



Mike Smith
President and CEO



McDonough Power hosts 2026 Annual Meeting of Members

McDonough Power Cooperative hosted its members Wednesday, Sept. 2 at The Crossing in Macomb for the co-op's 2026 Annual Meeting of Members, themed "Member Powered." Cooperative members enjoyed a pork chop dinner grilled by the West Prairie FFA and served by the Scotland Clever Clovers 4-H Club, as well as live music by Shannon "Woody" Woods. All registered members received a gift and a \$10 bill credit.

Board Chairman Walt Lewis called the meeting to order, and McDonough Power President Mike Smith delivered the invocation. Boy Scout Troop #315 presented the colors and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Steve Hall, Secretary of the Board, read the Official Notice of the Meeting, which included the minutes from the 2025 Annual Meeting. The minutes were approved, and Treasurer Mike Cox presented the Treasurer's Report.

Tim Piper, Nominating Committee chair, reported to audience members that the committee met June 4 to nominate candidates for election to the board. Those nominees included David Lueck (District 4), Nancy Erlandson (District 6) and Courtney Chandler (District 9). Additional nominations made by petition included Mike Grafton (District 6) and Andrew Glowacki (District 6).

The election of directors was conducted by Attorney John D. McMillan. Lueck and Chandler were reelected to represent their respective districts for another term, and Nancy Erlandson was elected to represent District 6. **10111B2-404A**



Following the election, Lewis presented the Chairman's Report. "Treasurer Mike Cox reported our cooperative had a good year," he said. "The good news is that in the June board meeting, the board authorized the retirement of \$366,422 in capital credit and estate refunds. This is money that reflects the excess capital that was needed to fund our cooperative operations and over time, is returned to those who were members at the time it was earned." He went on to mention that the wind farm between Table Grove and Industry is underway. We fully charge an aid-to-construction cost to developers, so the members are not picking up the tab.

Continued on 18D ►



Congratulations to our lucky GRAND PRIZE WINNERS, each receiving \$250 in bill credits!

- Laura Jennings
- Timothy Raymond
- Marla and John Johnson



1210 West Jackson Street
P.O. Box 352
Macomb, Illinois
61455-0352

24 hour pay-by-phone
844-656-4351

www.mcdonoughpower.com

Office hours:
7 a.m. - 4 p.m. - Weekdays

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DIRECTORS

Walt Lewis, Chairman
David Lueck, Vice Chairman
Mike Cox, Treasurer
Steve Hall, Secretary
Bryson Bedwell
Courtney Chandler
Bob Dwyer
Nancy Erlandson
Ryan Litchfield
John D. McMillan, Attorney

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The power of human connections



Local voices shape local solutions

October is National Co-op Month

When you hear the word cooperative, what comes to mind? As your local electric co-op, we hope you think of McDonough Power Cooperative.

Regardless of the services offered, all cooperatives have one thing in common: They're led by the people they serve — and that simple idea makes a meaningful difference.

Cooperatives come in all shapes and sizes, each created to meet a specific need. Credit unions help members save and borrow money. Producer cooperatives, like Ocean Spray and Land O'Lakes, help farmers bring their products to market. Retail cooperatives, like REI and ACE Hardware, are owned by their shoppers or a membership of store owners, while housing cooperatives give residents a voice in managing their communities. And utility cooperatives — like McDonough Power Cooperative — provide reliable electricity to the communities they serve.

Unlike many businesses that answer to outside investors or shareholders, cooperatives are built for their members. Their goal isn't simply to earn a profit — it's to provide value, meet unique local needs and strengthen the communities they call home. **11214C5-1066A**

That's exactly what makes McDonough Power Cooperative different.

Our story began in 1937 when neighbors came together to bring electricity to an area when other utilities wouldn't. While a lot has changed since then, our purpose has remained steady. We're still here to provide power and make decisions with our community's best interests in mind.

Being locally owned means we have the flexibility to focus on what matters most to the communities we serve. That's why

no two electric cooperatives are exactly alike. Every community has different needs, and every cooperative reflects those priorities.

For some co-ops, that means expanding programs that help members save energy and money. Others may focus on supporting economic development, investing in new technology or creating new opportunities for local students. Since our Operation Round-Up Program first started in 2015, our membership has donated over \$272,000!

You'll also find the co-op difference in the little things. It's the lineworkers restoring power after a storm. The employees answering your questions when you call. The team members volunteering at community events. The board members — your neighbors — who help guide decisions for the future.

We're your neighbor and local energy partner, and we're committed to serving this community for generations to come.

This National Co-op Month, we invite you to join us in celebrating the cooperative difference, because this co-op belongs to you. **On Friday, Oct. 16, from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., join us at our office as we celebrate! Trail's End Concessions will be set up in our parking lot, serving up delicious food and drinks. Members will receive a \$5 voucher to use toward their meal or drink that day.**

Whether it's McDonough Power Cooperative, your local credit union or ACE Hardware, cooperatives prove that when people work together, everyone benefits.

Your membership is what makes our mission possible — and it's what keeps us focused on serving the people and communities that matter most.

Member Prizes

Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout The Wire. If you find the map location number that corresponds to the one on your bill (found above the usage graph), call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.

Welcome new District 6 Director Nancy Erlandson!

We are pleased to welcome Nancy Erlandson as our new District 6 Director! **5232B7A-570A**

Nancy is a retired educator who spent 35 years teaching high school history and social studies with the Industry and Rushville-Industry school districts. Throughout her career, she truly enjoyed the relationships she built with her students. In fact, she had the unique opportunity to teach multiple generations of the same families over the years.

Nancy is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church, the Anna L. Parker

Club and McDonough County Retired Teachers. Her background in history has also sparked a lifelong interest in reading, watching and researching all things Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War.

Nancy lives just northeast of Macomb with her husband Joe. In her free time, she enjoys tending to her flower gardens, gardening, reading, traveling and spending time with her black lab, Callie, and her two mischievous cats.

Please join us in welcoming Nancy to the board! We're excited to have her serve our members and our cooperative.



Celebrate National Cooperative Month with us!

Join us as we celebrate National Cooperative Month! McDonough Power Cooperative is proud to join cooperatives across the country in celebrating the spirit of cooperation and community.

Stop by our office on Friday, Oct. 16 from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for some food and fellowship!

This event is open to the public, and current McDonough Power members will receive a \$5 voucher toward a meal or drink from Trail's End Concessions food truck.

We hope to see you there!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Don't let phantom energy haunt your electric bill this October. Many electronics continue using electricity even when they're turned off. TVs, gaming systems, coffee makers and phone chargers can quietly draw power around the clock. While each device uses only a small amount, the energy waste can add up over time. Before heading out for Halloween fun, unplug devices you don't use regularly or plug them into a smart power strip that automatically cuts power when equipment is off. It's a simple trick that can help keep phantom energy waste in check.

Source: Dept. of Energy



SAVE ENERGY THIS *Fall and Winter*

Follow these simple DIY tips to reduce energy use and keep you warm this season:

- Seal gaps around windows and doors with caulk or weatherstripping.
- Close curtains and blinds at night to keep the cold out.
- Open window coverings on sunny days to let the sun in.
- Clean or replace furnace filters.
- Run ceiling fans clockwise to push warm air down.
- Check insulation in your attic, attic hatch and crawl space.
- Use a smart thermostat to lower temperatures when asleep or away.
- Close the fireplace flue when not in use.
- Schedule a home energy audit to find and fix energy wasters.

For more tips, visit: **Safe Electricity.org**

A decorative image featuring a large orange pumpkin, a blue and white knitted scarf, and several autumn leaves in shades of orange, red, and yellow. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with trees.

This fall, refresh your cybersecurity habits

By Carrie Van Vleet

As the leaves begin to change and we settle into the routines of fall, it's a good time to take stock of a few things around the house — preparing for cooler weather, checking our heating systems and getting ready for the months ahead. It's also a good time to refresh our cybersecurity habits.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but protecting your personal information is something that deserves attention all year long.

At McDonough Power Cooperative, cybersecurity is a critical part of providing safe, reliable electric service. While much of our focus is on protecting the physical systems that operate the electric grid, we also work to protect the systems and information that help us serve you — including online accounts, payment systems, member portals and outage communications.

Unfortunately, scammers are becoming more sophisticated, too. Artificial intelligence (AI) is making it easier for cyber criminals to create convincing emails, text messages, websites and even voice messages that can look and sound legitimate. The FBI has warned that generative AI can make fraudulent schemes more believable by eliminating many of the errors that once helped us identify a scam.

That matters when it comes to utility scams. **423B1-538C**

A scammer may impersonate McDonough Power Cooperative and

claim your account is past due, your service is about to be disconnected, or you need to make an immediate payment. The message might even include our logo, use professional-looking language or direct you to a website that appears legitimate. With AI helping scammers create more convincing communications, simply looking for spelling mistakes or other obvious warning signs may no longer be enough. And these scams are not a small problem.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, consumers reported losing \$3.5 billion to imposter scams in 2025, making these types of scams the most commonly reported type of fraud. Nearly one in three fraud reports involved an imposter scam.

So, what should you do if you receive an unexpected message claiming to be from McDonough Power Cooperative?

If a message creates a sense of urgency or threatens immediate disconnection, take a moment to verify it. Don't click the link or call the phone number provided in the message. Instead, contact McDonough Power Cooperative directly using our trusted methods. You can reach us by phone at 309-833-2101; through our website (Contact Us at mcdonoughpower.com); or by email at memberservices@mcdonoughpower.com

You can also take steps to protect your online accounts before a scam occurs. Start with your password. Longer is generally better than simply adding



Photo Source: Liza Summer, Pexels

more special characters. Choose a long, unique passphrase that is difficult for others to guess, and don't reuse the same password across multiple accounts.

If the accounts you access online offer multifactor authentication (MFA), consider using it. MFA adds an extra layer of protection by requiring an additional way to verify your identity, such as a code sent to your phone or an authentication app.

Most importantly, remember that you don't have to make a payment simply because someone tells you that you do. We want you to have an opportunity to verify any unexpected request.

McDonough Power Cooperative is committed to protecting the systems that help us deliver your electricity and serve our members. You can help by protecting your own account, slowing down when something seems urgent, and contacting us directly when you're unsure.

For questions about your account or payment options, contact McDonough Power Cooperative at 309-833-2101.



Annual Meeting continued from 18A

President Mike Smith then took the podium to introduce guests and employees, present service awards and deliver the President's Report, during which he emphasized three points.

1. McDonough Power has been 89 years in the making, and we are still standing as strong as ever and ready to continue serving our members.
2. While outside forces may affect your bill, we will work to minimize those impacts as much as possible.
3. Our commitment to the seven cooperative principles is just as strong as ever and built to last for the next 89 years.

The meeting adjourned following the drawing of prizes, including three grand prizes of \$250, for active members of the cooperative.