

ACEC NEWS

APRIL 2023 | VOLUME 26 | ISSUE 04

ACEC AT REC DAY
ON THE HILL



CO-OPS CARE



CONGRATULATIONS
YOUTH TOUR
WINNERS!



A MESSAGE FROM Your General Manager

Hollie McCormick
EVP/General Manager

SUSTAINING A RELIABLE ELECTRIC SYSTEM

We've all heard the phrase, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." This popular adage is often used in conversation or a story when someone is about to do something foolish or risky. If they heed this advice, it means they did not commit to "one basket," but instead hedged their bets with multiple options.

This strategy is how I describe Allamakee-Clayton's common sense approach to the current energy transition. We know consumer interest in renewable energy continues to grow. We've seen this trend here in Iowa.

Recent innovations and advances in renewable energy technologies have led to decreases in costs, making renewables more feasible, accessible and scalable. Over the last few years, our wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power, has adjusted its fuel mix by utilizing more renewables, and today, nearly 30% of its fuel mix is comprised of renewable energy, the majority of which is solar and/or wind.

Nationally, there is increasing reliance on renewable energy sources at the same time that we're seeing fossil fuel plants taken off-line, often ahead of schedule. Additionally, we're seeing more pressure on the electric grid due to the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events and rising electricity demand.

Competing Pressures

So how do we reconcile these challenges of grid pressure and a changing fuel mix? Solar and wind energy are certainly

beneficial for the environment, but they are limited resources because the sun does not always shine, and the wind does not always blow. Our primary responsibility is to provide electricity 24/7 to you and our community. To do this, we need reliable sources of power that will meet all the peaks and valleys of on-demand energy in our connected world.

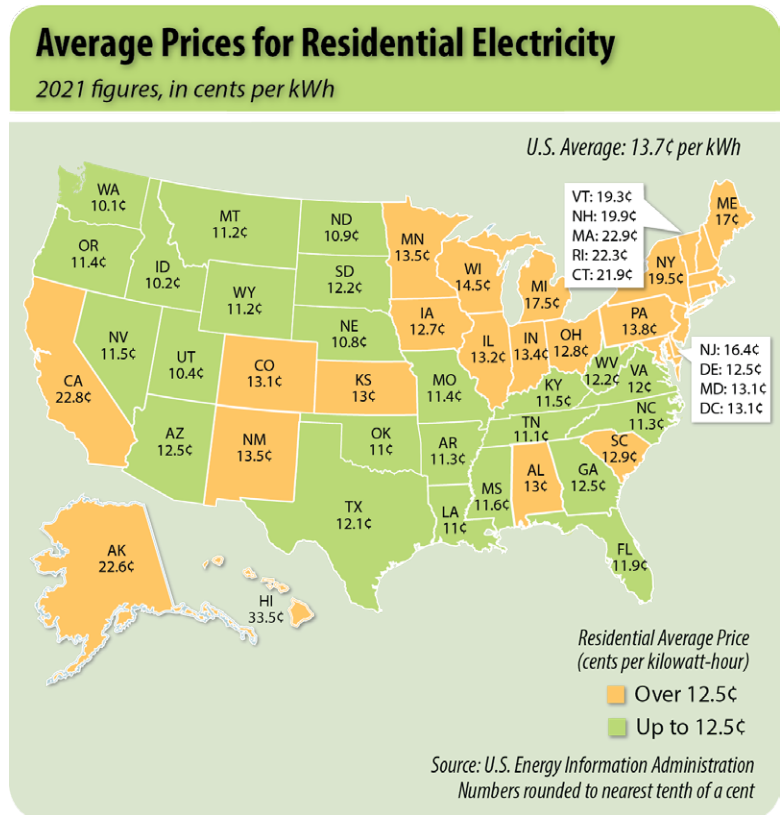
That's why we spread our eggs into multiple baskets. There is great value in maintaining a diverse mix of fuel sources--fossil fuels and renewables to ensure reliability, resiliency and meet the growing demand for electricity.

Reliability also means repairing and replacing utility equipment to prevent wear-and-tear, ensuring our equipment can withstand severe weather. We are committed to providing our members with reliable, affordable energy. That's why fuel diversity--or placing our eggs in multiple baskets--is essential to reliability.

The Bottom Line

Lowering the overall carbon footprint in this country means we're going to electrify more and more of our economy. In today's ever-connected world, people need power around the clock.

As our nation increasingly depends on electricity to power the economy, Allamakee-Clayton Electric Co-op is working with Dairyland Power to anticipate, plan and respond to market trends and policy shifts. That's how we can power your home and our economy, while continuing to serve as your local energy provider. ■



BOARD BRIEFS | March 27 Meeting

- Approved reliability report
- Discussed Mock Load Shed event with Dairyland
- Approved non-union employee wage adjustments
- Reviewed Director's Budget
- Approved donation requests to the Fayette County Fair and Country on the Creek

SUPPORT FOR THE HACKMAN FAMILY

10th annual REC Archery Fundraiser benefits Luke Hackman Family

For eight years, Protivin native Luke Hackman was a broadband technology specialist for AC Skyways, a division of Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative.

Tragically, Luke lost his life in an automobile accident on November 27, 2022.

In a show of support for our coworker, Luke's wife Brandi and children Hadley and Lincoln, were chosen as the beneficiaries of the 10th annual REC Archery Fundraiser.

"I truly am so appreciative of everything done for us," said Brandi Hackman. "Luke would be so proud to see the Co-ops, especially his work family, coming together to help our family through this time."

Since 2018, linemen from Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative and MiEnergy Cooperative have come together to raise money for a family in need living on either MiEnergy or ACEC lines. This year, well over 100 people traveled to West Union in February to a bow shoot at the Stephens Building on the Fayette County Fairgrounds. Echo Valley Archers strategically placed targets throughout the 11,000 square-foot building. Following the bow shoot, there was a meal and raffle drawings. #434



In addition to money raised during the bow shoot, generous businesses sponsored the event, with individuals buying raffle tickets for dozens of prizes.

"This started as a group of linemen who wanted to get together once a year to shoot a bow and relax" said ACEC Lead Lineman Josh Abbott. "The fact that we've been able to do this for 10 years, raising money for a local family for five years, is incredible. I'm glad we've been able to support families in need, especially the Hackman family this year."

Josh and MiEnergy representative Dave Wilkes presented Brandi with a check for \$18,287 raised during the event.

"I cannot thank the Co-ops, the businesses and the communities enough for supporting our family during this unimaginable time. I am so grateful for the continued thoughts and prayers we've received," said Brandi.

A big thank you to Josh Abbott and Dave Wilkes for doing the bulk of the work to coordinate the event. And thank you to the individuals who purchased raffle tickets and the numerous businesses who sponsored the event and donated to the raffle. ■



Josh Abbott (left) and Dave Wilkes (right) present Brandi Hackman with a check for \$18,287; Brandi Hackman was given a carving in memory of her husband, Luke; Hadley Hackman spins the wheel to draw names during the raffle; Luke Hackman was an AC Skyways employee for eight years before he passed away last November. He leaves behind his wife, Brandi; and children Hadley and Lincoln.

Enjoy the great outdoors this summer

WILLIES READY FOR 2023 SEASON AT UPPER IOWA RESORT

It's never too early to start thinking about booking your spot at one of the many campgrounds in our service territory.

One of those campgrounds, Upper Iowa Resort in Allamakee County, has seen some changes since new owners Colton and Tessa Willie took possession in 2021. The campground sits on our service lines, and the Willies recently built a house on our lines near the entrance of the park. They also utilize AC Skyways Internet at their home and business office.

Located along the Upper Iowa River north of Waukon near Dorchester, the campground sits on 29 acres and includes cabins, campsites, canoe, kayak and tube rentals and a spring-fed swimming pond.

Since 1999, the campground was owned and run by Bob and Kristi Hager of Waukon. After 22 years managing the property, the Hagers sold the former Lonnings Landing campground to the Willies of Cresco in January of 2021.

A lucky conversation led to the Willies purchasing the campground. The Willies owned Complete Tree Services of Cresco and planned to expand their business. However, things changed after talking with their banker.

"I told him that what my husband really wants to do is own a campground," said Tessa. "My husband is always talking about building one or doing that someday."

The banker also happened to be the listing agent on the campground. Even though Tessa grew up in the area, she'd never been to the campground and didn't even know it existed.

"We lived in Cresco so this wasn't that far away," she said. "To find something that was already established was perfect. We visited and we knew it was something we wanted to do so we just

ran with it."

In the two years since the Willies took ownership, they've made several changes to the campground.

Most recently, they've expanded their seasonal site options, now boasting more than 80 spots.

"We also added the first seasonal sites that have septic hookups. People are really excited about that," said Tessa.

Additionally, they offer more than 40 spots available for weekday or weekend camping, all including water and electric.

Another update to the campground for the 2023 season is a new bathhouse at the back of the campground. The new one is similar to the one at the front of the campground, featuring more showers.



There are five cabins available for rental with some available from March to December.

This winter saw another big change for the Willies. They sold their home in Cresco and moved into their camper for six months. When the season ended last fall, they moved into one of the cabins. This spring, they moved into their new home.



Colton and Tessa Willie, along with their children Raylen and Harlan, are looking forward to welcoming campers back this season.

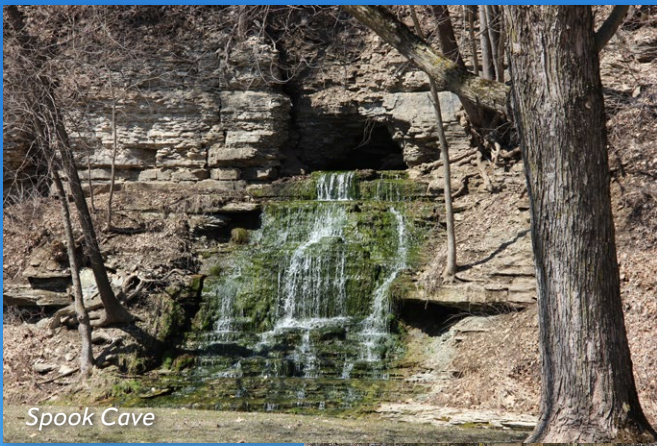
With boys Raylen, 9, and Harlan, 6, Tessa said the change has been perfect for their family.

"We really like it. It fits our outdoor personalities," she said. "They have lots of friends that camp. They make friends with kids who camp down here. They have their own little groups that they look forward to playing with."

There's always something to do at the campground. Summer days see Tessa and Colton busy running the day-to-day business side of things, doing canoe shuttles for people going down the Upper Iowa River, taking care of the office, checking people in, running the concession stand, cleaning out cabins and getting sites ready for the next family. And of course, they always have an eye on their next project.

"We're always looking at things, wondering how can we make things better," said Tessa. "We want it to look nice and well-kept. We've even talked about what it would look like if we added more cabins at some point."

While reservations due tend to fill up quickly, especially for cabins on the weekends, there are still spots available for the season. To learn more and to secure your camping spot for this season, visit <https://www.upperiowaresort.com/>. ■



Check out these campgrounds on our lines

FAYETTE

- Volga River State Recreation Area – Fayette
- Gilbertson Park – Elgin
- Gouldsburg County Park – Hawkeye
- Echo Valley State Park – West Union
- River Valley Campground – Wadena
- Deer Ridge Campground – Wadena
- Dutton's Cave Co. Park – West Union
- Twin Bridges Park – Fayette

CLAYTON

- Clayton Hills Campground – Garnavillo
- Big Spring Campground – Elkader
- Paradise Valley Campground – McGregor
- Buck Creek County Park – Garnavillo
- Spook Cave – McGregor
- Frenchtown County Parks – Garnavillo
- Volga U Campground – Volga
- Pikes Peak State Park – McGregor
- Osborne Park (COMING SOON) - Elkader
- Motor Mill – Strawberry Point

ALLAMAKEE

- Upper Iowa Resort – Dorchester
- Yellow River State Forest – Harpers Ferry
- Wexford Valley Campground – Lansing
- Andy Mountain Cabins – Harpers Ferry
- Red Barn Campground – Lansing
- Scenic Valley Campground – Waterville
- Big Joe's Little Campground – Dorchester
- Broken Paddle Lodge – Lansing
- Lund's Campground – Harpers Ferry

IOWA'S RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES ADVOCATE FOR REGULATORY CLARITY DURING 2023

"REC DAY ON THE HILL"



Pictured with local NE Iowa legislators at the REC Day on the Hill event were, from left – Chad Ingels; Michael Bergan; Ryan Wagner, ACEC Manager of Member Services; Anne Osmundson; Brenda Hackman, ACEC Manager of Economic Development and Community Relations

More than 200 employees and elected directors from Iowa’s locally owned rural electric cooperatives (RECs) convened at the Iowa Capitol on March 15 to advocate for important issues during the annual “REC Day on the Hill” event. Attending from Allamakee-Clayton Electric Co-op were Manager of Economic Development and Community Relations Brenda Hackman, IT Manager Jeni Kolsrud, and Manager of Member Services Ryan Wagner.

“Our annual advocacy day at the capitol is a valuable opportunity to meet face-to-face with our elected officials and share a local perspective on issues that impact rural Iowa and rural economic development,” remarked Roger Solomonson, board president of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC).

Specifically, advocates asked elected officials to support legislation that clarifies the authority and governance of local electric co-op boards. We believe locally elected co-op boards should have authority to set rates and fees for electric service. Member-consumers approving rates and fees that they themselves would pay is perhaps the most effective “check and balance” possible.

Additionally, co-op representatives discussed the dangers of electric service deregulation and how it would negatively impact rural Iowa businesses and communities. Service territory protections have been in place for more than 40 years in Iowa to ensure that citizens in sparsely populated areas have access to reliable and affordable power. In fact, electric cooperatives were formed in the 1930s and 40s because the investor-owned utilities at the time refused to serve unprofitable rural areas. #2926

Advocates also educated legislators on the benefits of the cooperative business model, including local ownership, cost-based rates and democratic governance. Several electric cooperatives displayed booths in the rotunda which provided information on topics including economic development, electric vehicles, digital metering advancements, investments in technology, safety innovations, energy efficiency efforts and vegetation management work.

Learn more about the legislative priorities of Iowa’s electric cooperatives and Iowa Rural Power grassroots advocacy at www.iaruralpower.org. ■



Dairyland Government Relations Manager Jennifer Shilling is pictured with representative Michael Bergan.



Last month, ACEC representatives traveled to Des Moines for the annual Day on the Hill event. Pictured are, from left – Brenda Hackman, Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg, Ryan Wagner, Jeni Kolsrud.

MEMBER RECIPES

Send your favorite recipes and/or recipe topics to Jennifer Achenbach, ACEC, PO Box 715, Postville, IA 52162 or email jachenbach@acrec.coop.

You'll receive a \$5 bill credit if your recipe is printed. Please note – recipes must be received by the 25th day of the month before the intended publication.

May – **BEEF**, June – **BERRIES (any kind)**



MILLION DOLLAR RAVIOLI CASSEROLE

Yield: 8 people

- 1 lb. Italian sausage
- 1 (28-oz.) jar spaghetti sauce
- 1 c. cottage cheese
- 1 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, softened
- ¼ c. sour cream
- 2 Tbsp. parsley
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ⅓ c. grated parmesan cheese
- 1 (25-oz.) package frozen cheese ravioli
- 2 c. mozzarella cheese

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 9x13x2-inch pan with cooking spray. Set aside.
2. In a large skillet, brown Italian sausage. Drain fat from skillet. Stir in spaghetti sauce and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, combine cottage cheese, softened cream cheese, sour cream, parmesan cheese, parsley and garlic powder. Add ravioli. Toss to coat.
4. Spread ravioli in the bottom of the prepared baking pan.
5. Pour meat sauce over ravioli and top with mozzarella cheese.
6. Bake uncovered for 45 minutes. Allow to cool for 10-15 minutes before serving.

Notes:

Can make the casserole in advance and refrigerate or freeze for later. If baking straight from the refrigerator, you may need to add a few minutes to the cooking time. To bake after freezing, thaw completely and bake as directed above.

■ Nancy Einck, Waukon

The power of human connections

SOURDOUGH BREAD

Directions

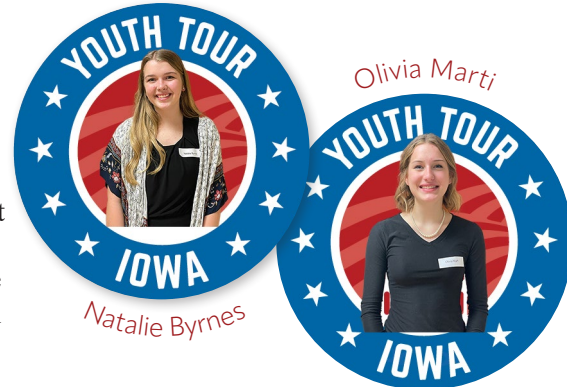
Take 1 c. warm water and ½ tsp. sugar and add 1 package of yeast on top in a large bowl and let it stand for 10 minutes. Stir in 1 c. bread flour and beat until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap and folded towel. Store in a warm place for 24-60 hours. Stir down dough. Then add 1 c. bread flour, 1 ½ tsp. salt and beat 1 minute. Beat in ½ c. flour. To make a soft dough, use a rubber spatula. Turn onto well-floured surface. Knead until dough is blistered but not sticky (8-10 minutes). Place in a lightly oiled bowl; turn oiled side up. Cover and let rise. Punch down. Turn onto lightly floured surface. Cover with inverted bowl and rest for 15 minutes. Shape as desired. Place in or on a lightly oiled pan. Can be long like French bread. I use an enamel cast iron small roaster. Make diagonal slashes across the top of the loaf and brush lightly with oil. Let rise 1 hr. and 15 min. Heat oven to 375°. Brush bread with oil and bake 20 min. Beat 1 egg and 1 Tbsp. water. Brush on the top of the loaf and bake for an additional 15-20 min.

■ Sheila Simmonds, Lansing

Congratulations Youth Tour Winners

Waukon juniors selected for '23 Youth Tour

Congratulations to our 2023 Youth Tour winners! Selected to go to Washington, D.C. were **Natalie Byrnes** and **Olivia Marti**, both juniors at Waukon High School.



This year eight students applied for the Youth Tour. Following a practice exam and essay, five students were chosen to advance to the interview round. Interviews were held on March 23. Each candidate was asked questions about themselves, about what they learned while studying for the practice test and about Co-ops. After a long discussion, the judges selected Olivia and Natalie to represent ACEC. #6066

Nearly 1,800 students from across the country go to Washington, D.C. in June as a part of the annual Youth Tour.

Judges for this year were Connie Euans, Calmar; Janice Koenig, Castalia; and LeAnn Meyer, West Union.

Be sure to check out May's ACEC News for more information on the Youth Tour and a look back on what the Youth Tour meant for one of the first participants. ■

PLUGGED IN: Electric Vehicle Update



MARCH

Number of miles driven: **232 miles**
kWh's Charged: **73**
Cost to Charge: **.13 x 73 = \$9.49**



FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

Congratulations to **Sharon Teff of Dorchester** who found her service number in a past newsletter. The Cooperative awarded her a \$10 bill credit.

ACEC has hidden three Service Location numbers within this newsletter. The numbers are from different regions of our service area – **one is worth a \$10.00 bill credit, and two are worth a \$5 bill credit if found.**

The service location number must be yours to claim the credit, and you need to notify us when you find it.



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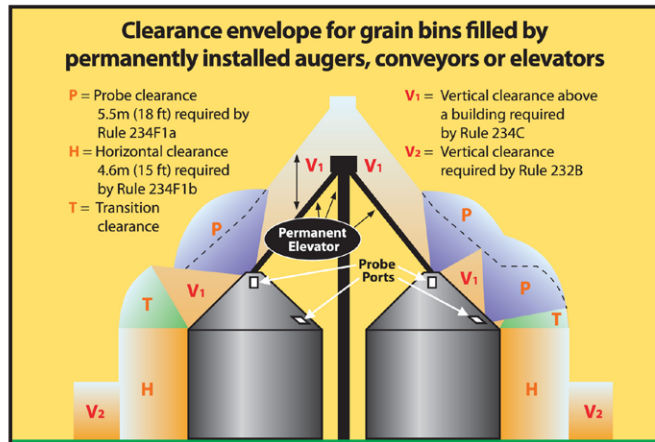
RYAN WAGNER, Manager, Member Services



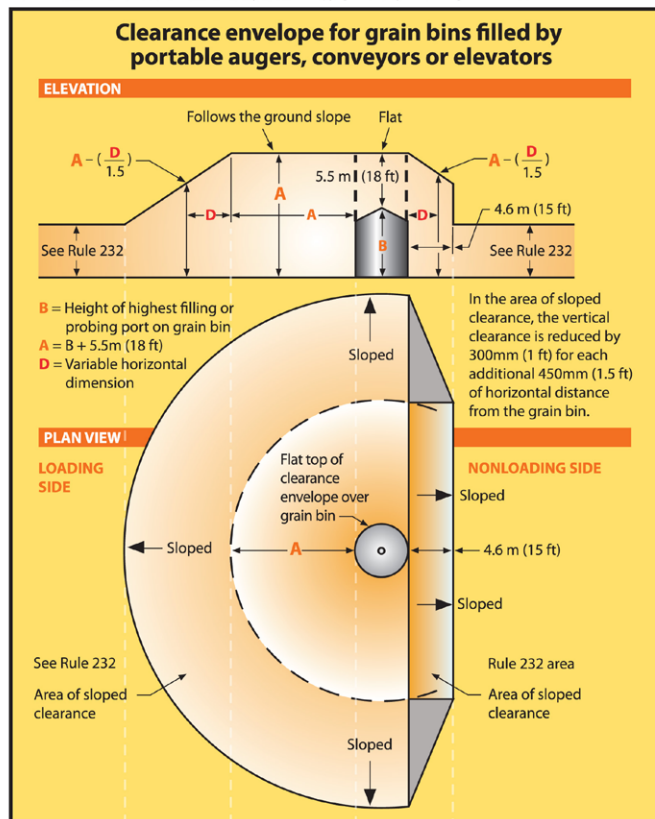
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