

living with energy IN IOWA

JULY 2021



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Access Energy Cooperative scholarship winners announced ▶ See Page 13



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Access Energy
Cooperative annual
meeting information

Iowa's electric co-ops
embrace diverse
generation

Sweet corn recipes

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Living with Energy in Iowa magazine (ISSN: 1935-7176) is published monthly by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, a not-for-profit organization representing Iowa's member-owned local electric cooperatives. Association address: 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. The phrase *Living with Energy in Iowa* is a mark registered within the state of Iowa to the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The magazine does not accept advertising.

Editorial Office: 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Telephone: 515-276-5350. E-mail address: editor@livingwithenergyiniowa.com. *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine does not assume responsibility for unsolicited items.

Website: www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com

Postmaster: Send address changes to *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine, 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Periodicals Postage Paid at Des Moines, Iowa, and at additional mailing offices.

Change of Address: Every local electric cooperative maintains an independent mailing list of its members, so please send your change of address directly to your local electric cooperative's office. *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine cannot make an address change for you.

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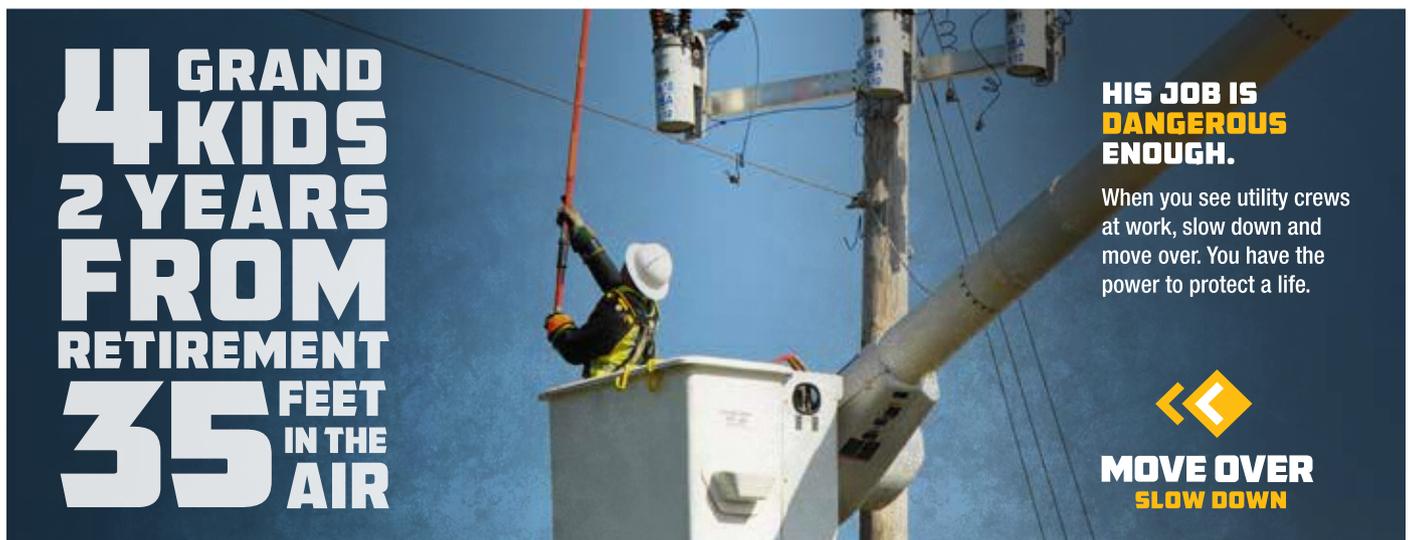
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HIS JOB IS DANGEROUS ENOUGH.

When you see utility crews at work, slow down and move over. You have the power to protect a life.

MOVE OVER SLOW DOWN

Electric cooperatives disappointed with legislative session

BY KEVIN CONDON

As lawmakers and Gov. Kim Reynolds tout the 2021 Iowa legislative session's legitimate advances in public policy that benefit rural Iowans, one area where progress will go unclaimed is in the interests of Iowa's electric cooperatives.

Although the session went three weeks into overtime, absent from debate was the opportunity to have worthy and robust discussions on two key priorities for Iowa's electric co-ops and their member-consumers.

Establishing or changing laws isn't easy and can take time. With that said, we're disappointed that policies pertaining to vegetation management and the sales tax code inequities co-ops face are not new issues being raised by rural electric cooperatives (RECs).

Lack of vegetation management standards

In the January edition of this column, I detailed the issue surrounding vegetation management distances and how the August 2020 derecho exposed part of our concerns. We hoped that lawmakers would have recent and ample evidence of the need to set a statewide safety and reliability standard for distances that electric co-ops could perform tree trimming and other management practices.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, the same opposition groups that prevented the legislation from becoming law a few years ago were able to keep this renewed effort from reaching the House and Senate for a full debate. Sadly, misinformation and scare tactics about the proposal won the day, and the state will continue to lack a standard that provides greater safety for co-op members and linemen while increasing reliability of electric service to rural Iowa.



Sales tax code inequities continue

Further, RECs were disappointed when provisions to resolve a sales tax inequity impacting electric co-ops included in a proposal put forward by the House were stripped out of the final legislation by Senate negotiators. In what appears to be an oversight from legislation passed in 2018, not-for-profit utilities like RECs have been subject to a tax on digital goods and services that for-profit, investor-owned utilities

(IOUs) are exempt from. It is estimated that rural electric member-consumers are paying \$250,000 more in sales taxes through their electric bills than ratepayers served by IOUs.

We believe resolving the inequity was certainly worthy of inclusion in a tax proposal that included tax provisions for Iowa's non-profit food banks and casinos, both of which will have General Fund impacts, just as the REC proposal would. We congratulate both of those entities for securing a place in the legislation. We also caution those who might claim the potential for a "slippery slope" in resolving this sales tax inequity issue.

To be clear, the electric co-ops appreciate the role of the Legislature and are grateful to those lawmakers who are willing to put their name on a ballot and serve. In our estimation, they continue to deserve our respect; but when it comes to our concerns this session, RECs are not taking any victory laps.

We look forward to developing our policy goals for the 2022 Iowa legislative session and will enjoy planning for our traditional and effective in-person events with lawmakers. We hope they are prepared to answer friendly but direct questions about the lack of progress on these issues. We hope our electric cooperative advocacy on behalf of the

650,000 Iowans we serve throughout all 99 counties will result in more favorable outcomes next year. ⚡

Kevin Condon is the director of government relations for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a \$100 home improvement gift card!



Home improvement projects can boost the curb appeal, resale value and energy efficiency of your home. We'll award one lucky winner with a \$100 gift card from a local business or retailer of your choice for a home improvement project! ⚡

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com no later than July 31, 2021. You must be a member of one of Iowa's electric cooperatives to win. There's no obligation associated with entering, we don't share entrant information with anyone and multiple entries from the same account will be disqualified. The winner of the Arbor Day tree packages from the May issue were:

- Gregg Hoins, Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative
- Lavern Hoeper, Butler County REC
- Rose Lennie, Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative
- Gary L Payton, Franklin REC
- Timothy Colburn, Grundy County REC
- Mark Schwartz, North West REC
- Kennon Goedken, Osceola Electric Cooperative
- Emily Mikesch, Prairie Energy Cooperative
- Kyle Leonard, Southwest Iowa REC
- Jeff Gropper, T.I.P. REC

UPCOMING EVENTS



July 7	Board election opens; online voting available and packets mailed
Aug. 2	Online voting closes; no longer accepting ballots after 4:30 p.m.
Aug. 3	Annual Meeting of Members at 7 p.m.; Facebook live event announcing election winners (no in-person events)
Sept. 6	Office closed for Labor Day

You can access your account information 24 hours a day, every day, on our website or through our SmartHub app for mobile devices. You can also call our office to report service interruptions and request account information at 866-242-4232. 🚀



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.

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LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

Virtually attend this year's annual meeting

BY KEVIN WHEELER

Sometimes the best-laid plans just do not work out. Access Energy Cooperative planned to host our 2021 Annual Meeting of Members in person, just like we had in the past. But COVID-19 would not allow us to do so.

In light of the continued pandemic and uncertainty surrounding the ability of large groups to gather in coming months, and for the protection of the health and safety of the members and employees, the Access Energy Cooperative board of directors voted during their regular meeting on Feb. 18, 2021, to modify the format of the 2021 Annual Meeting of Members to eliminate the in-person portion of the meeting and conduct the election of directors by mail and electronic voting. No other business will be conducted. This decision did not come easy for the board; however, Access Energy Cooperative feels it is the responsible choice.



Vote for directors and receive a \$10 bill credit

We encourage members to take part in the director election. If you have a valid email address on your account, you will also receive an email with the voting instructions. Any member who submits a vote that is received by the 4:30 p.m. deadline on Aug. 2, either by mail or electronically, will receive a \$10 bill credit. Your voting materials will be mailed on July 7, 2021, and will include instructions. Each membership will be allowed one vote.

Dividends paid early

The board approved an early payment of dividends this year. For members with dividend payments greater than \$25, a check was mailed

in June. For members with dividend payments less than \$25, dividends were applied to your electric account in mid-June. Member dividend accounts with less than \$5 will accumulate until the year they reach or exceed \$5.

Coronavirus impact

Since the beginning of the pandemic more than 18 months ago, your cooperative employees have been resilient, flexible and dedicated to make sure members' expectations are exceeded. The cooperative was forced to change the way operations were conducted while maintaining the safety and health of employees and the membership.

As we return to a new normal, Access Energy Cooperative will still exceed our members' expectations while providing safe and reliable energy. The employees pride themselves on serving our members' needs. As we move forward, Access Energy Cooperative will continue to be the cooperative you have all grown to know and trust. 🚀

Save the date for next year's annual meeting!

The Access Energy Cooperative Annual Meeting of Members for next year will be on Aug. 2, 2022. Expectations are to return to a full agenda and all members will be encouraged to attend. We hope to see you at the 2022 Annual Meeting of Members on Aug. 2, 2022! 🚀

Access Energy Cooperative notice of Annual Meeting of Members (mail and electronic voting only)

The Annual Meeting of the Members of Access Energy Cooperative will be held on August 3, 2021, to take action upon the following matters:

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

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, and in an effort to protect the health and safety of the members and employees, the Board has decided not to hold an in-person meeting, but rather will complete the election of Directors by mail and electronic voting as permitted by the Bylaws and will provide the reports to the members through alternative means. The election results will be announced on a live Facebook event on August 3, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. at www.facebook.com/AccessEnergyCoop.

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.

District 1

- Marvin Larson
- Donald Roach

District 2

- Dan Fullenkamp
- Larry White

District 3

- Robert Chesnut III
- Leslie Loyd

The Bylaws provide that any member may vote by mail or electronic method.

Please review the enclosed ballot on how to cast your vote for the Director nominees listed on the ballot.

DATED this 7th day of July, 2021

Robert Chesnut III, Secretary ⚡

2021 Access Energy Cooperative Annual Meeting of Members



VOTE! – Get a \$10 bill credit

The cooperative encourages members to take part in the director election. Each member who votes in the director election will receive a \$10 credit to their Access Energy Cooperative account. To be eligible for the bill credit, ballots must be received by 4:30 p.m. on Aug. 2, 2021.

Watch the election results

The election results will be announced on a live Facebook event on August 3, 2021, at 7 p.m. www.facebook.com/AccessEnergyCoop



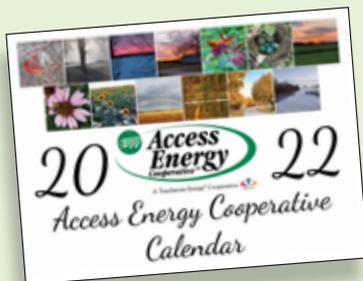
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Arriving in mailboxes soon – 2022 calendars

Congratulations to the artists who submitted the winning photos featured in the calendar and received \$50! 2022 calendars are being included in your voting materials packet and will be mailed July 7.

Start collecting photos to send in for the 2023 calendar! ⚡



SMART HUB

SmartHub update

From billing alerts to service updates, text messaging through SmartHub is an effective way for us to help keep you updated on your service and news regarding Access Energy Cooperative.

Currently when you receive a text message from Access Energy

Cooperative it comes from a short code. Text messages from Access Energy Cooperative will now come from a new toll free number **8449681994**.

This change does not affect your service or communication from us in any way. If you have any questions, please contact us. ⚡



Four keys to understanding the new electric grid

BY PAUL WESSLUND

With thousands of miles of power lines, nearly 200,000 utility employees and 7,300 power plants, America's electric grid and all its parts must work together to keep power flowing smoothly.

America's electric grid is often called the most complex machine in the world. That's not a stretch when you think about what it does: it runs your refrigerator and charges your phone, all from a ray of sunshine, a pile of coal, falling water or a prairie breeze.

In between those starting and ending points are 160,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines, millions of miles of low-voltage power lines, 7,300 power plants, nearly 200,000 electric utility employees, thousands of electrical substations and transformers that adjust voltage for the cross-country trip along transmission lines, then back down before it enters your house – and all these parts must work together to keep power flowing safely. In addition, this complex network is adapting to weather patterns,

increasing cybersecurity threats, consumer expectations and additional decentralized power sources like rooftop solar panels.

Those are big changes for such a vast and intricate system. “But the silver lining is that technology is available to help address the changes,” says Venkat Banunarayanan, vice president of Integrated Grid Business & Technology Strategies with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

For all its complexity, the electric grid can be described in three major parts: a power source (like a natural gas plant or wind turbine); the wires and equipment that deliver power; and a home or business that receives the power.

To understand the modern grid more deeply, here are four ways it's adapting to the world's new realities.

1 Resilience in the face of more severe weather

Last year was the busiest recorded hurricane season along the Atlantic Coast. Wildfires are increasingly intense, especially in the West, and ice storms and cold weather surprised the South this winter.

These changes call for new ways to make sure the lights stay on.

Electric utilities are increasing grid resilience by integrating weather forecasting with other smart technologies that monitor electric current and analyze how to respond. NRECA's Banunarayanan calls this “predictive technology.”

By knowing how weather will affect power equipment, he says, “an electric co-op can preposition work crews so they can quickly



respond to the outage, and they can redirect the flow of electricity to take an alternate route to minimize the duration of a power outage.”

2 Strengthening cybersafety

Cybersecurity measures have become standard operating procedure for utilities to protect against cyberattacks. Electric co-ops and other utilities work closely with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to monitor and strengthen defenses.

“Utilities are constantly improving to make sure they are more cyber-resilient,” says Banunarayanan.

Electric co-ops also urge consumer-members at home to protect themselves from hackers. When devices like printers and smart TVs connect to the internet, that actually makes them part of the electric grid.

3 More power to consumers

Many utilities have voluntary programs that manage electric loads by turning off water heaters or air conditioners for short periods of time. Those programs add another layer of coordination. Additionally, homeowners are installing solar panels on their roofs or in their backyards, with some even selling excess electricity back to the utility – over the electric grid.

4 Utilities keeping up with the change

Large fields of wind turbine farms and solar power arrays require building transmission lines to new locations. They also involve planning for a kind of power that might only operate when the sun shines or the wind blows. These changes are necessary and helpful, but they are also expensive.

Annual spending on the U.S. transmission system has increased from \$9 billion a year in 2002, to \$40 billion in 2019.

But that spending is paying off.

In 2017, Americans experienced about eight hours of power interruptions, according to the Energy Information Administration. By 2019, that was down to five hours.

“Power outages have been going down because there’s investment being made to increase the robustness of the grid,” says Banunarayanan. “I expect the reliability of the grid to increase.” ⚡

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation’s landscape.



Last year was the busiest recorded hurricane season along the Atlantic Coast. Wildfires are increasingly intense, especially in the West, and ice storms and cold weather surprised the South this winter. These changing weather patterns call for new ways to make sure the lights stay on.

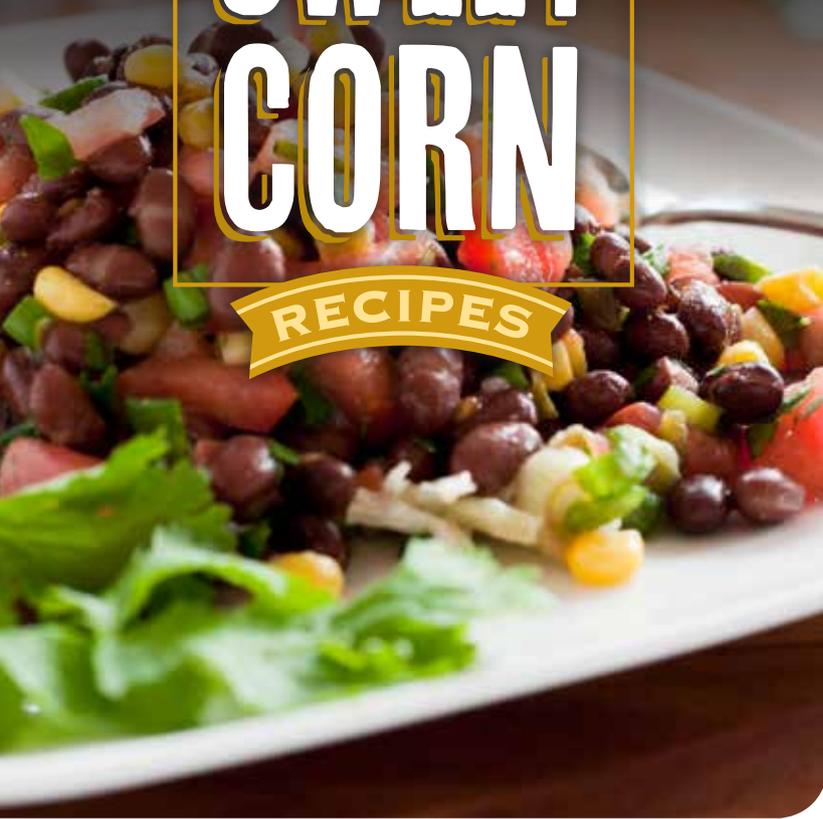


The electric grid is constantly adapting to changing weather patterns, increasing cybersecurity threats, consumer expectations and additional decentralized power sources like rooftop solar panels.

FAVORITE

SWEET CORN

RECIPES



Corn Kernels Source:
Iowa Corn Growers
Association, Iowa
State University
Extension and
Outreach

Corn and Black Bean Salsa

- 2 cups sweet corn, cooked
- 1 can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 scallion, sliced
- ½ cup tomatoes, diced
- ½ red bell pepper, diced
- 1 lime, zested and juiced
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- ¼ teaspoon seasoned salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder

Mix all ingredients together, adjust seasonings to taste and serve. This recipe is great as a salsa with tortilla chips or on tacos or burritos. It is also a great stand-alone side salad or served on greens.

Chris Daniels • Casey
Guthrie County Rural Electric
Cooperative Association

Curried Creamy Corn

- 3 teaspoons butter
- 2 cups fresh sweet corn
- 2 tablespoons green peppers, chopped
- 2 tablespoons onions, chopped
- ½ teaspoon curry powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- dash of pepper
- 3 ounces cream cheese
- ⅓ cup milk

In a saucepan, melt butter then add corn, peppers, onions, curry powder, salt and pepper. Cover and cook over medium heat for 8-10 minutes or until corn is tender. Add cream cheese and milk, stir over low heat until combined. *Serves 4*

Gina Lloyd • Linden
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Cheesy Creamed Corn

- 2 quarts frozen sweet corn
- 4 ounces cream cheese, cubed
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 4 slices American cheese
- 1½ teaspoons salt

Cook and drain corn. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until butter and cheese are melted. *Serves 8*

Emily Rassi • Rock Rapids
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

Garden Fresh Sweet Corn Salsa

- 1 cob sweet corn
- ¼ cup cilantro, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, diced
- 1 jalapeno, diced
- juice of ½ lime
- ¾ cup yellow or red onion, diced
- 2 cups fresh tomatoes, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- tortilla chips

Cut cooked corn off the cob. Toss all ingredients except for chips in a bowl. Serve fresh with tortilla chips. Store refrigerated up to 3 days. *Yield: 4 cups*

Susan Harrison • Le Mars
North West Rural Electric Cooperative

KERNELS AND ROWS

The number of kernels per ear can vary from about 500 to 1,200. A typical ear of corn has 800 kernels in 16 rows. There is one silk for every kernel that grows in an ear of corn.

Sweet Corn Dip

- 4 cups corn cut fresh off the cob or frozen
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes, drained
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- tortilla chips

Cook, drain and cool corn. Mix corn with drained tomatoes, sour cream and mayonnaise then chill. Serve with tortilla chips. For a spicier dip, use a can of diced tomatoes with green chilies. *Serves 12*

Donna Johnson • Kanawha Prairie Energy Cooperative

BBQ Chicken & Corn Pizza

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1½ cups chicken, cooked and chopped
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1½ cups barbeque sauce, divided
- 1 15-inch pizza crust, unbaked
- 6 ounces cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 cup fresh corn
- 4 ounces gouda cheese, shredded
- ¼ cup cilantro

Sauté onion in oil for 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 1 more minute. Mix in the chicken, salt, pepper and ½ cup barbeque sauce. Turn off the heat. Spread 1 cup barbeque sauce on the pizza crust, then top with cheddar cheese, chicken mixture, corn and gouda cheese. Bake at 375 degrees F for 30-35 minutes. Remove and top with cilantro. Cool 10 minutes before slicing. *Serves 6*

Lauren Zollinger • Rock Rapids Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

Fried Sweet Corn

- 8 ears sweet corn
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons red pepper, diced
- ⅓ cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- salt

Husk corn and remove silks. With a sharp knife, cut the kernels from the cob. Add butter to a large sauté pan then add corn and pepper, stirring for several minutes. Add cream and cook for 3 minutes over high heat. Stir in parsley and season with salt.

Barb Walter • Alton North West Rural Electric Cooperative

Easy Corn Fritters

- 3 cups sweet corn kernels, 4 ears of corn
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
- 1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- vegetable or canola oil for frying

In a medium bowl, mix corn, flour, cilantro, salt and pepper until well combined. Add eggs and mix well. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add oil to cover the bottom of the pan and heat until hot. Use about ¼ cup of corn mixture for each fritter, drop about 6 fritters into the hot skillet and flatten out a bit. Cook fritters until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Using a spatula, flip and cook another 2 minutes or until golden brown. Repeat with the remaining mixture and serve immediately. Fritters can be kept warm in a 200 degrees F oven if not served immediately. *Yield: 12 large fritters*

Tamara Kramer • Le Mars North West Rural Electric Cooperative

Wanted: Soup and Stew Recipes The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!

Nothing comforts the heart and warms the soul quite like a hearty bowl of soup! With crisp and cool fall days in mind, we want your favorite soup or stew recipe. If we run your recipe in the magazine, we'll send a \$25 credit for your electric co-op to apply to your power bill. Recipes submitted also may be archived on our website at www.livingwithenergyiowa.com.

The deadline is July 31, 2021. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions. **Also provide the number of servings per recipe.**

EMAIL: recipes@livingwithenergyiowa.com
(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your email message.)

MAIL:
Recipes
Living with Energy in Iowa magazine
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48
Urbandale, Iowa 50322

SWEET VS. FIELD CORN

Only 1% of corn planted Iowa is sweet corn; the other 99% is field corn.

CORN KERNELS

STORING CORN

Refrigerate sweet corn in tightly wrapped plastic for 1-2 days if the husk is removed. If the husk is still on, store uncovered in a refrigerator for 1-2 days.

CORN KERNELS

BRIGHT GREEN MEANS RIPE

Sweet corn is ripe when husks are bright green and moist. After peeling the husk back, the kernels should be evenly spaced and plump.

CORN KERNELS

MORE THAN DELICIOUS

Sweet corn is undoubtedly an Iowa favorite, but it's more than just delicious. It's also a good source of vitamin C, lutein and fiber.

CORN KERNELS

Technology and cost drive a diverse energy portfolio

BY ANN THELEN

Electric cooperatives serving Iowans showcase new projects

Corn Belt Power Cooperative brought Wisdom Station's new 150-kilowatt solar facility online in 2020. The project features two different photovoltaic panel arrangements, a fixed-tilt array and an array of single-axis tracking panels. The 600 total panels now occupy space once used for the plant's coal pile. Wisdom Station converted to an all-natural gas burning facility in 2014.

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series on how electric cooperatives serving Iowa member-consumers are integrating new energy sources into their energy portfolios. Part two will also feature cooperatives serving the northeastern and southeastern parts of the state.

Solar shines as a cost-effective resource

As Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) works to close the gap left by the early closure of Duane Arnold Energy Center, it is focused on finding additional power purchase agreements with developers of wind and solar resources to fortify its power supply portfolio. CIPCO is a generation and transmission electric cooperative and, through its 13 members, serves over 300,000 Iowans in 58 Iowa counties.

"Energy from solar and wind resources are, relatively speaking, low-cost alternatives to other means of generation," says Bill Cherrier, CIPCO executive vice president and CEO. "We give great thought to the value these assets bring to the power supply portfolio, analyzing the costs and the

potential benefits and drawbacks of every decision.

"The solar option has been outstanding for us and really over the last eight years, it's become much more competitive. Compared to nuclear and coal plants, it is very economical and at times more competitive than those. The issue is you don't always have it when you need it," Cherrier continues. "Therefore, coal and natural gas play a very important part in our portfolio and will for some time to come."

CIPCO's involvement in solar projects has been in the spotlight in recent months.

Wapello Solar comes online

Earlier this year, Wapello Solar, LLC came online. CIPCO has a power purchase agreement (PPA) to purchase 100% of the power from the 100-MW_{AC} Wapello Solar for 25 years. Clēnera LLC partnered with Renewable Energy Systems (RES) to construct Wapello Solar in six months, creating approximately 250 jobs at peak construction. Despite beginning construction during the

COVID-19 pandemic, Wapello Solar progressed with little to no delays and entered commercial operation in early 2021.

Clēnera acquires, develops, builds and manages utility-scale solar projects and energy storage facilities throughout the U.S.

Located on nearly 800 acres, Wapello Solar features 318,000 bi-facial solar panels on single-axis tracker tables. When siting the projects, it's important to locate and construct at the lowest cost possible, while having necessary access to the transmission system. To check all these boxes, the projects are typically located on land that is rural, and in these instances, landowners are often pleased with the projects because developers work with landowners, and the opportunity creates diversity for their income.

On the heels of the completion of the Wapello Solar in southeast Iowa, CIPCO and Clēnera Renewable Energy announced the execution of a PPA for Coggon Solar, LLC, a 100-MW_{AC} solar project in eastern Iowa.

NextEra Energy Resources and Alliant Energy petitioned the Iowa Utilities Board to close the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC) in Palo in 2020, 14 years before the nuclear power plant's operating license was scheduled to expire. CIPCO is a 20% owner of the plant and received 20% of its generating capacity (in 2020) from DAEC. Corn Belt Power Cooperative is a 10% owner of DAEC. The August derecho accelerated the plant's closure by two months.



Coggon Solar will bring significant economic benefits to the local area. According to Clēnera, the project will contribute several million dollars in property tax revenue to Linn County over the life of the generating facility. Clēnera also estimates that the project will create approximately 350 jobs during peak construction, many of which will be from local labor.

Coggon Solar is anticipated to begin commercial operations in 2022.

“Our electric cooperative members count on reliability more than anything. It's imperative to their lives and livelihood. Our job is to deliver the best balance in a diverse energy portfolio,” Cherrier adds.

Solar array occupies the former site of coal pile for power plant

In 2020, Corn Belt Power Cooperative brought Wisdom Station's new 150-kilowatt solar facility online. The project features

two different photovoltaic panel arrangements, a fixed-tilt array and an array of single-axis tracking panels. The panels take up space once occupied by the plant's coal pile. Wisdom Station converted to an all-natural gas burning facility in 2014.

Corn Belt Power supplies electricity to nine member cooperatives and one municipal cooperative that serve farms, rural residences, small towns, businesses and industries in 41 counties in northern Iowa. There are 600 total panels at Corn Belt Power's Wisdom Station with 75 kilowatts of generation on each of the fixed-tilt and single-axis tracking arrays.

A fixed-tilt array is an array in which the panels never move and are pointed in one direction at all times. The single-axis tracking panels will move with the sun to maximize energy generation.

“We hope to learn more about the true costs and benefits of the

two technologies – fixed-tilt versus single-axis tracking,” says Jacob Olberding, vice president, power supply, Corn Belt Power. “We tried to set up as much of an “apples to apples” comparison as we could. The two arrays are located right next to each other. Each array has the same size model, quantity of solar panels and inverters. We are monitoring and documenting the performance and costs associated with the two arrays so that our members can make informed decisions when considering the two technologies.”

Iowa Choice Renewables, a company established and run by a group of electric cooperatives in rural Iowa, installed the system. The array interconnects to Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative's distribution system at Wisdom Station. ⚡

Ann Thelen is the editor of *Living with Energy in Iowa*.



Solar panels at Wapello Solar LLC are bi-facial, meaning they have a back layer of transparent glass to give them the ability to utilize the sunlight reflected onto the rear side of the panel as well as onto the traditional front panels.

Photo Credit: RES



The official ribbon cutting for Wapello Solar, LLC, took place in April. From left: Jeremy Teresinski, RES; Tim Jordan, RES; Ken Johnston, FTC Solar; Bill Cherrier, CIPCO; Michael Gallego, Clēnera; Iowa Lt. Gov. Adam Gregg; Sen. Joni Ernst; Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks; and Tammi Sevy, Clēnera.

Meet the 2021 board candidates

The members of Access Energy Cooperative who are running for a seat on the board of directors at the 2021 Annual Meeting of Members are listed alphabetically below by district. Members vote for one candidate in their district.

DISTRICT 1

Marvin Larson

Marvin Larson and his wife Mary live in Jefferson County. Marvin attended Iowa State University and was a heavy equipment mechanic in the military. He was a mechanic at Duke's Yamaha and John Deere in Fairfield. He was also an inspector for the Iowa Department of Transportation and is a retired farmer. Marvin has served on the Access Energy Cooperative board of directors since 2018 where he is currently the vice president. He is a Credentialed Cooperative Director. Marvin was a 4-H leader and was inducted into the Iowa 4-H Hall of Fame. He has been a member of the Jefferson County Extension Council and a board member of his church.



Donald Roach

Donald Roach lives in Jefferson County. He is retired from Access Energy Cooperative after 15 years as the director of operations and engineering and 26 years as a lineman. During his career at the cooperative, he earned the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Management Internship Certificate and NRECA Safety Accreditation Observer certification. Don is retired from the National Guard as 1st Sergeant, with 20 years of service. He completed the National Fire Academy at Iowa State University and graduated from the State of Iowa Fire Fighter and the Fire Service and Emergency Rescue Technician programs. He was a volunteer firefighter for 10 years in Mt. Pleasant, and he has received many awards for his leadership, including National Defense Service Medal, Army Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Achievement Medal and Armed Service Medal.



DISTRICT 2

Dan Fullenkamp

Dan Fullenkamp and his wife Deborah live in Lee County where they have owned and operated the family farm for over 35 years. Dan has a degree in agriculture and currently works part-time for Agrineed, Inc., while maintaining his family farm. He is also retired from the Lee County Secondary Roads Department after 35 years. Dan is a trustee of the Pleasant Ridge Township and is on the board of the West Point/St. Paul Community Fire Association. He has been a volunteer firefighter for 10 years. He is a member of the Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Soybean Association and Iowa Farm Bureau; has been on school and church committees; and is a volunteer for the West Point Sweet Corn Festival. He has also been involved in coaching, refereeing and umpiring youth sports.



Larry White

Larry White lives in Henry County on a 40-acre farm. Larry earned his Class A lineman certification and became a master electrician. He worked for Access Energy Cooperative as a foreman and serviceman technician for 28 years before retiring. He has been on the Access Energy Cooperative board of directors for 15 years, and he served as secretary/treasurer for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives board of directors. He is a Credentialed Cooperative Director, and he has earned a Board Leadership Certificate and a Director Gold Certificate. Larry is a former member of the Henry County Rescue Squad and was a Henry County Special Deputy for 8 years.



DISTRICT 3

Robert Chesnut III

Robert (Bob) Chesnut and his wife Jean live in Lee County. He has degrees in sociology, American history and criminal justice. Bob is currently assistant manager of Growmark Propane Terminal. He retired as chief deputy after 27 years at the Lee County Sheriff's office. In addition, he worked at Plains LPG, Progas and also helped open Kempker's True Value in Mt. Pleasant. Bob has served on the Access Energy Cooperative board of directors since 2018 where he is currently secretary. He is a Credentialed Cooperative Director. He is the president of the Ft. Madison Airport Commission and past-President of the 911 board, as well as a past board member of the Lee County Fair board. He has also been dedicated to Paws in Ft. Madison.



Leslie Loyd

Leslie Loyd and his wife Kathie live in Henry County. Leslie graduated from New London High School and became a certified truck driver from Indian Hills Community College. He retired from Walmart after 32 years as a truck driver. During his tenure at Walmart, he served on the Planning Committee, Safety Committee and Hiring Committee. He maintained rental properties in New London and currently drives a truck for a family farm. Leslie is a Shriner and is involved in the New London Masonic Lodge. ⚡



Reminder: Vote and receive \$10 bill credit

See Page 5 for details.

Access Energy Cooperative scholarships awarded

Congratulations to seven area high school students who were recently named as recipients of the 2021 Access Energy Cooperative scholarship program! The following students each received a \$1,500 award.

Brody Angstead, son of Larry and Paula Angstead, graduated from Fairfield High School and plans to attend Iowa State University to major in Agriculture Systems Technology/Agromony.



Simeon Buie, son of Dan Buie, graduated from Pekin Community High School and plans to attend Kansas State University to earn a degree in Animal Science and Industry.



Elaina Liechty, daughter of Jason and Mary Liechty, graduated from Mt. Pleasant Community High School and plans to attend the University of Iowa majoring in Business and mining in Spanish.



Logan Lee, son of Robert (Benny) and Meredith Lee, graduated from Mt. Pleasant Community High School and plans to attend Southeastern Community College to begin his major in business.



Gavin Lorence, son of Andrew and Tonya Lorence, graduated from Ft. Madison High School, and plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to study Business Administration.



Haley Rohdy, daughter of Jeremy and Karla Rohdy, graduated from New London High School and plans to attend Ellsworth Community College to major in Equine Science/Equine Management.



Access Energy Cooperative awards six \$1,500 scholarships each year, two in each of its three districts. The parents or guardians of the applicant must be members of Access Energy Cooperative. Winners are chosen based on their academics, achievements, community involvement and a submitted essay.

In addition to the six winners in our service districts, **Layne Kiefer**, son of Tim and Robin Kiefer, graduated from WACO and is being awarded a \$1,500 scholarship in lieu of attending the 2020 and 2021 Youth Tour trips, which were cancelled due to COVID-19 precautions. ⚡



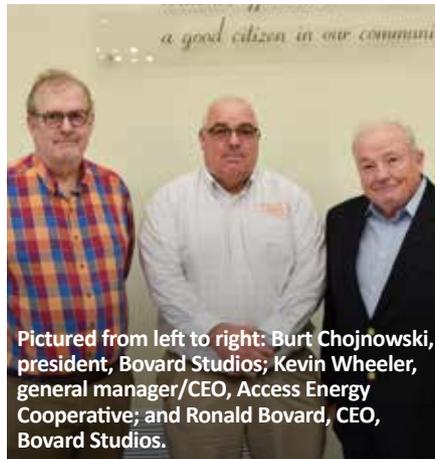
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bovard Studio business expansion

Bovard Studio, Inc. closed on an Access Energy Cooperative Revolving Loan Fund last month for a business expansion project in Fairfield. The company is going through a growth phase due to interest in the Bovard Studio patented, vented frames that can be customized for any customer's application.

Funds will be used to build an additional 12,000-square-foot building dedicated to frame production. It will allow for more than 200% production capacity, including a professional paint booth and room to add two more frame production employees.

Bovard Studio was founded in 1985 in Fairfield on a site that was the original livestock sale barn for southeast Iowa. They operate an expansion production facility in Metamoros, Mexico, which has a high number of experienced stained-glass fabricators.



Pictured from left to right: Burt Chojnowski, president, Bovard Studios; Kevin Wheeler, general manager/CEO, Access Energy Cooperative; and Ronald Bovard, CEO, Bovard Studios.

Bovard's work is acclaimed and was recognized with historic renovation awards in 2020 in New York City and Connecticut. They have evolved to be the premier stained-glass studio, providing integrated, long-term solutions integrating patented frame systems, art glass and protective coverings. ⚡

EMPLOYEE NEWS

Welcome to the Access Energy Cooperative team

Access Energy Cooperative welcomes two new apprentice linemen to our team this month.

Jackson Powell from Stoutsville, Missouri, is a May 2021 graduate from State Tech in Missouri. He did his 2020 summer internship at Ralls County Electric in New London, Missouri.



Cameron Kirchner from Canton, Missouri, graduated from State Tech in May 2020 and most recently worked for Scobee Line Contractors. ⚡



Stop by and see us at the Iowa State Fair!



The Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa are pleased to once again sponsor the Bruce Rastetter 4-H Exhibits Building at the Iowa State Fair. As Touchstone Energy members, we're part of a nationwide network of locally owned co-ops that provides resources and leverages partnerships to help member-consumers use energy wisely.

If you're planning a visit to the Iowa State Fair this summer, make sure to stop by and see us in the newly renovated 4-H Exhibits Building on the southwest corner of the fairgrounds. Come into the air-conditioned facility for a break from the heat and look for us near the new concession area.

Electric co-op staff from across Iowa will hand out plastic hard hats for the kids while supplies last. They can also try on some lineworker safety gear and take fun photos in our co-op safety selfie station!

Electric co-op members who take a quick survey on our iPads will automatically be entered into our fair contest. After the fair, three lucky winners will be randomly selected to choose one of three prize options:

- Roomba 614 Robot Vacuum
- DEWALT 20V MAX XR Blower
- Breville Smart Oven Pro

We will also announce the winners from our new Shine the Light contest during the fair. Iowa electric co-op member-consumers and employees had an opportunity to nominate local community volunteers for the contest in June. Three deserving volunteers will each receive a \$1,500 donation for their charity as we celebrate our cooperative commitment to community.

We look forward to connecting with our co-op members at the Iowa State Fair this summer. Please stop by our booth and say hello! ⚡



See you there!

IowaStateFair

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AUG 12-22 | 2021

County fair rides leave a lasting memory

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

Eleven months of the year, a certain tract of land in county seats sits quietly, barns empty, buildings vacant. But come July and August, it fills with 4-H kids, entertainment seekers and the greasy foods we all love, as the county fair kicks into high gear.

Any fair worth its salt has a midway. As a kid, this was the biggest draw. My friends and I loved the stomach-roiling, brain-churning mechanical monsters that threw us against each other and then up along the metal frame.

Whirly rides are a no go

But I've learned my lesson on the "whirly" rides. While I can stomach a roller coaster or a ride that goes straight forward, anything that turns in circles will make me sick the rest of the day. This lesson was imprinted on a muggy July evening at a county fair in central Iowa in the 1980s.

In this party was my mom, her friend Maxine, Maxine's two grandkids aged 9 and 6, and me. I was in my early 20s and found myself delegated to ride the Octopus from Hades with the two smaller kids. This was one of those entertainments that not only turns, but also has a car on the end of each spoke that whirls as well. I was game to ride along with the kids who were begging to go.

The first clue that this might not be so pleasant was the ride attendant, a teenaged boy with hair in his eyes, and a T-shirt with a vulgar saying on it. He grunted at us as we climbed into the Car of Death and latched us in. The second clue that this was going to be the Ride of Horrors was when said attendant started the ride by withdrawing a screwdriver from his back pocket and jamming it into the starting apparatus.

The ride lurched into motion, and I quickly realized that I had not figured the seating chart correctly.



The largest person should be on the outside so that the smaller ones don't get smashed in centrifugal motion. I was in the middle, so the little boy with me was getting the brunt of both his sister and me. I clung to the back of the seat, trying to pull myself away from him, which got more and more difficult the faster we went.

"Grandma" to the rescue

After two minutes of grim determination on our part to hang on, the 6-year-old wanted out. I tried to motion the adolescent attendant, only to find him flirting with a girl in line. It was obvious he was going to be of little aid. As we whirled past my mom and her friend, I tried to get their attention.

"Tell them to STOOOOPPPP..." I yelled, the Doppler Effect kicking in and carrying my voice away. She and Maxine were chatting away, totally ignoring us. In the meantime, the 6-year-old was crying, and the 9-year-old looked

pale. I was in real danger of getting hurled upon.

"MOOOOOMMMMMM!" I whirled a rotation. "TELL HIM TO STOOOPPPPPP...!" Second rotation.

The 6-year-old finally broke through. "GRANDMA! I WANT TO GET OFFFFFF!" The two women finally saw us gesturing and screaming and alerted Flirting Attendant, who pulled the screwdriver out of the works and brought us to a grinding halt.

We staggered off the ride, wobbly, sick and angry. Teen Attendant grunted at us as we left. Mom and Maxine found the whole thing somewhat hilarious.

Just in case you're wondering, I've never ridden the Octopus from Hades again. 🚀

Valerie Van Kooten is a writer from Pella who loves living in the country and telling its stories. She and her husband Kent have three married sons, two incredibly adorable grandsons and a lovely granddaughter.

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