


Menard Electric Cooperative's

# Connect to MEC



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Youth Tour

MacKenzie Case and Bridget Redmond met with Congressman Aaron Schock as they represented Menard Electric Cooperative in Washington, D.C., during the 53rd annual "Youth to Washington" Tour, June 15-22. 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 cooperatives for rural youth.

MacKenzie and Bridget were among 76 rural Illinois youth leaders selected for the trip. The Illinois students joined more than 1,500 young leaders from 43 states. Over the years, more than 50,000 young people have made the trip.

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, Washington and Roosevelt, the National Archives, the Newseum and a number of other historic sites.

"The kids spend a lot of time touring museums and monuments and learning about our shared heritage," said Steve Uram, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) grassroots senior advisor. "Their main reason for being here is to remind lawmakers that they share many of their parents' concerns about the future."



Bridget Redmond, Congressman Aaron Schock and MacKenzie Case

*I just wanted to Thank You so much for giving me this wonderful opportunity to visit the Nation's capital. I loved the Vietnam War Memorial. When we visited the U.S. Capitol Building, it made government officials seem like real people instead of just faces on T.V.  
Thanks again,  
MacKenzie Case*



## 5 ways to stay safe this harvest



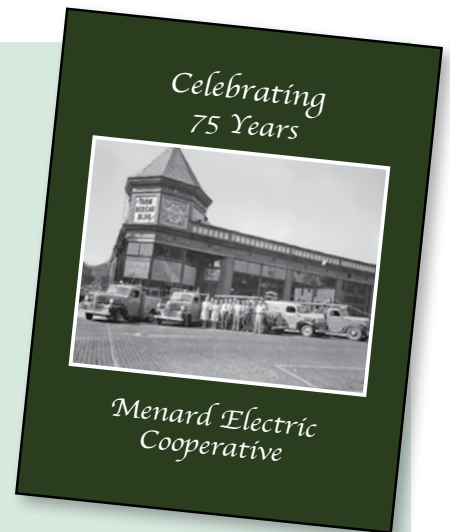
1. Keep farm equipment at least 10 feet from power lines.
2. Use a spotter when moving large equipment near power lines and be aware of higher antennas on large modern tractors.



3. Use care when raising augers or truck beds. Lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest level before moving. Variables like wind, uneven ground, shifting weight or other conditions can combine to create an unexpected result.
4. Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
5. Don't use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around bins. Be careful not to raise equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines.

## 75th Anniversary Cookbooks for sale

Did you miss the annual meeting? Or want an extra cookbook for a friend? You can purchase a Menard Electric Cooperative 75th Anniversary Cookbook for \$10 as supplies last. Stop in the office or give us a call. The books were given as an attendance gift at this year's annual meeting. They are hard-backed, 3-ring binder style and contain 392 recipes from members and employees.



## Rebates AVAILABLE

Several one-time rebates are available to members. We also offer specific rates for members using geothermal, heat pumps, and/or electric water heaters. Call our office or see our website for eligibility details on rebates and rates.

**Geothermal - \$300**

**Heat Pumps and Add-On Heat Pumps - \$200**

**40-Gallon Electric Water Heaters-\$100**

## Ways to pay your Menard Electric bill

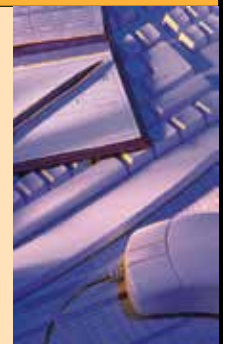
Pay your bill and view your historical usage through our website at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com).

Pay with a credit card by calling the office or paying online.

Of course we always accept payments at the front counter or mailed in to the office.

Use the drop box located across from our front entrance anytime (on Route 97, just south of New Salem State Park).

Pay automatically from your bank account each month (see form page 9).



## Office Closing

**Monday, September 3 for Labor Day**



## Engineering department changes

**M**enard Electric System Engineer Jim Rechner and Staking Engineer Alan Horn have recently retired and caused a few changes in the engineering department.

Jim has served as System Engineer for the co-op since Nov. 1999.

He has overseen the engineering department, tree trimming crews and more. Jim has no definite plans for retirement but has a few grandsons we are sure he will be spending more time with.

Alan served the co-op for 34 years. He was one of two staking engineers splitting the co-op's territory. If you've built a new home or added an electric service in his area, you've surely spoken with Alan.

Alan and his wife, Gail, lived in



**Jim Rechner**



**Alan Horn**



**Brady Smith**



**Tim Schafer**

Petersburg for many years but have recently relocated to Springfield. Though he also has no specific plans we are sure he plans on lavishing some extra time and attention on his grandchildren as well.

Brady Smith has taken over for Jim as System Engineer. Brady earned his PE designation earlier this year. He joined Menard Electric in 2011

and has been working closely with the engineering department staff to learn the co-op system so as to make a smooth transition.

Tim Schafer has taken over Alan's duties as Staking Engineer after working closely with him for several months. Tim has been an Engineering Technician at the co-op since 1998.

## Reasons to pay your bill online

You want to pay your bill by credit card

You want to compare your usage to other months

You forgot to mail in your payment until the day it's due

You want to pay your bill immediately and have confirmation we received payment.



## How to pay online

- 1) Visit [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) and select the blue Online Bill Pay icon. Then click on Register
- 2) Enter your account number, social security number and email address.
- 3) The system will verify your information and send you an email asking you to click on a link. (If we don't have your social security number on file your verification will not process. You'll need to contact the office to update that information.)
- 4) Create a password and log into the Electronic Bill Payment Processing service to see each of your accounts.
- 5) View your historical information and pay your current bill with a credit card. An email will be sent to confirm your payment was received.



# Board Meeting report

For full minutes please visit our website at [www.menard.com](http://www.menard.com) or contact our office.

Present were Manager Lynn Frasco, Attorney Charles Smith and Directors Gary Martin, Jerry Brooks, Michael Carls, Jay Frye, Warren Goetsch, Donald McMillan, Michael Patrick, Roy Seaney and Steven Worner.

Frasco advised that 44 new irrigation systems were completed.

He demonstrated the new online bill payment program.

He reviewed Member Installed Alternative Energy Output Systems.

The board adopted a resolution expressing support for the Illinois Grass Roots Campaign Issues as submitted by NRECA.

Review of January retirement of capital credits in 2012 for 1985-1986

allocation showed that 1,260 members received checks and \$82,341.89 went to active members.

Frasco reported on a loan advance in the sum of \$1,000,000.00 for 30 years at a 2.5% interest rate.

Frasco reviewed the RUS Community Connect Grant Program, which should promote rural high speed broadband service.

A field audit by an administrator of the Smart Grid Program found no problems.

Carls advised Prairie State was not yet online and this was creating positive margins for Prairie Power, which would result in a future power bill reduction to the co-op by \$700,000.00 to \$800,000.00. He and

Frasco discussed the effect this would have on co-op margins.

Board approved entering into two-year audit agreement with Dreyer & Kelso at rate of \$11,250.00, an increase from the previous agreement by \$150.00.

Year to date margins were (78,588) compared to 172,306 a year earlier. Equity as of the end of April was 33.61% and members served was 10,567 compared to 10,503 a year ago. Net Utility Plant at the end of April was \$37,537,697 compared to \$35,738,382 last year. The cooperative continues to meet the requirements of the RUS, FFB and NRUCFC.

## Safety award

Safety is a top priority at Menard Electric. When you're working with high voltages it has to be. All of our employees focus on safety and we have a program in place to continually instruct our linemen on measures they need to take to stay safe. We recently earned two safety honors from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives for Best Accident/Illness Record and Best Lost Time Record in 2011.

We have continued that safety record and have more than 2 1/2 years now without having an employee involved in an accident.

Bob Burris, General Foreman, says, "Safety always has, and will be, Menard Electric's number one priority."



↑ Working safely means having the right equipment and knowing how to use it. Area Serviceman Mark Bradley and Lineman Brandon Blair work on installing new line.

The Safety Committee at the co-op posing with the recent awards. From left are Director of Member Services Trish Michels, General Foreman Bob Burris, Lineman Brandon Blair, Area Serviceman Seth Parker and General Manager Lynn Frasco.