



# Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

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Mike Johnson

## A little light...A little at a time

Ernola Phillips was able to select just one class in high school and it was decided it would be sewing. From the instruction received during that time, Ernola became a very skilled seamstress. She sewed a lot of things for a lot of different people. What started as something she did to save her family money, making dresses and other clothing for them, turned into somewhat of a small business. Before she knew it she had made a name for herself and was sewing things for people she didn't even know. Her clientele was not limited to just women, but she also sewed for men. Men's dress shirts became one of her specialties.



She and her family were always frugal. Ernola would buy parachute material and pull out all of the seams before making clothes out of it because there was so much more material for less money. They lived in a two room house and when a house nearby was torn down, Ernola's father salvaged the materials and reused them to add onto their existing home.

Ernola was about 14 when talk of electricity provided by Clinton County Electric Cooperative made its way to the Boulder area where she and her family lived. Given their financial state at the time, it would be an incredible burden for her family to jump on board with this idea. Their only saving grace was that Ernola's uncle, who was a teacher and did electrical work during the summer, agreed to wire their house on weekends. That schedule along with financial difficulties made the lights coming on in that little house in Boulder a slow process.

Though Ernola and her family also had a barn, the house was the first to be wired.

There were only light bulbs, switches and outlets for many years after her uncle finished wiring the house. Therefore, even after the lights came on, they still used irons heated on a cook stove and Ernola was still sewing on a manual machine. She did wish many times for an electric sewing machine, but it just wasn't in the budget. In fact Ernola seems to recall the first big electric appliance purchase they made was a washer. After that she not only sewed for others but also started washing clothes for those that didn't have electric washers. Electricity wasn't something that happened overnight for Ernola and her family, but more like a little light, a little at a time.

Clinton County Electric Cooperative would like to thank Ernola for taking time to share her story. In honor of Clinton County Electric Cooperative celebrating 75 years of dedicated service to its members, we would like to feature stories like this throughout the rest of the year. Therefore, if you remember when the lights came on and are interested in sharing your story, please contact Carrie Trame at Clinton County Electric Cooperative by calling 618-526-7282.

**Our office will be closed on September 1 in observance of Labor Day.**

# Youth to Washington

At the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting in Chicago in 1957, Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson addressed the crowd stating, "If one thing goes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents." Soon thereafter, Illinois sent a busload of young people to Washington. By 1964, approximately 400 students from 12 states made the trip to D.C. The word of the program continued to spread and today, over 1,600 students and their chaperones participate in the Youth Tour every year.

The program is stronger than ever and Clinton County Electric Cooperative Inc. (CCECI) was proudly represented by three outstanding youth on this year's "Youth to Washington" Tour held from June 13-20th. Courtney Deiters and Elizabeth Medlin were chosen by a panel of judges, at "Youth Day" in Springfield, to attend this year's "Youth to Washington" tour. Chelsey Deiters went as a "Willie Student" meaning she too went to Youth Day in Springfield, but attended Washington D.C at her own expense. Courtney, Elizabeth and Chelsey, all children of CCECI members, loaded a bus in Mt. Vernon early Friday morning, June 13, and started what was an eye-opening experience. They saw numerous D.C. area attractions and monuments, learned more about electric cooperatives, and created countless friendships which will last for many years to come.

Almost 1,600 youth from all over the United States gathered at the Hyatt Regency Hotel one morning for the Youth Day assembly to hear phenomenal speakers. The students were privileged to hear Keynote speaker Mike Schlappi, who delivered an inspiring message from his wheelchair. Mr. Schlappi was accidentally shot at age 14 and doctors told him he would never walk again. Prior to his accident, he was dreaming of a career as a top



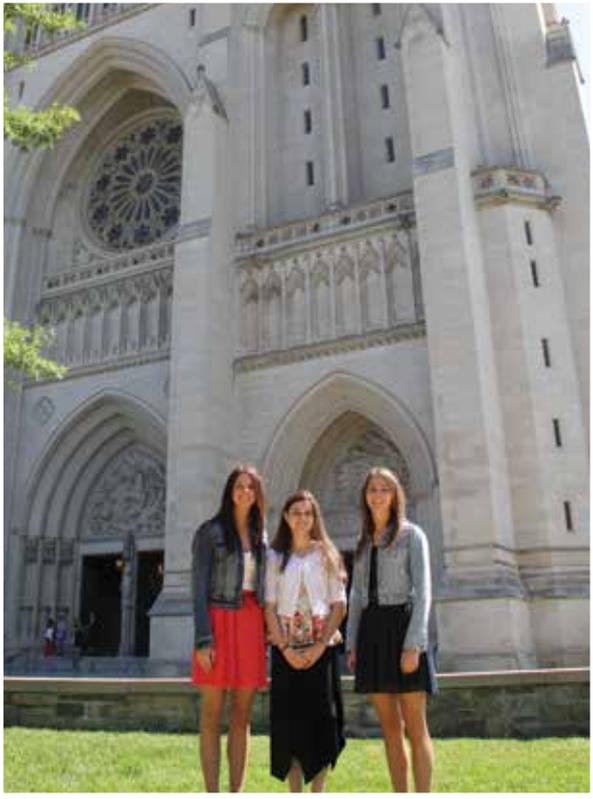
*In the top photo CCECI students can be seen with United States Congressman Bill Enyart. In the bottom photo they are pictured with United States Congressman John Shimkus. The students, from left to right, Chelsey Deiters, Courtney Deiters, and Elizabeth Medlin were able to speak with both Congressmen during a meet and greet session while visiting the Nation's Capital in June.*



American athlete. In his message he stated, "Just because you can't stand up, doesn't mean you can't stand out." His message was inspiring for the young and old.

The week in Washington D.C. was action-packed with over 75 students representing cooperatives from the entire state of Illinois. They all traveled together to visit such sites as the Capitol Building, Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery, the Washington National Cathedral,

several Smithsonian Museums, the United States Holocaust Museum, the World War II Memorial, memorial to Presidents Lincoln, Jefferson, Washington, and Roosevelt, the Newseum and numerous other historical locations. A highlight of the trip was the opportunity to meet our United States Representatives and Senators. Courtney, Elizabeth, and Chelsey were able to personally meet with United States Congressmen John Shimkus and William Enyart,



United States Senator Dick Durbin along with other United States Representatives and Senators.

The Youth Program allows today's students to experience government first-hand by visiting Capitol Hill and seeing the historical sites in Washington D.C. Courtney, Elizabeth and Chelsey along with all of the students from Illinois, who attended, did not want this awesome week to end.

They made long-lasting friendships and will remember their week of learning more about our wonderful Nation for a very long time.

Each year Clinton County Electric sponsors two students to attend this week-long all expense paid educational trip. Children of Board of Trustee members and employees are eligible to attend at their own expense. The program is kicked off each year

in February with "Youth Day" in Springfield and followed by the trip to Washington D.C. in June. Information about next year's trip will be available in the December issue of our newsletter or can be found on our website at [www.cceci.com](http://www.cceci.com) under the Youth Programs tab.

# Safety First

Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCECI) has always been an advocate of safety not just for its employees, but for all those that come in contact with electricity. On June 9, 2014 CCECI employees Gary Albers, Mike Faust, Brian Taylor, and Ahren Langhauser presented a Live Line Demonstration hosted by the Breese Fire Department. Several area Fire and EMS crews were educated about electrical issues they may encounter when responding to calls.



◀ Firefighters can be seen here watching the Live Line Demonstration at the Breese Firehouse.

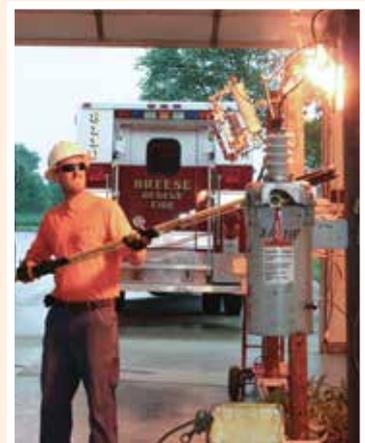
*The display that mimics lines Clinton County Electric uses to bring electricity to its members can be seen in this photo.* ▶



◀ CCECI Lineman Brian Taylor demonstrates how quickly a live, green tree limb can catch fire.



▲ This part of the demonstration uses a Tonka Truck to illustrate the hazards of operating large equipment around power lines and the dangers associated to those trying to rescue someone from a vehicle in contact with energized lines.



▲ CCECI Lineman Brian Taylor roasts hotdogs to exemplify what happens if a human touches an energized line.