

Cooperative Connections

SDSU Extension
Master Gardener
Program

**Growing Master
Gardeners in SD**

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**Rodeo School is
in Session**

Pages 12-13

Dakota Energy, East River Lawsuit



Dave Eide

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**The math
doesn't
add up.**

Many of you are aware that Dakota Energy Cooperative headquartered in Huron filed a lawsuit against East River Electric. They are suing East River in an attempt to end a long-term purchase power agreement that they signed in 2015. Dakota Energy believes they can purchase power on the open market cheaper than the power they purchase from East River. They have signed a letter of intent to purchase power from Guzman Energy, a Denver based brokerage firm. I am personally opposed to this action by Dakota Energy and here's why;

- The math doesn't add up. If Dakota is successful in exiting their contract with East River, they become a perpetual renter. They would have to rent their bulk transmission, sub transmission, substations and pay for capacity. The cost of doing so will be no less and most likely more than what they are paying for today. The only thing left to purchase with any wiggle room is generation on the open market in the 2¢ to 3¢ per kilowatt-hour range. This is about what it costs Basin to generate today and more than the cost of WAPA generation, more on that later. They are hoping Guzman can purchase this generation for less on the open market.
- In order to get out of the contract with East River, Dakota would need to buyout of East River and Basin. East River and Basin plant (transmission lines and generation) is heavily leveraged. Dakota would have to pay East River and Basin for their share of plant. The buyout number, potentially tens of millions, would have to be borrowed and paid back. How many cents per kilowatt-hour would have to be added to their rates for this? Another 2¢? 3¢?
- They will lose their WAPA hydroelectric allocation. A significant portion of Dakota Energy's power comes from WAPA. This is the lowest cost power in the portfolio, about half the cost of power from Basin.
- Purchasing power on the open market is very volatile. During the February energy emergency, power on the open market went up to \$4.10/kWhr. Yes, you're reading that correctly, \$4.10/kWhr. Retail power in most cases is less than 10¢/kWhr. Basin buys and sells power on the open market every day and shields you, the member from these high swings because they have generation on the ground. They put generation in the market then buy back every day. Basin is in the power generation business, Guzman is not. Basin is able to deliver their product. There is a HUGE advantage in being able to deliver in the market. I relate this to a trader saying he's a farmer because he trades corn on the Chicago Board of Trade.
- I don't believe it's prudent to contract for power supply with an entity that doesn't generate power.
- I can't see their rates going anywhere but up.
- They are wasting time and money suing East River, which costs Dakota Energy and Codington-Clark members to achieve an unknown end result. They don't know if this decision will make economic sense until the lawsuit is over. Once the lawsuit is over and if they win, they will have a buyout number. If the buyout number is too large, they won't move forward. All this effort and hard feelings would accomplish nothing. I suppose they could file a second lawsuit if they think the number is too high. When will the suing end?
- They will not address what will happen to their members allocated capital credits. Dakota's 2019 financials indicate this amount to be \$19,750,560. This is their members money. Will this amount be used for the buyout? Will members ever see a retirement of capital credits again?
- Dakota Energy members don't get to vote on this important issue. Whether or not they want to leave the co-op family.
- What about reliability? If there's an ice storm that covers eastern South Dakota will the other distribution co-ops send line crews to the co-op that's no longer part of the family? Will they go to the affected co-op that's part of the co-op family first?
- Basin has been misconstrued by Dakota in two cases. The long-term purchase power agreements are in place so Basin Electric can maintain an excellent credit rating and procure long term low interest loans which in turn keep wholesale power costs down. Dakota has portrayed Basin as a poorly managed co-op losing hundreds of millions of dollars on the Dakota Gasification plant. They only tell a partial story about the plant. The millions of dollars in benefit Dakota Gasification brings

Codington-Clark Electric

Cooperative Connections

(USPS 019-073)

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June 1 - Sept. 3

Mon. - Fri., 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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www.ccelectric.coop

Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Codington-Clark Electric Annual Meeting Announcement



You're invited to Codington-Clark Electric's Annual Membership Meeting

- **Tuesday, June 29, 2021**
- **Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative**
- **3520 9th Avenue SW**
- **Watertown, SD 57201**
- **Registration opens at 5:30 p.m.**
- **Meal served from 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.**
- **Business Meeting 7 p.m.**

Lawsuit, continued

to the table are ignored.

- I don't know of another electric co-op in South Dakota that agrees with Dakota Energy on this issue.
- A co-op shouldn't have to hire an ad agency to promote a good idea. If it's a good idea it should be easy for the co-op to sell it to their members on their own.
- I recently attended a very controlled Dakota Energy member meeting. A Guzman Energy representative spoke, not once did he say what they were going to do for the members of Dakota Energy. All he did was badmouth East River. Not a good selling point. A Kit Carson Electric representative also spoke, a Guzman customer. Their rates are double the average rate paid in New Mexico. Their rates are also much higher than Dakota Energy's. Evidently, Dakota Energy couldn't find a Guzman customer with rates lower than their own to present. Not a good selling point.
- Guzman is making an attempt to lure distribution cooperatives away from their co-op power suppliers. They have contacted Codington-Clark and other co-ops in the state. So, what's in it for Guzman? We all know what the answer to that is, to make money off the hard-working people of rural South Dakota. I'm not buying it.

A couple weeks ago a Dakota Energy board member sent a letter to the editor of the Watertown Public Opinion. In the letter I was falsely called out on this issue. He did not mention in the letter however, that I am a member of Dakota Energy. I have never been one to sit idly by and watch bad things happen to good people. I am so passionately opposed to the purchasing of power on the open market through Guzman Energy that I have taken my personal time to circulate a petition amongst Dakota Energy members to give them a voice in their co-ops direction. I am very concerned, I have many neighbors, friends and relatives that are Dakota Energy members that I don't want to see taken advantage of. Apparently, that didn't sit well with the board member that wrote the letter. It was evidently an attempt to publicly quash my character, a co-op member that disagrees with a co-op position, pretty sad. As a co-op member I have every right to voice my opinion with other members of the cooperative. If a co-op board member thinks that's wrong, they probably shouldn't be a board member. Please feel free to give me a call about this issue or to get more information. I'd be happy to visit with you.

Eight Tips to Help You Grow Your Garden Safely

Gardening may seem like a safe hobby - and for the most part it is. But it can potentially lead to injury. Emergency rooms treat more than 400,000 injuries each year related to outdoor garden tools, reports the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Trimming trees and tall bushes can take a deadly turn when electricity is involved. Never trim a tree that has grown into a power line. Metal and wood ladders can transmit electricity into your body if you come into contact with a live wire. Instead, ask your electric cooperative to send a professional to trim the tree.

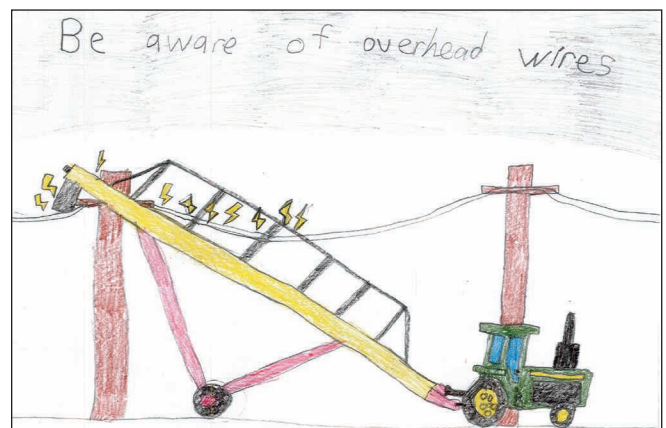
- At least three days before you begin a landscaping project that entails digging, call 811 to have underground utility lines marked.
- Never garden, trim trees or cut the lawn in bad weather. Wet and windy conditions can cause slipping and other hazards. Go inside immediately if you see lightning.
- Outlets protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters should be used for electric tools and trimmers. Never use tools outdoors when it's wet.
- Whenever possible, work in pairs so you're not using electrical equipment when nobody else is around - in case of an accident. And hire a professional if you doubt your ability to complete the job safely.
- Always wear the proper clothing and safety equipment for the task at hand. Gloves, eye and hearing protection, and dust masks can help prevent injuries and illnesses.
- Use the right tools for the job and use them safely. If you are using electric tools, watch where the cord is and unplug tools when not in use.
- Keep garden tools and equipment in proper working order. Equipment that is not maintained properly leaves the door open for potential accidents.
- Stay hydrated, use insect repellent and sunscreen (don't forget your face, neck and ears), and take breaks as needed to rest those hard-working muscles.

Did You Know?

- All thunderstorms produce lightning.
- Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and can strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall.
- If you hear thunder, you're in the danger zone.

#StormSafety

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



Be Aware of Overhead Wires

Carter Intveld, 11 years old

Carter is the child of Glenn and Darci Intveld of Sioux Falls. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy.

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.

Dig in to These Dairy Recipes

Tuna Cheesettes

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ½ c. American cheese | 2 tbsp. chopped dill pickles |
| 2-3 hard boiled eggs, chopped | ½ c. salad dressing |
| 1 can (7 oz.) tuna | ½ tsp. salt |
| 2 tbsp. chopped onion | ¼ tsp. pepper |

Preheat oven to 350. Mix ingredients and pile on ½ of a hamburger bun to make an open-faced sandwich. Bake for 30 min. Serve warm.

Ruth Schilberg, Viborg

Crustless Cheddar Mini Quiches

- | | |
|--|--|
| Non-stick cooking spray | 1 egg |
| 1/2 teaspoon olive oil | 1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes, plus additional tomatoes for garnish |
| 1 leek, cleaned and finely chopped (about 1 cup) | 1/2 teaspoon fresh or dried thyme |
| 1 cup reduced-fat shredded Cheddar cheese, divided | |
| 1 cup fat-free milk | |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Lightly spray a 12-cup muffin pan* with non-stick cooking spray. Heat oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Cook leeks until softened, stirring frequently, about 5 minutes. Divide leeks among muffin cups and top with 2/3 cup of Cheddar cheese. Blend milk, egg, sun-dried tomatoes and thyme in a blender or food processor for about 20 seconds or until tomato is minced. Pour milk mixture over cheese in muffin cups and top each with remaining cheese. Bake 30 minutes or until tops and edges are browned. Cool in pan for 3 minutes; serve warm or cold. Top with additional pieces of sun-dried tomato, if desired.

*May substitute with aluminum muffin cups or individual custard cups, if desired.

usdairy.com

Scalloped Eggs and Bacon

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1/4 cup chopped onion | 6 hard boiled eggs, sliced |
| 2 tablespoons butter | 1/4 teaspoon pepper |
| 2 tablespoons flour | 1/4 teaspoon salt |
| 1 1/2 cups milk | 1 1/2 cups crushed potato chips |
| 1 cup shredded American cheese | 12 bacon strips |
| 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard | |

Cut bacon strips into 1 inch pieces and fry until crisp. Sauté onion in butter until tender. Stir in flour, gradually add milk and cook, stirring until thickened. Add cheese and mustard stirring until cheese melts. Place half of the egg slices in a greased 10 X 6 baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover with half of the cheese sauce, potato chips and bacon. Repeat layering. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes. Tips: Prepare eggs and bacon the night before and put together the next morning to save time. May also use ham cubes instead of bacon. Double the recipe and use a 9 X 13 baking dish.

Mary Jo Semmier, Chancellor

Very Berry Ice Cream

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 2 lbs frozen berries (raspberries, blueberries, strawberries or blackberries) | 1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk |
| 1 tablespoon honey | 1/2 teaspoon salt |

In blender, pulse berries, condensed milk, honey and salt until smooth, scraping down sides. Pour mixture into 5-by-9-inch loaf pan. Freeze uncovered 4 hours, or until set.

Culinary.net

Please send your favorite dairy 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Four Efficient Cordless Tools for Dad



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

Quality cordless tools are usually less expensive if you buy them as part of a set instead of one tool at a time.

Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency write on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape. For additional energy tips and information on Collaborative Efficiency visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

Dear Pat and Brad: With Father's Day approaching, the kids and I are thinking of getting my husband some rechargeable power tools. Do you have any recommendations? When is the extra cost of cordless worth the investment? – Jesse

Dear Jesse: Great idea! If your husband enjoys tackling home projects, rechargeable tools are an excellent gift idea.

Rechargeable cordless tools are worth the investment when the corded version is the least convenient option. For example, a power drill is something you usually move around with and often use outside, so a cordless drill is much more convenient and a worthy investment. On the other hand, a table saw is usually not the first choice of cordless tools because it doesn't need to be moved repeatedly during a home project.

Quality cordless tools are usually less expensive if you buy them as part of a set instead of one tool at a time. And since each line of tools uses a unique battery, you can't mix and match between brands. So, it may cost less in the long run to buy a cordless starter kit with a few helpful tools and a battery, then add tools to the set as needed.

Here are a few cordless tools that the father in your family should love!

- **Power drill** – As one of the most-used power tools, a drill should be everyone's first cordless tool. Using a corded drill can mean constantly moving the cord around furniture, other tools or your own feet, which can be dangerous. Cordless drills are so easy to use, and the technology has improved so they have more power and hold a charge longer. Light-duty drills are smaller and less powerful but easy to use for smaller projects.



- **String trimmer** – A string trimmer is a quick way to trim weeds and grass near walls, bricks and rocks. If your family uses an old gas trimmer around the yard, it's time for a change. Two-stroke engines pollute the air and require regular maintenance. Electric trimmers are more energy efficient and quieter. You can find a variety of models between \$50 and \$150, and it's worth paying a little more to get a highly rated model that will last longer.

- **Leaf blower** – If the father in your family uses a gas-powered leaf blower, you can do him (and your neighbors!) a favor by giving him a cordless leaf blower, which is more energy efficient, much quieter and less polluting.

- **Flashlight** – LED technology is amazing — today's LED flashlights can produce 20 times as much light as the old incandescent ones. And they come in a variety of options, from tiny key chain lights to headlamps to waterproof spotlights. A flashlight can usually give better light than a cell phone, especially if you're working in a tight space like under a sink. A flashlight often comes as part of a cordless tool set, or you can buy a single unit that recharges using a USB port on a charger, a USB wall socket or a mobile phone battery.

Batteries make cordless tools possible. Lithium-ion batteries are more expensive, but they're gaining popularity because they hold a charge longer. They also have a longer life, but they still degrade over time and may need to be replaced in about three years. It's worth buying a reputable brand of cordless tool so you can be confident you will be able to find a replacement battery.

It goes without saying, but these cordless tool gift ideas aren't just for dads. All DIY enthusiasts would enjoy any of these gifts and hopefully put them to good use!

Heikes Family Farm Rides Wave of New Interest in Community Supported Agriculture

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

After enduring the rigors of running an organically-grown farm for several years, Heidi Heikes was ready to let the place go to seed.

But then the pandemic that pummeled so many industries last year proved to be a boon for the Heikes Family Farm operation. The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project was overwhelmed by consumers who suddenly became interested in locally grown produce.

“I was about ready to just pack it in. It takes a lot of work to run a small organically-grown farm,” Heikes recalled. “But then my phone just blew up. I was getting 10 to 15 new shares a day.”

The Heikes Family Farm CSA works on a shareholder arrangement where individuals buy into the farming operation and receive a share of the resulting crop. They also share the risk if the crop doesn’t bring the anticipated yield.



Sam Heikes said he believes Community Supported Agriculture is a trend that’s here to stay.

Following closely behind the new wave of shareholders came a “corporate share” commitment from a local hospital to supply fresh food for both the hospital and the affiliated nursing home. Then the farm was really riding high, feeding 500-600 people through nearly 100 shareholders.

Heidi’s father, Sam, said he believes the trend of community supported agriculture was bound to make its way to South Dakota in a matter of time.

“South Dakota is just catching up with the buy fresh, buy local, farm-to-table movement,” he said. “There’s been a dramatic increase in demand. I think the pandemic made people realize they want to go back to the past. They don’t want GMOs, pesticides and chemicals in the food that they feed their families.”

Sam Heikes spent his career as a production agronomist building up central South Dakota as the nation’s foremost sunflower producer. He returned to the family farm in Vermillion 10 years ago and decided to try establishing a CSA operation. He was in agreement with his daughter that maybe the demand

for organic produce wasn’t as robust as they both wanted to believe.

“I lost money for many years and we were ready to give it up,” he said. “Now we have more shareholders than we could have dreamed of. I think it’s a trend that’s here to stay. It’s great food at a great value. Once people get a taste of what organically-grown produce tastes like, they don’t want to go back to food that’s grown in another region and trucked in from hundreds of miles away.”

Mondays and Fridays are frenetic at the farm. Food distribution typically begins in May and consumers arrive to pick up their produce on Wednesdays from 4 to 7 p.m. and on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For her part, Heidi is happy to have more activity on the farm. She describes herself as a “people person” and noted that the place was getting a bit isolated and lonely. She welcomes the new relationships that have developed since more consumers have discovered the farm. Many volunteers are medical students and athletes from the local university campus who want to make sure they consume healthy diets.

“I love meeting people and eating healthy food,” she said.

Heidi invites more curious consumers to visit www.heikesfamilyfarms.com.



Heidi Heikes was ready to give up efforts to provide organically-grown produce when the pandemic generated new interest in the CSA model.



SDSU Extension Master Gardener Ruth Smith prepares for a local spring plant sale. Photos by Billy Gibson.

MASTER GARDENERS

Extension Program Seeks to Spread the Love of Gardening

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Sorry, Walt Disney. The happiest place on earth for Ruth Smith isn't located in Florida or California. It's found in the serene confines of her garden in Pierre, S.D.

A retired educator, Smith experiences relaxation and contentment while growing herbs, vegetables and florals in her terraced backyard garden. After spending a career in public education and dedicating herself to the development and guidance of local students, Smith now finds her bliss by focusing her efforts on cultivating fresh produce and plants.

She even confesses a proud affinity for something that most people absolutely abhor – weeding.

"I actually like weeding. I like tending to the plants and bringing them up with some tender loving care," Smith said. "I always tell people this is my happy place. Some people like to take a boat out on the river or go hunting. This is what we like to do."

The "we" Smith refers to includes her husband, Mark. Both enjoy gardening and both have been through the Master Gardener program administered by South Dakota State University Extension.

As current president of the Prairie Potters Master Gardeners Club based in Pierre, Smith is an enthusiastic proponent of serving as an ambassador for horticulture education both locally and throughout the state. She and Mark completed the training

and course work required to become Master Gardeners about 10 years ago, although Mark is currently on "inactive" status.

The goal of the program is to turn gardening enthusiasts into expert volunteers who share their research-based knowledge with community members across the state. Since the program's inception in 1985, more than 400 Master Gardeners have logged nearly 80,000 hours of volunteer service answering questions from the public and hosting community programs.

It's that public interaction that interests Smith. She enjoys attending local farmer markets, plant sales, workshops, school programs and other community events.

"The fun part is getting out among people and helping them solve



Mark Smith repairs a retaining wall in front of his home in Pierre.

Master Gardener Clubs in SD

Club Name	Area
Brookings Area Master Gardeners	Brookings
Coteau Prairie Master Gardeners	Watertown
Custer County Master Gardeners	Custer
Dakota Prairie Master Gardeners	Miller
Fall River Master Gardeners	Hot Springs
Garden Gate Master Gardeners	Winner
Harding County Master Gardeners	Buffalo
Huron Area Master Gardeners	Huron
Minnehaha Co.	Sioux Falls
Missouri Valley Master Gardeners	Yankton
Northern Hills Master Gardeners	Spearfish
Pennington County Master Gardeners	Rapid City
Perkins County Master Gardeners	Bison
Prairie Partners Master Gardeners	Aberdeen
Prairie Potters Master Gardeners	Pierre
South Central Master Gardeners	White River

any problems they're encountering and giving them suggestions on how they can get better results for their efforts," she said. "We love to have conversations with people and we're not afraid to say we don't know something. We can always find out the answers and get back with them."

So, what's the question she gets asked the most? "Hmmm. It's probably, 'Something is wrong with my tomato plants. What should I do?'"

Rhoda Burrows is a horticulture specialist with SDSU Extension and works frequently with Master Gardeners. She said interest in the program has grown since the pandemic struck in March of 2020. While participants weren't allowed to attend in-person events as representatives of the program through most of last year, online teleconferences were held with many new prospects joining in.

"It's just such a fun group to work with," she said. "They're so enthusiastic and they have a deep hunger for knowledge and a heart for helping out each other in their communities. After the pandemic when people were restricting their movements, they discovered that gardening can be a good, wholesome family activity. Gardening is a source of fresh produce and more people are appreciating the benefits of healthy eating."

More information about the Master Gardeners program can be found by visiting www.extension.sdstate.edu. Those interested in becoming part of the program can contact SDSU's Extension Master Gardener Coordinator Aimee House Ladonski at 605-782-3290.

McCrory Gardens is an Inspiration for Horticulture Hobbyists

Gardeners are typically passionate self-starters and don't require much outside motivation. But McCrory Gardens is an ideal place to go for those gardeners looking for an ounce of inspiration over the summer months.

Created in 2012 on the Brookings campus of South Dakota State University, McCrory Gardens features a 25-acre garden and 45-acre arboretum along with a 9,300-square-foot Education and Visitor Center.

While visitation was down in 2020, McCrory Gardens is expecting a busy summer and welcomes gardening enthusiasts to see the ever-changing display of flowers, vegetables, herbs and more.

New to the facility this summer is a Native American medicinal garden area, a "three-sisters" garden with beans, corn and squash, as well as a pollinator garden designed to attract bees and butterflies. Professors and instructors from the Native American studies department collaborated as consultants on the project.



McCrory Gardens is open to visitors on Wednesday through Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"There is always something new that's growing and blooming, and we have numerous annual beds that are planted each year," said Director Lisa Marotz.

What is expected to be a spectacular summer will culminate in the annual Garden Party held each year on the first Friday in August. While plans are still being finalized, past events have included food vendors, live music, games and free admission for the day.

"Pretty much everything we have is in bloom at that time. We want to invite everyone to come out and see what we have to offer," Marotz said.

McCrory Gardens is a privately-funded \$4.2-million facility that was the vision of founder and SDSU professor S.A. McCrory.

Last August, McCrory Gardens was named as a benefactor of an endowment from the estate of Frank and Mildred Denholm. A gift of more than \$422,000 went to the gardens while an additional gift of the same amount went to The South Dakota Agricultural Heritage Museum, which is hosting an exhibit entitled, "Electrifying Rural South Dakota," through Sept. 1.

ELECTRICITY & LIVESTOCK

Codington-Clark Electric Co-op's delivery system and the electrical systems in homes, farms and businesses are grounded to the earth to make the systems as safe and reliable as possible. Both the National Electric Safety Code and the National Electric Code require grounding.

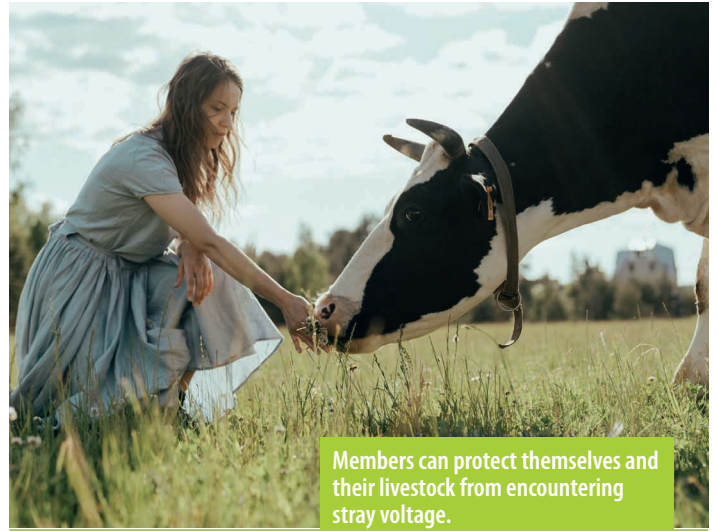
Electrical systems that are grounded to the earth for safety and reliability have a small amount of current flowing through the earth when electrical power is used. Associated with this current is a small voltage. This voltage is called neutral-to-earth voltage (NEV).

Most of the time, NEV levels are very low (less than one volt) and are not considered dangerous to humans or a problem for animals. High voltage levels do indicate a serious electrical problem that needs immediate attention. A level of NEV found at animal contact points and linked to abnormal animal behavior is frequently called stray voltage.

The United States Department of Agriculture and several universities have conducted considerable scientific research on the subject of NEV / stray voltage over the past 30-plus years. The research has established recognized levels of concern and remedies when it comes to dealing with stray voltage issues. Unfortunately, there are some consultants who promote unproven theories and practices and who are more than willing to take advantage of dairy and other livestock farmers whose problems (if they exist at all) are not caused by anything electrical.

It is important to note that livestock symptoms often associated with stray voltage can be the result of numerous other animal production, health or behavioral problems. Below are a few ideas that will help prevent stray voltage issues.

- Have a qualified electrician inspect the whole farmstead for electrical problems, and correct them in accordance with the National Electric Code.



Members can protect themselves and their livestock from encountering stray voltage.

- Balance ALL 120-volt loads as much as possible in an effort to reduce neutral currents.
- Size service wires according to the electrical load they are serving.
- Install an equipotential grounding plane in the floor for all new livestock buildings.
- Install ground rods and insulated wire to all electric fences/cow trainers.

Any Codington-Clark member who suspects a neutral-to-earth voltage problem is encouraged to contact the co-op's office. An investigation will be conducted and if needed, remedial action taken.

Sources: Midwest Rural Energy Council, Wisconsin Farm Electrical Council and Michigan State University publications.

Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative's office will be closed Monday, May 31, in observance of Memorial Day.



Pocket Gopher Bounty

In an attempt to reduce damage caused by pocket gophers chewing into underground distribution lines, Codington-Clark Electric Co-op will pay a \$1 per gopher bounty. Please check with your township on reimbursement. After proof is presented, the Cooperative will send payment to the township involved.





Avoid Hazards with Grain Bins and Power Lines

Electrical power is an indispensable part of modern agricultural operations. In fact, electricity is such a commonplace part of a farm operation that it can all too easily become a part of the scenery and its hazards overlooked. One often overlooked safety consideration is the power line clearance required for grain bins.

Hazards include large equipment and farm structures near overhead power lines. The best way to avoid problems is to keep equipment and new constructions a safe distance from power lines.

Equipment and vehicles, such as augers and grain trucks, around grain bins are particularly at risk of coming into contact with overhead power lines. It is important that bins be built a safe distance from power lines to help ensure the safety of workers.

The National Electrical Safety Code sets the minimum distance that power lines must be above and around grain bins. If planning on constructing a new grain bin, contact the Cooperative before any construction begins. We can help you determine minimum safety requirements.

Keep these additional safety tips in mind anytime you are operating large farm equipment around power lines:

- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions when moving loads.
- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.

■ Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.

■ If a power line is sagging or low, contact your local utility.

If equipment does come into contact with a power line, remember, stay on the equipment until the Cooperative has arrived to de-energize the lines. Warn others to stay away, and call the Cooperative immediately. The only reason to exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, “bunny hop” away to safety.

For more information, contact Codington-Clark Electric.

Member Notice

The Summer Office Hours for Codington-Clark Electric are as follows:

June 1 - September 3

Monday - Friday,

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Codington-Clark Electric has Marathon® lifetime warranty water heaters available.

100-gallon tank rebate = \$600

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Monthly electric bill credit = \$5

Must be connected to a load management device to receive the rebate and bill credit.

Please call us at 605-886-5848 for details.





A student at the Korkow Rodeo School learns the "lift, charge and stay back" method of saddle bronc riding under the watchful eye of former champion Chad Ferley. Photos by Billy Gibson

Class is in Session

Rodeo School Teaches Youngsters the Basics of the Sport

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Jeff Reis saw that his son was in big trouble, so he quickly hurled himself over the heavy metal railing and sprinted across the rodeo arena toward the bucking chute.

That's where Casey, a high school senior bull rider and student at the Korkow Rodeo School, was getting set for his final run of the day. But things weren't proceeding as planned. While Casey was going through his preparations, the agitated bull began climbing up the railing and turning toward the unwelcomed antagonist straddling his back.

Casey was able to get a grip on the top rail of the chute and the spotters eventually pulled him free, but not before his father had gotten halfway across the arena floor.

"Bulls have done this before, but I haven't seen one get that high or be able to turn the way this one did," Jeff recalled. "When it spun and belly rolled and started pulling Casey away from the spotters, I panicked because I thought something truly catastrophic was about to happen."

Thanks to the spotters and handlers and his own quick reflexes as a multi-sport

athlete, Casey escaped the few seconds of terror injury-free. The recalcitrant animal got everyone's attention and made a big scene, but it did nothing to diminish Casey's grit and determination. Even his father was a bit surprised at what happened next.

Casey made it clear he wasn't nearly finished with that bull.

"I couldn't believe his mentality after that," Jeff said. "He was shook up, but he went out and got a new spur strap that had broken off, fixed all of his equipment, got his rope back on and rode that same bull."

Lots of lessons were learned during that dust-up, but then that's the purpose of the Korkow Rodeo School. Having completed its 36th year in April, the school is one of the oldest and most established of several similar schools operating across the state that offer instruction to hundreds of eager young riders and future champions.

Jim Korkow, owner of the Anchor K Ranch east of Pierre, said the school tends to separate those who are genuinely interested in rodeo from those who "might want to go looking for a set of golf clubs."



Jeff Willert preps a saddle bronc student for the youngster's first ride.

Though last year's school was canceled, dozens of students of various ages and skill levels returned to the Anchor K this time around to learn the basics of saddle bronc, bareback and bull riding, and also ways to stay safe.

Korkow's son T.J. runs the annual three-day school, which is led by a team of skilled riders and instructors as well as a physical trainer and other highly-experienced support staff. Each year the school attracts dozens of riders from several different states.

Instructor Chad Ferley is a two-time PRCA World Champion saddle bronc rider and five-time NFR qualifier from Oelrichs who has participated in the event

SD HS Rodeo Assn. Regional Qualifying Rodeos:

June 4-6 - Huron,
Highmore, Buffalo, Wall
June 11-13 - Watertown,
Winner, Dupree, Sturgis

State HS Finals Rodeo:

June 15-19 - Ft. Pierre, SD

National HS Finals Rodeo:

July 18-24 - Lincoln, NE

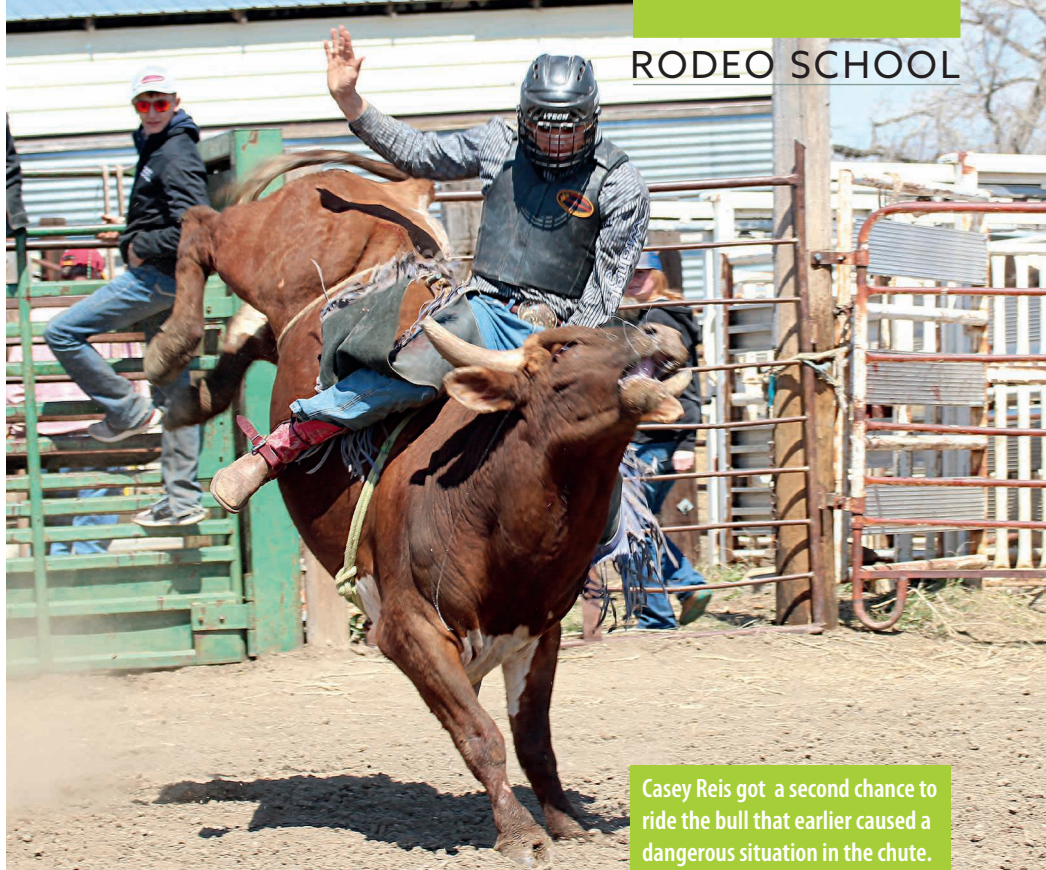
for the past 12 years. Ferley, a member of Black Hills Electric Cooperative in Custer, said students don't leave the school ready for the pro circuit but are there to learn the basics... at least after the initial shock wears off from that maiden voyage that takes the young rider from zero to 90 in a split second.

"After their first ride, they always say it was a whole lot faster than they thought it was going to be," Ferley said. "At first, most of them just black out. We're here to give them the basics, talk to them after each ride and tell them what they did wrong and what they did right, and give them the information they can apply and practice on down the line as they ride more horses."

Fellow instructor Jeff Willert is a PRCA World Champion saddle bronc competitor, five-time NFR qualifier and member of West Central Electric Cooperative. He said he enjoys passing on to youngsters all the tips and tricks that he learned throughout his successful rodeo career.

"With bronc riding, we tell them to lift, charge and stay back," he said. "But things happen so fast, and it's hard for them to pay attention because as soon as that chute opens, they lose their train of thought. You just try to drill things into their head and they eventually get it. It's trial and error. The more you ride, the more you learn."

Ken Korkow said throughout more than three decades of operating the school, one particular student stands out among all the others. An uninitiated 42-year-old gentleman from Alaska came to the ranch



Casey Reis got a second chance to ride the bull that earlier caused a dangerous situation in the chute.

with the intention of checking off an item from his bucket list of things he'd never done before, Korkow recalled. Organizers always make a point to match the stock with the rider's level of experience, so the instructor set up the non-traditional student with a black angus pasture bull.

"He managed to stay on it for longer than I thought he would," Korkow said. "The instructor blew the horn at six seconds when he saw the guy was about to come off, but he blew it early just so he'd think he made it the whole eight seconds. But all the kids who were around got excited for him and went out there and cheered for

him and gave him high-fives. It was quite a moment I'll always remember."

While some express concern about the future of rodeo in the age of youngsters getting more involved in technology, Willert said he doesn't share that concern.

"It can be rewarding from many stand-points," he said. "There are still a lot of kids who don't spend all day playing video games. They see the value of hard work and the farming and ranching lifestyle and they respect the culture. They understand that while some things may be difficult, it's all worth it when you can walk away knowing that you've stood up to the test."



A young rider hangs on just before getting thrown to the ground.

Video games can have a negative impact on teenagers but the technology can also help students learn valuable, marketable skills.

Experts See Potential for Both Good and Bad with Video Games, but Suggest Moderation

Billy Gibson

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Many parents who have a teenager and a video game console under the same roof have asked themselves the same question: What kind of effect is video gaming having on my child?

When video games made their way out of the arcades and into the living rooms and bedrooms of millions of American households, there was great concern that the games were growing more violent and all of that virtual gore was warping teenage minds.

It seemed every real-world episode of violent behavior exhibited by minors could somehow be traced back to the influence of the gaming culture. But after decades of academic studies, observations and rapidly changing technology, a more evolved and nuanced understanding of recreational video game activity – and its potential impact on developing minds – has emerged.

The landscape has changed so significantly, in fact, that the World Health Organization

– the same group that once alerted parents to the more sinister aspects of pathological video gaming and declared that “gaming disorder” exists – has announced its endorsement of gaming as a useful way for families to face the COVID-19 lockdown. That endorsement came with one important caveat, however: all things in moderation.

Lesley Atkins is a member of the family therapist team at Rising Hope 605 in Burke and also a member of Rosebud Electric in nearby Gregory. Atkins has three children of her own, including a 15-year-old and a 10-year-old, and has worked with many parents and teens to help them gain control over their use of electronics and their total daily exposure to screens of all kinds.

Her best advice to concerned parents is first to recognize that more studies are confirming that video gaming can in fact be addictive and to watch for signs indicating the teen is having trouble pulling away from video screens, smart phones, tablets and other electronic devices.

She also advises that it's imperative for parents to practice what they preach as



Therapist Lesley Holmes recommends moderating screen time for all family members.

teens tend to model the behaviors of the adults around them.

“I see this on a regular basis, where I have to remind the parents that if you want your



child to cut back on screen time, you're going to have to cut back too," Atkins said. "You may tell your teen to get off Instagram or TikTok, but then you stay up watching Netflix all night and you find yourself sleepwalking all through the next day. If you expect them to get out a board game and be content to play with that, then you have to be willing to do the same."

Atkins said it's also essential that parents hold their teens accountable, monitor their screen time, and make sure there are consequences for violating the rules that have been explained to them. Teens can also be empowered by giving them choices, such as telling them how much screen time they will be allowed, but then leaving it up to them whether they spend that time watching TV, playing video games or scrolling through social media account.

Parents, or even grandparents, may not be happy with the fact that youngsters are being raised in an increasingly virtual environment that grows more inescapable and threatens to further tighten its grip on modern society, but Atkins suggests the best response is not to fight it, but to manage it effectively.

"You can't really think about taking technology away, you just have to manage it. From a teenager's point of view, if you try to take it away, you're taking them away from a large part of their social interaction with their friends, their peer groups and their social standing," Atkins said. "Like it or not, in today's world trying to disengage with technology puts you at a disadvantage, and we all want our kids to have an opportunity to succeed in life. These days,

if you don't have a social media presence, it's almost like you're hiding something, like there's something wrong with you. The key is setting healthy limits on it and managing it well."

Not all video games focus on brutal acts of violence and mayhem, Atkins noted. One of the reasons the World Health Organization has altered its position on video games is because many developers have found creative ways to use video games to improve useful skills that can help teens prepare themselves for various careers. Atkins points out that many medical procedures are done with the use of robotics and require good hand-eye coordination. There are also many types of training simulators that allow tech students, for example, to learn how to control and operate heavy machinery or farming equipment before actually getting behind the real controls. If they prefer, they can compete against their peers to keep interest level high.

Young people interested in agriculture, for instance, can bale hay, apply fertilizers and harvest crops by using virtual farming programs. While these simulators may not have the high-speed action as Grand Theft Auto or Call of Duty, they're effective in transferring certain manual skill sets from a recreational to a practical application and improving overall cognition. Teachers and instructors are finding plenty of use for these virtual training programs as the video series called Farming Simulator has sold more than four million copies and the market continues to expand at a rapid pace.

The time to call for help, Atkins said, is when a teenager – or an adult – starts

The Positives and Negatives of Video Games

Researchers are discovering there can be both positive and negative effects of video gaming:

POSITIVES

- Uplifts mood, strengthens social skills
- Boosts creativity
- Develops problem-solving skills
- Improves attention, situational awareness and working memory performance
- Enhances hand-eye dexterity
- Develops strategic planning and management of resources

NEGATIVES

- Over-stimulation of the sensory system
- Aggressive behavior
- Association with negative values
- Poor social development
- Mental and physical health risks
- Academic concerns

having a difficult time pulling away from the screen, or starts exhibiting real-time anti-social behavior. Other signs to look for include lower academic performance, increased physical ailments such as carpal tunnel syndrome or a stiff neck and poor appetite and poor hygiene.

"If someone starts fighting and getting very emotional when they don't get their screen time, it's probably a good idea to seek help before the situation gets out of control," Atkins said.

Note: Please make sure to call ahead to verify the event is still being held.

May 21-23

Annual Sound of Silence Tesla Rally, Downtown, Custer, SD
605-673-2244

May 21-23

State Parks Open House and Free Fishing Weekend, All State Parks and Recreation Areas, SD
605-773-3391

May 22

Frühlingsfest and Spring Market, Main Street, Rapid City, SD
605-716-7979

May 22

La Framboise Island Bike Race, Steamboat Park, Pierre, SD
605-224-7054

May 31

PPQG 25th Annual Quilt Show, Harding County REC Center, Buffalo, SD
605-641-5591

June 3-5

Annual Black Hills Quilt Show and Sale, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD
605-394-4115

June 3-6

Wheel Jam, South Dakota State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD
605-353-7340

June 4-5

State BBQ Championships, South Dakota State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD
605-353-7354

June 4-6

Black Hills Blues Stomp and Swamp Romp, Rush No More RV Resort and Campground, Sturgis, SD
605-347-2916



Czech Days, June 18-19, 2021 (Photo by Travel South Dakota)

June 4-6

Lake Andes Fish Days, City-wide, Lake Andes, SD
605-487-7694

June 5-6

18th Annual Wessington Springs Foothills Rodeo, Wessington Springs Rodeo Grounds, Wessington Springs, SD
605-770-5720

June 5-6

Siouxland Renaissance Festival, W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD
866-489-9241

June 12

Yankton Ribfest, Downtown, Yankton, SD
866-260-2134

June 18-19

Czech Days, Lidice Street, Tabor, SD
605-463-2478

June 17-20

South Dakota Shakespeare Festival, Prentis Park, Vermillion, SD
605-622-0423

June 18, 25

River City Friday Nights, Downtown, Chamberlain, SD
605-234-4416

June 18-19

Wild Bill Days, Main Street, Deadwood, SD
605-578-1876

June 19

605 Summer Classic Beer and Music Festival, Cherapa Place, Sioux Falls, SD
605-274-1999

June 19

South Dakota Cattlemen's Foundation Prime Time Gala, Denny Sanford PREMIER Center, Sioux Falls, SD
605-945-2333

June 19-20

Aberdeen Arts in the Park, Melgaard Park, Aberdeen, SD
605-226-1557

June 25-27

Annual Main Street Arts and Crafts Festival, North River Street, Hot Springs, SD
605-440-2738

June 30-July 4

Annual Black Hills Roundup, 300 Roundup Street, Belle Fourche, SD
605-723-2010

July 2-4

Sitting Bull Stampede Rodeo, Various Locations, Mobridge, SD
605-845-2387

July 10-11

50th Annual Brookings Summer Arts Festival, West Highway 14 and 1st Avenue, Brookings, SD
605-692-2787

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.