

HI-LINES

A NEWSLETTER FOR JO-CARROLL ENERGY MEMBERS

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Elizabeth, Illinois



800-858-5522



www.jocarroll.com



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Youth to Washington is back!

Focus on growth, value and excellence

2021 is behind us and another exciting year of growth, added value and operational excellence to bring more value to you, our member consumers, is ahead of us.

During the past year, I've talked about our co-op's strategic plan and objectives. We have focused on the priorities of growth, enhancing cooperative value and operational excellence. Following is a look at some of the successes and progress we have made in the past 12 months:

Cooperative Growth

In 2021 Jo-Carroll Energy through its Sand Prairie broadband business unit added more than 1,000 new high-speed internet fiber subscribers totaling nearly 3,600 broadband subscribers. For every 1,000 new fiber subscribers, Jo-Carroll Energy revenue increases approximately \$750,000. In 2022 we expect to add another 1,500 fiber subscribers.

If you haven't already, please go to connectsp.com and express your interest. If your area is in the sign-up phase, please sign-up. Completed sign-ups help us determine which fiber neighborhoods we will build next.

In 2021, we were successful in being awarded an additional \$7 million in grants for a total of \$23 million. Considering our grant match of approximately \$10 million, plus what has been built out in areas not receiving grants, we expect to have



CEO'S REPORT by Mike Casper

fiber available to more than 50 percent of our current Jo-Carroll Energy member consumers within 4 years.

We also continue to add natural gas and electric member consumers. As we anticipate electric vehicle growth, Jo-Carroll has been proactive in partnering with other Midwest electric co-ops in developing an electric vehicle (EV) charging network. You can learn more about that network at charge.coop

Growth, no matter where it comes from, helps stabilize rates across all business units, especially considering inflationary pressures.

Enhance Cooperative Value

As we worked on building member engagement, this past year we reached more than 10,000 on multiple occasions through emails and newsletters. As of print deadline in November, we had more than 130,000 member contacts through

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Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll Energy 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 Jo-Carroll Energy.

For your information

Your Board of Directors:

David Senn

Chairman

District 7

Russell Holesinger

Vice Chairman

District 8

Marcia Stanger

Secretary

District 3

Jerry Meyer

District 1

Joseph Mattingley

District 2

Dan Tindell

District 4

Patricia Smith

District 5

Thomas Lundy

District 6

Larry Carroll

District 9

Robert Kuhns

Treasurer

District 10

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

www.jocarroll.com

For emergencies and outages call:

(800) 858-5522

Nomination petitions for the 2022 JCE Board of Directors are now available

JCE board directors are members just like you who live in and are a part of the communities we serve. Running for the board of directors and voting in the elections are benefits of being a co-op member and supports the cooperative principle of Democratic Member Control.

Three director posts are up for election in 2022, including representatives for Districts 1, 2 and 4. Any JCE member whose primary residence is in a district that is up for election – including the incumbent – may petition for nomination.

Members interested in seeking election to the board may download a petition from the cooperative's website at jocarroll.com/board-directors or pick up a form at any of JCE's offices.

Petitions must be signed by at least 25 JCE members residing in the district for which the director is to be elected. Petitions must be filed

at the cooperative headquarters in Elizabeth no earlier than Monday, Jan. 3, 2022 and no later than Friday, April 1.

In order to qualify to have their name placed on the ballot, all nominees must participate in an orientation provided by the cooperative president and CEO and/or the cooperative attorney. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, time demands, education expectations and fiduciary duties.

All eligible candidates will be listed on the cooperative's website, with election materials and other cooperative communications.

Complete details on director qualifications and the nomination procedure can be found in JCE's bylaws posted at jocarroll.com/minutes-bylaws. Anyone without internet access may request a copy by calling 800-858-5522.

Save with energy efficiency incentives!

Being energy efficient puts money in your pocket by lowering your energy bill and also qualifies you for additional dollars through our incentive program.

Our 2022 Energy Efficiency program includes incentives for both our electric and natural gas members.

Our electric members will want to note the increase in the incentive for Air Source Heat Pumps, now \$250/ton, up from \$200/ton.

To qualify for one of our incentives in 2022:

- Purchase and/or install a qualified energy efficient product in 2022.

- Submit required documentation as soon as possible as funds are limited. Incentives are in place through Dec. 31, 2022 or until funds are depleted.

- Submit forms and documentation by Jan. 3, 2023.

Incentive forms and complete information are available at Jo-Carroll Energy's offices or online at jocarroll.com/energy-efficiency-incentives.

Need more information? Contact our Energy Detective, John Scott at 800-858-5522 ext. 1339 or jscott@jocarroll.com for all your energy efficiency questions.

Focus on growth, value and excellence

(Continued from page 18A)

email and direct mail, all to provide you more information and announcements about important programs, services and projects.

What is spectacular about you—our members—is that the opened percentage ranged well above the industry average and in some cases well over 90 percent.

You can also follow us on Facebook for important updates that provide outage information and restoration updates, as well as news on programs that could save you money, youth programs, events and more.

And don't forget to contact us or sign in to your account on the member services portal to make sure your contact information is up to date (including preferred phone and email).

We're also providing members with renewable energy



options, with a focus on solar. We have helped our members interconnect more than 10 megawatts of solar capacity, which includes approximately 500 net metered solar installations.

As I shared with you last year, Jo-Carroll was also successful in benefiting from state incentives to build two new community solar projects. The Apple Canyon Lake Community Solar Array is fully subscribed. We are currently accepting subscription applications for the North Mount Carroll Community Solar Array.

Details on the program can be located at www.jocarroll.com/community-solar.

Operational Excellence

Our greatest operational accomplishment of the year is the reorganization of our Jo-Carroll team. The transition will continue into first quarter 2022. I am blessed to lead an incredible team who work together to provide the highest level of support and member care possible and enhance operational efficiencies that along with growth will help stabilize future rates.

YEARS OF SERVICE

Twenty Jo-Carroll Energy employees and one director were recognized in 2021 for a combined 260 years of service to Jo-Carroll Energy and the co-op's members.

Employees recognized included:

40 years of service

Don Altfillisch

35 years of service

Rob Headlee

15 years of service

Ryan Bales

Jeremy Whitmer

Dale Hereau

Steve Ludwig

Helen Kilgore

10 years of service

Laura Simmons

Justin Daughenbaugh

Heather Seei

Todd Chambers

Jodi Sweeney

5 years of service

Brandon Beyer

Jordan Esser

Amy Johnston

Brooke Michael

Justin Glassmaker

Matt Noll

Mike Casper

Director Russ Holesinger was acknowledged for 12 years on the JCE board.

Service awards were donated to a variety of local charities on behalf of the employees recognized, including: the Elizabeth Fire Department, Safe Haven Humane Society, The Workshop of Galena, Scales Mound Athletic Booster Club, Elizabeth Ambulance, Apple River Fort Foundation, Geneseo Food Pantry, Savanna Children's Fund, Elizabeth Food Basket and Galena Center for the Arts.

2021 A LOOK BACK

COOPERATIVE GROWTH

Connecting Our Members to the World

Sand Prairie, a service of Jo-Carroll Energy, recently celebrated a milestone by connecting the 2000th fiber internet member. Construction crews continue to actively build our fiber-optic internet network, completing the buildout of 16 additional fiber neighborhoods in 2021.

The entire Apple Canyon Lake buildout is now complete, creating our second community where fiber internet is readily available.

76

new miles of mainline
fiber

93

new miles of
drop fiber

36

fiber neighborhoods with
service now available

1,000+

new fiber subscribers

3,600+

total broadband subscribers

New value-added
services



VOIP phone
service



Internet
security

Follow our progress at conectsp.com

Enhance Cooperative Value

Distributed Energy Resources

2

EV charging stations

2

Community solar projects

500

Net metered solar installations

10

megawatts member interconnected solar capacity

Commitment to Community



\$13,000

in scholarships



\$5,000

to area food pantries

\$5,500

to area fire &
ambulance districts

\$5,640

to other area education &
community organizations

\$10,000

CoBank Sharing
Success Grants

Each grant from JCE was
matched by CoBank as
part of its Sharing Success
Program

All scholarships, grants & donations are made from Unclaimed Capital Credits



Crews from Wolf Line Construction are among the contractors Jo-Carroll Energy utilizes for a variety of projects. Wolf Line is assisting with fiber construction projects.

Contractors help provide safe, reliable services

Jo-Carroll Energy employees work hard every day bringing safe and reliable services to our members. At times, that means we utilize the services of contractors to assist in a number of areas ranging from right-of-way maintenance and pole testing to line and broadband construction.

In 2022, JCE will have a variety of contractors working on projects throughout the service territory. Please remember to use caution when you encounter these companies' employees and our own lineworkers and technicians as they work along roadsides.

Osmose Utility Services, Inc.

Osmose Utility Services, Inc. provides pole inspection and treatment. Osmose employees will be doing work for JCE in the fall of 2022. Osmose is headquartered in Buffalo, NY.

Vannguard Utility Partners, Inc.

Vannguard Utility Partners is the cooperative's JULIE locating partner, providing service systemwide, except in the Geneseo area. Vannguard employees do work for JCE throughout the year. Vannguard is from Deforest, Wis.

Karcz Utility Services, LLC

Karcz Utility Services of Pulaski, Wis., performs underground facility inspections, maintenance and painting work. Karcz employees can be found working in JCE territory during the spring of 2022.

J&R Underground

Throughout the construction season, J&R Underground provides natural gas, electric and fiber underground installation for JCE. Headquartered in Blanchardville, Wis., this contractor's employees work throughout the service territory, except in the Geneseo area.

Zielies Tree Service, Inc.

Jo-Carroll Energy has a new tree service to assist with the co-op's tree trimming. That contractor is Zielies Tree Service, Inc. from Bruce, Wis. Zielies provides tree trimming and removal services for the co-op systemwide year-round.

Stichter Construction

From Erie, Ill., Stichter Construction does right-of-way clearing in JCE's natural gas service territory.

JJ Vondrum & Sons, Thurin Excavating, Down-to-Earth Media and Underground Systems

JCE utilizes four contractors for underground fiber construction, including boring, trenching and plowing. They are JJ Vondrum & Sons of Lancaster, Wis.; Thurin Excavating of Viroqua, Wis.; Down-to-Earth Media of Lena, Wis.; and Underground Systems of Eau Claire, Wis. They work throughout the JCE service territory in fiber buildout areas.

Wolf Line Construction

Wolf Line Construction of Charleston, S.C. assists the co-op with overhead fiber construction, overhead and underground drop construction. They will work system wide in fiber build out areas.

Bahr Electric and Revolution Technology

Employees from Bahr Electric of West Salem, Wis., and Revolution Technology of Tomah, Wis., assist our crews with inside fiber installations throughout the service territory in fiber buildout areas.

Vantage Point Solutions

JCE utilizes the services of Vantage Point Solutions of Mitchel, S.D., for field engineering,

inspection and project management in fiber buildout areas system wide.

Fiber Ops

Fiber Ops of Whitelaw, Wis., performs fiber splicing for JCE. Their employees do work in the fiber buildout areas.

Sorenson Telcom

Sorenson Telcom of Onalaska, Wis. Performs NID (outdoor drop enclosure) installs and emergency fiber splicing. Their services are utilized in fiber buildout areas.

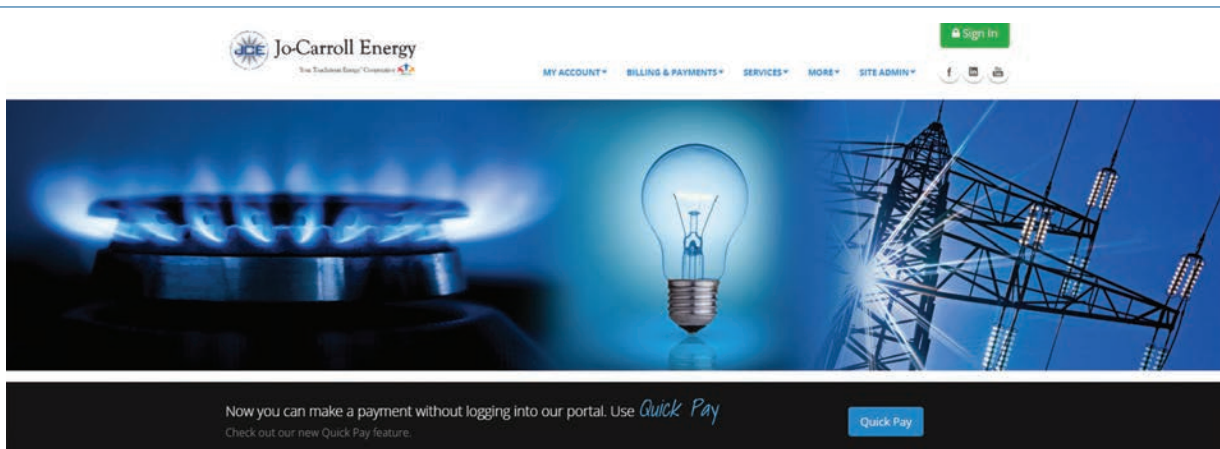
Linderlake Corporation

Linderlake Corporation of Montgomery, Ill. assists the cooperative with easement attainment in fiber build out areas.

In addition to these contractors, JCE utilizes many local contractors, service providers and businesses.

Thank you for years of service

Congratulations to Jeff and Susan Youngman, owners of Elite Tree, on their retirement. Elite Tree has provided right-of-way tree maintenance for JCE for more than 18 years!



Member services portal has new look

Jo-Carroll Energy's member portal has a new look and features and improved security.

According to Jennifer Meyer, VP of member services, the new portal is designed to be more user friendly and easier for members to navigate their online account.

A new benefit of the portal is the "Quick Pay" feature, allowing members to make a payment on the go without logging in.

The member portal is an extension of JCE's member service option, allowing members to manage their accounts 24 hours, seven days a week. On the portal, members can:

- Make a payment
- Set up auto pay
- Set up payment alerts
- View utility usage

Current and past bills can be viewed in one convenient location. Members can also use the portal to view electric consumption by month to gain insights into ways to save energy and money.

In addition, the portal is now mobile responsive, so members can easily access the site on any mobile device.

Members who used the previous version of the portal may continue to use the user ID created when they set up their

account. If that is an account number, the full account number (found on a bill) must now be used.

Members who haven't used the online portal can easily create an account. Information needed includes the full account number, last four digits of SSN and the last four digits of the phone number associated with the account.

Visit jocarroll.com to learn more about the portal, view FAQs and to log in or create an account. If you have any questions, please contact our member care representatives by calling 800-858-5522 or emailing info@jocarroll.com.



Youth to Washington is back!

The 2022 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. is scheduled for June 17-24. Jo-Carroll Energy plans to send two high school students on the all-expense paid, week-long educational trip where they will learn how the government and electric cooperatives operate.

As the Youth Tour returns after a two-year absence, JCE plans to also participate in the Youth Day event in Springfield, sending up to eight students to Youth Day.

Set for March 29, 2022, Youth Day in Springfield gives students a first-hand look at democracy in action. Students have the opportunity to meet with elected representatives during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day at the State Capitol and tour the Abraham Lincoln

Presidential Museum.

During the event, interviews will be held to select two students to represent Jo-Carroll Energy on the Youth to Washington tour. They will join delegates from other Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives for the trip to Washington, D.C. June 17-24.

Youth Tour gives students the chance to spend a week in the nation's capital visiting historic sites, touring some of the country's most moving memorials and browsing the campus of our nation's capital. Plans are also to visit the Supreme Court.

Who is eligible?

Jo-Carroll Energy accepts applications for Youth Day and Youth Tour from current high school sophomores

and juniors whose parents or guardians are Jo-Carroll Energy members. JCE will pay the expenses involved with Youth Day and Youth Tour except for spending money.

Information and online application forms can be found at jocarroll.com/youth-washington.

Submissions will be judged by a committee chosen by JCE. Students selected for Youth Day will be interviewed in person during Youth Day with two finalists and one alternate selected for Youth Tour.

Deadline to apply is Feb. 18.

If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Francomb, director of marketing and communications, at 800-858-5522 or pfrancomb@jocarroll.com



TOUCHSTONE ENERGY® COOPERATIVES

Home Energy Adventure

Saving energy is saving money, and it can be a fun activity to engage your friends and family. Tactics to save energy come in all shapes and sizes, including steps you can take today at no cost. Energy efficiency also increases the comfortability of your home and makes larger projects worth the investment. Go on a Home Energy Adventure by going to adventure.touchstoneenergy.com, brought to you by your local Touchstone Energy cooperative.



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