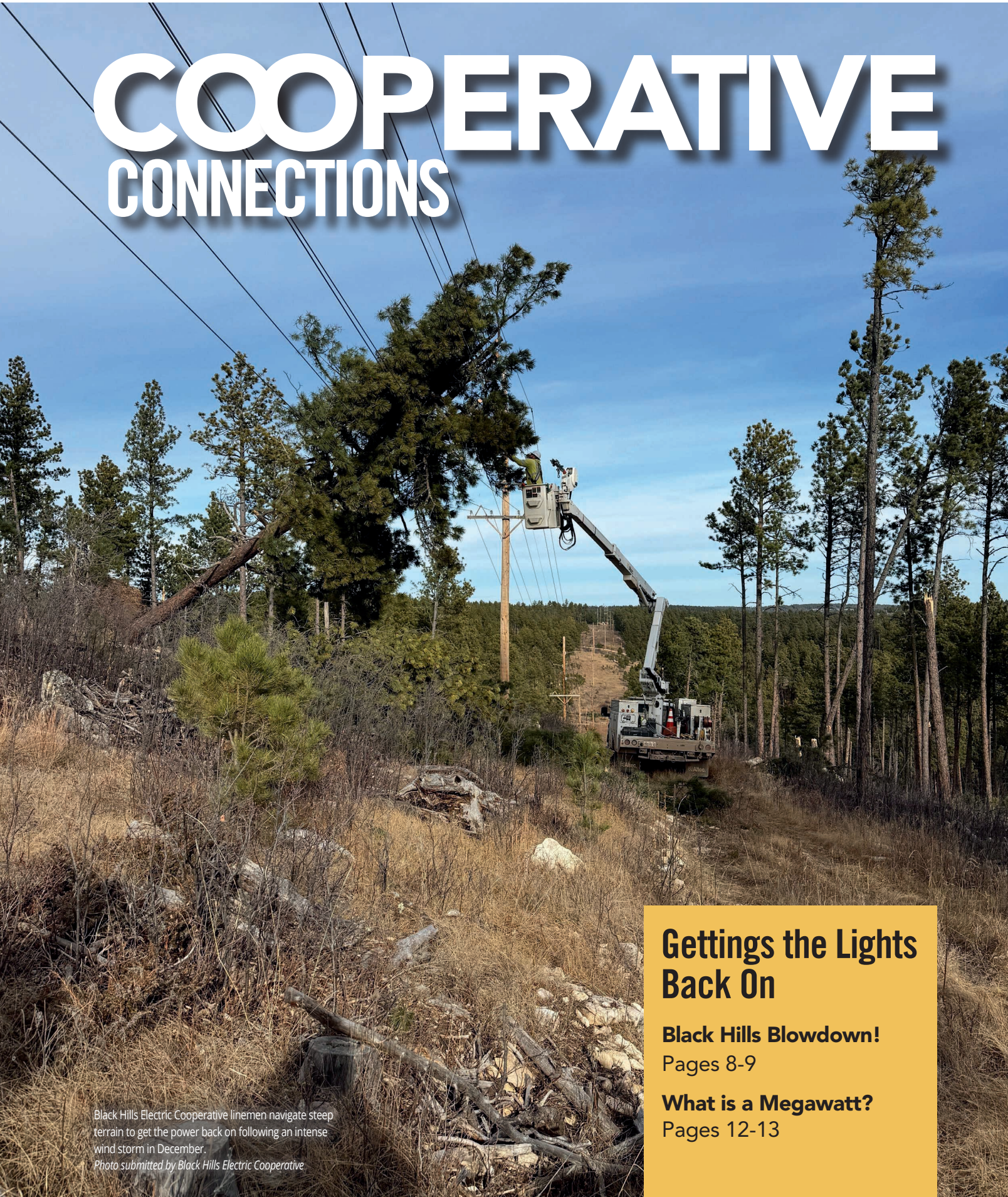
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

BON HOMME YANKTON ELECTRIC
MARCH 2026 VOL. 26 NO. 11

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Black Hills Electric Cooperative linemen navigate steep terrain to get the power back on following an intense wind storm in December.
Photo submitted by Black Hills Electric Cooperative

Gettings the Lights Back On

WIRED FOR GROWTH: BALANCING DATA CENTER DEMAND AND RELIABILITY

Stephanie Horst
horst@byelectric.com

When people think about data centers, they often picture big cities. But more and more, these facilities are popping up in rural areas like ours—and that's no accident. Rural communities offer what data centers need most: affordable land, room to grow, and access to transmission lines that can move a lot of power.

What really sets data centers apart is how much electricity they use—and how constantly they use it. These facilities operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, because they support many of the things we now rely on every day. From online banking and shopping, to streaming movies, cloud storage for photos, GPS navigation, and even some of the systems used in agriculture, healthcare, and emergency services, data centers keep the digital world running. While these systems are designed to operate around the clock, how they are served is carefully planned and governed by contracts to ensure reliability for all B-Y Electric members and to protect our existing load.

For electric cooperatives, powering data centers creates both opportunities and challenges.

On one hand, data centers can bring steady, long-term growth. That kind of growth can support investments in our electric system—things like new substations, stronger lines, and smarter technology. When planned carefully, those improvements can benefit all B-Y Electric members and help keep rates as stable as possible.

On the other hand, meeting that kind of demand isn't simple. Data centers can be built quickly, sometimes in less than a year, but the electric infrastructure needed to serve them takes much longer to plan, build, and finance. It requires careful coordination, long-term power supply planning, and significant investment.

As a member-owned cooperative, our job is to strike the right balance. We need to listen to our communities and support local growth, while also making sure we continue to provide reliable, affordable electricity to every B-Y Electric member.

Looking ahead, our approach is straightforward: growth needs to be fair. Large-scale energy users must pay their fair share so residential bills don't spike and the costs of growth aren't shifted onto our members. Just as important, all service is planned and governed by contracts that protect our existing load and ensure reliable service for the members who already depend on us every day.

The energy landscape is changing, and with change comes both opportunity and challenge. My commitment—and the commitment of B-Y Electric's board and employees—is to keep listening, communicating, and working with our members and community partners so the decisions we make today continue to serve the people who own this cooperative well into the future.

COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS
BON HOMME
YANKTON ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 018-973)

Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association, Inc
PO Box 158
134 S. Lidice St.
Tabor, SD 57063

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
7:30am - 4:00pm

Pay by Phone, call:
1-855-941-3507

To report an outage, call:
Local call from Tabor, Tyndall, and Yankton:
605-463-2507

NOTICE: Electric bills must be paid by 10:00am on the 20th of each month to avoid a $10 late fee.

Board President: Dave Sykora
Board of Directors
Rick Cheloha - Vice President
Brian Brandt - Secretary
Robert Ruppelt - Treasurer
Paul Voigt
Tom Boyko

General Manager: Stephanie Horst
Operations Manager: Ken Carda
Office Manager: Nicole Einrem
Members Service Advisor: Aaron Melichar
Editor: Chantelle Jungemann

Bon Homme Yankton Electric Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association, Inc, PO Box 158, 134 S. Lidice St., Tabor, SD 57063-0158. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of Bon Homme Yankton Electric Cooperative Connections is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on electric cooperative matters and better rural living. Subscription information: Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for $12 annually. Periodicals postage paid at Tabor, SD 57063.

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B-Y ELECTRIC
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JANUARY BOARD MEETING

The January board meeting was held on January 21, 2026 at 8:00 am. Directors present were Rick Cheloha, Robert Ruppelt, Paul Voigt, Tom Boyko and Brian Brandt. Others present were the attorney, management staff and guest employee.

THE BOARD APPROVED THE CONSENT AGENDA:

- December 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- Capital Credits to Estates - $15,541.35
- Review New Members & Cancellations
- Review Closed Work Order Inventory - #923 for $1,426,826.28
- Review Special Equipment Purchases - None

THE BOARD REVIEWED AND ACCEPTED FOLLOWING REPORTS:

- Member Service Report
- Operations & Safety Report
- Office & Financial Reports
- General Manager Report
- East River Cyber Security/IT Report
- SDREA Report
- East River Report
- SDREA Annual Meeting Report

OTHER GOVERNANCE

- Appointed NRECA Annual Meeting Voting Delegate/Alternate (Ruppelt/Brandt)
- Reviewed Yankton Office/Storage REED Application
- Reviewed/Approved 2025 4th Quarter Director Expenses
- Enter/Exit Executive Session
- CFC Presentation
- Next Meeting date set for Wednesday, February 18, 2026, at 8:00 am.

FINANCIAL REPORT	DECEMBER		YTD
	2024	2025	2025
TOTAL ELECTRIC REVENUE	$1,076,291	$1,143,537	$12,536,930
COST OF POWER	$629,040	$651,289	$7,355,272
TOTAL COST OF SERVICE	$891,834	$1,082,971	$12,301,320
KWHS PURCHASED	10,551,341	10,544,007	102,236,978
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE KWH	2,099	2,120	
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE BILL	$220	$237	

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Tabor
Chelsey Faehnrich

Tripp
Carson Barney
Weston L Frank

Irene
Chris & Jana Anderson

Yankton
Brad Smith
Brett Moeller
Chelsea Kroon & Jonathan Carlstedt
CNA LLC
Cynthia L Burns
Doug & Cinda Faber
Doug Stevens
Jennifer & Michael Donner
Katrina Parra
Midway Gulch Campground LLC
Randy Houska
Sully's LLC
Synapse Realty, LLC
Thomas & Patricia Newman

Ensuring Drone Safety Near Power Lines

As drones continue to gain popularity for recreational and commercial use, their integration into our daily lives should not lessen the consideration of safety – particularly when it comes to flying near power lines. The intersection of drone technology and electrical infrastructure necessitates adherence to safety protocols, regulations, and best practices to protect both pilots and the integrity of electrical systems.

Power lines are essential components of our electrical grid, delivering energy to homes and businesses. However, they can pose serious hazards for drone operators. Collisions with power lines can cause significant equipment damage, leading to costly repairs or replacements. More critically, such incidents can disrupt service for hundreds of members, creating outages that could last for hours or even days.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has established regulations governing drone use, including restrictions on flying in proximity to power lines. According to FAA guidelines, drone pilots must always maintain a visual line of sight with their aircraft and avoid flying over people. When operating near electrical infrastructure, it is crucial to adhere to the regulations pertaining to altitude and no-fly zones.

Drone operators should also be familiar with state and local laws, as some municipalities have designated specific areas as no-fly zones, particularly near critical infrastructure like power facilities. Understanding these regulations is not only a legal requirement but also an essential step in ensuring the safety of all involved.

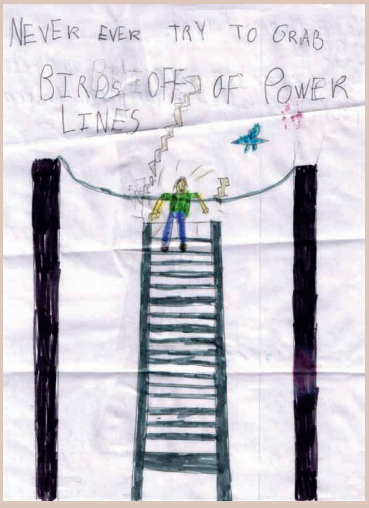
Best Practices for Safe Operations

To minimize risks when flying drones near power lines, operators should adopt several best practices:

1. **Pre-Flight Planning:** Before taking off, thoroughly assess the flight area. Identify the location of power lines, potential obstacles, and any relevant no-fly zones. Consulting local maps and aerial photography can aid in understanding the landscape.
2. **Maintain Safe Distances:** When operating near power lines, always keep a safe distance. The FAA recommends a separation of at least 500 feet from energized power lines to avoid potential collisions. Keeping a safe buffer not only protects the drone but also mitigates risks to nearby electrical infrastructure.
3. **Use Technology Wisely:** Many modern drones come equipped with GPS and obstacle avoidance systems that can aid in safe navigation. Utilize these features and ensure that your drone's software is updated to reduce the likelihood of malfunction.
4. **Operating in Controlled Conditions:** Avoid flying drones in poor weather conditions such as high winds, rain, or reduced visibility. Harsh weather not only affects flight stability but can also lead to loss of control over the drone, increasing the risk of accidents.
5. **Emergency Procedures:** In case of a malfunction or loss of control, having an emergency plan in place is vital. Be prepared to communicate with local authorities if a drone becomes entangled in power lines or presents a safety concern.

As the popularity of drones continues to soar, awareness around safety protocols, especially near power lines, has become increasingly critical. By understanding the risks involved, adhering to regulations, and implementing best practices for safe drone operations, pilots can ensure the protection of themselves, others, and vital electrical infrastructure. Responsible drone use fosters innovation while ensuring safety remains paramount in our evolving technological landscape.

"Never ever try to grab birds off of power lines!"



Naomi Krcil, Age 8

Naomi warns readers to never EVER grab birds off of a power line. Great picture, Naomi! Naomi's parents are Andrew and Andrea Krcil from Dante, S.D.

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.

Scrumptious SALADS

MACARONI SALAD

Ingredients:

2 cups macaroni (cooked, drained, rinsed and cooled)
2 or more cups of carrots (chopped or shredded)
1 small chopped onion (optional)
1 cup chopped green pepper (optional)

Dressing

1 cup mayonnaise (Hellmans)
1/4 cup vinegar
1/2 cup sugar
7 oz. sweetened condensed milk
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper

R. Gregg Fritz
H-D Electric

KARI REDER'S POTATO SALAD

Ingredients:

7-8 lbs. potatoes, Yukon gold or red
1 dozen eggs
1 med. sweet onion
2 cups Mayo
1 tbsp. cream
1/4 cup of apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup of sugar or splenda
1 1/2 tbsps. mustard
2 tbsps. celery seed
Celery salt, salt and pepper to taste

Method

Boil potatoes and eggs, peel and dice. Add the chopped onion. Mix together mayo, cream, apple cider vinegar, sugar, mustard, celery seed, celery salt, salt and pepper. Mix all together well and refrigerate.

Kari Reder
Northern Electric

SUMMER GARDEN PASTA SALAD

Ingredients:

1 lb. thin spaghetti, broken into 1" pieces
1 pt. cherry tomatoes, halved
2 med. zucchini, peeled & diced
2 med. cucumbers, diced
1 green pepper, diced
1 red pepper, diced
1 – 16 oz. can sliced black olives, drained

Dressing:

1 – 16 oz. bottle Italian dressing
1/4 cup parmesan cheese
1 tbsp. sesame seeds
1 tsp. paprika
1/2 tsp. celery seed
1/2 tsp. garlic salt

Method

Cook pasta; drain. Drizzle with 1-2 tsps. olive oil. In large bowl, combine pasta, tomatoes, zucchini, cucumber, peppers and olives.

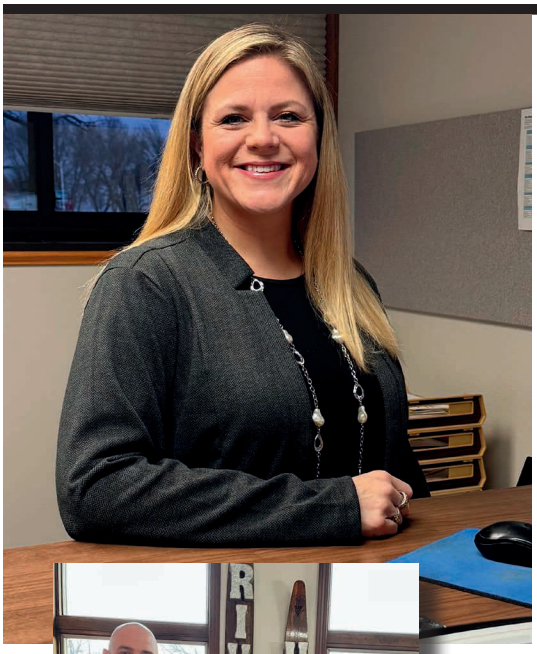
Whisk dressing ingredients together. Pour over salad ingredients and toss to coat.

Cover and refrigerate for three hours.

Jane Ham
Cam Wal Electric

Photo courtesy of Laurie Wernke.

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 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



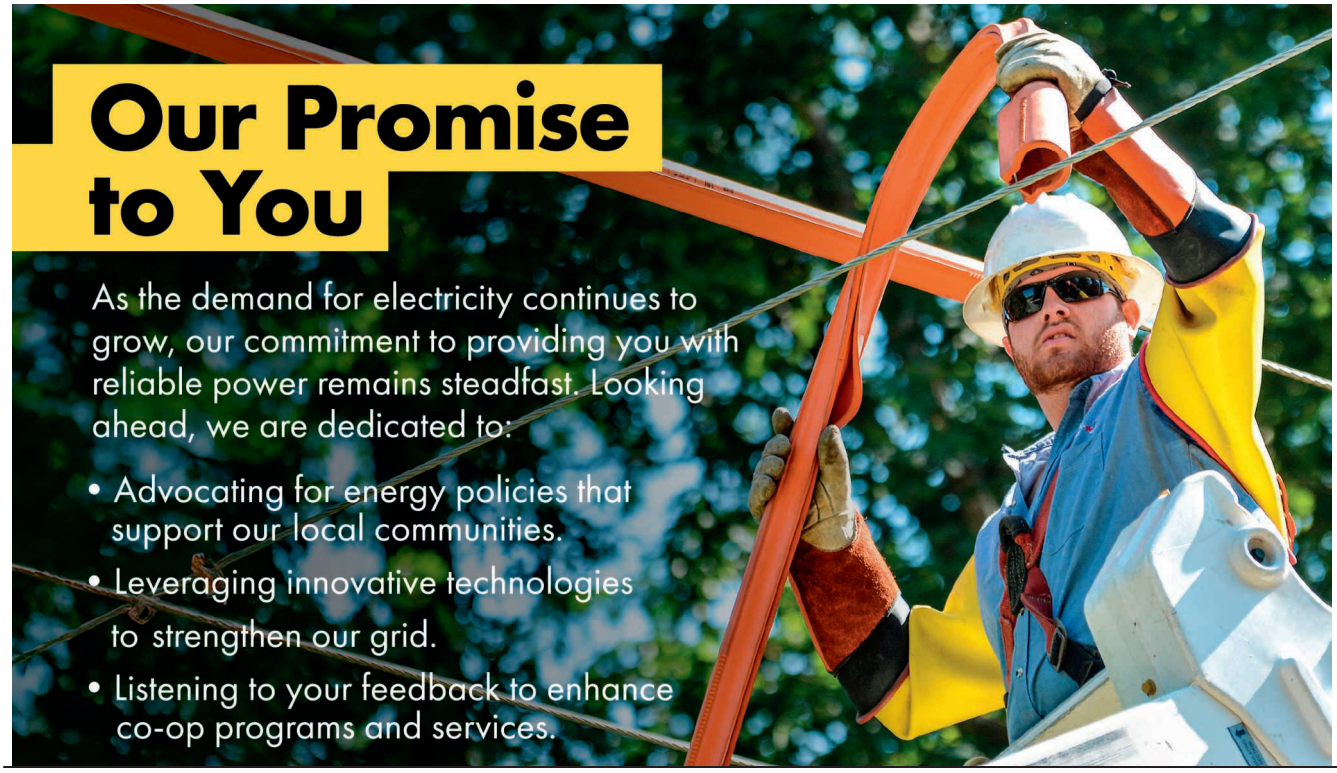
JESSICA CAMERON

Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association is pleased to welcome Jessica Cameron as our new Office Manager. Jessica brings a strong financial background to the cooperative, having earned a major in Accounting with a minor in Business. Most recently, she served as a Sales Tax Auditor for the State of South Dakota, where she developed a keen eye for detail and a deep understanding of fiscal responsibility - skills that will be an asset to both our members and staff.

Jessica and her husband, Garrett Cameron, who works for Astec, are active members of the Yankton community. They are proud parents to Kolden, a 10th grader, and Cale, an 8th grader in Yankton. Both boys stay busy participating in band, football, and wrestling, keeping the family on the go year-round.

Beyond work and family, Jessica is deeply involved in the community. She serves as Vice President of the Yankton Band Boosters, teaches confirmation at Trinity Lutheran Church, bowls in a weekly league, plays coed softball during the summer, and serves on the Yankton County POD. In her free time, Jessica enjoys painting, music, and all things Halloween. She is also passionate about supporting local nonprofit organizations, including All Cats Rescue, The Dakota Theatre, and the Heartland Humane Society.

Please join us in welcoming in coming Office Manager, Jessica to Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association training under Nicole - we're excited to have her on the team!



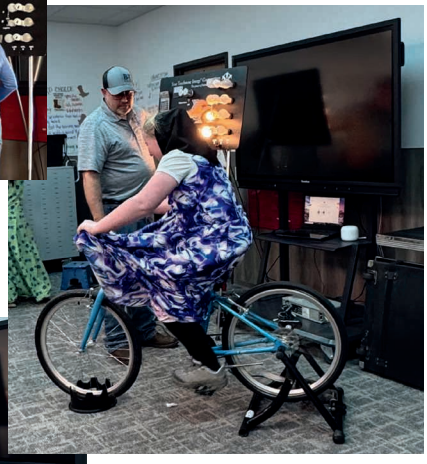
CO-OP IN THE CLASSROOM

Jennifer Gross, East River's Education and Outreach Coordinator and Aaron Melichar, B-Y Electric's Member Service Advisor recently visited Bon Homme Colony students.

Co-op in the Classroom program teaches the importance of respecting electricity, where electricity comes from, and hands-on demonstrations to engage students.

Learning the ways we produce electricity and where it comes from is "shocking". A Van de Graaff generator demonstrated the movement of electrons with some hair raising results. Another device that invokes a lot of excitement is the Pedal Power Bicycle generator. Students are asked to become power plants as they proved the energy that produces electricity for LED, CFL and Incandescent light bulbs. By learning these concepts from an early age, kids will be better prepared to make wise energy decisions now and be conscientious consumers of energy in the future.

Co-op in the Classroom is available to schools and organizations within East River's service territory. To request a presentation for your school or community organization, please contact Chantelle Jungemann, Member Service Representative at 605-463-2507.



Intense wind left the crossarm of a broken three-phase pole hanging after a holiday storm.
Photos submitted by Black Hills Electric Cooperative

GETTING THE LIGHTS BACK ON

Black Hills Electric Cooperative Works Tirelessly Following Holiday Storm

Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

In the early morning hours of Dec. 18, powerful winds swept across western South Dakota, leaving much of the Black Hills without electricity. The outage included the home of Bill Brisk, manager of operations at Black Hills Electric Cooperative.

Through wild winds, Brisk set out for his office at the cooperative at 3 a.m., where he discovered that the windstorm was unlike anything he had seen in his 36 years with the cooperative.

"We get wind in the Hills," Brisk said. "But nothing like that. In all of the time that I've been at the cooperative, I've never seen wind that strong."

Wind gusts were later estimated at more than 100 mph, tearing through the Black Hills with unprecedented force.

When Brisk arrived, the scope of the damage became clear. Nearly the entire system was down, and more than 11,000 of the co-op's approximately 11,500 meters were without power. By daybreak, more than 96% of Black Hills Electric Cooperative's system was dark, the largest outage event in the cooperative's history.

Although an influx of outage calls from members came in around midnight, Brisk made an early and critical decision; crews would not be sent out while the storm was still raging.

"We began receiving calls around midnight, but I did not have our crews go out, just for the fact that it was just too dangerous," Brisk said. "Trees were breaking off, conditions were hazardous, and I didn't want to put our crews in any dangerous situations."

Instead, crews waited for daylight, when conditions allowed for safe assessment – the first step of getting the lights back on.

Assessment almost always begins with reporting from the community. Due to an overwhelming call volume during storm events, local reports of outages are forwarded to Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Security and Response Services. These services relay important updates to electric cooperatives. Dispatchers communicate with linemen via push-to-talk radios and cell phones, tracking linemen from the time they leave the shop until the outage has been restored.

In addition to local reports, linemen also conduct their own assessments. That morning, linemen reported countless uprooted and snapped trees, downed poles and even wires lay broken across forest floors and roadways. In some areas, trees fell into other trees, creating dangerous conditions for anyone working below.

"I believe this was one of the worst storms in our cooperative's history, including winter storm Atlas," said Brisk.

As the assessment was underway, line

crews worked to bring downed substations back online first, then main three-phase feeders, followed by smaller distribution lines that bring power directly to homes and businesses. That order helps restore electricity to the greatest number of members as quickly as possible.

In the Black Hills, terrain adds another layer of complexity. Many lines run through dense forest, steep canyons and areas far from maintained roads.

"This isn't square-mile territory," Brisk said. "You might have to drive five or six miles just to get around a canyon."

By midday Dec. 18, it was decided the damage was too widespread for Black Hills Electric to tackle alone. Brisk reached out to Mark Patterson, South Dakota Rural Electric Association's manager of loss control, to request mutual aid from neighboring cooperatives – reinforcing a long-standing cooperative tradition built on neighbors helping neighbors.

Within hours, assistance began mobilizing. Crews, trucks and equipment arrived from across western South Dakota. Six electric cooperatives and a contractor ultimately sent help, bringing 55 additional linemen to the Black Hills. Those crews came from Butte Electric Cooperative, Cherry-Todd Electric Cooperative, Lacreek Electric Association, West Central Electric Cooperative, West River Electric Association, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative and Kainz Power Lines, a local contractor based out of Custer.

"I had each operations manager of the responding cooperatives call me and ask what we needed," Brisk said. "We asked for bucket trucks, digger trucks, chainsaws, attachments for skid steers, and extra line crews, and they sent everything we asked for."

Days began early and ended late with crews often working 12 to 16-hour shifts. Brisk emphasized safety repeatedly to the crews as they worked among unstable trees, high winds and rugged terrain.

Behind the scenes, the restoration effort extended beyond the field. Office staff coordinated logistics and prepared meals. Lunches were packed daily for crews heading out before dawn. Supplies were tracked, equipment was staged and communication updates were shared with members.

"It wasn't just the line crews," Brisk said. "Everybody stepped up."

As crews continued working and Christmas approached, it appeared unlikely that power would be fully restored in time for the holiday. The visiting crews made it clear they were willing to stay through the holiday.

"All the outside crews said they weren't leaving," Brisk said. "They stayed to help us finish."

By Christmas Eve, most members had power for the holiday and visiting crews were able to return home. Even still, Black Hills Electric crews continued limited work through the holiday, work that continues today.

"To be truthful, we are still cutting trees, setting poles and repairing lines from this storm," said Brisk.

The storm was later designated a FEMA-eligible event, requiring detailed tracking of labor, equipment and materials.

Looking back, Brisk said the restoration efforts relied heavily on cooperation and dedication among crews from the assisting cooperatives.

"It's good to know you've got great neighbors," he said. "When you need help, they come."

An assisting lineman from West River Electric Cooperative installs a ground on the line to be further worked on.

Damage from the storm not only affected poles, but also uprooted trees.

Bill Brisk, manager of operations at Black Hills Electric Cooperative, gives a morning briefing, updating the cooperative and assisting crews with storm recovery assignments.

2025 CO-OP UPDATE

2025 Marked 80 years of bringing the best to our members. Dedicated to serving our members with innovation, accountability, integrity, and commitment to service.

As we close another year, we want to take a moment to share what we've accomplished as a cooperative and share where we're headed next.

Construction

Underground Cable – One of the big projects in 2025 was the overhead to underground construction of about 24 miles of single-phase lines East of Tabor, 2 miles of three-phase North of Tabor, and then also 4.5 miles in the Southwest corner of the system. With this construction added to new service construction we installed approximately 37 miles of underground to the system and removed approximately 30 miles of overhead.

New Services – B-Y welcomed 58 new services in 2025.

2026 Construction – We will be busy this year again with cable plowing in for the overhead to underground construction. Depending on the grant award, the Tabor East to Yankton Sub three-phase line we may have 8 miles and the 5.5 miles North of Tyndall to install. This might have to be pushed to another year or until we get confirmation of the grant that would help pay for these projects.

We will be working in the Southwest corner of our system again to start with for nearly 20 miles of single-phase line. Then work with a couple different projects that are in Jamesville colony area. These projects would add up to about an additional 4 miles.

Along with the plow construction we will have the new service requests. We are still seeing our main service growth in the Lewis and Clark lake area. This includes a few developments that continue to expand and new developments opening.

Maintenance

Pole Inspections – continue to have poles to replace due to our pole inspection that take place every year. We also see multiple poles damaged by lightning or weather in general.

Years past we aimed for 2,000 poles or 10% of our system to inspect each year due to our system having about 20,000 poles total. Due to our service retirement, road moves, and overhead to underground conversion we have brought that down to about 14,000 poles left on our system. This number

will continue to go down as we remove more of the overhead lines.

Total rate of failed inspections if under 2% is thought to be good. 1.5% has been our average over the last 7 years. In 2025 Tabor West, South, and B-Y Water substation we saw .79% failure rate. That just means our system/poles appears to be doing well.

Tabor North and Town Circuits poles will be inspected in 2026. There will be about 1,000 poles in this group.

Tree Trimming – In 2025 we focused on the Springfield Sub area. As the overhead to underground conversion continues there will be less impact on our system by trees so less trimming will be needed.

The Tabor Sub area will be the focus with tree trimming in 2026.

Line Patrol/Inspection

Our plan for 2026 will have crew members inspecting our lines and verifying meter reads on these substations: By Water Sub, Mission Hill Sub, Yankton Sub, Gavins Sub, and Lewis & Clark Sub.

Safety and Training

Safety remains a top priority. Crews completed inspections of substations, routine line patrols, truck inspections, and meter reads on our

system. They participate in trainings throughout the year such as, JUTS, Meter School, Rubber Glove training, Underground School, and the whole team participated in annual hearing testing, CPR, First Aid, and May Day procedures.

Bon Homme Yankton Electric received RESAP certificate at the SDREA Annual Meeting. RESAP certificate signifies the completion of the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program, a national program for electric cooperatives recognizing strong safety performance through assessments, training, and documentation of safety plans, aimed at reducing electrical hazards for employees.

Finance

The finance team had a strong year by focusing on accuracy, compliance and the strategic plan. Many goals and achievements were made:

- Secured an RUS loan to support the 2024-2027 construction work plan
- Executed three advances of loan funds to reimburse the cooperative for construction activity
- Refunded over $585,000 in capital credits to members and estates
- Margins still finished strong at $10,000 over budget despite a mild-weather year with low electric sales conditions
- Planned allocation of $942,000 to members/ capital credit accounts in the spring following final reports

They continue to look at the rate structures/parameters that were implemented throughout the year and how to make the most out of every dollar for the member. They are looking forward to a productive 2026.

Member Service & Communications

We Connected with our communities throughout the year by organizing and participating in:

- Annual Membership Meeting
- Participation in parades
- Co-op in the Classroom
- 4-H Safety Days
- Hotline Trailer Presentation

What Can You Do With 1 Megawatt?

Big Box Stores

1 MW will power a typical large retail store.

Factory

Facilities with heavy machinery can draw 1 MW of power.

Office Building

1 MW can power several medium-sized office buildings.

Hospital

1 MW will power a small hospital.

Power Plant

Typical outputs:
Coal: 500 MW to 1 GW
Gas: 50 MW to 1 GW
Nuclear: 500 MW to 1.5 GW

1 MW is 1 million watts of power.

School

0.5 MW will power a medium-size public school.

EV Charging

1 MW can power four Tesla Supercharger V3s simultaneously.

Data Center

1 MW will power one small data center.

Other facilities that can draw up to 1 MW of power:

- High-speed rail
- Large farms
- Wastewater treatment
- Stadiums

Residential

1 MW can power 750 to 1,000 homes.

Source: NRECA; Design: Jerry Mosemak

WHAT IS A MEGAWATT?

Jacob Boyko
jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

If you're a regular Cooperative Connections reader, you've probably seen the term "megawatt" countless times. From articles about new power generation facilities, energy-saving tips, major infrastructure projects or energy policy, megawatts come up again and again. But what does a megawatt actually mean?

Watts, Kilowatts, Megawatts & More

A megawatt is a unit of power that measures the speed at which energy is generated or used at a given time. A megawatt is 1,000 kilowatts (KW), or 1 million watts.

You may recognize watts from the labels on everyday household items like light bulbs and phone chargers. These numbers indicate the amount of power the device draws while operating.

Here are the wattages for some common household items:

- LED Light bulb – 5-20 Watts
- Refrigerator – 350-800 Watts
- Desktop PC – 100-800 Watts
- LED Television: 30-300 Watts
- Microwave – 700-1,200 Watts
- Hair Dryer – 1,500-2,000 Watts
- Clothes Dryer – 1,800-5,000 Watts

1 Million Watts
=
1,000 Kilowatts
=
1 Megawatt
=
1/1,000 Gigawatt

At East River Electric Power Cooperative, the generation and transmission cooperative that sells power to member co-ops in Eastern South Dakota and Western Minnesota, Jennifer Gross uses a modified bicycle to help put power into perspective.

The bike is stationary – the pedals power a small generator wired to several different kinds of light bulbs. Gross, who is East River's education and outreach coordinator, says the "pedal power bike" demonstrates energy use in a tangible way and highlights the difference of energy-efficient products.

"It's actually quite difficult for the person pedaling to generate electricity consistently for more than a few minutes," Gross said.

Jennifer Gross demonstrates energy generation and consumption. *Submitted Photo*

"When they're pedaling to power the inefficient, old-school incandescent light bulbs, they can pedal for about one minute and not even keep it at 200 watts the whole time."

The electric grid experiences the most strain during peak demand times – the hours before and after work and school when most people are home doing laundry, watching TV etc.

In communities with hundreds to thousands of homes and businesses, electricity demand grows large enough to be measured in megawatts – the unit equal to 1,000 KW.

Your electric co-op's electricity is generated by Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which was formed in the 1960s by electric co-ops in the upper Midwest to generate electricity for co-ops. Serving over 3 million consumers across nine states, Basin generates power from its owned and leased assets, which include coal, natural gas, solar and wind. Basin's generation capability is so massive that it's measured in gigawatts – the unit equal to 1,000 MW.

Basin reports a maximum generating capacity of about 8,427 MW – or 8.427 GW. That figure reflects every available generation resource running at full output, including the oil-fueled peaking units used during times of high demand, along with purchases from the Western Area Power Administration and the Southwest Power Pool energy market.

On an even larger scale, the total installed generation capacity in the U.S. reaches the terawatt level, totalling about 1.3 TW, which is equal to 1,300 GW, 1.3 million MW or 1.3 billion KW – enough to simultaneously run about 1 billion hair dryers!

Your Co-op's Megawatts

As a co-op member, you're a part-owner of Basin Electric's generation resources. Here's a look at several of those facilities.

Antelope Valley Station
Beulah, N.D. • 1984
900 MW • Coal

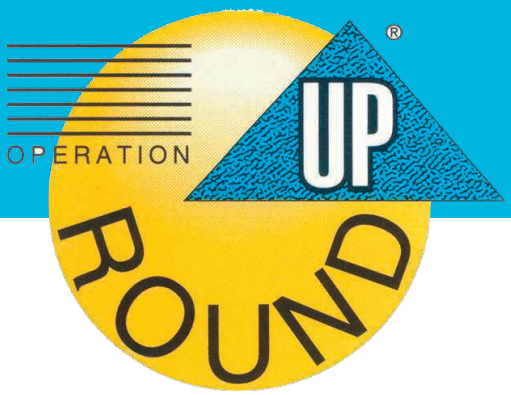
Bison Gen. Station
Epping, N.D. • 2030
1,490 MW • Nat. Gas

Pioneer Gen. Station
Williston, N.D. • 2013
822 MW • Nat. Gas

Crow Lake Wind
White Lake, S.D. • 2011
172 MW • Wind

Wild Springs Solar
New Underwood, S.D.
2024 • 114 MW • Solar

Concern for Community



Our community service program called Operation Round Up® began November 2022. While B-Y Electric has participated four years, it has been a successful program since 1989 when it was created by a Florida electric cooperative. B-Y Members have given back $55,886.38 since 2022 because of members like you.

The program "rounds up" a member's bill to the nearest dollar and that amount is donated to local charities in our service area. All funds stay in the community to benefit the members of B-Y Electric.

Who controls the funds?

A committee of cooperative members will oversee the program. These members will meet quarterly to review applications and determine how funds can best be used for the benefit of individuals and community projects.

The B-Y Electric Board of Directors will appoint one committee member from each of the seven board districts.

Who will benefit from the funds?

The Operation Round Up® program is intended to benefit people and organizations within the B-Y Electric service area. Operation Round-Up® funds may be used for community service projects, economic development, education and youth programs, environmental projects, emergency energy assistance, and disaster relief.

Who can apply for the funds?

Non-profit organizations, groups, and individuals within B-Y Electric's service area are eligible for Operation Round-Up® grants. Applicants are not required to be members of B-Y Electric and projects outside B-Y Electric's boundaries will be considered if they benefit B-Y Electric members and our local communities.

Do I have to participate?

This program is completely voluntary and a few members have opted out already. You can opt out at any time and even receive a refund if you forget about it and notice the item on your electric bill. We hope that some of these members will change their mind and opt back in after they see all the good that is happening within our service area.

Next Application Deadline

Friday, May 14th

2025 Operation Round-up® Recipients:

- Lesterville Community Center $5,000.00
- Market at the Meridian $1,000.00
- Tabor Beseda Hall $2,672.93
- Springfield Historical Society $5,000.00

HELP RECOGNIZE THOSE MAKING A DIFFERENCE LOCALLY.

CONTEST NOMINATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED.

Nominations are now open for "Who Powers You," a contest being hosted by Bon Homme Yankton Electric and the region's other Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. The fifth annual Who Powers You contest seeks to highlight local figures and organizations who are making a difference in their communities.

"No one succeeds alone, and that is especially true in rural areas, where friends and neighbors in tight-knit communities support, encourage and inspire each other," said General Manager Stephanie Horst. "Those people don't do it for the recognition, but they deserve to be recognized, and we'd like to help make that happen."

Member-owners, employees, organizations and residents who live, work or support communities within the service territory of the region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives are eligible to be nominated. Nominations will be accepted February 1 through April 19, 2026. Three final winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact that they have on the community. Weekly finalists will be announced and featured on Keloland Living starting March 12, 2026, and the three contest winners will be announced on Keloland Living on May 28, 2026.

The Who Powers You contest grand prize winner will receive a $3,000 prize. A second-place winner will receive $1,500, and the contest's third-place winner will receive $500.

"As an electric cooperative, our services extend beyond delivering safe, affordable and reliable power to our member-owners," said General Manager Stephanie Horst. "The Who Powers You contest highlights the commitment of our co-op to the communities and member-owners that we serve. We know that our co-op community is filled with people making a difference. Let's celebrate them!"

To learn more about the Who Powers You contest and to nominate someone in your community, visit WhoPowersYouContest.com.

TELL US WHO POWERS YOU!

We know our co-op community is filled with people making a difference. Let's celebrate them! Nominate a hero in your community who goes above and beyond. **They could win up to $3,000!**

Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

Nominate your local hero at
WHOPOWERSYOUCONTEST.COM

MARCH 7
Ag Day
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, SD
605-367-6000

Washington Pavilion Photo

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.

MARCH 5
SD Jazz Festival
7:30 p.m.
Johnson Fine Arts Center
Aberdeen, SD

MARCH 7
Free Christian Men's Event
The Barn at Aspen Acres
8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Spearfish, SD
Register: RiseUpMen.com

MARCH 7
Southern Hills Holistic Fair
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Mueller Civic Center
Hot Springs, SD

MARCH 7-8
The Black Market
Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
W.H. Lyon Expo Building
Sioux Falls, SD
605-332-6004

MARCH 14-15
Philip Area Annual Rod & Gun Show
Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sun. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
American Legion Hall
Philip, SD
605-859-2135

MARCH 14
St. Uhro Finnish Festival
11 a.m. Main Street Parade
12 p.m. Community Ctr. Lunch
Lake Norden, SD
605-881-1758

MARCH 14
SNOLF (Snow Golf) Tournament
Webster, SD
Contact: Buster's Resort
605-345-2787

MARCH 20-21
Badlands Quilters Getaway
Fri. 5:30 p.m. Start
Sat. 8 a.m. Start
Wall Community Center
Wall, SD
605-279-2807

MARCH 20-22, 27-29
Mighty Corson Art Players
March 20-21, 27-28: 7:30 p.m.
March 22, 29: 2:30 p.m.
Corson Playhouse
Corson, SD
www.mightycorson.com

MARCH 27
East Dakota Chapter NWTF 33rd Annual Banquet
Ramkota Expo Hall
Sioux Falls, SD
605-940-0702

MARCH 28
Coteau Prairie Masters Gardeners Ready, Set, Grow
9 a.m.-12 p.m.
Codington Cty. Extension Cplx.
Watertown, SD

MARCH 28
VFW Teener Baseball Benefit Vegas Night
Social: 4:30 p.m., Meal: 6 p.m.
Tyndall, SD

APRIL 3
Bachelors of Broadway: Gentlemen of the Theatre
7 p.m.
Johnson Fine Arts Center
Aberdeen, SD

APRIL 5
Easter Sunrise Service
7 a.m.
Mount Rushmore
605-391-9156

APRIL 9
McCrossan Wildest Banquet Auction in the Midwest
Jimmy Buffett Tribute
Polynesian Paradise Dancers
Sioux Falls, SD
www.mccrossan.org

APRIL 9-11
Annual Schmeckfest
German Heritage Celebration
Freeman, SD
605-925-4237
www.schmeckfest.com

APRIL 18
Brookings Quilt Show XII
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Admission: $10
Dakota Bank Center
Brookings, SD
605-690-3246

APRIL 18
Tri-Valley Chorus 75th Annual Show
4 p.m.
Centerville, SD
605-201-9398

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.