

# living with energy

IN IOWA



JULY 2019

Save the Date! ▶ Access Energy Cooperative Annual Meeting is August 6

## Sweet success:

Dairy farms,  
ice cream and  
electric co-ops

**New for 2019**  
board election:  
online voting!  
See Page 4

Visit our website at [www.accessenergycoop.com](http://www.accessenergycoop.com)

**Experience**  
this year's  
Youth Tour

**Get grilling with**  
new recipes!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- July 2** Access Energy Cooperative's 81st birthday
- July 8** Board election opens. Online voting available and packets mailed
- August 5 4:30 p.m.** Online voting closes; and no longer accepting mailed in ballots
- August 6 5 p.m.** Annual Meeting of Members - ballots still accepted at the meeting
- Aug. 8-18** Visit us at the Touchstone Energy® Booth at the Iowa State Fair
- Aug. 29 – Sept. 2** Visit the drive-a-tractor event at the Midwest Old Threshers Reunion – Access Energy Cooperative is a sponsor!

## OFFICE CLOSING

The Access Energy Cooperative office is closed on **Thursday, July 4** for Independence Day.

Call 866-242-4232 for emergencies and account information.



Access Energy Cooperative is dedicated to exceeding members' expectations for safe, reliable and efficient service, while being a good citizen in our communities.

**Office:** Access Energy Cooperative  
1800 W. Washington St., P.O. Box 440  
Mount Pleasant, Iowa 52641

**Phone:** 319-385-1577 or 866-242-4232

**Fax:** 319-385-6873

**Call Before You Dig (Iowa One Call):** 8-1-1

**Website:** www.accessenergycoop.com

**Facebook:** facebook.com/AccessEnergyCoop

**Twitter:** twitter.com/AccessEnergyC

**E-mail:** contactus@accessenergycoop.com

**Office Hours:** Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Friday, 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
Call our office 24/7: 319-385-1577.

Payments can be placed in dropbox under flag pole. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

**General Manager/CEO:** Kevin Wheeler  
**Editor:** Kimberly Davis  
**Assistant Editor:** Cherity Wibben

**Officers and Directors:**

David Hollingsworth	District 1	President
Marvin Newton	District 3	Vice President
Robert P. Smith	District 2	Secretary
Fred Hickenbottom	District 1	Treasurer
Marvin Larson	District 1	Director
Jerry Barker	District 2	Director
Larry White	District 2	Director
Robert Chesnut III	District 3	Director
Marvin Holtkamp	District 3	Director

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

## 2019 annual meeting of members will be better than ever!

BY KEVIN WHEELER

Please join us on August 6 at McMillan Park for the 2019 Annual Meeting of Members and Election of Directors. We look forward to gathering with you to catch up, hear what you have to say, and enjoy some good food, fun and fellowship.

We have made some changes to the meeting this year to make things more efficient for you – our members.

- New this year is online voting. Your voting materials will be mailed on July 8 and will contain directions on the voting process. If you have a valid email address listed on your account, you will also receive an email with a direct link to vote.
- Your registration and dividend cards will be attached to your ballot. Please bring them to the annual meeting.
- Make your first stop at the registration booth. You can stop there for everything you need.
  - Meal tickets for you and your family. Meal tickets are required.
  - Dividend checks will be distributed in the registration line.
  - Attendance gifts will also be distributed while you are registering.
- The grand prize this year is a \$500 bill credit! You must be present to win. If the winner drawn is not present, the \$500 bill credit will be rolled over into next year's grand prize.
- We will hold two special drawings at the meeting for \$100 bill credits each – one from the ballots mailed in, and one from the online votes received.
- We will have twice as many Registration/Dividend lines so we can make that process go quicker for you. To make this happen, we have several of the

employees' family members helping. Thank you to all those who have volunteered!



- We will not be mailing out the 2020 Access Energy Cooperative Calendars. You can pick them up at the registration booth at the annual meeting. If you can't make it to the meeting, you can pick one up at our office after August 6.
- Your 2018 Annual Report is included as part of this edition of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine.

This event is not only a chance to visit with members of our co-op community – it's also an excellent opportunity to learn about programs offered by Access Energy Cooperative and get to know your co-op staff. Our annual meeting makes it possible for us to gather feedback from you by providing a forum where you can let us know how we can better serve you and your family.

It's also an opportunity for you to exercise one of the most significant benefits of being a member of an electric co-op, by voting for the upcoming year's board of directors. Access Energy Cooperative is not owned by far away investors, and it is not run by an appointed board of directors. We are run by a democratically elected board of directors – a board who is given the privilege to serve because of your vote.

Our directors are members of your community. They are concerned with the issues you face every day because they face them too. Also, don't forget – it is members of Access Energy Cooperative that are eligible to run for the board – maybe even you!

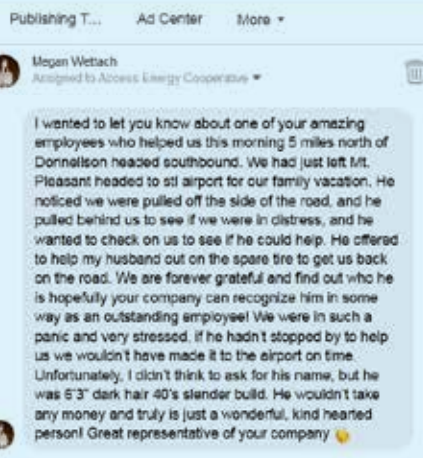
We remain dedicated to providing you with safe, reliable and efficient service. We encourage you to take part in helping us improve how we deliver that service. Make a point to join us on August 6 at your annual meeting; we have a great evening planned! ⚡

## Vote and enter to win a \$100 bill credit!

Even if you cannot make it to the annual meeting on August 6, you can still vote for directors running in the 2019 election. Ballots will be mailed to you on July 8. Mail your ballot in the envelope provided so it is received by 4:30 p.m. on August 5 to be eligible. Or – new this year is online voting, which is available July 8 through August 5. Check your ballot for voting instructions. If you have a valid email address listed on your account, you will also receive an email with a direct link to vote. Remember – you can only vote once, so choose only one option.

There will be two drawings for a \$100 bill credit – one from the ballots mailed in and one from the votes received online. ⚡

### FACEBOOK THANK YOU!



### EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Meet Tammy Snavely

**Tammy Snavely** has worked in your finance department for 34 years and currently serves as the chief financial officer at Access Energy Cooperative. She is responsible for overseeing the accounting, financial and information technology activities of the cooperative. Thank you, Tammy for all you do for the members of Access Energy Cooperative! ⚡



### HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

## Access Energy Cooperative Notice of Annual Meeting of Members

The Annual Meeting of the Members of Access Energy Cooperative will be held at the McMillan Park in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, at 7 p.m., on Aug. 6, 2019, to take action upon the following matters:

- The reports of officers, directors, and committees.
- The election of three (3) directors of the Cooperative for a term of three years each.
- All other business which may legally come before the meeting or any adjournment or adjournments thereof.

In connection with the election of directors scheduled for this meeting, the following members have been nominated for director by the Committee on Nominations appointed by the Board of Directors of the Cooperative pursuant to the Bylaws.

### THREE-YEAR TERM (Three to be elected)

#### District 1 Candidates

- Fred Hickenbottom
- Clifford Nichols

#### District 2 Candidates

- John Arp
- Robert P. Smith

#### District 3 Candidates

- Marvin Newton
- Ernest Schiller

You are urged to attend the meeting, hear the reports of the officers, vote for directors, and transact such other business as may come before the meeting. ⚡

### SAFETY FOR KIDS



Access Energy Cooperative Safety Director Jim Mills and Apprentice Lineman Korbin Johnson presented safety education to Van Allen Elementary students in Mt. Pleasant on Ag Safety Day.

### CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to **Chuck Rila** on his retirement from the cooperative this June. Thank you, Chuck for 28 years of service for the members of Access Energy Cooperative!



## SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT

# Benefits of an updated metering system

BY TYLER THEIN, P.E.

In the June issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa*, Kevin Wheeler – General Manager/CEO for Access Energy Cooperative – shared the news that we will be upgrading our metering system this fall. As the project manager for this initiative, I am excited about the significant value it will provide for our members and the cooperative.



When it comes to the benefits, they are abundant in helping to serve our members better as technology continues to evolve and improve. From my perspective, the top two things that will benefit all members include – 1) Improved outage data – allowing us to pinpoint and isolate system issues more efficiently, which will lead to improved restoration times and overall reliability; and 2) Interaction with SmartHub – giving members access to near real-time energy use and helping you to make informed decisions with your energy consumption. Plus, this upgrade will be a tremendous resource for us in troubleshooting issues, coordinating system maintenance and improvements, and evaluating and potentially adopting alternate energy resources.

In my role, I appreciate when our members are engaged with us and ask questions. We have been successfully using digital meters for nearly two decades, and it's gratifying to see how the systems have advanced in that time. After thorough research and evaluation, we are 100% comfortable transitioning to a new system. Our members can have full confidence in the new meters.

The most frequent questions I receive are about the safety of radio frequency emissions and privacy concerns. Like you, many of us are Access Energy Cooperative members

so we care about these things, too. I would like to share some of the most common questions I receive and my responses.

**Q: Is there a fee to the member for transitioning to this new system?** No!

**Q: Are radio frequencies from digital meters safe?** Yes! In everyday life, people are continuously exposed to very

low levels of natural and man-made radio frequency fields (RF). Even the earth's surface and the human body are constant sources of RF fields. Dr. Yakov P. Shkolnikov, Ph.D., scientific researcher and expert on RF technology finds that RF exposures from digital meters are much lower than other RF sources. For example, natural RF from the human body is 20 times greater, a Wi-Fi signal is 67 times greater and a cell phone held to your ear is 12,677 times greater!

**Q: What if I am close to a meter, does that pose a health risk to me?** No! At 20 inches in front of a meter, the average exposure to radio frequency signals is less than the

background RF signals naturally generated by the earth and less than one-seven-thousandth of the safe exposure standard set by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Exposure to RF is significantly reduced by buildings. At one yard in front of the meter on a typical day, inside your home, your exposure is minuscule — more than 1.3 million times below the FCC safety standard.

**Q: I'm worried about privacy and if data is being collected "all day" from the meter?** On a daily basis, digital meters emit power for less than one minute per day. Access Energy Cooperative is not collecting any data beyond energy use information that helps with outage management or troubleshooting issues. We don't share your private information with outside entities without your written consent.

If you still have questions, I welcome the opportunity to visit with you. I can be reached by phone at 319-385-1577, email [tthein@accessenergycoop.com](mailto:tthein@accessenergycoop.com) or in person at our office. ⚡

Tyler Thein is the director of engineering for Access Energy Cooperative.



## SAFETY MATTERS



Summer is a busy time for road and line construction. If you see workers on the side of the road, move over to the other lane and slow down. We all thank you! ⚡



**MOVE OVER  
SLOW DOWN**

# Information we collect

Access Energy Cooperative will receive and retain information about member consumers/customers through applications or other forms; transactions with us, our affiliates, or others; from a consumer-reporting agency; and advanced metering infrastructure.

Access Energy Cooperative will limit the use and collection of nonpublic personal information to that which is necessary to maintain and administer financial services, beneficial in designing, operating and maintaining the Cooperative's electric system to offer affordable and reliable electric service.

This information will not be shared with third parties unless: the information is provided to help complete a member-consumer/customer initiated transaction; the member-consumer/customer has requested it; the disclosure is required by law, warrant, or court order; or the disclosure is required by banking regulation.

"Third Party" is defined as any person or entity other than: employees of the Cooperative; the Cooperative's designated legal counsel; or any entity contractually bound to the Cooperative to provide billing

or collection services for electric cooperative accounts. When member-consumer/customer information is provided to any third parties, that third party must be bound by appropriate confidentiality and non-disclosure obligations.

Access Energy Cooperative limits employee access to member-consumer/customer information to those with a business reason for knowing such information. All employees are educated on the importance of confidentiality and member-consumer/customer privacy. Any employee that violates the privacy of our member-consumers/customers will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures and possible termination.

Appropriate physical, electronic, and managerial procedures to safeguard and secure information are put in place to prevent unauthorized access, maintain data accuracy, and to ensure the correct use of information.

## RIGHT TO BE INFORMED

Information regarding operational aspects of the Cooperative's advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and related programs will be made available to members as requested.

Member-consumers will be better

informed about their electricity consumption.

Member-consumers will have access to information that helps explain available billing rate structures and options, outage information, peak demand, and the impact of energy consumption habits with the AMI.

The purpose of the collection, use, retention, and sharing of energy consumption data shall be made known to the member-consumers in a clear and transparent manner.

Member-consumers will be informed of the available choices and consent options regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of energy consumption data.

Requests to correct inaccurate information will be responded to in a timely manner.

Member-consumers who wish to file a privacy violation complaint have the right to submit the same to the Cooperative for resolution. If not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the Cooperative staff, the same may be submitted to the Cooperative's Board of Directors for a resolution. If the issue is still not resolved to the member-consumer's satisfaction, the member-consumer may pursue alternative remedies. ⚡

## BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP

# Dividends are coming

Once a satisfactory level of margins or profits for 2018 was determined by the Board, the cooperative assigned the rest of the margins to you, the members (each of who owns a portion of the cooperative), according to the amount of energy purchases you made in 2018.

Each member has a dividend account at the cooperative where your dividend allocations accumulate. When the Board allocated the 2018 margins, your portion was moved to your dividend account. Notices were mailed May 8 with the amount that was allocated to your account.

This year, Access Energy Cooperative

allocated \$1,322,292 and passed through allocations from Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative of \$1,278,885 for a total allocation of \$2,601,177.

The amount of total allocations the cooperative has stored in the dividend accounts was then reviewed by the Access Energy Cooperative Board of Directors to determine whether to generate a dividend payment this year. After reviewing the cooperative's current financial position, the board approved

a dividend refund this year in the amount of \$1,134,767. This refund is 58% of the remaining dividends for 1998, 71% of 2003, 46% of 2004, 6% of 2005 and 11% of 2018.

Dividend checks will be available to pick up at the annual meeting on August 6. Any checks not picked up will be mailed after the annual meeting. Checks will be sent to the most current address we have on file. The cooperative will not be printing checks for amounts under \$5. These amounts will be added to the next dividend refund. ⚡

