

# InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF BUTLER COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

May 2022

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



## Butler County REC holds in-person annual meeting

Saturday, March 26, Butler County REC members, board, and employees were back together for the annual meeting for the first time in two years.

Election tellers, along with corporate attorney Dennis Puckett, opened and counted over 550 mail-in ballots prior to the business meeting. An additional almost 100 ballots from members in attendance were counted during the meeting.

Members of Butler County REC re-elected three incumbent directors: Gary Poppe, Ionia; Steve Boevers, Readlyn; and Allyn Harms, Clarksville.

Approximately 150 people were in attendance for the meeting, where Ken Kuyper, general manager and CEO of Corn Belt Power Cooperative, gave a 2021 year-in-review of Corn Belt, discussing the February load curtailment, system upgrades, and cyber security, among other relevant topics. He concluded, "We'll continue to aim for a better quality of life for those members we serve."

Craig Codner, CEO and general manager of Butler County REC, then discussed the cooperative financials and spoke about our economic development efforts, our employees, safety, cyber

security, and our new metering system to be installed this year. He also announced that member appreciation events will take place later this year.

### Prizes awarded

At the close of the business meeting, \$700 in cash was given away. Grand prize winner of \$100 was Kenneth Debner of Greene.

Additional prize winners were (*below left to right*):

- Steve Mosher, Sumner, LED security light
- Kevin Friedman, Marble Rock, air fryer
- Skillen Family Farms, Greene, LED smart TV

Winners of the \$25 Casey's gift cards for bringing in the registration certificates were Darrel Mixdorf, Tripoli, and Richard Liddle, Plainfield.

### Elected officers

Following the annual meeting, the board of directors held a reorganization meeting and elected the following officers: Duane Rieckenberg, Ionia, president; Gary Poppe, Ionia, vice president; Troy Feldman, Greene, treasurer; Tim Schrage, Allison, secretary; and Share Brandt, Allison, assistant secretary-treasurer.

*Thank you to all who attended!*



Members in line to receive their annual meeting meal.



Tellers counting the mail-in ballots for the director election.



Members discussing energy efficiency with Butler County REC employees.



# Restoring power safely and efficiently

By Abby Berry, NRECA

We do our best to avoid power outages, but there's no way around it: they occasionally happen.

For most Butler County REC members, outages are rare and only last a few hours. But when major storms impact our area, extended outages are unavoidable.

When the power goes out, how do Butler County REC crews know where to start working? How do you know if your outage has been reported? We've got answers to these questions and more, and it all starts with a safe, efficient plan for power restoration.

When it's safe for our crews to begin the restoration process, they start by repairing power lines and equipment that will restore power to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible.

This process typically begins with repairs to the larger main distribution lines that service a greater number of members. Next, crews work on tap lines, which deliver power to transformers. Finally, individual service lines that run between the transformer and the home are repaired.

When widespread outages occur, multiple crews will be out in the field simultaneously working to repair damage at multiple locations. We also coordinate with nearby co-ops to bring in additional crews when necessary.

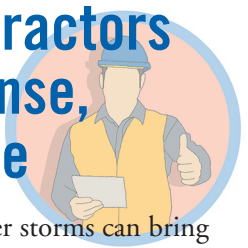
A proactive approach to maintenance helps minimize the chance of prolonged outages; this is why you see our crews periodically trimming trees and clearing vegetation near rights-of-way. We love trees too, but it only takes one overgrown limb to knock out power for an entire area. Trimming improves power reliability for our entire community. In addition, we regularly inspect utility poles, power lines, and other critical equipment to maintain a more reliable system.

If you experience a power outage, it's best to report the outage yourself. Our phones are answered 24/7: 888-267-2726.

Mother Nature can be unpredictable, but as a member of Butler County REC, you can feel confident knowing we're standing by, ready to restore power as safely and quickly as possible.



# Use contractors with license, insurance



Warm weather storms can bring truckloads of eager handymen, roofers, and tree trimmers to your front door.

Contractors who go door-to-door looking for jobs may not be qualified to do the job they offer. Don't take a chance. Ask to see the contractor's license. Also:

- Check with the Better Business Bureau ([www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)) and the state licensing agency to find out if the contractor has any unresolved complaints on file.
- Your contractors should be bonded and insured. Ask to see evidence that they are, and check expiration dates.
- Insist that the contractor obtain building permits for all work that requires them. If they refuse or try to talk you out of it, find someone else. Applying for building permits will trigger an inspection by a local building official to make sure all work has been done according to building codes. The contractor—not you—should take responsibility for obtaining the necessary permits, but you should ask to see them.

Hundreds of thousands of businesses and individuals call themselves home improvement contractors. Make sure the one you hire has all paperwork in order.

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Effective May 22, 1991, the Iowa Utilities Board passed a ruling requiring all non-rate regulated utilities to post the following notice to its memberships: If a member-consumer has a question or concern regarding his/her electric service, please write or call your local electric cooperative at the following address or phone number:

Butler County REC  
521 N. Main Street, PO Box 98  
Allison, IA 50602-0098  
(319) 267-2726  
[www.butlerrec.coop](http://www.butlerrec.coop)

If your complaint is related to your cooperative's service rather than its rates, and your cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board by calling 515-725-7321 or toll-free 1-877-565-4450; by writing to 1375 E. Court Avenue, Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; or by email to [customer@iub.iowa.gov](mailto:customer@iub.iowa.gov).

Our office is closed  
Monday, May 30,  
in observance of  
Memorial Day.

Our phones are  
answered 24/7:  
888-267-2726

# Shining the Light on community volunteers in June

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, Iowa's electric co-ops are excited to bring back our Shine the Light contest in June to celebrate local volunteers. The Shine the Light contest, sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, will accept nominations and select three winners who will each receive a \$2,000 donation to their local charity or nonprofit.

"We were truly inspired by the flood of contest entries we received last summer," remarked Erin Campbell, director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. "We're increasing our three winner donations from \$1,500 to \$2,000 each this year to encourage even more participation across the state."

Member-consumers and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers during the month of June. If you receive electricity from Butler County REC, you're a co-op member-consumer and we encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

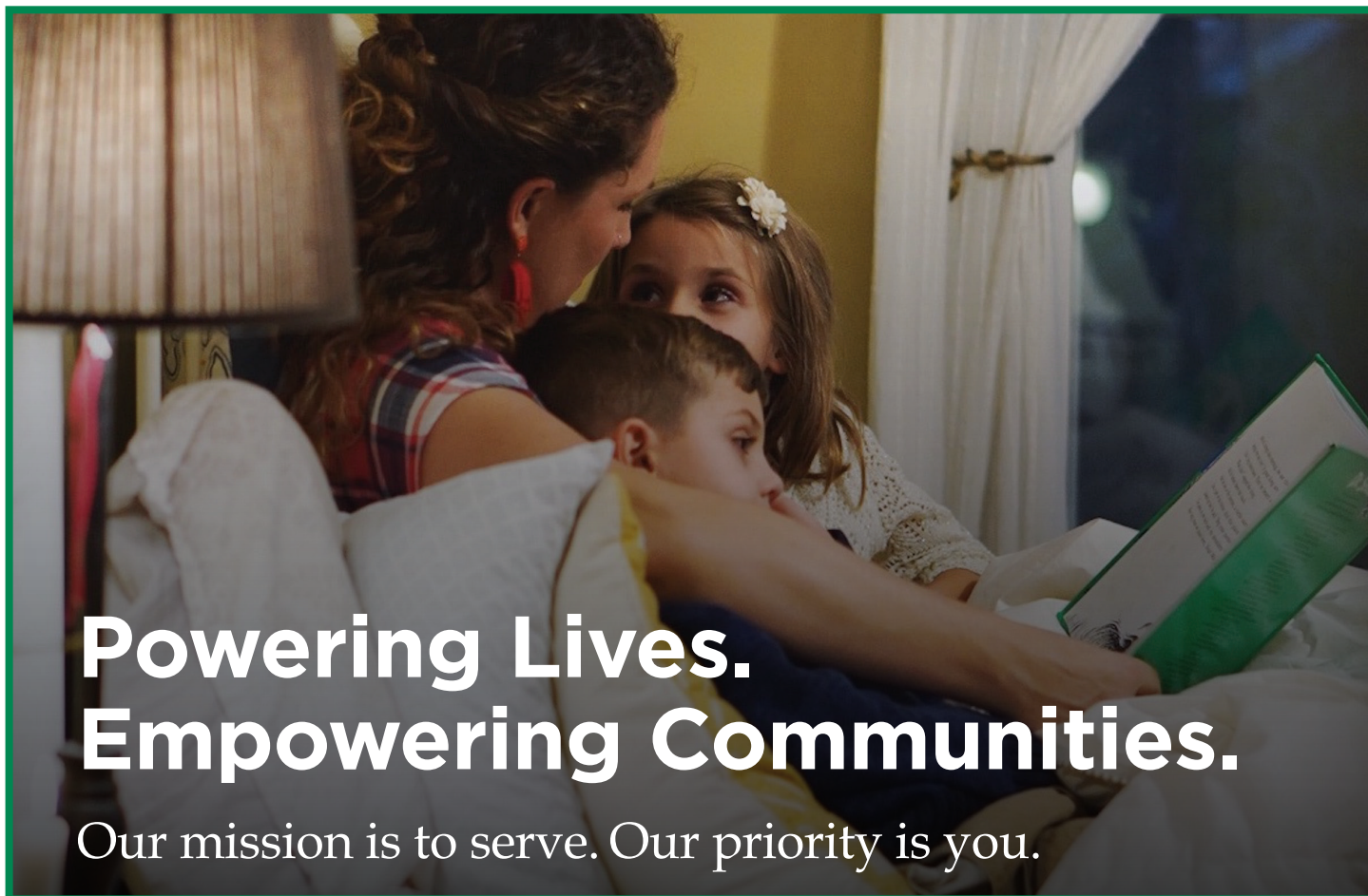
The three winners will be announced in September and featured in Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine.

**Go to [www.IowaShineTheLight.com](http://www.IowaShineTheLight.com) to review the contest rules. Contest entries will be accepted at this website starting on June 1.** Help us shine the light on community volunteers this summer and consider making a nomination.



**Nominate a local volunteer  
and they could win  
\$2,000 for their charity!**

Contest entries accepted during June at  
[IowaShineTheLight.com](http://IowaShineTheLight.com)



**Powering Lives.  
Empowering Communities.**

Our mission is to serve. Our priority is you.

## Youth Tour attendee chosen

Butler County REC is proud to announce that Lily Mayo, a junior from Sumner, will be representing the cooperative at the 2022 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., June 18-24.

Mayo, the daughter of members David and Stephanie, is active in varsity cross country and varsity track at Sumner-Fredericksburg high school. She is also a member of the Get-a Grip organization, participates in a number of church activities, and is the 2022 Bremer County Beef Princess.

On the Youth Tour, Mayo will join students from more than 40 additional electric cooperatives in Iowa and over 1,800 students from across America to explore our nation's capital. The fast-paced informative week gives the students a better understanding of the role electric cooperatives play in our country.



Lily Mayo



Your 2022 board officers (left to right): Duane Rieckenberg, president; Gary Poppe, vice president; Share Brandt, assistant secretary-treasurer; Tim Schrage, secretary; Troy Feldman, treasurer.



Your Butler County REC board of directors and employees thank our 65 members who contributed to RECare this past heating season. Your generosity helped almost 20 neighbors pay their electric bill.

RECare is our program of members helping members. Funds are distributed by local community action agencies to help pay heating bills and to assist in the weatherization of homes of low-income consumers.

Contact us at 888-267-2726 or visit our website, [butlerrec.coop](http://butlerrec.coop), if you would like to contribute.



## Building a home?

At Butler County REC, we are your trusted source—here to help you make informed decisions about the types of heating systems, cooling systems, and more that are best for you and your family.

Also, we offer rebates for appliances; heating and cooling, including geothermal and air source heat pumps; and electric water heaters. If your home is all-electric, we have a Touchstone Energy home rebate of up to \$1,000. A discounted electric heat rate for qualifying members is also available.

As you begin to make your decisions, contact our Energy Efficiency Department at 888-267-2726 to learn how we can help.

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