

Clay ELECTRIC News

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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71st annual meeting

During the 71st Annual Meeting of Members, Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc. members re-elected three area men to the board of directors and learned about the organization's plans to return capital credits to members, a new discount card for members called the Co-op Connections Card and how new EPA regulations could impact the cost of electricity.

The meeting was held August 27 at the Oil Belt Christian Service Camp in Charley Brown Park in Flora and the cooperative received positive comments about the change in venue.

During the meeting, three area men were re-elected to the co-op's board. The re-elected directors are Frank Czyzewski of Louisville, Greg Smith of Xenia and Bob Pierson of Flora. Also, Secretary-Treasurer Greg Smith reported that the cooperatives assets, and members' equity in the system both increased during the previous year, and revenue from the sale of electricity increased by over \$440,000.

Executive Vice President and General Manager Edward VanHoose said that the board of directors has been working diligently on the process of returning capital credits to Clay Electric members. He said the capital credits will be returned within the next year.

In addition to returning capital credits VanHoose announced the cooperative is providing a new discount card to the members called the Co-op Connections Card. He said, "The Co-op Connections card is a popular benefit for the many Touchstone Energy cooperatives



During Clay Electric Co-operative's 71st annual meeting, members re-elected three area men to the board of directors. Shown with Executive Vice President/General Manager Edward VanHoose are (l-r) Frank Czyzewski of Louisville, Greg Smith of Xenia, Bob Pierson of Flora and VanHoose.

around the country, such as Clay Electric. The cards provide co-op members with product and service discounts at cooperating local and national businesses. Many members of other co-ops across the country have received discounts from national businesses such as Wal-Mart, Best Buy, CVS and Target. These discounts can help members save on many products and services such as automotive, clothing, dining, energy efficiency and hotel chains. There are even prescription drug discounts at national and local pharmacies. The prescription discounts alone have saved Touchstone Energy members \$25 million."

VanHoose encouraged members to ask local businesses to join the

program. "It's a great opportunity for local businesses to get some free advertising and some loyal customers."

The local cooperative is also making improvements including a major line rebuild and the addition of new technology that will also help improve reliability. VanHoose said, "In addition to the linemen who have been very busy rebuilding line and making other upgrades, the inside staff employees have been hard at work as well. We are in the process of upgrading our system to the new Futura geographic information system, GIS for short. The GIS system is a way of keeping track of the entire system in a digital map, and

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71st annual meeting *(Continued from page 16a)*

the new electronic staking add-on will allow us to more accurately and efficiently complete line builds. Once we complete the GIS implementation, we hope to continue to upgrade our system with the eventual goal of being able to know you are out of power before you even have a chance to report it.”

New technology and business processes require high speed broadband and for that Clay Electric received help from a sister cooperative Wabash Independent Networks (WIN). VanHoose thanked the communications cooperative for providing a new fiber connection.

He said, “Wabash is a sister cooperative and embodies the principle of cooperation among cooperatives. WIN employees have gone above and beyond to help our cooperative modernize our communications infrastructure. Communications is

critical to our future as we continue to lower costs, offer new services, and improve efficiency and reliability.”

The electric industry is under new cost pressures and concern for power supply reliability are growing because of new U.S. EPA regulation that mainly target coal fired-power plants. VanHoose explained Clay Electric’s power comes from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative and Prairie State Generating Plants, which both burn Illinois coal. He said many coal-fired plants have already been shut down in Illinois and across the country and this could lead to a tighter power supply and higher rates.

“EPA regulations could double rates for co-op members, and we’d like to see an all-of-the-above energy strategy, one that includes coal, natural gas, and nuclear generation along with renewable energy such as solar, wind, hydro and methane gas.

In his report, Board President Frank Czyzewski addressed the history of the co-op and its unity of purpose. He said, “We remember our forefathers and how they banded together to build this cooperative by going door to door and asking for \$5 from each new co-op member. These pioneers worked together to build the infrastructure necessary to deliver electricity to the rural areas. Their sacrifices helped us to enjoy the benefits of electricity. Unity of purpose has provided electric cooperatives with a voice with our legislators, with manpower during outages, member programs such as discounts through Co-op Connections Card, energy conservation programs with Togetherwesave.com and economic development community programs. Cooperatives working together improves the quality of life in rural Illinois.”

Clay Electric Co-operative celebrates National Cooperative Month

October is National Cooperative Month, and Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc. (CECI) – and all co-ops across the U.S. – are celebrating the benefits and values that cooperatives bring to their members and communities.

While co-ops operate in many industries and sectors of the economy, seven cooperative principles set us apart from other businesses: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; member’s economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

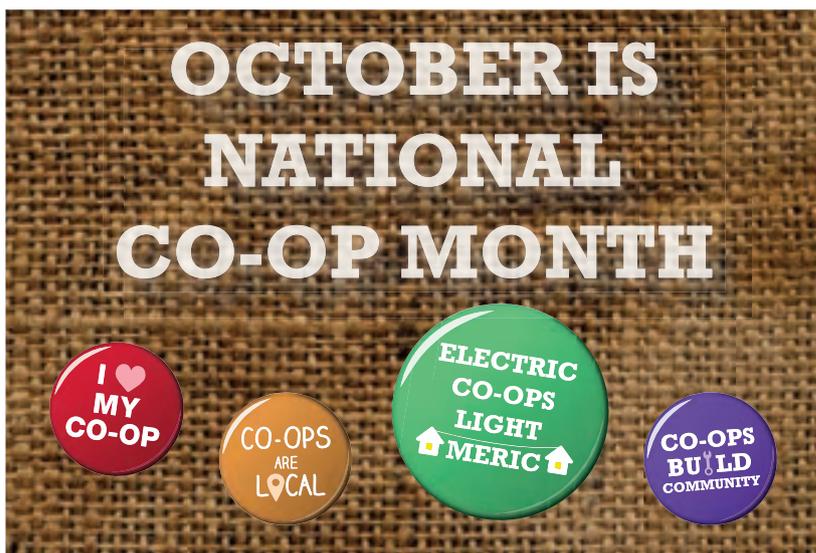
“Today, people prefer options and alternatives to ‘big box’ businesses,” says Executive V.P./General Manager Ed VanHoose “The co-op business model is unique and rooted in our local communities. Co-ops help us

build a more participatory, sustainable, and resilient economy.” CECI is proud to be part of America’s cooperative network, which includes more than 47,000 cooperative businesses.

Electric co-ops provide power for

many Illinoisans, with 24 electric distribution co-ops serving more than 294,000 homes and businesses.

CECI is one of more than 900 electric cooperatives, public utility districts and public power districts serving 42 million people in 47 states.



Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

Regular meeting July 27, 2015

Trustees present were: Frank Czyzewski, Bill Croy, Neil Gould, Frank Herman, Kevin Logan, Bob Pierson, Richard Rudolph, Danny Schnepper and Greg Smith. Also present were Executive Vice President/General Manager Ed VanHoose, Cooperative Attorney Melanie Pearce, Member Services Director Doug Hockman, and Operations Manager Luke Johnson. The invocation was given by Kevin Logan.

Approved the agenda as amended by Gen. Mgr. VanHoose.

Approved the Mission Statement drafted in Strategic Planning Meeting as follows: "To provide reliable, safe, and exceptional service to our member owners".

Approved the minutes of the regular meeting held June 22, 2015.

Reviewed and Approved work orders,

Heard a report by Luke Johnson as to the same in the amount of \$37,386.71 for the month of June 2015.

Accepted 15 new members for service.

Canceled 2 members no longer receiving service.

Accepted the disbursement list for the month of June 2015.

Heard a report by Attorney Pearce as to NRECA Legal Seminar she attended.

Reviewed a report of an Illinois ACRE publication by Trustee Logan.

Heard a report by Trustee Herman concerning the recent SIPC Board meeting specifically financial information, Strategic Planning Meeting, and possible prospect for wholesale power contract. Reviewed SIPC "Administration and Finance Department Summary" for June 2015.

Heard a report by Trustee Logan, on behalf of the Purchasing Committee, and recommended the budgeted item of the purchase of a John Deere compact tractor from McLean Implement of Flora. Said recommendation was approved.

Heard a report by Trustee Smith, on behalf of the Building and

Grounds Committee, the issue of replacement or repair of the current Clay Electric Office Building. No recommendations for Board action were made; the committee will continue to meet to discuss and investigate the issue.

Approved entering into Executive Session for the purpose of Union Negotiations. Doug Hockman and Luke Johnson left the room.

Approved concluding Executive Session.

Approved Union Contract as presented.

Hockman and Johnson returned to the meeting.

Heard a report by Gen. Mgr. VanHoose as to the following;

Disbursed new credit cards to Board Members

Reviewed Form 7/Operations Report.

Reviewed cash flow report.

Reviewed financial trend analysis.

Reviewed SIPC power bill.

Reviewed power factor.

Reviewed power cost adder.

Heard a report by Luke Johnson, as to recent safety meeting, topic being recent accidents at neighboring

utilities, including one fatality.

Heard a report by Luke Johnson as to transformer kVa charges.

Discussed options and Approved revisions to policies to reflect either demand or kVa charges.

Report concerning Irrigation Rate, Reviewed and Approved the Irrigation Rate as presented.

Thereafter **Approved** Managers report.

Reminded of upcoming Clay Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting of Members on August 27, 2015.

Heard and Approved a report by Doug Hockman concerning a Joint Pole Use agreement between Clay Electric Cooperative, Clay County Water, and the City of Flora to install a meter reading repeater on a utility pole belonging to the City of Flora.

Reviewed a Certificate of Liability Insurance for Windstream Services, LLC.

Reviewed a Thank You note from Parker Moses for sponsoring his participation with the AIEC Youth Tour.

Heard an update on the lightning damage to CECI electronic equipment.

Adjournment.

Kevin Logan of Edgewood elected Chairman of AIEC Board of Directors



The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) held its annual meeting July 30 – 31, 2015 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. During the Board of Directors reorganizational meeting, Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc. Director Kevin Logan, of Edgewood, was elected for a one-year term as Chairman of the AIEC Board of Directors.

Based in Springfield, the AIEC provides legal, engineering, communications, safety training, legislative and other services to 29 electric cooperatives. AIEC member-cooperatives serve more than 294,366 farms, homes and businesses in 90 counties, with 56,124 miles of line. AIEC is a member of Touchstone Energy — an alliance of 750 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country, committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

Shield your home from energy loss with adequate insulation

By Anne Prince

Walls. Floors. Ceilings. Attic. These are some of the prime areas of a home that need insulation in order for you to maximize energy efficiency. According to the Department of Energy (DOE), adding insulation to your home is a sound investment that is likely to quickly pay for itself in reduced utility bills. In fact, DOE estimates that you can reduce your heating and cooling needs up to 30 percent by properly insulating and weatherizing your home.

If your home is more than 20 years old and was not specifically constructed for energy efficiency, additional insulation can likely reduce your energy bills and increase the comfort level of your home. The actual amount of savings for each home depends upon several factors—the current level of insulation, your climate, efficiency of your heating/cooling system and your utility rates. On average, older homes have less insulation than homes built today, but even adding insulation to a newer home can pay for itself within a few years.

So, where do you start?

You first need to determine how much insulation you already have in your home and where it is located. For those with the DIY spirit, you can conduct an insulation audit yourself. Here is what you should be looking for:

- Where your home is, isn't, and/or should be insulated
- The type of insulation in your home
- The R-value and the thickness or depth (inches) of the insulation

A prime area that is chronically under-insulated is the attic. Whether you live in a cool or warm climate, attic insulation is essential to help keep warm air inside in the winter and prevent hot attic air from heating your living spaces in the summer. If you have R-19 or less insulation in your attic, consider bringing it up to



R-38 in moderate climates and R-49 in cold climates. For flooring in cold climates, if you have R-11 or less insulation, consider bringing it up to R-25.

How does insulation work?

Heat flows naturally from a warmer space to a cooler space. During winter months, this means heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls and floors—wherever there is a difference in temperature. During summer months, the opposite happens—heat flows from the exterior to the interior of a home. Proper installation of insulation creates resistance to heat flow. Heat flow resistance is measured or rated in terms of its R-value—the higher the R-value, the greater the insulation's effectiveness. The more heat flow resistance your insulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs will be. Using cellulose or foam insulation in the walls and ceilings is recommended, and when insulating basements or crawl spaces, foam insulation is an excellent choice.

Save green by going green

Today, you have choices when it comes to selecting insulation for the

home, including an environmentally-friendly option made of recycled materials, such as scrap blue jeans. It looks similar to chopped up blue jeans and is treated for fire safety. With an insulating R-value similar to fiberglass insulation, this blue-jean insulation is a great option.

Get started and get saving

While an older home will never be as efficient as a new home, an insulation upgrade will make a noticeable difference in your energy use and wallet. A well-insulated home is one of the most cost-effective means of saving energy and decreasing heating and cooling bills. For more information go to www.togetherwesave.com or www.ceci.coop and click on the “Building the Home of Your Dreams” booklet, for several energy efficiency tips.

Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

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