

ACEC NEWS

JULY 2025 | VOLUME 28 | ISSUE 07

Thank you!
FOR YOUR SERVICE



**DID YOU WIN A
PICNIC PRIZE?**

See page 3 to find out!

**EMPLOYEE
UPDATES**

**YOUTH TOUR
RETURNS**

**VOTE THIS
SEPTEMBER**



A MESSAGE FROM *Your General Manager*

Hollie McCormick
EVP/General Manager

I ENCOURAGE YOU TO VOTE THIS SEPTEMBER

Summer is a busy time of year at Allamakee-Clayton Electric, as I'm sure it is for many of our members. We plan and host our Member Appreciation Picnic in late June. We attend our four area fairs to meet with members. Our line crews are busy building new projects, repairing and upgrading lines and making sure the equipment is ready for another winter. We have contractors executing our vegetation management plan and scouting out future projects.

And, of course, we're planning for our Annual Meeting, this year happening on Monday, September 8.

While our meeting looks a little different than it did pre-COVID, the goal is still the same – to gather our members and allow them the chance to vote for who represents them on our Board of Directors. Instead of sitting down to a formal meeting, we offer a drive-through format. Members pull into our front parking lot where they are greeted by their directors and ACEC staff. They then drive around the parking lot into our shop, vote, and receive a gift and hot to-go meal for the family, all while remaining in your vehicle.

If you haven't been to this style of meeting before, I personally invite you to come this year. We've found that this is what our membership wants. We are seeing double, almost triple the attendance numbers of members attending. From our post-meeting survey last year, 60.16% of

those who responded said they prefer a drive-through meeting.

While we obviously enjoy seeing our members as they drive through, I want to focus on the election portion of the meeting. Every year, our membership votes for three directors. Those directors each serve a three-year term and then can seek re-election. This demonstrates one of our seven Cooperative Principles – No. 2 Democratic Member Control. This means our cooperative is democratically "controlled by the members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Elected representatives (directors/trustees) are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the membership."

Candidate profiles of everyone running for a seat on the board can be found in our Annual Report, which is mailed to members in August. That report can also be found on our website, <https://acrec.com/acrec-annual-report>, also in August.

This year we also are asking our members to vote on two amendments to our Articles of Incorporation. I'd like to explain those changes and why we're asking you to vote on them now, so if you have any questions, you can reach out to me or any of our current directors.

The first change is in regards to the number of directors on the board. As our policy currently states, "The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a board of nine (9) directors." We are asking you to vote on changing that policy to "The business and affairs of the cooperative shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of no less than seven (7) nor more than ten (10) directors." Continuing on, "Pursuant to Iowa Code 499.36(2)"c", the number of directors may be fixed or changed from time to time, within the minimum and maximum number, by the members of the Board of Directors. The Board may elect to reduce the size of the Board of Directors (but subject to the minimum size requirement) by electing not to fill a vacancy created on the Board of Directors, or by having the members elect fewer Directors at an Annual Meeting than the number of Directors

whose terms are expiring." #125

Let me explain why we are putting this on the ballot. Right now, we have nine directors. There are three directors from each of our territories – District "A", District "B" and District "C." Each of those districts has roughly one-third of our membership. Looking to the future, we'd like the option to either add or not have as many directors. Depending on the future of our Cooperative, we might not need nine directors to adequately represent the membership. As our membership changes, we might need to adjust our district lines, potentially changing the number of directors. Should our load grow, such as by adding a large load, we'd like the possibility to add a director to better represent that increased load.

Should you vote yes on this change, that doesn't mean we'll be making changes to our directors right away. We're looking to the future and what would best serve our Co-op down the road.

The second change is to allow the Co-op to use electronic voting for our elections. Specifically, we are asking you to vote that "the Board of Directors may authorize voting by Electronic Transmission, provided such electronic vote is received from the Member by the Cooperative or its representative at the headquarters office of the Cooperative, before 4:30 p.m. local time, on the last business day before the day of the Member meeting at which the election or vote will be held, in accordance with such policies and procedures as may be adopted from time-to-time by the Board to promote the orderly, secure and accurate voting and tabulation of ballots sent and received by Electronic Transmission."

Currently our members receive a ballot in their Annual Report. You can drop the ballot off at our office during business hours or in our drop box after hours, can mail the ballots to our office or drop the ballot off during our Annual Meeting. This change in language allows us to potentially allow for electronic voting. This is something many co-ops already do and could attract more members to exercise their democratic right to vote. Again,

this isn't to say we'll start using electronic voting right away, but it does allow us to look into that option for the future.

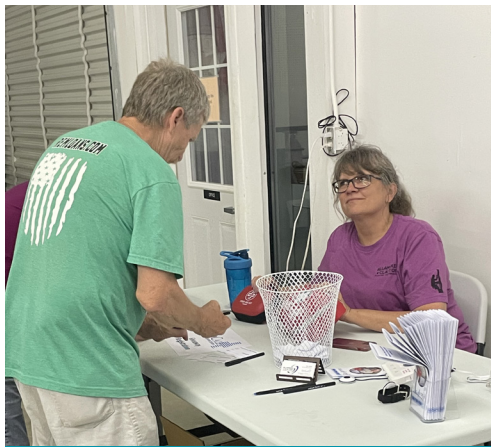
We believe both of these changes to our Co-op Articles will help us better prepare for the future and meet the needs of our members for years to come.

I invite you to reach out to me or to any of our Board of Directors if you have any questions or concerns. And I do hope to see you all at our Annual Meeting in September. ■

BOARD BRIEFS June 27 Meeting

- Reviewed fees and approved updates
- Approved 2025/2026 Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives budget
- Approved Virtual Attendance Policy for directors
- Discussed revisions to Board Policy 406: Board Meetings
- Approved donations to NRECA International and Fayette County Fair
- Approved resolution to bring two items to membership for a vote at the 2025 Annual Meeting: Variable Board Size and Electronic Voting

Fun for all at ACEC Member Appreciation Picnic



ACEC employee Kim Kloke chats with a member about the FirstCall Emergency Response System

It was a packed exhibit hall during the ACEC Member Appreciation Picnic



Former ACEC employee Donna Frieden chats with 2025 ACEC Youth Tour Representative Hayden Palmer



Ivy Dunt was all smiles while on the bounce house slide

Prize Winners

- Lifestone Cooler** – Claudine Yearous
- CGI Rocker Chair** – Kevin Roys
- Electric Grill** – Janice Rea
- \$25 bill credit** – Connie Ruff, Mark Kisner, Craig Bergan
- Beach bag** – Mike Kruckenberg, Addy Marmann, Vaughn Drewes
- Blanket** – Jim Allison, Carol Uhlenhopp
- Prize pack** – Rosalino Palas, Therese Lechtenberg, Gerald Reimer, Ann Klees
- FirstCall First Aid Kit** – Joyce Saacke
- FirstCall Travel Kit** – Neal Struthers

DECADES OF SERVICE COMES TO A CLOSE



It was 1992 when two Allamakee-Clayton REC directors showed up on the Roger and Cheryl Arthur farm unannounced. The directors were there to ask Roger to fill a vacancy on the Board of Directors. For the next 33 years, Roger has devoted his time to serving the members of ACEC on the Board, in addition to serving on the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC) Board and the Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Board.

A chance meeting

Roger is a native of Northeast Iowa, attending West Central (Maynard) Schools before graduating in 1964. He went to The State College of Iowa (SCI), now known as the University of Northern Iowa, before graduating in 1968 with a teaching degree. Roger and his wife Cheryl moved to the Cedar Rapids area, where Roger took a position teaching math at Cedar Rapids Prairie while coaching track and football.

In the winter of 1972, Roger's parents asked if they'd be interested in moving back to the farm. They agreed, moving to the home farm just south of Hawkeye in June of 1972. The Arthurs were active in the Randalia United Methodist Church, as well as the Pork Producers, Porkettes, Corn Growers Association and 4H, among other activities. They also were busy raising their daughters, Angie and Mandy.

In 1985, Roger ran for a spot on the Farm Services of Fayette County board, which later joined with Buchanan County to become Northeast Iowa Farm Services and then AgVantage FS. Roger served as the vice president and later president of the board for several years before retiring in 2005. He also served on the West Central School Board for 12 years, with the final four as the board president.

It was March of 1992, when Rodney Drews and Oliver Larson drove to the Arthur farm to ask Roger to fill out Duane Strong's Board seat. Duane had moved to town and was no longer an ACEC member so they asked Roger to fill out the remainder of Duane's term.

"We'd had a neighbor who was on the board for years and years and he enjoyed it," said Roger. "My dad said that if I ever got the chance, the REC board would be a really good board to be on. When they came, my last term on the school board was going to be over that September so I accepted the position on the REC Board."

Roger was to attend the March meeting; however he got busy doing chores that morning and missed his first meeting. He laughed that it was the first and only time he ever missed a meeting unless he needed to attend another Co-op event.

25 years

When Roger finished his first full year of REC Board service in the fall of 1993, he was chosen as the board president. For the next 25 years, Roger held that role.

"I did try to have someone else serve during that time but they were comfortable with how things were going. I served under three managers – Larry Reed, Paul Foxwell and then I had the honor of being here for the hire of Hollee."



The 1993 ACEC Board of Directors.

Statewide

In 1997, Roger was asked to represent our district on IAEC Board. In 1998, he was selected as the IAEC Board President. This was during a time when Enron was dominating the news before it was discovered to be a Ponzi scheme. Roger recalled meeting after meeting between then-governor Tom Vilsack, the IAEC and owners of investor-owned utilities.

"We testified to the House Committee on the Hill as far as choice that was proposed by Enron. That was an interesting experience with the IAEC Board. There had to be 100-150 people in the Rotunda. They were setting out desks in the Rotunda for speaking with utility representatives."



ACEC at REC Day on the Hill 2011. Pictured are, from left - State Representative Andrew Wenthe, Roger, ACEC's Beth Snitker (sitting), ACEC's Paul Foxwell.



Roger speaking at a CFC meeting.

In the mid-2000s, Roger was asked to be one of five people nation-wide to represent electric

cooperatives in Washington D.C. to celebrate Cooperative Month in October. Cooperatives of all varieties gathered in the nation's capitol for an event called Breakfast at the White House. Roger said it was one of his most memorable moments from his 12 years on the IAEC board. **#3635-2**

CFC

In 2002, Roger ran for a position on the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (now known as the CFC) board, where he was elected to represent Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin. The term was for three years, at which point he could run for another three-year term. He started his tenure in 2003 and was elected a second time, serving until 2009. He served as chairman of the audit committee in 2004 and then was re-elected the chair in 2005, making him a part of the executive committee. In 2006 he was elected secretary/treasurer of CFC, in 2007 as vice president and in 2008 he was elected president of the \$20 billion financial cooperative, serving electric cooperatives throughout the nation.

Being on the various electric cooperative boards allowed Roger and Cheryl to travel all across the US. He fondly recalled two trips to Alaska, several to California and Texas and taking his family to Washington D.C. and Herndon, Virginia. He said he'll never forget all the opportunities he's had because of his work for the co-op.

Big changes

When asked about some of the changes he's seen during his tenure, Roger talked about where our power comes from. He said prior to the Enron scandal, our power came from Mid-Continent Area Power Pool (MAPP). When Enron was discovered to be

a Ponzi scheme, it changed how cooperatives produced power and where it came from. Eventually, MAPP split apart, with our portion going into the MISO (Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator) agreement.

Roger also recalled with delight when the Cooperative had a DirectTV agreement. At its peak, the Co-op had over 4,000 hookups. He said he wasn't sure it was time to sell, but in hindsight, it was a good decision for the co-op as it allowed for the current building to be constructed.

"It's been 33 years I've been on the ACEC board and it's absolutely not been close to the same issues and the way things are run from 33 years ago to what we're facing now. But the goal is still to supply our members with reliable, affordable electricity," he said.



Roger meeting with then-Governor Terry Branstad and ACEC's Hollee McCormick at Country View Dairy near Hawkeye in 2014.

Passing on his knowledge

Roger admits he thought about retiring from the board six years ago, but Bob Swenson encouraged him to stay on because Roger was possibly "the only one who remembers the history from back in the early 90s." With the deployment of fiber internet, Roger chose to run again in 2022.

As his final meeting approaches, Roger said he's excited to see who takes over his board seat, knowing that they'll do a great job.

"The board and the people here will bring you up to speed. You'll learn a new language. The learning curve is really steep. All of the board members are very much involved and very supportive. I think of the whole staff that we have here now, and I'm very proud to be here. It's because of ACEC that I've had 33 years of experiences that I would have never happened."

"I'm very proud to have been a part of all the organizations that I have been. For a guy that grew up in Northeast Iowa on a farm, not many people can say they've had those kinds of opportunities." ■



The 2004 ACEC Board of Directors.

ENYART, PALMER RETURN FROM YOUTH TOUR

It was a whirlwind trip to Washington D.C. for ACEC representatives **Olivia Enyart** and **Hayden Palmer**. The high school duo recently participated in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour of Washington, D.C., sponsored by ACEC. They traveled to Washington, D.C., in mid-June with over 30 other student leaders from Iowa.

The annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has been a joint effort of locally owned electric cooperatives, including ACEC, statewide trade associations and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) for over 65 years.

In addition to taking in the sights of the nation's capital, all the state groups convened for the Rural Electric Youth Day, sponsored by NRECA, to learn from public

figures and other inspirational speakers. This year's Youth Day agenda included Mike Schlappi, a four-time Paralympic Medalist and two-time world Wheelchair Basketball champion. Schlappi shares his inspiring message for every American, young or old: "Just because you can't stand up, doesn't mean you can't stand out."

Since 1958, Iowa's electric cooperatives have sponsored high school students on Youth Tour for visits to their U.S. congressional delegations, energy and grassroots government education sessions, and sightseeing in Washington, D.C.

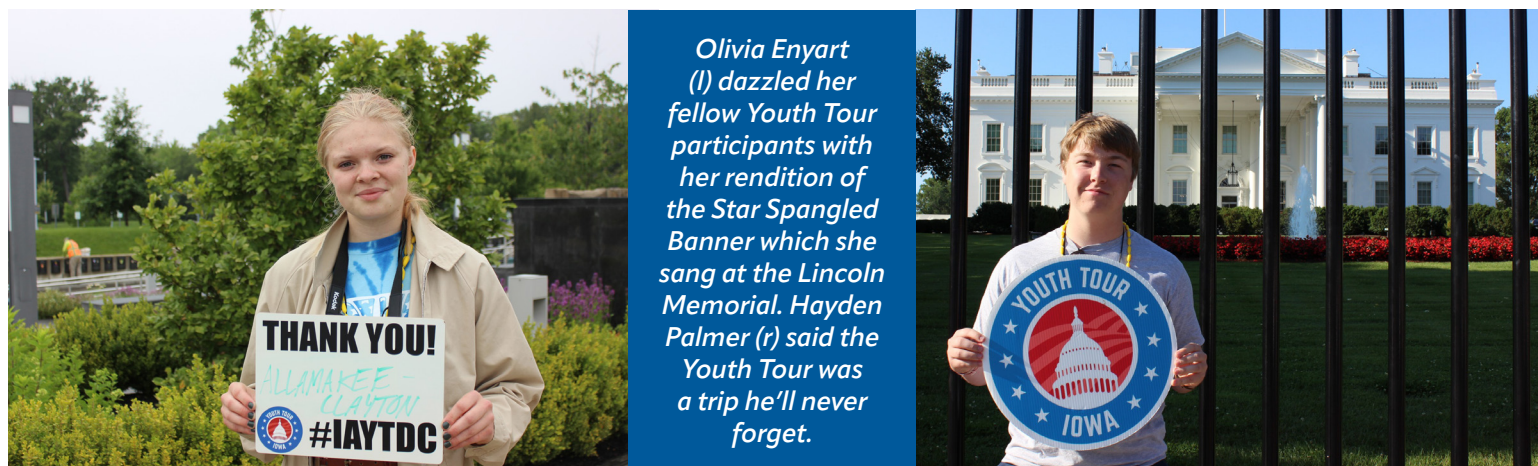
Every summer, this weeklong leadership development program provides high school students opportunities to learn about government, the electric cooperative business model and today's pressing issues

in the energy industry. Students meet their elected officials, tour historic sites and run their very own snack cooperative.

Olivia will be a junior at Postville High School this fall and is the daughter of Brian and Monica. Hayden will be a senior at Waukon High School and is the son of Robert and Sharon.

Applications for the 2026 Youth Tour will be available from ACEC in late fall. For more information on how you can participate in our 2026 Youth Tour program, contact Jennifer Achenbach at 563-864-7611 or visit www.IowaYouthTour.com. Search for "Iowa Youth Tour" on Facebook or Instagram to see the group's recent adventures from 2025. ■

#6497



MEMBER RECIPES

Send your favorite recipes and/or recipe topics to Jennifer Achenbach, ACEC, PO Box 715, Postville, IA 52162 or email jachenbach@acrec.coop.

You'll receive a \$5 bill credit if your recipe is printed. Please note – recipes must be received by the 25th day of the month before the intended publication.

SEPTEMBER – SIDE DISHES; OCTOBER – ANYTHING WITH PUMPKIN

GRAPEFRUIT MARGARITAS

- 6 oz. frozen limeade
- $\frac{2}{3}$ c. red grapefruit juice
- $\frac{2}{3}$ c. tequila
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. triple sec or grand mariner

Directions

Combine in blender, adding crushed ice to $3\frac{1}{2}$ c. level. Process and serve immediately. Salt rimmed glasses optional.

■ *Becky Engelhardt, Postville*

FRESH RASPBERRY LEMONADE

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ c. fresh or frozen raspberries
- 6 oz. frozen lemonade
- 1 c. water

Directions

Combine in blender, adding crushed ice until the consistency you want. Note: This is the non-alcoholic version. If you want, you can use vodka in place of water.

■ *Becky Engelhardt, Postville*

RHUBARB SLUSH

- 1 lb. Rhubarb, chopped (3 c.)
- 1 c. water
- $\frac{1}{3}$ c. sugar
- 1 c. vodka or apple juice
- 1 6-oz. Can frozen pink lemonade concentrate, thawed
- 1 1-liter bottle lemon-lime carbonated beverage
- Fresh mint sprigs (optional)

Directions

In a large saucepan, combine rhubarb, water and sugar. Bring to boiling. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 5 minutes or until rhubarb is tender. Cool slightly. In a blender or food processor, blend or process half of the mixture, covered, until smooth; pour into a medium bowl. Repeat

with remaining mixture. Stir in vodka or apple juice and lemonade concentrate. Pour into an 8x8x2-inch baking pan. Cover and freeze several hours or overnight until firm. Before serving, let rhubarb mixture made with apple juice stand at room temperature for 45 minutes to thaw. (Rhubarb mixture made with vodka does not need to thaw). To serve, scoop about $\frac{1}{3}$ c. of the rhubarb mixture into each glass; fill each glass with about $\frac{1}{3}$ c. of the carbonated beverage. Or, scoop rhubarb mixture into a punch bowl; add carbonated beverage. Top each serving with a mint sprig. Makes 12 servings.

■ *Cici Mueller, Postville*

CYBER SECURITY Tip of the MONTH

I Don't Need to Worry!

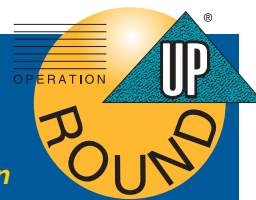
I have a strong password so I don't need to worry about anything else. It's great if you have a strong password that is at least 16 characters long and a blend of letters, numbers and special characters. However, this is just one part of being a cybersecurity superstar. Remember, every account and device needs its own password – meaning don't reuse your password because if one account is hacked, they all are at risk. Another way to stay safe is to enable MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) on your accounts. ■

~ Courtesy of
staysafeonline.org

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ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Do you know an organization that could benefit from an ACEC Operation Round Up Grant?



Organizations of all types are eligible for an Operation Round Up Grant. The ACEC Operation Round Up Trust Board meets twice a year beginning this October and then in April 2026 to review and award a grant. Applications must be submitted by Sept. 15 and March 15 to be considered.

Where does the funding from ORU come from?

Thank you to those 200+ members who voluntarily "round up" their electric bill and contribute a few cents every month to ORU. That small change can make an overwhelming difference! We have approximately 7,000+ members so imagine what your collective small change (average of \$6 a year-never more than \$11.88 a year) could do for our local communities! For more information on the grants or to sign up for Operation Round Up, go to acrec.com/operationroundup.

FIND YOUR SERVICE NUMBER

ACEC has hidden three Service Location numbers within this newsletter. The numbers are from different regions of our service area – two are worth \$10.00 and one is worth \$5.00. The service location number must be yours to claim the credit, and you need to notify us when you find it.



CONTACT ACEC

HEADQUARTERS

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PHONE NUMBERS

LOCAL 563-864-7611

TOLL-FREE 888-788-1551

PAYMENT LINE 24/7 833-284-5051

UNDERGROUND CABLE LOCATING
811

SKYWAYS INTERNET SOLUTIONS

800-864-1611

WEBSITE

acrec.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

OUTAGES

888-788-1551 or 563-864-7611

IOWA STATE ONE CALL

811

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AL STEFFENS, President, Clermont

MICHAEL D. GIBBS, Vice President, Waterville

CINDY HEFFERN, Sec./Treas., Harpers Ferry

ROGER ARTHUR, Sumner

JEFF BRADLEY, Wadena

NELSON CONVERSE, Postville

GREG FORMANEK, Farmersburg

JERRY KELEHER, Elkader

BRICE WOOD, Lansing

MANAGEMENT STAFF

HOLLEE McCORMICK, EVP/General Manager

JENNIFER ACHENBACH, Manager,
Marketing & Communications

DAVID DECKER, Director,
Finance & Administrative Services

BRENDA HACKMAN, Manager, Economic
Development & Community Relations

JENI KOLSRUD, Manager, Information
Technology

JASON TROENDLE, Director,
Operations & Engineering

RYAN WAGNER, Manager, Member Services



Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, Inc.
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Employee Updates



After nearly 23 years, ACEC Cashier/Collections Representative **Donna Schultz** has retired from the Co-op.

Donna began her career at ACEC in September 2002. She has been a key part of our member assistance team and will be greatly missed. ACEC wishes her all the best in her retirement!



Jacob Grangaard is joining the ACEC line crews this summer as our summer laborer. Jacob is a recent graduate of Waukon High School. He plans to attend Southwest Tech this fall in the electrical power distribution program. Welcome Jacob!



Brennen Gunderson joined the ACEC team in May as our Engineering Coordinator. Brennen brings experience as an inspections and staking engineer from STAR Engineering. In his free time, he enjoys being outdoors, history and shooting sports. Welcome Brennen!