

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Kuchen Country

**German Delicacy
Celebrates 25 Years as
South Dakota's Official
Dessert**

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Swimming Safely

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Answering the Call: Why Your Co-op Needs Member-Leaders



Stephanie Horst
horst@byelectric.com

At B-Y Electric, we are guided by a simple but powerful principle: we are owned and led by the people we serve. That means every member has not just a voice—but the opportunity to lead. One of the most meaningful ways to do that is by serving on our Board of Directors.

This year, Director District 7 which includes townships of Mayfield, Turkey Valley, Central, Walshtown, Marindahl, North Utica, North Mission Hill, and South Mission Hill, is looking for a dedicated member to step forward and fill the seat held by Dave Sternhagen, who will be retiring with an incredible 36 years of service. Dave's long-standing leadership and deep commitment to our members helped guide the cooperative through times of growth, technological change, and industry challenges. His service is a testament to what strong, local leadership can do—and his legacy is one of dedication, fairness, and putting members first. Now, it's time for someone new to carry that torch.

Director District 2 is also up for election, which includes the townships of Running Water, Hancock, Springfield, Bon Homme, Albion, Cleveland, and Jackson in Bon Homme County. Robert Ruppelt currently serves this district and has indicated he will seek re-election.

Leadership Rooted in Community

Our directors aren't distant executives — they're farmers, small business owners, and neighbors who care deeply about the people they represent. They bring local perspectives to the boardroom and ensure that B-Y Electric remains focused on delivering safe, reliable, affordable power with integrity.

Board members work alongside management to:

- Guide long-term planning and investments
- Ensure the cooperative remains financially strong and transparent
- Navigate rising power costs and new energy technologies
- Advocate for co-op priorities in state and national conversations

You don't need to be an expert in electricity to serve—just someone who cares about your community and is willing to learn.

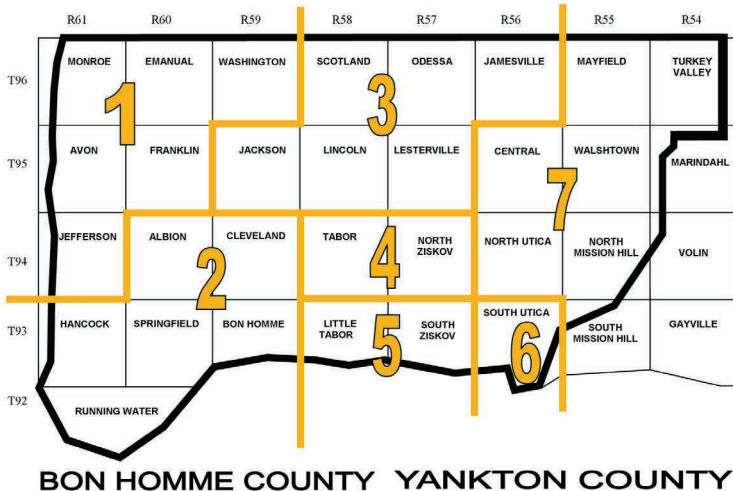
A Seat at the Table, A Voice for the Future

As power markets shift, technology evolves, and rural communities face new challenges, the need for strong, member-driven leadership has never been greater. When you step up as a director, you're doing more than filling a seat — you're helping shape the future of your co-op and ensuring it stays anchored in the values that built it.

Your Cooperative Needs You

If you live in and care about the future of your cooperative, we encourage you to consider running for the board. Just like Dave Sternhagen made a difference for more than three decades, you could be the next voice helping to guide B-Y Electric forward.

To learn more about eligibility, expectations, or the process to get on the ballot, please contact me at 605-463-2507 or email me at horst@byelectric.com. Petitions are due at the B-Y Electric office by June 20, 2025. So, if you are interested, do not hesitate to contact me. Your co-op was built on participation, and it thrives when members like you answer the call to serve.



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: Dean Sternhagen

Board of Directors

- Dave Sykora - Vice President
- Dave Sternhagen - Secretary
- Robert Ruppelt - Treasurer
- Paul Voigt
- Brian Brandt
- Rick Cheloha

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.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to Bon Homme Yankton Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 158, Tabor, SD 57063; telephone (605) 463-2507.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

APRIL BOARD MEETING

The April board meeting was held on April 23, 2025 at 8:00 am. Directors present were Dave Sternhagen, Dave Sykora, Dean Sternhagen, Paul Voigt, Brian Brandt, Robert Ruppelt and Rick Cheloha via zoom. Others present were the attorney, management staff and guest employee.

THE BOARD APPROVED THE CONSENT AGENDA:

- March 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- Capital Credits to Estates - \$2,426.57
- Review New Members & Cancellations
- Review Closed Work Order Inventory - 918 for \$644,484.90
- 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 Board Report

- East River Report
 - CCD Workshop Report
- OTHER GOVERNANCE**

- Approved 2024 Audit Report Presented by Aaron Clayton and Lucas Holden
- Approved change to Policy 40-02: Construction and Extension of Electric Service
- Updated Signature Cards at Security State Bank
- Approved Annual Meeting Agenda
- Enter/Exit Executive Session
- Next Meeting date set for Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 8:00 am.

FINANCIAL REPORT	MARCH		YTD
	2024	2025	2025
TOTAL ELECTRIC REVENUE	\$912,599	\$962,676	\$3,411,852
COST OF POWER	\$559,161	\$568,005	\$1,991,635
TOTAL COST OF SERVICE	\$924,965	\$971,209	\$3,270,293
KWHS PURCHASED	8,347,360	8,100,035	30,585,683
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE KWH	1,596	1,510	
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE BILL	\$184	\$188	

Welcome New Members

Utica	Avon	Michael Stefanee Blom-Mace
Chelsea & George Summerside	Tom Freidel	Tony & Trina Wiese
Tabor	Yankton	Yarelys Ledesma
Daryl & Becky Laferriere	Central Specialties, INC	Scotland
Deborah Knudson	Jenelle & Jaimey Schempp	Sunterra Farms Iowa INC.
Tyndall	Kallie Hanson	By PVC MANAGEMENT
Sean & Sara Bauder	Mike & Karen Pochop	



Going on now! Single to Joint Membership Conversion at no charge
 Call 605-463-2507 or email ebiz@byelectric.com for more information.

Summer Safety

Mosquitoes and Ticks

Source: American Red Cross

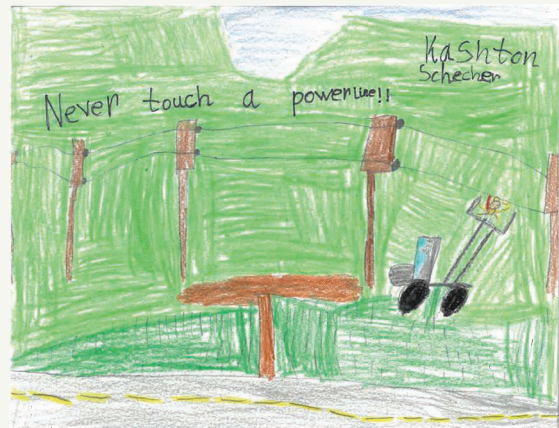
Don't let mosquitoes and ticks ruin your carefree summer fun. As we spend more time outdoors for activities like camping, hiking, swimming, picnicking and barbecuing, there is a greater chance of getting bitten by mosquitoes and ticks. According to the American Mosquito Control Association there are 176 known species of mosquito in the U.S. – putting Americans at risk from coast to coast. And while mosquitoes may be the most obvious detractor from summer fun – ticks are silent but dangerous. Most active during warmer months (April to September), it is especially important to be vigilant of blacklegged ticks, more commonly known as deer ticks, especially if you live in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, North-central or Northwest.

Mosquitoes and ticks are more than just itchy and annoying – if infected, these pests can pose a major health risk to people by possibly transmitting diseases. Follow these tips to prevent mosquito and tick bites this summer:

- Use insect repellents containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) when you are outdoors. Be sure to follow the directions on the package.
- Consider staying indoors at dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants and tuck your pant legs into your socks or boots.



- Use a rubber band or tape to hold pants against socks so that nothing can get under clothing.
- Tuck your shirt into your pants. Wear light-colored clothing to make it easier to see tiny insects or ticks.
- When hiking in woods and fields, stay in the middle of trails. Avoid underbrush and tall grass.
- If you are outdoors for a long time, check yourself several times during the day. Especially check in hairy areas of the body like the back of the neck and the scalp line.
- Inspect yourself carefully for insects or ticks after being outdoors or have someone else do it.
- If you have pets that go outdoors, spray with repellent made for their breed/type. Apply the repellent according to the label and check your pet for ticks often.
- Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying sources of standing water outside of the home, such as from flowerpots, buckets and barrels.



“Never Touch a Power Line!!”

Kashton Schecher, Age 7

Kashton cautions readers not to touch power lines. Thank you for your picture, Kashton! Kashton's parents are Brad and Brooke Schecher from Bison, 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.

SOUPS & SALADS

GERMAN KRAUT SOUP

Ingredients:

2 pork steaks
Water
1 diced onion
3 stalks celery
1 large carrot
Butter
6 diced potatoes
1 qt. sauerkraut
3 cups heavy cream
Salt and pepper (to taste)

Method

Gently simmer pork steaks in about three cups of water until done. (You can substitute other meat you have on hand – left over roasts or Polish sausage is nice). Dice meat. Sauté onion, celery and carrots in butter. In a Crock-Pot, add four cups of water, potatoes, sautéed veggies, diced meat and sauerkraut. Cook on low four to six hours until potatoes are tender. Add cream, salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving dish to share and enjoy!

Kari Bevers
Codington-Clark Electric Member

BLACK BEAN SALAD

Ingredients:

3 tbsps. lemon juice
1 clove garlic (minced)
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
3/4 tsp. ground cumin
2 tbsps. olive oil
(2)15 oz. cans black beans (drained and rinsed)
1 pt. cherry tomatoes (halved)
4 scallions or green onions
1 yellow or green bell pepper (cut into thin strips)
3 tbsps. fresh cilantro or parsley (chopped)

Method

In a small bowl, stir together lemon juice, garlic, salt, pepper and cumin until salt is dissolved. Slowly whisk in oil until dressing mixture thickens. In a large bowl combine beans, tomatoes, scallions or onions, peppers and cilantro or parsley. Toss with dressing to coat. Let stand at least 15 minutes before serving. *Makes 6 servings.

Reta Eidem
Clay-Union Electric Member

LASAGNA SOUP

Ingredients:

1 lb. lean ground beef
1 cup chopped onion
1 can (28 oz.) petite diced tomatoes, undrained
1 can (15 oz.) tomato sauce
2 tbsp. garlic, herb and black pepper and sea salt all purpose seasoning
1 container (32 oz.) chicken stock, (4 cups)
8 oz. (about 10) lasagna noodles, broken into small pieces

Method

Brown ground beef in large saucepan on medium heat. Drain fat. Add onion; cook and stir 2 to 3 minutes or until softened.

Stir in tomatoes, tomato sauce, Seasoning and stock. Bring to boil. Add lasagna noodle pieces; cook 6 to 7 minutes or until noodles are tender.

Ladle soup into serving bowls. Serve with dollops of ricotta cheese and sprinkle with shredded mozzarella cheese, if desired.

McCormick.com

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.



We are celebrating 80 years of service!

District 1 Director: Paul Voigt



Paul Voigt has been a dedicated member of the cooperative's board since his election in 2008, continuing a family tradition of service started by his father, Vert Voigt, who also served on the board in earlier years. Paul held the role of Board President from 2017 to 2024, providing leadership and helping guide the cooperative through important projects and growth. He takes pride in the construction of a new operations building and significant system upgrades that have modernized infrastructure, with nearly half of the cooperative's lines now underground.

As president, Paul greatly appreciated the commitment of the cooperative's manager, staff, and fellow board members, and holds a deep appreciation for the essential role the cooperative plays in the daily lives of its members.

Paul and his wife of 30 years, Tracy, live on their farm near Avon, South Dakota, where they raise crops and operate a seed business, selling Asgrow and Dekalb seed to local farmers. They are proud parents of Derian and Cassandra, both college graduates building their own careers. Paul's long-standing service reflects not only his personal dedication to cooperative values but also a proud family legacy of leadership within the organization.



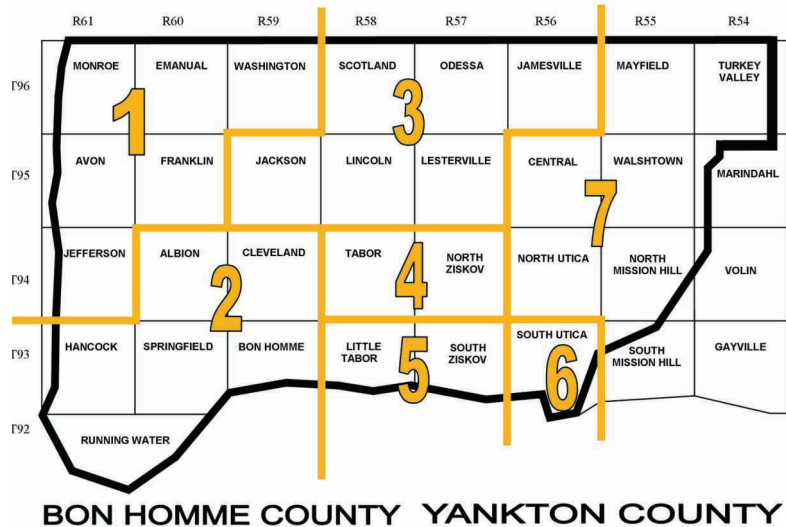
Paul and Vert in 2016, Verts last time in the combine, special memory for Paul.

All active members in district 1 were put in a drawing in June for a chance to win an \$80 bill credit. We will apply the \$80 credit to the next months bill.

Schedule for bill credit drawing:

- June - District 1
- July - District 2
- August - District 3
- September - District 4
- October - District 5
- November - District 6
- December - District 7

District 1 \$80 Bill Credit Drawing Winner: John W Sedlacek



PRAIRIE PAGEANTRY

Birding in the National Grasslands

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

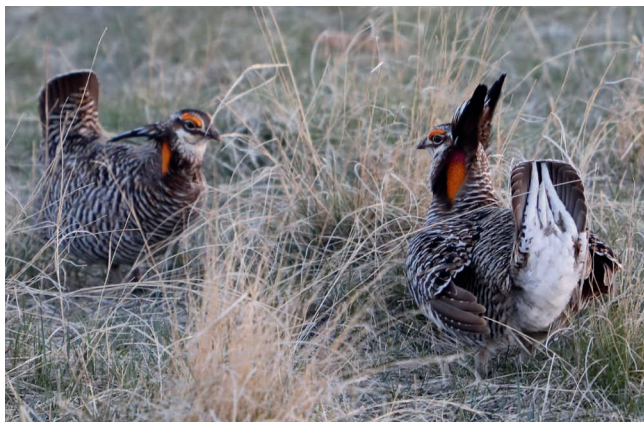
Pierre locals Mary Turner and her husband, Randy, rose an hour before sunrise on a brisk April morning to witness a curious natural phenomenon in South Dakota’s National Grasslands. Guided by the light of a full moon, the two amateur birders traveled 10 miles south of Fort Pierre and hiked to a secluded location in the rolling plains, where they tucked themselves into a small, camouflaged shelter known as a viewing blind.

Mary and Randy were at the center of a spring lek – one of the prairie’s most striking mating displays – where two closely related species of grouse, the greater prairie chickens and sharp-tailed grouse, gather at dawn in a specific location to compete for the attention of a suitable mate.

As the sun’s glow overtook the prairie, the booming calls and fluttering dances of the two closely related birds began to echo across the grassland.

“This experience has been on my bucket list for almost 15 years,” Mary said. “Pheasants were introduced here, but grouse are native – they’ve always been a part of this land, and the lek is proof of that connection.”

The prairie doesn’t just host the lek, it defines it. Before the females arrive, the males compete for alpha status by laying claim to the hotly contested ground at the center of the lek. Positioning is everything. What follows is a series of tense showdowns – staring matches, fluttering wings, bickering squabbles and the brandishing of talons – as each contender fights to control the prime real estate.



Two greater prairie chickens contend for their position in the lek.
Photo by Frank Turner



Mary Turner stands in front of the viewing blind used to observe a lek of sharp-tailed grouse and greater prairie-chicken.

Photo by Frank Turner

Once a dominant male is established, nearly all females will mate with him.

When the females arrive, the ritual transforms into a bid to impress. Male greater prairie-chickens fan their square tails, puff out their bright orange air sacs and take a “nuptial bow,” lowering their heads to the ground. Male sharp-tail grouse stick their distractively sharp tails into the air and pump their feet in a pitter-patter dance.

“It’s normal to see both sharp-tailed grouse and the greater prairie chicken in the same lek, because they are looking for the same conditions,” said David Swanson, an ornithology professor at the University of South Dakota. “They are closely related. You can get even get a hybrid between the two, but it reduces the reproductive viability of their offspring.”

The Turners estimated that, over a few hours, they watched nearly 50 greater prairie chickens and sharp-tailed grouse join the display.

Randy called the morning unforgettable. “We were so close to the experience that the grouse were jumping up onto the blind,” he said, laughing.

Their adventure was made possible through the U.S. Forest Service’s Prairie Grouse Viewing Blind Program, which provides access to the viewing blind, the geographic location of the spring lek and the viewing etiquette required to properly observe the prairie pageantry. Although reservations are required through the Fort Pierre National Grassland office, the experience is completely free of charge to the public – benefiting bird enthusiasts, conservationists, wildlife photographers and even reporters.

Mary said the experience revealed a whole new facet of appreciation for the National Grasslands and conservation.

“It’s a treasure that’s in our back yard,” she said. “This experience revealed how important the grasslands are for this species and our well being too. I would do it again in a heartbeat.”



Pietz's Kuchen Kitchen & Specialties employees Amanda Garcia and Myra Bachman with owners Lori and Roger Pietz. Photo by Jacob Boyko

SOUTH DAKOTA IS KUCHEN COUNTRY

German Delicacy Celebrates 25 Years as State's Official Dessert

Jacob Boyko
jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

On a brisk spring morning, balls of dough rise hours before the sun. One at a time, they're placed onto a press and flattened before being positioned into tins. Carefully, Lori Pietz ladles custard overtop, sprinkles in fruit, and passes off a tray of the desserts to her husband, Roger, for baking. As Roger pulls open the door of the stainless steel commercial oven, a wave of heat emanates across the kitchen. He slides the tray of five desserts onto a shelf in the oven, then removes another tray and sets it aside to cool before they begin packaging.

Roger and Lori will repeat this process at least 100 more times this morning to keep up with their customers' orders.

In the town of Scotland, northwest of Yankton, Pietz's Kuchen Kitchen & Specialties is one business that has turned South Dakotans' love for kuchen – a

delectable unification of cake, custard and pie – into a thriving business.

Kuchen, the German word for cake, has been a staple at European kitchen tables for centuries. The delicacy has stood the test of time, continuing to serve as a tea-time – or any-time – favorite across cultures and continents, especially right here in South Dakota.

"I think it's because of the population, because the greatest proportion of immigrants (in South Dakota) are the Germans from Russia," co-owner Lori Pietz said of kuchen's popularity. "There are German areas, there are Czech areas, there are Norwegian areas — but there are a lot of Germans from Russia."

Roger comes from one of those German-Russian families where the tradition of baking homemade kuchen has been passed down for generations.

"I watched my mother make kuchen as a little kid," Roger remembered. "I'd stand a little ways from the oven and I'd watch

her make it and I loved it."

Staying true to his German-Russian roots, Roger's love for kuchen never faded. After marrying Lori, Roger remembers telling her that if he could ever recreate his mother's kuchen recipe, he could probably market it and sell it.

Owning a kuchen shop was always a retirement dream, the couple recalled. But after going through several farm accidents, the Pietzs' decided to pivot in 2008. Trading plows for whisks, Pietz's Kuchen became a reality.

The operation quickly outgrew their make-shift basement kitchen, so Roger and Lori opened up a storefront and commercial kitchen in the nearby town of Scotland in 2011.

Today, the store ships an estimated 2,500 kuchen monthly to grocery stores, butcher shops, and restaurants across South Dakota and the Midwest.

Roger and Lori's kuchen offerings range from Americanized options – blueberry, peach, strawberry – to the more traditional blends of 18th and 19th century Europe, including rhubarb,

prune and cottage cheese.

Lori explained that historically kuchen was made using ingredients that were readily available, making it the ideal comfort-food and cultural dish for immigrants building their lives on South Dakota farms.

“There are a lot of Germans from Russia who brought rhubarb over with them, so they made a lot of rhubarb kuchen,” Lori said. “Flour and sugar were available, and they all had chickens and cows, so that’s kind of how it kept going.”

Lori didn’t grow up eating much kuchen. Her mother, who was of Czech descent, favored fluffy pastries called kolaches – filled with jam, poppy seeds or cream cheese.

But once Lori joined the Pietz family, she saw an opportunity to bridge both traditions. Drawing on the popularity of poppy seed kolaches in the Czech community, she created a Czech-inspired twist: poppy seed kuchen.

“There’s a lot of Czech people out there that like poppy seed kolaches,” Roger said. “And when they hear there’s poppy seed kuchen, they’re buying it.”

Kuchen’s footprint in South Dakota extends far beyond Scotland. Annual events like the Kuchen Festival in Delmont and Schmeckfest in Freeman invite locals and visitors alike to sample a variety of recipes and baking styles.

In McPherson County, the town of Eureka also has a reputation for being a kuchen-tasting hot spot, with several local kitchens offering their own takes on the dish.

South Dakotans’ love for kuchen runs so deep that it’s been codified into law; In 2000, State Sen. James Lawler, whose district included Eureka, helped lead the charge in Pierre to designate kuchen as the official state dessert.

Lawler, who once served as a judge for a local kuchen contest in Eureka, said the bill was part of a broader push to support local industries and breathe new life into small towns.

“The town of Eureka really got behind me and supported that bill,” Lawler recalled. “Those women up there got together and made enough kuchen for the whole legislature, and we fed them all and got the bill passed.”

A framed commemorative print of that bill hangs on the wall by the checkout counter in Roger and Lori’s shop – a tribute to all of the kuchen fans who have made their business what it is today.

“If you asked me 15 years ago what our business was going to be...I’d have said we’d sell a few,” Roger laughed. “I thought if it flopped, my friends would buy some from me and they wouldn’t let me down. Never did I anticipate this. Never. It’s just unbelievable.”

The Germans From Russia

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Russian leaders made an appeal to German families to emigrate to Russia, promising land, religious freedom and military service exemptions.

According to the Prairie Public Broadcasting documentary, *The Germans From Russia: Children of the Steppe*, Children of the Prairie, the first wave of German immigrants arrived in 1764 during the reign of Catherine the Great. For Catherine, this was strategic; adding population to the sparser areas of her empire not only developed Russia’s agricultural economy, but also helped create a buffer against invaders from central Asia.

The settlements dotted the Volga River in Russia and the Black Sea in modern Ukraine and Crimea. The German villages closely resembled the communities they left behind as well as the ones they’d later build on the American prairie, with distinct churches and earth-brick houses.

While the Germans held onto their language, culture, and customs, Slavic influence gives the Germans from Russia a distinct identity. One notable difference is in their kuchen. While the traditional German dish resembles a yeast-based fruit cake, the eastern version is typically richer and made with custard.

Later in the 19th century, the special privileges German settlers had been granted were slowly being eroded. The Germans’ special status was lowered to that of common peasants, they could now be drafted into the Russian army, and were forced to assimilate to the Russian language and education system.

Many German settlers left their villages in Russia to start over once again in North America and South America, while those remaining in Russia would go on to suffer through civil and world wars and the man-made Holodomor famine during the 20th century.

The Germans who had settled the banks of the Volga River went on to populate large swaths of Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado, while the Germans from the Black Sea region primarily settled the Dakota Territory and Canada – bringing kuchen with them.



Fruit is sprinkled over the dough, followed by a ladle of custard. Lori Pietz uses a scale to ensure nutrition labeling is precise. Photo by Olivia Opland



A Diverse Fuel Mix is Essential for Reliable Power

Michael Leitman

Providing members with safe, reliable and affordable power is the mantra for electric cooperatives across the nation. Co-op members can see the work necessary to maintain reliable electricity at the local level, such as co-op lineworkers maintaining utility poles and wires and repairing them after major storms. At the regional and national levels, a diverse mix of power generation resources, transmission lines and pipeline infrastructure are essential cornerstones of maintaining reliable electricity.

The U.S. electric grid has undergone major changes over the last decade. The share of electricity generated from coal plants has declined significantly, while the share from natural gas and intermittent wind and solar generation has grown. Fuel diversity means that your electricity is supplied by a variety of generation technologies, each with their own characteristics and performance capabilities over different weather and seasonal conditions.

Dispatchable technologies can be turned on and off as needed. Large steam generation plants (most commonly using coal or nuclear fuels) are generally considered “baseload,” meaning that they are designed to run efficiently 24/7 to serve as the base of the electricity mix. However, steam plants are less capable of ramping output up or down to meet the various peaks and dips as grid conditions change.

Natural gas is the most versatile fuel, powering large combined-cycle plants that can operate as baseload but are also more flexible

ramping up and down. These capabilities are essential for meeting demand on the hottest and coldest days, and for balancing intermittent renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind.

Most hydroelectric power comes from generators inside large dams, like the Snake River Dams in the Pacific Northwest, which can be dispatched when needed – as long as there is enough water available.

Over the last decade, the share of electricity generated from wind and solar plants has increased dramatically. These beneficial, “no-fuel-required” plants can deliver low-cost electricity – but they only generate electricity when the wind blows and the sun shines. The production patterns of solar and wind technologies are complimentary to one another. Solar generates during the day and wind tends to generate more at night. Across seasons, wind output is typically higher during the colder months when there is less sunshine. Deployed together, wind and solar technologies can balance each other.

While battery energy storage technology is growing rapidly to allow some control of when renewable energy sources can be dispatched, natural gas plants remain the primary method for “firming” renewable generation resources.

Ultimately, our electric grid is most reliable when a wide range of technologies is available. When conditions lead to lower generation from one type of source, others can help compensate. When there is an imbalance, such as a major winter storm when electricity use skyrockets, grid operators are forced to rely on purposefully reducing demand and occasionally plan rolling blackouts to keep the grid operating.

While there is variation across regions in what types of power plants can be built based on weather and infrastructure, America's electric cooperatives work diligently to ensure a diverse and reliable power supply for the communities they serve.

Spring Field Preparation Includes Checking For Power Line Clearances

Many farmers are busy preparing tillage equipment, sprayers and planters for spring field work.

Safe Electricity urges farmers to look for electric hazards around the farm as they prepare for planting.

The most common cause of electric shocks is operating machinery such as large tractors with front loaders, portable grain augers, fold-up cultivators, moving grain elevators and any equipment with an antenna. Handling long items such as irrigation pipe, ladders and rods also pose the risk of contact with power lines. Getting too close to a power line while working is dangerous because electricity can arc, or “jump,” to conducting material or objects.

Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity to farmsteads and rural homes, but the electricity can be deadly if wires are touched by large equipment. Farmers should be aware of power lines while using large equipment for spring tillage.

Here are a few safety tips to keep in mind:

- Farmers and their equipment should always be 10 feet away from power lines on all sides. Field cultivators and sprayers can often reach as high as 12 feet in the air. Practice extreme caution and use a spotter to make sure you stay far away from power lines when you use tall equipment.
- Power lines start to sag over the years. If power lines on your property sag so low you cannot safely work, contact your utility. They will repair sagging lines. Never try to move a power line on your own.
- Overhead power lines are not the only electric hazard on the farm. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when one of the guy wires is broken it can become charged with electricity. If you break a guy wire, call the utility to fix it. Don't do it yourself. Farmers may want to consider moving or burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways where many farm activities take place.
- You should also call 8-1-1, a free national service, to locate your underground utilities. You should know where underground utilities are located, and how to avoid them.



Farmers and ag co-ops in our service area are busy in the field planting, rolling, spraying and spreading. Always remember **Look Out, Look Up!**



SWIMMING SAFELY

Tips to Ensure Your Family Swims Safe This Summer

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

The leading cause of death for American children under the age of five: drowning.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates 4,000 fatal drownings occur each year in the U.S., with the number of deaths sharply increasing in May and reaching a peak in July.

And according to Consumer Affairs, that number has been on the rise since 2020, especially among young children.

Whether at a waterpark, lake, backyard pool, or even a hot tub, being safety-aware and educating others can prevent drownings and other pool accidents and save lives.

According to Holly Hardy, aquatics director for the Oahe Family YMCA in Pierre, safety begins with supervision.

“Somebody should always be observing the water when there are kids in a pool,”

Hardy said. “It doesn’t matter if it’s our (YMCA) pool, a backyard pool, or the river. There needs to be a person there that’s responsible for watching the kids.”

At the YMCA’s pool, lifeguards who aren’t sure about a child’s swimming skills can have them do a swim test, where the child has to either show they can swim the length of the pool or remain in the shallow end.

“At our (YMCA) pool, we have those big slides and kids want to go down them because their buddies are going down them, and they want to go down but they can’t swim,” Hardy explained. “That’s where we pull the most people out of the water – the slide or the diving board.”

The YMCA lifeguards also have a rule against seeing how long you can hold your breath – children can hyperventilate before submerging and faint, which is called a

hypoxic blackout. Hardy also stresses the importance of swimming lessons, since understanding basics like how to float, swim, exit water and feeling oriented and calm are critical for water safety. She recommends to begin swimming lessons as soon as possible – The YMCA offers swimming lessons for children as young as six months old.

But swimming lessons are not a substitute for properly securing a pool.

According to Consumer Affairs, 87% of fatal drownings for the 0-5 age range occur in backyard pools.

That’s why a sturdy fence and self-latching gate around the pool area are still essential for preventing accidents. Even temporary mesh fence options can work in some instances.

Additionally, submersion alarms and door alarms can audibly alert you when someone enters the pool or pool area.

By communicating the pool safety rules to children and guests, as well as taking preventive measures to prevent accidents in the first place, you may be saving lives.

Pool Safety Checklist

Is there supervision?

- All children should be under responsible adult supervision.
- Designate “water watchers” and minimize distractions.
- Keep a phone close by for calling 911.
- Always swim with a buddy – Never alone.
- Keep throwing equipment or reaching equipment nearby.
- Consider CPR training – it could save a life.

Can everybody in the pool swim?

- Ensure everyone in the pool can at least swim from one end of the pool and back.
- Weak or new swimmers should keep to shallow water and use flotation aids.
- Parents should stay close – preferably within arm’s reach – to weak or new swimmers.
- Sign up for swimming lessons – it’s a lifesaving skill.

Are there safety barriers?

- Install and maintain a proper fence and self-latching gate around the pool.
- Consider a door alarm and pool alarm for an audible alert when someone enters the pool or pool area.
- Hot tubs should have properly-latched covers.

Recognize hazards.

- Stay away from drains and water intake pipes, as body parts, hair, jewelry, and loose clothing can get pulled in. Drains should have auto-entanglement drain covers, and pumps should have accessible shut-offs.
- Ensure tiles, handrails, anti-slip pads, and ladders are properly installed and maintained.

- Electrical work should be done by a qualified electrician. Chargers, extension cords and other electronics should be kept away from the pool area.
- Check your pool water regularly to avoid illness from contaminants and chemical burns.
- Avoid slips and falls by picking up pool toys and other hazards. Do not run or roughhouse near the pool.
- If you’re not sober, don’t swim.
- Diving can result in serious injury. Make sure others know when a pool is not safe for diving.
- Store pool chemicals and additives somewhere inaccessible to children.
- Ensure proper lighting is installed around the pool area and never swim in the dark.
- Consider an animal escape ramp for pets and wild animals.

Remind your children and guests...

Establish pool-safe rules for your children and any guests at your home. Remind your children to...

- Never swim without permission and supervision. Other children are not supervisors.
- Don’t enter a pool area or go near water alone.
- Never roughhouse or run in the pool area.
- Never dive in shallow water.
- Stay away from chemicals and additives.
- Keep the pool area tidy and hazard-free.
- Keep electrical devices and cords away from the pool area.
- Never hyperventilate or try and see how long you can hold your breath underwater. Hyperventilating can induce fainting, called hypoxic blackouts and lead to drowning.

Employee Spotlight: Joe Vavruska



How long have you been at Bon Homme Yankton Electric? I started September 1st, 2022, 2 years.

What does your job entail? I am maintenance and material handler. My day to day changes depending on the season. In the off season I organize and put away deliveries, snow removal and general custodial. In the summer months grounds keeping and assist linemen if need.

What do you love most about B-Y Electric? I really like that my job has a lot of variety and that I am able to work outside.

What is your favorite memory since starting work at B-Y Electric? Everyday is something. We all joke and try to have fun makes the days go well.

How would you describe B-Y Electric in three words? Never dull moment.

A little about you outside of work. I live in Tabor with my family wife (Bonnie), kids (Jurni, Willow, William, Ja'La and Imani) and dog (Nitro). We have been foster parents for 10 plus years. I enjoy taking and attending my children to their activities. I am a local referee for basketball and enjoy being on the chain gang for Bon Homme High School football team and have done so for eight plus years.

Scholar of the Week

Bon Homme Yankton Electric is happy to award Avon High School Senior, Lila Vanderlei, daughter of Craig and Amy Vanderlei from Springfield SD as one of this year's Scholar of the Week.

Lila was nominated as she represents a model student. She has work ethic like none other. She is involved in multiple extra-curricular activities while maintaining her academics. She takes higher-level classes to better prepare her for her future coursework. Over the past few years, she has been a big part of the athletic teams as well. Earning her All-Conference awards in multiple sports. Lila has also been part of choir and band for the past four years.

Lila was featured on Dakota News Now on the evening of April 28th and the morning news on April 29th. As one of the winners of Scholar of the Week she is invited to the Scholar of the Year Banquet held on the Lake Area Campus Saturday, May 3rd.



BON HOMME YANKTON ELECTRIC GROUP IN WASHINGTON DC

Bon Homme Yankton Electric Director Robert Ruppelt and wife, Deb and Member Service Advisor, Aaron Melichar attended NRECA's 2025 Legislative Conference. April 28th and 29th, thousands of electric cooperative leaders from across the country traveled to Washington DC with one voice and one mission: to advocate for reliable, affordable power.

From meetings on Capitol Hill to conversations with key policymakers, co-op leaders made it clear, electric reliability is non-negotiable, and co-ops are essential partners in America's energy dominance.

CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATIONS

2025 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 2022 and 2023 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 2024 refund included allocations from 2005 and 2006.

Depending on the financial condition of the cooperative, the

next refund will start with the rest of 2006 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, 2024 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.

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 2025 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 2022 or 2023.



THE 76TH ANNUAL CZECH DAYS

Tabor, South Dakota
Friday and Saturday
June 20th and 21st, 2025

The celebration has kept alive the heritage of the early founders of the little South Dakota community who came to Tabor from Czechoslovakia as early as 1869.

What started out to be a small community celebration has grown into an attraction that draws literally thousands of people each year.



JUNE 19-21
Czech Days
 Music, Dancing, Foods & Parades
 Tabor, SD

Photo courtesy of Travel South Dakota

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.

MAY 24-SEPT. 13
Buggy Museum
 Free Buggy Rides + More
 Saturdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Stockholm, SD
 605-938-4192

JUNE 5
Danish Constitution Day Celebration
 6:15 p.m.-9 p.m.
 Danish Folk Dancing & Music
 Viborg, SD
 danevilleheritage.com

JUNE 5, 7
Wheel Jam
 7 p.m.
 Dakota State Fair Speedway
 Huron, SD

JUNE 6
Northern Bull Riding Tour
 6:30 p.m.
 Madison, SD
 www.prairievillage.org

JUNE 6
Joy Fest
 John Mogen Piano Performance
 7 p.m. CDT
 Okaton, SD
 cristenjoyphotography.com

JUNE 6-8
SDHSRA Regional Rodeos
 Buffalo, Huron, Wall, Kadoka, SD
 www.sdhsra.com

JUNE 7
Car Show & Kids Carnival
 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
 202 2nd St. SE
 Watertown, SD

JUNE 7
Prairie Village Tractor Pull
 3 p.m.
 Madison, SD
 www.prairievillage.org

JUNE 11
Agricultural Women's Day
 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Agar-Blunt-Onida School
 Onida, SD
 605-769-0013

JUNE 12-14
Gumbo Ridge Wagon Train
 Murdo, SD
 605-530-3638

JUNE 13-15
SDHSRA Regional Rodeos
 Dupree, Watertown,
 New Underwood, Winner, SD

JUNE 13-15
Ipswich Trail Days
 Ipswich, SD
 ipswichtraildays.com
 ipswichtraildays@gmail.com

JUNE 14
Roslyn Vinegar Festival
 Roslyn, SD
 320-808-8873

JUNE 15, 29
1880 Train Old West Shootout
 5 p.m.
 Hill City, SD

JUNE 17-21
SDHSRA State Finals Rodeo
 Fort Pierre, SD

JUNE 20-22
Farley Fest
 Milbank, SD
 605-432-6656
 www.farleyfest.com

JUNE 21
Hobby Horse Relay
 McCrossan Boys Ranch
 1 p.m.
 Lake Lorraine
 Sioux Falls, SD

JUNE 25-28
Crystal Springs Rodeo
 Clear Lake, SD
 605-874-2996

JUNE 27-28
Buckhorn Rodeo
 Britton, SD
 605-880-5077

JUNE 27-29
Leola Rhubarb Festival
 Leola, SD

JUNE 27-29
Bowdle Tower Days
 Bowdle, 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.