



**MJM**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# ALONG THE LINES

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**MJM Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

 A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

18300 Shipman Road, Carlinville, IL 62626

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Pay by Phone 1-855-313-6314

Office Hours

Mon-Fri 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.


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and Member Services Coordinator

**Holidays observed**

 New Year's Day, Good Friday,  
Memorial Day, Independence  
Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day,  
Thanksgiving Day, day following  
Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

**How to report an outage**

Call 217-707-6156. When you report an outage, give your name and location number. Before calling, check your fuses or circuit breakers. Check with your neighbors. Call to report hazardous conditions. Please do not report outages on Facebook.

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## Thank You, Louis Johnson!

On June 4, 2021, Louis Johnson of Shipman hung up his hat as District 5's Board of Director. Johnson spent 30 years in his position where he and his wife Pat created many lifelong friendships. Johnson recalled serving on the Member Advocate Committee in 1991 when he was asked to serve as a Board of Director. He did give it some thought and even thought against it, but those on the Board had been so friendly and encouraging Johnson could not pass up an amazing opportunity. "Serving on the Board of Directors for MJM Electric has been a highlight of my life," Johnson admitted, "The entire experience has been very educational and enjoyable." Now that he is retired, he plans on spending his free time with his family and, especially, spoiling his grandchildren. He looks forward to seeing what MJM will do for its Members in the future.



Dwyane Milner of Medora will be taking Johnson's seat on the Board. You can read about him on page 10. At the end of the Annual Meeting, a cake was presented to Johnson to celebrate his accomplishments and to send him off with well wishes! Johnson says, "I want to thank everyone at MJM for their friendship and kindness. I wish everyone well!"

Happy retirement, Louis! 

## Setting an Example



MJM employees do not just stop at "good enough". They strive to do the best that they can every day. For instance, Staking Technician Nathan Hatalla has been attending specific classes and trainings over the last three years to complete the Staking Certification Program through Hi Line Engineering sponsored and hosted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative. On May 28, 2021, the Cooperative was made aware that Hatalla completed and successfully passed the third and final phase of the program. Hatalla is a great example of how MJM is consistently betting itself to serve its Members! Congratulations, Nathan! 

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## See You at the Farm Progress Show!

The nation's largest outdoor farm event will be held at Progress City in Decatur August 31- September 2. Look for the Illinois Touchstone Energy® Cooperative's booth at its new location on Lot 217 on Second Street between Central Progress and East Progress Avenue, near Gates 7 and 8. You'll find us next to the Grain System Inc. display.

Communication and Member Services Coordinator Brooke Gross and several other Illinois Electric Cooperatives will be on hand to share information about Cooperatives, safety, energy efficiency, and much more.

Be sure to catch a pole climbing demonstration! Stop by the booth to charge your phone at one of our charging stations. While you're there, play a game for a chance to win a prize.

Weather permitting, the Touchstone Energy Hot Air Balloon will be flying the American flag each morning of the show. Plans are for the balloon to also fly late afternoon on the first two days of the show.

For 68 years, The Farm Progress Show has celebrated agriculture by bringing tradition and business together. It is where people from all over gather to meet, observe, and learn. Major manufacturers roll out their newest offerings, and agricultural families take a break from their daily routines to immerse themselves in the wider ag community. The show rotates annually between Decatur, Illinois and Boone, Iowa.

Check out Prairie Farmer Magazine or visit [farmprogressshow.com](http://farmprogressshow.com) to learn more about the 2021 Farm Progress Show. 



MJM will be closed on July 5th in recognition of Independence Day

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# WE WEATHERED THE STORM!

(The Covid Storm That Is!)

Wow! The Board of Directors, staff, and employees are still in shock just thinking about the success of the drive thru Annual Meeting! On Friday, June 4, 2021, MJM opened the drive thru truck bays to the Membership. At the time of planning the Annual Meeting, Covid restrictions made it difficult to host the typical, in person, meeting. Instead, MJM tried something new just to find it paid off extremely well.

At 4 p.m. on June 4<sup>th</sup>, Members began pouring through the truck bays. Once they were registered, Members proceeded through the line to receive relative Member information, an insulated gift bag containing a bagged pork chop supper (grilled by the Macoupin County Pork Producers) and could stream the entertainment BlackHill.

Unfortunately, Covid restrictions broke multiple records for different reasons. It worked out in MJM's benefit as this was a record-breaking year. Due to MJM Bylaws, 150 registered Members must attend the Annual Meeting in order to reach quorum. Within 35 minutes of opening the gates, quorum had been met! MJM had 458 Members in attendance and served approximately 810 meals! This was a 42% attendance increase from 2020's Annual Meeting. That is huge!

After the drive thru had been shut down, a live video aired from the headquarters' Community Room. This live video was to serve as a forum where MJM management and staff could address any new business that the Members had. Seeing that there was none, the video proceeded to announce scholarship and prize winners.

MJM's \$1,000 Scholarship Program winners are Brigid Dunn of Carlinville and Delaney Hemann of Carlinville. This year's \$500 Honorary Scholarship winner is Anthony Joiner of Carlinville. These students worked hard with many factors working against them this past school year. With that, MJM was able to give the remaining scholarship applicants a \$250 Covid Relief Scholarship. Those winners are Ethan Knodle, Brenden Marshall, Faith O'Dell, Madelyn Rupert, Gabryel Thompson, Jacob Ury, Gabriel Barbre, Kendall Knodle, Ashtin Sorgea, and Tori Hartson. Congratulations to all, and MJM wishes you great success in your future!

Just for registering at the Annual Meeting, Members received a \$15 bill credit and were also entered into a drawing for prizes. This year's grand prize was a \$350 bill credit, and the lucky recipient was (Bruce) Ernst Farms. When told they were the winner, they were very appreciative and said the meal was delicious and they thought the whole thing moved very smoothly! 21 - \$25 bill credits were also given out and those who won were Roland Frankford, Bobby Hunt, Mona Fones, Ralph Glassbrenner, Dan Kallal, Scott Boyd, Hansen Land Trust, Tammy Hughes, Paul Guthrie, Jeff Hart, Peter Rosentreter, Joyce Anders, John Plunk, Karen Brown, Joshua Volentine, David Rathgeb, Lois Dauksch, Vernon DePauw, Stephan Bechtold, James Knotts, and Robert Ostendorf.

As mentioned above, Members had the opportunity to bring up new business by sending in a form that was found on page 21 of the Annual Meeting booklet. The form was also available on MJM's website and social media. New business does not need to be brought up one time a year. You are a MEMBER-OWNER. You have the right to bring business up to MJM whenever it is convenient for you.

In case you missed the Annual Meeting, it was recorded, and you can catch up at [www.mjmec.coop/annual-meeting](http://www.mjmec.coop/annual-meeting). Whether or not you attended the meeting or not, MJM was interested in what Members thought about this type of meeting. A survey was sent out via email to those Members who have their email on file with MJM and the survey was posted on social media. By taking the survey, Members were entered into a drawing to win a \$50 bill credit! Results of that survey and the winner of the drawing will follow in the August edition of *Along the Lines*.





In case you missed the Annual Meeting, it was recorded, and you can catch up at [www.mjmec.coop/annual-meeting](http://www.mjmec.coop/annual-meeting).

## 2021 MJM's \$1,000 Scholarship Program Winners



*Brigid Dunn*



*Delaney Hemann*

Brigid Dunn of Carlinville is one of MJM's \$1,000 Scholarship Program. Dunn graduated from Carlinville High School and is headed for the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, IN. She plans on studying International Economics – Arabic and Peace Studies. She is the daughter of Matt and Jackie Dunn of Carlinville. When Dunn was in high school, she was extremely active in golf, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Scholastic Bowl, Interact Club, math team, academic challenge, and band. She hopes to work with a government agency or the UN to help those suffering from humanitarian crisis, especially refugees.

Genoa-Kingston High School graduate Delaney Hemann is the other MJM \$1,000 Scholarship Program winner. She is daughter of Michael Hemann of Carlinville. Hemann is going to attend Lake Land College in Mattoon, IL, to earn her associates degree. She is enrolled in the Agricultural Transfer program focusing on Agricultural Business and Animal Science. Her plans are to transfer to Texas A&M University to obtain her bachelor's degree in Agricultural Marketing. She hopes to work in the swine industry by working for a feed, genetic, or supply company. In high school, she was extremely active in Future Farmers of America, 4-H, student council, Community Impact Club, National Honor Society, basketball, and soccer.

Delaney Hemann is also one of twelve winners of this year's Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. She competed for the scholarship with 252 other students from across the state. The \$2,000 awards are given each year to eleven sons or daughters of Electric Co-op Members, employees or directors. (A twelfth scholarship reserved for a student interested in lineman's college will be announced at a later date.)

Candidates were judged on grade-point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay demonstrating their knowledge of energy cooperatives. 

### Fixing of Record Date

I certify that May 25, 2021, was the Fixing of Record Date for applications of Membership. The total number of active Members receiving service as of that date was 7,808. This represents the number of Members that were allowed to vote at the 82nd Annual Meeting that was held June 4th.

Sincerely,  
William R. Heyen, Secretary



## Don't Fall Victim to Utility Scams!

By Abby Berry, NRECA

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

Just within the past couple of months, several MJM Electric Members were targeted through a phone scam where the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, MJM Electric will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two trending scam tactics. One is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have *overpaid* your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, MJM Electric will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle. Another trending scam is smishing (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. MJM Electric will only send you important updates via text if you have signed up for SmartHub alerts. These are just a couple examples of trending scams, so it's important to watch for any red flags.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- **Confirm before you act.** If you are contacted by someone claiming to represent MJM Electric or another utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 217-707-6156 to verify the situation.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to MJM Electric so we can let others in our community know. Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized. 🌈



# Have a Safe and Happy Fourth of July

The month of July has always been a favorite of mine. It's the middle of summer, the kids are out of school and of course, we celebrate Independence Day! Typically on the Fourth, we celebrate our nation's independence with grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, homemade ice cream and other sweet treats, and last but not least, fireworks. This is a time for fellowship with family and friends, but at MJM Electric, we also want to make sure our members focus on safety.

To ensure you have the best Fourth of July possible, we would like to remind you about a few important safety tips from The American Red Cross.



Nothing says "Fourth of July" like a spectacular fireworks display! The safest way to enjoy this part of the celebration is to head to a local fireworks show. But, if you want to put on your own show at home, be sure to follow these safety tips:

- Always follow the instructions on fireworks' packaging and never give fireworks to small children.
- Keep a supply of water close by as a precaution.
- Make sure to wear protective eyewear when lighting fireworks.
- Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to relight "a dud."
- Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets.
- Never throw or point a firework toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials.

Cookouts are a great way to bring folks together on the Fourth. Whether you are grilling in your back yard or at a community park, make sure your feast includes a generous portion of fun and a side helping of safety! We recommend the following safety tips:

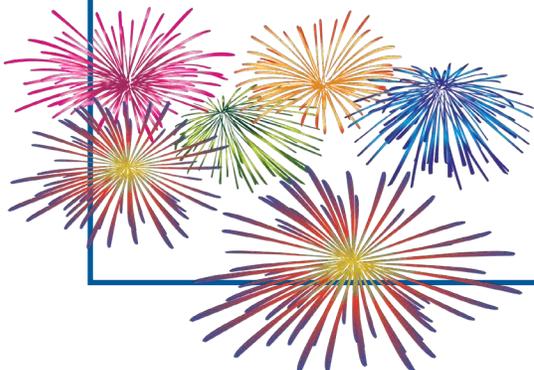
- Supervise your grill at all times.
- Use the proper tools for cooking on a grill.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid when the coals have already been ignited.
- Always follow the manufacturers instructions when using grills.

Fireworks and cookouts wouldn't be complete without a sunny day. Here's hoping we have good weather, and if we do, make sure you are practicing sun safety:

- Use a broad spectrum SPF sunscreen and reapply often.
- Protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Be on the lookout for signs of heat stroke (hot red skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; rapid, shallow breathing).

However you choose to celebrate, MJM wishes you a safe and Happy Fourth of July! Please be sure to note that our office will be closed on July 5th in recognition of Independence Day. 🇺🇸

*By Meghaan Evans, Safe Electricity*



# Here's a Bright Idea!

## Save Some Green by Using LED

By Safe Electricity



Many of us might recall that way back in 2007, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) passed the Energy and Independence Act. Well, actually, you probably don't remember that at all. What you probably remember is watching the news a few years later and realizing the future of incandescent light bulbs was quite dim.

While this legislation included a wide range of recommendations for the energy industry, the main and probably most memorable requirement was that new light bulbs use 25% less energy. As a result, there was a huge push between 2012 and 2014 to replace older incandescent light bulbs with newer, more energy-efficient versions.

Oftentimes, regulations come and go without much fanfare. However, when incandescent light bulbs were phased out, it directly impacted light bulb choices and left many of us wondering what all the fuss was about.

Traditional incandescent bulbs produce light by heating a wire filament to a temperature that results in the generation of light. Incandescent bulbs were popular because they were inexpensive and available in a wide range of colors. However, much of their energy went into heat production and very little toward emitting light.

Incandescent light bulbs also have a very short lifespan, lasting only about one year on average. Although they are no longer available in U.S. stores, the energy costs associated with the once-popular bulb, along with its stunted lifespan, far outweigh the initial savings at the cash register. Since incandescent bulbs produce a lot of heat, they may cause burn injuries and pose a fire risk.

Nowadays, the three most popular light bulbs are the light-emitting diode (LED), the halogen incandescent and the compact fluorescent light (CFL). According to the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, in the third quarter of 2018, light bulb orders were broken down as follows: LEDs accounted for 65%, halogens made up 28% and CFLs were 7%.

What makes LEDs different? LED light bulbs work when an electrical current passes through a microchip, which illuminates the tiny light sources we call LEDs, and the result is visible light. LED light bulbs produce light up to 90% more efficiently than traditional incandescent light bulbs. They also include features that keep the bulb cooler to the touch, which avoids potential injuries and fire risks.

LEDs are also safer than their closest competitors, CFL and halogen bulbs. CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, which is dangerous if ingested. In addition, this type of bulb should not be thrown in the trash. Halogen bulbs operate at very high temperatures, which means they can cause burns to the skin if touched. They can also, in some cases, cause a fire: when they are knocked over or come in contact with something flammable, for example.

Moreover, many LEDs are rated with a lifespan of 50,000 hours. That means if one is used eight hours a day, it is projected to last 17 years! Residential LEDs, especially those that are designated with the ENERGY STAR logo, use at least 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent lighting, according to the DOE.

In comparison, halogen light bulbs last about a year and CFL bulbs about 3 years (both based on 8-hour-a-day usage).

LEDs help the environment while reducing energy costs. According to the DOE, their widespread use is on track to save the equivalent annual electrical output of 44 large electric power plants, with a total savings of more than \$30 billion, by the year 2027!

For more information about electrical safety and energy efficiency, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org). 



## MEET THE NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

New seasons brings new changes. MJM is seeing this change as it welcomes two brand new MJM Board of Directors!



Charles Huebener  
Brighton, IL

Charles Huebener of Brighton was appointed Director of District 3 on March 25, 2021 to take Paul Bartlett's seat on the Board and was recently elected officially by the Membership at the June 4, 2021, Annual Meeting. Huebener graduated from the University of Illinois in 1976 with his Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics. Upon graduating, he came back home to work on the family farm with his brother. Huebener had originally served on MJM's Member Advocate Committee (MAC) from 2018-2021. His involvement with MAC grew his knowledge of MJM and interest for serving on the Board of Directors.

"I intend to educate myself regarding the challenges and opportunities that are facing the Cooperative. It's my honor to be able to serve the Cooperative in the most cost efficient and reliable manner," Huebener stated. Since he has been with MJM for three months now, he has learned that there are a vast number of resources available to educate himself as a Board of Director regarding the inner workings of rural Cooperatives. He is excited to take advantage of these resources and working alongside other well-qualified Directors. Huebener says, "I'm impressed by the MJM Employees and look forward to working with them all."

When Huebener is not running the family farm, he enjoys sports, spending time with his family, and traveling with his wife Felecia. Together, they have two children. A daughter Emily of Chicago and a son Ben (Lacey) of Lexington, KY. Charles and Felecia are looking forward to the birth of their first grandchild this fall.

Due to Johnson's retirement, Dwayne Milner of Medora was appointed to take his seat. Therefore, Milner began his journey as Director of District 5 on June 4, 2021. Milner graduated from Southern Illinois University – Carbondale with his Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics in 2006. He obtained a job as a Salesman for CHS out of Shipman and now manages the seed department. Louis Johnson had a few conversations with Milner over the years that enticed him to become a Board of Director. "I'm enthusiastic about meeting MJM's Members and learning how to best serve them," Milner says. He is hoping that his background will add a diversity to the Board of Directors.

Milner is the proud dad of Abram, eight, Charlotte, six, Cole, three, Josh one, and Baby Milner who will be arriving in early September. He is married to his wife Catherine. Milner enjoys duck hunting and raising market lambs to sell for kids to show across the country.

MJM cannot wait to see their contributions in the very near future! 🌈



Dwayne Milner  
Medora, IL

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

During summer months, run large appliances that emit heat (like clothes dryers and dishwashers) during the evening when it's cooler.

This will minimize indoor heat during the day when outdoor temperatures are highest.



# COOPERATIVE WORD SEARCH

As a member of an electric cooperative, you're part of something special!

Read the facts below to learn how co-ops are unique, then find and circle the **BOLDED** words in the puzzle.



## WORD BANK:

- **COOPERATIVES** are local organizations and businesses, so they understand the communities they serve.
- Co-ops don't have customers; instead, they have **MEMBERS**.
- All co-ops are guided by the same set of cooperative **PRINCIPLES**.
- "Concern for **COMMUNITY**" is the seventh cooperative principle.
- Co-ops are led by the members they **SERVE**.
- You're a member of an **ELECTRIC** cooperative, but there are also housing, grocery and other types of co-ops.

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## Member Trading Post

**FOR SALE:** 2018 Salem Cruise Lite 20' camper \$18,000; 2011 Suburban, Loaded, 132,500 miles, \$13,000. Please call 217-710-2361

**FOR SALE:** 2001 Corvette Dark Blue Automatic Sport Coupe, 31,500 miles, perfect condition. Asking \$19,500.00. Call 618-635-3030

**FOR SALE:** Maxwell 24' gooseneck trailer, in good shape, and title in hand. Asking for \$1,500. 8' heavy duty blade. Asking \$750 O.B.O. Call 618-980-9705

**FOR SALE:** Olympic max for decks. Resurfaces, primer, and sealant. Color: Pewter. Fills cracks and splinters up to 1/4 inch. 2.67 gallons. Paid \$75, asking for \$50. Call 618-372-8763

To list your free ad, email [brookeg@mjmec.coop](mailto:brookeg@mjmec.coop), call 217-707-6156 or mail the ad to MJM Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL 62626. Each ad will run for one month. Some restriction may apply.