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Southwest lines

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

January 2017

Co-op Leaders Meet with Representatives

COOPERATIVE representatives from Southwest Iowa REC, Clarke Electric (Osceola), Farmers Electric (Greenfield) and Guthrie County REC (Guthrie Center) hosted a Legislative Meeting in Creston on November 28, 2016. State Representatives Cecil Dolecheck, David Sieck, Tom Moore and Senator Tom Shipley met with about 30 attendees from these area cooperatives.



From left to right: Rep. Tom Moore, Sen. Tom Shipley, Rep. David Sieck and Rep. Cecil Dolecheck.

The Legislative Meeting gave cooperative leaders a chance to discuss key issues in detail with their state-level elected officials and for the legislators to discuss what they expect to work on during the legislative session. The biggest influence on lawmakers is their own voters and their expressed concerns. Whether you are a co-op member, director, manager or employee, you can play an important role in this process. If we don't

tell them about our issues and concerns, they won't know we care.

Your cooperative's future can be directly related to your active participation in the political process. There is a great deal of power behind grassroots activities and how they can effectively influence the outcome of legislative, political and community decisions. We are there to get the best deal for Iowa's RECs and YOU, our members.

You can help in this effort. We encourage all of you to participate in Iowa's politics.

In Remembrance: Richard D. "Rich" Fast

RICHARD FAST, AGE 59, of Villisca, Iowa, passed away Friday, December 9, 2016 at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska.



Rich served on the REC Board of Directors for the past 10 years. Along with serving as Director for District 6, Rich also served as President of the cooperative for one year. Rich helped guide and direct us through the many changes we have encountered in our industry.

Rich will be missed by all who knew him and our prayers go out to his entire family at this difficult time.

YOUTH TOUR REMINDER



2017 Washington D.C. Youth Tour
June 9-15, 2017

Contact your local Southwest Iowa REC office or visit www.swiarec.coop for an application.

Deadline for receipt of applications is Wednesday, March 1, 2017.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

A crackling fire in the hearth warms the house, but don't let it heat up your electric bill! Caulk around the fireplace hearth and keep the damper closed when a fire is not burning. Source: U.S. Department of Energy

CEO's COMMENTS:

Electric Cooperatives are Ready to Work with Elected Officials



AS THE NATION PREPARES TO welcome a new Congress and Administration, America's electric cooperatives are ready to welcome back old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers.

The co-ops' message to elected officials, both old and new, Republican and Democrat, will be the same: we all need to work together to protect consumer access to safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

Whatever you thought of the 2016 campaign, one message came through loud and clear: many, many people don't believe their concerns are being heard. For member-owned cooperatives, listening to people is at the heart of our business model. And we carry our members' concerns to public officials every day.

As co-ops reach out to engage with elected officials, they will build on the strength of Co-ops Vote, the grassroots initiative to

reverse declining voter turnout in rural areas. Co-ops Vote did more than register voters. This initiative sent a strong message to the country's elected officials that rural electric consumers matter.

And co-ops will be reinforcing this message with a request that policymakers keep the needs of consumers front and center. Needs such as funding for infrastructure – especially transmission lines and access to natural gas. Increasing the efficiency of the electric system. Determining the future of hydropower and nuclear energy. Elected officials will be making decisions affecting every aspect of the electric system.

Advocating for these issues is nothing new. In fact, we've been doing it for years. And we're ready to continue the fight on your behalf.

Here at Southwest Iowa REC, we will reach out to local, state and federal officials. We will explain the unique member-owned, not-for-profit co-op business model. And

we will remind long-time politicians of our co-op's commitment to its members.

In Washington, D.C., the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association will conduct similar introductions, speaking with key agencies and departments within the new Administration. It is likely many of these new policymakers will know little or nothing of the co-op model.

Forging an energy future that serves rural consumers, and protecting access to safe, reliable and affordable electric power is a bipartisan effort. Electric co-ops are optimistic. As we work with our elected leaders, we hope to renew a spirit of cooperation in the nation's capital and in statehouses across the country.

After all, cooperation is what co-ops do best!

Phil Kinser

Southwest Iowa REC Recognized for Dedication to Safety

IN RECOGNITION OF ITS commitment to providing a safe workplace for employees, Southwest Iowa REC has earned Safety Achievement recognition from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives administers the safety audit program in the state and presented the certificate during its annual meeting in December.

Southwest Iowa REC is proud to have earned this designation. It shows the cooperative has an organized plan to keep our workers and the public safe. The program also helps make sure we are in compliance with the many rules and regulations required by OSHA and other regulatory bodies.

The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives safety inspection team quizzed

line workers on specific job procedures, as well as the condition and use of items such as flame-retardant clothing, hard hats and hearing protection. In all, more than 400 items related to the cooperative's safety program were reviewed during the audit.

There are additional benefits to gaining achievement as well. Along with joining an elite group of electric cooperatives from around the country, Southwest Iowa REC also receives a premium reduction from its insurance carrier, which helps hold down operating costs.



From left to right: Chuck Soderberg, IAEC executive vice president/general manager; Phil Kinser, CEO, Southwest Iowa REC; Marilyn Werner, Southwest Iowa REC president; and Steve Seidl, IAEC board president, Racoon Valley REC.

Scholarships Available for High School Seniors

SOUTHWEST IOWA REC WILL ONCE AGAIN OFFER SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE 2016-2017 school year to graduating high school seniors. Students applying for the \$500 scholarship must be enrolled full-time at an accredited college, university or vocational/technical school. The parent or guardian of the student must be a Southwest Iowa REC member and the student **MUST RESIDE** in the REC-served residence. The \$1,000 scholarship is open to **ALL** high school and non-traditional students within Southwest Iowa REC's territory attending an Accredited Lineman School or other electrical trade program.

Applications are available at your high school guidance counselor's office or you may fill out the form below. Students may also go to our website www.swiarec.coop to print the application. Recipients of the scholarships will be chosen by a selection committee appointed by Southwest Iowa REC whose decisions are final.

Southwest Iowa REC will award twelve (12) \$500 scholarships. In addition, two (2) \$1,000 scholarships will be available for students planning to attend an Accredited Lineman School or electrical trade program.

Completed applications and a photo must be received at the REC office by March 1, 2017 to be eligible.

Scholarship Information Request Form

Please send me the Southwest Iowa REC scholarship application form.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ High School _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

REC Account #/Location#: _____

Preparing for a Winter Storm

EXTREME WINTER WEATHER CAN immobilize an entire region. Even areas that normally experience mild winters can suddenly be hit with heavy snowfall or intense cold. Winter storms can result in closed streets and highways, power outages and flooding. Take action now to ensure the safety and comfort of your family in the event of extreme winter weather.

Before a storm

- Have snow removal equipment on hand, as well as rock salt to melt ice, and sand to improve traction.
- Regular heating fuel sources may be cut off, so make sure an alternative is available. For example, store a good

supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.

- Keep fire extinguishers on hand and make sure everyone in your house knows how to use them. House fires pose an additional risk as more people turn to alternate heating sources without taking the necessary safety precautions.
- Locate your main water supply and valves and make sure you know how to shut them off in case a freezing pipe bursts.

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Vegetation Management Plans for 2017

THE MAJORITY OF SOUTHWEST Iowa REC's vegetation management program is completed during the months of January through March.

In 2017, the following areas are scheduled for vegetation management (ground cut, trim and chemical treatment):

CODDINGTON INC. (contractor)
Ringgold County – Athens, Lotts Creek and Riley townships

REC CREWS
Adams County – Grant and Mercer townships

Mills County – Deer Creek Township

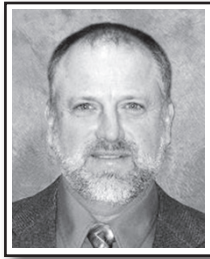
Page County – Grant, Tarkio and Valley townships

Ringgold County – Benton and Grant townships

Taylor County – Clayton, Gay, Grant, Grove, Marshall and Platte townships

You can always feel free to contact us at any of our service locations in Corning, Mount Ayr or Stanton with any questions you might have on this process. Or perhaps, you would like to let us know about a tree or other vegetation that you think could be too close to power lines or important electrical equipment. Call us at (888) 220-4869 or find helpful information at www.swiarec.coop.

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Name: Dennis Meier
Elected to Board: 1997
Current Position:
 Vice President, Director
 – District 8
Family: Wife – Lynn;
 2 sons – Daniel (Jackie)

Meier and David Meier; Granddaughter - Carly

Favorite Recipe: Mom's Chocolate Oatmeal Bars

Mom's Oatmeal Chocolate Bars

Ingredients

- 1 c. chocolate chips
- 1 c. butterscotch chips
- 1 can Eagle brand sweetened condensed milk
- 2 tsp. salt (divided)
- 2 T. butter
- 1 c. walnuts
- 1 c. oleo
- 2 c. brown sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 ½ c. flour
- 3 c. oatmeal

Melt together chocolate chips, butterscotch chips, sweetened condensed milk, 1 tsp. salt, and butter over low heat. Add walnuts.

Cream: oleo, brown sugar, eggs, and vanilla.

Add: flour, remaining 1 tsp. salt, and baking soda. After it's mixed well add oatmeal.

Spread 3/4 of oatmeal batter on large cookie sheet. Spread chocolate mixture on top. Drop remaining batter by teaspoonful on top of chocolate mixture

Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes.



The RECipe



Be Ready for Winter Storms...from pg. 3

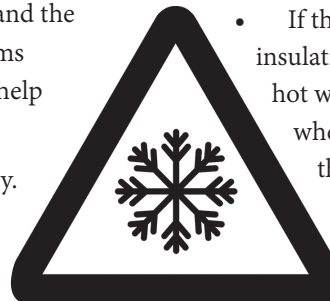
- Repair roof leaks and keep gutters clear. Trim any tree branches that could fall on your house during a storm.
- Winterize your home by caulking and weather-stripping doors and windows, sealing the attic area and installing storm windows. This will help to keep your family safe and comfortable during a storm.

During a storm

- Listen to your radio, television or NOAA Weather Radio for weather reports and emergency information.
- Eat regularly and drink ample fluids, but avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- If it becomes necessary to conserve fuel, keep your residence cooler than normal. Temporarily close off heat to some rooms.
- Stay dry. Change wet clothing frequently

to prevent the loss of body heat.

- Watch for signs of frostbite. These include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Drive only if it is necessary. If you must drive, travel in the daytime, do not drive alone and keep others informed of your whereabouts. Also, stay on main roads. Avoid back-road shortcuts.



After a storm

- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter. If you must shovel snow, stretch

before going outside.

- Help neighbors who may require special assistance including infants, the elderly and people with disabilities.
- If the pipes freeze, remove any insulation and open all faucets; pour hot water over the pipes, starting where they were most exposed to the cold. Do not try to thaw them with a blow torch or other open flame.
- Follow forecasts and be prepared when venturing outside. Major winter storms are often followed by extremely cold conditions.

A little forethought and some attention to detail will help to ensure that you and your family stay warm, dry and safe in your home this winter, no matter what the weather is outside.



Find us on Facebook

Corning
1801 Grove Ave., Corning, IA 50841

Mount Ayr
1502 W. South St., Mount Ayr, IA 50854

Stanton
415 Broad Ave., Stanton, IA 51573

NEW PHONE NUMBER FOR ALL LOCATIONS:
(888) 220-4869

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 Ken Peppmeier Jason Smith
 Dale Walkup

Phil Kinser, CEO