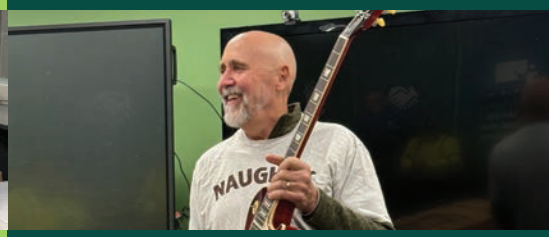
CLARKE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Volume 86, No. 5 | May 2026

HEADLINES

SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED

Opie Closes Co-op Career

In January 2016, Dave Opie walked into Clarke Electric Cooperative's back door and down a familiar hallway to his new office. Everything about the place was familiar except for his role and where his office was located.

Now, after serving 10 years as Clarke Electric's general manager, and five years previously as its manager of finance, Dave will close his office door for the last time when he retires at the end of this month.

You could say that poles and wires were always a part of Dave's life. As a teen in the early 1970s, he worked for a contractor to treat utility poles on rural roads. More specifically, Dave removed dirt from around aged poles so another worker could apply creosote to protect against decay, insect and weather damage.

"It was kind of lonely work," he said. "But it paid well - $2 an hour!" 45-05-03-03

In his later teen years, Dave worked for a commercial landscaper, where his job duties were much more diverse and "never boring".

"One odd project we did as contractors was to wreck line," he said. "We had a retired lineman pull down the old conductor and I would wrap a chain around the pole. Then we used an old boom-winch truck from the 1950s to pull the pole. We weren't very safe, but it was my first exposure to supervising employees and crews."

The job and his boss, Gary Stevenson, taught him some valuable life lessons.

"Gary taught me how to respect people," Dave said. "He taught me how to work long, hard hours in tough conditions, but to always have an element of fun, too."

Dave continued working manual labor jobs during the day while earning his degree in accounting and finance at night. His career includes 25 years of hands-on experience with financial management and human resources in and around Des Moines, working for United Way of Central Iowa, Vision Point Productions, Inc., and Advanced Network Technologies.

Dave was Clarke Electric's CFO from 2009-2014, then returned in 2016, and immediately got to work building a united, healthy, and satisfying work culture.

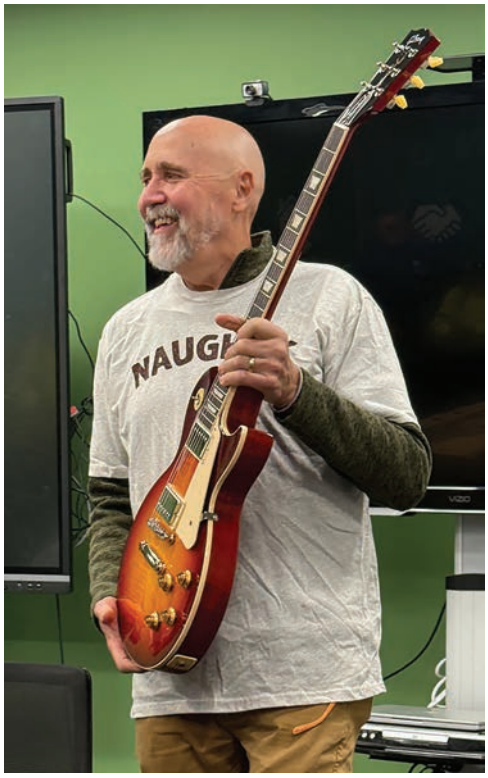
"As CFO, I was so impressed with the dedication and loyalty of these workers,"

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.

Opie Retirement...from pg. 1

he said. "I knew I couldn't be as good as they were, and I couldn't eliminate the hardships they endured, but I could do everything possible to make their work environment as positive as I could."



Staff surprised retiring General Manager Dave Opie with a Les Paul electric guitar for Christmas in 2025.

A remodel of the co-op's headquarters in 2021 infused new life into the 1954 building. Bright colors, a modernized office space layout, and artwork throughout that reinforces CEC's mission now serve as visual reminders that the co-op, and its employees, work to serve its members.

This cohesiveness was on display when, in 2025, co-op employees gifted Dave a 1959 Cherry Sunburst Les Paul electric guitar for Christmas. As a musician, Dave said the gesture was "about the most humbling moment in my professional career."

In fact, playing more guitar and piano, as well as mountain biking and camping out West are on Dave's retirement agenda. But what he's looking forward to most is spending more time with his wife of 40 years, Lee Anne.

As he closes this chapter of his life and hands the GM title over to Chad McIntosh, Dave said he couldn't be prouder of Clarke Electric employees.

"We are like one, big, championship team," he said. "I'm so thankful they put up with me and all my antics, even when it came down to 'where the rubber meets the road.' The staff – inside and outside – continually impressed me with what they accomplished. I can't wait to see what they do next."

Help Us Shine the Light on Volunteers

It's time to shine the light on our community volunteers!

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, Clarke Electric encourages our members to participate in the statewide Shine the Light contest this summer by nominating local volunteers.

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, the contest will accept nominations during the month of June and select three winners who will each receive a $3,000 donation to their local charity or nonprofit.

Member-consumers and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers June 1-30. If you receive electricity from Clarke Electric, you're a co-op member and we invite you to nominate a friend, neighbor or relative who is making a positive impact in the community.

The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians. Nonwinning nominees from previous years can be nominated again for another chance to win.

Our 2026 winners will be announced in September and featured in Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine and on social media. 35-22-02-20

Go to www.IowaShineTheLight.com to review the contest rules and how to submit a nomination. Contest entries will be accepted at this website starting on June 1.

Help us shine the light on community volunteers this summer and consider honoring a local volunteer by making a nomination!

Director Election Time

Directors from District 1, 3 and 7 will be on the ballot during this year's annual meeting Tuesday, Sept. 15. If you reside in one of these districts, you are eligible to run for a board seat. Please reach out to our office by calling (800) 362-2154 if you are interested in being placed on the ballot.

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.12-26-12-01

Ballots will be mailed to you ahead of the annual meeting. You can participate in the democratic process and exercise your right as a co-op member by returning your ballot and voicing your vote in the election. More annual meeting details will be made available in future newsletters.

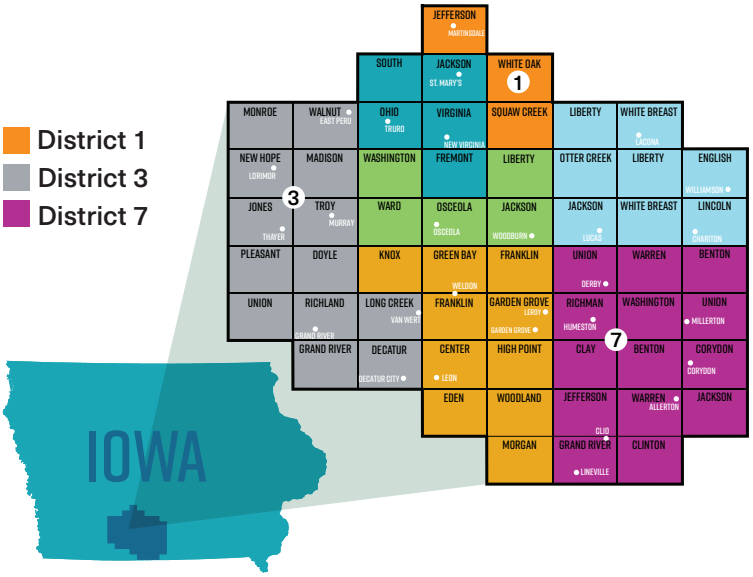
Districts up for election this year are:

District 1 – Natalie Rydl
District 3 – Cody Miller
District 7 – Zach Robinson

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

Article III Section 2, Qualifications and Tenure. *Directors from the districts where the terms have expired shall be elected by ballot by the members of the Cooperative to succeed those directors whose terms of office have expired, to serve for a term of three years or until their successors have been elected and shall have qualified. 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. When a membership is held jointly by two or more natural persons, either one, but not both may be elected a director, provided however that neither one shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold a position of trust in the Cooperative unless both shall meet the qualifications hereinafter set forth. Nothing in this section contained shall, or shall be construed to affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board of directors.*

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 nominees 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...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.*

MEMORIAL DAY

REMEMBER AND HONOR

The Clarke Electric Office will be closed Monday, May 25

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU? @ cecnet.net

- Statewide outage map
- Leased Light Program
- SmartHUB
- Rebates & Online Forms
- Operation Round-UP
- Call Before You Dig
- Email newsletters
- RECare

COMMUNITY INVESTED

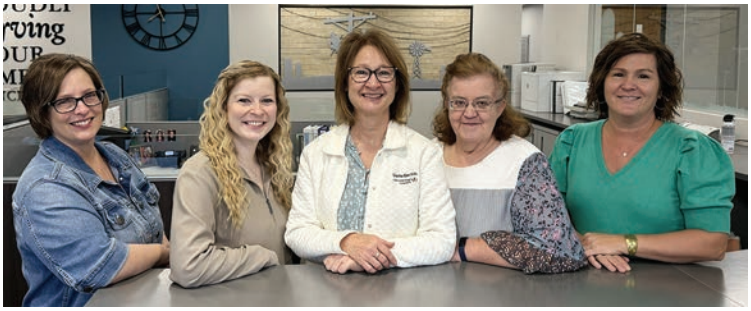
Vonnahme Earns Youth Tour Trip

Please join us in congratulating Lucy Vonnahme, a junior at Interstate 35 High School, for being selected to participate in the 2026 Youth Tour!

As CEC's representative, Lucy will travel to Washington, D.C., in June for an unforgettable, weeklong experience alongside fellow students from across the state and nation. Youth Tour participants explore historic landmarks, meet with elected officials, and gain a firsthand understanding of how our government operates. The program also emphasizes the principles of the cooperative way of life, helping students develop leadership skills and a deeper appreciation for civic engagement.

Lucy is the daughter of Katie and Eddie Vonnahme of St. Charles. She is active in cross country, track, basketball, student council, National Honor Society and Best Buddies. In 2018, her older brother, Max, was selected by the co-op to attend Youth Tour.

CEC is proud to sponsor students like Lucy and invest in opportunities that inspire and empower the next generation of leaders. We look forward to hearing about her experiences and the impact this journey will have on her future.



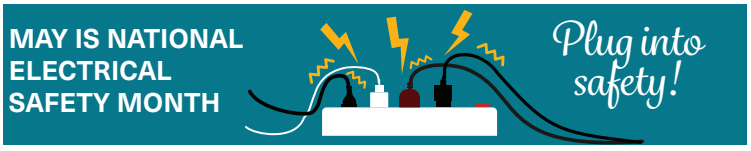
Pictured, from left: Kim Griffin, Cori Smith, Jodee Eckels, Marcella Welsch, and Stephanie Moore.

Celebrating Our Admins

In late April, Clarke Electric staff proudly recognized the individuals who make every day run smoothly both for staff and our members. Administrative Professionals Week gave us an opportunity to honor and acknowledge the incredible individuals who are the heartbeat of our cooperative.

They are the glue that keeps our teams connected. Their unwavering dedication, efficiency, and resilience shine through in everything they do—from managing bills and inquiries to coordinating meetings and supporting linemen in the field. They juggle countless responsibilities behind the scenes, ensuring everything runs smoothly.

Thank you, Administrative Professionals, for all that you do!



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cecnet.net

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.