



Palmyra Chamber of Commerce

# Chamber News

Your Daily Dose is Served...

FEATURED BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

## MISSOURI RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

In the 1930's the United States was neatly divided into two parts: those who had electricity, and those who didn't. Power lines stopped at the city limit signs. Privately-owned utilities, in business to make money for their stockholders, couldn't make a profit on sparsely populated rural areas. And, in cases where power was extended into the countryside, rates were excessively high with farmers sometimes being asked to pay for the cost of building the power lines which the power companies continued to own.

Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an Executive Order in May 1935 establishing the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) "to initiate, administer and supervise a program of approved projects with respect to the generation of electric energy in rural areas." The Rural Electrification Act of 1936 gave a clear preference for REA loans to non-profits instead of private power companies. One of the first electric cooperatives established was our own Missouri Rural Electric on June 16, 1936.

The first 155 miles of line were made possible by loan funds from the REA. Those funds were approved on September 23, 1936, with construction beginning in January 1937. By the end of the first year, 271 members had service to their home. Power was first purchased from the City of Palmyra until 1946 when Missouri Rural Membership outgrew the city's capacity. In 1947 Northeast Missouri Electrical Power Coop was incorporated to address the generation of electrical power. However, it was not until late October 1955 that the power plant on the west bank of the Mississippi River near Palmyra was dedicated. In 1961 Associated Electric Cooperative was formed to generate power, and Northeast Power would transmit the power to substations where distribution cooperatives, like Missouri Rural, would deliver it to the homes. The three-tiered system, consisting of generation, transmission and distribution, exists today.

Missouri Rural Electric moved from downtown Palmyra to its present location in January of 1997. Missouri Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) is a non-profit electric cooperative owned by the consumer members it serves. The cooperative service territory covers most of Marion, parts of Lewis, Monroe, Ralls, and Shelby Counties in Northeast Missouri. The Cooperative's goal has always been to improve its members' standard of living by providing a reliable supply of electricity at the lowest possible cost. Today REC maintains 1100 miles of line serving approximately 5200 meters and just over 4000 members. It is governed by a Board of nine directors elected from the membership and employs 24 individuals, including Rich Donelson, the current General Manager and CEO who has been with REC thirty-nine years. "Newer hires for the twelve man line crew are highly-trained from lineman schools. Safety is a high priority and employees participate in monthly safety meetings," shared Donelson.



*"Newer hires for the twelve man line crew are highly-trained from lineman schools. Safety is a high priority and employees participate in monthly safety meetings."*

~Rich Donelson



(1) An original Rural Electrical Administration Project sign.

(2) Members wore their Sunday best when they attended the 1957 Annual Meeting under the big tent.

(3) Missouri Rural Co-op's First Board posed for this photo years later at an Annual Meeting.



Rich Donelson, Missouri Rural Electric Cooperative  
P.O. Box 111 – 975 Ross, Palmyra, MO 63461-0111, 573.769.2104  
[www.morec.org](http://www.morec.org)

# MISSOURI RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Continued from front cover

What is an Electric Cooperative? Electric cooperatives are privately owned businesses established to supply electricity to their member-owners. Electric co-ops are owned by the people who use the power the co-op provides. Its customers are also its owners. Electric co-ops operate on a not-for-profit basis, with excess margins returned to the consumer either in the form of patronage capital or in stable rates. Electric co-ops are governed by a board of directors elected from among the membership; at Missouri Rural, they are elected from three districts to afford equal representation across the areas served by the co-op. Any member may run for the board who complies with the bylaws, and all members are asked to participate in an annual membership meeting at which board members are elected.

When FDR signed the executive order forming the REA he had two goals in mind: he wanted to make electricity available to all Americans, and he wanted to make it affordable. After seventy-seven years, this is still a mission REC believes in. Missouri Rural Electric is reaching out to its members and the general public with regard to EPA proposed regulations aimed at yet-to-be-built coal-fired power plants. And the place to start, they say, is the new Cooperative Action Network, a website that outlines the issues and provides opportunities for member input on the Environmental Protection Agency's greenhouse gas regulations. They are asking citizens to "stand with us as we fight to keep electric bills affordable." For more information or to add your voice, you can visit [action.coop](http://action.coop).



*Rich Donelson, REC General Mgr. & CEO ready for another day at work.*

*President Roosevelt signing into law the Rural Electrification Act.*

**NOTE:** New Chamber Email Address: [palmyrachamber@gmail.com](mailto:palmyrachamber@gmail.com)

## upcoming events CALENDAR

### Sat., November 23rd 5k Christmas Run/Walk 10am - Flower City Park

Follow us on Facebook! Also join us for The Small Business Vendor & Craft Show in the Sesqui Building from 8 - 11 a.m. Pick up your Christmas Crawl Card and get it stamped for the 1st time at these events!

### Tuesday, Dec. 10 Chamber Monthly Meeting

Guest Speakers: Cheerleaders & Poms back from the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in NYC

### Tuesday, Dec. 10 Business After Hours

5 - 7 p.m. Old Stone House Inn  
Sponsored by Flower City Mercantile & the Old Stone House Inn

## Christmas in Palmyra

### Christmas Crawl:

November 23 - December 5.  
Individuals can get their Christmas Crawl card stamped at 15 different Palmyra businesses & the kick-off event, the 5K Walk/Run & Small Business Vendor & Craft Show.

### 3rd Annual Chili Cook-Off

Thursday, December 5: 6 - 7:30 p.m.  
Palmyra Courthouse Basement  
All proceeds to benefit ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). Team Entry Fee: \$20, \$5 Cover Fee for Tasting

### Santa at the Courthouse!

6 - 7:30 p.m.

### Children's Activity

7:00 - 8:15 p.m. provided by the Marion County Library Subdistrict #1 at the Courthouse

### Live Auction

7:30 p.m. Christmas Wreath/Basket

### Christmas Crawl Drawing

8:00 p.m. Win \$200, \$300 or \$500 CASH!



## Thursday, Jan. 9, 2014

**ANNUAL MEETING.** 2014 MEMBERSHIP FORMS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE CHAMBER WEBSITE IN DECEMBER, 2013.

**WANTED: Nominations for the following Chamber awards:** Citizen of the Year, Educator of the Year, Paint Brush Award, Volunteer of the Year, and the Business Hall of Fame. The Paint Brush Award is for a business that has really improved its looks and made an impact on the community. Nominations for Educator of the Year do not have to be for a teacher. Nomination letters should not only explain why a person is qualified but also contain a brief history of an individual's work background and involvement in civic and social organizations. **The deadline for nominations is December 18.** Send to the Chamber office at P.O. Box 446, Palmyra, MO 63461 or [palmyrachamber@gmail.com](mailto:palmyrachamber@gmail.com).

# Chamber Briefs...

PALMYRA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## MONTHLY MEETING TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2013

The Palmyra Chamber of Commerce held its monthly meeting at the VFW Hall Tuesday, November 12. All were welcomed by President Michelle Merkel including guest Tamara Reed and FBLA students Seth Brown and Kelsey Martin. Taste of Palmyra money from food vendors is still coming in.

### CHRISTMAS IN PALMYRA

Christmas In Palmyra, chaired by Joni Gottman, will kick-off soon with the Christmas 5K Run/Walk, Saturday, November 23. All proceeds will go to the Palmyra Food Pantry. Participants can still access the registration on [showmepalmyra.com](http://showmepalmyra.com) or register online by following the link on the Christmas in Palmyra 5K Run/Walk Facebook page. Twenty vendors will be selling their wares in the Sesqui Building before and after the race for one and all, and you can pick up your Christmas Crawl Card and get it stamped for the 1st time at this event!

Christmas Crawl Cards will also be available at participating businesses. An individual will be required to visit a set number of businesses and get their card stamped as their ticket for the drawing. On Thursday, Dec. 5th, individuals must be present at the Court House to have a chance to win \$200, \$300 or \$500 in cash, all of which will be given away. The drawing will take place during the 7:30 p.m. live auction of Christmas wreaths and baskets donated by Chamber businesses. At 6 p.m., prior to the auction, the Chili Cook-off benefitting ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) will take place in the Courthouse Basement. Interested "chefs" are encouraged to enter as prizes will be awarded in several categories, and all are invited as tasters for a minimal \$5 cover fee. Registration to participate in the Chili Cook-Off can be found on [showmepalmyra.com](http://showmepalmyra.com).

### BY-LAWS UPDATE

A By-Laws amendment that would enable the President and Vice-President to serve a second successive term of office was voted upon and passed by the membership present.

### BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Tuesday December 10th is not only the date for the next Chamber Meeting but also Business After Hours from 5 – 7 p.m. at the Old Stone House Inn sponsored by Flower City Mercantile & the Old Stone House Inn.

### 2014 CHAMBER ANNUAL MEETING

The 2014 Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, January 9. ***Nominations for the following Chamber awards are being solicited and should sent to the Chamber office*** (P.O. Box 446, Palmyra, MO 63461 or [palmyrachamber@gmail.com](mailto:palmyrachamber@gmail.com)): Citizen of the Year, Educator of the Year, Paint Brush Award, Volunteer of the Year, and the Business Hall of Fame. The Paint Brush Award is for a business that has really improved its looks and made an impact on the community. Nominations for Educator of the Year do not have to be for a teacher. Nomination letters should not only explain why a person is qualified but also contain a brief history of an individual's work background and involvement in civic and social organizations. ***The deadline for nominations is December 18.***

### EDWARD JONES FINANCIAL SERVICES OFFERED IN PALMYRA

Betsy Rush, a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones whose office is right here on Main Street in Palmyra, was the guest speaker. Betsy grew up across the river in the Hull and Kinderhook. She earned her Bachelors Degree in Textiles and Apparel-Manufacturing & Marketing from the University of Missouri-Columbia. In 2001, she worked in the corporate offices of May Department Stores in St. Louis, but when the May company merged with Macy's and reorganized, she found herself faced with a major decision: either move to New York City or start a new career path. A newlywed, married to a fellow May company employee in similar straits, Betsy and her husband decided to move closer to home and a more rural environment. After five years as an advertising executive with the Quincy Herald Whig, she was ready to take on a new career path with more opportunity. Betsy followed her personal interest as an investor in stocks and bonds and joined Edward Jones in Quincy in 2011. Betsy opened her doors on Main Street in Palmyra, August 1, 2012, and spent the month of September remodeling the office as well as seeing clients.

Edward Jones got its start in 1922 when Edward D. Jones Sr. founded the firm that bears his name. In the '40's and '50s, the representatives from Edward Jones traveled the countryside surrounding the company's office in St. Louis serving clients. In 1948, Edward D. "Ted" Jones Jr., son of the founder, returned to the family business after studying agriculture at the University of Missouri and working on Wall Street. While working his territory in rural Missouri and Illinois, he began experimenting with the concept of locating offices in communities outside St. Louis. In 1957, he hired a representative for Mexico, MO, and with the opening of this first branch office, a new era began.

Betsy feels that working for Edward Jones is unique because the company focuses on long term individual investors who work to find solutions to personal needs. When you visit Betsy as a client, she will take you through a 5 step process:

- Where are you today?
- Where would you like to be?
- Can you get there?
- How will you get there?
- How do you stay on track?

She says her favorite, though often overused word is diversification, and suspects it's one everyone's heard about investing before. "I try to keep it really simple," said Mrs. Rush. She prides herself on explaining things in terms her clients can understand and remember using analogies whenever possible. Her office is a full brokerage firm and can help you with stocks, bonds, mutual funds, IRAs, trusts, etc. Betsy invites everyone to see the office and the services she has to offer.

If you saw the professional camera crews outside her office recently, you'll be excited to learn that Betsy Rush and Palmyra will be featured on the updated Edward Jones Career website. Betsy was chosen as the advisor for the segment to recruit female advisors as well as those from sales backgrounds. When the site debuts in December the Palmyra Chamber will be sure to share the link as filming was done not only at Edward Jones but also around town. Maybe you'll catch yourself in the background waving to the camera!