

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



River Power Renewed

Fort Randall Renovations

Pages 8-9

Pick, Sloan & the Missouri

Pages 12-13

The Fort Randall Dam is retrofitted
with new generating units.
Photo by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

www.touchstone.com

ENGAGING LOCALLY: IT MATTERS MORE THAN YOU THINK



Stephanie Horst
horst@byelectric.com

District Meetings and Hellmann Appointed

It's easy to think that the big decisions happen somewhere else—Washington, D.C., or Pierre—but more often than not, the things that impact our daily lives are shaped much closer to home.

I was reminded of that recently while thinking about how many of us got our start in community involvement. For some, it was helping at a local event. For others, it was attending a township meeting, a school board discussion, or even just showing up to listen. It doesn't always start with a big moment—it starts with simply being present.

Over time, those small steps turn into something more. You begin to understand how decisions are made, who is making them, and how your voice fits into the process. Whether it's your local electric cooperative, your city, or your legislative district, engagement matters—and it makes a difference.

That's exactly what our district meetings are all about.

At last year's meeting a survey was conducted where members preferred drive-thru format also expressed interest in getting in per person engagement with the Cooperative. We encourage you to attend your upcoming electric cooperative district meetings that are being held before the drive-thru Annual Meeting on Tuesday, August 18. These meetings are an opportunity to hear what's

happening within your co-op, ask questions, and take part in the democratic process that makes cooperatives unique.

This year's meetings will be held:

- July 20 at the Tyndall Community Building in Tyndall for Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4
- July 21 at the Lewis and Clark Resort Cottage for Districts 5, 6, and 7

You'll receive updates about your cooperative, have the chance to participate in a Q&A session, and most importantly, have a voice in shaping the direction of your co-op.

At the April board meeting, the directors appointed Ben Hellmann of rural Tabor to represent District 4. He brings many years of board experience as he has served on the Bon Homme School board and other local boards. He also is owner of Elite Feeds & Nutrition out of Tyndall.

Engagement matters - and it makes a difference.

That same idea of local engagement extends beyond the cooperative.

With the June 2 primary election approaching, it's another opportunity to be involved. Voting is one of the most direct ways to make your voice heard. Taking a little time to learn about the candidates can go a long way in making informed decisions.

A helpful resource is Yankton Thrive's Coffee with the Candidates, where you can hear directly from those running for office in District 18:

<https://www.yanktonsd.com/coffee-with-the-candidates/>

At the end of the day, strong communities don't happen by accident—they're built by people who show up, ask questions, and take part.

Whether it's attending a district meeting, asking a question, or casting your vote, your involvement matters.

We hope to see you there.

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
 Ben Hellmann
 Tom Boyko

General Manager: Stephanie Horst
Operations Manager: Ken Carda
Office Manager: Jessica Cameron
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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APRIL BOARD MEETING

The April board meeting was held on April 22, 2026 at 8:00 am. Directors present were Dave Sykora, Robert Ruppelt (via Zoom), Paul Voigt, Tom Boyko, Rick Cheloha and Brian Brandt. Others present were the attorneys, management staff, guest employee and guest member.

THE BOARD APPROVED THE CONSENT AGENDA:

- March 2026 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- Capital Credits to Estates - \$11,797.81
- Review New Members & Cancellations
- Review Closed Work Order - None
- 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 & CCD Training
- SDREA Zoom Legislative Committee
- East River Report

OTHER GOVERNANCE

- Brandt CCD Certificate
- Member Ben Hellmann expressed interest and qualifications to vacant District 4 Director position
- Approved Cargill Rate Change
- Reviewed Rate Comparisons
- Facilities Review
- Approved first quarter Board Expenses
- Approved advancement of REED application
- Approved changes to Policy 70-4 related to custom work and equipment rental
- Enter/Exit Executive Session
- Approved Appointment of District 4 Director, Ben Hellmann to fill vacant Director position effective April, 23 2026
- Next Meeting date set for Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at 8:00 am.

FINANCIAL REPORT	MARCH		YTD
	2025	2026	2026
TOTAL ELECTRIC REVENUE	\$962,676	\$1,147,145	\$3,586,269
COST OF POWER	\$568,005	\$695,181	\$2,265,503
TOTAL COST OF SERVICE	\$971,209	\$1,182,954	\$3,676,181
KWHS PURCHASED	8,100,035	8,125,361	28,092,278
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE KWH	1,510	1,478	
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE BILL	\$188	\$209	

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Tabor

Chris Gerber
 Jozie Einrem
Scotland
 Jacob & Kallie Schott
Tyndall
 Aaron & Nicole Rames

Menno

Grangaard Construction
Yankton
 Aaron Tucker
 Al Binder Trust
 Amber & Brandon Tucker

Andrew & Angela Tonsoline
 April & Bill Fernau
 Bob Ryken
 Curtis Moore
 Ewe Knit It LLC
 Kendra & Adam Frick
 Papa Bear Family Trust
 Rayden Terca

NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH: PLUG INTO WHAT MATTERS

Safety is a word that shows up in mission statements, meetings and job sites across every industry. At its best, it reflects preparation, awareness and responsibility.

That's where the difference shows.

Electricity doesn't leave room for shortcuts. It demands attention, consistency and respect every day. For your local cooperative, that responsibility is built into the work.

The job goes beyond delivering power. It protects the people who build and maintain the system and the communities who rely on it. Reliable and affordable electricity matters, and so does making sure every crew member goes home at the end of the day.

That outcome takes focus, repetition and a culture where doing things right matters more than doing them fast.

Built on the Right Habits

Linework is demanding and, at times, dangerous. It's also highly structured. Crews follow national standards designed for utility work. Protective equipment isn't optional. Procedures aren't suggestions.

Before a job begins, it's planned. Crews walk through the work, identify risks and make sure everyone is aligned. Communication stays constant.

What happens after the job matters just as much. Near-misses are tracked, reviewed and discussed to understand what happened and prevent it from happening again. Over time, those lessons build a stronger, more prepared workforce.

Everyone is expected to look out for each other. If something doesn't look right, it gets said. That accountability turns policies into habits.

Contractors working alongside cooperative crews are held to those same expectations.

Extending Beyond the Jobsite

The work doesn't stop at the edge of a right-of-way. Because crews live in the communities they serve, that responsibility carries beyond the job.

Your local cooperative shares electrical safety information through schools, events and outreach. It's simple advice that helps prevent accidents.

June is National Safety Month. Most electrical injuries are preventable, and small decisions matter.

Leave electrical work to qualified professionals. Don't overload outlets. Stay clear of downed power lines and report them. If something looks off, whether it's a damaged transformer or an open substation, say something.

Take the Extra Moment

Electricity is easy to take for granted. But the systems behind it, and the people maintaining them, depend on careful decisions.

When a task involves electricity, take a moment. Look twice. Think it through.

That pause can make all the difference.



"Be safe, lineman!"

Renn Ronning, age 8

Renn urges the line crew to stay safe on the job. Thank you for sharing your picture, Renn! Renn's parents are Justin and Katrina Ronning from Elk Point, 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.

Easy & Delicious FAMILY MEALS

TACO SOUP

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. hamburger, cooked and drained
- 1 28 oz. can red or kidney beans
- 1 28 oz. can petite diced tomatoes
- 1 14 oz. can corn
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning

Method

Put all ingredients into bean pot. Microwave for 20 minutes. Serve with shredded cheese and corn chips. Do not drain liquids.

Marla Gilbert
Southeastern Electric

QUICK PORK CHOP DINNER

Ingredients:

- 4 pork chops
- 2 tps. prepared mustard
- 2 tps. flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt or Mrs. Dash
- Dash of pepper
- 2 tps. fat or oil
- 1 10 oz. can of chicken rice soup or chicken broth
- 1/2 cup water
- Add onion, potatoes, carrots, garlic powder to taste

Method

Spread mustard over pork chops and sprinkle with flour, salt and pepper. Brown thoroughly in fat or oil in pressure cooker. Add chicken soup and water. Add vegetables and cover. Set control at 10 and cook 12 minutes or 35 minutes if you add vegetables. Cool pan for 5 minutes, then reduce pressure.

Ruth Konechne
Central Electric

CARAMELIZED HAM & SWISS SLIDERS

Ingredients:

- 12 Hawaiian dinner rolls, split
 - 1/4 cup horseradish sauce, optional
 - 12 slices deli ham (or 24 if it's thinly sliced)
 - 6 slices Swiss cheese, cut in fourths (so you have 24 squares of cheese)
- Sauce**
- 1/2 cup butter
 - 1/4 tsp. onion powder
 - 2 tps. brown sugar
 - 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
 - 2 tps. poppy seeds
 - 1-1/2 tps. Worcestershire sauce
 - 1/4 tsp. garlic powder

Method

Spray a 9x9 or 9x13 glass dish with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside. Preheat oven to 325°. Spread roll bottoms with horseradish sauce (if using). Fold up pieces of ham to fit the rolls and place them on the bottom halves of the roll. Next, place 2 squares of cheese, replace roll tops and place in a single layer in the prepared pan.

In a small skillet, heat butter over medium-high heat. Stir in remaining ingredients. Pour over rolls. Cover with foil and bake covered for 20 minutes. Remove foil and bake 5 more minutes. *These can also be made ahead of time. Just cover with foil and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Bake as instructed.

Jerald and Virginia Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

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 2026. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Picture by Shutterstock.

LOW- TO NO-COST WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Saving energy doesn't have to be expensive or time consuming. You don't need to spend thousands of dollars or get the newest technology to use less energy. There are several steps to lower energy use, even on a tight budget.

Here are some low- and no-cost ways to save energy around your home.

Adjusting the thermostat is an easy way to save. Nudge the thermostat a few degrees closer to the outside temperature, especially on extreme weather days. I often hear people say, "I didn't change anything, and my bill is higher." On the hottest and coldest days, your heating and cooling equipment must work much harder, and use more energy, to maintain the same temperature. Add an extra layer of clothes or some cozy slippers in the winter and lighter layers in summer.

Fix any hot water leaks or dripping faucets. Those tiny drips can add up to big energy waste, not to mention water waste. If you need to hire a pro to fix it, turn the shutoff valve under the sink to stop the leak until you can get it fixed.

Wash clothes in cold water to avoid using the energy required to heat it. Washing on hot or warm settings can really add up, especially if you have a top-load or older washing machine that uses more water.

Adjusting the temperature on your water heater can save energy and money, too. Depending on the water heater, this is either an easy adjustment or something a little more complicated that requires removing access panels. If you don't know how, consult a professional.

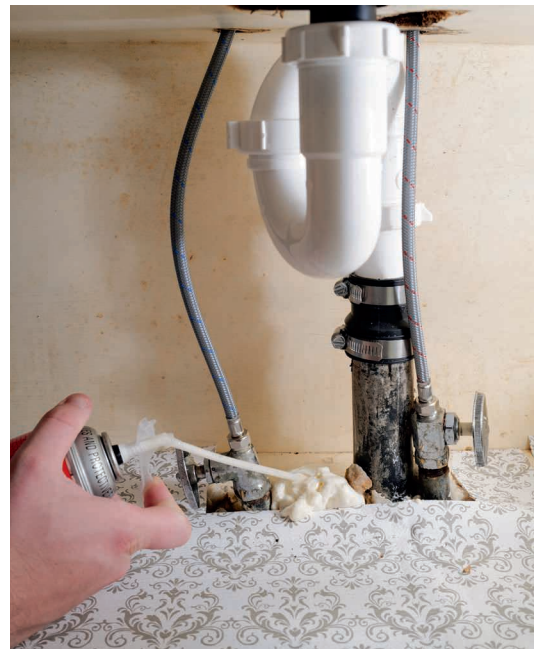
Air sealing is a do-it-yourself, beginner-friendly project that improves comfort and reduces energy waste. For around \$20 and a couple of hours of time, you can fill gaps, cracks and holes to prevent air from leaking in and out of your home. From the inside of the home, seal trim on windows and exterior doors with caulk for about \$4 a tube. Buy paintable caulk so you can touch it up when it dries, if needed.

A can of spray foam is about \$5 and seals gaps around plumbing lines. It's great for sealing gaps around pipes under sinks and in the crawlspace or basement. Cold air can travel up through those spaces, causing drafts and wasting energy. Air sealing these areas gets bonus points for stopping insects and rodents from using these gaps to enter your home.

Spray foam is messy and nearly impossible to get off whatever it touches, so wear disposable gloves and clothes you don't mind dirtying, and use drop cloths to protect finished floors. Be careful if you're working with spray foam overhead. If you get it in your hair, it's not coming out with anything less than a haircut. Move any items and clean surfaces of dust and debris in areas you intend to seal before cracking open a can. Put the can in a cardboard box to carry throughout the house so you don't leave a trail of spray foam.

For \$10 to \$15, you can buy weatherstripping to improve the seal on exterior doors. If you can see light around doors or feel a draft between the door and the door jamb when the door is closed, weatherstripping will help.

Try these easy, low- and no-cost improvements to reduce energy waste and improve comfort in your home.



CO-OP FAMILY LEGACY

Father and Son Carry Decades of Service at Their Local Cooperative

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

In 1997, Russ Foster was a 37-year-old producer from Garden City who at the time didn't know much about how the co-op operated. He paid his bill, appreciated reliable power and didn't think much about what happened behind the scenes.

Then a neighbor asked him to step in. The neighbor, a longtime family friend who served on the Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative board of directors, was preparing to leave the position and needed someone to finish out his term. Before stepping away, he approached Foster directly and encouraged him to consider taking his place.

Foster agreed to give it a try, interviewed and was selected for the board.

"I said, yeah, I'd give it a whirl," said Russ. "Went in pretty green."

That decision turned into a nearly three-decade run on the board of directors. In those early years, Russ was learning – not just how the system worked, but what it meant. The deeper he got into the work, the more he understood what sat beneath the monthly bill: the planning, the accountability and the people responsible for keeping the lights on.

"You see there's more to it than just hating that utility bill when it would come every month," Russ said. "You see the dedication of the employees. They're there because it's a good job, but they're also there for the people. When people have a problem, they deal with it."

That perspective changed how he viewed his local cooperative. Unlike investor-owned utilities, decisions made in a co-op boardroom stay close to home, tied directly to the people the system serves.

"We're not regulated by stockholders," Russ said. "We're owned by our members. We are not here to satisfy stockholders. We're here to provide power for somebody who was denied power in the past."

Over time, Russ found his place within a board culture that emphasized consistency and professionalism.

"Codington-Clark is a well-oiled machine," he said. "Previous board members were so dedicated to the board. I would venture to say if somebody misses a meeting all year long, it's rare."

But after more than 28 years of service, Russ began to think about something beyond operations and policy – when it was time to step aside.

In 2025, he chose not to run for reelection as a board member of Codington-Clark, leaving space for the next generation to step forward.



Former Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative director Russ Foster, left, and his son, Jay Foster, who now serves on the board.

Photo by Frank Turner

"I didn't figure it was a life sentence," Russ said. "There's a time. And I think some guys enjoy it so much they stay a few years too long."

"I didn't quit because I had to," he added. "I quit to give opportunity to the next generation. The older you get, the more you realize there's smarter, more aggressive people who are hungry to learn. You got to give them an opportunity."

As it turns out, that next generation was already close to home. Jay Foster, Russ's son, had grown up alongside the cooperative without realizing it at the time. Annual meetings, summer picnics and youth programs weren't unusual – they were simply part of life.

He got to know the people and understood the culture long before he ever considered sitting at the board table.

"I just grew up with them," Jay said. "It always seemed like you were already involved in it. You just weren't on that side of it yet."

When Russ decided not to run again, Jay took out a petition. The election wasn't automatic. He ran opposed, talked with members and had to make his case. After a short campaign, he was elected in March 2025, joining the board shortly after.

"When he said he was going to run, I said, 'Yeah, that'd be good,'" Russ said. "It'll take some time to learn it, but there's good people around him."

Russ was right, and Jay quickly found his place among fellow community members on the board, and the experience turned out to be more collaborative than he anticipated.

"The board made sure to get me involved from the very first meeting," Jay added. "They definitely made it feel like I've been on the board for 10 years already."

For Russ, watching that process begin again – not just with his son, but with the board as a whole – reinforces the decision he made decades ago to join his local cooperative board of directors.

"I miss it," Russ said. "I'd just soon be on the board, actually. But you got to let the next generation grow."



The rotor is lifted out of the generator unit using two cranes. This component of the generator will be reused once other parts are replaced.
Photo Submitted by USACE

RENEWING RIVER POWER

Fort Randall Dam Undergoes Multiyear Renovation

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

A 72-year old hydropower dam in southeast South Dakota is the first of the state's four mainstream Missouri River dams to undergo a substantial retrofit to improve the facility's efficiency and reliability.

Fort Randall Dam, which began operating in 1954, was built near Pickstown, South Dakota, through the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program. The program was included in the Flood Control Act of 1944 by Congress to dam the Missouri River at multiple points to improve the region's water management, irrigation, flood control and navigation while also generating much-needed hydropower. (See Pages 12-13 for more on how the program came to be.) A marvel at the time of its construction, the two-mile-long rolled-earth dam holds back 5.4 million acre-feet of water in Lake Francis Case. The dam's eight turbine generators have a maximum generating capacity of 320 megawatts – enough electricity to power about 245,000 homes.

Now, more than seven decades later, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is looking to boost those numbers and revitalize the aging dam with state-of-the-art, 21st-century technology to ensure the facility keeps up with the region's modern energy demands.

Overseeing the multi-year project is Maintenance and Operations Manager Michael Schenkel, who's spent the last 14 years at the Fort Randall Project overseeing the facility's maintenance, operation and planning. Schenkel says while the dam's eight original 72-year-old generators and turbines have served reliably, a renewal will improve the project's operation.

"Like many aging public assets, it's time for reinvestment," Schenkel said. "The turbine-generator units were installed in the

1950s and are beyond their expected service life. We're replacing them to ensure long-term energy and infrastructure resilience."

He pointed out that the USACE got its money's worth with the original generators, saying how rare it is for a generator to last over 70 years without needing a rewind – referring to the process of replacing the stators, or the copper windings and insulation that help convert the turbine's rotation into electricity. Over time, heat, vibration and age can weaken that insulation and increase the risk of failure. Schenkel noted that Fort Randall is the only Missouri River dam in South Dakota that has retained its original stators up to this point.

The scale of the units pose a significant challenge – each unit is 40 feet tall and weighs more than 400 tons, necessitating piece-by-piece transport, assembly and installation. Voith Hydro North America, the company awarded the contract to manufacture and install the new turbine runners and generator stators, began the decommissioning and replacement of the first generator in July of 2025. USACE expects that generator to be offline until November 2026 after installation is complete and engineers can inspect it for any issues. Once the first unit is back online and clears inspection, engineers will give the contractor the green light to proceed. To keep up with hydropower demand and allow adequate flow downstream, USACE's goal is to keep six units operating and two units offline for renovation at a time until the project is wrapped up in 2031.

Schenkel explained how the upgrade solves two problems at once: it replaces aging components in the dam and provides the opportunity to install new, highly efficient generators and turbines to produce more power with the same amount of water.

Fort Randall's original turbines generate hydropower most efficiently with 103 feet of head – the vertical distance between the water levels above and below the dam, determining the pressure at which water moves through the turbine. At 103 feet of head, each generator will produce about 31 megawatts of electricity.

However, due to the region's fluctuating power demands, water

management and other factors, operating in the efficient middle ground isn't always ideal. Schenkel says USACE often operates Fort Randall at 40 megawatts and 119 feet of head – about 4% below peak efficiency.

To solve this problem of lost efficiency, the new turbines being installed are highly-efficient, rated for 52 megawatts at 119 feet of head. This change raises the facility's total generating capacity from 320 megawatts to about 400 megawatts – enough electricity to power more than 300,000 homes.

“We expect to recover roughly 10% more energy output from the same water volume,” Schenkel said. “Essentially free power beyond the capital investment once the upgrade is complete.”

As part of the renovation, USACE also completed as-needed updates to the switch yard, which is the infrastructure that routes power to transmission lines for transport across the region.

Electricity generated at the Fort Randall Dam is managed, transported and sold by the Western Area Power Administration under the U.S. Department of Energy.

As a co-op member, part of your utility's energy mix is hydropower from the Missouri River dams, including Fort Randall, “so this work directly affects co-op members,” Schenkel added.

Looking at the dam's age and efficiency profile – and also being the only dam in South Dakota possessing its original stator windings – Schenkel said Fort Randall was the clear priority. The USACE has begun planning a similar renovation project for the Oahe Dam.

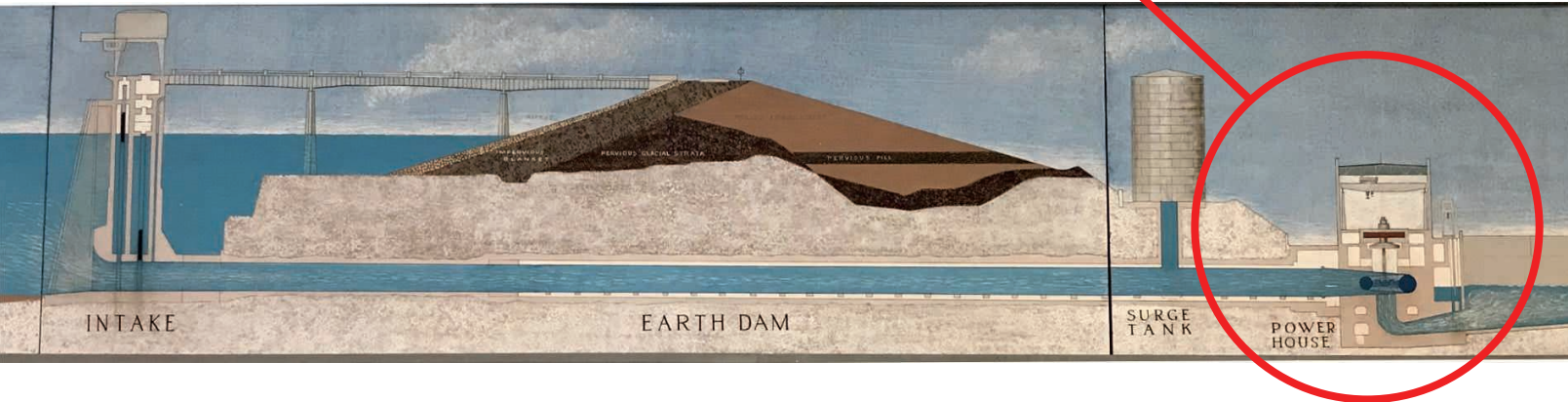
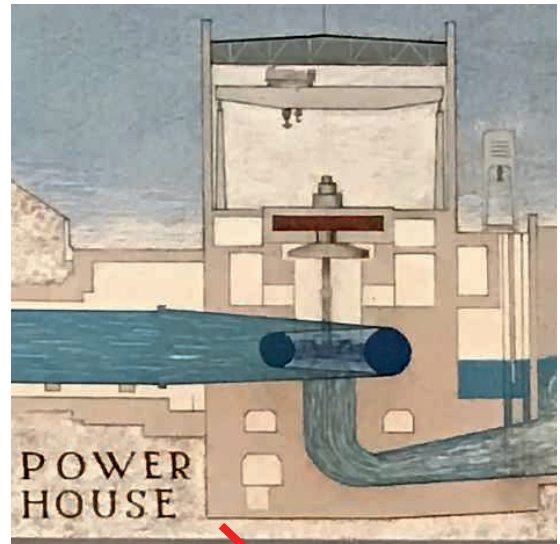
Work at the Fort Randall Project is scheduled to wrap up in 2031 once all eight generating units are replaced.



Above: The Fort Randall Dam is equipped with eight turbines. Unit 6 turbine is shown being removed for the first time since it went online in 1955.

Below & Right: A visual of Fort Randall Dam. Water flows into the powerhouse via the intake tunnel. As the water passes through, it spins the turbine. The rotor, connected to the turbine, spins inside the stator. As the rotor spins inside the stator, its magnetic field passes through copper windings and produces electricity.

Photos Submitted by USACE





RECOGNIZING LEADERSHIP

Brian Brant earned the CCD Certificate.

Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association Board President, David Sykora, presents certification to Director Brian Brandt as he has earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Today's rapidly evolving business environment places increasing demands on electric cooperative directors, requiring a strong understanding of the electric utility industry, enhanced governance skills, and a solid foundation in cooperative principles and the cooperative business model. Electric cooperatives across South Dakota are committed to working through National Rural

Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) to strengthen this body of knowledge for the benefit of their member-owners.

The NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director program requires attendance and demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five core courses. These courses cover director duties and liabilities, understanding the electric business, board operations and processes, strategic planning, and financial decision-making.



1
VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

2
DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

3
MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

4
AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

5
EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

6
COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

7
CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

THESE ARE THE WORDS WE LIVE BY

UPDATE MEETING

Bon Homme-Yankton Electric to host district meetings in July.

Bon Homme-Yankton Electric Association will hold district meetings on July 20 and July 21, offering members an opportunity to stay informed about your electric cooperative.

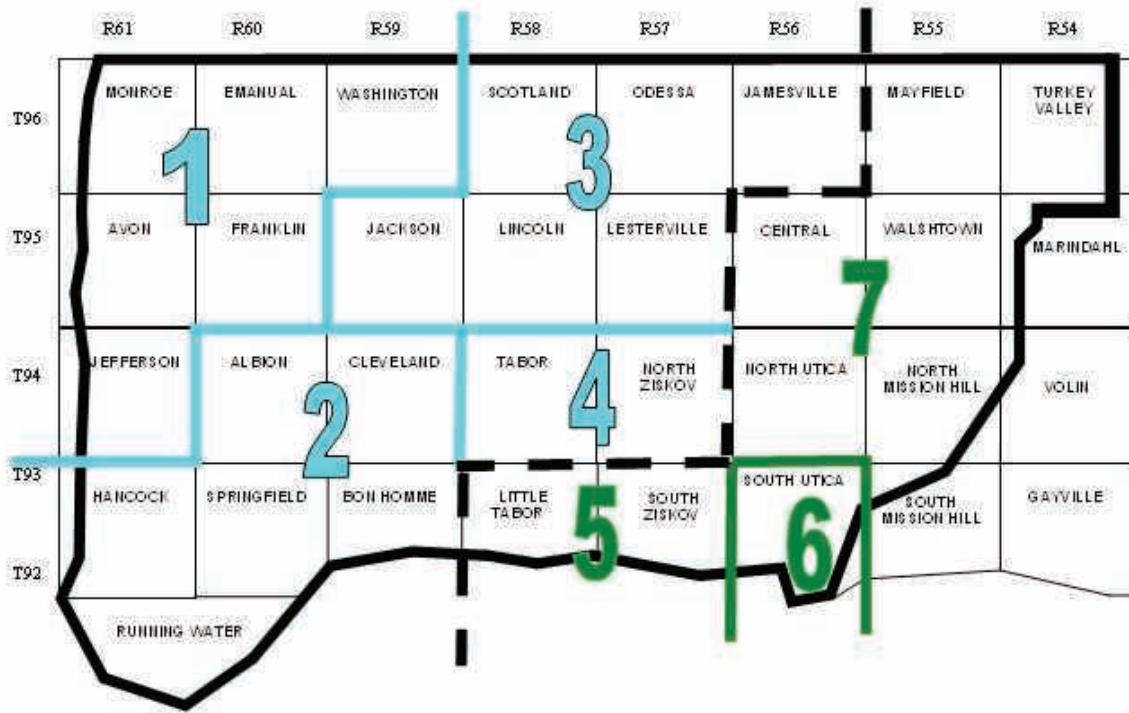
The District Meeting for districts 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Bon Homme will take place in Tyndall. The District Meeting for districts 5, 6 and 7 will be in Yankton and will be held at the Lewis and Clark Resort Cottage (lake area, watch for arrows). Both meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m.

These meetings provide members with valuable updates on cooperative activities, projects and future plans. Attendees will also have the opportunity to ask questions and participate in discussions with management and the board of directors.

Bon Homme Yankton Electric is also making plans for its annual meeting. The meeting will be held August 18, 2026.

Bon Homme Meeting
 Monday, July 20th
 6:30 pm
 Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4
 Tyndall Community Building
 1609 Laurel St
 Tyndall, SD

Yankton Meeting
 Tuesday, July 21st
 6:30 pm
 Districts 5, 6 and 7
 43496 Shore Dr
 Yankton, SD



BON HOMME COUNTY YANKTON COUNTY

THE PICK-SLOAN PLAN

Taming North America's Longest Waterway

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyok@sdrea.coop

In the 1930s, both the upper Missouri River and its home in rural America looked notably different than they do today.

That was a period in which electricity was still a luxury enjoyed by townsfolk lucky enough to have a municipal or investor-owned utility serving the community. As rural neighbors founded electric cooperatives to serve their homes, the once-primitive prairie quickly began to light up. And with that step into the modern age came the growing need for more electricity.

At this same time, the 2,300-mile-long Missouri River passing through seven states in the region was proving to be an untamable, destructive force for the communities and agriculture producers on its banks.

The floods would wreak havoc on riverside cities like Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, and Mississippi River communities like Memphis and New Orleans during swells, disrupting economic activity and trade. During low-flow years and toward the end of summer, the low water levels made navigation extremely difficult for barge traffic.

These problems had been ongoing. All the way back in 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal constructed the Fort Peck Dam near Glasgow, Mont. There, the nearly 4-mile-



The Missouri River floods downtown Pierre in 1952 before the Oahe Dam is complete.

Photo Courtesy of S.D. State Historical Society

long and 250-foot high rolled-earth dam created Fort Peck Lake, stretching 134 miles across eastern Montana and generating up to 185 MW of electricity. Even so, the federal government understood more work was needed to fully rein in the power of the Missouri.

Competing Visions: Pick vs. Sloan

Lewis A. Pick, an officer with the US Army Corps of Engineers, and William G. Sloan, an official with the Bureau of Reclamation, each had a vision for the future of the Missouri River Basin.

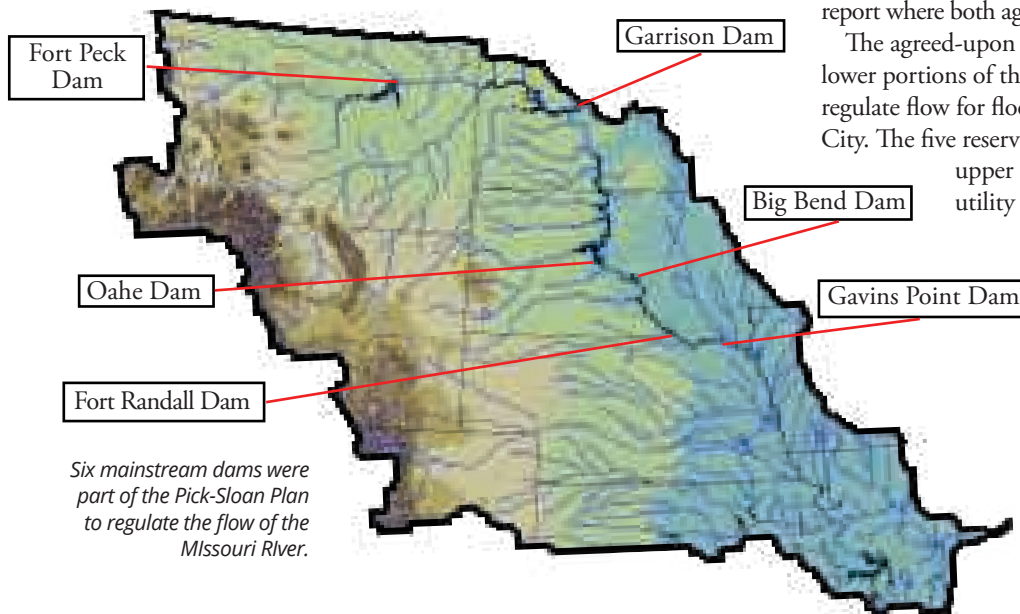
Pick envisioned large dams on the main channel of the Missouri River with a focus on flood control and navigation downstream in the lower Missouri River basin. His plan included five main-channel dams with levees from Sioux City, Iowa, to the river's confluence with the Mississippi River in St. Louis, Missouri.

Sloan, on the other hand, wanted the projects to benefit the upper Missouri River basin, with a focus on water storage for irrigation and agricultural development. Sloan recommended dozens of smaller dams with hydro-electric power plants.

The battle between the USACE and DOR was contentious, but it became clear that no side could garner enough support on its own to pass a project with price tags of about \$1 billion each.

Finally, in 1944, USACE and DOR released a joint engineering report where both agencies' goals for the basin were represented.

The agreed-upon plan would benefit both the upper and lower portions of the basin, with five hydro-power dams to regulate flow for flood control and navigation past Sioux City. The five reservoirs would store water for uses in the upper basin, including irrigation, recreation, utility systems and hydropower generation.



Oahe Dam during construction in 1958.

Photo Courtesy of S.D. State Historical Society

Fort Randall Dam (1946-1954)

Location: Pickstown, S.D.

Length: 10,700 feet long – over 2 miles!

Height: 165 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 8 hydroelectric generating unites producing up to 320 MW. (See pp. 8-9)

Completed in the 1950s, Fort Randall was the first of South Dakota's mainstream Missouri River dams to come online, generating hydropower for the region and changing the river from a threat into a resource. The Fort Randall Dam creates Lake Francis Case, named for South Dakota's US Senator and Pick-Sloan advocate Francis Higbee Case. The reservoir can store about 5.3 million acre-feet of water (enough water to flood 5.3 million acres at a depth of 1 foot).

Garrison Dam (1947-1955)

Location: Riverdale, N.D.

Length: 11,300 feet long – over 2 miles!

Height: 210 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 5 hydroelectric generating unites producing up to 583 MW.

Garrison Dam creates lake Sakakawea, which stretches across western and central North Dakota. The reservoir is the largest on the Missouri River, holding more than 23.5 million acre-feet of water. The dam is named after the nearby town, Garrison. Controversially, the lake flooded the homes of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara tribal nations.

Oahe Dam (1948-1963)

Location: Pierre/Fort Pierre, S.D.

Length: 9,360 feet long – about 1.8 miles!

Height: 245 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 7 hydroelectric generating units producing up to 786 MW.

Oahe Dam sits north of Pierre and Fort Pierre, forming Lake Oahe. The reservoir can hold about 23 million acre-feet of water. Oahe Dam has the highest generation capacity, producing enough electricity to power about 600,000 homes.

The dam and lake's name came from the Oahe Indian Mission established more than 70 years before. The mission's site, as well as other communities and tribal lands, were submerged beneath the reservoir.

Gavin's Point Dam (1952-1957)

Location: Yankton, S.D.

Length: 8,700 feet long – about 1.6 miles.

Height: 74 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 3 hydroelectric generating unites producing up to 132 MW.

The farthest downriver dam on the Missouri, Gavin's Point is a dam essential for controlling the water levels for downstream barge traffic starting at Sioux City on the Missouri River and all the way down to New Orleans on the Mississippi River. The dam creates Lewis and Clark Lake on the South Dakota-Nebraska border, with a storage capacity of 492,000 acre-feet of water.

Big Bend Dam (1959-1966)

Location: Fort Thompson, S.D.

Length: 10,570 feet long – about 2 miles.

Height: 95 feet at highest point

Generating Capacity: 8 hydroelectric generating unites producing up to 439 MW.

The final mainstream Pick-Sloan dam to be completed on the Missouri River, Big Bend Dam creates Lake Sharpe, holding about 1.7 million acre-feet of water.

The Good and the Bad

A lot of good came from the Pick-Sloan Plan: affordable hydropower for communities throughout the region and water storage to mitigate drought and reduce flooding.

However, a project of such magnitude will also naturally have downsides. University of South Dakota Professor David Swanson says the disruption of

natural patterns has affected ecology for riverside habitats.

Cottonwood seedlings need wet, sandy soil to germinate – without spring floods, it's hard for new trees to establish. Today, there are fewer young cottonwoods growing.

In addition, birds like the least tern that nest on sand bars struggle to find suitable ground, affecting populations.

The reservoirs also flooded more than 1 million acres of land along the Missouri River, some held by private landowners and tribes, and displaced about 6,000 people from land where their families had lived for generations.

In South Dakota, several former communities lay beneath Lake Oahe, including parts of Polluck and Forest City.

Between Chamberlain and Oacoma, American Island was once a statewide destination for boy scouts, with its miles of forest, camp with cabins and bathhouse, racetrack. Today, it sits below dozens of feet of water in Lake Francis Case.



American Island's locally-famous animal statues were moved before Lake Francis Case flooded the island. Photo Courtesy of the Cozard Memorial Library



Tribal leader George Gillette wipes tears as land is seized for the Garrison Dam. Photo Courtesy of National Archives



TOUCHSTONE ENERGY COOPERATIVES NAMED INDUSTRY OF THE YEAR BY MITCHELL TECHNICAL COLLEGE

The region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives were recognized as Industry of the Year at the Mitchell Technical College Foundation's Donor Appreciation Reception. The award honors the electric cooperatives' long-standing support of the college and its graduates, as well as a shared commitment to education and workforce

development.

CEO and General Manager Bob Sahr of East River Electric Power Cooperative attended the event alongside electric cooperative leaders from across the region and spoke on behalf of the cooperatives that continue to invest in Mitchell Technical College graduates, many of whom go on to play critical roles throughout the electric cooperative system. Sahr accepted the award on behalf of Touchstone Energy during the reception.

The Industry of the Year award is presented to an industry that has collectively demonstrated exceptional support for a Mitchell Technical College program through financial contributions, equipment and supply donations, training opportunities, internships, or employment of Mitchell Tech graduates.

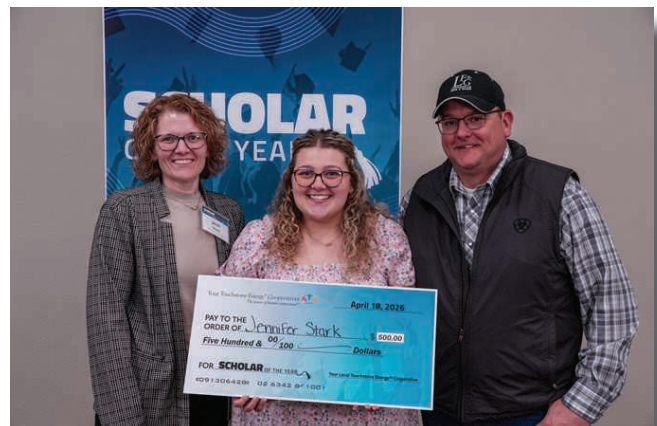
This year's recognition highlights the collective impact of Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, which have pledged nearly \$750,000 toward the construction and equipping of Mitchell Technical College's new Energy Underground Lab.

Photo: General Manager Stephanie Horst presenting to 7 of the 8 currently employed Mitchell Technical College graduates. Left to right: Travis Zomer, Alex Caba, Gunnar Dally, Kevin Meyer, Tyler Suess, Anthony Walloch, Travis Guase, not pictured Nathan Kloucek.

SCHOLAR OF THE YEAR BANQUET

Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota honored some of the area's most impressive high school seniors Saturday, April 18, during the 24th Annual Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Year Banquet and recognition held at the Dakota Prairie Playhouse on the campus of Dakota State University.

The event honored the 32 high school students who were chosen each week throughout the school year as the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week. It's a program which recognizes students for academic achievement, co-curricular involvement, and community service. The students are featured in weekly segments which air on Dakota News Now television and each student receives a \$250 scholarship for being chosen as the Scholar of the Week.



Henry Vasgaard, a senior at Viborg-Hurley School within South Eastern Electric's service territory, was selected during the banquet as the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Year and received a \$1,000 award. Willa Stern a senior at Webster Area High School, within Lake Region Electric's territory, and Jennifer Stark a senior at Scotland School District, within Bon Homme Yankton Electric's territory, received \$500 scholarship awards. The winners' names were drawn from among those in attendance

CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATIONS

2026 Allocations will show on your June Bill

B-Y Electric will show capital credit allocation notices on June bill. This notice indicates your share of the margins from 2023 and 2024 electric energy sales.

WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

Bon Homme Yankton Electric is a non-profit, member owned cooperative. This doesn't mean there are no profits earned, but that any profits or margins that are generated are split amongst the members based on how much they spent on electricity for the year that is being allocated.

I HAVE SEVERAL ACCOUNTS, WHY DO I ONLY RECEIVE ONE NOTICE?

Even if you pay a bill for several locations, you have just one membership with the cooperative and will just receive one official allocation notice. If you would like more detailed information, contact our office.

WHEN DO YOU ISSUE REFUNDS?

Capital credit refunds are usually processed every year using a first in first out method. The 2025 refund included allocations from 2006 and 2007.

Depending on the financial condition of the cooperative, the next refund will start with the rest of 2007 but has not been scheduled at this time. In the past few years, we have issued capital credit refunds late in the fall.

2020 was the first year we issued capital credits as bill credits for

active members but still print checks for inactive members. Look for your prior refund on your December 1, 2025 electric bill.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A MEMBER MOVES?

Members cannot claim the balance of their account when they leave our system. As long as we have their current address, we will continue to send them their refund checks on our regular refund schedule. Several checks go unclaimed because we are unable to locate previous members.

The Affidavit of Address form as well as a list of members with outstanding or unclaimed checks are available at byelectric.coop/capital-credits.

WHAT IF A MEMBER PASSES AWAY?

Upon the death of a member, the bylaws allow the capital credit account to be refunded at a discounted amount up to the date of death. 30 days need to pass after the date of death and an application has to be made, reviewed by our attorney, and approved by the board. Active accounts cannot be in the name of a deceased member, so the account should be changed to a spouse or whom ever takes over the

property no later than two months after the death of the member. Please contact the office for the appropriate documentation to make those changes.

DO MEMBERS HAVE TO PAY TAXES ON THEIR ALLOCATION?

It is not required that capital credit allocations be reported to the IRS at the time it is allocated. When the capital credits are refunded, the refund is only considered taxable income in relation to the same portion of the electric bill that was claimed as a business or farm expense in the year that it was originally allocated.

Most members either report the allocation or the refund as taxable income for their farm, but you should not report both--just be consistent.

If you always report the allocation but have already filed your taxes, you may save this notice for your 2026 taxes.

For more information, members should contact their tax preparer.

Contact the office if you have any questions regarding capital credits. You will not see the allocation notice if you did not purchase electricity in 2023 or 2024.

Statement Date	06/03/2025
Account Number	[REDACTED]
Service Summary	
Previous Balance	214.45
Payment 05/15/25	Thank you! 214.45 CR
Balance Forward	0.00
Current Charges	175.81
DO NOT PAY, PAID BY BANK DRAFT 06/15/2025	175.81
Important Message	
Notice of Capital Credit Allocation	
Current Allocation:	\$571.95
Total Allocation:	\$855.59
Current Allocation includes prior and current allocations for 2022 and part of 2023. See the June issue of the Cooperative Connections for more information about Capital Credits.	



JUNE 19-20
77th Annual Tabor
Czech Days
 Food, Dancing, Parade
 Tabor, SD
taborczechdays.com

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.

JUNE 4-6
Black Hills Quilt Show
 Thurs. 5-8 p.m.
 Fri. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Rushmore Hall
 at the Monument
 Rapid City, SD

JUNE 5
Northern Bull Riding Tour
 Prairie Village
 Madison, SD

JUNE 6
Bulls 'n' Pulls
Antique Tractor Pull
 Prairie Village
 Madison, SD

JUNE 10
BFest Concert Series & Farmers Market
 Landree Wilson Performing
 Museum Park
 Bruce, SD
 605-627-5671

JUNE 13
Journey Into Uncovering Historic Pickstown
 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Pickstown, SD
 605-487-7299

JUNE 13
Luce Pioneer Day
 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
 Rope & Candle Making, Butter Churning, Dutch Oven Cooking
 Lake Herman State Park
 Madison, SD
 605-880-5077

JUNE 13
The Hay Country Jamboree
 7 p.m.
 Gayville Hall
 Gayville, SD

JUNE 18-21
Hartford Jamboree Days
 City Park
 Hartford, SD
 605-941-0809
www.hartfordjamboreedays.com

JUNE 19-20
Estelline Rodeo Days
 5:30 p.m. Mutton Bustin'
 6 p.m. Rodeo (Both Days)
 Estelline, SD
www.estellinerodeo.com

JUNE 19-20
Farley Fest
 Milbank, SD
 605-432-6656
www.FarleyFest.com

JUNE 20
Grace's Gas Guzzlers
 Car Show & Vendor Fair
 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
 202 Second St. SE
 Watertown, SD
 605-237-8005

JUNE 24-26
Bruce Honey Days
 Bruce, SD
 605-627-5671

JUNE 24-27
Crystal Springs Rodeo
 Clear Lake, SD
 605-874-2996

JUNE 26-27
Buckhorn Rodeo
 Britton, SD
 605-880-5077

JULY 2-4
USA 250th Celebration at Mount Rushmore
 Rapid City, SD
www.nps.gov

JULY 11
40th Annual Spearfish Canyon Half Marathon & 5K
 Start: 7 a.m., Savoy, SD
 End: City Park, Spearfish, SD
 Register: www.nhcaso.org

JULY 18
SD MCC Relief Sale
 Helping Others 'Round the World
 Museum: 10 a.m.
 Food Court, Bake Sale: 11 a.m.
 Pioneer Hall
 Freeman, SD
 605-925-7009
sdmccreliefsale.weebly.com

JULY 18
A Celebration of Johnny Cash
 7 p.m.
 Gayville Hall
 Gayville, SD

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.