



**Mid America Cooperative Council**

**2003-2013**

**"A Decade of Cooperative Education"**

# MACC VOICE

**November 2013 Newsletter**

Mid America Cooperative Council  
6302 Rucker Road, Suite H Indianapolis, IN 46220  
Phone: (317) 726-6910 Fax: (317) 726-2630  
Email: [knowledge@macc.coop](mailto:knowledge@macc.coop) Web: <http://www.macc.coop>

## Board Chairmen's Roundtable

The **Board Chairmen's Roundtable** will take place December 12-13, 2013 at the Association of Illinois Electric Co-ops in Springfield, IL.

*Why attend the Board Chairmen's Roundtable?* Every cooperative has a variety of business risks that seem to grow, over time. Your co-op's Board Chairman understands their governance role to lead your board and your cooperative. This roundtable will explain the unique challenges faced by board chairmen in the cooperative business world.

How do you, as Board Chairman, handle the too quiet director, the overly talkative director, the director who likes to manage, or the director who likes to share everything that is discussed at the board meeting?. These and other current topics that require effective board leadership, will be discussed at this roundtable. Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to gain insight into the responsibilities of board chairmen, and network to share ideas about working with your directors.

Our speaker lineup for this year's roundtable is as follows:

- **Duane Noland**, President and Chief Executive Officer - Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives
- **Dr. Greg McKee**, Chairman of the Quentin Burdick Center for Cooperatives - North Dakota State University
- **Dan Kelley**, Owner/Operator - Kelley Farms, a diversified corn and soybean operation in Normal, Illinois
- **Dr. Megan Gerhardt**, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of Management in the Farmer School of Business, a Naus Family Faculty Scholar, and Director of the Buck Rodgers Business Leadership Program - Miami University.

### Comments made by prior attendees of this forum include:

- *Great speakers and topics, I learned a lot*
- *It was great to network with other board chairs*
- *Very interesting, made us think*
- *Good interactive discussion*
- *A worthwhile experience, I highly recommend it!*
- *I loved the breakout sessions, very interactive*
- *I come every year, it is a great refresher course!*

To register for this year's Board Chairmen's Roundtable, please visit <http://macc.coop/>. You will see the registration box on the right side of the page. You can also register for the roundtable by email at [knowledge@macc.coop](mailto:knowledge@macc.coop) with registrant's name, business name and address, email address and phone number. If you would like to register by mail, please click the link below for a brochure with registration form included: <http://macc.coop/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/2013-Board-Chairmens-Roundtable-Brochure1.pdf>. If you have any questions about the roundtable, call the MACC office at (317) 726-6910.

*(See below for photos of past Board Chairmen's Roundtables)*



## 2013 MAC-ED PROGRAM CALENDAR

### CFO Essentials Conference

November 20-21 Embassy Suites North Indianapolis, IN

### CFO/Controller Conference

November 21-22 Embassy Suites North Indianapolis, IN

### Co-op Development Center Roundtable

December 2-3 IN Farm Bureau Indianapolis, IN

### Co-op Board Chairmen's Roundtable

December 12-13 Assn. of Illinois Electric Co-ops Springfield, IL

### MACC Membership Meeting

December 16 Select Sires Plain City, OH

*If you have questions about any of our programs, please contact the MACC office at (317) 726-6910 or by email at [knowledge@macc.coop](mailto:knowledge@macc.coop).*

## MACC Membership Meeting

The MACC Membership Meeting will be held on December 16, 2013 at Select Sires in Plain City, OH. *This meeting is open to both MACC members and non-members.*

### Membership Meeting Agenda

Time	Program	Speaker
10:00 AM	Call to Order Minutes Treasurer's Report	<b>Jim Schultheiss, Chairperson</b> <b>David Hahn, Secretary</b> <b>Darren Langhals, Treasurer</b>
	MACC Business	<b>Jim Schultheiss</b>
	Executive Director Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAC-Ed Report</li> <li>• Co-op Intern Survey Results</li> <li>• Educating Your Future Leaders</li> </ul>	<b>Rod Kelsay, Executive Director</b>
	MACC Promotional Engagement	<b>Janice Welsheimer, Wilt PR</b>
10:30 AM	Select Sires Presentation	<b>David Thorbahn (or designee)</b>
	Ohio Credit Union League	<b>Paul Mercer</b>
	OSU Center For Co-op Update	<b>Dr. Tim Haab</b>
	<b>MACC OSU Advisory Committee</b>	
12:00 PM	Lunch	
1:00 PM	MACC Board Meeting	<b>MACC Board of Directors</b>
3:30 PM	Adjourn	

If you are interested in attending the meeting, you can register online at <http://macc.coop>, or send us an email at [knowledge@macc.coop](mailto:knowledge@macc.coop) with your name, business name, address, email and phone number.

*Thanks to our MAC-Ed Sponsors & Scholarship Providers!*



## Rod's Thoughts

It was a current board chairman that requested that MACC develop a program that focused on their unique position of being chairman of a business, where they were engaged as a customer. Additionally, they had the challenge of being a customer just like all the other member/owners, and live in the same community where their cooperative resides. Thus, the **Board Chairmen's Roundtable** was developed four years ago.

Board chairmen don't have the luxury of governing, from afar. They must see other members of their cooperative routinely, and hear their complaints. Having been married for over 30 years, I can honestly say that the spouse of the board chair is, likely, the communicator of what is not going well at the co-op. Yes, they also live and feel the challenges of governing the cooperative, on a daily basis.

Boards of directors are oftentimes a collection of individuals with their own vision of what is best for the cooperative. As these directors are also customers, it is a common challenge that what they think is best as a director is also what is best for them as a customer or consumer of services. Many board chairs also realize that every member/owner has a planning horizon that is unique to them and their needs.

While some younger members are eager to grow their personal business using the equity of older cooperative members, those older member/owners would like to cash in some of that coop equity and retire or take a vacation. They have served their family and business needs using the services of their cooperative. These older member/owners are ready to pass that equity need on to another generation.

Board chairs also realize that they need to be the principal link between the CEO/manager and the board of directors, in representing the membership. Most of the time this is a good fit when things are going well, but when markets are volatile regulators are not satisfied with past policies and procedures. Sometimes, management has made what they thought was an acceptable decision until the membership realized it was not acceptable. Under these difficult situations, it is a challenge to be heard over a group of independent directors.

Peter Drucker, in his writing of corporate boards says, **"There is one thing all boards have in common, regardless of their legal position. They do not function."** I am not certain that I would go as far as Peter Drucker, but I am certain that all boards have flaws. We will cover the challenge of how to handle these flaws, during our Board Chairmen's Roundtable. The speakers have a great deal of experience, specifically with cooperatives, and understand their unique business structure. Additionally, we have trained professionals with experience in how other boards have faced their challenges, successfully. Navigating the troubled waters of cooperative governance, your CEO is looking at the board chair to bring the board together, with one voice. This roundtable will offer successful ideas about how to accomplish that goal.

**The 2013 Board Chairmen's Roundtable will be held on December 12-13, at the Association of Illinois Electric Co-ops in Springfield, IL.** Please visit <http://macc.coop/> for more information or to register for the roundtable. You can also register by email at [knowledge.coop](mailto:knowledge.coop) with the registrant name, business name and address, email address and phone number. If you should have any questions regarding the 2013 Board Chairmen's Roundtable, **please call the MACC office at (317) 726-6910.**