

● JULY 2023

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ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

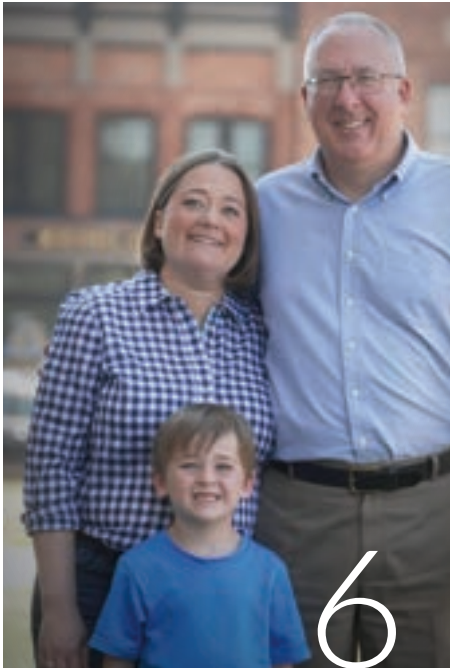
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EDITOR
Ann Foster Thelen

DESIGNERS
Bree Glenn
Megan Thompson

IAEC EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Chuck Soderberg

IAEC DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
Erin Campbell

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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 Kent Schlwin, a Prairie Energy Cooperative member-consumer, for supplying this month's cover image. Submit high-resolution photos for consideration to editor@ieclmagazine.com. You could receive \$100!

GROWING RELIABILITY THREATS

BY JIM MATHESON



American families and businesses expect the lights to stay on at a cost they can afford.

But that's no longer a guarantee. Nine states saw

rolling blackouts last December as the demand for electricity exceeded the available supply.

This is no longer a theoretical conversation. And unless policymakers change course, it's going to get worse.

Warnings and challenges mount

In May, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed a rule to regulate power plant emissions. This proposal will further strain America's electric grid and undermine decades of work to reliably keep the lights on across the nation. It's just the latest instance of EPA failing to prioritize reliable electricity as a fundamental expectation of American consumers.

It shouldn't have to be this way. When you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop digging. But instead of putting down the shovel, EPA wants to bring in an excavator.

But don't just take my word for it. Warnings about the threat of reliability challenges have snowballed in recent months. The 2023 North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) summer reliability assessment recently highlighted that more of the country is at risk of blackouts than last year. NERC says that the EPA proposal will accelerate the reliability challenges.

In May, several Federal Energy Regulatory Commission leaders warned the U.S. Senate about threats to reliable electricity. In March, Manu Asthana, who is the CEO of PJM Interconnection – a regional transmission organization that coordinates the movement of wholesale electricity in 13 states –

said that the regional transmission organization needed to slow the pace of generation retirements to avoid reliability problems by the end of the decade.

Voicing reliability concerns

America has a reliability problem. With the help of co-op leaders across the nation, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has been a leading voice in sounding the alarm on reliability. Today's energy decisions will determine if there are sufficient resources to keep the lights on tomorrow. Five issues are impacting the reliable delivery of electricity across the nation.

- 1 Increasing demand for electricity as other sectors of the economy are electrified.
- 2 Decreasing electricity supply due to the disorderly retirement and insufficient replacement of existing generation.
- 3 Permitting delays that prevent new electric infrastructure from being built and connected to the grid.

4 Supply chain challenges.

5 Problems with natural gas availability.

Commitment to member-consumers

None of these challenges will be easy to address, but we can start by asking ourselves these questions:

- Is this what America is supposed to be?
- Should the threat of rolling blackouts be a permanent facet of U.S. energy policy?

The answer to both of those questions is a resounding no for electric co-ops and the communities we serve.

The long-term solution requires policymakers and regulators to recognize the need for time, technology development and new transmission infrastructure. These are the essential ingredients for an energy future that prioritizes reliable electricity for all consumers, including the 42 million Americans served by electric cooperatives.

Jim Matheson is the CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

EDITOR'S CHOICE CONTEST

Win a grilling package!

July is National Grilling Month! To celebrate, we're giving away a beef bundle, including \$50 in beef certificates, a cast iron skillet and additional summer grilling essentials, courtesy of the Iowa Beef Industry Council.

Visit our website and win!

Enter this month's contest by visiting www.ieclmagazine.com no later than July 31. 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 local nursery gift card from the May issue was Phillip Boehnke, Prairie Energy Cooperative.



ENTER ONLINE BY JULY 31!

WE'RE HERE TO SERVE YOU

BY MICHAEL GEERDES



"We're here to serve you." We've all heard this phrase countless times. These words may sound generic, but to us – your local electric cooperative – they mean everything.

Grundy County REC was created to serve our community. Back in the day, neighbors banded together and formed our co-op for the common good. In our case, it was the only way the community could bring electricity to an area where there was none. In doing so, our cooperative helped the community thrive. That mission-focused heritage is the golden thread that is woven throughout our history. Today, we are continuing to power the community. While our focus has remained steady on providing reliable energy to our

members, today's energy landscape and consumer expectations are far different than they were decades ago. That's why we're adapting, to keep pace with changing technology, evolving needs and new expectations.

Serving as your trusted energy advisor means we want to help you save energy (and money) and provide advice and information on a broad range of energy topics.

Helping you save energy

If you're looking for ways to save energy, visit www.grundycountyrecia.com and check out the great resources under the Energy Efficiency tab that can help you increase the energy efficiency of your home. Consider scheduling a free energy audit with Brady Codner, our member service advisor, to identify ways you can save energy at home. Understanding how your home uses energy can help determine the best ways to modify energy use and thereby keep more money in your wallet.

Solar insights

If you're considering solar, make sure you give the cooperative a call! We are happy to give you an unbiased view of the pros and cons. Investing in a solar system is a major decision, and it's important to fully understand the costs, responsibilities and potential energy savings. Unlike a solar company that has one objective – to sell their products and services – we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home. We understand that homeowners must undertake their due diligence, and we're here to help you through that process.

Evaluating electric vehicles

We recognize that many members are considering electric vehicle (EV) options and Grundy County REC can help provide you with information so you can make an informed decision. We can provide a candid assessment of residential and business charging requirements for all types of EVs. It

is also important to speak with the cooperative regarding EVs and what size charger you wish to purchase to ensure your current system can handle the load. No matter what our members drive, we want to help you achieve energy savings.

To learn more about EVs, available options, potential cost savings and more, visit our website and click the "Learn About EVs" button in the upper right corner.

Our commitment to you

So, the next time you hear Grundy County REC use the phrase "We're here to serve you," we hope you know that we mean it. Service is deeply ingrained into who we are. We continue to evolve with the times, and in return, we've found additional ways to serve our members and provide more options for you to power your life.

We're here whenever you need us. Connect with us online, in person or through our social media channels. However you choose to connect, please let us know how we can serve you better.

Michael Geerdes is the general manager of Grundy County REC.



A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

"Our mission is to provide our members safe, reliable, electric service"



Office: Grundy County REC
303 N Park Avenue • P.O. Box 39
Grundy Center, IA 50638

Phone: 319-824-5251 or 1-800-390-7605

Fax: 319-824-3118

Call Before You Dig (Iowa One Call):
800-292-8989

Website: www.grundycountyrecia.com

Facebook: facebook.com/GrundyCountyREC

Email: mgeerdes@grundycountyrecia.org

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Call our office 24/7: 319-824-5251

General Manager: Michael Geerdes

Officers and Directors:

District 1: Kevin Pruisner
District 2: Norbert Boyle
District 3: Nick Strohhenn
District 4: Larry Rohach
District 5: Matt Kopriva
District 6: David Schmidt
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DON'T FORGET TO GRAB YOUR FAIR FOOD VOUCHERS

Fair food vouchers are available until July 10! Stop in the co-op office to pick up your two complimentary \$10 food vouchers to the BarLea Roots booth. You can redeem them at the 1851 Pavilion during the Grundy County Fair.

2023 NOMINATING COMMITTEE MAKES DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS

Report of the Nominating Committee:

The Nominating Committee of Grundy County REC duly appointed by the Board of Directors, hereby nominates the following members of the Cooperative for the office of Director for the ensuing term of three (3) years each, all to be elected at the Annual Meeting to be held Sept. 7, 2023.

District No. 4

Larry Rohach, Incumbent

District No. 6

David Minter

Roger Brown

DATED at Grundy Center, Iowa this 24th day of May, 2023 and posted on the 31st day of May, 2023 in the office of the above-named Cooperative.

There were no Nominations by Petition submitted to the Cooperative.



Members of the Nominating Committee pictured from left to right: President Nick Strohbehn, District 4 Member Ed Noteboom, District 6 Member Don Diamond and Board Treasurer Norb Boyle.

SAVE THE DATE: 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendar for Grundy County REC's Annual Meeting on Thursday, Sept. 7. If you thought last year's meeting was good, you won't want to miss this year's event! Fun, food, bucket truck rides and great prizes ... just to name a few reasons to attend!

Attendees can win these prizes:

- Yeti Cooler with items from member businesses (valued at approximately \$475)
- Blackstone Grill
- \$500 gift card to Great Wolf Lodge Water Park Resort (for mini-members under 18 years of age)

Cash prizes will once again be distributed to each member account that attends in person!

A promotional poster for the 2023 Annual Meeting. At the top left is a silhouette of a person climbing a bucket truck. The main text reads "WORKING TODAY TO POWER TOMORROW" in large, bold letters. Below this is a row of five small images of people wearing hard hats. Underneath is a black banner with "GRUNDY COUNTY REC • 9.7.23" and "ANNUAL MEETING 2023" in green. A white box in the center contains the text "OPEN HOUSE: 5-7 PM; BUSINESS MEETING TO FOLLOW" and "FOOD, PRIZES, BUCKET TRUCK RIDES AND MORE!". At the bottom left is the Grundy County REC logo, which includes a stylized green and blue wave icon and the text "Grundy County REC A Touchstone Energy Cooperative". On the right side, there is a large, glowing lightbulb held in a hand, with a circular inset showing a landscape of rolling hills.

MEET IOWA'S ATTORNEY GENERAL

BY ANN FOSTER THELEN

Editor's Note: As a non-partisan publication, we profile government officials from time to time to help our readers get to know these important Iowans and to understand how their roles impact rural Iowa.



In November 2022, Iowans elected Brenna Bird as their next Attorney General – the first Republican to hold the office

since 1979. Before becoming Iowa Attorney General in January 2023, Bird served as a prosecutor for six years, first as the Fremont County Attorney and then since 2018 as the Guthrie County Attorney.

Born and raised on a farm in Guthrie County, where she was homeschooled, Bird graduated from Drake University and received her J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School.

We sat down with Bird in June to learn more about her perspectives and priorities on various topics in her new role serving Iowans.

Q: Tell our readers more about your background and family.

I grew up east of Dexter, and we had corn, soybeans, cattle and farrow-to-finish pigs. My husband, son (who is 6 years old) and I live on what was once my grandpa's farm – where my dad grew up – and in the house my grandpa built in rural Dexter.

My husband Bob is an Iraq War veteran. He is also a lawyer and works in the Iowa State Senate. Over the years, my legal career has included working in private practice, in Congress in Washington, D.C., as legal counsel for Gov. Branstad and then Lieutenant Gov. Reynolds. I've served as the county attorney in Audubon, Fremont and Guthrie counties.

Q: Over the years, how have you been involved in your community/state or other activities? What are your hobbies?

Beyond professionally, one of the ways I've been most involved in the

community is through our church and the local activities that our parish gets involved in. The strength of our rural communities is one of Iowa's best assets. We are good at working together and solving problems. I enjoy reading, cooking, gardening, quilting, bicycling and spending time with family.

Q: How has agriculture shaped who you are today?

My family has been involved in agriculture for generations. In fact, my brother is a seventh-generation farmer. Growing up in agriculture taught me to stick to things even when they get tough and keep trying and working hard.

Like many Iowa families, we learned through the farm crisis that people matter more than possessions. From firsthand experience, I know that Iowa farmers care more about the land than anyone else and support good conservation practices.

Q: What are some topics that you are passionate about that impact rural Iowa/lowans?

One area is pushing back against the federal government in court when they go too far with federal overreach. An important example for Iowa is the Waters of the U.S. rule, which would allow the Environmental Protection Agency to control 97% of Iowa farm ground and other lands. We've challenged the rule and have received some favorable rulings to stop it, but we're still litigating that through court. That's very important because it could change agriculture in rural Iowa as we know it. We need to keep decision-making local and out of D.C.

I'm also passionate about supporting and maintaining strong law enforcement. An alarming trend is the infiltration of drugs into rural Iowa. In every county in the state, it's important to keep our communities safe.

Q: As a member of Guthrie County REC, what are your thoughts/perspectives on the cooperative business model?

The cooperative business model works well. Initially, electric cooperatives brought power to rural Iowa, including where I live. It's essential to have affordable and reliable electricity. Because of its local ownership structure, cooperatives excel with customer service, responsiveness and community engagement. The co-op business model is even more relevant today than ever before.

Q: What personal and professional accomplishments are you most proud of?

Personally, it's being a wife and mom. I worked full-time to pay for college. I learned a lot serving in different roles in the Governor's office and Congress. Then, starting my law firm while also working as a county attorney.

Regarding my accomplishments as a prosecutor, I think the best part of the job was working with law enforcement because they're heroes with good hearts. People don't see all the things that law enforcement does daily and the compassion and bravery they bring to the job. Working to enforce the law to keep our communities safe and helping crime victims is rewarding.

Q: What excites you the most about being Iowa's Attorney General?

Having the opportunity to make Iowa safer, support our law enforcement and push back against the federal government when they go too far.

Q: What is another top priority that you are working on?

We're here to serve lowans. If someone falls victim to a scam or thinks something might be suspicious, we want them to reach out to our office.

Last year, we were contacted by a woman who received a scam call and was told that she had a fraudulent Amazon charge for thousands of dollars on her account. The scammer convinced her they would help cancel

the payment. They claimed her account showed unusual activity in other states, that she had become a victim of ID theft, and that her information was used to commit a crime. The scammer impersonated law enforcement and informed her to protect her assets, she needed to send a box with \$20,000 in cash to California. The day after she shipped the money, she realized she had been scammed and contacted the Iowa Attorney General's office. Our team was able to stop the shipment and return the money to this woman.

Ann Foster Thelen is the editor of Iowa Electric Cooperative Living.

See Page 14 for tips on protecting yourself against utility scams.



Brenna Bird with her husband Bob and their son.

Vegetable

RECIPES

for summer

SWEET AND SOUR GREEN BEANS

- 4 slices of bacon
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- flour, optional
- 3 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 pint green beans

Fry bacon, drain and crumble. Put brown sugar in pan, stir in flour thickener if desired. Add bacon, vinegar and beans and heat through. *Serves 2*

**Allyson Bailey • Hamilton
Chariton Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

MICROWAVE SUCCOTASH

- 1 16-ounce bag frozen corn
- 1 16-ounce bag frozen lima beans
- ¼ cup water
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ¼ teaspoon thyme, dried
- 1 teaspoon parsley, dried
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup sweet onion, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter

In a 2.5-quart microwave-safe bowl with lid, mix corn, lima beans and water. Microwave on high for 10 minutes. Let bowl sit in microwave covered. In a separate bowl, combine tomatoes, garlic powder, paprika, thyme, parsley and salt. Mix well and set aside. Sauté onions in butter until clear. Add to bowl of tomatoes and spices, mix well. Combine tomato mixture with corn and lima beans. Thoroughly stir together. Microwave on high for 2 minutes or until hot. *Serves 6*

**Jacque Minikus • Pisgah
Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative**

EASY SCALLOPED POTATOES

- 2½ cups milk, heated
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 6 medium potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons butter, plus enough to coat casserole dish
- pepper, optional

Stir the milk, flour and salt together. Layer in a buttered casserole dish alternating potatoes and milk mixture. Top with 3 tablespoons butter and season with pepper, if desired. Bake at 350 degrees F for 60-75 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. *Serves 8-10*

**Elinor Moeller • Tripoli
Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative**

LOTTA (LOW-TAH) FINNISH VEGGIE CASSEROLE

- 5 potatoes, sliced
- 4 carrots, sliced
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 beet, sliced
- ½ pound salt pork, preferably frozen
- ⅓ cup water

In a medium-sized roaster or Dutch oven, place a layer of potatoes followed by a layer of carrots. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add a layer of onions followed by a layer of beets, salt and pepper. Repeat the vegetable layers one more time. Slice salt pork ¼-inch thick and approximately ½-inch wide, frozen pork is easier to cut. Place salt pork on top of vegetables and add water. Place under the broiler to cook salt pork until crispy brown. Cover roaster and cook at 400 degrees F for 50 minutes. *Serves 6*

Michele Dirks • George • Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

INFINITY CABBAGE SALAD

- ¼ cabbage, shredded
- 1 cucumber, thinly sliced, optional
- ½ carrot, thinly sliced, optional salt, to taste
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon sesame dressing, optional
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds

Put the shredded cabbage in a colander. If desired, add cucumber and carrots. Sprinkle with salt, mix well. Set aside for 5-10 minutes. Meanwhile, create a dressing by mixing soy sauce, sugar, apple cider vinegar and sesame oil. Add sesame dressing, if desired. Squeeze vegetables to drain excess water. Pour dressing over vegetables and sprinkle with sesame seeds. *Serves 3*

Erina Westphal • Guthrie Center
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association

EGGPLANT CASSEROLE

- 1 small eggplant
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil salt, to taste pepper, to taste
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 small green pepper, chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes, sliced medium thickness
- ¼ cup American cheese, grated

Peel eggplant and slice about ⅜- to ½-inch thick. Cut slices in half. In a large frying pan, heat oil until starting to smoke. Place eggplant in hot oil and brown each side. Season with salt and pepper to taste. In a 2-quart baking dish, alternate layers of eggplant, onion, green pepper and tomatoes. Cover and bake at 375 degrees F for 50 minutes. Remove cover and sprinkle grated cheese on top. Return to oven and bake uncovered until cheese is melted and browned. *Serves 4*

Greg Flugum • Forest City
Prairie Energy Cooperative

GOOD CARROTS

- 8 cups carrots, peeled and sliced
- ¼ cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup plus 4 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1 pound Velveeta
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 cups crackers, crushed

Steam and drain carrots and onions. Place in 9x13-inch pan. Melt 1 cup butter with Velveeta. Mix in brown sugar and pour over carrots. Mix crackers and 4 tablespoons melted butter, sprinkle over top. Bake at 350 degrees F for 20-25 minutes. *Serves 6*

Lizzy Hartter • Rock Rapids
Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

ONION PIE

- 1 cup soda crackers, crushed
- ¼ cup margarine, melted
- 2 cups onion, sliced
- 2 tablespoons margarine
- ¾ cup milk
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ¾ teaspoon salt pepper, to taste
- ¼ cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- parsley, to taste, chopped

Mix crackers and ¼ cup melted margarine. Press into an 8-inch pie pan on bottom and up the sides. Cook onions in 2 tablespoons margarine until tender, not brown. Place onions in pie pan. Combine milk, eggs, salt and pepper, then pour over onions. Sprinkle with cheese and a little chopped parsley. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes, until custard is set. Serve hot. *Serves 8*

Truman Nester • Rock Rapids • Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative

BAKED ZUCCHINI CASSEROLE

- 1 pound ground beef
- ¼ cup onion, chopped
- ½ cup green pepper, chopped
- 1 cup cracker crumbs salt, to taste pepper, to taste
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 large zucchini, cubed (or 2 small) bread crumbs for topping

Brown beef and onion. In large bowl, mix beef and onion with green pepper, cracker crumbs, salt, pepper, soup, eggs and zucchini. Place mixture in a greased 9x13-inch pan. Top with bread crumbs and bake at 350 degrees F for 35-40 minutes.

Mrs. Charles Hanes • Stuart
Guthrie County Rural Electric Cooperative Association

WANTED:

SLOW COOKER RECIPES

THE REWARD:
\$25 FOR EVERY ONE WE PUBLISH!

Deadline is July 31

Please include your name, address, telephone number, co-op name and the recipe category on all submissions. Also provide the number of servings per recipe.

EMAIL: recipes@ieclmagazine.com

(Attach your recipe as a Word document or PDF to your email message.)

MAIL: Recipes

Iowa Electric Cooperative Living • 8525 Douglas Ave., Suite 48,
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A TRIP OF A LIFETIME DELORES FAGLE THOM RECALLS EXPERIENCE ON 1958 YOUTH TOUR

BY JENNIFER ACHENBACH

Sixty-five years ago, Delores (Reed) Fagle Thom stepped on a bus headed to Washington, D.C., for the first-annual Rural Electric Co-op Youth Tour.

It was a trip that would leave a lasting impression on the recent high school graduate.

At the time, Delores was working at the Iowa State University Extension Office in Independence. As a member of the Buchanan County Rural Electric Cooperative, her boss suggested she complete the application for the tour, writing an essay about why she wanted to be chosen. She was one of the over 30 participants from Iowa selected to go to D.C. in 1958. As a recent Independence High School graduate, Delores was engaged to Dwaine Fagle. In her words, she thought that if she was going to go on a trip like this, she better go before she was married.

On June 14, Delores got on a bus headed to D.C., her first time visiting the nation's capital. The group spent the night in Toledo, Ohio, before arriving in D.C. the next evening. They stayed at the Arva Motor Hotel in Arlington, Virginia.

Impactful lineup of tours and conversations

The first day of the trip, the group had breakfast with members of the Iowa Congressional Delegation, followed by a tour of the U.S. Capitol, led by Sen. Thomas Martin. That was followed by a tour of the Library of Congress, visiting both the House of Representatives and Senate, as well as the Supreme Court Building. Delores recalls the time she spent visiting with her local delegates, as well as posing as a group on the Capitol steps.

On June 17, participants visited the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) building, followed

by a visit to the Bureau of Printing and Engraving and the Department of Justice.

Activities the next day included touring the Rural Electrification Administration headquarters at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), viewing the Washington Cathedral and touring the USDA Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland.

June 19 holds a special place in Delores' memory. That was the day participants got a special tour of the White House.

After the White House tour, the group visited the Washington Monument, including an elevator ride to the top. Next, they



went to the Smithsonian Institute and finished the night with a trip to Glen Echo Amusement Park. On the final full day of the trip, they toured Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and Lee's Mansion, then concluded the visit with a tour of Washington's home at Mt. Vernon.

After five days of learning about government, the group got back on the bus to Iowa on Saturday, June 21. They spent the night in Chicago. Delores recalls feeling a little scared as their hotel room didn't have a lock on the door.

Despite the full schedule of activities, there was also a lot of fun and bonding with her fellow participants.

"We stayed in a motel room with four of us to a room. We filled the bathtub with ice cubes and put watermelon in it. We invited a few people to our room, and we had a watermelon treat," she remembers.

When she returned to Iowa following the tour, Delores presented what she'd learned to her co-op.

The next chapters of life

What started as a trip before settling down turned into an experience that shaped the rest of her life. Delores and Dwaine got married the following year. They lived in Independence, then Dewar and Sumner, before settling onto their farmstead three miles west of Fayette. There, the couple raised seven children while operating their dairy farm.

In 1986, Delores decided it was time to go to school and pursue her passion. She started taking accounting classes at Northeast Iowa Community

College (NICC) in Calmar. She finished her degree in 1987 and opened Delores Tax and Accounting. For over 30 years, Delores has built her business, at times with more than 200 tax clients a year, in addition to her accounting jobs.

"I just love it," she says, noting she now has cut back on her tax work but stays busy year-round with accounting. She was recognized by the governor for 25 years of work in 2013. She also was named a 2017 NICC Alumni Shining Star.

Dwaine passed away in 1996 from cancer. After a second marriage, Delores found love with her high school sweetheart, Bill Thom. Delores had reached out to Bill after the death of his wife. Six years later, Bill contacted Delores and they struck up a relationship. The two married. They later divorced but remain in touch today. Delores now resides in Fayette, just three miles from where she and Dwaine farmed.

Fond memories and advice for future participants

Although it's been well over half a century since Delores was on the Youth Tour, she still has fond memories of the trip.

Delores is excited for future Youth Tour participants to experience the thrills she had.

"Make it a learning experience because there's a lot to learn, but still enjoy the time that you're there," she says. "It was a good experience for me, a good learning experience."

Jennifer Achenbach is the manager of marketing and communications for Allamakee Clayton Electric Cooperative.



Delores (Reed) Fagle Thom is pictured with a photo from her Youth Tour experience in 1958.

Vintage photos from the 1958 Youth Tour.



2023 MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENT – YOU'RE INVITED

Please join us for a Member Appreciation Event on Wednesday, Aug. 9 from 5-7:30 p.m. at Hansen's Dairy in Hudson.

Food will be provided by the BarLea Roots Food Trailer, plus you can enjoy Hansen's Dairy ice cream for dessert. We'll also have tractor wagon rides to the farm to see baby calves and kangaroos, and a chance to win a Yeti Cooler that contains \$100 of Hansen's Dairy products (total value of \$475)!

Stop into the Grundy County REC office at 303 North Park Avenue between now and Aug. 1 to get your tickets.

One ticket per member of your household and you must have your tickets at the event to receive dinner.



DO YOU KNOW THESE PEOPLE?

Grundy County REC, located at 303 N. Park Avenue, Grundy Center, Iowa 50638, is holding unclaimed patronage dividends due to the individuals listed below. The owner may claim this property by contacting the cooperative headquarters at 319-824-5251.

If the cooperative does not hear from the owner within six (6) months, we are allowed to retain this property in accordance with Iowa law.

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Albers, Coty
Anderson, Ruth
Auten, Josh

B Baker, Thomas Kyle
Beeghly, Kevin
Benson, Larry
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Bouchard, Louis
Bromwich, Wade
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Goodman, Mike

H Hall, Tony
Heistad, Christopher
Hohenberger, Craig
Hunt, Merle

J Jeffrey, Clapsaddle
Jewell, Vickie
Johnson, Glenn
Jordan, Austin

K Knife River
Midwest, LLC
Kos, Jo Anne
Kruse, Michael
Kucera, Nancy

L Lynch, Dean

M Marks, John
Marshall, Bret
Maxson, David
McCalley, Chris
Meany, Eugene

Meek, Brenda
Mether, Daniel
Metzger, Roy
Miller, Patrick
Mochal, Lawrence

O Olderog
Wholesale Tire Inc

P Peters, Gordy
Peters, Ross
Podasky, Tracy
Pratt, Mark

R Raisch, Elma

S Sass, Andrew
Sienknecht, Dennis
Smith, Dennis
Stivers, Ronda

T Tiedt, Nick

W Werkman, Deb
Wild, Justin
Wrage, Lyle



ASK ME ANYTHING:

CO-OP EDITION WITH MICHAEL GEERDES



Michael Geerdes has served the members of Grundy County REC for the past 12 years, first in member services and now as your general manager. When he's not at work, Geerdes often can be found cheering on his kids in sports or working on the farm. With many current hot topics in the energy issue, including peak alert, energy shortages, the possibility of rolling blackouts and electric vehicles, to name a few, Geerdes answers commonly asked questions and explains what that means for the co-op and our members.

Q: When the co-op posts a “peak alert,” what does that mean, and what should I do?

A: A peak alert happens when the co-op experiences higher-than-normal loads (energy use). This will occur throughout the year and is caused by weather and member-consumer electric demand. When the co-op is in a peak alert situation, it helps if the members try and avoid using any electrical appliances that are not a necessity.

Q: There has been talk and even news segments stating that most of the U.S. is at an elevated risk of energy shortages this summer. Does this mean there will be rolling blackouts again? What is being done to mitigate that risk, and what can members do to help?

A: There is a slight risk for rolling blackouts this summer if energy demand exceeds the availability of power generation resources. Our generation and transmission providers work year-round to try and mitigate this risk. We continue to work with policymakers and

regulators on a state and federal level for a sensible all-of-the-above generation approach. All-of-the-above promotes the idea that the U.S. depends on a reliable and sustainable fuel supply that includes developing and incorporating domestically produced intermittent renewable energy resources (such as wind and solar) to supplement baseload generation, which includes biofuels, natural gas, nuclear, hydropower and coal.

You can help the co-op in high load or peak alert situations by conserving as much electrical usage as possible. Consider turning your thermostat up a couple degrees in the summer, avoiding using your oven in the evening hours, avoiding doing your laundry in the evening, and, if you have an electric vehicle, avoiding charging during those times.

Q: What are some things the cooperative will be focusing on in the next year? Next five years?

A: The cooperative is always looking at ways to do a better job of serving our members. We will be closely watching the rollout of electric vehicles. With more load on the grid, we must be prepared to serve this load in the future. We have a Construction Work Plan in place to rebuild several overhead line projects, which are essential for reliable service.

Q: What is the co-op doing to help mitigate and manage supply chain issues?

A: The co-op is working hard to manage supply chain issues by making sure we order materials further out. Some materials have had one-year lead times since COVID. We maintain and rebuild lines so that reliability does not become an issue for our members.

Q: What is your favorite part of working at Grundy County REC?

A: The employees and the members are why I like working at Grundy County REC.

CO-OP WELCOMES SEASONAL EMPLOYEE



Please join Grundy County REC in welcoming Koty Kruse of Conrad. Koty is a recent graduate of the Sheldon Line Program and a cooperative member. He will work with our operations crew this summer as a seasonal 1,000-hour employee. We look forward to having you on board, Koty!

FREE & EASY
ways to save energy

(Spoiler Alert: Your clothes and dishes won't know the difference)

Major home appliances account for approximately **16%** of an average home's energy consumption.

1. Run full loads of laundry instead of several smaller ones.
2. Use cold water to wash your clothes.
3. Keep your refrigerator at 35° to 38°F and your freezer at 0°F.
4. Regularly defrost manual-defrost freezers and refrigerators.
5. Skip the heat-dry setting on your dishwasher.
6. Fully load your dishwasher before washing.
7. When buying new appliances, consider Energy Star versions.
8. Unplug appliances you're not using.

Time to replace that old appliance? Replacing older versions with energy-efficient models can save the average household more than \$500 per year.

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST UTILITY SCAMS

“Your electric bill is past due, and we will cut off power to your home in the next hour if you don’t pay us over the phone immediately!”

Have you ever received a threatening call like this from someone claiming to be from your local electric cooperative? Would you know what to do if you received a call like this?

No matter the season, scammers frequently target consumers, and members of Iowa’s electric cooperatives are not immune. Phone scammers often appear to be calling from local numbers and claim to be from the local electric cooperative. Sometimes, the calls include prerecorded messages. In almost all the calls, the scammers threaten the innocent person on the other end of the line, demanding immediate payment to prevent disconnection of electric service.

Your local electric co-op will never contact you out of the blue to demand immediate payment or threaten immediate disconnection. If you receive a suspicious call, text or email from someone claiming to be from the co-op, please contact your electric co-op office directly by using the phone number on a recent bill or on the co-op’s website to verify the communication. The best

defense against a utility scammer is an educated consumer; follow these tips from Utilities United Against Scams to protect yourself from a potential scam.

1 Protect personal information

Never provide or confirm personal information (Social Security number, date of birth) or financial information (banking account information, debit or credit card information) to anyone initiating contact with you and claiming to be from your local electric co-op. Never give out information or provide any payment type to any callers or unexpected individual(s) appearing at your door claiming to represent your co-op. Your local co-op will already have your relevant personal and account information.

2 Take your time

Do not be rushed. If you receive a call, text, email or visitor saying you have to pay your bill immediately to avoid disconnection, tell them you would like to verify that they are a legitimate co-op representative by calling a verified number for the local co-op office. Beware if a representative exhibits impatience, annoyance or anger when you question their authority. While a scammer will

discourage you from hanging up and calling the number on your utility bill, a real co-op representative will encourage you to do so for your own peace of mind.

3 Always ask questions

Ask the person contacting you to provide you with your account number, your last payment amount, date of payment and their employee identification number. If the individual is a legitimate utility representative, this information will be readily accessible. If not, hang up or shut the door, and call your utility directly to report the suspicious activity.

4 Contact your utility directly

If you receive a suspicious call or visit, please contact the local police and your electric co-op immediately. Share details that the scammer told you which might aid in a possible criminal investigation.

For more information on protecting yourself against various scams, visit the Iowa Attorney General’s website at www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov and click Consumer Tips & Information under the FOR CONSUMERS tab.



SCOTCHEROOS – AN IOWA DELICACY

BY DARCY DOUGHERTY MAULSBY

One of the highlights of summer events is getting to sample all the tasty, homemade treats at picnics, potlucks, parties and more. Iowans are masters of making these informal meals memorable.

When I attended a local high school graduate's reception in May, I couldn't believe my good fortune. At the end of the buffet line, there was a beautiful sight, sure to warm the heart of an Iowan – a huge tray of homemade scotcheroos, all cut into generous portions.

Since it's important to eat a balanced diet, I put a grilled hamburger on one side of my plate and a big scotcheroo on the other side.

I've been a scotcheroo fan since I was a kid. Well into adulthood, I assumed everyone knew about scotcheroos and loved them. After I published my book "A Culinary History of Iowa," I discovered that a surprising number of non-Iowans have never heard of these delicacies. Say it isn't so! It's hard to imagine life without this incredible concoction of cereal, chocolate, butterscotch and peanut butter that's fun to say (doesn't "scotcheroo" sound like a fancy dog?) and even more fun to create.

A convenient history

Occasionally, a member of the media asks to interview me about the origins of the famed scotcheroo. At best, the history is unclear. Some reports say the recipe made its first appearance on the side of Rice Krispies® boxes in the mid-1960s, although there's no definitive answer about who invented scotcheroos – or where.

While some food snobs might sneer at something based on convenience foods, let's take a step back to when scotcheroos first hit the culinary scene. I think of the Iowa home cooks I've interviewed through the years, especially those who remember how popular "modern" convenience foods



were in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. At that time, processed, time-saving foods were all the rage. Serving these types of foods was a sign you were on the cutting edge. It would have been trendier to bring a plate of scotcheroos to a party than a freshly made rhubarb crisp or apple pie.

Through the years, the Midwest has become the epicenter of scotcheroo enjoyment, and I, for one, am grateful.

Scotcheroos are a riff on Rice Krispies Treats, minus the marshmallows. This connection is a nice touch, since an Iowan helped create Rice Krispies Treats. After Mildred Ghrist Day earned her degree in home economics from Iowa State University, she landed a job with the Kellogg's cereal company. By 1939, Mildred and a co-worker invented what we know today as Rice Krispies Treats.

Simple goodness that stands apart

Some say scotcheroos are the Cadillac of Rice Krispies Treats. Even though they incorporate a few great twists, including peanut butter, melted

chocolate and butterscotch chips, scotcheroos don't really taste peanut buttery, nor do they taste quite like butterscotch. More than the sum of their parts, scotcheroos are chewy, crispy and downright addictive.

It's no wonder scotcheroo recipes often turn up in Iowa church cookbooks and community cookbooks – the places where people showcase their culinary "A game." These books abound with proven, practical recipes, meaning you can find most ingredients, if not all, at the local grocery store or your kitchen pantry. The simplicity of scotcheroo ingredients is just one more reason to love them.

Next time you need to bring treats to a picnic or potluck, just whip up a batch of scotcheroos. (Hey, I even learned recently that they freeze well if you want to make them ahead of time.) You're sure to be the hit of the party.

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



The magazine
for members of
Iowa's electric
cooperatives.

July 2023

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