

Genuine, Authentic, and Unadulterated Kindness



Stephanie Horst

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Here at Bon Homme Yankton Electric, our mission is to serve our members, and every employee here prioritizes serving our membership to keep electricity affordable and reliable while adopting an innovative approach to meet their needs now and into the future.

Last October I turned 50. That's right...the Big Five-Oh! I've noticed that with every turn of a new decade my body starts to experience a growing number of unfamiliar and unexplainable issues. This time it was no different with hormone levels and metabolism changes coming on faster and more unpredictable than the South Dakota weather, and the stubborn pounds finding a comfortable home on the most unflattering parts of my body that do not want to leave. To make sense of all these changes, I have been reading through books that seem to all have the same overarching theme: there are no easy solutions, hidden secrets or magic bullets. As much as I don't want to admit it, the real answer lies in a healthy diet, moderate exercise, plenty of water and an adequate amount of sleep. As Willie Cap, our retired custodian, would say: "Easy Peasy!" I have found through experience that "easy peasy" is more of a mindset than it is physical effort. The process of looking good and feeling good can be as hard or as easy as I want. Some days it's a struggle, and some days it really does seem "easy peasy."

Recently, I experienced an evening that I have to put in the "struggle" category. One of my goals is to build up my asthmatic lungs by doing some interval running. When it came time to head outdoors, neither my mind nor my body was willing. The couch and the television screen had a pretty firm grip on me that they weren't willing to let go. Eventually, I was able to pull myself out the door by force of will and with a few minutes of stretching out and warming up, I found my rhythm. The more physical distance I put between myself and the sofa and TV, the more I felt that cobweb sensation of stiff joints and tight muscles going away.

There were others on the Lewis & Clark Lake bike paths enjoying the beautiful 85-degree summer-like weather. There was a lady walking her Golden Retriever – or it may have been the other way around - lots of cyclists, and families out for an early evening stroll. I jogged by each of them flicking my hand up with a friendly wave and a smile without breaking in my pace, until a boy about 3 years old jumped off his Strider bike and stopped me in my tracks. He looked up at me and waved and said, "Hi!" I said hello to the child, and before I could get going again, he asked me something that I didn't anticipate. "Can I hug you?" A bit startled by this sudden invitation from a stranger, I looked at the boy's mom for permission and with her nod I received the greatest blessing! I thanked him for the hug and for being so nice to me and he hopped back on his bike and peddled away with glee. I continued my run with those words hanging heavy in the air around me. "Can I hug you?" The simple words reverberated in my head and began to synchronize with the beat of my feet against the pavement. Why did these words keep bouncing around in my brain? Then I realized, he did not ask, "Can I have a hug?" but "Can I hug you?" Two very different meanings. The first is wanting something from someone, and the other is giving something to someone else. This little guy with a simple phrase, a simple gesture and his enthusiasm for sharing a spontaneous display of affection with a stranger was all about serving, and I was incredibly fortunate to receive this blessing right out of the blue.

For the first time, I realized the importance of being the receiver of such genuine, authentic, unadulterated kindness and how it made me feel. Here at Bon Homme Yankton Electric, our mission is to serve our members, and every employee here prioritizes serving our membership to keep electricity affordable and reliable while adopting an innovative approach to meet their needs now and into the future. My hope is that as a Bon Homme Yankton Electric member you feel the positive impact that our dedicated employees make even beyond restoring power, in the same way I received that boy's desire to just spread a little joy in the world.

We are engaging in more programs for our members like the Co-op Connections Card, which we recently rolled out to help our members save money and support local businesses. You can use this card for discounts at participating businesses locally and nationally. The letter that was included with the card explains the program, and in our newsletter, our website, and/or our social media platforms, we will have our local business discounts advertised. Please contact Jaclyn in our office if you have a business and want to participate. *Continued on next page*

Bon Homme Yankton Electric

Cooperative Connections

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Manager's Column Cont.

We will continue to find new ways to serve our members, and looking at the technology heading our way there is a lot of opportunity for us to do so.

To the 3-year-old I met on the bike path that day, thank you for reminding me of the impact that a servant attitude has, being a grateful receiver, and of course what I would have missed out on if I'd allowed myself to stay stuck on that couch.

Until next month, Stay Safe!

FFA Farm Safety Day in Scotland

On March 19th, Bon Homme Yankton Electric put on an electric safety demonstration for Scotland School District K-8 grade students. Scotland's FFA Advisor Lindsey Kaufmann planned the Farm Safety Day with the help of FFA committee members Joslyn Walloch, Tori Dvorak, Kalley Vitek, and Addison Haase.

Kevin Meyer, Tyler Suess, Sean Kafka, and Travis Zomer of Bon Homme Yankton Electric used the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) High Voltage Trailer to put on the presentation. They used hot dogs and grapefruit to demonstrate what electricity can do to a human body.

FFA Advisor Lindsey Kaufmann said she saw a need for farm safety education for elementary and middle schoolers and filled it. She plans to continue the FFA Farm Safety Day every year with rotating topics.

In addition to the high voltage trailer, sessions this year were animal safety (Northwest Vet), chemical safety (Central Farmers Co-op), gun safety (Brian Humpfry), basic first aid (Scotland EMS), and accident safety (FFA).

Kaufmann's favorite part of this event was how willing all the volunteers were to help educate kids on farm safety, especially the scary parts of farming.

If you are interested in organizing an electric safety demonstration, contact Jaclyn Arens at jarens@byelectric.

