### GM'S REPORT

## **COOPERATIVES SEE THE FUTURE**

Dramatic changes are transforming all aspects of the energy industry. Interest in renewable energy is at an all-time high, and ultimately, consumers want greater control over everything from their energy use to their payment methods. The prevalence of smartphone apps and smart technology for the home is increasing. Consumers and businesses are showing greater interest in electric vehicles. There's no denying it: Electric utilities will have to make changes to the way they provide energy to accommodate these trends. As a cooperative, Firelands Electric is uniquely positioned to meet these changing energy needs.

### **Co-ops are community-led**

October is National Co-op Month, which is the perfect time to highlight the many ways electric cooperatives stand out from other types of utilities.

Cooperatives belong to the communities we serve. We are locally governed by the people we serve — our board of trustees consists of members just like you. This heightened community focus allows us to adapt to evolving consumer expectations, and our closeness to the community ensures a better response to its needs.



To celebrate National Co-op Month, Firelands Electric Cooperative will be giving a FREE LED lightbulb to the first 200 members who visit our office at 1 Energy Place, New London, during the month of October. Our sole purpose is to look out for the needs of our members.

#### Co-ops are a catalyst for progress

Co-ops like Firelands Electric are a catalyst for progress in our communities. They make it possible for members to do things that might otherwise be difficult or even unattainable if attempted alone. In the old days, that meant bringing power to areas where other utilities



Dan McNaull GENERAL MANAGER

did not find it economically feasible. Today, it means providing technology to help members take control of their electric use, offering rebates to invest in energysaving appliances and upgrades, and bringing affordable community solar to residential members.

Cooperatives exist to meet a need that was previously unmet in the community, and we always strive to anticipate and plan for the future needs of our members.

Firelands Electric often works with local businesses and organizations to bring economic opportunities to the community. Whether helping a farmer or small business owner with plans to expand or working to bring additional facilities to a local recreations area and campground, it is this role that is often the most valuable strength of the co-op.

The co-op business model is unique. It is pragmatic, mission-oriented, and puts people first. Co-ops strive to be a trusted voice in our communities, and we feel we have earned that trust because, while not perfect, we always have our members' best interests at heart and are determined to enrich the lives of those living and working in the communities we serve — now and in the future.

I'd like to hear your ideas on other ways we can serve our communities.

### EMPLOYEE NEWS

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# READY, SET, RETIRE!



Gwean Anderson

#### **Gwean Anderson** After serving the members of Firelands Electric

Cooperative for more than 32 years, Consumer Services Representative Gwean Anderson will retire on Oct. 5.

Gwean joined the co-op as a billing clerk in June 1986. As part of Firelands Electric's billing team, she has assisted countless members over the years. Whether setting up budget billing, processing payments, transferring service,

or explaining a member's energy use, Gwean is a familiar face at the co-op's front counter. "I will miss interacting with our members and my co-workers," she says.

There have been many changes in the electric industry since Gwean started her co-op career, especially in the area of technology. In the past, for instance, co-op personnel had to read meters, perform disconnects, and investigate power blinks in person. Today, these tasks, as well as many others, can often be managed from the office, reducing response time and increasing employee efficiency. "The advances in technology kept me learning something new," Gwean says.

Gwean and her husband, Michael, reside in New London. The couple have two sons, Rollie and Jason, and three grandchildren, Ashley, Sadie, and Gavin. In her free time, Gwean enjoys scrapbooking, crocheting, sewing, and trips to Cedar Point with her family. Several members of her family are also involved in drag racing, and Gwean hopes to spend more time with them at the track.

In addition to spending more time with her family, Gwean plans to get more involved with volunteering. She has enrolled in emergency medical technician (EMT) training with Firelands Ambulance Service in New London. Both of Gwean's granddaughters are fourthgeneration firefighters, so becoming a first responder is the obvious next step for her.

### Vicki White

Engineering Data Analyst Vicki White has announced that she will retire on Oct. 5, wrapping up an 18-year career with Firelands Electric Cooperative.

Vicki joined the co-op's billing department on a part-time basis in October 2000. She later transitioned to a full-time position in the operations department and was promoted to her current position in August 2002.

Vicki's duties at Firelands Electric include maintaining records of the co-op's infrastructure. One of her



Vicki White

primary responsibilities is mapping, which involves keeping a comprehensive digital record of the location and details of the poles, transformers, wires, and other equipment that bring power to Firelands' members. Although it can become complex at times, "I enjoy the challenge of working with the co-op's mapping system," Vicki says.

In addition to mapping, Vicki also handles pole contacts for Firelands Electric. Pole contacts are when another utility, such as a cable company, requests to attach their equipment to one of the co-op's poles. Vicki processes the necessary paperwork to ensure that such connections are completed correctly and that Firelands Electric receives compensation (or "rent") for the use of the co-op's pole.

Vicki and her husband, Winston, live just outside of New London. They enjoy traveling and spending time with their six children and ten grandchildren. After retirement, Vicki plans to do additional traveling as well as devote more time to her hobbies of knitting, crochet, crafts, and embroidery. While she looks forward to this next chapter — and spending winters in a warmer climate — Vicki says she will miss the people she works with.

### EMPLOYEE NEWS

## DAVE HARWOOD CELEBRATES 40 YEARS WITH THE CO-OP

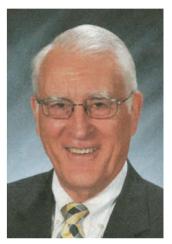
This month, Company Attorney Dave Harwood marks 40 years with Firelands Electric Cooperative.

Following his graduation from The Ohio State University Law School in 1972, Dave was hired as an associate attorney with a law firm that, at the time, represented Buckeye Power and Ohio's Electric Cooperatives (then known as Ohio Rural Electric Cooperative Association). When he returned to his hometown of Willard in 1977, Dave began practicing law with Bob and Ken Thornton, who had been serving as Firelands Electric Cooperative's legal counsel for several years.

Dave's prior experience with cooperatives and the electric industry made him the perfect candidate to work with Firelands Electric. Shortly after joining the Thorntons' practice, he was asked to take over representing the cooperative. "I've had the privilege to represent Firelands ever since then," Dave says.

Currently a partner at the law firm of Harwood and Niedermeier in Willard, Dave is involved in the general practice of law. The work is challenging, but exciting. "Nearly every day there is something new and different. This is especially true today when representing cooperatives in the ever-changing electric utility industry environment," Dave says.

Dave and his wife, Deb, have been married 48 years and have two children. In his free time, Dave enjoys reading, traveling, playing golf, and spending time with his three grandchildren.



Dave Harwood



### FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LOCAL PAGES

### CO-OP NEWS



Progress continues to be made on Firelands Electric Cooperative's new all-in-one facility. Concrete inside the building has been completed, perimeter and pole-yard lighting has been installed, and electricians have started on the interior wiring. In-floor radiant heating for the warehouse and HVAC units for the office area are now in place, and plans for the exterior landscaping are being finalized. To view additional photos of the construction, visit www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums.





In August, a new 10mVA transformer arrived at Firelands Electric Cooperative. With the assistance of a 250-ton crane, the transformer was permanently placed in the north bay of the New London substation. This unit replaces a 37kVa transformer that was severely damaged when a bird flew into the regulator bushings and caused it to short out. The new transformer will help the cooperative continue to provide reliable service and accommodate future growth to the nearly 1,900 members served by the New London substation.

## accountability innovation

### CAPITAL CREDITS

## NOTICE OF UNCLAIMED FUNDS

Official notice is given that the following current or former patrons have cash retirements of capital credits or other payments from Firelands Electric Cooperative that have gone unclaimed for more than four years. According to Article VIII, Section 3, of the Code of Regulations, unless claim is made within 60 days of the second publication of this list, such funds will become an irrevocable gift and assignment by such patron to the cooperative. Inquiries should be directed to Firelands Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 32, New London, Ohio 44851, or by phone at 1-800-533-8658.

This is the first of two notices.

A T & T COMPANY STORE#75-TADM A V LAKE STEEL CO ABRAM, DAVID A ABRAMS, STEVEN ABSHER, LINDA ACKERMAN, KATHLEEN ADAMS, EDNA ADAMS, RICHARD H, JR ADKINS, CHARLES ALBAUGH. PHILIP D ALBERT, KENDALL ALCORN, MICHAEL E ALEXANDER, ARNOLD ALLEN, BEVERLY ALLEN, KATHERINE ALLEN, ROBERT M ALLEN TRAINING STABLES ALLTOP, TABITHA ALT. BERNARD J AMBURGY, BONNIE F AMBURGY, JOHN D AMERICAN TOWERS INC AMSTUTZ, RANDY A ANDERSON, DAVID R ANDERSON, FRANCES L ANDERSON, GARY L ANDERSON, ROBERT C ARMAN, RICHARD C ARMSTRONG, JANE E ARNOLD, EILEEN

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### COOPERATIVE UPDATE

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## BOARD MEETING highlights

*Firelands Electric Cooperative's board of trustees met July 24 and covered the following items:* 

- The board reviewed the report for a safety and training meeting held July 18.
- Director of Finance and Accounting Tabi Shepherd reviewed the June financials and reviewed loan drawdown procedures for the cooperative's building loan. She also reported on recent accounting and billing department activities.
- Management updated the board on the status of constructing the cooperative's new facility and advised that the building was on schedule.
- General Manager Dan McNaull reviewed a recommendation to obtain a new commercial appraisal of the cooperative's existing buildings. Following discussion, the board decided to obtain a new commercial appraisal and revisit marketing options at the August board meeting.
- The board also decided not rent out the cooperative's rental house until a decision is made on the marketing and disposition of all buildings and property.

- Director of Electric Operations Don Englet reported on recent projects and crew activities in the operations department.
- Director of Member Services and Communications Andrea Gravenhorst updated the board on recent projects and activities involving the member services department. She discussed the cooperative's revised rebate programs and benefits available to members using the programs.

Firelands Electric Cooperative is democratically controlled and governed by local people committed to policies that result in a safe and reliable electric system, fair rates, financial responsibility, and superior member service.

The cooperative's next board meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 23, at Firelands Electric's office, located at One Energy Place, New London.

#### FIRELANDS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

OUTAGE HOTLINE 1-800-533-8658

#### OFFICE

One Energy Place P.O. Box 32 New London, OH 44851 419-929-1571

**OFFICE HOURS** Mon. – Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. www.firelandsec.com



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