

# EnerStar<sup>®</sup> HomePage

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## Comments from the President/CEO

by Tom Hentz, President/CEO

### Annual Meeting Around the Corner

Our Annual Meeting of Members is just a couple of short weeks away. And if you want to know why we go to so much trouble each year, simply look at recent newspapers or watch the television news for headlines on unethical business behavior.

Given the business climate over the past year, having an open annual meeting is more important than ever. It is your chance to learn about the cooperative and have direct input into its future with the election of officers.

Hopefully, we will see you and your immediate family on Saturday, March 13 at Crestwood School, east of Paris. Our employees will be serving breakfast from 7:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., with the assistance of some of the cooks at Crestwood. Member registration will run from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Our goal is more than to show you a good time. Yes, we want you to come and enjoy breakfast and fellowship with other members. And yes, we look forward to giving away prizes.

But mostly we want to inform you of what is going on at EnerStar Power. During the business meeting, a financial

report will be given by Board Secretary-Treasurer John Fell. Board members and nominees will be introduced and members will cast their ballots for positions on EnerStar's Board of Directors. You can read the director nominee biographies on the next two pages. An executive summary will recap 2003 and take a brief look at what is ahead. At the close of the presentation, the floor will be open to questions from the membership. The Annual Meeting is a time to hear, read and see all about your electric utility.

Some may think our annual meetings are just carrying on a tradition that started back in the early 1940s. To a certain extent, they have become tradition. They are, however, one of the reasons we have been able to prosper over the decades, compared to companies that have not.

Perhaps we should rename it our "Accountability Meeting." That is what it is all about. We want as many of our members to show up as possible. We are proud of what we do and how we do it. Do you think many of those companies making the headlines on the business pages feel the same way we do? Unfortunately, we don't think so either.

## Grounded by our PROMISE



### EnerStar Annual Meeting Information At a Glance!

Saturday, March 13, 2004 • Crestwood School, Paris, IL

7:00 am to 9:30 am ..... Complimentary Member Breakfast  
Served by EnerStar Employees and Directors

7:00 am to 10:00 am ..... Registration

8:00 am..... Children's Room Opens

10:00 am..... Business Meeting Begins

*Door Awards drawn prior to and immediately following the business meeting*



# Board of Director Candidates

**Dale Edward English**  
*District 3 Candidate*



**D**ale English, candidate for District 3, has farmed for the past 26 years in the Redmon area. A 1970 graduate of Paris High School, English received a B.S. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Illinois in 1974. After working for Farm Credit for three years, he returned to the family farm and grain elevator in 1977.

Dale has been a director of the Citizens National Bank for 15 years. He has been Supervisor of Buck Township for the past 10 years, and serves as treasurer and elder of the Redmon Christian Church. As chairman of the Edgar County Ambulance Board, he is proud that we now have

a paramedic in each ambulance—especially important in our rural areas. English has been active in the Edgar County Shrine Club since 1980 and served as club president in 1993.

“I would like to see the cooperative focus on its main purpose of providing electricity to its members at the lowest possible cost. Any other business ventures, such as propane or communications, should be sold if they cannot individually show a profit.”

Dale and his wife Jan have been married 22 years and have two children and three grandchildren. When not farming, they enjoy spending time with their family, golfing and traveling.

**Dave Hollis**  
*District 3 Candidate*



**D**ave Hollis, candidate for District 3, has been an EnerStar board member for 18 years and served as Board Chairman nine years. Dave is a lifelong resident of Edgar County where he has been a livestock and grain farmer for 30 years. Growing up, he attended Paris schools and studied agriculture at the University of Illinois.

Dave has served on numerous boards and community organizations including the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors for 15 years, Farm Bureau Board of Directors, Stratton Township board, Masonic Lodge and Danville Consistory.

Dave is seeking re-election on the EnerStar board because, “I would like to see projects through to completion. Being a director takes a period of experience to gain the knowledge needed to understand the

complexities of the utility business.” Dave believes there should be a more structured way of distributing capital credits to all members of the co-op in the near future. He states, “I have tried to keep rates as low as possible for the consumer while striving for economic development and better service for our members.”

Dave considers his family to be an important part of his life. He and his wife Nancy have three grown children: Jennifer Keys, a special education teacher; Andrea Hollis, a loan officer; and Joel Hollis, a livestock and grain farmer. Dave and Nancy are also the proud grandparents of five. Dave is a member of the Methodist Church in Paris, and in his spare time enjoys sports, woodworking and planting in his greenhouse.

**Donald Baggs**  
*District 6 Candidate*



**D**onald Baggs, a candidate from District 6, is a lifelong resident of Clark County and lives on a small farm east of Marshall with his wife of 38 years, Portia. He retired from Cinergy’s Wabash River Generating Station after 35 years of service; the last 22 years were in supervision.

During his 35 years of power plant experience, he was directly involved in generating electricity and operating substations and transmission lines.

“My experience in the electrical industry will help me make prudent

decisions to maintain the business ethics of EnerStar, ensure its financial health, lower rates, and maintain reliability and customer satisfaction in the years to come.”

Baggs is presently a trustee of the Marshall Fire and Ambulance Protection District, a member of the Marshall Masonic Lodge, the Scottish Rite Valley of Danville, and the Clark County Farm Bureau.

Baggs enjoys hunting, fishing, and attending his grandchildren’s baseball and football games.

## Larry Welsh

District 6 Candidate



Larry Welsh has farmed in the Marshall area for approximately 40 years. He graduated from Marshall High School in 1971 and Indiana State University in 1975, spent two years working in the automotive industry, and then returned home to work on the family farm.

Welsh has served on the EnerStar board for the last three years. He states, "I take my responsibility of representing the interests of the EnerStar member-owners very seriously. Your voice of concern and frustration at last year's annual meeting was heard loud and clear. Balancing everyone's best interest while mandating a high degree of efficiency and value is probably our most difficult task.

"This co-op faces many challenges, but reducing debt and lowering rates to our customers is a high prior-

ity. Some of our current services are being re-evaluated or overhauled cost effectively. We need to be more competitive in our trade area and provide consistent service to all our customers.

"We've set policy and established goals for senior management to accomplish. We're also committed to providing well-trained, high quality employees, all working together to keep your power on 24/7. We haven't reached all our goals yet, but we are moving in the right direction. I'd like to continue as your director and help build a co-op we're all proud of."

Welsh has served on many boards and has been active in the Clark County community. He and his wife Debbie have two sons, Jeremy age 23 and Brandon age 20. Welsh's two favorite pastimes are snow skiing and 1969-1971 muscle cars.

## Danny Gard

District 7 Candidate



Danny Gard Jr., candidate for District 7, is and has been a farmer in the West Union area since 1973. Gard has also been a resident of West Union his entire life and was a graduate of Marshall High School.

Gard has been a part of the Enerstar board of directors for the last 3 years. Gard states, "My future goals include working together with fellow board members and staff to provide quality services with as low of a rate as possible and to increase the members' equity."

Gard and his wife Barbara have been married for 24 years and have three sons. Daniel, 22, is an officer in the Marine Corp, currently stationed in Pensacola, Florida. Seth, 19, is a freshman at Lakeland College. And Jacob,

17, is a senior at Marshall High School.

Gard has been a member of the Lions Club for over 24 years, including past president, and has also served as a board member. He has also belonged to the Masonic Lodge for 26 years. He has been an active member on the Clark Co Ag Extension Board, serving on the Clark County Ag Council and the 4-H Board and Council. He has also been a 4-H Leader for eight years and a youth football coach for 10 years. Gard has been a past trustee and road commissioner of Darwin Township. He volunteers as a fireman at the West Union Volunteer Fire Department. Gard is a member of the First United Methodist Church in Marshall and has served on numerous church committees.

Member  
News

Membership  
is Ownership

Not everyone realizes that by receiving your electricity from EnerStar Power, you automatically become a member.

EnerStar Power is a not-for-profit electric cooperative, so we are owned by the members we serve. As a member, you are entitled to the benefits that your cooperative offers. One such benefit is strength in numbers. We serve more than 5,200 members. And we are part of an association that serves more than 250,000 members in Illinois and 35 million across the country.

By pooling our member resources locally and in association, we are able to offer competitive rates. We are also able to represent members' interests in local and state government, ensuring that the electric cooperative voice is heard.

# They Work for You

*EnerStar CSRs Answer the Call*



*EnerStar's Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) help keep the co-op running smoothly by dealing directly with you, the member, and any questions you may have. Above left, Jennifer Hird; top right, Kelly McCrocklin; bottom right, Susan Watson.*

You see our EnerStar linemen up and down the country roads, maintaining the lines and responding to outages. But have you ever wondered about the people that answer the phone?

Our Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) are a critical part of the EnerStar organization. Serving our members is what Jennifer Hird, Susan Watson and Kelly McCrocklin do best!

Jennifer Hird has been with EnerStar for three years, but she is considered the "young -un" of the bunch. She

now makes her home in Chrisman, but is originally from the state of Washington. Her office is decorated with scenes from home including several photos of Mount Rainier. "I miss Washington a lot but I have come to enjoy living here. This is now my home," says Hird.

Besides answering the telephone, Hird's main duties at the cooperative include payments and billing functions. Like all the CSRs, Hird's job varies with the situation. "Members call in with a variety of situations and requests; it's our job

to point them in the right direction. It helps that I am a member of the cooperative too. I understand a lot of their questions, especially about billing," says Hird. The thing she enjoys most about her job at EnerStar is her "great co-workers."

One of those co-workers is Susan Watson, who serves as a Customer Service Representative and Billing Supervisor. Originally a native of Paris, Watson has worked for EnerStar for five years. Previously

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she worked at AmerenCIPS in Mattoon. It is Watson's responsibility to thoroughly understand the entire billing system and how it interacts with the other office systems. To do this she works closely with Meter Reader Jon Farris and the accounting department. Watson's future projects will put her in a critical role as EnerStar upgrades its computer system in the fall.

Experience is on her side. "I have worked for an electric utility for more than 22 years, so a lot of this work has become second nature to me," stated Watson. "But working for EnerStar, I find new challenges on a regular basis that make my job very interesting."

Watson was quick to point out that the cooperative is all about the membership and the cooperative difference. "At the other utilities, customers do not have the opportunities that our members have. It's neat that they can attend the annual meeting and be heard directly by the CEO. They can affect the direction of the cooperative with their vote."

The Customer Service Representative working at EnerStar's front counter is Kelly McCrocklin, a 26-year veteran of EnerStar and a cooperative member as well. Probably one of the best-known EnerStar employees, McCrocklin's infectious good attitude is one that members have come to love.

With a chuckle, McCrocklin says she enjoys working at the cooperative. "We work hard to keep things in line so members' requests are met. Sometimes the phones and the counter get a little crazy around here but we somehow get it all done. I'm not sure how, but we get it done!"

Regardless of whether you recognize the faces or just know the voices, the CSRs are here to serve you—the membership. Since they interact daily with members, these employees provide a voice to EnerStar management with suggestions on improving customer service. If you have a suggestion or concern, please let them know. They will be happy to pass it on for you. It is one more way that local people are serving the membership.

## New Year...New Book!

### Area Libraries Benefit from Cooperative Program



**E**nerStar recently began a new library giveaway program. All area schools and public libraries in the EnerStar service area are encouraged to participate. Information regarding the program was sent to area libraries in late January.

The program was developed with EnerStar's mission statement in mind. "The purpose of the program is simple. EnerStar is committed to community improvement projects and good libraries improve our rural communities. We simply want to help stock the library shelves with books that students need and community residents would enjoy," stated Angela Griffin, Director of Marketing at EnerStar.

The first book selected was *The Next Greatest Thing*. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), of which EnerStar Power is a member, authorized the publication of the book, and long-time NRECA employee, Richard Pence, served as editor. Many past and current EnerStar

employees have had the privilege of meeting Pence.

Originally published in 1984, the 246-page book is "a remembrance that captures in photograph and phrase the magic of America's greatest 20th Century social and economic achievements—the lighting of rural America."

"This is obviously a book that is near and dear to our hearts so we thought it would be an appropriate first choice," added Griffin.

A new selection will be available each January. The number of books available will vary based on the cost of the books. According to Griffin, topics will vary each year and range in such subjects as energy and water, the environment and conservation, rural America and community development, and general history, just to name a few.

"I anticipate a book on electricity projects next year that would be helpful to children participating in 4-H and school science projects," Griffin added.

## Those Strange Outlets Protect You



**H**ave you ever wondered why you have different outlets in the bathroom? Those outlets are Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs). More than two-

thirds of 300 electrocution deaths could have been prevented with the use of GFCI outlets, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The GFCI is able to shut off when a small fluctuation in current is detected. These outlets are much more sensitive to current fluctuations than a fuse or your circuit breaker.

These GFCI outlets should be installed anywhere an appliance might come in contact accidentally with water, typically in the bathroom, kitchen, laundry room or garage.

Don't take your GFCI for granted. The Underwriters Laboratory suggests testing your GFCI monthly

to make sure it is working properly with the following steps:

- Push the "Reset" button located on the GFCI receptacle.
- Plug a nightlight (with an "ON/OFF" switch) or other product (such as a lamp) into the GFCI receptacle and turn the product "ON."
- Push the "Test" button located on the GFCI receptacle. The nightlight or other product should go "OFF."
- Push the "Reset" button again. The light or other product should go "ON" again.

If the light or other product remains "ON" when the "Test" button is pushed, the GFCI is not working properly or has been incorrectly installed (miswired). If your GFCI is not working properly, call a qualified electrician who can assess the situation, rewire the GFCI if necessary or replace the device.

Source: Underwriters Laboratory, Inc.; [www.safeelectricity.com](http://www.safeelectricity.com).

## We Got Chips... But No Dip!

**F**rom time to time as EnerStar is trimming trees throughout the service territory, there is a need to dump loads of wood chips. Where and when the chips are available varies on EnerStar's workload.

Mike Clark, EnerStar's Superintendent/Maintenance Foreman, says that it really comes down to being in the right place at the right time. "Often we are in remote areas of the system and need to get rid of wood chips. It would be real handy if we had a list of members who might want a load of chips."

Clark emphasized that not necessarily everyone who wanted chips would get them. He also added that, "Basically, we are looking for members who might want us to deliver chips to them if we happen to be in their area." Members who might be interested should contact Clark at (217) 466-7616.

## Here's Your Sign



Yard Sale. Garage Sale. Lose weight. Work from home. Need health insurance?

You have undoubtedly seen them. They are signs that adorn utility poles.

While they seem innocent, their nails, tacks and staples can injure linemen and damage their clothing and gear. Removing signs wastes time during outage repair and adds expense to line maintenance.

Whether it is a busy intersection or on your personal property, please refrain from posting anything on utility poles.



## Mission statement

*EnerStar exists to serve the changing needs of its members by improving their quality of life, by serving their energy needs and by actively supporting community development.*



## Winterize Your Skin

Just because it is wintertime doesn't mean you have to be miserable with dry skin. A few simple steps can take care of this common winter health problem:

- Drink eight glasses of water a day
- Take shorter baths or showers and use lukewarm water with bath oil or mild soap substitutes. Gently pat your skin dry. Apply moisturizer while the skin is damp.
- Use an air humidifier to counter the drying effect of heated homes and offices
- Wear cotton clothing when possible. Avoid wool and synthetic fibers.
- Take a multi-vitamin. Too little vitamin A can contribute to dry, cracked skin.
- Look for moisturizers that contain both humectants and emollients (like Lubriderm or Eucerin). Bath products that contain mineral or vegetable oils (Vaseline Intensive Care, Alpha Keri) can also help reduce dry skin. Oatmeal-based products (Aveeno) soothe and lubricate dry, irritated skin.

### *The 2nd Annual Caregiver Symposium*

## “Challenges and Choices of Caregiving”



**Saturday, March 27, 2004**

Paris Community Hospital • 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Will discuss issues concerning caregivers of Alzheimer patients.

- Causes of Alzheimer's disease
- Early signs and stages of Alzheimer's disease
- Caregiver support – coping with a family lifestyle change

For registration information, contact Rita at Dynamic Homecare at 466-2273.

## A handshake still means something



Remember when a handshake was all it took to seal a deal? It's still that way at your local electric cooperative.

The Touchstone Energy® logo you see on our trucks, hats, and on our sign outside, along with our co-op name, stand for our promise to you that you'll receive the best electric service at the best possible price.

We're here only to serve you. And in a world where not much is certain, you can count on that.

We are the power of human connections.



**Touchstone Energy®**

*The power of human connections*



# Better Ideas for Your Home

## New Construction Guidelines Booklet Still Available

New materials and techniques for building a comfortable, energy-efficient home are included in the new Certified Comfort Home manual now available from the Illinois Electric Cooperatives.

This booklet, first written in 1995, offers advice on many details of construction, as well as broad guidelines on issues such as insulation levels and high-efficiency heating systems. The new edition includes recommendations for spray-on cellulose insulation in walls, airtight recessed light fixtures, and windows with invisible low-e film between the panes.

Alternative construction techniques such as structural insulated panels (SIP) and insulated concrete forms are also recognized for their high efficiency and strength.



"This manual shows the proven construction practices that our co-

operatives have seen used around the state to build houses that are super-efficient, affordable and very comfortable year-round," says Tim Haddix, EnerStar's Staking Engineer. "Some of the tips are basic while others go right down to the detail of how to build an airtight soffit or where to put vapor barriers in a crawl space," he adds.

The 16-page Certified Comfort Home manual is offered free of charge to EnerStar cooperative members and area contractors. You can request a copy by writing our office, or by calling Haddix at (800) 635-4145, extension 617. You may also drop us an e-mail at [power@enerstar.com](mailto:power@enerstar.com). Haddix would also be the contact for questions regarding electric build-ins or upgrades at your property.

# Grant Money Available for Geothermal Energy Systems

Communities and non-profit organizations served by Illinois electric cooperatives can now receive up to \$50,000 to help with the installation of geothermal heating and cooling systems through a grant program administered by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) and funded by the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency calls geothermal heating and cooling systems "the most energy efficient, environmentally clean and cost-effective space conditioning systems available."

Tom Hentz, President/CEO of EnerStar Power, says, "We are very excited about the availability of this grant because this will really help some of our local schools or church-



James Mann, Executive Director of the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation (left) presents a \$500,000 grant check to Earl Struck, President/CEO of the AIEC.

es save money on their monthly energy bills. Geothermal systems on average can cut energy expenses by 50 percent, and have been proven to decrease maintenance costs as well.

"EnerStar looks forward to collaborating with the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation on this program, which will promote a proven,

under-utilized, energy-saving clean technology?"

"The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation appreciates the leadership of the electric cooperatives on this effort," says James Mann, Executive Director of Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation. "We see this as a breakthrough opportunity for public and non-profit organizations. They can benefit from improved comfort in their facilities, lower operating

and maintenance costs and reduced energy use, leading to less pollution in Illinois communities."

For more information about the geothermal system funding program, contact EnerStar's Brent Reyher at (217) 466-7606 or the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives at (217) 529-5561, or go to [www.aiec.coop](http://www.aiec.coop).



11597 IL Hwy 1 • Paris, Illinois 61944 (217) 463-4145 • Office hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. M-F