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Rural HIGHLIGHTS

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

Lou DeLaby reaches 40-year milestone

Lou DeLaby is the longest-serving employee at RECC, officially at 40 years, but he can add even a couple of more summers to that total. He worked two summers while in high school as a temporary groundman, before joining the co-op full-time in October 1972 as a groundman. He's worked ever since in the line department, and now heads that department as Manager of Operations and Maintenance.

In 1976, Lou became a Journeyman Lineman, learning the skills of overhead and underground electrical systems. He was one of the many linemen working tirelessly after the April 1978 ice storm to rebuild the lines after every member had lost electric power. He went on to work as a service man for six years, installing meters and security lights and other small jobs.

When Delbert Boston retired from RECC in March 1997, Lou was named as department manager. He has helped guide the co-op through the introduction of new technologies including automated meter reading, outage management system, and digital mapping. His department also took over responsibility for the co-op's nine substations and 22 miles of transmission line that were purchased when RECC changed power suppliers in 2009.

Lou is a member of the Job Training and Safety Committee for



Lou DeLaby has fewer linemen in his department today than in the 1990s, to serve more members, thanks to better equipment and new technologies adopted by the cooperative. (Inset photo) Lou DeLaby served as a lineman in the 1980s, sometimes sporting the winter beard.

the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, and has completed the NRECA Management Internship Program. He is a certified Loss Control professional.

Lou is also heavily involved in the National Utility Training & Safety Education Association (NUTSEA), an organization comprised of utility safety and training professionals from various

backgrounds throughout the United States. He serves on the Board of Directors for the distribution section.

Congratulations to Lou on reaching this significant milestone at RECC! It's becoming a rarity to stay in one industry for an entire career, but he has been with one company, in one location, since his high school days!

Rural Electric
Convenience Cooperative
3973 W. State Route 104
P.O. Box 19
Auburn, IL 62615
217/438-6197
Fax: 217/438-3212
e-mail: recc@recc.coop

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Dana Smith, *editor*



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Board report

Resume of Minutes Regular Board Meeting August 28, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative Co. was held at the cooperative headquarters on August 28, 2012, at 7 p.m., with all members present except John Beatty. Also present were President/CEO David Stuva; Director of Member & Public Relations Dana Smith; Executive Assistant Sandy Lex; Computer Support Specialist Brandon Taylor; Member Service Electrician Jeff Lancaster; and Attorney Jerry Tice.

* The minutes of the July 24 regular Board meeting were approved as presented.

* President/CEO Stuva introduced Dana Smith and Jeff Lancaster, who reported that the staff was investigating a small solar panel system at the co-op's headquarters building. After reviewing three proposals from equipment suppliers, the Board declined to move forward on a potential project.

* Chairman Ayers presented a summary of the cooperative's Board assessment reports completed by each of the Directors, with discussion among the board members and President/CEO. The Board then discussed the President/CEO Appraisal Report among themselves, followed by a review with CEO Stuva.

* Chairman Ayers announced his appointments for 2012-2013 board committees (Executive; Operations; Member & Public Relations & Marketing; and Finance, Audit, Rate & Planning).

* CEO Stuva presented the IMEA Report.

* Ayers provided the AIEC Report. He reviewed the Executive Summary of the

AIEC Board meeting held August 16.

* Attorney Jerry Tice gave a brief report.

President/CEO's Report

CEO Stuva reviewed the following reports which had either been mailed or distributed to all directors and attorney: Job Training and Safety, Meters and Outages, Operations and Maintenance, Engineering and Construction, Member and Public Relations, Cash Flows, Cash Disbursements Summary, and Check Listing. The financial and statistical reports for July 2012 were reviewed and accepted for placement in the cooperative's files.

CEO Stuva also:

* Noted that electricity sales were up sharply in July due to the high temperatures throughout the month, and operating margins for the month were up after experiencing negative or very small positive margins for the first six months of the year.

* Reviewed the Rural Electric Safety and Achievement Program (RESAP) inspection of RECC held August 22, 2012.

* Reviewed plans for upcoming meetings and classes.

Board Action

The Board acted on the following:

* Approved the application for, or reinstatement of, membership and electric service for 23 persons.

* Approved an amendment in loan documents with CoBank that lowers RECC's minimum debt service coverage ratio to match the requirements of USDA/RUS.

* Approved a Resolution encouraging the statewide cooperative association and IMEA to study the stranded costs and contract limitations involved in electric deregulation.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

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at www.recc.coop**



ENERGY STAR is 20 years old

ENERGY STAR is celebrating 20 years (and counting) of saving energy, money and pollution emissions. Over the past 20 years, Americans with help from ENERGY STAR have saved nearly \$230 billion on utility bills and prevented more than 1.7 billion metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

ENERGY STAR is an international standard for energy efficient consumer products created in 1992 by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy. Devices carrying the ENERGY STAR service mark, such as computer products and peripherals, kitchen appliances, buildings and other products, generally use 20%-30% less energy than required by federal standards.

Starting with computers and printing devices, the ENERGY STAR program set a voluntary improvement target and encouraged consumers to look at the long-term cost of using equipment and appliances. Usually the higher up-front cost of an ENERGY STAR rating is more than paid back in energy savings over the life of the equipment.

The list of items available with ENERGY STAR certification is long today, including small and large appliances, TVs, lighting, heating and cooling systems, office equipment, and even new homes.

ENERGY STAR has also been adopted by several other countries.



Significant Savings

How much can you save by purchasing ENERGY STAR-certified equipment? Here's a look at the differences in several consumer items.

Refrigerators – if your refrigerator was built 20 years ago, you could save over \$143/year by upgrading to an ENERGY STAR model. (Assuming 20 cubic feet capacity, top freezer, and electric rate of \$0.111/kWh.) That's more than \$490 savings in the first five years!

Dishwashers – An ENERGY STAR model will save 79 kWh, in addition to 572 gallons of water, each year. Dishwashers made pre-1994 wasted 10 gallons more per load than today's efficient models.

Clothes Washers – ENERGY STAR washers average 15 gallons per load, compared to 23 gallons for standard washers. If that's warm water, you're also saving on water heating costs.

Freezers – A 15-cubic foot chest freezer will use about 49 kWhs less per year if you buy an ENERGY STAR model.

Dehumidifier – If your dehumidifier runs for 68 days of the year, an ENERGY STAR unit will save 268 kWhs/year, keeping an extra \$30 in your pocket.

For more information on ENERGY STAR, savings calculators and lists of qualified models, visit www.energystar.gov.



Carbon monoxide safety

Illinois law requires detectors in all residences

Often called the silent killer because of its odorless, tasteless, and colorless nature, carbon monoxide remains the leading cause of accidental poisonings in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Each year, carbon monoxide poisoning claims nearly 500 lives and causes more than 20,000 visits to hospital emergency departments.

In Illinois, every home is required to have at least one carbon monoxide alarm in operating condition within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes.

Carbon monoxide can be found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by cars and trucks, small gasoline engines, stoves, lanterns, coal- and wood-burning stoves, gas ranges, and heating systems. Carbon monoxide from these

sources can build up in enclosed or semi-enclosed spaces, poisoning people and animals who breathe it.

Portable electric generators are a source of carbon monoxide poisoning if used improperly. Many people rely on these units during extended power outages, but special care must be used.

If a carbon monoxide detector in your house goes off, check to see if anyone in the house is experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. If so, get them out of the house immediately and tell your doctor you suspect poisoning from the gas.

Regardless of whether anyone in the home has symptoms, ventilate the house, turn off all potential sources of carbon monoxide, call 911, and have a qualified technician check your gas appliances.

Know the symptoms

Physical symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning vary depending on the amount in the bloodstream.

Mild exposure

- Slight headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Fatigue
- Flu-like symptoms

Medium exposure

- Severe headache
- Drowsiness
- Confusion
- Rapid heart rate

Severe exposure

- Unconsciousness
- Convulsions
- Cardiac/respiratory failure

Safety tips

Do:

- Have your heating system, water heater, and any other gas, oil, or coal-burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- Install a battery-operated CO detector in your home and check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall. If the detector sounds, leave your home immediately and call your local fire department.
- Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseous.

Don't:

- Use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement, or garage or near a window.
- Run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open.
- Burn anything in a stove or fireplace that isn't vented.
- Heat your house with a gas oven.



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/s/ Dana Smith, Editor



Celebrating National Co-op Month

National Co-op Month in October is the perfect time to remember and celebrate what we've accomplished – all with a little cooperation. Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative's history, rooted in the REA movement, is part of an American success story. Rather than waiting for someone else at a distant corporation to turn on the lights, rural neighbors stood together to power their own future.

Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative is proud to serve a diverse membership and to be a part of America's cooperative network. Cooperatives thrive across the country with more than 29,000 co-ops and credit unions serving members.

Every October, cooperatives are recognized for those qualities that

make the business model unique. An event that dates back to 1930, Co-op Month is a way for cooperatives to create awareness of the cooperative difference and to commemorate their history and achievements. In

2012, the celebration lasts year-long with the United Nations-sanctioned International Year of Cooperatives proclaiming that "Cooperative enterprises build a better world."

This theme reflects the contributions cooperatives make to members and their communities. A commitment to community is one of the seven cooperative principles. Building stronger communities – for the good of all – is at the heart of why people form cooperatives.

Cooperatives are special, and share distinctive characteristics: they are not-for-profit, have local demo-

cratic control and a commitment to supporting the communities they serve. Cooperatives are self-accountable and have no divided loyalties between those they serve and stockholders. Cooperatives are about people and working together – the members, the board that represents them and the employees who provide service to them.

At Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative, not only do we have an obligation to provide reliable, affordable and safe service, we take it a step further. We believe we have a responsibility to support our members and enhance their quality of life.

As a member of Rural Electric, you may already know that ownership is one of the best parts of being a co-op member. We encourage

We believe we have a responsibility to support our members and enhance their quality of life.

you to take some time to learn about our programs and services and to get acquainted with your board of directors, the co-op's employees and our programs and services. There's nothing more important to the health of

your co-op in the future than your involvement today.

Our members have played an important role in the 75-year history and culture of RECC, and they continue to play an important role now and for the future. By working with your cooperative you can make a big impact on the communities we serve.

Together we can accomplish more than we can individually. Thank you for your efforts to strengthen our communities. We invite you to join us as we celebrate National Cooperative Month. After all, our story starts with you!

News & Notes

Sign up for Budget Billing

There's still time to sign up for RECC's Budget Billing program, to even out your electric bills throughout the year. A new budget cycle will begin in November, with 11 level payments based on the previous 12 months' use. The 12th month is your "catch-up" month, when any remaining balance is due or credit is refunded. If you have a credit remaining, the cooperative will issue a check after the October billing has been prepared. A new Budget Billing amount is then calculated for the next year.

To join the Budget Billing program, you must have a good payment record for the past year, and at least six months' history (preferably 12 months) to establish an average monthly payment. Your monthly billing statement will show your actual usage and billing amount, along with the budget billing payment and balance for the year. If you're interested in signing up, call or drop us a note. You can also combine Budget Billing with our other convenient payment options such as automatic bank draft or credit card payments.



RECC recognized for HomeE program

The Chairman of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) annually recognizes cooperative directors or staff for outstanding effort in the rural electric program. This year's winners were the local cooperative staff that promoted and administered HomeE, the energy assessment program that helped their member-owners reduce their electric bills by making their homes more energy efficient. The \$2.5 million federal stimulus grant received by the AIEC, allowed cooperative staff to perform 3,441 heating and cooling, insulation and weatherization home assessments

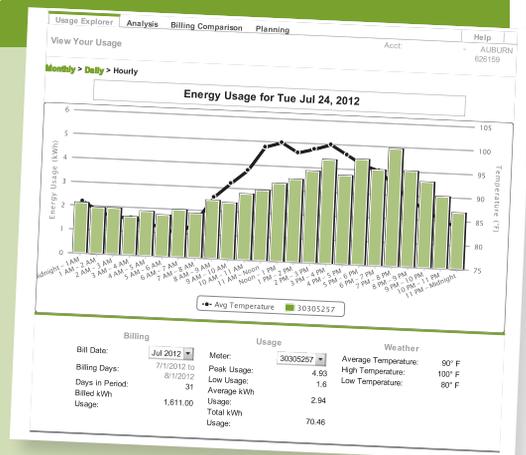
in just 16 months. This effort resulted in the savings of 397,622 therms of natural gas; 889,426 gallons of propane gas; 1,628,462 kWh of electricity; and eliminated nearly 7,000 metric tons of CO₂. The economic impact of the project resulted in \$24 million of completed projects. Locally, 67 energy assessments were performed by RECC resulting in \$62,392 in rebates, with total project investments of \$623,824. Pictured is Jeff Lancaster, RECC's Member Service Electrician, accepting an award certificate from AIEC Board Chairman Darrell Shumard.

Have you tried My Energy Tracker?

We introduced My Energy Tracker to you last month, where you can go online and see graphs of your monthly kWh use, along with daily use for each month and even the hours of each day. These useful reports can help you spot any jumps in your energy use, or see what difference a new major appliance is making on your bill. You may be surprised to see how much electricity is still used when you're away from home, or you might decide to track down the spike in use that happens at

the same time every day. The meter readings are updated daily, so you can check your kilowatt-hour use before the next bill comes!

To use the program, you must register on our e-bill page, and set up your own secure viewing account. Start at the www.recc.coop homepage, and click on "View or Pay Your Bill Online." Once you're on the e-bill page click on the blue "My Energy Tracker" link.



A screen from My Energy Tracker showing hourly energy use for one day.

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"/> Long Distance Saving Rates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dual Meter Heating Rate | <input type="checkbox"/> Surge Suppressor Lease | <input type="checkbox"/> 5% ERC Loans for Efficiency Improvements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Security Light Rental | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-op Connections® Card | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Evac Memberships | <input type="checkbox"/> Marathon Lifetime-Warranty Water Heaters | |

Electric heating equipment rebates

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

- Geothermal System – \$250/home
- Air Source Heat Pumps – \$250/home (with electric back-up)
- Air Source Heat Pumps – \$100/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 (40 gallon minimum):
- New Home
 - Gas Conversion
 - 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

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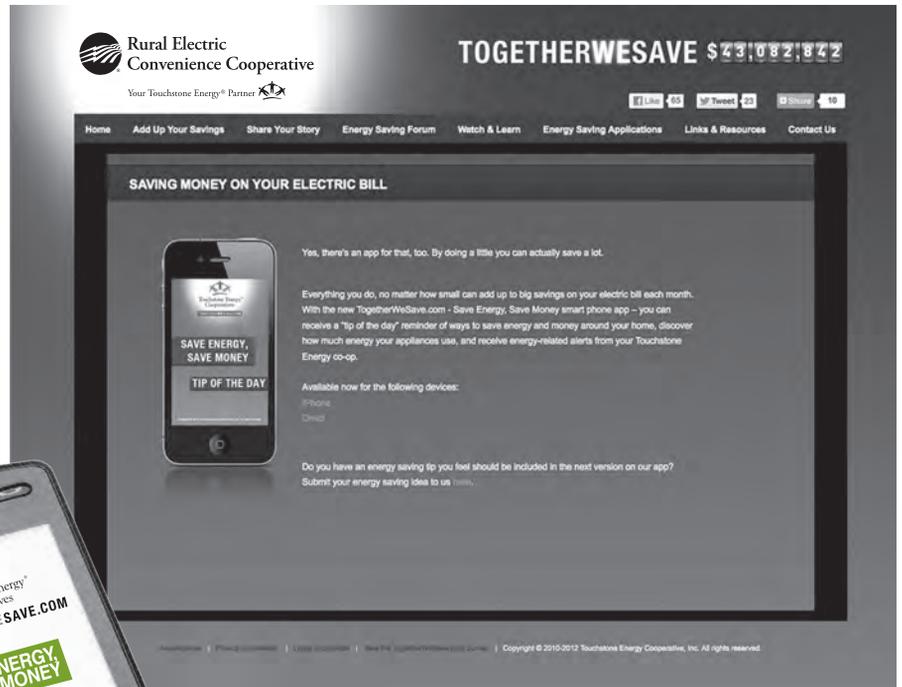
Smart phone app offers tips, calculators and more!

A new FREE app for smart phones allows cooperative members to see how little changes can add up to big savings. With the “TogetherWeSave.com - Save Energy, Save Money” app, you can discover easy ways to save energy and money in your home.

You can receive a “tip of the day” reminder of ways to save energy and money around your home, or find specific savings tips for water heating, heating and cooling, lighting, laundry and other energy uses. You can even delve into these topics in-depth through social media posts and responses.

Check out the calculators to see how much your light bulbs and appliances are costing you to operate, in areas including the kitchen, entertainment, bedroom, laundry, lighting, home office, and miscellaneous equipment.

By putting in your zip code, you may personalize the app



for RECC, your local Touchstone Energy® cooperative. You can choose to receive weather alerts or other alert

messages from RECC, and even set the frequency to show any alerts.

You can find the Together We Save app for both iPhones and Android systems. Search their online stores or link from RECC’s website at www.recc.coop.