

# FARMERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE Open Lines

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2021



The Farmers Electric office will be closed Monday, May 31 in observance of Memorial Day. We wish all our members a safe and healthy holiday weekend!

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Ever wonder why your home's cooling system kicks on when the house already feels cool? It could be what's located near your thermostat that's causing the problem.

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances which can cause your air conditioner to run longer than necessary.



P.O. Box 330  
Greenfield, IA 50849  
FarmersREC.com | (800) 397-4821

### YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES:

## 2021 Scholarship Recipients



Farmers Electric is proud to support our young members and demonstrate our commitment to their futures by offering an annual scholarship. This year, the co-op awarded a total of \$11,000 to 13 local high school seniors. Congratulations to these students!

1. **Grant Caltrider**, West Central Valley. Grant is the son of Jill and Wayne Caltrider of Menlo and plans to attend the University of Iowa.
2. **Jaida Fischer**, Creston. Jaida is the daughter of Tamera and Layne Fischer of Creston and plans to attend Southwestern Community College.
3. **Tatum Grubbs**, Exira-Elk Horn-Kimballton. Tatum is the daughter of Connie and Rodney Grubbs of Casey and plans to attend Wartburg College.
4. **Jennifer Holliday**, Nodaway Valley. Jennifer is the daughter of Jodie and Doug

Holliday of Greenfield and plans to attend Iowa State University.

5. **Megan Kingery**, Earlham. Megan is the daughter of Lynette and Roger Kingery of Earlham and plans to attend Des Moines Area Community College.
6. **Macy Kuhns**, Nodaway Valley. Macy is the daughter of Denise and Matt Kuhns of Greenfield and plans to attend Simpson College.
7. **Ava Lowden**, Winterset. Ava is the daughter of DeAnn and Blaine Lowden of Winterset and plans to attend Simpson College.
8. **Riley McCall**, Nodaway Valley. Riley is the daughter of Diane and Ray McCall of Fontanelle and plans to attend Southwestern Community College.
9. **Zayden Rawlings**, Orient-Macksburg. Zayden is the son of Sieanna Rawlings

*continued on pg. 4*



## DIY With Safety in Mind

**M**ay is Electrical Safety Month, a chance for your cooperative to remind you of the importance of being safe around electricity and the many ways danger can present itself.

For instance, do you have do-it-yourself (DIY) items on your spring chores list? Projects we complete ourselves not only save money, but also give us a sense of pride in ownership of our home spaces.

Large or small, DIY projects have risks. Here are a few tips to keep in mind as you tackle your projects list:

**Select a designated work area** with adequate lighting and ventilation, if necessary. Have all the tools you'll need nearby for easy access.

**PPE is your friend.** Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is generally a low-cost addition to any project that can ensure you avoid harm. Goggles, dust masks, ear plugs, gloves or even the appropriate shoes can spare DIY-ers from injury.

**Work slowly and clean as you go.** Costly

and dangerous mistakes are more likely when you're in a hurry. Take your time and remember that you are in control of the project. Cleaning up as you go – clearing scrap materials and putting away tools that aren't in use anymore – can avoid tripping hazards.

**Be cautious with power tools.** Did you know that 8% of electrocutions in the U.S. are attributed to the improper use of power tools? Follow the manufacturer's safety guidelines for each tool, never use tools near electrical wires or water pipes, and always connect them to power using a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter).

**Keep a first-aid kit handy** in whatever space you're working.

**Stay aware of your surroundings.** Keep children and pets away from the work area when using power tools.

Finally, consider hiring a licensed, qualified electrician for more extensive work beyond your comfort or skill level. Trust your instincts – if it seems too difficult for you, it probably is.

## Utility Bill Assistance for Renters Impacted by COVID-19

**A** new program to assist eligible Iowans who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and need assistance with rent and utility bills is now available.

Funded by the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, the Iowa Rent and Utility Assistance Program is administered by the Iowa Finance Authority.

Eligible renters can receive financial assistance with past due electricity, gas, propane, fuel oil, water, sewer and/or trash removal bills incurred no earlier than March 13, 2020. Utility payments through the program will be made directly to utility providers and applied to the applicants' accounts.

"We know there are co-op members who could benefit from financial assistance because their situation has changed due to the pandemic," said Farmers Electric General Manager Charles Dunn. "This program is one way to help ease that burden. Applicants are welcome to contact our office for assistance if needed."

The program is now accepting applications. Full eligibility details for the Iowa Rent and Utility Assistance Program are available at [www.iowahousingrecovery.com](http://www.iowahousingrecovery.com). The website includes an eligibility precheck and answers to frequently asked questions. You can also call Iowa's Utility Recovery Hotline at (515) 348-8976 or (877) 463-3269 for more information about this program.

If you receive electricity from Farmers Electric and need assistance with documentation for your application, please contact Holi Weston, [hweston@farmersrec.com](mailto:hweston@farmersrec.com) or (800) 391-4821.





## Rhoads Earns BLC

Congratulations to Board Member RoxAnn Rhoads who earned her Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) recently.

RoxAnn has been a board member since 2019 and is serving her first term. The BLC is the second part of the NRECA's director education program and is awarded to those who have successfully completed the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) courses.

The BLC program consists of a series of courses focusing in greater depth on specific industry and governance issues, such as risk management, power supply, parliamentary procedure, technology and policy development. The program offers more than 20 courses and requires a total of 10 credits to earn the designation.

At the very heart of our co-op are the board members who seek education that help them make informed decisions on behalf of all our members.

Roxann is pictured above with Farmers Electric Board President Dan Westphal.

Congratulations, RoxAnn!

# Tree Trimming Improves Service for All

One of the things I love best about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade and a habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife.

Your co-op strives to balance maintaining those beautiful surroundings with ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights of way (ROW).

A right of way is the land the co-op uses to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. Rights of way enable us to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Regardless, Farmers Electric must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

**Safety:** Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to children if they can access those trees and potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

**Reliability:** Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keeps lines clear to promote reliability.

**Affordability:** If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.



**CHARLIE DUNN**  
CEO



## Burning the Way for Butterfly Growth

*The Greenfield Volunteer Fire Department conducted a controlled burn of the butterfly habitat in front of the co-op office March 19. Prescribed burning is a primary tool for habitat restoration and management and, when done in the right conditions, enhances the survival of butterfly larvae at or near the soil surface. Under controlled conditions, this burning is meant to mimic wildfires that are a natural component of many ecosystems and serve as a catalyst for promoting biological diversity and healthy plant communities like nectar plants and milkweed that support butterfly species. Photo courtesy of the Adair County Free Press*

# i ♥ Beef

**B**eef. It's what's for dinner! If you're reading this, you probably agree with that statement, or know someone who does. May is National Beef Month and Farmers Electric supports the hardworking farmers who raise cattle and contribute to Iowa's economy and the beef industry.

Each month, the cooperative places a call for recipes in various categories. Winners receive a \$5 credit on their account, with their recipes appearing in the next month's issue. Plan now to participate by mailing your entry with your bill to: P.O. Box 330, Greenfield, IA 50849; or e-mailing it to: [HWeston@farmersrec.com](mailto:HWeston@farmersrec.com).

**June:** Favorite Summertime Recipes

## Mushroom Beef Patties

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 egg
- 1 3/4 c. milk, divided
- 2 c. crushed cornflakes
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 lbs. ground beef
- 1 can (10 3/4 oz.) cream of mushroom soup, undiluted



*sweetpeaskitchen.com*

In a bowl, combine egg, 1/2 c. milk, cornflakes and onion. Crumble uncooked ground beef over mixture and mix well. Shape into 8 patties. In a large skillet, cook patties over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Transfer patties to a greased 9x13 baking pan. In a bowl, combine remaining milk and soup until blended. Pour over patties. Bake, uncovered, at 350 for 30 minutes or until hot and bubbly.

*Janice Miller, Creston*

**Want a chance to get \$5 off your next electric bill? Enter a recipe in our recipe contest each month!**



## Scholarships...from pg. 1

of Greenfield and plans to attend Northwest Missouri State University.

10. **Josie Sackett**, West Central Valley. Josie is the daughter of Jodi and Dean Sackett of Stuart and plans to attend Northwest Missouri State University.
11. **Lexi Shike**, Nodaway Valley. Lexi is the daughter of Jami and Dave Shike of Greenfield and plans to attend Iowa State University.
12. **Madelyn Williamson**, I-35. Madelyn is the daughter of Nicole and Kenny Williamson of St. Charles and plans to attend Simpson College.
13. **Jena Yonker**, Nodaway Valley. Jena is the daughter of Danielle and Jason Yonker of Stuart and plans to attend Southwestern Community College.



### WHAT TO DO

if you suspect someone has been shocked:

- 1 **PROTECT YOURSELF**  
Do not go near the victim in case stray electricity is present.
- 2 **CALL 9-1-1**  
Let the dispatcher know a power line or other electrical source is involved.
- 3 **DO NOT**  
go near high-voltage wires, a padmount transformer, or other source of electricity.
- 4 **WARN OTHERS**  
to stay away to help keep them safe.
- 5 **TURN OFF**  
the electrical source if possible and safe to do so.
- 6 **ONLY IF**  
the power source is off, follow the 9-1-1 dispatcher's instructions to help the victim.
- 7 **ALWAYS**  
assume a downed power line is live, even if it doesn't buzz or spark.



**Farmers Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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**CEO:**  
Charles Dunn

2389 Highway 92 | P.O. Box 330  
Greenfield, Iowa 50849-0330  
Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
24 hour outside depository  
Ph: (800) 397-4821  
Fax: (641) 343-7187  
[www.farmersrec.com](http://www.farmersrec.com)

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The mission of Farmers Electric Cooperative, Inc., is to deliver safe, reliable, affordable electricity and other services to improve the quality of life within our communities. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.