

## Youth Tour Iowa

Calhoun County Electric Cooperative is looking for high school Sophomores and Juniors with a passion for government and public service to apply for a once-in-a-lifetime trip to our nation's capital in June!

For over 65 years, Iowa's locally owned rural electric cooperatives have been sending deserving rural Iowa students to Washington, D.C., to participate in the national electric cooperative Youth Tour.

One student from Calhoun County Electric Cooperative's service territory will be selected from eligible candidates to attend the 2024 Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., from June 15-21 along with 40 other student leaders from Iowa. The Iowa Youth Tour group will join with hundreds of students from across the country as they learn more about electric cooperatives and American history and come home with a greater understanding of their role as American citizens. Students will also learn about U.S. government and meet with their members of Congress. On the trip, students take in the sights of D.C. as they visit monuments, museums, and historical landmarks. Students who go on Youth Tour often call it the trip of a lifetime!

**When is Youth Tour?** June 15-21, 2024 (orientation on the evening of June 15 in Des Moines, then fly out to D.C. on June 16)

**Who can apply?** Current sophomore and junior high school students that are in Calhoun County ECA's service territory are eligible to apply for this experience. The application process consists of completing our application form which includes essay questions. Calhoun County ECA will conduct in-person interviews with the top three applicants.

**How to apply?** Calhoun County ECA has the Youth Tour form available on our website at [www.calhounrec.coop/youth-tour-washington-dc](http://www.calhounrec.coop/youth-tour-washington-dc), students can stop by our office for a printed copy, or an emailed version of the application can be sent by contacting Abbey Conrad at [aconrad@calhounrec.coop](mailto:aconrad@calhounrec.coop). For any questions or to discuss this opportunity further, please call our office at 712-297-7112 and Abbey would be happy to help you.

**Deadline?** March 1, 2024.

What is the cost? There is NO cost to the student(s) who are selected to go on the trip. This year, Calhoun County ECA is adding to the excitement of this program. Aside from an all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. by

Students can apply now  
for a trip to our nation's  
capital from June 15-21!

High school students  
interested in public  
service & government  
are encouraged to  
apply! Learn more at  
[IowaYouthTour.com](http://IowaYouthTour.com)



Calhoun County ECA, the top candidate will receive a \$250.00 pre-paid debit card that he/she will be able to use during the trip. For those candidates that come in to complete an interview and are the first and second place runner ups will also receive a pre-paid debit card in the amount of \$125.00. Calhoun County ECA is a proud sponsor of the Youth Tour Program and the opportunity it provides us to show our ongoing commitment to the communities we serve.

Want to learn more about Iowa Youth Tour? Check us out online:

- [www.iowayouthtour.com](http://www.iowayouthtour.com)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IowaYouthTour>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/IowaYouthTour>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/iowayouthtour/?hl=en>
- Snapchat: iowayouthtour

## Calhoun County ECA Scholarship



Seniors can now apply for Calhoun County Electric's scholarship opportunities. Four \$500 Scholarships will be offered in 2024. Applications and scholarship details can be found on our website at [www.calhounrec.coop/calhoun-county-electric-cooperative](http://www.calhounrec.coop/calhoun-county-electric-cooperative), picked up in our office, or can be emailed by contacting Abbey Conrad at [aconrad@calhounrec.coop](mailto:aconrad@calhounrec.coop).

Applications must be completed and submitted to the cooperative by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 9, 2024. For any questions related to the scholarships, please contact Abbey at 712-297-7112.

# 2024 Director Spotlight Series

Recently, we asked our directors to answer three questions about our cooperative, the electric industry, and being a director for CCECA. Over the next seven months, we will take directors responses and share them with the membership as part of our Director Spotlight Series. We hope you'll enjoy following along.

## January's Director Spotlight District 1 – Jim Miller

Jim has been a member of Calhoun County ECA since 1981 and represents District 1 on CCECA's Board of Directors. He is an active member of the community of Fonda and shares his retirement with his wife, Rae. Jim has served on CCECA's Board for 15 years and currently holds the President and Executive Chairman positions. His dedication to the electric industry continues past our co-op walls to the state level where he also serves on the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors.

As a director for CCECA, Jim has completed the Certified Cooperative Director (CCD), Board Leadership Certificate (BLC), and Director Gold Programs. To achieve these milestones, Jim has put in many hours of continuing education that range from innovation and technology, to strategic planning and financial decision making. Jim continues to show his commitment to the cooperative by participating in on-going educational courses, understanding his role and responsibilities as a director, and staying up to date on the key issues and trends in the electric industry.

When asked the following questions, this is what Jim had to share with us.

**1. After serving as a cooperative director, what is something you'd like your fellow members to know about the co-op or the electric industry?**

*I really enjoy being part of CCECA's board and working for the member owners of our co-op. The electric industry is changing at a rapid pace. It seems like every few weeks new issues arise that could affect our co-op in the future.*

**2. What trend or issue are you most concerned about in the year ahead for the co-op or the electric industry?**

*My biggest concern, maybe not this year but in the near future, is the reliability issue. We have all grown up knowing that when we hit the switch the lights will go on. The big push for renewable generation (wind and solar) and the EPA's push to shut down coal and natural gas generation could lead to reliability issues. We must try to educate our elected officials that we need "all of the above" types of generation to meet our increasing electrical needs.*

**3. What do you appreciate about the cooperative now that you serve as a director on the board?**

*I am the longest tenured board member and I have witnessed many personnel changes during my time on the board including the CEO, office staff, line crew and board members. I can tell you that we have outstanding people working for you. We have a quote on the wall of our co-op board room that reads "Every decision I make shall be based on what is best for the member owners of this cooperative." We all keep this in mind as we serve you, our members.*



## CCECA Line Crews Start Line Patrol

Doing maintenance on a sunny weekday, rather than fixing an outage in the middle of the night, benefits you and your local electric cooperative. The Calhoun County Electric Cooperative's line crews have begun their annual line patrol. Crews will be looking for possible line maintenance issues, safety hazards, and other problems that may affect the distribution lines that bring power to your home or business. Depending on weather and road conditions, you may see linemen patrolling line in your area. Please remember to slow down and be cautious as you see the CCECA trucks on the roads. Preventative maintenance including line patrol is one of the many ways we can be proactive in keeping our power system strengthened and continue to offer safe, affordable, and reliable electric services to our members.



# Proactively Providing Safe and Reliable Service

By: Keaton Hildreth, CEO



When electric cooperative member-owners are asked what they value most about their electric service, two things consistently rank near the top – reliability and affordability. With an annual average reliability rate of 99.99%, we know reliability doesn't happen by accident. It takes constant effort to maintain systems, improve where necessary, and anticipate our member-owners' increasing needs for electric service.

During the winter months, reliability is under greater scrutiny from our member-owners. Winter weather including snow and ice storms, combined with strong winds, can put our systems to the test in a significant way. When outages occur, the most frequent cause is trees or other vegetation coming into contact with power lines. These types of outages are not only inconvenient for our member-owners but also costly to your cooperative's bottom line, which impacts affordability over the long-term.

We know that vegetation – especially trees – are valued parts of our landscape. Beyond enhancing the beauty of an area, they provide important functions like shade, noise barriers, oxygen to the atmosphere, and habitat for many animals. But trees also grow, which can cause problems with power lines if they are not properly planted or if volunteer trees rise in unintended areas.

When branches and limbs break off, they often land in roadways or bring the power lines down with them – posing a safety risk to cooperative employees and the public. Because our distribution system connects thousands of people across our service territory, one tree coming in contact with a power line may



**A primary cause of power outages is trees contacting power lines. CCECA makes every effort to provide you with safe and reliable electric service.**

**To provide safe, uninterrupted service it is necessary to trim trees when they are located too close to power lines.**



impact your neighbors near and far. The Iowa Electrical Safety Code requires electric utilities, including cooperatives, to have a schedule and procedures for regular tree trimming and vegetation management, which is critical in minimizing these instances.

Under our vegetation management program – which means that trees and other vegetation are inspected and trimmed on a regular basis – maintaining line clearance is our primary objective. We do this

while ensuring we trim vegetation in a responsible manner. The tree trimming process has two purposes – to remove elements that may already be coming into contact with utility equipment, such as wires and conductors and to create a clearance that will provide hazard-free operation of electric service for at least two years.

Using the established standards as the guide, we also know that a methodical, proactive approach is important to ensure the safe, reliable, affordable, and responsible delivery of service. Like many things in life, preventative maintenance is a key to the health of the electric system. Left to chance – rather than being proactive – your cooperative's electric system would likely suffer. By proactively clearing vegetation before it reaches power lines, Calhoun County Electric Cooperative will be less impacted during severe weather and we'll avoid longer, more costly outages.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills.

Install weather stripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is required.

Source: [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)



# Energy Trail Tour 2024

Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association and Corn Belt Power Cooperative invite you to join us for one of two Energy Trail Tours being offered this summer. This 3-day adventure will allow you to experience,

first-hand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind, and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are then returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Enjoy interactive walking tours through a hydroelectric and coal-fired energy generation facility and other stops along the way. Meet other cooperative member-owners while traveling together across the Dakotas on-board a motor-coach bound for the North Dakota's Energy Loop. \$100 per couple covers your lodging, meals and entry fees. The remainder of your tour costs are covered by Calhoun County Electric. Two lucky couples from Calhoun County Electric will be selected at random from those who sign up.



☒ YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip. We understand that if our names are drawn, we will be billed \$100.

Our first and second choice of dates:

June 26-28    1st   2nd   3rd   (please circle)  
July 24-26    1st   2nd   3rd

I/we ☐ have ☐ have not participated in this tour in the past.

First Person \_\_\_\_\_

Second Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Clip this coupon and return to cooperative by May 3, 2024.



## January Member Challenge

1. When are Scholarships due back to CCECA? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Who was the Director featured this month in the Director Spotlight? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are the dates for the 2024 Energy Trail Tour? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Find the answers within the stories, features, and content of this newsletter and you could win a prize. **Send your answer to memberchallenge@calhounrec.coop, clip and mail to: Calhoun County Electric Cooperative, PO Box 312, Rockwell City, IA 50579 or submit on our website: www.calhounrec.coop.** You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember there is a deadline!

Entries for this issue **must be received by February 1st**. Three names will be drawn from all correct entries. Members will receive a **\$10 credit** on their account. Members who answer the questions correctly and participate at least 4 times throughout the year, will be eligible for a \$100.00 Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Pre-Paid Debit card, through a random drawing, at the end of the year.

***Congratulations November winners:**  
Kermit Doolittle, Dave Haberl, and Ed & Ann Albers*

## Reach Us

### OFFICE HOURS:

8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
(Mon-Fri)

Contact 24/7 with the following numbers:

### General Phone:

(712) 297-7112

### Toll Free:

(800) 821-4879

### Fax:

(712) 297-7211

### Visit us online:

[www.calhounrec.coop](http://www.calhounrec.coop)

### Email:

[info@calhounrec.coop](mailto:info@calhounrec.coop)

### DIRECTORS:

Jim Miller, President – Fonda  
Steve Boedecker,  
Vice President – Rockwell City  
Jason McKenney,  
Secretary – Somers  
Ron Hanson,  
Treasurer – Pomeroy  
Duane Beschoner – Lohrville  
Darcy Maulsby – Lake City  
Joe Parker – Lohrville  
Keaton Hildreth, CEO



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BEFORE YOU DIG**

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**Mobile App:** Download our app

**Auto Bill Pay (ACH):** Deduct from your bank account. Find the form on our website or stop by the office.

**Phone:** Call the office and make a payment over the phone with a card or checking account.

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