

heartland LINK



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

MAY/JUNE 2026

a publication of
East-Central Iowa Rural
Electric Cooperative

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CALENDAR NOTES

May 25
Closed for Memorial Day

June 30
Annual Meeting of the Members



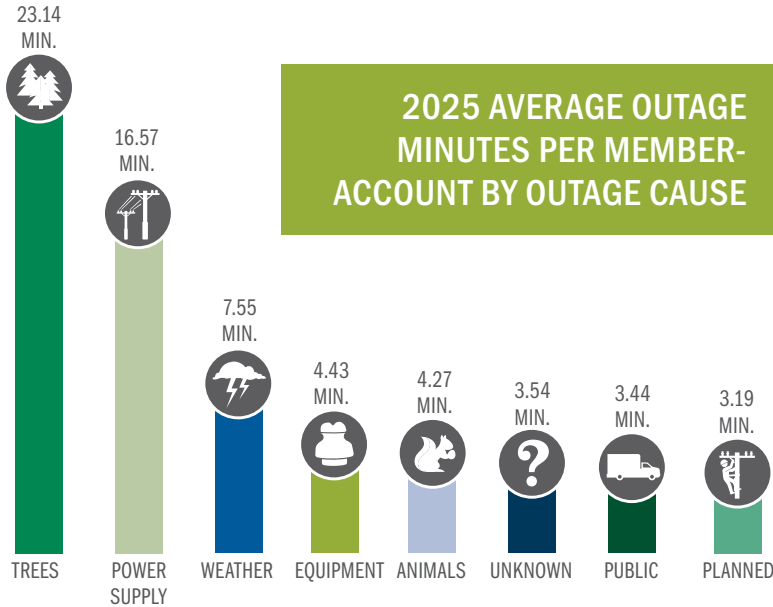
YOUR COOPERATIVE IN ACTION: 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW & ANNUAL MEETING



Cover photo credits: ECIREC library

ANNUAL REPORT ON PAGES 2-8

BOARD PRESIDENT & CEO MESSAGE

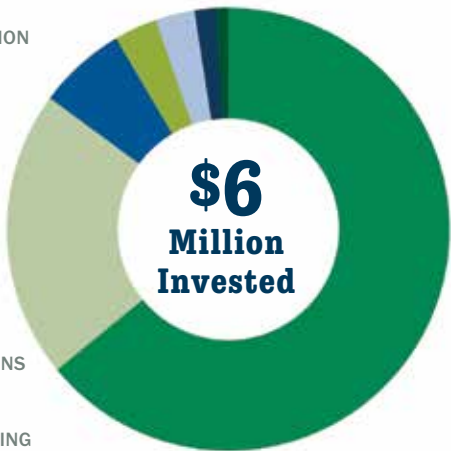


2025 AVERAGE OUTAGE MINUTES PER MEMBER-ACCOUNT BY OUTAGE CAUSE



ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

- INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS **\$3,855,387**
- MAINTENANCE OF DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM **\$1,264,481**
- VEGETATION MANAGEMENT (TREE TRIMMING) **\$387,990**
- MAINTENANCE OF METERS & TRANSFORMERS **\$189,477**
- OPERATIONS TECHNOLOGY **\$172,433**
- MAINTENANCE OF SUBSTATIONS **\$92,670**
- POLE & UNDERGROUND TESTING **\$54,753**



Our Year in Review

As we reflect on 2025, we see how your Cooperative continued to make meaningful investments to ensure the safe, reliable delivery of electricity to every member we serve. Guided by a strong strategic vision from your Board of Directors and powered by the dedication of our employees, we remain focused on delivering exceptional service while protecting the long-term financial health of ECI REC.

Every accomplishment begins with a solid foundation in the boardroom. Your Board’s priorities—safety, infrastructure investment, technology advancement, employee development, and financial stewardship—shape the decisions we make each day. At the same time, the Board closely monitor legislative and regulatory developments that may impact your Cooperative and our members.

In 2025, we invested more than \$6 million in system infrastructure improvements and ongoing operations and maintenance. These investments are critical to keeping your lights on and your power reliable. While July storms contributed to an increase in outage time compared to 2024, the average annual outage minutes within our control remained at 42.9 minutes per member—a testament to the strength and responsiveness of our system.

Safety remains our top priority. In November, we proudly

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE

CONNECT WITH ECI REC

Emails
memberservices@ecirec.coop
 (rebates)
csr@ecirec.coop
 (billing, new customers)

Address
 2400 Bing Miller Lane
 PO Box 248
 Urbana, IA
 52345-0248

Phone
 319-443-4343
Toll Free
 877-850-4343
Fax
 319-443-4359

Hours
 Monday–Friday
 Office: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
 (closed Saturdays,
 Sundays, and holidays)

Website
ecirec.coop
Facebook
facebook.com/eastcentraliowarec
 (operations news and general updates)

CO-OP OPERATIONS IN ACTION

celebrated 500,000 hours without a lost-time accident, a significant milestone that reflects our culture of accountability and care. In addition, we invested substantial time in employee education and professional development to ensure our team remains highly trained and prepared to serve you.

Looking ahead, your Board approved a comprehensive four-year Work Plan that's designed to continue strengthening our infrastructure and maintain the level of reliability you expect and deserve. Importantly, these significant investments in 2025—and the continued investments planned for 2026—were made without increasing base electric rates, demonstrating our commitment to balancing reliability with responsible financial management.

Your Cooperative exists to serve you. Every decision, every investment, and every improvement is made with our members in mind. Thank you for the opportunity to serve your homes, farms, and businesses.

OPERATING STATISTICS	2025	2024
Members	7,329	7,264
Total Services Connected	9,261	9,224
Distribution Miles Energized	2,298	2,301
Average Services per Mile	4	4
kWh Sold	225,351,809	214,470,350
Wholesale Power Cost per kWh Sold	\$0.0639	\$0.0628
Average Revenue per kWh Sold	\$0.1196	\$0.1146
Average Patronage Dividend Payment	\$72.81	\$70.74
Full-Time Employees	31	33
Outage Minutes Total	66.1	37.4

INFRASTRUCTURE, METERS, & MEMBERS

Empowering Energy Savings for Members

\$108,380
in your pockets through



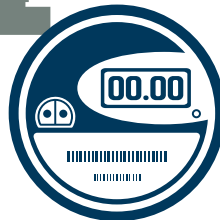
190
energy efficiency rebates

2,298
miles of overhead and
underground line maintained

4,500+
pole inspections in 2025

46,000
poles in our system

101 interconnected
member-owned
onsite generation facilities



11,475
AMI meters at work serving

7,329
memberships

9,261
member accounts

ECI REC owns and maintains
24 substations



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

2025 Financial Overview

Operating Revenue

Operating revenues increased by **\$1.2 million** over 2024, totaling **nearly \$27 million**—all from the sale of electricity and related services.

Net Margins

The Cooperative finished the year with **\$2.8 million** in net margins. As a not-for-profit utility, these margins are allocated to patronage capital, reserves for losses, and surplus in accordance with Iowa law.

System Investment

We invested **\$4.6 million** in utility plants, including:

- ✓ 28.2 miles of distribution line
- ✓ Replacement of more than 800 poles
- ✓ \$700,000 in fleet upgrades

These projects were funded with **\$4 million in long-term borrowing**, with the remaining balance funded through rates.

Capital Credits Returned

In May 2025, the Board approved the retirement of **\$601,038** in patronage dividends (100% of 2010 margins and 8.4% of 2016 margins).

Independent Audit

An independent audit by CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, confirmed the financial statements conform to generally accepted accounting principles, with no issues identified.



Over the past **10 years**, we've returned

\$5,443,390 to members.

Statement of Revenue & Expense

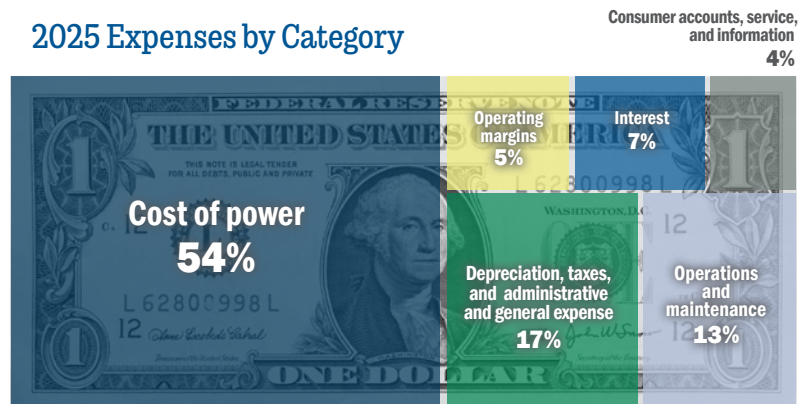
REVENUE.....	2025	2024
Operating Revenue & Patronage Capital.....	\$26,973,559	\$25,734,523
EXPENSE		
Purchased Power	\$14,421,488	\$13,495,724
Distribution Expenses - Operations & Maintenance...	\$3,496,290	\$3,352,530
Customer Accounts & Informational Expense	\$1,055,886	\$1,036,511
Administrative & General Expense	\$1,771,342	\$1,611,213
Depreciation.....	\$2,920,981	\$2,840,973
Interest on Long-Term Debt.....	\$1,924,296	\$1,753,604
Other Deductions & Interest Expense.....	\$13,873	\$60,819
Total Expense	\$25,604,156	\$24,151,374
Operating Margins	\$1,369,403	\$1,583,149
Non-Operating Margins.....	\$215,407	\$121,744
Generation & Transmission Capital Credits	\$1,096,348	\$1,125,007
Other Capital Credits & Patronage Dividends.....	\$189,963	\$255,082
Total Operating & Non-Operating Margins.....	\$2,871,121	\$3,084,982

Balance Sheet

ASSETS.....	2025	2024
Current Assets & Other Debits	\$19,546,904	\$16,974,520
Fixed Assets (Net Utility Plant)	\$76,716,221	\$74,719,608
Total Assets & Other Debits	\$96,263,125	\$91,694,128
LIABILITIES		
Total Current & Accrued Liabilities.....	\$4,751,317	\$4,487,836
Total Fixed Long-Term Debt & Deferred Credits.....	\$44,766,493	\$42,656,862
Total Margins & Equities	\$46,745,315	\$44,549,431
Total Liabilities & Other Credits.....	\$96,263,125	\$91,694,128

COOPERATIVE DOLLARS AT WORK FOR YOU

2025 Expenses by Category



\$5.95

The average our residential members spend per day on electricity.

ECI REC IS AMONG IOWA'S LOWEST RATES

for cooperative residential electricity.


COMMUNITY INVESTMENT IN ACTION

Members Help Members Through RECare Program

With support from members like you, our RECare program distributes funds to low-income energy consumers in Benton and Buchanan Counties. Donations help pay these members' heating bills or the cost of winterizing their homes.

In 2025, 53 members donated \$6,252 to RECare. Some donated in one payment, while others had the Cooperative add a few dollars to their electric bills each month. No matter the size or frequency of the donation, it made a difference! We are proud so many of our members are digging into their pockets to help others.

RECare funds are distributed to qualifying members through community action agencies. Donations from our northern service area are administered by Operation Threshold, while donations from our southern service area are administered by the Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP).

To sign up for RECare or make a one-time donation, call 877-850-4343 or fill out and return the form included here or scan the code to find the form on our website. 



Scan to fill out form online.

YES, I want to contribute to RECare.

- I will make a one-time contribution to RECare.
- I will contribute \$ _____ per month to RECare. (I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.)
- My check is enclosed. (Make payable to ECI REC.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Account Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Mail form to:
ECI REC | Billing | PO Box 248 | Urbana, IA 52345-0248

COMMUNITY DONATIONS BREAKDOWN

\$43,770 donated to **37 causes**

\$12,000

(via \$1,000 scholarships) to 12 graduating seniors

\$10,950

to local/county economic development

\$6,500

to health organizations/ food pantries

\$5,269

to Youth Tour

\$4,731

to community organizations

\$4,320

to youth functions



Nominate a local volunteer and they could win \$3,000 for their charity!

Contest entries accepted in June at IowaShineTheLight.com.



Photo credit: Courtesy photo

Photo credits: ECI REC photo library

YOUR BOARD AT WORK

Board Experience and Credentials

Steve Rau, Board President,
21 years of service

Certified Cooperative Director
Board Leadership Certificate
Director Gold Credential

Jeff Elliott, Vice President,
36 years of service

Certified Cooperative Director
Board Leadership Certificate
Director Gold Credential

Julie Kester, Secretary/Treasurer,
7 years of service

Certified Cooperative Director
Board Leadership Certificate

Pete Burmeister, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,
2 years of service

Gary Cook, Director,
2 years of service

Nick Donlea, Director,
8 years of service

Gary McKenna, Director,
10 years of service

ECI REC Representative on CIPCO
Board of Directors
Certified Cooperative Director
Board Leadership Certificate
Director Gold Credential

Brian McNulty, Director,
5 years of service

5

Steve Rau,
President
Director since 2005
Board District 5



Ilyria (17)
Fayette County

Fremont (24) Fayette County | Harlan (25) Fayette County | Smithfield (26) Fayette County | Fairfield (27) Fayette County | Sperry (28) Clayton County

5

8

Nick Donlea
Director since 2018
Board District 8



Franklin (33) Bremer County | Oran (34) Fayette County | Jefferson (35) Fayette County | Scott (36) Fayette County | Putnam (37) Fayette County | Cass (38) Clayton County

Lester (43) Black Hawk County | Fairbank (44) Buchanan County | Hazleton (45) Buchanan County | Buffalo (46) Buchanan County | Madison (47) Buchanan County | Richland (48) Delaware County

Barclay (53) Black Hawk County | Perry (54) Buchanan County | Washington (55) Buchanan County | Byron (56) Buchanan County | Fremont (57) Buchanan County | Coffins Grove (58) Delaware County

7

Gary Cook,
Director since 2024
Board District 7



1

Jeff Elliott,
Vice President
Director since 1990
Board District 1



Poyner (62) Black Hawk County | Fox (63) Black Hawk County | Westburg (64) Buchanan County | Sumner (65) Buchanan County | Liberty (66) Buchanan County | Middlefield (67) Buchanan County | Prairie (68) Delaware County

Big Creek (72) Black Hawk County | Spring Creek (73) Black Hawk County | Jefferson (74) Buchanan County | Homer (75) Buchanan County | Cono (76) Buchanan County | Newton (77) Buchanan County | Adams (78) Delaware County

6

Pete Burmeister,
Asst. Secretary/
Treasurer
Director since 2024
Board District 6



Geneseo (133) Tama County | Bruce (134) Benton County | Cedar (135) Benton County | Harrison (136) Benton County | Polk (137) Benton County | Grant (138) Linn County

Clark (143) Tama County | Monroe (144) Benton County | Jackson (145) Benton County | Taylor (146) Benton County | Benton (147) Benton County | Washington (148) Linn County

Oneida (153) Tama County | Homer (154) Benton County | Big Grove (155) Benton County | Eden (156) Benton County | Canton (157) Benton County | Fayette (158) Linn County

York (163) Tama County | Kane (164) Benton County | Union (165) Benton County | Eldorado (166) Benton County | Fremont (167) Benton County | Clinton (168) Linn County

Iowa (174) Benton County | Leroy (175) Benton County | St. Clair (176) Benton County | Florence (177) Benton County | Fairfax (178) Linn County

Marengo (185) Iowa County | Washington (186) Iowa County | Lenox (187) Iowa County | Monroe (188) Johnson County

2

Julie Kester,
Secretary/Treasurer
Director since 2019
Board District 2



4

Gary McKenna
Director since 2016
Board District 4



3

Brian McNulty
Director since 2021
Board District 3



2025 BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Conducted strategic planning

Spent 294 hours in training

Approved Work Plan

Reviewed 26 policies

Engaged with legislators

Provided financial oversight



ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

Meet the Candidates

DISTRICT 1



Jeff Elliott is a longtime farmer in Benton and Black Hawk Counties. He has served on the ECI REC Board of Directors since 1990, bringing decades of cooperative leadership experience and advanced director training credentials.



Matt Werner is a crop farmer near Mount Auburn and a longtime cooperative member who brings experience in agriculture, finance, and community leadership through his service on local boards and organizations.

DISTRICT 5



Steve Rau is a Fayette County farmer who has served on the ECI REC Board of Directors since 2005, bringing years of cooperative leadership and governance training to the role. He is currently serving as Board President.



Janice Martins is a full-time farmer from rural Fairbank with a background in mental health services and strong community involvement through local organizations, emergency services, and agricultural groups.

Full candidate biographies are available in the election mailing and at ecirec.coop.

Voting & Attending the Meeting

How Do I Attend?

Visit ecirec.coop and look for the yellow button at the top of the home page, which will take you to the Annual Meeting of the Members page. Look for the green JOIN NOW button. The virtual meeting room will open at 10:30 a.m.

How Do I Vote?

On **June 1**, ballots will be mailed and online voting will open. There are three ways to vote (see below). All votes—online and mail-in—MUST be received by **June 26**.

- 1 MAIL** - A ballot will be mailed to every member with a self-addressed and stamped return envelope.*
- OR
- 2 SMART HUB** - Log in to SmartHub at ecirec.smarthub.coop and click VOTE NOW. Please note: SmartHub voting must be done in a web browser, not the SmartHub mobile app.
- OR
- 3 ONLINE** - Click the VOTE NOW button located on the home page at ecirec.coop. Enter your voter number and election passcode, which will be listed at the bottom of your mailed ballot. Follow online voting instructions.

*ECI REC partnered with Survey & Ballot Systems to administer the 2026 Annual Meeting mailing and ballot validation processes. They will tabulate all the ballots, both paper and online.

Are There Prizes?

Of course! Twelve \$50 bill credits will be given to randomly selected members who vote. Two \$100 bill credits will be given away as grand prizes, with one winner randomly drawn from the members who attend the Annual Meeting and the other drawn from the members who vote.

SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2026

10:30 a.m. – Meeting registration

11:00 a.m. – Business meeting begins

Zoom information can be found at ecirec.coop.

AGENDA

Call to Order

Invocation

Introduction of Directors
Steve Rau, President

Reading of Affidavit of Mailing of Notice of Annual Meeting
Julie Kester, Secretary/Treasurer

Approval of Agenda
Julie Kester, Secretary/Treasurer

Minutes of Last Annual Meeting
Julie Kester, Secretary/Treasurer

Introduction of Attorney
Steve Rau, President

Reading of the Nominating Committee Minutes and Election Results
Amanda James, Attorney

Adjournment of Business Meeting

THE PEOPLE WHO POWER YOUR COOPERATIVE

Electricity Experts, at Your Service!

East-Central Iowa REC's 31 employees have been on the job for a combined 519 years—experience that helps ensure the delivery of safe, reliable power for our communities.

Some employees have served members for more than three decades, while others are just beginning their careers. Together, they form a team committed to our Cooperative's future. ♻️

WE ARE

31 employees with **519** combined years of service

serving members across **11** counties.



URBANA HEADQUARTERS

Photo credit: Teresa Floyd

Front row (left to right): Nathan Groom, Tom Schmitt, Robert Derifield, Adam Albertsen, Scott McLaughlin. Back row (left to right): Tanya Ellis, Robin Moore, Katie Stadheim, Molly Cook, Jennifer Schmitz, Holly Cashman, Aliza Mollenhauer, Pat Hyland.



VINTON OPERATIONS

Photo credit: Katie Stadheim

Left to right: Scott Rast, Bryce Burroughs, Kevin Walton, Braxton Clubb, Dane Peterson, Trent Koopmann, Josh Cox, Brooks Erickson, Doug Appelgate

Left to right, below: Travis Schellhorn, Colton Wolfe, Brian Reidy, Andrew McGuire, Jared Grover, Ben Donnelly, Colton Dietrick, Mike Adams



INDEPENDENCE OPERATIONS

Photo credit: Katie Stadheim

We're Committed to Supporting Our Youth

a Community Connected feature

Supporting local students is one of the many ways your Cooperative invests in the future of the communities we serve. Each of these deserving students will receive a \$1,000 scholarship from East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative.

2026 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



DALEY DONLEA
Jesup High School
Parents: Jeremy and Stephanie Donlea
University of Northern Iowa, Business



MACY KELCHEN
East Buchanan High School
Parents: Brian and Erin Kelchen
Hawkeye Community College, Accounting



ALEXIS SATTGAST
East Buchanan High School
Parents: David and Kyla Sattgast
University of Iowa, Counseling and Behavior Health Services



BRANDON FRUSH
Union High School
Parents: Travis and Lisa Frush
Iowa State University, Agricultural Business



GRACYN KINGSBURY
Vinton-Shellsburg High School
Parents: Matt and Heather Kingsbury
Iowa State University, Healthcare Management



AVA SHANNON
East Buchanan High School
Parents: Brent and Marcia Shannon
Wartburg College, Psychology and Pre-Occupational Therapy



LAUREN FRUSH
Union High School
Parents: Travis and Lisa Frush
University of Iowa, Nursing



ABIGAIL MICHAEL
North Linn High School
Parents: Mathew and Jody Michael
University of Iowa, Radiation Sciences



DELANEY TONEFF
Dunkerton High School
Parent: Jennifer Toneff
Iowa State University, Integrated Health Science



ADELYN JONES
Center Point-Urbana High School
Parents: Brian and Angela Jones
University of Northwestern St. Paul, Nursing



HARLEY NARVESON
Center Point-Urbana High School
Parents: AJ and Katie Narveson
Northeast Iowa Community College, John Deere Technician



HANNAH WALVATNE
Center Point-Urbana High School
Parents: Galen Walvatne and Sharla Wall
University of Northern Iowa, Communication Sciences and Disorders

2026 YOUTH TOUR REPRESENTATIVES

Each year, East-Central Iowa REC sponsors local students to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. This unique experience gives students the opportunity to learn about government, leadership, and the cooperative difference while connecting with peers from across the country.

This year, we're proud to be represented by twins Nora and Jenna Grovert of Vinton-Shellsburg High School.



Nora is actively involved in school and community activities, including archery, soccer, FFA, 4-H, and her church youth group. She is especially interested in how legislation impacts rural energy and is eager to better understand how electricity is supplied and managed across the country.



Jenna is also highly involved in her school and community, participating in archery, soccer, FFA, 4-H, and dance. She is passionate about learning how electric cooperatives serve rural communities and is interested in exploring solutions to meet the growing demand for affordable energy in the future.

Together, Nora and Jenna are looking forward to traveling to Washington, D.C., experiencing the nation's capital, and learning more about leadership, public service, and the future of energy.


The 2026 Youth Tour will take place in June. We look forward to sharing more about their experience in a future issue of the *Heartland Link*. 



Photo credit: Kaitie Stahheim

Meet Our Team

a Keeping the Lights On spotlight

Adam Albertsen, Manager of Member Service

What do you enjoy about your job at ECI REC?

My connection to the Cooperative goes back generations—my great-grandfather was the third member of Benton County REC. I enjoy the variety of tasks that are required in my position and sharing the knowledge and experience I've learned over the years to help our members solve problems and make smart energy-related decisions. I also enjoy working with our employees. We have a great group of people here at ECI REC.

What's something members might not realize about your role or the work you do?

Our employees devote a lot of time, thought, and effort to making smart decisions that will best serve our membership. The work we do is for our members, and we truly care about them.

How does your role help support safe, reliable power for our members?

Safety and reliability are top priorities at ECI REC, and my position plays a proactive role in identifying potential issues within our system before they become bigger problems. This allows me to communicate and collaborate with fellow employees and members to ensure the delivery of safe, reliable power.

What has changed the most at the Cooperative during your time here?

The advancement in technology and equipment. I think back to when I first started working here and the way things used to be accomplished and compare it to how those same things are accomplished now. It's incredible how technology has changed the way we do business and interact with our members. Modern technology allows us to better meet our members' needs in a safer and more efficient manner. 🔄

Thank You for Your Years of Service!

May Anniversaries



TOM SCHMITT
Operations Manager
35 years



PAT HYLAND
System Controller
36 years



COLTON DIETRICK
Lineworker
8 years



ADAM ALBERTSEN
Member Service
Manager
26 years



BRAXTON CLUBB
Lineworker
9 years

June Anniversaries




SCOTT RAST
Inventory/Maintenance
Technician
15 years

A Taste of Tradition

Thank you for sharing your BBQ and picnic recipes!

a Community Connected feature

THIS SPRING, WE ASKED YOU to submit your favorite BBQ and picnic recipes, and you delivered! From longtime family favorites to go-to summer dishes, we enjoyed reading the stories and traditions behind each recipe. Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit a recipe. Each one reflected the care, creativity, and community spirit that make gathering with friends and family so special.

We are pleased to highlight the following BBQ and picnic recipe submissions in this issue of the *Heartland Link*. As a thank you for sharing their recipes, these members have received a **\$25 bill credit**. 

••••• *BBQ & Picnic Favorites* •••••

Smoked Pickle Poppers

Submitted by Beth Geater, Vinton

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8 whole dill pickles | ½ tsp. black pepper |
| 8 oz. cream cheese, softened | 12-16 slices of bacon, |
| 1 cup shredded cheddar | depending on pickle size |
| cheese | BBQ rub, your favorite |
| 1 tsp. garlic powder | BBQ sauce, optional for |
| 1 tsp. onion powder | glazing |

Preheat your smoker to 350°F.

Slice each pickle in half lengthwise and scoop out a small portion of the center to create space for the filling.

In a bowl, mix together the cream cheese, shredded cheddar, garlic powder, onion powder, and black pepper until smooth.

Fill each pickle half with the cheese mixture, pressing it in so it's well-packed.

Wrap each stuffed pickle with a slice of bacon, securing it tightly around the filling.

Season lightly with your favorite BBQ rub.

Place the pickle poppers on the smoker and cook for 35–40 minutes, or until the bacon is fully rendered and slightly crispy. Cooker times will vary, sometimes widely. Check them at 25 minutes and go from there.

Brush with BBQ sauce during the last 10 minutes for a sticky glaze (optional).

Remove from the smoker and let rest for 5–10 minutes before serving.

Classic Sloppy Joes

Submitted by Jared Vaske, Urbana

- 2 lbs. ground beef
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 1 small onion, diced

FOR SAUCE:

- 2 cups ketchup
- 3 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 3 Tbsp. yellow mustard
- 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 Tbsp. pepper
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder

Brown beef with pepper and onion, then drain. Add sauce ingredients and simmer on low for 30 minutes.

Crock Pot Mac & Cheese

Submitted by Jared Vaske, Urbana

- 2 cups uncooked elbow noodles
- 4 Tbsp. butter
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 can cheddar cheese soup
- 3 cups shredded cheese
- 1½ cups milk
- ½ tsp. mustard powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper

Boil macaroni for 6 minutes, then drain. Melt butter and cheese on low heat. Combine all ingredients in slow cooker. Cook on low for 2.5 hours (or high for 1–1.5 hours), stirring occasionally.



What's Next? Garden-Fresh Recipes!

Do you have a favorite recipe featuring garden-fresh produce?

Whether it's a salad, side dish, something straight from the garden, or a favorite canning recipe, we'd love to share it in an upcoming issue of the *Heartland Link*.

Submit your recipe to ecirec@ecirec.coop by June 1.

Be sure to include your name, service address, and a short note about why the recipe is special to you!

If your recipe is selected for publication, you'll receive a \$25 bill credit as our thanks. We can't wait to see how you showcase what's growing in your gardens this summer!

Heartland Link (USPS No. 313-160) is published bimonthly by East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative, 2400 Bing Miller Ln., Urbana, IA 52345-0248 with outposts located at 1707 First St. E., Independence, IA 50644 and 1600 West D. St., Vinton, IA 52349. Periodicals class postage paid at Cedar Rapids, IA, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Heartland Link, 2400 Bing Miller Lane, PO Box 248, Urbana, IA 52345.

Phone: 319-443-4343

Ownership: East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

Publisher: Teresa Floyd / Editor: Katie Stadheim

East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

CLIP AND MAIL

See below for Member Challenge questions.

Answers: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Account No. _____ We cannot accept answers by phone.

PERIODICALS

FIND TOOLS FOR MEMBERS AT ECIREC.COOP



24-Hour Bill Pay With SmartHub

See account information at ecirec.smarthub.coop or download the app.



Outage Center & Map

View current outages on our website or in the SmartHub app.



Online Forms

Access rebate, service request, and program sign-up forms.



Call Before You Dig

Notify utilities before you dig at www.iowaonecall.com or call 811.



Co-op Connections®

Get discounts on everyday expenses. Visit www.connections.coop or download the mobile app.



Heartland Link E-Newsletter

Email ecirec@ecirec.coop and ask to receive our newsletter via email.



Iowa Rural Power

Join grassroots advocates for Iowa's electric cooperatives. Visit www.iaruralpower.org.

take the member challenge

1. ANNUAL MEETING INFO: Visit ecirec.coop and look for the _____ button at the top of the home page, which will take you to the Annual Meeting of the Members page.

2. COMMUNITY CONNECTED: Each year, East-Central Iowa REC sponsors local students to attend the Electric Cooperative _____ in Washington, D.C.

3. KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON: Safety and reliability are top priorities at ECI REC, and my position plays a _____ role in identifying potential issues within our system before they become bigger problems.

Find the answers within the stories, features, and content of this newsletter and you could win a prize. Send your answers to ecirec@ecirec.coop. Or, print the word(s) at the top of the page, cut it out, and send it to: ECI REC, PO Box 248, Urbana, IA 52345. You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember there is a deadline! Entries for this issue must be received by June 1. Ten names will be drawn from all correct entries.

last issue's challenge winners

The following names were drawn from the March/April 2026 *Heartland Link* entries. These members will receive a \$10 credit on their account.

Russell Hebert

Mike A. Stafford

Thomas J. Doyle

James D. Hoffman, Jr.

Charles R. Weber

Thomas G. Wiese

Grant L. Miller

Joel Greenley

Ty H. Vandehaar

Billie Jo Tonn