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# Rural HIGHLIGHTS

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

## More savings from your cooperative Touchstone Energy® Co-op Connections® program adds pharmacy discounts

Members' Co-op Connections cards are now even more powerful, with the addition of a pharmacy discount program. The Co-op Connections card, along with our group codes, will entitle our members to get 10 percent to 60 percent savings on most prescriptions at more than 48,000 independent pharmacies and national chains including CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, Target and more.

RECC is implementing this program in conjunction with many other Touchstone Energy cooperatives, in an effort to better serve our member-owners. With soaring prescription prices, this discount pharmacy program will work for your family and you.

RECC members received their free Co-op Connections cards two years ago, that offer savings at many local and national businesses. A new card with the discount pharmacy information will be mailed to all members in the coming weeks. Once the member has signed the back of

the card, it may be used at participating pharmacies locally and nationwide. To find out which pharmacies are participating and to look up the discount prescription price, members can visit [www.rxpricequotes.com](http://www.rxpricequotes.com).

This is just one more way you win from being a cooperative member. Simply present your Co-op Connections card at a participating pharmacy with your prescription and receive a discount at the time of purchase. Whenever a Co-op Connections card holder – whether from RECC or from any of the other participating Touchstone Energy cooperatives across the country – shows their card, they will receive a

10 percent to 60 percent discount on most prescriptions.

***"Whenever a Co-op Connections cardholder shows their card, they will receive a 10 percent to 60 percent discount on most prescriptions."***



*Members can use these card numbers at local pharmacies until new cards are mailed later this summer.*

Until you receive your new Co-op Connections card, you can use your existing card and the program numbers shown on the graphic below. (You can even clip out the card graphic and take it with you to your pharmacy!) We will also have temporary cards available at our office that you may ask for.

"The Co-op Connections card creates an even greater sense of membership and reinforces Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative's longstanding commitment to the community," said President/CEO David Stuva. "It offers further proof being a member of an electric cooperative has its advantages," he added.

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**Mel Repscher**  
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## President/CEO

David Stuva

### Rural Highlights

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Dana Smith, *editor*



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# Board report

## Resume of Minutes Regular Board Meeting March 26, 2007

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative Co. was held at the cooperative headquarters at 6 p.m. on March 26, with all members present except Lee Marten. Also present were President/CEO David Stuva; Manager of Office Services, Dean Fuchs; Director of Member and Public Relations, Dana Smith; Manager of Operations and Maintenance, Lou DeLaby; and Attorney Jerry Tice.

\* The minutes of the Feb. 26 Regular Board Meeting were approved with one change.

\* CEO Stuva and Lou DeLaby reported management had reviewed the cooperative's lines in eight of the cooperative's substation areas to determine what additional repairs are needed due to damage in the December 2006 ice storm. These repairs may be eligible for reimbursement from FEMA.

\* There was no AIEC report because there had not been an AIEC Board meeting since the last RECC Board meeting

\* Director White presented the Soyland Board report, discussing several proposed power plants that could provide future supplies.

\* Jerry Tice reported that he had assisted the AIEC in responding to questions from Illinois electric co-ops regarding the right to serve discontented customers from investor-owned utilities.

### 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. Financial and statistical reports for February were reviewed and accepted.

CEO Stuva also:

\* Reported that the co-op's electric

sales for January and February 2007 were \$204,023 greater than for the same period in 2006, due mainly to the colder weather and increased electric heating consumption. He said the distribution maintenance expense for February 2007 was up due to RECC linemen helping other co-ops in Illinois and Iowa repair storm damage, but those expenses would be reimbursed by the host cooperatives.

\* Reported on progress for the planned wind turbine project, with a License Agreement signed with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for the location at Farmersville. He said the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation has agreed to purchase the green energy certificates from the wind project for ten years with a one-time payment.

\* Reviewed bids received for the employee health and dental insurance plans for 2007-2008.

\* Noted the upcoming retirement of Jeanette Clark on April 13, and the hiring of Laura Carter for the office staff.

\* 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 16 persons.

\* Approved amended RUS Financial reports for December 2006 and the year of 2006, to reflect the reimbursement for storm damage repairs received from FEMA.

\* Approved a contract with Croft Electrical Contractors, to perform labor for repair and construction work to the cooperative's system during the year 2007.

\* Approved renewals of the employee health and dental insurance plans with the present providers for 2007-2008.

\* Appointed a resolution to authorize a Roth 401(k) option for employee retirement plans, at no additional cost to RECC.

\* Set a special Board meeting for April 9 at 7 p.m., to review a wind turbine system quote and a metering/connection policy for members' small renewable energy systems.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

# RECC linemen named Red Cross "Heroes"

Bill Hart and Curt Nicholson, journeyman linemen at RECC, were among 22 persons honored at the annual Heroes Breakfast sponsored by the Illinois Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross. The ceremony was held April 20 at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield.

The Red Cross Heroes program recognizes outstanding community members in eight categories: Youth, Senior, Public Safety, Work Place, Military, Education, Community, and Healthcare. Hart and Nicholson, who both live in Girard, were recognized in the Work Place category.

The linemen were installing an electric service on Lake Lou Yeager, near Litchfield, in March 2006 when they heard a man calling for help. A fisherman from Alton had lost power to his johnboat and was

using an oar to paddle himself to shore. When he stood up to move to the front of the boat, he fell into the near freezing water.

Hearing the yells for help, Hart tied a rope around his waist and swam more than 75 feet to the front of the boat. Nicholson and two contractors, who had also been working nearby, pulled the boat and men to shore. The fisherman

was experiencing mild shock from hypothermia, but recovered quickly. "(He) knew he was in trouble ... and luckily we were there," Nicholson said.

"Our linemen work among our members and I'm thankful that they care enough about people to do the right thing. Bill and Curt are heroes, without a doubt," said RECC's President/CEO David Stuva.



Linemen Bill Hart (left) and Curt Nicholson were honored as Red Cross "Heroes" in a presentation on April 20.

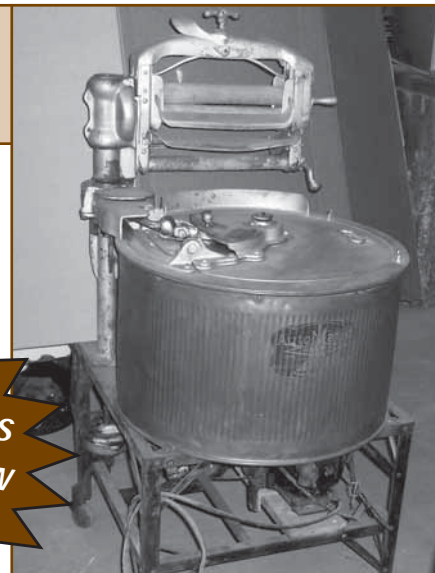
## Searching for early appliances

### Contest for oldest working appliances

Do you have an old electric appliance that still works? Tell us about it, for a chance to win a thoroughly modern microwave oven! We'll choose the oldest working appliance for the prize, to be awarded at RECC's Annual meeting on June 7 in Chatham. We'll also share some of the entries with our readers in this newsletter.

The deadline is May 25, so check your attic and basement storage areas for your "good old" stuff!

**Your old appliances could win you a new microwave!**



# News & Notes

## *JULIE has new 811 number*

Whether you are planning to do it yourself or hire a professional, smart digging means calling 811 before each job. Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs.

If you hit an underground utility line while digging, you can harm yourself or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood and potentially be responsible for fines and repair costs.

One easy phone call to 811 starts the process to get your underground utility lines marked for free. When you call 811 from anywhere in the country, your call will be routed to your local One Call Center. Local One Call Center operators will ask you for the location of your digging job and route your call to affected utility companies. Your utility companies will then send a professional locator to your location to mark your lines within a few days. Once your underground lines have been marked, you will know the approximate location of your utility lines and can dig safely, because knowing what's below protects you and your family.

Always call 811 before starting any digging project!

For more information, visit the Web site at [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com)



## *Scholarship winners named*

The five winners of the 2007 Illinois Electric Cooperative Memorial Scholarships have been announced. In the “son or daughter of an electric cooperative member” category, the three winners are:

- Laura Kirst of Galena, Illinois. Laura’s family receives electricity from Jo-Carroll Energy.
- Tess Hellgren of Makanda, Illinois. Tess’s family receives electricity from Egyptian Electric Cooperative.
- Mitchell R. Fairley of Quincy, Illinois. Mitchell’s family receives electricity from Adams Electric Cooperative.



In the “son or daughter of an electric cooperative employee or director” category, the scholarship winner is Whitney Kampwerth of Carlyle. Whitney is the daughter of Clinton County Electric Cooperative director Kevin Kampwerth.

The winner of the scholarship reserved for use at an Illinois Community College is Benjamin Wesley Johnson. Benjamin’s family receives electricity from Menard Electric Cooperative.

All of the winning students will be presented with a plaque by local co-op officials at their upcoming local high school awards ceremonies. The amount of each scholarship is \$1250. There were 204 applications this year, and letters were sent to all applicants with the contest results.

## *Planning a new home?*

If you’re planning a new home, or an addition, be sure to build energy efficiency into your plans! Many energy-saving products and techniques cost little or nothing, and will save you money year after year on your utility bills. RECC has some great guidelines in the “Certified Comfort Home” booklet to help you make smart choices for your building project. From foundation to ceiling insulation, it includes dozens of tips to reduce energy consumption and increase comfort levels in your new home. Call for your free booklet at (800) 245-7322, or drop us a note with your monthly bill payment!

# Summer is Peak Alert season!

*Load management strategies help keep power costs down*

The warm, welcomed days of spring will soon turn to sultry, sweaty days of summer. When you add the thousands of air conditioners and fans used by our members to other residential and commercial loads, you get a peak electrical demand that's higher than any other time of the year.

That makes RECC a "summer peaking" co-op, like every other electric utility in the Midwest region. It means we need to have enough generation and transmission capacity available to satisfy the demand on the very hottest day, even though we need much less on most of the remaining days of the year.

It's like a farmer buying enough tractors and planters to get his entire corn crop planted in one day, and then letting the equipment sit in a shed the rest of the year. If he can spread out the planting over several days, he can spend a lot less on equipment and make better use of his investment.

We don't plant corn, but we do pay for lots of equipment. For electric generation and transmission, we don't own the facilities, but we pay for them through the wholesale power rates. If we can reduce our peak demands, and spread out the usage during peak periods, we pay less for the electricity we buy for our members.

RECC's rates include three main incentives for our members to help us reduce our peak demands on hot summer days: the five-cent Dual Meter rate, Peak Switch billing credits, and our Interruptible rates.

When a Peak Alert is issued by our power supplier (Soyland Power Cooperative), we notify the members served on our

Interruptible rates that they must shed their electric loads during the peak period. This is usually the early afternoon and evening hours. Most interruptible accounts have a generator to run their systems during the peak period, while a few are able to shut down their

air conditioners and water heaters return to normal operation.

How do you know if your air conditioner or water heater is being controlled? All of our Peak Switches have red indicator lights on the front that go on when a circuit is interrupted. Depending on the equipment you have connected to the Peak Switch, you may see one, two or three red lights come on. Switches also have green lights that may blink or remain on, but that is not an indication of control status.

We run Peak Alert announcements on two local radio stations, WSMI (106 FM and 1540 AM) and WTIM (97.3 FM) during peak periods. If you want to know whether

your equipment is being cycled on a hot day, you can also call our office from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We are now also posting notifications during Peak Days on our Web site at [www.recc.coop](http://www.recc.coop).

And another new communication tool we're introducing is an optional e-mail notice to you. If you provide us an e-mail address, we will send a notification to you on the morning of any Peak Alert periods, to let you know that load control is expected for designated hours later in the day. Your e-mail address will remain private within the cooperative.

These load control strategies are used to keep power costs as low as possible for all members. We have power capacity available to meet all our needs, but load management makes better use of the electrical system. If you have questions on the savings potential for your home, please give us a call at (800) 245-7322.



*One of the Peak Switch boxes used by RECC*

operation entirely.

Members on the Dual Meter and Peak Switch programs both have remotely controlled switches installed so that RECC can cycle air conditioners and electric water heaters. Air conditioners (including heat pumps and geothermal systems) are cycled 15 minutes on/15 minutes off through the peak period, which could continue up to 10 hours but seldom last that long.

Water heaters have the heating elements turned off for the entire peak period, but there is hot water stored in the tank which minimizes any inconvenience to the member.

Peak Alert periods may occur between June 1 and Sept. 15 each year. They should not occur on a weekend or holiday, unless extreme conditions are causing power supply concerns. A peak period may last until after dark, because the loads must be restored gradually to avoid a secondary peak when

# Dave Lewis resigns from Board of Directors

Director Dave Lewis has resigned from the RECC Board of Directors, after representing cooperative members for almost eight years. The directors accepted his resignation at the April 23 board meeting. Dave cited personal reasons for leaving the board.

“Dave Lewis has been a reliable and attentive board member and we appreciate his contribution. He often brought a viewpoint to the decision making process that helped other directors evaluate both sides of the argument,” said Board Chairman Jimmy Ayers.

Dave Lewis was elected on June 10, 1999 and would have completed his third term on the RECC Board in June 2008. He earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate in 2001. Dave is owner and operator of Lewis Electric Inc. and has been involved in the

electrical industry for more than 32 years.

Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative’s service area is divided into nine geographic districts, with one director elected from each district. Directors must live in a certain district, but all cooperative members vote for the directors, who serve three-year terms. Members will elect directors for Districts 1, 2 and 3 at this year’s annual meeting on June 7.

“The Board plans to fill the vacancy, since this year’s nominating committee has already met and director elections for District 4 are



Dave Lewis

not until 2008,” explained Board Chairman Jimmy Ayers. “The board will begin searching for qualified director candidates in District 4 and hopefully will appoint a replacement in the next few months.”



I got true broadband high speed internet for the RECC member introductory rate of only

**\$9.95**  
per month for 3 months  
offer expires 4/30/07

— plus I got \$50 when I signed up!

This special offer is available only to RECC members. Please mention code IL-RECC when you order.

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# 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"/> Cingular 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 Conversation – \$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:  New Home  
 Gas Conversation  
 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](http://www.recc.coop)

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

# New employees join RECC

Two employees started full-time work at RECC in April, but one has been gaining experience since last fall.

Laura Carter became the new Member Accounts Representative on April 1, working at the front desk to serve our members in person and on the telephone. Laura has been the Assistant Librarian at the Auburn Public Library for the past nine years, and has also worked at the Auburn Grade School Library and the Auburn True Value

Hardware. She and her husband, Dave, live just north of Auburn, and are co-op members. They have two daughters attending college.

Laura is taking over the duties of Shelley Crocks, who has been named Senior Member Accounts Representative. Shelley took the place of Jeanette Clark, who retired on April 13.

Travis Boylen is now an apprentice lineman, after working part-time for the co-op since August 2006. Travis graduated on

May 4 from the Lincoln Land Community College Lineman Training Program. He has also worked for Robert Roman Electric and the City of Quincy.

Travis and his wife, Kristen, plan to move to the Chatham area and are expecting a child in July. Travis' father is a line foreman at Adams Electric Cooperative in Camp Point, IL.

We welcome Laura and Travis to the rural electric family!



*Travis Boylen*



*Laura Carter*

Rural  
**HIGHLIGHTS**

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