

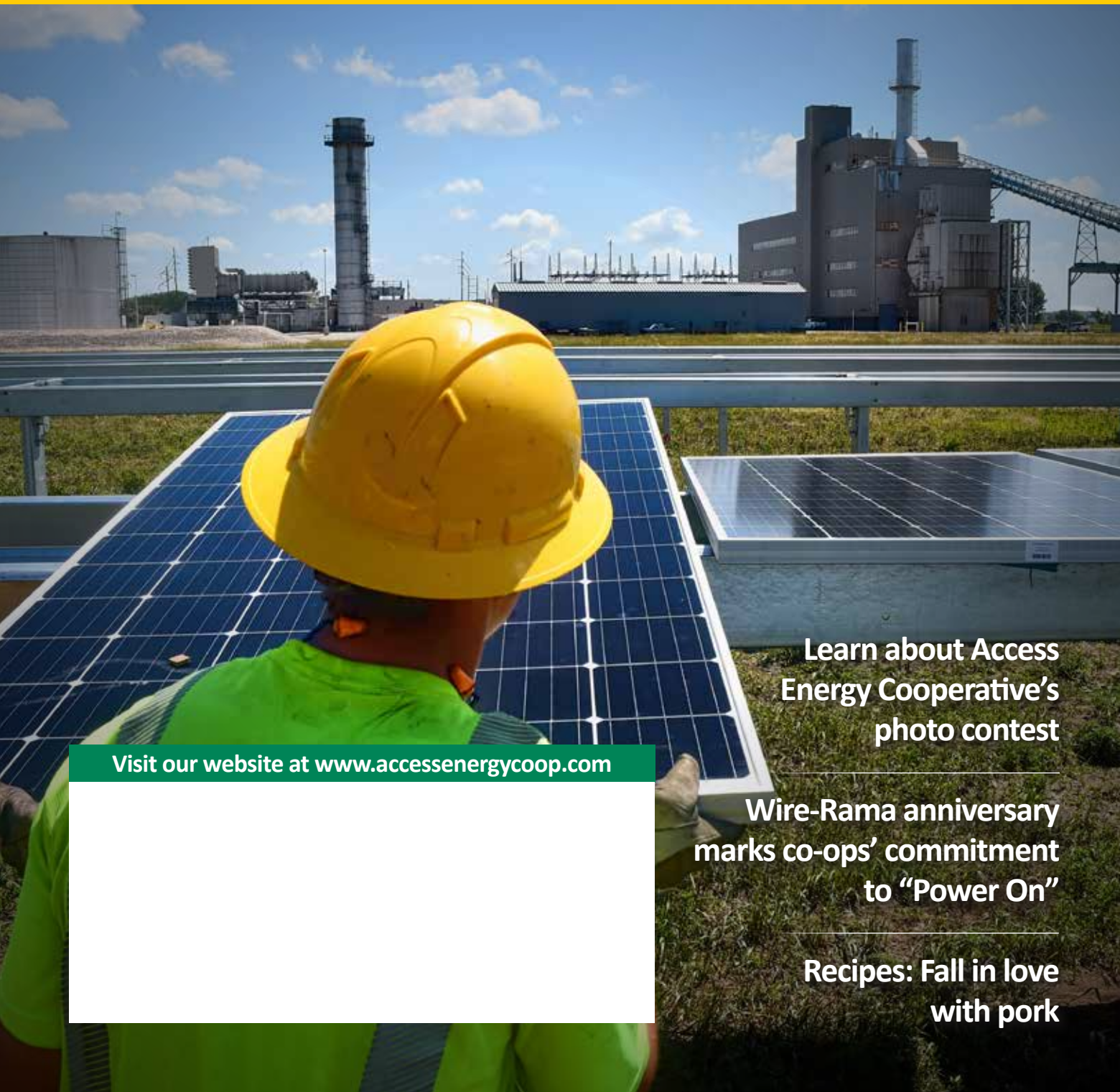
# living with energy

IN IOWA



OCTOBER 2020

Do we owe you money? Check out the Treasure Hunt list ▶ See Page 12



Learn about Access Energy Cooperative's photo contest

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

Wire-Rama anniversary marks co-ops' commitment to "Power On"

Recipes: Fall in love with pork

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Our lines are shaped by you, the members we serve.

**October is National Co-op Month.**

**#PowerOn**

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**ON THE COVER**



A new single-axis tracking panel is installed at Corn Belt Power Cooperative's new 150-kilowatt solar project at Wisdom Station, Spencer, Iowa. This 600-panel project replaces the space once occupied by the plant's coal pile. Photo taken by Marena Fritzler, marketing director, Corn Belt Power Cooperative. ⚡

# Electric co-op advocates continue working hard for Iowa's communities

BY HALEY MOON

Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives have a long and successful history of working with elected officials and policymakers to advocate for their member-consumers. Iowa Rural Power advocates – made up of co-op directors, employees and member-consumers – are known for wearing the iconic green shirts while attending events in their communities, in Des Moines and in Washington, D.C., to talk about issues impacting rural Iowans. Rural Power advocates work hard to educate elected officials on public policy that promotes rural economic development and supports safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible energy.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the opportunities Rural Power advocates typically attend to engage with candidates for office and elected officials were canceled. Events such as the annual REC Day on the Hill at the State Capitol in Des Moines, the NRECA Legislative Conference in Washington, the Iowa State Fair and countless campaign events were canceled, postponed or shifted to a virtual platform. And like all of us getting through this pandemic, Rural Power had to adjust.

## Advocates adapt to pandemic changes

Even though the methods aren't the same as we're used to, Iowa's electric cooperatives have successfully kept communication lines open with elected officials. Through phone calls and video conferencing, and small socially distanced events at the co-op, advocates have continued to speak up for their communities. Because even though the pandemic has changed plenty, one thing that

hasn't changed is the importance of ensuring electric co-op member-consumers have a consistent voice and a credible message.



## You can be a voice for rural Iowa

One of the most important ways to ensure co-op member-consumers have a voice is by voting. Member-consumers like you know best what is important in your community, and you can help send a message to elected officials that rural Iowa deserves their support. Iowa Rural Power, in conjunction with the national organization Co-ops Vote, is working to encourage voter registration and participation in the election on Nov. 3. *We don't care who you vote for, we just care that you vote!*

In Iowa, you can vote early in-person, on election day or by absentee ballot. Remember these dates as you get ready to vote:

- Oct. 5 – First day of absentee voting

- Oct. 24 at 5 p.m. – Pre-registration deadline; Deadline to request absentee ballot to be mailed
- Oct. 31 – Auditor's Office open for absentee voting
- Nov. 2 – Absentee ballot in-person deadline; Postmark deadline for absentee ballots
- Nov. 3 – Election Day

To learn more about voting in this year's election, visit [www.voterready.iowa.gov](http://www.voterready.iowa.gov) or contact your county auditor.

If this year has taught us anything, it is the importance of community. Our core cooperative principle of concern for community has always driven the work of Iowa Rural Power. Now more than ever we are proud to advocate on behalf of our communities, the people served and the lives powered by electric cooperatives. Follow @iaruralpower on Facebook and Twitter or visit [www.iaruralpower.org](http://www.iaruralpower.org) to learn more. ⚡

Haley Moon is the advocacy and political action manager for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

## EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

### Win a \$100 gift card to a local business!



Being a member of an electric cooperative is being part of something local. From the board of directors who guide the strategic direction of your co-op to the office headquarters, everything revolves around serving the local community. To celebrate National Co-op Month, we want to help you show your support for a local business! We're giving away a \$100 gift card to your choice of a hometown business. It will be good for a restaurant, hardware store, gift shop, grocery store, beauty salon or other family-oriented business that's vital to your community. ⚡

### Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting [www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com](http://www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com) no later than Oct. 31, 2020. 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 dehydrator and cookbook from the August issue was Ashley Verheyen, Access Energy Cooperative.

UPCOMING EVENTS



**Nov. 1** Daylight saving time ends at 2 a.m. Set clocks back 1 hour!

**Nov. 26-27** Office closed for Thanksgiving

**Nov. 30** Fall legislative summit

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. ⚡



*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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Payments can be placed in dropbox under flag pole. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

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LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

# Generating efficient power is a priority

BY KEVIN WHEELER

When the power supplier for Access Energy Cooperative – Associated Electric Cooperative (Associated) – generates electricity, producing efficient power is a top priority for the Springfield, Missouri-based cooperative. Its mission – to provide a reliable, economical power supply – has remained constant throughout its 59-year history of providing service to local distribution cooperative member-consumers, like Access Energy Cooperative.



Associated is owned by and provides wholesale power to 51 local electric distribution cooperative systems in Missouri, southeast Iowa – including Access Energy Cooperative – and northeast Oklahoma that serve 2.1 million member-consumers.

## Diverse generation helps deliver affordable power

Associated's commitment to reliable, responsible and affordable power requires options for generating electricity. Associated continues its time-tested strategy of maintaining a diverse and flexible portfolio of generation resources that includes coal, natural gas, wind and hydropower.

## Options for generating power lead to lower costs

Associated's goal is to match local distribution cooperative member-consumers' needs to the most affordable generation resource.



Associated invests in coal power plants that run around-the-clock to make them more efficient. Along with natural gas plants, they are an important part of a balanced, diverse generation mix that enables the cooperative to run the less-expensive units when electricity is needed.

While coal is traditionally a less costly fuel to make electricity than many other sources, low natural gas prices in 2019 and 2020 have, at times, made Associated's natural gas generating units less expensive to run than coal units. The ability to choose among different ways to generate power – like coal, natural gas, wind and hydropower – is a tremendous advantage that benefits member-consumers with lower costs.

## Making the most of electric generation resources

Many hours, Associated has generation available above its member-consumers' needs. When utilities outside of the Associated system need power, they can buy the cooperative's excess generation. The revenue from these power sales helps keep member costs lower than they otherwise would be.

## The bottom line: Balance benefits members

A balance of generating options used to produce electricity allows Associated to do what is necessary to control costs on behalf of member-consumers. Whether it is using the lowest-cost electricity produced by Associated's power plants or selling extra power off-system to bring in revenue that relieves rate pressure for members, providing affordable power is a top priority. ⚡

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



# Enter for a chance to win \$50!

For the 2022 calendar, we are looking for more of those fantastic photos of rural settings in southeast Iowa that we have received in previous contests. We will choose 13 photos as winners to be placed in the large photo areas above the calendar pages. Each of the 13 winning entrants will receive \$50.

Please submit entries by March 31, 2021, to:

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

OR email them to:  
 contactus@accessenergycoop.com

### CONTEST RULES

- Full color photos are encouraged.

- **Entries must be in a horizontal layout.**
- **DIGITAL IMAGES ONLY WILL BE ACCEPTED IN ORIGINAL FILE SIZE.**

- **Minimum size requirement is 3300 x 2550 pixels.**
- **Photocopies and digital pictures printed from a computer/printer will not be accepted.**

- If an entry is received that does not meet the minimum requirements, it will be disqualified from the contest.
- Entrants may enter more than one photo.
- Entries must include the following information:
  - Entrant's name, address, phone number.
  - Title of the photograph.
  - County in which photo was taken.
- All entries will become the property of Access Energy Cooperative and may be used by Access Energy Cooperative for any purpose Access Energy Cooperative deems valid. (We can return them upon your

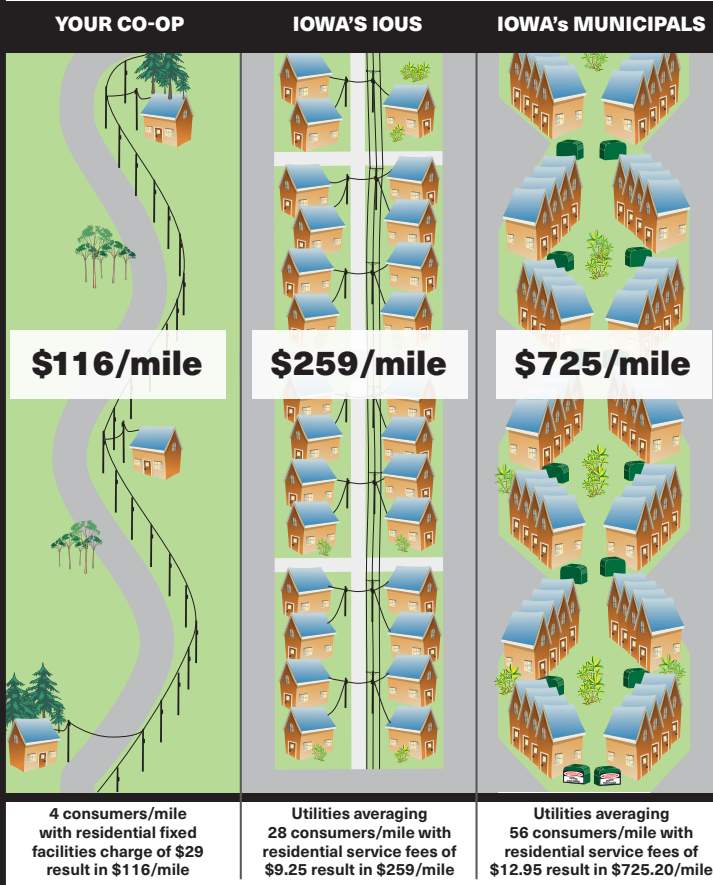
request when the contest is complete.)

- Entrants agree to authorize Access Energy Cooperative to announce and publish their name, address and photograph in any forthcoming publicity without further remuneration, other than the prizes awarded in this contest.
- By submitting an entry in the contest, you agree to grant Access Energy Cooperative permissions and all rights to use the photo entry indefinitely for marketing purposes, which include but is not limited to a calendar or other printed materials promoting Access Energy Cooperative.
- All entrants must have sufficient permission of any recognizable persons appearing in the photograph to be able to grant to Access Energy Cooperative the right to display their photographic submission online or in printed material. ⚡

## Did you know?

Your co-op serves an average of 3.97 consumers per mile of distribution power lines, while Iowa's investor-owned utilities (IOUs) average 27.3 consumers per mile. This is trumped by municipalities in Iowa, who serve 55.9 consumers per mile.

How much does a utility receive in monthly residential fixed facilities charges?



## POLICY MATTERS

# Updated disconnection procedure

To maintain efficiency in our daily procedures, and allow for quicker service to our members, Access Energy Cooperative has implemented a new procedure for disconnection of service for non-payment.



Our updated meter system provides us with the ability to disconnect and reconnect most of our meters remotely. This helps us to keep costs down and allows us to provide members with more options for quicker power restoration.

If a member fails to pay their bill or make arrangements with our office within the time allowance as stated in the cooperative tariff, service may be disconnected via our remote metering system on the next business day, Monday through Thursday.

Should a member's service be disconnected, payment equal to the delinquent amount as specified on the notice will be required to reconnect. Payment can be processed through our SmartHub app, and the member will need to consent to immediate reconnection via the remote metering system. Payment can also be accepted at our office Monday through Thursday 7 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Friday 7 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., or by phone available 24 hours a day at 1-866-242-4232.

Once the payment has been processed, service should be restored within a few minutes. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these procedures, please contact the Access Energy Cooperative office during the business hours listed above. ⚡

# Celebrating co-ops and local communities

IT'S NATIONAL  
**CO-OP**  
MONTH!

BY PAUL WESSLUND

We like the word local.

We like it because it's the nearby hardware store where we can get what we need. It's where we meet friends for coffee. It's the shop where they look us in the eye and smile. It's a word of warmth that makes us feel known.

Local also means your electric co-op. It's as local as you and your neighbors because you own it. It's grown and changed with you, possibly starting before you were even born. Because it's made up of you and your neighbors, it's as unique to each part of the country as you are. And it changes to help out with what's going on in your community, whether that means bringing electricity to farmsteads

80 years ago, providing the community with access to high-speed internet or powering your community through the pandemic today.

October is National Co-op Month, and this year, it makes sense to use this time to recognize and celebrate the variety that is the essence of being local.

That local heritage for electric co-ops started in the 1930s with neighborly visits, often on horseback from one farm to the next, talking about the lights they could see in the city but didn't have themselves. They weren't likely to get those modern conveniences because no company saw a profit in stringing wires to power a few light bulbs in a remote farmhouse.

So, the local farmers took matters into their own hands. They pooled \$5 startup fees; organized member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives; and convinced local politicians to create a federal loan program to help with the rest of the cost. They created what others didn't see: one of the most efficient agricultural economies in the world and communities based around a variety of business and industry, from manufacturing to tourism.

## No such thing as a typical co-op

Today, 900 electric co-ops provide electricity to more than 20 million businesses, homes, schools and farms. They cover more than half the land in the U.S. They employ



From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric cooperatives are proud to serve 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.





more than 68,000 people and invest \$12 billion a year in local economies, contributing \$88.4 billion to the nation's Gross Domestic Product.

They're big and small. The largest electric co-op serves nearly 350,000 members; the smallest, 113.

They're in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. While electric co-ops come from a rural heritage, many of their communities have grown over the decades. About 40% serve counties classified as rural and 60% classified as metropolitan. Another way to look at that variety is by the average number of members served by each mile of its power lines. The co-op with the densest population serves 78 members for each mile of line. The most remote co-op averages less than one person per mile of line.

While those numbers reflect the variety and uniqueness of who co-ops serve, what they do also matters.

### Fewer emissions, more renewable energy

As co-op members became more aware of environmental priorities, co-ops focused on reducing power plant emissions. From 2009 to 2016, co-ops reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 8%, nitrogen oxide emissions by 24% and sulphur dioxide emissions by 66%. Co-ops also launched energy efficiency programs, many offering home and business 'energy checkups' to make sure members got the best value for their energy dollar.

Electric co-ops are helping power the growth in alternative energy. They pioneered the development of community solar, which allows co-op members to participate in renewable energy without the expense and effort of installing solar panels on their own property. Nationwide, co-op solar capacity has more than quadrupled in



the past five years. Seventeen percent of co-op electricity in the U.S. now comes from hydroelectric power, solar, wind and other renewable sources.

Over the next several years, we will see electric vehicle technology transform transportation. Some electric co-ops are making electric cars available to members to try out. Others are working to set up charging stations that will be required for a viable electric vehicle industry.

And now that we're all adapting to the effects of COVID-19, electric co-ops are again on the job as the virus changes everything from the national economy to how we say hello to our neighbors.

Electric co-ops are developing payment plans for people out of work. They're socially distancing line crews. They're setting up drive-in or virtual membership meetings and many are offering virtual energy audits.

The world keeps changing, and electric co-ops will continue to adapt. Each co-op's approach may differ, but they'll do whatever it takes to adapt in ways that make the most sense for the people in their community. *That's* what it means to be a local electric co-op. ⚡

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

## IOWA FACTS

The not-for-profit electric co-ops of Iowa provide reliable, safe, affordable and sustainable electricity to over

**650,000 PEOPLE**

throughout all **99** counties every day.

Iowa's electric co-ops maintain enough power lines to wrap around the equator **2.5 times!**

Iowa's electric co-ops provide power to about 15% of the state's population, yet cover approximately **80%** of the state's land mass.

Iowa's electric cooperatives have helped create or retain more than

**50,000 JOBS**

in rural Iowa.

Each year, Iowa's not-for-profit electric co-ops pay

**\$14 MILLION**

in property taxes.

The electric co-ops of Iowa directly employ more than

**1,200 PEOPLE**

# Fall in Love WITH Pork



## Cranberry Pork Festive

- ¾ pound pork tenderloin, trimmed**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil or vegetable oil**
- ½ cup beef broth, divided**
- 2 tablespoons dried cranberries**
- 1½ teaspoons Dijon mustard**
- 1 tablespoon orange juice concentrate**
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch**

Cut tenderloin into 12 slices; flatten to ¼-inch thickness. Add oil to skillet and brown pork over medium heat. Add ¼ cup beef broth, cover and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes or until meat is no longer pink. Remove meat to a serving dish and keep warm. Add cranberries, mustard and remaining broth to skillet. Combine orange juice concentrate and cornstarch until smooth. Gradually add to broth mixture to skillet, stirring constantly. Bring to boil, cook and stir 1 to 2 minutes. Pour over pork.

**Sharon Cline • Kent**  
**Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative**

## Kate's Breakfast Casserole

- 1 to 1½ pounds ground pork sausage**
- ½ teaspoon ground mustard**
- ½ teaspoon basil**
- ½ teaspoon oregano**
- ½ teaspoon thyme**
- 8 eggs**
- ½ cup milk**
- 2 cups shredded cheese of your choice, divided**
- 4 ounces mushrooms, sliced**
- 1½ pound package frozen tater tots (mini or regular)**
- ½ cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese**

Brown sausage and incorporate seasonings. Pour off grease. Beat eggs, and then beat in milk. Stir in sausage and 1 cup shredded cheese. Pour into greased or sprayed casserole pan. Sprinkle with 1 cup shredded cheese and cover in mushrooms. Top with tater tots. Cover loosely and bake at 350 degrees F for 40 minutes. Remove cover and sprinkle with Monterey Jack cheese. Return to oven to melt cheese. After removing from oven, let rest a few minutes before serving. Meat and seasonings may be prepared on one day and quickly put together the next morning for brunch.

**Mabel L. Fisher • Sigourney**  
**T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative**

## Garlic Apple Pork Roast

- 3-4 pound boneless pork loin roast, thawed**
- 6 ounces apple jelly**
- ½ cup water**
- 2 teaspoons garlic, minced**
- 1 tablespoon parsley**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**

Cut roast in half and place in slow cooker. In a bowl, combine jelly, water and garlic; pour over roast. Sprinkle with parsley, salt and pepper. Cover and cook on low for 8 to 8½ hours. Remove from juice and let stand 5 minutes before slicing. Serve with cooking juices.

**Judy Jackson • Hedrick • Access Energy Cooperative**

## Slow Cooker Ranch Pork Chops

- 4 boneless pork chops**
- 1 can cream of chicken soup**
- 1 package dry ranch dressing mix**

Layer pork chops in slow cooker. Add soup over pork chops and sprinkle with ranch dressing. Cook on high for 4 to 5 hours or on low for 6 to 7 hours. Thicker pork chops will take longer.

**Patty Schurk • Burlington • Access Energy Cooperative**

Source for pork facts: Iowa Pork Producers Association

### SAFE COOKING TEMPERATURE

The USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service says pork can be safely cooked to medium rare at a final internal cooked temperature of 145 degrees F as measured by a food thermometer, followed by a three-minute rest time.

Ground pork, like all ground meats, should still be cooked to 160 degrees F.



## Ground Pork Casserole

- 1 pound ground pork
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1½ cups milk
- ½ cup uncooked rice
- ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1 cup soft breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted

Brown pork and drain fat, then add onion. Stir in soup, milk, rice and seasoning. Put in casserole dish and bake uncovered at 350 degrees F for 60 minutes. Mix breadcrumbs and melted butter. Sprinkle crumb topping over casserole and bake until golden brown.

Linda J. McCarville • New Hampton  
Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative

## Sausage Pilaf

- 1 pound bulk sausage
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ½ cup green pepper, chopped
- 1¼ cups milk
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup uncooked rice (not instant)
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning
- ½ cup soft breadcrumbs
- 3 tablespoons margarine, softened

Brown sausage and drain excess fat. Add celery, onion and green pepper. Cook until tender but not brown. Stir in milk, salt, rice, soup and seasoning. Bake in 1½-quart covered casserole dish at 350 degrees F for 50 minutes, stirring occasionally. Mix breadcrumbs and margarine. Sprinkle breadcrumb mixture on top and continue baking uncovered for 20 minutes.

Lisa Harris • Akron  
North West Rural Electric Cooperative

## Hickory Chops

- 3 tablespoons molasses
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 3 teaspoons liquid smoke
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- 6 boneless pork chops

In bowl, mix first 8 ingredients into a marinade. Put pork chops into freezer bag and pour marinade over. Seal and refrigerate overnight. Grill until pork chops are desired temperature.

Marci Domnick • Rock Rapids  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

## Sweet and Sour Pork Chops

- 4-6 boneless pork chops
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup vinegar
- ⅔ cup brown sugar
- ⅓ cup yellow mustard
- ⅔ cup ketchup
- rice

In a large skillet, place oil and cook pork chops until meat is no longer pink. In a separate pan, sauté onion and butter until onion is transparent. Add vinegar, sugar, mustard and ketchup. Simmer to blend flavors. Pour sauce over the pork chops, cover and continue cooking about 20 minutes. Serve with rice.

Lori Miller • Alvard  
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

### COOK IT LIGHT

Use low-fat cooking methods, like grilling, broiling, stir-frying and pan-broiling to maximize flavor while keeping added fat to a minimum. Marinate for flavor and juiciness, with juice, wine-flavored vinegar or fat-free dressing instead of oil-based marinades.

PORK FACTS

### SIZE OF A DECK OF CARDS

A 3-ounce serving of trimmed, cooked meat is about the size of a deck of cards.

PORK FACTS

### LEANEST CUTS

Use cuts with the words "loin" or "round" in their name for the leanest meats, such as pork tenderloin or loin chop.

PORK FACTS

### SPICE FOR LIFE

Season meats with herbs and spices (other than salt) to boost flavor and cut back on fat and salt at the same time. Rub herbs and spices onto pork before grilling, broiling or roasting.

PORK FACTS

## Wanted: Recipes for Valentine's Day! The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!

From roses to hearts, red is the color of Valentine's Day! We're looking for foods our co-op cooks love that include something red as a primary ingredient. Whether the recipe contains a red fruit or vegetable, is a dessert or main dish, the contest is open to your creativity! 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 Oct. 31, 2020. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions.

**NEW:** Please also provide the number of servings per recipe.

#### EMAIL:

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

#### MAIL:

#### Recipes

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

# Wire-Rama anniversary marks co-ops' longstanding commitment to “Power On”

BY ANGELA CATTON



Right: George Hoffman, Sr. stands beside the main switch box. Pipes leading into the ground carry a plastic cable buried about 30 inches deep. This served as the heart of the entire electrical system.



Above: Dan Hoffman, George Sr.'s grandson, points to the same panel as it was recently rebuilt. The pipes still provide a conduit to the underground cabling that has been updated.



## Wire-Rama promotes “modern electricity”

Wire-Rama was the brainchild of NIPCO's Public Relations/Power Use Advisor Kinney S. Reiser. In his role at NIPCO, Reiser was responsible for promoting the benefits of electric power. Construction on the NIPCO 69,000-volt transmission system had already begun three years earlier but member-consumers in the region were slow to understand the advantages that improved wiring and electrical systems could provide. With farms and homes already incorporating modest and primitive wiring and equipment, Reiser recognized an opportunity to educate and promote how “modern electricity” could further revolutionize mid-century life on the farm, relying on the expertise of their local electric cooperative.

The Hoffman Farm was identified as the ideal setting for the 1955 Wire-Rama. George Hoffman, Sr. was already a heavy user of electricity (about 10,000 kilowatt-hours each month). Hoffman raised and showed cattle and Berkshire hogs. He was interested in improving his operation

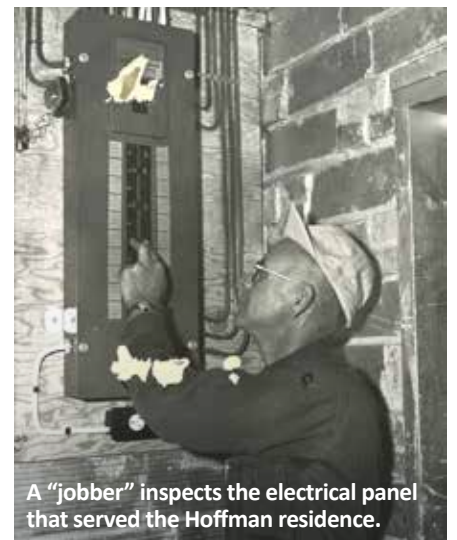
October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways they “Power On.” For more than 80 years, rural electric cooperatives (RECs) have been defined by their mission to enrich the lives of members and serve the long-term interests of the communities they serve.

This month, when we honor a long history devoted to cooperatives and their relationships with those they serve, Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO) celebrates the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of an initiative to “Power On” a farm in Ida County. The event – the first of its kind in Iowa – was called Wire-Rama and held on Sept. 28, 1955, on the George Hoffman, Sr. farm north of Ida Grove. Today, the farm remains in the family and is owned by Dan

Hoffman, one of George's grandsons. Dan, who currently serves as an Ida County director representative on the North West REC board of directors, was just three years old at the time of the event. His older brother George Hoffman III was 12 years old. The farm is served by North West REC.

“I remember the promotional marketing,” recalls Hoffman III. “There were brochures and posters that featured Willie Wiredhand. That was really neat!”

According to the November 1955 issue of *Iowa Rural Electric News*, “Wire-Rama translated into language everyone can understand, could be described as souping up an entire electrical system on a farm, including a complete rewiring job, and the addition of new electrical equipment, appliances and a fan, etc.”





The Hoffman farm takes on a slightly different view than it did 65 years ago.

Present day photos by Rachel Rogers, communications specialist, NIPCO

by adding more electric equipment but his outdated existing wiring, installed in 1917, could not handle the increased electric load.

NIPCO's Reiser worked with power use advisors from each of NIPCO's member distribution cooperatives, which included 10 co-ops at the time. Power use advisors (or "P.U. men," as they were often called), were the predecessor to today's REC energy advisors and member service professionals. The group met regularly with Hoffman to plan a system that would meet his needs. Once the layout was finalized and materials list set, they worked with local vendors, manufacturers and "jobbers" (local electricians and tradesmen) to solicit donations of materials and labor. According to the *Iowa Rural Electric News* article, "A favorable reply from the jobbers, as well as offers from manufacturers contacted by them, saw the first phase of Wire-Rama well on the way to completion."

By donating materials and labor to the project, partners hoped to perpetuate the notion of modernizing antiquated electric

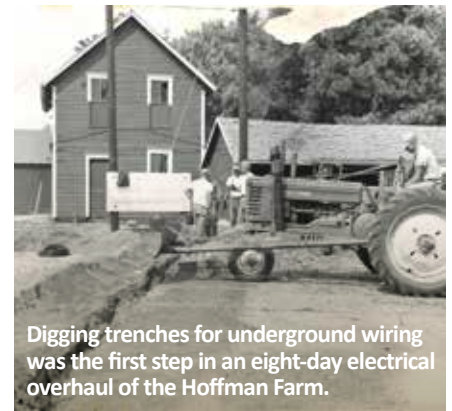
systems and electric appliances. Wire-Rama served as a working trade show exhibit for local electricians and vendors to market their services and products.

### Underground wiring stands the test of time

It took approximately one week to rewire the Hoffman Farm. Work began on Sept. 20, with the digging of trenches that would accommodate the underground wiring. Hoffman III remembers that the underground wiring was "really something special" at the time and that many, including his grandfather, wondered how long it would last. Sixty-five years later, Dan Hoffman confirms that much of the underground wiring remains operational today.

A 400-amp capacity service was installed on the yard pole, followed by 100-amp services to several outbuildings, including the family home.

Thanks to these improvements, George Hoffman, Sr. was able to install a 42-inch fan with a two-horsepower motor to keep flies away from his cattle, something he could



Digging trenches for underground wiring was the first step in an eight-day electrical overhaul of the Hoffman Farm.

not do with his older system. George III distinctly remembers the giant fan. "It was about 5-foot square, and I remember it was red."

In addition, the Hoffman home was upgraded to include new wiring throughout, including a 100-amp circuit breaker panel, all new light fixtures, outlets and electric appliances. Mrs. Hoffman received a modern electric range but, according to her grandsons, insisted that her trusted propane stove be moved to the basement as her backup. ⚡

Angela Catton is the manager of member relations and development for Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative



George Hoffman, Sr. (left) and Ida County REC Manager Charles Pullen (right) inspect old wiring next to the fan that was installed to cool Hoffman's cattle barn.



Dan says this fan still works and is in regular use today!

## TREASURE HUNT LIST

## Do you know any of these people?

We are searching for these members whose dividend checks did not reach them. If you know the whereabouts of any of these people, please contact our accounting department at [finance@accessenergycoop.com](mailto:finance@accessenergycoop.com) or 866-242-4232. 📧

Adam, Charles E/Cindy L	LaBelle MO	Grochowski, Kenneth R	Cape Coral FL	Morris, Brian/Darla	Mt Pleasant IA
Adam, Jane A	Fairfield IA	GTE Mobil Net	Schaumburg IL	Murray, Raymond B/Diana	Palmira MO
Agnew, Jon	Malvern IA	GTE Telephone Operations	Irving TX	Nelson, Ronny H	Mt Pleasant IA
Alexander, Betty J	Burlington IA	Hammer, William D/Teresa L	Brainerd MN	Neuendorf, Larry T	Donnellson IA
Allen, Douglas G	Riverside IA	Hanna, Katharine M (Estate)	Fairfield IA	Newman, Paul E/Amy L	Cedar Rapids IA
Andrew Pallet Company Inc	Story City IA	Harris, Delores F (Estate)	Wayland IA	Newpath Communications	Des Moines IA
Appleget, Deborah S/B M	Sioux Falls SD	Hart, Todd/Bobbie	Agency IA	Newquist, Russell D/Judy	Batavia IA
Askew, Elizabeth (Estate)	Hillsboro IA	Hayward, Frank E/Janet	American Fork UT	North, Susan/Cooke, Jeff	Fairfield IA
Bachtel, Cliff	Mt Pleasant IA	Henshaw, J D	Wever IA	Otto, Nathan/Malak	Boulder CO
Barr, Mickey R	New London IA	Heston, Jeff M/Shelly	Lake Geneva WI	Parker, Delbert	Wayland IA
Beaty, Duane A (Estate)	West Point IA	Higdon, Stephen M/DeAnna M	North Liberty IA	Patton, Lisa G/Burton, James C	Cleveland TX
Beck, Lance	Larkspur CO	Hoffeditz, Vera K	Ft Madison IA	Pilcher, Brian/Melinda	Owatonna MN
Biggs, Bryan	Fairfield IA	Hoffman, James R/Montgomery, Diane	Perry IA	Piper, Charles	Wever IA
BJ's Four Corners	Morrison IL	Holmes, Donald R	Ruthven IA	Platt, C James/Janice	Ft Madison IA
Blow, Scott L	Burlington IA	Hookom, Elizabeth A (Estate)	Mt Pleasant IA	Pollpeter, Barbara	Denmark IA
Blunk, Michael R/Susan D	Winfield IA	Horak, Sherri/C J	Washington IA	Pratt, Brian/Christina	Cedar Rapids IA
Boecker, Eleanor	Moorpark CA	Hunter, Melissa	Mt Pleasant IA	Pumphrey, Steve/Scotton, Jodi	Fairfield IA
Brawner, Michael/Jacqueline A	Mt Pleasant IA	IES Utilities	Burlington IA	Ran/Kel Farms LLC	Wayland IA
Bueker, William B/Tammy	Donnellson IA	Ingram, Forest/Carol	New Salem ND	Ravey, Tom/Diane	Fairfield IA
Butler, Amber/Mark	Mt Pleasant IA	Iris City Antique Mall (Seager)	Mt Pleasant IA	Rice, Lois	Austin TX
Casteel, Dennis L/Hachey, Carol C	Birmingham IA	Jackson, Holly	Mt Pleasant IA	Riffel, Barbara E	Burlington IA
Celestica Inc	North York Ontario	Johnson, David R/Jenna	Brighton IA	Riley, Michael D/Constance L	Saint Peters MO
Chase, Julie L	Winfield IA	Jones, Dale/Patricia A	Hawkeye IA	Riley, Richard/Shannon	Packwood IA
Church, Samantha/Juhl, Dave	Mt Pleasant IA	Katz, David E/Joann	Fairfield IA	Riley, Richard D/Rose A	Wever IA
City Carton Co	Iowa City IA	Kemp, Diana K (Estate)	Mt Pleasant IA	Riverside Paper	Mt Pleasant IA
Clear Channel Communications	Burlington IA	Kern, Phillip H/Jean	Fairfield IA	Rockin M Ranch	Bloomfield IA
Clelland, Ruth A	Sacramento CA	Kevin Inc	Clinton IA	Rowe, Troy E/Parker, Cherish	Winfield IA
Companions of St Luke	Shreveport LA	Kingdom Hall of Jehovas' Witness	Mt Pleasant IA	Russell, Betty	Fairfield IA
Contreras, David/Dorene	Oconomowoc WI	Kingery, Kimberly	Mt Pleasant IA	Russell, James L	Burlington IA
Coon, Robert J	Washington IA	Kirk, Stephen/Julie M	Burlington IA	Ryder, Jay/Melissa	Stockport IA
Coulter, John/Janet	Burlington IA	Knustrom, Rod/Patty	Ft Madison IA	Sammons, Lawrence	Mt Pleasant IA
Courtney, David R	Niota IL	Knutson, Theodore M (Estate)	Danville IA	Sanders, William H	Donnellson IA
Crouse, Bryan	West Point IA	Konhaus, John C/Sara	Casper WY	Shaner, Mark/Jan	Fairfield IA
Davis, Donald A	Santa Barbara CA	Krebsbach, Joel	Mt Pleasant IA	Shier, Steven/Erika K	Fairfield IA
Degen, Robert/Ila Jane	Ft Madison IA	Krieger, Mickey R	New London IA	Shull, Delores S	Hedrick IA
Dill, George P/Lindsay	Fairfield IA	Lambert, Darrell	Mt Pleasant IA	Shute, Beverly (Estate)	Fairfield IA
Dillman, David E	Batavia IA	Larson, Russ E/Lucinda A	Burlington IA	Smith, Charles A	LaGrange NC
Dix, Glen/Janice	Sigourney IA	LeMaster, Jody G	Reeds Spring MO	Smith, Matthew J/Christina	Mt Pleasant IA
Eisentraut, Jeff F/Julie D	Hillsboro IA	Leffler, Dwayne R	Washington IA	Smith, Robert D/Nancy	Coon Rapids IA
Farmer, Laurie	Newport ME	Leffler, Ira/Jacqueline	Lockridge IA	Southeast Wireless Inc	Danville IA
Farrell, Douglas F	Denmark IA	Lieberg, Robert	Galesburg IL	Sp Grove Mobile Homes	Burlington IA
Fleming, Robert	Burlington IA	Liles, Biran L/Christine L	Fairfield IA	Stockton, Virginia A	Leawood KS
Foreman, Rodger W	Albia IA	Livestock Placement	Salix IA	Stoermer, Larry G/Sandra K	Davenport IA
Fox, Thelma M	Riverside IA	Lockridge Arena	Cantril IA	Sweeney, Peder/Kelly	Asheville NC
Fraise, Victor (Estate)	Mt Pleasant IA	Lustgraff, Phillip D/Furman, Kathy	New London IA	Taylor, Melody/Victor	Rome IA
Frisbee, Brian D	Fairfield IA	Madden, Shirley	Olds IA	Templeton, Scott/Eleanor K	Donnellson IA
Fritz, Kevin	Wellman IA	Marlin, William C	Mt Pleasant IA	Terry, Martin/Twyla	Apple Valley CA
Fritz, Wanda	Brighton IA	Martin, Billy/Jennifer	Davenport IA	Thompson, Dan R/Susan M	Batavia IA
Fry, Sam D/Bobbi S	New London IA	Martin, Gary/Vicki	Burlington IA	VanWinkle, Jim/Brenda	Redding CA
Gardner, Daniel J/Sue	Crawfordsville IA	McAtee, Ann	Ames IA	Vela, John R/Charlotte	Burlington IA
Garner, Kevin W/Haley	Wayland MO	McBride, Chester	Des Moines IA	Wallenselsz, Mike	Burlington IA
Garretson Equipment Co	Huntley IL	McConnell, Lawrence W	Burlington IA	Walrod, Bob E/Leona	Savannah MO
Gillett, Frank H	Ft Madison IA	McCurren, Debra K	Washington DC	Watson, Linda	Stockport IA
Gore, Susan	New York NY	McDonald, Douglas E	Mt Pleasant IA	Weber, David L	Clive IA
		McKeehan, Ruth A	Mt Pleasant IA	White, Betty J	Mt Pleasant IA
		Meardon, Kathleen W	Ft Madison IA	White, Cathy A (Estate)	Mt Pleasant IA
		Melloy, Michael/Kayla	Mt Pleasant IA	White, John/Cathy S	Mt Pleasant IA
		Mertens, Joseph P	Ft Madison IA	Williams, Aimee	Nauvoo IL
		Miller, Jeff/Kith	Jerome ID	Williams, Larry W/Maranna	Pershing IN
		Mills, Michael J/Jennifer	Reasnor IA	Wineinger, Connie/Charles	Fairfield IA
		Moeller, Ray	Cotopaxi CO	Winfrey, Jeff J	Gainesville MO
		Moore, Howard W Jr/Deborah	Sylacauga AL	Woodruff, Stephen W/Rita L	Milton IA
		Moore, Mrs. J Brown (Helen)	Mt Union IA	Young, Mark L	Kalona IA
		Moothart, Donald L	Fairfield IA		
		Morris, Allen D	Batavia IA		

**CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY**

## Employee volunteers and helps provide food to derecho victims

Marva Crowl, customer service representative at Access Energy Cooperative, recently volunteered to help provide food for Cedar Rapids victims of the recent massive storm destruction. Along with others, she prepared food and served it in areas where people needed supplies. ⚡

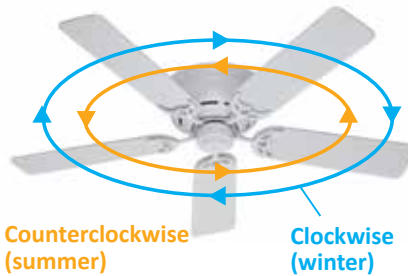


**ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

## Reverse the spin and save

Ceiling fans can cut your electric bills year-round, but before you run out and buy one for every room, it's important to know how fans can help you save energy. If you install a ceiling fan and don't adjust your thermostat settings accordingly, you may be more comfortable, but you also could be increasing your monthly electric bills.

During winter, flip the small switch on the side of the ceiling fan housing to reverse the blade rotation to clockwise. Run the fan at low speed, so it creates a gentle upward breeze away from people



in the room. This pushes the warm air at the ceiling back down into the room, where it's needed. Then set your furnace a few degrees lower to save more. ⚡

**SAFETY MATTERS**

## Move Over Slow Down



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, but they are thanking you!

**MOVE OVER  
SLOW DOWN**

**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 \$1 a month will help others. The amount collected for contributions July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, was \$2,657.21. Thank you to those who have given to 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) \_\_\_\_\_

# Electrifying end-use appliances

Many of the everyday appliances in your home have the potential to be powered by electricity instead of gas, propane or any other type of fossil fuel. Switching over to electric appliances and technologies can help you save money over time in power and maintenance costs.

Four major electric technologies around the home are changing the way we use energy:



## Electric induction stove tops

New induction stove tops can now warm up more quickly than gas stoves, can heat pans more evenly than before and are much more efficient than older versions of electric resistance stoves. Induction stove tops require specific pots and pans to be compatible with the stove top. The prices for electric stove tops have also declined in recent years, making most of them on par with the cost of gas stove tops.

## Electric water heaters

A hybrid heat pump water heater is another option to electrify an appliance in your home and is much more efficient than a traditional electric water heater. Hybrid heat pump water heaters generally save money since they use energy more efficiently than gas-powered water heaters. Households can potentially save hundreds of dollars per year, while also not having to worry about



Photo Credit: A.O. Smith

any combustion safety issues.

Another key feature of the electric water heater is that it can serve as a battery by storing thermal energy. Water heaters can retain their heat for hours, which means owners can power water heaters at night when electricity may be cheaper.



## Electric lawn mower

Instead of using gasoline to power your lawn mower, consider a battery-powered mower, which doesn't expel exhaust fumes or require engine maintenance. Battery-powered mowers start instantly and are quieter to operate. Although most battery-powered mowers cost more upfront, the savings can be recouped over time by not needing to pay for engine maintenance or fuel.

Photo Credit: Ford Motor Company



## Electric vehicles

Electric vehicle technology is changing quickly, with prices now becoming on par with gasoline-fueled vehicles over the long term. While there are luxury options like Tesla, there are many other manufacturers coming out with more affordable hybrids, especially for used cars. Electric vehicles also reduce exhaust emissions, which can improve air quality on a larger scale. ⚡

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# Driving us over the edge

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

Being quarantined with those nearest and dearest to us has brought out the best and the worst characteristics in everyone. The joys and sweetness were amplified; the most grating and obnoxious characteristics were magnified. It was those everyday annoyances that drove us to the edge. And what made it more vexing is that my family acted as if they had never heard these things ... as if I were giving them newspaper headlines in announcing them:

- **Hear Ye! Hear Ye!** You can use a bath towel more than once if you're clean! I know this is a revelation to many in my family, but if you get out of a shower and you've just scrubbed yourself, that towel is not going to be dirty. If you hang it up, you can re-use it! But once you fling it on the floor, it will turn into a moofy, mildewy-smelling lump.
- **This Just In!** It helps no one if you eat the last snack cake, the last cup of cereal, the last couple chips, and then put the box back! Just as bad: leaving  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch of orange juice so that you don't look like a pig who just drank the rest of the carton. Face it: You did drink the rest of the carton. Own it.
- **Breaking News!** Those items placed on the stairs aren't there for decoration or for you to trip over. They are meant to go up and be put away. Reverse the process for items at the top of the steps. Isn't that a novel idea?
- **I Know This is Hard to Believe!** Mom doesn't know where your boots/book/car keys/screwdriver/measuring tape is! And you know why she doesn't know? Because she hasn't worn/pocketed/used them!
- **Take Note!** There is no laundry category for "placing the item on



top of the clothes hamper!" It can be in the hamper (preferable state) or on the floor, but no one knows what to do with something on top of the hamper. Give it the sniff test and make a decision.

- **Be Warned!** When a responsible adult-type person is on the phone or a Zoom meeting, do not ask them stupid questions about where the aforementioned keys are. Unless there is blood or smoke, do not disturb said Person.
- **You Heard It Here First!** Moms really don't like to be "mooed" at. What do I mean? That long, mooing "Moooooooom" thing kids do (incessantly) when they want your attention wears on the nerves and frays the temper. I know, it sounds incredible, but moms and grandmas really don't like it.

- **It Confounds Science!** Studies say people can go weeks without food, but grandchildren seem to need snacks 10 minutes after a meal. And 20 minutes. And an hour.
- **Who Knew?** Once the toilet paper gets down to the cardboard roll, it needs to be replaced. Amazing, no?

In a world where we were scared of a pandemic, what annoyed many of us the most was not being required to wear a mask or having to sanitize everything we touched. It was the habits of those we were ready to take a letter opener to, even though we loved them more than anything. Except when they leave an empty egg carton in the fridge. 🚩

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.

# I AM THE CO-OP

The information we get from our Touchstone Energy cooperative about efficiency, safety and technology gives us the power to make informed decisions.

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