

living with energy IN IOWA



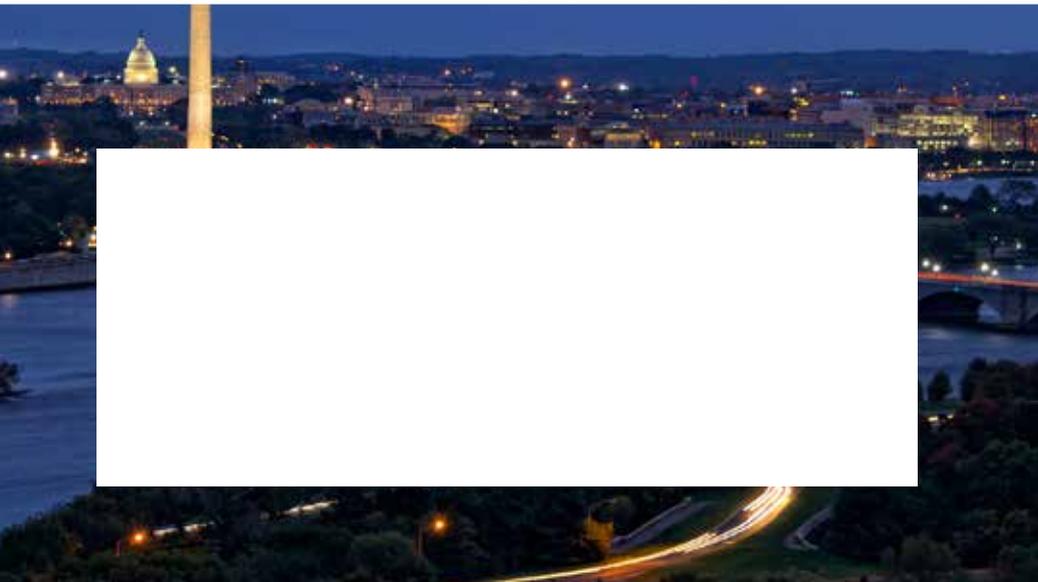
Guthrie County REC

A Traditions Energy Cooperative

FEBRUARY 2016



High school students:
Win
our contest and
a trip
to Washington, D.C.!



Zieser wins Editor's Choice Contest

Joanne Zieser of Guthrie Center won the Editor's Choice Contest in the October 2015 issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine. Zieser stopped by the Guthrie County REC office to pick up her prize: a Wizard Stick for tracking down energy-wasting air leaks.

Watch for more chances to win the Editor's Choice Contest in this and future issues of the magazine! ⚡



Guthrie County REC member service clerk Marlene Chalfant (left) presented the contest prize to Joanne Zieser.



Guthrie County REC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Office

1406 State Street • P.O. Box 7
Guthrie Center, IA 50115-0007

Office Hours

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Telephone Number

641-747-2206 or 888-747-2206
Calls answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Website

www.guthrie-rec.coop

We've completed the first 5 years of our energy efficiency plan

BY COZY NELSEN

Every 5 years, Guthrie County REC is required to set energy efficiency goals, develop programs to achieve those goals and then file our 5-year plan with the Iowa Utilities Board and the Iowa Attorney General's Office of Consumer Advocate. We recently completed our first 5-year plan covering the years 2010-2014 and filed the results through our statewide association.

During those 5 years, Guthrie County REC has invested \$754,584 toward energy efficiency, which will result in savings totaling 68,743,605 kilowatt-hours over the lifetime of those measures installed. We couldn't have done it without participation from our member-owners.

Collectively, Iowa's electric co-ops invested almost \$76.7 million from 2010-2014, and the energy savings are expected to total more than 3.7 billion kilowatt-hours over the life of the measures installed, which represents enough electricity to power more than

347,000 homes for a full year!

If you're wondering why an electric company would offer incentives for their consumers to use less of their product, it's because Guthrie County REC is different from most businesses. We're a not-for-profit electric cooperative owned by those we serve. So, what's in your best interest is in our best interest.



But these energy efficiency programs only work if member-owners like you participate in them! Visit our website, www.guthrie-rec.coop, or call us at 888-747-2206 to check your eligibility. If you've participated in our energy efficiency programs previously, thank you! You've contributed to the cooperative cause by saving energy and money for your home, farm or business. Search through our list of current programs to see if there are more ways to save in the years ahead. ⚡

Cozy Nelsen is the executive vice president and general manager of Guthrie County REC.

Co-op VIP

Masmar receives credentialed designation

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has awarded board director John Masmar the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) designation. The program consists of five courses designed to provide basic knowledge and skills required of cooperative directors. Topics cover director duties and liabilities, understanding the electric utility business, board operations and process, financial decision making and strategic planning. The curriculum provides the important



Guthrie County REC president Don Schwartz (right) presented John Masmar with his CCD certificate.

foundation directors require to effectively oversee the business of their cooperative.

Board president Don Schwartz presented the certificate to Masmar at the October board meeting. ⚡

Operations Update

Maintenance and upgrade projects continue through winter months

BY JIM TERWILLIGER

It's now February, and thankfully we're just edging past being closer to the first day of spring than we are to the first day of winter. But regardless of the time of year or the temperatures, there are always projects for our line crews to complete. Here are a few of the things they've been working on the last few months:

- **Completed replacing eight miles of single-phase line southwest of Guthrie Center.** These lines are what you see bringing electricity to your home.
- **Annual line inspections.** Checking our lines thoroughly every year helps us stay on top of any repairs or replacements that need to be made and ensures reliability is at its best.
- **Tree trimming.** With a service territory the size of Guthrie County REC, managing veg-



etation is a year-round process. Crews are out taking care of bushes, trees or other obstructions that may come into contact with a power line – particularly when it's weighted down with snow or ice.

- **Meter checks.** We always want to make sure our meters are running efficiently and correctly to ensure billing is accurate.
- **Seeking bids for a new substation transformer.** Guthrie County REC will invest in a new transformer for the Yale substation. We anticipate this to occur next fall. Members served by the transformers there won't see any disruption in service. Crews are able to switch over power without disconnecting lines. ⚡

Jim Terwilliger is the line superintendent for Guthrie County REC.

Just for Kids

Apply now for scholarships

High school seniors continuing their education in any field of study or a power line



program are invited to apply for a 2016 scholarship. Guthrie County REC will award three \$1,000 scholarships to individuals enrolled full-time at an accredited college, university or vocational/technical school for the 2016-2017 school year. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or legal immigrants, in a power line program or members of Guthrie County REC.

A 2015 scholarship recipient, Hunter Kuta, now attends Iowa State University. Among his many student activities, Hunter serves as the sustainability coordinator for his residence hall, which means he promotes energy efficient practices in the dorm. He was one of 30 freshmen selected for the ISU President's Leadership Class.

"Thanks to Guthrie County REC, I have been able to successfully begin my college career without the stresses of debt," Hunter said. "Thank you for the gift you have given me, and thank you for your continuing support of Guthrie County high school students!"

Applications must be postmarked on or before **April 8, 2016**. Winners will be posted at the Guthrie County REC offices by Friday, May 6. Due to the volume of applications, only students awarded a scholarship will be notified. ⚡

Editor's Choice Contest

Teach your smoke alarm new tricks!

This month's prize is a Kidde Remotelync that plugs into a wall outlet, listens for your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and sends an alert to your smartphone when you're not home and there's a problem. To enter, go to www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com by Feb. 29, 2016. ⚡



Storm Preparedness

Stay safe and warm in winter weather

Downed power lines due to snow and ice can leave a co-op member without power. If it's extremely cold outside, a power outage may soon become dangerous. While our crews work to restore service for our members, follow these tips:

1. Use a wood burning fireplace, propane space heater or generator to stay warm, making sure to follow all safety precautions.
2. Prepare! Create a survival kit with batteries, blankets, first-aid supplies and anything you would need in the event of an outage.
3. Stay away from downed power lines. Always assume they're energized and dangerous.



"Guthrie County REC is committed to providing our members with the most reliable power possible, stated executive vice president/general manager Cozy Nelsen. "If severe weather strikes, our crews work tirelessly to restore power while maintaining safety."

Careful planning can make the difference when dealing with a power outage. Guthrie County REC works closely with our power supplier, Central Iowa Power Cooperative, to ensure our electricity is delivered in a safe and reliable manner in all seasons. For more winter safety tips, visit the cooperative's website at www.guthrie-rec.coop. ⚡

Guthrie County REC held its 78th Annual Meeting last month

Guthrie County REC held its 78th Annual Meeting Jan. 9 at Lake Panorama Conference Center. Board president Don Schwartz called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m., following a free member luncheon. Don's wife, Carolyn, gave the invocation. The meeting was attended by 73 members and 38 guests.

President Schwartz took a moment to recognize and introduce his fellow Guthrie County REC Board members, as well as former directors Keith Wirt and Sue Jensen, former general manager Frank Mains and special guests Steve Seidl, president of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, and Darrell Stamp, president of Nishnabotna Valley REC.

This year, three cooperative employees received special recognition for employment milestones:

- **Dea Kress**, billing clerk: 5 years
- **Todd Tinken**, journeyman lineman: 5 years
- **Keith Hise**, journeyman lineman: 5 years

In addition, recently retired director Raynold Johnson received a com-

memorative clock in gratitude for his more than 25 years of service to the Board.

In her speech, executive vice president/general manager Cozy Nelsen touched on the challenges and obstacles that were overcome in 2015.

"We are pleased to be one of the leanest and most efficient cooperative crews in the state," Nelsen said. "We are proud to be locally owned and managed, and because of this we can provide the highest quality service to you."

Guthrie County REC Board attorney John Ward, Sullivan & Ward, P.C., presented the following results of the board election:

- **Julia Kiley**: District 1
- **John Masmar** (incumbent): District 2
- **Keith Peterson** (incumbent): District 3

Mary Jane Carothers won the grand prize drawing – a MECO electric cart grill. Other door prizes included a Bissell compact vacuum, Ultra Pro Surge Protector, work light, rechargeable spotlight, Black & Decker 7.2-volt drill and many cash prizes. ⚡



Board president Don Schwartz (right) said a few words to recognize Raynold Johnson's 25 years of service as a cooperative board member. Also pictured is Raynold's wife, Kay.



Guthrie County REC member service clerk Marlene Chalfant (right) presented the Grand Prize – an electric cart grill – to Mary Jane Carothers.



Guthrie County REC Office Manager Lori Hix



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More than 175 directors, managers and staff members from Iowa's electric cooperatives met last month with about 100 state legislators during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception in Des Moines. Discussions focused on these issues of importance to electric cooperatives:

- State programs that complement federal rural economic development programs;
- Legislation encouraging utility-owned solar;
- Line worker safety; and
- Policies supporting a skilled workforce in the state.