

# THE GRID

**P.O. Box 709  
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Mattoon, Illinois 61938**

**Phone:** 217-235-0341  
or **Toll-Free:**  
1-888-661-CMEC (2632)  
**Office hours:**  
Monday-Friday  
7:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.

**Chairman**

Kent Metzger .....Gays

**Vice Chairman**

Bill Voyles .....Sullivan

**Secretary**

Andrew Fearn ....Charleston

**Treasurer**

Thomas Sherman ...Humboldt

**Directors**

Jeffery Hudson .....Charleston  
Mike Love ..... Mattoon  
Colt Roderick ..... Trilla

**President/CEO**

Amy Bornttrager

**To Report an Outage  
call #888-661-2632**

**Find Your Name  
and Win \$50**

Find your name hidden inside this issue of The Grid and receive a **\$50 bill credit**. Credit must be claimed by the end of each month in which this newsletter is published.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## 83rd Member Celebration

Thank you to all our members, employees and families who attended our Member Celebration and Annual Meeting this year at Peterson Park. It was great to see everyone. CEO Amy Bornttrager talked to the membership about cybersecurity, strategic planning, new metering technology, mapping solutions, work planning and reliability. We had 430 registered members who received a \$25 bill credit. Congrats to those who won our bill credit drawings held at the end of our meeting:

**\$100**

Richard Atchison  
Larry Moore  
Michael Radloff  
Leroy Stout  
Kathryn Taylor

**\$250**

Teddy Anderson  
Evelyn Steele  
Chad Storment

**\$500**

Cheryl Cannon  
Julia Miller

**In case you missed it ...**

You can see the recorded meeting on our Facebook page.

# Lineworker's Safety Rodeo 2023

Congrats to Linemen Grant Cooper, Mitch Huddleston and Gavin Bennett, who represented CMEC and won first place in the 40-foot climb, second place in the cutout change and second place in the H-structure obstacle course events. Team CMEC placed fourth overall out of 18 teams.



Left to right, Grant Cooper, Mitch Huddleston and Gavin Bennett.  
Photo courtesy of AIEC

## BEWARE OF SCAM CALLS



Do not provide any information or agree to immediate payment; instead hang up and check with your utility by using the phone number listed on your power bill.

## Scholarship Reminder



The Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Scholarship deadline is Dec. 31, 2023. Applications are available online at [aiec.coop/iec-scholarship/](http://aiec.coop/iec-scholarship/). The lineworker's scholarship application is due April 30, 2024. IEC will award 17 scholarships in 2024. Contact [cbradbury@cmeccoop](mailto:cbradbury@cmeccoop) for details.

### SAFELY RESTORING POWER after a storm

When the power is out, crews are doing all they can to safely and efficiently restore it so that you can get back to life as usual.

Depending on the extent of storm damage, restoration can be a complex process. There are many steps in the assessment and restoration process:

- Clearing downed power lines
- Restoring power to public health and safety facilities
- Repairing transmission lines
- Checking power stations and transformers
- Repairing distribution lines
- Getting power restored to homes and businesses



Remember, a neighbor may have power while you do not. Your home might be on a different feeder or transformer or the service line to your home may be damaged.

Never plug a portable generator into a wall outlet, which could cause power to backfeed into the overhead lines that utility crews are working on.



Regardless of the extent of an outage, safety always comes first.



# Reliable Power for Today and Tomorrow

By Amy Borntrager, President/CEO

Ring in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the CEO of Coles Moultrie Electric Cooperative (CMEC), for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at CMEC is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering — and empowering — our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs? **Elizabeth Howard**

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across our service territory. You may

not realize it, but CMEC doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Prairie Power, Inc., and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it.

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, CMEC is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the co-op and consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps your cooperative save money with real-time data and improves power reliability for our entire community.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service

disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall. Drone inspections of lines and vegetation have allowed us to reduce labor and equipment costs while bolstering reliability. Through the use of small drones, we can accurately monitor the health and growth of trees and identify potential problems. As technological advancements become more accessible, we anticipate using advanced mapping software to better maintain the environment while providing more reliable service.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in Illinois and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model, because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, CMEC will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve — for today and tomorrow.



*Happy Holidays*

*from our co-op family to yours*

**CMEC will be closed Dec. 22, 25 and 29, and Jan. 1.**



*thank you*

**Thank you** to our members and employees who brought in items for our Fill a Bucket Food Drive for National Co-op Month. Members Raymond and Lynne Padovan won a \$100 bill credit. The following members were drawn for our Weekly Wednesday Shop Local Chamber Bucks: **Alan Batson, Berle Casteel, Daryl Hudson, James Sensenig, Jennifer Siemer, Paul Sisk, Eric Walton and Wanda Wisely.**



## O Christmas Tree

'Tis the season to check out the Overton Tree Farm, located on our lines at 9700 E County Road 550 N, Mattoon. They have a 1,700-square-foot shop filled with holiday items, along with concessions serving snacks and warm beverages. They are open Friday and Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday noon to 5 p.m. Start a new tradition with your family and follow them on Facebook for details and holiday events.



## Safety Tip

Individuals attempting to steal copper from electrical equipment can lose their life over what they believed to be 'easy' money. If you see suspicious activity, contact your electric utility.



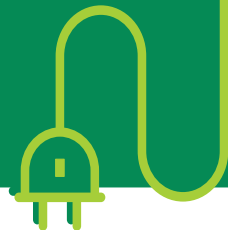
Safe  
Electricity.org®

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Get smart with a better way to heat and cool your home! Smart thermostats are Wi-Fi enabled and automatically adjust heating and cooling temperature settings in your home for optimal performance. Smart thermostats learn your temperature preferences and establish a schedule that adjusts to energy-saving settings when you're asleep or away.

For maximum energy savings, look for smart thermostat models with the ENERGY STAR® label.

*Source: Dept. of Energy*



Monthly Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed on our website: [cmec.coop](http://cmec.coop)