



## Egyptian Electric lands \$360,000 loan for Degognia-Fountain Bluff Levee and Drainage District

Areas in Jackson County will soon have increased protection from flooding thanks to Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association's (EECA) assistance in securing a \$360,000, zero-interest, 10-year loan for Degognia-Fountain Bluff Levee & Drainage District. This loan is from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) program with \$300,000 of these funds from the USDA and \$60,000 matched by EECA.

"It has always been important for Egyptian Electric to invest in rural communities," said General Manager

Shane Hermetz. "The cooperative is happy to provide support through the REDLG program."

The levee district will utilize the funds from this loan to repair and replace two of the existing pump systems. "The current pumps are 40-plus years old and were never designed to do what the district needs to remove water from areas that are at high risk for flooding," said Mark Holt, commissioner for Degognia-Fountain Bluff.

According to Holt, there will be about 12,000 acres protected by these pumps. Flood events that occurred in 2011-2012 caused a net

income loss of more than \$19 million. "Needless to say, the impact for the area will be dramatic," Holt said.

The Degognia-Fountain Bluff Levee & Drainage District is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the levee system from Cora City to Fountain Bluff on the Mississippi River and Oakwood Bottoms to Grimsby on the Big Muddy River.

"The district is playing catch-up for a system that was built in the 1950s that has had little to no maintenance since its construction," Holt said.

"Many assume that the repairs would be the responsibility of the Army Corps of Engineers, but nothing could be further from the truth. The levee district must assume that role, which is our purpose, and funding such as that provided by the loan through EECA and USDA will help facilitate that effort."

This is the first REDLG loan EECA has assisted in attaining, and the cooperative is currently accepting applicants from qualified member or non-member taxing entities within its service territory interested in the REDLG program. USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. The funding awards for these projects are through the REDLG program to support rural businesses. For more information about this program, visit [www.rd.usda.gov](http://www.rd.usda.gov). **49-01-0223**



EECA presented a check of \$360,000 to Degognia-Fountain Bluff Levee and Drainage District on June 14. On hand for the check presentation were (L-R) EECA Board President Ken Jarrett, Degognia-Fountain Bluff Levee District Board Chair Carl Heins, EECA General Manager Shane Hermetz and EECA Member Services Manager Brooke Guthman.



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## Bunselmeyer claims the Thomas H. Moore IEC Memorial Scholarship

Congratulations to Kara Bunselmeyer of Trico High School, recipient this year of the \$2,000 Thomas H. Moore IEC Memorial Scholarship Program's 2018 Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship! Kara was presented with her award on Thursday, May 10, 2018 and will be recognized at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative's (AIEC) annual meeting in Springfield on July 26. She is the daughter of an EECA employee, Kendall Bunselmeyer, and will be attending the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville this fall. **22-19-0009**

The scholarship program prospered under the leadership of Earl W. Struck, who served as President/CEO of the AIEC from 1994 to his retirement in 2006. Struck passed away in August 2007. The AIEC board of directors unanimously voted to honor Struck's memory by naming the annual scholarship awarded to the son or daughter of an electric cooperative employee or director the "Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship."



*EECA General Manager Shane Hermetz presents Kara Bunselmeyer with the 2018 Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship.*

It is one of 10 scholarships awarded yearly. There were 275 applications submitted this year from the 24 Illinois electric cooperatives.

Scholarships are awarded based on grade point average, college entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, biographical statement and knowledge of electric cooperatives, as demonstrated by a short essay.

Applications for these scholarships are open to apply every fall, most closing the end of the year. Visit our website to learn more.

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## 2018 AIEC Statewide Survey in the coming months

Your opinion matters to us! Every other year, the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) conducts a statewide member survey project on our behalf. You may be randomly selected to participate in the project. If selected you will receive the survey by email with a link to complete the survey online, or possibly receive a telephone survey. People who complete the survey by one of the above-listed methods will be entered in a drawing to win a bill credit.

Neither the AIEC or the survey vendor, Inside Information, will never ask for credit card information or sell or share your private information. They will provide us with the anonymous survey results, and we will evaluate the information that is gathered to help improve our service to you. **12-07-0007**

The more completed survey questionnaires we receive, the more accurate the information will be, so if you're selected to participate, please take the time to answer the short survey. We anticipate that survey questionnaires will be distributed in August and September. Please contact our office with any questions you may have about this.



## Local students represent Egyptian Electric during the nationwide Youth to Washington Tour

What do you get when 71 students from 27 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives join more than 1,800 of their peers across the United States? You get the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth to Washington Tour.

Two local students were selected from a diverse group of applicants to represent Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association (EECA) to enjoy an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. from June 8-15 as part of the annual Youth Tour. The 2018 Youth Tour delegates from EECA included Michael Fisher of Ava and Grace Koester of Red Bud.

The students toured Capitol Hill and met with U.S. Senator Dick Durbin and Congressman Michael Bost. They also visited historical and cultural sites including Arlington National Cemetery, the Supreme



*Michael Fisher and Grace Koester represented EECA during Youth Tour. They are photographed in front of the Washington National Cathedral.*

Court, Newseum, Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, a variety of memorials and the U.S. Capitol. Among fun activities the students enjoyed were the Marine Corps Sunset Parade, the Smithsonian Museums and an assembly of Youth Tour participants from across the nation.

"Youth Tour is a great opportunity that changes these students' lives," says Shane Hermetz, general manager of EECA. "This experience helps prepare them for their futures. After touring our nation's capital, meeting

congressional representatives and learning firsthand how our government works, they return home with valuable knowledge and memories that will last a lifetime."

Since 1964, the nation's cooperative electric and telephone utilities have sponsored more than 60,000 high school students to visit Washington, D.C. To learn more about the Youth to Washington Tour, go to [www.youthtour.coop](http://www.youthtour.coop).



*Seventy-one students from across Illinois attended Youth Tour this year. The group is photographed in front of the U.S. Capitol Building.*

## 80th Annual Meeting of the Members

Thank you to all who attended our 80th Annual Meeting of the Members and facility dedication that was conducted on Tuesday July 17, 2018 at our headquarters location, 1732 Finney Road, Murphysboro. More details will be published next month.



## MEMBER PRIZES

Every month we will have three map location numbers hidden throughout our Egyptian Electric News section. If you find your location number, that corresponds to the one on your bill, call our office and identify yourself and the page that it is on and you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.

## Scraps to donations

One of our Line Foreman, Mike Smith, disassembled and scrapped used metal on his own time over a period of approximately six months. It was recycled, and we are happy to report every cent of the \$1,119.30 was sent to St. Jude's Children's Hospital this June! Thank you, Mike!



## Member survey and Sara Evans concert tickets

We partnered with Walker's Bluff to give away two VIP tickets to its Sara Evans Summer Concert held Saturday, June 23, 2018! Congratulations to Tricia Asbury of Vergennes for being randomly selected as the winner. We had almost 200 that participated in the survey. The results have been very valuable and positive, and we very much appreciated it!



**Our office will be closed on Monday, September 3rd for Labor Day!**