



Clinton County Connection

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Mike Johnson

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Membership – “It Matters”

Generally if you are an electric consumer in the State of Illinois, you don't have a choice on your electrical provider. Basically, due to your physical location, your electrical provider is chosen for you. There are times when consumers on opposite sides of the road may be served by different electric providers; some by any Investor-Owned Utility (IOU), some by a city-owned utility (Municipality), and some by an electric cooperative like Clinton County Electric.

As I discussed in last month's Illinois County Living magazine, there has been a lot of talk about municipal aggregation in the State of Illinois lately. Out of the three types of electrical providers listed above, only electric cooperatives offer the consumers the benefits of membership. Clinton County Electric is a not-for-profit electric cooperative owned by you and your fellow members. As I see it, there are two basic fundamental differences between an electric cooperative like Clinton County Electric and the other forms of electrical providers. These are: (1) ownership, and (2) ability to engage in governance. Being a member of a cooperative matters. Your cooperative exists solely to provide you, the member, with Safe, Reliable, and Affordable electric service that will increase the quality of life in our communities.

As I mentioned earlier, one of your cooperatives goals is to provide reliable electric service to our member/owners, and I personally think Clinton County Electric does a great job of that. Investor Owned Utility Companies focus on earnings, rates of return and stock share price growth. In order to achieve those, most IOU's have closed their local offices and centralized their operations into fewer locations. We, on the other hand, are located right here in the community. We

are able to respond to your home or business in the event of an outage quicker than an IOU can.

Generally, one of the areas that Municipalities and IOU's have an advantage over cooperatives is in regard to rates. Having more customers per mile of distribution line allows them to lower their costs compared to most cooperatives including Clinton County Electric Cooperative. Determination of rates is also affected by other differences such as: (1) IOU's pay income taxes and Clinton County Electric does not; (2) Clinton County Electric's ability to get low cost financing; and (3) sheer size or economies of scale. In the grand scheme of things, Clinton County Electric is fairly small in the electric utility marketplace. Please remember our goal is not to be the lowest cost energy provider, but to be an Affordable cost provider, and I think we have and will continue to do that for our membership.

The first difference I mentioned above is the ownership Clinton County Electric Cooperative members have in their cooperative. Municipality and Investor Owned Utility customers do not have any ownership in their electrical provider companies. Clinton County Electric operates on a not-for-profit basis for the mutual benefit of its owners. Any leftover monies (margins) are allocated to each member's capital credit account based on how much that member paid the cooperative for electric service. (See article on page 16d concerning the 2011 allocations applied to the members' capital credit accounts to the tune of \$826,980) Generally, Clinton County Electric budgets a fairly small margin. But, margins are necessary to ensure the long term financial

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Membership - "It Matters" (Continued from page 16a)

viability of the cooperative. There might be times when the cooperative has to charge rates that produce larger margins, but that will definitely not be the norm.

Your ownership is returned to you in the form of capital credit retirement checks. Each year, the board of trustees determines the portion of capital credits that will be returned to members, while ensuring the cooperative's financial health. This past March we returned a portion of 1989 margins to members. The board of trustees is dedicated to continuing to return capital credits to the membership in the future.

To me the biggest difference between Clinton County Electric and the other providers is the ability to engage in the governance process. Clinton County Electric is a democratically-governed electric utility owned by the members it serves. You have a voice in running your cooperative by electing members to a board of trustees who provide oversight, governance and guidance for the cooperative. The trustees determine the general direction of the cooperative by setting policies, making financial decisions, and establishing goals. You can become a part of that process by attending YOUR Annual Meeting on

March 21, 2013.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite the membership to login to our website www.cceci.com. While you are on our website, please take the opportunity to sign up for E-Business; the button is on the upper left of your screen. All you will need is a Cooperative billing statement and a valid email address. You will be able to view billing and payment history as well as pay your monthly electric bill.

Thank you for taking the time to read this article. Please remember, all initiatives we embark upon always have our members' best interest in mind. Providing our members with safe, affordable, reliable electricity and restoring electrical service as quickly and safely as possible continues to be our goal. As always, if you have any comments or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me at Johnson@cceci.com.

P.S. A new feature will be deployed within the next couple of months. As a member, you will have the ability to text Clinton County Electric when you have an electrical outage. This is just another value added member communication tool we are deploying for the benefit of the membership.



I DON'T LEAVE THE TV ON FOR THE COFFEE TABLE. WHY COOL AN EMPTY HOUSE?

It only makes sense. My house shouldn't have to work so hard when I'm taking it easy on vacation. So now I adjust my thermostat, turn off my water heater and unplug as much as I can before I pull away, and those simple acts save me some serious money. Money I can spend on things like vacations. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at **TOGETHERWESAVE.COM**

Mark your calendar



In observance of Labor Day, the office will be **CLOSED on Monday, September 3rd**



In observance of Veteran's Day, the office will be **CLOSED on Monday, November 12th**



In observance of Thanksgiving, the office will be **CLOSED on Thursday, November 22nd & Friday, November 23rd.**

Just another day in paradise...

On Tuesday, July 24, there was not a cloud in the sky, the temperature peaked at 104° and there had not been more than a trace of rain in 3 weeks. It sounds like a weather report from Myrtle Beach, but it was actually Lakeshore Acres Subdivision in Carlyle. Our linemen may have been near the lake and a beach, but they were doing anything but relaxing – they were changing out rotten power poles.



The underground wires that run down the side of the poles are exposed by hand digging, also allowing the existing riser pipes that encase underground wires to be maneuvered to allow for the new pole to be set in place.



Holes are drilled in the new pole to allow for bolts and other equipment to be installed on the pole.



The old equipment and wires are removed from the rotten pole. The 7200 Volt primary line is kept energized while it is removed to minimize the number of customers that will be out of power.



The hole from the old pole is augered out to make space for the new, larger pole. The auger is carefully positioned as not to damage the existing underground cables that will need to be attached to the new pole.



While the linemen in the bucket pulls the energized conductors out of the way, the new pole is swung into place, guided into the hole, and the backfill is tamped to keep the pole straight.



The energized lines are guided onto the new insulators and tied down.

Assignment Of 2011 Margins

Assignments of 2011 margins to members purchasing electricity from Clinton County Electric Cooperative have been calculated. A total of \$826,980 of margins (revenues in excess of expenses) has been allocated as capital credits for the year 2011. Clinton County Electric Cooperative operates on a not-for-profit basis for the mutual benefit of its owners. Any leftover monies (margins) are allocated to each member's capital credit account based on how much that member paid the cooperative for electric service.

Allocation notices will be sent to each member who received service during 2011. These notices will inform you of your share of the capital credits. This amount is only an accounting credit. It cannot be claimed at the present time nor can it be applied against your current electric bill.

The board of trustees reviews the financial condition of the Cooperative before

determining when and how much capital credits can be returned to the members. The Cooperative has paid capital credits through 1988 and a portion of 1989, so it will be some time before we will pay 2011 capital credits.

Please remember, you must be a member and have service in your name to have capital credits assigned. If you are receiving electric service in someone else's membership or the service is in the name of a deceased person, you will not receive capital credits. The capital credit check will always be issued in the name of the person on the membership or the estate of a deceased member.

If you ever move off Cooperative lines, please provide us with your new address so we can send your future capital credit checks. Please email Billing@cceci.com if you have any questions.

Spotlight on Trustee Tim Hanke

Tim Hanke is a Trustee for Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. from District 1. Tim was born and raised in the Boulder area. He graduated from Carlyle High School, Kaskaskia College and Southern Illinois University in Carbondale with a degree in Ag Business.

Tim's wife, the former Chris Steinmann, grew up in St. Rose. They have two children, Nicole and Lucus, both students at Carlyle High School.

Tim is a member of the Carlyle School Board, serves as East Fork Township Supervisor, and has held numerous positions on his church council. He is a grain and livestock farmer and has served on the Clinton County Electric



Tim Hanke

Cooperative Board since 1999. Through his many years of training, Tim has achieved his Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate as well as The Board Leadership Certificate.