

A look back

Your cooperative will be holding its 76th annual meeting of members on Friday, June 13, 2014 at the 4-H Fairgrounds in Shelbyville. As we look back to our 75th annual meeting, we thought we'd take a snapshot of the past year as we begin another 75 years of service to our members.

Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC) has accomplished several projects this past year. One highlight that moved the cooperative forward was the release of SmartHub, an application that transformed the online bill pay option and gave members a useful app for their tablets and smart phones. The cooperative also added a real-time outage map and thanks to our members support, we received the highest ACSI score in the state. See related stories about each of these items in this issue of Shelby News.

While the local economy still struggled and the harsh winter put a strain on member's pocket books, the SEC Board of Directors was faced with what they consider to be the most difficult decision they've had to make. A cost of service study determined the cooperative needed to make rate adjustments. The Board knew it was their responsibility to strategically place rates in a position that would power the cooperative into the future. The decision was made to adjust rates for 2014 to reflect the true cost to bring power to the member's home – increasing the facility charge and lowering the energy charge by up to 5 percent, depending on use. Though no one likes a rate change, the change

ensures the cooperative's financial stability into the next quarter century.

The cooperative continues to lead other cooperatives in the state with its percentage of capital credit retirements. As of 2014, your cooperative has paid back \$5.834 million (percentage retired out of total percentage allocated).

SEC continues to look for ways to lessen carbon footprint and reduce waste. To date, the Power of Green recycling program has recycled more than 500,000 pounds of materials and the two solar arrays on cooperative buildings continue to help lower the carbon footprint. Visit the cooperative's web page, www.shelbyelectric.coop, and click on the story to view real time electricity production from the solar arrays.

PWR-net continues to grow and improve its service to the remote rural countryside as it provides more than 1,200 members and non-members a reliable source for Internet service.

Shelby Energy celebrated 20 years of providing LP gas services to its customer base, many of them being SEC members.

Your cooperative will continue to strive to be a leader in its field but we are ultimately here to serve you, our member-owners, with reliable, affordable and safe electric service. You have a voice in how your cooperative is run and the annual meeting is one way you can learn more about how your cooperative oper-



Your annual meeting notice was mailed in mid-May.

ates. Plan to attend this year's annual meeting.

The business portion of the meeting will be held inside the 4-H Center at the fairgrounds located off of North Route 128. You should have already received your annual meeting notice in the mail. This notice contains information about the cooperative, a meeting agenda and registration information. As in previous years, a barbecue pork chop dinner will be served by the Shelby County Pork Producers between 10:30 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. Registration will begin at 10:30 a.m. with the business meeting scheduled for 1:00 p.m.

Controlled burns can damage utility poles

Over the past several years, there have been a lot of changes in the industry. One big change has been the composition of the chemical treatment used on utility poles. For years members have burned-off ditches in the spring as they prepare for the planting season and at other times during the year. In the past, utility poles were more resistant to burning; however, newer ones are not as resistant. Once they catch fire, the only way to put them out is to cut the hotspot out, as a fire extinguisher has no effect on them. This can impair the integrity of a pole and could create a dangerous situation as the pole could break and fall into the road, break during a strong

wind storm or snap due to heavy snow or ice in the winter.

We ask all of our members to please use caution during controlled burns or when using ditches to burn yard waste and limbs. If you are burning off ditches, please stay on the scene and watch them closely. Spraying water on the base of the pole while you are burning can help, but damage can still occur. Help us reduce the nuisance of outages and our costs to replace damaged poles; but most importantly, keep everyone safe. If you ever see this happening or notice damaged poles, please contact the office immediately, so we can look into the situation. We appreciate your understanding and help.



Controlled burns can damage the integrity of the utility pole.

Members can report an outage via SmartHub

SmartHub, SEC's new member portal, launched about a year ago as a way for members to pay bills, look at daily electric use and communicate with the cooperative online at www.shelbyelectric.coop. SmartHub also functions through an app for smart phones and tablets.

"The one feature we are excited about and hope our members start to utilize is the outage-reporting feature. When a member loses

power they can notify us via SmartHub," said cooperative spokesperson Kevin Bernson.

iOS users access SmartHub in the Apple iTunes App store and Android users access SmartHub in the Android Market. Creating a SmartHub account is easy - just

enter your profile information, choose your provider and you're ready to begin.

iOS Users



Scan this QR code to access SmartHub in the Apple iTunes App Store.

Android Users



Scan this QR code to access SmartHub in the Android Market.



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

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twitter.com/YourCoop
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Office Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Did you know...

Shelby Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy® — an alliance of 750 local, consumer-owned electric utilities around the country. Shelby Electric is committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves more

than 9,971 meters over 2,187 miles of line in parts of Christian, Cumberland, Effingham, Fayette, Macon, Montgomery, Moultrie, Sangamon and Shelby counties. For more information visit www.shelbyelectric.coop. Like the cooperative on Facebook, facebook.com/YourCoop or search Shelby Electric Cooperative.

Area students visit the State Capitol

More than 200 students from downstate Illinois traveled to Springfield on Wednesday, April 2nd, for the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day.

With rural areas losing population, fewer legislators are serving downstate. The need for citizens to take active roles in making sure their legislators are aware of rural issues is of critical importance.

“Elected officials enjoy the opportunity to meet with students and learn first-hand their concerns. Many issues debated in the General Assembly personally affect their lives,” said Duane Noland, President and CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC).

Senators Chapin Rose and Andy Manar along with Representatives Adam Brown and Wayne Rosenthal met with 14 students representing Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC). All the students on the trip had an opportunity to visit the State Capitol, view state government in action and question their legislators on key issues. They also were invited into the office of Secretary of State Jesse White.

During breakfast, Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon addressed students and chaperones and challenged them to take an interest in the political process and encouraged them to talk to their state senators and representatives about issues that interest them. While in Springfield, the students also visited the Illinois State Museum, Old State Capitol and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum.

Following the full day of activities, students were interviewed for the chance to represent the cooperative on the Youth to Washington Tour on June 13th through the 20th. Morgan Partlow and Ryan Stenger were selected to represent SEC during the Youth to Washington Tour this year. Alternates chosen were Jessica Watson and Allison Maretti. This



State Senators Andy Manar and Adam Brown, along with State Representative Wayne Rosenthal, visit with students during Youth Day. Pictured front row l-r are: Shelby Electric Cooperative (SEC) chaperone Heidi Hall, Lacey Knodle and Allison Maretti, both from Nokomis High School, Katie Cline from Windsor High School, Sarah Locke a 2013 participant and last year's YLC winner from Stewardson-Strasburg High School, Hannah Senteney from Cowden-Herrick High School, Paige Woolard from Windsor High School, Morgan Partlow from Neoga High School and SEC chaperone Dustin Theiss. Back row: Ryan Stenger from Shelbyville High School, Senator Andy Manar, Michael Beardsley from Shelbyville High School, Alex Brockamp from Morrisonville High School, Jonathan Schultz from Stewardson-Strasburg High School, Senator Adam Brown, Carson Lorton from Cowden-Herrick High School, Kaitlin Slifer from Stewardson-Strasburg High School, Jessica Watson from Neoga High School and Representative Wayne Rosenthal.

marks the 55th year students have participated from Illinois. Shelby Electric Cooperative has been sending students on the Youth to Washington Tour since 1967.

Youth Day was sponsored by the AIEC and is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government. There were 24 co-ops from across the state represented at the event.



Morgan Partlow and Ryan Stenger were selected to represent Shelby Electric Cooperative on the Youth to Washington Tour this summer. Pictured L to R are alternate Jessica Watson and Partlow, both from Neoga High School, Stenger from Shelbyville High School and alternate Allison Maretti from Nokomis High School.

Cooperative launches a real-time outage map

We take great pride in providing you with safe and reliable electric service; however, there are times when our best efforts aren't quite enough to keep your lights on. To help our members with outage situations, we have created an online outage map.

The link to this map can be found on the cooperative's home page at www.shelbyelectric.coop. Just visit the website and click on the outage map icon for real-time outage information. This information refreshes every five minutes.

You can view outages by zip code, county or township. As outages occur, or as they are restored, the map will reflect the current number of members without power. Due to safety concerns and privacy laws, we cannot drill down to an exact member's meter address but this gives members an idea of who is out of power and when it is restored.

What should you do when the power goes out? First check your



breakers, fuses and the neighbors, then report the outage by calling 800-677-2612. When you call the office please have the name on the account, map location number and service address or phone number of

the person at the account location. You can now report an outage with your SmartHub app.

As always stay away from any downed wire or pole and call your cooperative immediately.



Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

When replacing incandescent bulbs from recessed light fixtures, use energy-efficient bulbs that are rated for that purpose. For example, the heat buildup in downlights will significantly shorten the life of spiral CFLs.

Source: Department of Energy

Comparison of Average ACSI Scores

Shelby Electric Co-op	88
Apple	87
Cadillac	85
Co-ops National Avg	83
Illinois Co-ops Avg	82
Investor-Owned Avg	77
Municipal Avg	76
Ameren	74
Commonwealth Ed.	74
Cell Phone Industry	72
Cable/Satellite TV	68

Shelby Electric Cooperative's (SEC) score in the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) was highest among Illinois cooperatives and slightly better than well known brands like Apple and Cadillac. The cooperative's ACSI score was also higher than investor-owned utilities in Illinois. Our 2013 score of 88 was an increase from our 81 in 2011. Thank you for your confidence in SEC!

Shelby Energy
1-217-774-2311
24-hours-a-day

PWR-net Internet
1-877-994-2323
weekdays

Shelby Electric Cooperative
1-800-677-2612
1-217-774-3986
24-hours-a-day