

# Open Lines

The newsletter for Farmers Electric  
Cooperative members

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Customer Appreciation Supper



**P**ictured above right are Liam Mahoney and his sister, the winner of the kids drawing at our Members Appreciation Supper. Winners of the adult drawings were Gary Grubbs, Sheila Zellweger and Dean Emory. Thanks to all those who braved the rain to come to the Customer Appreciation Supper.



# OPEN LINES

by Stan Crees, Member Service Director



## Things To Do Before Leaving on Vacation

**A**round our household, the month of July has typically always been the time of year we plan to go on a family vacation. Going on vacation is an exciting time but there can be all kinds of last minute problems and annoyances that arise preventing you from taking care of things that you should before you leave. Remembering those things later on when you are down the road will be too late. Below are some things that you should make sure you have on a

check-off list before leaving home on your vacation.

- 1) Lock all doors and windows. If you have a neighbor that can watch the house for you make sure you get them a key.
- 2) Unplug most electronic items, especially those that are expensive or may have very valuable information on them. Those items should include your TV set, stereo, and computers.
- 3) Check your water heater thermostat setting. There is no need to leave it at the same setting as when you are home. It should be turned down to a lower setting. If you are gone for a long vacation, turn the water heater completely off to save that energy consumption while you are away.
- 4) Cancel your mail delivery and paper while you are on vacation. You won't want the newspapers and mail piling up outside of the house sending a clear signal to burglars that your house is an easy target.
- 5) Leave a radio or something going in the house that makes sound and can be an indication that someone is home. A light on a timer is also a good idea.
- 6) Disconnect the garage door opener so that it cannot be operated by a remote control from the outside. Usually there is a lever that you can pull on the opener that will accomplish this easily. When we leave I usually trip the main breaker in the breaker panel and this disables all of the overhead doors as well as other circuits.
- 7) Turn the water off, or at least turn the water off to your washing machine. These hoses can easily break while you are away for several days and can cause near catastrophic damage to your home before you or anyone else could do anything about it.
- 8) Pets are another issue. We have our family cat, Midnight, and at 18 plus pounds, if he runs out of food and water, he would starve! Make sure that if your pets are left in the home they have an automatic feeder and plenty of water. If this is not a possibility then you will have to leave them with someone else or kennel them. If they are left at the residence, make sure the heating / AC system is set to keep things comfortable for them. It's also a good idea to have someone check on them and spend a little time with them.

Although there are other tips to have on your checklist, these are some of the more important ones. Another thought might be to leave your cell phone number with a neighbor in case they would have to get in touch with you for any reason. When you have done all of the things on your checklist, you can have a restful vacation knowing you have covered all of the bases at home.


I hope this list will be of some help and that each and every one of you will have a chance to get away from the everyday grind for at least a few days this summer. It is good therapy to take a vacation, even if it may be just a short one. Have a good summer vacation!

## Farmers Open Lines

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To report a power outage call  
any of the above numbers.

## STOP BY AND VISIT US AT THE ADAIR COUNTY FAIR

Farmers Electric  
Cooperative will have a  
booth at the Adair County  
Fair. Stop by and visit  
with us while enjoying a  
bag of popcorn.

Be sure to register for our  
drawings.

See you at  
the fair –  
July 22-26,  
2009.





The Nominating Committee recently met to select a slate of candidates to run for the Board of Directors of your Cooperative. Each year, it seems, it gets harder to find individuals to run for the Board and even to serve on the Nominating Committee.

The Board represents you, the member/owners, in the operation of Farmers Electric. They set policy, set rates and hire a manager. Whatever changes they make, they are affected by them just like everyone else is. They put in many hours each month to stay abreast of what is happening in the industry and attending meetings. It's more than a 1-day-a-month job.



The line crews are nearly finished with the new 3-phase service to the Winterset Middle School. They are also finishing up work in the Holliwell Bridge area and west of St. Charles. They are also working on a project north of the Earlham substation. Coodington (our tree trimming contractor) is working in the Earlham Substation area. The line crews will soon be working in the Desoto Substation (near Rose Acres) to modify that substation to serve some residential accounts and the new Winterset Middle School.



A nice crowd attended the member appreciation supper on June 12th, despite the rain. We had good food and fellowship and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Thank you to all who attended, we appreciate your support.

The highlight of the evening was the bucket truck rides. The young and those young at heart (participants ranged in age from 4 to 87) enjoyed the oppor-

tunity of a wet ride. From the ground, it doesn't look that high when the bucket is fully extended, but when you look down from 55 feet in the air, it's a different story.



On June 1, Jan McMorran retired from the Cooperative after 32 years of service. Jan worked at the front desk and took care of the monthly billing. We appreciate her years of service and wish her the best in her retirement years ahead. On May 18th Brad Ernest began working for the Cooperative as an Apprentice Lineman after completing the lineworkers program at Minnesota West in Jackson. Brad is a Nodaway Valley graduate and grew up in Greenfield. Welcome aboard Brad.



Thank you to everyone who has sent in Our Energy-Our Future cards from the recent *Living With Energy Magazine*. Iowans have sent in over 50,000 cards to Washington reminding them of our concern about rising energy prices that may result from energy and climate change legislation. A balanced approach is needed for any legislation that is passed, not legislation that favors one group over another.

We anticipate legislation will be coming out of Congress shortly regarding climate change, let's hope our efforts have made a difference.



**INTERESTING INFORMATION:** In the latest edition of *Power Magazine*, the editor-in-chief talks about the number of wind turbines (like the ones near Adair, IA) that would be needed to replace the 1470 existing coal plants and 15,000 other power plants used today. According to the article, the entire east coast (1800 miles long) would have a wind turbine every 1/2 mile stacked 93 deep!

## Using Power Tools Safely

- **Use the right tools.**

The power tools you use outdoors should be specially made for that purpose. They will have heavier wiring, a three-way grounded plug, or double insulation.

- **GFCIs will help keep you safe.**

Any outdoor outlet must be weatherproof and have a GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) to protect you from serious shock. If you run an extension cord from an indoor outlet to use a power tool at an outdoor location, choose an outlet that has GFCI protection.

- **Keep your work area dry and clean.**

When working in wet conditions, you need to be even more careful. Wet clothes or skin will increase the severity of any shock. Also, dust can ignite from a spark caused by your tools. Take some extra time to make sure your work area is dry and clean before starting work.



**Use only well-insulated, heavy-duty equipment that is designed for outdoor conditions. When working outdoors, use GFI-protected outlets.**

Source: *Electrical Safety*

## Farmers Electric Employee News



### McMorran retires after 32 years of service

Congratulations to Jan McMorran as she begins a new phase in her life. Jan officially retired on June 1, 2009.

We thank Jan for her dedication and service. We wish Jan the best in her retirement years.

### New Employee



Brad Ernest has been working at Farmers Electric for the last two summers while attending Minnesota West Comm & Tech College in Jackson, MN. Brad graduated in May as an apprentice lineman and is now a full time employee. He is currently working on one of our three

line crews. Welcome, Brad.

## Wind Powered Generator Information

Private ownership of wind-powered generators continues to capture the interest of rural residents. But often the appeal of generating your own power can be clouded with complications. Operating a generator involves legal agreements, liability risks, and obligations to related parties (including the power supplier).

To help educate our members, we suggest you read *Farmers' Guide to Wind Energy: Legal Issues in Farming the Wind*. This document is available as a free download on-line.

Written by the Farmers' Legal Action Group, this guide also helps rural landowners considering the leasing of their land's wind rights to larger wind developers. A free PDF of the 293-page guide is available at [www.flaginc.org](http://www.flaginc.org) with a printed version also for sale.



## Nominating Committee Selects Candidates

The Nominating Committee met at the Farmers Electric Cooperative office on Tuesday June 9, 2009. Gene Hosfelt, Alan Brewer, Bill Keating, Troy Plowman, Vernon Luers, and Dean Costlow were on the committee. Their duty was to select a slate of candidates for the board vacancies to be voted on at the annual meeting.

The following members' names will be placed on the ballot:

### West District

Gary Ohms – incumbent

### Central District

Ralph Lents – incumbent

### East District

William Adams – incumbent

In addition, any 15 or more members may make other nominations in writing over their signatures not less than 20 day prior to the annual meeting, Sept 22, 2009.

## Farmers Electric Return Envelopes

Please don't use Farmers Electric return envelopes to send things to other people. There is a bar code on the bottom of the envelope that the post office scans. The bar code contains our address. We are receiving envelopes addressed to other people.

**[www.farmersrec.com](http://www.farmersrec.com)**

Don't forget to visit us on line at [www.farmersrec.com](http://www.farmersrec.com). By registering your account you will be able to pay online, view your usage, request services and much more. Don't wait – register today.