

CONTENTS

 Elizabeth, Illinois |  800-858-5522 |  [jcecoop.com](http://jcecoop.com)



**18C**  
Scholarship winners



**18D-18E**  
Annual meeting recap



**18F**  
2024 Youth Tour

## Thanks for attending the annual meeting

On behalf of the JCE Co-op board of directors and staff, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our members who attended the 2024 Annual Meeting of Members in Geneseo on June 20.

We appreciate everyone who joined us to learn more about the co-op and participate in the meeting. Highlights of the meeting can be found inside this issue.

It was great to talk with many of you before and after the meeting. We also received some great questions from members who were unable to attend the meeting. Below are general responses to some of the questions we received.

**Question:** What are the long-term plans for building fiber optic network in Geneseo and the surrounding area?  
Hesper Nowatzki

**Response:** Your co-op is committed to providing all member's fiber, whether directly or through a mutual partnership.

**Question:** I am excited that fiber internet is coming. Construction has started in my area. Is there an estimate on when the install will be complete, and service is available? How long does the process take?

**Response:** There are a number of steps required before service is available. Construction brings the fiber to your neighborhood, then



**CEO'S REPORT**  
by Mike Casper

splicers splice the fiber, which will be run to your house. Then a co-op representative will call you to schedule the installation. The process takes between 1 to 3 months, which depends on several factors including weather. Additional information on this process can be found on our website: [www.jcecoop.com](http://www.jcecoop.com).

**Question:** Fiber when?

**Response:** We continue to push forward in bringing fiber optic service to all members across our service area, which covers four counties. This is a large undertaking, and takes a team effort from the cooperative, you and local leaders.

Our multiple grant awards are providing us the opportunity to bring fiber to rural areas that would otherwise be cost-prohibitive. Each grant has specific deadlines that we must meet, which drives the timeline. If an area does not qualify for grants, we rely on your interest to help move projects forward.

We expect fiber to be available throughout our service area by 2030, much of which by the end of 2026.

To date, we have constructed more than 1,200 miles of fiber (about half the width of the United States) and connected nearly 5,500 subscribers.

Continued on page 18G ▶

## For your information

### Your Board of Directors:

**David Senn**

Chairman

District 7

**Jerry Meyer**

Vice Chairman

District 1

**Robert Kuhns**

Treasurer

District 10

**Dan Tindell**

Secretary

District 4

**Joseph Mattingley**

District 2

**Allen Hendren**

District 3

**Patricia Smith**

District 5

**Thomas Lundy**

District 6

**Ted James**

District 8

**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

May 29, 2024

The regular board meeting of Jo-Carroll Energy, Inc. (NFP) was held on Wednesday, May 29, 2024.

**Safety Moment** – Director Kuhns shared the importance of vehicle safety, and defensive driving techniques.

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

**Consent Agenda** – A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda items, including the April 25, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes/Summary, Discounted Estate Retirements, and the board expense summary.

**Presentation** – Dan Marcure provided a description of recent cybersecurity tests that were performed, in addition noted that an overview of the results will be presented during an upcoming board meeting.

**Governance Topics and Board Policy Review** – None.

**Governance Talk Video** – A video was shared that provided guidance to the Board on its role in safety, highlight- ing the importance of an effective safety plan.

**Board Policy Review** – None.

### CEO/Financial Operating Report

**CEO Report** – President and CEO Mike Casper shared with the board and senior staff the significance of follow-up to members who provided feedback as part of the Member Satisfaction Report. In addition, Casper shared that he recently testi- fied before the House Subcommittee on Energy, Climate and Grid Security on the role of natural gas (NG) and the importance of consumer choice.

**Financial Operating Report** – Chuck Woods, Chief Financial Officer, pro- vided a summary of the April financial operating report. Revenue year-to- date (YTD) is approximately \$23.5 mil- lion. Total operations and maintenance

expenses are approximately \$17.4 million, which is (\$1,344,242) under the budget of \$18.8 million. Margins are approximately \$2.5 million. By general consent, the board moved to file the financial operating report with the auditor.

### Operations and Regulatory/Legislative Update

**Operations Update** – The operations update was provided in the Member Services Section.

**Member Services Update** – VP of Member Services Jennifer Meyer provided an update on JCE Co-op's Strategic Initiatives as a result of the Strategic Planning session.

**Technology Update** – The technology update was provided during the pre- sentation section of the board meeting.

**External Affairs/Legislative Update** – General Counsel Terry Kurt shared that he recently attended the National Rural Electric Cooperative (NRECA) legal seminar and shared highlights from the sessions.

### Board Issues and Action Items

A motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to approve an agreement to participate in the Dairyland Power Cooperative Pre- Payment Program.

Attendees were selected for BLC Course 961/The Evolution of Electric Cooperative Power Supply.

Attendees were selected to attend the AIEC Annual Meeting.

Dave Senn was selected to serve as the AIEC Director and Pat Smith was selected as the Alternate Director rep- resenting JCE Co-op to serve on the AIEC Board of Directors.

Director Senn was selected as the AIEC Voting Delegate, and Director

# BLOOD DRIVE

[BLOODCENTER.ORG](http://BLOODCENTER.ORG)

## JCE Co-op

Thursday, August 8

2:00pm - 6:00pm

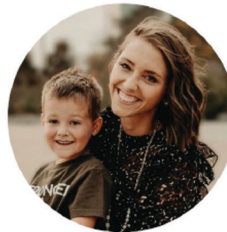
Meeting Room (793 U.S. Route 20 West)

To schedule, scan QR code, call ImpactLife at (800) 747-5401 or visit [www.bloodcenter.org](http://www.bloodcenter.org). Appointments preferred.



*"Honestly, without donors there is a chance that Hudson wouldn't be alive today because those transfusions are what saved his life."*

—Jessica, Hudson's mom



Please eat before donating and bring Photo ID.

Last Date to Donate Elsewhere: 6/13/24

Group Sponsor Code: 3642



## Director Scholarship Winners



From left to right: JCE Co-op President and CEO Mike Casper, Trisha Soat of East Dubuque, Ruby Dickerson of Galena, Jakob Schmidt of Galena and Abigail Frank of Atkinson.



### 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.





## JCE Co-op holds 85th annual meeting

**E**ighty-five years of growth were celebrated when JCE Co-op hosted its annual meeting of members on June 20 at the St. Malachy School in Geneseo.

"From a single light bulb in a barn to an organization having facilities in excess of \$213 million dollars, I'd have to say we have grown, and together we will continue to grow," said Dave Senn, chairman of the JCE Co-op board of directors.

Senn noted that not only have facilities grown, but so have the services provided. From its origins as an electric cooperative, JCE Co-op is now an enterprise that has three divisions, including electricity, natural gas and broadband internet.

"This has been accomplished through mergers, acquisitions and hard work to expand our fiber to the homes and businesses here in rural America," Senn said.

"Agriculture has been the backbone of rural America. It still is, but that industry has also seen huge change, moving from smaller family farms to much larger operations, with machinery that is far distant from the horse and plow," Senn added. "Businesses that will need high-speed

internet to compete in a global marketplace."

He added that reliable, high-speed fiber internet will encourage more jobs and help alleviate the pressure of inflation and lack of density by providing more members per mile of line.

Continuing the growth theme, JCE Co-op President & CEO Mike Casper noted that the board of directors, democratically elected by the members, chose growth as one of the co-op's key objectives.

"We are growing for you, because growth will positively impact you, businesses and the communities where we live. Growth in rural America is essential to the overall success of the U.S., from agriculture to energy," Casper said. "Growth of the co-op helps stabilize rates for all the value-added services that we provide you by spreading fixed costs across more accounts."

Casper emphasized that as a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative, JCE Co-op has an obligation to deliver safe and reliable utility services at the lowest possible price.

"Our goal is not to maximize profits but to provide our services at cost with minimal margins to meet our lender's financial covenants," he said.



“Every day we strive to bring more value to you safely, reliably, efficiently and sustainably.”

Reliability, fuel diversity and transmission were the focus of comments from guest speaker Jeremy Johnson, vice president of engineering and operations at Prairie Power, Inc., one of the co-op’s power suppliers.

Johnson noted that the electric grid is changing much faster than at any point in history. Intermittent renewable resources are being added as fossil/thermal resources are being retired. At the same time, more is being asked of the grid with more electric vehicles, beneficial electrification, artificial intelligence, data centers and more.

There is more complexity now than at any point, Johnson said, and the reliability of the electric grid is more precarious because of it. More dispatchable electric generation that can operate when the sun doesn’t shine and the wind doesn’t blow as well as transmission lines are needed, he said, adding that these need to be built faster to foster change that is being pushed by federal and state policy.

### Election results

During the business session, two directors were reelected to the JCE Co-op Board of Directors by a vote of acclamation. They were Dave Senn of Mount Carroll in District 7 and Robert Kuhns of Geneseo in District 10. Both were unopposed

Elections in both Districts 5 and 8, where more than one candidate filed, were conducted by ballot. In District 5, the incumbent Pat Smith of Galena was reelected. In District 8, Ted James of Fulton was elected as a new director. He replaces Russell Holesinger who had served and represented District 8 for 15 years.

The co-op was assisted in the election by Survey & Ballot Systems, which received the paper and web ballots, validated member numbers, and tabulated and delivered the election results to the co-op.

Members also approved five bylaw amendments. The changes made regard easements, treating co-op officials with courtesy and respect, appointment of committees and adds language including “telecommunications/ broadband services” to reflect the growth of the co-op.

View a recording of the annual meeting at <https://jcecoop.com/annual-meeting>.





## Area student represents JCE Co-op during Youth Tour

Each year, hundreds of high school students from across the United States embark on an educational and inspirational journey to the nation's capital city. Sponsored by Illinois' electric and telephone cooperatives, 54 students departed Springfield, Ill., by bus on June 14 to Washington, D.C., for a weeklong trip of a lifetime.

JCE Co-op sponsored Noah Ponce from its service territory.

Youth Tour began in 1964, after President Lyndon B. Johnson inspired the nation's electric cooperatives to sponsor youths to go to D.C. to educate young people about the role of electric co-ops and the significance of the legislative process. It became an annual tradition.

"Youth Tour is more than just a trip," said Brooke Gross, Youth Tour coordinator from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that empowers future leaders to become informed, engaged and active citizens. Many Youth Tour alumni go on to become leaders in their communities, inspired by this experience."

The event offers a unique opportunity for students to explore the nation's capital, meet their peers from across the state and beyond, and engage with the political process. Youth Tour not only highlights the importance of electric cooperatives but also fosters civic engagement and leadership skills.

The itinerary for the Youth Tour was packed with both educational and cultural experiences. The students visited major landmarks such as Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery, the U.S. Capitol and the National Mall. They also visited several museums, including the Smithsonian, Air and Space Museum, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

"There's a lot more to Youth Tour than sightseeing," Gross said. "It also provides students with a deeper understanding of American history and government and the role electric and telephone cooperatives play in the communities they serve."

One way the students learned about cooperatives was by forming one themselves. The Chip 'n' Pop Co-op is an engaging way to provide the Youth Tour participants with experience in understanding the fundamentals of the cooperative business model.



"This hands-on activity emphasizes the importance of teamwork," Gross said. "The students gained practical business skills and a deeper appreciation for cooperatives."

The students created their own snack shop cooperative by forming a nominating committee, electing a board of directors and hiring a co-op manager. They worked together to manage all aspects of the operation and had an equal say in decision-making, just like the cooperatives that sponsored them on the trip.

In addition, the students voted for one of their peers to represent Illinois on the Youth Leadership Council (YLC). Those interested in becoming Illinois' YLC representative filled out an application, and five were selected to give a speech in front of their peers. Cole Buchanan, representing SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, was selected as the 2024-2025 YLC representative for Illinois. He will represent the state at national and state meetings and events in the year ahead.

"The impact of Youth Tour goes far beyond Washington, D.C.," Gross said. "One of the most impactful parts of Youth Tour is the relationships that students build with their peers from different parts of the state and country. These connections often turn into lifelong friendships."

High school students who live within the service area of JCE Co-op are eligible to participate in the annual program. To learn more about Youth Tour, go to [youthtour.coop](http://youthtour.coop) or [facebook.com/ILYouthTour](https://facebook.com/ILYouthTour).

**Minutes continued from page 18B**

Hendren was selected as the Alternate Voting Delegate for the AIEC Annual Meeting that will be held in August.

**Into Executive Session** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to go into Executive Session at 10:28 a.m.

**Out of Executive Session** – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to come out of Executive Session at 10:57 a.m.

**Action Resulting from Executive Session** – None.

**Reports/Updates**

**Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) Report** – AIEC VP of Government Relations Nick Reitz provided highlights from the last session of the Illinois House before they will meet again in the fall; Nick discussed proposed bills affecting the State of Illinois and the utility industry.

**Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC)** – Director Tindell shared

highlights from the DPC board meeting, noting that a generating facility was recently offline for a period of time for planned maintenance, which included an overhaul of equipment that will more than double the amount of byproduct material collected for beneficial reuse in cement and concrete applications.

**American Public Gas Association (APGA) Report** – Director Carroll discussed topics affecting the natural gas industry, specifically a recently passed rule that would impact consumer choice of NG appliances.

**Prairie Power Incorporated (PPI) Report** – Director Kuhns shared a summary from the PPI board highlights, in addition noted that they had a clean unmodified audit report.

**Other Business** – None.

**Adjournment** – Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 11:56 a.m.

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

Within the next 3 to 5 years, JCE Co-op expects to construct an additional 1,500 miles of fiber that will provide access to more than 10,000 homes, businesses and farms.

**Question:** Anytime in the future will you be giving discounts/rebates for water heaters?

**Response:** Please check our website. We do offer incentives for gas and electric water heaters, as well as other appliances that meet certain energy efficiency standards.

**Question:** Is there still a price difference between the "old" JCE members and the former Alliant Energy customers?

**Response:** No, not since 2011. All rate classes have been merged.

**Question:** Are there any plans to take advantage of wind farming in Jo Daviess County in the near future?

**Response:** We are not aware of any plans in our current service territory. Wind developers consider specific criteria in choosing the best location.

**Question:** What year did JCE Co-op start operating?

**Response:** Jo-Carroll Energy was formed in 1939, however, Farmers Mutual Electric Company (with which JCE merged in 2013) was the first Illinois Electric cooperative to organize and energized its first electric distribution lines in 1937.

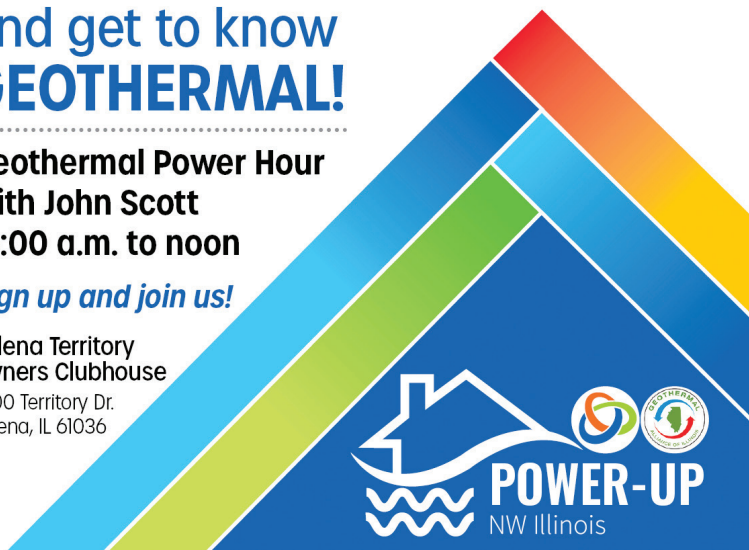
# POWER UP... Saturday, August 10

## And get to know GEOTHERMAL!

**Geothermal Power Hour with John Scott**  
**10:00 a.m. to noon**

*Sign up and join us!*

Galena Territory Owners Clubhouse  
2000 Territory Dr.  
Galena, IL 61036



# OVERPAYING FOR YOUR CURRENT LANDLINE?



## Crystal clear and affordable residential and business phone service

JCE Co-op phone service offers the peace of mind, quality and clarity of a phone line for a fraction of the cost of a traditional landline for your home or business. Phone service is full of features including unlimited local and nationwide calling, no contracts or long-term commitment requirements. You can get a new number or keep your existing number.

### Calling features (at no additional cost) include:



#### Unlimited local and nationwide calling

Includes all 50 states and Canada.

(333) 121-0333

#### See who's calling

Name and number ID allows you to see who might be trying to call.



#### Three-way calling

If you ever need to quickly add someone to a call without any effect on your reception, it's never been easier.



#### "Leave me a message"

Voicemail comes standard. Simply set up your mailbox and you're ready to go.

### Residential Phone includes:

- ✓ Unlimited calling, voicemail, call waiting, caller ID, three-way calling & other features
- ✓ Keep your existing number or get a new number<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ No contract or long-term commitment required<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ E-911 emergency calling

# \$30/mo.

Price includes all applicable taxes, initial phone hardware and installation<sup>2</sup>

### Business Phone includes:

- ✓ Unlimited calling, voicemail, call waiting, caller ID, three-way calling & other features
- ✓ Keep your existing number or get a new number<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ No contract or long-term commitment required
- ✓ E-911 emergency calling

# \$40/mo.

**\$20 for each additional line**

Price includes all applicable taxes, one phone base station or ATA and installation.

**Need SIP Trunking or to replace a PBX? Additional questions? Please call and ask for our Business Help Center for assistance.**

**If you are interested in JCE Co-op phone service, you can sign-up now at [jcecoop.com/fiber](http://jcecoop.com/fiber) or call 800-858-5522.**



800-858-5522

793 US 20 West, Elizabeth, IL 61028

<sup>1</sup>Keeping your existing number is dependent upon service market and location. VoIP and fiber broadband services are not available in all areas.

<sup>2</sup>Bundle and save. Installation fee of an additional \$13/month for six months is required of Fiber-Link Home subscribers. Or for \$15/month you can upgrade to the Giga-Link package and enjoy 10x faster internet speeds and receive free phone installation.