CLARKE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Volume 86, No. 4 | April 2026

HEADLINES

SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED

A Lineman's Calling

DAVE OPIE
General Manager

Some professions demand more than skill; they require a calling. Doctors, teachers, military personnel, first responders, law enforcement officers, and firefighters all embody this dedication.

Linemen stand firmly among them. Their work reflects a natural drive, as if they were born for the role.

For those outside the profession, the dedication of a lineman can be difficult to fully understand. Tasks that seem challenging or daunting to others are met with confidence and resilience.

In fact, when faced with demanding conditions, many Linemen take even greater pride in their work. What may appear dangerous or extreme to others is second nature to those who are wired for this work.

Linemen overcome significant physical obstacles, and their ability to do so is remarkable. They also uphold strong family values, even as their loved ones bear the impact of long hours and the inherent risks that accompany the profession.

Although I may never fully comprehend the drive that guides a lineman, I am deeply grateful for it. Their dedication supports Clarke Electric and the members we serve each and every day.

A big thank you to our linemen!

THANK YOU

for your commitment to safety, service, and reliability. Your dedication ensures that our members can depend on electricity every day.
Pictured, from left:

Matt Readout, Journeyman Lineman

Chris Oberbroeckling, Apprentice Lineman

Max Hunter, Apprentice Lineman

Jarad Taylor, Journeyman Lineman

Hunter Koehn, Journeyman Lineman

Eric Page, Journeyman Lineman

Zach Stewart, Journeyman Lineman

Rob McCoy, Maintenance Foreman

Matthew Luckey, Journeyman Lineman

Cory Dommer, Construction Foreman

Doug Reasoner, Journeyman Lineman

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

THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE

2026 REC Day on the Hill

Green was the popular color at the State Capitol on March 17, but it wasn't for St. Patrick's Day. Nearly 200 REC co-op advocates wore green in support of Iowa's rural electric cooperatives during the 2026 REC Day on the Hill.

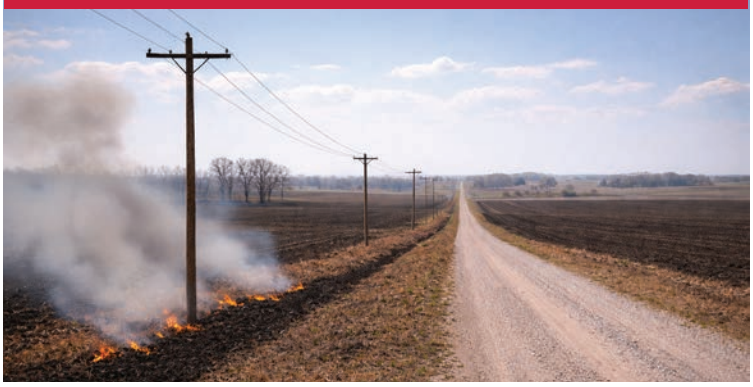
General Manager David Opie, Linemen Hunter Koehn and Max Hunter, Board Member Cody Miller, and Manager of Member Services Jason Gibbs were in attendance to support this year's advocacy efforts.

Advocates met with their legislators to discuss utility worker protections that would strengthen penalties for those who harass, threaten or assault utility workers on the job. Additionally, they shared concerns with third-party solar provisions that sets a concerning precedent statewide. Iowa's electric cooperatives support solar development when it makes sense locally, but they must be held to the same consumer protection standards or regulatory oversight as Iowa's public utilities.

CEC's Jason Gibbs demonstrates how electricity is transferred.

From left: General Manager Dave Opie, Lineman Hunter Koehn, Board Member Cody Miller, Rep. Ray Sorensen, Lineman Max Hunter and Jason Gibbs.

SAFETY DRIVEN



Burning Ditches? Keep Our Power Lines in Mind

This time of year, it's common to see smoke drifting across the countryside as landowners burn road ditches, waterways, and pastures to clean up old grass and encourage fresh growth. Controlled burning can be a helpful tool, but it's important to keep safety in mind—especially when electric poles and power lines are nearby.

We know many Clarke Electric members use fire as part of their land management. We just ask that a little extra care be taken around electrical equipment. 44-07-01-02

Utility poles may look tough, but fire burning directly against them can weaken the wood at the base and shorten the life of the pole. Flames and intense heat can also damage guy wires, transformers, and other equipment mounted on the pole. When that happens, it can lead to outages that affect homes, farms, and businesses across the area.

Before lighting a burn, take a quick look around the area for power poles, guy wires, and overhead lines. It's a good idea to leave a small buffer around poles and other equipment. Many landowners simply mow or leave a ring of grass unburned around the pole to help protect it.

Wind is another thing to watch, especially when conditions are dry. A shift in the wind can push flames where you didn't expect them to go. Keeping a close eye on any weather alerts and having water or other tools ready to control the fire can help keep a small burn from turning into a bigger problem.

If you're planning a burn and have questions about power lines or poles in the area, feel free to give Clarke Electric a call before you get started. We're always happy to help make sure things are done safely.

We appreciate the care our members take when working the land. With just a little extra attention around electric equipment, we can all help protect the system that keeps the lights on across our rural communities.

Murray Revitalization

Big things are happening in Murray! This small town with just over 600 residents in western Clarke County has committed itself to enhancing public spaces, improving safety, and revitalizing housing in this tight-knit community.

Thanks to Clarke Electric Cooperative members, the co-op recently presented the city with a check for $1,000 from the Operation Round-Up fund to support enhancements, like:

- New playground, splash pad, and new restrooms at Mallory Park;
- Three RV/horse camping sites to attract tourism and events at the Murray Horse Arena;
- New safe sidewalks for youth that connect Mallory Park, the school and the ball complex; and
- Renovations for eight homes (three renter-occupied, five owner-occupied) prioritized by income-based need, focusing on health and safety as well as modernization and exterior improvement.

With a total price tag of over $2 million, the town of Murray has been awarded nearly enough in grants to cover costs but are still $17,000 from reaching their goal.

CEC's Jason Gibbs presents a $1,000 Operation Round-Up grant to Murray City Administrator Denise Arnold.

Operation Round-Up is a program offered by Clarke Electric in which co-op members can opt in to round up their monthly electric bill to the next dollar. For more information or to opt in, visit www.cecnet.net/operation-round.

For more information about Murray's improvement projects, call Murray City Hall at (641) 447-2522 or email cityadmin@murrayia.org.

SafeHunt Simulator

Clarke Electric Cooperative is helping to bring an innovative safety and education initiative to Decatur County thanks to co-op members who participate in Operation Round-Up. The co-op recently awarded a $3,000 grant to support a new project focused on hunter education and community safety.

CEC's Jason Gibbs presents a $3,000 Operation Round-Up grant to Kayla Clausen and Kimberly Miller with Decatur Co. Conservation.

This funding will help Decatur County Conservation launch Operation SafeHunt, a virtual hunting simulator designed to enhance hunter education, firearm safety, and conservation awareness across Decatur County and surrounding areas.

Operation SafeHunt is an immersive, projector-based system that allows participants to safely practice real-life hunting scenarios using replica firearms. The simulator builds critical decision-making skills and is especially beneficial for youth, beginners, and individuals with accessibility barriers who may not fully benefit from traditional hunter education formats. By promoting safe, ethical, and conservation-minded hunting practices, the program supports a safer community, stronger outdoor traditions, and responsible stewardship of Iowa's natural resources.

The portable system will be used at community events, schools, and civic functions, expanding its reach and impact throughout the region. The total project cost is $20,000.

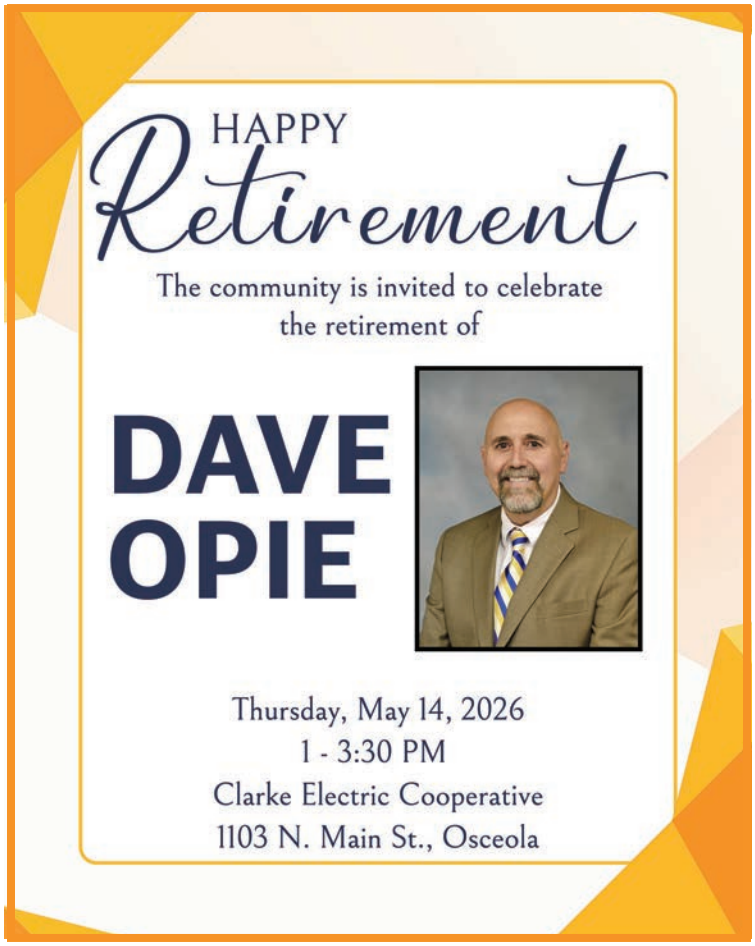
Community members interested in supporting Operation SafeHunt or learning more can contact Kimberly Miller. Decccb@grm.net or call the Decatur County Conservation Office at (641) 446-7307.

Opie Earns Local Leadership Award

Congratulations to CEC General Manager Dave Opie who received this year's Leadership Award from the Osceola Chamber Main Street (OCMS) March 6.

Each year, OCMS presents the award to a volunteer who has made a significant impact on the program and downtown Osceola.

"David has a way of bringing people together and building connections between organizations," said OCMS Executive Director Ashleigh Eckels. "His leadership and collaborative spirit have helped strengthen our downtown and move our community forward in meaningful ways."



CLARKE ELECTRIC

SUMMER LOBBY HOURS
MAY 4 - AUG. 21, 2026

MONDAY	7:00 - 4:00
TUESDAY	7:00 - 4:00
WEDNESDAY	7:00 - 4:00
THURSDAY	7:00 - 4:00
FRIDAY	CLOSED
SATURDAY	CLOSED
SUNDAY	CLOSED

(641) 342-2173

Looking Out for You:
February Outages

Construction: 7
Equipment Failure: 2
Undetermined: 2
Animal/Bird: 1
Lightning: 1
Member Caused: 1

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OFFICE HOURS
Mon.-Fri.: 7:30 AM - 4 PM | Outside depository available 24/7

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Ed White
Vice President: Randy Rouse
Secretary: Cody Miller
Treasurer: Lydda Youmans
Asst. Sec./Treasurer: Randy Barnard

Directors
Liz Beck
Larry Keller
Zach Robinson
Natalie Rydl

GENERAL MANAGER
David Opie

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