



Corning | Mount Ayr | Stanton

Southwest lines

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

February 2017

Iowa's Electric Cooperatives Welcome Back Legislators

Over 150 directors, managers and staff members from Iowa's electric cooperatives discussed priorities with 100 state legislators Jan. 10 during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception in Des Moines. Other guests of honor included: Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds, Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey, Secretary of State Paul Pate, Iowa Utilities Board Member Nick Wagner and Iowa Department of Economic Development Director Debi Durham.

The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives, the Iowa Communications Alliance and the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Stores of Iowa, hosted the annual reception.

The event provided an opportunity to meet with recently elected and re-elected legislators to discuss issues regarding safe, reliable and affordable energy options for all Iowans. Southwest Iowa REC employee Ginny Eighmy along with directors Dick Ballantyne and Deena Moore met with Senators Mark Costello and Tom Shipley as well as Representatives Joel Fry, Cecil



From left to right: Rep. Joel Fry, Southwest Iowa REC Board Members Dick Ballantyne and Deena Moore, employee Ginny Eighmy, Rep. Cecil Dolecheck and Rep. David Sieck.

Dolecheck, Tom Moore and David Sieck.

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will address a multitude of issues, including energy-related items central to Iowa's rural economy. Beginning with the Welcome Back Legislative Reception, electric cooperative directors, managers and staff will again be important advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues that allows for Iowa's member-owned rural electric cooperatives to continue providing affordable, reliable, safe and environmentally-responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans.

Electric cooperative representatives from all parts of the state will visit Des Moines for REC Day on the Hill March 22, where they will again be able to visit with their legislators.



Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives

2017 Legislative Agenda

Line Personnel Safety

We support legislation focused on the safety of line personnel.

- One Call - We support the need for an increase in the utilization of the One Call system.
- "Move Over" law - We support clarifications to the "Move Over" law, specifically what it means to "slow down."
- Tree trimming authority - We support uniform requirements for utilities and landowners regarding vegetation.

Economic Development Programs

We support state programs that complement federal rural economic development programs.

Geothermal Property Tax Exemption

We support an exemption to increased property tax value from geothermal system installations.

Duane Arnold Energy Center Tax Exemption

We support the exemption of machinery and equipment at Duane Arnold Energy Center from sales and use tax.

Review and Revision of Energy Programs

We support the review and revision of the purpose, oversight and value of the Iowa Energy Center, Center for Global & Regional Environmental Research and energy efficiency programs.

CEO's COMMENTS:

Paying for a System That Works Around the Clock

Your electric cooperative has been around for a long time – 80 years to be exact. We've witnessed the many ways electricity has transformed the communities we serve and our rural landscape. Before electricity, today's household tasks were hard work and dangerous. For example, cooking and washing clothes involved a lot of manual labor. Thankfully, practically everything we do – from entertainment to our jobs – is impacted by the ease of electricity.

A lot has changed since electric cooperatives first turned on the lights for rural Iowa. One thing that hasn't changed is our mission to provide electricity to you.

Because we've been reliably, efficiently and affordably delivering electricity to homes and businesses for decades, some of our member-owners ask why they still need to pay for a system that should have been paid for by now.

The truth is, most – if not all – of the original system was paid for many years ago. The original infrastructure, such as poles and wires, has been replaced. When you have equipment that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, it's no surprise when it needs to be replaced. Imagine if you had a car that was 80 years old and it was driven all day, every day. By now, either the car would not be operating, or every part of the car – from the tires to the engine – would have been replaced many times. The same is true for utility infrastructure. While poles and wires generally have a life span of 30-40 years, some may not last as long due to a variety of conditions. For example, a major ice storm can cause power lines to snap and poles to break regardless of their age.

Paying for an electric cooperative system

can be compared to paying for your home. Over many years or decades, the original tract of land and the physical property are paid in full.

But infrastructure updates such as a new furnace, air conditioner, windows, and roof are required, not to mention updates to appliances, carpeting, flooring, and paint. Consider how inefficient it would be to heat your home with an 80-year-old furnace. Think of the additional money you'd spend each month due to its inefficiency instead of replacing it with a new model.

The same logic applies to your co-op.. Aside from the costs of

hard assets at the co-op, there are also the costs of property taxes, insurance, regular maintenance, and staffing that contribute to our overall system costs.

Eighty years ago, the infrastructure fulfilled the expectations of that time in terms of reliability and affordability. Over the years, many of those needs have changed. What's in place today is an improved distribution system that allows Southwest Iowa REC to meet our members' increasing demands for kilowatt-hours in an efficient manner. Not only has the need for electricity increased, but also our processes now result in reduced outage times. Additionally, we work to extend the life of infrastructure through routine maintenance. Poles are regularly tested for termites, and we trim vegetation throughout our system on cycles to maintain a high level of reliability. To balance reliability with affordability, we upgrade our system when and where it makes sense to do so. We balance financing upgrades and replacements with debt and equity so that we can keep your rates affordable while providing power that you can count on for your home or business.



Phil Kinser



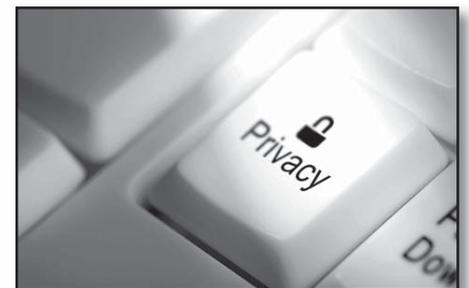
Your Privacy is Important

At Southwest Iowa REC, we recognize that a key element of the member-cooperative relationship is the trust that you place with us to respect the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information. We are committed to providing you with the highest quality of electric service. While personal information about you is fundamental to our ability to do this, your privacy is also very important to us.

Therefore, Southwest Iowa REC will not disclose to non-affiliated third parties any information, including personal financial or consumption histories, without the expressed consent of the member/consumer. The Cooperative does reserve the right to use information for purposes relevant to prudent engineering and design practices and power procurement practices, which are consistent with the industry requirements, and for the betterment of the Cooperative and its membership, as a whole.

We restrict access to non-public personal information for all member-consumers to only those employees or affiliates who need to know specific information to provide products and services to the member/consumer. We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards that, to the best of our abilities, provide prudent and sufficient protection for all non-public personal information.

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Southwest Iowa REC Interconnects Two Large Wind Turbines

In January, Southwest Iowa REC interconnected two commercial size wind turbines located a few miles south of Clearfield for August Wind Energy, LLC and Birch Power, LLC. During December, crews from Southwest Iowa REC installed new and upgraded facilities to make it possible for the interconnection to take place. This work was paid for by August Wind Energy and Birch Power.

Both companies installed General Electric 1.79 megawatt (MW) wind turbines. Each turbine is capable of providing over 7 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity annually, enough to power 647 homes for a full year.

Southwest Iowa REC members will benefit from this addition of clean, renewable generation. Our power supplier, Central Iowa Power Cooperative, will purchase the energy output of the turbines and supply it back to its members, including members of Southwest Iowa REC.

In addition to becoming a clean source of electrical power for our area, benefits also include increased property tax revenue to support local services, landowner lease payments and a return on investment for the owners of the turbines. These two turbines in Taylor County join 11 other privately-owned wind turbines in Adair and Cass counties. For more information on these projects, contact Randy Caviness, Project Manager, at (515) 250-8200.

Privacy...from pg. 2

Information shall not be released to any third party until such time as the member/consumer approves, in writing, such authorization. Forms for the release of information may be obtained from the Cooperative office.

Southwest Iowa REC may collect non-public personal information from the following:

- a. Information we receive from you on applications or forms.
- b. Information regarding payment histories, consumption history, demand history or capacity requirements.

Youth Tour, Scholarship Apps Deadlines March 1

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.

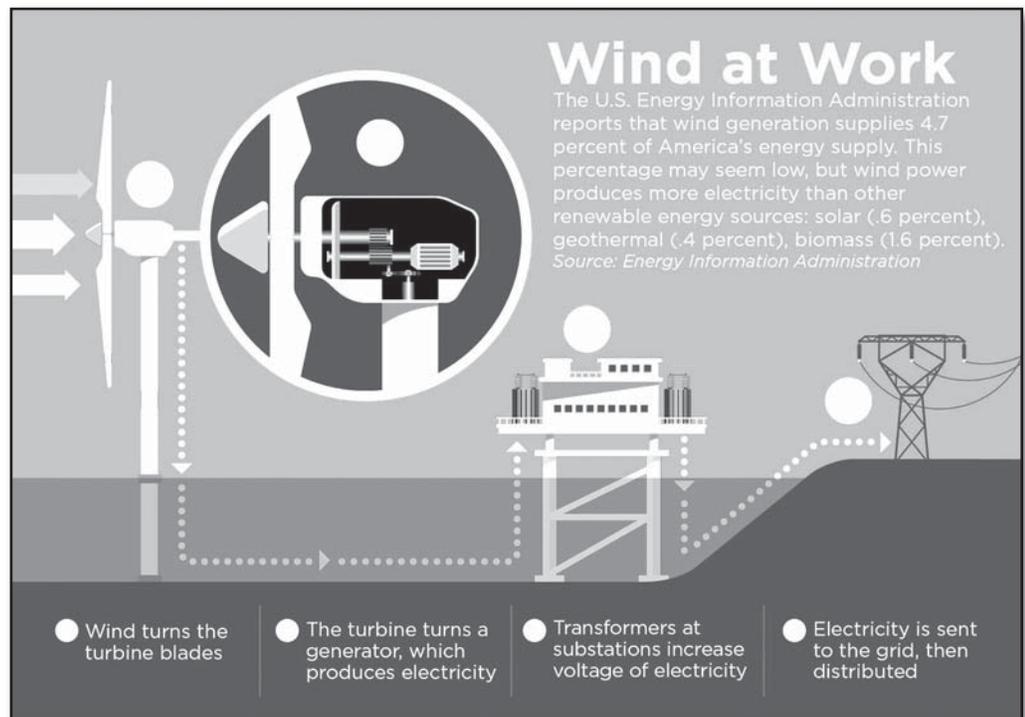
Deadline for receipt of applications is Wednesday, March 1, 2017.



2017 Scholarships

\$500 (12) or \$1,000 (2) Available

Visit www.swiarec.coop to print application. Completed applications and a photo of the applicant must be received at the REC office by March 1 to be eligible.



Why Do Co-ops Advertise?

Southwest Iowa REC's main purpose in advertising is to teach and promote electrical safety and energy efficiency to meet federal and state regulations – and to educate our members and policy-makers about the Cooperative – and what we do for our communities. Here are a few other reasons:

- Like any other business, we use paid advertising to communicate a message to a specific audience.
- Advertising is a communication tool we use to reach our members and the public about issues important to our business, such as energy efficiency tips that save consumers electricity and money.
- We use advertising to educate legislators and regulators about issues that impact the cost of your electric bill, such as climate change legislation.
- As an electric co-op, we commit to sponsoring and supporting programs that enhance the community and provide services to our members. Our revolving loan fund and student scholarship programs are just two examples.
- Advertising helps us develop name recognition with legislators and regulators. It is important for them to know who we are and what we do when we contact them to advocate on behalf of your interests.
- Because Southwest Iowa REC benefits from the combined buying power of up to 30 different electric cooperatives, we get a great return for our advertising dollars.



The RECipe



Sweetheart Strawberry Cheesecake

Ingredients

1 1/4 c. graham cracker crumbs

1/4 c. white sugar

2 tsp. ground cinnamon

1/3 c. butter, melted

2 (10 oz.) packages frozen sweetened sliced strawberries, thawed and drained

1 T. cornstarch

3 (8 oz.) packages cream cheese, softened

1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk

Combine graham cracker crumbs, sugar, cinnamon, and butter in a bowl. Press onto the bottom of an ungreased 9-inch springform pan. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.

Place strawberries and cornstarch into a blender. Cover and puree until smooth. Pour strawberry sauce into a saucepan.

Bring to a boil over high heat. Boil and stir until sauce is thick and shiny, about 2 minutes. Set aside 1/3 cup strawberry sauce; cool. Cover and refrigerate remaining sauce for serving.

Beat cream cheese in a mixing bowl with an electric mixer until light and fluffy; gradually beat in condensed milk. Mix in lemon juice and vanilla extract, then beat in eggs on low speed until just combined. Pour half of cream cheese mixture over crust; drop half of reserved strawberry sauce by 1/2 teaspoonfuls on cream cheese layer. Carefully spoon remaining cream cheese mixture over sauce; drop remaining strawberry sauce by 1/2 teaspoonfuls on top. Cut through top layer only with a knife to swirl strawberry sauce.

Bake in preheated oven until center is almost set, 45 to 50 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight. Serve reserved strawberry sauce with cheesecake. If the sauce is too thick, stir in water.

1/4 c. lemon juice

1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

3 eggs

1 T. water (optional)



Thank you for your support of the 2016 Mount Ayr

Turkey Trot. The Turkey Trot donated \$600 and a truckload of food to the Neighborhood Center.

-Mount Ayr Turkey Trot Committee



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Cleaning your refrigerator's coils can extend the life of your appliance. When coils are clogged, they can't efficiently release heat and that makes your fridge work harder. Regular cleaning is recommended for refrigerators older than six years and can help you avoid costly repairs. Unplug the fridge, remove the vent plate, and vacuum or use a coil brush on them regularly.



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NEW PHONE NUMBER FOR ALL LOCATIONS:
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