

Doug Rye *says ...*



The young folks get it

I have been teaching energy efficiency for many years on radio, through seminars and in this column. The weekly radio show is in its 20th year with 1,025 programs and counting. Thanks to the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, the columns that you read in here in *Rural Arkansas* magazine are also published in electric cooperative magazines in several other states. I also conduct many seminars every year and I must admit that I love every second of it. I do love to help folks have lower utility bills and a comfortable house.

There are times when I think that surely everyone knows about energy efficiency. But all the questions that I get at the office, on the radio show, and at the seminars are all about energy efficiency. I am amazed at how many new non energy-efficient homes continue to be built. Well, I will just keep on keeping on as long as I am helping you.

If you have been to one of my seminars then you have heard me say that sometimes young folks understand what I teach easier than older folks. I make a few presentations each year in the public schools and it is always rewarding. When I tell them that Mother Earth can give you almost free heating and cooling, they say, "wow." Adults usually say, "nothing's free." When I tell the students that a geothermal heating system is 400 percent or five times more efficient than a gas furnace, they say, "cool." Adults have a hard time believing that so I take time and explain how this can be. I get a special kind of satisfaction when I work with young whippersnappers.

In the November 2009 issue of this magazine, I mentioned that I considered electricity to be a blessing and mentioned a goodly number of ways that we use electricity in a house. I challenged you to make your list and to call if you thought that your list might be the longest. I told you that if you had the most ways to use electricity, I would send you a nice gift for Christmas. I never dreamed that so many of you would call me. The calls came for more than two weeks.

One of the calls came from a teacher from the Kirby, Ark., school system. She said that her classes, 1-6, had



Doug Rye speaks to students at Kirby.

prepared a very long list. She also mentioned that the classes had really enjoyed the challenge and had learned a lot about the uses of electricity. On March 30, I had the privilege of accompanying staff and board members of South Central Arkansas Electric Cooperative to the Kirby school where we presented Ladonna Ashbrooks' classes with a flat screen television and a digital camera for being one of the winners of the November contest. Let's just say that a good time was had by all. We will also do a similar presentation for another winner of the contest – the Gravette Public School – along with staff and board members of Carroll Electric Cooperative.

As much as I love working with young folks, I know helping adults is first and foremost so I hope that you can attend one of the following seminars this month.

Craighead Electric Cooperative – Jonesboro,
May 3 and 4

Ozarks Electric Cooperative – Fayetteville,
May 11 and 12

Carroll Electric Cooperative – Berryville,
May 13 and 14

First Electric Cooperative – Jacksonville,
May 27