

# Norris Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# News

## 2019 scholarships awarded

Fifty students applied for the 2019 scholarships offered by Norris Electric Cooperative. Paperwork was sent to all area high schools for seniors to complete. The forms were also available on the co-op website. A panel of judges reviewed the applications and, with much difficulty, narrowed down the list to three students.

Maycee Holtz, daughter of Angie Holtz of Bridgeport, Red Hill High School; Zane Padgett, son of Roderick Padgett of Saint Francisville, Lawrenceville High School and Jordyn Koester, daughter of Mathew and Beth Koester of Jewett, Cumberland High School each received a \$1,000 scholarship to further their education.

Tamara Phillips, co-op manager, said, "The employees and board members of Norris Electric Cooperative have always been involved in our local schools and communities.



Maycee Holtz



Zane Padgett



Jordyn Koester

We live here too, and like our members, have a vested interest in the future of our children. These scholarships are just a small way we can help make a difference for students like Maycee, Zane and Jordyn."

**Congratulations to all area graduates!**

## Grimes wins IEC memorial scholarship

Savannah Grimes, a 2019 graduate of Teutopolis High School, has been selected as a recipient of the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. Savannah is the daughter of Peter and Kathleen Grimes of Dieterich, who are members of Norris Electric Cooperative. Savannah was selected from among 316 applications.

The Thomas H. Moore IEC Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 1994 to provide financial assistance to deserving students. Applicants must be high school seniors who plan to enroll full-time at an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school in Illinois. Scholarships are based on grade point average, college

entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience and participation in school and community activities.

Each year, 12 \$2,000 scholarships are awarded to Illinois students who are sons or daughters of cooperative members, directors and/or employees. Six scholarships are given to students enrolling at a four-year institution; four are reserved for those enrolling in a two-year Illinois community college; one (the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship) is awarded to the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee or director; and the LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship is presented to a student to attend the lineworker's school conducted by the Association



of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College.

**Congratulations Savannah on winning a \$2,000 scholarship!**

# Stay back and stay safe

By Anne Prince, NRECA

**W**orking with electricity can be a dangerous job, especially for lineworkers. In fact, USA Today lists line repairers and installers among the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. That's why for Norris Electric Cooperative, safety is the number one priority. This is not empty talk. Over time, we have created a culture of putting our crews' safety and that of the community above all else.

Our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, our consumer-members. Yes, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to you, but equally important, we want our employees to return home safely to their loved ones. This requires ongoing focus, dedication, vigilance – and your help!

## **Distractions can be deadly.**

While we appreciate your kindness and interest in the work of our crews, we ask that you stay back and let them focus on their task at hand. Even routine work has the potential to be dangerous, and it takes their full attention and that of their colleagues, who are also responsible for the team's safety. Distractions can have deadly consequences. If a lineworker is on or near your property during a power outage, for vegetation management or for routine maintenance, please allow them ample room to work. These small accommodations help protect our crews— and you.

If you have a dog, try to keep it indoors while lineworkers are on or near your property. While most dogs are friendly, some are defensive of their territory and can't distinguish

between a burglar and a utility worker. Our crews work best without a pet “supervising” the job.

We recognize that for your family's safety, you want to make sure only authorized workers are on or near your property. You will recognize Norris employees by their shirts and the service trucks with our name and logo on them. You may also recognize our lineworkers because they live right here in our local community.

## **Slow down and move over.**

In addition to giving lineworkers some space while they are near your property, we also ask that you move over or slow down when approaching a utility vehicle on the side of the road. This is an extra barrier of safety to help those who help all of us.

**PLEASE MOVE OVER FOR EMERGENCY AND UTILITY CREWS**

**If you see police, firefighters, utility crews or other emergency personnel on the side of the road, please slow down and move over when possible.**

**Together, we can keep our crews safe.**



# Converting a dumb home to a smart one: Is it worth it?

Depending on your age, your techie factor or perhaps your interests, you may or may not be excited at the prospect of installing smart devices in your home. Becoming more and more a part of our vocabulary, having a “smart home” or even a semi-smart one can help make the many tasks we do each day less time consuming and more fun.

So what, exactly, are smart homes? They are houses that boast a number of interconnected devices and home appliances that perform certain actions or functions. Smart-home performance is often more efficient than the owner-operated kind, which could save money. Other high-tech, smarty-pants devices won't save much on your utility bills but can increase your home's cool factor.

Smart home automation allows you to program a variety of items ranging from a smart thermostat, lights, window blinds and even an

automatic pet-feeding bowl.

If all your devices are interconnected, you can orchestrate them from one place on your tablet or cell phone. And if you have voice-assisted technology, you can just use your words, and presto! — the coffee maker starts or your lights turn on or off.

In many upper-end markets, buyers can consider a new home that is already smart. For the rest of us, it can cost in the thousands to upgrade our entire home with multiple smart devices. If your house has not yet arrived on the smart scene, there are ways to increase your home's “smartness.”

Examples include smart thermostats, gizmos that track energy use such as individual smart plugs or whole-house monitoring trackers (so that you can improve your energy “fitness”), and smart lighting that includes motion sensors and phone app controls.



Smart appliances and devices can save money because in many cases they allow you to use less energy. They're also convenient, fun to use and can give you peace of mind. In short, some may be worth it in the long run.

And a new home that's certified smart or even super intelligent? We can all dream, can't we?

## Options for Upgrading to a Smarter Home

Don't have the budget to make all the devices in your home smart and interconnected? Consider these stand-alone items that could help you save money on your utility bill:

- **Smart thermostats** usually cost in the \$200 to \$300 range, and rebates are often available. With an estimated cost savings of around 10 percent on energy costs, this smart device could pay for itself in just a year or two depending on where you live and your indoor comfort preferences. (Of course actual savings depend on heating and cooling habits prior to smart thermostat installation and how you use it after the fact.)
- **Smart plugs** allow you to plug in an appliance and track its

energy use. Seeing how much energy your old garage refrigerator uses may motivate you to give it the ole heave ho. These intelligent plugs are relatively inexpensive compared to other smart gadgets (they cost around \$30 to \$50) and they also allow you to control an appliance or gadget remotely. This saves money on energy since you can turn things off remotely instead of leaving that light or coffee maker on all day.

- For a little more money, higher-end **energy monitoring devices** give real-time feedback on energy consumption and track your energy stats (kind of like a fitness tracker for your home); these typically cost

between \$200 and \$300 but can make a real difference in your energy bills if you make adjustments based on feedback.

- **Smart lighting** allows you to take advantage of higher tech motion sensors and dimmers, which means using less energy to light (or should we say not light) your home.
- **Smart bulbs** help save money because they are internet-capable LED bulbs that allow lighting to be controlled remotely. If your teen or spouse is always leaving the lights on in an empty house, you can turn them off from your phone.

**For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).**

Automatic Draft is one of our many options of payment methods. Each month, Norris Electric will automatically draft your checking or savings account the day before it is due. You will never have to worry about your bill again. If you would like to sign up for automatic draft, fill out the attached form and mail it in to the office...it is as simple as that!

**Norris Electric Cooperative  
Authorization Agreement for Direct Payments (ACH Debits)**

I (we) hereby authorize NORRIS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE to initiate debit entries to my (our) Checking Account indicated below at the depository financial institution named below, hereafter call DEPOSITORY, and to debit the same to such account. I (we) acknowledge that the origination of ACH transactions to my (our) account must comply with the provisions of U.S. law.

Depository  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Routing Account  
Number \_\_\_\_\_ Number \_\_\_\_\_

This authorization is to remain in full force and effect until NORRIS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE has received written notification from me (or either of us) of its termination in such time and in such manner as to afford NORRIS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE and DEPOSITORY a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

Name(s) as it appears  
on checking account \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Call Back Phone Number if Bank doesn't Approve \_\_\_\_\_  
**Please include a void check with this agreement.**

Office Use Only

Name on  
Electric Bill \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Acct  
Number \_\_\_\_\_ Cycle \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Cycle \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Cycle \_\_\_\_\_