

PIONEER

From Page 6A

Pioneer Electric completed the implementation of AMR which involves Awesome Member Reliability. The technology, which has been completely installed in all residential meters on our system, allows 100-percent of all electric accounts to be read remotely and offers enhanced information to the Cooperative about the current flowing at each location to reduce operational costs in the future. Overall, Pioneer converted seven additional substation/metering points in 2007 with AMR equipment and over 6,947 AMR digital meters have replaced existing members' meters throughout the system. In Shelby County, there were 3,000 meter exchanges for the year.

In 2007, Pioneer Electric began offering Pioneer Connect which is an e-bill option for members. Pioneer Connect gives members the ability to instantly view information about their bill from home, office or any place with Internet access. It also allows members to view and efficiently pay bills online through a secured Web site via the Internet. By providing this new billing option, we hope our members realize Pioneer's commitment to bringing them the best services possible. We have seen much growth in this program as 1,154 members have registered, and the average growth per month the last four months has been 100 members.



SDN photo/ NAME

CREWS FROM Pioneer Rural Electric are shown at work, repairing and installing electric lines.

Construction of the new Urbana district office of Pioneer Electric began this past fall. This facility will take us from 4,500 square feet to 15,000 square feet under roof. Over the past two years we looked not only at our current situation, but also at future needs.

One great concern we had is that if a disaster would strike our Piqua headquarters we have no adequate facility from which to conduct recovery efforts and

continue operations. This was brought home to us in a major way when some of our personnel helped with recovery in the south after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The new facility will provide easy access and one reporting location for our crews, and will have a convenient drive-thru service window and night depository for our members. The emergency operations center will also be available to serve

as a meeting room for members of our community.

We will have adequate space to accommodate additional personnel working in Urbana if the need arises in the future. In other words, this facility will meet our needs for a very long time.

On the business side, Pioneer remains committed to its power supply cooperative, Buckeye Power, to environmental issues going forward. Much work and investment has already gone

into making Buckeye's current coal fired plants among the cleanest operating units in the world by 2010.

Already utilizing hydropower and natural gas as well, research is being conducted to further diversify its fuel sources to produce electricity. We will also continue to endorse EnviroWatts which supports the use of renewable energy and promotes research and development of new, renewable energy sources in Ohio.

We have 39 members participating in the EnviroWatts program. Pioneer has also maintained its financial integrity by focusing on long-range planning, cost-based rates, and increased efficiency. As a not-for-profit business, any margins earned in a year are allocated back to the membership. As financially feasible the margins or patronage capital are refunded.

In 2007, Pioneer Electric Cooperative retired more than \$1.1 million in capital credits to former and current members reducing their net overall cost of doing business with Pioneer.

Pioneer Electric Cooperative is looking forward to 2008 as we are constantly working to meet the energy needs and expectations of our member-consumers. We are your Touchstone Energy Cooperative and plan to continue powering possibilities.

Company adds equipment to operation

In an effort to enter into new and expanded markets, Shaffer Metal Fab Inc. has added several new pieces of equipment to their operation in 2007.

Dan Shaffer, vice president of sales/marketing, has submitted the following report:

The metal fabrication business recently purchased a new 3,300-watt

laser, which is able to cut a sheet of steel up to 5 feet by 10 feet and 1-inch thick. This will operate in addition to the 1,500-watt laser the business currently uses. The increased capability and enhanced speed of operation will allow Shaffer to be even more competitive in a larger market arena.

The year of 2007 also saw Shaffer install a new

state-of-the-art powder coat paint system. The expansive new system is housed in the business' 60,000-square-foot facility on Commerce Drive. Powder coat painting provides a hard and very durable finish that will allow Shaffer to enter into new market areas for metal finishing. The system is fully automated with automatic

spray guns and computer controlled operation of all washers and ovens. The complexity of this system offers optimum quality and allows for quick change of colors.

With the addition of a Steelmaster Triple Head Wet Deburring/Finishing Machine Shaffer now has the capability to remove

vertical burrs from material and also remove secondary burrs in holes while applying a straight grain finish.

With these additions and with the planned additions for 2008, Shaffer feels that they will be positioned to see growth in new market areas while increasing their market share with current customers.