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JUNE 2019

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Energy storage action
plan for Iowa unveiled

Summertime
recipes

Co-ops meet with
lawmakers in D.C.

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ON THE COVER

Courtesy of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, this month's cover photo features the co-op's wind turbines in Superior, Iowa. This location features seven 1.5 megawatt G.E. wind turbines. Energy production from the turbines began in March 2009, and the output is used by ethanol plants. Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative serves approximately 12,700 farms, homes, businesses and industries in the northwest Iowa counties of Clay, Palo Alto, Kossuth, Cherokee, Buena Vista and Pocahontas.



Electric cooperative interests on the table during legislative session

BY KEVIN CONDON

The 2019 session of the Iowa legislature adjourned on April 28, spanning 104 days from the time lawmakers took their seats at the Statehouse in mid-January. For the first time in nearly a decade, the Legislature wrapped up business before reaching their allotted threshold to conduct the policymaking process. With 20% of the Senate being new and 22% of the House being sworn in for the first time, this session was full of activity and passion from both parties.

For Iowa's electric cooperatives, this session was less intense when compared to the 2018 session that saw the passage of comprehensive energy legislation. While the issues we supported on behalf of electric cooperatives weren't necessarily news-making headlines, they were still relevant.

We're proud of our advocacy to restore Iowa's geothermal installation tax credit, which was unnecessarily eliminated last year. The credit was restored through a provision on a tax bill. Iowa's Rural Power advocates can be proud of the role they played in voicing our support for geothermal as an important energy efficiency tool.

Additionally, we participated in various energy-related conversations, including a bill intended to help ensure the solvency of the road use tax



fund as more electric vehicles (EVs) emerge on Iowa's roadways. About half of the funding for Iowa's bridges and roads comes from the fuel tax that is paid at the pump. The bill phases in a \$130 annual registration fee for Iowa EV owners and delays until 2023 the establishment of a 2.6 cent per kilowatt-hour excise tax for "electric fuel" consumed at non-residential EV

charging stations. Striking a balance between encouraging more EVs on the highway and ensuring there is adequate funding for Iowa's roads and bridges is a complex issue. It's a conversation that we will continue to engage in as policies are discussed.

Other proposals that were brought forward but didn't make it to Gov. Reynold's desk include the electric co-ops' bill to ensure greater safety and reliability of service through adequate tree-trimming access. While the bill won't be signed into law this year, Iowa's electric cooperatives started a meaningful conversation at the Statehouse about the need for clarity about proper clearances from power lines. Electric cooperative members deserve safe and reliable power up and down every single power line, which is at the core of this dialogue.

As we close the chapter on the 2019 session and turn our attention toward planning for next year, electric cooperative members can rest easy knowing we're looking out for your interests at the Capitol. The state's lawmakers care about how their decisions impact you. The next time you see your legislators, be sure to thank them for their service! ⚡

Kevin Condon is the director of government relations for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Win a Char-Broil Electric Patio Bistro Grill!



The Char-Broil Electric Patio Bistro Electric Grill offers 240 square inches of primary cooking space. The burner has 1,750 watts of grilling power and heats up quickly without hot or cold spots so you can grill delicious fish, chicken, vegetables and more. Porcelain-coated steel grates help to keep food from sticking to your cooking space. Two wheels allow you to easily move the grill to the perfect spot, and the integrated cord management keeps the cord tucked away so you will not have to worry about any safety hazards as you move the grill around your yard.

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.livingwithenergyiowa.com no later than June 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 Kitchen Aid Stand Mixer from the April issue was Sandra Pralle, Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative. ⚡



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

During a national conference on May 7 in Houston, electric co-op employees worked together to set a new record for Operation: Veteran Smiles, a nonprofit organization founded by former Youth Tour delegate Amelia Day, who is 20 years old. She has been working to make life a little easier for hospitalized military veterans since she was in middle school.

Day used the project to apply for a community service scholarship for college, which led to her founding a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit corporation. Since then, Operation: Veteran Smiles has distributed more than 25,000 personal care kits to military veterans through VA medical centers across the country. For more information, visit operationveteransmiles.weebly.com.

“We packed over 600 care packages for veterans in two hours, and that’s the most volunteers have ever done in a single sitting. I started collecting items for hospitalized veterans in 2012 as a small 4-H service project. When I went to Washington, D.C., and talked about it on Youth Tour, kids thought it was a really cool project and that I should do more with it.”

- Amelia Day

POWERFUL IMAGE

Linemen bring safety education to life

Guthrie County REC Journeyman Lineman Jeremy Gruber volunteered his time May 5 to teach Guthrie Center Clover Kids about electrical safety. The children, who ranged in age from kindergarten through third grade, were shown how the bucket truck works, the safety gear linemen wear, and how linemen use their gear to climb electric poles.

In recognition of May being National Electrical Safety Month, cooperatives throughout Iowa participated in safety demonstrations at schools. Each year, electrical accidents and fires kill more than a thousand people and injure thousands more. The majority of those accidents can be prevented with awareness.

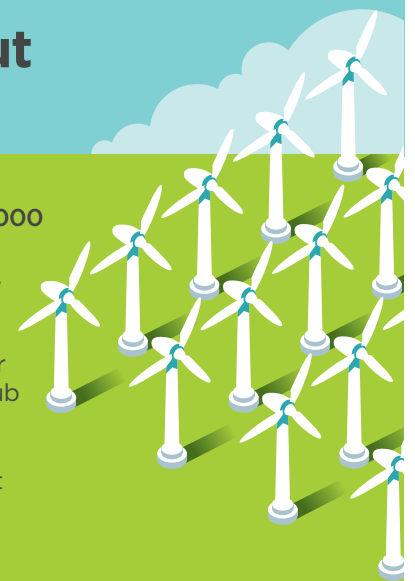
Helping young people understand how to stay safe around electricity is an important service cooperatives provide in their communities. Thank you to Iowa’s electric cooperative linemen for taking safety on the road! ⚡



Photo: Guthrie County REC

3 Fun Facts About Wind Energy

1. The blades on a wind turbine can turn **30 to 60 times per minute**, at about **1,000 to 1,800 rpm** – the speed required by most generators to produce electricity.
2. Wind turbines are getting bigger to become more effective. A typical rotor blade is **180 ft.** long and the turbine hub sits about **300 ft.** above the ground.
3. A large wind turbine can power about **500 homes** when the wind is blowing.



Iowa electric cooperatives provide flood relief funds

Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative, Central Iowa Power Cooperative and CoBank recently provided contributions to support flood relief efforts in Mills and Fremont counties. A \$5,000 donation was made to the Mills County Flood Fund and a \$5,000 contribution was given the Fremont County Flood Fund.

Flood relief funds were established by the Mills County Community Foundation and the Fremont County Community Foundation to provide relief in their respective counties to those who have been affected by the 2019 Missouri River flooding. Donations to the funds go directly to flood victims in Fremont and Mills County, Iowa, with the local County Public Health Department serving as the facilitator in distributing support.

Stacey Goodman, Iowa Foundations Director with the Community Foundations of Southwest Iowa, expressed her thanks, noting “These funds will make critical relief grants



Photo: Central Iowa Power Cooperative

Representatives from the Mills County Flood Fund accept a contribution from Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative, Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) and CoBank. Pictured from left: Sheri Bowen, administrator for Mills County Public Health; Kerry Koonce, manager of communications & public affairs for CIPCO; Phil Kinser, CEO and general manager at Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative; Carol Robertson, Mills County auditor; Lana White, chair of the Mills County Community Foundation Advisory Board; Liz Baldwin, Mills County Community Foundation Advisory board member; and Stacey Goodman, Iowa Foundations Director for the Community Foundations of Southwest Iowa.

possible to those whose homes and livelihoods have been so greatly impacted by the recent flooding in Mills and Fremont counties.”

According to Phil Kinser, CEO and general manager at Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative, “So

many of our members, neighbors and colleagues have been impacted by this historic flooding. As a cooperative, we are honored to be able to give back to help flood victims and support communities across southwest Iowa in their time of need.” 🌱

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Podcast: Saving monarch butterflies

The monarch butterfly is in trouble, with its numbers in decline for the last few decades, its habitat rapidly disappearing, and an Endangered Species Act listing on the horizon. Iowa’s electric cooperatives are members of the Iowa Monarch Conservation Consortium – a partnership of farmer and conservation groups, state agencies, companies and Iowa State University. The group has set a goal of 830,000 acres to be devoted to monarch butterfly habitat in the state by 2038.

Many co-ops – including those in Iowa – who are in the monarch’s annual migratory path from Mexico to Canada have taken significant steps to conserve the distinctive orange-and-black-winged pollinator. Some have planted acres of milkweed

– the only plant monarchs lay eggs on and feed on in the larvae stage – as well as nectar flowers for adult monarchs to graze on. These habitats lie in rights of way as well as around solar installations, headquarters and other co-op facilities.

For more information, check out a new podcast from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association,



Photo: Dairyland Power Cooperative

featuring Dairyland Power Cooperative’s Brad Foss as they discuss the challenges the monarch faces and the steps co-ops are taking to save this iconic species. To listen, visit <https://bit.ly/30qMwBF>. 🌱

Energy Storage Action Plan unveiled for Iowa

BY ANN THELEN

Iowa has elevated itself on the national stage as a leader in renewable energy. Energy providers and policymakers are continuously looking ahead with the goal to be prepared to serve the ever-changing needs of consumers.

Released in December 2016, and led by then Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds, an Iowa Energy Plan was developed to set state priorities and provide strategic guidance for Iowa's energy future. The plan addresses current and future energy supply and demand, examines energy policies and programs, and identifies emerging challenges and opportunities. The Iowa Energy Plan was a culmination of a year-long process that consisted of soliciting statewide public input via working groups and community forums and meetings with representatives from state agencies and industry associations and organizations. Iowa's electric cooperatives were actively involved with development of the plan by serving on the working groups and providing input.

As part of implementation of the Iowa Energy Plan, the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Iowa Energy Office worked with the state's energy industry stakeholders – including electric cooperatives – to develop Iowa's first-ever Energy Storage Action Plan, which was released in May.

“The goal of the Iowa Energy Storage Committee was to assemble a diverse mix of Iowa energy stakeholders to discuss how Iowa can best prepare for the future. With the wide-ranging benefits energy storage can provide, the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) wanted to initiate this project to begin to recognize and capture its economic benefits,” says IEDA Director Debi Durham. “This effort resulted in the Iowa Energy Storage Action Plan, which outlines recommendations that



maximize this emerging technology and further complement Iowa's ample renewable energy resources. The collaborative dialog by the committee members identified opportunities for Iowa to continue its leadership in the energy arena – now is the time to take action.”

Storage types and future policies

In developing the plan, the group examined various kinds of energy storage and the potential benefits and challenges. Whether it's a utility-scale or a residential application, energy

storage is part of a proactive discussion related to the delivery of safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible energy for consumers.

“Energy storage is one more element in the technological advancements taking place in the industry,” says Regi Goodale, director of regulatory affairs for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and a member of the Iowa Energy Storage Committee. “With any new technology, it's up to each electric cooperative to assess the potential viability for its members.”

The federal government, through



the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, is also working on policies relating to electric energy storage. Electric cooperatives have been participating in the process of these changes and determining how they might impact cooperative members. As more affordable and effective energy storage options continue to emerge, it's likely that state and local policies will be developed in addition to federal policies.

Goodale adds that electric cooperatives have been working on energy storage solutions for many years in the form of thermal storage in water heaters. Storing water that's been heated with electricity helps to reduce peak energy use, which saves on energy costs. Ice storage is another example of thermal energy storage; water is frozen at night when electricity costs are lower, and the thawing ice water is utilized in

HVAC units to cool the air for air conditioning. This process provides cost-effective cooling systems. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association uses this technology at its headquarters in Virginia.

In the July issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa*, Goodale will share more information about electric cooperatives and storage. The full energy storage action plan is available on IEDA's website at <https://bit.ly/2Wcx25k>. ⚡

Recommendations for energy storage solutions

- 1 The storage committee collaborated to determine the recommendations on how Iowa should prepare for and embrace energy storage. Through deeper analysis, identify and remove key barriers to storage expansion**

IEDA should fund a study to evaluate potential benefits, as well as identify barriers, to expand the storage industry and the application of that storage in Iowa.

- 2 Encourage and support storage pilot projects to learn operational and financial gaps**

IEDA's Energy Office will grant special consideration to proposed projects requesting funding that include an energy storage element and will encourage the Iowa Energy Center to take a similar position. This will lay the groundwork for more storage pilot projects

- 3 Glean best practices through collaboration with Midwestern states, national storage experts, and Iowa's colleges and universities**

IEDA will continue to collaborate with utilities, Iowa's colleges and universities, stakeholders and

regional partners, such as MISO and the Midwest Governors Association, to maintain an open dialogue on how best to prepare for storage in this evolving market.

- 4 Realize the job and economic benefits of storage in Iowa**

Policy makers should feel encouraged to advance supportive storage specific policy to further attract and grow the industry to Iowa. As policy advances, leaders must ensure storage costs are allocated fairly to avoid a shift in costs. If dedicated federal storage tax incentives are established, Iowa should consider offering a complementary state incentive like its solar tax incentives.

- 5 Update building codes, standards and regulations for acceptance of storage**

The Iowa Utilities Board can work with IEDA to ensure the proper storage policy is in place. IEDA should encourage the collaboration of the Iowa Department of Public Safety and other industry stakeholders to place visibility on the building codes, standards and regulations that are restricting the evolution and advancement of storage. Adequate consumer protections must be maintained, and if compliance is still justified, it can be confirmed.

- 6 Resiliency benefits of energy storage**

IEDA should continue working with industry stakeholders to further investigate and communicate the resiliency benefits of energy storage. Natural disasters and severe weather will always be a threat, and by adding storage, Iowa communities will be better prepared. First responders will have the power required to assist those in need during times of hardship.

- 7 Energy storage paired with EV charging stations and other infrastructure**

IEDA and the Iowa Department of Transportation should continue to encourage the addition of storage for its peak shaving capabilities when further developing and expanding future EV infrastructure.

- 8 Ensure updated safety standards and training for first responders**

IEDA will facilitate discussions with applicable stakeholders to evaluate the possibility of policy updates and the training needed by first responders and other safety professionals to handle these new technologies. ⚡

FAVORITE Summertime RECIPES



Rainbow Spritzer

- ½ cup blueberries
- ½ cup kiwi, chopped and peeled
- ½ cup fresh pineapple, chopped
- ½ cup fresh strawberries, slice
- 1 cup ginger ale
- ½ cup pineapple juice, chilled
- ½ cup lemonade, chilled

In four tall glasses layer blueberries, kiwi, pineapple and strawberries. Mix remaining ingredients and pour over fruit. Serve immediately.

Laura DeSmet • Larchwood • Lyon REC

Cashew Chicken Rotini Salad

- 16 ounces spiral or rotini pasta
- 4 cups cooked chicken, cubed
- 20 ounces pineapple tidbits, drained
- 1½ cups sliced celery
- ¾ cup thinly sliced green onions
- 1 cup seedless red grapes
- 1 cup seedless green grapes
- 5 ounces dried cranberries
- 1 cup ranch salad dressing
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- 2 cups salted cashews

Cook pasta according to package instructions. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine chicken, pineapple, celery, onions, grapes and cranberries. Drain pasta and rinse in cold water; then stir into chicken mixture. In a small bowl, whisk the ranch salad dressing and mayonnaise. Pour over salad and toss until coated. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Just before serving, stir in cashews.

Jackie Netherton • Ida Grove • North West REC

Strawberry Tapioca Jell-O Salad

- 2 small packages vanilla tapioca pudding
- 1 small package strawberry Jell-O
- 3 cups water
- 2 8-ounce containers Cool Whip
- 2 cups freshly sliced strawberries

In a saucepan mix Jell-O, tapioca and water. Stir and cook until thick and bubbly. Cool. Stir in Cool Whip and strawberries. Stir all together, pour into a serving bowl and chill until firmly set.

Heather Lair • Danville • Access Energy Cooperative

Taffy Apple Salad

- 16 ounces crushed pineapple
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 3 pounds apples, do not peel
- 16 ounces Cool Whip
- 12 ounces salted peanuts

Cook pineapple, eggs, flour, vinegar and sugar in a medium-sized pan over medium heat, stirring. When it is thick like pudding, remove from heat. Cool in refrigerator (this step can be made the day before). Dice apples, mix with Cool Whip and pudding mixture. Chop peanuts and mix all but ¼ cup in with the apple pudding mixture. Sprinkle remaining peanuts on top.

Connie Twente • Hudson • Grundy County REC

PLAN AHEAD

Do prep work during the cooler parts of the day. If a recipe calls for cooking an ingredient, such as hard-boiled eggs, fire up the stove top first thing in the morning. Using heat-generating appliances in the cooler parts of the day will help to keep your air conditioner from having to work so hard to keep your home cool.

Mom's Potato Salad

- 5 pounds potatoes, cooked
- 1 dozen hard-boiled eggs
- 1 cup chopped celery
- ½ cup diced onion
- ½ cup sweet pickle relish
- 2 teaspoons Lawry's seasoned salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 3 cups mayonnaise
- Paprika

Dice potatoes and place in large mixing bowl. Dice nine eggs and add to potatoes. Add pickle relish, celery, onions, seasoned salt and pepper. Mix in mayonnaise and refrigerate at least four hours. Garnish with remaining eggs, sliced. Sprinkle with paprika, if desired.

**Brenda Meierotto • West Point
Access Energy Cooperative**

Calico Bean Bake

- ½ pound hamburger
- ½ pound bacon, cut up
- 1 cup chopped onion
- ½ cup ketchup
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 can pork and beans
- 1 can kidney beans
- 1 can black beans

Brown meats and onion. Mix all ingredients and place in a greased baking dish. Bake covered at 350 degrees F for 1½ hours. Goes great with hot dogs, brats or burgers!

Steph Messner • Rock Rapids • Lyon REC

Sweet-Sour Pasta Salad

- 16 ounces tri-color spiral pasta, cooked and drained
- 1 medium red onion, chopped
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1 medium cucumber, chopped
- 1 medium pepper (any color), chopped
- 2 tablespoons parsley
- 1½ cups sugar
- ½ cup vinegar
- 1 tablespoon ground mustard
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

In large bowl combine cooked pasta, chopped vegetables and parsley, set aside. In saucepan combine sugar, vinegar, mustard and garlic powder. Cook over medium-low heat 10 minutes or until sugar is dissolved. Pour over salad, toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours. Serve with slotted spoon.

**Cindy Briggs • Centerville
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

Best-Ever Fruit Salad

- 1 can chunky pineapple
- 1 large box instant vanilla pudding
- 1 can mandarin oranges, drained
- Seedless purple grapes
- 1 banana

Mix together undrained pineapple and instant pudding. Add mandarin oranges and grapes (as many or as few as you prefer). Add sliced banana right before serving. Double the recipe for summer picnics!

Natalie Herrington • Nevada • Consumers Energy

TAKE IT OUTSIDE

Instead of staying inside while you prep dinner, do what you can outside – and involve the kids. Shuck corn and wash, peel, and chop vegetables in the summer air. Use your grill, portable roaster or Instant Pot right outside!

SUMMER TIPS

FIRE UP THE GRILL

Don't limit yourself to using the grill just for cooking meat. Vegetables and fruits, such as pineapple, are delicious on the grill. Make brightly colored skewers with zucchini, squash, tomatoes, peppers and carrots. Always keep food safety in mind and cook raw meat on a separate part of the grill.

SUMMER TIPS

Wanted: Fall Favorites

The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!

Fall brings changing leaves and crisp, cool nights. But the season also means it's time for comfort food, harvest meals and tailgating recipes. Share your fall 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.

The deadline is June 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

PACK A PICNIC

Take your meal on the road with a simple picnic. Enjoy family time at one of Iowa's beautiful parks for a relaxing change of pace. Make it an electronics-free mealtime for an added bonus!

SUMMER TIPS

Iowa programs provide a pipeline for leaders

BY KAY SNYDER

Iowa's electric cooperatives are anchor institutions in communities across rural Iowa. Co-op staff and members – both now and in the future – provide diverse perspectives, new ideas and strong leadership to Iowa's organizations, businesses, communities and the state. Lifelong leadership development is key to finding and fostering the people who will continue to lead Iowa forward.

There are many opportunities for leadership development across the state of Iowa. Local and regional leadership programs provide a great avenue in identifying and developing the next generation of leaders. The Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI) Foundation provides three outstanding programs targeted at high school students, college students and adult professionals. These opportunities might be right for you, a family member, community representative or a friend!

Business Horizons – Exploring career opportunities for students

Business Horizons allows Iowa high school students to explore career opportunities and experience hands-on working environments with their peers. Teams of students work alongside Iowa professionals to navigate exciting challenges and competitions throughout the five-day program. Students create a product, develop a business and marketing



Jim Gossett, CEO of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative, helped plan the May Leadership Iowa session on economic development that was held in Carroll County.

strategy, film an infomercial and pitch their idea to a panel of investors at the end of the week.

Leadership Iowa University – Bridging the gap between college and career

Leadership Iowa University is designed to bridge the gap between college and career. This weeklong program seeks to cultivate and develop our state's future workforce by equipping them with diverse knowledge, skills, and perspectives that will allow them to be engaged leaders and open doors to new ideas and employment opportunities within our state.

Leadership Iowa – Promoting leadership and civic responsibility

Leadership Iowa is an issues-awareness program promoting leadership and civic responsibility in

our state. It is in its 36th year and has a statewide alumni network that is more than 1,100 strong.

Through a series of eight two-day monthly sessions, participants encounter a wide range of eye-opening experiences and insights that address the opportunities and challenges facing Iowa. This year's class session topics included agriculture and renewable energy; economic development; industry/workforce; government; public safety/community preparedness and response; and education.

The impact of the Leadership Iowa experience is different for all. Consistent feedback includes recognition of the strong and meaningful friendships that are forged with this diverse group of professionals in your class. The information and connections gained



Business Horizons



Leadership Iowa University

Leadership alumni participated in an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve at Camp Dodge.



during the program often inspire new ideas and ambitious goals for participants, along with a renewed sense of motivation to go forth and lead. There are endless examples of collaboration, business deals, business starts, job promotions,

board appointments and successful elections to public office that have taken place with Leadership Iowa alumni.

“I treasure my participation in Leadership Iowa. I was born and raised in Iowa but ventured

to Illinois for many years, where I attended college and started my career and family. After 15 years east of the border, I found an employment opportunity at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC), which enabled my family to relocate to Iowa,” says Erin Campbell, IAEC’s director of communications. “Participating in Leadership Iowa gave me a wonderful opportunity to reconnect and fall in love with Iowa all over again. I learned about the challenges and opportunities facing various industries and regions and formed friendships with dozens of diverse Iowans who are also passionate about this great state. My Leadership Iowa experience has helped me greatly in my role to support electric cooperatives across the state.” ⚡



Electric cooperative involvement is strong

Co-op involvement is strong in these statewide programs. Many of the co-ops have team members who have participated in Leadership Iowa. Current involvement includes:

- **Sarah Heggen**, communications/member services relations specialist at Central Iowa Power Cooperative, a member of the 2018-2019 Leadership Iowa class, says this of her experience. “Leadership Iowa has been a welcome challenge for me. I’ve enjoyed connecting with people from different parts of the state that I normally never would have met. We’ve had opportunities to immerse ourselves in the communities we visit while diving into discussions on statewide topics that have very real implications locally. Providing top-notch education, workers for manufacturing jobs, affordable

housing, robust economic development and crucial public safety are a common thread running through communities big and small from river to river. These experiences have broadened my view of, and deepened my love for, this state.”

- **Jim Gossett**, manager of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative helped plan and served as a local host for the May Leadership Iowa session on economic development that was held in Carroll County.
- **Ann Thelen**, editor of *Living with Energy in Iowa*, and **Rand Fisher**, president of Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) are Leadership Iowa alums and serve on the ABI Foundation Board, which is the non-profit entity that oversees Business Horizons, Leadership Iowa University and Leadership Iowa.

- **Tresa Hussong**, vice president of customer/corporate relations for Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative and **Kay Snyder** serve on the Leadership Iowa Board of Governors.

Leadership Iowa alumni are encouraged to continue learning about Iowa issues and opportunities. **Tod Faris**, member services/economic development manager for Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative and **Kay Snyder** recently participated in an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) event at Camp Dodge to gain an understanding of the benefits and obligations of employing members of the National Guard.

Additional information is available at www.iowaabi.org/abi-foundation. ⚡

Kay Snyder is the director of marketing and communications for the Iowa Area Development Group.



Capitol Hill visits show the power of cooperative advocacy

In May, more than 40 Iowa electric cooperative representatives went to Washington, D.C., to participate in the 2019 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Legislative Conference. Together with more than 2,000 of their fellow cooperative representatives from across the nation, Iowa managers, directors and employees spent three days sharing the electric cooperative story with federal lawmakers.

Electric cooperative advocates talked with members and staff of Iowa’s Congressional Delegation, staff from the Executive Office of the President and USDA Under Secretary Bill Northey. Key conversation topics included protecting cooperatives’ not-for-profit status, rightsizing pension premiums, protecting Iowa’s power supply, and improving rural infrastructure and broadband access.

The group was well-received in every meeting, as evidenced through support voiced for several bills and issues by Iowa’s representatives and senators, underscoring the continuing success of Iowa’s electric cooperatives federal advocacy efforts. Four of Iowa’s conference participants shared their thoughts with *Living with Energy in Iowa* about why these legislative visits are important. ⚡



Jim Gossett, CEO, Racoon Valley Electric Cooperative

Interacting with Iowa members, federal agencies and their key staff is the way the needs of our members are voiced in Washington, D.C. There’s no substitute for direct contact. Year after year, we see results in legislation and regulation by building and

maintaining these relationships. When we can personalize an issue along with its impact on our members and what it means to those at the end of the line, policymakers in Washington take note.



Tim Marienau, CEO, Prairie Energy Cooperative

Having the opportunity to visit with our Iowa senators and representatives and have candid conversations gives electric cooperatives the chance to tell our story on the national issues that impact rural Iowa and our members.

It’s vital that we maintain and build strong relationships with our Senators and House Representatives. By frequently engaging with lawmakers, they trust we have the best interests of our members – who are also their constituents – in mind when we share our concerns on the issues.



Holley McCormick, Manager of Economic Development & Community Relations, Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Investing the time and resources to meet with our elected officials in Washington is time well spent for many reasons. We owe it to our legislators to explain, in our words,

why topics are important to us and how they affect serving our members. Giving legislators real-life examples and painting a realistic picture – all the while sitting in their offices in D.C. – helps them understand things from our vantage point. Iowa’s electric cooperatives provide an essential service and are engaged in keeping rural Iowa vital. We need to tell these stories and emphasize our 80-plus-years of unwavering commitment to the people and places of Iowa.



Jon Miles, CEO, Pella Cooperative Electric Association

Building solid working relationships with our elected officials in Washington, D.C., is important in keeping the lights on back home while maintaining reliable and affordable electricity. It’s incumbent on electric cooperative representatives to

effectively engage on matters that impact co-ops and the members we serve. We can be proud of the relationships we have built – based on honesty and trust – with our elected officials and their staff members. We take this role very seriously and understand that the sole purpose of attending these meetings is to represent the best interests of our members back home.

Electricity on the go!

BY MARIA KAVENSKY

Everyone enjoys the great outdoors. The fresh air, getting in touch with nature and physical exercise are key highlights of camping. Today, while exploring and adventuring, you can also still stay connected. Although the great outdoors does not come equipped with ready-to-use electricity, nature already provides energy that can power various on-the-go gadgets. While spending time outside, you can harness power from the sun, wind and water to charge devices that can make your camping experience even better.

One example is BioLite's portable solar light. The device includes a built-in solar panel that can be placed on a backpack during the day. In about seven hours of charging in the sun, you can reach 50 hours of burn time from the small device. After a full day of exploring, you can relax in your tent and enjoy a new book with plenty of light. This product is just one of many by BioLite, which sells various products meant for off-grid households and recreational use of fuel-independent charging.

LuminAID offers a similar product, the PackLite Firefly USB, which is an inflatable lantern with five lighting modes. The device is compact,



Photo: LuminAID

LuminAID's PackLite Firefly USB is an inflatable lantern with five lighting modes. The device is compact, waterproof and portable for easy charging on the go. It can be charged by direct sunlight (about 10 hours) or through a micro USB input (one to two hours)



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waterproof and portable for easy charging on the go. The PackLite Firefly USB needs about 10 hours of sunlight to fully charge.

If you want a smaller solar-powered gadget for lighting, try products like Davis Instruments LightCap. This cap fits any 2-inch water bottle, like those sold by Nalgene or Camelback, and it's extremely convenient since you don't need to worry about the gadget as long as you keep it on your water bottle. At night, the water bottle lights up from the cap shining through. A few different versions are available on Amazon for about \$30 or less.

To power all your USB-based devices, such as cell phones, speakers, camp lights or GoPros, you can walk around with a USB solar backpack. There are several varieties of backpacks available from different manufacturers, ranging in price from \$50 to more than \$200, and normally taking about four to six hours to fully charge.

For longer camping trips, there are portable showers that can be heated by the sun. The reservoir bag holds five gallons of water, which can be used for multiple showers, and warms up through a heat-locking material when left in the sun. These are convenient for camping but could also come in handy for emergencies when hot water isn't accessible. Solar-powered portable showers are available from different manufacturers. Visit Amazon.com or check local retail stores like Walmart and Cabela's to review your options.

When the skies are cloudy or there's a lot of tree coverage, there are



Photo: LuminAID

Who says you can't listen to your favorite songs in the great outdoors? LuminAID's Suncat Solar-Powered Speaker is waterproof, sandproof and ideal for use anywhere.

additional energy sources to be found in nature. Although less common, another way to charge your USB devices is by using a small turbine by Waterlily that harnesses either wind or hydro energy. By letting the turbine run in the wind or in a fast-moving stream, you can charge any of your devices. Even when there isn't a strong gust or a fast stream, the turbine comes with a hand crank that generates power as well. Visit www.waterlilyturbine.com for more information.

Just five years ago, many of these gadgets were still prototypes, and now most of them are easily accessible to buy online. Thanks to these advances, we can enjoy the outdoors and stay connected while keeping a clean footprint. ⚡

Maria Kanevsky is a program manager for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.

Take control of summer electricity bills

BY DERRILL HOLLY

We expect Iowa summers to be hot and most of us do all we can to keep our homes as comfortable as possible as outdoor temperatures inch upward.

When it comes to electricity, each of us has the power to help control our costs – we just have to make thoughtful choices to make energy savings pay off in dollars and cents.

Look toward the west. If you don't have trees, a porch overhang or awnings shading windows exposed to afternoon sun, there's a good chance radiant heat could be driving up indoor temperatures and adding to your overall cooling costs.

Window coverings can help. Blinds or shades can deflect intense sunlight, and draperies lined with a thermal radiant barrier can block up to 95 percent of sunlight and 100 percent of ultraviolet rays.


Take advantage of air flow

Comfort and cooling are easier to maintain when we take advantage of air flow. A ceiling fan rotating counterclockwise can pull warm air up above your living zone, making a difference during summer months. The evaporative effect of circulating air blowing across our skin makes us more comfortable, but that benefit completely disappears when we leave the room, so turning fans off in unoccupied rooms will save energy.

HVAC filters have a lot to do with airflow through your heating and cooling systems. Dirty filters restrict circulation through your returns, requiring your cooling system to work harder. If you can see dirt in a filter, it's likely 50 percent clogged. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on replacing disposable filters or cleaning permanent ones. If you have pets, consider checking the filter more frequently.

Time-shift activities

You can save money and electricity by time-shifting some of the most energy-intensive activities away from



Ceiling fans help keep us cool during the summer, but that benefit completely disappears when we leave the room. Turn fans off in unoccupied rooms to save energy.

Energy-intensive activities like doing laundry can increase heat and humidity inside your home. Try time-shifting these types of chores to off-peak hours, when energy demand is lower.



peak energy use periods that normally occur during the hottest hours of the day. Cooking, doing laundry and using power tools can increase both heat and humidity inside your home, making it harder to reach or maintain a comfortable temperature.

Remember, controlling energy costs will always work better with buy-in from *everyone* in the household.

- One open window anywhere can be like an uncapped chimney, pulling the conditioned air you pay to cool outside.
- A gaming system, computer or big screen television left on but unwatched produces nearly as much heat as it does when it's in use.
- Lighting and ventilation fans add convenience and provide benefits when they are needed, but when left on and unattended, they use energy.

- A bag of ice poured into a cooler will chill summer beverages as effectively and less expensively than an aging refrigerator in a hot garage.

Check with your local electric cooperative for details on programs that can help you control energy costs and avoid seasonal billing challenges. Your co-op may also offer energy audits or additional information that can help you identify and correct problems that might be contributing to higher bills and increased energy use in your home. ⚡

Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.

Air travel woes

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

I've flown a lot lately, both for business and for leisure. At one point in my life, I loved flying. It seemed exotic and exciting, with the promise of faraway places and unfamiliar customs and sights. Even sitting at the gate of a flight at the airport, listening to the swirl of languages around me, gave me a thrill.

I've since gotten over that.

Traveling by plane has become a giant hassle, even if it is the quickest way from Point A to Point B. Seats are smaller, restrictions for carry-on items have gotten tighter and people have gotten meaner. Just witness some of the viral videos of out-of-control passengers (and even flight crews) that have made the rounds lately. It starts with check-in at a faulty kiosk that boots you out and repeatedly makes you start over. Then continues as you disrobe to go through security and then have to get re-dressed at the end, hauling shoes, belts, laptops and purses in your wake.

The latest indignity is the Basic Economy fare. If you thought airfares were no-frills before, just hang on to the water bottle you'll have to dump before security. Basic Economy strips you of any carry-ons, any seat selection and any dignity. But hey, you'll save a few bucks!

I travel light, so paying for luggage has seldom been much of an issue for me. But if there's anywhere you should be spending your money, it's for seat selection, even if it costs an extra \$10. If you don't, I guarantee you'll be sitting in the dreaded middle seat between a sumo wrestler and a lady who takes 45 minutes to eat a tuna fish sandwich.

Another snub you'll have to endure with Basic Economy is your boarding "zone." Everyone knows



that first class and business class, people with children or elderly parents, military personnel, those who are members of some secret society with the airline and those who know the magical handshake get to board first. Then come the swarming masses, yearning to breathe free, who will be fighting for overhead space.

If you're Basic Economy, you are Boarding Zone 9. Before I had purchased this fare, I didn't know there was a Zone 9. Was this on the wing? Behind the restrooms?

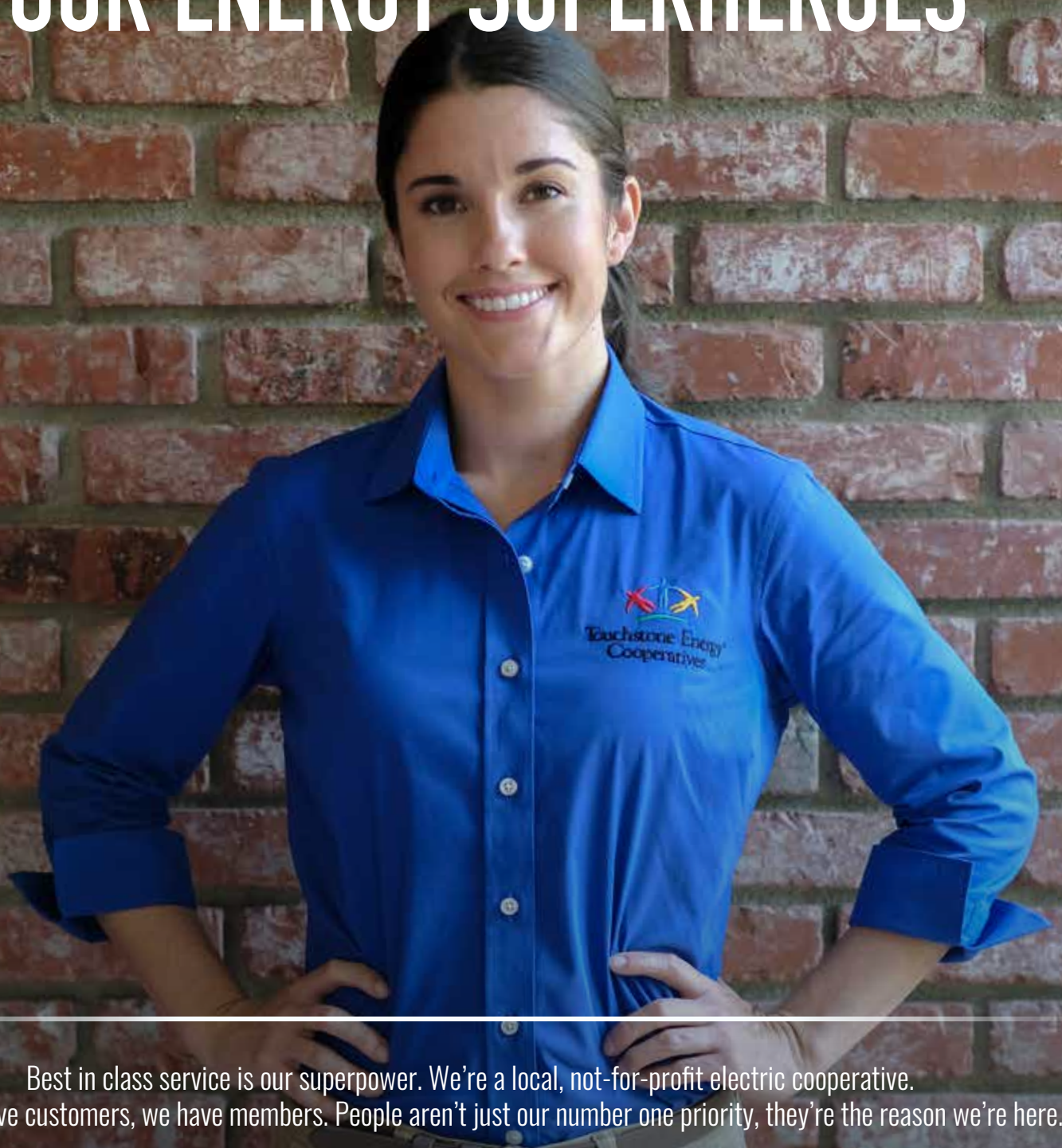
I wasn't far off. Zone 9 encompasses the detritus of the airfare world. You will march onto the plane in last place with "Cheapskate" branded on your forehead. And, you'll be lugging the carry-on you're trying to pass off as

a purse or personal item. It will have to be stuffed under the seat in front of you, crunching your feet and calves until they're fast asleep. You'll be seated among the comfort ferrets or comfort parrots or something else that will not provide comfort to you in any way. You will be passed over for the miniature baggie of pretzels because they've run out. Instead, you will be offered a raisin cookie. In short, you will have a miserable journey.

Not that any of this will dissuade me in any way from traveling. After all, the sumo wrestler let me have the armrests. ✈️

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.

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