

PowerLines

November 2018

Happy Thanksgiving

As you receive this, the Thanksgiving holiday is still a few weeks away. We also celebrate Veteran's Day this month. It is also election season once again. Please take time to personally thank a veteran for their service. Because of their efforts over the years, we enjoy the freedom to exercise our privilege to vote.

With this ability to vote also comes responsibility. Please take the time to research the candidates and issues, whether it be in local, state, or national elections. The success of a democracy is highly dependent on the active participation and involvement of all citizens.

Our weather finally changed to more typical fall conditions in mid-October. The barren fields and changing leaves portend the coming winter season. All in all, the weather has been interesting so far this year. Let's hope the winter conditions in this area tend to be more normal rather than severe in the months to come.

Thanksgiving typically revolves around family and friends. I would like to offer a special thank you to two of our senior staff who recently retired from the cooperative.

Brian Stagen retired in late July after 24 years of service. During his tenure, Brian was responsible for various portions of the financial and member care areas.

Mike Zalaker retired in late September with 34 years of service. Mike was

instrumental in the fleet, material procurement, and facilities operations areas. They both provided loyal and dedicated leadership for the cooperative in many different aspects. We wish all the best to Brian and Julie Stagen, and to Mike and Wendi Zalaker in their future endeavors.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Please note the upcoming event we are hosting at Riggs Beer Company. You are invited to Kilowatts and Brats on Monday, November 12, from 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. More details can be found on the back page. We hope you will join us at this informal gathering (along with some of our directors) to share information and fellowship.

Overall, 2018 looks to be a good year for your cooperative. We are nearing completion of the budgeting and planning process for what we hope will be a successful 2019 as well.

Please be safe in all that you do. On behalf of the employees and directors of Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative, safe travels to all during the holiday season and Happy Thanksgiving.

Cooperatively,

Bob Hunzinger

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SmartHub is your online and app portal to:

View and pay your bill
Report an outage
Track your electric use
Update your account info

Visit www.eiec.coop to get started!

Holiday Schedule:

Eastern Illini's offices will be closed November 12, 22 and 23. As always, please feel free to call us at 800-824-5102.

Stay in the know:

Visit www.eiec.coop to get the latest version of our terms and conditions, bylaws, regulations, and rates.

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative

Remembering Jay Hageman: A Life Well Lived

None of us know how much time we have left on Earth. What matters in the end are our actions, the memories we leave behind and how we made people feel.



We are deeply saddened to announce that Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative has lost one of its own - Jay Hageman, a member of the board of directors. Jay lost his life in a vehicle accident on October 9, 2018. His many contributions to the co-op, his strong belief in the cooperative principles, and his approach to living life to the fullest will always be remembered.

Jay was a dedicated director who was elected to the Illini Electric Cooperative Board in 1986. He then served on the Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative Board, following the 1987 consolidation, until 1989. He was re-elected to the Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative Board of Directors in 2002.

Jay received many honors during his years of service. He was awarded the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Credentialed Cooperative Director Certification, the NRECA Board Leadership Certificate, and the NRECA Director Gold Credential Certificate.

Jay was serving as Vice Chairman of the EIEC Board of Directors at the time of his passing. He also served as Eastern Illini's representative on the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors.

Jay made a difference in the lives of many, including EIEC members, employees, and his fellow directors.

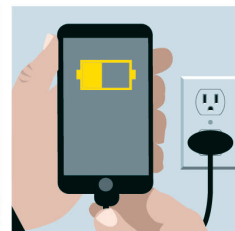
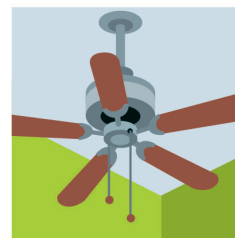
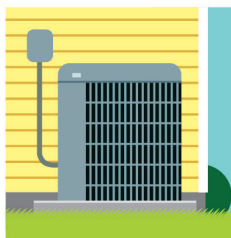
"It has hit us hard," said Debbie Laird, Vice President/Executive Assistant for Eastern Illini. "Jay was a longtime member of the cooperative board. He had a great personality and never met a stranger. He will be missed."

Jay leaves behind his wife, Tracy, daughter Jenny (Chris) Kirschner, and beloved grandchildren, Dylan and Hadley. The Hageman's farm near Fairmont. Jay was a graduate of the University of Illinois.

"Jay was an integral part of the Eastern Illini Cooperative family," said Bob Hunzinger, President/CEO of EIEC, "He had a thorough understanding of the electric utility industry, the co-op business model and a sense of service to all members of the cooperative. I am personally grateful for having had the opportunity to get to know Jay and appreciated his assistance and counsel. We are forever appreciative for his loyalty and dedication."

We're Proud to Power YOU.

Local, Safe, Reliable Electricity.
For all the ways
you live.



EMPOWERING EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM 2019

**ATTENTION
TEACHERS**
\$500 GRANTS
AVAILABLE



Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative is offering a \$500 grant to every school district in the EIEC service territory. The Empowering Education Grant Program is designed to help fund projects that will inspire and engage students through memorable learning.

Each school district in the Eastern Illini service territory has a chance to earn a \$500 grant. Complete the application on-line at www.eiec.coop

One grant recipient from each school district will be selected. Winners will be notified in early 2019.

Applying is easy! Simply fill out the on-line application and tell us about your project. Share with us the highlights, including specifics about how it directly benefits students and how many students will be involved. Grant award winners will be determined based on: innovation and the ability to foster creative learning.

For more information go to
www.eiec.coop or give us
a call at **800-824-5102**.

Apply at
www.eiec.coop
by
Dec. 14, 2018



Eastern Illini
Electric
Cooperative

Historic Preservation: Cemetery Mapping

Prairie Central High School students have been visiting some fascinating places: cemeteries!

Andrew Quain, a teacher at PCHS and his human geography classes are involved in a cemetery mapping project to provide future generations with a database of gravestones that can be accessed online and provide valuable information that serves as a way to honor those who are gone, so they won't be forgotten.

Quain was awarded an Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative 2018 Empowering Education Grant and he has used his grant funding to purchase supplies to continue the cemetery mapping that he began in the fall of 2015.

Quain strives to meet classroom education standards. In his human geography classes, that entails having students collect data and upload the information into interactive online cemetery maps. The maps let people search for a location and information about the graves in any of the eight cemeteries they've mapped so far. The students have entered data for almost 15,000 gravestones and have plans to continue to map all 21 cemeteries located in the Prairie Central school district. Their mapping includes geographic analysis and research about the individuals buried in the cemetery. The students use GPS devices to digitally plot the location of the gravestones by using waypoints that automatically upload to the maps.

The students really get into the mapping and are extremely engaged while researching the gravestones. They begin by looking for a name, determining the date of birth and death, figuring out if the gravestone is part of a family plot, and if they were a veteran who served in the military. From there they question the cause of death and



Andrew Quain, PCHS geography teacher, stands next to the gravestone of William McDowell, a veteran of the War of 1812. McDowell was born in 1785 and died in 1834. His grave is located in the Avoca Cemetery, north of Fairbury.



The students use GPS technology to determine waypoints of gravestones in local cemeteries.



Students work together to record name, date of birth & death, along with other information listed on gravestones.

observe inscriptions on the gravestones that denote beliefs, social class, occupation and other aspects of the life of the deceased.

The students are extremely respectful of the cemetery and reverent towards the gravestones. They often adjust memorabilia placed at the gravestone by loved ones that has been blown over by the wind. They brush off the grass clippings that cover the site from the last time the lawn mower passed by and they straighten the military insignia that adorns the area.

As a supplemental project related to cemetery mapping, Quain and his students identify veterans' graves that are damaged. They are doing additional research regarding the veterans' graves and making arrangements to replace the damaged gravestones with historically accurate new stones.

Some of the students have found graves of family members. The student's research has encouraged them to ask questions of their parents and grandparents regarding their family history to discover details about past generations.

There's a long-standing assumption that cemeteries are creepy and depressing places, but geography students at PCHS have a very different perspective. They see them as outdoor museums that provide a wealth of information about the past that can be shared with future generations and appreciated by members of the community.

The ultimate goal of cemetery mapping is to preserve the history of the area and share it with generations to come. For more information visit <http://www.prairiecentral.org/highschool/geography-class-cemetery-project/>.

People to Know: Melinda Kinney

Member care is about how you help your members with their needs and assist them in solving problems.

Melinda Kinney has been taking good care of Eastern Illini members for 17 years and she recently has been promoted to a new position at EIEC taking care of employees as Human Resources/Payroll Assistant.

Her years of experience have taught her a great deal about business and working with people. She strives to troubleshoot problems before they happen and uses her expertise to resolve situations before they escalate. Her extensive knowledge about electric service terminology, billing practices and cooperative policies and procedures provide powerful insights that benefit members.

Melinda has made a career at Eastern Illini because she enjoys the family-like work environment. Everyone knows everyone, and we work together to help members. She wants members to know that being part of a cooperative and being member-owned does make a difference. Every member has a vote and they can vocalize their comments and concerns with the board of directors and vote at annual meetings.

During her career, Melinda has seen the greatest change in technology and how members interact with EIEC.

In 2001, she processed paper payments, opened bills and handled checks. When power bills were due each month, member care representatives' work load transitioned from answering calls to opening envelopes. These days, members communicate with the cooperative in whatever way works best for them – email, online, phone call or face-to-face. Melinda predicts that technology will continue to progress, and members will be interacting with Eastern Illini in new and innovative ways in the future.

One of the more challenging aspects of Melinda's work as a member care representative had to do with members who struggled to make ends meet. She often suggested they contact external resources that may be able to provide financial assistance. She also offered energy audits from the Eastern Illini energy specialist who provided energy efficiency recommendations.

Melinda lives in Paxton with her husband, Randy. She has two children, Josh (Laura) and Rachel (Chris) and two grandchildren, Marilyn and Lantz. In her spare time, Melinda enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and traveling. One of her most recent adventures was an unforgettable, high-flying journey on a zip line. She says it was thrilling, but she prefers keeping her feet in the white sands of the beaches in Destin, Florida.

Melinda likes vacations that are relaxing. She recommends a trip to Beaver Island, Michigan via the ferry as it is a welcome escape from the hustle and bustle of a busy life. Her bucket list includes a trip to Alaska and Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Melinda's next adventure is a weekend trip to Grafton, Illinois to take in the autumn



leaves, tour a winery, and spend quality time with her sisters.

During the holiday season, Melinda can be found baking cinnamon rolls with family and friends. Near Christmas, they all gather at 7:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning and start the process of baking 24 dozen cinnamon rolls using a favorite family recipe. It is an all day event that takes all hands on deck.

This family tradition started in 2003 and creates not only 288 cinnamon rolls, but lasting memories, that draws her six siblings closer together. She jokes about the time the cooks got ahead of themselves and delivered a pan of frosted, uncooked cinnamon rolls to a neighbor who was surprised when she bit into the raw dough!

Melinda's mom, Betty, the family matriarch, always taste tested the first cinnamon roll out of the oven. Betty passed away earlier this fall, so the custom of baking cinnamon rolls this Christmas will be bitter sweet, but in honor of her mother, the tradition will continue on for years to come.





Kilowatts & Brats

Please join us for a gathering of co-op members at Riggs Beer Company. We'll provide free food and a great atmosphere!

Riggs Beer Company will also offer complimentary tours of the brewery.



Eastern Illini
Electric
Cooperative

NOVEMBER 12, 2018

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

RSVP by **November 9** to 217-379-0446
or rsvp@eiec.coop



Beer & other alcoholic beverages may be purchased at the event.



RIGGS BEER COMPANY

**1901 S. HIGH CROSS ROAD
URBANA, IL**

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative employees will be available to answer your questions, provide an informal update on the co-op, and offer insights into what's coming up in the energy industry.