

# living with energy

IN IOWA



NOVEMBER 2019

Help other Access Energy Cooperative members in need ▶ See Page 12

Linemen  
practice  
lifesaving skills



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

Check out Access Energy Cooperative's holiday hours

Iowans bring electricity to Guatemala

Savory Thanksgiving side dishes

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**Electric Cooperatives**  
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## Features

### 6 Iowa linemen help to power Guatemala

In October, four Iowa linemen were part of a team of 12 who brought electricity to a region of Guatemala for the first time.



### 8 Thanksgiving side dishes

With the big holiday around the corner, discover some of our readers' favorite recipes. **PLUS:** Find out how you can receive a \$25 credit on your power bill!



### 10 Six efficient holiday gifts to give (or keep!)

This holiday season think outside the box and consider energy efficient gifts. These gifts are sure to bring joy as they keep giving all year long.



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## ON THE COVER

As part of an Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' safety training program, Drew Hardisty – a line foreman with Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) – practices rubber glove training on power equipment. Read more about the training on Page 14. Photo taken by Donna Griebel, communications and photography coordinator, CIPCO. ⚡



# It's time to stop a taxing problem for rural Iowa

BY CHUCK SODERBERG

The gap between rural and urban Iowa continues to widen as population, earnings and net farm income are declining in several rural areas.

Unfortunately, an unintended consequence of federal tax law changes now threatens to impose an additional financial burden on rural communities.

Under the new tax law, electric cooperatives that receive federal, state or local government grants are at risk of losing their tax-exempt status. This undermines a successful business model that has served America's rural communities well for decades. It doesn't matter what the grant is for – storm recovery, broadband deployment or economic development. If grant funding causes a co-op's non-member income to exceed 15%, its tax-exempt status is gone.

Congress inadvertently created this problem, and now co-ops are urging Congress to fix this mistake this year. Such a correction will protect the tax-exempt status of electric co-ops and avoid needless rate increases for many American families and businesses that could result due to the changes being carried out by the IRS. Pending bipartisan legislation, known as the RURAL Act (H.R. 2147 and S.1032), clarifies that government grants should not jeopardize the tax-exempt status of electric co-ops.

The bipartisan RURAL Act has been co-sponsored by nearly all of Iowa's Congressional Delegation, including Sen. Ernst and Reps. Axne, Finkenauer, King and Loeb sack. We thank them for their support. Sen. Grassley currently chairs the Finance Committee in the U.S. Senate, which has jurisdiction over this proposed bill because it deals with the tax code. Iowa's electric cooperatives are depending on Sen. Grassley to help restore certainty and common sense to our tax treatment. His leadership can help ensure that co-ops won't jeopardize their tax-exempt status by

accepting government grants.

Lawmakers acknowledge that the threat to electric co-ops is an unintended consequence. Co-ops are locally owned, not-for-profit businesses created to supply electricity to their member-consumers. Among the 45 member cooperatives of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, there are roughly 650,000 Iowans in all 99 counties who will feel the impacts of this tax increase.

Iowa's weather can be unpredictable and unrelenting. When disaster strikes and the lights go out, electric co-ops frequently rely on government assistance to recover from the damage and restore power quickly. If the damage is severe enough, the co-op may also seek assistance to help mitigate future threats by using grants to help "storm harden" the grid. But if the assistance pushes a co-op's income

over the 15% non-member income level, the co-op will have to choose between losing its tax-exempt status or walking away from needed funds.

If the new tax law changes had been in place over the past decade, several electric cooperatives across Iowa would have been in danger of losing their tax-exempt status for accepting Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance following natural disasters like flooding or ice storms.

Locally owned electric co-ops and the Iowans they serve should not receive a tax bill for stepping up to restore power after a natural disaster.

It's time to stop a taxing problem for rural Iowa by passing the RURAL Act this year. As Iowa's electric co-ops prepare for a potentially harsh winter, relief can't come soon enough. For more information, visit [action.coop](http://action.coop). ⚡

Chuck Soderberg is the executive vice president and general manager of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.



## EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a KEURIG® K-Café™ single serve coffee, latte and cappuccino maker



With the new K-Café™ single serve coffee, latte and cappuccino maker from KEURIG®, every house can be a coffeehouse. Brew your favorite coffee or make creamy lattes and frothy cappuccinos using any K-Cup® pod – all from one effortlessly simple to use brewer. Just brew, froth, enjoy! Visit [www.keurig.com](http://www.keurig.com) for more details – \$180 value. ⚡

### Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting [www.livingwithenergyiowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiowa.com) no later than Nov. 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 Roomba® from the September issue was Angie Princehouse from Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Nov. 21	Blood Drive
Nov. 28-29	Thanksgiving – office closed
Nov. 29- Dec. 31	Festival of Lights (weekends)
Dec. 2	Fall Legislative Meeting
Dec. 12	Member Advisory Meeting
Dec. 24-25	Christmas – office closed
Jan. 1	New Year's Day – office closed

Even though our office is closed, you can call us at 866-242-4232, 24 hours a day, seven days a week – or use our Smarthub App for answers to billing and account questions, paying your bill and service interruptions. **Have a safe and happy holiday season!** ⚡



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

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LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

# May your holiday season be merry and bright

BY KEVIN WHEELER

The holidays are a time of year that many of us eagerly anticipate. The season is marked by special foods, seasonal decorations and lots of festivities. Right here in Mt. Pleasant, we look forward to the annual Festival of Lights at the Midwest Old Threshers grounds.

We cherish carrying on old family traditions and enjoy creating new ones. For me personally, I look forward to more time spent with family and friends.

However, given the hustle and bustle of the season, the holidays can also offer an opportunity to slow down and reflect. For all of us at Access Energy Cooperative, we are grateful for you, the members of the co-op.

You see, one of our founding principles as a co-op is “Concern for Community.” While our main focus is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we want to give back. We want to help our community thrive.

## Reflecting on the year

In looking back at this past year, I’m grateful that we were able to make a positive impact in the community. Through our RECare program, thanks to your contributions, we collected \$2,937 and distributed \$2,080. As a result of your generosity, we helped many families in the community pay their energy bills.

We were also grateful for the opportunity to partner with local schools to raise awareness of the importance of electrical safety. This year, we visited with 350 students from two schools, numerous civic organizations and fire/rescue units.

In fact, we continue to work closely with our local high schools by awarding \$9,000 in college scholarships and sending two students annually to Washington, D.C.

There are other ways we can help the community, whether we’re providing information about our electric vehicle, our solar array, or helping you find ways to save energy at home, we want you to know we’re here to help.



## Looking ahead

Looking ahead to 2020, we hope you will share your opinions with us. We recognize that our members have a valuable perspective, and that’s why we continually seek your input. Whether through community events, our social media channels or the annual meeting, we want to hear from you. We are led by you – the members of the co-op – and we depend on your feedback.

As we prepare for next year, we look forward to the opportunity to serve you and the greater community. On behalf of the Access Energy Cooperative family, we hope your holidays are indeed merry and bright! ⚡

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

SYSTEM UPGRADE

## Contractors working in the area

We currently have contractors working throughout our service territory with these logos on their vehicles.



If you are ever in question of a person or vehicle that is representing Access Energy Cooperative, please call our office at 866-242-4232. ⚡

**PICTURE THIS!**

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



We are holding our annual photo contest with selected entries to be used in the 2021 Access Energy Cooperative calendar. 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](http://www.accessenergycoop.com) for complete rules. ⚡

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If you see them working on the side of the road, move over to the other lane and slow down. You might not hear them, but they are thanking you! ⚡



**MOVE OVER**  
**SLOW DOWN**

**INTERNATIONAL WORK**



Bob Ruby (pictured second from right in the left photo), line foreman at Access Energy Cooperative, spent three weeks in October in Guatemala. He was one of four Iowa linemen who was working on an international project to build 2 miles of electric lines for children and families who have never had electricity. Learn more about the project on Pages 6-7 in this issue. Watch for more information in the December issue. ⚡

# Iowa linemen bring electricity to Guatemala

## It takes a village to electrify a village

BY ANN THELEN

It's nearly impossible for most Iowans to imagine what life would be like without electricity. However, millions of people across the world must navigate every day without the convenience of lights, air conditioning, refrigeration, electric ovens, clothes dryers and many other items we've come to take for granted.

On Sept. 30, 12 linemen – including four from Iowa – embarked on a mission to bring electricity to a region of north-central Guatemala. Approximately 1 out of 5 Guatemalans do not have power. The mission was the first international project for Iowa's electric cooperatives and one that was met with excitement and eagerness to make a difference in the lives of those living in the rural village.

### Linemen line up to help

There was a surplus of support for the Guatemala program from the start; 11 Iowa electric co-ops volunteered to send a lineman to be part of the project team. With four positions available, Mike Berkenpas (team leader) of North West Rural Electric Cooperative, Bob Ruby of Access Energy Cooperative, Mat Kilgore of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative and Quentin Fisher of Linn County Rural Electric Cooperative were randomly selected for the project. They joined eight other linemen from Illinois and Wisconsin as part of the 16-day **Partners for a Brighter Tomorrow** National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International project.

"It's hard to comprehend there are still millions of people in the world who don't have electricity," says Chuck Soderberg, executive vice president and general manager for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives



A ribbon cutting was held during the lighting ceremony. The group is standing in front of the school in the village.

(IAEC). "Rural Iowa was at a similar point back in the 1930s. Thanks to the rural electrification movement, we've been blessed with safe, affordable and reliable electricity ever since. It will be a life-changing experience for the people in this region of Guatemala to have electricity for the first time in their lives."

Conversations to work on an international project started a couple of years ago for IAEC and its member electric cooperatives.

"Part of the challenge for any state wanting to be involved in an international project is a significant



Mat Kilgore, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, with one of the village's young children.

commitment – both from a personnel and financial standpoint," Soderberg says. "Whoever sponsors the event also picks up the cost of the equipment."

The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives was also considering an international project, but the cost to be a sole sponsor was steep. In conversations with Iowa, a partnership developed and also brought Wisconsin into the fold. With a three-state coalition, instead of one state footing the entire project cost, three states would share the costs.

"The poles are donated by a utility in Guatemala; however, the costs for the wires, equipment, airfare and other items necessary to bring the project to completion are the responsibility of sponsoring states," Soderberg adds.

### Cooperation among cooperatives

When an electric cooperative needs assistance, other cooperatives step up to the plate. Cooperation among cooperatives is one of the seven guiding principles for the locally owned and governed business



entities, but it's also the bedrock of the organizations. Finding the funding for the Partners for a Brighter Tomorrow project was no exception.

The National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) was one organization that provided the trio of states with funding for the project. The total project cost was estimated to be approximately \$165,000. The organization – created 50 years ago by electric cooperatives – provided a generous \$70,000 for the project, plus \$25,000 each for Iowa and Wisconsin because they were first-time participants of an international project. Several Iowa cooperatives contributed to the effort, and CoBank, a national cooperative bank, matched the electric



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cooperative donations. Thanks to these contributions, Iowa's share of the project was fully funded.

Sheldon Petersen, CEO of CFC, is a native Iowan and understands firsthand the long-term value of the international projects. By funneling contributions through NRECA International's matching grants program, the funds create exponential benefits. Since becoming involved with NRECA International in 2012, CFC has contributed \$1.25 million to projects that bring electricity to underserved regions of the world.

"I have been with CFC for 37 years, and my first job was working for Nishnabotna Valley Rural Electric Cooperative in Harlan," he says. "Working for a distribution co-op, you see the impact electricity has on people's lives – even those who have

had electricity for years and years. These projects are an opportunity to give back and to people who have so little.

"Electric cooperatives remember what it was like to bring electricity to rural areas. If we can be of assistance in helping to further the mission of electrification globally, we want to be a part of the solution. When you consider the modest amount of money that can be leveraged with on-the-ground volunteer personnel, the result is incredible."

*Editor's Note: This is the first in a two-part series of Iowa's role in bringing electricity to this region of Guatemala. In Part II of our series in December, we'll introduce you to the Iowa linemen who worked on the project and learn about their experiences. Plus, Chuck Soderberg will describe what it was like to be at the lighting ceremony in Guatemala. 🌟*

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



*Pictured from left to right: Mat Kilgore, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative; Bob Ruby, Access Energy Cooperative; Chuck Soderberg, IAEC; Mike Berkenpas, North West Rural Electric Cooperative; and Quentin Fisher, Linn County Rural Electric Cooperative, gather for a group photo in Guatemala.*

# Thanksgiving

## • SIDE DISHES •



### Cranberry Pecan Pie

- 6 tablespoons shortening
- 1½ teaspoons buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons hot water
- 1 cup flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup corn syrup
- ⅔ cup sugar
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups fresh cranberries
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Cream shortening and buttermilk until smooth. Gradually add water, beating until light and fluffy. Beat in flour and salt. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for four hours or overnight. Roll out pastry to fit 9-inch pie plate. Trim pastry to ½ inch beyond edge of plate; flute edges. Combine eggs, corn syrup, sugar, butter and vanilla until blended. Stir in cranberries and pecans. Pour into crust. Bake at 425 degrees F for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees F and bake 35-40 minutes longer or until filling is almost set. Cool completely on a wire rack. Cover and refrigerate overnight before slicing.

Lori Miller • Alvord  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

### Stuffed Mushrooms

- 1 pound fresh, whole mushrooms
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3-4 bread slices, torn in pieces
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 1 egg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- milk, if needed

Remove mushroom stems and dice. Mix diced stems with butter and onions, then microwave for two minutes. Stir in bread, cheese, egg and seasonings. Add milk if needed to moisten and set aside. Lay mushroom caps upside down in a greased pie pan. Sprinkle with additional salt then spoon stuffing mixture over top. Bake at 350 degrees F for 20 minutes.

Lauren Zollinger • Rock Rapids  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

### Easy Delicious Carrots

- 1 pound full-sized carrots, cleaned and sliced
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- 1 cup water
- salt, to taste

Put all ingredients into saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and cook uncovered for 25 minutes or until carrots are tender and most of the liquid has evaporated.

Karen Crossland • Fairfield  
Access Energy Cooperative

### Fresh Apple Cake

- 1½ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 3 cups peeled apples

Mix sugar, eggs, cinnamon, vanilla, salt and butter. Then add flour, soda, and apples. Bake in a greased 9x13-inch pan at 350 degrees F for one hour.

Rebecca Hancox • Seymour  
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

#### NUTRITIOUS & VERSATILE

Delicious, versatile and available in a variety of cuts, turkey is naturally low in fat and provides immune-boosting nutrients like iron, zinc and potassium. It's also packed with lean protein!

TURKEY TIPS

## Sweet Potato Apple Dish

- 6 sweet potatoes
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 tart apples, sliced

Cook sweet potatoes until tender, cool and then slice. Combine water, sugar, butter, salt and cornstarch. Cook until thick. Place sliced sweet potatoes in the bottom of a greased 9x13-inch dish. Cover sweet potatoes with a layer of raw apples. Pour thickened sauce over the top. Bake at 300 degrees F for one hour.

Nancy Bruns • Jolley  
Calhoun County Rural Electric Cooperative  
Association

## Easy Cranberry Sauce

- 4 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
- ½ cups water
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, optional

Combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan, bring to a boil. Boil until the berries start to pop, stirring occasionally. Start to mash the berries with a wooden spoon, continue boiling until they completely break down. Remove from heat. Serve warm as a sauce or cool to make a jelly. Makes two cups.

Shirley DeSmet • Alvord  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

## Rice Casserole

- 1 can French onion soup
- 1 can water
- 1 can mushrooms
- 1 cup of raw rice
- 1 stick of margarine or butter

Mix all ingredients together in a casserole dish. Cover and bake at 325 degrees F for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Stir once or twice.

Betty Goodman • North English  
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative

## Party Potatoes

- 8-10 medium potatoes
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1 cup dairy sour cream
- milk, if needed
- garlic salt
- chives
- butter
- paprika

Peel potatoes and cook until tender, drain. Beat softened cream cheese and sour cream at medium speed until well blended. Add hot potatoes gradually, beating constantly until light and fluffy. If too stiff, thin with milk. Season to taste with garlic salt. Add chives to your preference. Spoon into a buttered 2-quart casserole. Brush with softened butter and sprinkle with paprika. Brown at 350 degrees F for about 30 minutes. Serves 8. May be refrigerated overnight and then baked for 1 to 1½ hours.

Denise Anderson • Ocheyedan  
Osceola Electric Cooperative, Inc.

### POUND PER PERSON

Allow 1 pound of uncooked turkey per person from an 8- to 12-pound turkey. Larger birds have a larger proportion of meat to bones, so ¾ pound per person should be sufficient and still have leftovers.

TURKEY TIPS

### THAW IT RIGHT

Frozen turkey, like all meat and poultry, should be thawed in the refrigerator, never at room temperature. Whole turkeys thaw at a rate of 4 to 5 pounds per 24 hours.

TURKEY TIPS

### IS IT DONE?

For a whole turkey, use your food thermometer to check the internal temperature in three places: the innermost part of the thigh, the thickest part of the breast and the innermost part of the wing. The internal temperature of the turkey should measure 165 degrees F.

TURKEY TIPS

## Wanted: "Pass the Pasta" Recipes The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!

Whether it's spaghetti and meatballs, lasagna or macaroni and cheese, pasta is a crowd pleaser! Share your pasta recipes that are family favorites. 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](http://www.livingwithenergyiowa.com).

The deadline is Nov. 30, 2019. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions.

**EMAIL:**  
[recipes@livingwithenergyiowa.com](mailto: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



# 6 Efficient Holiday Gifts

BY PAT KEEGAN AND BRAD THIESSEN

With the holidays approaching, you may be starting to think about unique gifts for family and friends. We encourage you to think outside the box and consider energy efficient gifts. These gifts are sure to bring joy as they keep giving all year long.

To help you get into the gift-giving spirit, we've compiled some ideas based on a range of prices. Because these gifts are far from ho, ho, hum, you might even want to play Santa and buy one or two of these for yourself!



# 1

## Smart power strip.

**Price: \$15 to \$100:**

Smart power strips are the perfect gift for your tech-savvy family members and friends because they'll likely need the extra outlets for their many devices. Smart power strips give more control than traditional ones. By plugging the main hardware item, such as a computer or monitor, into the master outlet, you can easily control the rest of the devices. When that main device is turned off, everything else plugged into the strip also powers off. Some smart power strips can also be operated through a remote control or smartphone app, and some include programmable timers.

Smart thermostats like the Ecobee (pictured here) adapt to your energy use habits, which ultimately helps you save energy and money in the long run.

*Photo Source: Ecobee*



# 2

## Smart thermostat.

**Price: \$30 to \$600:**

A smart thermostat can adjust the temperature by learning your energy use habits over time, which saves you money and keeps you more comfortable. It can also be controlled through a smartphone app. Just make sure you're going to use all of its functionality before taking the leap.

# 3

## Solar backpack.

**Price: \$30 to \$325:**

Walking or biking to the office, the field or one of Iowa's many trails? It may sound crazy, but you can actually make the most of the sun's energy with a solar backpack. These handy devices collect and store enough electricity to power a phone, tablet or even a laptop. The solar panels stitched onto the back of the packs are flexible and waterproof. Best of all, they have all the features and functionality of their traditional non-solar cousins.

A solar backpack is an easy way to bring portable energy for your small electronic devices.

*Photo Source: Hannu Makarainen*



# to Give (or Keep!)

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on energy efficiency, please visit [www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips)

Looking for an efficient gift that costs practically nothing? Enjoy a good book and a cozy evening at home. Don't forget to put on your favorite sweater and pair of fuzzy slippers so you can lower the thermostat a couple of degrees. Now that's an energy efficient evening worth repeating! ⚡

An e-bike can make cycling easier if you face challenging terrain, bike to work or find regular cycling too physically challenging

Photo Source: Willie Markkanen



## 5

### Electric scooter.

**Price: \$80 to \$3,000:**

The \$49 foldable, foot-powered scooter that exploded onto the scene a decade ago has grown up in a big way. In some cities, electric scooters are now available to rent at various locations, found and paid for via app. Or you can buy one to use for your daily commute or as a fun way to simply scoot around the neighborhood. Higher-quality versions will have longer range, larger tires and better suspension – along with a higher cost, of course. The catch is that they're still largely confined to paved surfaces.

## 4

### E-bike.

**Price: \$250 to \$9,000:**

Electric bikes, or e-bikes, are regular bicycles with an electric motor that can be engaged as needed. E-bikes are becoming increasingly popular with people who face challenging terrain, bike to work and don't want to work up a sweat, or perhaps find regular cycling too physically challenging. Studies also show that e-biking can bring many of the same physical benefits as non-assisted pedaling. They even come in foldable versions. One downside is they are heavier than regular bicycles.



Electric scooters are perfect to use if you have a quick daily commute, or they can simply be used as a fun way scoot around the neighborhood.

Photo Source: Miki Yoshihito

## 6

### Energy efficient tablets.

**Price: \$40 to \$4,000:**

You may already have at least one tablet in your home, but have you considered how energy efficient it is? Try this: Instead of using your TV to binge that new show, consider an ENERGY STAR®-rated tablet, and you can use seven times less power! Simply look for the ENERGY STAR label when you're shopping for new tablets.



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 monthly electric bill. Just one dollar a month will help others.

Last year, our members contributed \$2,937.53 to help others. This program is administered by the Iowa Community Action Program, and recipients must meet their guidelines. Funds are used to assist people in southeast Iowa. ⚡



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) \_\_\_\_\_

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

# Access Energy Cooperative helps industry find energy-saving measures



Hearth & Home Technologies Energy audit, pictured, from left to right, Karen Sweeney, The Energy Group; Joe Huff and Roger Krogmeier, Hearth & Home Technologies; and Tyler Thein, P.E., director of engineering at Access Energy Cooperative. Not pictured: Kim Davis, director of member services and public relations, Access Energy Cooperative.

As part of Access Energy Cooperative's energy efficiency program, energy audits are available for members of all sizes. Karen Sweeney, from The Energy Group, assisted cooperative personnel Tyler Thein, P.E., director of engineering, and Kim Davis, director of member services and public relations, in

conducting an energy audit at Hearth & Home Technologies facilities. In the report, we hope to offer Hearth & Home Technologies some ways to save energy and money that they can implement in their operations.

Residential energy audits are also available to members of the cooperative. ⚡

ENERGY MATTERS

# Access Energy Cooperative helps fund energy research centers

Each year, Access Energy Cooperative contributes a portion of its gross revenues to the Iowa Energy Center, which is part of the Iowa Economic Development Authority, 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 staff is available to answer questions on a variety of energy issues for the citizens of Iowa.



In 2019, Access Energy Cooperative paid \$39,286 (one-tenth of 1% of gross operating revenue for electric service). We are proud to help fund these two centers. ⚡

# Items on utility poles are illegal and pose a safety hazard

Although it may seem like a good idea, putting items on utility poles creates serious safety hazards.

Staples, nails and tacks used to hang things – as well as the items themselves – pose dangers to Access Energy Cooperative line workers who must climb poles to restore power or perform routine maintenance.

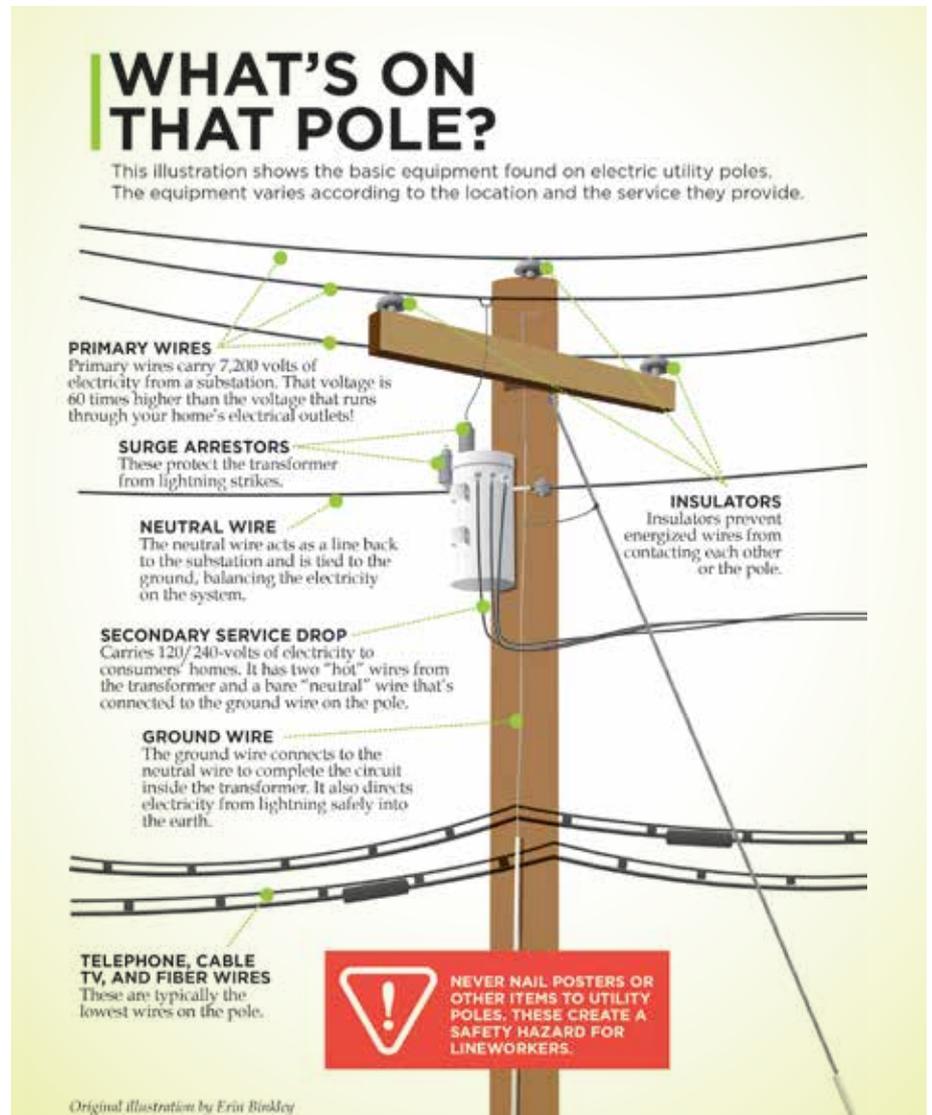
Satellite dishes, deer stands or other objects (such as birdhouses, balloons, flags or a basketball net) can create dangerous obstacles.

The nails, tacks and screws left behind can snag utility workers' boots or puncture safety clothing, making line workers vulnerable to slipping or even electrocution.



In addition to being hazardous, tampering with utility poles can be costly. Posting signs or attaching other objects to utility poles violates Access Energy Cooperative's electric tariff, Section 19. Individuals are subject to disconnection and possible legal action.

Access Energy Cooperative encourages members to contact local zoning officers to inquire about where signage can be posted legally. ⚡



## Employees train on emergency rescue

As part of their ongoing safety training, Access Energy Cooperative employees practice annual emergency rescue techniques. It is our hope they will never have to use their skills; however, if it ever became needed, learning these skills could save someone's life. ⚡



**Access Energy Cooperative**  
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGIONAL BLOOD CENTER

**BLOOD DRIVE**

Thursday, Nov. 21  
2:00PM - 4:40PM  
Access Energy Cooperative  
Meeting Room  
**SIGN UP TODAY**  
by calling 1-866-242-4232  
Walk-ins Welcome

We are an equal opportunity provider

# Line crews train for live wire work

Safety is the foundation of providing members of Iowa's electric cooperatives with affordable, reliable and environmentally responsible power. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' (IAEC) Safety & Loss Control department manages safety training and general work procedures across Iowa.

Recently, IAEC worked with Central Iowa Power Cooperative's (CIPCO) Creston transmission line crew and Rex Butler, CIPCO's manager of environmental and safety, to practice rubber glove training on power equipment.

"Because transmission lines are a higher voltage than the distribution lines delivering power directly to co-op members' properties, this was an excellent opportunity for Creston's linemen to train for live wire work, says John Dvorak, IAEC's director of safety and loss control.

"We had this training so the linemen would know how to apply cover-up material on the lines. The exercise allows them to practice working above the line or stringing wire safely around the energized conductors."

Dvorak and Scott Meinecke, one of IAEC's job training and safety instructors, conducted the training in late August at the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities in Ankeny. ⚡



*Pictured from left to right: CIPCO's Creston crew along with IAEC instructors and Butler: Rex Butler, Brad Johnson, John Dvorak (IAEC instructor), Lee Madison (standing), Justin Murphy (bucket), Steve Peterson, Drew Hardisty, Hunter Mc Intosh, Jason Wilkey and Scott Meinecke (IAEC instructor).*

# Married living

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

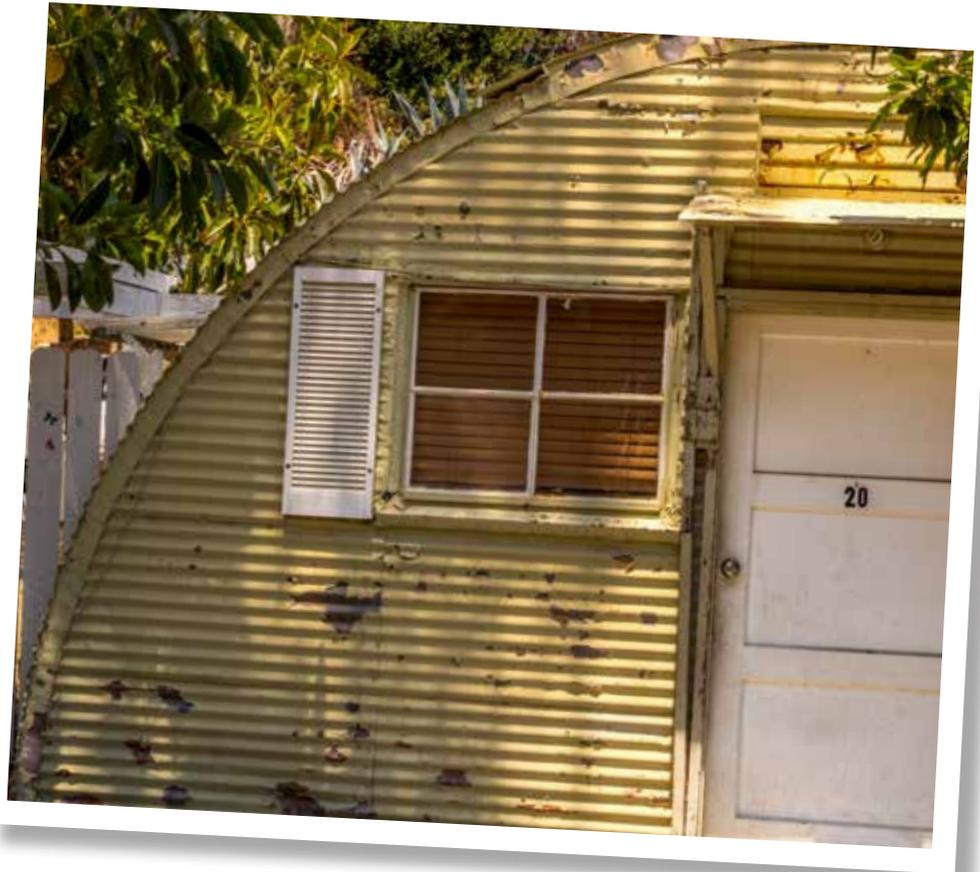
Three of my high school friends and I got together for coffee recently, and we wandered into reminiscing about the first places we'd lived after we got married. Two of us were students at Iowa State University and had begun our lives of marital bliss in Pammel Court.

For those unfamiliar with this housing situation at ISU, Pammel Court had been thrown up hastily after World War II to accommodate the thousands of GI's flooding into the university. Each Quonset hut housed two families, set up in rows like military barracks. What was initially considered temporary housing stretched to providing inexpensive digs for broke students until the 1990s.

Kent and I moved into 873 Pammel Court in June 1983. I was a full-time student and Kent was working for minimum wage – \$4 an hour – at a local auto garage. We were thrilled with the \$81 a month rent.

The best thing about Pammel Court was that anything you did to it was an improvement. We set about feathering our two-bedroom nest with zeal. My mom “papered” the kitchen walls with blue gingham cloth. My aunt and uncle donated a piece of carpeting they had recently removed from their bedroom. Kent camouflaged the hot water heater that featured prominently in our living room with a wooden front.

Every day was an adventure of sorts. The train rumbled through several times a day on the track about 100 yards from our place. Wall hangings and pictures swayed in rhythm each time. Because we lived on a corner, the giant trash receptacle sat on our front yard – appreciated in winter when a short dash to dump garbage was



required, but the bane of our existence in the summer, when the smell and flies caused one to take a wide berth around it.

The battle against cockroaches was a constant one. Turning on the lights in the middle of the night was truly a horrifying sight as what seemed to be hundreds of them scattered across the ceiling. You had to work with your connected neighbors to spray at the same time; otherwise, they'd simply retreat to one side when the exterminator came.

Our neighborhood was truly multinational: across the street lived a couple from Taiwan, next door to a family from Sri Lanka. Down the street was a family from Nigeria; across from them was a family from Qatar. Walking down the lane, we

could hear several languages calling children home and smell strange spices from a plethora of kitchens.

We were broke, but so were all of our friends. Ordering a pizza was a big event, and evenings at each other's places consisted of popcorn and board games.

There's no trace of Pammel Court today, much to my chagrin. But do a quick internet search and you'll see pictures of a close-knit community that housed thousands of students over the years. Unfortunately, I'll never again see \$81 monthly rent. ⚡

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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.

**7,200**  
**VOLT LINES**  
**16** YEARS  
ON THE  
**JOB**  
**RESTORING**  
**POWER TO**  
**500**  
**MEMBERS**

**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**