Clinton County Connection

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

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Mike Johnson

Six Month Report Card – How have we done?

We are just about ready to complete the first six months of 2010, and it seems like a good time to update you on our progress with the goals we set for this year. I realize you are reading this in the first week of August, but due to scheduling we are required to have our articles to the publisher six weeks before actual publication.

Our first initiative for 2010 was to"Enhance our Member Communications," and in order to accomplish that our plan was to:

1. Reestablish Open House and Area Meetings. Since you are reading this in August, I will assume that our July 17 Open House was a huge success and that many members were in attendance. The Area Meetings are scheduled for late October 2010. You can see the exact locations, dates and times in the "Important Dates for Your Calendar" section of this magazine.
2. Provide each member with a paid subscription of this magazine. We started to provide this magazine in May and I have received many compliments from the membership concerning the valuable and useful information contained in it.
3. Deploy e-business – a key component of our plan, we are currently in beta testing and should be ready for full deployment on or about Labor Day. Next month's Illinois County Living will provide more detail on how to sign up for this new product offering.

Our second initiative was "Infrastructure Improvements," and in order to accomplish that our plan included:

1. Focusing on safety for our employees, the public and the membership. We have purchased tools, equipment and clothing for our employees to ensure they work in a safe manner. Another component of our safety focus was to provide safety demonstrations. So far in 2010 we have provided safety demonstrations to two fire departments, our annual meeting, our open house and the Corps of Engineers Earth Day held at Lake Carlyle. To say the least, we have been busy informing the public about electrical safety. Remember, if your group, school or civic organization would like to have us put on a demonstration, we would be more than happy to provide that service to you.
2. A Pole Inspection/Replacement Program. We inspected 4,235 poles in 2009 and 348 of them failed inspection. Our goal was to replace those 348 poles in 2010, and for the most part we have accomplished that goal. Some poles are in unique locations that will have to wait for either the weather to change or crops to be harvested. We will be inspecting about 4,000 poles in 2010, probably beginning around Labor Day.
3. Large capital projects. Due to the unusually wet weather we have failed to make much progress on this plan to complete six large capital projects during the year. We knew our goal was aggressive, but it was doable under the right weather conditions. I have lived here for a little over a year now, and at times I really believed I moved to Seattle, Wash. instead of Breese, Ill. I have never seen so much moisture. We have started to reevaluate those planned projects to see which ones can be accomplished in 2010.

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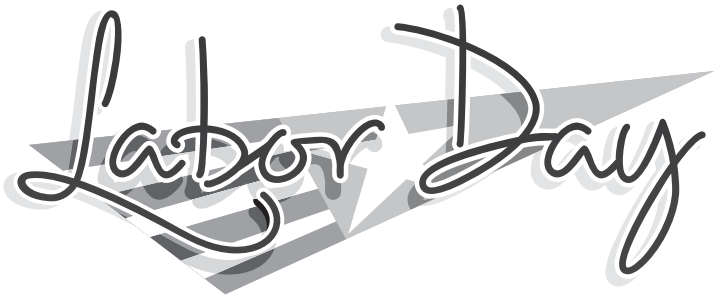
4. Copper replacement projects which were also deferred due to the wet ground conditions. Hopefully we will be able to accomplish about half of our original goal by year's end.
5. GPS/GIS of our entire system; we plan on starting this project in September and the contracts have been executed. The goal of this project is to gather geographic coordinates for all of our devices, (meters, transformers, etc.) which will be transformed into electronic maps. These maps will then be loaded onto laptops which will provide our line crews with up-to-date accurate information that should allow for quicker restoration in the event of a power outage. This project should be completed by summer/fall of 2011.

I would guess that our overall grade would be a solid B for the first six months. The fact we didn't get everything accomplished we had wanted to is not due to lack of effort by our employees, but rather due to wet weather and possibly an over-aggressive expectation on my part. Remember, all initiatives we embark on always have our members' best interests in mind.

I have tried to keep you informed regarding the progress of potential climate change legislation which has seen many twists and turns, ups and downs during the past few months. As I write this article, it appears the Senate may try to take advantage of the gulf oil spill crisis to craft legislation that combines the controversial capping of greenhouse gas emissions with new offshore drilling rules (which are more widely acknowledged as needed by Senators). We are concerned that the resulting legislation could likely cause financial hardship to our membership, and we would therefore ask you to continue to be engaged in the political process by logging on to www.ourenergy.coop which will guide you in contacting your elected officials on this important energy issue.

Thank you for taking the time to read this article, and as always if you have any questions, concerns or comments please call me at 526-7282 or email me at johnson@cceci.com.



OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
In observance of Labor Day, the office will be CLOSED on Monday, Sept. 6, 2010.

From left are Haley Fisher, Rep. John Shimkus and Matt Geiger.

Haley Fisher from Breese and Matt Geiger from Shattuc represented Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. in Washington, D.C., during the annual "Youth to Washington" Tour, June 12-19. This event, sponsored by the electric and telephone cooperatives across the nation, began in the late 1950s with a goal of introducing rural youths to our democratic form of government and cooperatives.

The students met with Rep. John Shimkus and were among 65 rural Illinois youth leaders selected for the trip. The Illinois students joined 1,532 young leaders from across the country. In addition to the Capitol, they also visited Arlington National Cemetery, the Washington National Cathedral, several Smithsonian Museums, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the World War II Memorial, the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, the National Archives, the Newseum and a number of other historical sites.

Several CCEC employees traveled to Albers to participate in the Clin-Clair Fire Department Open House on June 13, 2010. The linemen used the Live Line Demo to teach 100 area civilians and firemen power line safety. They learned the hazards associated with animals, tall farm/work equipment, tree limbs, collisions and fallen power lines. The Live Line Demonstration is shared by CCEC and several other Southern Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

As mentioned earlier in this publication, CCEC had 348 poles fail inspection. Due to time and employee constraints, Big D Electric, an electrical contractor from El Dorado, Ill., won the bid to change out a majority of those failed poles. Their work began in February in the Beckemeyer and Carlyle Areas, and ended in the Boulder, Patoka, and Sandoval areas in June. Here are some pictures of Big D changing some failed poles along Meridian Road.

CCEC has retained Big D to complete another line rebuild project west of Hoffman, which will allow CCEC's line personnel to complete other projects around the system.

Employee spotlight - Harry Buller

Harry Buller

This month we are spotlighting employee Harry Buller, the Cooperative's Manager of Operations.

Harry was born and raised in Breese and graduated from Mater Dei High School in 1970. He received an Associate's Degree in Electronics Technology from ITT Technical Institute in Indianapolis, Ind. and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Technology from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale.

Harry has held the position of Member Service/Power Use Advisor from 1975 to 1986 and Assistant Operations Supt from 1986 to 2001. Harry was promoted to Manager of Operations in 2001. Harry is a known as the Cooperative's historian.

He's been married for 33 years to the former Cathie Duncan of Belleville and they are parents of two sons, Matt (Jen) and Andy (Andria), both of Breese. They also have one grandson, Xavier.

Harry enjoys spending time with family and friends, especially his new grandson. His hobbies are playing golf and hunting.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

CCECI Area Meetings		
District #1-Carlyle VFW	Wednesday, October 27, 2010	Registration begins at 6:30 p.m.
District #2-Breese K OF C	Wednesday, October 27, 2010	Registration begins at 12:30 p.m.
District #3-Albers Legion	Thursday, October 28, 2010	Registration begins at 6:30 p.m.

Please come & meet the employees and directors of your cooperative.