

# InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF  FRANKLIN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

May 2022

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



## 2022 annual meeting based on member feedback

A WORD FROM



**Garrett Thompson**  
Chief Executive Officer

Last month Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative hosted its 85th Annual Meeting of the Members. To be in business for over 85 years is a huge accomplishment and wouldn't be possible without you, our members, and for that we say thank you!

To reach as many members as possible the board of directors and co-op staff decided to conduct a hybrid annual meeting. The driving force behind this decision was due to comments we received from our

members. During our member appreciation event in October 2021, we asked members to fill out a short survey asking why they have or have not attended an annual meeting in the past. Because of those answers and comments, we developed the hybrid method, leading to a record turnout.

We served 554 meals with 254 members present either through the drive-thru or the evening meeting. We appreciate all those who participated in our 2022 annual meeting regardless of which format you attended.

It is our hope that Franklin REC conducting a survey and modeling our annual meeting after those survey results shows that we genuinely want to hear from our members. We want to design the meeting to best fit your needs, so please reach out to your director, myself, or an REC employee if you have any ideas or suggestions for next year's annual meeting or a future member appreciation event. The cooperative is here to serve and benefit our members.

*Thank you for attending!*



*(L to R) Linemen Chace Klein and Austin Neff serve food to a member in the drive-thru at the annual meeting.*



*Board President Gordon Greimann speaks to the annual meeting crowd.*



## REA Power Plant Museum needs your help!

If you haven't visited the REA Power Plant Museum just south of Hampton you need to! On March 23, 1938, this historic location became the first energized, farmer-owned power plant west of the Mississippi. Yes, you read that right—the first power plant west of the Mississippi! We are lucky enough to have it in our backyard.

Darwin Meyer and his wife Lorna do a terrific job keeping the museum cleaned and maintained, while also leading many educational tours throughout the year. Their hours of dedication, along with other volunteers' donation of time, to the museum is greatly appreciated. But now we need your help!

We would like to hear first-hand accounts of life on the farm before and after electricity was delivered. What was life like before electricity? What was the greatest efficiency gain? How did electricity change your life? If you are willing and able to recount those memories, please contact us at the office: 641-456-2557.

# Restoring power safely and efficiently

By Abby Berry, NRECA

We do our best to avoid power outages, but there's no way around it: they occasionally happen.

For most Franklin REC members, outages are rare and only last a few hours. But when major storms impact our area, extended outages are unavoidable.



When the power goes out, how do Franklin REC crews know where to start working? How do you know if your outage has been reported? We've got answers to these questions and more, and it all starts with a safe, efficient plan for power restoration.

When it's safe for our crews to begin the restoration process, they start by repairing power lines and equipment that will restore power to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible.

This process typically begins with repairs to the larger main distribution lines that service a greater number of members. Next, crews work on tap lines, which deliver power to transformers. Finally, individual service lines that run between the transformer and the home are repaired.

When widespread outages occur, multiple crews will be out in the field simultaneously working to repair damage at multiple locations. We also coordinate with nearby co-ops to bring in additional crews when necessary.

A proactive approach to maintenance helps minimize the chance of prolonged outages; this is why you see our crews periodically trimming trees and clearing vegetation near rights-of-way. We love trees too, but it only takes one overgrown limb to knock out power for an entire area. Trimming improves power reliability for our entire community. In addition, we regularly inspect utility poles, power lines, and other critical equipment to maintain a more reliable system.

If you experience a power outage, it's best to report the outage yourself. Our phones are answered 24/7: 641-456-2557.

Mother Nature can be unpredictable, but as a member of Franklin REC, you can feel confident knowing we're standing by, ready to restore power as safely and quickly as possible.

## Use contractors with license, insurance



Warm weather storms can bring truckloads of eager handymen, roofers, and tree trimmers to your front door.

Contractors who go door-to-door looking for jobs may not be qualified to do the job they offer. Don't take a chance. Ask to see the contractor's license. Also:

- Check with the Better Business Bureau ([www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)) and the state licensing agency to find out if the contractor has any unresolved complaints on file.
- Your contractors should be bonded and insured. Ask to see evidence that they are, and check expiration dates.
- Insist that the contractor obtain building permits for all work that requires them. If they refuse or try to talk you out of it, find someone else. Applying for building permits will trigger an inspection by a local building official to make sure all work has been done according to building codes. The contractor—not you—should take responsibility for obtaining the necessary permits, but you should ask to see them.

Hundreds of thousands of businesses and individuals call themselves home improvement contractors. Make sure the one you hire has all paperwork in order.

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Effective May 22, 1991, the Iowa Utilities Board passed a ruling requiring all non-rate regulated utilities to post the following notice to its memberships: If a member-consumer has a question or concern regarding his/her electric service, please write or call your local electric cooperative at the following address or phone number:

Franklin REC  
1560 Hwy. 65, PO Box 437  
Hampton, IA 50441  
(641) 456-2557  
[www.franklinrec.coop](http://www.franklinrec.coop)

If your complaint is related to your cooperative's service rather than its rates, and your cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board by calling 515-725-7321 or toll-free 1-877-565-4450; by writing to 1375 E. Court Avenue, Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; or by email to [customer@iub.iowa.gov](mailto:customer@iub.iowa.gov).

Our office is closed  
Monday, May 30,  
in observance of  
Memorial Day.

Our phones are  
answered 24/7:  
641-456-2557

# Shining the Light on community volunteers in June

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, Iowa's electric co-ops are excited to bring back our Shine the Light contest in June to celebrate local volunteers. The Shine the Light contest, sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, will accept nominations and select three winners who will each receive a \$2,000 donation to their local charity or nonprofit.

"We were truly inspired by the flood of contest entries we received last summer," remarked Erin Campbell, director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. "We're increasing our three winner donations from \$1,500 to \$2,000 each this year to encourage even more participation across the state."

Member-consumers and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers during the month of June. If you receive electricity from Franklin REC, you're a co-op member-consumer and we encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

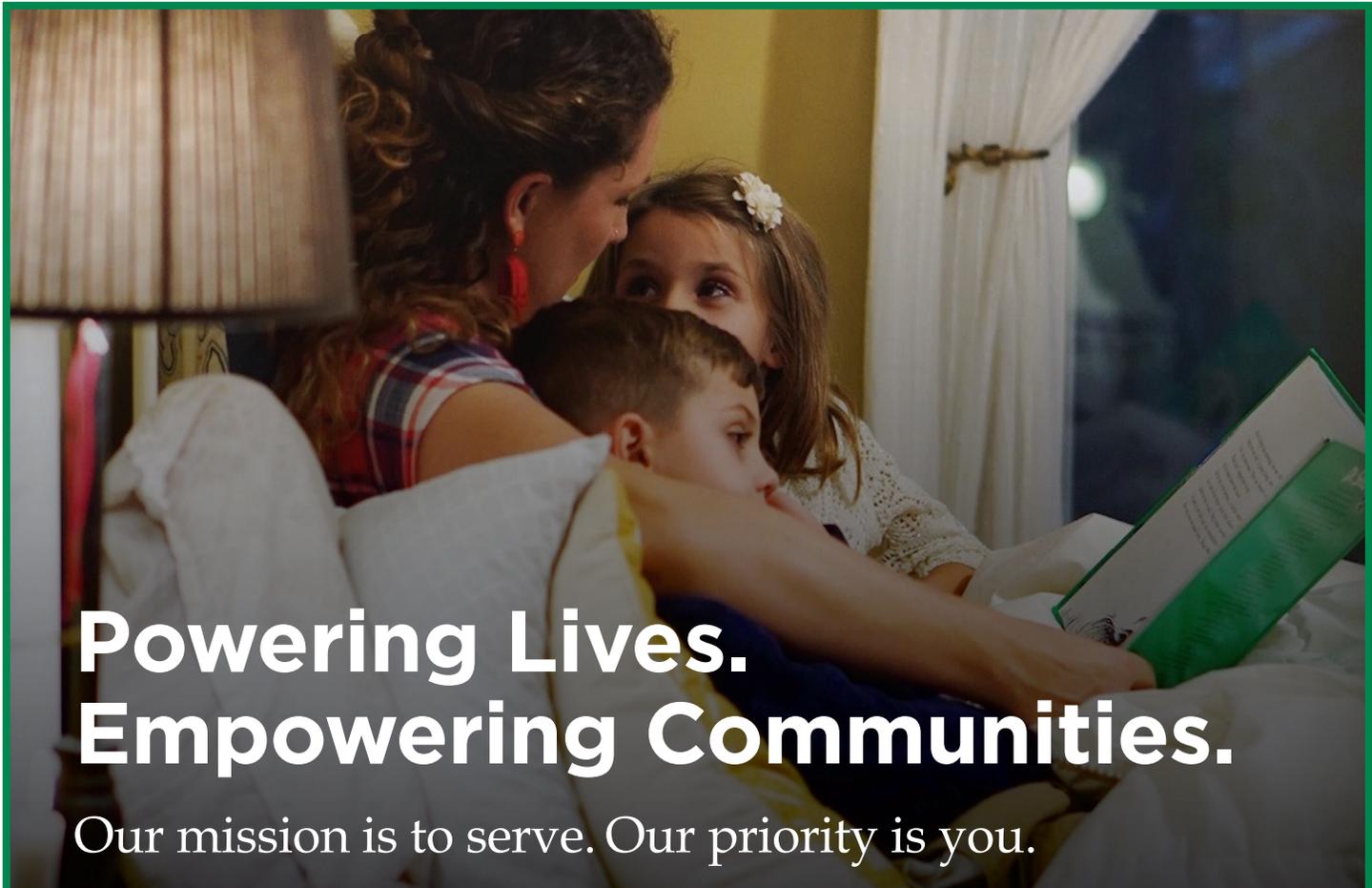
The three winners will be announced in September and featured in Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine.

**Go to [www.IowaShineTheLight.com](http://www.IowaShineTheLight.com) to review the contest rules. Contest entries will be accepted at this website starting on June 1.** Help us shine the light on community volunteers this summer and consider making a nomination.



**Nominate a local volunteer  
and they could win  
\$2,000 for their charity!**

Contest entries accepted during June at  
[IowaShineTheLight.com](http://IowaShineTheLight.com)



**Powering Lives.  
Empowering Communities.**

Our mission is to serve. Our priority is you.



# 2022 scholarship recipients and Youth Tour participant announced

## Franklin REC Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship Recipients

Kennedy Dodd, Ackley, was chosen by the Scholarship Committee as the Franklin REC recipient of the \$1,000 Basin Electric scholarship this year. She is the daughter of Aaron and Shayna Dodd. Cannon Craighton, son of Kevin and Jennie Craighton, Sheffield, was chosen as the runner-up and will receive a \$500 scholarship.

## Commitment to Community Scholarship Recipients

The Scholarship Committee chose Delaney Christianson of Sheffield, Kennedy Dodd of Ackley, and Isabella Noelck of Hampton as the recipients of the Commitment to Community scholarships. They will each receive \$500.

## Youth Tour Participant

Lily Strother of Hampton was chosen as the 2022 Franklin REC Youth Tour participant. Lily is a sophomore at Hampton-Dumont CAL high school. She is the daughter of Tyler and Mandy Strother of Hampton. Lily was interviewed by Franklin REC staff. She will represent the cooperative well in Washington, D.C. the week of June 18-24.



**CONGRATULATIONS!**

## More scenes from your annual meeting



*Franklin REC employees, directors, and the Franklin County Development Association director assemble meals during the drive-thru event.*



*(L to R) Duane Carstens, KLMJ, interviews board member Darwin Van Horn on the radio.*



*(L to R) 2019 Youth Tour participant Courtney Ringleb and 2022 Youth Tour representative Lily Strother.*



*Following the annual meeting, the board held their reorganization meeting.*

## SPARKS of news

### Board room highlights

At the March meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Approved the 2021 Audit Report
- Reviewed and accepted the Franklin REC Reliability Report
- Reviewed the 2021 financials and approved a patronage allocation to the membership totaling \$388,964.77
- Approved a patronage refund totaling \$275,439.22
- Reviewed the Idle Services Tariff



**FRANKLIN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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