

JO-CARROLL

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative  **HI-LINES**



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Michael Hastings

A bright future



Co-ops have emerged as leaders in bringing the benefits of renewable resources to members. That's certainly the case here at Jo-Carroll Energy.

Our South View Solar Farm, located at the cooperative's headquarters in Elizabeth, is the only community solar project in northwest Illinois. The solar farm allows individuals an affordable way to invest in solar energy and meets a rising demand for renewable energy sources.

Everyone is different, however some common reasons why it makes sense to invest in the South View Solar Farm include:

- It's perfect for renters who want to invest in solar.
- Solar installations are not allowed on your property due to zoning or other limitations.
- Your site has limited solar access.
- The cost of stand-alone solar project is not feasible.
- No bother with maintenance. (Jo-Carroll Energy takes care of that).

If one of these describes your situation, then it might make sense for you and your

family to invest in Jo-Carroll Energy's community solar project.

For those of you who have not signed up for South View Solar, panel subscriptions are still available. One panel has an output capacity of 275 watts and an average annual production of 375 kWh. The farm is composed of 456 panels, with a subscription cost of \$890 per panel.

With their subscription to solar panels, members receive a monthly credit on their electric bill based on the actual production of their solar panels.

I am happy to report the project is on track with projected solar output and savings. As a subscriber myself, each month I see the savings reflected in a credit for solar on my bill. Members can monitor the farm's energy production on the Sunny Portal accessed through our website at jocarroll.com.

At Jo-Carroll Energy, it's our job to make sure all our members have energy to power their day. While that is something that will not change, how we meet the growing demand for energy is evolving. South View Solar Farm is a part of our commitment to renewable energy and environmental stewardship.

Lineman appreciation days

Jo-Carroll Energy will celebrate Lineman Appreciation Day on April 11 to honor the hardworking co-op employees who keep the lights on 365 days a year.

We invite members to show their appreciation by sending messages with positive comments and thanks. Messages can be mailed to Jo-Carroll Energy, ATTN: Communications, PO Box 390, Elizabeth, IL 61028 or emailed to communications@jocarroll.com.

Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll Energy member who is eligible to win a monthly \$25 readership prize. If your name is printed in this month's edition, and not a part of any article, contact Jo-Carroll Energy and claim your prize no later than the 10th of the month following publication.

Would you like to do more?

Evergreen is our voluntary "green power" program, available through Dairyland Power Cooperative.

It's a great way to use the credit you receive from your solar panels to do more to preserve the environment and support renewable energy generation. Participation

in the Evergreen program is simple: in addition to your normal, monthly electric bill, you volunteer to pay a small, additional charge each month to support renewable energy generation. For more information on our Evergreen program, please contact us at 800-858-5522.

Voluntary and open membership • Voluntary and open membership • Voluntary and open membership

For your information

Your Board of Directors:

David Senn
Chairman
District 7

Chris Stadel
Vice Chairman
District 4

Marcia Stanger
Secretary
District 3

Martin Werner
Treasurer
District 1

Joseph Mattingley
District 2

Patricia Smith
District 5

Thomas Lundy
District 6

Russell Holesinger
District 8

Larry Carroll
District 9

Robert Kuhns
District 10

Ronald Hallendorff
District 10

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday

Elizabeth
793 U.S. Route 20 West
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Savanna
103 Chicago Ave.
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Geneseo
1004 S. Chicago St.
7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
1:30 - 4 p.m.

**Services and
Billing Questions:**

(800) 858-5522
www.jocarroll.com

**For emergencies
and outages call:**
(800) 858-5522

Resume of Minutes

February 3, 2016

The board met on Wednesday, February 3, 2016, at the Jo-Carroll Energy Headquarters. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The Agenda and the Consent Agenda were approved.

Chairman's Report – Chairman Senn reported on renewables and noted that the President recently vetoed bipartisan changes to the EPA's Waters of the U.S. rule.

Dairyland Report – Director Stadel reported that the DPC board voted to defer \$4.4 million in margins from 2015 to 2016. The board also voted to change meeting dates, which will prevent Stadel from also attending AIEC meetings as the DPC representative.

AIEC Report – Director Senn reported that Rock Energy has joined the AIEC as a full voting member.

APGA Report – Director Carroll stated APGA will be unveiling a new marketing campaign. APGA is discussing new gas regulations and filing comments with the Department of Energy in regards to new efficiency standards.

PPI Report – Director Hallendorff reported that PPI ended the year with actual margins that were very close to the budgeted amount.

Monthly Committee Review

Policy Report – Policy 100 Development was approved as is.

CEO's Report – The CEO reported on the following in addition to his written report:

a. Financial Operating Report – CEO Hastings reported that the Cooperative had unaudited margins of \$3.6 million for 2015, compared to a budgeted amount of \$3.2 million. For the month of December, the Cooperative had an unaudited loss of \$460,000, which was due to the board's decision to defer \$500,000 of revenue from 2015 to 2016. The Board accepted the December Financial Operating Report for filing by general consent.

b. Power Supply Report – CEO Hastings noted the upcoming Dairyland district meeting on Feb. 5 in Gays Mills, WI.

c. CFO Report – Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Heidenreich reported that the auditors were here the week of January 25 and anticipate presenting the audit to the board in April.

d. Sr. Vice President and Assistant General Manager Report – Sr. Vice President and Assistant General Manager Buros reported on the progress of the building addition. Buros provided information on the community solar project's performance for 2015, noting that it has operated very close to projections.

e. Culture of Excellence and Communications – Merri Sevey, Vice

President of Human Resources noted that the new IRS Form 1095, a result of the Affordable Care Act, was included with W2s. Sevey updated the board on the interview process for 2 journeyman lineman positions and a staking position.

f. Member Services – Jennifer Skien, Vice President of Member Services, updated the board on measures taken to protect Members' credit/debit card information.

g. External Affairs Update – Chris Allendorf, Vice President of External Relations and General Counsel reported that TCEDA is now the only organization providing workshops for small businesses on growth and planning in our area. Allendorf also provided an update on state and federal legal and legislative issues.

Board Issues

a. Discounted Estate Retirements

Approval – CFO Heidenreich presented the board with the most recent requests for discounted estate capital credits, which were approved as presented.

b. Jo-Carroll Energy Annual Meeting – Annual Meeting theme and report cover were approved as presented.

c. Ratification of the Touchstone Energy Amendments – The board ratified amendments to the articles of incorporation of Touchstone Energy.

d. The Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation – The board approved a donation of \$500 to the Glenn English National Leadership Foundation to support scholarships for past participants in the Youth to Washington program.

Executive Session

Executive Session was held to discuss pending and possible litigation, other legal matters, and employment matters.

Reports – Reports were heard on: NRECA Course 2620.1-Board Operations and Process

Upcoming Meetings – Feb. 5, Dairyland District Meeting and Feb. 14-17 NRECA Annual Meeting.

Other Business

Conflict of Interest Forms – Policy 103 was submitted and vehicle insurance registration reminder was made.

Mattingley, Stadel and Werner were reminded to bring names for nominations of the credentials and Elections committee to be provided by the Feb. 24 meeting.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Directors earn gold credentials



Michael Hastings, Jo-Carroll Energy president and CEO, congratulates eight Jo-Carroll Energy directors for achieving the Director Gold Credential. NRECA created the credential program to recognize directors committed to continuing their education beyond the "Credentialed Cooperative Director" and "Board Leadership Certificate" levels. To earn the credential, a director must hold the CCD and BLC credentials, earn three additional credits from NRECA's Board Leadership Certificate course series and have a total of 13 BLC credits. Pictured from left, are: Hastings, Russell Holesinger of Fulton, District 8; Thomas Lundy of Savanna, District 6; David Senn of Mount Carroll, District 7; Martin Werner of East Dubuque, District 1; Patricia Smith of Galena, District 5; Chris Stadel of Hanover, District 4; and Joseph Mattingley of Scales Mound, District 2. Not pictured is Marcia Stanger of Apple River, District 3.

Co-op Connections Card means value

What does being a part of Jo-Carroll Energy mean for you, the member? Along with our great products and services, community involvement, and economic development projects, Jo-Carroll Energy is pleased to offer a member-service benefiting both businesses and members – the Co-op Connections Card!

The Co-op Connections Card is a tool that provides members with a multitude of local and national benefits. Benefits range from discounts on hotel and cruise line rates, to automotive and clothing price reductions – and valuable pharmacy discounts too! This service is of no cost to our members.

For businesses, joining the co-op



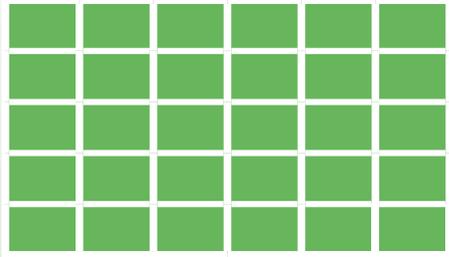
connections card program can be a great opportunity to bring in new customers. Also, as a co-op connections business, your business will be featured in our monthly magazine, *Illinois Country Living*.

The cards can be used at any location where Co-op Connections Cards are taken. There are currently over 120 participating co-ops across

the United States, with more than 8,000 businesses offering discounts, and even more being added every day! With the increasing cost of living and travel, this card can be used as a resource for vacation discounts across the nation – and more importantly, in your own backyard of Jo Daviess, Carroll and Whiteside Counties. Many local businesses have signed up to participate in this program and more are being added every day! Businesses like Illinois Bank and Trust, Hoskins Building Center of Elizabeth, Welcome Inn and so many more! Visit connections.coop for a list of participating businesses in your area or refer to our May 2016 edition of *Hi-Lines*.



A CLOSER LOOK AT South View Solar Farm



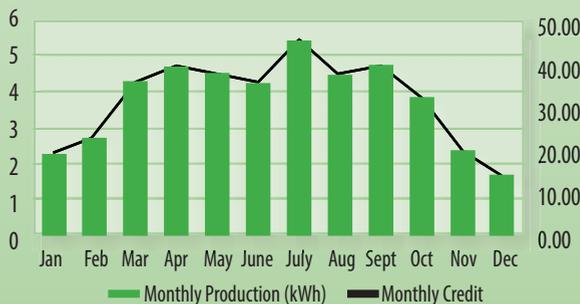
456 panels
275 watts
capacity each



189,000+
megawatt hours
of electric energy produced since com-
mission



133 tons
of **CO₂**
avoided



\$48-50 credit
returned per year per panel (average)

Visit jocarroll.com or call 800-858-5522
for more information

How to start saving energy and money

If you want to celebrate Earth Day on April 22, start by making your home more energy efficient.

Look around your home for no-cost ways to be efficient. Close the curtains in the summer and open them in the winter. Turn off computers overnight. Turn off video game consoles when they're not in use. *Barbara Norman*

Look for small steps you can take and "do-it-yourself". Caulk around drafty windows. Check the attic for the correct amount of insulation. Switch to LED light bulbs. Plant a deciduous tree on the sunny side of your house; in a few years the leaves will cool your home against the sun in summer, then fall off to warm it in the winter. If you have a major appliance – like a refrigerator, washing machine or dryer – that's more than 10 years old, don't repair it. The energy efficiency of a newer model will likely pay for itself with energy savings in a few years. Look for the ENERGY STAR label; learn to read it and compare products.

Call Jo-Carroll Energy about energy-saving programs—We can offer advice, connect you with appliance rebates or conduct a home energy audit. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.



Don't let a digging accident diminish environmental efforts

Call 811 before you dig

Are planting trees for Earth Day or Arbor Day in your plans for spring landscaping? We'd like to remind you that it is important to remember to call 811 at least 48 hours ahead of time to have underground utility lines marked before digging begins.

Striking a single utility line can cause injury, repair costs, fines and inconvenient outages and interruptions of service. Remember, you're responsible for having lines marked, regardless of the size of your project.

Everyone who calls 811 is connected to the JULIE one-call center, which notifies the appropriate utility companies of the caller's intent to dig. Professional locators are sent to the requested digging site to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags or spray paint.

Once lines have been properly marked, digging can begin around the marked lines.

The depth of utility lines can vary for a number of reasons, such as erosion, previous digging projects and

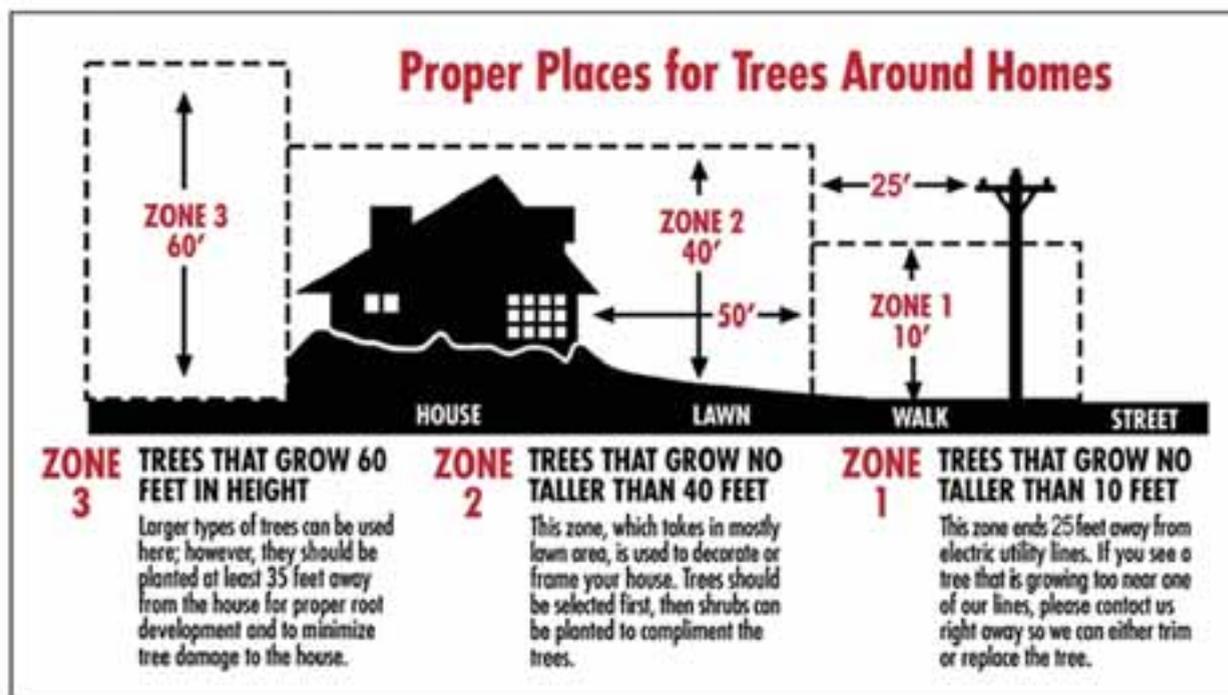
uneven surfaces. Every eight minutes a utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without calling 811.

The simple call to 811 will help contractors and do-it-yourselfers avoid striking an underground utility line.

Visit www.call811.com for more information about 811 and the "Call before you dig" process.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.



Deadlines approach for two scholarships; Lineworker Scholarship deadline extended

Deadlines for two different scholarships offered by Jo-Carroll Energy are approaching and the deadline for the Lineworker Scholarship has been extended.

Adult Student Scholarship applications are due to the co-op by April 1. Up to four \$1,500 scholarships will be awarded (one in each

county of the cooperative's service territory). These scholarships will go to cooperative members who are returning to school or will attend a post-secondary or accredited training program for the first time. (This does not include high school seniors; the deadline has passed for the 2016 Jo-Carroll Energy Scholarships.)

Director's Scholarship applications are due by May 1. Up to 10 Director's Scholarships of \$500 will be awarded to a student from each of the cooperative's 10 director districts. Current high school seniors who parents are members of Jo-Carroll Energy, and have not won another

(Continued on p 16F)

Dorothy Young retires from 34-year co-op career

Family. It is a common thread woven through Dorothy Young's reflections on the 34 years she spent working at Jo-Carroll Energy. On March 4, Dorothy retired from her job as executive assistant at the cooperative.

"To work for a co-op is unique in the fact that all members are owners," Dorothy said. "There's that care factor. It's different than working with your IOUs or a business where they only care about the bottom line. It's the family atmosphere."

Family is also how Dorothy describes the people she worked with. "When I started there were only about a dozen of us," she said. "We've grown to be a very big family." Adding that has led to "more ideas, interesting ideas. It only makes the co-op better."

A native of Scales Mound, Dorothy came to the cooperative after 12 years at Branigar – The Galena Territory and short stints at the local extension office and an insurance company in Freeport. Just over a year after she started in the billing department, then manager Gary Stuva asked if she wanted to be secretary to him and the board of directors.

"I said, 'I don't know, can I try it?' because I really liked what I was doing," Dorothy said. "I ended up accepting the position and the rest is history."

Dorothy worked for three managers, including Stuva, Connie Shireman and Michael Hastings, as well as working closely with the board. She has seen the cooperative go through an office move, two building additions, an acquisition and a merger.

For Dorothy, one of the biggest changes was going from a typewriter to a computer: no more carbon paper and no



more onion skin paper. Technology has also made delivery of information to the board more efficient.

"I remember standing at the copy machine, it whining away as the copies rolled off. Then they needed to be three-hole punched and put in booklets" she said. "Now, the packets are electronic; no more paper. The directors have their tablets and follow along at the meetings."

Of her job she said, "No two days are the same. It's always interesting, always refreshing, always new challenges."

And her favorite part – communicating and working with every department and the board "because everybody is family. If someone has something they need help with we can help them out and make their task easier," she said.

Asked what she will miss, without hesitation Dorothy answered "My

family; the camaraderie. But I keep telling them I'm not going to be a stranger. I'll probably have to pay my bill every month in person."

As for plans in retirement, a visit to her brother, Don, and family in Arizona is one of the first items on Dorothy's list.

Then there will be projects on the farm where she and her husband, Tom, live and raised their son, Darin. Buildings to be torn down, improvements to the farmhouse and boxes from a move to their new house to go through.

"I would like to do some volunteering; I'm not sure what but whatever might come along," she added. "I wouldn't mind getting back in touch with my piano skills."

Maybe I'll do some sewing; I haven't done that in years," she said. "And, there has to be time to sit on the deck and enjoy a cup of coffee and the sunset."

Deadlines approach for two scholarships; Lineworker Scholarship deadline extended *(Continued from p 16E)*

scholarship, are eligible. Applicants and at least one of their parents must attend the Annual Meeting of Members on May 25 where selections will be made by drawings.

Lineworkers Scholarships have had the deadline extended to April 1. Two

scholarships in the amount of \$2,000 each are available for students who will attend lineworker school. Preference is given to applicants planning to attend Northwest Iowa Community College, Sheldon, Iowa; Southwest Tech, Fennimore, Wis.; Chippewa Valley

Technical College, Eau Claire, Wis.; or Moraine Park Technical College, Beaver Dam, Wis.

For more information and applications, please visit jocarroll.com. All Jo-Carroll Energy scholarships are funded from unclaimed capital credits.

A typical day at the office

Our lineworkers form a solid team with one job: to deliver safe, reliable electricity.

Linemen have to work safely, smart, and efficiently—all while 40 feet in the air wearing sturdy, thick rubber gloves. On a typical day, lineworkers maintain electrical distribution lines or build a new service. They have a lot on their plates.

We have crews standing by to serve you 24 hours a day, in the middle of the night or the wee hours of the morning, weekends and holidays. Can you imagine getting a call at 3 a.m. telling you to work outside during bad weather? Our lineworkers face harsh elements daily, all to serve you.

Lineworkers also focus on safety; the lives of coworkers are on the line. There can be no slip ups or careless actions. Mistakes can cost a limb or life. When

you put your life in the hands of coworkers every day, they become more than colleagues. They're family.

To be ready to respond no matter the situation or weather conditions, linemen are highly trained. They go through regular training to ensure they can work safely with various kinds of equipment.

These highly skilled men light our homes and businesses every day. They endure harsh weather and long hours, all to make our lives better. Today (and every day), please take a moment to thank them.

We are recognizing April 11 as National Lineman Appreciation Day. Send us a positive message or thank you to communications@jocarroll.com and we will get that message to our lineworkers.

Pass it along, and help us honor our heroes who keep the lights on!

#THANKLINEMAN



Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you are playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.

Flying remote controlled toys are a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites, or remote controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck in a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.



2016 Annual Meeting of Members

**Save the
DATE!**

Wednesday, May 25, 2016
East Dubuque High School
200 Parklane Drive, East Dubuque, IL

5 pm | Registration begins • 6 pm | Annual Meeting
7 pm | Pork Chop Sandwich Dinner by Piggly Wiggly

Members who attend the meeting will receive one \$10 bill credit per membership

Please **RSVP** *Appreciated but not required.*

* attending: MEETING _____ DINNER _____

NAME _____

MEMBER # _____ (located on your bill)

- Please return this RSVP form or the form in your bill with your next payment.
- Call 800-858-5522 ext. 1208 or 1228
- Complete the survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/jocannualmtg16

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