



Corning | Mount Ayr | Stanton

# Southwest lines

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

May 2018

## Southwest Iowa REC Unveils Solar Farm April 26

**S**outhwest Iowa REC and Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) showcased the new Southwest Solar Farm April 26 as the newest installment of CIPCO's utility-scale solar sites in Iowa. This 2 MW solar facility is situated on 11 acres of land one mile west of Corning and was constructed in partnership with Azimuth Energy, a solar and energy efficiency engineering and construction company based in St. Louis.



Southwest Iowa REC and CIPCO see value in utility-scale solar because it manages risk within a balanced and diverse generation portfolio, provides a source of local distributed generation, assists with developing in-house solar technology expertise, and reduces the utilities' carbon footprint.

"We are committed to meeting the energy needs of our membership with safe, reliable and affordable electricity," said Phil Kinser, CEO. "Adding solar energy to our generation mix reflects how those needs are evolving."

Construction began in September 2017, and the facility came online in January 2018. Southwest Solar Farm is expected to produce 3.1 million kWh of energy its first year, which is enough to power over 300 typical homes.

Southwest Solar Farm is CIPCO's sixth and largest solar facility in Iowa, which provides a combined total of 6.4 MWs of solar generating capacity. Other facilities are located in Urbana, Wilton, Pella, Osceola, and Marshalltown.



Azimuth Energy President Marc Lopata answers questions from SWIAREC board members.

## Board Approves Patronage Allocation

**I**n March, the Board of Directors allocated margins of \$684,265.04 for 2017. Margins are the "bottom line" on our financial operating statement when all the expenses of providing electric services to our member-owners are deducted from the revenues taken in. After the annual independent audit of the books, these margins are allocated to the various reserve accounts and also as patronage capital to the member-owners who received service from the Cooperative during

the year the margin was created.

For 2017, margins will be allocated to member-owners based upon the amount each paid for electricity in proportion to what the other member-owners paid. The payment of patronage capital is deferred until a future point in time when the financials of the Cooperative allow a refund. Member-owners who purchased electricity from us in 2017 will receive a patronage allocation notice in the mail in late May or early June.

## Wookey Earns Trip to Washington, D.C.

**C**ongratulations to Mallorie Wookey of Red Oak for being selected to represent Southwest Iowa REC on this year's Electric Cooperative



Youth Tour. Mallorie, a junior at Stanton Community High School, was selected by an independent committee through an essay and interview process. She will enjoy an expense-paid trip to our nation's capital June 8-14 with more than 1,500 students from all over the country. While there, Mallorie will meet with legislators, tour historic sites, museums and memorials, meet other student leaders and learn more about the history of the electric cooperative business model.

Mallorie is the daughter of Jake and Mindy Wookey of Red Oak.

CEO's COMMENTS:

# Safety Above All Else



Phil Kinser

Safety is a universal word that is mentioned often and used loosely. Communities large and small as well as companies across all industries are committed to safety. Sports leagues, at every level, take safety seriously. Unfortunately, when it really counts, steps to keep the public, workers, athletes and loved ones safe are often ignored in the interest of expediency or convenience.

However, safety is a serious issue, especially when it comes to electrical safety. For Southwest Iowa REC, it's the number one priority. This is not empty talk. Over time, Southwest Iowa REC has created a culture of safety by putting our employees' safety and that of the community above all else. At its essence, Southwest Iowa REC's mission is to provide safe, affordable and reliable electricity to its member-owners. At the end of the day, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to our member-owners, but equally important, we want to return our workers home safely to their loved ones. To do this requires ongoing focus, dedication and vigilance.

### Following national safety standards

Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous job, especially for lineworkers. Southwest Iowa REC has a safety team whose focus is keeping employees and the

community safe around electricity. We established and follow safety protocols based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry. We require our lineworkers to wear specialized equipment when working next to or with power lines. There are specific protocols that our lineworkers follow when dealing with electricity. Our safety team has regular meetings where they discuss upcoming projects from a safety perspective. They monitor and track near-misses of accidents in order to understand them, share "lessons learned" and improve in the future.

As importantly, we encourage all our crews to speak up and hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving with regard to safety, rather than defaulting to a blame game. We examine the information and data gleaned from near-misses and accident reports to discern patterns and use safety metrics to improve in those areas where we have fallen short. As appropriate, we brief contractors on our safety protocols and set expectations for their engagement.

### Keeping the community safe

Because we live and work in the community we serve, we care about our neighbors. Southwest Iowa REC conducts electrical safety demonstrations in schools and for community events.

May is National Electrical Safety Month. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation, each year thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. There is much you can do to keep yourself and your community safe around electricity.

Don't attempt electrical DIY projects or overload your outlets. Report downed power lines, unlocked substations or padmount transformers that look amiss. Contact Southwest Iowa REC for additional electrical safety tips or if you would like us to provide a safety demonstration at your school or community event. Be mindful when it comes to electrical safety. Pause and take the extra time to plug into safety.

**May is National Electrical Safety Month**

This month, we encourage all our members to take extra time to plug into safety.

**#ElectricalSafetyMonth**

SOUTHWEST IOWA RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE Your Sustainable Energy Cooperative

## \* \* \* 2018 Annual Meeting Plans \* \* \*

Plans are well underway for Southwest Iowa REC's Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held at the Lenox Community Center Thursday, September 13, 2018. The general business session will be called to order at 7:00 p.m.

In addition to reports being presented that cover our 2017 operations, a major item of business will be the election of four directors to serve one three-year term each. Directors

whose terms expire at the Annual Meeting in September are:

- Region 1, District #1 – Jason Smith
- Region 1, District #3 – Dale Walkup
- Region 2, District #5 – Deena Moore
- Region 2, District #7 – Dana Morgan

A nominating committee will be named at the May board meeting and given the task of nominating qualified candidates to

run for each of these positions. Once the slate of candidates is chosen, members will be given the opportunity to vote by mail or at the Annual Meeting September 13. A detailed explanation of the nominating and election process will be provided in the next newsletter. If you are interested in being considered to serve on the nominating committee this year, please contact Phil Kinser at (888) 220-4869.



## Reduce Energy Use During Peak Hours

Peak hours are the busiest times for your local electric cooperative since many people are using electricity at the same time. In addition, it costs your co-op more to generate electricity when demand soars during peak periods – and the cost of your electricity also may rise. Obviously, using less electricity during peak periods can save you and your co-op money.

Here's how you can help during peak hours, which generally are on the hottest summer days between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.:

- Shift household chores and activities away from peak periods. Wait to run your dishwasher until you go to bed, for instance.
- If you have air conditioning, turn the thermostat up when you are gone and at night. Cool only the rooms that you are using.
- Use the most energy-efficient appliances you have. Your microwave oven, for example, uses considerably less energy than your stove or cooktop.
- If you're buying a new appliance, make sure you get a highly efficient one. Look for ENERGY STAR® labels when you're evaluating different models.
- Be aware of your energy consumption and try to get in the habit of using energy efficiently year-round.

Use the energy you need, but use it wisely! You'll help your co-op avoid building expensive new power plants – and that, in turn, will help keep your electric rates stable.

## SWIAREC Participates in CPR and AED Refresher Course

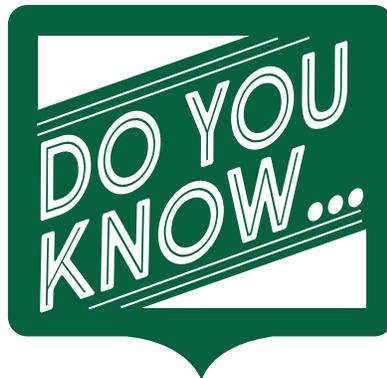
Southwest Iowa REC practices safety year-round and is also dedicated to furthering our safety practices in the event of a medical emergency. At our April safety meeting, all employees participated in a refresher course in First Aid, how to properly administer CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), and the use of an AED (automated external defibrillator) device.

*Pictured, at top right: Line Foreman Ken Van Wyhe practices infant CPR as Member Services Technician Chance Greenman looks on. Bottom right, Accountant Sarah Newton simulates use of the AED on an infant.*

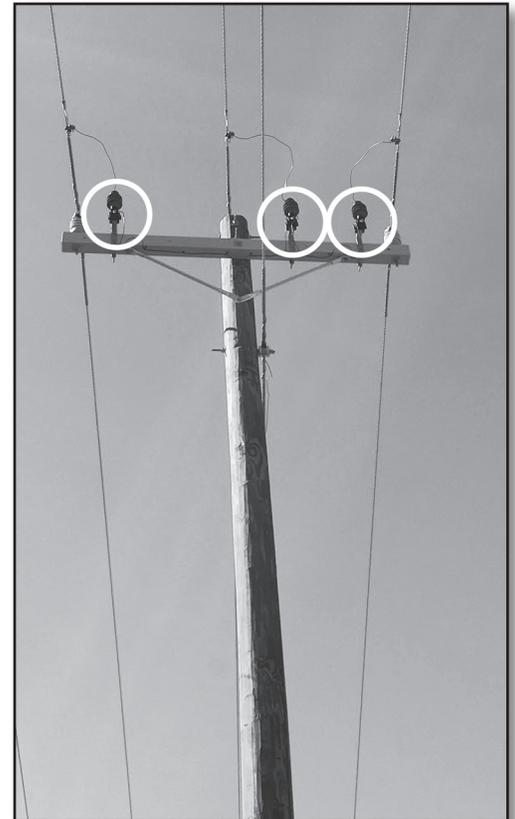


### Heat Plus Meter Readings

The Heat Plus rate season will end May 31, 2018. It is important that members do not turn off power to those meters because the cooperative still needs to be able to read them each month. The Heat Plus rate will begin again on October 1, 2018.



In last month's issue, we talked about transformers and what's on a utility pole. Another very important item on the utility pole is the lightning arrester. A lightning arrester is a device used on electric power systems and telecommunication systems to protect the insulation and conductors of the system from the damaging effects of lightning. Lightning arresters or insulators are made of porcelain or a composite and prevent energized wires from contacting each other or the pole.



### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



**L**audry tip: Use rubber or wool dryer balls, which help separate clothing in the cycle, providing better airflow and a shorter drying time. Wool dryer balls can help absorb moisture, which also reduces drying time. *Source: energy.gov*



Southwest Iowa REC offices will be closed Monday, May 28 in observance of Memorial Day.

## Sarah Newton Earns Professional Certificate



Southwest Iowa REC Accountant Sarah Newton has earned the Cooperative Financial Professional Certificate (CFPC).

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) have partnered to provide a competency-based, interactive program for co-op financial professionals and non-finance managers wanting to deepen their understanding of electric co-op utility finance.

During the two-part program, Sarah learned the concepts and practices needed to think beyond the data and successfully position the cooperative for the future.

Key objectives were:

- Enhance effectiveness at managing the

## Key Lime Cheesecake Bars

For the crust:

- 15 graham cracker sheets (or 30 squares)
- 2 T. granulated sugar
- pinch salt

6 T. unsalted butter, melted

For the filling:

- 6 oz. cream cheese, room temperature
- 14 oz. can condensed milk
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 T. lime zest
- ½ c. key lime juice (or regular lime juice)
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 9"x9" pan with aluminum foil or parchment paper, set aside.

In a food processor or in a large Ziploc® bag with a rolling pin, crush the graham crackers until fine crumbs form.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine the crumbs, sugar, salt and butter, mix to combine. Press the crumbs evenly into the bottom of the lined pan. Place in the oven and bake for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large mixing bowl with a hand mixer or the bowl of a stand mixer, beat the cream cheese until smooth and creamy. Add the condensed milk and mix until combined.

Then, add the egg yolks one at a time, mixing well after each addition followed by the lime zest, juice and vanilla extract, mix until combined.

Pour the filling over the hot, baked crust. Return to the oven and bake for 15-18 minutes or until set. The top should not brown. Remove from the oven and chill in the refrigerator for 2-4 hours before serving. Cut and serve, store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.



financial aspects of the co-op;

- Gain the skills needed to identify and take advantage of strategic opportunities; and
- Integrate finance expertise and business stewardship practices to achieve business results.

Please join us in congratulating Sarah on her accomplishment!

*Pictured, Sarah Newton, left, displays her Cooperative Professional Certificate with Southwest Iowa REC Director of Finance & Administrative Services Ginny Eighmy.*



**Corning**  
1801 Grove Ave., Corning, IA 50841

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

**Stanton**  
415 Broad Ave., Stanton, IA 51573

**Phone Number: (888) 220-4869**

### Board of Directors

Marilyn Werner, President  
Dennis Meier, Vice President  
Richard "Dick" Ballantyne, Secretary  
Mark Herzberg, Treasurer  
Kay Fast  
Dana Morgan  
Jason Smith

Phil Kinser, CEO

Deena Moore  
Ken Peppmeier  
Dale Walkup

Southwest Iowa REC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.