

Area Serviceman Dwaine Heyen retires

“I’ve worked with a lot of good people, and it’s been a lot of fun,” says Dwaine Heyen of his 40 years with Menard Electric Cooperative.

Dwaine was hired in 1983 as unskilled help for the Operations Department. He then moved to Groundman, then Groundman/Truck Driver before beginning his 4-year lineman apprenticeship in 1985. He worked as a Journeyman Lineman a few years before moving to Area Serviceman in 1994. He’s been serving members in that position the last 29 years.

One of the biggest changes Dwaine has seen is with equipment. “When

I became an Area Serviceman, I had a pickup truck, so I climbed poles every day. In 2004, I got a bucket truck, and that was a big change,” he says. Another positive change was the move from multiple locations in downtown Petersburg

to our current consolidated location. “Coming out here, it saved us a lot of time having everything together,” he says.

He also notes that through the last 40 years the culture around safety in the entire lineman profession has also changed. “Safety has always been there, but it’s more talked about now. That’s gotten better.” What does he tell the new linemen? “Be observant and watch over others. And don’t worry about asking questions,” he says.

Operations Manager Dalton Whitley says, “Dwaine is truly one of a kind, and he will be missed by many. We wish him the best in his retirement.”



Employee position changes



Brandon Blair is Area Serviceman.
23 Years of Service
Positions held: Apprentice Lineman;
Lineman; Leadman; Crew Leader



Jeremy Willis is Crew Leader.
15 Years of Service
Positions held: Lineman; Leadman;
Storekeeper Leadman



Pam Davis is Purchasing & Materials
Specialist.
20 Years of Service
Positions held: Receptionist; Accounts
Payable Clerk



85th Annual Meeting of Members

Members were attentive during the business meeting after enjoying a pork chop dinner by the Mason County Pork Producers and visiting with friends, neighbors, co-op employees and directors.

Business Meeting Reports

President Warren Goetsch

In a video presentation, Goetsch discussed the challenges faced and progress made by the co-op during the past year, focusing on infrastructure, technology and workforce. He discussed how employees met the challenges of supply chain disruptions and increased material pricing and lead times. He pointed out the collaborative work performed to upgrade lines, substations and electronic equipment, all while keeping our services safe and reliable.

“We understand that Menard Electric’s success is not measured in kilowatts or dollars, but in the quality of service we provide our membership and the impact we have in our communities,” said Goetsch. He ended with a reminder that the co-op’s continued evolution in response to changing technologies, consumer needs and regulatory environments is critical. “I am confident that by working together, we can overcome any challenges and achieve even

greater success,” he said. Find a link to the full video report at www.menard.com/2023AnnualMeeting.

Treasurer Dennis Ryan

In a video presentation, Ryan gave financial details about the cooperative, focusing on the importance of the long-term financial plan balancing equity and debt, the co-op’s commitment to returning capital credits to members, and its priority to minimize rate increases. He indicated a cost-of-service study is currently being conducted to ensure each rate class structure adequately captures the co-op’s costs. [You’ll hear more about that in this newsletter once it is complete.] Interested in hearing the numbers? You can find the Treasurer Report handout given to members at the meeting and a link to the video presentation on our website at www.menard.com/2023AnnualMeeting.

General Manager Alisha Anker

Anker reminded members of where we stood last year in regard to the energy market and the co-op’s ability to maintain steady rates at that time due to the diverse portfolio of our power supplier, Prairie Power, Inc. “This held

true for 2022,” she said. “The 2023 outlook we received in November from Prairie Power included a 14% increase in forecasted costs over the most recent 4-year average.” She also referenced inventory costs that doubled in 2022 have continued to increase. These factors led to cutting some planned projects and analyzing the most recent cost-of-service study to implement a facility charge increase to members this January.

“Despite these market-influence rigors, over the past year your co-op

Members got a first peek at our electric vehicle, a Volkswagen ID.4. We will give details about member visits and test drives on our website, www.menard.com/EV, and in next month’s issue.





More than 325 members and their families attended this year's meeting at a new location, Athens Christian Church. Each registered membership received a \$20 bill credit and was entered to win prizes.



Kona Ice snow cones were popular again this year with all ages.



Members stopped by to ask our Engineering Department questions about their home and irrigation services, right-of-way maintenance, solar and more.

employees have accomplished many feats," said Anker. Some examples included interconnection of 63 member-owned distributed solar generation systems, bringing the total to just under 200 members; installation of over 5 miles of underground line and 75 new member services; and completion of 225 work orders to upgrade existing or retire unneeded services. The installation of 17.5 miles of overhead line by co-op and contract crews provided an upgrade in conductors, which improved the system line loss factor between substations and

member meters by one-half of one percent. "Given our wholesale power cost for every 1% of line loss equals almost \$183,000 a year, we welcome every tenth of a percentage of reduction." She also praised the vegetation management right-of-way program that assisted in reducing line loss, as well as improving the safety and reliability of our system. Alisha highlighted key accomplishments from each department's employees that included enhanced communications systems at substations; the ability to accept new membership

applications online; expansion into a new Mechanics Building, allowing for better care of our fleet, equipment and materials; and the integration of asset records, purchasing, inventory and work order processes into our financial information system.

Director Election

Three incumbents ran unopposed and were re-elected to three-year terms: Jodine Tate – District 3; Michael Patrick – District 7; and Warren Goetsch – District 8.

Board highlights

May 23, 2023

Present were Warren Goetsch, Jay Frye, Gary Holloway, Gary Martin, Don McMillan, Michael Patrick, Dennis Ryan, Jodine Tate & Steve Worner; also Director of Accounting & Finance Julie Atwater, Engineering Manager Brady Smith, General Manager Alisha Anker & Attorney Charles K. Smith.

Member scheduled appearance to discuss vegetation mgmt policy.

2022 Financial Audit approved as presented by Kevin Kelso.

Anker reviewed monthly & YTD financial operation report, balance sheet & financial trends. Operating margins as of 04/23 were \$1,202,796, compared to \$1,087,241 last year;

For full minutes visit menard.com or contact the office.

equity at 42.81%; 12-mo TIER 2.61 & DSC 1.81.

Reviewed Operations report w/70 incidents; longest outage 357 min affected 12 members due to downed lines by tree hit by lightning; largest # affected by single outage 956 due to transmission outage to substations after farm/pole accident.

Safety report discussed hurt man & bucket truck rescue & fire extinguisher training. Discussed irrigation system constructions. Discussed FEMA Appeal denial; motion approved to utilize firm with FEMA experience & appeal again.

Next mtg moved to 6/30/23 @8 a.m.

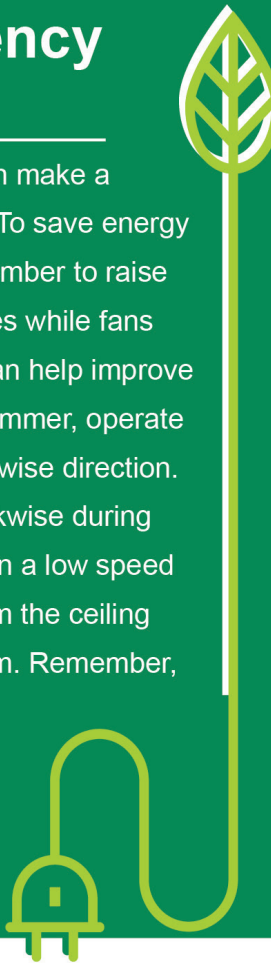
If your landscaping projects involve digging, remember to always call Julie at 811 or visit illinois1call.com. Give two to three business days' advance notice so that all underground utility lines can be marked.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know ceiling fans can make a room feel 4 degrees cooler? To save energy through ceiling fan use, remember to raise your thermostat a few degrees while fans are turned on. Ceiling fans can help improve comfort year-round. In the summer, operate ceiling fans in a counterclockwise direction. Reverse the direction to clockwise during winter months and set fans on a low speed so warm air can circulate from the ceiling to the lower levels of the room. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not spaces. Be sure to turn them off when you leave the room.

Source: Dept. of Energy



New Online Payment Website and Quick Pay Option

New Address



Click the "Pay Online" button on our website at www.menard.com, or the "Payments" button on the MyMEC app. If you've previously bookmarked the page, you will need to update that to the new link.

New Look & Better Navigation



Find what you need quickly and easily. If you've previously registered, your login remains the same.

Quick Pay Option



Now you can pay your bill without having to register or log in. Simply enter the account number and phone number for the service, and you'll be able to submit your payment without accessing the full site.

New Online Payment Website and Quick Pay Option



Sign In

MY ACCOUNT

BILLING & PAYMENTS



Quick Pay is a simple, fast and secure way to make payments online without logging in.

Quick Pay



Online Payments

Save a stamp by using the Internet to view and pay your bill online.
Click here to pay online. →



Account Profile

Everything you need to manage your account right at your fingertips.
Click here to manage my account profile. →



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