

A WORD FROM



Becky Bradburn
General Manager

Annual meeting update

First and foremost, thank you to our members for understanding our need to postpone the annual meeting that was to be held on Tuesday, April 7. Safety is our priority and it did not feel safe for us to hold the meeting.

Although we have not set a new date for our meeting, the board of directors has amended the by-laws to allow the meeting to be held another time this year. We are considering a date near Franklin County Fair time in July, if the coronavirus situation has improved. In addition, we are also considering other creative options that may allow us to hold the meeting.

In the meantime, the board has accepted the resignation of Director Gordon Meyer and appointed Darwin Van Horn to fill his position until we are able to conduct our meeting and election. Darwin was nominated for the position by our Nominating Committee in February.

Please read the newsletter, visit our website, and follow our Facebook page for annual meeting announcements. As always, we look forward to seeing and interacting with you at our annual meeting!

Husz selected for Youth Tour

Lauren Husz, daughter of John and JoLynne Husz of Hampton, was recently selected to represent Franklin REC during the Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. in June.

A sophomore at Aplington-Parkersburg High School, Lauren is active in dance and color guard. She is also the music director of her church youth group and director of the church Christmas program.

Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus, the 2020 Youth Tour has been cancelled. Next year, however, Franklin REC may have the opportunity to send two students, and Lauren has agreed to attend as the Franklin REC representative. Congratulations to Lauren on being awarded this opportunity!



Lauren Husz

Franklin REC scholarship winners

This year, Franklin REC awarded \$500 Commitment to Community scholarships to these West Fork High School students:

- Stafonia Bamrick, daughter of David and Reina Bamrick
- Collin Witte, son of Roger and Brandie Witte

These students showed their commitment to community by volunteering for organizations and helping in their churches and at community events, among other activities involving their time and talents.

Scholarship information is available in October of each year on our website, in our office, and through area high school guidance counselors. Parents of students applying for the Commitment to Community scholarship must be members of Franklin REC.

Congratulations to Stafonia and Collin on your scholarships!



Stafonia Bamrick



Collin Witte

Four common culprits of electrical fires

May is National Electrical Safety Month, the perfect time to evaluate the safety of your home's electrical system. Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires. Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.

- 1. Electrical outlets:** Faulty electrical outlets are a leading cause of home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them that you can't see. Any loose, damaged, or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.
- 2. Electrical wiring:** Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights and burning smells are clear warning signs. If your home is more than 20 years old, it may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, contact a qualified electrician.
- 3. Overloaded cords and outlets:** Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your big-screen TV, home theater system, and other electronics are plugged into one extension cord or you have an outlet that looks like the one above, it's time to call an electrician and install additional outlets.
- 4. Old appliances:** Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets. A qualified electrician can help with installation.



Reflect and honor: May is Military Appreciation Month

On Memorial Day this year, be sure to reflect on the sacrifices of our country's veterans and their families. Your electric cooperative is especially thankful for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms their service affords us in this great country of ours.

May is Military Appreciation Month, and in the words of John F. Kennedy, "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

Your electric cooperative is grateful to have veterans serving our members, and we are proud to serve veterans and their families within our local communities.

We are pleased to be a part of the electric cooperative network that honors and supports veterans of all ages, ranks and branches of the military. Please join us in taking a moment to show your appreciation to a veteran.

**Our offices are closed on
Memorial Day,
Monday, May 25.**

**As always, our phones
are answered 24/7 for
outages and
emergencies.**

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

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

Butler County REC

521 N. Main Street, PO Box 98
Allison, IA 50602-0098
(319) 267-2726
www.butlerrec.coop

Franklin REC

1560 Highway 65, PO Box 437
Hampton, IA 50441-0437
(641) 456-2557
www.franklinrec.coop

Prairie Energy Cooperative

2099 Highway 3 West, PO Box 353
Clarion, IA 50525-0353
(515) 532-2805
www.prairieenergy.coop

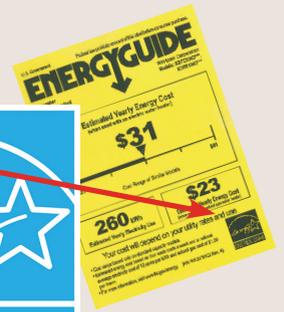
If your complaint is related to your cooperative's service rather than its rates, and your cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board by calling 515-725-7321 or toll-free 1-877-565-4450; by writing to 1375 E. Court Avenue, Room 69, Des Moines,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

WHAT SHIMMERS And Shines

Use **SUMMER OUTDOOR LIGHTING** Safely

- Only use lighting approved for outdoor use.
- Make sure lighting has a reputable seal of approval, such as UL.
- Use outdoor-rated bulbs.
- Use recommended bulb wattage.
- Inspect all cords and lights for damage or wear before using them.
- Only use outdoor-rated extension cords and do not overload them.
- Do not use nails or metal tacks to hang light strands.
- Make sure your outlets are GFCI-protected.

For more information:  Safe Electricity.org



Appliance rebates

Contact us for appliance rebates! To qualify for a rebate, the appliance must be Energy Star rated. Look for this logo on the Energy Guide before you purchase.

Selecting an AC and using it more efficiently

In our climate, using an air conditioner (AC) is necessary to staying comfortable in the summer months. High temperatures can be stressful to people and the electrical system. With a few quick tips from the Energy Education Council and knowledge of home cooling systems, you can help ease some of that stress.

If you are updating your air conditioning system, make sure to pick the one that is right for you. Here are some tips to keep in mind to help you select an air conditioning system that best fits your needs and how to use your air conditioner more efficiently:

- Central air conditioners can cool an entire home more efficiently than window air conditioners. However, if you just need to cool a single, small space, a window air conditioner can do the job.
- Energy Efficiency Ratio (EER) compares the cooling capacity of an air conditioner with electrical requirements. The higher the EER, the more efficient the air conditioner.
- Look for the Energy Star label for a high-efficiency air conditioner.
- Make sure your home has the insulation it needs. EnergySavers.gov has information about the best insulation to use in different geographic areas.
- Prepare your air conditioner for the hard work it will do over the summer months. Turn off power to the air conditioner before you work on it. Clean or replace filters. Outside, clear leaves and other debris away from the condensing unit. Hose off any accumulated dirt.
- A programmable thermostat allows you to change your home's temperature based on your daily patterns. The thermostat can allow temperatures to go higher while you are away, then cool off when you are back in the home.

And don't forget your Touchstone Energy cooperative has central air rebates. Contact us to learn more about central air units and our incentives!



Whalen to retire

Franklin REC economic development director Rick Whalen's successful career with rural electric cooperatives is coming to a close on May 31.

After graduating from Mason City High School, Whalen joined the Navy, spending 13 months in Vietnam and the Philippines and serving our country for a total of three-and-a-half years.

He then graduated from Hawkeye Institute of Technology with a degree in electronics and worked for a television repair company in Hampton, eventually opening his own television, stereo, and sound system business.

In 1979, Whalen's lengthy journey with rural electric cooperatives began, when he was hired as the member services director for Franklin REC. He then moved to economic development and key accounts at Butler County REC in 1989, eventually adding Franklin REC and Grundy County REC. Over the years he has also worked for Clarke Electric Cooperative, Pella Cooperative Electric Association, and Consumers Energy.

Rick has helped to develop a number of industrial parks and speculative buildings and has helped countless business owners achieve their dreams through the USDA loan program. He is a member of several boards and was named National Rural Economic Developer of the Year from the National Rural Economic Development Association in 2018.

In retirement, Rick will continue his work to have the Reeve Generating Station south of Hampton named a historical landmark. The plant was the first generation plant west of the Mississippi financed by the Rural Electric Association. "I'd like to pursue that further to make it the National REA Museum," he stated. He will also plans to golf and would like to read to kids in school.

Rick and his wife Beth are the parents of four children and they have three grandchildren. Congratulations, Rick! Enjoy your retirement!



SPARKS of news

Board room highlights

At their most recent meeting, Franklin REC directors:

- Accepted board member resignation and appointed new director.
- Approved renewing insurance with our current carrier, Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange, for the next two years.
- Approved a \$250 donation to the Friends of Charlie Company 1st Battalion 133rd.
- Approved a sharing agreement with Franklin County Development Association for economic development director.
- Approved the purchase of four laptops to allow administrative staff to work from home during COVID-19 and other appropriate times.
- Reviewed the 2019 Reliability Report and approved its submission to the Iowa Utilities Board.
- Reviewed the 2020 Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program onsite visit report.

Spring is a great time to save energy

When it's not too hot and it's not too cold outdoors, take advantage of the opportunity to use less energy to keep your home comfortable. For example:

- **Open your windows.** Turn off the heat and open your windows. The cross-breeze will circulate fresh air throughout the home.
- **Cook outdoors.** Fire up the grill and dust off the patio furniture for your first *al fresco* meal of the season.
- **Open the drapes.** Switch off the electrical lights and let the sunshine light up your home during the day. The sunrays also will help keep your home warm during early spring days.
- **Run ceiling fans counter clockwise.** They will help circulate the air and keep everyone in the room comfortable.



Intouch® is published monthly for members of Franklin Rural Electric Cooperative
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