

Norris Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

News

Norris Electric Cooperative

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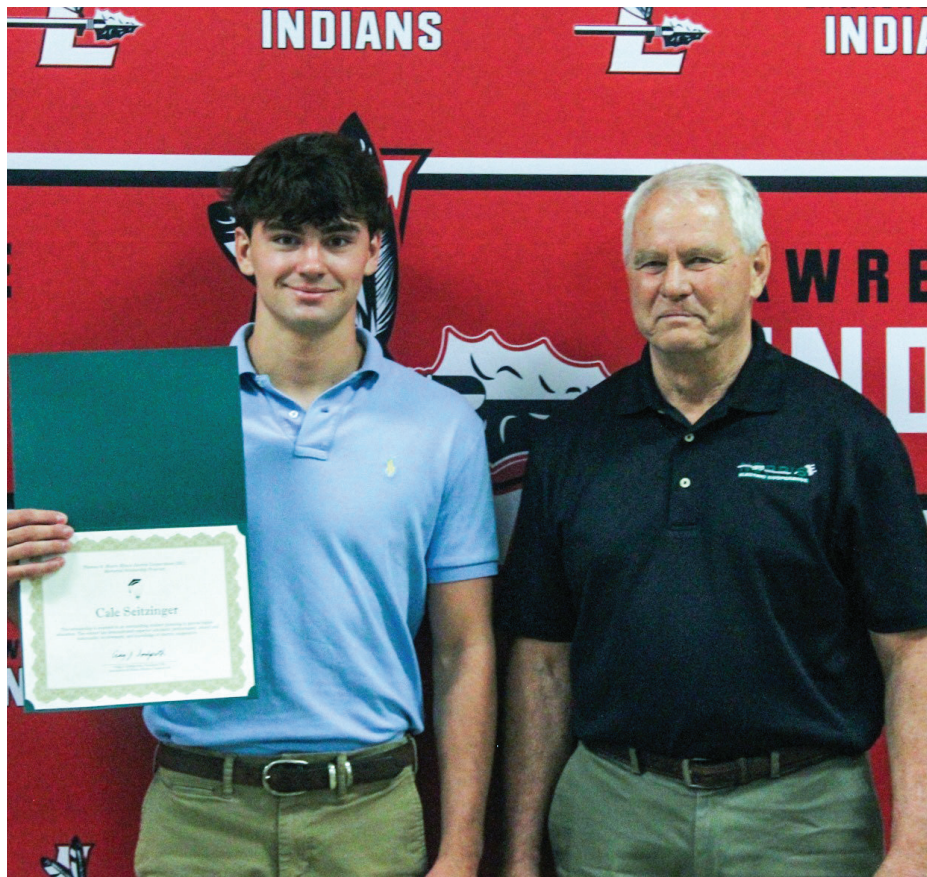
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Scholarship awarded

Norris Electric Cooperative is proud to announce that Cale Seitzinger of Lawrenceville High School is one of the 17 winners of this year's Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. Cale is the son of Ryan and Lisa Seitzinger. Cale competed for the scholarship with 278 other students from across the state. The \$3,000 awards are given each year to 17 children of electric co-op members, employees or directors. Cale will be recognized during the Association of Illinois

Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting on July 30, 2026, in Peoria.

Candidates were judged on grade-point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay demonstrating their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

Norris Electric Cooperative is honored to have a scholarship recipient and is excited to see how he will represent the community.



Making their mark

Local students represent Norris Electric Cooperative in D.C.

Students representing electric and telephone co-ops across the state recently returned home following Youth Tour, a tradition spanning decades that sends students to Washington, D.C., for an unforgettable weeklong trip.

This year, 49 students sponsored by 25 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives took part in the 2026 Youth Tour, held June 15-22, to visit the nation's capital for an immersive experience designed to educate and inspire the next generation of cooperative and civic leaders.

Norris Electric Cooperative sponsored 2 students within its service territory. These students included Lydia Lessley of Newton Community High School and Hunter Fitts of Oblong High School. They joined more than 2,000 students representing 44 states for the annual event.

"Electric and telephone cooperatives across the state are investing in the next generation through Youth Tour," said Brooke Gross, member services manager and facilitator of youth programs at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. "It gives students a chance to see our nation's history and government up close. Just as importantly, it helps them discover their own potential as leaders."

Central to the Youth Tour experience is the formation of a mock student-run cooperative called Chip 'n' Pop Co-op. Students began their journey at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives headquartered in Springfield, where they selected the co-op's board of directors. The board later interviewed and selected a co-op manager.

Throughout the week, the co-op handled snack sales, decision-making and budgeting — giving participants a hands-on look at how cooperatives operate. All students were members of the co-op.

Co-op leadership included Manager Josephine Meyer, Tri-County Electric Cooperative; Board Chair Elizabeth Hampton, Shelby Electric Cooperative; Vice Chair Brenna Hays, Wabash Communications CO-OP; Secretary-Treasurer Isabella Smith, Menard Electric Cooperative; and board members Iris Mount, SouthEastern Illinois Electric Cooperative, and Reece Whitley, Wayne-White Counties Electric Cooperative.

"Being part of this co-op helps students understand what makes a cooperative different," said Gross. "It's all about working together and making

decisions that serve everyone — not just one person or company."

Over the course of the week, students visited historic landmarks, including Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Capitol, where they had the opportunity to meet U.S. Senator Dick Durbin. They also strolled the National Mall and explored the Smithsonian museums.

Midweek, students took part in the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Day, where they joined hundreds of other teens from across the country to hear from national leaders and learn how to use their voices back home.

In addition, a student was selected to represent Illinois on the national Youth Leadership Council (YLC). Those interested in becoming Illinois' YLC representative filled out an application, and five were selected to be interviewed for the position.

Corn Belt Energy Corporation's Colton Leonard was selected as the 2026-2027 YLC representative for Illinois. He will represent the state at national and state meetings and events in the year ahead.

Continued on 18C ►

Making their mark continued from 18B

"It's so awesome that the co-ops are able to do this for us all," Leonard said. "Everyone comes from so many different perspectives, and getting to meet other individuals is just so empowering."

The week concluded with a farewell dinner and dance, and by the time students returned home on June 22, many said they felt changed by the experience.

"These students arrive in Washington, D.C., not knowing

what to expect," Gross said. "By the end of the trip, they've built friendships, expanded their perspectives and gained a better understanding of how they can make a difference in their communities."

High school students who live within the service area of Norris Electric Cooperative are eligible to participate in the annual program. To learn more about Youth Tour, go to youthtour.coop or facebook.com/ILYouthTour.



TIPS TO AVOID

ENERGY SCAMS



One of the best ways to protect yourself from online scams is by using strong passwords. While many people focus on complexity—adding symbols, numbers and capital letters—password length is equally important. A longer password or passphrase is generally harder for cybercriminals to crack than a short, complex one. Consider creating a memorable phrase made up of several unrelated words, and avoid using personal information like birthdays or pet names. Use a unique password for each account and enable multi-factor authentication when possible. Taking these simple steps can help keep your personal information and online accounts secure.

Source: CISA



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

August heat can put your air conditioner to the test, making it a great time to check your system's air filter. A dirty, clogged filter restricts airflow, forcing your cooling system to work harder than necessary to keep your home comfortable. That extra strain can reduce efficiency, increase energy use and contribute to unnecessary wear and tear on equipment. Inspect your filter monthly during periods of heavy air conditioner use and replace it if it appears dirty. A clean filter supports efficient operation and can even enhance indoor air quality—helping you stay cool and comfortable during the hottest days of summer.





LITHIUM-ION BATTERY SAFETY AT HOME

Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries power many everyday devices, including phones, laptops, e-bikes, tools and toys. These batteries store a lot of energy in a small space. Learn how to buy, charge, store and recycle batteries safely to help prevent fires at home.

Use lithium-ion batteries safely

- Buy batteries and chargers with a nationally recognized safety certification mark.
- Only use chargers made for your devices and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Don't leave devices charging for longer than is necessary.
- Charge on hard, flat surfaces. Do not charge on beds, couches or under pillows.
- Store batteries at room temperature and away from anything that can catch fire.
- Have repairs conducted by a qualified professional.

! Stop using a battery if it smells unusual, gets very hot, makes popping sounds or changes in shape or color.

Charge e-bike and e-scooter batteries safely

- Charge your battery outdoors in a flat, dry area away from direct sunlight.
- Do not use a battery or charger that is damaged.
- Store batteries at room temperature, away from hot or cold areas.
- Never charge in areas that may block exits or create tripping hazards.
- Keep batteries away from anything that can catch fire.

What if batteries have been exposed to floodwater?

- Do not charge lithium-ion batteries that have been submerged or show signs of damage.
- Place exposed devices or batteries in noncombustible containers. Store them outside, away from buildings until recycled.

Recycle batteries the right way

- Do not throw lithium-ion batteries in the trash or curbside recycling bins. Doing so can start fires.
- Recycle batteries and devices at an approved battery recycling location.
- Contact your local waste department or visit batterynetwork.org to find a recycling site near you.

! The best way to cool a lithium-ion battery that is overheating or on fire is to flood it with water or submerge it in water.

Source: National Fire Protection Association

To learn more, visit:

Safe
Electricity.org®