

Whatever it takes: *Powering life, from a lineworker's perspective*

Linework is ranked as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the country. The lineworkers at Western Illinois Electrical Coop. work rain or shine, often in challenging conditions, to ensure you have reliable electricity. National Lineworker Appreciation Day is on April 8th this year.

WIEC currently has a seven-person line crew, a mechanic who does double-duty as a groundworker when needed, and an area service technician who work every day in all weather conditions to make sure the people in our communities have the power to live their lives. These lineworkers are dedicated to their job. It's hard work but can be very rewarding. We hope this will give you a better look into what they face, and more importantly, why they do it.

The danger

A lot of people know linework is dangerous because lineworkers work near high-voltage electricity. Move just the wrong way or lose focus for a split second, and it could be deadly. You have to be aware of your surroundings and the safety of the person next to you. We often work on energized power lines, and you can't always tell they are energized by just looking at them. You're working with an element of danger that requires concentration, and there is no margin for error. The environment compounds the pressure, because when you need power most



(L to R) Tim Shumate, Journeyman Lineworker; Mitchell Reed, Mechanic/Groundworker; Kyle Tanner, Journeyman Lineworker; Eric Johnson, Line Foreman; Colton Ragain, Groundworker; Cody Grainger, Area Service Technician; Konner Leedy, Apprentice Lineworker; Holton Burnett, Apprentice Lineworker; and Andy Lafeber, Crew Foreman

is usually when weather is worst. I'm often working in storms with rain, wind, extreme heat and cold, in the dark or on the side of the road next to fast-moving traffic. Yes, it's dangerous, but that's what we're trained to do.

Many may not realize it, but we undergo years of training before we can officially be called a lineworker. We typically start as a groundperson, helping crews with tools and keeping job sites safe, then we transition to apprentice status, which typically spans four years. After an apprenticeship, with more than 8,000 hours of training under our belts, we transition to journeyman lineworker status — that's when we're considered officially trained in our field. **662-48**

However, the education is ongoing. Lineworkers continuously receive training to stay mindful of safety requirements and up to date on the latest equipment and procedures.

The physical demand

The daily expectations of a lineworker are physically demanding, but you won't hear me complain about that. I know what I signed up for — loading heavy materials, climbing poles and in and out of buckets. A lot of times, we go places the trucks can't, so I might be hiking through the woods loaded down with 40 pounds of personal protective equipment. But that's the job. Most of us are just glad to be outside.

Continued on 18B ►



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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

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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.

"Whatever it takes" continued from 18A

The sacrifices

There are some sacrifices that come with being a lineworker. I'm often first on the scene of an emergency, seeing things that are devastating, like car accidents, structure fires and damage from severe storms. You don't know what type of situation you're going to face or when you're going to face it. We get calls at all hours and in the middle of the night. I've missed a lot of school events and family dinners, but my family is very supportive, and it pays off in the end. We make sure there is nothing standing in the way of helping our friends and neighbors get back to normal life.

It's worth it

One thing that makes this job worthwhile is the camaraderie. My

co-op is my second family, and the line crews are a brotherhood. In this work, you have to depend on the person beside you in life-or-death circumstances. It's a culture of trust, teamwork and service. It's all about keeping the teammate beside you safe and the lights on for everybody else.

I take a lot of pride in my work. Even when it's cold and wet, I know I'm working to keep people warm. There's a lot of satisfaction in hearing someone yell "Thank you!" from the window after the lights come back on and seeing people flipping the light switches on their porches after an outage is restored. **6636-37** No matter how tired I am or how long I've been working, that feeling always makes it worth it.

Nominating Committee appointed

At the February WIEC board meeting, current board members appointed the following co-op members to serve on the 2024 Nominating Committee:

- **District No. 1** – Bradley Flatt and Todd Woodbury, both of Stronghurst
- **District No. 2** – Spencer Berry and Adam Bollin, both of Nauvoo
- **District No. 3** – Harold (Tony) Herdrich and Rodney Pence, both of Dallas City
- **District No. 4** – Steve Boyer, Carthage
- **District No. 5** – Austin Ufkes, Carthage
- **District No. 6** – Rodney Bruns, Carthage
- **District No. 7** – Max Roskamp, Sutter

Two committee members were appointed from the districts whose board members' terms expire this year. Other districts each have a single appointee. This committee will nominate at least one member from District No. 1, at least one member from District No. 2, and at least one member from District No. 3 to represent those districts on the WIEC Board of Directors for a three-year term.

Kim Gullberg from District No. 1, Dustin Walker from District No. 2, and Jay Morrison from District No. 3 are the current board members.

The first Nominating Committee meeting was scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. on Monday, March 11, at the WIEC office in Carthage.

Welcome new members

January
2024

Jonathan Delaney
Mark Evans
Ronald Kienast
Kayla Long

John Pierce
Tracey A. and Brian E. Richers
Dakota Eli Trebes
Catherine Williams

Cash those capital credit checks...

Please take one more look to assure you've cashed any capital credit retirement checks from September of 2023. If you haven't taken care of that yet, now's the time! **4835-22**

In addition, if you happen to have current address or phone information for someone appearing on this list of uncashed checks, please contact our office to aid in our efforts to return as many dollars to WIEC members as possible. Thank you.

A 1 AG SERVICE	CANGAS JOSEPH E	FORESMAN ANNA L	HOLTKE GLENDA M
ADAMS DAVID W	CARDEN TINA	FORRESTER DONALD G	HOPSON RUTH
ALBRIGHT DEBRA L	CARLSON ARNOLD E	FORTADO DAVID C	HOSKINS JERRY D
ALBRIGHT MICHAEL	CARNELL JIMMIE L	FORTADO JEAN	HUFENDICK MICHAEL C
ALLEN BRADLEY D	CASADY JOEL NED	FOSTER BRIAN	HUFF ISLAND HUNT & FISH
ALLENSWORTH PAULA	CASEY GARY W	FOSTER MICHAEL	HUFFMAN CAROL J
ALLISON SHIRLEY	CATLIN MARVIS D	FRANK INEZ J	HUFFMAN CHARLES W
AMFAHR GALEN	CHANEY WILLIAM E	FRERICKS DANIEL A	HUGHEN TONY
ANDERSON JEFFERY D	CHIPMAN GARY L	FULLER KEITH A	HUGHES STEVEN A
ANTES MIKE	CHRISTOFFERSON III OTTO	GABEL DANIEL	HULS COLLEEN
BAEHR SAMUEL J	COLLINS CLYDE E	GARLICK DAWN	HULS GARY
BAILEY JAMES E	COLUSA POST OFFICE	GEISSLER WILLIAM F	HUMMEL ROSALIE M
BAILEY SHANNON D	CONDREN DEBBIE D	GEMMING LARRY L	HUSTON TRACEY
BAINTER CARL D	COOLEY STEVEN R	GERDES GEORGE E	HUTSON STANLEY J
BAIRD RUSSELL E	COOPER FLOYD	GERST RICHARD O	ICI SEEDS
BALLENGER KENNETH L	CORDER TODD A	GILPIN BRENDA S	IKERD VERA J
BALLINGER MARTIE	CORNWELL NEAL E	GILPIN FRED L	ILLINOIS EMERGENCY
BALMER WILLIAM	COX DONNIE	GITTINGS REBECCA	IRISH MARTHA
BANGERT KEITH A	CRABILL RUBY F	GOSS ARLENE	JACKSON SCOTT
BARNS WARREN P	CREASY RONNIE L	GRAFTON CAROLYN	JAMISON JOHN B
BATSON LARRY A	CROW O DAVID	GRAFTON RICKY L	JOHNSON BETTY
BAVERY MICHAEL T	CRUM MARJORIE J	GRAHAM MARLIN F	JOHNSON CAROL J
BELSHAW BROS	CURTIS JASON	GRANNEMAN SHARON S	JOHNSON CHARLES J
BELSHAW EILEEN	DAGGETT HELEN	GRANT LUANNE	JONES IRENE
BELSHAW MARTY	DANES ROGER D	GRANT STACY	JONES KARL BLAINE
BELVILLE CLIFTON H	DAYTON D JAMES	GRAVES J S	JONES KERRY K
BENNETT HARRY J	DENISON ROBERT L	GRAY HOBART G	JORDAN MARY M
BERGMEIER ELOISE	DEPEW MICHAEL	GRAY MARTHA L	JUDD RODNEY
BERNSTEIN DOROTHY	DESCHPEPPER RICHARD J	GRIFFITHS DANNY J	KAPPELMAN MICHELE
BERQUAM GARY M	DIETRICH KAY	GROTTS CLIFTON	KAY DAVID J
BERRY MARILYN K	DIXON STEVEN D	HABERICHTER KENTON J	KELLEY JENNIFER K
BERRY ROBERT L	DOOLEY RICK	HALL RANDALL C	KELLY JANET
BESS-MELCHER MALINDA L	DORETHY MICHAEL A	HAMMAN KATHRYN D	KELLY KELLY L
BETTS CHARLES L	DOWELL BENNY L	HANCOCK CENTRAL AVIATION	KETTELKAMP STEVEN J
BETTS JO ANN	DULIN CLARENCE D	HANKS STEPHEN	KIRBY REX H
BIGGER WILLIAM	DUNCAN MARILYN	HANKS WAYNE	KIRFMAN MARSHALL G
BLUME WAYNE A	DUSZA DONALD E	HANSON MARK E	KLAVENSKI JAMES C
BOEHM CHRISTOPHER A	EAVES KELLY J	HARNETIAUX LESTER	KOEHLER GLADYS
BOHNENKAMP ALBERTA M	EAVES RICHIE	HARRELL MARK	KRAUS KORY L
BOLLIN DOUGLAS	EBERT ALETHA	HARRIS STEVE	KRIEG GALEN
BOONE LARRY	EBERT MARK	HARRISON DELORES	LAMB RUTH M
BOWMAN PHILLIP JR	ECKHARDT JEFF	HARRISON LEO C	LAMMA JIMMY E
BOYER BEN	EDDINGS FARM ACCT	HART PATRICIA J	LARSON ERIC E
BOYER DENA M	EGAN MARY E	HARTWEG BRAD	LARSON LARRY H
BOYER SCOTT R	EICHMAN KEITH	HASKINS A BLAKE	LEEPER BARBARA
BRADSHAW JR DEAN ROBERT	ELDRIDGE CLIFFORD V	HEAVIN MELANI	LEWIS GENEVIEVE
BRICKER SHIRLEY A	ELLEFRITZ SANDRA	HEDGES PAULETTE J	LIBBEE ROBERTA
BRIERTON GARY	ELLIS SANDRA P	HEISLER GARRET	LILLARD CHRIS
BRISCOE RON D	EMERICK FARMS	HELENTHAL JOHN D	LILLARD HOWARD D
BROOKHISER ROBERT	ENDRES GENE	HELLYER BROTHERS	LIMKEMAN DELBERT W
BROWN BETTY	ENERGY TRANSP ORT	HELLYER DENNIS	LINK SHELDON
BROWN MICHAEL	ESTABROOK R B	HELLYER SCOTT	LOGAN ROBERT
BROWN STEVEN C	EVERHARDUS SALLY	HENSON DOROTHY C	LORD ROSS
BUEHL JANET F	FARKAS GLENDA J	HIATT STEPHEN A	LOWE MARGARET A
BULLARD KEVIN	FARM CREDIT SERVICES	HICKS CHRISTAL	LUEMRO FARMS INC
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CALIFF BILL	FLESNER GENE	HOBART DOROTHA	MALONEY MAUREEN T
CAMPBELL L L	FLYNN TERRY	HOFF JAMES	

Continued on 18D ▶

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

A well-designed landscape can add beauty to your home and reduce home heating and cooling costs. Plant deciduous trees with high, spreading crowns to the south of your home to block sunlight in the summer and reduce the need for air conditioning. Deciduous trees lose their leaves in the winter, allowing sunlight to warm your home.

Plant evergreen trees and shrubs with low crowns to block winter winds. Dense evergreen trees and shrubs planted to the north and northwest are the most common type of windbreak and can help lower energy used for home heating.

Source: energy.gov



Vegetation Management

In order to help maintain reliable electric service, WIEC has contracted with IFP Land Services LLC (IFP) to handle brush and tree management needs again this year. They will handle spraying, trimming, cutting and removal of trees and brush.

We plan to have crews performing routine brush spraying this spring and summer in Keene, Lima, and Houston townships in Adams County, Lamoine Township in McDonough County, as well as in St. Albans, Chili, Bear Creek, Augusta, St. Mary's, Harmony,

Wythe, Wilcox, Rocky Run and Walker townships in Hancock County.

Fallen trees and limbs account for many power outages, momentary flickers and blinks. Brush spraying and tree trimming are necessary to provide the continuous service WIEC members deserve and expect. **3719-39**

Due to the advanced printing of this issue of the WIEC News, these plans are subject to change. If you have questions, please contact the office at 217-357-3125 or 800-576-3125.

"Capitol credits" continued from 18C

MANTON KEVIN D
MARKERT CYNTHIA
MARKEY RONALD
MARSHALL KATHERINE
MARTENS RAYMOND
MARTENS RAYMOND
MARTENS RONALD
MARTIN JR
MARTIN PATRICIA
MARTIN RANDALL
MARTIN SULLIVAN
MASON MYRON
MASON RAYMOND D
MATHEWSON ELAINE
MAYNARD CINDY
MCCLAIN DANNY
MCCLELLAND MIKE
MCCONNELL PAMELA
MCDOWELL DUANE
MCDOWELL MICHAEL
MCENTEE BROS
MCENTEE CARL F
MCINTYRE BECKY J
MCKEOWN BILLY
MCVEIGH SCOTT R
MEEK ANDREW
MEIER ROCHNE E
MENN ROBERT
MILLER JUSTIN
MILLER MARLYS
MILLER ROLLAND
MITCHELL KATHY
MITCHELL RICHARD L
MOFFITT JAMES W
MOHLER LESLIE A
MOHR LOWELL
MOORE TOM
MOY ALLAN R
MURPHY ROBERT D
MUSTARD RICHARD
MYNATT BRIAN L
NEFF ELDON

NEFF'S WELDING
NEILL ELDON C
NEWTON WILLIAM JR
NICHOLSON PATRICK
NORTHUP ROLAND H
NORVELL DOUGLASS G
OCHSNER GRACE C
ORR DEWAYNE
OVERTON DONALD
PABEN JAMES L
PAINTER PATRICIA W
PALMER HARLEY
PARKER A G
PENCE JONNA L
PERKINS MICHAEL
PIERCE RALPH E
PILKINGTON JOSEPH C
PLUMMER JAMES P JR
POULTER ELDON D
POWELSON RONNIE
RAINWATER DELMA L
RALSTON NANCY
REA CARL
REED GEANE M
REES ROBERT
REIFENRATH YVONNE S
REPPLINGER ROBERT
RHODES DAVID
RICHMOND RICK
ROCKENFIELD VELMA
ROCKY RUN SOFTBALL ASSOC
RODEFFER JOHN H
RODEFFER RICHARD L
ROELFS DARREN J
ROGERS JAMES S
ROGERS KATHY
ROMAN PAMELA
ROOKS ROBERT D
ROSENBOOM DOROTHY P
ROWLAND MARGARET
ROWLEY BARBARA L
RUNGE MATTHEW A

RUPP DARLENE
S A FARMS
SALA JAMES B
SANCHEZ ROBERTO
SANDERS JENNY L
SANDERSON LINDA
SCALISE ROGER A
SCANLAN DORIS J
SCHALLER JAMES R
SCHEETZ LEROY
SCHEETZ REX
SCHILSON ELIZABETH
SCHWEITZER KENNETH L
SELLS RICK J
SHERER JANET J
SHIPMAN DEBRA J
SICKELS CORNELIA A
SIMPSON MICHAEL G
SLOAN CHARLOTTE
SMITH ANTHONY J
SMITH ANTHONY R
SMITH DAVID R
SO-IL SVC
SOUTH ROBIN
SOWERS VALLIE J
SPANGLER HELEN
SPARROW BRENT
SPEER ERIC
STAMP LINDA L
STEINBERG GARY
STEVENSON EMERALD
STEVENSON MICHAEL
STEWART DONALD
STONE MIKE
SULLIVAN BILL M
SULLIVAN RITA
SWITZER LES JR
SYMONDS TERRY
THE MARILYN A
THOMPSON HELEN
THURMAN STANLEY
TIMMERMAN BARBARA JEAN

TOBIAS BILL
TOBIAS JOHNNIE M
TOWNSEND BRUCE J
TRANSMONTAIGNE PIPELINE
TRIAH MIDWEST
TROTT DONALD C
TROUT RAMONA E
UFKES GREGORY J
VANBEEK PETER L
VANCE FARM
VANCE THEA M
VOLLBRACHT JANIS K
WAHI-FM GOSPEL RADIO
WALES SEAN
WALLINGFORD JOYCE
WARSAW GUN CLUB
WASHBURN ALAN
WATERMAN HAROLD L
WATSON MICHAEL
WATSON STEPHANIE
WEAR ROSS
WEINBERG TERESA L
WEST MARK A
WHITAKER DOROTHY
WHITEAKER RICK
WILLIAMS RUTH C
WILSON LEORA
WINTERS FRANCES E
WISEHART ROBERT
WITTER CAROL J
WITTMAN EDNA M
WOLLBRINK EDWARD
WOMACK PENNY S
WOOLSON WESLEY A
WORLEY LAWRENCE
WORLEY WENDI
WRIGHT FLORENCE M
WUESTENFELD DAVE
YOUNG SEAN
ZELLOW TERESA L