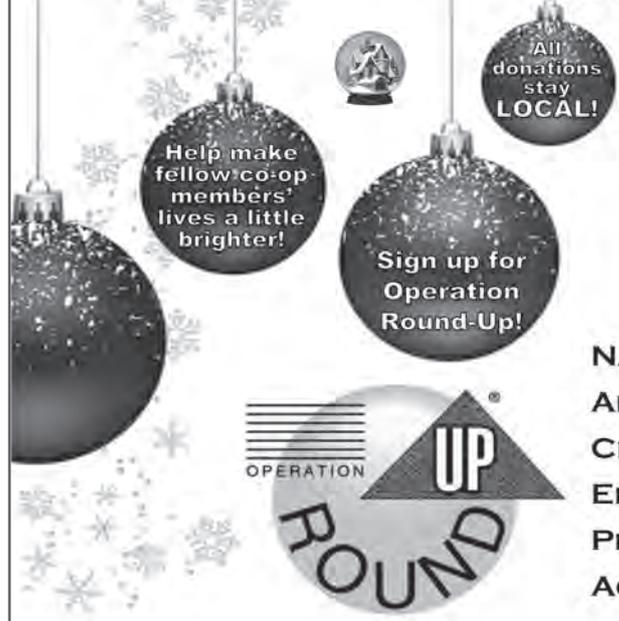


THE CONNECTION

When you donate your spare change to Operation Round-Up, Consumers Energy will round your electric bill to the next highest dollar each month.



The money contributed goes into a fund to help members who need economic assistance with winter electric bills.

COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN WITH YOUR NEXT BILL PAYMENT,
OR VISIT WWW.CONSUMERSENERGY.COOP.

CLICK THE PROGRAMS/SERVICES TAB AND SELECT OPERATION ROUND-UP.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY/STATE/ZIP _____
 EMAIL _____
 PHONE _____
 ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

WIN

ONE OF TWO MONTHLY \$5 BILL CREDITS

THIS MONTH'S CONTEST:

Winter is on its way!
How many snow-covered, winterized homes can you find in this issue of The Connection, not including the one here? 

No winners for the month of October:
 Some costume ideas having to do with electricity: lineworker, jelly fish, electric eel, lamp, lighted Christmas tree, lightning, and finally, a couples costume: outlet and plug!

Here's how to enter:

1. Answer the question or challenge posed each month.
2. Send answers to Consumers Energy with:
 - . Name
 - . Service address
 - . Account number
 - . Phone number
 - . Email address

Email to: kglenney@consumersenergy.coop

Subject line: Contest

Mail to: Consumers Energy
 2074 242nd Street
 Marshalltown, IA 50158

3. Winners' names will be drawn at random and published in upcoming issues of *The Connection*.

December 2018

– Your Source for Power and Information

Dates To Remember:

- Nov. 30 Read Meters
- Dec. 3 Bills Due
- Dec. 3 Automatic Payments Deducted
- Dec. 8 Email/Mail Bills
- Dec. 24 Christmas Holiday**
- 25 Office Closed**
- Dec. 26 Automatic Payments Deducted
- Dec. 31 Read Meters
- Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Holiday**
- Office Closed at 11:30 am**
- Jan. 1 New Year's Day Holiday**
- Office Closed**
- Jan. 3 Bills Due
- Jan. 3 Automatic Payments Deducted

Educated Directors are More Effective Leaders



Jim Kidd

It's no secret that for leaders to be most effective, they must be knowledgeable about the industries and issues that could impact the organizations they serve. This is especially true in the electric industry, and our local cooperative leaders – your board of directors who you elected as fellow members – invest their time in education and training so they are knowledgeable of issues that affect the operations of Consumers Energy.

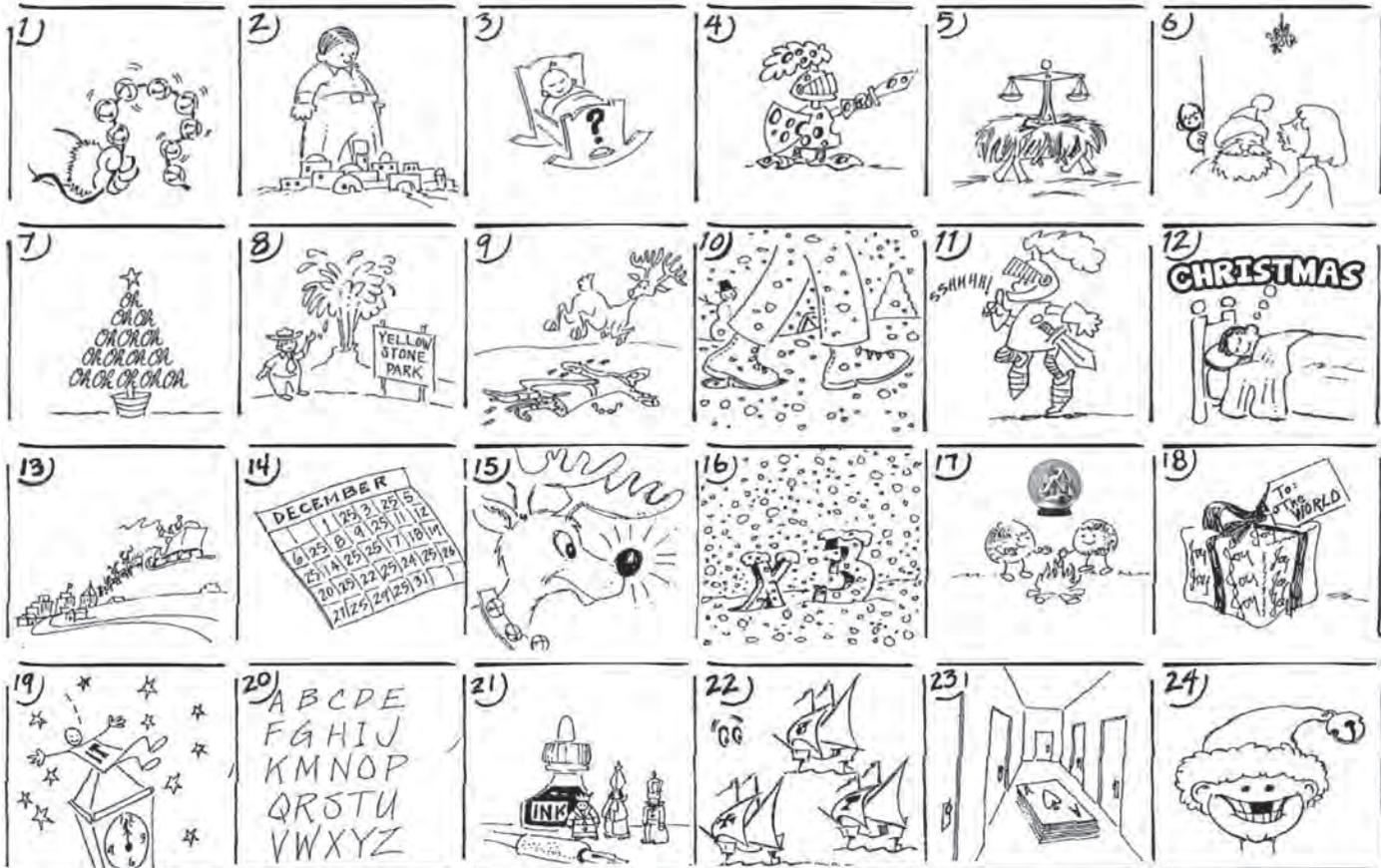
Our board guides the cooperative in providing electricity that is safe, affordable, reliable, and sustainable. Directors play a crucial role in determining the strategic direction and priorities of Consumers Energy. This input and guidance are key as the co-op keeps the lights on today and also works to meet our members' future energy needs.

We strongly believe that a more informed and educated board is a more effective and successful board, which is why Consumers Energy invests resources in providing quality education and training to directors. Through our affiliations with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, our directors have valuable opportunities to attend governance education courses and industry conferences so they are informed on the latest challenges, trends, regulations, and technologies affecting electric cooperatives.

Investing in valuable education and training for board directors helps ensure that our leaders make informed decisions that will guide the cooperative to a successful future as we power lives and empower the communities we serve.

~ General Manager Jim Kidd

Name That Christmas Carol!



1. Jingle Bells 2. O Little Town of Bethlehem 3. What Child is This? 4. O Holy Night 5. Away in a Manger 6. I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus 7. O Christmas Tree 8. O Come All Ye Faithful 9. Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer 10. Walking in a Winter Wonderland 11. Silent Night 12. I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas 13. Santa Claus is Coming to Town 14. The 12 Days of Christmas 15. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer 16. Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow 17. Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire 18. Joy to the World 19. It Came Upon a Midnight Clear 20. The First Noel 21. We Three Kings 22. I Saw Three Ships 23. Deck the Halls 24. All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth

Ready, Set, Winterize!

Since home heating makes up a significant portion of a utility bill, it is a sensible area of focus for energy efficiency improvements and savings. In fact, many of the actions you can take to be more energy efficient can pay for themselves over time. The Energy Education Council has tips to help you make energy efficient choices now in order to help you decrease your monthly utility bill this winter.



Make a habit of cleaning your furnace annually in the fall months. Removing a season of built-up debris (especially if you have pets) can reduce the risk of fire and make your furnace run more efficiently.

Also, remember to replace your furnace filter during the winter. Replacing a dirty filter will increase the air flow and make your home more energy efficient (with the added benefit of cleaner air in your home).

If it is time to replace the furnace itself, look for energy-efficient models. Furnaces with an Energy Star rating usually exceed federal standards for energy efficiency and can make choosing the right model that much easier. Installing an energy-efficient furnace can reduce your energy consumption and the cost of heating your house.

Check your home for air leaks. You can use the following method to check for them. On a windy day, hold a lit incense stick or smoke pen next to anywhere you think a leak may be (usually windows, doors, attic hatches, or any other opening to the outside). If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you have found an air leak.

There are a variety of actions you can take to plug the leak, depending on its location. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends the following steps:

- Caulk and add weather stripping to doors and windows that leak air.
- Use foam sealant on larger gaps around windows, baseboards, and other places where air may leak out.
- Replace door bottoms and thresholds with ones that have pliable sealing gaskets.
- Keep the fireplace flue damper tightly closed when not in use.

When you are away from home or sleeping, turning the thermostat down a few degrees in cold weather months can also help reduce your monthly utility bill. For an even more hassle-free option, install a programmable thermostat that can automatically make the adjustments for you.



For more information on energy efficiency as well as electrical safety, visit EnergyEdCouncil.org.

COURTESY OF YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

WIN A WEEK-LONG TRIP TO WASHINGTON D.C.



- Join 1,800 other students from across the country
- Meet Iowa's members of Congress
- Tour historic sights
- Take a boat cruise on the Potomac River
- Visit Smithsonian museums

- Make new friends
- Learn more about electric cooperatives
- Sharpen your leadership skills

NEXT YOUTH TOUR • June 14-20, 2019

**DEADLINE TO APPLY:
March 19, 2019**

Questions?

Contact Tami Kerwood:

800-696-6552

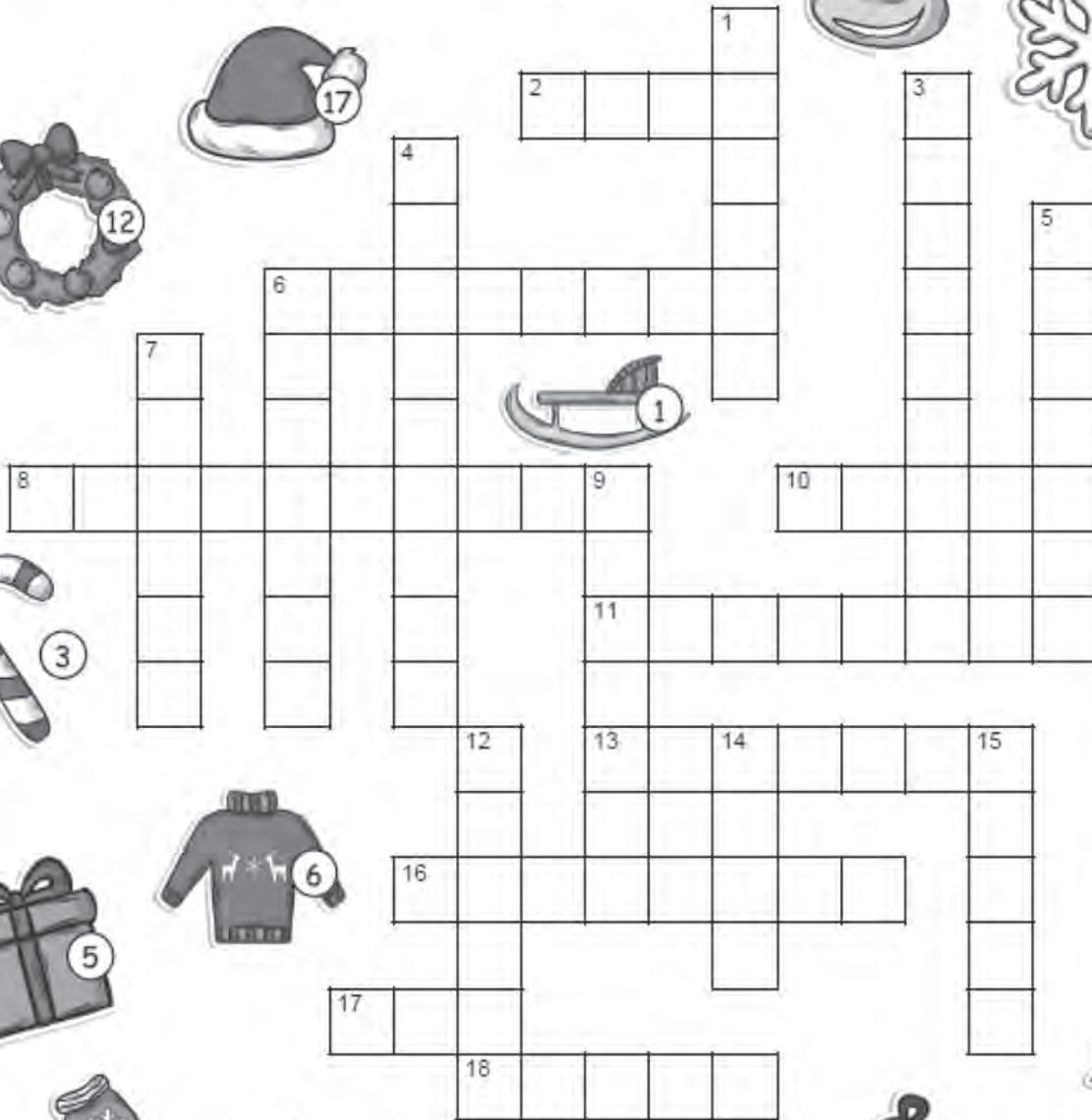
tkerwood@consumersenergy.coop

www.consumersenergy.coop

Click the Community tab, then Youth Tour.

Christmas Crossword

DIRECTIONS: Fill in the puzzle, using the pictures as clues.



1. STEIGH 2. BELL 3. CANDYCANE 4. SNOWFLAKE
 5. PRESENT 6. STOCKING [ACROSS] & SWEATER [DOWN]
 7. CANDLE 8. SANTACLAUS 9. SNOWMAN 10. SKATE
 11. ORNAMENT 12. WREATH 13. MITTENS 14. TREE
 15. SCARF 16. REINDEER 17. HAT 18. HOLLY

Wrapping up the Holidays

PREVENTING WINTER FIRES

Nearly half of home fires occur during the months of *December, January, and February*. Keep your home and family safe after the holidays with these *post-holiday year-end tips*.



25% of holiday fires are caused by decorations

zzz Never leave holiday decorations on while sleeping or away from home

210 home fires a year are caused by Christmas trees

Fires caused by **Christmas trees** are usually **deadlier** than other fires

Inspect and dispose of any **damaged decorations**

Decorations are **temporary**, remove them **after the holidays**

Separate and **label** indoor and outdoor decorations

Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters can prevent **50%** of home electrical fires

Store decorations in a **dry location** that is safely out of reach of children and pets

1st WEEK Remove, inspect and store all holiday decorations by the 1st week of January



www.facebook.com/ESF1.org

www.twitter.com/ESF1dotorg

www.youtube.com/ESF1dotorg

2019 SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

CONSUMERS ENERGY OFFERS
\$1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR
ACADEMIC AND LINEWORKER
STUDENTS.

Applications are available from the co-op office or on our Website:

www.consumersenergy.coop

Click on the Community tab, then Scholarship Program.

Contact Tami Kerwood at

800-696-6552 or tkerwood@consumersenergy.coop.

DEADLINE TO APPLY:
March 15, 2019





Office Hours
7:30 am — 4:00 pm
Monday through Friday

Contact Us

2074 242nd Street • Marshalltown, Iowa 50158
Phone: 641-752-1593 • Toll-Free: 800-696-6552
Fax: 641-752-5738 • E-mail: info@consumersenergy.coop
www.consumersenergy.coop



Directors:

Bill Hobson, President
Mark Wampler, Vice President
Pat VonAhnen, Secretary-Treasurer
Allan Armbrecht, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer
Denny Beckman
Terry Benskin
Arden Greiner
Tony Lem
Bob Meimann

If you have an idea for a topic for The Connection, please contact Kippen Glenney at 800-696-6552 or kglenney@consumersenergy.coop.

New Employee Spotlight

Mitch grew up in Mabel, MN, with his parents and siblings. Currently in Mitch's family are his parents, his brother, 2 sisters, 2 brothers-in-law, 1 nephew, and 2 dogs. Mitch and his family enjoy going out to eat, attending events such as concerts, and going on trips together. When not working, Mitch helps on his family's farm and rides his dirt bike.



Mitch Kuhn
Apprentice Lineman

WELCOME TO CONSUMERS ENERGY!

Did you buy anything this year that qualifies for an incentive?

If you purchased a new washing machine or equipment for your home or business in 2018, you may qualify for an incentive from Consumers Energy. Below are important reminders before filing incentive forms with the cooperative. All requirements must be met in order to receive the incentives offered.

- All incentives are due within six months of **purchase** date.
- Fill the forms out completely, and sign in all places indicated.
- Attach copies of receipts for purchases.
- In order to ensure prompt payment of the incentives, it is recommended to turn paperwork in as soon as possible in case of delays or missing information.



For more information on Consumers Energy's Incentive Program, call 800-696-5552 or visit www.consumersenergy.coop, then click on the *Incentives* button on the home page.