

intouch

WITH MEMBERS OF GRUNDY COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

\$218,709.25 patronage capital being returned to members

As a member of Grundy County REC (GCREC), you will be receiving YOUR share of \$218,709.25 in December. This represents 100 percent of the remaining unpaid patronage capital for the year 2001 and 73 percent of the year 2017.

Since Grundy County REC is not-for-profit, any money your cooperative receives not needed for operations is allocated back to members. These allocated profits are called patronage capital and are YOUR share of the profits as owners of the cooperative. Your allocation of patronage capital is based on the amount of electricity you use. The more electricity used, the greater YOUR share of patronage capital. With this retirement, Grundy County REC has retired almost \$4.6 million since we began paying patronage back to members in 1961.

In December, a patronage capital credit will be applied to your electric bill if you were a member of GCREC in the years 2001 and 2017. Anyone who is no longer an active member will receive a mailed check. If you are moving off our lines, please notify our office with your new address so you can be sure to receive future patronage capital checks.

When you think about YOUR local electric cooperative, think about being an owner of a local business, because you are. Reap the benefits from the services provided today and look forward to a return on your investment in the future!



Tyler Thomas

Thomas joins co-op

Tyler Thomas, a recent graduate of the Northwest Iowa Community College's Powerline School, started as a part-time worker this summer for Grundy County REC, but was recently hired as a full-time apprentice lineman.

Originally from Cresco, Iowa, Tyler will now be making his home in Grundy Center.

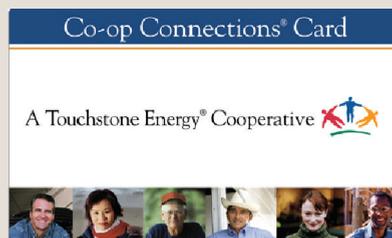
If you see Tyler, please join us in welcoming him to our cooperative family!

Co-op Connections card

Make sure to stop by Stylish Living in Grundy Center. Stylish Living is a gift shop, full-service flower shop and bistro. Stop in for a variety of fresh flowers and plants or browse the selection of home décor and gift items. You won't go away hungry with their homemade meals and desserts. They even offer Canvas Art and Wine painting classes! Be sure to stop in for a visit and don't forget to present your Co-op Connections Card to get a discount.

Other area participating businesses include:

- 319 Décor & Design - Grundy Center
- Crazy Daisies - Grundy Center
- Natural Grind - Grundy Center
- Tasty House - Grundy Center
- The Landmark Bistro - Grundy Center
- Retro Rooster - Traer
- Sweets on Main - Traer



The cooperative's office will be closed Dec. 24 and 25 and Jan. 1 so employees may celebrate the holidays with their families. Phones are answered 24/7 to report outages and emergencies.



- Dependents of cooperative members are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship for tuition at a two-year or four-year college. Contact your electric cooperative for an application form.
- Corn Belt Power Cooperative partners with Northwest Iowa Community College (NCC) in Sheldon, Iowa, to offer four \$500 scholarships. Recipients must be students at NCC studying Electrical Technology, Powerline or Powerline Technology. Contact the NCC Foundation, Sheila Van Engen, 800.352.4907 ext. 246, svanengen@nwicc.edu.
- Corn Belt Power partners with Iowa Lakes Community College to offer one \$500 scholarship for students enrolled in the Wind Energy and Turbine Technology program. For more information, contact Alison Mason, Iowa Lakes Community College, 712.362.0491 ext. 4491 or amason@iowalakes.edu.

Be ready when Mother Nature strikes

When Mother Nature strikes this winter, make sure you're ready. Because winter brings its own set of challenges to staying safe, we remind you to prepare for extreme weather and to stay home during storms and their aftermath whenever possible.

Be ready

Do all you can to prepare. Make sure you have a portable charger and extra batteries on hand. Have a battery-operated radio available (with extra batteries) to listen for updates or instructions.

In preparing for a storm, be sure to:

- Have an ample supply of all medications and a supply of non-perishable food, plenty of drinking water and a first-aid kit.
- Keep a checklist of items to have on hand.
- Prepare your home with proper insulation, caulking and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing.

Stay inside

Stay home during snow and ice storms and wait until roads are passable. Whatever the commitment, it's not worth getting into an accident or finding yourself stranded.

If you do travel and drive into extreme conditions, do not leave your car to look for help. Make sure your car is equipped with several items during colder months: a first-aid kit; blankets, water, snack food; tire chains; booster

cables; emergency flares; and road salt and sand for traction.

When the power goes out, we will restore power as

efficiently and safely as possible. Do not turn on the stove for heat; it is not safe. Instead, use blankets, sleeping bags and warm winter coats. You can also use an up-to-code fireplace or portable heaters when used correctly.

When using a portable generator for power, never use it indoors and make sure it is not close to any windows, doorways or air-intake vents. Do not use it in an attached garage, even with the doors up. Never touch it with wet hands or use in areas with rain, snow, or standing water.



Wishing you peace and joy this holiday season!

BE PREPARED BEFORE A STORM STRIKES

In the event of a power outage, be prepared by keeping the following items in an easy-to-find emergency supply kit.



■ WATER

Three-day supply, one gallon per person per day.



■ TOOLS

Flashlight, extra batteries, manual can opener, battery-powered or hand-crank radio, NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert.



■ FIRST AID KIT AND PRESCRIPTIONS

First aid supplies, hand sanitizer and at least one week's supply of prescriptions and medications for the family.

Learn more at www.ready.gov

Source: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The gifts that keep giving

As you grab your hot chocolate and favorite blanket to cozy up and begin making this year's holiday gift list, consider the often overlooked but practical present: an energy-efficient gift. While it may not be the usual book, shower gel or coffee mug, energy-efficient gifts keep on giving.

According to Energystar.gov, the typical U.S. household spends more than \$2,000 a year on energy bills. Beyond the combined 42 percent of annual energy consumption spent on heating and cooling, the next biggest and fastest growing category is electronics, accounting for 21 percent.

To get you started, we have compiled a list of energy-saving gift ideas, ranging from stocking stuffers to best-gift-ever status.

Around the house

1. Energy-efficient light bulbs
2. Energy-efficient or smart power strips
3. A surge protector and power strip with wireless remote
4. A smart or programmable thermostat
5. Blankets and warmer clothing to use and wear indoors while the thermostat is turned down
6. A tablet or laptop computer
7. A rechargeable battery kit
8. Room occupancy sensors
9. An electric pressure cooker, a slow cooker or a an Instant Pot®
10. Power tools

For the energy conscious (or wannabe)

11. A home electricity monitor
12. Low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators
13. A thermal leak detector

Because solar is cool

14. For the college student: a solar backpack
15. Solar-powered items: lights, cell phone and battery chargers, and even wireless speakers and computer keyboards
16. A solar-powered toy

For that special someone (even if that someone is you)

17. An Energy-Star rated television



LED holiday lighting rebate

When you purchase LED lights for holiday decorating, remember that you can save up to \$2 per item, with no limit on the number purchased.

Contact us for details or visit our website for a rebate form.

MORE SAVINGS, MORE MEMORIES.

The one card that does it all.

Connections.coop



Participates in No Barriers Summit program

Earlier this year, veteran Elizabeth Ledvina, who lives northeast of Toledo, was nominated by Grundy County REC to participate in the CoBank No Barriers program.

Elizabeth was selected by CoBank to participate in the No Barriers Summit in New York City on Oct. 5-6, 2018. The Summit is an inspirational event for leaders, change-makers and visionaries to learn to unleash their potential. By sharing the experience with veterans and others with disabilities, they get the opportunity to build a network of support that can last a life-

time. Among the activities at this year's Summit were an address by keynote speaker Ice-T—musician, songwriter and actor; a presentation by Sebastian Terry—inspirationalist, author and TV host; a concert by Judah and the Lion; and a scavenger hunt in Central Park. Ms. Ledvina stated, "It was a great experience that was very interactive and gets you up and moving. I really appreciated the opportunity."

Each year, CoBank customers like Grundy County REC can nominate deserving veterans interested in this challenging and inspiring program.



The 2018 No Barriers Summit.

CoBank began accepting nominations for the 2019 program on Veterans' Day 2018. If you're interested in participating, contact General Manager Vicki Daily at 319-824-5251.

A new member resource

In a cooperative effort to best serve our members, Grundy County REC has partnered with nine other electric cooperatives to form Iowa Choice Renewables, LLC—a for-profit company. There is an evolution occurring in the electric utility industry, and Iowa Choice Renewables has been developed to offer services that complement traditional electric utility service. Iowa Choice Renewables offers turnkey solar systems that can be sized, purchased, installed and connected to the power grid. You don't have to be a member of the cooperatives to purchase our products.

Solar is a long-term commitment. Having been a part of your communities for a long time, we're committed. We care about you, and we're here to stay. We know electricity, and we know how to analyze your usage history and sizing needs. We know interconnection, and we know what needs to be done to keep you and your investment safe. By forming Iowa Choice Renewables, we are excited to take this important step for our members. Many want to be involved in renewable energy but are confused by the choices and information provided in the market. Iowa Choice Renewables will simplify and assist members as they work through sensible energy choices.

The Iowa cooperatives that formed ICR have deep roots in delivering safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible energy to their members. We are proud to provide co-op members and their surrounding communities with local, trusted energy options. For more information, contact Mike Geerdes, member service manager at 319.824.5251.



Lineman Karl Nielsen makes a rescue as instructor Jim Wolfe observes.

Pole top rescues

At Grundy County REC, safety is our top priority. That's why our linemen undergo pole top rescue training every year. A rescue would be necessary if a co-worker became unconscious while working on a utility pole.

Each lineman must climb a pole and lower a 200-pound mannequin to the ground with a rope in less than four minutes.

Rescue training teaches the importance of planning for a possible emergency. The linemen learn that prompt action by fellow employees is essential in effecting a rescue operation.

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smart choices

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