

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF  FRANKLIN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

June 2023

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Love your neighbor as you love yourself

A WORD FROM



Garrett Thompson
Chief Executive Officer

If you've spent any time listening to a Sunday morning sermon or attending a Sunday school class, you have probably heard the verse, "love your neighbor as you love yourself" (Matthew 22:39). If I'm being completely honest, it's a very hard thing to do day in and day out. Thankfully we have several people around us that live this out every single day, and I'm sure a few of those individuals popped into your head while reading this.

Societal benefits of volunteering

In Robert Putnam's book, *Bowling Alone*, he observed that healthy communities have a very high degree of social trust. Social trust basically means, "a general sense that the members are not simply pursuing their own narrow good, but are willing to look out for one another as well." Examples of this can be as simple as raking a neighbor's leaves or something more time-intensive like planting or harvesting a crop for a sick neighbor.

As a transplant to Iowa, I can say without a doubt that Iowans definitely deserve the cultural label of "Iowa

Nice." The idea of loving your neighbor as you love yourself is lived out every day by our fellow Franklin REC members. Which is why we would love nothing more than to recognize those in our communities that have such a positive impact on our lives.

History of Shine the Light

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives created the Shine the Light contest in 2021 in partnership with Iowa generation and transmission cooperatives to highlight individuals making a positive difference in their communities.

Franklin REC, along with fellow Iowa electric cooperatives, search for those who volunteer their time selflessly, creating a healthier and more enjoyable community in which to live. Do you know someone that has gone above and beyond and left a lasting and positive influence on your life? If so, we would love to nominate them for this year's Shine the Light contest.

Three winners will be announced and featured in the September issue of *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine. Each winner will be awarded \$2,500 to a charity of their choice. That money can go a long way in cultivating additional social trust and a healthier community within Franklin REC's service territory.

Feel free to contact us at the office about the application process or you can visit IowaShineTheLight.com for more information.

Personal benefits of volunteering

If you've been on the fence about volunteering, or don't feel you have the

time, just know that there's something in it for you, too. *Psychology Today* has performed research on volunteerism and how it affects us personally. Over an eight-year period, they studied 13,000 adults from a vast range of social, demographic, and behavior characteristics.

They discovered that people who volunteered at least two hours a week had higher levels of happiness, optimism, and purpose in life and had more contact with friends. They also had lower levels of depressive symptoms, hopelessness, and loneliness, fewer perceived physical discomforts/disabilities, and were more physically active.

There have also been in-depth studies on the benefits of volunteering in relation to those recovering from alcoholism; individuals suffering from chronic pain; patients with multiple sclerosis (MS); those suffering with cardiology illness; and, of course, mental illnesses. For more information, please read, "Rx It's good to be good 2017 commentary: Prescribing volunteerism for health, happiness, resilience, and longevity" by Stephen G. Post on the APA PsycNet® website.

To all the volunteers who selflessly love their neighbors, thank you! You do not hear it enough, and we appreciate the positivity you bring to our communities! You are the reason we created the Shine the Light program, and we would love nothing more than to have a winner from Franklin REC.

This time next year we hope to have even more individuals to nominate for the Shine the Light program, which in turn will help Franklin REC's members, and our communities, live happier and healthier lives!

Stay safe outdoors

As sunny days arrive and temperatures soar, it is easy to be footloose and fancy free. As you spend more time outdoors, keep these safety tips in mind to have a fun, safe summer.

Pools and hot tubs Before opening your pool or hot tub for the season, ensure there is ground fault circuit interrupter protection on underwater lighting circuits, as well as for lighting around pools, hot tubs, and spas. Have your pool's electrical system inspected. Faulty wiring can cause swimmers to experience electric shock drowning.

Safe swimming Never swim near boats plugged into shore power or docks with an electrical source. Energized water can cause electric shock drowning.

Recreational activity According to the National Lightning Safety Council, between 2006 and 2021, nearly two-thirds of lightning deaths occurred while enjoying outdoor activities. Thirty-three percent of the fatalities occurred during water-related activities such as boating, spending time on the beach, and swimming, while 14 percent happened during sporting activities such as fishing, soccer, and running.

During a storm Install a weather app on your phone to inform you of weather alerts. Lightning can occur up to 10 miles away from the heart of the storm, so if you hear thunder, take cover. A watch means that conditions are likely for severe weather to develop; a warning means take action.

When playing Fly drones, remote-controlled planes, toys, and kites in a wide-open area away from overhead power lines. If an object is stuck in an overhead power line, do not try to remove it. Instead, call Franklin REC and a crew will address the issue safely.

Ensure that overhead power lines do not run through or over a tree before your child starts to climb. Select trees that are in a wide-open space without overhead power lines nearby.

Teach your children to never touch or climb a substation fence to attempt to retrieve a ball or any other item. Call Franklin REC to safely take care of it. The same precaution applies to a pet or animal inside the fenced area of a substation.

Releasing balloons Be careful with metallic balloons. If they become caught in a power line or other utility equipment, they can cause a major power outage. Additionally, use caution during a balloon release regardless of the type of balloon. Be sure to release balloons in wide-open areas, far from overhead power lines and airports.

For additional electrical safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Franklin REC, your Touchstone Energy cooperative, encourages you to MOVE OVER AND SLOW DOWN when you approach a vehicle with flashers on. Let's obey the law and make sure everyone arrives safely!



**MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN**



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Weekend warrior energy-saving projects

By Abby Berry

Weekend warriors: Considering home improvement upgrades that save energy and money? We have a few project ideas for you that can be completed in a day or less!

Get smart about cooling and heating.

Now that smart thermostats are more affordable (as little as \$70!), this simple upgrade makes for a fun, efficient weekend project.

Your new smart thermostat will come with step-by-step instructions, but this project typically involves shutting off your HVAC at the breaker panel, disconnecting/removing the old thermostat, installing the new smart thermostat, and connecting it to your home Wi-Fi.

Go green and boost your greenery with a rain barrel. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, one rain barrel can save a homeowner 1,300 gallons of water annually.

The simplest way to install a rain barrel is positioning a plastic or wooden barrel directly under your gutter downspout. Basic piping may be required, as well. Consider a cover for the top of your rain barrel to keep insects and small debris out of your harvested water.

Create fresh savings with a DIY clothesline.

You can create your own clothesline with two T-posts, wire, and hook-and-eye turnbuckles. First, call 8-1-1. Depending on your soil, you may need a small amount of Quikrete to set the posts. Another option is installing the line between two trees—a typical load of laundry requires about 35 feet of line.

Be sure to check out Franklin REC's website for more energy-saving ideas and tips.



Home Safety Awareness Month

Home Safety Awareness Month is a good time to check for accidents waiting-to-happen in your home, especially when electricity is involved.

Perform an audit of your home by following these safety tips:

- Check that your appliances are still in working order by turning them on and off, listening to the sound of the motor (is it “normal”?) and inspecting their cords and plugs for damage. Only purchase new appliances that have the thumbs-up from an independent testing laboratory such as UL.
- If you have young children, plug wall outlets with child-safety caps.
- Replace frayed or worn appliance cords.
- Choose light bulbs with the correct wattage for each lamp and overhead light fixture. The maximum safe wattage is imprinted on the fixture.
- Remove electrical cords from under your carpets.
- Put your extension cords away. They are not meant for everyday use.
- Install waterproof covers on your outdoor outlets.



**Nominate a local volunteer
and they could win
\$2,500 for their charity!**

Contest entries accepted during June at
IowaShineTheLight.com

Franklin REC will be closed
Tuesday, July 4, 2023.

Be sure to call us if you
have an emergency or
an outage:
641-456-2557

Have a SAFE 4th of July!

BOARD ROOM highlights

At their April meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization of \$58,025.33
- Approved the auditor's report



Beginning in July, look for your Franklin REC news in Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine!



Mitchell
Roelfs



Lily
Strother

Youth Tour attendees to D.C. in June

Congratulations to Franklin REC's 2023 Youth Tour representative, Mitchell Roelfs, son of Matt and Meghan Roelfs of Ackley.

Roelfs will join 2022 Franklin REC Youth Tour representative Lily Strother and many other Iowa electric cooperative representatives, this month in Washington, D.C.

The students will learn about the impacts of electric cooperatives, American history, and the United States government, while having the opportunity to visit with their elected officials.



Courtney Ringleb

Ringleb chosen for scholarship

Courtney Ringleb, a student at NIACC in Mason City and daughter of Franklin REC office manager/chief financial officer Karen Ringleb, was selected as a 2023 recipient of a \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative Employee Dependent scholarship.

Recipients are selected based on academic record, potential to succeed, leadership, participation in school activities, honors, work experience, a statement of education and career goals, and an outside appraisal.

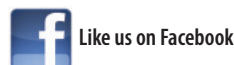
Basin Electric is a not-for-profit generation and transmission cooperative based out of Bismarck, North Dakota, supplying power to 131-member cooperative systems and serving 3 million electric consumers.

Congratulations, Courtney!

6 cool tips for a hot room

1. Keep heat and sunlight out of indoor rooms during the day by closing windows and window coverings.
2. Open those same windows overnight to let cool, nighttime air into your house.
3. If some windows are naturally shaded by trees or shadows, open them during the day. Opening more than one can create a cross-breeze that will quickly cool off the house.
4. Switch the direction of ceiling fan blades. In the summer, blades should spin counterclockwise to push cool air down into the room. Turn the fans off when nobody is in the room.
5. Add an energy-efficient portable dehumidifier to a room that tends to be too warm. Humidity can make a hot room feel even hotter. Removing the humidity makes the room feel cooler.
6. Use the microwave or outdoor grill to cook dinner. Heat-producing indoor appliances like the stove, dishwasher, and clothes dryer lose a lot of heat to the air in the room. Wait until after dark when it's cooler outdoors to turn on appliances.

INTouch® is published monthly for members of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative
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smart choices

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