

ACEC NEWS

DECEMBER 2023 | VOLUME 26 | ISSUE 12

FALL LEGISLATIVE
VISIT

CAPITAL CREDITS

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
UPDATES



**YOUTH TOUR APPLICATIONS
NOW AVAILABLE!**

See page 3 for information.



**A MESSAGE
FROM**
*Your
General
Manager*

Hollie McCormick
EVP/General Manager

**FIVE WAYS TO
FIGHT THE WINTER
CHILL AND SAVE
ENERGY**

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and outdoor activities that come with it. While others (like me!) prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all fun in the sun!

But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

1. Mind the thermostat. This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.
2. Button up your home. The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort



and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

3. Use window coverings wisely. Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.
4. Consider your approach to appliance use. When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.
5. Think outside the box. If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up--beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.

If you're taking steps to save energy but continue to see major increases in your bills, give us a call at 563-864-7611 and we can take a closer look. ACEC's energy experts can help identify areas and factors impacting your home energy use and perhaps recommend some next steps.

It is no secret that winter months typically bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can maintain a comfortable home and keep your energy usage in check. Visit our website at www.acec.com for additional energy-saving tips.

I wish all our members a safe, happy and warm holiday season. ■

BOARD BRIEFS | November 27 Meeting

- Discussed and previewed fleet plans and needs for the next several years
- Reviewed Annual Meeting survey results
- Approved a resolution authorizing a Rural Economic Development loan application for WinMed
- Approved a DPC Cost Share Application with Clayton County Development Group
- Approved a donation request to Northeast Iowa Wellness & Recreation Center
- Reviewed Key Ratio Trend Analyses with Darrin Lynch, CFC
- Approved conversion line of credit to long term debt

Youth Opportunities at ACEC

Youth Tour 2024

High school sophomore and junior members are eligible to apply for an opportunity for an all-expenses paid trip to Washington D.C. as a part of the annual Cooperative Youth Tour. Two students from ACEC will travel with other delegates from Iowa Cooperatives for a whirlwind tour through the nation's capital June 15-21. To be eligible, the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must be a member of the Cooperative. Applications are available through area high school guidance counselors, at the ACEC office or at www.acec.com. **Application deadline is January 31, 2024.** For more information, contact Jennifer Achenbach at 888-788-1551. ■



Hauschild Scholarship 2024

Current graduating high school seniors are eligible to apply for a scholarship through the Cooperative. The Hauschild Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 1995 in memory of former ACEC director Robert "Bill" Hauschild by his wife and family.

To be eligible, students must be planning to continue studies in an electric-related field. Parent(s) or guardian(s) do not need to be members of ACEC; however, they must reside within the boundaries of our service area.

Details are available at www.acec.com. **Application deadline is February 29, 2024.** For more information, contact Jennifer Achenbach at 888-788-1551. ■



ACEC WELCOMES RYAN JASTER!

Ryan Jaster has joined the ACEC team as an apprentice lineman.

Ryan started at ACEC on November 13. Hailing from Strawberry Point, Ryan is a graduate of Edgewood-Colesburg High School. He went to Southwest Technical College in Fennimore, Wisconsin, studying power distribution. Ryan was the coordinator at MP Nexlevel and most

recently was the electrical superintendent for the city of Guttenberg.

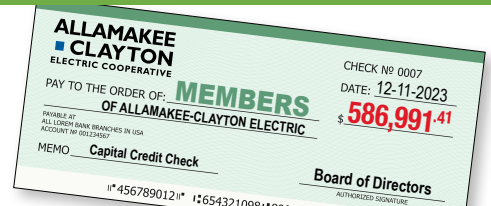
Ryan and his wife, Hanna, are the parents of Lennix. In his free time, Ryan enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with his family. He is also a volunteer with the Guttenberg Fire Department.

Welcome Ryan! ■

Board Returns \$586,991 to Members Through Patronage Dividends

IN A CO-OP, EVERY MEMBER GETS A PIECE OF THE PIE

#490-10



YOUR SHARE OF THE MARGINS

2023 CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS MAILED 12/15/2023

Capital credits represent your ownership in Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative and are one of the most unique and rewarding benefits you enjoy as a member of an electric cooperative.

This year, the board of directors approved the distribution of **\$586,991.41** in patronage dividends to members and former members who purchased electricity from us in 2001, 2002, and 2022. This distribution includes patronage dividends from Dairyland Power Cooperative (\$193,965.55 for 1997 and 1998) and our DBS division (\$91,877.57 for 2004). ■



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative knows that small businesses are the heart of our local communities. That's one of the reasons why we partner with the USDA to offer various development resources to businesses in our service footprint.

Last year, two local new businesses applied and were approved for Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) from the USDA. River Town Family Dentistry in Guttenberg and K9 Country in Colesburg both worked with ACEC Manager of Economic Development and Community Relations Brenda Hackman to receive the loans to purchase necessary equipment in 2022. #2752-XX

In late October, members of ACEC's staff and two Board of Directors visited the businesses. ■

River Town Family Dentistry

After being approved and receiving a Revolving Loan in May of 2022, Dr. Alicia Walke purchased equipment for her new 4,200 square foot dental office, located at 511 N. Bluff St. in Guttenberg. The space is nearly three times the size of her previous office, which she purchased from Dr. John Barron. She opened the new facility in December of 2022.

In the new space, Dr. Walke now has six treatment rooms, as well as two additional rooms that are plumbed for future use. Each treatment room was strategically designed to have a view of the various waterways.

She also has space to lease a room to an orthodontist once a month. On average, she said they see between 25-30 patients a day. In addition, they've been able to grow their business to averaging about 25 new patients a month. "In the old office, we couldn't support that," Dr. Walke said.

With the loan, Dr. Walke said she purchased several key pieces of equipment needed for her space. She purchased things like a sterilizer, cabinets, instrument washer, an oiling machine, computers, hand-held x-ray machine, TVs and more.

Dr. Walke said she's pleased with the space and upgraded technology and how she's now able to serve her community. She's open Mondays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Tuesday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays the office is typically closed, with the exception of Fridays when the orthodontist serves patients. To learn more about the services offered by River Town Family Dentistry, call 563-252-2150. ■



Each patient room has a view of a waterway in Guttenberg.



Dr. Alicia Walke shows her new dental practice to members of the ACEC staff and board of directors. Pictured with Dr. Walke (left) are, Jerry Keleher, ACEC director; Al Steffens, ACEC director; Hollee McCormick, ACEC general manager; Brenda Hackman, ACEC manager of economic development and community relations.

K9 Country

In December 2022, Brenda Hackman presented a check from a USDA RLF to K9 Country owners Laura and Mindy Meyer. They opened K9 Country Dog Daycare and Boarding, located at 35549 Osterdock Rd., just outside of Colesburg, in late December.

The facility features an indoor play area, as well as outdoor runs for dogs of all breeds. At a minimum, the dogs are let out of their pens five times a day. There's kennel space for small and large breed dogs, as well as more private rooms.

The Meyers offer dog boarding and some day stay. They plan to offer more dog daycare options in the future. Twisted Clovers LLC also rents out the large indoor space for training classes. There is also a space for a groomer.

The Meyers used the USDA RLF to purchase outdoor fences, security cameras, TVs and radios, hose reels, kennels, storage cabinets, grooming tub and table and more. The Meyers said they greatly appreciated the help they received from ACEC, saying they had peace of mind to be able to purchase the supplies they needed to open.

Call 563-880-4752 to book your pooch's stay. ■



Laura and Mindy Meyer show the indoor playroom of K9 Country.



K9 Country Dog Daycare and Boarding was a recipient of a revolving loan in 2022. Pictured are, from left – Hollee McCormick, ACEC general manager; owners Mindy and Laura Meyer (with pup Ziggy), Brenda Hackman, ACEC manager of economic development and community relations; Al Steffens, ACEC director; and Jerry Keleher, ACEC director.



Mindy and Laura Meyer were able to purchase fencing and other equipment to open their new business.

Hawkeye Fire Department

Just last month, Brenda Hackman completed an RLF loan with the Hawkeye Fire Department. The \$100,000 loan was used to assist with building the new Hawkeye Fire & Rescue Association Fire Station. ■



The ACEC Revolving Loan Fund was approved to assist the Hawkeye Fire & Rescue Association with their new station. Pictured are, from left - Darren Schultz, Fire Chief; Dorty Yauslin, Hawkeye City Clerk; Don Kelly, Mayor; Brenda Hackman, ACEC Manager of Economic Development and Community Relations; Dwane Koch, Assistant Fire Chief.

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.

January – **NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS RECIPES**;

February – **BRUNCH**; March – **MARCH MADNESS APPETIZERS**



BEEF AND BARLEY SOUP

2-3 lbs. round steak or chuck roast, trimmed
Kosher salt and ground black pepper
3 Tbsp. butter, divided
1 Tbsp. garlic, minced
1 small yellow onion, diced
3 medium carrots, sliced
4 celery stalks, sliced
8 c. beef broth
2-3 tsp. Better than Bouillon Beef Soup

Base

2 tsp. tomato paste
1 Tbsp. soy sauce
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
3-4 beef soup bones
1 bay leaf
2-3 sprigs fresh thyme
1 c. pearl barley

Directions

Trim beef and cut into 1-inch pieces. Season with kosher salt and ground black pepper. Bring a Dutch oven to medium-high heat. Add 2 Tbsp. butter and let melt. Swirl to coat pan. In batches, sear beef cubes on all sides. You do not need to fully cook them, just get a nice sear on the outside. Add additional butter, as needed, if the pan starts to get dry. Remove beef and set aside on a plate. Add a splash of the beef broth to deglaze the pan; scrape off any bits that are stuck to the bottom of the pan. Add the last tablespoon of butter and let melt. Add garlic and move around pan until fragrant, approx. 1 minute. Add onion, carrots and celery. Saute for 3-5 minutes or until onion softens. Add beef broth, Beef Better than Bouillon, tomato paste, soy sauce and worstershire. Stir to combine. Add beef bones, bay leaf and fresh thyme. Return the beef to the pot along with any juices that have gathered on the plate. Cover and let simmer at least 25-30 minutes or up to 60 minutes. Add the barley and let simmer, uncovered, 20-30 minutes or until firm but tender. If you want to scoop out any of the bone marrow from the soup bones, feel free to! Remove soup bones and taste – adjust any seasoning or add any additional beef bouillon, as desired. Serve with a fresh parsley garnish and some crusty sourdough bread with butter.

■ *Cici Mueller, Postville*
6 ACEC NEWS

ROASTED RED PEPPER AND TOMATO SOUP

12 whole tomatoes, cored and halved
3 red bell peppers, cored and quartered
1 bulb garlic, whole
3 Tbsp. olive oil
1 onion, diced
1 tsp. thyme
¼ chili flakes (optional)
4 c. vegetable or chicken broth
½ tsp. salt

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the tomatoes (halved and seeded) and red peppers (cored and quartered) on the baking sheet. Drizzle the tomatoes and bell peppers with 1 ½ tsp. olive oil and gently toss until all the vegetables are coated. Slice the entire bulb of garlic in half widthwise, skin intact. Add it to the baking sheet (cut side up) and drizzle with ½ Tbsp. olive oil. Transfer the baking sheet to the oven to roast for 40 minutes. With 10 minutes remaining, in a large pot on medium-high heat, warm the remaining tablespoons of olive oil, add the onion and cook for 5-6 minutes until tender and translucent. Add the thyme and chili flakes (optional) and cook for an additional minute until fragrant. Once the vegetables are roasted, remove the baking sheet from the oven, remove the garlic from the baking sheet, set aside and allow to cool slightly. Transfer the tomatoes and bell peppers directly to the pot with the onion, stir to combine with the onion mixture, add salt and cover with broth. Once the garlic is cool enough to handle, squeeze cloves of roasted garlic out of the skin directly into the pot and stir to combine. Reduce heat to a simmer and allow to cook for 10 minutes. Once cooked, using an immersion blender or in batches using a bar blender, puree the soup until smooth. If you find the soup too thick, just add a splash of broth or water until you've reached the desired texture. Taste and season with additional salt as needed, it may need a decent amount of additional salt depending on how salty your broth is. Once blended, the soup can be served immediately or cooled and stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days or in freezer up to 3 months.

■ *Cici Mueller, Postville*

BEER CHEESE AND SAUERKRAUT SOUP

5 bratwurst, cooked and sliced
3 Tbsp. olive oil
1 ½ c. onion, chopped
1 ½ c. celery, chopped
1 ½ c. carrot, chopped
½ red bell pepper, diced
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
¾ c. flour
1 lb. red potatoes, diced
6 c. chicken stock
1 12-oz. regular beer
2 bay leaves
1 tsp. dry mustard
Salt and pepper to taste
1 c. half and half
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
4 c. grated cheddar cheese
½ can Bavarian-style sauerkraut

Directions

Heat olive oil in a soup pot. Add carrots, onion, celery, peppers and garlic and saute 10-15 minutes until tender. Add ¾ c. flour, cook for 1 minute. Add potatoes, stock, beer and bay leaves and bring to a boil. Simmer until potatoes are tender. Add mustard, milk and Worcestershire. Remove pot from heat, add cheese, stirring until melted. Puree 2-3 cups of soup in a blender and return to the pot (if desired for creamier consistency). Add brats and kraut, then return to the stove and heat until warmed through.

■ *Katie Koehn, Clermont*

BLACK-EYED PEA SOUP

1 lb. bulk pork sausage
1 lb. ground pork
1 large onion, diced
4 c. water
3 (15 oz.) cans black-eyed peas, drained
1 (28 oz.) can diced tomatoes
1 (10 oz.) can diced tomatoes with green Chile peppers (such as Rotel), undrained
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
A couple of crushed garlics
½ tsp. salt
1 (4 oz.) can chopped green chilies
4 tsp. molasses
4 tsp. Better than Bouillon roasted beef broth
¼ tsp. black pepper
¼ tsp. ground cumin

Directions

In a large Dutch oven, cook and stir the pork sausage and ground pork with the onion over medium heat until the meat is no longer pink, 10 to 12 minutes. Drain off any excess fat. Pour in the water and stir in the rest of the ingredients until thoroughly mixed. Bring the soup to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer, cover and let cook for 45 minutes.

■ *Sheila Simmonds, Lansing*

BAKED POTATO SOUP

- 1 lb. bacon
- 1 ½ c. margarine
- 1 ½ c. flour
- 3 qts. milk
- 6-7 medium baked potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 4-5 green onions, sliced
- 1 ¼ c. shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 1 c. sour cream

Directions

Cook bacon in skillet, drain well on paper towel and crumble. Melt margarine in stock pot, stir in flour. Gradually add milk, whisking until smooth; stir until thickened. Stir in potatoes and green onions. Simmer 10 minutes. Mix in bacon, sour cream, 1 c. shredded cheese, salt and pepper. Simmer on low in crock pot until serving time. Sprinkle remaining shredded cheese on top of each bowl of soup. Can make additional crumbled bacon and top bowls of soup with this if desired. Makes a large batch, can halve the ingredients for a smaller batch.

■ *Barbara Oberbroeckling, Garnavillo*

PLUGGED IN: Electric Vehicle Update



NOVEMBER

Number of miles driven:
444 miles

kWh's charged: **53 kWh**

Total cost to charge
.13 x 53kWh = **\$6.89**



Fall Legislative Visit

Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative hosted a Fall Legislative Meeting on Thursday, Nov. 30. We appreciated having state and federal legislators attending to learn more about important issues to rural electric cooperatives.

Topics of discussion included:

- The Cooperative's Central Mission, guiding principles, business model & service territory
- Facts about Iowa's electric cooperatives; comparisons to IOUs and municipal utilities
- History of ACEC and Dairyland Power as our G&T
- Who we are in our community/ACEC Economic Development achievements
- Our views on an all-of-the-above strategy

Visiting ACEC were, front row, from left – **Brenda Hackman**, ACEC's manager of economic development and community relations; **Kim Reem**, regional director for **Senator Joni Ernst**; **Jeff Bradley**, ACEC board president; **Jeni Kolsrud**, ACEC manager of information technology; **Rochelle Fuller**, regional director for **Senator Chuck Grassley**; back row – **Georgie Hilby**, district representative for **Congresswoman Ashley Hinson**; **Ryan Wagner**, ACEC manager of member services; **Rep. Michael Bergan** – District 55; **Senator Mike Klimesh** – District 28; **Hollie McCormick**, ACEC general manager; **Dave Decker**, ACEC director of finance and administrative services; **Jason Troendle**, ACEC director of operations and engineering.



- Senator Mike Klimesh on nuclear energy SMR's (small modular reactors)
- RECS are committed to energy efficiency
- Updates PACE & New Era applications
- Fiber-broadband mapping and speed verification policy
- Cybersecurity
- Session priorities/2024 issues we're tracking
- ACEC Newsletters, social media and website information
- Partnering together & providing resources

The Co-op expresses our gratitude for our area legislators' interests in energy policies that will help maintain affordable, reliable, and safe electricity. ■
#6159-XX

CYBER SECURITY Tip of the MONTH

Stop auto-connecting. When away from home, disable remote connectivity and Bluetooth. Some devices will automatically seek and connect to available wireless networks. Bluetooth enables your device to connect wirelessly with other devices, such as headphones or automobile infotainment systems. Disable these features so that you only connect to wireless and Bluetooth networks when you want to. If you do not need them, switch them off. While out and about, these features can provide roving cybercriminals access to your devices.

Sponsored by
AC SKYWAYS
INTERNET SOLUTIONS
BY ALLAMAKEE ■ CLAYTON
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

Congratulations to Rick and Denice Fink of Maynard for finding their service number in a past newsletter. The Cooperative awarded them 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 \$17.50, one is worth \$12.50 and one is worth \$5.** The service location number must be yours to claim the credit, and you need to notify us when you find it.



CONTACT ACEC

HEADQUARTERS

229 Highway 51 • PO Box 715
Postville, IA 52162

PHONE NUMBERS

LOCAL 563-864-7611

TOLL-FREE 888-788-1551

PAYMENT LINE 24/7 833-284-5051

UNDERGROUND CABLE LOCATING
811

SKYWAYS INTERNET SOLUTIONS

800-864-1611

WEBSITE

acrec.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

OUTAGES

888-788-1551 or 563-864-7611

IOWA STATE ONE CALL

811

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JEFF BRADLEY, President, Wadena

MICHAEL D. GIBBS, Vice President, Waterville

CINDY HEFFERN, Sec./Treas., Harpers Ferry

ROGER ARTHUR, Sumner

NELSON CONVERSE, Postville

GREG FORMANEK, Farmersburg

JERRY KELEHER, Elkader

AL STEFFENS, Clermont

BRICE WOOD, Lansing

MANAGEMENT STAFF

HOLLEE McCORMICK, EVP/General Manager

DAVID DECKER, Director,
Finance & Administrative Services

BRENDA HACKMAN, Manager, Economic
Development & Community Relations

JENI KOLSRUD, Manager, Information
Technology

JENNIFER ACHENBACH, Manager,
Marketing & Communications

JASON TROENDLE, Director,
Operations & Engineering

RYAN WAGNER, Manager, Member Services



Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc.

PO Box 715 - Postville, IA 52162-0715

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

PRSR STD

U.S. Postage

PAID

DPC

Happy Holidays!

Spark joy and light this holiday season. From our co-op family to yours, we wish you safe and warm season with friends and loved ones.

Our office will be closed on Monday, December 25, and Monday, January 1, in observance of the holidays.

FREE INSTALLATION

Free installation through December 29, 2023!

Give the gift of independence this season by subscribing a loved one to our FirstCall service. FirstCall is our emergency response system that is activated by a fall or by pressing a button.

This service is available to members AND non-members within our service territory. Learn more about FirstCall at www.acrec.com/firstcall or by calling **Kim Kloke** at

888-788-1551.

FIRSTCALL
Emergency Response System



   **STAY CONNECTED**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 