

## Congratulations, Rick Whalen!

Congratulations to Rick Whalen, economic development director for Butler County REC and Franklin REC in Hampton, for being awarded National Rural Economic Developer of the Year from the National Rural Economic Development Association (NREDA).

Rick has been with rural electric cooperatives since 1979, beginning as the member services director for Franklin REC. He added economic development to his work duties in 1986 and began with Butler County REC in 1989. He also works with key accounts for Butler County REC.

Nominated for the award, Rick received eight letters of support, a testament to how he has performed his job.

According to Rick, he agrees with the sentiment that “If you love what you’re doing, you’ll never work a day in your life.” He said, “That’s been my experience. It’s an exciting job.”

NREDA is a professional organization dedicated to the advancement of rural development. They are the only organization that focuses exclusively on rural economic and community development.



*Left to right: Dennis Mingyar, director of economic development, Ohio's Electric Cooperatives and chair of the NREDA Awards Committee; Rick Whalen; Bruce Nuzum, senior vice president, finance and operations, Iowa Area Development Group; and Becky Bradburn, general manager, Franklin REC.*

## Do You Know... About Billing?

- **Meter readings** for billing are from the previous calendar month—the first day through the last day
  - **Billing is completed** between the 1st and 3rd
  - **Your bill should arrive** by the 10th
  - **New bill notification is available** through SmartHub on our website: [butlerrec.coop](http://butlerrec.coop)
  - **Your bill payment is due** by the 28th
- As always, call us at 888.267.2726 with questions.



## Groen named to new position

John Groen, crew chief out of our Allison warehouse, has accepted the newly created position of GIS coordinator. He will begin his duties after line construction season.

Groen will be responsible for coordinating, maintaining and publishing the cooperative’s mapping system; preparing data for mapping viewers, staking and outage management; and preparing system maps for internal and external use.

Coming to Butler County REC in 1995, Groen brings electrical experience and system knowledge to the position. He began in the cooperative’s appliance department, moving to the line crew in 2000. Congratulations, John!



*John Groen*



**High-school juniors:** Butler County REC is seeking student applicants to participate in the 2019 Youth Tour June 14-20 to Washington D.C. Parents must be Butler County REC members or residents of Aplington, Fairbank, Fredericksburg or Readlyn.

Contact us or go to [butlerrec.coop](http://butlerrec.coop) for more information. Application deadline is March 11, 2019.

## Scholarships available



- 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](http://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](http://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 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**



# Nominating Committee seeks candidates for board of directors

Butler County REC's board of directors have appointed the following members to serve on a nominating committee and select members to run for three director positions that will expire on April 6, 2019:

- **Kevin Zwanziger, Nashua, phone 641-330-9368**
- **Phillip Destival, Sumner, phone 319-415-1904**
- **Brent Janssen, Allison, phone 319-231-2395**

This committee will meet at the cooperative office in Allison at **11 a.m., Jan 10, 2019**, to nominate members for the office of director. The election will take place at the cooperative's annual meeting on Saturday, April 6, 2019.

Your co-op's board of directors consists of nine members serving three-year terms. Every year three of the positions come up for election. Each director must reside in the area he or she is elected to represent.

**This year, the board is seeking nominations for the following areas: Chickasaw County, the east half of Bremer County and the southeast quarter of Butler County.** At this time, the members listed below are currently serving as your board representatives. Their terms will expire and are the only names on the ballot:

- **Gary Poppe, Ionia**
- **Steve Boevers, Readlyn**
- **Allyn Harms, Clarksville**

If you are interested in running for a position or want to recommend someone residing in any of these areas, please contact a member on the nominating committee before Jan. 4, 2019. Please call our office if you need help to reach a member of the nominating committee.

## Nomination details

The list of nominations will then be posted at the Butler County REC office in Allison. For 10 days after posting this list, additional nominations of members residing in the general area of vacancy may be made by written petition. Forms will be provided at the request of any member and must be signed by no less than 20 members of the cooperative. Any member so nominated must give prior consent to such nomination. The following excerpt from the Butler County REC articles of incorporation and bylaws further explains this process:

Not less than sixty (60) days prior to the regular annual meeting of members, the Board of Directors shall appoint a Nominating Committee of not less than three members of the Association who are not directors of the Association. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of nominees, residing in the general area of the vacancy, with at least one member nominated for each vacancy to be filled at the next annual meeting. The written list of nominations of the Nominating Committee shall be posted at the office of the Association not less than thirty days prior to mailing the notice of the annual meeting of members. For ten days after posting of the list of nominations by the committee, additional nominations of members residing in the general area of the vacancy may be made by written petition on forms provided on request of any member, and signed by not less than 20 members of the Association. Any member nominated shall give prior consent to such nomination whether by committee or petition. The notice of the annual meeting of members shall list the names of all nominees for the office of director.

In the event any member who is nominated either by the committee or petition withdraws consent, dies, or for any other reason is unable or declines to serve as a director, prior to the annual meeting but after the deadlines set forth above for posting and mailing of notices, and as a result thereof there remains only one nominee from the general area of any vacancy, then the committee on nominations shall be vested with full authority to nominate an additional member of the Association residing in the general area of the vacancy, so that two nominees from that area exist. If sufficient time exists prior to the annual meeting, the members of the Association shall be notified by mail of the new nomination. If sufficient time does not exist, prior to the election of directors at the annual meeting, a general announcement shall be made concerning the withdrawal, death, etc. of the person originally nominated, and the person subsequently nominated by the Nominating Committee.

## Holiday hours

We will be closed Monday, Dec. 24; Tuesday, Dec. 25; and Tuesday, Jan. 1, to celebrate the holidays.

Our phones are answered 24/7 to respond to outages and emergencies.

**888.267.2726**



*Warm wishes for a joyous and special holiday season from Butler County REC!*

**INtouch** is published monthly for members of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative  
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