

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC

Comments from your CEO

Coop Adds Dedicated Toll-Free Outage "Hotline" Number



Boyd Huff, CEO

To serve you faster during a power outage, we've created a new "hotline" to report your power outage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When a power outage occurs at your home or business, call 800-776-0493. When calling the "hotline" number you will receive a greeting that says "Thank you for calling Whitewater Valley REMC, this call will be recorded for quality assurance, please hold for the next available representative." Or if all live agents are on the phone it will say, "Thank you for calling Whitewater Valley REMC, If you are experiencing a life threatening emergency please hang up and

call 911, otherwise press 1 for an outage, press 2 for a meter reading, and 3 for other services." By talking to a live agent or using our automation for reporting outages you'll have the ability to receive an automated callback to ensure that your power came on, this will occur shortly after your power is restored.

We have researched areas where improvements needed to be made in order for members to reach us when their power is out. During major outages of long duration that unfortunately affect hundreds or thousands of members, phone lines can become overloaded. The new hotline will allow a larger volume of calls to simultaneously be made with fewer busy signals. However, busy signals and longer hold times will not be eliminated completely in the event of a major power outage. Be patient and try to place your call again if unsuccessful in your first attempt.

We are also working on adding an on-line outage reporting system to our Web site. I will keep you updated as details are worked through. Finally, when major outages occur, Whitewater Valley REMC provides periodic updates to the media and posts information to our cooperative web site home page – www.vremc.com. The updates include the cause of outages and areas of our service area most affected.

Plan to attend

Whitewater Valley REMC's Annual Meeting

When: Tuesday, April 7, 2009
beginning at 7 p.m.

Where: Civic Hall, Richmond

Children's Program for ages 4-12

Receive a \$10 bill credit for attending.

Each member will receive a registration gift, a \$10 bill credit, and be eligible for the prize drawing at the end of the meeting.

Prizes will be given away immediately following the business portion of the meeting. Members with multiple meters/accounts in the same name will have only one vote, receive one bill credit and one special attendance gift. You must be present to win cash prizes.

Grand Prize – Energy Star rated Frigidaire appliance package including a refrigerator, washer & dryer

2nd Prize - \$500 CASH

3rd Prize - \$250 CASH

4th-8th Prize - \$100 Bill Credit

9th – 13th Prize - \$50 Bill Credit

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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*Mark Your Calendars!
Annual Meeting - April 7*

Liberty Office Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday
Closed Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays

To Report an Outage or Emergency:

Call 1-800-776-0493

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Be ready to provide the following information:

- The name and account number under which your electric service is listed
- Map location number
- Your phone number—needed to call back or confirm power restoration
- The type of problem you are experiencing –flickering lights, complete power outage, etc.

We appreciate your call and will work promptly to assist you.



WHITEWATER VALLEY
RURAL ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

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For up-to-date information, visit us on the web at www.vremc.com.

Candidate Profiles

Your local nominees for the Board

NORTH DISTRICT

Myron Moyer – President

Greens Fork

Myron and his wife Sara Jane have three daughters and six grandchildren. Myron, president of the Whitewater Valley REMC board, has been a member for over 42 years and has served on the board for 21. Myron is also on the board of the Harvest Land Co-op and is secretary-treasurer of the Indiana Holstein Association. He currently farms 940 acres and has a grain and dairy heifer operation.

Don Crossley

Greens Fork

Don and his wife Amy have three children and have been REMC members for 10 years. Don is the store manager of AAMCO Transmission in Richmond. Don has served as Treasurer and President of the Greens Fork Community Center.

Don states, "I believe that any decisions made on energy supply over the next few years are going to be very important. Harnessing the wind and/or solar is the future of our energy supply. Everything has to be considered. As an REMC customer, I expect the best service and I want the best price. I think the challenge is creating the 'value'. I want to use my years of management experience and years of service in a 501c3 organization to help the current REMC Board of Directors."

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Jodie Creek

Richmond

Jodie was born and raised in Noblesville, Indiana (Hamilton County) on a grain and livestock farm. She attended Purdue University where she graduated with a Bachelors of Science degree from the School of Agriculture in Agriculture Economics. Upon graduation, Jodie worked for a community bank for 10 years as an agricultural loan officer/AVP. In May 2007, she joined Midwest Ag Finance as a loan manager out of the Richmond Office specializing in agriculture loans.

Jodie and her husband Brian are involved with Brian's family's farming operation in Union County. They live in Richmond.

Diana Fox

Brownsville

No information available at press time.

Jack Bailey

Brownsville

I am a high school graduate and attended Ball State University. I have attended four years of schooling in residential and commercial building codes. I served in the U.S. Army as a construction engineer for three years with one year spent in Vietnam. My wife Betty and I have three children, three step children, and seventeen grandchildren.

I am involved in our community and a member of the VFW, The Sawnee Valley Dulcimer Society, The Union County Historical Society, and serve on the Union County Founder's Day Committee. I attend the College Corner Presbyterian Church and have strong religious roots, a historical perspective, have many contacts in our community, and communicate well with the public.

I am currently employed as the part-time Union County Building Inspector. Before taking that position, I spent 43 years running my own business in the construction trade. As both a retired contractor and current building inspector I deal with the public constantly.

Jack states, "Serving as a director for Whitewater Valley REMC would be an honor. To represent the people of this district would give me another way of contributing to the community."

SOUTH DISTRICT

Terry Hillman

Connersville

Terry was raised on a farm in Drewersburg and graduated from Whitewater Twp. High School. He retired in 2002 from the Fayette County School Corporation as a math and science teacher. Terry and his wife, Linda, have been REMC members

Your local nominees for Nominating Committee

NORTH

Robert Nocton Mark Mendenhall

CENTRAL

David Stanley George Henry

SOUTH

Fred Shamblin Odell Calihan

since 1971. They live in Fayette County raising black and red Angus cattle and grain. They have two married children and three grandsons.

He is currently a director for the Whitewater Valley REMC Board since 2006, a Supervisor with the Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District, and an elder in the Macedonia Christian Church for 37 years. He also served as vice-president of the Fayette County Retired Teachers Association.

To further his education and training, Terry earned a CCD designation, by demonstrating competence in five core courses, which promote the maintaining and efficient working of the REMC.

Terry states, "My knowledge of the Whitewater Valley REMC and services has given me a better insight as to the positive direction of the board of directors. I would like to help others with that knowledge and contribute as one of the directors on the board."

Clarence Joy

Brookville

I have been a resident of Franklin County for 27 years. My wife Penne and I have been married for 37 years. I graduated from Central Oklahoma University and am a licensed electrician for Ludwig Contracting.

Clarence states, "My reason for seeking a board seat is to see continued quality electric service for REMC members."

Donald Steinaid

Connersville

I am a lifelong resident of Everton, Indiana. I am a 1974 graduate of Connersville High School and also studied diesel mechanics for two years

Special Prize Drawing

Members who show their Co-op Connections Card or Key Fob during registration at the 2009 Annual Meeting will be entered in to win a prize for carrying their card! Can't find your card? No problem, just call our office and we will send you another one.

Why aren't electricity rates falling like gasoline prices?

The average price of a gallon of gasoline in the U.S. fell from \$4.11 at its peak in July to \$1.70 per gallon in December 2008. Prices for natural gas and residential heating oil have also fallen recently with the likelihood of a global economic downturn well into 2009.

Some consumers may be wondering, why aren't my electricity rates going down as well?

While gasoline was rising more than 105 percent, Whitewater Valley REMC's residential rates rose about 7.77 percent during 2008. This increase was primarily due to cost increases from Hoosier Energy, our cooperative-owned power supplier. For 2009, Hoosier Energy has implemented wholesale rate and first quarter tracker adjustments that are expected to result in about a 2.32 percent retail rate increase for a consumer using 1,000 kilowatt-hours per month. Other electric utilities report similar rate adjustments and U.S. electricity prices in general haven't followed the downward trend of energy commodities that are directly tied to crude oil costs.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's short-term energy outlook released in December, residential electricity prices nationally for 2008, which average about 12 cents per kilowatt-hour, were projected to rise about 6 percent with another 5 percent increase expected in 2009.

Current electricity prices continue to reflect cost increases over past years for

Candidates Profiles continued...

at the Connersville Vocational School. I am married to Cathy and am the father of three children and five grandchildren. I have been employed by Irving Materials as the Plant Manager since 1989. For the past 13 years I have been a member of the Everton Water Corporation, and for 12 of those years I have held the office of the president. Also, I have served 25 years on the Everton Volunteer Fire Department.

Donald states, "I feel that with my experience of being president of the Everton Water Corporation for the past 12 years, and working with the public with my position of Plant Manager at IMI will greatly benefit me in fulfilling my position on the REMC board."

fuel (coal and natural gas) costs and for commodities such as steel and copper. During that time power prices remained relatively stable with small increases compared to the dramatic price spikes in gasoline and natural gas.

Power cost tracker provides price stability

Hoosier Energy's power cost tracker is used to recover highly variable costs that are not fixed or predictable. To level or smooth the impact of wide swings in fuel and other costs, the tracker recovers and spreads those costs over a 12-month period. As well, Hoosier Energy "hedges" prices on certain commodities such as natural gas and fuel oil to lessen market risks. Hedging takes place through advance purchasing of products to help avoid price volatility.

Recent tracker increases are driven primarily by increasing costs for coal and purchased power. Hoosier Energy uses 4 million tons of coal annually at two baseload southern Indiana power stations.

U.S. coal markets have been impacted by demand from China, India and other countries and a shift from surface mining to more costly underground mines. While most of Hoosier Energy's coal supply has been secured under long-term contracts at favorable prices, the power supplier's coal costs for 2008 were still 31 percent higher than in 2004.

Because of mining and transportation issues, fuel oil is a component of coal costs for power plants. During 2008, the price of fuel oil was more than three times what it was in 2004. That price is projected to decline in 2009 and 2010, but is expected to be more than double the 2004 price.

Several coal contracts are nearing expiration and future coal costs are projected to be even higher. Higher coal costs are expected to add about \$40 million per year to Hoosier Energy operating costs by 2010.

Hoosier Energy is adding a third natural gas-fired generating station to its power production resources in early 2009. Natural gas units provide flexibility, especially in times of fluctuating or peak

demand. The cost of natural gas to fuel those plants is lower now than it was at its peak, but is still 17 percent higher than in 2004. (The hidden acct. no. is 841803.)

Hoosier Energy also purchases power for members in the wholesale market during periods when demand may be very high or power plants are experiencing outages. Average purchased power prices in 2008 were 63 percent higher than 2004 prices. Addition of the new power plant will help to mitigate future purchased power costs.

As well, a cost-based purchased power contract rose about 23 percent in 2008 over 2007 and will increase further in 2009, reflecting overall cost pressures experienced in the wholesale power markets.

The power cost tracker also includes environmental compliance costs. Since 2005, Hoosier Energy has spent more than \$80 million to produce cleaner electric power.

The demand for electricity has been increasing steadily until the current recession. Meanwhile the U.S. is looking

Whitewater Valley REMC is launching new programs in 2009 to help consumers improve efficiency and better manage rising electric costs.

to build many power plants to meet future demand. One way of minimizing the huge costs of new power plants with their associated fuel and environmental costs is to reduce consumer usage through demand management and energy efficiency measures. Whitewater Valley REMC is launching new programs in 2009 to help consumers improve efficiency and better manage rising electric costs.

Hoosier Energy and Whitewater Valley REMC are aggressively pursuing initiatives to reduce and manage costs and operate more efficiently as we cooperatively produce and deliver power for you. Although electric rates have not increased or fallen like the cost of filling your gas tank, electricity remains a good value in today's energy market.

2009 INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Members can earn rebates when they install certain high efficiency electric water heaters, heating and cooling equipment in their home. Installation and efficiency ratings must be verified by REMC personnel before rebate can be paid. Please call our office for complete details on how to apply for a rebate.

ELECTRIC WATER HEATERS

- 80 gallon high efficiency (.90 or above): \$150
- 40 or 50 gallon high efficiency (.90 or above): \$50

CENTRAL AIR

- 14/15 SEER unit: \$200
- 16 SEER unit: \$250
- 17 SEER unit: 300

HEAT PUMPS

- 14/15 SEER heat pump: \$300
- 16 SEER heat pump: \$350
- 17 SEER heat pump: \$400

HEAT PUMPS AS AIR CONDITIONERS

- 14/15 SEER heat pump: \$300
- 16 SEER heat pump: \$350
- 17 SEER heat pump: \$400

AIR SOURCE OR GEOTHERMAL HEAT PUMPS TO REPLACE ELECTRIC FURNACE

- 14/15 SEER heat pump: \$800
- 16 SEER heat pump: \$900
- 17 SEER heat pump: \$1,000

Rebates are available for equipment installed between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009. Rebate requests must be received within 30 days of equipment installation.

Melody Ramey graduates from the 2008 RELITE program



Melody Ramey

Melody Ramey, Office Manager at Whitewater Valley REMC, recently graduated from the Rural Electric Leaders-In-Training Exchange,

or RELITE program. This nationally-recognized leadership development program is coordinated by the Indiana Statewide Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, Inc., and includes participants from electric cooperative systems throughout Indiana.

The extensive two-year program is designed “to create a broadened environment of networking and community experience that will develop electric utility employees into knowledge-age leaders and better global citizens.”

Melody, and the 19 other participants in her class attended nine professional development days from April through October. The RELITE program focuses on leadership skills, team building, facilitation skills, public speaking, interpersonal communications, personal mission, and accountability.

In part two of the RELITE program, which begins in early 2009, Melody’s role will change from that of student to facilitator. She and the other 2008 graduates will act as program planners and leaders, putting their own mark on the 2009 RELITE program. This part of the program design ensures that, as graduates apply their recently acquired leadership skills, future RELITE training will be continually adjusted to meet the ever-changing needs of the real world.

Other RELITE graduates from Whitewater Valley REMC include:

Mary Jo Thomas, Director of Administrative Services & Corporate Development, Wende Shipley, Operations & Engineering Coordinator, Rodney Robertson, Staking, and Sandy Cason, Executive Assistant & Communications Specialist.



Find the Hidden Account Number!

No one found the hidden account number from December. Keep reading your Powerlines each month or browsing our website—the next hidden account number could be yours!

February Due Dates

During February the due dates for payment of your electric bills are February 3, 10, 19 and 26.

Remember, we recommend that you allow three to five business days for the mail to reach the payment processing center. That way, you’ll never run the risk of being late.

Payment Options

US Mail: Send your payment to:
Whitewater Valley REMC
P.O. Box 3199
Martinsville, IN 46151-3168

Internet: Log-on at www.wvremc.com

Liberty Office: In person or in the drop box

Automatic Withdrawal: Simply request a form and submit it to our office

FCN or Franklin County National Bank:

In person or in the drop box (Please bring your payment stub with you)

First Merchants Bank both Richmond Locations: In person or in the drop box (Please bring your payment stub with you)

If you would like more information about payment options, call 765-458-5171 or 1-800-529-5557.