

JUNE 2026

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ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

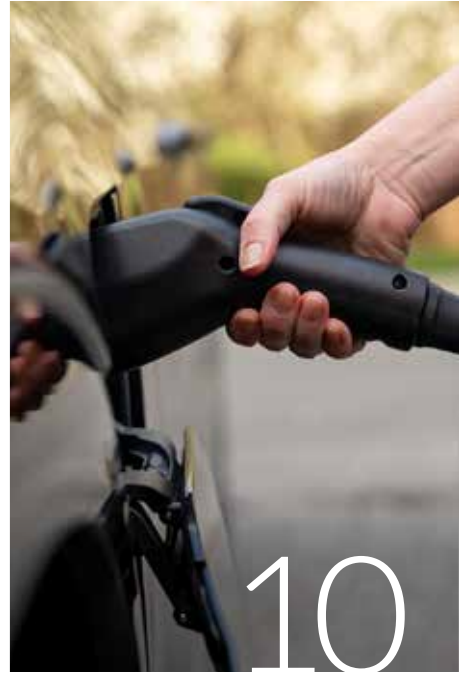
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a community volunteer**

Low-cost ways to save energy

Backyard BBQ recipes

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Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine (ISSN: 2770-8683) is published monthly by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, a not-for-profit organization representing Iowa's member-owned local electric cooperatives. Association address: 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. The phrase *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* is a mark registered within the state of Iowa to the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. The magazine does not accept advertising.

Editorial Office
8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Telephone: 515-276-5350.

Email Address
editor@ieclmagazine.com. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine does not assume responsibility for unsolicited items.

Website
www.ieclmagazine.com

Postmaster
Send address changes to *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine, 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48, Des Moines, IA 50322-2992. Periodicals Postage Paid at Des Moines, Iowa, and at additional mailing offices.

Change of Address
Every local electric cooperative maintains an independent mailing list of its members, so please send your change of address directly to your local electric cooperative's office. *Iowa Electric Cooperative Living* magazine cannot make an address change for you.

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ON THE COVER

Special thanks to Jill Hannasch, a Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative member-consumer, for supplying this month's cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could receive \$100!

CLASS IS ALWAYS IN SESSION FOR IOWA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

BY KATRINA DAVIS



When the lockers are empty and the final school bell rings, summer announces a well-earned break from homework and schedules.

While classrooms may quiet down, learning doesn't take a season off in the world of electric cooperatives.

At the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, we see education not as an obligation, but as an investment that pays dividends in reliability, innovation and service to co-op member-consumers. The electric utility landscape is constantly evolving, shaped by new technologies, changing regulations and growing expectations from the communities we serve. Staying ahead requires more than experience; it demands a commitment to continuous learning.

That's where our training and education programs come in. As the director of education and training at the statewide trade association, my role is to provide high-value learning opportunities for our member electric cooperatives.

Investing in employees and directors

Throughout the year, we bring co-op employees together for workshops, conferences and hands-on training opportunities designed to sharpen skills and spark new ideas. Whether it's a lineworker mastering the latest safety practices, a customer service representative navigating emerging member needs or a manager exploring new operational strategies, each session builds confidence and capability.

But learning doesn't stop with employees.

Cooperative board directors, who are locally elected member-consumers, also dedicate time to expanding their knowledge. Through director-focused events, they dive deeper into the complexities of the energy industry, from governance responsibilities to emerging policy issues. Just as importantly, these gatherings create a space for connection. Directors from across the state share perspectives, challenges and solutions, strengthening not only their individual co-ops but the cooperative network as a whole.

Continuous commitment

There's something fitting about this work continuing through the summer months. While students may take a break, co-op leaders and employees are leaning in by asking questions, exchanging ideas and preparing for what's ahead. It's a reminder that learning isn't confined

to a classroom or a calendar. It's a mindset. And that mindset matters.

Because when cooperative teams are well trained and well informed, they're better equipped to serve you. They make smarter decisions, respond more effectively to challenges and help ensure your co-op remains strong for generations to come.

As you enjoy the pace of summer with longer days, family time and a bit of rest, know that behind the scenes your electric cooperative is still doing its homework. And Iowa's electric co-ops invest in education and training because we believe in the power of knowledge to build a brighter future.

After all, in the cooperative world, learning is always in season.

Katrina Davis is the director of education and training for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

WIN A CHARBROIL BISTRO PRO TABLETOP GRILL!

Grill like a pro – even in tight spaces! The Charbroil® Bistro Pro™ tabletop electric grill heats up to 500 degrees F fast, delivering deliciously seared flavors. Its 180-square-inch cooking area makes it ideal for small patios or on-the-go cookouts. Enjoy easy, electric-powered grilling with convenience.

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.ieclmagazine.com no later than June 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 \$100 Spring Spruce Up gift card from the April issue was **John Hoffman**, a **Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative** member-consumer.



ENTER ONLINE BY JUNE 30!

ENERGY PROJECTS IN THE NEWS: WHAT TO KNOW IN CERRO GORDO AND WORTH COUNTIES

BY GARRETT THOMPSON



You may have seen recent news stories about large solar and wind projects in North Iowa, particularly in Cerro Gordo County and nearby areas.

With about a third of our membership living in that area, I thought it would be helpful to walk through what's going on and what it means from your co-op's perspective.

There have been two separate decisions that have gotten a lot of attention:

- The Iowa Utilities Commission recently granted a generating certificate for a large solar project in Cerro Gordo County, allowing it to move forward.
- Around the same time, the Iowa Supreme Court issued a decision related to a wind project in Worth County that supported the county's position in that case related to stricter zoning ordinances.



At first glance, those outcomes might seem a little inconsistent. However, they highlight something important: the energy landscape and regulatory environment are constantly evolving and include input from multiple parties with different roles and perspectives.

Depending on the situation, these projects can involve:

- County-level zoning and ordinances
- State-level regulatory agencies
- Federal regulatory agencies
- Regional Transmission Organizations (such as the Southwest Power Pool)
- And, in some cases, the court systems

Each of these entities play a different role, how they interact and the details can vary from project to project. That's why you can see different outcomes, even when the projects may seem similar on the surface.

I also want to be clear about what this means for Franklin REC.

We are not involved in the siting or approval of these projects, and these decisions do not impact how we operate day to day. Our role is to deliver reliable, affordable electricity to our members, not to determine where generation projects are built.

So, while these are important developments at the state and local

level, they don't change your service or your rates today.

Staying engaged on energy policy

That said, these situations are a good reminder of why it's important for your electric cooperative to stay engaged and informed on energy policy and regulatory issues at both the state and local levels. Our goal isn't to take sides in individual projects, but to ensure that our members' voices are heard as decisions are made.

We work closely with organizations like the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, as well as state and local legislators, to share what we're seeing on the ground. Whether that's reliability needs, cost pressures or long-term system planning. That collaboration helps ensure policymakers have a clear understanding of how their decisions can impact the electric system and the communities we serve.

As things continue to evolve, we'll keep an eye on developments and share updates if and when there's a direct impact to our system or our members. In the meantime, our focus remains the same: keeping the lights on and continuing to provide the level of service you expect from your local electric cooperative.

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



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CELEBRATING OUR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Franklin REC is proud to invest in the future of our communities by awarding scholarships to five students as they pursue their educational goals.

At the heart of a strong cooperative is a commitment to education. Supporting students today helps build a skilled, dedicated workforce for tomorrow – one that will continue to strengthen and sustain rural Iowa for generations to come.

Franklin REC's updated scholarship program reflects this commitment by providing opportunities to students who are driven to succeed and passionate about making a difference in rural Iowa. Whether continuing their education in a trade, technical field or college setting, these students represent the future of our local workforce and communities.

Please join us in congratulating our scholarship recipients on this well-earned achievement.

Basin Scholarship Recipients



Brenden Walker

School attending: Riverland Community College

Major: Web Developer/Game Design

Parents: Heather Walker-Kral and Christian Kral



Katelyn Witte

School attending: Iowa State University

Major: Agriculture Studies

Parents: Roger and Brandie Witte

Agriculture & Rural Development Scholarship Recipient



AnnEllen Hofmeister

School attending: Ellsworth Community College

Major: Animal Science

Parent: Marlyn Hofmeister

Leadership & Service Scholarship Recipient



Abby Schoning

School attending: North Iowa Area Community College

Major: Secondary Ag Education

Parent: David Schoning

Skilled Trades & Technical Scholarship Recipient



Hudson Hansen

School attending: Northwestern Iowa Community College

Major: Power Lineman

Parents: Nate and Ginger Hansen

We are proud to support their journey and look forward to the positive impact they will make in the years ahead.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY BOOK DRIVE

Franklin REC extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone across our service territory who contributed to our recent book drive. Your generous donations, combined with the support of our valued community partners, made it possible to build and restock 13 community book houses throughout the area.

Because of you, these book houses are filled with stories waiting to be discovered, shared and enjoyed by readers of all ages. We encourage you to stop by your local community book house, take a book, leave a book and be part of the ongoing effort to inspire a love of reading in our communities.

Thank you for helping us make a meaningful impact – one book at a time.

SHINE THE LIGHT ON LOCAL VOLUNTEERS



NOMINATE A COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER BY JUNE 30

Three winners will each receive \$3,000 for their chosen charity or nonprofit

The Shine the Light contest is celebrating its sixth year of recognizing volunteers who make a lasting difference in communities across Iowa. Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives of Iowa, the statewide contest highlights individuals whose dedication, compassion and leadership strengthen local nonprofits, charities and community organizations.

Each June, member-consumers and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are invited to nominate outstanding

local volunteers through the contest website. Again this year, three winners will be selected and each will receive a \$3,000 donation for their chosen charity or nonprofit organization. Nominations are open June 1-30 to volunteers of all ages, and past nominees who did not win may be nominated again. Entries require a short explanation of how the nominee has made a positive impact in the community.

As the Shine the Light contest enters its sixth year, here's a look back at the winners and charities recognized during the past five years.

2021



Suzanne Askelsen | Ballard Education Foundation

Suzanne Askelsen of Cambridge was nominated by her mother, Carol Gilbert, a Midland Power Cooperative member. Suzanne was recognized for her work with the Ballard Education Foundation, serving on the steering committee and as the first president for four years. She helped identify sponsors and lead fundraising efforts while balancing life as a mother of six.

Marlene Walthart | Emmet County Animal Shelter

Marlene Walthart of Estherville was nominated by Dawn Eveleth, a member of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, for her work with the Emmet County Animal Shelter. Alongside her husband Larry, she has volunteered at the shelter for years and helped establish a nearby can redemption center to raise money for the facility.

Dr. George North | Wilder Park

George North of Allison was nominated by Deb McWhirter, a Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative member, for his work with Wilder Park. A retired dentist and longtime scout leader, George helped develop Wilder Park to provide affordable outdoor recreation opportunities in Butler County.

Deb Johnson | Greater Fairfield Area Habitat for Humanity

Deb Johnson of Fairfield was nominated by Kathy Brown, a member-consumer of Access Energy Cooperative. An active volunteer, Deb uses her social work background to serve as a family support liaison for Greater Fairfield Area Habitat for Humanity. She is also known as the "Cookie Lady" for baking treats for student workers during home builds.

Sharon Van Beek | Buckets of Joy

Sharon Van Beek of Primghar was nominated by her daughter, Laura Leonard, a member-consumer of North West Rural Electric Cooperative. Sharon has coordinated holiday gifts for children in need for 30 years, continuing a tradition started by her in-laws. Buckets of Joy now distributes up to 250 bags each Christmas filled with clothing, books, snacks and other essentials.

Nicole Low | Eldora Community Garden

Nicole Low of Eldora was nominated by Midland Power Cooperative member Paul Lawler. Nicole co-founded the Eldora Community Garden to build community and provide fresh produce for people in need. A registered nurse and mother of two, she is passionate about public health and reducing food insecurity.

2022



Erica Lindaman | Gift of Giving

Erica Lindaman of Clarion was nominated by members and employees of Prairie Energy Cooperative. A fourth-grade teacher, Erica became involved with Gift of Giving during the pandemic to help provide holiday gifts for children. She now helps coordinate assistance for families needing clothing, food and household items throughout Wright County.

Betty Thronson | Project Flo

Betty Thronson of New Hampton was nominated by her sister, Shirley Hoffman, a member of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative. Betty and her siblings started Project Flo in 2011 to honor their mother, Florence "Flo" Thronson. Each summer, volunteers repair homes throughout Chickasaw County, with Betty coordinating projects and work teams.

Heather Weers | Sleep in Heavenly Peace

Heather Weers of Center Junction was nominated by Megan Ruley, a member and employee of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. Heather founded the Jones County chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace in 2019 and has helped deliver more than 320 beds so children don't have to sleep on the floor.

2023



2024



Judy Hess | Moms and Grandmas for Fonda Inc.

Judy Hess of Fonda was nominated by Kerry Noethe, a member-consumer of Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association. Judy was recognized for her work with MAGS 4 Fonda, a group focused on improving parks and the local pool. Since starting the organization in 2018, she has led creative fundraising efforts for local projects.

Doug Pralle | Compassion Flights

Doug Pralle of Hampton was nominated by Madison Alert, an employee of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative. Doug founded Compassion Flights in 2017 to arrange free air transportation for medical treatment. Inspired by kindness shown to his family during his father's illness, he now works to provide that same support to others.

Beth Thole | Osceola County Agriculture Pavilion

Beth Thole of Sibley was nominated by Gary and Karen Trei, member-consumers of Osceola Electric Cooperative. As a board member of the McCallum Museum, Beth has helped raise funds and preserve agricultural history through the Osceola County Ag Pavilion, which features a farmhouse, barn and historical artifacts.

Chuck Bildstein | Chelsey's Dream Foundation

Chuck Bildstein of Anamosa was nominated by Al Reiter of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. Chuck founded Chelsey's Dream Foundation in memory of his daughter Chelsey to help families with adoption expenses and emotional support. Since 2014, the organization has helped more than 100 families adopt 141 children.

Gerry Holtrup | Partners for Patriots

Gerry Holtrup of Hospers was nominated by Molli Griffin, a member-consumer of North West Rural Electric Cooperative. Gerry was recognized for his work with Partners for Patriots, an organization that trains service dogs for disabled veterans. He leads fundraising and outreach efforts and also helps train and place service dogs.

Aimee Goeman McKnight | Build a Better Belmond

Aimee Goeman of Belmond was nominated by four member-consumers of Prairie Energy Cooperative. Aimee returned to her hometown in 2020 and became a leader in efforts to rebuild Belmond's community swimming pool. Through Build a Better Belmond, she is helping raise funds to restore the pool as a key community gathering place.

2025



Visit www.IowaShineTheLight.com to review the contest rules and submission guidelines.

Contest entries will be accepted at this website June 1-30.

Scan the QR code to watch videos featuring each of the winners.





SMOKED BBQ MAC AND CHEESE

- 1 large bag elbow macaroni
- 1 block Velveeta cheese
- 1 stick butter, cubed
- 1 quart milk
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 3 tablespoons barbeque seasoning
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 2-3 cups Cheez-Its, crushed
- cooking spray

Heat smoker to 275 degrees F. Pour dry macaroni into a 9x13-inch baking dish and place Velveeta in the center of the dish. Spread butter cubes around cheese then pour in milk, heavy cream and barbeque seasoning. Spread shredded cheese over the top evenly. Cover and smoke for 2 hours, then stir well. Sprinkle crushed crackers on top and spray lightly with cooking spray. Sprinkle a dash of barbeque seasoning over the crackers, then return to smoker for 25 minutes. *Serves 6-8*

Chloe Palmer • Lovilia
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

CORN CASSEROLE

- 1 stick butter
- 1 can corn, undrained
- 1 can cream of corn, undrained
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ cup onion, chopped
- 1 8-ounce carton chive chip dip
- 2 cups cheddar cheese
- 1 box Jiffy corn bread mix

Melt butter and add both cans of corn, egg, onion, chip dip and cheese. Mix in corn bread mix. Pour into a greased 9x15-inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees F for 1 hour. *Serves 10*

Karen Caldwell • Albia
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

RANCH COLESLAW

- 4 cups cabbage, shredded
- ½ cup Mexican-style corn, drained
- 1 jalapeño pepper, diced
- 3 tablespoons onion, chopped
- ½ cup cheddar cheese
- ¾ cup ranch dressing
- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon celery seed
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste

Mix all ingredients together. *Serves 6*

Amy Behounek • Chelsea
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative

MOLASSES GRILLED PORK TENDERLOIN

- ½ cup molasses
- ¼ cup coarse grain Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon seasoned salt
- 1 3-pound pork tenderloin

Combine molasses, mustard, vinegar and seasoned salt, adjust salt to taste. You can also use honey Dijon mustard. Place pork tenderloin on grill over medium-hot coals (splitting the tenderloin in half makes it easier to grill and will cook faster). Cover with grill lid and cook until almost done, meat will be a little pink when cooked on the grill. Brush molasses sauce on pork and cover with lid. Cook until the thickest part of the tenderloin reaches an internal temperature of 160 degrees F, turning once and basting with the reserved molasses. You can double the sauce ingredients to make a dipping sauce. Warm the dipping sauce in the microwave before serving. *Serves 8*

Dianne Roeder • Maurice
North West Rural Electric Cooperative

GRILLED STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE KEBABS

- 8 wooden skewers
- 1 loaf shortcake
- 1 1-pound package strawberries
- whipped cream or ice cream

Soak the wooden skewers in water for at least 2 hours to prevent them from burning on the grill. Cut the cake into 2-inch cubes. Sponge cake or angel food cake can also be used. Wash strawberries and remove the hull. Thread alternating strawberries and cake on each wooden skewer. Place kebabs on the grill and cook for 5 minutes, rotating during cooking. They are done when the cake is toasted. Serve with whipped cream or ice cream.

Marilyn O'Brien • Geneva
Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative

BBQ BITES

- 16 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breasts, diced
- 2 tablespoons corn oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sweet barbeque sauce
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Dijon mustard
- 40 corn chip cups
- sour cream

In a large skillet over high heat, cook chicken in corn oil until done. Add onion and cook 2 minutes more, or until onion is golden brown. Season with salt and pepper. Add barbeque sauce and mustard. Cook until heated through, stirring occasionally. Divide barbeque chicken mixture into the corn chip cups. Add a dollop of sour cream to each cup.

Deb Bartholomew • Ollie
T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative

CREAMY BLACK BEAN DIP

- 1 can black beans
- 1 can corn
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup red pepper, chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup green pepper, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red onion, chopped
- chips

Rinse and drain black beans and corn. In a medium bowl, combine sour cream, mayonnaise, vinegar, cumin, chili powder, pepper, garlic powder and salt. Add the beans, corn, peppers and onion. Stir and serve with chips. Serves 8-10

Grant DeSmet • Larchwood
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

CORN SALAD

- 2 cans yellow kernel corn, drained
- $\frac{1}{2}$ red pepper, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ green pepper, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ red onion, chopped
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 5-ounce package chili cheese flavored corn chips

Mix all ingredients except chips. Chill mixture. Stir chips in just before serving. Serves 10-12

Joanna Schaefer • Larchwood
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

BAR-B-Q BEEF BURGERS

- 1 pound ground beef
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup barbeque sauce, more to taste
- 2 teaspoons prepared mustard
- 1 tablespoon sautéed onion
- buns

Mix ingredients except buns together and form into patties. Grill burgers until done. Toast buns on the grill for the last couple of minutes.

Susan Ausborn • Ventura
Prairie Energy Cooperative

WANTED:

COMFORT FOOD CLASSICS

THE REWARD:

\$25 BILL CREDIT FOR EVERY ONE WE PUBLISH!

Deadline is June 30

We're looking for your **classic comfort food recipes** – think hearty, warm, simple and nostalgic meals – to usher in the cool fall days. Selected submission will appear in our October issue. Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name, recipe category and number of servings on all submissions.



EMAIL: recipes@ieclmagazine.com

MAIL: Recipes

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Visit www.ieclmagazine.com and search our online archive of hundreds of recipes in various categories.





EV SALES SLOW, BUT CO-OPS POWER FORWARD FOR MEMBERS

BY CATHY CASH

Headlines may say that electric vehicle (EV) sales have taken a significant spill, but electric cooperatives and their members have nothing to worry about here.

It's in co-ops' DNA to be strategic and flexible – balancing shifts in energy demand while upholding the seven cooperative principles that prioritize affordable, reliable and safe electricity. That same adaptability applies to the recent downturn in EV purchases, which energy analysts still expect to surge in the long term.

“Co-ops have internal processes and plans for what really does show up as load versus what's in the headlines,” said Jennah Denney, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's senior program manager for technology integration.

She sees no adverse impacts, just because EV sales dropped by half between last September and December, according to industry data.

“If an electric co-op is serving EVs today, those EVs still have

to charge and the co-op's still serving them,” Denney said.

Variety of benefits remain

The benefits of EV ownership remain strong, and co-ops play an important role.

Although the federal tax credit for EV purchases has sunset, many co-ops and states are offering discounts, rebates or other financial incentives. EV drivers also can take advantage of lower rates from their co-op when charging their

vehicles at home or elsewhere at times that don't stress the grid.

Charging stations owned and operated by co-ops have become valuable assets in supporting grid reliability and the communities they serve. Having available and convenient charging stations is considered a real amenity in small towns and suburbs.

Owners of EVs with a bidirectional capacity battery can tap their vehicle like a generator to deliver backup power to their home in case of a power outage. EVs have also been used to power outdoor community events sponsored by co-ops.

Fuel savings, pre-owned options

Then there's fuel economy and the low maintenance of EV motors.

Fully charged EV batteries provide about 300 miles of driving nowadays, easing past "range anxiety" for drivers switching from cars and pickups that run on gasoline. That means longer drives with fewer fueling stops and no worries about the escalating price at the pump.

"Many people don't realize until they're an EV driver how nice it is to not go into a gas station," said Denney.

A lot of EV models carry higher upfront costs, but the lower-priced, pre-owned vehicle market is growing and more of these vehicles can be found in co-op service territories.

For co-ops with EVs on their lines or if you're a member who owns an EV, it's a great time to contribute to an affordable and reliable grid.

"You have so many ways to benefit from an electric vehicle that you may not have had before," said Denney. "The benefits to owning an EV, that's one thing that hasn't changed despite all of the sales hype."

Long-term vision for electrification

Co-ops across the country with EV load are partnering with local government and business and community leaders to install chargers in prominent places in their electric footprint, such as county buildings, community centers, large restaurants, shopping areas, museums and more.

"EV drivers want confidence about where they will be able to charge,

and some co-ops realize that these communities would be left behind if they didn't install EV chargers," Denney said. "Our mission as co-ops is concern for community, improving the communities we serve. So, if there's somewhere that brings families together, that's also an opportunity to provide EV chargers."

Plus, electric transportation is projected to make up the second largest tranche of electrification between now and 2050, according to the Electric Power Research Institute.

While we don't have a crystal ball, Denney noted co-ops' success comes from being stalwart and loyal to their members, their communities and their load – and that includes EVs.

"Electric co-ops are showing up to serve growing needs in our territories, and that means using scenario process improvements to plan for what comes next," Denney said. "We've seen a lot of fluctuations, and it will be a story that continues to evolve."

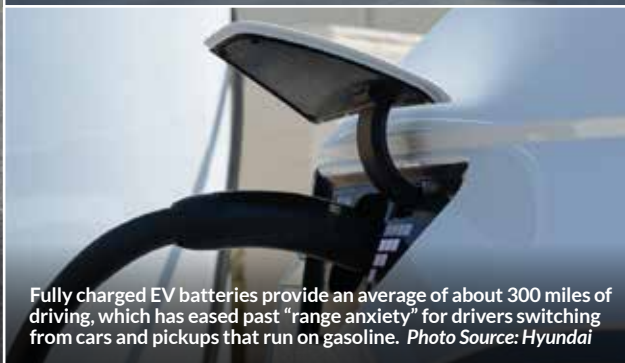
Cathy Cash writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



Across the country, electric co-ops with EV load are partnering with local government and business and community leaders to install chargers in prominent places in their electric footprint. *Photo Source: Greystone Power*



Although the federal tax credit for EV purchases has sunset, many co-ops and states are offering discounts, rebates or other financial incentives. *Photo Source: Hyundai*



Fully charged EV batteries provide an average of about 300 miles of driving, which has eased past "range anxiety" for drivers switching from cars and pickups that run on gasoline. *Photo Source: Hyundai*

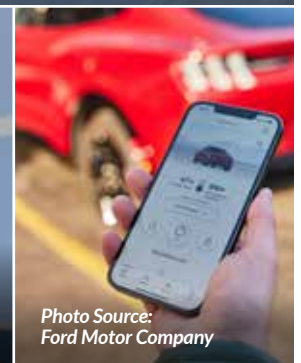


Photo Source: Ford Motor Company



FROM YOUR BOARDROOM

During the April meeting, Franklin REC directors considered the following:

- Approved work orders and special equipment capitalization of \$42,839.54
- Accepted the 2025 Audit Report

SIGN UP FOR AUTOMATIC WITHDRAWALS AND RECEIVE A ONE-TIME \$10 BILL CREDIT!

Have your monthly electric bill automatically deducted from your checking account in one easy step.

The monthly payment is deducted from your bank account on the 25th of each month (or following business day after a weekend or holiday). Contact us if you have any questions, or if you never want to worry about your bill being paid on time, sign into SmartHub to register for autopay or contact the cooperative at 641-456-2557.



WELCOME TO THE TEAM: PHILIP FRENCH



Help us welcome the newest member of Franklin REC's line crew, Philip French!

Philip joined the team in May with several years of experience working on contractor line crews, bringing valuable knowledge, skill and a fresh perspective to the cooperative. His background in the field makes him a strong addition to our line crew as we continue serving our members.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARY: NICHOLAS NELSON



Franklin REC is excited to recognize Lineman Nicholas Nelson on his two-year anniversary with our cooperative! Over the past two years, Nicholas has become a valued part of our team, consistently showing dedication and pride in his work. His efforts play an important role in maintaining safe, reliable service for our members. We appreciate all he does and look forward to many more years ahead – congratulations, Nicholas!

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH: MADISON ALERT



Congratulations to Franklin REC's Madison Alert on being named a Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative Volunteer of the Month from Corn Belt Energy Cooperative.

In recognition of this honor, Madison has chosen to donate her earnings to the Hampton Christian Daycare.

Madison has generously volunteered her time as a board member of the Franklin County Tourism group and as a coach for peewee T-ball through Hampton Youth Baseball. Her commitment to both community service and youth development reflects the cooperative spirit we value at Franklin REC.

Franklin REC is proud to recognize Madison for her dedication and the positive impact she continues to make in our community.

Congrats, Philip, Nicholas and Madison!

SHINE THE LIGHT CONTEST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Nominate a community volunteer by June 30!

Have questions about how the Shine the Light contest works? You're not alone! We've put together a list of frequently asked questions to help you better understand who can be nominated, who can submit and what makes a nomination eligible. Whether you're a first-time participant or thinking about re-nominating someone from a past year, this will guide you through the process. You can also learn more on Pages 6-7 of this issue.

Q: Can I nominate an organization? No. The purpose of the contest is to highlight individuals who are making a positive impact in their communities through volunteer work. Organizations are not eligible for nomination.

Q: Can I nominate someone I previously nominated if they didn't win? Yes! If your nominee wasn't selected as a winner in a previous year, you're welcome to nominate them again. We encourage you to continue sharing the stories of those making a difference.

Q: Can my significant other and I both submit separate nominations? No. Only one nomination is allowed per membership.

Q: Who is eligible to be nominated? Anyone who is 18 or older and actively volunteers their time to make a difference in their Iowa community is eligible. Nominees do not need to be a member of a cooperative.

Q: Who can submit a nomination? Anyone 18 or older who is a member-consumer of an Iowa electric cooperative can submit a nomination. Your cooperative membership makes you eligible to recognize a deserving individual.

Q: When is the nomination period? Nominations are accepted from June 1-30.

Q: How are winners selected? A panel of judges will review all eligible nominations and select three winners based on the nominee's volunteer impact, dedication and service to their community.

Q: How do I submit a nomination? Visit www.IowaShineTheLight.com between June 1-30 and complete the online nomination form. Be sure to share a compelling story about your nominee's volunteer efforts and community impact.

VISIT US AT THE FRANKLIN COUNTY FAIR

Franklin REC will be dishing up ice cream at the Ice Cream Parlor in Pleasant Hill on Thursday and Friday morning of the county fair. Be sure to stop by, redeem your ice cream voucher with the co-op and say hello to our employees!

Please note, Franklin REC office hours will be limited July 16-17. For all outage or service needs, please call our office at 641-456-2557. Crews will remain on standby, and phones will be answered 24/7 to ensure reliable service for our members.



OFFICE CLOSURE NOTICE

In observance of Independence Day, Franklin REC will be closed Friday, July 3.

We will resume normal business hours on Monday, July 6.

As always, our crews remain on call and ready to respond to any outages or emergencies.

If you need to report an outage, please call 641-456-2557.

We wish you a safe and happy Fourth of July!



LOW- TO NO-COST WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY

BY MIRANDA BOUTELLE

Saving energy doesn't have to be expensive or time-consuming. You don't need to spend thousands of dollars or get the newest technology to use less energy. There are several steps to lower energy use, even on a tight budget.

Here are some low- and no-cost ways to save energy around your home.

Change thermostat settings.

Adjusting the thermostat is an easy way to save. Nudge the thermostat a few degrees closer to the outside temperature, especially on extreme weather days. On the hottest and coldest days, your heating and cooling equipment must work much harder and use more energy to maintain the same temperature. Add an extra layer of clothing or cozy slippers in winter, and lighter layers in summer.

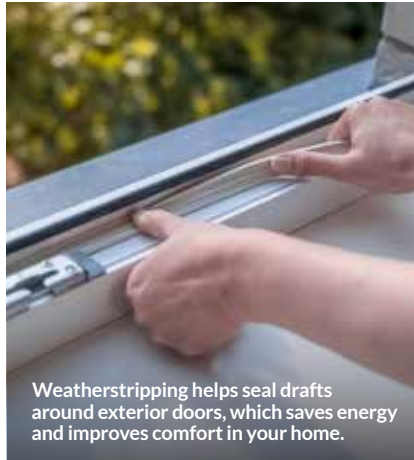
Address water leaks. Fix any hot water leaks or dripping faucets. Those tiny drips can add up to big energy waste, not to mention water waste. If you need to hire a pro to fix it, turn the shutoff valve under the sink to stop the leak until you can get it fixed.

Choose cold water. Wash clothes in cold water to avoid using the energy required to heat it. Washing on hot or warm settings can really add up, especially if you have a top-load or older washing machine that uses more water.

Adjust water heater settings.

Adjusting the temperature on your water heater can save energy and money, too. Depending on the water heater, this is either an easy adjustment or something a little more complicated that requires removing access panels. If you don't know how, consult a professional.

Fill air leaks. Air sealing is a do-it-yourself, beginner-friendly project that improves comfort and reduces energy waste. For around \$20 and a couple of hours of time, you can fill



Weatherstripping helps seal drafts around exterior doors, which saves energy and improves comfort in your home.



Spray foam seals gaps around pipes to prevent cold air from traveling up through those spaces, causing drafts and wasting energy.



Do-it-yourself, beginner-friendly projects, such as weatherstripping around doors, help lower energy use at home.

gaps, cracks and holes to prevent air from leaking in and out of the home. From the inside of the home, seal the trim around windows and exterior doors with caulk for about \$4 per tube. Buy paintable caulk so you can touch it up when it dries, if needed.

A can of spray foam is about \$5 and seals gaps around plumbing lines. It's great for sealing gaps around pipes under sinks and in the crawlspace or basement. Cold air can travel up through those spaces, causing drafts and wasting energy. Air-sealing these areas earns bonus points for preventing insects and rodents from using these gaps to enter your home.

Spray foam is messy and nearly impossible to remove from whatever it touches, so wear disposable gloves and clothes you don't mind getting dirty, and use drop cloths to protect finished floors. Be careful if you're

working with spray foam overhead. If it gets in your hair, it's not coming out with anything less than a haircut. Move any items and clean surfaces of dust and debris in areas you intend to seal before cracking open a can. Put the can in a cardboard box to carry throughout the house so you don't leave a trail of spray foam.

Seal exterior doors. For \$10 to \$15, you can buy weatherstripping to improve the seal on exterior doors. If you can see light around doors or feel a draft between the door and the door jamb when the door is closed, weatherstripping will help.

Try these easy, low- and no-cost improvements to reduce energy waste and improve comfort in your home.

Miranda Boutelle writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

PRESSURE IS A PRIVILEGE

BY DARCY DOUGHERTY MAULSBY

What do you dream of? A new car? A bigger house? A grand vacation?

Beth (Schleisman) Montalvo dreamed of competing in the Olympics. She represented Team USA during the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing, China, as her parents, Larry and Violet Schleisman of Lake City, cheered her on from the stands.

As a non-athlete, I'm intrigued to learn how world-class champions like Beth think. She introduced me to a quote from Billie Jean King, one of the greatest tennis players of all time: "Pressure is a privilege."

Beth knows a lot about pressure. Her ability to harness this intensity is a big reason why the United States Tennis Association Hawaii Pacific Section's Hall of Fame presented Beth (a long-time Maui resident) with the Outstanding Player Award in November 2025.

"I felt alive again"

Long before this prestigious award, Beth was a farm girl from west-central Iowa who enjoyed cheerleading, track and water skiing. She spent her summers working as a lifeguard at the Lake City swimming pool. She also worked part-time as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) at the local care center.

"I learned a strong work ethic, dedication and honoring your word," said Beth, whose father would take her to work on a snowmobile if a winter storm blocked the roads.

After graduating from Iowa State University, Beth became a math teacher. Then came March 30, 1991.

Beth, her boyfriend and other friends were riding four-wheelers in the sand dunes near Las Vegas. Something went horribly wrong, and Beth's four-wheeler pitched forward. "I hung on and felt my back snap," she recalled.



Beth (Schleisman) Montalvo, who received the United States Tennis Association's Hawaii Pacific Hall of Fame Outstanding Player Award, is shown here with Executive Director Ron Romano in 2025.

Beth, 25, spent nearly five years trying to re-learn how to walk. While she eventually realized she could get around quicker in a wheelchair, she had no interest in wheelchair sports. "In my mind, playing wheelchair sports was admitting that I was going to stay in a wheelchair the rest of my life," she said.

That changed when another "wheelie," named Billie Eddins, came to the Las Vegas school where Beth worked, teaching adaptive physical education. He convinced Beth to try wheelchair tennis. "I fell in love with the freedom of moving around on the court," she said. "I felt alive again."

The player who serves well seldom loses

While the birth of Beth's son, Jacques, in December 1996 put tennis on hold, the U.S. Open in the late 1990s rekindled her interest. By 2000, she was touring full-time, competing in tennis tournaments across the U.S. and around the globe, from Australia, Asia and South Africa to Europe and South America.

Along the way, she learned a lot about life. "The better physical shape I'm in, the better I feel about myself. The better I feel about myself, the more I can give to others," she said.



Giving guides Beth's life since she retired from competitive tennis in 2008. She's grateful her trainer, Scott Sanchez, shared the gospel with her. "Romans 8:28 was life changing," she said, referring to "we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

When massive wildfires devastated Maui in 2023, Beth helped organize relief efforts. She's active in her non-denominational church and participated in a church mission trip to Egypt in 2025. She also hosts weekly Bible studies in her home and facilitates Financial Peace University, a biblically based course that teaches money management. In her free time, she enjoys Hawaiian canoe outrigger paddling.

No matter what challenges come her way, Beth is living proof that pressure is a privilege – and champions adapt. "If there's a will, there's a way," she said. "Figure it out, make it happen."

Darcy Dougherty Maulsby lives near her family's Century Farm northwest of Lake City. Visit her at www.darcymaulsby.com.

Visit our website at www.franklinrec.coop



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THE COOPERATIVE ADVANTAGE

We do more than keep the lights on.
We're here to keep our community strong because every member matters.

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For generations, we've powered the growth of our community. And today our cooperative is stronger than ever.

Keeping you connected to what matters most.