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Elizabeth, Illinois



800-858-5522



jcecoop.com



## 18C

### Youth Day

Noah Ponce represents JCE Co-op



## 18D

### Annual Meeting

Save the date: June 20



## 18F

### Summer savings

We can help you save!

## Advancing our area

We talk a lot about our buildout of fiber broadband in northwest Illinois and what that means to you as members, our communities and JCE Co-op itself. We thank you for your patience as our teams manage the largest buildout of utility infrastructure/fiber in our past 85 years.

To put this in perspective, we currently maintain approximately 2,400 miles of electric distribution line, 300-plus miles of natural gas pipeline, and over 1,000 miles of fiber backbone. During the next three years, we expect to construct another 1,500 miles of fiber backbone that will provide access to over 10,000 homes and businesses.

We all appreciate our beautiful rural countryside, from the rocky bluffs and rolling hills to the woodlands, farm fields and sandy prairies. What makes our area uniquely scenic can make construction and maintenance of utility infrastructure extremely difficult and costly. To overcome this, our team has been proactive and tremendously successful in being awarded grants to build out eligible areas that would otherwise be cost-prohibitive.

I am pleased to share that your cooperative has been awarded an additional \$69.5 million in grants, which will provide us the opportunity to offer fiber to other eligible rural areas of Jo Daviess, Carroll and Whiteside County. To date, JCE Co-op has been awarded approximately \$90 million in grant dollars



### CEO'S REPORT by Mike Casper

that require on average a 30% match from the co-op, which equates to an approximately \$130 million buildout. More information can be found on our website at [jcecoop.com](http://jcecoop.com).

Why is this important? High-speed internet allows our existing businesses — small business, commercial, industrial and agricultural — to grow and remain competitive, our children to excel and Northwest Illinois to attract workforce and businesses, while connecting us to telemedicine and family and friends around the world. Not only will fiber benefit you directly, but indirectly, by improving communication with our other utility assets (electric and natural gas). With better quality communication comes improved safety, reliability, efficiency, operations and data accuracy, which all contribute to rate stabilization.

High-speed internet is necessary for the future success of our region. Working together as ambassadors is a worthy purpose for the advancement of our children and our children's children.

I have one request, which is vital to meet this objective. When our team or our easement contractors make a request, please work with us in a timely fashion. Each grant award has

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## For your information

### Your Board of Directors:

**David Senn**  
Chairman  
District 7

**Russell Holesinger**  
Vice Chairman  
District 8

**Robert Kuhns**  
Treasurer  
District 10

**Dan Tindell**  
Secretary  
District 4

**Jerry Meyer**  
District 1

**Joseph Mattingley**  
District 2

**Allen Hendren**  
District 3

**Patricia Smith**  
District 5

**Thomas Lundy**  
District 6

**Larry Carroll**  
District 9

### Office Hours: Monday-Friday

**Elizabeth**  
793 U.S. Route 20 West  
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Savanna**  
103 Chicago Ave.  
7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
1:30 to 4 p.m.

**Geneseo**  
1004 S. Chicago St.  
7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
1:30 to 4 p.m.

### Services and Billing Questions:

**(800) 858-5522**  
jcecoop.com

### For emergencies and outages call:

**(800) 858-5522**

# Resume of Minutes

Feb. 28, 2022

*The regular board meeting of JCE Co-op was held on Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2024.*

**Safety Moment** – Director Al Hendren discussed cybersecurity at home and what you can do to protect yourself, such as changing passwords frequently and updating your software.

**Approval of Agenda** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the meeting agenda.

**Consent Agenda** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the consent agenda.

### Presentations –

The Annual Meeting Cover and Theme “Growing for You” was presented to the Board. The theme represents the strategic approach that the cooperative continues to pursue presently and into the future.

Kyle Buros, Senior VP and Chief Operating Officer, provided updates on Natural Gas (NG), Broadband and Electric operations. Buros highlighted our growth in all three business units, noting that we are continuing to upgrade the NG pipeline system, expand the fiber network by utilizing multiple grants and self-funding, and adding three new electric substations while completing line capacity upgrades.

### Governance Topics and Board Policy Review

**Governance Talk Video** – None.

### Board Policy Review

**Board Policy 149/Cybersecurity** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to repeal and replace Policy 149 with re-written Policy 149.1 Cybersecurity.

**Board Policy 120/Harassment** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve Board Policy 120 as is with no changes.

**Board Policy 121/Safety and Job Training** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve Board Policy 121 to include the use of mobile devices and updated federal and state law regulations.

**Board Policy 104.1 Travel** – Board Policy 104.1 Travel – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to move Board Policy 104.1 back to the Governance Committee for further discussion. It was also noted that changes will be made to section A.3 to include language “as a cost-saving measure.”

### CEO/Financial Operating Report

**CEO Report** – President and CEO Mike Casper

emphasized our three strategic objectives (growth, enhanced cooperative value and operational excellence) and together how they strengthen the co-op, as well as the future of northwest Illinois. He highlighted the businesses and communities recognized at the Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) annual meeting and how our strategic objectives have played a part in their success.

**Financial Operating Report** – Chuck Woods, Chief Financial Officer, provided a summary of the January financial operating report. Revenue year-to-date (YTD) is approximately \$7 million. Total operations and maintenance expenses are approximately \$5 million, which is (\$490,329) under the budget of \$5.6 million. Margins are approximately \$1.1 million versus a budgeted amount of \$80,438 and amount to \$1 million over budget. By general consent, the board moved to file the financial operating report with the auditor.

### Operations and Regulatory/Legislative Update

**Operations Update** – Senior VP and Chief Operating Officer Kyle Buros had nothing else to add outside of his Operations Presentation.

**Member Services Update** – VP of Member Services Jennifer Meyer provided a Strategic Plan update that includes growth initiatives to help stabilize rates (i.e., fiber). In addition, Meyer discussed how we continue to improve operations with technology enhancements. One such improvement includes the upgrade of our Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system, comprised of 21,000 electric meters and 5,600 natural gas meters.

**Human Resources Update** – It was noted that VP of Human Resources Merri Sevey was participating in mock interviews with students from a local high school, which aligns with one of JCE Co-op’s core principles, Community Success.

**Executive Assistant Update** – Amy Johnston, Executive Assistant, provided logistics for the upcoming NRECA Power Exchange Annual Meeting.

**External Affairs/Legislative Update** – General Counsel Terry Kurt discussed House Bill 5021/ Municipal and Cooperative Electric Utility Planning and Transparency Act, which has been introduced into legislation, and reported that AIEC is monitoring the bill.

**Technology Update** – VP and Chief Technology Officer Dan Marcure shared that JCE Co-op uses multifactor authentication to protect from potential

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## Youth Day

For more than 60 years, the electric and telephone cooperatives of Illinois have given tomorrow's leaders the opportunity to learn from today's public officials. On March 20, more than 200 students from across rural Illinois represented 25 co-ops during Youth Day, including one from JCE Co-op.

"Youth Day gives students across the state an up-close look at democracy in action as they meet their elected representatives in Springfield," said Baylee Flowers, legal and government relations coordinator at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. "State senators and representatives have the opportunity to inspire and encourage the leaders of tomorrow during this annual event."

Noah Ponce represented JCE Co-op on Youth Day. During the day, he visited Illinois Senator Neil Anderson's office, learned about his electric cooperative's role in his community and had the opportunity to tour the Illinois State Capitol and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

During lunch, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Natalie Phelps Finnie addressed the students. She discussed her background as a healthcare provider and how she got into politics. She encouraged

them to follow their passions, live confidently and work hard.

"You're embarking upon adulthood," Phelps Finnie said to the students. "You can do anything you want to do. I just ask that you come to adulthood with the right posture and attitude. ... Don't come with a sense of entitlement that everything is owed to you. Work for it. Earn it."

Participants also met Paris Van Dyke, the 2023-24 Illinois Youth Leadership Council representative, who was sponsored by Wabash Communications during last year's Youth Day. She spoke about her experiences over the past year and challenged attendees to say, "Yes."

"What I want to say to you today is something that I decided to do during this day last year — take every opportunity," Van Dyke said. "You will learn so much if you just choose to say, 'Yes.'"

In addition to Youth Day, Ponce was also selected to participate in Youth Tour, an annual trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives. This year's trip will be held June 14-21. He will represent JCE Co-op on the weeklong



trip and meet his elected officials, see historic sites, learn firsthand how cooperatives work and gain valuable leadership skills.



# Don't miss the 85th Annual Meeting of Members

All JCE Co-op members are invited to attend the 85th Annual Meeting of Members on Thursday, June 20 at Saint Malachy School in Geneseo.

Registration begins at 4:30 p.m. with the business meeting at 6 p.m., followed by a pork chop sandwich dinner.

Remember to bring the registration card from the 2024 Annual Report that was mailed in late April. Every member in attendance will receive a \$10 bill credit.

Co-op displays will feature energy efficiency, safety, fiber internet and more!

During the official business session, you will hear updates from Board Chairman Dave Senn and President and CEO Mike Casper. Special guest speaker is Jeremy Johnson, VP-Engineering & Operations, Prairie Power, Inc.

Five bylaw amendments will be considered. The proposed changes are:

1. Addition to Article II, Section 7(d). This amendment adds language requiring members to treat all co-op officials

with courtesy and respect.

Cooperatives are based on the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

2. Article II, Section 12. Deletion of "oral" easements to be consistent with Illinois law.

3. Addition to Article II, Section 12. A new paragraph is being added to Section 12 so the installation of cooperative services can be more efficient and performed in a timely manner in the absence of a signed written easement. The bylaws already require members to provide the cooperative access to any portion of member property and require the execution of a written easement in or on member property. This section will be utilized in those circumstances where no written easement has been obtained.

4. Addition to Article IX, Section 9. The addition to this section regarding the appointment of committees provides consistency with past practices and existing board policy.

5. Additions to Article IX, Section 1(2), Section 2 and Section 3. The addition of language "telecommunications/broadband services" in the bylaws reflects the growth of the cooperative and the inclusion of those business units in the event of a disposition of property, mortgaging, merger or sale.

At the end of the meeting, door prizes will be awarded, and a drawing will be held for the Director's Scholarship. Members must be present to win door prizes; students who have applied for the Director's Scholarships must attend with at least one parent or guardian. Members who can't attend are invited to submit questions in advance at [jcecoop.com/annual-meeting](http://jcecoop.com/annual-meeting) and will be entered into a drawing for bill credits.

We encourage families to attend! A kids' area with special activities for children ages 5-10 will be available during the business session. We'll have safety demonstrations, games and more for our future co-op members.

## Minutes continued from page 18B

cyberattacks. In addition, he provided clarification on JCE Co-op's new email addresses, which will be fully integrated and ready for use soon.

## Board Issues and Action Items

**Position Statement/Safety** – The Position Statement on Safety was tabled and will be reviewed at the March board meeting.

## Executive Session

**Into Executive Session** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to go into Executive Session at 11:40 a.m.

**Out of Executive Session** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to come out of Executive Session at 11:50 a.m.

## Action Resulting from Executive

**Session** – General Counsel Terry Kurt will develop a conflict-of-interest waiver.

## Reports/Updates

### Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) Report

– Chairman Senn provided highlights from the AIEC board meeting, noting that they have agreed to the employment terms of their newly hired President and CEO Craig Sondgeroth. The AIEC continues their search to hire a General Counsel for the organization. Craig Sondgeroth was the previous General Counsel prior to filling his role as the President and CEO.

### Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) –

No report given, due to the timing of the DPC board meeting.

### American Public Gas Association

(APGA) Report – Director Carroll discussed the APGA marketing

strategy, noting the importance of public education.

### Prairie Power Incorporated (PPI)

**Report** – Director Kuhns shared a summary from the PPI power supply report and provided the most recent generation numbers. In addition, President and CEO Casper noted that PPI's VP of Engineering and Operations Jeremy Johnson will be the guest speaker at JCE Co-op's Annual Meeting.

### Strategic Planning Roundtable

**Discussion** – Directors shared highlights from the Guide to Shared Services/Mergers and Acquisitions Course they recently attended, noting that the class was very informative.

**Other Business** – None.

**Adjournment** – Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

## AMI module upgrade

JCE Co-op is implementing an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) solution for our natural gas members. We began this upgrade the beginning of April.

Each home with natural gas will receive an AMI module upgrade to their current meter. Some homes may receive a new meter along with the AMI module depending on the age of their current meter.

Each installation should take around 30 minutes. Typically, there will be no interruption of service; however, if the entire meter set needs to be replaced, we will occasionally need to turn off the gas to a home. If the gas needs to be turned off, we will offer a relight at the members convenience.

You do not need to be present while this work is being completed. Once the upgrade is complete, we will leave a door hanger with any follow up actions.

AMI technology automatically collects consumption data from your gas meter and transfers this data over a secure network to our database. The collected data is used for utility billing.

This AMI solution will limit requiring a JCE Co-op meter reader to come onto your property. This new system will improve our ability to take readings more often and minimize estimated bills, enhancing meter reading accuracy.

If you have questions, please contact JCE Co-op at 800-858-5522.

## Budget billing accounts recalculate in May

Members with budget billing for their electric and/or natural gas accounts will have the budget amounts recalculated in May. Because the budget amount is based on an average of previous 12 months' use and outstanding credits or debits may accrue, the May true-up recalculation may result in an increase or decrease depending on changes in your use patterns.

Be sure to check your May statement to see if your budget amount has changed. A message in blue will appear on your statement to indicate the new budget amount if the recalculation resulted in a change. If you do not see a message on your statement, your budget billing amount remained the same.

If you have more than one billing account on budget, it is possible that one or both amounts may change.

You will begin paying the new budget amount in June. If you have any questions regarding budget billing, your budget bill account or levelized billing, please contact the Member Services Department at 800-858-5522. You can also find more information on our website at [jcecoop.com/budget-billing](http://jcecoop.com/budget-billing).

## Send us your best shots!

JCE Co-op members are invited to submit their best photos for our 2024 photo contest.

The subject of the photo can be landscapes, power-line equipment or anything that depicts life in northwest Illinois. Entries must be submitted by June 30.

Entrants must be JCE Co-op members; spouses and children of members may submit photos also. All photos must be the work of the entrant and be taken within the JCE Co-op service area.

We will choose 12 photos to appear on the pages of our 2025 photo calendar pages. Several other photos may be selected as honorable mention.

For complete rules and entry information, please visit [jcecoop.com/member-involvement](http://jcecoop.com/member-involvement).

We do ask that members limit their entries to five each.



## Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a JCE Co-op member who is eligible to win a monthly \$25 readership prize. If your name is printed in this month's edition, and not a part of any article, contact JCE Co-op.

# Grow your summer energy savings

JCE Co-op can help you save money

One of my favorite things about summer is the opportunity for fresh, home-grown food, whether it's shopping at the local farmers market or sharing the abundance of garden tomatoes with a neighbor. It's amazing how just a few seeds, some fertilizer and water can turn into a bounty.

When I think about energy efficiency, I think about that bounty of food, and how with just a few simple actions, you can use less electricity and reap the rewards of energy savings.

You don't need to be a farmer or botanist to know that plants need water — just like you don't have to be a lineworker or engineer to know that adjusting the thermostat or turning off lights can reduce your monthly electric bill. In fact, if you read JCE Co-op's publications regularly and follow us on Facebook, you know there are a lot of things you can do at home to save electricity and money.

Summer months bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. Why? Cooling your home accounts for a large portion of your monthly energy use, and the hotter it gets, the harder (and longer) your air conditioner works to keep you cool. **Patrick & Sara Kennedy**

There are several ways you can manage energy use at home, and below we provide a few tips that can help grow your summer energy savings.

I'd also like to share a few ways we're here to help you save — not only during the

## 5 WAYS TO SAVE THIS SUMMER

When summer temperatures rise, so do our energy bills. Here are a few ways you can reduce energy use and grow your summer savings.

### 1. Raise your thermostat.

The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temp, the more you'll save.

### 2. Install window coverings

like blinds or light-blocking curtains to prevent indoor heat gain during the day.

### 3. Seal leaks with caulk and weatherstripping

around windows and exterior doors. Air leaks force your air conditioner to work harder and run longer than necessary.

### 4. Run ceiling fans

for additional cooling but turn them off when you leave the room.

### 5. Lower your water heater thermostat

to 120 degrees to reduce standby heat loss.



Source: Dept. of Energy

dog days of summer but throughout the year.

One of the great things about being a member of the co-op is that we're locally owned by you, our members. So, instead of making profits, we can focus on helping our community. That's why we've developed incentives and programs to help you keep your money in your wallet.

Save money with these easy incentives:

- **Rebates:** JCE Co-op offers multiple ways to give you money back for efficient equipment you purchase, like heat pumps and water heaters. Many of our rebates can be claimed by simply filling out a form. Find a list of all our rebates at [jcecoop.com/energy-detective](http://jcecoop.com/energy-detective).
- **Free energy assessments:** Our energy advisor can determine the overall efficiency of your home and help you with ways to improve it.

- **Ways to pay:** If you're having a difficult time paying the higher bills that come with increased use in the summer, contact us to learn about our budget billing program.

Most people don't know everything about electricity, and that's why we're here to help you. There are no investors making profits here, just knowledgeable people with local jobs, working for our neighbors to ensure there is electricity available when you need it. Contact us, and we can work with you to find more ways to save energy — and money.

**CEO's report continued from page 18A**

a defined period to complete the buildout. Delays can risk defaulting on funds to build out cost-prohibitive areas that desperately need this service.

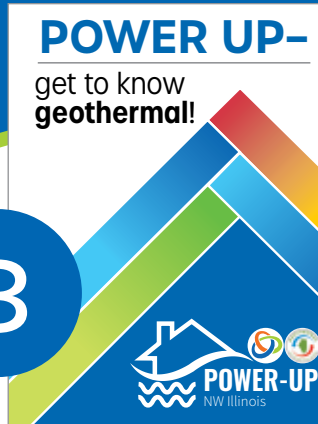
Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the advancement of our communities.

# Save the dates!

*We're are always excited to meet with our members—so please plan to join us for these upcoming events!*

June  
Saturday

8



## Geothermal Power Hour

Apple Canyon Lake

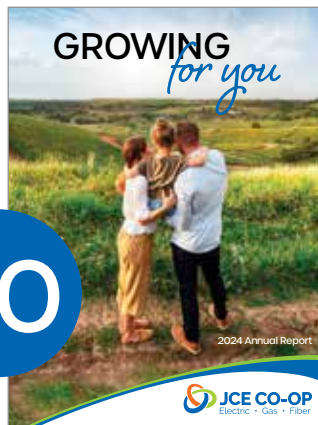
14A157 Canyon Club Dr Apple River, IL 61001

10:00 a.m. to noon

Refreshments to follow

June  
Thursday

20



## 2024 Annual Meeting of Members

Saint Malachy School

595 E Ogden Ave, Geneseo, IL 61254

4:30 p.m.

Member registration

4:30-5:30 p.m.

Geothermal presentation

6:00 p.m.

Meeting

7 p.m.

Dinner

August  
Saturday

10



## Geothermal Power Hour

Galena Territory Owners Clubhouse

2000 Territory Dr, Galena, IL 61036

10 a.m. to noon

Refreshments to follow

***We hope to see you there!***



Sign up at  
[jcecoop.com/geothermal](http://jcecoop.com/geothermal) or  
[jcecoop.com/annual-meeting](http://jcecoop.com/annual-meeting)

# JCE Co-op Fiber

## Fiber Construction Update



## Fiber Construction Crews Ready For Busy Spring Buildout

Spring has sprung and fiber construction crews have been active in many of our fiber neighborhoods including East Dubuque, Galena, Savanna, Lake Carroll, Schapville, The Galena Territory, Thomson, and Woodbine areas have all advanced in their fiber buildout phase! Follow your community's progress on JCE Co-op website's fiber communities map.

### Recent updates and phase changes include:

#### Interest to Sign-Up

East Dubuque: ED7, ED8, ED9  
Savanna: SAV10

#### Pre-Construction to Construction

East Dubuque: ED2, ED5  
Elizabeth (rural areas): ELZ11, ELZ12  
Lake Carroll: LCA1, LCA2  
Mount Carroll: MTC1  
Savanna: SAV2-7, SAV9, SAV11  
Schapville: CYN8  
Thomson: THN1, THN2, THN3  
Thomson (rural area): YRK1  
Woodbine: WBN1

#### Construction to Schedule Install

Chadwick: CDW3  
East Dubuque: ED3, ED4, ED6  
Galena Territory: GT11, GT15  
Savanna: SAV8

#### Fiber In-Service

Galena: G2, G3, G4, G5, G12, G24  
Galena Territory: GT1, GT7, GT8, GT9  
Mount Carroll: MTC2, MTC3, MTC5, MTC6, MTC8

*Status as of press deadline.*



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