



Highline Headlines

Volume 37
Issue 9

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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

For after hours emergencies call
800.452.7819
or 319.385.1580

Learn about how your dividends checks go back to you every year.

your account

Dividends

www.accessenergycoop.com

Transforming Your Future Draws Crowd of Over 3,000

Members of Access Energy Cooperative in southeast Iowa celebrated your **annual** meeting of members on August 4th with an estimated record crowd of 3300 members at McMillan Park in Mt. Pleasant.

With near-ideal weather conditions,

the crowd was estimated at 3,300, with around 1,000 registered members.

Speakers reported during the business session under the **tents** on "Transforming the Future," the cooperative's growth and contribution to the communities.

Robert Swindell announced that this

will be his last annual meeting as General Manager/CEO of the cooperative, as he will be retiring this year. Throughout Bob's career at Access Energy Cooperative, he has never been afraid to **admit** that

Annual Meeting, continue on page 4



Electric trimmer/hedger	Margaret Steele
Tower fan	Jody Adler
Ninja Chopper	Randy Peck
50' Extension Cord	Elizabeth Long
George Foreman Grill.....	Fred Thomas
Crock Pot.....	Donald Wasson
Clock Radio with dock	Janette Ross
Cordless Drill	Robert Mason
Zip Snip Cordless Cutter	Polishville Assn. Inc
LED Work Light.....	David Henkel & Troy Snaadt Estate
LED Cabinet Light	John Giberson
Jig saw.....	Ronald Bengé
Programmable thermostat	Bradley Lake & William Watson
LED lightbulb	Ann Krabill, Matt Johnson, Margaret Van Zile & John Unternahrer
\$100.00 Electric bill credit from mailed in ballots	Robert Wollom
Kids Bike	Ashlynn Dodds

GRAND PRIZE \$500..... Winner was not present so the \$500 will be rolled into the drawing for a grand prize of \$750 at the 2016 Annual Meeting.

'15 ANNUAL MEETING PRIZE WINNERS

Director Election Results

During the annual meeting these directors were re-elected for a 3-year term each.

DISTRICT 1



Joe Heckethorn

DISTRICT 2



Larry White

DISTRICT 3



Victor Pierrot

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT Jerry Barker, District 2 **VICE PRESIDENT** Fred Hickenbottom, District 1
SECRETARY Joseph Heckethorn, District 1 **TREASURER** Marvin Newton, District 3
DIRECTORS David Hollingsworth, District 1; Ron Campbell, District 2; Larry White, District 2; Marvin Holtkamp, District 3; Victor Pierrot, District 3

2016 Photo Contest Begins

It's time for the 12th annual photo contest with selected entries to be used in the 2017 Access Energy **calendar**.

We're looking for photos of rural settings in southeast Iowa including landscapes, animals, buildings or people in any season of the **year**. Fifty dollars will be awarded to each photographer whose entry is selected as one of the 12 featured photos.

Submit all entries by March 31, 2016 to:

Photo Contest,
c/o Access Energy Cooperative, PO Box 440,
Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641.

Visit our website for complete photo contest rules.



Dividend Checks in the Mail

If you were not **able** to make it to the annual meeting, your dividend check was mailed to you recently. Accounts with payments of less than \$5 will continue to **accumulate** and will be paid in the year they reach or exceed \$5.

After reviewing the operating revenues for 2014, your Board of Directors approved a dividend retirement of \$946,720. The refund is applied against years 1996, 1998, 1999 and 2014. The cooperative will be paying 51% of the dividends for 1996, 36% of 1998, 25% of 1999, and 12% of 2014. A pass-through amount of \$255,156 is from Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative.

At Access Energy Cooperative, as a member you own the cooperative. Unlike other electric utilities, we exist to make sure your needs are met—not to make a profit. As a member-owner, you share in the profits in the form of dividend checks. We work hard every day to keep your rates as low as possible. We also strive to **earn** your trust and excel at providing you with reliable service.

If you would like to know more information about dividends, check us out on our website at www.accessenergycoop.com.



Manager's Corner



General Manager/CEO Robert Swindell

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone that attended and assisted with our annual meeting. It not very often that we get to enjoy such a pleasant evening. I especially want to thank the individuals that ran for the Board of Directors. Our Articles of Incorporation require that we have contested elections with at least two candidates for each board position up for vote. I know it's often hard to run against a neighbor or friend that is currently serving on the board but I'm thankful that there are members who are willing to run and serve on the board.

FREE ENERGY AUDITS

With winter just around the corner, now is a great time to make your home more energy efficient. We are more than happy to assist you by providing free energy audits. If you wish to take advantage of this service, please give us a call to schedule an audit. I would

also recommend you contact a local heating and cooling contractor to check out your heating system. Having a qualified heating and cooling technician inspect your heating system will not only make sure your heating system is operating efficiently, but most importantly safely. Several years ago during a check out of my furnace, a cracked heat exchanger was discovered which, if not repaired, could have resulted in deadly carbon monoxide in my home.

CONGRATULATIONS!

In closing this month I want to announce that Tony Adams has been promoted to serve as the Mount Pleasant District Foreman. Tony has been with the cooperative since 2000, most currently serving as a crew foreman. Tony replaced Jim Mills who is now one of the servicemen working out of our Mount Pleasant facility. I want to thank both Jim and Tony for their service to the Cooperative.



Tony Adams
Mount Pleasant
District Foreman

Statement of Non Discrimination

Access Energy Cooperative is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call 866.632.9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by faxing to 202.690.7442 or email program.intake@usda.gov. This is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

BLOOD DRIVE



MISSISSIPPI VALLEY
REGIONAL BLOOD CENTER

How life flows through our community.™

Save the Date

Thursday, Sept. 24th
2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Access Energy Cooperative
Meeting Room

Sign up by calling
319.385.1577.

COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

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

Website: www.accessenergycoop.com

Facebook:
facebook.com/AccessEnergyCoop

Twitter:
twitter.com/AccessEnergyC

Email:
contactus@accessenergycoop.com

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Payments can be placed in the dropbox under the flag pole.

Visa and Mastercard accepted.

After Hours Emergencies call:
319.385.1580 or 800.452.7819

General Manager/CEO: Robert Swindell

Editor: Kimberly Brumbaugh

Assistant Editor: Cherity Wibben

Officers and Directors:

Jerry Barker	District 2	President	
Fred Hickenbottom	District 1	Vice President	
Joseph Heckethorn	District 1	Secretary	
Marvin Newton	District 3	Treasurer	
David Hollingsworth	District 1	Director	
Larry White	District 2	Director	
Ronald Campbell	District 2	Director	
Marvin Holtkamp	District 3	Director	
Victor Pierrot	District 3	Director	

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Access Energy Helps Fund the Iowa Energy Center & the CGRER

Each year, Access Energy Cooperative contributes a portion of its gross revenues to the Iowa Energy Center at Iowa State University and the Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research at the University of Iowa.

The Iowa Energy Center helps to promote, develop and advance energy efficiency programs and renewable energy research. In addition, the Center is available to answer questions on a variety of energy issues for the citizens of Iowa.

In 2014, Access Energy was assessed one-tenth of one percent of its gross operating revenue for electric service of \$24,023,616. Access Energy paid a total of \$24,024. Eighty-five percent of that will go to the Iowa State Energy Center and 15 percent will go to the University of Iowa for the CGRER. All Iowa electric and gas utilities are required by the state legislature to help fund the two centers.



Help Others by Contributing to RECare

You may make a one-time contribution to the RECare program, or you may enclose an amount each month with your monthly electric bill. Just one dollar a month will help others!

This program is administered by the Iowa Community Action Program, and recipients must meet their guidelines.

I would like to make a:

- one time contribution of \$ _____
- monthly contribution of \$ _____
(monthly contribution will be added to your bill)

Name _____

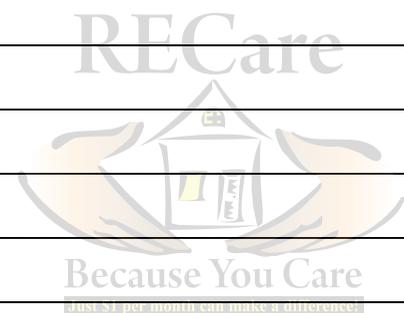
Address _____

City/Zip _____

Phone # _____

Email _____

Account # (if known) _____



Look Up for Hazards During Harvest

After working in a field on a neighbor's farm, Jim Flach parked his equipment and stepped out of the vehicle. Sadly, Jim did not realize his equipment was touching an overhead power line, and he became a path for the electrical current as he placed his foot onto the ground. Jim received a severe electric shock that ultimately resulted in his death a few months later. Safe Electricity urges farmers to take the proper precautions when working around power lines.

The rush to harvest can lead to farmers working long days with little sleep. It is important to take time for safety. Before starting work, make sure to note the location of overhead power lines.

To stay safe around overhead power lines, Safe Electricity urges farm operators and workers to:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Use care when raising an **auger** or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet **away** from power lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line

- out of the way or raise it for clearance. If a power line is sagging or low, call Access Energy Cooperative immediately.

If contact is made with a power line, stay on the equipment. Make sure to warn others to stay away, and call 911. Do not leave until the utility crew says it is safe to do so. The only reason to exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

Some additional safety tips from Safe Electricity include:

- Do not use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around grain bins.
- Always hire qualified electricians for any electrical issues.
- Do not use equipment with frayed or **aged** cables.

"You need to double check, even triple check, to see what is above you," says Marilyn Flach, Jim's widow. His son Brett adds, "Be conscious of your surroundings. You need to keep your eyes open and beware of overhead lines."

For more electrical safety information, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Shield Your Home from Energy Loss with Adequate Insulation

Walls. Floors. Ceilings. Attic. These are some of the prime areas of a home that need insulation in order for you to maximize **energy** efficiency.

According to the Department of Energy (DOE), adding insulation to your home is a sound investment that is likely to quickly pay for itself in reduced utility bills. In fact, DOE estimates that you can reduce your heating and cooling needs up to 30 percent by properly insulating and weatherizing your home.

If your home is more than 20 years old and was not specifically constructed for energy efficiency, additional insulation can likely reduce your energy bills and increase the comfort level of your home. The actual amount of savings for each home depends upon several factors—the current level of insulation, your climate, efficiency of your heating/cooling system and your utility rates. On average, older homes have less insulation than homes built today, but even adding insulation to a newer home can pay for itself within a few years.

So, where do you start?

You first need to determine how much insulation you already have in your home and where it is located. If you need assistance, Access Energy Cooperative Energy Advisors will conduct a free energy efficiency audit for your home and will check insulation as a routine part of the assessment. For those with the DIY spirit, you can conduct an insulation audit yourself. Here is what you should be looking for:

- Where your home is, isn't, and/or should be insulated
- The type of insulation in your home
- The R-value and the thickness or depth (inches) of the insulation

A prime area that is chronically under-insulated is the attic. Attic insulation is essential to help keep warm air inside in the winter and prevent hot attic air from heating your living spaces in the summer.

If you have R-19 or less insulation in your attic, consider bringing it up to R-49

for best results. For flooring, if you have R-11 or less insulation, consider bringing it up to R-25.

HOW DOES INSULATION WORK?

Heat flows naturally from a warmer space to a cooler space. During winter months, this means heat moves directly from heated living spaces to adjacent unheated attics, garages, basements and even outdoors. It can also travel indirectly through interior ceilings, walls and floors—wherever there is a difference in temperature. During summer months, the opposite happens—heat flows from the exterior to the interior of a home. Proper installation of insulation creates resistance to heat flow. Heat flow resistance is measured or rated in terms of its R-value—the higher the R-value, the greater the insulation's effectiveness. The more heat flow resistance your insulation provides, the lower your heating and cooling costs will be.

SAVE GREEN BY GOING GREEN

Today, you have choices when it comes to selecting insulation for the home, including an environmentally-friendly option made of recycled materials, such as scrap blue jeans. It looks similar to chopped up blue jeans and is treated for fire safety. With an insulating R-value similar to fiberglass insulation, this blue-jean insulation is a great option.

GET STARTED AND GET SAVING

While an older home will never be as efficient as a new home, an insulation upgrade will make a noticeable difference in your energy use and wallet. A well-insulated home is one of the most cost-effective means of saving energy and decreasing heating and cooling bills. For more information, contact the energy experts at Access Energy Cooperative or check our website at www.accessenergycoop.com.

Source: *Anne Prince*



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Looking for an easy efficiency upgrade? Additional insulation can make a difference! The Department of Energy estimates you can reduce heating and cooling needs up to 30 percent by properly insulating and weatherizing your home. Source: energy.gov

Co-op Programs Save You Money

At Access Energy Cooperative, we are dedicated to making sure you receive electric service at a price your family can afford. But it doesn't stop there. Did you know your electric co-op offers programs to help you reduce energy **use** and save on your monthly bill?

Need an energy audit? We provide this service free of charge! Let us help you find ways to save energy, AND we have a rebate program available for making some of the changes recommended in the audit.

We also offer a variety of free member education programs including safety and energy efficiency programs for schools.

One of the best services we offer saves you money on everything from clothing to automotive services, from dining to travel – and so much more. The Co-op Connections card is a valuable member benefit that not only saves you money but helps local businesses in our community.

The Co-op Connections card gives co-op members discounts on everyday expenses and features a cash-back mall, where you can get paid to shop online at nearly 3,000 retailers. It also provides health savings that augment your current medical benefits. The card includes discounts on prescriptions at over 60,000 locations. Co-op Connections cardholders have saved over \$64 million on prescriptions since its inception! You can also receive discounts on chiropractic care, lab work, **imaging**, vision services and dental care. The card can even help you save on energy efficient appliances. Learn more about the Co-op Connections card by visiting www.accessenergycoop.com.

Source: *Meghaan Evans*

Questions or Complaints?

As a member-owner of Access Energy Cooperative, assistance is available to you in resolving questions, comments or complaints about your electric service.

Access Energy Cooperative has trained representatives available to answer your questions and address any concerns you may have. Here is how you can contact our office at: Access Energy Cooperative, P.O. Box 440, Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641 or call 866.242.4232.

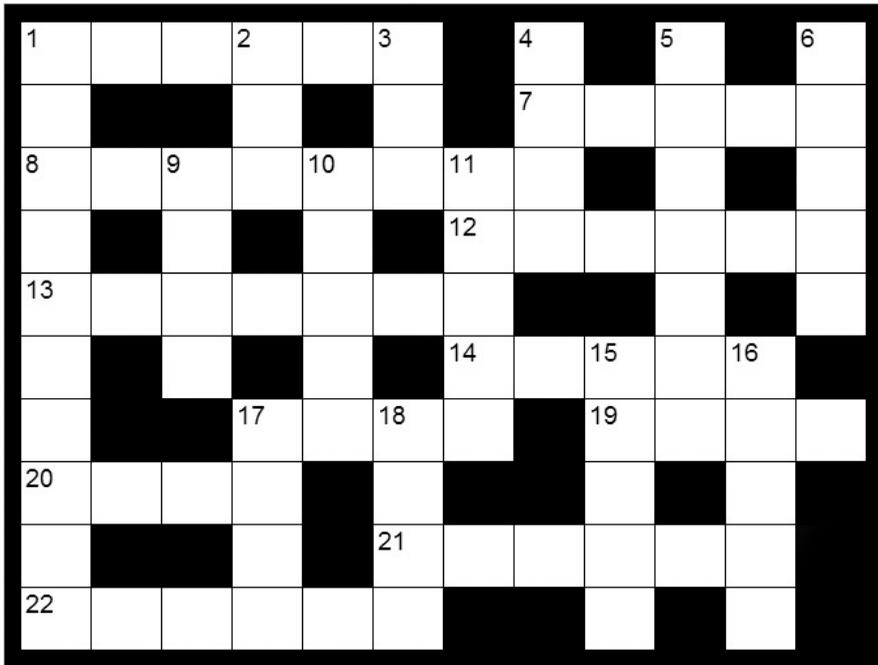
If your question is related to our service, rather than rates, and your concern is not resolved, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board by calling toll-free 877.565.4450, by writing to Iowa Utilities Board, 1375 E. Court Avenue, Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069, or by email to customer@iub.iowa.gov.

Win A \$25 Bill Credit

Access Energy Cooperative members can win a \$25 bill credit by completing the crossword. Send your answers in by September 28, 2015, to: Access Energy Cooperative, Attn: Crossword Puzzle, P.O. Box 440, Mount Pleasant, IA 52641. Most of the answers are bold and highlighted elsewhere in this issue of the Highline Headlines. If more than one person answers all of the questions correctly by the deadline, a drawing will be held to determine the winner.

Name _____

Address _____



Last month's crossword winner is Kathy Fields of Libertyville.

ACROSS

- 1 This meeting of members was held August 4th
- 7 Mr. Swindell has never been afraid to do this that he has troubles pronouncing names
- 8 The photo contest is now open for entries for this for 2017
- 12 Not subject to an aging process
- 13 Director elections were held at this event for members
- 14 Highlights of this included Jake McVey's performance
- 17 The term a director serves on the board is three of these
- 19 Stay safe, do not use equipment with this type or frayed cables
- 20 If you were not ___ to make it to the annual meeting, your dividend check will be mailed to you
- 21 Give special attention, stress, or emphasis
- 22 Insulation can maximize the efficiency of this

DOWN

- 1 Dividends earned of less than \$5 will continue to do this in your dividend account
- 2 Did you know we offer programs to help you reduce this for energy?
- 3 Movable top or cover hinged for closing the opening of a container
- 4 We strive to do this for your trust
- 5 Coop Connections Cards can help you save on this medical expense
- 6 Upright boards in house framing
- 9 The right to take another's property if an obligation is not discharged
- 10 Sound of any kind
- 11 Before raising one of these look up for power lines
- 15 This happened to a great meal at the annual meeting
- 16 Speakers at the annual meeting reported to the members under these
- 17 Photo contest entries are accepted for all seasons of this
- 18 Keep at least 10 feet ___ from all power lines in all directions

Energy Assistance Program

The 2015–2016 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has been established to help qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs for the winter heating season. The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel, and type of housing.

WHEN TO APPLY:

- Elderly (60 & over) and/or disabled: October 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016.
- All other households: November 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016.

WHAT TO TAKE:

- Proof of income: Most recent 3 months' check stubs, award letter from Social Security or 2014 tax return
 - Social Security numbers of **all** household members (documentation required)
 - Recent heat bill
 - Recent electric bill
- If you receive alimony or child support it

will also need to be verified.

WAGE EARNERS: Please bring copies of your check stubs for the three-month period preceding the date of application, or a copy of your federal income tax return.

FIXED INCOME: This income may include: Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Family Investment Program, Veteran's Assistance, Unemployment Insurance and pensions. Please bring copies of your most recent 3 months' check stubs.

SELF-EMPLOYED/FARMERS: Please bring a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

FIP RECIPIENTS: Please bring your current DHS Notice of Decision or contact your local office for acceptable document information

If you are not sure where to apply, please write to: LIHEAP, Iowa Department of Human Rights, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, IA 50319, or call your local community action agency.

Income Maximums

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
3 Month Gross Income	\$5,149	\$6,969	\$8,789	\$10,609	\$12,429	\$14,249
Annual Gross Income	\$20,598	\$27,878	\$35,158	\$42,438	\$49,718	\$56,998

For households with more than six member, add \$1,820 per three months, or \$7,280 annually for each additional member.

Medical Waiver: Households who are over LIHEAP regular income guidelines may be eligible for LIHEAP benefits through our medical waiver component. The medical expenses must be documented, paid, and non-reimbursable. For more information please contact your local community action agency.

Annual Meeting, continued from page 1

pronouncing people's names during the drawings has not been his greatest attribute. He was given several chances during his final prize drawings to entertain the crowd by accidentally misreading some difficult names to pronounce. At his first Access Energy Cooperative annual meeting, as he had just been recently hired at the cooperative, and was simply asked to do a hello and give the "princess wave." He followed up his last annual meeting speech in the same manner, with a hello and a "princess wave."

Also at the annual **meeting**, incumbents Joe Heckethorn, Larry White and Victor Pierrot were re-elected as directors to serve three-**year** terms on the nine-person board.

The Grand Prize of \$500 was not given away, as the member's name that was drawn to win was not present. This \$500 will be rolled into next year's grand prize at the annual meeting, for a chance to win a \$750 bill credit in 2016.

The best prize winner of the day was the kids' bike drawing. The winner won a brand new bike from Bickels on her birthday! Congratulations and happy birthday to the daughter of Heather Dochterman!

Other highlights of the **event** included

an outstanding performance by Jake McVey, a great meal **eaten** by all and many family fun activities including: pony rides by Shady acres, inflatable activities for kids by Jump-4-Fun, and drive-a-tractor by Joel Proennecke and Dick McGohan. Several booths were available offering information, including a renewable energy trailer from iRenew, booths on the upcoming launch of the cooperative's new website and Facebook and Twitter accounts, as well as a new weather radio app for smartphones, the Coop Connections Card, in addition to energy efficiency and safety information.

