

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Former co-op general manager Jim Moore is one of the original organizers of the Line Patrol Charity Ride and was the designated lead rider in 2021 as the group embarked on its adventure

Line Patrol Charity Ride

**20 years of assisting
co-op families**
Pages 8-9

**Food co-ops meet
community needs**
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Southwest Power Pool tour leads to conclusions

On August 25, 2022, 36 electric cooperative directors, managers and staff from across South Dakota and western Minnesota along with South Dakota PUC Commissioner Kristie Fiegen toured the facilities of the Southwest Power Pool in Little Rock, Ark. The Southwest Power Pool, or SPP, is our Regional Transmission Organization or RTO. SPP is responsible for managing the electric grid and wholesale power market throughout a 13-state region that spans from the Canadian Border to northern Texas (see map at right).



Dave Eide
General Manager
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Some recent events spurred the visit. Many of you recall the February 2021 weather event where four East River/Codington-Clark substations - Waverly, Florence, Rauville and Henry - were disconnected by WAPA, our Transmission Operator, to avoid a potential blackout. Other substations in the SPP footprint were also disconnected at the same time. During the summer of 2022, SPP also declared several Resource Advisories (concerns with balancing supply with demand) and Conservative Operations Advisories (a need to operate the system conservatively).

With these events, the topic of reliability has come to the forefront. At Codington-Clark Electric, our goal is to provide the membership with reliable power 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To ensure this happens, the board and I thought it would be a good idea to tour SPP's facilities to learn more about the process and at the same time voice our concerns.

After touring SPP, these are some of the conclusions I came to:

- Balancing generation and transmission supply with demand can be extremely challenging, especially with increasing demand for electricity to include electric vehicles, retirement of coal and natural gas generation (baseload generation), intermittent generation sources (wind) and more intermittent generation in the queue (solar).

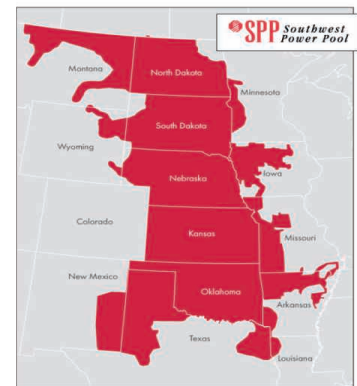
- SPP initiated a policy change where load serving entities such as Basin Electric must increase their Generation Reserve Margin from 12 percent to 15 percent. In essence, more generation on the grid. This will cost more but is important to keep the lights on.

- SPP is working on Deficiency Payments for those that come up short when bidding in generation. This should help; I hope it happens.

- SPP is also looking at incentives for baseload generation (hydro, coal and natural gas) to address reliability issues, keeping in mind the market value of baseload generation. I really hope this happens as I believe a generator that is available 24/7 is worth more than an intermittent generator.



Shown above, from left: Board President Ben Fleming, Manager Dave Eide, Director Russ Hulbert and Director Mike Meland. At right is the SPP coverage map.



Our political strong arm in Washington D.C., the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, has engaged congress on some of these same issues, including: the premature retirement of legacy power plants; the abrupt move to renewables; carbon capture and storage that is unproven; the need for federal energy policy to align with the reliable operation of the electric grid. All this at the same time electric vehicles are being incentivized.

I believe subsidies for wind and solar generators also skew the market. If the price for power in the market decreases, wind generators, for example, remain profitable due to the subsidies. A coal generation plant at the same time, the one that is there 24/7 keeping the lights on, becomes unprofitable, yet we need them there. Somehow coal, natural gas and hydroelectric generation need to be compensated differently in the market to improve reliability.

**COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS****CODINGTON-CLARK
ELECTRIC**

(USPS 019-073)

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To report a power outage:

886-5848 or 1-800-463-8938

Office Hours:

Mon. - Fri., 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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www.ccelectric.coop

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

New number for reporting outages

1-844-968-1976

Codington-Clark Electric is excited to announce the implementation of our new Outage Management System (OMS). What does this mean for members?

No more busy signals. CCEC has only four phone lines which means only four phone calls at a time can be answered. With the new OMS, calling 1-844-968-1976, you will never get a busy signal. The new automated system will guide you through reporting an outage, alert the line workers, and aid in getting the power back on quicker.

Any SmartHub user may report outages in the application. Members may also sign up for notifications (via text, email and/or phone) regarding any planned or unexpected outages. If you are interested in signing up for SmartHub, please visit our website www.ccelectric.coop.

If you are a SmartHub mobile user, you can text in your outage. Simply text the word OUT to 1-844-968-1976.

Please note, that 1-844-968-1976 is a dedicated number for reporting outages only. Please contact our office at 605-886-5848 or 1-800-463-8938 for any normal business.

Practice fire safety this fall and winter

When the weather turns colder, you inevitably start hearing more news about house fires. Even a small fire can be devastating.

Most house fires are caused by cooking that gets out of hand. But the second most common cause is materials in the home that catch fire. This often occurs when a heat source, such as a space heater or flying embers from a fireplace, comes into contact with fabric or paper, which then ignites. Once a fire starts, it can move so rapidly that even the best efforts to put it out may fail.

When it comes to old houses, the risks are even higher. The older the wood is that a house is constructed of, the faster it burns. Once flames invade the walls of an old house, they move with frightening speed.

Fire protection in any home is necessary, but even more careful precautions should be taken if your house is older. Here's how to help ensure the safety of your house and everyone in it.

SMOKE DETECTORS. These are the first and best line of defense; they allow you to get out of the house at the first whiff of smoke. Six in 10 deaths in house fires occurred in homes that did not have working smoke detectors. Go beyond the federal recommendations and put a smoke detector in every room. Stay on the even safer side by opting for those that detect both smoke and carbon monoxide.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS. Keep small fires from getting out of control with fire extinguishers that are easily accessible. Choose several extinguishers that are light enough for even kids to handle. Make sure they have simple pull mechanisms that don't require much strength. Look for fire extinguishers that work for various parts of the house; for instance, an extinguisher in the kitchen should be able to handle grease fires.

INSTALL ARC-FAULT INTERRUPTERS. These ingenious little gadgets detect the electrical arcing that occurs when an old wire buried deep in your wall begins to fail. Speak with an electrician about where best to install interrupters and how your particular ones work.

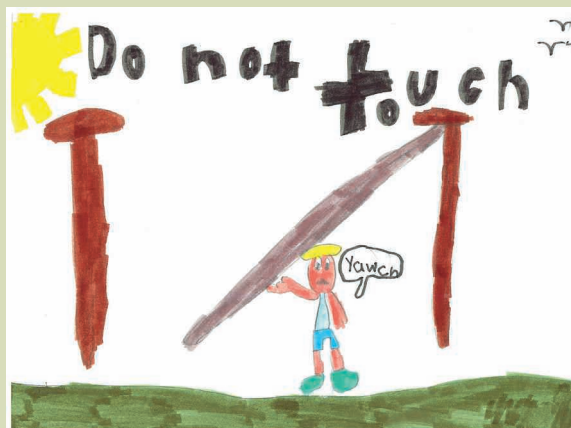
MAINTAIN IT ALL. Finally, test everything on a regular basis. Smoke detectors should be tested every month, their batteries replaced every six months, and old smoke detectors replaced every 10 years. Opt to purchase an extra fire extinguisher so your family can take it to the backyard and practice using it.

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES REPRESENT AT DAKOTAFEST



Electric cooperative representatives were on hand at the 2022 Dakotafest in Mitchell to share information about energy efficiency and electric-powered lawn implements and to showcase a 2022 Ford Lightning electric pickup truck provided by Vern Eide Ford. Shown left to right are Sheila Gross, Jared Rakness, Jennifer Gross, Patrick Soukup, Kristie Hauck, Brett Snyders and Tara Miller.

To see a video of this event and learn more about how electric cooperatives serve our members, visit Cooperative Connections Plus by scanning the QR code at right.



Do not touch power lines

Kendyl Gill

Kendyl knows that electricity always seeks a path to the ground and that all power lines should be treated as if they are energized. Kendyl is the child of Brent and Emily Gill, and they are members of Moreau-Grand Electric based in Timber Lake.

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.

PRIMO PASTA!

PASTA WITH ZUCCHINI AND TOMATOES

Ingredients:

7 oz. short whole wheat pasta
like penne fusilli or farfalle
2 lbs. zucchini, chopped
1 lb. grape or cherry tomatoes
cut in halves
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
6 garlic cloves minced
1/3 c. Parmesan cheese grated
1 c. parsley or 1/2 cup basil finely
chopped
1 tsp. salt
Ground black pepper to taste

METHOD

Cook pasta per package instructions undercooking by 2-3 minutes or until pasta is cooked but firm. While pasta is cooking, preheat large ceramic non-stick skillet on medium-high heat and swirl 1 tbsp. of oil to coat. Add zucchini and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Transfer to a bowl and set aside. Return skillet to stove, swirl 1 tbsp. of oil to coat, add tomatoes and cook for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring a few times. Turn off heat and add cooked pasta and zucchini, remaining 1 tbsp. of oil, salt, pepper, cheese and parsley or basil; stir and serve. Adjust seasonings to taste. ifoodreal.com

MEXI-CORN LASAGNA

Ingredients:

1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained
1 can Mexican corn
1 can (15 oz.) tomato sauce
1 c. Pace picante sauce
1 tbsp. chili powder
1 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
16 oz. low-fat cottage cheese
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 c. parmesan cheese
1 tsp. oregano
1/2 tsp. garlic salt
12 corn tortillas
1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

METHOD

Combine first six ingredients in large skillet. Simmer 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Combine cottage cheese, eggs, parmesan cheese, oregano and garlic salt; mix well. Arrange 6 tortillas on bottom and sides of a lightly greased 13x9x2 baking dish, overlapping as necessary. Top with half the meat mixture. Spoon cheese mixture over meat. Arrange remaining tortillas over cheese. Top with remaining meat mixture. Bake 375 degrees for 20 minutes or until hot and bubbly. Remove from oven and sprinkle with cheddar cheese. Let stand 10 minutes, serve with additional picante sauce. Serves 8.
Carol and Rollie Smith, Brandon

BAKED SPAGHETTI

Ingredients:

8 oz. package angel hair pasta
1/4 c. chopped parsley
1 lb. ground beef
1 lb. ground pork
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. garlic salt
1/2 tsp. black pepper
1 1/2 tsp. sugar
1 tbsp. Italian seasonings
2 c. tomato sauce
1 c. water
2 c. canned crushed tomatoes
2 bay leaves
2 garlic cloves chopped
1/2 c. green peppers chopped
1/2 c. onion chopped
1 c. shredded cheddar cheese
1 c. shredded Monterey Jack cheese

METHOD

Cook pasta and set aside. Add 1 tbsp. olive oil to pasta and stir in to keep it from sticking together. Precook beef and pork together with salt, garlic salt and black pepper. Drain grease off and set aside. In a large pan add parsley, Italian seasonings, tomato sauce and water, garlic, green peppers, onions and crushed tomatoes. Bring sauce to a boil then reduce to a simmer and continue to cook for 30 minutes. Add cooked meat to the sauce. Let set while preparing the baking pan. Grease a 9x13 inch pan. Layer sauce with spaghetti noodles in the pan. Bake 350 degrees for 30 minutes. At 30 minutes pull spaghetti from the oven and mix cheeses together then pour on spaghetti evenly. Bake 5-10 minutes until cheese is melted
Jane Cave, Sioux Falls

Please send your favorite 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 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Q. What cost-effective improvements will make my home comfortable year-round?

A: It isn't pretty, but insulation and air sealing typically provide the biggest bang for your buck when it comes to home energy efficiency improvements. When installed together, they can save you money and make a big difference in comfort and energy use.

Insulation Rating

Insulation is rated in R-value. The R stands for resistance to heat transfer. The higher your R-value, the slower the heat transfer, or less wasted energy. There are several different types of insulation, including fiberglass batts, blown fiberglass, cellulose and foam. Each has its own R-value listed on the packaging. To determine the R-value of your existing insulation, multiply the number of inches by the R-value per inch for the type of insulation.

Insulation level recommendations are based on your geographic location. Generally, the colder the climate, the higher the recommended R-value.

Where to Insulate

The typical locations for insulation are the attic, walls and floor. If you have a forced-air heating or cooling system, your ductwork should be insulated, too. You want a consistent thermal barrier around your home for maximum efficiency. A bonus to insulation is it can reduce noise from the outside of your home.

Attic insulation minimizes energy waste and can help maintain a more consistent temperature throughout your home. Combined with air sealing, it also can prevent ice dams from forming on your roof in colder climates.

Attics can be insulated using batts or blown-in insulation. Recommend R-values range from R-30 to R-60. If you use your attic for storage, you can build a raised platform with room for insulation underneath. Add insulation and weatherstripping to access doors

or hatches.

Exterior walls and walls separating heated and unheated areas of the home—such as garages or enclosed porches—should be insulated to an R-value ranging from R-13 to R-21, based on your location and wall construction.

Wall insulation can be installed during construction or a remodel. If your home wasn't insulated when it was built, you can have the insulation blown in by a contractor. Blown-in options include cellulose, fiberglass and foam.

Your home should also be insulated between the floor and crawlspace or unheated basement. If your basement is heated, install insulation in the box sills—the area between the foundation floor of the home's main level.

Consider building and insulating the exterior walls in the basement or installing foam insulation on foundation walls. Check your local building code requirements. Recommended R-values for floor insulation range from R-13 to R-30. Also insulate heating and cooling ductwork located in unconditioned spaces to prevent energy waste.

Importance of Air Sealing

Think of insulation as a cozy sweater and air sealing as a windbreaker for your home.

You know that cozy sweater is no match for winter winds, so you need an extra layer to stop it from ripping through. The same goes for your home.

Air sealing prevents drafts and air infiltration from outside. It can improve efficiency, comfort and indoor air quality.

Air sealing can be done as a DIY project, but it is challenging to pinpoint and properly seal air leaks. Consider hiring a contractor to complete a blower door test and seal leaks.

Typically, air sealing is done around plumbing and electrical penetrations with spray foam or caulk. If using spray foam around gas appliances, temporarily turn off pilot lights. Spray foam is extremely flammable.

Sheet metal and high-temperature heat-resistant caulk should be used to seal gaps between framing, chimneys and metal flues.



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group



Headley, three others named to 2022 SDAC Hall of Fame

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Cooperative mergers, storm restoration and pitched political battles over renewable power and annexation... Jim Headley has never backed down in the face of challenges during his 25 years of service on the Central Electric Board of Directors.

Headley was recently inducted into the South Dakota Association of Cooperative's Hall of Fame. He was honored at the annual banquet in Oacoma along with Stan Hanson, Deino Sather and Bryan Roth.

"It's a real privilege to be able to recognize these outstanding individuals who have done so much during their stellar careers to promote the cooperative business model and the many ways that model has benefited citizens all across the state for decades," said Brenda Forman, executive director of the association.

Headley is a farmer and rancher from White Lake who recently retired from the Central Electric Board after 25 years. He was on the board when Tri-County Electric and InterCounty Electric

merged in 2000 and recalls wanting to make sure the right steps were taken so that the best interests of the members were taken into account.

He took a leadership role in completing the merger and later helped guide the co-op through issues such as emerging technology, rising cost pressures, cybersecurity and pitched political battles like the annexation of electric cooperative service territories and the adoption of renewable power.

In fact, Headley figured prominently in the creation of Prairie Winds, a 135,000-acre wind farm project near White Lake that has 108 turbines and the capacity to generate 162 megawatts of electricity each year. It was the first community-owned wind investment partnership with more than 600 South Dakota investors and is now owned by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

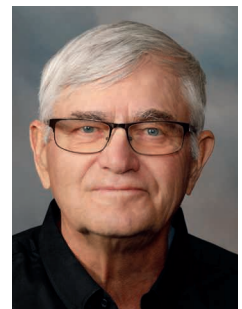
For his leadership, Headley received Basin Electric's "Cooperative Spirit Award" in 2011.

One accolade that holds special meaning for Headley was presented last year at the Buffalo County District Meeting when he received a star quilt from fellow Central Electric Director

Donita Loudner and Crow Creek Sioux Tribal Chairman Peter Lengkeek. The quilt was in recognition of his many years of dedicated service to the Tribe as he has made an effort to preserve many unique Native American artifacts found in his pastures.

Headley also serves on the Patten Township Board and has been active in a number of organizations including the White Lake School Board, Aurora County Zoning Board, GF&P Regional Advisory Board and United Methodist Church Board. He is currently a member of Farmers Union, Farm Bureau, Dakota Rural Action and the Jerauld County Game and Fish Club.

Jim and Cristine Headley have had four children. Their son Jay lost his life in a boating accident on Lake Poinsett in 2002 at the age of 30. Jay's children, Jack and Sydney, later moved to Colorado with their mother, and Jack passed away in 2016. For nearly 20 years, Headley has donated a portion of his board compensation to fund the Jay Headley Memorial Scholarship for dependents of Central Electric members.



Jim Headley



Roger Lawien and his wife, Kris, are regular participants in the Line Patrol Charity Ride. *Photos by Brad Letcher*

Line Patrol Charity Ride marks 20 years of serving those in need

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

When Roger Lawien encountered some unexpected health problems, his fear and anxiety were assuaged by the assurance that he had several key factors in his favor.

He knew he could rely on his faith. He knew he could rely on his family. And he knew he could rely on his fellow cooperative employees across the state.

Lawien, member services manager at Moreau-Grand Electric based in Timber Lake, is a part-time volunteer and full-time advocate of Line Patrol, Inc., a charitable organization that exists to provide financial relief for South Dakota electric cooperative employees and their families in times of need.

Since the program was launched in 2003, hundreds of co-op employees have contributed to the emergency response fund by staging golf tournaments, bowling tournaments, auctions, trap shoots, 5K runs, raffles,

bake sales and more. One of the most popular and highly anticipated events is the annual Line Patrol Charity Ride held each September.

This year's 20th annual event took place on Sept. 10 and was co-hosted by Rushmore Electric, Butte Electric and Grand Electric. More than 200 riders and other participants gathered in Whitewood at the Iron Horse Inn and spent the afternoon motoring through the picturesque northern Black Hills.

Lawien was there perched aboard his prized Indian Roadmaster, soaking in the experience with his co-op friends and feeling grateful to have a dependable network of support that can be counted on not only to help rebuild lines and poles after a storm but also render aid in a personal crisis situation.

"Having been a recipient of funds from this program, it means a lot to be among these fellow co-op employees who are all so eager and willing to demonstrate their kindness and sincerity by showing up every year to contribute

Estimated amount of Line Patrol funds

\$580,000

donated to electric co-op employees

to a worthy cause like this," Lawien said. "It's that same cooperative spirit that bonds us all together. It's the can-do attitude they bring to their jobs every day in service to their members and their ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life in their communities. They are salt-of-the-earth people who care deeply for one another and the people around them."

Lawien said more than 240 families have received assistance through the fund totaling roughly \$580,000. He is one of three directors of the program along with Jessie Tucker (West Central Electric) and Tim Neises (Central Electric).

Jerry Swartz was one of the first



Jerry Swartz, pictured above-left, was the first recipient of Line Patrol funds after he was injured in 2004.

recipients of Line Patrol funds after he was involved in a workplace accident. He expressed what the charitable organization has meant to him and his family.

“Back in 2004, I had an extreme accident at work. I spent six months in recovery and this foundation gave us a check for \$500 to help us out. It may not seem like much money, but at the time it meant everything to me and my family. It’s amazing. God bless this fund and the people who donate to it and keep it running,” Swartz said.

One of the original organizers of the Charity Ride is former Northern Electric General Manager Jim Moore. Each year, as is the custom, Moore leads the cavalcade of dozens of motorcycles

away from the gathering site and along the chosen route.

“The ride has just gotten bigger and better over the years,” Moore said. “The money goes to help co-op employees in need. One person had a tornado damage their home, another lineman from Yankton was killed in Afghanistan and we set up a scholarship fund for his three children. I always tell my wife, Janice, this is the one thing I look forward to every year and truly love because we’re helping employees and their families get back on their feet.”

Laine Mitchell, communications director at Butte Electric, said helping to host the Charity Ride was an honor for the cooperative and something the organization was happy to support.

“Having many of our own employees benefit from the Line Patrol fund over the years, we are thrilled to co-host this year’s event and help raise money for other cooperative families across South Dakota. The ride is just one of the many ways the foundation bonds our cooperatives together and has touched countless lives in the last 20 years,” Mitchell said.

The weekend began with a social on Friday evening and concluded the following night with a buffet dinner and charity auction.

Sponsors for this year’s ride were Irby, Altec, RESCO, Dakota Supply Group, Border States Electric, WESCO and The Okonite Company.



Hundreds of riders from across the state participate in the annual Line Patrol Charity Ride each year. The program exists to provide financial support for electric cooperative employees and their families in times of need.

BASIN TOUR



Cooperative representatives from Codington-Clark Electric and H-D Electric teamed up to tour the Basin Electric facilities.

Basin Electric tour educates and entertains

There is more to electricity than flipping a switch on the wall, and what better way to understand how electricity is made than to visit a power plant and see for yourself.

As part of member education efforts, Codington-Clark Electric and H-D Electric Co-op, Clear Lake, sponsored a tour of Basin Electric.

The group left Codington-Clark's Service Center by chartered bus and traveled to Bismarck where they enjoyed lunch, shopping and swimming. The evening was spent with a riverboat cruise on the Missouri River.

After spending the night in Bismarck, the group left for Beulah, N.D. where the day was spent touring Basin Electric Cooperative facilities. The first stop was a tour of Dakota Gasification Company. The synfuels plant transforms coal into natural gas and other byproducts.

The next stop was a tour of Antelope Valley Station, a 900-megawatt coal-fired power plant. At the plant, members learned about the 277-foot boiler which transforms heat produced from the coal mine into steam energy which then turns the plant's turbines.

The last stop was a tour of Coteau Properties' Freedom Mine. Members learned about the mining and reclamation process while on a guided tour of the coal mine. They watched as the mine's electric loading shovel removed huge buckets of overburden from above the lignite coal seam. They also viewed the mine's 300-ton coal haulers that transport lignite coal from

the coal pit to the handling facilities.

Codington-Clark's Tammy Popham served as tour chaperone.

This is the 13th time the two co-ops partnered together for the tour.

to 3 million electric consumers in parts of North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Montana, and New Mexico.

Basin Electric has two coal-based power



Pictured above, from left, are Pam Berg, Sharon Byer, CCEC's Nikki Stadheim and Dianne Drake taking a tour of Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Antelope Valley Power Plant. Shown at right are Beth and Jim Thoreson, who were also on the tour.



Basin Electric is a consumer-owned, regional cooperative headquartered in Bismarck, N.D. Basin's member systems' service territories span 550,000 square miles from the Canadian to the Mexican borders. Their members constitute a vital network of generation, transmission and distribution systems that deliver electricity

plants in North Dakota – the Antelope Valley Station, at Beulah, and the Leland Olds Station, at Stanton.

Codington-Clark has annually sponsored the Basin Tour since 1966. If you would like to join next year's tour group, contact Tammy at the Co-op's business office and reserve your seat.

Line personnel receive safety training

Line personnel from Codington-Clark Electric received training at a recent safety meeting on pole top and aerial truck rescue from Tyson Brooks, Loss Control Professional for the South Dakota Rural Electric Association.

This is an annual training requirement for all line workers. During the safety meeting Tyson inspected the crew's personal equipment, reviewed safety practices in regard to an aerial or pole top rescue and talked about any close calls or near misses.

Having completed the pole top rescue, the crews then performed the required annual electrical dielectric test of Codington-Clark Electric's bucket and digger trucks. Dielectric testing verifies the electrical insulation strength of the truck. To complete the dielectric test, a testing instrument is connected to the basket of the truck. When ready, the basket is placed against an energized high voltage power line and the testing equipment measures how much current is passing through the fiberglass basket and arm of the aerial trucks.

The line workers then performed live line maintenance as a part of the rubber gloving refresher training. This training allows crews to maintain lines without disconnecting power to the consumers.

Reviewing these procedures and testing of the trucks are for the safety of the crews and public.



Apprentice Lineworker Jacob Ulrich performs pole top rescue with a 120 lb. dummy.



Focused on YOU.

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL
CO-OP MONTH**

CO-OPS OFFER HEALTHY CHOICES

The Sioux Falls Food Co-op has persevered for 50 years by adhering to the co-op model. *Photo by Sioux Falls Food Co-op*

Food co-ops meet the need for nutritious, healthy choices

Billy Gibson

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Back in the 1930s, rural community leaders all across the country began traveling from farm to farm knocking on doors and asking for \$5 as seed money to build out a network of electric distribution systems.

It was not an insignificant sum to solicit from many farmers and ranchers contending with substandard soil conditions, the vagaries of weather patterns and fairly primitive mechanization compared to today's operations.

But in exchange for that investment, those same community leaders turned the promise of rural power into a reality and presently there are more than 750 locally-owned electric cooperatives serving roughly 40 million Americans.

Bess Pallares keeps that electric co-op success story close to mind as she embarks on establishing a grocery store in Brookings County using the

cooperative business model as her template.

Pallares is president of the Dakota Community Market board of directors, whose members have been working since 2019 to bring a food cooperative to the Brookings area. She reports that the endeavor hasn't been a cake walk, but she continues to be inspired by the way like-minded electric co-op leaders back in the '30s managed to gain popular support for locally-owned, independent entities created to provide a valuable service.

The board's market analysis indicates that a "low food access zone" exists within Brookings County when it comes to full-service retail grocery stores with just two providers in a 50-mile radius.

"On average, there are typically 2.84 grocery stores per 10,000 population. We have .68 in this area," she said. "People keep saying they're sick of having to drive miles and miles to get to a full-service grocery store that stocks



Bess Pallares

what they want and need for their families."

To generate start-up capital, the board is offering memberships at \$150, a little more than a week's worth of groceries for many families. Meanwhile, Pallares and her board members are scouring the landscape for additional financing sources and federal grant opportunities with plans to have a retail store up and running as soon as possible.

She has had discussions with East River Electric in Madison about accessing available funds through the Rural Electric Economic Development Fund (REED). The REED program



Caselli's Garden is among a growing list of fresh food suppliers for Dakota Community Market. *Photo by Caselli's Garden*

is designed to provide financing to help build the economic base of rural communities within East River Electric's regional service area. Hundreds of organizations, businesses, medical facilities, housing projects and many more have received financial support through the REED program over the past 20 years.

Hundreds of organizations, businesses, medical facilities, housing projects and many more have received financial support through the REED program over the past 20 years.

Pallares said she sometimes feels exactly like those early electric cooperative pioneers, attempting to pave the way for providing a reliable source of quality, low-cost food in the Brookings area. She has become active in the Billie Sutton Leadership Institute Rural POWER program to help tap into the regional business community with the goal of developing an optimum financial strategy and making connections with future suppliers and other partners.

"The Institute opens up a giant network across the state where you can meet a lot of people doing the same kinds of things you're doing, and they've

got great ideas and big goals and a fearless entrepreneurial spirit. One of our board members has gone through the class and I'm doing it now. It's been transformational," she said.

The Dakota Community Market is not the only fearless group striving to launch a locally-owned and locally-controlled food cooperative. The Coteau Community Co-op is also trying to establish a food co-op to serve the Watertown area. Both have plenty of successful models and supporters to help guide and inspire their efforts.

The National Food Co-op Startup Network and the National Co-op Grocers based in Minneapolis are both available to provide resources and expertise. Additionally, there are a few successful stores already operating in South Dakota, including Natural Abundance in Aberdeen, Breadroot Natural Food Co-op based in Rapid City and the Sioux Falls Food Co-op.

Patrick Sayler is general manager of the Sioux Falls Food Co-op on West 18th Street, an operation that has been going strong for the past 50 years through several relocations, growing competition and even a fire. Sayler sees food co-ops across the region as sharing the same common goals and working together to accomplish those goals.

"We tend to put a different twist on things, but in the end we all want the families we serve to have a better way of

accessing the food they eat to maintain good health and a healthy lifestyle," said Sayler, who used to frequent the store as a teen and replaced long-time manager Molly Langley in 2016. "It's always encouraging to see different leaders working hard to do what we've been able to do. It takes a lot of effort and it takes tireless visionaries to stay focused and committed to achieving what you want to accomplish together."

In meeting its commitment to improve the quality of life in the community, the co-op has a program called Big Change, where shoppers are invited to round up their expenditures to the next whole dollar amount. The difference is added to a fund that goes to support local charities such as the Teddy Bear Den, Mobile Pantry of Sioux Falls, Bishop Dudley Hospitality House, SD Voices for Peace and many more. The co-op even has a space available for public meetings and workshops.

The store recently celebrated an expansion and re-opening, and Sayler said he's optimistic about the future while keeping an eye on industry trends.

"We're growing. There's a lot of competition, but we've got a great location, great employees and a great product," he said. "The co-op model is alive and well. We have members who support us and are committed to our mission of providing a source of healthy, affordable good choices."



Black Hills State University is one of four higher ed institutions to adopt the Build Your Base with Beef program. *Photo by BHSU Athletics*

Beef is what's for lunch in many local school district cafeterias

Billy Gibson

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Beef. It may be what's for dinner, but now it's what's for lunch in many school cafeterias across the state.

In January of 2019, the Wall School District launched a program called "Beef to School" in an effort to add locally-raised beef to the weekly lunch menu and provide protein-rich meals to meet the nutritional needs of the students. At the time, it was billed as the first program of its kind in South Dakota.

The pandemic threatened to scuttle the initiative before it had the chance to gain momentum, but school district leaders, parents and supporters stuck to their mission and today the program has spread to nearly 20 local school districts.

Wall Meat Processing located just north of town is at the center of the action, identifying and working with local ranchers to deliver beef products for hungry students.

Inflation and rising market prices have also presented challenges, but Food Services Director Lynn Dunker stresses that community support has been key to success.

"The price of groceries and the price of everything just keeps going up," Dunker said, "but we've had individuals donate monetary funds out of their own pockets, and Wall Meat Processing is doing what they can to help us and to get other processors involved. We have a very supportive community and they've really been backing this program because they know how important it is that children get good nutrition."

In fact, it was local rancher and concerned citizen Josh Geigle who brought the Beef to School idea to the district leaders after learning about a similar program in Nebraska.

Dunker said the program is part of a popular farm-to-school model that emphasizes locally-grown fresh foods that are generally healthier for young students and their cognitive, behavioral

and physical development.

Besides benefiting from quality nutrition, students also have the opportunity to learn more about where their food comes from and the importance of ranching and farming to the overall success of the community.

"Some maybe don't even realize where beef comes from in the first place," said Wall School District Superintendent Dan Baldwin. "And now when they found out it's their dad, their uncle, a family member, it's actually someone from their ranch, I think that's a really neat thing."

BUILD YOUR BASE WITH BEEF

Another protein promoting program reaching both high school and college students is called Build Your Base with Beef and is specifically directed at athletes who rely on good nutrition to perform at their maximum level.

The South Dakota Beef Industry Council, Sanford Health and the Sanford Sports Science Institute have teamed up to develop a comprehensive tool kit for student-athletes that includes ready-to-use educational materials that help students and their

AFTER WORK BEEF POT ROAST

Ingredients:

- 1 beef Bottom Round Rump Roast (3 to 3-1/2 lbs.)
- 1 envelope (0.7 z.) Italian dressing mix
- 2 large onions, each cut into 8 wedges
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 red bell peppers, cut into 1-1/2 inch pieces
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- 2 zucchini, cut into 1/4-inch thick slices
- 2-1/2 tbsp. cornstarch dissolved in 2 tbsp. water

Directions

Press dressing mix evenly onto all surfaces of beef roast. Place onions and garlic in 4-1/2 to 5-1/2-quart slow cooker; top with roast. Add bell peppers and broth. Cover and cook on high 5 hours or low 8 hours. Add zucchini. Continue cooking, covered, 30 minutes or until pot roast is fork-tender. Remove roast and vegetables. Strain cooking liquid; skim fat. Combine 2 cups cooking liquid and cornstarch mixture in medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; cook and stir 1 minute or until thickened. Carve roast into slices; season with salt and pepper, as desired. Serve with vegetables and gravy.

families adopt more healthy lifestyle choices, practices and habits.

Build Your Base has been endorsed by the National Scholastic Athletics Foundation (NSAF) and recently expanded its reach by appearing at the 2022 Nike Indoor Nationals in New York City last spring. Jack Links serves as the official snack sponsor of the program.

Chris Nilsen, a pole vault record-holder, Olympic silver medalist and former University of South Dakota student, has endorsed the program along with other prominent Olympic athletes such as hammer thrower Deanna Price and shot putter Payton Otterdahl.

“Build Your Base prepped me so well, and without this nutritional approach I wouldn’t be in such great shape. Eating well is such a big part of competing well, and they absolutely do their part,” Nilsen said.

Along with four colleges and universities, more than 25 South Dakota high schools have adopted Build Your Base and integrated it into their athletic departments and lesson plans.

Athletes learn how to determine the proper amounts of beef protein to consume for optimal effect in the maintaining, building and repairing of muscle.



Co-op leaders visit Southwest Power Pool facilities in Arkansas

A contingent of more than 35 electric cooperative leaders from throughout South Dakota and western Minnesota recently visited the facilities of the Southwest Power Pool based in Little Rock, Ark.

The Southwest Power Pool (SPP) is the Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) responsible for managing the electric grid and wholesale power market throughout a 13-state region that spans from the Canadian border to northern Texas.

While RTOs seldom attract much public attention, the polar vortex that swept across the country in the winter of 2021 placed grid operators closer to the spotlight. The roles and responsibilities of RTOs have also come to the fore with concerns over extreme weather events, changing market forces, aging infrastructure, grid congestion, the emergence of renewable power sources and other issues.

The tour was organized by Codington-Clark Electric General Manager Dave Eide. He said he initiated the event because he believed electric cooperatives that transmit and distribute power within the SPP’s footprint would benefit from engaging in face-to-face interactions with those responsible for moving electricity across the grid.

“This was a very eye-opening visit, as we were able to see first-hand how the Southwest Power Pool operates,” Eide said. “Coordination is key, and having personal interaction with the professionals at SPP helps in preparation for the next storm event.”

Eide explained that in the real-time generation, transmission and delivery of electricity, supply and demand must balance out to provide 24-hour continuous service that is safe, efficient and affordable for consumers. When situations develop that threaten to throw the system out of equilibrium, RTOs work in collaboration with utilities throughout the service area to keep the network stable.

The process includes communicating with those entities under the RTO’s umbrella to take decisive measures to modulate either the supply or the demand.



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.

To view the publication's master event calendar, scan the QR code below:



Or visit <https://sdrea.coop/cooperative-connections-event-calendar> to view more upcoming events.

SEPT. 29-OCT. 1
Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup & Arts Festival
 Custer, SD
 605-255-4515

SEPT. 30-OCT. 1
Oktoberfest
 Citywide, Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

SEPT. 30-OCT. 2
SiouxperCon
 1201 N West Ave.
 Sioux Falls, SD

OCT. 1
Prairie Village Hobo Marlin Pumpkin Train
 45205 SD Highway 34
 Madison, SD
 605-256-3644

OCT. 1-2
Magic Needlers Quilt Festival
 Codington County Extension Complex, Watertown, SD
 605-881-3273

OCT. 7
The Pumpkin Patch
 Rapid Valley United Methodist Church, Rapid City, SD
 605-393-1526

OCT. 7-9
Great Scarecrow Festival
 Campbell Park
 Huron, SD
 605-353-8530

OCT. 7-9
Black Hills Powwow
 444 Mt. Rushmore Road
 Rapid City, SD
 605 341-0925

OCT. 7-8
Holman Acres Pumpkin Fest & Vender Show
 Philip, SD
 605-441-1060

OCT. 8
Fall Festival
 Fairburn United Methodist Church, Fairburn, SD
 605-255-4329

OCT. 8-9
Crazy Horse Marathon & Races
 Crazy Horse Memorial
 12151 Avenue Of The Chiefs
 605-390-6137

OCT. 15
Fall Festival
 18473 US Hwy 83, Onida, SD

OCT. 22
Ladies Day
 The Crossing Bar, Mina, SD
 605-390-2939

OCT. 28-30
ZooBoo
 Great Plains Zoo
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-367-7003

NOV. 3-5
Yankton's Harvest Halloween
 Downtown, Yankton, SD
harvesthalloween.com

NOV. 3-5
Huron Ringneck Festival & Bird Dog Challenge
 100 4th Street SW, Huron, SD
 605-352-0000

NOV. 5-20
Rustic Designs & More Christmas Show
 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily
 Ethan, SD
 605-770-2411

NOV. 11-13
Christmas at the Barn
 Front Porch 605, Groton, SD
 605-216-4202

NOV. 12
Black Hills Meat Festival
 Black Hills Harley Davidson
 2820 Harley Dr., Rapid City, SD
 605-390-7917

NOV. 18-20
Deadwood's Big Whiskey Festival
 Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

DEC. 2-3
Christmas in the Hills
 Mueller Center, Hot Springs, SD
 605-745-4140

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