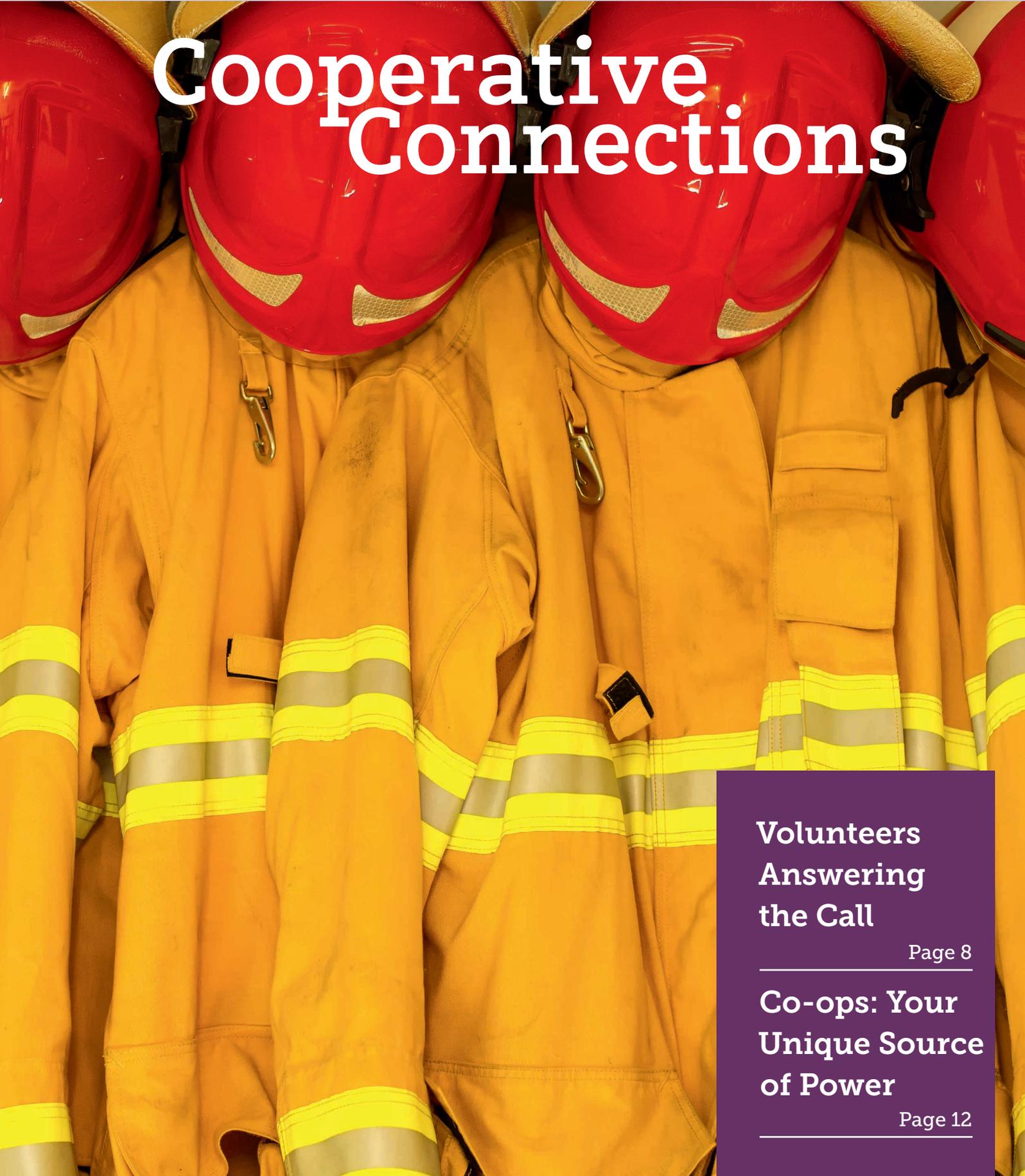


Cooperative Connections



**Volunteers
Answering
the Call**

Page 8

**Co-ops: Your
Unique Source
of Power**

Page 12



Tough
training.
Safe &
reliable
power.



Linemen play a critical role in our mission to provide reliable, affordable electricity. Tough training and a focus on safety is behind everything they do. Simulated field operations and emergency-response training are ways Basin Electric invests in their safety and in providing reliable power to you.



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South Dakota Electric Cooperative Connections

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October is National Co-op Month

By the Community, For the Community



Ed Anderson

SDREA General Manager
 ed.anderson@sdrea.coop

When you think of October, pumpkins, Halloween and beautiful fall foliage naturally come to mind. But October is notable for another reason – it’s National Co-op Month! This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including those in South Dakota and western Minnesota, celebrate who we are and more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. When the market declines to offer a product or service, or does so at a very high price, co-ops intervene to fill the need.

Similar to how electric cooperatives were built by members who came together to bring electricity to our community, cooperatives are conveners for the common good. Your electric co-op exists to provide

safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. Your co-op’s leadership team and employees live in the communities they serve. Local boards of directors, who help set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected to the position by neighbors like you.

We know our members (that’s you!) have a valuable perspective. That’s why we are continually seeking your input. Whether through community events, our social media channels or the annual meeting, we want to hear from you.

Our close connection to the community ensures we get a firsthand perspective on local priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as community solar programs, equipment and technology upgrades and electric vehicle programs.

Another feature that sets our co-op apart from a traditional utility is one of our core principles, “Concern for Community.” We partner with local organizations on worthy programs. We participate in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, where we take our community’s brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action.

Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

We hope you will think of your local electric cooperative as more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities so that we can better serve you – because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community.

October is Fire Prevention Month

The U.S. Fire Administration reports that fires kill more than 4,000 Americans each year and approximately injure 20,000 more. U.S. fire departments respond to nearly 2 million fires each year, with three-quarters of them occurring in residences.

A home is often referred to as a safe haven. This month, make sure your home is protected from (and your family is prepared for) a fire. Here are 10 simple tips to help you avoid fires and reduce the risk of injury should one occur:

- **Smoke Alarms** – Smoke alarms are widely available and inexpensive. Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home and test it monthly.
- **Prevent Electrical Fires** – Don't overload circuits or extension cords. Cords and wires should never be placed under rugs or in high traffic areas. Avoid loose electrical connections by checking the fit of the plug in the wall outlet. If the plug loosely fits, inspect the outlet right away. A poor connection between the plug and the outlet can cause overheating and can start a fire in minutes.
- **Keep Plugs Safe** – Unplug all appliances when not in use. Follow the manufacturer's safety precautions and use your senses to spot any potential disasters. If a plug is overheating, smells strange, shorts out or sparks – the appliance should be shut off immediately, then replaced or repaired.
- **Alternate Heaters** – Make sure there is ample space around any portable heating unit. Anything that could catch fire should be at least three feet away. Inspect your chimney annually and use fire screens to help keep any fires in the fireplace.
- **Fire Safety Sprinklers** – When combined with working smoke alarms, home fire sprinklers greatly increase your chance of surviving a fire.
- **Create An Escape Route** – Create and practice your escape plan with your family from every room in the house. Practice staying low to the floor and checking for hot doors using the back of your hand.
- **Position Appliances Carefully** – Try to keep TV sets, kitchen and other appliances away from windows with curtains. If there is a wiring problem, curtains can spread a fire quickly. Additionally, keeping your appliances away from water sources (like rain coming in from windows) can help prevent wiring damage which can lead to a fire.
- **Clean Dryer Vents** – Clothes dryers often start fires in residential areas. Clean the lint filter every time you start a load of clothes to dry or after the drying cycle is complete. Make sure your exhaust duct is made of metal tubing and not plastic or foil. Clean the exhaust duct with a good quality dryer vent brush to prevent blockage and check for lint build up behind the dryer at least twice a year.
- **Be Careful Around the Holidays** – If you fill your home with lights during the holiday season, keep them away from anything that can easily catch fire. Check all of your lights prior to stringing them up and dispose of anything with frayed or exposed wires.
- **Conduct Regular Inspections** – Check all of your electronic equipment and wiring at least once a month.

Following these simple tips could potentially save your life or the life of a loved one. Pass this list on to your friends and family and make this fire prevention month count!

Source: quickenloans.com



October is National
Co-op Month.



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Be careful of snow cavities over electrical boxes."

Avery Bauman, 10 years old

Avery is the daughter of Pete and Bridget Bauman, Watertown, S.D. They are members of Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative, Watertown.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.



Perfect Pasta

Angel Hair Pasta with Italian Sausage and Herbs

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 lb. angel hair pasta | 1 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Parsley, Flat Leaf |
| 1 lb. sweet Italian sausage, casing removed | 1/2 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Garlic Powder |
| 2 T. olive oil | 1/2 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Fennel Seed |
| 1-1/2 cups chopped red onion | 1/2 tsp. Sicilian sea salt |
| 8 oz. mushrooms, quartered | 1/2 cup grated Romano cheese |
| 1 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Basil | |
| 1 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Italian Seasoning | |

Cook pasta as directed on package. Drain well. Meanwhile, break up sausage in large skillet. Cook on medium-high heat 5 to 6 minutes. Remove sausage; drain fat. Rinse skillet and wipe clean. Heat oil in same skillet on medium heat. Add onions, mushrooms and seasonings; cook and stir 5 minutes. Add cooked sausage; cook and stir 5 minutes longer. Place pasta in large serving bowl. Add sausage mixture and cheese; toss to coat well. Serve with additional cheese, if desired. Makes 12 (1 cup) servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 281, Total Fat 13g, Cholesterol 26mg, Sodium 374mg, Protein 10g, Carbohydrates 31g, Dietary Fiber 2g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Taco Pasta Salad

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1-1/2 lbs. ground beef, cooked and drained | 1 pint grape tomatoes, sliced in half |
| 4 T. taco seasoning | 3 cups shredded lettuce |
| 1 lb. rotini, cooked, drained and rinsed with cold water | 2 cups shredded cheese |
| 1/2 small onion, minced (optional) | 1 bottle Catalina dressing |
| | 1 bag nacho cheese tortilla chips, crushed |

Stir together hamburger and taco seasoning. In a large bowl, combine hamburger, pasta, onions, tomatoes, lettuce and cheese. Mix in dressing. Stir in chips. Serve immediately.

Dawn Leibel, Glencross, SD

Smoky BBQ Chicken Salad

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 box Betty Crocker™ Suddenly Salad® Ranch and Bacon Pasta Salad Mix | 1/4 cup barbecue sauce |
| 1/2 cup frozen corn | 1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes, halved |
| 1/4 cup mayonnaise | 12 butter lettuce leaves, optional |
| 2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken | 1/4 cup chopped green onions |

Empty pasta mix into a 3-quart saucepan 2/3 full of boiling water. Gently boil uncovered 12 minutes, stirring occasionally, adding corn during last 2 minutes of cooking. Drain pasta and corn; rinse with cold water. Shake to drain well. In large bowl, stir together seasoning mix, mayonnaise and barbecue sauce. Stir in pasta, corn, chicken and tomatoes. Line serving plate with lettuce leaves. Top with salad mixture; sprinkle with green onions. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate 1 hour to chill.

Jean Osterman, Wheaton, MN

Cheating Cheeseburger Macaroni

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1-1/2 lbs. ground beef | 1 can cheddar cheese soup |
| 1/4 cup chopped onion | 1 cup water |
| 1/2 pkg. baby carrots, finely chopped | 1/4 cup sour cream, optional |
| 1 can cream of chicken soup | 2 cups macaroni, cooked and drained |

Cook ground beef and onion; drain. Add carrots and cook while macaroni is cooking. Mix soups, water and sour cream; add to hamburger. Simmer over medium heat for a few minutes. Stir in pasta. Serve immediately.

Becki Hauser, Tripp, SD

Please send your favorite slow cooker, holiday or soup recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3).

Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2019.

All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Is a Heat Pump Right for My Home?



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

Dear Pat: My cousin just installed a heat pump, so now she uses fan units placed on the walls instead of her baseboard heaters. My neighbors just got a heat pump too, but they replaced their furnace and air conditioner, so it blows through the old furnace vents. Could one of these options work for my home as well? – Anke

Dear Anke: The short answer is yes. The two most common types of heat pumps, which you've just described, are often good options.

It sounds like your cousin replaced her electric baseboard heaters with a ductless mini-split heat pump. This is a good solution because older baseboard heaters are typically inefficient. The mini-split system has a compressor outside that is connected with refrigerant lines to the blowers inside. A ductless system can serve up to four zones, so it can heat a small home or can be used in combination with another heating system in a larger home. The ductless mini-split system is a great option for a home that does not have a duct system, or if the existing duct system is inefficient or poorly designed.

Your neighbors most likely replaced their central heating and air conditioning (HVAC) system with a central system air-source heat pump. This system's compressor is also located outside, but in this case, it's connected to the home's duct system to distribute cold or warm air through the existing vents. The central system heat pump can be an efficient option if your existing duct system is in good shape.

A less common type of heat pump is a ground-source, or geothermal, system that taps into heat that's naturally underground year-round. Geothermal systems are typically an expensive investment, but they are quite efficient.

Heat pumps are typically much more efficient than electric resistance systems and can be a solid solution in a wide variety of circumstances. They can be the right choice in a manufactured home, a construction addition or as a replacement for a broken or inefficient HVAC system. They're also becoming more popular for central heating in new construction.

Here's how heat pumps work: During winter, they pull warmth from the outside air into the home; during summer, the process is reversed and warmth from inside the home is exhausted outside. It may seem odd that warmth can be found in outdoor winter air, but heat pumps are amazing inventions. They've become much more efficient in recent years to the point that they can be effective year-round in most cold winter climates.

The efficiency of a heat pump is measured in two ways: The HSPF (Heating Season Performance Factor) rating measures heating efficiency and the SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) rating measures cooling efficiency. The minimum ratings for a heat pump are HSPF 8.2 and SEER 14. Heat pumps with the ENERGY STAR® rating are significantly more efficient than the minimum standard.

Here's how to know if you should consider a heat pump for your home:

- 1. Want to save money?** If you are currently heating your home with electric resistance or propane or heating oil and you seal air leaks and install additional insulation, installing an efficient heat pump could reduce your heating costs by up to 75 percent. And if you are currently cooling your home with an old A/C system or window A/C units, you could also cut your cooling costs.
- 2. Want heating and cooling flexibility?** A ductless mini-split heat pump can serve up to four individual zones or rooms and each room's temperature can be controlled separately.
- 3. Want safer heat?** Heat pumps eliminate the need to burn fuels inside your home and exhaust combustion gases. There's no risk of carbon monoxide or gas leaks that can come from flaws in a system that runs on natural gas, propane, fuel oil or wood.

Before you consider installing any new heating and cooling system for your home, I strongly suggest you conduct an energy audit. Your electric co-op may provide energy audits or be able to recommend a local professional.

As with any major home improvements or installations, be sure to get a few quotes and references before committing or making any payments.

Heat pumps are typically much more efficient than electric resistance systems and can be a solid solution in a wide variety of circumstances.

State Veterans Cemetery Breaks Ground

Construction on the new South Dakota State Veterans Cemetery near Sioux Falls got underway this fall with an official groundbreaking Sept. 9.

The cemetery will be located on 13 acres of land, located just north of the I-229 and I-90 interchange off of Split Up Creek Road and 477th Ave.



Lt. Gov. Larry Rhoden, sixth from left, and Gov. Kristi Noem, were among officials who broke ground for the new state veteran's cemetery near Sioux Falls.

And, just days ahead of the groundbreaking, South Dakota's electric cooperatives were able to contribute \$47,500 to the project.

In August, The South Dakota Department of

Veterans Affairs was awarded a \$6.9 million grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration for the establishment of South Dakota State Veterans Cemetery in Sioux Falls.

"This new cemetery will give tens of thousands of Veterans and their families the peace of mind that comes from knowing they will have a burial option close to home," said Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves in announcing the grant.

This grant will fund the construction of 610 pre-placed crypts, 999 cremains gravesites, 660 columbarium niches, 50 memorial wall markers, a main entrance, an avenue of flags, an administration building, a maintenance facility, roads, an assembly area, a committal shelter, scatter burial area, a memorial walkway, landscaping and supporting infrastructure. The project will develop approximately 12.9 acres and will enable the cemetery to serve approximately 43,000 Veterans, their spouses and eligible family members. The VA Veterans Cemetery Grants Program (VCGP) complements the 136 VA national cemeteries across the country. Since its inception 41 years ago, the VCGP has awarded grants totaling more than \$817 million to establish, expand, improve or operate and maintain 115 state and tribal Veterans cemeteries. These VA-funded cemeteries provided more than 39,000 burials in 2018.

Ribbon Cutting Held

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the new Onida, S.D., substation on Aug. 23. The substation is owned by East River Electric Power Cooperative and serves the member-owners of Oahe Electric Cooperative, including the city of Onida and Ringneck Energy ethanol plant.

During the event, representatives from East River Electric, Oahe Electric, Ringneck Energy, the Onida Area Development Corporation and the Onida Chamber of Commerce discussed the benefits that the new substation brings to the area. The event concluded with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

"We are excited for the enhanced capabilities of this new facility in meeting the growing energy needs of Onida, Ringneck Energy and the surrounding area," said East River Chief Operations Officer Mark Hoffman. "This new substation will have the ability to serve new growth in the area for years to come, just further enhancing the region's economic development opportunities. East River and Oahe Electric are strong supporters of the ethanol industry and are pleased to work with Ringneck Energy to meet their power needs."

The new substation replaces a substation that was built in the 1970s and brings increased capacity to reliably meet the area's current and future energy needs. Construction began in September 2016 and was completed in fall 2018.

"We appreciate the great working relationships with East River Electric, Ringneck Energy and the City of Onida," said Oahe Electric General Manager Rodney Haag. "This new substation has improved the reliability of Oahe Electric's energy delivery system to our member-owners."

In addition to the Onida substation, East River Electric is currently planning several other facilities in the area. These facilities include a new substation west of Blunt in Hughes County that is currently under construction, plans for a new substation north of Pierre and a rebuild of a current substation west of Onida. These projects will improve reliability and provide additional capacity for the region's growing energy needs.



East River Electric Business Development Director Mike Jaspers (left), East River Electric Chief Member and Public Relations Officer Chris Studer, East River Electric Chief Operations Officer Mark Hoffman, Oahe Electric General Manager Rodney Haag, Onida Chamber of Commerce President Marileen Tilberg, Onida Area Development Corporation President Brian Ring, Onida Chamber of Commerce Member Leann Weischedel, Ringneck Energy CEO Walt Wendland and Oahe Electric Board President Ken Gillaspie participate in the ribbon cutting for the new substation.



Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association Journeyman Lineman Clint Olson is a member of the Olivia Area Technical Rescue Team. Olson is in the center front holding the dalmation dog.

HELPING OUT AT NEW HEIGHTS AND TIGHT SPACES

Co-op Employees Among Local Emergency Responders

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

As the chief of the Olivia, Minn., Area Technical Response Team, Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association journeyman lineman Clint Olson combines some of his experience with the Danube, Minn.-based cooperative with his 15 years as a member of the Olivia Fire Department.

Olson joined the OFD after being asked repeatedly by then-members of the volunteer fire department.

“To be honest, the main reason for joining the OFD was so I wouldn’t be bugged anymore by past firemen asking me to join every time I saw them in public. Looking back, I am glad I did,” Olson said.

Olson was tapped to lead the newly formed rescue team which was established in January 2019. The team is specialized in high-angle and low-angle (confined space) rescues.

The team is made up of firemen all from different towns in



Many rural and small town fire departments throughout the Dakotas and western Minnesota rely on volunteers to fill the ranks of the much-needed service.

Renville County, Minn. The county is home of several large ag industries, such as the Southern Minnesota Sugar Beet Cooperative and several large seed plants along with large bin set ups.

“We saw a need for the Technical Response Team years ago and never could spark enough interest from the other towns in the county for funding. Finally, Olivia stepped up and funded the start up,” said Olson. “We firemen have trained in the past with some high-angle rescue trainings but knew it wasn’t proper and knew it’s a need being in a rural community.”

Right after the team was established, the first call came in of a conscious victim who fell 40 feet down into a concrete seed bin.

“There was no access from the bottom. After assessing the situation, we were able to get the victim up using ropes and mechanical advantage systems which consists of pulleys and anchor points through a small four foot by four foot access door. From there, we were able to rig a rope system on the catwalk outside in order to lower the victim to the ground 75 feet below,” Olson said.

“Looking back, this is the first rescue like this in our area and we are glad we had the

training and equipment to complete the task,” Olson said.

There are multiple regular trainings and extra trainings that go along with the fire department and the Olivia Area Technical

“Being in a smaller agriculture and rural community, fire departments in our area are struggling to fill positions, whether its lack of interest or time.”

rescue team, Olson said. The fire department trains twice a month while the OATRT team trains once a month.

Olson notes there is a need for more volunteers in fire departments and ambulance crews.

“Being in a smaller agriculture and rural community, fire departments in our area, are struggling to fill positions, whether its lack of interest or time,” Olson said.

To try to maximize departments’ effectiveness, departments have been training with our surrounding departments and assisting in mutual aid calls.

“I highly recommend if you can join a local EMS in your community the benefits are self-rewarding. The knowledge you learn can be beneficial for you to share with your coworkers also no matter what field you are in.”

The knowledge base that co-op linemen bring to a volunteer fire department can be beneficial, Olson noted, especially when it comes to electrical hazard recognition.

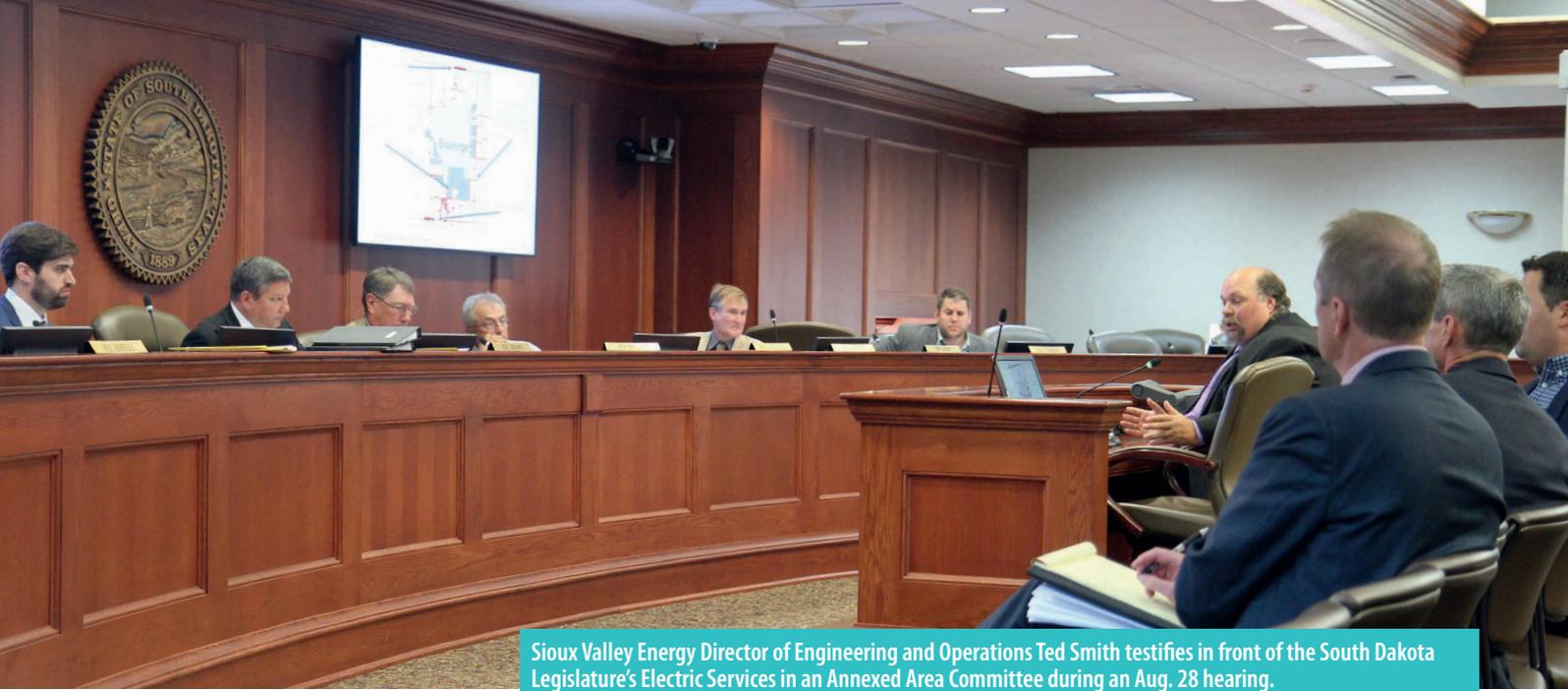
“Multiple trainings have been done internally with our department on what action to take if a live wire is involved and also know where the disconnects are located and types of disconnects need to be opened in order to isolate before the utility company arrives,” Olson said.

Olson is one of three employees of Renville-Sibley who are members of their fire department or technical team. Fellow journeymen linemen Brayden Fischer and Brandon Ochs are volunteer firefighters

“I describe it has a brotherhood similar as a brotherhood at your electric cooperative,” Olson said.



RSCPA Journeyman Lineman Brayden Fischer is in the back row, fourth from right, while Journeyman Lineman Clint Olson is second from the left in the first row. Not pictured is Journeyman Lineman Brandon Ochs.



Sioux Valley Energy Director of Engineering and Operations Ted Smith testifies in front of the South Dakota Legislature's Electric Services in an Annexed Area Committee during an Aug. 28 hearing.

SEARCHING FOR SUMMER STUDY SOLUTIONS

Electric Co-ops Seek to Protect Service Territory Boundaries During South Dakota Legislative Summer Study Hearings

Ben Dunsmoor

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South Dakota's electric cooperatives are working to find solutions and bring fairness to the state law that governs electric service territory.

The South Dakota Legislature's Electric Services in an Annexed Area Interim Study Committee ('SB 66 Interim Committee') has met twice during the summer to listen to testimony and search for answers regarding an exception in state law which allows municipal electric systems to take the service territory of other utilities in annexed areas. The interim legislative committee, also known as a summer study committee, was formed to examine the issue following the 2019 legislative session.

"We believe that, when given a chance, summer studies can be an effective means of addressing complex subjects and produce workable solutions," South Dakota Rural Electric Association General Manager Ed Anderson said.

There are three types of electric service providers in the state. South Dakota is served by electric cooperatives, investor-owned utilities (i.e. Northwestern Energy, Xcel



Representatives from several South Dakota co-ops attended the August 28 hearing of the Electric Services in an Annexed Area Committee in Pierre.

Energy, and Black Hills Energy), and 35 cities which operate their own municipal electric systems. Electric cooperatives and investor-owned utilities must collaborate and agree upon changes in service territory boundaries established by the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (PUC). However, current law allows the 35 municipal governments with electric utilities to expand their service boundaries into annexed areas and take territory from incumbent electric providers. Electric cooperatives argue that this exception for municipal electric systems favors the government taking of private enterprise.

“This issue is not about annexation. Co-ops support annexation,” Anderson said. “However, annexation and the taking of service territory of an incumbent utility are not tied together. There are too many examples of successful growth without a municipal electric system to think otherwise. The continued vitality of cities large and small across South Dakota is important to electric cooperatives.”

SDREA attempted to change this exception during the 2019 South Dakota Legislative Session, but the issue was referred to a summer study through the passage of Senate Bill 66 (SB 66). The first hearing of the committee was held at the state capitol in Pierre on July 25. Co-op managers from Sioux Valley Energy,

Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative, and Clay-Union Electric testified in front of the committee during the July 25 hearing. Those three co-ops have experienced the issue firsthand because the communities of Watertown, Brookings, Madison, and Vermillion all operate their own municipal electric systems.

The second hearing of the committee was held on August 28. During the August meeting, representatives of the electric cooperatives and investor-owned utilities presented responses to a series of research questions that were posed by the SB 66 Interim Committee. The municipal utilities presented testimony during the second hearing and time was also allowed for public testimony. The meeting ended with a discussion regarding possible solutions to the issue of territorial takings by municipal utilities.

“All parties are in agreement that we have very, very good high-quality electric service,” SB 66 Interim Committee Chairman Sen. Alan Solano (R-Rapid City) said during the August 28 hearing. “Good people in South Dakota can sit down and work through a lot of things.”

Solano would like all sides of the issue to bring forward potential solutions to the problems that have been caused by the inequities in current state law. The

SB 66 Interim Committee will review the solutions and work toward a formal legislative recommendation in October or November. Any final recommendation that is adopted by the SB 66 Interim Committee will be considered by the full legislature when lawmakers return to Pierre for the 2020 South Dakota Legislative Session in January.

“We believe the important work of the committee and the integrity of the process is best served when participants on all sides of an issue are committed to working together to find solutions,” Anderson said. “We are committed to working with the committee to find a sustainable solution to a real problem.”

The SB 66 Interim Committee is chaired by Sen. Solano with Rep. Thomas Brunner (R-Nisland) serving as co-chair of the panel. Sen. Lee Schoenbeck (R-Watertown), Sen. Susan Wismer (D-Britton), Sen. Jordan Youngberg (R-Chester), Rep. Shawn Bordeaux (D-Mission), Rep. Kirk Chaffee (R-Whitewood), Rep. Spencer Gosch (R-Glenham), and Rep. Tim Reed (R-Brookings) also serve on the committee.

The committee will hold a third meeting to discuss potential solutions and recommendations later this fall. A date has yet to be determined.



East River Electric Power Cooperative CEO/General Manager Tom Boyko (far right) listens to testimony with other co-op representatives during the August 28 hearing in Pierre.

Your Unique Source of Power

Paul Wesslund

NRECA

Electric cooperatives belong to the people they serve – that would be you and your neighbors.

You have a unique story to tell about yourself because you are part of an electric cooperative community. But if you're like a lot of electric co-op members, you might not feel you know enough to tell that story well. So, here's some help.

About one in 10 Americans receives their power the way you do, from an electric co-op. Electric co-ops belong to the people they serve – that would be you and your neighbors. Electric co-ops were first developed in the 1930s because city utilities, owned by investors wanting to make a profit, ignored rural America – they didn't think there was enough money to be earned there. So, people in rural communities met with each other and formed their own local electric co-ops.

October is National Co-op Month, the time of year when cooperatives across the country celebrate the many ways co-ops are unique and more importantly, the members they serve. This year, we're focusing on our ties to the local community. Your co-op was built by the community, for the community, so let's take a look at what that means for you, the members of the co-op.

Your co-op is here to stay. Since the co-op belongs to the members it serves with safe, reliable, affordable energy, it's not going to move out of the country, or even across the state. It's staying right where it is.

Your co-op knows you. No two co-ops are alike. Across the country, there are more than 900 electric co-ops. Because each of those co-ops belongs to the people who live there, the co-op listens to the community they are a part of. Whether it's

October is National Co-op Month.



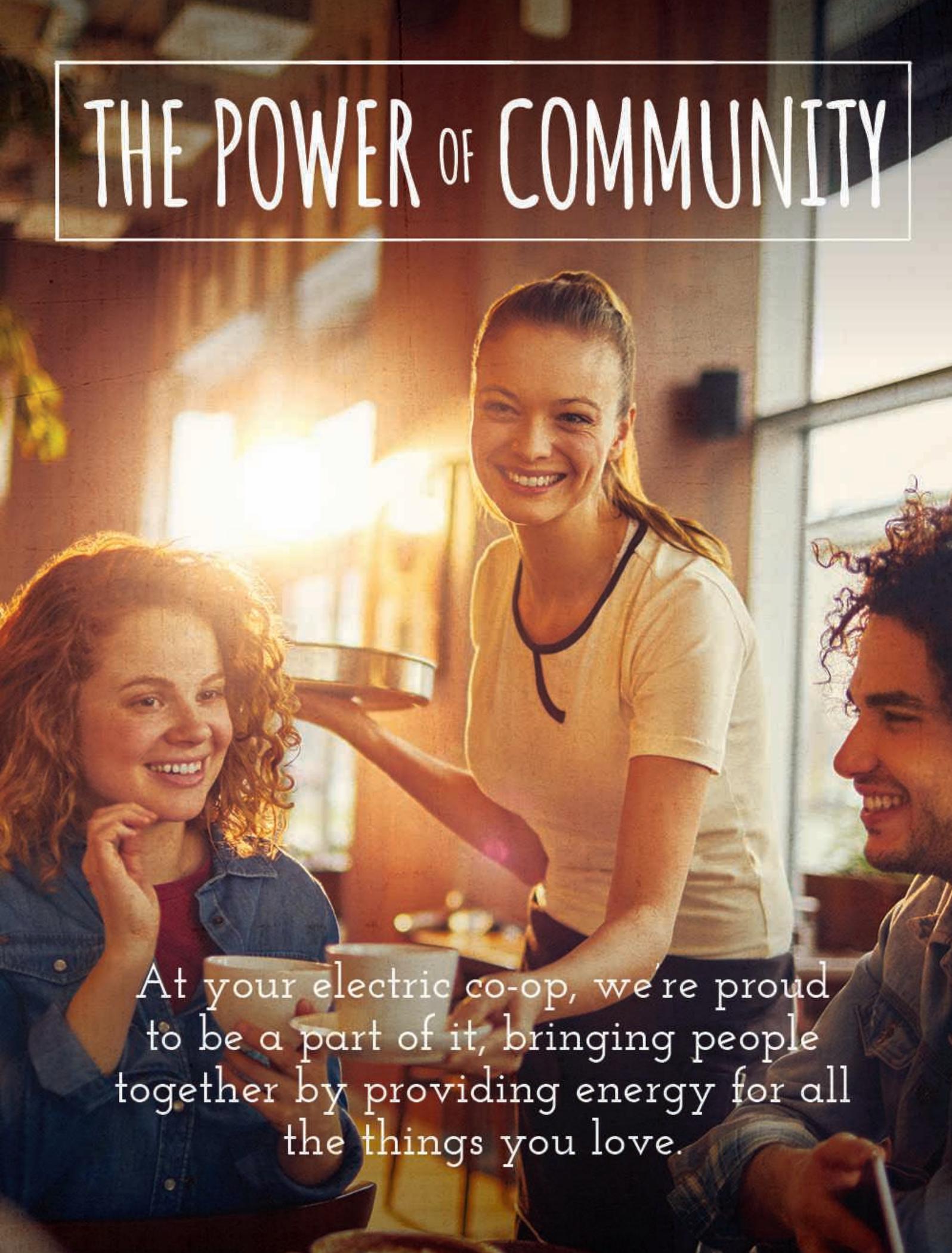
Co-op lines are shaped by you, the members we serve, right here in our local community.

working with the latest energy efficiency technologies or keeping the electric grid safe and secure, your electric co-op can offer solutions that make the most sense locally.

Your co-op cares about your community. The co-op's top priority is to power the community. It is not owned by far-away, or even nearby, investors looking only for a good return on their money. Your co-op also partners with local organizations on community events, fundraisers, youth programs and more. We're your friends and neighbors. By investing in the local community, your electric co-op supports economic development and prosperity for all, right here at home.

And these are just a few ways you and your electric co-op are one of a kind.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

A warm, golden-hour photograph of three people in a cafe. A woman in a white t-shirt stands behind a counter, smiling as she serves coffee. Two other people, a woman with curly hair and a man with curly hair, are seated at a table, smiling and looking towards the server. The scene is lit with soft, warm light from large windows in the background.

At your electric co-op, we're proud to be a part of it, bringing people together by providing energy for all the things you love.



Spooky displays of all types are part of the annual Grey Goose Pumpkin Display near Pierre.

PIERRE FAMILY'S DISPLAY IS SPOOKTACULAR

Hundreds of Carved Pumpkins at Center Stage

Brenda Kleinjan

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A Pierre, S.D.,-area family has taken a fall tradition of pumpkin carving to new heights, and widths, with their ever-expanding pumpkin display.

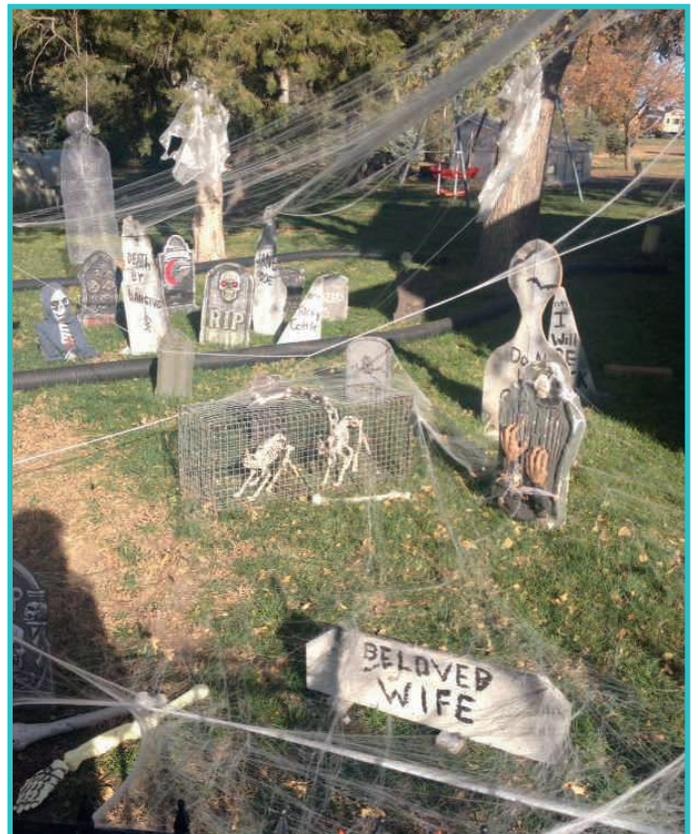
Since 2005, the Grambihler family has been turning its farm north of Pierre into a Halloween extravaganza. The display is typically open the last 10 days of October, concluding on Halloween.

The family is involved in all aspects of the process, including growing the hundreds of pumpkins that are carved into a variety of jack-o-lanterns.

The display can be seen from Gray Goose Road just north of Pierre. The best time to visit is in the evening, after the sun is setting.

All the pumpkins put on display are grown on the Grambihler farm and started right from seed. The different kinds of pumpkins raised are quite extensive and have many different shapes and sizes. The final number will be known when they are put out on display.

In preparation of the display, the Grambihler crew picks the good from the bad pumpkins. The week before they are set up, the pumpkins are gutted and set aside. As soon as all the pumpkins are cleaned, they are ready to be carved. Typically, the carving process starts three days before they are to be set out on display.





Frankie will be making his debut in the 2019 Grey Goose Pumpkin Display near Pierre.

The Grambihler family and other volunteers work many hours with the pumpkins. The display is all set up the week before Halloween. Creating the display generally takes all day, from setting up the decorations to setting the pumpkins in a line and stringing LED lights through them.

Directions to the 2019 Pumpkin Display are as follows: Turn onto Highway 1804 and go north for 5 miles, then turn onto Grey Goose Road and continue going north for about 4.5 miles. The glowing orange lights from the display are visible about a quarter-of-a-mile down the road and if you get lost, ask directions at the Grey Goose Store!

Please be mindful of the property owners.

The Grambihler families along with all the volunteers are dying for you and your families to walk around and enjoy the lit jack-o-lanterns, spooks and goblins!

Watch for other vehicles and pedestrians and have a safe Halloween!

For more information on the display, visit <https://www.facebook.com/GreyGoosePumpkinDisplay/>



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September 18-22

Sanford International Golf Tournament, Sioux Falls, SD, 877-748-3376

September 19-21

St. Joseph's Indian School Powwow, Chamberlain, SD, 605-234-3452

September 20-22

German-Russian Schmeckfest, Eureka, SD, 605-284-2332

September 21

Annual Watertown Radio Chili Cook-off, Watertown, SD, 605-882-6269

September 21

AgriCulture on the Square, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. MDT, Free, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-1722

September 21-22

North Country Fiber Fair, Watertown, SD, 605-956-7909

September 21-22

Northern Plains Indian Art Market, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-856-8193

September 21-22

Pioneer Power and Toy Show, Menno, SD, www.pioneeracres.com

September 25-28

Black Hills Plein Air Paint-Out, Hill City, SD, 605-645-7196

September 26-28

Buffalo Roundup Arts Festival, Opens at 10 a.m., Game Lodge grounds, Custer State Park, Custer, SD, 605-255-4541

September 26-29

South Dakota Film Festival, Aberdeen, SD, 605-725-2697



Photo courtesy: Oahe Electric Cooperative

September 27

56th Annual Buffalo Roundup, 6:15 a.m., Buffalo corrals, Custer State Park, Custer, SD, 605-255-4515

September 27-28

Corn Palace Challenge Bulls and Broncs PRCA Extreme, Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430

September 27-29

SiouxperCon, Sioux Falls, SD, www.siouxpercon.com

September 28

Wheelin' to Wall, Wall, SD, 605-685-3882

September 28

Living History Fall Festival, Groton, SD, 605-715-7117

September 29

Fall Volksmarch at Crazy Horse Memorial, Crazy Horse, SD, 605-673-4681

October 3-6

South Dakota Festival of Books, Brookings, SD, 605-688-6113

October 5

Harvest Festival, Chamberlain, SD, 605-234-4416

October 5

Prairie Village Hobo Marlin Pumpkin Train, Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

October 11-13

Black Hills Powwow, Rapid City, SD, 605-341-0925

October 11-13

Black Hills Horse Expo, Rapid City, SD

October 19

4th Annual Fall Festival, East Pierre Landscape and Garden Center, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Pierre, SD, 605-224-8832

October 19-January 5

Pheasant Hunting Season, Statewide, Pierre, SD, 605-223-7660

October 25-27

Autumn Festival, An Arts and Crafts Affair, Sioux Falls, SD, 402-331-2889

October 31-November 2

Ringneck Festival and Bird Dog Challenge, Huron, SD, 605-352-0000

November 9

Sisseton Area Merchants and Crafters 22nd Annual Holiday Extravaganza, Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

November 15-December 18

Black Hills Christmas Tree Permit Season, Custer, SD, 605-673-9200

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.