

# WATTS *Current*

October 2013

For Our Members

## Above and Beyond

*MVEC membership offers value far beyond affordable, reliable electricity*

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative works hard to deliver safe, affordable, and reliable electricity to our 13,000 members every day. But we don't stop there. Because we're a cooperative, we strive to do much more, to find ways of providing *real value* to you and the communities you live and work in.

So what exactly does *real value* mean? Well, in some ways it's basic, like connecting with a real, local person when you call our office, rather than just a recording. It could be finding a copy of *Watts Current* in your mailbox or inbox every month, which keeps you informed about the business you own. Maybe it's competitive rates; or getting the lights back on more quickly after a major storm thru dedicated, local employees and significant high-tech infrastructure. Using your free Co-op Connections card to get discounts at local businesses and national retailers is another tangible benefit. Members tell us these things are important to them so that is how we define *real value*.

October marks National Cooperative Month, when we take time to celebrate cooperatives and talk about why our not-for-profit, member-owned business model is different. Offering our members *real value*—and working to improve the quality of life in their communities—is just one way we set ourselves apart. To learn more about the Cooperative you own, visit [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop).

## New Way to View Your Energy Use

The My Account section on our website offers you an easy way to manage your account. You can view an energy usage chart, select dates you want to review and choose whether to view the temperature in comparison to your usage. This information is also what we use when answering questions about your energy use and relating bill so you are able to reap the rewards of this automated infrastructure even if you are not utilizing the Internet.

To get started, visit [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop) and click on the My Account tab located in the middle of the home page. If you need a password to log-in or have any questions, call our office at 800-927-6068.

Artistry Transitions-  
Barn Quilts &  
Soap Bars

*"Barn quilts are a way of developing pride in barns."*

Robyn Janey, Ryan

**Page 4**



## Did You Know?

**You can pay your electric bill online at [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop).**



## Watts Inside:

Membership Meeting Held  
**Page 2**

Iowa LIHEAP 2013-2014 Guidelines  
**Page 3**

Artistry Transitions-Barn Quilts & Soap Bars  
**Page 4**

RECare  
**Page 5**

Protect Your Home from Electrical Fires  
**Page 6**

Reminder - Buried Service Cable is our Member's Responsibility  
**Page 7**

Co-op Connections Card Savings  
**Page 7**



## Membership Meeting Held

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative held its annual membership meeting on August 22, 2013, at the Palace Ballroom in Farley. Over 500 members and guests were in attendance.

Directors Ron Thielen representing Dubuque County, Thomas Stewart representing Jackson and Clinton Counties and Billie Zumbach representing Delaware, Buchanan and Clayton Counties were re-elected to the Board of Directors. CEO Jim Lauzon's report to the membership introduced the cooperative's new website where members can report and track power outages online or view individualized energy usage and cost information. Lauzon also highlighted the cooperative's high service reliability, competitive rates, national recognition and good service. Attendees enjoyed a pork loin dinner and were eligible for cash prizes.

A re-organization meeting was held immediately following the annual meeting. Larry Swanson, Manchester, was elected President. Other officers include Gene Manternach, Cascade, Vice President; Eldon Busch, Bellevue, Secretary; Charles McCullough, Bernard, Assistant Secretary; and Judy Gotto, Epworth, Treasurer. Other directors include Jan Null, Monticello, Tom Stewart, Preston, Ron Thielen, Bellevue, and Billie Zumbach, Coggon,

### Cash prize winners:

- |                            |                                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Rose Oswald, Monticello    | Edward Wille, Holy Cross       |
| Linda Behne, Bernard       | Art Fischer, Dubuque           |
| Lester Weber, Dubuque      | Ronald Bussan, Durango         |
| Carol Gilmore, Monticello  | Norbert Gonnsen, Maquoketa     |
| Larry Kilburg, Bellevue    | Robert Gudenkauf, Dyersville   |
| Emil Weber, Epworth        | Richard Merrihew, Dubuque      |
| John Gaul, Peosta          | Robert Clark, Zwingle          |
| Larry Gilmore, Maquoketa   | Cletus Ambrosy, Zwingle        |
| Verna Mae Ernst, Bellevue  | Carlyn Meyer, Peosta           |
| Elaine Witt, Peosta        | Robert Molid, Dubuque          |
| JoAnne Heber, Dubuque      | Leo Pfab, Dubuque              |
| Larry Larson, Cedar Rapids | Clarence Kennicker, Holy Cross |
| Randy Klein, Sherrill      | Verna Budde, Bellevue          |
| Susan Lang, Bellevue       | Elvera Steger, Worthington     |
| Elda Kuehn, Dubuque        |                                |





## Iowa LIHEAP 2013-2014 Guidelines

The 2013-2014 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has been established to help qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs for the winter heating season. The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel, and type of housing. To apply for assistance, please see the local community action agencies listed below.

### WHEN TO APPLY:

- Elderly (60 & over) and/or disabled  
October 1, 2013, to April 30, 2014
- All other households  
November 1, 2013, to April 30, 2014

### WHAT TO TAKE:

- Proof of income (for all household members age 19 and over) (Most recent three months' check stubs, award letter from Social Security or 2012 tax return)
- Social Security numbers for all household members (documentation required)
- Recent heat bill
- Recent electric bill
- Recent telephone bill

### WAGE EARNERS:

Please bring copies of your check stubs for the three-month period preceding the date of application or a copy of your federal income tax return.

### FIXED INCOME:

This income may include: Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Aid to Families with Dependent Children or Family Investment Program, Veteran's Assistance, Unemployment Insurance, and Pensions. Please bring copies of your most recent three months' check stubs.

### SELF-EMPLOYED FARMERS:

Please bring a copy of your most recent federal income tax return.

### FIP RECIPIENTS:

Please bring your current DHS Notice of Decision or contact your local office for acceptable documentation.

If you receive alimony or child support, it will also need to be verified.

## INCOME MAXIMUMS

Household Size	Three Month Gross Income	Annual Gross Income
1	\$4,309	\$17,235
2	\$5,816	\$23,265
3	\$7,324	\$29,295
4	\$8,831	\$35,325
5	\$10,339	\$41,355
6	\$11,846	\$47,385

For households with more than six members, add \$1,508 per three months, or \$6,030 annually for each additional member.

## COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

### Hawkeye Area Community Action Corporation

HACAP Central Office	800-332-5289
Jones County: Anamosa	319-462-4343
Linn County: Hiawatha	319-393-7811

### Iowa East Central T.R.A.I.N.

Cedar County: Tipton	563-886-3191
Clinton County: Clinton	563-243-5220
DeWitt	563-659-8492

### Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation

Clayton County: Decorah	563-382-9608
-------------------------	--------------

### Operation New View

Dubuque County: Dubuque	563-556-5130
Delaware County: Manchester	563-927-4629
Jackson County: Maquoketa	563-652-5197

### Operation Threshold

Buchanan County: Independence	319-334-6081
-------------------------------	--------------



Find us on  
**Facebook**

[facebook.com/maquoketavalleyelectriccooperative](https://facebook.com/maquoketavalleyelectriccooperative)





# Artistry Transitions-Barn Quilts & Soap Bars

*Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa, Iowa*

As I visit with Robyn Janey at her restored quaint country home, also known as Farmhouse Studios located at 3286 180<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ryan, Iowa. To say that I am amazed at her story of how she got started is putting it mildly. On this summery day, Robyn is accompanied by her granddaughter, Avery, visiting with her, as they are awaiting news about the birth of an addition to the family. Robyn's daughter, Casey Dettbarn, is already at the hospital.



*Robyn Janey and her granddaughter, Avery.*

Robyn serves rose petal tea and cookies on the front porch swing as we're surrounded by flowering plants and unusual arrangements of antiques. Avery plays with the barn cats who have adopted the Janey home. Nearby is a pony and two horses waiting for care and affection as Robyn informs me that one is a rescue horse who has found a place to live.

"I moved here in 1997; a single mom," she says. "The house seemed a total loss, without a front door and a leaking roof. It was difficult on a limited budget, learning about water pressure tanks, chimneys that needed cleaning, fixing up leaks with tar on the leaking roof, cleaning, lots of elbow grease, cleaning, and more cleaning. A big surprise was discovering the beautiful hardwood floors under the old scruffy shag carpeting! So, my first major project was a new roof. I never thought a roof would make me so happy!"

As I commented about the creative use of antiques blending together and interspersed throughout



*In the yard sits part of an old windmill.*

the house, depicting her work with primitive items adding that extra artistic touch as the 'junk'

is used to highlight the natural scheme of life. I'd add that her creative juices run rampant!

Then it was my turn to query Robyn about her adaptation to growing a cottage industry of making soap. She said, "It was when my half sister lost her husband and soon after a child. We got the idea of working together after we purchased a very expensive goats' milk soap bar. We decided we could do that. We started out by trial and error, making batch after batch. Luckily, we stumbled across an old soap recipe created by a doctor. It was important to use Nubian goats' milk because it had the highest fat content which was best for the complexion and skin care."

"We have natural soaps, oils, scents of lavender, peppermint, frankincense, myrrh, patchouli, and I



*The chalkboard sign at Farmhouse Studios.*

incorporate my own herbs from my garden," says Robyn. "Switching scents to match seasons keeps it interesting. Right now, it's pumpkin and Christmas offers

lots of scents. Our soap is sold in 15 shops, farmers markets, NewBo City Market in Czech Village, and I have a display at Thou Art Gallery located on Main Street in Anamosa."

My next obvious question was about the barn quilts. Robyn says, "I love doing barn quilts. We are losing so many barns, succumbing to the ravages of time and no longer being part of the farm work. Barn quilts are a way of developing pride in barns. I have two big quilt books with over 5,000 designs to pick from. Some may want to add a name to customize it. One of the most unusual was a breast cancer pink with an Angus cow in the center for their cattle farm. You can see samples of my work on Facebook. Delaware County has a quilt group. They contact me for people who want a barn quilt larger than a 6' x 6'. I do a lot of John Deere quilts. I'll do what anybody wants to suit the customers, even small ones for garden sheds."



At this juncture, we drove over to the nearby Althoff farm along Highway 13 as I took photos of the Case IH inspired colorful barn quilt. On Labor Day, he exhibits row after row of Case tractors on his front lawn. Then, it was onto the Zumbach farm on Monticello Road, where their farm colors are so brightly displayed.

This rather surprised Robyn when the farmer came to the door asking, “Are you the lady that does the barn quilts?” Most of the people have been women doing the looking and it takes quite a bit of time. “But this was different,” reports Robyn.



*Barn quilt at the Althoff farm.*

“In a few minutes he had made the choice and said, ‘These are the farm colors and this is for my wife’s birthday.’”

It was such a challenge to mesh the story from beginning to the present day status to how Robyn Janey developed by her own diligence and creativity and achieving a way of doing her own thing which has a definite impact on the country scene. Her impact will be left for future generations. She can be contacted by phone at 319-538-6987 or you’ll easily spot her at farmers markets and various functions throughout eastern Iowa.



*Barn quilt at the Zumbach farm.*

*My note: By the way, you may have heard the Janey name associated with music. Robyn is married to Billy Lee Janey, who is an Iowa Rock ‘n’ Roll and Iowa Blues Hall of Fame inductee. He teaches music at West Music in Cedar Rapids and also provides private lessons at their farm on the weekends. Reading the entertainment section, you’ll often notice the Janey name as a band playing at various venues, as he sometimes joins his son, Bryce.*

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative  
109 North Huber Street  
Anamosa, Iowa 52205

RECare is a voluntary energy assistance program established to help low income families weatherize and heat their homes. Funds collected are distributed by a local community action agency. The money does stay in the area; it is a program of members helping members!

One Time Pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Payable to:  
Maquoketa Valley  
Electric Cooperative

Monthly Pledge:

\$1.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$2.00 \_\_\_\_\_

\$3.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize MVEC to add this monthly pledge to my electric bill. I understand I can cancel my monthly pledge at any time by notifying MVEC in writing.

Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_



## Protect Your Home from Electrical Fires

Each year, electrical failures and malfunctions cause 43,900 home fires, resulting in 438 deaths, 1,430 injuries, and \$1.47 billion in property damage. But many home electrical fires can be prevented simply by understanding basic electrical safety principles and following safe practices.

This year's Fire Prevention Week campaign (October 6-12, 2013) focuses on kitchen fires. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) have teamed up to offer safety tips to help protect your home and family:

- Safety should always be the top priority when working with electricity. ESFI recommends that a qualified, licensed electrician perform all home electrical work in compliance with local and national safety standards.
- Consider having your circuit breakers replaced with arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs), which provide enhanced electrical fire protection by detecting dangerous arcing conditions.
- Make sure all electrical panel circuits are properly labeled. Always replace fuses or circuit breakers with the correct size and amperage.
- Keep the area around the electrical panel clear so you can easily shut off power in an emergency.
- Every month, use the TEST button to check that ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) at outlets and AFCIs are working properly.
- Be mindful of warning signs of an electrical problem, such as outlets and switches that are warm or make crackling, sizzling, or buzzing noises.
- Regularly check cords, outlets, switches, and appliances for signs of damage. Do not use damaged electrical devices.

- Do not use extension cords on a permanent basis, and never use them with space heaters or air conditioners.
- Avoid overloading outlets.
- Do not use lightbulbs that exceed the recommended wattage of the light fixture or lamp.

Despite your best efforts at prevention, a fire could still happen. Follow these tips to make sure your family is prepared to make a safe escape:

- Install smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home.
- Test smoke alarms every month by pushing the TEST button.
- Create a family fire escape plan that includes two ways out of each room.
- Pick an easy-to-find meeting place outside, a safe distance from your home.
- Practice your escape plan by having at least two fire drills a year. One fire drill should be at night while your family is sleeping.
- If anyone in your household is deaf, or if your own hearing is diminished, consider installing a smoke alarm that uses a flashing light or vibration to alert you to a fire emergency.

Visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org) for more home electrical safety information and for ESFI's Fire Prevention Week resources.

Source: *Electrical Safety Foundation International*







## Reminder - Buried Service Cable is our Member's Responsibility

We want to remind each of our members that the buried secondary service cable going to your home or business is your responsibility to maintain or replace when it fails. This cable typically runs from the meter or meter pedestal at the base of the utility pole to your home. If your meter is located on your house, this cable runs from the transformer to the meter socket.

Members often assume the Cooperative will repair or replace this underground cable if it fails. This cable is the responsibility of the member and you will need to hire an electrician to repair this cable when it fails.

The Cooperative strongly suggests you avoid planting vegetation over the route taken by the service cable and also NOT construct any additions, patios or other structures over the cable as well. We encourage you to place new cables in conduit to facilitate future replacement when it fails or exceeds its useful life. If you have any questions on this topic, please contact the Cooperative.

## Co-op Connections Card Savings

Use your Co-op Connections Card at these local participating businesses. Go to [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop) and click on the Co-op Connections Card link to discover



national discounts, as well as information on the Healthy Savings discounts on prescriptions, vision and dental care, and more. If you have misplaced your card or have questions about all the benefits of the program, call Erica at 800-927-6068.

A free Co-op Connections Card app is available for the iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch, as well as Droid and Blackberry phones. Even if you forget your card, you'll be able to save with the app.

**Anamosa Floral**  
Anamosa  
319-462-3000  
Free votive candle with purchase of any fresh arrangement

**Grounds & Goodies**  
Anamosa  
319-462-2868  
Free drink with purchase of deli item

**AI's Clean Machine**  
Bellevue  
563-542-3655  
10% off all services

**Anytime Fitness**  
Dubuque  
563-556-0056  
1st month free with a new 12 month agreement

**Comfort Inn**  
Dubuque  
888-651-7666  
Room rate discount

**Fairfield Inn**  
Dubuque  
888-651-7666  
Room rate discount

**Massage Wellness LLC**  
Dubuque  
563-599-6369  
\$5 off 1 hour massage

**Comfort Inn**  
Dyersville  
563-875-7700  
5% off regular room rate

**Fabulous Fridays**  
Manchester  
563-927-2197  
Buy one accessory and get one for 1/2 off (equal or lesser value)

**Maquoketa Inn & Suites**  
Maquoketa  
563-652-6888  
15% off regular room rate of the day

**Trenkamp Electric**  
Miles  
563-682-7944  
10% off labor charges

**Pizza Ranch**  
Monticello  
319-465-6000  
5% off meal purchase

## Watts The Answer?

1. October is \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ Month.
2. Be mindful of warning signs of an \_\_\_\_\_ problem, such as outlets and switches that are warm or make crackling, sizzling, or buzzing noises.
3. The Cooperative strongly suggests you avoid planting vegetation over the route taken by the service \_\_\_\_\_ and also NOT construct any additions, patios or other structures over the cable as well.

Mail your answers in with your energy bill or email them to [erobertson@mvec.coop](mailto:erobertson@mvec.coop).

Two winners will each receive a \$10.00 credit on their energy bills.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

August winners:

Rita Gavin, Worthington  
John Richey, Dubuque



Maquoketa Valley  
Electric Cooperative  
109 North Huber Street  
Anamosa, Iowa 52205

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Cedar Rapids, IA  
Permit 174



**EVERY MEMBER HAS A VOICE.  
TOGETHER THEY WORK IN HARMONY.**

Every electric co-op member has a say in what's best for the community. Power to the people, from the people. Doesn't that sound good? Learn more about the power of your co-op membership at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).



# Watts Current

is published monthly for the members of  
Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative.

Mailing Address:

109 North Huber Street • Anamosa, IA 52205

319-462-3542 or 800-927-6068

OFFICE HOURS

Monday thru Friday • 7:30 to 4:00 p.m.

## After Hours Call Center

800-582-8998

## Visit Our Web Site

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

## Find Us On facebook

[www.facebook.com/maquoketavalleyelectriccooperative](http://www.facebook.com/maquoketavalleyelectriccooperative)



Email direct to the following departments:

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Billing Questions            | <a href="mailto:billing@mvec.coop">billing@mvec.coop</a>             |
| Product or Service Questions | <a href="mailto:memberservice@mvec.coop">memberservice@mvec.coop</a> |
| Maintenance Issues           | <a href="mailto:maintenance@mvec.coop">maintenance@mvec.coop</a>     |
| Dividend Questions           | <a href="mailto:patronage@mvec.coop">patronage@mvec.coop</a>         |
| New Service Questions        | <a href="mailto:engineering@mvec.coop">engineering@mvec.coop</a>     |
| Management                   | <a href="mailto:management@mvec.coop">management@mvec.coop</a>       |

Printed by Julin Printing Company  
Monticello, IA

