

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF  FRANKLIN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

July 2021

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Shining the Light on these local volunteers

During June, Iowa's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives sponsored the Shine the Light contest, accepting nominations of local volunteers. Franklin REC nominated Denny and Cathy Carlson, Jim Davies, and Barry and Jan Johnson, all of Hampton.

Denny and Cathy Carlson: Denny and Cathy Carlson have been active volunteers in many communities.

When Denny retired after almost 40 years with Franklin County Conservation as a conservationist, he wanted to continue his work in environmental education with the area schools. Since 1982, he and his wife Cathy have owned Carlson Tree Farm, through which they sell Christmas trees and wreaths. So the move to educating school-aged children on trees and frontier life was logical.

In the spring and fall, the Carlson's host field trips and Future Farmers of America groups. "They are so excited to be outside," commented Cathy.

To enhance the children's experience, the Carlson's built Carlson Learning Tree Lodge. The lodge houses animal skins, bows, and additional items used to teach about frontier life—such as the skins were used for warmth and also how food was gathered. Children often ask the Carlson's about the items in the lodge, "Is this real?"

In addition to teaching at the farm and lodge, Denny also gives conservation talks at libraries related to books the children are reading.

Jim Davies: Since moving back to Hampton in 1983, Jim Davies has served numerous organizations.

Currently, he is in his second term on the Hampton City Council; president of the Windsor Theatre Development Corporation and the Hampton Kiwanis Club; chair of three additional committees; treasurer of the Franklin County Arts Council, director of Hampton's 150+1 historic play; and a member of nine other groups.

Previously, he was affiliated with 20 additional organizations, volunteering in various capacities.

Jim averages about 20 hours a week volunteering and comes by his generous spirit through his family. Jim said, "My family set an example and provided an opportunity for me to volunteer and experience leadership.... All of this made me aware that if something needs to be done, you get involved and not wait for someone else to do it. Volunteering is a way to give back to the community that has given me so much. Together we can accomplish anything."

Barry and Jan Johnson: Barry and Jan Johnson are very well known in the community of Hampton for their volunteering spirit.

North of the Franklin County Fairgrounds sits the 20-acre Harri-man-Nielsen Historic Farm run completely by volunteers, including Barry Johnson. Barry maintains the grounds and tends to the pumpkin and squash patch, planted for kids to pick during the fall festival the first Sunday in October. During gardening season, Barry is at the farm an average of 20 hours per week.

Barry isn't the only volunteer in the Johnson house. For over 12 years,



Barry and his wife Jan have mentored several kids, helping Hispanic and Latino children transition to life in the United States. Barry said, "It's been very rewarding."

The Johnson's are also active in their church, Hampton United Methodist, and have served on numerous committees.

"We volunteer to give back to the community. The community is a good place to live and raise a family. We want to pass that on. And, we're doing the right thing by helping others," said Barry.

Three contest winners will be announced during the Iowa State Fair in August. In addition to a \$1,500 to their local charity or nonprofit, each winner will be featured in the September issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine.

Franklin REC is proud of the commitment to community shown by these and all volunteers—thank you for all you do for our communities!

How renewable energy helps power our world

Renewable energy is continuous energy supplied by natural resources. Although endless, the amount of renewable power produced in a specific period is restricted.

According to the University of Michigan Center for Sustainable Systems, about 80% of the nation's energy comes from fossil fuels, 8.4% from nuclear power, and 11.4% from renewable sources. Wind and solar are the fastest-growing renewable sources; however, they provide just 3.8% of the total energy used in the U.S., according to the Center.

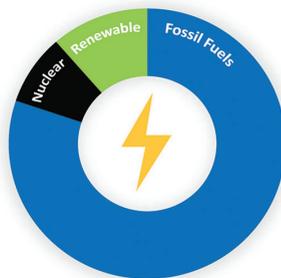
In 2019, renewable energy sources accounted for about 17% of energy generation, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). The administration projects that the share of renewables used for U.S. electricity generation will increase to 42% in 2050.

Types of renewable energy include:

Biomass: An organic material that comes from plants and animals. Examples of biomass include wood, agricultural crops; food, yard, and wood waste in garbage; and animal manure and human sewage.

Geothermal: Garnered from the heat of the earth. It can heat and cool homes and buildings through

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Safe Electricity.org

Source: University of Michigan Center for Sustainable Studies

heat pumps, generate electricity via geothermal power plants, and heat structures directly.

Hydroelectric: Relying on the water cycle for power. According to the EIA, hydropower was one of the first sources used for electricity generation, and it is the largest single renewable energy source for U.S. electricity generation.

Solar: The most abundant energy resource on earth according to the Department of Energy, with 173,000 terawatts of solar energy striking the earth continuously. That is more than 10,000 times the world's total energy use.

Wind: Wind occurs because the sun cannot heat the surface of the earth evenly. Today, wind energy is mainly used to generate electricity.



70% of lightning fatalities occur June through August - National Weather Service

There is no safe place from lightning when you are outside. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to pose an immediate threat. That is why the National Weather Service advises, "When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!" Lightning can strike up to 10 miles away from rain, even if you don't see clouds.

Learn more at

Safe Electricity.org

LEDs = Energy savings

What makes LEDs different? LED light bulbs work when an electrical current passes through a microchip, which illuminates the tiny light sources we call LEDs, and the result is visible light. LED light bulbs produce light up to 90 percent more efficiently than traditional incandescent light bulbs.

Moreover, many LEDs are rated with a lifespan of 50,000 hours. That means if one is used 8 hours a day, it is projected to last 17 years!

LEDs help the environment while reducing energy costs. According to the Department of Energy, use of LEDs is on track to save the equivalent annual electrical output of 44 large electric power plants, with a total savings of more than \$30 billion, by the year 2027!

MAKE THE SWITCH

SAVE MONEY and REDUCE ENERGY USE by replacing outdated lightbulbs with newer, more efficient LED lights.



Safe Electricity.org

Don't fall victim to utility scams

By Abby Berry, NRECA

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers.

We want you to be aware of two trending scams. One is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your banking information to deposit the credit to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, we will automatically apply the credit to your account, carrying over to your next billing cycle.

Another trending scam is smishing (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. At this time, your electric utility does not send text messages to members.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency. Think about the situation before acting.
- **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Remember, if the request seems out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- **Confirm before you act.** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent us but you're unsure, hang up the phone and call us directly to verify the situation.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to us so we can let others in our community know.



- Our employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let us know as soon as possible.

Tornado Safety Tips

Practice and Prepare

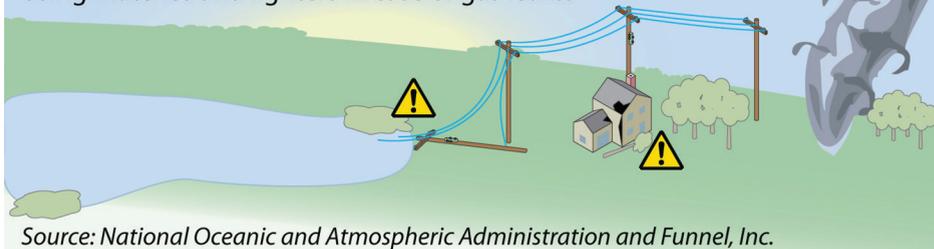
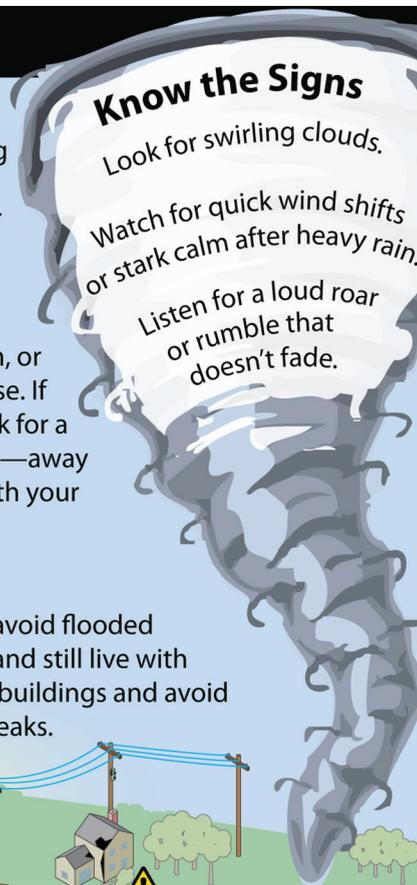
Know where you'll meet your family during the tornado (and after). Practice a tornado drill annually. Keep a weather radio in your storm shelter, along with safety supplies.

Seek Shelter

Go to your basement, a small interior room, or under stairs on the lowest floor of the house. If you live in a mobile home, get out and look for a stable building. If outside, find low ground—away from trees and cars—and lie face down with your arms protecting your head.

After the Storm

Stay away from downed power lines, and avoid flooded areas—power lines could be submerged and still live with electricity. Don't enter seriously damaged buildings and avoid using matches and lighters in case of gas leaks.



Join us at the Iowa State Fair!

At the Iowa State Fair August 12-22, 2021, the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa are again sponsoring the Rastetter 4-H Building on the south side of the fairgrounds.

Look for our August newsletter and watch our Facebook page for more information on how you can WIN ONE OF THREE PRIZES when you visit us at our booth.

We can't wait to see you at the Iowa State Fair next month!



Marathon water heaters: What you need to know

If you are in the market for a new water heater or are the owner of a Marathon residential water heater, here are a few warranty facts you should know:

- You must register your new water heater within 90 days of purchase by visiting www.rheem.com/warranties.
 - The tank has a lifetime warranty – if owned by the original purchaser.
 - The parts (elements, thermostats, valves) are under warranty for six years— if owned by the original purchaser.
- If you are NOT the original purchaser of the water heater and are uncertain of the warranty, please call our office at 641-456-2557.

If the water heater tank is determined to be under warranty and you need a replacement unit, you must provide the silver and black sticker off of the old water heater to submit to our supplier. Attaching it to a piece of paper is preferred.

Marathon water heaters are sold only to our members who agree to load management device installation by a Franklin REC employee. Additionally, the water heater must be installed on a property served by Franklin REC.

Did you know Franklin REC:

- Stocks 50-, 85-, and 105-gallon water heaters in our warehouse.
- Offers rebates of \$250 and \$400. Installation of a Marathon in a new construction or replacement of a gas water heater, may qualify for an additional rebate.

Line crew begins summer hours



To avoid the hottest time of the day for safety reasons, our line crew is working 6:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. until Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 6.

SPARKS of news

Board room highlights

- Approved \$42,276.40 in work orders and special equipment
- Changed the November 2021 board meeting to November 16 from November 23
- Approved the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives 2021/2022 dues as presented
- Reviewed financials and out-ages
- Manager, staff, and associated organization reports were presented

Round up to help our communities

Rounding up your electric bill to the nearest dollar will help your community! When you participate in Operation Round Up®, each month your bill will be rounded up to the nearest dollar. The maximum possible contribution is only \$11.88 per year per account. When combined with other members' contributions, this can add up to make a significant impact on the community. The program is voluntary, there are no fees to participate, and at any time you can choose not to participate.

Your Franklin REC directors meet periodically to distribute 100 percent of the collected funds to those who demonstrate a need. Funds are used for everything from helping a family in need to supporting a local nonprofit organization.

Please consider participating by completing and returning the form below.

Operation Round Up Contribution Form

Yes, I want to participate in the community service program Operation Round Up provided by Franklin REC. I understand that my electric bill(s) will be rounded up to the next dollar. Those funds will be used for nonprofit community activities, as well as helping families in need.

Name: _____ Account No: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Signature: _____



Complete and return to Franklin REC. Thank you for your support.

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