

NOVEMBER 2023

# iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

**Shop co-op local  
this holiday season**

**Financial assistance resources  
for help with energy bills**

**Slow cooker recipes**

**Sleigh the Day & Light the Night event details ▶ See Page 13**

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Knowing is half the battle

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ON THE COVER

Special thanks to Ryan Van Dyke, a North West REC member-consumer, for supplying this month's cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could receive \$100!

# ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES POWER IOWA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH

BY CHUCK SODERBERG



You depend on your local electric cooperative to power your life every day, but did you know that your co-op also powers economic growth in your region?

Earlier this year, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives commissioned an economic impact study through the esteemed Goss & Associates of Omaha. This study confirmed what we've long known about our association members: Iowa's locally owned electric co-ops contribute greatly to the state's economy.

For the five years ending in 2021, the study found that Iowa electric co-ops generated a total impact on the state of \$4.8 billion, produced \$688 million in wages and salaries, directly supported 1,961 jobs, generated self-employment income of \$79.5 million and paid \$144.7 million in state and local taxes.

## Powering people and communities

Powering lives and empowering communities are at the core of our cooperative mission. This economic analysis is helpful as we talk with legislators, policymakers and other decision-makers about how electric cooperatives invest in rural Iowa. For more than 80 years, electric co-ops have maintained reliable and affordable electric service, provided stable career opportunities and paid taxes, which have vast ripple effects throughout the regions we serve.

Not only have electric co-ops' economic impacts been historically significant, but the study also concludes that co-ops have assisted local and state organizations in retaining, attracting and expanding businesses in the state. Separate from their spending impacts, electric cooperatives invest in efforts to attract and retain jobs and investment within their communities.

In addition to their daily duty of providing safe, reliable and affordable power,

the study found that Iowa electric cooperatives had an impact of \$14.7 billion in economic development projects between 2018 and 2022, supporting 7,366 jobs (retained, attracted or expanded) during that same time period.

## An important connector

Your electric cooperative has undoubtedly supported many economic development initiatives over the decades by serving as an intermediary for U.S. Department of Agriculture revolving loan funds, among other programs and projects. For example, several Iowa electric co-ops have been instrumental in developing industrial speculative buildings to accommodate local business expansion or to attract new businesses and jobs to the community. Iowa's electric cooperatives also give generously to local charitable causes and support youth education initiatives.

You should be proud of your local electric co-op's contributions to Iowa's economy. As a member-owned and locally governed entity, your electric co-op is more than a service provider; it's a major economic engine of progress for your community.

*Chuck Soderberg is the executive vice president and general manager of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.*

Access a PDF of our 2023 economic impact study at [www.iowarec.org](http://www.iowarec.org).

## Economic Impact: By the Numbers

For the five years ending in 2021, Iowa electric cooperative investments and operations generated the following impacts on the state of Iowa.

\$14.7  
BILLION

Impact in economic development projects.

\$4.8  
BILLION

Overall economic activity.

\$688.1  
MILLION

In wages and salaries.

\$79.5  
MILLION

Self-employment income.

\$144.7  
MILLION

In state and local tax collections.

1,961  
JOBS

Supported each year.

## EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

# WIN A RING SPOTLIGHT SECURITY CAMERA!

Shine a light on your home security with a Ring spotlight security camera – a versatile outdoor dynamo fit for any property.

See vivid detail with HD video in almost any weather. Deter threats with built-in spotlights. And get real-time alerts when there's motion in your yard.

## Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting [www.ieclmagazine.com](http://www.ieclmagazine.com) no later than Nov. 30. 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 wireless weather station from the September issue was Nathan Stauffer, a Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative member-consumer.



ENTER ONLINE BY NOV. 30!

## FROM YOUR BOARD ROOM

During the September board meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization of \$113,106.29
- Approved a resolution with United Bank & Trust
- Set the 2024 annual meeting date
- Appointed voting delegate and alternate for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting
- Approved the workers' compensation insurance renewal
- Approved four estate patronage retirements
- Approved a licensing agreement with Tantalus
- Changed the November board meeting date



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[www.franklinrec.coop](http://www.franklinrec.coop)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# EDUCATED DIRECTORS ARE MORE EFFECTIVE LEADERS

BY GARRETT THOMPSON



It's no secret that for leaders to be most effective, they must be knowledgeable about the industries and issues that could impact the organizations they serve. This is especially true in the electric industry, and our local cooperative leaders – our board of directors who fellow members elect – invest a great amount of time in education and training. This ensures they are knowledgeable of issues affecting Franklin REC's operations.

Our board guides the cooperative in providing safe, affordable, reliable and sustainable electricity. These directors play a crucial role in determining the strategic direction and priorities of Franklin REC. This input and guidance are key as the co-op keeps the lights on today and also works to meet our members' future energy needs.

We strongly believe that a more informed and educated board is a more effective and successful board. This is why Franklin REC invests resources in providing quality education and training to board directors. Through our affiliations with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

(NRECA), our directors have valuable opportunities to attend governance education courses and industry conferences to be informed on the latest challenges, trends, regulations and technologies affecting electric cooperatives.

In fact, NRECA manages an extensive credential program for electric cooperative directors that includes opportunities to earn a Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate, a Board Leadership Certificate, and the highest training credential of Director Gold. Those Franklin REC board members who have obtained Director Gold status include Gordon Greimann, Don Greimann, David Keninger, Dale Schaefer and John Snyder.

These programs are especially important for newer directors as they must learn quickly about their roles and responsibilities and understand the challenges and issues unique to the electric industry. Many of these education courses are provided here in Iowa, which helps us manage costs.

These educational investments help ensure our leaders make informed decisions that will guide the cooperative to a successful future as we power lives and empower the communities we serve.

*Garrett Thompson is the general manager/CEO of Franklin REC.*

## CELEBRATING CO-OP WORKIVERSARIES

Congratulations to Apprentice Lineman Ben Waltersdorf for dedicating one year of hard work to Franklin REC.

We appreciate your continued contributions to the success of Franklin REC!



# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO HELP WITH UTILITY BILLS

If you are having trouble paying your electric bill, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) may be an option for you.

LIHEAP is a federally funded program designed to assist low-income households in meeting the cost of home heating by providing a one-time partial payment toward a heating bill during the winter months. In addition to financial assistance with your utility bill, LIHEAP assistance

may be available for furnace repair/replacement and the cost of an air conditioner if it is deemed necessary for medical reasons.

In addition to LIHEAP, Franklin REC offers a RECare program facilitated by community action agencies affiliated with the cooperative. RECare is a voluntary, member-funded energy assistance program that offers financial relief to eligible co-op members. Any Franklin REC member may choose to

pledge contributions to the RECare program in dollar increments on their monthly bill or members can make a one-time donation by completing the RECare form inserted with this month's bill. The form is also available on the Franklin REC website. RECare funds are distributed to members who meet the community action agency's guidelines.

To determine if you qualify for energy assistance, contact your local community action agency listed below.

## ENERGY ASSISTANCE BY COUNTY

### Hardin County

Mid-Iowa Community Action  
637 S Oak St.  
Iowa Falls, IA 50126  
641-648-5036

### Wright County

Outreach Office  
221 West Broadway  
Eagle Grove, IA 50533  
515-448-3704

### Franklin County

Outreach Office  
123 1st Ave SW  
P.O. Box 384  
Hampton, IA 50441  
641-456-3431

### Cerro Gordo County

Family Resource Center  
100 1st Street NW  
Suite 140  
Mason City, IA 50401  
641-423-7766

### Butler County

Outreach Office  
219 N Mather  
P.O. Box 187  
Clarksville, IA 50619  
641-243-7573

### Floyd County

Outreach Office  
404 N Jackson  
P.O. Box 473  
Charles City, IA 50616  
641-228-2893



# HAPPY THANKSGIVING

In the spirit of gratitude and togetherness, Franklin REC's offices will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 23, and Friday, Nov. 24, in observance of Thanksgiving.

If you experience an interruption in service, please contact our office at 641-456-2557.

# SHOP CO-OP LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

BY ANN FOSTER THELEN

It's time to start this year's holiday shopping, and it's easy to be merry when you surprise a loved one with a special gift.

During the holiday season, shopping local is a festive way to support your friends and neighbors who are also business owners. Many of these small businesses are served by Iowa's electric cooperatives and share a common mission – being committed to the communities they serve.

To help your holiday gift-giving or list-making, we've combined a list of electric cooperative-served businesses that offer unique gifts to place under the Christmas tree or in a stocking. As you embark on Santa Claus duties this year, keep in mind that this list is just a sampling of local businesses. Take a walk along your community's Main Street or explore all that your local area offers for additional inspiration to shop local this holiday season!



## 300 ACRES

[www.300acres.llc](http://www.300acres.llc)

**Facebook:** 300acres

300 Acres is a local and veteran-owned business in Ocheyedan (located on Business Corner near May City). They focus on supplying the highest-quality products, which include LED lights, shovels, coffee, coolers, custom decals, signs and much more.



## ADVANTAGE APPAREL

[www.advapparel.com](http://www.advapparel.com)

**Facebook:** advapparel2019

Advantage Apparel is a local small town, family-owned, one-stop apparel shop in Albia. They pride themselves on quick turnarounds, with quality service guaranteed on business, school and sports logos, stadium chairs, uniforms, sportswear and other items.



## BLOOMS & THINGS

[www.albiablooms.com](http://www.albiablooms.com)

**Facebook:** albiablooms

The shop offers arrangements for every special occasion. It also has green plants, silk flowers and small gift items such as candles, soaps and journals. Orders can be delivered throughout Albia and surrounding communities within a 20-minute radius.



## BOUILLON FLOWER & GARDEN

[www.bouillonflower.org](http://www.bouillonflower.org)

**Facebook:** [BouillonFlowerGarden](#)

Bouillon Flower & Garden in Greene is a one-stop-shop for flower-related needs. They boast an impressive selection of flowers and arrangements for everyone's taste! From home décor options to bouquets for special occasions – there's always a reason to invest in a beautiful arrangement.



## BRITCHES 'N' BOWS COUNTRY STORE & BOUTIQUE

**Facebook:** [shopbnb](#)

Gift and décor shop in Panora offering modern farmhouse décor, boutique-style clothing and trendy accessories.



## CORNCRIB DESIGNS

[www.corncribdesigns.com](http://www.corncribdesigns.com)

**Facebook:** [corncribdesigns](#)

A trending shop filled with farmhouse vibes, traditional and seasonal home décor, apparel, and vintage and repurposed finds. The business features a mobile trailer, which offers pop-up shopping around rural Iowa. Corncrib Designs strives to inspire patrons to transform your home into a place you love.



## FOREST MILLS QUILT SHOP

[www.forestmillsquilts.com](http://www.forestmillsquilts.com)

**Facebook:** [forestmillsquiltshop](#)

This unique quilt shop is located just south of the beautiful Yellow River outside of Postville on the family's Century Farm. They carry material, quilt kits, quilts for sale and host events.



## GRAND VIEW BEEF

[www.grandviewbeef.com](http://www.grandviewbeef.com)

**Facebook:** [GrandViewBeef](#)

For more than 100 years, the Severson family has been farming in Clarion and calling Grand View Farm and Ranch home. Now, people across the nation can enjoy their products. Send or receive a box of this family-raised, 100% grass-fed beef. The meat is shipped on Monday in a compostable cooler with dry ice and arrives within two days.



## J&J CANDLES

[www.jjcandlesmanson.com](http://www.jjcandlesmanson.com)

**Facebook:** [jjcandlesmanson](#)

J&J Candles is a family-owned business that has been offering handcrafted, scented products for more than 25 years. They feature nearly 200 scents. In addition to individual sales, they offer wholesale pricing with minimum orders and do fundraisers. All the scented products are made at its facility south of Manson.



## MOLLY'S

**Facebook:** [mollyscountrystore](#)

Molly's in Audubon is an old barn turned retail store with home décor, clothing and more!



## PROMISELAND WINERY

[www.Promiselandwinery.com](http://www.Promiselandwinery.com)

**Facebook:** [promiselandwinery](#)

Located on the southern hills of Guttenberg along the Great River Road, this winery offers a full experience of tasty wines, food, six boutiques for shopping and beautiful views!



## RECREATION UNLIMITED

[www.recreationunlimited.net](http://www.recreationunlimited.net)

**Facebook:** [recreationunlimited04](#)

A family-owned and operated business in Traer offering top-notch outdoor equipment and accessories, including Green Mountain Grills.



## THE RED SHED

**Hwy. 63, Bloomfield**

The Red Shed has a wide variety of gifts, handmade chocolate and Amish-made items.



## RHONDA'S COUNTRY RETREAT

**Facebook:** [rhondascountryretreat](#)

Rhonda's Country Retreat was founded in October 2020. This home-based specialty shop offers Iowa-made home décor, jewelry, soy candles, Iowa wines and more. All available products can be purchased at her farm store or online.



## SHELBBIE DEBOLT DESIGNS

[www.etsy.com/shop/ShelbieDeBoltDesigns](http://www.etsy.com/shop/ShelbieDeBoltDesigns)

**Facebook:** [shelbiedeboltdesigns1](#)

Operating via an Etsy shop, Shelbie Ehlers makes custom clothing, including holiday and everyday items.



## SWEET HONEYMOON WINERY

[www.sweethoneymoonwinery.com](http://www.sweethoneymoonwinery.com)

**Facebook:** [sweethoneymoonwinery](#)

Sweet Honeymoon Winery is a craft winery in Calhoun County making quality wines (including dry wines) in small batches from imported grape juice from all around the world.

Because of this approach, the business offers varietals not normally available to wineries in our northern climate.

They also make an award-winning Mead (honey wine).

*Ann Foster Thelen is the editor of Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine.*



To find more local businesses in your area, check with your local chamber of commerce or electric cooperative. Happy shopping!



SPECTACULAR  
SLOW COOKER  
RECIPES

## SLOW COOKER MAID-RITES

- 3 pounds hamburger
- 3 beef bouillon cubes
- ½ cup hot water
- 1 can chicken gumbo soup
- 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 3 teaspoons dry mustard

Cook meat and drain. Dissolve bouillon in hot water. Add remaining ingredients and place in slow cooker for 4 hours.

**Karen Caldwell • Albia  
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative**

## PEACHY KEEN SWEET POTATOES

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes
- 1 cup peach pie filling
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Put all ingredients in slow cooker. Cook on low for 5-7 hours.

**Marlene Burns • Swisher  
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative**

## SLOW COOKER PORK CUTLETS

- 1 can beef stock
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 package brown gravy mix
- 1 package onion soup mix
- 2 pounds pork cutlets
- ½ pound mushrooms
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- mashed potatoes

Pour beef stock, cream of mushroom soup, gravy mix and onion soup mix in slow cooker and stir together. Season cutlets with salt and pepper. Add to slow cooker and top with mushrooms. Cook on low for 4-6 hours. Serve over mashed potatoes. *Serves 4-6*

**Tiana Stroman • Merrill  
North West Rural Electric Cooperative**

## SLOW COOKER APPLE CRISP

- 2 cans apple pie filling
- 1 package butter pecan cake mix
- ½ stick butter, sliced

In the order listed, layer ingredients in slow cooker. Don't stir. Cook on high for 2 hours.

**Cindy Pottebaum • Alton  
North West Rural Electric Cooperative**



## CREAM CHEESE CHICKEN

- ½ cup butter
- 1 7-ounce envelope Italian dressing mix
- 2 pounds boneless chicken breasts
- 1 10.75-ounce can cream of chicken soup
- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese  
mashed potatoes, rice or noodles

Melt butter in bottom of slow cooker on high. Stir in Italian dressing mix until well mixed. Cut chicken into 1-inch strips. Place chicken in slow cooker and stir to coat with butter and dressing mix. Cook covered on high for 2 hours.

Remove chicken and set aside. Add soup and cream cheese to liquid in slow cooker. Stir to melt until smooth and creamy. Add chicken back to slow cooker and turn to low until ready to serve.

Serve over mashed potatoes, rice or hot buttered noodles. Can be frozen for a great make-ahead meal. *Serves 6*

**Regina V. Lloyd • Linden**

**Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association**

## SLOW COOKER PIZZA-LASAGNA

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 98-ounce package mini lasagna noodles
- 1 package pepperoni
- 1 28-ounce jar spaghetti sauce
- ¾ cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- 10 ounces cheddar cheese, grated
- 2 cups mozzarella cheese, grated

Cook beef and onion until meat is browned, drain. Cook noodles until almost tender (you can substitute with rotini). Combine all ingredients except Mozzarella cheese in layers in slow cooker. Sprinkle Mozzarella cheese over top. Bake on low for 5-7 hours, or on high for 2 hours.

**Larae Van Wyhe • Lester**  
**Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative**

## ITALIAN ROUND STEAK

- 2 pounds round steak  
salt and pepper
- 3 cans Italian diced tomatoes
- 2 cans French-style green beans  
onion, to taste, sliced

Cut steak into serving-sized pieces, season with salt and pepper. Place all ingredients in slow cooker. Cook on high for 4 hours or low for 7 hours. *Serves 4-5*

**Gladys Willey • Yale**

**Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association**

## APPLE STREUSEL DESSERT

- 6 cups apples, sliced
- 1¼ teaspoons cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon allspice
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ¾ cup milk
- 5 tablespoons butter, divided
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1½ cups Bisquick baking mix, divided
- ½ cup brown sugar  
ice cream or cream

Toss apples with spices. Place apples in greased slow cooker. In a bowl, combine milk, 2 tablespoons butter, sugar, eggs, vanilla and ½ cup baking mix. Pour over apples. Combine 1 cup baking mix, brown sugar and 3 tablespoons butter. Sprinkle over apples. Cover and cook on low for 6-7 hours. Serve with ice cream or cream.

**Sue Cook • Deep River**  
**T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative**

**WANTED:**

## SHEET PAN MEALS

**THE REWARD:**

**\$25 FOR EVERY ONE WE PUBLISH!**

**Deadline is Nov. 30**

Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions. **Also provide the number of servings per recipe.**



**EMAIL:** [recipes@ieclmagazine.com](mailto:recipes@ieclmagazine.com)

(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your email message.)

**MAIL:** Recipes

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# ENERGY-SAVING GADGETS & GIZMOS

BY PAUL WESSLUND

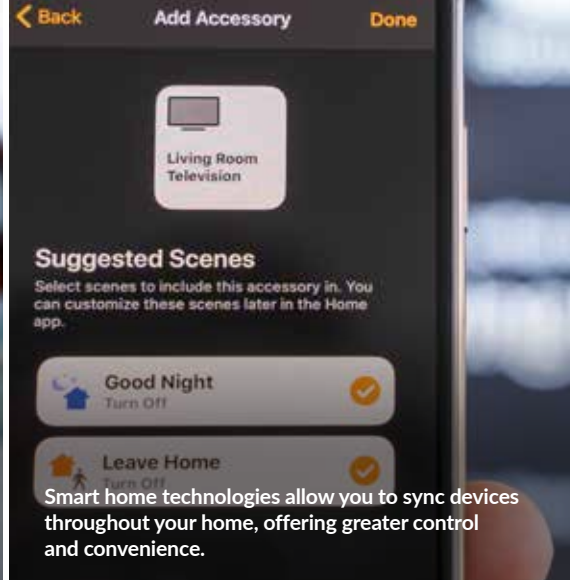
With the holidays approaching, shoppers will soon be eying an abundance of devices and gadgets to gift friends and loved ones – or to buy for themselves.

Many consumers are turning to smart home devices that offer convenience and other benefits, including one often-overlooked perk: energy savings. With so many options available, choosing the best tech for your needs can be overwhelming.

**The following four tips can help you determine the right smart home technologies for your home.**



When it comes to cool new technology, many consumers are turning to smart home devices that offer convenience and other benefits, including energy savings.



Smart home technologies allow you to sync devices throughout your home, offering greater control and convenience.



Smart thermostats offer convenience and achievable energy savings.  
Photo Source: Ecobee

### 1 ASK YOURSELF HOW SMART YOU WANT YOUR HOME TO BE.

Smart plugs, energy-use apps and home monitors are cool devices that can help you save energy. But it helps to understand how they work to make the most of them. Before you invest your time and money, ask yourself, how much technology do you want? What are your habits when setting up and using the latest development? If you like to tinker, an energy app on your phone could be fun and help you save money. But as electronics get smarter, even non-tech-savvy people find them easier to use.

### 2 GET THE MOST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK.

The most frequently recommended energy-saving device is a smart thermostat. And that makes sense because the thermostat controls your heating and cooling, which account for the most energy consumption in your home. Smart thermostats can program an energy schedule to adjust the heating or cooling when you're sleeping or out of the house during the day. Additional smart thermostat features include detecting movement in a room to adjust energy use, learning your daily habits, responding to voice commands and tracking the weather.

Renters might even be able to convince a landlord to pay for an energy-saving smart thermostat.

If you have a heat pump, contact your electric co-op before using a smart thermostat. Lowering the temperature too much when you're not home could result in switching to more expensive auxiliary heat to bring the house back to room temperature.

Other devices that can produce energy savings for minimal cost and effort include smart light bulbs, outlets and charging stations.

### 3 DETERMINE YOUR ENERGY-SAVING GOALS.

A home energy monitor is one way to save on electricity, and the range of choices means you'll need to ask how much you're willing to pay and if it's worthwhile. One study found that spending about \$1,800 on a full home, commercially installed energy monitor could save about 16% on electric bills and pay for itself in 10-15 years. Much less ambitious approaches involve downloading an app on your phone to keep track of your electricity use and even turning smart appliances on and off when you're away.

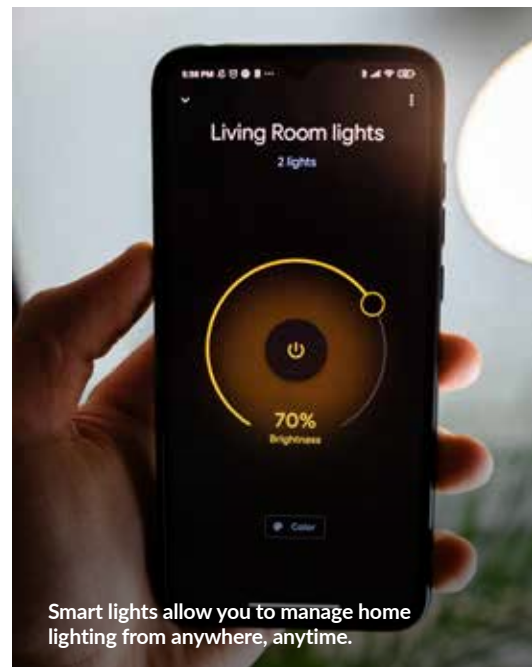
### 4 DO A SIMPLE ENERGY CHECKUP.

Take a walk through your home with the intention of identifying everything that uses electricity. You'll likely notice a lot of functions that could be managed with smart devices. If your phone sits plugged in long after it's charged, smart power strips and smart outlets can stop the electricity use when the battery is at 100%. Smart

light bulbs can be controlled with an app on your phone, saving energy and giving your home that lived-in look when you're away. Ceiling fans can now adjust themselves for the best air flow, depending on the temperature. Motion detectors can turn indoor lights on and off when you enter or leave a room; even solar-powered outdoor lights can detect when you're approaching and light the way.

With just a little planning, you can make sure this gift-giving season is merry, bright – and smart.

*Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.*



Smart lights allow you to manage home lighting from anywhere, anytime.

# A LINEMAN'S CAREER

BY SCOTT HAGENSON



When a lineman begins his employment with the co-op after powerline school, he is an apprentice lineman. He then begins a minimum

of a three-year, eight-step process to become a first-class lineman.

During those three years, the lineman begins by performing basic powerline work alongside a first-class lineman. As his experience increases and he becomes more comfortable with the new job, the apprentice lineman may have the opportunity to operate the bucket and digger trucks at the job site and be given additional responsibility to complete tasks in the field. After months of experience and hands-on training, the apprentice lineman will start to work with energized circuits alongside other first-class linemen at the discretion of the line superintendent and first-class lineman.

During the three years, an apprentice lineman attends several continuing

education classes and monthly safety meetings. He also logs countless hours working on power lines, trimming trees, building lines and working on numerous annual maintenance jobs. Through each step of the three-year program, the apprentice lineman will provide the hours completed working in specific categories to complete the step. He will also have to test through the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' program to advance each step. After passing tests, completing hours of line work and earning experience, an apprentice lineman becomes a first-class lineman. As a first-class lineman, he can respond to outages with an apprentice lineman and be a crew leader on the job site.

The job of being a co-op lineman is very difficult but also highly rewarding. Putting safety first and providing great customer service to our members are the ultimate goals of every lineman.

*Scott Hagenson is the line superintendent for Franklin REC.*



## GENERATOR PROGRAM TIPS



Are you interested in purchasing a generator through Franklin REC? Here are three helpful tips to get started with the new member benefit program:

- **Contact your preferred electrician to discuss your generator needs.**
- **Review the FAQ and complete the forms on the Franklin REC website.**
- **Order your member-only discounted price generator through the co-op!**

It is as easy as 1, 2, 3!

For additional questions regarding the generator program, please call the co-op at 641-456-2557.

## IS YOUR WATER HEATER A WATER LEAKER?

Franklin REC has an exclusive, member-only electric water heater rebate program that can turn your leaker into a keeper! The co-op offers a variety of electric water heater sizes to fit all your needs, and specific sizes are kept in the warehouse for same-day pickup.

Call Franklin REC to order a new, reliable water heater today!





## THE DRIVE TO HELP RURAL IOWA THRIVE

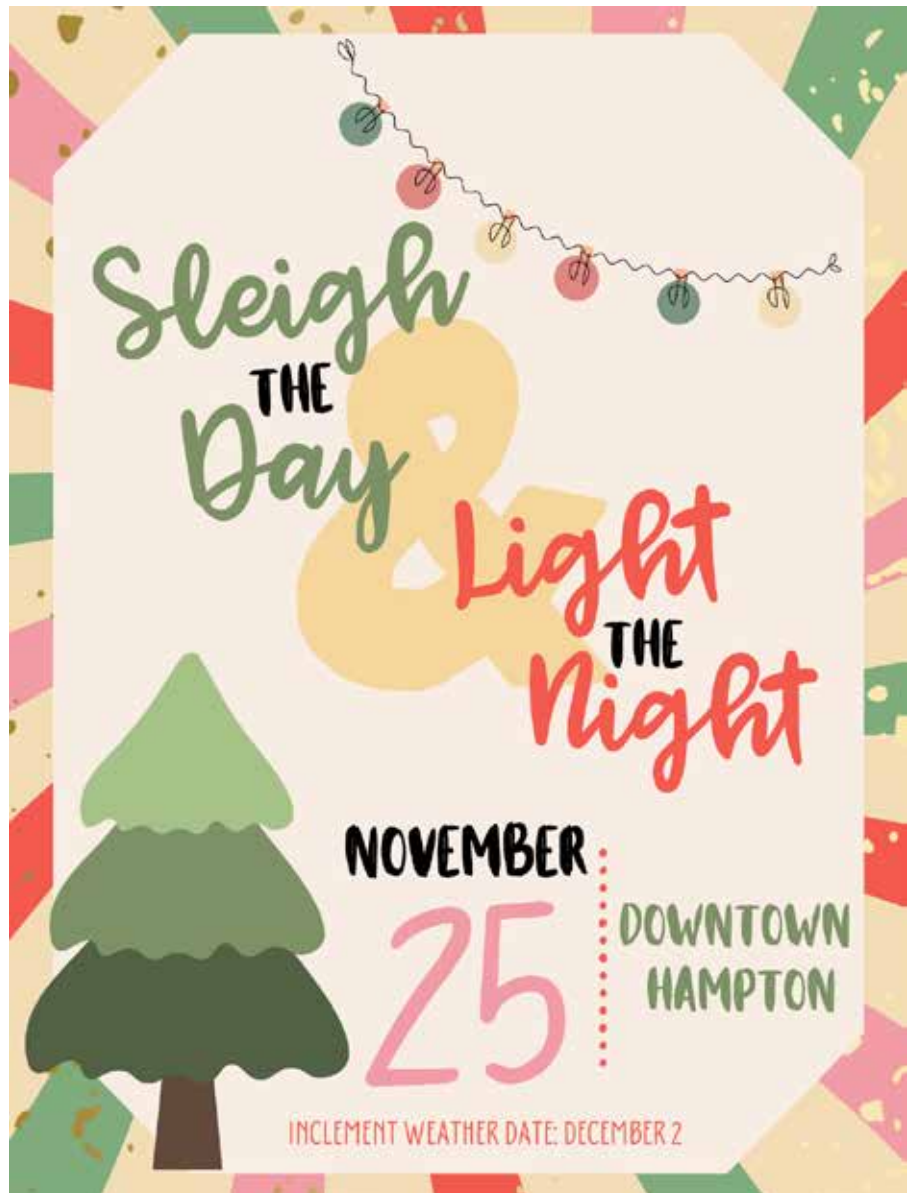
Franklin REC employees and local community members dedicated their time to a recent blood drive. The donations provide the invaluable gift of life, collectively saving 36 lives.

## THE 2023 FESTIVITIES ARE HERE!

Illuminate the holiday season with Franklin REC's Light Up the Night event on **Saturday, Nov. 25**, in downtown Hampton.

Join us for a day filled with joyful activities hosted by our community's fellow businesses. We will line the streets as the lighted parade travels along First St. NW toward Band Shell Park starting at 5:30 p.m. Then you can find the perfect vantage point to witness the lighting of the impressive 30-foot tree at the center of Band Shell Park. Santa Claus will be there to count down the magical moment when the tree comes to life with a radiant glow!

The full event schedule will be inserted with this month's bill. You can also find the latest details by following the Franklin REC Facebook page.



# IOWA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES CONNECT WITH CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

BY ERIN CAMPBELL

More than 25 representatives from Iowa's electric cooperatives traveled to the nation's capital in September to advocate for their co-op members. While in Washington, D.C., the group attended high-level briefings on key issues impacting the electric industry and met with all six members of Iowa's Congressional Delegation to discuss priorities and concerns.

Advocates shared concerns that could impact electric cooperatives' ability to provide reliable and affordable power, including federal Environmental Protection Agency mandates that may force electric generation plants to shut down prematurely. Additionally, co-op representatives talked about continued supply chain challenges and how they impact day-to-day operations.

Co-op advocates also asked their senators and representatives to support permitting reforms to the National Environmental Policy Act to avoid costly delays in the permitting process. The group urged the Iowa Congressional Delegation to authorize an increase in funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant program as part of the Farm Bill reauthorization to support our rural Iowa communities.

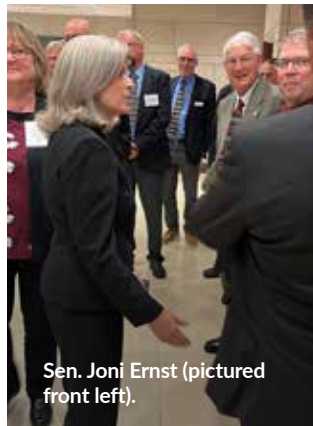
Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster funding was also a concern, as the electric co-op group asked the Iowa Delegation to support supplemental funding for the Disaster Relief Fund to ensure that support is available should a natural disaster strike Iowa.

We appreciate the service of Iowa's elected officials and the tireless work of their staff who help look out for Iowans in the Halls of Congress.

*Erin Campbell is the director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.*



Rep. Zach Nunn (pictured in the center).



Sen. Joni Ernst (pictured front left).



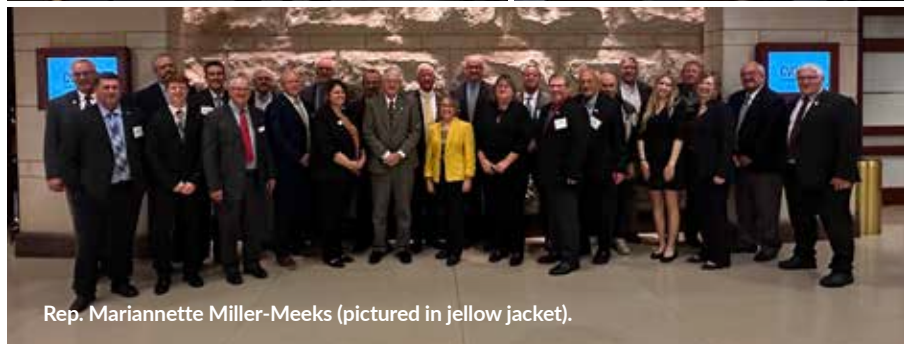
Rep. Ashley Hinson (pictured in red jacket).



Sen. Charles Grassley.



Rep. Randy Feenstra (pictured at the front of the room).



Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (pictured in yellow jacket).

# KNOWING IS HALF THE BATTLE

BY DARCY DOUGHERTY MAULSBY

When I was growing up, some of the most popular toys had their own cartoon shows. This included G.I. Joe, who also narrated public service announcements (PSA).

These PSAs addressed something dangerous kids did unintentionally – such as running out into traffic. After the kids learned the right way to do things, each message ended the same: “Now you know. And knowing is half the battle.”

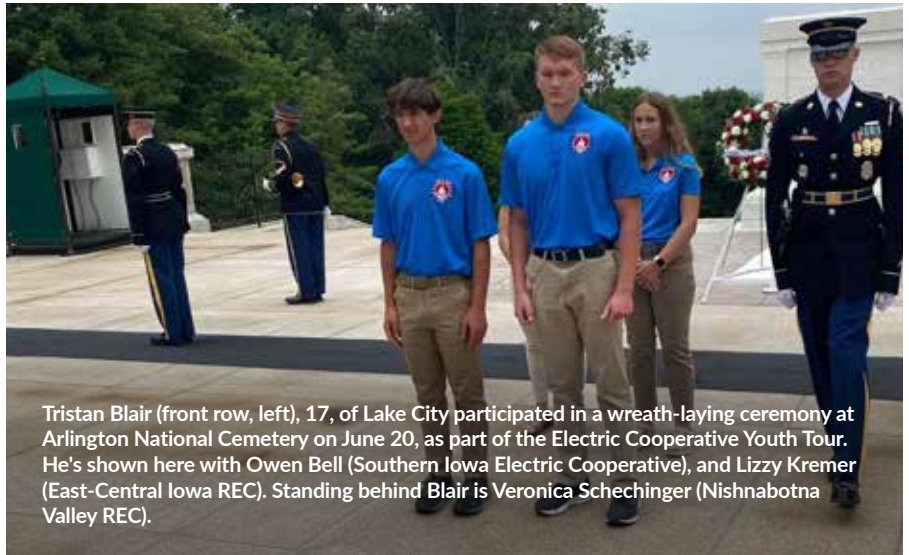
Fast forward to today. I’m concerned we’re letting young people wander down a dangerous road when we fail to teach them history, including the significance of Veterans Day each Nov. 11.

Its roots trace back to World War I. Fighting ceased when an armistice between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month – Nov. 11, 1918. By 1919, the date became known as Armistice Day, although Congress renamed it Veterans Day in 1954. Veterans Day continues to honor American veterans of all wars for their patriotism, love of country and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

## What are we teaching youth?

What’s the state of affairs as we approach Veterans Day in 2023? A recent Morning Consult poll found that only 16% of Gen Z (people born between 1997-2012) are proud to live in the U.S. Every U.S. military branch is struggling to meet its recruiting goals. Volunteering, in general, is also suffering.

A report released in January 2023 by AmeriCorps and the U.S. Census Bureau shows that less than one-quarter of Americans age 16 and older volunteered from September 2020 to September 2021. That’s down from 30% in 2019. Annual hours donated by volunteers has plunged during the



Tristan Blair (front row, left), 17, of Lake City participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery on June 20, as part of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. He's shown here with Owen Bell (Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative), and Lizzy Kremer (East-Central Iowa REC). Standing behind Blair is Veronica Schechinger (Nishnabotna Valley REC).

past two decades, sinking from 52 hours in 2002 to 25 hours today.

I think these disturbing trends are connected to “knowing is half the battle.” What are we teaching young people about the importance of volunteering and serving others? Do we invite our kids and grandkids to place flowers and American flags by the graves of veterans? Do we encourage students to learn about the sacrifices our armed forces have made to protect our freedom?

## Youth Tour offers new perspectives

I’m grateful the annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, sponsored by many of Iowa’s electric cooperatives, offers students the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. This trip is dedicated to learning about electric cooperatives, American history and U.S. government, while giving students a greater understanding of their role as American citizens.

This year’s Youth Tour participant from my rural electric co-op (Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association) was Tristan Blair (17) of Lake City. At Arlington National Cemetery, Blair escorted fellow students who laid the wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

“I felt instant sympathy for anyone who lost a loved one in combat,” says Blair, whose thoughts also turned to his family members who’ve served.

These family members include Dennis Moulds (great-grandpa), Bill Marine (grandpa), Steve and Sheri Nockles (grandpa and grandma), Adam Nockles (uncle), Cara (Blair) Hove, and Kolby Blair (cousin). Some served in the Army, while others joined the Air Force. They included a tank mechanic in South Korea, a signal corps communication specialist and more.

“Thank you so much for asking me to get this information,” Blair told me. “I had no idea about some of that stuff.”

Knowing is half the battle. Once you plant the seeds of knowledge, good things follow.

“Thank you to all the veterans and current soldiers,” Blair added. “I wouldn’t have been able to do any of this without the sacrifices you made for my generation and the whole country.”

*Darcy Dougherty Maulsby lives near her family’s Century Farm northwest of Lake City. Visit her at [www.darcymaulsby.com](http://www.darcymaulsby.com).*



IOWA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

The magazine  
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Iowa's electric  
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