

living with energy

IN IOWA



SEPTEMBER 2017

Dividend checks that were not picked up at the Annual Meeting have been mailed ▶ See page 12

Solar eclipse, co-op style!

We gathered to watch day turn into night



Changes announced for heating bill assistance program

Does your home need more insulation?

Annual meeting of members draws huge crowd

Visit our website at www.accessenergycoop.com

IN THE NEWS

2018 photo contest launched



Access Energy is holding its annual photo contest, and winning entries will be shown in the 2019 Access Energy Cooperative calendar. We're looking for original photos of rural settings in southeastern Iowa – including landscapes, animals, buildings or people – during any season of the year.

Every photographer with an entry selected as one of the 13 photos to be featured in the calendar will win \$50. The entry deadline is March 31, 2018; to see the contest rules, visit our website at www.accessenergycoop.com. ⚡



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): 800-292-8989
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.
Closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays

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
Joseph Heckethorn	District 1	Vice President
Robert Smith	District 2	Secretary
Fred Hickenbottom	District 1	Treasurer
Jerry Barker	District 2	Director
Larry White	District 2	Director
Marvin Holtkamp	District 3	Director
Marvin Newton	District 3	Director
Victor Pierrot	District 3	Director

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

Here are the advantages of member control

BY KEVIN WHEELER

Access Energy Cooperative and, in fact, all of Iowa's electric cooperatives are distinctly different from the state's investor-owned utilities (IOUs) because of our unique business structure. Cooperatives are created, owned and directed by you, our members. In contrast, IOUs are capitalized, owned and directed by investors, their stockholders.

An important element of the co-ops' method of doing business is local member control, which allows the co-ops to make decisions that are in the best interests of the members they serve. Access Energy Cooperative and other electric co-ops operate on a not-for-profit basis and provide service at the cost of operations. This allows us to focus on efficiency and quality of service. IOUs, on the other hand, must focus on profits, since their stockholders (who demand a return on their investment) often are not the companies' customers.

Of course, electric cooperatives are subject to working within a limited number of state and federal guidelines. But the state's IOUs are regulated by the Iowa Utilities Board and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in Washington, D.C. This oversight exists to balance the significantly different interests of the IOUs' stockholders and their customers.

Decisions about Access Energy Cooperative are made by people who live in the community, not by bureaucrats in Des Moines or Washington, D.C. As a member of our co-op, you share ownership in our system and have a voice in our operations. You have a

vote in electing directors who are responsible for setting the rates, developing the policies and putting together the procedures for running the cooperative on both a daily and long-term basis.



Our directors are elected to the board by the membership during the annual meeting. They're chosen based on their knowledge of (and interest in) the co-op, their reputation for sound judgment and their leadership skills.

Our directors are local leaders who know their neighbors and often serve on civic, agricultural, church and labor organizations; they also may be members of a local school board or zoning commission. The bottom line is that our directors know the area, and they know the people who live in it. They're responsive to the opinions of their neighbors and strive to provide them with reliable electric service at reasonable rates.

Another good example of the value of member control is in the arena of economic development. The co-op-supported Iowa Area Development Group helps bring new industries and jobs to co-op communities around Iowa. In fact, during the last 20 years, this organization and Iowa's electric cooperatives helped generate more than \$5.5 billion dollars of capital investment and 37,000 jobs for Iowa.

Local ownership and member control makes Access Energy Cooperative much more responsive to the needs of our members – and we're proud to actively be involved in enhancing the quality of life in the areas where you live, work and play. ⚡

Kevin Wheeler is the general manager/CEO of Access Energy Cooperative.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Here's how to handle a concern about your electric service

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. Contact our office by writing Access Energy Cooperative, P.O. Box 440, Mt. Pleasant,



IA 52641 or calling 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 Ave., Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069, or by e-mailing customer@iub.iowa.gov. ⚡

HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

Statement of Nondiscrimination

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 we are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. (Not all basis apply to all programs.) Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille,

large print, audiotape or American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; by fax: 202-690-7442; or by e-mail: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. ⚡

EXTEND A HELPING HAND

Help others by contributing to RECare

RECare is a program where members help other members in need. 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 \$1 a month will help others.

The Iowa Community Action Program administers this program, and recipients must meet its guidelines. ⚡



Member Authorization Form

I would like to make a (check one):

One-time contribution of

\$ _____

Monthly contribution of

\$ _____

(That will be added to my bill)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

ZIP Code _____

Phone # _____

E-mail _____

Account # (if known) _____

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win an LED work light!

This \$120 Husky twin-head, 7,000-lumen, tripod light will provide all the light you need for any project. Complete the entry form by Sept. 30, 2017, at the *Living with Energy in Iowa* website: www.livingwithenergyiowa.com. ⚡



FINANCIAL MATTERS

The dividends are coming!



If you weren't able to make it to the annual meeting of members on Aug. 1, your dividend check was recently mailed to you. 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 2016, your Board of Directors approved a dividend retirement of \$975,818. The refund is applied against years 1997, 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2016. The cooperative paid 40 percent of the remaining dividends for 1997, 59 percent of 2001, 25 percent of 2002, 18 percent of 2003 and 11 percent of 2016. A pass-through amount of \$208,262 is from Northeast Missouri Electric Power Cooperative.

As an Access Energy Cooperative 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'd like to know more about dividends, check our website at www.accessenergycoop.com.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Annual meeting of members

A crowd of Access Energy Cooperative members estimated at 3,300 celebrated "Cooperative Tools Building Power For You," at the 2017 Annual Meeting of Members on Aug. 1 at McMillan Park in Mt. Pleasant. Members received a warm welcome to their meeting by Mount Pleasant Chamber Alliance executive director Kristi Ray, who applauded the cooperative for their partnership and involvement in Henry County economic development.

David Hollingsworth, Jerry Barker and Marvin Holtkamp were re-elected as directors to serve 3-year terms on the nine-person board. In addition, dividend checks for 2017 totaling \$975,818 were available for

members to pick up at the meeting. For those who were unable to make it to the meeting, checks have been mailed.

Other highlights of the event included an outstanding musical performance by Beau Jangles and a great meal served by Mount Pleasant Hy-Vee. Members enjoyed Drive-a-Tractor by Joel Proennecke and Dick McGohan, inflatable activities for the kids by Jump 4 Fun, pony rides by Windy Acres, a live line demonstration on being safe around electricity, free blood pressure checks and information from the Henry County Health Center, Milestones, the Area Agency on Aging and the Henry County Sheriff.



◀ The stage was the center of attention for the business meeting and an evening of great country music entertainment by Beau Jangles.

Congratulations, prize winners!

The Grand Prize of a \$250 bill credit was awarded to Dale Ritz, which means the Grand Prize for 2018 will start over at a \$250 bill credit.

Robert Kern won the \$100 bill credit for mailed-in ballots. Also, these members won \$50 electric credits donated by Sherrill Electric: Keith Dimmitt, Randall L. Loges, Leland Graber, Darlene Lauder, Roy E. Anderson, Rosalie Kirchner, La Verne F. Loges, Keith R. Webber, Relm Holding II Inc. and Robert L. Anderson. Other \$50 bill credit winners were Green Bay Shiitake Growers, Sue Lund, Tracy Vaughn, Marsha J. Birdsell and James D. Nevins.

Winners of \$25 credits included Keith O. Pratt, Tom L. Morgan, Raymond Robbins, Karen L. Krumboltz, Allen Raker, John C. Danielson, Sammy Carlson, Keith A. Kocour, Margaret E. Van Zile and Robert A. McCarty.

draws huge crowd



▲ Kids of all ages enjoyed the Drive-A-Tractor once again this year.



▲ Participants spun the wheel to answer energy-related questions to win prizes.



▲ The nice weather drew a large crowd for a wonderful meal catered by the Mt. Pleasant Hy-Vee before the business meeting.

◀ Members visited the energy efficiency booth to learn about energy audits and ways to save energy in their homes.

Members elected to Access Energy Cooperative board of directors

David Hollingsworth, Jerry Barker and Marvin Holtkamp were re-elected as directors to serve 3-year terms on the nine-person board.

Following the meeting, the board of directors met at their annual reorganizational meeting. The following were elected as the officers of the board: David Hollingsworth, president; Joe Heckethorn, vice president; Rob Smith, secretary; and Fred Hickenbottom, treasurer. ⚡



David Hollingsworth,
President



Joe Heckethorn,
Vice president



Rob Smith,
Secretary



Fred Hickenbottom,
Treasurer