



RuralHIGHLIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

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President/CEO Sean Middleton congratulates Bill Hart on his promotion.

Hart to lead RECC Operations Department

Bill Hart has been selected as RECC's next Manager of Operations and Maintenance. The long-time journeyman lineman has been with the cooperative for 31 years and held the position of crew foreman for the previous six years. He will assume his new role on May 5th, following the retirement of Tim Hemberger. Bill and his wife Tausha, along with their four children, are Girard natives and reside at Sunset Lake.

Manager of Operations Hemberger Retires



Tim Hemberger has been employed at the cooperative for over 38 years. He was hired as a warehouseman in 1986 and began his lineman apprenticeship shortly afterward. Tim spent most of his career as a journeyman lineman before being promoted to Manager of Operations and Maintenance in April 2018.

Hemberger, an Auburn native, has always been involved in the community. He taught hundreds of children and adults the importance of electrical safety and has conducted CPR and first-aid training for RECC employees for many years. As a journeyman lineman, Tim volunteered to participate in the NRECA International program, which brought electricity to rural areas of the Dominican Republic.

Tim has led the operations department for the last seven years. During his tenure as manager, the cooperative has achieved a near-perfect safety record while recording zero lost-time accidents. The co-op safety streak, which extends to well over 3,000 days without a lost-time accident, continues today.

In the past few years, many experienced linemen have retired, leaving Tim with the opportunity to acquire their replacements and modernize the operations department. Most candidates selected for full-time employment with RECC have participated in the cooperative's intern program, which offers linemen graduates a temporary position with RECC's line crew. Interns are provided with job training and valuable experience, while the cooperative can evaluate the intern's skills and working habits before being hired permanently. Tim embraced this philosophy and routinely employed two or three interns each year. He believed the co-op's intern program was beneficial to everyone and used his position to help young linemen begin their careers.

After retirement, Tim and his wife Tricia will remain in Auburn. He plans on staying busy operating the tree-trimming and self-storage businesses he has established over the years. They also want to travel the country, visiting their four children and four grandchildren in the Midwest.



RETIREMENT
Party



Join us for a
Reception to Honor Tim's Career

Friday, May 2, 2025 • 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative
3973 W State Route 104 • Auburn, IL

Hemberger's Retirement



I began my career at RECC on December 15, 1986, as a warehouseman. In March 1989, I transitioned to the line crew, where I spent over twenty-nine years. During my tenure, I witnessed remarkable changes and growth, both within the cooperative and the industry. In my early years at RECC, members would read their own meters and mail the readings to the co-op. Eventually, we transitioned to having dedicated meter readers who read the meters each month. And, in 2003, we

installed our first AMR metering system, which enabled us to read meters remotely from the office.

Technology and safety have continued to evolve with significant advancements, including remote-controlled booms on digger trucks, self-rescue devices for one-man bucket truck operations, fall protection for linemen climbing poles, and the integration of various electronic devices into our system to reduce outage times. The process of dispatching linemen has also changed dramatically. What once required a dispatcher or office personnel to notify a lineman of an outage now happens instantaneously through alerts sent directly to our phones whenever a meter loses voltage, thanks to the upgraded metering system implemented in 2019.

I am proud to have been part of many key upgrades to our system, as well as the renovations of our headquarters. The last seven years, serving as Manager of Operations and Maintenance, have been especially fulfilling, as I have had the opportunity to help drive these changes.

In 2007, I was selected by NRECA to travel to Las Matas de Farfán, Dominican Republic, to help build an electric co-op in their community. It was an incredibly rewarding experience to help build power lines in a developing country for two weeks and bring electricity to homes that had never had it before.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my career has been working with our team and helping to bring on new talent. From restoring power after major storms to hiring enthusiastic and hardworking employees, my time at RECC has been extremely gratifying. One of my greatest joys has been helping young people launch their careers here. I have had the privilege of being involved in hiring several of our twenty-two employees, and together, we've built a team that is second to none. Over the years, I have also worked with many lineman interns and helped several secure positions as linemen across the Midwest.

It has truly been an honor to work at RECC for thirty-eight and a half years, and I am forever grateful to everyone I have had the pleasure of working with throughout my career. I want to thank all the members of RECC for making this co-op such a great place to work, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all past and present employees for everything you have taught me over the years.

As I transition into retirement, I will forever cherish the memories of my time here and the wonderful people I have had the privilege of working with. Thank you all once again for the incredible experience. Lastly, I want to express my deepest appreciation to Roy Goode, who hired me in 1986. Without his faith in me, I would not have had the incredible career I have had at RECC.

Tim Hemberger



Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

3973 W. State Route 104
P.O. Box 19 • Auburn, IL 62615
(217) 438-6197
e-mail: recc@recc.coop
www.recc.coop

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board meeting reports.

Youth Day 2025



Julie Waghorn, Dallas Alavarez, Logan Skinner, Olivia Dowell, Lane Megginson, and Tim Hemberger

For more than 60 years, the electric cooperatives of Illinois have given tomorrow's leaders the opportunity to learn from today's public officials. On March 5, 200 high school students from across rural Illinois represented 22 co-ops during Youth Day, including four from RECC.

"Youth Day offers students from across the state a firsthand experience of democracy in action as they engage with their elected representatives in Springfield," said RECC Member Service Liaison Julie Waghorn, who facilitates the cooperative's programs. "This annual event provides state senators and representatives a chance to meet the next generation of leaders."

In addition to meeting elected officials, the students also learned more about their electric cooperative's role in their communities and had the opportunity to tour the Capitol Building and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

State Senator Steve McClure, Representative Wayne Rosenthal, and Representative C.D. Davidsmeyer met with the four students representing the cooperative. These students included Dallas Alavarez, Lane Megginson, Logan Skinner, and Olivia Dowell.

At the end of the day, attendees were interviewed for a chance to participate in the Youth Tour, an annual trip to Washington, D.C. This year's trip will be held June 16-23. Dallas Alavarez of Auburn and Olivia Dowell of Girard were selected to represent RECC on the weeklong trip to meet their elected officials, see historical sites, learn firsthand how cooperatives work, and gain valuable leadership skills.



Looking for past members

RECC may have some money for "lost" members. Margins earned in past years were allocated to member-owners who used electricity from RECC, as a share of the co-op's equity. The margins were reinvested in RECC's distribution system and are eventually paid out to members as capital equity retirements.

Rural Electric most recently paid equity retirements for the year 1989. Unfortunately, many past members have not provided up-to-date addresses, so their capital credit checks were undeliverable. "Those folks earned a share of the co-op's equity in that year, and we want them to receive this retirement," says President/CEO Sean Middleton. "They may also have equity payments coming up for later years, so we need their current addresses."

To help locate these members, Rural Electric has put a list of unclaimed capital credits accounts on its website at www.recc.coop. The names and last known towns are listed for each account, with the amount of capital credits to be paid for 1989. If viewers recognize a name, let that former member know that they have unclaimed funds, or pass along a new address or contact information for that person.

"We've returned more than \$4 million in equity retirements to our members, and we want to continue this legacy of cooperative ownership," says Middleton.