



**MJM**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**ALONG THE LINES**

Vol. 14, No. 11

November 2021

[www.mjmec.coop](http://www.mjmec.coop)

# Happy Thanksgiving

**MJM to Return  
\$626,570 in Capital Credit Refunds!  
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Available!  
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ALONG THE LINES

Published by:

**MJM Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Office Hours

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



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Engineering and Operations

Jeremy Pattillo..... Director of

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Jennifer Peterson..... Executive

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#### Editor

Brooke Gross..... Communications  
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 loca-  
tion 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.

MJM Along the Lines (USPS 854-620) is  
published monthly for \$3.00 per year by  
MJM Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box  
80, Carlinville, Illinois 62626. Second-  
class postage paid at Carlinville, IL.  
POSTMASTER: Send Address changes  
to MJM Along the Lines, P.O. Box 80,  
Carlinville, IL 62626.

# BE SAFE DURING THE HO-HO-HOLIDAYS 10 TIPS TO HELP YOU STAY JOLLY



*Before you plan out your new holiday lighting scheme  
or repeat last year's festive design, keep these 10  
safety tips in mind when decorating outdoors:*

1

Do not toss light strands up into the  
air. They could get too close to or  
come into contact with a power line.

2

Before using a ladder, always look up  
and assess all power line locations.

3

Carry a ladder horizontally when  
transporting it.

4

Keep at least 10 feet between yourself  
(and any item you are holding) and a  
power line.

5

Do not use staples or nails or tacks to  
secure light strands, cords, wires or  
extension cords.

6

String together no more than the  
number of strands recommended by  
the manufacturer.

7

Plug all lights and extension cords into  
GFCI-protected outlets.

8

Use lights and extension cords rated  
for outdoor use.

9

Do not use frayed, cracked or  
otherwise damaged cords, plugs or  
lights.

10

Use only lights and products certified  
by a reputable testing lab.

 **Safe Electricity.org®** LEARN MORE AT:







In a Cooperative like MJM Electric, you are a Member-Owner of the business. One major difference between a Cooperative and an investor-owned utility is that you see an ownership in the business through capital credits. When capital credits are returned to Members, you are seeing the return on your investment. This is one of the benefits of being served by a not-for-profit utility!

Many MJM Members do not realize that we're a not-for-profit utility. Every month you pay your bill, you are helping to finance, not just the purchase and production of power, but improvements to the system that keep the lights on. **You are investing in YOUR Cooperative.** Your immediate payback is in the form of increased reliability and affordable rates.

Capital credits are the money or margins that is left over after all bills associated with doing business have been paid. Each of you are entitled to these capital credits, or a share of the refund based on your energy use. Before returning these capital credits back to you, MJM uses this capital to offset the cost of debt for the construction and maintenance of the electric distribution system. This working capital represents your ownership equity in MJM. Each generation of Cooperative Members contributes, builds equity in the Co-op, and then is rewarded with a capital credit refund. This system is unique to not-for-

profit electric cooperatives. People served by for-profit utilities do not reap these benefits.

Per Cooperative bylaws, MJM's Member-elected Board or Directors determines the amount of margins retired each year based on the Cooperative's financial condition and other considerations. At the August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, board meeting, a motion was made to retire all of 1983 Cooperative's margins in the amount of \$626,570. Since the first capital credit refunds were made, MJM has returned \$5 Million back to its Members and has distributed capital credit refunds the last nine consecutive years.

**The 1983 general retirement will show up on Member's bills as a credit on their December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, billing statement.** Active Members who have been named as an heir of an estate and Members no longer on MJM lines will receive this capital credit refund via check. If the refund is under \$10, a check will not be reissued but will be donated back to the Cooperative as permanent equity.

Do not forget that even if you have moved away from the Cooperative lines, you are still eligible to receive your capital credits. Always make sure that we have a current address on file. If you have any questions, please call us at 217-707-6156. 🌈



# It's a Matter of (Co-op) Principles!...pt 2

By Anne Price, NRECA

For me, this is a time of year for reflection, and topping my list of things I'm grateful for is our wonderful community. I know I speak for all MJM Electric employees when I say that we are thankful to be in such an incredible place. We are fortunate to live in the same place where we work, which makes our ties to this community that much stronger.

You may recall that last month, my column touched on the first three Cooperative Principles, so this month, I'd like to tell you about the remaining four principles. The Cooperative Principles are essential to the Co-op business model and benefit all members of the Co-op.

## Autonomy and Independence

The fourth principal, Autonomy and Independence, means that the Co-op operates in an autonomous way that is solely directed and guided by its members, reflecting the values and needs of our local community. This means the Co-op is not being influenced by leaders or shareholders several states away. Instead, the Co-op is led by the local Members it serves.

## Education and Training

The fifth principle, Education and Training, focuses on enhancing the knowledge of Co-op employees and Board Members, which enables them to contribute to the development of the Co-op.

By investing in continuous learning for our employees and Board Members, our Co-op is making a commitment not just to individual professional and personal growth, but to the future of the Co-op and the high quality of service our members expect and deserve. It's a win-win situation.

We also strive to inform our Members (that's you!) and the public about the mission and operations of the Co-op. In fact, that's why you receive this magazine every month, so we can share the latest Co-op news and updates, as well as energy efficiency and safety tips.

## Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperation among Cooperatives is the sixth principle and fosters the way that co-ops work together to address bigger challenges. While this principle applies to all types of cooperatives, it is especially relevant in the energy industry. In our case, we put this principle in action after major storms and disasters that cause widespread power outages. When this happens, we call on nearby Co-ops to come to our aid and assist with restoration efforts—and we of course extend the same help to them when they need us. I can't think of a better example of cooperation among cooperatives.

In addition, because we are part of the national electric co-op network, we can connect and collaborate with other electric co-ops to tackle industry-related challenges, like cybersecurity and an everchanging energy landscape.



## Concern for Community

The seventh principle, Concern for Community, is essential to who we are as cooperatives. We serve our community not only by being an essential service, but by helping to power our local economy. Whether through economic development, volunteerism or donations to local causes, we invest in this community because it's our home too.

I think you'll find that most cooperatives bring good people together to make good things happen in the community. We hope you feel that way about us, your local electric co-op.


On behalf of everyone at MJM Electric, we're thankful for your Membership, and we hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving. 🌈



# Calling All Leaders!

MJM follows the basic principle of Democratic Member control: one Member, one vote. Did you know that as a Member of our Co-op, you are eligible to run for a Board of Director position? Board of Directors are your friends and neighbors. The decisions they make for your Cooperative effects their electric service the same as yours. This year District 1 - W. Kay Schultz, District 6 - William Heyen, and District 9 - Marcie Tonsor are up for re-election. These Board of Directors will be voted on at the 2022 Annual Meeting. Due to continued COVID restrictions, a decision as to when or where the Annual Meeting will be has yet to be determined.

To know which Board of Director represents you, refer to the MJM bylaw booklet (Articles IV – Board of Directors; V – Meetings of Director; and VI – Officers, Misc.) available online at [www.mjmec.coop/how-were-governed](http://www.mjmec.coop/how-were-governed). For participation details, contact us at 217-707-6156 or email us at [info@mjmec.coop](mailto:info@mjmec.coop) as soon as you can. 🌈



## COOK UP ENERGY SAVINGS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.

- Clean oven burners regularly.
- Match the pan size to the burner you're using.
- Use small appliances like slow cookers and toaster ovens when possible.

**From our table to yours,  
Happy Thanksgiving!**

# October's Month in Review!

What a way to celebrate National Co-op Month by welcoming Senator Doris Turner to MJM's headquarters! Senator Turner toured the facility and met the employees who keep MJM running from a day-to-day basis. She had the opportunity to hear a presentation from Director of Engineering and Operations Joe Heyen and Staking Technician Nathan Hatalla over MJM's mapping system. Senator Turner took her time walking the halls, asking questions, and furthering her knowledge on what a Cooperative does. It was great to host her!



MJM employees could not be more Cybersecurity knowledgeable as this past month IT Administrator Chris Franzen took the lead on educating employees for National Cybersecurity Awareness month. For a whole year, Franzen designed test emails that would periodically be sent to employees' emails. These test emails would question our knowledge on choosing if it was an actual email or a phishing email. After a full year, Engineer Gage Gwillim was able to pass all the tests and won a prize! 🎉



# 14

# SCHOLARSHIPS

Illinois electric cooperatives will award 14 scholarships in 2022 to financially assist deserving students in the electric cooperative family. The 14 scholarships, \$2,000 each, will be awarded through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Eight scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric co-op member. A ninth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee or director. Four additional scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

The 14th scholarship, the LaVern and Nola McEntire Memorial Lineworker's Scholarship, will help pay for costs to attend lineworker school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Ill. Sons and daughters of co-op members, relatives of co-op employees or directors, and individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard are all eligible for this scholarship.

"We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with these scholarships," says CEO/President Laura Cutler. "MJM Electric and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth and investing in them through programs like this one."

Along with the announcement of 14 scholarship opportunities, MJM's \$1,000 Scholarship Program is now live! MJM will award two \$1,000 scholarships to sons and daughters of MJM Members. The applicant must be a high school senior who is planning to enroll in a full-time (at least 12 hours) undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, community college, or vocational/technical school in the United States. Only one application is needed for both the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperative and MJM's \$1,000 Scholarship Program.

**Deadline to apply is Dec. 31, 2021. The lineworker scholarship deadline is April 30, 2022.** For more information regarding the scholarships, contact Brooke Gross at 217-707-6028. Information is available online at <https://mjmec.coop/scholarships>. 🎓



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# Member Trading Post

**FOR SALE:** 2011 Mercury Grand Marquee, ultimate addition. Looks new, drives like new, and has four new tires. It has 29,700 miles and leather seats. Asking \$8,900. Please call 618-376-4006.

**FOR SALE:** 1993 Grand Prix, Runs good - \$1000. Free standings basketball hoop - \$10, George Foreman Electric Grill - \$10. Call 217-854-3577.

**AVAILABLE:** Covered, storage space available near Carlinville. Will fit boat, camper, or a car. 618-334-4298

**FOR SALE:** 5 antique solid oak curved back wooden chairs - \$35 EACH. Black, burnished metal, 5 arm chandelier - \$50. Old, black, metal wood lined steamer trunk 36x24x18 - \$80. Thru the roof chimney pipe about 8ft, 10in diameter believed to be stainless steel \$135. 2 Dyna-Glo Portable kerosene convection heaters. Cost \$300, used one week. 23,000 BTU - Both \$125 Call 618-580-7414 and a leave message.

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, 18300 Shipman Road, P.O. Box 80, Carlinville, IL 62626. Each ad will run for one month. Some restriction may apply.

