



# JO-CARROLL

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



## CEO'S REPORT

by Mike Casper

**T**his time last year I was preparing to move back to the area that I call home. Having traveled and lived throughout the country, it's great to be back to one of, if not, the most beautiful regions of the United States with the friendliest and most caring people.

One of my favorite parts of the job is reacquainting myself with so many people I haven't seen in years and talking with our members about the cooperative. I had the chance to do that again in September when we met with the co-op's Member Advisory Council (MAC) at Elkay, an American-owned and operated company located in Savanna. The meeting was designed for MAC members to learn more about this local business, hear updates and share ideas. (See page 18c for information on how you can get involved.)

After the meeting, we received a message from one of the MAC members about the "member/owner" concept and how it may be unfamiliar to many of our members. He reminded us that many Jo-Carroll Energy members, especially those who have moved from larger cities, find it difficult to connect the co-op and member concept to the company that issues their utility bills.

Living on co-op lines is more than paying your bill once a month. It is more than the amount of kilowatts or therms you use, and it is even more than just knowing that there are people working every day to bring you safe, reliable and affordable service.

Living on co-op lines is an investment – an investment in our area and an investment in our members.

Founded as a way to bring electricity to areas that didn't interest investor-owned

utilities (like those that supply larger cities), electric co-ops have been a cornerstone of community and economic development in rural America for decades.

Unlike our IOU counterparts, we are not-for-profit. When we make more money than we need to supply energy safely and reliably, we return it to our members in the form of capital credits. After all co-op expenses are paid, any additional money we earn goes back into our communities instead of a shareholder's pocket.

Because we are owned by you – the members – we have a vested interest in making sure our community is prosperous. We support community service projects that make for a better quality of life for our members. It's why we undertake projects like Sand Prairie fiber that will better connect our members to each other and the world.

As your cooperative, our purpose extends beyond keeping the lights on, the gas flowing and the internet connected. Together we're working to make a difference.

I hope you view Jo-Carroll Energy as a local business that takes pride in helping bring prosperity to our communities. One that puts members first.

To help us tell our story better, you'll see some changes in the coming months. Our website is undergoing an upgrade with a fresh look and responsive design. This new site will help you find the information you need about Jo-Carroll Energy and will feature good news about our members, communities and your co-op. We're also working on a redesign of this newsletter which will make it easier to read and provide you with more local information.

## Reader prize

**E**ach 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.

# Resume of minutes

## August 23, 2017

### For your information

#### Your Board of Directors:

**David Senn**  
*Chairman*  
District 7

**Russell Holesinger**  
*Vice Chairman*  
District 8

**Marcia Stanger**  
*Secretary*  
District 3

**Martin Werner**  
*Treasurer*  
District 1

**Joseph Mattingley**  
District 2

**Dan Tindell**  
District 4

**Patricia Smith**  
District 5

**Thomas Lundy**  
District 6

**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 to 4 p.m.

**Services and  
Billing Questions:**

(800) 858-5522  
www.jocarroll.com

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

The board met on Wednesday, August 23, 2017, at the Jo-Carroll Energy headquarters. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The Agenda, as amended, and the Consent Agenda were approved.

**Chairman's Report** – Chairman Senn discussed the solar industry as a whole and the financial circumstances of the State of Illinois, noting that these are “challenging times.” Senn reiterated the importance of keeping our Members informed. Senn also noted that Rock Energy recently presented to the AIEC board regarding its operations and future plans.

**Dairyland Report** – Director Mattingley discussed the Dairyland Report. Mattingley informed the board that Dairyland had a successful Strategic Planning Session.

**AIEC (Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives) Report** – Chairman Senn discussed donating to the NRECA (National Rural Electric Cooperative Association) International Foundation for an upcoming international project. President and CEO Mike Casper discussed Jo-Carroll Energy's safety culture and the importance of safety training. Senn reported that Jo-Carroll Energy received an award from the AIEC for our President's-level participation in the ACRE (Action Committee for Rural Electrification) program.

**APGA Report** – Director Carroll provided an update on regulatory matters being followed by the American Public Gas Association (APGA), as well as his attendance at the APGA Annual Meeting. Carroll reported on the Whiteside and Carroll County Fairs he recently attended on behalf of Jo-Carroll Energy, noting that he spoke with members about Fiber to the Home and First Call systems.

**PPI Report** – Director Hallendorff reported on Prairie Power Inc. (PPI's) most recent generation figures and provided operational highlights from Prairie State Units 1 and 2.

#### Monthly Committee Review

a. **Policy 110** – Approval of Consultants – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to approve Policy 110 as is.

#### CEO's Report

President and CEO Mike Casper provided a Fiber update and a reminder that a Member Advisory Council meeting and tour of Elkay's facility is scheduled for September 19.

a. **Financial Operating Report** – Casper reported on the Cooperative's operating margins for the year-to-date. The current equity of the cooperative is approximately 24.98%, compared to 23.65% at the end of 2016. By general consent, the board moved to file the financial operating report with the auditor.

b. **Tech Update** – Casper presented on solar energy, focusing on the various types of technologies and design plans for improving panel output.

c. **Senior Vice President and Assistant General**

**Manager Report** – Kyle Buros, Senior Vice President and Assistant General Manager, discussed

Jo-Carroll Energy's strategic initiatives and their development, noting each employee will have input in the process.

d. **External Relations Update** – Chris Allendorf, Vice President of External Relations & General Counsel, provided the board with an overview of matters concerning the State of Illinois, noting that overrides of the Governor's veto of appropriations and spending bills were enacted. Allendorf noted that attention in the General Assembly will now turn to Senate Bill 1, which is a comprehensive reform for primary education funding from the state. Allendorf also discussed a new comprehensive energy bill that is in Congress, along with many appropriations and spending bills that need to be passed before the end of the year. Allendorf updated the board on the Tri-County Economic Development Association's (TCEDA's) upcoming events and projects and the hiring of a full-time staff member to assist TCEDA's Executive Director Lisa McCarthy.

#### Board Issues

a. **Discounted Estate Capital Credit Retirements – Discounted Estate Retirements Approval** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the discounted estate retirements, as presented.

b. **Rate Policy 803** – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to approve Rate Policy 803 as presented.

c. **NRECA International Foundation** – A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve a donation amount to the NRECA International Foundation. A second motion was made, seconded and carried to amend the donation amount.

d. **Renew Line of Credit with Illinois Bank and Trust** – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to renew the line of credit with Illinois Bank and Trust.

e. **CFC (Cooperative Finance Corporation) Voting Delegate and Alternate Voting Delegate** – Director Holesinger was selected to serve as the CFC voting delegate and Director Stanger as the alternate voting delegate.

f. **Select Voting Delegate and Alternate Voting Delegate for the PPI (Prairie Power Inc.) Special Meeting of Members** – No action needed.

**Executive Session** – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to go into executive session at 11:28 a.m.

**Out of Executive Session** – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to come out of Executive Session at 11:57 a.m.

**Consideration of Matters discussed in Executive Session** – None

**Other Business** – None.

**Adjournment**

Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 11:58 a.m.

# Petitions available for 2018 director nominations

**N**omination petitions for the 2018 Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Directors are now available. Running for the board of directors and voting in the elections is a benefit of being a co-op member. Directors are democratically elected by the membership.

Five director posts will be up for election in the 2018 elections. Districts up for election include: District 8, currently represented by Russell Holesinger of Fulton; District 7, now represented by David Senn of Mount Carroll; District 5, now represented by Pat Smith of Galena; and District 10, now represented by Ronald Hallendorff and Robert Kuhns, both of Geneseo; and District 4, now represented by Dan Tindell of Galena. **Hi-Line**

With this election, the number of representatives from District 10 will be reduced to one. Following the merger with Farmers Mutual Electric Company, District 10 was initially represented by three

directors, and reduced to two in 2015 following a transition and integration period. In District 4, the election will be to fill an unexpired term that ends in 2019. Tindell was appointed in May to fill the vacancy until the next election.

Any Jo-Carroll Energy member residing in a district that is up for election, including the incumbent director, may petition for nomination in that district. Members interested in seeking election to the board may pick up a nomination petition at one of Jo-Carroll Energy's offices or download a petition from the cooperative's website at [www.jocarroll.com](http://www.jocarroll.com).

Petitions must be signed by at least 25 Jo-Carroll Energy members residing in the district for which the director is to be elected. Petitions must be filed at Jo-Carroll Energy's headquarters no earlier than Dec. 27, 2017 and no later than March 23, 2018.

In order to qualify to have their names placed on the ballot, all

nominees must participate in an orientation process provided by the attorney for the cooperative, assuring that all nominees fully understand the expectations and responsibilities of directors. These include but are not limited to: time demands, educational expectations and fiduciary duties.

All eligible candidates will be announced and listed on the cooperative's website and in Hi-Lines.

Complete details on director qualifications and the nomination procedure can be found in Jo-Carroll Energy's bylaws posted on the cooperative's website at [www.jocarroll.com](http://www.jocarroll.com). Anyone without internet access may request a copy by calling 800-858-5522.

The 2018 Annual Meeting of Members is set for Wednesday, May 23 beginning at 6 p.m. at the Crossroads Community Church in Galena (the former Galena Convention Center).

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spending more time in the kitchen during the holiday season? Here's one way to be more energy efficient: Unplug small kitchen appliances, like toaster ovens and microwaves, when not in use. You could save \$10 to \$20 per year.

*Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy*



## Get involved: Apply for our Member Advisory Council

**J**o-Carroll Energy's Member Advisory Council is a valuable link in receiving input from our members.

Jo-Carroll Energy needs members who care about their community and take an interest in their cooperative to serve on the council. Started in late 2012, the council meets to learn more about the co-op business model and has provided input on important issues such as capital credits, our website and bill redesign.

For more information or MAC application, please call 800-858-5522, email [MAC@jocarroll.com](mailto:MAC@jocarroll.com) or visit the Member Involvement page on our website.

## Jo-Carroll Energy sends crews to help with power restoration following Irma

Jo-Carroll Energy crews assisted with hurricane recovery and restoration at two Georgia electric cooperatives in September.

Linemen Steve Ludwig, Brad Travis, Jeremy Whitmer and Brandon Cummings were among the 123 Illinois linemen from 21 co-ops dispatched to assist with restoration efforts in Georgia and North Carolina.

In advance of Hurricane Irma, the Georgia Electric Membership Cooperative reached out to the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) for storm recovery help. The AIEC activated its Emergency Work Plan to assist.

The hurricane produced tropical-force winds, torrential downpours and extensive damage to Georgia's electric infrastructure.

Before the hurricane made landfall, the crew from Jo-Carroll Energy was sent to Carroll EMC in Carrollton, Ga. After helping to restore power to all of those members, the crew was released to assist others at Snapping Shoals EMC in Covington, Ga.

The Jo-Carroll Energy crews worked mostly with downed limbs and trees on lines and some broken poles, and not as much flooding or high-wind damage as those working in other parts of Georgia and Florida.

Cooperative workers from 25 states converged in the hurricane's impact zone to assist in restoration efforts. Peak outage estimates indicated there were more than 760,000 co-op outages in Florida, 535,000 in Georgia and 100,000 in South Carolina, according to AIEC. The linemen were working an average of 17 hours a day, under difficult circumstances, to rebuild the systems.



# Powering Up After an Outage

When the power goes out, we expect it to be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm or natural disaster causes widespread damage, extended outages may result. Our line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark:



## 1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines:

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

## 2. Distribution Substation:

A substation can serve hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself or if problems exist further down the line.

## 3. Main Distribution Lines:

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

## 4. Tap Lines:

If local outages persist, supply lines (also known as tap lines) are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

## 5. Individual Homes:

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.

# Budget billing accounts recalculate in November

Members with budget billing for their electric accounts will have their budget amounts recalculated in November.

Because your budget amount is based on an average of the previous 12 months' use and outstanding credits or debits accrued, this November true-up recalculation may result in an increase or decrease, depending on changes in your use patterns.

Be sure to look at your November statement to see if your budget amount has changed. If a change results from the recalculation, a message will appear on your statement in blue indicating the new

budget amount. If you do not see a message on your statement, your budget billing amount remained the same.

If you have more than one billing account on budget, it is possible that one or both amounts may change. You begin paying the new budget amount in December. Invoice billed members, please remember that no messages will print on your bill statement whether or not the budget bill amount changes. If you would like to know your new budget bill amount, please call our offices between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday-Friday or email us at [info@jocarroll.com](mailto:info@jocarroll.com).

Budget billing can help you manage your energy costs by allowing you to allocate the same amount each month. Monthly utility bills can vary significantly throughout the year due to variations in your usage through heating and cooling seasons. With Jo-Carroll Energy's budget billing plan, you eliminate the month-to-month fluctuations caused by changing weather and use patterns. It is imperative that members on budget billing still watch their monthly use and outstanding balances to ensure a large increase does not occur during a recalculation month.

## Levelized billing

Jo-Carroll Energy also offers a levelized billing program. Under this plan, each monthly bill is the rolling average of your electric use for the most recent 12 months, thus eliminating true-up months.

This means you will not pay the exact same amount every month, but it will be close to the same. The amount you owe some months will be more than the average, other months it will be less. Over the course of the year, you will have paid what you actually owe.

Levelized billing does not reduce your bill; rather it helps you manage your utility payments.

If you have any questions regarding budget billing, your budget bill account or levelized billing, please contact the Member Services Department at 800-858-5522. You can find more information about budget billing on our website at [www.jocarroll.com](http://www.jocarroll.com).

## Neighbor to Neighbor Care Funds offer help

If you need assistance paying your energy bill this winter, help may be available through Jo-Carroll Energy's Neighbor to Neighbor Care Funds.

This program works in tandem with the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Members must first apply for LIHEAP funds to be considered.

If funds are available, you may receive a grant from the Neighbor to Neighbor funds. To find out if you qualify, contact your respective agency to start the application process:

- **Jo Daviess County:**  
Northwestern Illinois  
Community Action Agency  
(NICAA)  
815-232-3141
- **Carroll and Whiteside counties:**  
Tri-County Opportunities  
Council  
800-323-5434
- **Henry County**  
Project Now  
309-852-4565

## Holiday closing

Jo-Carroll Energy will be closed on Friday, Nov. 10 in observance of Veterans Day.

Jo-Carroll Energy will be closed on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 23-24 for the Thanksgiving holiday.





## Congratulations to our 2017 photo contest winners

Congratulations to the winners in our 2017 Photo Calendar Contest. We are proud to feature the work of our talented members in the 2018 Jo-Carroll Energy Calendar.

Copies are available at the Elizabeth, Savanna and Geneseo offices while supplies last.

Members whose photos appear in the calendar include:

- Barb Virtue of Galena
- Laura Edmonds of Galena
- Sarah Hartman of Savanna
- Richard Beutel of Galena
- Debbie Borkgren of Geneseo
- Sue Einsweiler of Galena
- Michelle Sullivan of Lake in the Hills
- Vicky Enyeart of Atkinson
- Pam Darrow of Savanna
- Donna Berlage of Galena
- Tonia Delong of Geneseo
- Adelle Mure-Ravaud of Fulton
- Mark Robinson of Galena
- Diane Turczynski of Elizabeth
- Greg Starret of Munster, IN
- Peggy Kemp of Hanover



### See your photos in print

The 2018 Photo Contest is now open. Jo-Carroll Energy is accepting entries for the 2018 contest; winners will be featured in the 2019 Jo-Carroll Energy Calendar.

We are looking for images that represent life in our service territory – whether they are action shots or scenic landscapes. All photos must be the original work of the entrant and be taken within the Jo-Carroll Energy service territory.

Entry deadline is June 30, 2018.

For complete rules and entry information, visit [www.jocarroll.com](http://www.jocarroll.com) or contact Peggy Francomb, manager of communications and marketing, at 800-858-5522 or [pfrancomb@jocarroll.com](mailto:pfrancomb@jocarroll.com).