

WATTS Current

February 2007

For Our Members

2007 Youth Tour

What do Lois Kuchenbaker of Olin, Jim Michael of Delhi, Kenneth Stecher of Peosta, and Richard Schaefer of Bellevue have in common? These high school juniors were the first Youth Tour contest winners sent to Washington, D.C. in 1959 by Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative.

In 1957, Senator Lyndon Johnson, of Texas, addressed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Annual Meeting in Chicago and inspired the Youth Tour by declaring, "If one thing goes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents."

That summer, several Texas cooperatives sent groups of young people to Washington to work in Senator Johnson's office to learn more about government in action.

In 1958, Iowa's rural electric cooperatives sponsored the first group of 34 young people on a weeklong study tour of the nation's capital. The idea grew and other states sent busloads of young people throughout the summer.

Forty-nine years later, Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative is excited to announce that we are again sending three area youth to Washington, D.C, in 2007. Any student who is a junior in a high school located in Jones, Jackson, Dubuque or Delaware counties is eligible to enter the contest. A student who attends school outside the four-county area may enter the contest if their parents/legal guardians are members of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. Participants will be asked to write an essay on this year's topic, "The Value of Green". Perhaps the essay could research how we can save "green" money thru energy efficiency or how the use of "green" energy can save and protect our natural resources.

Three winners will each receive an all expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 9-14, where they will join hundreds of other high school students as they learn about our nation's capital and electric cooperatives. Two runner-up winners will each receive a \$300 cash honorarium.



L-R Nan Brehm, Nicole Soppe, Emily Althoff

To enter, submit a paper of 500 words or less on the exact title, "The Value of Green". All entries must be received by March 15, 2007. For more information or to request entry materials, call Terri at 800-927-6068 or email her at tleger@mvec.com. After preliminary judging, the five finalists will be asked to come to the Anamosa office the evening of April 10, 2007 for final judging.

Improve Your
Hearth and Home
Maquoketa Valley Electric
Cooperative
can help make your dreams come
true..... **PAGE 4**

"Our Energy Working for You"



Did You Know?

**Double-pane windows
with low-e coating on the
glass reflect heat back
into the room during the
winter months.**



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Limited Time Offer

The Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors has once again approved an expansion to our rebate program.

MVEC members will be given the opportunity to replace their old residential, water heaters with an energy efficient 50-gallon Rheem electric water heater for \$100. Our installers will remove your old water heater, place and install your new water heater on an insulated board and cover 6' of pipe leading away from the unit with insulation. All warranties are guaranteed through the manufacturer and installer. This program may not be used in conjunction with the 2007 incentive/rebate program.

If your residential water heater is 10 years old or older, call us today at 800-927-6068. We will take orders for new water heaters until April 15, 2007.

Water heater must be installed on Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative's system.

Due to size of unit, these water heaters are not mobile home compatible. Water heater measures 60" high with a 24" diameter. Adequate space must be available.

This is a limited supply offer. Our Water Heater Replacement Program will run from February 1, 2007 thru April 30, 2007 or until allocated funds are depleted.

Did You Know?

Replacing an old clothes washer with a new **ENERGY STAR® front loading model will reduce the need for hot water & reduce washing cost by 50%.**

Make
Very
Efficient
Choices

MVEC Can Light Up Your Life!

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative cares about energy conservation. In 2006, the light bulbs given away by MVEC, if used an average of 3 hours per day, will save 353,461.62 kWh annually. That is enough energy to power 23 households for an entire year!

This year, your Cooperative is offering a 5-pack of compact fluorescent bulbs to all members. Please stop in the Anamosa office to pick up yours. Help us light up your life and keep the environment green.

* Please note that CFL bulbs are not to be used in a light fixture that is operated by a standard dimmer switch.

Fall In Love With Long Distance Savings From Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative!

Calling family and friends across the United States has never saved families so much money. Call anytime, any day, same rate! Switch to Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative long distance program today!

- ♥ State to State only 6.7¢* per minute.
- ♥ In-state rate only 7.9¢* per minute.
- ♥ Toll-free only 7.9¢* per minute.
- ♥ Business rates available. Please call for details!
- ♥ You don't have to be a member to sign-up!

State-to-state long distance only **6.7¢** per minute

1-877-671-4004

*Taxes and other regulatory charges not included. Certain restrictions and early termination fees may apply. Rates stated are for Iowa. Please call for details. In partnership with TransWorld Network.



Keep Cozy with Electric Bedding

If you're sure you'll shiver if you turn your thermostat down at night, your bed might need a boost.

Throw an electric blanket or mattress pad on your bed so you can reap the savings – about 3% on your energy bill for each degree you lower the thermostat – without feeling cold.

First, dig your grandmother's heated blanket out from the back of the closet and throw it away. Newer models have better warming technology and built-in safety features, and they come in hip fabrics, textures and colors.

Most new electric blankets come with temperature sensors that automatically warm the coldest parts of your body, and they prevent the blanket from overheating. Electric blankets and mattress pads are less bulky than they were in the past, and their wires are hidden.

When buying electric bedding, look for a label from a trusted product safety testing organization. Don't leave the bedding on overnight unless it is specifically designed for it. Instead, turn your blanket or pad on about 20 minutes before bed and turn it off when you get in.

Electric blankets can burn the sensitive skin of the elderly and infants, so never leave the devices unattended with the heat on. Buy a product with an auto-off feature, and check it for defects or damage before plugging it in. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old are a fire hazard; do not use them.



Improve Your Hearth and Home

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative can help you make your heart's desire come true again this year. Would you like to replace old windows, improve your ceiling and/or wall insulation or replace those appliances 10 years old or older with new ENERGY STAR® appliances? Maybe you'd like to install a geothermal system, the most efficient heating and cooling system available on the market today. Remember, Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative will team up with your bank to offer the Interest Buy-down Loan Program. This program can help you make those energy efficient improvements to your existing home. Once approved for your loan, MVEC will buy-down 3% of the interest reducing your interest and payback time on the loan.

This program is being offered until December 31, 2007 or until funds are no longer available. Don't wait, if you're interested in taking advantage of this spectacular opportunity, contact us at 800-927-6068 for details. Your Cooperative's commitment to its members can help you make energy efficient improvements to your home.

* Restrictions apply including a loan limit of \$10,000 and improvements must meet ENERGY STAR® guidelines.





Anne Williams Promotes Starlighters

Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa, Iowa

Anne Williams entered upon the Jones County scene thirty-three years ago when she and her husband, Arthur, a psychotherapist, purchased a ten-acre old farmstead in the Fairview area.

Anne tells me, “I was born in West Virginia, first attending nursing school at West Virginia University but finishing with sociology. I loved learning and ended up with six minors. After graduation, I married, moved to Michigan, had two kids, and got a Master’s Degree in Family Life Education (no joke), all in three years. We wanted out of the metropolitan area, our criteria being to find a red brick house in the country. As a result, when we found this house which was exactly what we were looking for, we moved in, added another child, Margaret, after our move, to join Charles and Janet.”



Anne Williams

Since I met Anne at Starlighters Theatre as a very involved volunteer, my obvious question was, “How did you become involved in Starlighters?”

Anne, with that twinkle in her eyes, explained the steps involved. “The girls had been in dancing school since they were youngsters. I did costuming for dancing school and then when they were in the Starlighter production of ‘South Pacific’ in 1987, I did their costumes, which led to Mary Sue Vernon wanting help for costuming in the play, ‘Mame’, back in 1988. That’s how I got started. Mame had 30 costume

changes so I was also her ‘dresser’, even changing her right behind the set. Then later I acted in ‘Arsenic and Old Lace’ (one of the old ladies), ‘Can’t Take It With You’ and ‘Battle of the S’s’, which I really enjoyed as well as some others. Then I started stage-managing. I’ve been on the Starlighters Board for a long time and took over the box office task. When I started doing ministry type things, because of my schedule, I could no longer be in plays. It just wasn’t fair- if you can’t be there all the time for rehearsals.”

The pride in Starlighters became evident when she informed me of a brief history of Starlighters Theatre. “It was started in Monticello by Emil Prull and Ron Ketelson as well as Bob Furino of Anamosa. There were people interested in theater in Monticello and in Anamosa, each on their own, who eventually formed a group together. There was “no home”. The group would do shows in Monticello, Anamosa, Cascade and Independence, which meant moving everything to the location of the play. Then Starlighters II purchased the present building 18 years ago. Later they bought the two stories above the old Ament building, which was connected to the original building.”

When one peruses the chronology of the shows from 1975 to 2006, it totals 130 shows. This helps explain the awards received by Starlighters II: 1.) A young actress, Mary Beth Hanna, was best actress of the year for ‘Kindertransport’. 2.) Best Costuming Award for Virginia Danielson for the same show. 3.) Bob Furino, the technical guru, won an award for web page design 4.) Anne adds to the list, “Many kids have gone on to communication and are professionally employed because of the skills learned in Young Peoples Theater. Those who attend also exhibit the fruit of our efforts when they appear in all types of school functions. These kids learn by one-act presentations in their theater on the third floor. It’s an excellent way to discover theater.” Anne stressed philosophy differences of Starlighters II Theatre, “Education is part of our tradition. It’s the driving force of our mission. Very few community theaters do drama. But



we have a different audience.”

It's very obvious that Starlighters depends on volunteers. There are many who work on costuming, set design and building, painting, lighting, sound, marketing, coordinating & directing youth theatre, publicity, program preparation, box office management, make-up, refreshment coordinator, stage crew, music direction, choreography, acting etc. Would you believe that more than 1,700 individuals have donated over 1 million volunteer hours?

Starlighters II provides an opportunity for special needs persons to attend performances free of charge. Have your group contact the box office.

I've only covered highlights of the opportunities offered by Starlighters and its impact on the surrounding communities. The 2007 schedule includes: “Hollywood Arms” written by Carol Burnett and her late daughter, a play or part drama, part comedy and music that will be presented in March; “City of Angels” with comedy and music, which is scheduled in late July and early August (Wanna' audition June 3rd & 4th?); “Veronica's Room” with fantasy and reality thriller to be presented in late September; “The Season's Warmest Glow: a Holiday Spectacular” is self explanatory and will be presented in the beginning of December. (By the way, season tickets can be purchased at the box office – a powerful way of getting the message of Starlighters to your friends).

Anne continues, “Starlighters II Theatre has a dream, to build a new theatre. We did a feasibility study. Their strong advice was to build out on Highway 151. The Board is looking into possibilities. With the help of many volunteers and donors, the theatre hopes to continue to bring quality entertainment to a wide area, as well as provide a cultural education for youth for many more years. Since that dream has yet to become a reality, the facility still needs to be responsible for the current building which is in need of renovation and maintenance.”

Any contributions, large or small, are appreciated to make the dream come true. Anne Williams will be glad to send you a brochure or visit with you to provide more information. Anne will give tours of the theatre building. You can contact Anne by e-mail at star2inc.@n-connect.net or writing to Starlighters II Theatre, 136 E. Main Street, Anamosa, Iowa 52205 or calling the box office ant 319-462-4793. More information is also available on the Starlighter's web site, www.starlighters.org.

When the funds to build a new Starlighters Theatre becomes an actuality, the saying which you've all heard, “If you build it, they will come,” the non-profit all-volunteer group will provide even more opportunities for the seven-county area. Anne's enthusiasm is catching. She's quick to inform me that there are many other Board and guild members and supporters from a wide area who feel strongly about Starlighter's goals and are diligently working to widen their scope and welcome ALL to give of time, talents, and aptitude to share the attraction of being part of the Starlighters II Dream!



Starlighters Theatre



Healthy Weights, Healthy Hearts

Susan Uthoff, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist

Few American women understand their risk of heart disease. Even fewer know how easy it is to reduce cardiac risk, enhance overall health, and maintain a healthy weight with simple lifestyle changes.

More than one in five American women suffer from some type of cardiovascular disease. Although it is a common perception that breast cancer is the leading cause of death among women, more die from heart disease than breast, ovarian, uterine and lung cancers combined. Heart disease claims the lives of nearly 5000,000 American women every year.

The good news is that lifestyle changes can help women, and their families, reduce their risk of heart disease. The even better news is that these same simple steps are also the best way to reach and maintain a healthy weight. Two steps are taking more walks and eating more whole grains.

Getting fit and staying healthy can be as simple as putting one foot in front of the other. Research shows that walking 10,000 steps a day can help women manage their weight and lower cardiac risk factors, like blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Most American couch potatoes currently average about 2,000 to 3,000 steps per day, so there is plenty of room for improvement.

Eating more whole grains is another heart-healthy habit that makes delicious sense. Many studies confirm the benefits of whole grain foods like breads and cereals. The various nutrients in whole foods seem to be even more powerful when they are packaged together. Adapt the motto; make half your grains whole.

Give yourself a Valentine this year and begin taking some simple, effective steps towards a healthy heart – and a healthy weight. Heart-healthy habits will also energize your busy life. Fun physical activity and delicious whole foods can give you the get-up-and-go to do all the things you want to do.

Here is a recipe that is quick to prepare if you use frozen vegetables and boneless, skinless chicken.

Chicken and Brown Rice Skillet

Makes 4 servings

- 1/3-cup low-fat Italian salad dressing
- 1-lb. boneless skinless chicken or 2-lbs. with bones
- 2 tsp. dried oregano or Italian seasoning
- 4 cups cut fresh vegetables such as broccoli, green pepper or carrots; or 1 - 16 oz. bag frozen vegetables (thawed)
- 1 – 14.5 ounce can reduced sodium chicken broth or 1 ½ cups water
- 2 cups instant brown rice (uncooked)

If using fresh vegetables, rinse and cut them on a clean cutting board before preparing the chicken. If using frozen vegetables, put them in the microwave or run warm water over them in the sink and let drain. If not using boneless, skinless chicken, remove skin and bones. Cut chicken into bite size chunks.

Heat salad dressing in a large, deep skillet or frying pan on medium heat. Add chicken and sprinkle with oregano. Cook 5 minutes, stirring once. Add vegetable and broth or water. Simmer 5 minutes. Stir in rice. Cover. Simmer 5 minutes. Turn off heat and let stand, covered, 5 minutes or until the liquid is absorbed.

Did You Know?

If range-top burners and reflectors are kept clean they will reflect the heat better and save you energy.





Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative Provides Equal Opportunity

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity affirmative action employer. It shall be the policy of the Cooperative that all applicants for employment shall be considered and hired on the basis of merit, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, disability, or status as a veteran.

Third Party Notification

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative's third party notification plan allows our members to designate a third party to receive copies of any notices that might be received for discontinuation of electric service.

The purpose of this program is to limit the risk of a member having the electric service discontinued because of a breakdown in communication. Example, a member missed receiving the notice or received it but did not understand the implications.

Copies of the notifications may be sent to any third party; a relative, friend, clergyman, physician, landlord, agent or agency, etc., designated by the member. Even though the third party serves as an additional communication link with the member, the third party is not placed under any obligation to pay the electric bills. Third party notification does not defer or prevent discontinuing the electric service if payment is not made.

Although we will make every effort to provide third party notification, the member making this request agrees that Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative incurs no liability whatsoever for failure to do so for any reason.



Watts The Answer?

1. In _____, Iowa's rural electric cooperatives sponsored the first group of 34 young people on a week long study tour of the nation's capital.
2. When buying electric bedding, look for a label from a trusted product _____ testing organization.
3. Getting fit and staying healthy can be as simple as putting one _____ in front of the other.

Mail your answers in with your energy bill or email them to dreyhons@mvec.com.

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

Name:

Address:

Due to the fact that a December issue of Watts Current was not published, there are no January winners to announce.



**Our office
will be closed
Monday,
February 19th for
President's Day**

**Visit Our
Web Site**

at www.mvec.coop or

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Our Energy Working For You!



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Web Site: www.mvec.coop

After Hours Call Center

800-582-8998

After hours you may also call the service person
in your area to report outages or trouble on the line.

Anamosa, Dallas Paustign.....	319-462-4848
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Dubuque, Rick Olson.....	563-582-3668
Ferley, Jim Lehman.....	563-744-3005
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