S. Highway 51 South in Dongola). Several retirees and members were interviewed for the video. Lengthy research and old pictures make both items a must-have! We hope you enjoy these treasures. Thank you again to all members and to our local communities.



Serving you proudly since 1938.

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

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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