

DECEMBER 2023

iowa

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

**Students: Apply for the
2024 Youth Tour**

**Iowa businesses honored
with Venture Awards**

Holiday dinner recipes

Details announced for Momentum is Building Conference ▶ See Page 12



IT'S A BOY!

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative First Class Lineman Matt Schwarzkopf, his wife Bailey and son Reed welcomed Noah Gene Schwarzkopf to their family in October.

Congratulations!

YOUR PATRONAGE, YOUR WAY

BY JIM GOSSETT



Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) staff work diligently to find ways to make our work more efficient while providing additional services and information for our member-owners.

Over the years, the co-op has opted to return your patronage dividend as a check, which gives members control over how to spend the money. Alternatively, receiving your patronage as a bill credit directs your dividend to offset a power bill in the month the credit is issued.

To continue serving our member-owners, we have made a recent software update that now allows RVEC to provide members with the option of taking patronage dividends in either a check or in a bill credit. All member-owners can expect to receive a letter from RVEC in the coming weeks giving them the option of taking future patronage retirement dividends

as a bill credit. Receiving a check will remain an option.

Upcoming patronage check

In September, the RVEC board of directors voted to retire a portion of patronage allocated in 2002. Member-owners of record that year will still receive a patronage dividend by check in December.

Since 2010, RVEC has retired \$3,400,000 in patronage allocation to our member-owners. Allocation and retirement of patronage to member-owners is an important difference between electric cooperatives and investor-owned utilities.

If you have any questions, call our office at 712-659-3649. You can also find more information in the Capital Credits section of our website at rvec.coop/patronage-capital-credits

Thanks for reading this column throughout the year. Let me know what topics you would like me to cover in 2024. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Jim Gossett is the CEO of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative.



Office Address

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PO Box 486 /
28725 Hwy 30
Glidden, IA 51443



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Follow us on Facebook!

Directors

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- Jeff Cranston Odebolt
- Mark Ludwig Breda
- Karen Werner Schaller
- Steve Schable Carroll
- Adam Handlos Glidden
- Dave Schroeder Coon Rapids
- Jim Gossett, CEO

RVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



RURAL ELECTRIC YOUTH TOUR 2024

Win a trip to Washington, D.C.!

An all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 15-21, 2024, and a \$500 scholarship will be awarded to one high school student from the Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) service area.

Youth Tour contest applicants must currently be a high school sophomore or junior residing in the RVEC

service area, either town or country. However, an applicant's parents DO NOT need to be RVEC members.

Based on an open-book exam and essay, the top three applicants will participate in face-to-face interviews. RVEC will award one winner a one-week, all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., as part of the electric cooperative Youth Tour. The winner will also receive a

\$500 scholarship for the first year of college or secondary school.

Applications must be received in the RVEC office by Jan. 5, 2024. The open-book exam and study materials will be mailed after Jan. 5, 2024.

Additional information and applications may be obtained by contacting RVEC at 712-659-3649 or visiting www.iowarec.org/youth-tour.

YOUTH TOUR CONTEST APPLICATION



Student _____

Address _____ Telephone # _____

School _____

(Must currently be a high school sophomore or junior to enter)

We certify that we are the parents or legal guardians of the above youth and give our permission for the youth to participate in the trip to Washington, D.C., should they be declared the winner; and further agree that their entry will become the property of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative.

Date _____

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian _____

Mail to: Youth Tour Contest, RVEC, PO Box 486 Glidden, IA 51443

BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

Dependents of Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) members are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 scholarship from Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which supplies power for RVEC.

The scholarship program is designed to encourage and recognize the achievements of a student living on electric cooperative lines. The scholarship must be used for educational costs, and the student must enter college in the fall of the

school year for which the scholarship is given. The applicant must be a student who is enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year, or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

This scholarship is awarded without regard to other awards, loans or financial assistance the applicant may have obtained. Award of the scholarship is based on the following criteria: SAT/ACT scores, grade-

point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a statement by the student explaining educational and career goals and a written recommendation by a third party. Application forms can be obtained from RVEC.

Application forms are due to RVEC by Jan. 15, 2024.

For more information, contact Jill Hannasch at 712-659-3649, 800-253-6211 or jillh@rvec.coop.





2024 MOMENTUM IS BUILDING CONFERENCE FOR CONTRACTORS AND BUILDERS

Iowa-based builders and contractors are invited to learn about energy efficiency technologies at the 2024 Momentum is Building Conference, scheduled for Feb. 8-9, 2024, at The Meadows Events and Conference Center in Altoona.

A major draw for electricians, plumbers and HVAC professionals is the opportunity to earn continuing education unit (CEU) credits at the conference. Momentum is Building attendees can also network with industry professionals, hear from recognized energy efficiency and building trades experts, and gain insight on energy-efficiency regulations and incentives.

Building connections with electric co-ops

Sponsored and organized by the Iowa Cooperatives for Energy Efficiency, the annual conference also connects Iowa's construction industry with electric cooperatives' local services and resources, which serve nearly 650,000 Iowans across 99 counties.

"Electric cooperatives have long supported energy efficiency efforts, and one of our goals is to help member-consumers use energy wisely," states Angela Catton, manager of member relations and development at Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative. "We invest in this conference to build relationships between cooperatives and the contractors who provide

services to the members we mutually serve."

Ryan Cornelius, vice president of corporate relations at Corn Belt Power Cooperative, shares, "Informing contractors about cutting-edge energy efficiency and ensuring our building trades partners are up on the latest codes is important to Iowa-based electric cooperatives. For more than 30 years, the Momentum is Building Conference has provided electric cooperatives and contractors an opportunity to come together to provide rural Iowans with safe, efficient and cost-effective home comfort solutions."

Impactful speaker lineup

Jay Gubrud, a catalyst for performance improvement who has provided insight on working

together as a team, will kick off the conference by illustrating his powerful approach to improving personal and professional productivity while connecting with colleagues and clientele.

The conference will close with an inspirational speaker, Dr. Charlie Cartwright. Drawing on his deep understanding of what motivates and drives people, Cartwright has uncovered the essential elements that pave the way for unlocking human potential.

Registration is available online at www.MomentumIsBuilding.com. Early Bird registration is open until Jan. 17, 2024. For more information about the conference, visit www.momentumisbuilding.com or call your electric cooperative.

PROPERTY TAXES PAID

Property taxes are used to help fund essential things such as education and city and county government. You might not be aware of it, but your cooperative pays property taxes. Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) receives a tax bill for the poles, wires, transformers and other equipment out on the line, and another tax bill for the office and warehouse. RVEC pays taxes in nine different counties that we serve.

To the right is a breakdown of the property taxes paid in 2023.

COUNTY	TAXES PAID
Audubon County	\$ 4,081
Buena Vista County	\$ 155
Calhoun County	\$ 711
Carroll County	\$ 47,449
Crawford County	\$ 56
Greene County	\$ 3,308
Guthrie County	\$ 427
Ida County	\$ 77
Sac County	\$ 23,462



PATRONAGE RETIRED

The Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative board of directors allocates excess margins to a member-owner's patronage account by year based on the percentage of dollars the member paid to the co-op during that year.

Your board of directors approved retiring the general patronage

allocated for a portion of 2002. If you were a member-owner that year, your check was issued at the beginning of December. Please cash your check promptly.

The board reviews the cooperative's financial position each year to determine when additional refunds will be made.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The Iowa Utilities Board requires that all non rate-regulated utilities post the following notice to its membership. If a member-consumer has a problem with his/her service, please write or call:

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box 486 • Glidden, Iowa
51443 • 712-659-3649

If the member-consumer's complaint is related to Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative's (RVEC) service rather than its rates, and RVEC does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the following:

Iowa Utilities Board
1375 E. Court Avenue
Room 69 • Des Moines, Iowa
50319 • 877-565-4450

INVESTING IN YOUR ELECTRIC SYSTEM

Electricity is first generated at power plants, then transmitted through transmission lines to substations and finally delivered to our member-owners through distribution lines. Power travels on Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative (RVEC) distribution lines to transformers that drop the voltage level down so it can be safely delivered directly to homes and businesses.

Distribution lines can be seen supported by wooden poles along many highways, gravel roads and city streets. These lines and poles deliver the power that turns on and runs the appliances we use every day to keep our food fresh, clothes clean and homes cool or warm.

RVEC owns and maintains 1,447 miles of line that safely provides reliable power to our more than 2,085 member-owners.

ELECTRIC CO-OP TRIVIA

How much does it cost to construct 1 mile of single-phase overhead power line?

- A. \$45,000
- B. \$55,000
- C. \$65,000
- D. \$75,000

Answer: B

How much does it cost to construct 1 mile of single-phase underground power line?

- A. \$80,000
- B. \$90,000
- C. \$100,000
- D. \$110,000

Answer: C



IOWA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LIVING

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for members of
Iowa's electric
cooperatives.

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Visit our website at www.rvec.coop



ALL OF OUR LINES ARE **CUSTOMER SERVICE LINES.**

Some deliver electricity. Others deliver information. All must deliver on the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives mission: to provide you with service that's just as dependable as the energy you count on us for every day. Learn more about your locally owned and operated Touchstone Energy cooperative at TouchstoneEnergy.com.



YOUR SOURCE OF POWER. AND INFORMATION.