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JULY 2019

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ON THE COVER

This month's cover photo is courtesy of Rachel Rogers, communications specialist with Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative. Rogers captured this shot at Perry Creek Dairy in Plymouth County. The county is also home to Le Mars, which is known as the "Ice Cream Capital of the World," and local dairies are essential to the production of ice cream, yogurt, cheese and many other foods. Perry Creek Dairy was honored in 2018 as one of eight recipients of the Iowa Venture Award by the Iowa Area Development Group (IADG). Perry Creek Dairy is a multi-generational family operation. They recently opened a second facility featuring an 80-stall parlor, milking up to 3,600 cows three times per day. The dairy has 7.5 acres of under-roof, free-stall barns for cow comfort, safety, and environmental stewardship. ⚡



Energy storage goes back many years

BY REGI GOODALE

Growing up on the farm – and being one of several boys – I was exposed to a lot of machinery, engines and other equipment that helped to keep the farm running. Technology was always evolving. In our free time, my siblings and I loved being outside. One of our favorite pastimes was hunting for nightcrawlers after dark using flashlights. We would sell the nightcrawlers for 25 cents per dozen to area residents for fishing. Back then, when I was just single digits in age – I had my first exposure to the basics of energy storage in the form of using disposable alkaline batteries to power our flashlights.

Fast forward to today, and flashlights mainly use light-emitting diodes (LEDs) and run on rechargeable batteries. Like nearly all technological advancements, energy storage technology continues to evolve. Sure, we still have batteries and other small-scale storage devices. However, where storage technology is being evaluated to be most affordable and efficient for consumers is for larger scale, energy and electricity use. With the increase of intermittent renewable energy resources, such as wind and solar, in power generation portfolios the need to store energy is a hot topic. However, it's not necessarily a new topic.

For example, electric cooperatives have integrated energy storage solutions for a long time through water heater thermal storage. In this case, water is heated using electricity and stored in water heaters to reduce peak energy use.

Most recently, Iowa's electric cooperatives have been working with the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Iowa Energy Office and statewide stakeholders to develop Iowa's first-ever Energy Storage Action Plan, which was released in



May. Historically, the energy industry has utilized the raw energy sources for the storage of energy, such as coal, natural gas and uranium, which must be converted into electricity or kilowatt-hours. The current focus seems to be focused primarily on storage of electricity in batteries.

Today, the research is working to advance the storage of electricity in batteries. To date, the challenge has been making the technology capable of storing large quantities of electricity cost-effectively. When co-op members think of energy storage, many may think of having a robust storage unit in their basement to provide backup power from a storm that knocks out power for a couple of days. The industry isn't there yet in providing a cost-effective solution for these cases. Right now, the average energy storage options would provide only a few hours of storage and are expensive. Other alternatives, such as backup generators, remain more cost-

effective. If you are exploring storage or backup generators contact your local electric cooperative as they are excellent sources of information.

From an electric cooperative perspective, we're continuously assessing these new technologies. In Iowa, three key storage opportunities are currently being examined: 1) Utility scale storage, 2) On-premise storage for a large-scale consumer, and 3) A residential energy storage pilot project by an electric cooperative in northeast Iowa. As these potentially develop, any technology that becomes a resource for cooperatives must meet the criteria of being safe, affordable, reliable and environmentally responsible for members. At the local level, integrating any new technology into the cooperative's system must make sense for its members.

We look forward to continuing to be an active participant in state and federal policy discussions surrounding this evolving technology. ⚡

Regi Goodale is the director of regulatory affairs for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a Nest® Learning Thermostat



The third-generation Nest® Learning Thermostat features a thinner, sleeker design and a bigger, sharper display. With Farsight technology, it lights up when it sees you coming and shows you the time or temperature from across the room. With an easy-to-read display, this thermostat will help make your home not only smart but energy efficient. With just a few manual adjustments, the Nest thermostat can learn your habits and start to save you money by automatically adjusting the temperature.

The winner of this month's contest will be able to select from four fantastic colors – copper, stainless steel, black and white. Valued at \$250. ⚡

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.livingwithenergyiowa.com no later than July 31, 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 Ice Cream Maker from the May issue was Mark Kurimski, Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Connected communities are fundamental to all aspects of growth and prosperity, and essential to keep our young people and attract others to rural Iowa. ...There’s a renaissance underway in small towns across our state and it’s fueled by hardworking local leaders who adapt with the times and think differently.”

– Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds, after signing the Empower Rural Iowa Bill. Her office picked the small town of Wilton, north of Muscatine, as the backdrop for her signing the bill into law. The law directs \$5 million for broadband and \$25 million for workforce housing tax credits to encourage workforce housing and internet broadband expansion in rural Iowa.

POWERFUL IMAGE



Iowa Youth Tour participants had the opportunity to present a wreath at a public ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. To learn more about this year’s Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., see Pages 6-7. ⚡

NOTHING COMPARES!

Visit Iowa’s electric cooperatives at the Iowa State Fair!

Once again, members of Iowa’s electric cooperatives can visit us at the Iowa State Fair! During the 11-day run of the fair – August 8-18, the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives’ booth will again be in the Rastetter 4-H Building on the south side of the fairgrounds. New this year, the booth will feature an updated design, along with highlighting the Youth Tour and co-op career opportunities.

YOUTH TOUR

On the Youth Tour side of the booth, visitors can catch visuals and testimonials from the 2019 trip to Washington, D.C., on the larger screen. From time-to-time, some Youth Tour students might even join us in the booth to share their stories firsthand!



IowaStateFair

OFFICIAL SPONSOR
AUG 8-18

COOPERATIVE CAREERS

On the cooperative career side of the booth, visitors can interact with NIPCO’s award-winning Lineman 360 virtual reality experience to see what it’s like working safely as a lineman!

As always, staff from Iowa’s electric cooperatives will be volunteering in the booth to answer members’ questions about energy efficiency, renewable energy, safety and more! ⚡

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

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



MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN



Co-op establishes leadership and development program

To help further develop leadership skills in its existing employees, Corn Belt Power established the Leadership Exploration and Development (LEAD) program. Congratulations are in order for numerous Corn Belt Power employees who recently completed the LEAD program!

Working with Kathy Peterson (far right in picture) of PeopleWorks, Inc., Corn Belt Power personnel developed a program outline that includes 360 assessments, guest speakers from each department, tours of Corn Belt Power facilities and trips to affiliated organizations' headquarters.

Participants learn about topics such as setting goals, leading change, managing stress and dealing with difficult conversations. Those in the program attend sessions about cooperative financials, generating sources, electric rates and the cooperative business model.

LEAD participants read books on leadership, interview leaders they



Graduates of Corn Belt Power's LEAD program (front row, from left) Mike Finnegan, Jeremy Stattelman and Patrick Connor. (Back row, from left) Brittany Dickey, Marena Fritzler, Matt Donald, Tyler Herrig, Sam Moore and Josie Ubben.

admire and job shadow individuals whose work they would like to know more about. After each of these assignments, LEAD participants

will make presentations to the group on what they have learned.

Kudos to Corn Belt Power for establishing this valuable program! ⚡

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Guatemala planning trip a success

Iowa's electric cooperatives are proud to partner with co-ops in Illinois and Wisconsin to staff a National Rural Electric Cooperative Association International project, which will power 42 homes, a school and a health post for a total of 44 connections in the village of Salinas 7 Cerros in north-central Guatemala. The volunteer crew of 12 will be



responsible for installing the transformers, stringing the wire and all that entails building a distribution system. The full team, including four Iowa co-op linemen, will travel to Guatemala in late September to bring electricity to this underserved area.

In June, electric co-op team leaders from Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin traveled to Guatemala to assess the scope of work for the upcoming international project. Mike Berkenpas of North West Rural Electric Cooperative went on the planning trip as the Iowa Team Leader; he is wearing the dark shirt in the photo. Berkenpas volunteered to serve on this project to help others



in need. He shared that the people in the village were very friendly and said, "They live with so little, yet want to help with what you are giving to them."

In a fall issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa*, we'll share more details of the project. ⚡

Trip of a lifetime

Youth Tour is full of fun, education and friendships!

Thirty-eight high school students representing Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives traveled to Washington, D.C., from June 14-20 and joined more than 1,900 other students from across the nation for the 2019 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

Participants met their U.S. representatives and senators, started and ran their own cooperative, met student leaders from nearly every state and watched history come alive as they explored museums, memorials, monuments and other sites. Best of all, the students made friendships that will last a lifetime.

Sabrina Leistikow, an incoming senior for the 2019-2020 school year, was the winner of the *Living with Energy in Iowa* 2019 Youth Tour Contest. Her winning essay earned her a spot on this year's Youth Tour. She's the daughter of Kurt and Jenifer Leistikow, and her family is a member of Butler County REC.

"Seeing all of these monuments makes me realize how much impact I can have on the world as an ordinary person. George Washington was an ordinary man until he decided to lead America's victories against the British. Martin Luther King, Jr. was an ordinary man until he spoke up for blacks' rights and impacted their lives," Sabrina says. "All these people were unheard of and ordinary until they decided to step up and make a difference. So just imagine what I or you can do in this world if you only have the courage to take a stand. This realization would not have been possible without the opportunity of the Youth Tour!"

Enjoy these pictures of the students' journey! Find more on Facebook at www.facebook.com/IowaYouthTour 🌟

▶ Watch for more details about this year's Youth Tour in the August issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa*!



Everything was better than what everyone told me. This trip is above and beyond my imagination.

Maddy Stevenson —
Midland Power Cooperative





2019 Youth Tour participants and sponsoring electric cooperatives

Shelby Ryan	Access Energy Cooperative
Ellie Smith	Access Energy Cooperative
Mike Hagen	Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Skyler Kelly	Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Morgan Biretz	Butler County REC
Sabrina Leistikow	<i>Living with Energy in Iowa</i> (Butler County REC)
Kyler Sander	Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association
Sarah Herz	Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Collette Teno	Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Jamie Smith	Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Jack Chism	Consumers Energy
Kaylee Kleitsch	East-Central Iowa REC
Jacob Ludeking	East-Central Iowa REC
Luke Burlage	Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative
Paisley Kintigh	Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Courtney Ringleb	Franklin REC
Peyton Gingery	Grundy County REC
Ashley Sonderman	Harrison County REC
Kylie Greenfield	Heartland Power Cooperative
Clare Huisman	Heartland Power Cooperative
Gabrielle Janssen	Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative
Taylor Myers	Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative
Cody Huisman	Lyon REC
Kali Johnson	Lyon REC
Kassie Lamoureux	Midland Power Cooperative
Maddy Stevenson	Midland Power Cooperative
Ethan Rosonke	MiEnergy Cooperative
Paige Dagele	North West REC
Valeria Uribe	North West REC
Chloe Inskeep	Pella Cooperative Electric Association
Will Rasmussen	Pella Cooperative Electric Association
Jadyn Jondle	Prairie Energy Cooperative
Tessa Warnke	Prairie Energy Cooperative
Luke Handlos	Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative
Abygale Sherman	Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Anika Wenstrand	Southwest Iowa REC
Alaina Allen	T.I.P. REC
Kyle Rowan	United Electric Cooperative

Leadership delegate chosen

Sarah Herz from Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative was selected to serve as Iowa's Youth Leadership Council delegate during the Youth Tour. She will travel back to Washington, D.C., this month for leadership training. She also will speak at the annual meeting of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives in December and attend the annual meeting of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in New Orleans next year.

Herz, a recent graduate from Albia Community High School, is the daughter of Kevin and Janet Herz of Lovilla. While in high school she was involved in many activities, including volleyball, tennis, cross country, student council, National Honor Society and Blue Pride Buddies. Outside of school, she was involved with her church youth group and Iowa Honey Producers Association.



LET'S GRILL!

RECIPES FOR SUMMER'S SIZZLING SEASON



GET IT HOT

Preheat the grill 15 to 25 minutes before you start cooking to make sure it reaches the right temperature.

The grill should be 400-450°F for high, 350-400°F for medium-high, 300-350°F for medium and 250-300°F for low heat.

A properly heated grill sears foods on contact, keeps the insides moist and helps prevent sticking.

Grilled Corn on the Cob

- 6 ears corn
- 6 tablespoons butter, softened
- salt and pepper, to taste
- aluminum foil

Preheat outdoor grill for high heat and lightly oil grate. Peel back cornhusks and remove silk. Place 1 tablespoon butter with salt and pepper on each piece of corn. Close husks and wrap each ear of corn tightly in aluminum foil. Place on prepared grill and cook for approximately 30 minutes, turning occasionally until corn is tender.

**Denise Anderson • Ocheyedan
Osceola Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

South of the Border Burger

- 1 pound ground pork
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon oregano
- ¼ teaspoon seasoned salt
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

Gently mix together ground pork and seasonings, shape into four burgers about ¾-inch thick. Place on grill and grill about 5 minutes; turn and finish grilling 4-5 minutes more. Serve immediately.

Anita Mittag • Prescott • Southwest Iowa REC

Pork Tenderloin Kabobs

- 2 pork tenderloins
- salt
- pepper
- lemon juice
- 2-3 tablespoons honey mustard
- ½ pound sliced bacon
- 1 red pepper, cut into squares
- 1 onion, sliced
- ½ pound mushrooms, sliced
- 4-5 tablespoons oil
- skewers

Cover tenderloin with salt, pepper, lemon juice and mustard. Marinate in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Cut the meat into large cubes and wrap each in a piece of bacon. Place the meat and vegetables on skewers in desired order. Brush with oil and grill for approximately 30 minutes.

Marta Smigowska • Marshalltown • Consumers Energy

Grilled Squash

- 1 yellow squash
- 1 zucchini squash
- Italian dressing
- parmesan cheese

Cut each squash lengthwise in ½ strips. Brush with Italian dressing. Place on grill and grill only until firm, do not overcook. They should be a little crunchy. Before serving, sprinkle with parmesan cheese.

Alyce Hugeback • Hampton • Franklin REC

Pork Marinade

- 1 can lemon-lime soda
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ cup wine vinegar, optional

Place all ingredients in a mixing bowl and blend well. Use Iowa chops, butterfly chops or boneless pork tenderloin. Pierce deeply with a meat fork in several places, on both sides. Place in a shallow pan with a lid (a 9x13-inch lidded cake pan works well). Pour blended ingredients over top and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. This is enough for 6 large chops, double the recipe if needed.

Jennifer Judson-Harms • New Hampton
Butler County REC

Bacon-Wrapped Hamburgers

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 egg
- 2 teaspoons onion flakes
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon parmesan cheese
- ½ cup cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- 5 slices bacon

Combine all ingredients but bacon. Form into five patties; wrap with bacon and secure with a toothpick. Smoke or grill to desired doneness.

Lauren Zollinger • Rock Rapids • Lyon REC

Tangy Grilled Pork

- 2½-3 pound boneless pork loin roast
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1¼ teaspoon ground mustard
- ¾ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ cup horseradish mustard
- ½ cup apricot preserves

Rub roast with olive oil. Combine mustard, garlic powder and ginger then rub over roast. Wrap in tin foil and refrigerate overnight. Grill roast, covered, over indirect heat for 60 minutes. Combine horseradish mustard and preserves. Continue grilling 15-30 minutes, basting twice with sauce. Grill until a meat thermometer reads 160-170 degrees F. Heat remaining sauce to serve with roast.

Marci Domnick • Rock Rapids • Lyon REC

Grilled Vegetable Medley

- 6 potatoes, quartered
- 4 large carrots, cut in large pieces
- 1 large onion, quartered
- 1 cup snow peas
- 1 small zucchini squash, sliced
- olive oil
- salt
- pepper
- seasoned salt
- aluminum foil

Place all raw vegetables in a large bowl, sprinkle with olive oil, salt, pepper and seasoned salt until coated well. Wrap in two layers of heavy-duty foil. Place on heated grill for about 20 minutes. Serve hot. Any variation of vegetables can be used.

Penny Sue Haley • Keswick • T.I.P. REC

SAFETY FIRST

Food safety is a priority! Keep these rules from the USDA in mind: avoid cross-contamination by using separate cutting boards, utensils and platters for raw and cooked foods; refrigerate foods while marinating; and never baste with the marinating liquid. Make extra marinade and set aside just for basting.

GRILLING TIP

CHILL IT FAST

Chill food promptly! Bacteria can grow rapidly between 40- and 140-degrees F. Refrigerate any leftovers in shallow containers. Discard any food left out more than 2 hours (1 hour if temperature outside is above 90 degrees F).

GRILLING TIP

SAFE SMOKING

Smoking is done much more slowly than grilling, and as a result, the meat is tender and takes on a natural smoke flavoring. The temperature in the smoker should be maintained at 250 to 300 degrees F for safety. Use a food thermometer to be sure the food has reached a safe internal temperature.

GRILLING TIP

Wanted: Thanksgiving Side Dishes The Reward: \$25 for every one we publish!



Thanksgiving provides the ultimate setting to gather with friends and family while serving up your favorite recipes. Share the delicious side dish that always has a place at your table! 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 July 31, 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

Sweet Success: Dairy farms, ice cream and electric co-ops

BY ANGELA CATTON

If you live in a rural community, the term “farm to fork” is a familiar one. If you live in “The Ice Cream Capital of the World”, the term “farm to spoon” is much more relevant. And if your cooperative is North West Rural Electric Cooperative, the term “farm to spoon” means economic development and an opportunity to support a 106-year-old dairy manufacturer that calls Le Mars home.

July is National Ice Cream Month, so designated by the late President Ronald Reagan to pay tribute to his favorite dessert. Nowhere in the U.S. does this recognition mean more to community development than Le Mars and the rural electric cooperative that serves it.

Ice Cream Capital of the World®

Le Mars, located 30 miles north of Sioux City, might best be described as a bedroom community. But the residents of Le Mars (pop. 9,967) might better describe it as a bedroom community – with a view.

Le Mars has grown up alongside a family-run dairy operation which has become one of the largest ice cream manufacturers in the U.S. In 1994, Le Mars was officially recognized by the Iowa legislature as “The Ice Cream Capital of the World” thanks to the fact that more ice cream is made by Wells Enterprises, Inc. in a single location than in any other city in the world. This claim to fame has punctuated the community’s tourism industry as fans of ice cream and the



Photo: Wells Enterprises, Inc.

Farm to Spoon interactive exhibit at the new Wells Visitor Center & Ice Cream Parlor.

Blue Bunny® brand descend upon the community for events such as the annual “Ice Cream Days” festival and to visit the Ice Cream Parlor, located in the heart of the downtown’s vibrant business district. In fact, on June 12, Wells Enterprises cut the ribbon on its re-imagined and rebranded Wells Visitor Center and Ice Cream Parlor with an expanded ice cream menu and interactive experience. Learn more by visiting www.ilovewells.com.

Family ownership and the sweet spot of success

Wells Enterprises, Inc., founded by Fred H. Wells Jr. in Le Mars in 1913, currently employs nearly 3,500 workers across the country and proudly remains family owned. Fred’s great-nephew, Mike Wells, the third-generation leader, continues to advocate for the cultivation of business, workforce recruitment and development, and the dairy industry

in an area of the state that some might think is “the sweet spot” for commercial viability.

The success of Wells Enterprises began to draw the attention of neighboring states that had tried to lure the organization away with the promise of a richer business climate and a plentiful supply of milk. In the early 2000s, a volatile dairy commodities market and a shortage of dairy producers in the area led Wells to contemplate a move from the community it had called home for generations. During this time, Wells was outgrowing its corporate office in Le Mars. The need for more space, more access to transportation and storage for its product, and a guaranteed supply of raw milk from regional producers topped the long list of needs that Wells required. Enter North West Rural Electric Cooperative (REC).

North West REC is a rural



Cows line up in the carousel milking parlor at Perry Creek Dairy, a multi-generational family operation in Plymouth County. A 2018 recipient of an IADG Venture Award (nominated by North West REC), the dairy recently expanded its facilities.

Photo: Angela Catton, NIPCO



Wells Enterprises corporate headquarters in Le Mars.
Photo: Wells Enterprises, Inc.

electric distribution cooperative headquartered in Orange City and serves over 7,200 members in the Iowa counties of Ida, O'Brien, Plymouth, and Sioux. It purchases its power from Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO), a generation and transmission cooperative located in Le Mars. During the mid-1990s, NIPCO established economic development policies to support efforts to strengthen and encourage commercial opportunities within the NIPCO service territory. NIPCO's six distribution cooperatives and one cooperative consisting of six municipal electric utilities have been able to leverage these policies to cultivate a business landscape that creates and retains jobs, promotes business start-ups and expansions, and improves quality of life for western Iowans, while ensuring the safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible delivery of power.

North West REC, working in concert with NIPCO, Iowa Area Development Group (IADG), city and county partners, and the local economic development corporation, was able to pull together a financial and incentive package that included revolving loans, federal grants and loans offered through USDA, and an affordable supply of power that beat out a handful of states and communities vying for the opportunity to relocate the ice cream manufacturer. These efforts saved hundreds of corporate jobs that would have left Le Mars. A 178,000-square-

foot, three-level corporate office was constructed on a 40-acre site, just southwest of Le Mars on cooperative lines, and, coincidentally, next door to neighboring NIPCO. The corporate office is home to over 300 employees and includes a state-of-the-art pilot plant for research and development initiatives. The two Wells' production facilities employ over 2,500 individuals who live in, or within roughly a 50-mile radius, of Le Mars.

Scooping up opportunities

With the new corporate center secured, it was time to "moovoo" (sorry, we couldn't help ourselves!) the focus to dairy recruitment.

"North West REC, working closely with NIPCO and IADG, was diligent in our efforts to recruit dairy producers from across the country to our area," says North West REC CEO Lyle Korver. "Our low-cost power, energy efficiency and load management services, and economic development programs were great incentives for dairy producers to consider this area."

Since 2000, North West REC has worked with producers to add over 20 new or expanded dairy services in its service territory and increased the number of dairy cows by over 35,000, with many of them providing milk to Wells, Enterprises, Inc. Blue Bunny ice cream is proud to be able to say that it starts with fresh milk from dairies within 75 miles of its production

facilities.

Scooping the retention of Wells, its corporate center and a secure supply of milk was just the beginning. The sprinkles on the top included several "cluster" businesses, providing raw goods and services to Wells, to locate or expand operations in Le Mars with many of them choosing to build or expand in the Le Mars Industrial Park that is powered by North West REC. Such cluster businesses include Schuster Company, an over-the-road freight company; IML Containers, which manufactures molded, in-labeled plastic containers that hold ice cream and ice cream-related products; BoDeans Baking Company, manufacturer of cones and wafers used in Wells products; and Le Mars Public Storage, which provides additional freezer and dry goods storage capacity for Wells.

Members of rural electric cooperatives know the history and purpose behind its impetus. When no one would do it for them, rural Americans came together to power rural communities and empower those who live there. That story is no different in The Ice Cream Capital of the World where the "farm to spoon" concept doesn't always begin with the cow. It begins with the rural electric cooperative. And that's the cherry on the top! 🍷

Angela Catton is the manager of member relations and development for Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative based in Le Mars.



North West REC office in Orange City.
Photo: North West REC



Gov. Kim Reynolds, Le Mars Mayor Dick Kirchoff (right), and Wells Enterprises, Inc. President & CEO Mike Wells tour the new Wells Visitor Center & Ice Cream Parlor.
Photo: Maddy Boehme (M. Catton & Co., LLC)

Celebrate National Ice Cream Month

by learning a little more about Iowa's largest ice cream manufacturer!

BY ANGELA CATTON

In 1913, Le Mars resident Fred H. Wells Jr. purchased one grey horse, a delivery wagon, some cans and jars and the goodwill of the business from a local dairy farmer by the name of Ray Bowers for \$250. This contract secured a milk distribution route in Le Mars and a guaranteed source of raw milk from Mr. Bowers' herd of 15 cows. In the 1920s, a partnership with brother Harry C. Wells brought a high-quality ice cream to the Sioux City market. The product was so good that competitor Fairmont Creamery bought the rights to the distribution and the Wells brand name. The sale got the family through the Great Depression. But when the brothers wanted to get back into the ice cream business in 1935, they needed a new name. A "Name That Ice Cream" Contest resulted in the company being rebranded to "Blue Bunny" and the company has enjoyed steady growth ever since.



Photo: Maddy Boehme (M. Catton & Co., LLC)



The Wells Visitor Center & Ice Cream Parlor had a grand re-opening in June.

FUN FACTS

When Fred H. Wells Jr. began the company in 1913 as the sole employee, he probably would not have imagined Wells Enterprises, Inc. employing over 3,000 across the United States today.



Wells Enterprises makes more than 150 million gallons of ice cream each year.



Vanilla is the most popular flavor Wells makes, although, locally, in the parlor the last few years, Blue Bunny Salted Caramel Craze has topped the charts. What is your favorite?



Each year, Wells Enterprises use enough chocolate coating to fill more than three Olympic-size swimming pools.



Wells can make more than 1 million ice cream sandwiches in one day at its manufacturing plants in Le Mars!



All that ice cream takes a lot of milk! On average, one tanker truck full of fresh milk arrives at Wells, every hour of every day, 365 days a year!



Wells Enterprises' 12-story, free-standing high-rise freezer is one of tallest in the world! This amazing structure can store more than 70,000 pallets of ice cream and frozen treats at -40 degrees F! ⚡

Experience the re-imagined Visitor Center & Ice Cream Parlor, now open in Le Mars, Iowa! For more information visit www.ilovewells.com/the-experience

Interior dining at the Wells Visitor Center & Ice Cream Parlor.

Photo: Wells Enterprises, Inc.

Beat the summer heat!

BY ABBY BERRY

As summer temperatures continue to go up, there's no need to let the heat get you down. There are several ways you can keep cool this summer – without wreaking havoc on your home's air conditioner! Use these four simple life hacks to beat the summer heat.

- 1. Make aloe vera cubes.** Whether you're nursing a sunburn or just wanting to cool off, aloe vera cubes will offer some relief. Simply fill an ice tray with aloe vera gel, freeze it, then place the cubes on your body's pulse points, like the neck and wrists, for a quick cooling sensation.
- 2. Try a cooling pillow.** If you're willing to spend a little, a cooling pillow can help you feel more comfortable on those muggy summer nights. Prices range from \$27 (like Plixio Pillows) to \$180 (like the Technogel Pillow), so you can determine how much you're willing to spend.
- 3. Just add mint.** Menthol makes our bodies feel cool, so by adding spearmint essential oil to products like body wash and lotion, you can get an instant cooling effect. Essential oils can be purchased at most drugstores or online.
- 4. Spend a few bucks on a handheld fan mister.** Sure, you may feel a little silly carrying around a tiny fan, but you'll be more comfortable than everyone else – and they'll probably ask to borrow it. You can typically find these at big box stores like Wal-Mart or Target, or you can order one online.

There are additional ways to keep you and your home cool this summer:

- Close blinds and curtains during the day and open them during the evening when the temperatures are cooler.



Adding spearmint essential oil to products like body wash and lotion gives you an instant cooling effect.

- Use ceiling fans and portable fans to stay comfortable. But remember, fans cool people, not rooms.
- Use appliances that put out heat, such as clothes dryers and dishwashers, during the evening to minimize indoor heat during the day when temperatures are higher.

Don't let the heat get in the way of summer fun. Use these tips to keep

your cool and enjoy the rest of the season! ⚡

Abby Berry 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.

New technologies serve as outage detectives

BY MARIA KAVENSKY

Ever wonder what goes into restoring your power after an outage? Temporarily losing electricity can be frustrating, but Iowa's electric cooperatives are always looking for ways to get the power back on as quickly and safely as possible.

Whether it's severe weather like a thunderstorm or high winds, or a fallen tree, as soon as an outage is detected, your electric co-op is working to correct the problem. And thanks to new and more advanced technologies, co-ops can restore power outages faster than ever.

Powering up

Powering up after an outage starts on a larger level and ends up in local areas. First, high-voltage transmission lines are examined, then distribution stations, then main distribution lines. If the outage can't be pinpointed to these areas, tap lines and individual homes are inspected. This process allows your electric co-op to efficiently help the most members in the shortest amount of time, and co-ops are working to make this process move even faster.

One of the biggest advancements in technology that electric co-ops are using is Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). These digital meters allow for two-way communications and work by sending information back to the co-op's operations center. This helps to distinguish between events that affect a single home or multiple outages, which is important because solving either issue is a very different process. The two-way communication also provides a way to verify that power has been restored after an outage.

Another technology is the Outage Management System (OMS), which can predict the location of the issue and how many members are impacted. Especially when used with the AMI system, the OMS can be extremely useful for a co-op's



Electric cooperatives are using a variety of technologies to pinpoint and resolve power outages, which benefits the members they serve. Power outages are inevitable, but as technology continues to improve, disruptions are becoming shorter and easier to resolve.

effectiveness in resolving an outage. As the AMI collects and sends data, the OMS then analyzes the data using mathematical functions and models the electrical network to assess the impact of the outage.

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) is another technology used to manage power outages. Members can easily and quickly report an outage by entering their phone number or location, which is recorded onto an electronic map used by dispatchers. After service has been restored, the system can also make follow-up calls to members to confirm that the power is back on.

Predicting outages

One technology is even capable of predicting outages *before* they happen. Distribution Fault Anticipation (DFA) technology was developed by researchers at Texas A&M University and is used by Pedernales Electric

Cooperative in Texas. This system can detect tree branches hanging on power lines, damaged equipment and unusual, unrecognized events. By identifying these issues, co-ops can more efficiently dispatch crews, avoid wildfires and prevent outages before they happen.

One of the major benefits from improved technologies, especially for outages caused by extreme weather, is understanding where the outages are located, which helps to reduce risk for crews out on the road during the weather events.

These technologies clearly benefit electric co-ops and the members they serve. Power outages are inevitable, but as technology continues to improve, disruptions are becoming shorter and easier to resolve. ⚡

Maria Kanevsky is a program manager for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Photo: Tobias Hammer

Living in the moment

BY VALERIE VAN KOOTEN

We all have events etched into our lives so deeply that they stand out with complete clarity for years to come. My mother remembers precisely which soap opera she was watching the afternoon JFK's death was announced. A co-worker recalls the snack he was eating when news of the Challenger explosion erupted in his office.

Fifty years ago this month, a country sat huddled around their television sets watching Neil Armstrong make the first tentative steps out of Apollo 11 onto the moon.

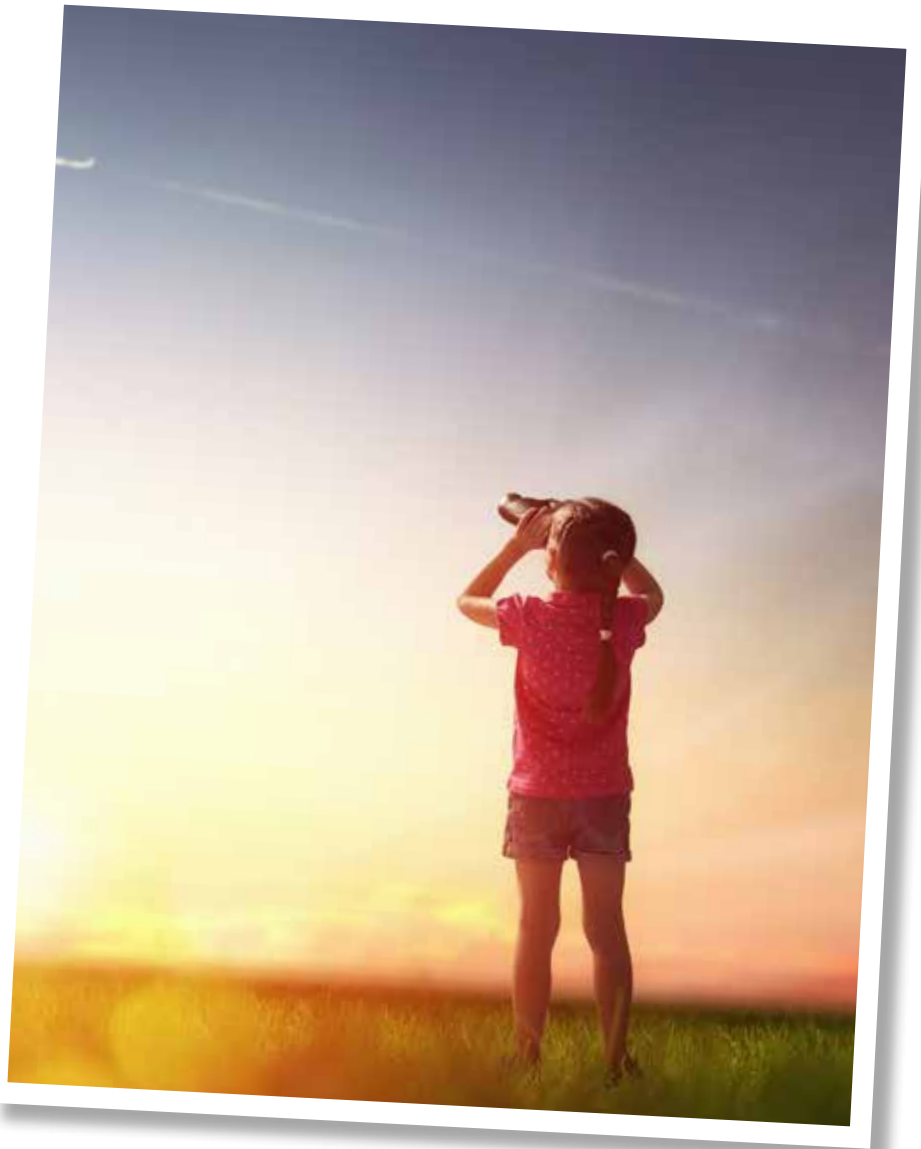
It was a hot Sunday night. And while my parents and sister and the company we had over that evening – a regular Sunday night occurrence – were sitting in a stuffy living room, 6-year-old me was going to show them all.

I figured that there was no reason that I wouldn't be able to go outside and simply see people walking on the moon. Why watch it secondhand when I could view it, if not close up, at least personally? Yes, they'd be tiny, but I'd be able to tell people I had seen the real thing!

Barefoot, my feet like leather after a summer outdoors on the farm, I picked my way across the driveway with a pair of binoculars that my dad used for hunting. I was wearing my favorite pair of blue corduroy shorts, and the smoothness of the river rock against my toes was cool.

I adjusted the too-heavy binoculars, peering through them, trying to find the moon among all the other stars in the sky. Soon I was focused on the real thing, but an immediate problem surfaced: The moon consisted only of a quartered sliver, not the full moon I had expected.

Well, astronauts wouldn't be walking around on the dark side of



the moon, would they? They wouldn't be able to see anything. I had thoroughly thought this through, with all my accumulated six years of wisdom. I was sure I'd be able to see them.

Only I couldn't. A few familiar features stood out – part of the Man in the Moon's face – but nothing that appeared to be moving. I stood there for several minutes on that sticky summer evening, holding the bulky binoculars up to my face, before joining the horde in the house.

Throughout my life, I've discovered that many events can be seen more clearly on television – ball games, parades, even church services.

But there's something to be said for being there, in the moment. Even if you have to lug a pair of binoculars with you. ⚡

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.

**4 GRAND
KIDS
2 YEARS
FROM
RETIREMENT
35 FEET
IN THE
AIR**

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



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



**MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN**