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Southwest lines

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

July 2020

Joslynn Moore Youth Tour Winner



Congratulations to Joslynn Moore, daughter of Corey and Deena Moore, for winning the 2020 Youth Tour. Joslynn was set to join 40 other Iowa students- and nearly 1,900 high school students from across the U.S.- in Washington, D.C. from June 18-25, 2020. The Youth Tour plans were to learn about rural electrification and get an inside look at the federal government and tour the city, visiting the National Cathedral, war memorials, Smithsonian museums and Capitol Hill.

Unfortunately, Youth Tour 2020 has been cancelled due to concerns about COVID-19. This is an unprecedented action. High school students from rural Iowa have participated in Youth Tour for more than 60 years, and this is the first time the event has been cancelled.

Because Joslynn is a junior in high school, she is eligible to go on Iowa Youth Tour in 2021. She has accepted the opportunity to participate next year. Southwest Iowa REC usually only sends one student per year, but since this year was cancelled, the Board voted to send two participants next year. If you know a student that will be a junior for '20-21 school year, please encourage them to apply.



Nominating Committee Meets

The Board appointed Nominating Committee of John A. Overholtzer, Cathi Fulton, Chad Ide, and Joe Kernen met on Wednesday, June 17th and nominated the following members of the Cooperative for the office of Director for the ensuing term of three (3) years each, all to be elected at the Annual Meeting to be held September 10, 2020:

Region 1 - District No. 2: Curtis Greene; Marilyn Werner (i)

Region 1 - At-Large: Ken Peppmeier (i); Rusty Zimmerman



Pictured left to right: Chad Ide, Cathi Fulton and John A. Overholtzer. Not pictured - Joe Kernen.

Region 2 - District No. 6: Kay Fast (i); Colene Roberts (i) incumbent director

John A. Overholtzer
Chairman - Nominating Committee

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COVID-19 updates available on our facebook page and website.

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CEO's COMMENTS:

Electricity Brings Everyday Value

Even though I work in the energy industry, like most people, I still don't think much about the electricity I use. I expect the lights to turn on when I flip the switch and the coffeemaker to work each morning. Because electricity is so abundant, we don't think much about it. Since many of us have been spending more time at home over the past few months, we have likely been using more energy. And yet, we still expect an endless supply of power with uninterrupted service 24/7. The only time we really think about electricity is when the power goes out or perhaps when the monthly bill arrives. Given how electricity powers our modern lifestyle every day, it's a great value, especially when compared to other common services and expenses. Think back to the cost of many goods and services you consumed 20 years ago compared to the cost today. In comparison, the cost of electricity has remained largely flat, unlike most other consumer goods.

Like many of you, I have a cell phone to stay connected, and I subscribe to cable channels so I can enjoy more viewing options. Many of us consider these necessities for modern day life. We can see what we're getting for our money, and we pay the price for those services. In contrast, when

we use electricity, we don't necessarily "see" all that we're getting for our money.

But considering what electricity does for us, it's a tremendous value for our quality of life as well as our budgets. For comparison, consider that the average rent increase was nearly 4% (from 2014-2019) according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI). The cost of medical care increased 3% during this time, and education was not too far behind at 2.6%. So, where did electricity rank? According to the CPI, electricity nationwide increased by less than half a percentage point, 0.4%. **By comparison, at Southwest Iowa REC, the cost of electricity has actually decreased during 2014-2019 by 1.15% per year on average!**

The bottom line: electricity brings everyday value especially for something that we all use around the clock. We are continually striving to increase our service reliability, reduce brief interruptions, reduce costs, improve our operations to ensure a smarter grid and explore more renewable energy options where possible.

Southwest Iowa REC provides the reliable service you expect and deserve as valued members of the co-op. And as your trusted energy advisor, we want to help you save you energy and money.

We recognize that the past few months have been

challenging for many of our members and we're here to help. If you have questions about your account or are looking for ways to save energy at home, please give us a call. Southwest Iowa REC is your electric co-op and our sole purpose is to serve you and the needs of our community. That's everyday value.



Phil Kinser

COVID-19 Update

Effective June 8, 2020, our office lobbies were re-opened to the public. Before entering one of our lobbies, please consider wearing a mask for your protection and ours. If you or any member of your party are not feeling well, please do not enter our facilities.

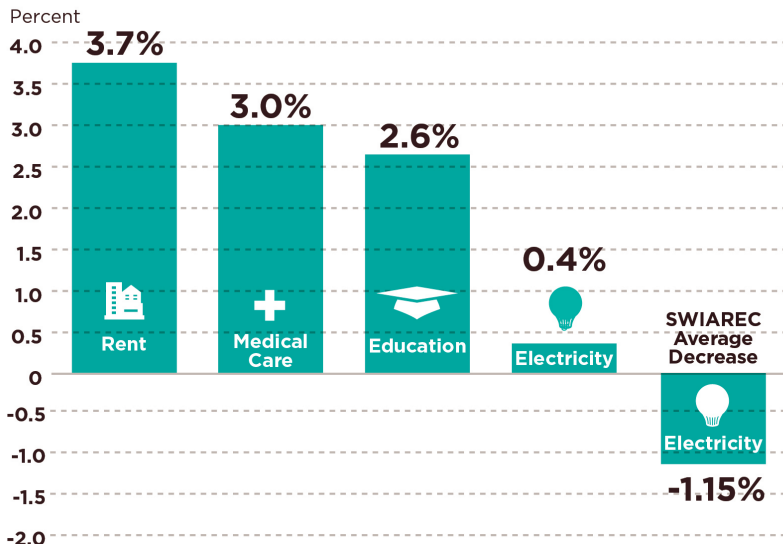
Only one customer or visitor is allowed at the front counter at one time. If another person is being assisted, please respect a minimum 6-foot social distance until it is your turn. Barriers have been installed for everyone's protection so please stand directly in front of those to transact your business.

If you are simply dropping off your payment, please consider leaving it in the outside drop box and not unnecessarily entering our facilities. Thank you for following these guidelines.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2014-2019



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index

2019 Central Iowa Power Cooperative Power Supply Report

By: Dale Walkup
Representative on the CIPCO Board of Directors

If 2018 was a groundbreaking year for Central Iowa Power Cooperative, then 2019 was a year of executing on strategy. The opportunities afforded by change produced strategies to sustain connections within our broad electric cooperative network as well as connections to CIPCO's proud past and future vision. The organization rolled up its sleeves and got to work implementing new strategic priorities along with new generation projects designed to partially replace output from one of CIPCO's primary sources of energy, the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC), set to close in October of 2020.

These new generation projects fall right in line with CIPCO's goal of providing a diverse, 24/7 energy portfolio. In particular, progress continued on Wapello Solar, a 100 MW facility on 850 acres in Louisa County, from which we will purchase 100 percent of its output. Developed by Clēnera, LLC, Wapello Solar is Iowa's largest solar project. In 2019, we completed a transmission system impact study for when Wapello Solar is placed into service and worked with the developer as they obtained zoning approvals along with a generating certificate from the Iowa Utilities Board. We expect Wapello Solar to come online in late 2020. In addition, an \$85 million repowering project is taking place at the existing Summit Lake Generating Station in Creston. The modernization project for the 70-year-old plant will add 55 MW of efficient natural gas-fired reciprocating engines to CIPCO's portfolio, while retiring the old steam engines. Significant work took place throughout the year, with Creston transmission crews rerouting substantial lines in preparation for the Summit Lake North substation deconstruction and rebuild. Demolition work is complete on the substation, the office building, the transmission garage and diesel plant. The new engines are expected to be in place and operational in late 2020.

Southwest Iowa REC and CIPCO strive to provide safe, affordable and reliable power to our consumer-members across the system. When it comes to safety, we're proud of

CIPCO's achievement of two million hours worked over 10 years without a lost-time injury. In addition, the implementation of the Low Voltage New-To-Replace-Old (NTRO) program in 1986 and the expansion of it in 1995 includes over 845 miles of rebuilt line. NTRO, along with sound operating and maintenance programs, helps ensure our power supply system attains the high degree of reliability our consumer-members expect and deserve. CIPCO's system-wide 2019 outage rate was 0.44 hours per consumer. This is the eighth consecutive year in which outage totals were less than the target of one hour per consumer. CIPCO's average outage total for 2019 for Southwest Iowa REC was 0.55 hours per customer.

Financial strength is integral to our success and has led to strong credit ratings, stable rates that are now the lowest among G&Ts in the Midwest, and access to borrowing capital to complete system upgrades and enhancements cost effectively. Fitch Ratings recently completed its annual review and affirmed CIPCO's "A" Issuer Default Rating and its Rating Outlook as Stable. The unexpected early closure of DAEC underscores the important actions taken over many years to manage risk and position CIPCO to withstand the loss of a vital generation resource. As a result, CIPCO has managed through this period of change by adjusting its future resource strategy while maintaining stable or declining rates as new cost-effective resources are secured.

CIPCO's 2019 average system rate was the lowest in more than 10 years.

Returning patronage capital is a fundamental component of the cooperative business model. CIPCO remains dedicated to sound financial practices that allow margins to be returned to its members in the form of patronage. During 2019, CIPCO returned patronage totaling \$401,208 to Southwest Iowa REC.

In today's energy-conscious world, CIPCO and Southwest Iowa REC are committed to ensuring consumer-members use energy wisely and utilize available options to reduce



excess energy consumption. As a result of these efforts, CIPCO and its member systems issued energy-efficiency rebates saving approximately 13,233,348 million kWh. In comparison, the average house uses nearly 11,000 kWh a year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. That includes 522,731 kWh savings for Southwest Iowa REC members.

I'm proud of the actions taken in 2019 to sustain our connections within the rural electric industry. Our actions have strengthened CIPCO's mission to provide consumer-members with wholesale power and services in a safe, reliable, and cost-effective manner. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your representative on both the local board of directors and the CIPCO board of directors. I am proud to say, as a result of decisions made in 2019, Southwest Iowa REC's consumer-members, as well as the entire CIPCO system, will be well-served now and into the future.

NOTICE:
Due to Covid-19,
the 2020 Farm
Progress Show
has been cancelled.
It was scheduled
Sept 1-3
in Boone, Iowa

Bravo!

SWIAREC,

Thank you for awarding me a scholarship. Your generosity is very appreciated and this scholarship will help me obtain my goal of becoming a nurse.

Sincerely, Kayley Myers

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Spending more time at home? Try an online energy audit to assess the overall efficiency of your home.

Visit www.energystar.gov, then enter "home energy yardstick" in the search box to get started!

Patriotic Mini-Cheesecakes

- 1 cup crushed graham cracker crumbs
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 tbsp butter melted
- 3 pkgs cream cheese 8oz each - softened
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup diced strawberries
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1 cup granulated sugar

1. Combine berries & 1 cup sugar in a small bowl & toss to combine. Set aside to macerate until it becomes like a syrup with the berries.
2. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
3. Melt butter in microwave safe bowl for approx 30 seconds.
4. Add graham cracker crumbs & 2 tbsp of sugar. Mix until combined & crumbs are moist.
5. Line muffin tins with 18 baking cup liners.
6. Put approx 1 tsp of moist crumbs in the bottom of each liner & press down to compact & cover bottom.
7. Beat cream cheese, vanilla extract & remaining sugar in electric mixer until well combined.
8. Add in eggs one at a time- mixing until just blended.
9. Scoop into your prepared liners on top of your crackers. I did one large scoop to start & then went back & topped each off with my remaining batter so that they were all uniform in size.
10. Bake 25-30 minutes- until center is almost set.

Cool completely.

1. When ready- peel papers off, top with macerated berries
2. Store in refrigerator in airtight container.



Make life a little easier with SmartHub



Southwest Iowa REC offers another convenient way to pay your electric bill – it's **SmartHub**. All you have to do is visit our web-site (www.swiarec.coop) – click the green Pay Online link, and you can pay your bill online. The payment site is fully secure – using state-of-the-art encryption.

With SmartHub you will be able to:

- Make a payment
- Access payment history
- View your bill
- View your electric usage
- Update your account or contact information
- Communicate directly with Southwest Iowa REC

Once you're registered for SmartHub you will receive monthly e-mail notifications when the latest billing information is available on-line and when accounts are due. SmartHub is just another way your cooperative strives to provide the latest in convenience and technology for our members. SmartHub option is available for you to use to pay your electric bill on-line. It will cost you \$3.95 per transaction for up to \$500 maximum with a credit card (Visa/MasterCard/Discover) or by check.

All you need is your REC account number, an email address and then create your own password.

2020 Energy Efficiency & Beneficial Electrification Program Delivery Costs = \$.0028/kwh



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