



# CLARKE REC Headlines

The official publication of Clarke Electric Cooperative



The co-op office will be closed to observe the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 25. We wish all our members a safe and healthy holiday weekend! **NOTE: The Clarke Electric Cooperative office continues to be closed to the public. Please call (800) 362-2154 for questions about your bill or other co-op services.**

## Energy Efficiency



### Tip of the Month

When the weather is nice, put your grill to use! During summer months, cooking outdoors is a great way to save energy and eliminate unwanted heat from cooking indoors. 30-18-01-04

## Looking Out for You: March Outages

- Animal/bird: 4
- Equipment/maintenance failure: 4
- Maintenance: 1
- Unknown: 1
- Wind: 1



**CLARKE**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested  
Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative

P.O. Box 161 1103 N. Main  
Osceola, IA 50213-0161  
www.cecnet.net



## The Cooperative Difference: 2019 Patronage

**WEST DES MOINES-BASED** accounting firm BKD CPAs & Advisors, LLC, recently wrapped up their annual audit of Clarke Electric Cooperative. BKD Partner Cheryl Clausen made a presentation of the audited 2019 statements to the board of directors at its April board meeting. The report showed all financial and operational documents to be fairly presented and in accordance with government auditing standards. The board reviewed the statement of operations, equity, cash flows and deferred patronage schedule to determine how to allocate 2019 margins.

subtracting operating expense from the total amount of money collected during the year. The margin is allocated to each member based on the amount each member paid for electricity, and does not include service charges, membership fees and other payments that may have been made to the cooperative.

This year, the board voted to allocate \$647,525.32 back to the members as 2019 patronage capital. They also voted to retire the patronage capital that was allocated in 2002 and a portion of 2003. CEC members during those years will see a credit on their electric account; former members will receive a check in the mail.

The cooperative's margin is calculated by



## Community Invested: Operation Round-Up

### THE FRIENDS OF CLARKE COUNTY

Conservation and Christian Relief Supplies & Services (C.R.O.S.S. Ministries) are local recipients of grants made possible through Clarke Electric Cooperative's Operation Round-Up (ORU) program.



Jason Gibbs presents a \$1,500 check to Scott Kent.

The Friends of Clarke County Conservation and Scott Kent have worked tirelessly on a new 40-spot camp site that will be located on the northeast side of East Lake Park along Hwy. 34 just east of Osceola. This campsite features full hook-ups with a shower house and bathroom. Many families



Jason Gibbs presents a \$5,000 check to Mike Sitzman.

*continued on pg. 2*

*Reading pays! We have hidden two of our members' account numbers in this issue. If you find your member location number, call during May to have \$10 deducted from your monthly energy account.*

# Co-op Office Building Remodel Continues



**DAVE OPIE**  
General Manager

## THE REMODELING PROJECT AT

Clarke Electric Cooperative continues to move forward as the COVID-19 pandemic remains top of mind. At its April meeting, the CEC Board of Directors agreed to keep the project underway while being cognizant of safety practices and member-consumers who are going through a time of uncertainty and financial hardship.

There are several benefits to doing so. One benefit regarding our budget is that now is a good time to secure a long-term, low interest rate loan to pay for the project. Another reason to move ahead is if we halted the work now, we would be on the hook for stranded costs associated with design and development of the construction drawings, budgets and staff time spent planning the project



*Pictured is the north side of the warehouse that sits on the east side of the headquarters building. We installed two new overhead doors and replaced two smaller overhead doors with larger ones to accommodate the larger trucks.*

over the course of the last 10 years. The cooperative takes its fiduciary responsibility seriously and works hard to make good, long-term decisions on behalf of our member consumers. This requires us to take a hard look and make tough decisions about our debts, assets, work efficiency

and work environment.

The ongoing construction also keeps people working in a time when companies are struggling to pay their employees.

With most of our employees working remotely and the co-op office closed to the public, the amount of foot traffic through the construction zone is alleviated and social distancing is easier to abide by.

Additionally, there are security challenges that the remodel will address. The first

phase of the remodel began in February with the addition of new larger, overhead doors to the cooperative's east warehouse (pictured).

This provides a drive through building that lets linemen load equipment in a convenient and controlled environment.

Finally, the current condition of the building presents employees with an inefficient and unhealthy workspace with outdated plumbing, heating/cooling and electrical infrastructure.

As we continue to evaluate the project, we will let you know how we are progressing. Serving our members is what the cooperative is all about. Taking care of the physical buildings and equipment also serves our members in a responsible manner. More headquarter updates are coming. Continue to read the newsletter to keep up with this ongoing project.

## Operation Round-Up...from pg. 1



already use East Lake Park for reunions, picnics, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, and will now be able to enjoy a great campground. CEC Manager of Member Services Jason Gibbs presented a check for \$1,500 to Scott Kent.

Christian Relief Supplies and Services (C.R.O.S.S Ministries) located on Hwy. 69 north of Osceola applied for ORU funds to upgrade and replace a much-needed forklift that was failing. The organization operates a thrift store and uses proceeds from sales to support roughly 60 different agencies and churches in southern Iowa including the Red Cross and Crisis Intervention. Gibbs presented Mike Sitzman with a check for \$5,000.

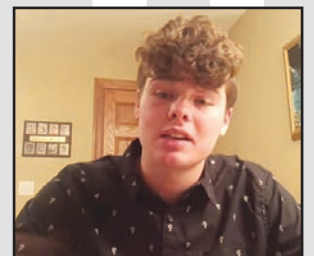
Additionally, CEC and the Operation Round-Up Board voted to donate \$500 to seven food pantries that serve our members.

"We are grateful to the Clarke Electric member-consumers who gave generously to make these grant awards possible," said Gibbs. "It's our hope that we've made a difference in a few people's lives during these very stressful and trying times."

## Jordan Walters Earns Youth Tour Spot

### CONGRATULATIONS TO JORDAN WALTERS FOR BEING SELECTED AS THIS YEAR'S RURAL ELECTRIC

Youth Tour representative from Clarke Electric! Due to COVID-19 restrictions on in-person meetings, participants were asked to submit a video of themselves answering the question, "which two of the seven cooperative principles are the most important and why?" After tough deliberation, Jordan Walters was selected as this year's Youth Tour representative. Jordan is the son of Kristi and Robert Walters. You can see his video submission on the Clarke Electric Facebook page. Congratulations, Jordan! 53-10-05-01



*Jordan Walters*

Also submitting videos were Sam Vonnahme, son of Katie and Eddie Vonnahme; and Zy D'Attilo, son of Ann and Tony D'Attilo.

Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, this year's Youth Tour has been canceled, but Jordan is invited to accompany the 2021 YT winner on next year's Youth Tour trip to Washington D.C.

# CEC Board Members Earn Leadership Certificates

**CLARKE ELECTRIC BELIEVES** effective board members are informed, educated and engaged in cooperative practices and business issues. Through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), these board members are offered educational opportunities in various components of the cooperative business model. The following board members recently earned NRECA certificates for completing educational credits.

NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD): Randy Barnard, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, New Virginia. To earn this certificate, Randy completed a series of five courses designed to teach directors the basics of the utility industry.



NRECA Board Leadership Certificate (BLC): Cody Miller, Thayer and Ed White, Osceola. This certificate requires that a director must first earn the Credentialed Cooperative Director designation before completing 10 credits in advanced, utility industry issue-oriented courses.



NRECA Director Gold Certificate: Larry Jackson, Clio and Bill Willis, New Virginia. Both Larry and Bill renewed their Director Gold status by completing three continuing education courses over a two-year period. To achieve this designation, Larry and Bill first had to earn the CCD and BLC designations.



Congratulations to our board members for reaffirming their commitment to Clarke Electric Cooperative and its member-consumers!

# Director Elections

**YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS** is elected by and from the membership of Clarke Electric Cooperative. Being a director for Clarke Electric is a great opportunity to learn more about your cooperative, work with local legislators and give back to your community. A director must have the time to attend monthly board meetings, other special meetings and educational seminars designed to keep directors informed about the cooperative and utility industry.

Three seats are up for election this year and will be elected at the Annual Meeting on Sept. 14. You can exercise your right to vote by mailing in a ballot or coming to the meeting to vote, enjoy a free meal and entertainment.

If you are interested in serving as a board member, call (800) 362-2154.

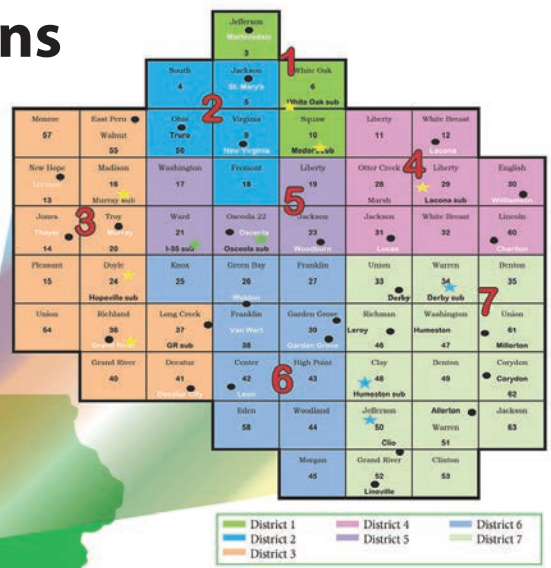
Districts up for election this year are:

- District 1 – Bill Willis**
- District 3 – Cody Miller**
- District 7 – Larry Jackson**

The following are excerpts from the Cooperative Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation regarding director elections.

**Article III, Section 2, Qualifications and Tenure.** *From and after the annual meeting in 2014, "No member shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative, whose primary residence is not served by the Cooperative, or who is in any way employed by or who is married to an employee of the Cooperative or who has been an employee or married to an employee within the past three years or who is financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative."*

**Article III, Section 3, Nomination and Election of Directors.** *"It shall be the duty of the board to appoint, not less than 60 days and not more than 90 days before the date for the*



*meeting of members at which directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations. Said committee shall consist of two members from each of the districts where the terms are to expire following the annual meeting. A director of the Cooperative, who is ineligible to be a candidate because of tenure, may be appointed to the nominating committee. The committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the cooperative, at least 45 days before the meeting a list of the nominations for directors. The committee shall be encouraged, but shall not be required, to nominate not less than two candidates for each district for which a director is to be elected.*

*"Any fifteen or more members acting together may make other nominations by petition not less than 45 days prior to the meeting and the secretary shall post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted, providing that said nominations made by petition shall be limited to members from the district for which a director is to be elected and the petitioners must also be from said district."*

*(b) Election of Directors "Election of directors shall be by printed ballot. The ballot shall list the candidates nominated by the committee on nominations and by petition, if any, arranged by the districts. The secretary shall mail a ballot marked, "Ballot for Election of Directors" and a statement of the number of directors to be elected and showing separately the nominations made by the committee and those made by petition. The statement shall also contain and inform the members of the manner in which they may vote by mail for directors as provided in this section."*

## Financial Assistance for Utility Bills

**C**LARKE ELECTRIC WILL WORK with member-consumers who may have trouble paying their electric bill. Please contact Clarke Electric to discuss payment options and our staff can suggest ways to reduce your energy use to lower your bills. Our top priority is serving **YOU**.

You may also be eligible for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) financial aid by contacting your local community action agency. At the time of publication, the Iowa Department of Human Rights extended the LIHEAP application period for eligible Iowans until May 31, 2020. Those who demonstrate financial need may qualify for help in paying a portion of their household's utility bill. Learn more at <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply>.

If you are compelled to help your neighbors in need, please consider a tax-deductible donation to RECare or donate to CEC's Operation Round-Up program. You can pledge a one-time contribution or a recurring monthly amount to these types of funds and your support will help those in need in your local community. Contact a member service representative or visit our website at [www.cecnet.net](http://www.cecnet.net) to learn more.

Clarke Electric is committed to keeping the power flowing safely and reliably to you during these turbulent times.



**I**N LIGHT OF RAPID CHANGES TO member interaction at Clarke Electric due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the cooperative launched a Facebook page March 19.

"With everything that was going on, we wanted to use Facebook as an additional communication tool for our member-consumers," said Clarke Electric General Manager Dave Opie. "We hope this helps them stay connected to us during this time."

## Are you Planning to Upgrade or Build a New Service? Call Clarke Electric First

### **I**F YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT UPGRADING AN EXISTING SERVICE

or requesting a new service, there are some key items you will need to know in order to help Clarke Electric Cooperative meet your electrical needs. We don't want to waste your time, so we have prepared a list of information items to have available prior to the first phone call to the cooperative.

- Where is the new property located? Address, township, range and section number.
- Is the new home or building staked out on the property?
- Is the driveway also staked or laid out?
- What type of heating and appliances will be utilized? Electric
- What KW size is the unit of the heating unit? Gas / Wood (heat)
- Are there any other outbuildings being constructed or will there be in the future?



**NICK GANNON**

If you are not building a new service you might need to upgrade. Here are a few reasons that you may want to consider upgrading your existing electric service. Consult both your electrical contractor and Clarke Electric Cooperative as you plan your project so that we can work together to meet your expectations.

- Building a new home to replace your existing home.
- Adding an addition to your current home.
- Build a new outbuilding/shop.
- Adding a grain bin or large motor load to your existing service.
- Updating your panel size in your home.



It is important to us to know any additional electric load you plan to add to your existing service. If you are not sure of the size of your service don't hesitate to call in and request that information. This will assure that Clarke Electric continues to provide you with proper and reliable electrical service.



**CLARKE**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

PO Box 161, 1103 N Main, Osceola, IA 50213-0161

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

David Opie, General Manager

Office Hours: Mon - Fri 7:30 am - 4 pm

Outside Depository Available 24 Hours

**641.342.2173 | 800.362.2154**

[www.cecnet.net](http://www.cecnet.net)

#### Board of Directors

Randy Barnard, New Virginia

Larry Jackson, Clio

Larry Keller, Osceola

Kyle Kelso, Weldon

Cody Miller, Thayer

Randy Rouse, Corydon

Ed White, Osceola

Bill Willis, New Virginia

Lydda Youmans, Indianola