

living with energy

IN IOWA



SEPTEMBER 2019

Access Energy Cooperative receives Impact Award ▶ See Page 13

Iowans participate in Energy Trail Tour



Visit our website at www.accessenergycoop.com

Hinterland Dairy
launches local
cheese products

Touchstone Energy[®]
Main Street Summit
lands in Iowa

After-school recipes

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@livingwithenergyiowa.com. Letters may be edited for clarity and length before publication. *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine does not assume responsibility for unsolicited items.

Website: www.livingwithenergyiowa.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.

© Copyright 2019, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. No portion of the editorial, photographic or other content of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine or its website may be reproduced without written permission of the editor.



ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

IOWA 811 ONE CALL

800-292-8989

Features

6 Touchstone Energy® Main Street Summit lands in Iowa

The three-day event, which drew 135 attendees from around the country, proved Iowa is where powerful possibilities unfold!



8 After-school snacks

With the kids back in school, discover some of our readers' favorite after-school snacks. **PLUS:** Find out how you can receive a \$25 credit on your power bill!



10 Annual energy trail tours build powerful engagement

The tours give co-op members a firsthand glimpse into electric generation and an opportunity to meet the people responsible for providing the power.



Favorites

3 Statewide Perspective

Education is key to effective cooperative leadership

14 Energy Matters

LIHEAP funding announced for 2019-2020

3 Editor's Choice Contest

Win a Roomba® 680 Robot Vacuum

15 Out Back

Perils of wrap rage

ON THE COVER

Ben Sanders, journeyman lineman for Midland Power Cooperative (left) and Matt Pociask, job training/safety instructor for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives participate in an apprenticeship workshop at the Midland Training Field in Jefferson. The workshop is part of the apprenticeship program and trains an apprentice in the routine and non-routine tasks required for a lineman. The goal is to ensure an apprentice completes the necessary tasks correctly and safely, not only for their personal safety, but also for the safety of co-workers and the members they serve. ⚡

Photo: Scott Meinecke, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.



Education is key to effective cooperative leadership

BY KATRINA DAVIS

“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”

This quote from John F. Kennedy never fails to guide and inspire me in my role at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC). As the director of education and training, I schedule, organize and manage conferences, educational workshops and training sessions for the directors and employees of Iowa’s electric cooperatives.



When we think about the elements of effective leadership, knowledge about the industry usually ranks near the top. The same is true for the elected directors at your locally owned electric cooperative. For electric co-ops to best serve their member-owners, it’s important for directors and staff to be informed and educated on the latest industry trends and challenges. In fact, your locally elected co-op board of directors invests a significant amount of time to attending training and educational sessions nationally and regionally in order to best serve you, the co-op member-owners. These programs are especially important for newer directors as they must learn quickly about their roles and responsibilities and understand the challenges and issues unique to the electric industry.

This focus on education and information stems from the core cooperative principles that guide all cooperatives. In fact, at IAEC, I work to manage and organize more than 50 education and training events for our electric cooperative members every year. We focus on providing valuable and affordable opportunities for co-op directors and employees to attend governance education courses and industry conferences, so they are informed on the latest challenges, trends, regulations and technologies

affecting electric cooperatives.

In August each year, IAEC staff members travel across the state to present industry updates to electric cooperative directors and staff. In these full-day sessions, we cover safety and loss control statistics, regulatory updates, highlights from the recent state and federal legislative sessions, new training opportunities for directors and staff, and IAEC financial and operational updates. We also allow plenty of time for attendees to ask questions in order to fully explore and understand the material.

This summer, we also talked about the upcoming international project in rural Guatemala; four Iowa electric cooperative linemen will travel with volunteers from Illinois and Wisconsin in early October to

bring the benefits of electricity to 42 households, a medical outpost and a school. We’ll make sure to share this incredible story with you in a future issue! We also presented a session at our statewide district meetings on the importance of transparency in governance and the accessibility of information about how decisions are made at your local electric cooperative.

Your electric co-op directors and staff work hard to ensure that you receive safe, reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity. Investing in valuable education and training helps ensure that our leaders make informed decisions that will guide the cooperative to a successful future as we power lives and empower the communities we serve. ⚡

Katrina Davis is the director of education and training for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

EDITOR’S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a Roomba® Robot Vacuum!



The Roomba® 680 Robot Vacuum provides a thorough clean, all at the push of a button. The Roomba’s patented 3-Stage Cleaning System is specially engineered to loosen, lift and suction everything from small particles to large debris from carpets and hard floors. Dirt Detect™ sensors alert the Roomba robot vacuum to clean more thoroughly on concentrated areas of dirt. Preset Roomba to clean when it’s convenient for you, so you can keep up with everyday messes. The Roomba robotic vacuum is the new must-have appliance of the century! Valued at \$299. ⚡

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month’s contest by visiting www.livingwithenergyiowa.com no later than Sept. 30, 2019. 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 Nest® Learning Thermostat from the June issue was Brady James from T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative.

Be prepared before the storm

BY KEVIN WHEELER

While you can't predict which weather forecast will come true, you can be prepared when severe weather strikes. Doing so ensures you have the tools and resources to effectively weather the storm. The Department of Homeland Security offers several resources to help you prepare for major weather events and natural disasters. Visit www.ready.gov/make-a-plan.



Preparedness actions and items

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers, toilet paper and towels, towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer).
- Stock your first-aid kit with pain relievers, bandages and other

medical essentials, including prescriptions.

- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.

With advance warning

If a severe storm is expected with high winds and sustained rain or snow, you may need to take extra steps to safeguard your home. Shut windows and securely close exterior doors. Charge cell phones, laptops and devices so you have maximum power. Make sure generators are rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and review manufacturer instructions to operate them safely.

During a prolonged outage

In the event of an outage, turn off appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics to help avert damage from a power surge and prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. If using a small generator, consider using LED holiday lights to illuminate a living area. A strand of 100 white lights draws little energy yet produces considerable light. Solar lights also work, if they can

receive some sunlight during the day for charging.

During thunderstorms, avoid electrical equipment and land-based telephones. Use battery-powered TVs and radios instead. Keep away from windows. Listen to local news or NOAA Weather Radio for emergency updates, or check Access Energy Cooperative's website for restoration updates.

After the storm, avoid downed power lines and walking through flooded areas where power lines could be submerged. Allow ample room for utility crews to safely perform their jobs – including on your property.

Power in planning

Planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm's effects. Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings and set Access Energy Cooperative's website as a favorite on your phone to stay abreast of restoration efforts and other important co-op news and information. Act today, because there is power in planning! ⚡

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



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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Hinterland Dairy is open for business!

Hinterland Dairy, owned by Ralph and Colleen Krogmeier, held its open house on August 9 to celebrate the opening of its new cheese processing and retail business. Access Energy Cooperative is proud to have assisted with this economic development project by providing financing through the cooperative's Revolving Loan Fund program. Congratulations to the Krogmeiers! ⚡



From left: Ralph and Colleen Krogmeier, owners; daughter Shannon Wellman, who works at Hinterland Dairy; Kevin Wheeler, general manager/CEO, Access Energy Cooperative; and Mike Meissen, vice president, Iowa Area Development Group.

Access Energy Cooperative members celebrate 20/20 vision

Members of Access Energy Cooperative celebrated “Looking Back with 20/20 Vision” at the 2019 Annual Meeting of Members on August 6 at McMillan Park in Mt. Pleasant, with a crowd of members close to 3,000.

“We thank everyone for coming to the meeting. Part of being a member of an electric cooperative is actively participating in the activities of the organization. We hope the changes we made this year helped members enjoy the evening,” says Kevin Wheeler, general manager/CEO.

Highlights of the event included an outstanding performance by Stumptown and a delicious meal served by Mt. Pleasant Hy-Vee. Grandpa’s Homemade Ice Cream from Burlington made the ice cream. Members enjoyed drive-a-tractor by Joel Proennecke and Dick McGohan, inflatable activities for the kids from Big Ten Rentals, pony rides by Windy Acres, a live line demonstration on being safe around electricity, and information from the Henry County Health Center and the Henry County Sheriff. Access Energy Cooperative thanks everyone for making the event a success, including Lance Refuse, Winfield Lion’s Club, Quality Equipment, Boy Scout Troop 27 and Printgroup for all their help.

Starting off the business meeting, Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber Alliance Executive Director Kristi Ray gave members a warm welcome, followed by reports of the cooperative officers. Fred Hickenbottom, Robert P. Smith and Marvin Newton were re-elected as directors to serve three-year terms on the nine-person board.

The winner of the Grand Prize of a \$500 bill credit was Kenneth Ralfs of Birmingham. Dividend checks for 2019 totaling \$1,134,767 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.



Following the meeting, the board of directors met at their annual reorganizational meeting. The following were re-elected as the officers of the Access Energy

Cooperative board of directors: David Hollingsworth, president; Marvin Newton, vice president; Robert P. Smith, secretary; and Fred Hickenbottom, treasurer. ⚡

SAFETY MATTERS



Our employees work hard to practice and learn about safety, so they can go home at night to their families. If you see workers on the side of the road, move over to the other lane and slow down. You might not hear them say it, but they are thanking you! ⚡



MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN

Touchstone Energy Main Street Summit lands in Iowa

Event proves Iowa is where powerful possibilities unfold

BY DAWN SLY-TERPSTRA

Call it coincidence or call it fate. The week Touchstone Energy® brings its newest initiative – the Main Street Summit – to Iowa, Major League Baseball announces next year’s Field of Dreams game. The 2020 game will be a match-up between the Chicago White Sox and New York Yankees on a new field adjacent to the field of movie fame near Dyersville. For those of us in flyover country, when the big leagues play on our fields, powerful possibilities unfold.

Those possibilities were perfectly encapsulated at the Des Moines Social Club (DMSC), site of Touchstone Energy’s Best in Class: Strategy Execution program and the Main Street Summit. As effective storytelling is more about the “show” than the “tell,” this venue immersed 135 participants in the creative placemaking experience. Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community’s assets, inspiration and potential, with the intention



of creating public spaces that promote people’s health, happiness and well-being. The theater and meeting spaces in this converted fire station – a project of founder Zack Mannheimer of McClure Engineering, who is also a presenter at national cooperative events – was its own case study for those who gathered to learn more about economic development strategies and resources.

The Summit’s focus during the

first half of the event included managing change by developing strategy, translating change to create a new reality, and aligning strategy and leading change. The room was set to facilitate small group work. Table exercises played a key role in learning more about strategies implemented by cooperative peers.

Discovering “Iowa Nice” is real

The attendees from 22 states, many of whom had never been to



“The teamwork and cooperative spirit from the Iowa Welcoming Committee was infectious. It made what could have been a grueling week for staff into a fun, energized trip to a hidden gem of a city. We couldn’t have picked a better place to get our members fired up about community and economic development.”

– Scott Bialick
Senior Business Development Program Specialist
Touchstone Energy®



BEST IN CLASS MAIN STREET SUMMIT

Iowa, discovered that “Iowa Nice” and Midwestern hospitality are real. A committee of Iowa electric cooperative staff who formed a Welcome to Iowa group made sure that was the case, along with participants from local cooperatives. A reception on the rooftop of the DMSC, a food truck throw-down and DJ in the courtyard, allowed everyone a chance to get to know each other better while sharing their region’s opportunities and challenges.

After lunch on the second day, the balance of the conference focused on economic development – the star of the show. Discussions ranged from how to start an economic development program by building partnerships and identifying funding sources, to practical tools and applications, as well as types of development initiatives from across the country. Speakers included Bette Brand, administrator, USDA/ RD Rural Business Cooperative-Service; Zack Mannheimer; Jim and Mallorie Rasberry from HGTV’s

Home Town, as well as presenters from electric cooperatives and development groups.

Seamlessly intersecting the past and present

On the second evening, 30 attendees participated in a mobile classroom experience to Winterset organized by Iowa Area Development Group (IADG). Participants from South Carolina, Oregon, North Dakota, Florida, Kentucky and a handful of Iowans learned how history and culture can become big draws in small towns. A farm-to-table dinner at the Northside Café (made famous by “The Bridges of Madison County”) preceded a tour of Winterset’s town square – where all the storefronts are occupied – and a behind-the-scenes look at the John Wayne Museum. Mark Catton, a museum exhibit designer from Iowa, accompanied the group and discussed his experiences working with project stakeholders to develop and curate a public space that engages an audience while keeping the story of John Wayne relevant.

Visiting the energetic hub of Iowa

Many visiting Iowa for the first time discovered the unexpected cultural life in downtown Des Moines – trendy restaurants and bars, the hip vibe of the East Village, Triple A baseball, and the rapid growth and development of a city and a state identified by many national publications as a top place to live. The phrase “Who knew?” was repeated often by those making fresh discoveries, prompting smiles of pride and surprise among natives.

As the conference ended, many attendees seemed reluctant to leave – hungry to learn more about growing their communities, building on their local legacies and aspiring to merge past and present.

This trip to Iowa – to learn about economic development and placemaking – showed visitors “if you build it, they will come!” ⚡

Dawn Sly-Terpstra is the vice president of corporate communications for Central Iowa Power Cooperative.

“Before the Main Street Summit kicked off in Iowa, I had an opportunity to meet with teams from several electric co-ops and exchange ideas about the cooperative difference. I was blown away with all the wind generation I saw on my day trip, loved experiencing firsthand the importance of leadership in revitalizing local communities and had corn on the cob so satisfyingly sweet I didn’t need dessert. But the story that really stuck with me was the Freedom Rocks. It highlighted many lessons from the Summit like the importance of making the ordinary outstanding with a simple story, giving communities something local to celebrate and being open to opportunities.”

– Anne Harvey
Director of Member Relations & Communications
Touchstone Energy®



“Iowa was the perfect backdrop to celebrate and promote community development. Co-ops across Iowa are committed to their communities at the local and state levels, including creating, owning and supporting development organizations, namely IADG. Efforts like these mixed with “Iowa Nice” hospitality, made our Summit valuable to attendees from dozens of states and sets a template other states can emulate.”

– Josh McGhee
Strategic Communications Manager
Touchstone Energy®

AFTER-SCHOOL SNACKS



September is National Family Meals Month™ – a nationwide event designed to support families in enjoying more meals together.



Granola Bars

- 1 cup nut butter
- ½ cup finely chopped dates or other dried fruit
- ½ cup dark chocolate chips
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 3 cups oatmeal
- ¾ cup roasted pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup roasted sunflower seeds
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

Combine nut butter, fruit, chocolate chips, olive oil, honey and vanilla. Heat in saucepan to melt butter and chips. Combine oatmeal, seeds and salt. Pour butter mixture over seeds mixture. Mix well, coating oatmeal and seeds. Prepare a jelly pan by spraying with baking oil and lining with parchment paper. Press mixture into prepared pan. Press hard and firm. Cool, then cut into bars. Store in airtight container.

Lora Hoven • Albia
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Quickity-Split Banana Chocolate Marshmallow Treat

- 1 large banana, peeled
- 8-10 small marshmallows
- 10-15 semi-sweet chocolate chips

With a knife cut a groove down the center of a banana. Pry open and place marshmallows and chocolate chips in the groove. Place on a microwave safe plate and set on high for 45 seconds. Remove from microwave and wait for the gooey goodies to cool, then enjoy.

Dave Duit • Nevada • Consumers Energy

Apple Cartwheels

- ¼ cup peanut butter
- 1½ teaspoon honey
- ½ cup miniature chocolate chips
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 4 medium red apples, unpeeled but cored

In a bowl, combine peanut butter and honey. Fold in chocolate chips and raisins. Fill center of apple with mixture. Refrigerate at least one hour. Cut into ¼-inch rings. Makes approximately 2 dozen rings.

Erma Coblentz • Cincinnati
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

No-Bake Energy Bites

- 1 cup oatmeal
- ½ cup peanut butter
- ⅓ cup honey
- 1 cup coconut flakes
- ½ cup ground flax seed
- ½ cup mini chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Mix all ingredients in a medium-sized bowl and chill 30 minutes. Once chilled, roll into balls and enjoy. Store in an airtight container for one week.

Glenda Jager • George
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

PLAN AHEAD AND KEEP IT SIMPLE

When you have time, prepare staples (think rice, quinoa) and refrigerate or freeze to throw into soups/casseroles/side dishes later in the week. From time-to-time, make extra of your family-favorite recipes and pop into the freezer to pull out when you are rushed for time.

Easy Kid-Size Pizzas

- 8 ounce package flour tortillas
- ½ cup pizza sauce
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 8 ounces sliced pepperoni

Cut 12 circles from tortillas with a round cookie cutter. Place circles in the bottoms of greased muffin tins. Spoon pizza sauce over tortilla circles; top with cheese and pepperoni. Cooked ground beef or sausage can be used instead of pepperoni. Bake at 350 degrees F for 10-12 minutes. Scoop out of tin when done.

Mary Gropper • Chelsea
T.I.P Rural Electric Cooperative

Freezer Fruit Slushies

- 10 ounces frozen strawberries
- ¾ cup water
- ¾ cup ice cubes
- 1 6-ounce can pink lemonade concentrate, frozen carbonated citrus soda

Blend everything except the carbonated drink in a blender until smooth. Freeze mixture into a 2-quart container or in individual serving cups. To serve, put a generous ½ cup slush mix in a glass, pour carbonated drink over to fill the glass and serve with a spoon to mix and stir. Fresh fruit pieces can be stirred in too. Any frozen fruit can be used instead of strawberries.

Faith Blaskovich • Lohrville
Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association

Scotcheroos

- 1 cup white Karo syrup
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1½ cups peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 6 cups crispy rice cereal
- 12 ounces butterscotch chips
- 6 ounces chocolate chips

Mix Karo syrup and sugar in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Add vanilla, peanut butter and mix well. Pour cereal into a large bowl and pour syrup mixture over it. Stir gently to coat then pour into a greased 9x13-inch pan. Pat cereal mixture with wax paper to evenly fill pan. Melt all chips in a double boiler and spread melted mixture over cereal mixture. Cool and cut into bars.

Jane Person • Batavia • Access Energy Cooperative

Creamy Strawberry-Orange Pops

- 8 ounces strawberry flavored yogurt
- ¾ cup orange juice
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 cups frozen whole strawberries
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 6 paper cups, 7-ounce size
- 6 wooden popsicle sticks

Combine yogurt, juice and vanilla. Blend until smooth. Add strawberries and sugar. Blend until smooth. Fill cups ¾ full. Freeze for 1 hour then insert sticks. Continue to freeze. Peel cup off to serve.

Ava Nester • Rock Rapids
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

EMOTIONAL BALANCE

Frequent family meals increase self-esteem, a sense of well-being, positive social behaviors and stronger family relationships.

FAMILY MEALS

MAKING THE GRADE

Kids – from elementary to high-school age – who eat meals with their families four times a week or more earn better test scores and succeed in school.

FAMILY MEALS

INVOLVE THE KIDDOS

Involve your children in food shopping, meal planning, and meal preparation whenever possible. Let your children pick one part of each meal (e.g., fruit side dish).

FAMILY MEALS

WEIGHING THE PROS

Adults and children who eat at home more regularly are less likely to suffer from obesity. Increased family meals are associated with greater intake of fruits and vegetables.

FAMILY MEALS

Wanted: Winter Soups & Stews The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!

When temperatures drop, winds howl and snow flies, warming up with a hearty bowl of goodness is always on the menu! We're looking for your best recipes for winter soups and stews. 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 Sept. 30, 2019. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions.

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

MAIL:
Recipes
Living with Energy in Iowa
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48
Des Moines, IA 50322-2992

Annual energy trail tours build powerful engagement among members

BY ANGELA CATTON

For more than 50 years, Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO) based in Le Mars has been conducting co-op member tours to power plants. The tours give energy end-users – including many electric co-op members in Iowa – a firsthand glimpse into electric generation and an opportunity to meet the people responsible for providing the power that is delivered directly to their homes, farms and businesses. Because of its northwest Iowa location, NIPCO's member cooperatives receive power from neighboring cooperative resources. Co-op members learn how coal is a valuable part of America's energy mix, while showcasing how environmentally responsible power is possible within a carbon-constrained world.

During three educational and fun-filled days, members are immersed in rural electric cooperative history, the co-op business model, and the Touchstone Energy® brand as well as gaining a deeper understanding and pride about the cooperative difference. Each year and during two tours,

participants include 90-100 members from eight different distribution cooperatives and several municipal utilities, all with a common bond of belonging to and advocating for the rural electric cooperative industry.

Serving up electricity

What began as a single day tour to the Oahe Dam and Powerhouse in Pierre, South Dakota, evolved into a three-day journey in the mid-1980s. The event grew when NIPCO began to supplement its hydroelectric (water) power supply with power purchased from Basin Electric Power Cooperative, a generation and transmission (G&T) power cooperative headquartered in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Today, NIPCO receives approximately 80% of its power supply from Basin Electric and 20% from Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), which markets power generated from the Missouri River Dam System. NIPCO's generation portfolio includes electricity generated from coal, water, wind, natural gas and other sources. Because of the resource diversity, NIPCO and its member cooperatives want co-op members to have an opportunity to see and understand the electricity sources powering their lives. NIPCO facilitates the tours, with its member cooperatives sponsoring travel costs for tour participants. In many cases, the trip is offered at no cost or for only a nominal fee to their member-consumers who express an interest in the journey.

Every tour begins by offering this analogy to tour participants:



Energy Trail Tour participants pose for a group shot in front of Basin Electric Power Cooperative's 900-megawatt Antelope Valley Station, a coal-fired electric generation station.

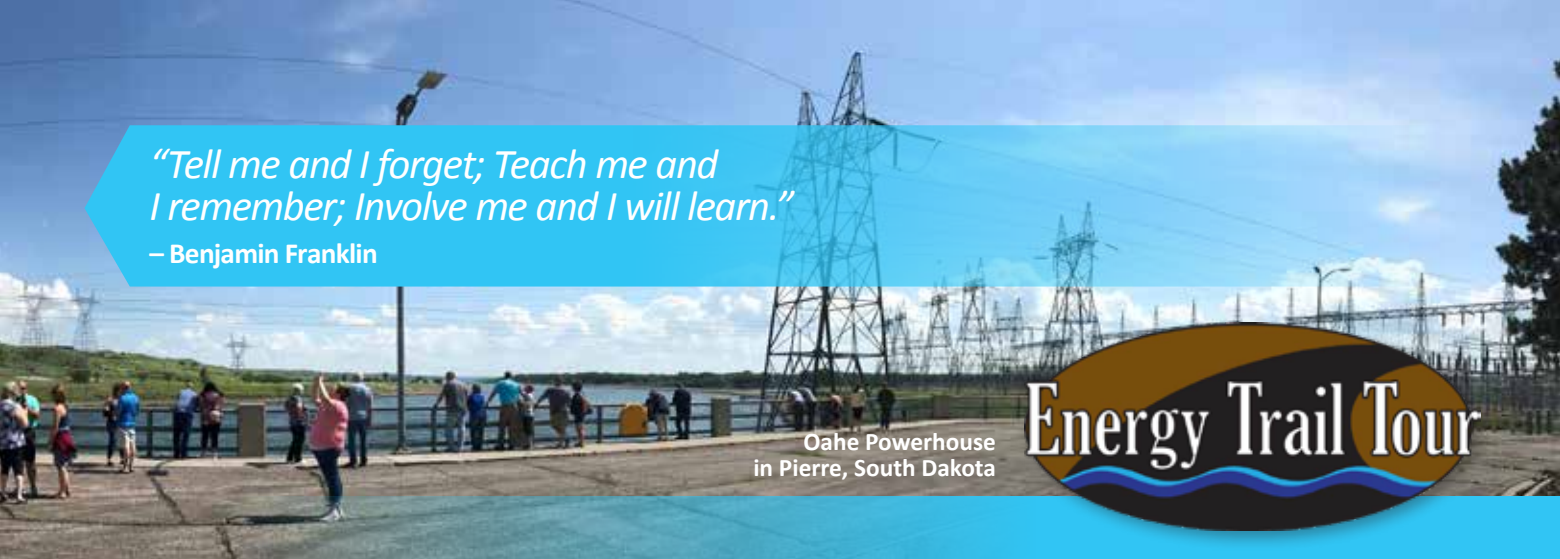
“Electricity works a lot like ordering food at a drive-thru window. When you order a hamburger and fries at the speaker, you expect it to be ready for you when you pull up to the window. There is an expectation that the food will be affordable, of good quality and available to you immediately. The electric power supply is no different. When you order up your

NIPCO's Iowa-based electric distribution cooperatives

- Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative – Woodbine
- Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative – Estherville
- Nishnabotna Valley Rural Electric Cooperative – Harlan
- North West Rural Electric Cooperative – Orange City
- Western Iowa Power Cooperative – Denison
- Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative – Moville

“Tell me and I forget; Teach me and I remember; Involve me and I will learn.”

– Benjamin Franklin



Oahe Powerhouse
in Pierre, South Dakota

Energy Trail Tour



A tour member snaps a photo in the room which houses a scale model of the coal gasification plant.

power at the switch, you expect it to be delivered to you. That electricity isn't stored in the switch plate. When you flip that switch, that power must travel hundreds of miles to reach your location at the exact time you demand it." How that electricity is "served up" to your light switch takes a cast of thousands. Tour participants experience the passion, innovation and dedication of each of NIPCO's power providers as representatives from every aspect of power supply and delivery act as tour guides and answer questions from the group.

The Energy Trail Tours showcase generation facilities that include hydropower at the Oahe Powerhouse and Dam in Pierre, South Dakota, and the coal-fired Antelope Valley Station in Beulah, North Dakota.

At Dakota Gasification Company, located adjacent to the 900-megawatt Antelope Valley Station, tour participants learn about the method of carbon-capture and coal gasification and the many products manufactured through this process, including fuel additives such as diesel exhaust fluid and fertilizers used

in agricultural production, such as anhydrous ammonia, ammonium sulfate and urea.

Caring for the environment

The Coteau Properties Company Freedom Mine in North Dakota allows co-op members to see the mining process of the area's lignite coal. Land that is mined is carefully returned to its original contour and reseeded to return to its original use. Whether it's going back to a natural prairie or cropland, it's monitored for several years. Often, members catch a glimpse of the deer, fowl and antelope that graze on the reclaimed acres.

Energy Trail Tour participants also learn about wind generation and the importance of renewable energy resources in America's overall energy mix. Iowans are very familiar with the fact that their state leads the way in wind generation. As such, the tour includes a mobile classroom on the process of wind generation and how a turbine works.

Showcasing safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible power

Education about power generation and delivery is an important element



55 years ago, a group of rural electric cooperative members enjoyed the Energy Trail Tour!

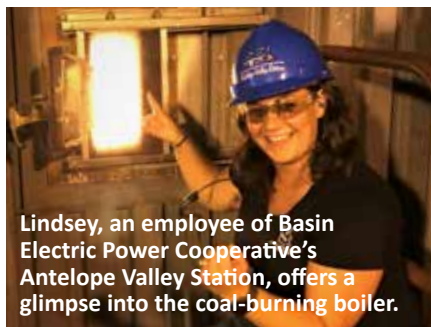
in the way NIPCO and its member cooperatives engage with member-consumers. For decades, energy trail tours have served as a powerful way to deepen co-op members' understanding of how energy reaches them and strengthen the relationship with their local cooperative.

"This trip reinforced the need for a balanced approach to meeting our future energy needs, one that protects our environment, our communities, U.S. jobs and the reliable electric service that our industries need – and our citizens have come to expect," says Fred Wirtz, a member of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative.

Gregg and Zolene Streck, members of North West REC, echoed those same sentiments, "We were so impressed how land was put back for use – even better than it was and the efficiency of coal use. We definitely will encourage others to take the trip."

To learn more about the Energy Trail Tour, visit www.nipco.coop.

Angela Catton is the manager of member relations and development for NIPCO.



Lindsey, an employee of Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Antelope Valley Station, offers a glimpse into the coal-burning boiler.

IN THE COMMUNITY

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 electric bill. Just \$1 a month will help others.

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



To have an amount deducted from your monthly bill, send the form below to:

RECare
 c/o Access Energy Cooperative
 P.O. Box 440
 Mount Pleasant, IA 52641

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 # _____

Email _____

Account # (if known) _____

CONSUMER PROTECTION

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

As a member 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: 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. ⚡

Get notified on your mobile device of power outages

SmartHub App is available to notify you if your power is out. If you have an email address stored on your account with Access Energy Cooperative, you will receive an email notification if your power experiences a service interruption. If you don't have an email address on your account and want to add one, please call our office at 1-866-242-4232.

Members can also arrange to receive a text message alerting you of any service interruptions. Just call our office, and we will update your account to receive a text message.

You can opt out of this program at any time. Simply call us and let us know you would like to be taken off the list.



PICTURE THIS!

Win \$50 in Access Energy Cooperative's photo contest

Access Energy is holding its annual photo contest with selected entries to be used in the 2021 Access Energy Cooperative calendar. We're looking for photos of rural settings in southeast Iowa, including landscapes, animals, buildings or people in any season of the year.

Each photographer whose entry is selected as one of the 13 featured

photos will win \$50. Submit all entries by March 31, 2020 to:

PHOTO CONTEST, C/O
 ACCESS ENERGY COOPERATIVE
 PO BOX 440, MT. PLEASANT IA
 52641

Visit www.accessenergycoop.com for complete rules. ⚡



Access Energy Cooperative honored with Economic Development Impact Award

Access Energy Cooperative was recognized for its economic development accomplishments and commitment to the community at its August 6 annual meeting in Mt. Pleasant. Iowa's rural electric cooperatives' and municipal utilities' commitment goes far beyond ensuring safe, reliable, efficient and environmentally responsible service. They actively create strategic partnerships and provide technical and financial assistance to support business growth and community vitality. Annually, Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) presents Impact Awards to utility partners who were involved in significant economic development initiatives the prior year.

Access Energy Cooperative was presented with an IADG Impact Award for project development. Recent examples of project support

include financial and technical assistance for the purchase of a new ambulance and X-ray equipment, as well as technology upgrades at Henry County Health Center in Mt. Pleasant. Access Energy Cooperative also provided support for the construction of the 30,000-square-foot shell building in the Fairfield South Industrial and Business Park. Access Energy Cooperative secured federal grant funds through the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant program and added a 20 percent match to support these projects. An additional benefit of the USDA funds is that loan repayments are returned to the cooperative's Revolving Loan Fund and are actively accessed to support future projects.

"We commend Access Energy Cooperative for its strong leadership and support of business and



Rand Fisher, president of IADG (center), presents the award to Access Energy Cooperative. Pictured with Fisher are Kim Davis and Kevin Wheeler.

community development," says IADG President Rand Fisher. "They are active supporters of economic development and provide important financial and technical assistance that many times is a key component in successfully securing projects, which create jobs and support community vitality." ⚡

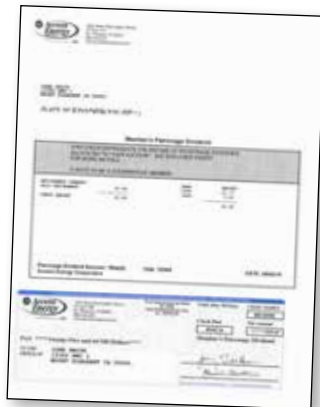
BENEFITS OF CO-OP MEMBERSHIP

Dividends were mailed!

If you didn't attend the Annual Meeting on August 6, 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.

How are dividends earned?

After reviewing the operating revenues for 2019, your board of directors approved a dividend retirement of \$1,134,767. The refund is applied against years 1998, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2018. The cooperative paid 58% of the remaining dividends for 1998, 71% of 2003, 46% of 2004, 6% of 2005 and 11% of 2018. The retirement



includes a pass-through amount of \$279,002 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 would like to know more information about dividends, visit our website at www.accessenergycoop.com. ⚡

HOW YOUR CO-OP WORKS

Meet Tyler Thein

Tyler Thein, P.E. is the Director of Engineering at Access Energy Cooperative. Prior to joining the



cooperative team this year, Tyler provided engineering services to Access Energy Cooperative and many other Iowa cooperatives as a consultant. Tyler is responsible for overseeing the system planning and design for your cooperative. Thank you, Tyler, for all you do for the members of Access Energy Cooperative! ⚡

PERILS OF WRAP RAGE

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

As tempting as it is to pick up that neatly packaged set of earbuds or that new DVD for your grandkids or even those muffins at the local grocery store, it's easy to forget that, sooner or later, you're going to have to open that package.

Dismantling these slick, hermetically sealed containers is an endless source of frustration, so much so that it has engendered an emotion as well as an official name: "wrap rage."

Wrap rage leads to the use of unorthodox items in the battle to procure the item you spent too much for from the outer trappings that imprison it.

As one who's been known to use a butcher knife to attack a clamshell package that held a toy tractor, I share your pain, quite literally and metaphorically. I ended up with a gash between my thumb and first finger that, while not requiring medical care, did require some awkward bandaging and some even more awkward questions from friends and family.

"Gee, Grandma, what did you do to your finger!?"

"Oh, nothing, darlings. It's just a symbol of my unbounding love for you." (Insert martyred tones.)

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 6,000 Americans are injured each year in wrap rage incidents, with most of those injuries to the hands, fingers, arms and legs. (Presumably, this last injury occurs when un-wrappers use their legs to stabilize the offending product.) These wounds include punctures, lacerations, cuts, and burns from untwisting the approximately 180 cable ties holding that doll against a cardboard lining.

Safety experts continue with a list of safety precautions that begins sternly ("Wear protective eyewear.")



If I need to wear protective eyewear to open a box, doesn't that indicate that something is terribly wrong?) and ends up throwing in the towel ("Buy the kid a sweater."). Really.

Even Consumer Reports has joined the harangue, initiating the Oyster Awards for the year's hardest-to-open packages.

Packaging companies maintain that stiff clamshell coverings and tough blister packets not only deter shoplifters but also ensure the product arrives intact. They also make it possible for the buyer to see exactly what is being purchased.

But it's worth noting that the

online merchandising giants are turning more often to user-friendly packaging – pull tapes and plain cardboard boxes without excess stuffing.

I'm patiently waiting, hopeful that more companies will jump on the bandwagon to provide packages that are easier to open. In the meantime, I've got my butcher knife ready. But I don't think I really need protective eyewear. ⚡

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 and two incredibly adorable grandsons.

Details released for Iowa Home Energy Assistance Program

The 2019-2020 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.

Besides meeting the income guidelines, you must furnish the Social Security numbers of all household members and a copy of recent heating and electric bills. You also must show proof of income for all household members age 19 and over. If you receive alimony or child support, it will need to be verified too.

If you're a wage earner, you should bring copies of your check stubs for the 30-day period before the date of application or a copy of your federal income tax return. If you're self-employed or a farmer, provide a copy of your most recent federal income tax return. And if you're on a fixed income – Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Family Investment Program (FIP), Veteran's Assistance, Unemployment Insurance



and pensions – take copies of check stubs from the last 30 days. For FIP recipients, bring your current DHS Notice of Decision or contact your local office for acceptable document information.

In Iowa, applications for the program will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis from Nov. 1, 2019, through April 30, 2020. The start date is Oct. 1, 2019, for elderly (60 and over) and/or disabled applicants. If you're not sure where to apply, visit humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply to contact your local community action agency, call 2-1-1 or write: LIHEAP, Iowa Department of Human Rights, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, IA 50319. ⚡

Income Maximums	
Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$21,858
2	\$29,593
3	\$37,328
4	\$45,063
5	\$52,798
6	\$60,533
7	\$68,268
8	\$76,003

Note: For households with more than eight members, add \$7,735 for each additional member.

**BUT RIGHT NOW
IT'S YOU I'M
WORRIED ABOUT.**

HIS JOB IS DANGEROUS ENOUGH. The last thing he needs is for you to drive into his utility truck because you ignored the flashing lights, cones and signs. When you see utility crews at work, slow down and move over. You have the power to protect a life.


**MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN**





SMALL SAVINGS
LEAD TO BIG ONES

Touchstone Energy®
Cooperatives of Iowa
www.touchstoneenergy.coop



Your local electric cooperative helps you find more ways to save energy, save money and help the environment. So small savings today lead to big savings tomorrow.