

Rural HIGHLIGHTS

A publication of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative • Auburn, Illinois • www.recc.coop



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Holiday Greetings

*from the directors and employees of
Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative!*

Directors

Jimmy Ayers
John Beatty
Clayton Bloome
Ted Dowson
Cassie Eigenmann
Mel Repscher
Erv Shores
Lou Weitekamp
Chris Wilcox

Employees

David Stuva, Pres/CEO
Clark Bowman
Travis Boylen
Craig Costello
Shelley Crocks
Lou DeLaby
Curt Fishburn

Dave Flynn
Dean Fuchs
Becky Grossner
Bill Hart
Tim Hemberger
Martin Hinton
Tom Jones
Jeff Lancaster
Sandy Lex
Dave McCarty
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Dana Smith
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Vice Chairman

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Secretary-Treasurer

John A. Beatty
Asst. Sec.-Treasurer

Clayton Bloome
Thomas "Ted" Dowson
Cassie L. Eigenmann
Erv Shores
Lou Weitekamp

President/CEO

David Stuva

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Dana Smith, *editor*



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Board report

Resume of Minutes Regular Board Meeting October 25, 2010

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative Co. was held at the cooperative headquarters at 7 p.m. on October 25, with all members present. Also present were President/CEO David Stuva; Manager of Office Services, Dean Fuchs; Manager of Operations and Maintenance, Lou DeLaby; Director of Member and Public Relations, Dana Smith; Field Engineer and Purchasing Agent, Martin Hinton; Executive Assistant, Sandy Lex; and Attorney Jerry Tice.

* The minutes of the September 27 regular Board meeting and October 21 special Board meeting were approved as presented.

* Lou DeLaby reviewed the outages and blinks that had occurred at the Glenarm substation and transmission line in recent months, and the maintenance projects done to improve reliability. He reported on some objections to easement clearing work on the transmission line through Chatham and the communications with adjacent homeowners.

* Dana Smith and Martin Hinton presented proposed modifications to the cooperative's Peak Switch credits for electric air conditioners and water heaters, and the potential control periods for devices on the Peak Switch and Dual Meter programs. The changes would better match the wholesale power cost structure.

* Dana Smith and Martin Hinton discussed a proposed new rate for small 3-phase accounts within franchised municipal service areas.

* CEO Stuva presented the IMEA report.

* The AIEC report was presented by Chairman Ayers. He reviewed the Executive Summary of the AIEC Board meeting held October 21.

* The Attorney's report was given by Attorney Tice. He reviewed the procedures followed in the Chatham easement clearance work and the objections raised by some homeowners.

* Chairman Ayers presented Director Chris Wilcox a certificate for successfully completing the NRECA Board Leadership program.

President/CEO's Report

CEO Stuva reviewed the following reports which had either been mailed or distributed to all directors and attorney: Member and Public Relations, Job Training and Safety, Meters and Outages, Operations and Maintenance, Engineering and Construction, Cash Disbursements Summary, and Check Listing. The Board accepted the reports. The financial and statistical reports for September were reviewed and accepted.

CEO Stuva also:

* Reviewed the long term rate forecast from IMEA for wholesale power costs.

* Reviewed plans for upcoming meetings.

Board Action

The Board acted on the following:

* Approved the application for, or reinstatement of, membership and electric service for 15 persons.

* Approved Resolutions re-authorizing Board officer signatures on accounts at two area banks.

* Approved a new 10-year franchise with the Village of Raymond.

* Approved an updated Policy listing franchises from area towns and villages.

* Approved proposed changes in monthly credits and control periods in the Peak Switch program.

* Approved a revised Dual Meter rate with new potential load control periods.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Holidays observed

RECC's office will be closed for upcoming holidays:

Friday, Dec. 24 – Christmas

Friday, Dec. 31 – New Year's

Eight Memorial Scholarships available for 2011

Seven scholarships of \$1,250 will be awarded in 2011 to eligible high school seniors through the Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Thomas H. Moore Memorial Scholarship Program. In addition, a new eighth scholarship – to assist with costs in attending an electric lineworker school – will be offered for the first time.

Four scholarships will be awarded to students who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative. A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee. The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

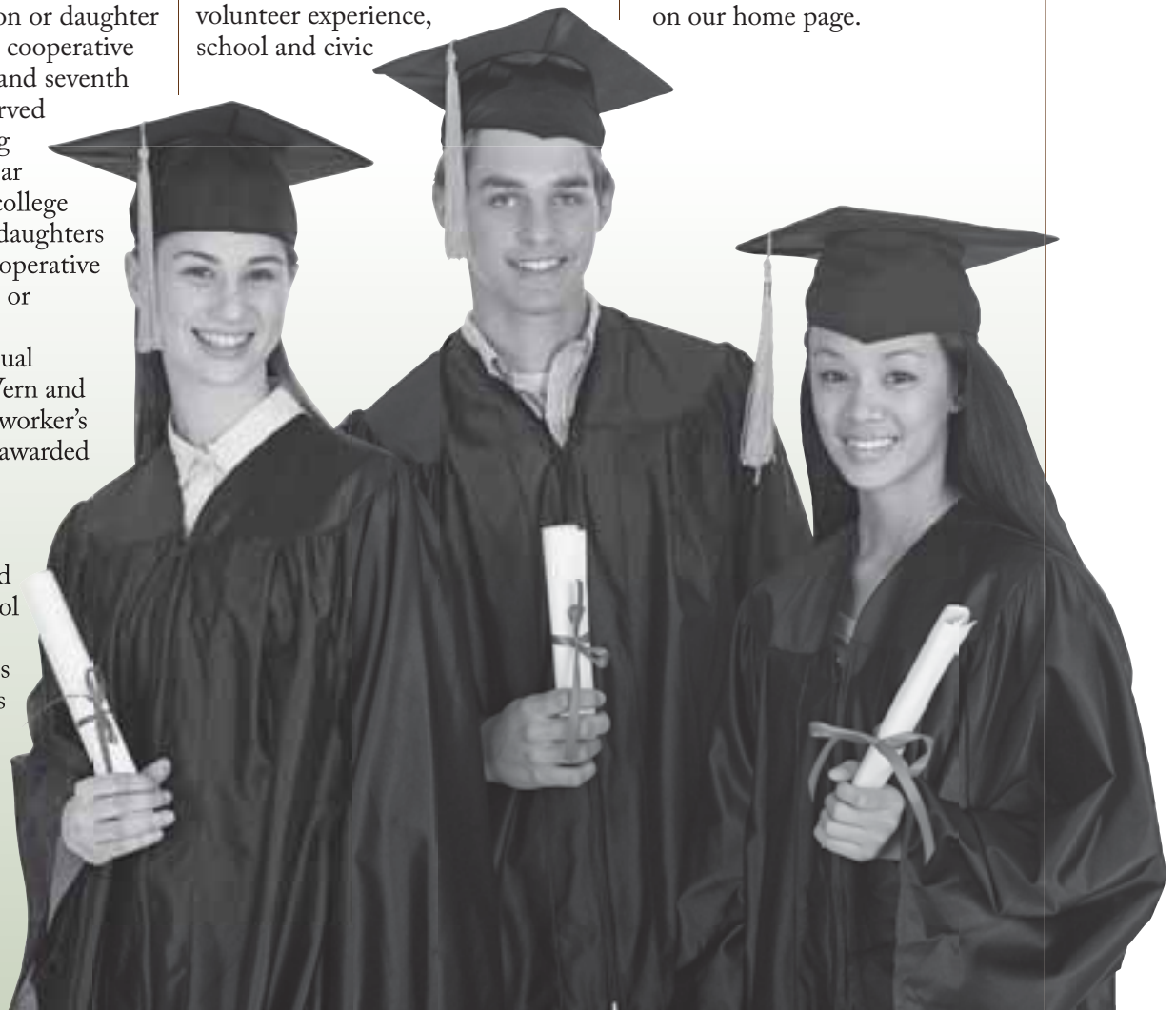
A new eighth annual scholarship, the “LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker’s Scholarship,” will be awarded for the first time in 2011. This \$1,250 scholarship will help pay for costs to attend the lineworker’s school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield.

LaVern McEntire served as a lineman for McDonough Power Cooperative from 1949 until 1991. He and his wife, Nola, helped to endow and establish the new scholarship to financially assist deserving individuals in becoming trained lineworkers. Relatives of co-op employees or directors are eligible for the lineworker’s scholarship, as are individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard.

Candidates are judged on the basis of grade point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic

activities, and a short essay that demonstrates their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

Application forms are available from the RECC office in Auburn, and must be returned by Jan. 1, 2011. Winners will be announced by May 1, 2011. You can request an application and rules sheet by calling our office at 800-245-7322. These forms and a brochure can also be downloaded from our website (www.recc.coop). Look under the “Downloadable Forms” link on our home page.



Copper wire stolen on RECC poles

Copper thieves struck again in the Lowder area in November, cutting the copper ground wires off of 61 RECC poles near ground level. The same area, south of the co-op's Lowder substation, was hit last March while new three-phase lines were being constructed.

"We're working with the Sangamon County Sheriff's office to investigate these thefts and stop the destruction of co-op property," says President/CEO David Stuva. "We will prosecute anyone caught in these dangerous activities, and the material cost may result in a felony crime."

Stuva says the thieves typically cut the solid copper ground wires

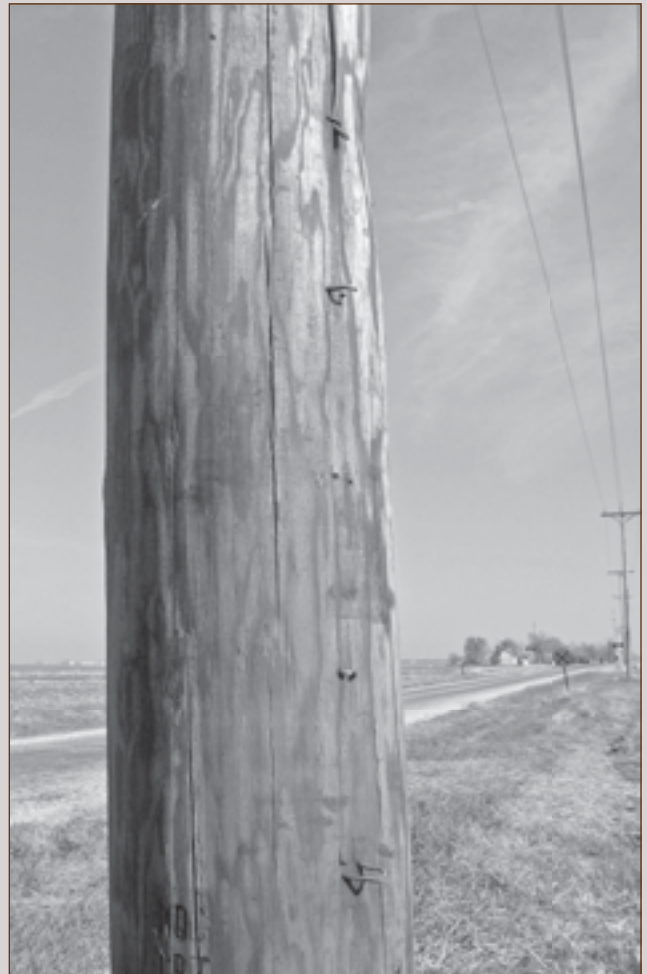
installed on many electric poles, near the ground and as high as they can reach. The grounds are vital for safety and proper operation of the electric distribution system, he says. "Our crews staple the wire to the pole every six inches on the lower section of the pole, so it takes a little time and effort to cut the wire loose!"

Not surprisingly, the thefts occur on poles located away from homes or major intersections. But the areas are still open and visible, Stuva says. He is encouraging members and rural residents to report any suspicious activity or anyone trying to sell large amounts of copper wire pieces. "RECC is offering a \$1,000 reward for information

leading to the arrest and conviction of these criminals," he says.

Stuva adds that RECC's own crews or contractors would always be driving marked vehicles, so they can be identified easily. They also would seldom be working along a line at night, unless responding to an outage problem, he points out.

"Obviously, we can't watch all of our poles and equipment every day. We need the help of our members, being vigilant and watching out for the good of the neighborhood. After all, the cost of repairing and replacing these wires is being paid by every member-consumer."



A \$1,000 reward is offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of copper thieves who removed copper ground wires from 61 electric poles in the Lowder area.

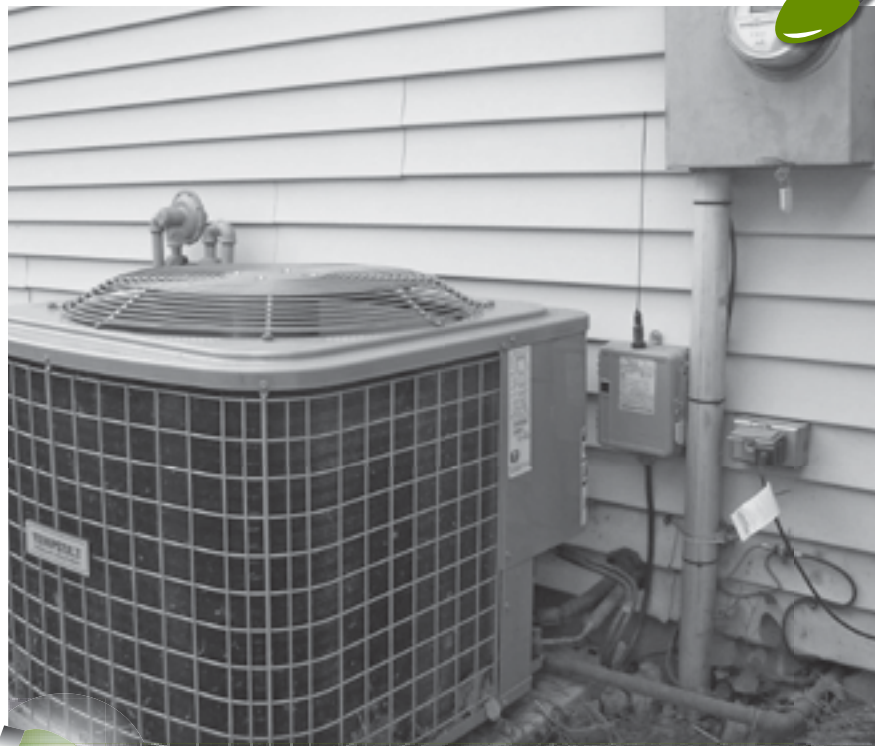


Give a gift of electricity

RECC's gift certificates make it easy for you to provide a credit on a friend or relative's electric account. Simply tell us the account and the amount you want to give, and we'll take care of the rest! The recipient will receive a letter showing your name and the amount of credit they have received. It's an easy way to help with a needed item, and there's no worry about buying the right color or style!

The first electric Christmas lights

Wouldn't you know, the first strand of electric Christmas lights was created by Thomas Edison, the inventor of the incandescent bulb! According to the Library of Congress, Edison hung strands of white bulbs around the outside of his Menlo Park Laboratory in New Jersey where rail passengers marveled at the new illumination during the Christmas season in 1880. The first colored Christmas lights, though, were built in 1882 by Edward Johnson, Edison's friend and partner in the Edison's Illumination Company. Johnson hand-wired 80 red, white and blue light bulbs and wound them around a revolving Christmas tree. It wasn't until 1895 that President Grover Cleveland promoted indoor electric Christmas lights, with hundreds of multi-colored light bulbs on the White House family Christmas tree. General Electric Company offered the first pre-assembled kits of Christmas lights in 1903, bringing the cost down to an affordable level for the first time for the average family.



Peak Switch, Dual Meter changes

RECC's Board of Directors approved changes in the co-op's Peak Switch and Dual Meter programs in October that will affect about 1,000 accounts receiving Peak Switch credits and 1,400 Dual Meter accounts. All of these accounts have a Peak Switch installed by RECC, to provide strategic load control of water heaters and air conditioning systems. For many years, summer peak loads were the main concern in determining our wholesale power costs. Now, peak loads are important every month, so our potential control periods are being expanded.

Members receiving Peak Switch credits for air conditioning could have their air conditioner compressors cycled from May through September, depending on

weather and the co-op's total load. They will receive credits of \$10 per month for those five months. Peak Switches on water heaters may be operated from January through December, in return for a billing credit of \$7 every month. A new Agreement form is being developed with these details, and will be sent to participating members in coming months.

Members with Dual Meters will continue to receive the 7-cent rate on electric heating, air conditioning and water heating. The potential control periods will be the same as the Peak Switch program described above. RECC is also carrying out a Peak Switch testing program to make sure that installed switches are still connected and working properly at members' homes.

Get some holiday help for your cell phone shopping

Phones and plans for all types of customers



Many cell phone owners will be looking at new phones and accessories for the Christmas season, and there's a lot out there to choose from! From plain old phone service to texting plans to smart phones, there are more options and features than ever before.

To help sort it all out, many of our members have worked with AT&T representative Jim McAfee to select a cell phone that fits their needs and a monthly plan that matches their calling habits for the best possible value. Jim has worked for many years with residential, farm and business cus-

tomers to make sense of the wide array of equipment and service choices that confront them.

With 15 years in the cellular phone industry, Jim says, "I've seen a lot of changes and different applications for the cell phones, data being the biggest change. You can have your e-mail forwarded to the cell phone, check grain prices, look at a radar map, get turn by turn driving instructions for free."

One idea Jim has seen contractors and outdoor workers use is to keep their existing phone and add a smart phone to their account and leave it in their truck. This way they

can get the information they need from the Internet when they need it while carrying a more rugged phone with them.

A huge trend that Jim sees is customers replacing their home landline phones with wireless service. "We can give you your present landline number on your cell phone, so your friends won't lose your contact number. You can even install an adapter to use your existing phone sets in your home," Jim says.

A huge trend that Jim sees is customers replacing their home landline phones with wireless service.



You can contact Jim McAfee at (217) 741-0405 to discuss any AT&T Wireless options. He now handles all smart phones, Windows, Android, Blackberry and Apple. He says another application of technology is air cards for laptop computers, to access the Internet from almost anywhere.

Jim can meet with RECC's members to look at phones and discuss their calling needs. He'll even review monthly bills, looking for savings and discounts. "We want to make sure you're getting the most for your cellular dollars," he explains.

While rate discounts for RECC members have ended, Jim says there are other group plans that users may be able to take advantage of. Business accounts can qualify for discounts and then extend the discounts to their employees, he adds.

Whether you're overwhelmed or excited by the developments in the cell phone business, Jim can help you find your way. Give him a call!

MEMBER RESPONSE PAGE

Please send me information on services from RECC:

<input type="checkbox"/> Peak Switch	<input type="checkbox"/> New Home Energy Guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/> Marathon Lifetime-Warranty Water Heaters
<input type="checkbox"/> Dual Meter Heating Rate	<input type="checkbox"/> Surge Suppressor Lease	<input type="checkbox"/> Long Distance Saving Rates
<input type="checkbox"/> Security Light Rental	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-op Power Plus™ Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> AT&T Wireless Cellular Phone Savings
<input type="checkbox"/> Convectair Heaters	<input type="checkbox"/> DTN Wireless Internet	

Electric heating equipment rebates

An electric heat rebate form must be completed. Minimum system sizes apply.

- Geothermal System – \$500/home
- Air Source Heat Pumps – \$500/home (with electric back-up)
- Air Source Heat Pumps – \$200/home (with gas back-up)

Electric equipment rebate request

Please include a copy of your sales receipt for your new electric equipment, purchased and installed within the past 12 months.

<input type="checkbox"/> Clothes Dryer, Electric Replacement – \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Heater, Standard Warranty – \$200 (less than 10-yr warranty)
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothes Dryer, New Home or Gas Conversion – \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Heater, Life-long Warranty – \$250 (10-yr or longer warranty)
<input type="checkbox"/> Electric Range, Electric Replacement – \$25	
<input type="checkbox"/> Electric Range, New Home or Gas Conversion – \$25	This water heater is for: <input type="checkbox"/> New Home <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Conversion <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Replacement

Member Name _____ Account No. _____

Mailing Address _____

Town _____ Phone _____

Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

P.O. Box 19, Auburn IL 62615

Telephone: (800) 245-7322 (RECC) or (217) 438-6197 • www.recc.coop

Normal office hours 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



HomE energy rebates get added funding

Additional \$1 million for Illinois electric cooperatives' members

RECC was able to help 36 members with their home energy efficiency projects this summer, installing insulation, high-efficiency heating systems and new-generation electric water heaters. Now, more funds are being offered to assist with even more projects.

The Illinois electric cooperatives have received an additional \$1 million in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds through the Illinois State Energy plan, after distributing \$1.5 million to co-op members over the past seven months. RECC's initial allocation, based on the number of members served, was \$33,000. The added funds will be at least \$23,000.

The HomE program (pronounced home-E), begins with a home energy assessment provided by the co-op. Based upon this energy assessment, participating members are then eligible for rebates for making recommended energy efficiency improvements to

their homes. Besides insulation and weather sealing, rebates are available for Energy Star-qualified air source heat pumps, geothermal systems, and conventional systems. A rebate is also available for Energy Star-qualified heat pump water heaters.

The maximum rebate per household is \$1,500. Rebate funds will be provided to qualifying members who participate in the program for their primary residence and complete the efficiency improvements. Members who qualify for low-income energy programs would utilize funds from those programs, not from HomE.

Payments for qualified projects will be committed for 60 days after a project proposal is approved. Members must begin by having a home energy assessment done by RECC. There is a \$25 fee for this assessment and energy recommendation. Any rebates paid under this program are in addition to RECC's normal equipment rebates.

Call Rural Electric Conve-

nience Cooperative at (217) 438-6197 for more information, or to request an energy assessment. You can also find more details at our website, www.recc.coop.

HomE rebates offered

HomE rebates, available while funds last, are offered for high-efficiency heating and cooling equipment and insulation. (Must meet minimum efficiency requirements of the program.) Maximum payment per household is \$1,500; the individual rebates are shown below.

Air-source heat pumps	\$ 1,000
Geothermal systems	\$ 1,500
Gas or LP furnace	\$ 350*
Central AC	\$ 350*
Heat pump water heaters ...	\$ 250
Insulation/ sealing.....	30% of project cost

** Can not receive AC rebate with gas-fired furnace rebate.*