

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



South Dakota 4-H Shooting

Shooters Prepare for
the State Competition

Pages 8-9

Wild Horses Roam at
Black Hills Sanctuary

Pages 12-13

Jackson Neprud, 4-H archer for Jones County, poses next to his target.

Electric Cooperatives Bring Unique Value to Their Members



Stephanie Horst
horst@byelectric.com

Electric cooperatives stand out from other types of businesses because we are built and led by the members we serve. As independent, not-for-profit electric utilities, we are owned and governed by our local members—not by outside shareholders or investors. That is a powerful differentiator.

Here are a few ways electric co-ops like B-Y Electric bring unique value to the members they serve:

As a new year begins, we're focused on our members' energy needs - not only for today but for the long haul.

- **We put people before profits.** Co-ops are not-for-profit and provide at-cost electric service. Any excess revenue is returned to our consumer-members in the form of capital credits, typically as a bill credit or check.

- **Community comes first.** We live and work here too, and we care deeply about our local communities. That's why we engage in development and revitalization projects through the REED Fund, sponsor local students for scholarships and youth programs, and give back through our Operation Round Up® Fund.

- **Affordable, reliable power is our priority.** B-Y Electric purchases electricity from East River Electric, our wholesale energy partner. Basin Electric is our generation and transmission cooperative formed by a group of electric co-ops in our region. This cooperative business structure allows us to pool local resources and provide electricity at a lower cost than if we purchased it from outside sources.

As a new year begins, we're focused on our members' energy needs—not only for today but for the long haul. We're advocating for smarter energy policies that prioritize reliability and affordability for all. We recognize we must be inclusive of all energy sources, which is why we work closely with East River Electric and Basin Electric to ensure

use of a diverse mix of sources, including coal, natural gas, hydro, solar, and wind, to generate the electricity we provide to our members.

B-Y Electric is working to power a brighter future through innovation that meets tomorrow's energy needs. Through our load management program, we can decrease our demand at peak time avoiding higher cost power.

Reliable, affordable electricity is more important than ever before, and our focus will continue to be in the best interest of the members we serve.

STAY IN THE KNOW



Stay connected by keeping your contact information up to date. Current contact information benefits you in multiple ways.

- ✓ Faster outage reporting and response
- ✓ Timely alerts about planned outages and other important updates
- ✓ Smoother customer service interactions
- ✓ Improved access to member benefits and programs

Ensure your phone number, email address and mailing address are up to date so you can enjoy the benefits of staying connected.

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

UPDATED
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

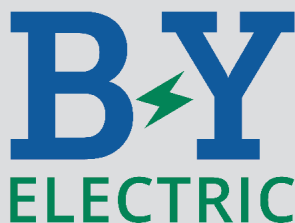
Office Manager: Nicole Einrem

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. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

JANUARY BOARD MEETING

The January board meeting was held on January 22, 2025 at 8:00 am. Directors present were Dave Sternhagen, Dave Sykora, Dean Sternhagen, Rick Cheloha, Brian Brandt, Robert Ruppelt and Paul Voigt. Others present were the attorney, management staff and guest employee.

THE BOARD APPROVED THE CONSENT AGENDA:

- December 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
- Capital Credits to Estates - \$7,411.14
- Review New Members & Cancellations
- Closed Work Order Inventory - #916 - \$118,819.00
- Review Special Equipment Purchases - \$101,130.33 (transformers)

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
- SDREA Annual Meeting Recap

OTHER GOVERNANCE

- RUS Loan Execution

- Executed Federated Subscriber's Agreement/POA
- Approved 2024 4th Quarter Board & Management Expenses
- Reviewed 2024 YTD Meeting Expenses
- Appoint 2025 NRECA Annual Meeting Voting Delegate/Alternate (Voigt/Dean Sternhagen)
- Approved 2025 City of Tyndall Contract
- Approved 2025 Berndt's Tree Service Contract
- Enter/Exit Executive Session
- Next Meeting date set for Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 8:00 am.



FINANCIAL REPORT	DECEMBER		YTD
	2023	2024	2024
TOTAL ELECTRIC REVENUE	\$974,979	\$1,076,291	\$11,652,905
COST OF POWER	\$489,927	\$629,040	\$6,790,968
TOTAL COST OF SERVICE	\$861,554	\$891,834	\$11,468,680
KWHS PURCHASED	9,118,250	10,551,341	101,143,854
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE KWH	1,831	2,099	
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE BILL	\$201	\$220	

Welcome New Members	Tabor	Michael Drotzmann
Avon	Adam Kraft	Michael & Rebecca Winterfeld
Landon Berndt	Paul Wagner	Paige List
Tripp	Raquel Stucky	Rory & Carol Allen
Ashton & Weston Frank	Yankton	
	Brad & Lynne Van Grootheest	
	Brandt Honey Producers LLC	

Falls Are Preventable

March is Ladder Safety Month. Whether working from a ladder, roof or scaffolding, it's important to plan ahead, assess the risk and use the right equipment. First, determine if working from a height is absolutely necessary or if there is another way to do the task safely.

- Discuss the task with coworkers and determine what safety equipment is needed.
- Make sure you are properly trained on how to use the equipment.
- Scan the work area for potential hazards before starting the job.
- Make sure you have level ground to set up the equipment.
- If working outside, check the weather forecast; never work in inclement weather.
- Use the correct tool for the job, and use it as intended.
- Ensure stepladders have a locking device to hold the front and back open.
- Always keep two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder.
- Place the ladder on a solid surface and never lean it against an unstable surface.
- A straight or extension ladder should be one foot away from the surface it rests on for every four feet of height and extend at least three feet over the top edge.
- Securely fasten straight and extension ladders to an upper support.
- Wear slip-resistant shoes and don't stand higher than the third rung from the top.
- Don't lean or reach while on a ladder, and have someone support the bottom.
- Never use old or damaged equipment; check thoroughly before use.



Fall Hazards at Home

Are you a weekend warrior or do-it-yourselfer? If you take on home improvement or other weekend projects, it's important to prepare yourself for physical exertion, especially if you've been sedentary through the winter months, and take extra precautions to prevent falls.

Risky projects, like installing siding, gutters or roofs, are best left to professionals. Saving money isn't worth risking a debilitating or fatal fall.

At home or at work, many of the same rules apply. When taking on a project, remember the following.

- Practice all of the ladder safety tips mentioned to the left.
- Keep the work area clear of hazards and immediately clean up spills.
- Read all instructions and safety precautions on your equipment.
- Don't wear loose clothing that can get caught in equipment.

Source: National Safety Council



"Don't cut trees near power lines."

Remington Welsh, Age 11

Remington warns readers to not cut trees around power lines. Thank you for your picture, Remington! Remington's parents are Ryan and Rachel Welsh, members of Black Hills Electric Cooperative.

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.

Hearty FAMILY MEALS

EASY CREAMY HAMBURGER PASTA

Ingredients:

1 lb. ground hamburger
1 lb. cooked pasta
5 oz. spinach
1/4 cup butter
2 cups heavy cream
1 tbsp. minced garlic
1 cup grated parmesan cheese

Method

In a large pan, brown hamburger and minced garlic. Remove any excess grease. Turn heat to low and add the butter and heavy cream. Stir and simmer for a few minutes until the butter melts and it starts to boil. Stir in the spinach and cook for about three more minutes. Stir in the parmesan and cooked pasta. Enjoy!

Lyndell Todd
Rapid City, S.D.

MINI BBQ BACON CHEDDAR MEATLOAF

Ingredients:

2 lbs. ground beef
6 oz. chili sauce
4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
1 1/2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
2 large eggs
1 tsp. onion powder
1 tsp. seasoned salt
1 tsp. garlic powder
2 tbsps. Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp. yellow mustard
1/2 cup BBQ sauce

Method

Preheat oven to 425°F. Cook and crumble bacon. In a mixing bowl, mix together all meatloaf ingredients except the BBQ sauce. Divide the mixture into eight round loaves. Press a small depression into the middle of the meatloaves. Brush BBQ sauce on top of the meatloaves. Bake for 25 minutes. Turn on broiler and brown the BBQ sauce for two to five minutes.

Kayla Beaner
Centerville, S.D.

SKILLET CHICKEN POT PIE

Ingredients:

1/4 cup butter
1 cup chopped onion
1/4 cup flour
2 cups chicken stock
1 cup milk
1/2 cup apple cider
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. whole thyme leaves
1/4 tsp. black pepper
2 cups cubed cooked chicken
1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 2 cups)
1 cup frozen peas
1 can (7.5 oz.) refrigerated biscuits, (10 biscuits)

Method

Preheat oven to 450°F. Melt butter in large ovenproof nonstick skillet on medium-high heat. Add onion; cook and stir five minutes or until softened. Sprinkle with flour. Stir with whisk until mixture is well blended. Add stock, milk, apple cider, garlic powder, cinnamon, thyme and pepper; whisk until mixture is smooth.

Stir in chicken, sweet potatoes and peas. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook and stir 15 minutes or until sweet potatoes are tender.

Place biscuits on top of chicken mixture. Bake 10 minutes or until biscuits are golden brown.

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.

Landscaping to Save Energy



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Q: How can landscaping help lower my energy bill?

A: There's a lot going on in the space around our homes. Competing factors of aesthetics, safety, energy efficiency, water conservation and increasing risk of wildfires are a lot to consider. Thoughtful planning and good design can address these factors and result in year-round energy savings.

Carefully positioned trees can save up to 25% of a typical household's energy use, according to the United States Department of Energy (DOE). When selecting the right trees and other foliage, research what is best for your local climate. Select native species naturally adapted to your location for lower maintenance.

Strategically placed deciduous trees allow for summer shade and passive solar heat gain in the winter when leaves have fallen. This can lead to energy savings in the summer and winter.

Slower-growing trees might take longer to provide maximum shading benefit, but their roots are typically deeper, and branches are stronger. These factors can make them less likely to be damaged by wind, snow or ice, and be more drought resistant.

Be sure to plant large trees far enough away from your home to prevent damage from falling branches or root damage to your home's foundation.

Keep in mind, if you have a rooftop photovoltaic solar system, even a small amount of shade can significantly reduce energy production. Consider smaller plantings closer to the home to shade walls, windows or hardscaped surfaces, such as driveways and sidewalks.

Windbreaks are another landscaping strategy that can be beneficial for energy savings in windy areas. The DOE says windbreaks reduce wind speed by as much as 30 times the windbreak's height. That, in turn, reduces wind chill near your home and can lower heating costs. The DOE recommends planting two to five times the mature tree's height away from your home.

Plant evergreen trees and shrubs for windbreaks and consider adding fences or earthen mounds to help lift

the wind up and over your home. In cold climates, they offer the added benefit of acting as a snowdrift to keep snow from piling up against your home.

Keep landscaping clear of dryer vents, heat pumps and air-conditioning units to ensure access for maintenance and airflow around those locations.

If you live in an area at risk of wildfire, create a defensible space around your home. Consider hardscaping with gravel, bricks, pavers or stone shaded by fire-resistant awnings or covers. Plant fire-resistant plants with proper spacing of plants and trees from your home and other structures on your property.

When landscaping, always consider safety first. Call before you dig to ensure you know where any underground power, gas, water or sewer lines are located. The national 811 Underground Service Alert program routes you directly to your local resources. Call 811 or go to call811.com before you dig.

Be mindful of overhead power lines, too. Look up and check the surroundings before setting up ladders. Be thoughtful when planting new landscaping that could encroach on power lines. Utility equipment should have at least 10 feet of clearance, when possible.

As you prepare to refresh your yard for the coming spring and summer, consider ways you can boost your energy efficiency for more comfort and savings year-round.



Crafting Memories

Jaylie's Custom Pens Turns Parts Into Art

Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Jaylie Beckman, a member of Grand Electric near Bison, S.D., has a knack for taking something as ordinary as a pen and making it extraordinary.

Last year, Jaylie and her mother, Jenny, ordered a custom nursing-themed pen advertised on Facebook as a gift for her sister-in-law, a nurse at West River Health Services in Hettinger, N.D. When the surgery department manager saw the pen, she wanted 10 more for their entire team.

“At first, we said, ‘Wait, we bought them from somebody else.’ But then we thought, if they make can make them, we can too,” Jenny said. “It all exploded from there.”

Encouraged by the growing interest in her community, Jaylie embraced the challenge. Inspired, she began exploring TikTok and other social media for new ways of making pens and ordering supplies for her new endeavor: Jaylie’s Custom Pens. Combining beads with pens, Jaylie began transforming basic parts into something that is truly one of a kind.

In May 2024, Jaylie and Jenny opened their first vendor booth at the Bison Spring Vendor Fair, showcasing nursing, faith-based and graduation themed pens.

Since then, the two have traveled across northwest South Dakota and southwest North Dakota, displaying Jaylie’s beautifully



Jaylie Beckman selling pens at a vendor show in Timber Lake.
Submitted Photo

crafted pens at trade shows in Faith, Hettinger, Buffalo and beyond. Their booth now hosts a wide variety of customized pens with themes ranging from monster trucks and rubber ducks to butterflies – and Jaylie’s personal favorite, a pen topped with a focal bead that proudly states, “Cat Mom.” In total, Jenny estimates that Jaylie has sold more than 500 pens from their last eight craft shows.

“I really love it,” Jaylie said.

Beyond the fun aesthetic, Jaylie’s pens have also provided both her and her family a way to process a profound loss within their family. In January 2024, Jenny lost her granddaughter, Jaylie’s niece, to a farm accident. In her memory, Jaylie and Jenny created purple pens with Minnie Mouse beads to help raise money in a silent auction for a commemorative park.

“Creating these pens gave Jaylie something to focus on and put her energy toward during that difficult time,” said Jenny. “I think it kept her mind off of it and I know it helped me.”

Jaylie continues to take custom requests for pens. She has also expanded her inventory to include bracelets, Crocs charms, stickers and keychains. Those interested can find her work on the Jaylie’s Custom Pens Facebook page, where she shares updates on her latest projects.



Jaylie Beckman’s favorite custom pens proudly state, “Cat Mom.”
Photo by Frank Turner



West Central Electric CEO Jeff Birkeland, left, is the retired archery coach, and IT Coordinator Derek Wolf, right, is a first-year rifle coach for Jones County, South Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA 4-H SHOOTING

Shooters Prepare for the State Competition in April

Jocelyn Johnson
jocelyn.johnson@sdrea.coop

Dedicated practice is the price each marksman pays to qualify and compete at the South Dakota 4-H Shooting Sports state event.



Sophie Wolf takes aim during a weekly practice.

This year, hundreds of shooters will compete on April 25-27 to showcase marksmanship. Their hard work will be on display as every shot will impact the final score. Among these competitors is a dedicated group from Jones County, South Dakota. For the past two decades, employees from West Central Electric Cooperative in Murdo, S.D., have dedicated their time to coaching various 4-H shooting disciplines.

“It’s the cooperative giving back to the community and promoting our youth,” said Jeff Birkeland, CEO of West Central Electric. “A few years ago, we took 41 kids to state, and we brought home 43 state trophies. I’m proud of our kids.”

Birkeland coached archery for 15 years and happily recounted the experience with his two boys during that time.

“Kids want to shoot. We have the best participation in shooting sports

than we have in anything else.”

Birkeland’s son, Jacob, competed for 10 years in shooting sports among other 4-H competitions.

“While I explored many aspects of 4-H, shooting sports became my primary focus,” Jacob said. “I began my journey in shooting sports with BB gun and was introduced to archery. Archery quickly became my main area of competition, and it has been an incredibly rewarding and impactful part of my 4-H experience.”

This experience offered him a competitive edge as well as bonding memories that Jacob vouches as life shaping.

“One of the greatest highlights of my time in 4-H has been the lasting friendships and memories I’ve built along the way,” Jacob said. “Whether it was constructing a trophy shelf with my grandpa, having archery competitions against my dad to see who had to do the chores or representing South Dakota at the national shooting sports event – each experience has contributed to my personal and professional growth. I would not be where I am today without it.”



Matthew Birkeland, left, stands with Hayzen Sealey, right, at the spring state competition.

Derek Wolf, IT coordinator for West Central Electric and first-year coach for Jones County 4-H, said, “We begin practicing once a week in January. We work on safety first – getting the kids comfortable with their firearms. Then, we step into practicing for competition.”

Each county competes in three matches leading up the state competition, and every participant must make a qualifying score in at least one match to qualify for state.

“We encourage every kid to enter and compete in all three matches,” Birkeland said. “It’s better to practice at it instead of getting to state and having the wheels fall off.”

The art of practicing perfectly is what brings these competitors to state. Birkeland noted that those who practice, will win. And those who overcome a disappointment may come home with the trophy.

“It teaches those kids a lot about life,” Birkeland said. “You practice and practice, you put the time in and then one thing happens – one flinch,

one mistake and it’s over. Emotionally, hopefully it strengthens them a bit. Instead of breaking down and crying, you better be able to handle it...Limit your problems. Don’t increase them with a mental meltdown.”

Wolf agreed with this sentiment and described how overcoming a bad shot and being mentally tough is sometimes more important than being a skilled shooter.

“There are a lot of kids who find success in this, so I find it rewarding to be involved as a coach,” he said.

Wolf’s daughter, Sophie, competes in .22 rifle and archery and remarked that the highlight of the competition was that it challenged her and made her a stronger competitor. She trains twice per week for several hours while preparing for the state competition.

“I feel excitement when I compete,” Sophie said. “I love the challenge.”

In 2024, more than 1,600 participants competed in various disciplines at the spring state shooting event. These disciplines

are pistol, archery, rifle, hunting and western heritage. An additional 270 participants competed in the fall state shooting event for shotgun and muzzleloading. Each year, the top five shooters win trophies and this year’s winners may be chosen to represent at the 4-H Shooting Sports National Championships in Grand Island, Neb., on June 22-27. Last year, South Dakota tied for 2nd place with Missouri at the national event.

John Keimig, South Dakota State University Extension Youth Safety Field Specialist, emphasized that the shooting program is made great by the people who volunteer.

“One of the great things about small communities in South Dakota is people who give their time to volunteer,” said Keimig. “If it wasn’t for people who volunteer, we wouldn’t have this successful program – whether it be volunteers who work full-time for an electric cooperative or farmers and ranchers. They are the backbone of this program.”



Archers stand on the line at South Dakota’s spring state competition.

Strickland Headed to Washington

Bon Homme High School student Seraya Strickland is Bon Homme Yankton Electric's representative on the Rural Electric Youth Tour. Joining 1,800 High School Junior and Seniors as they travel to Washington D.C. the week of June 15th-21st to participate in the Rural Electric Youth tour.

During the week Strickland will have the opportunity to increase her knowledge about our country's history, about electric cooperatives, and about our government.

Strickland will no doubt meet many new friends and have fun.

Electric cooperatives throughout the country sponsor the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington to encourage young people to prepare to become the next generation of leaders.



Scholar of the Week

Avon High School Senior, Lila Vanderlei, daughter of Craig and Amy Vanderlei from Springfield SD.

Lila was nominated as she represents a model student. She has a work ethic like none other. 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 the choir and band for the past four years.

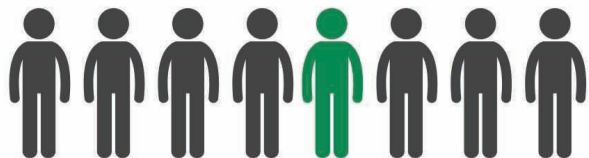
Lila will be featured on Dakota News Now during the 6:00 pm news on Monday, April 28th and again on Dakota News Now morning news on Tuesday, April 29th between 6:00 am and 7:00 am.

Drawing Winner!



Bon Homme Yankton Electric member, Larry Navratil, was drawn as winner of this year's give-a-way at the 2025 Dakota Farm Show held in Vermillion SD. Larry received a new Leatherman.

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES
Who We Are



**Co-ops serve 1 in
8 U.S. residents**
in rural and exurban communities

Washington Changes Signal Positive Energy Impacts

Scott Flood
NRECA

The 2024 election centered on widespread frustration with America's economy and immigration. While energy policy didn't receive as much time in the campaigning spotlight, the second Trump presidency is likely to result in significant changes in how our nation approaches its ever-growing demand for electric power. For electric cooperatives, it appears those changes will be positive.

"America is at an energy crossroads, and the reliability of the electric grid hangs in the balance," NRECA CEO Jim Matheson explained in a message expressing the association's desire to work closely with President Trump and Congress to protect energy affordability and reliability. "Critical generation resources are being retired faster than they can be reliably replaced. At the same time, electricity demand is skyrocketing as power-hungry data centers and new manufacturing facilities come online. Smart energy policies that keep the lights on are more important than ever."

Shortly after the election, the North American Electric Reliability Corp. (NERC) warned that many regions face an elevated risk of electricity shortfalls in the face of extreme weather such as prolonged cold snaps. NERC, the nation's grid watchdog, reiterated that older power plants are being retired at the same time Americans are using more electricity. While solar and wind farms have been sprouting up, they can't deliver the always-available electricity that coal- and gas-fired plants have long provided. Hurricanes Helene and Milton compounded the problem by damaging critical grid infrastructure.

The first Trump administration scaled back many of President Obama's initiatives to replace fossil fuels with "clean power," so observers expect President Trump's team to overturn many of the Biden administration's energy-related policies. NRECA has been urging officials to eliminate regulatory burdens such as the EPA's power plant rule – which many believe exceeds the EPA's legal authority – and

to encourage the Department of Energy and other agencies to take steps that will eliminate bureaucratic roadblocks and bolster the long-term reliability of the nation's grid.

Electric cooperatives' vision for America's energy future calls for a durable plan to ensure our consumer-members and the largely rural communities they call home will have reliable and affordable access to electricity in the face of the nation's skyrocketing demand.

South Dakota's electric cooperatives are comfortable taking a leadership role in this effort because we have worked hard with elected officials and their staffs to advocate for our members. Policymakers from both parties have consistently commended electric cooperatives as reputable energy providers and engines of economic development that play a vital role in transforming the local communities they proudly serve.

Solidifying a positive and resilient energy future for co-op communities involves a long list of issues and elements. For example, we're pressing Congress and the Trump administration to take concrete steps to overhaul outdated permitting laws that delay or frustrate efforts to build the new infrastructure tomorrow's energy needs demand. We need to address public lands and conservation regulations that make it challenging to operate powerlines, maintain rights of way, and reduce potential wildfire threats. Electric cooperatives are also working to support their consumer-members by maintaining federal programs and tax credits that bolster electric reliability and affordability.

While President Trump has earned a reputation for demanding swift action on his priorities, we need to remember that change doesn't happen quickly in Washington. For example, undoing the EPA power plant rule will require a robust regulatory process, that will take some time to ensure this repeal can withstand expected legal challenges. While the exact path we'll take is still coming into focus, our top priority is the interest of the local communities we serve and the everyday Americans who call them home.

We will continue to strengthen our voice by making sure our representatives at the federal and state level are aware of our concerns and the importance of ensuring reliable, affordable electricity for all Americans.

The strength of the electric cooperative movement and the clout we have when we work together are unsurpassed, positioning us for continued success as we work with the new administration.



RUNNING FREE

Photos by Alvis Uptis

Wild Horses Roam at Black Hills Sanctuary

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

In the southern Black Hills, a watchful eye will catch a rare and breathtaking sight: a herd of wild mustangs galloping freely across thousands of acres of grassland in the Cheyenne River Valley.

For the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary staff and the hundreds of rescued horses they care for, it's just another day on the ranch.

The sanctuary operates like most working ranches, says Susan Watt, the president and CEO of the Institute of Range and the American Mustang. Staff regularly travel over 15 miles across the 10,000 acre ranch to fill water troughs and set out hay, mineral blocks and horse cake. It's a trek that takes them across picturesque grasslands, hills, bluffs and the muddy banks of the Cheyenne River. A bulwark against suburban sprawl, the land remains as nature intended.

"Wild horses have been part of North America since time immemorial," Watt explained. "We have a large population of American mustangs, Spanish mustangs, horses with blood lines that trace back to Spain and Portugal, and a small herd of Choctaw Indian ponies that were part of the Trail of Tears

– They are a very important part of American history we need to preserve."

The story of the sanctuary begins in the late 1930s with a young man named Dayton Hyde. At 13 years old, Hyde left his home in Michigan for his uncle's cattle ranch in Oregon after hearing captivating tales of the wild west's excitement and beauty.

Once he arrived, Hyde was completely enthralled by the western lifestyle. With each passing year, his connection to the land and the wildlife strengthened, shaping his identity as a cowboy, conservationist and writer.

Decades later in 1987, while on a trip to Nevada to purchase cattle, Hyde came across corrals of wild horses the federal government had rounded up using low-flying helicopters. Devastated by the idea of the free-roaming herds confined to pens, Hyde was inspired to create a refuge for wild horses where they could run free.

Hyde petitioned congress to allow him to take some of the captured horses and create a sanctuary. South Dakota Governor George Mickelson, who had learned of Hyde's ambitions and was supportive, invited Hyde to inspect a piece of land known as Chilson Canyon near Hot Springs, S.D.

For nearly 40 years now, that piece of land plus Hyde's hard work has given hundreds of wild horses another chance to roam wild. However, it's a luxury very few wild horses receive.

Since 2020, the Bureau of Land Management has reported

WILD HORSE SANCTUARY

rounding up over 40,000 wild horses to control herd populations, which can grow rapidly in the wild. Their fates vary; At government holding pens, they await auction where if sold they'll be rehomed with owners who agree not to sell them for slaughter outside of the U.S.

According to Watt and other wild horse advocacy groups, those assurances don't always matter.

"The horses are supposed to be protected from slaughter," she continued, "But unfortunately, you put them in a trailer and cross the border into Canada or Mexico and they don't always check to see what's in the trailer."

The horses that come to the sanctuary are generally in "emergency situations," Watt said, which means the horses are being sent to slaughter or their previous caretaker died or is unable to take care of the horses.

In addition to preserving the herds of wild horses, Hyde envisioned the sanctuary as a means to protect and preserve the land's natural beauty and rich historical legacy, which includes long-ago remnants of human activity.

"This particular tract of land was the location for ancient petroglyph writings that ancient man did on cliff walls," Watt explained. "And we're protecting the pioneer history of this land; Our buildings that we use are pioneer homesteads."

Though Dayton Hyde passed away in 2018, his legacy lives on. Today the sanctuary is home to several hundred wild horses, a herd of cattle, thousands of acres of pristine prairie

and the inextinguishable spirit of the wild west.

"He used to say every ache and pain he ever had was from a horse," Watt laughed. "What Dayton Hyde really wanted was to protect this land from subdivision, to let it be for wildlife and wild horses, and keep it safe and protected. I think South Dakota should be immensely proud of what Dayton Hyde has done."

For more information about the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary, visit www.wildmustangs.com.



(Above) Dayton Hyde, founder of the sanctuary.
(Below) The sanctuary encompasses more than 10,000 acres of land along the Cheyenne River near Hot Springs, S.D.
Photos by Alvis Uptis



'Who Powers You' Contest Nominations Now Being Accepted

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

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

Member-owners, employees, and residents who live or work within the service territory of the region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives are eligible to be nominated. Nominations will be accepted February 3 through April 11, 2025. Three final winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact that they have on the community. Weekly finalists will be announced and featured on Keloland Living starting March 13, 2025, and the three contest winners will be announced on Keloland Living on May 22, 2025.

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

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

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

Contest finalists could win one of the following cash prizes:

- Grand Prize Winner: \$3,000
- Second Place: \$1,500
- Third Place: \$500



**TELL
US WHO
POWERS
YOU!**

We know our co-op community is filled with people making a difference.

Let's celebrate them!
Nominate a hero in your community who goes above and beyond.

**They could win up
to \$3,000!**

South Dakota Rural Electric **YOUTH EXCURSION**

July 21-24, 2025

Each summer, South Dakota's rural electric cooperatives sponsor area students for the South Dakota Rural Electric Youth Excursion. This FREE four-day event takes place in Bismarck and Beulah, North Dakota. All area high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors whose parents or guardians are members of Bon Homme Yankton Electric are eligible to apply. Applications can be found in your guidance counselor's office, stop by the B-Y Electric office in Tabor or online at byelectric.coop.

- Visit North Dakota's Capital!
- Learn where South Dakota's electricity comes from!
- Tour the Great Plains Synfuel Plant
- Tour Freedom Coal Mine
- Tour Antelope Valley Station Power Plant
- Meet new friends!

**Bon Homme Yankton Electric will provide for transportation, lodging, meals, entertainment and sightseeing events. Students are required to supply their own personal/shopping money.*



For More Information Contact:

Bon Homme Yankton Electric
Aaron Melichar or Chantelle Jungemann

Phone: 605-463-2507

Application Deadline: Friday, May 9th 2025



MARCH 14-15
St. Patrick's Day
Weekened
Fri. 5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.
 Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

*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.

FEB. 28-MARCH 1
Mardi Gras Weekend
 8 p.m. Fri.-10 p.m. Sat.
 Main Street
 Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

MARCH 6
SD Jazz Festival Concert
 Aberdeen Community Concert Association
 7:30 p.m.
 NSU Johnson Fine Arts Center
 Aberdeen, SD
 Tickets Available at Concert

MARCH 8-9
Philip Area Annual Gun Show
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sun. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
 American Legion Hall
 Philip, SD
 605-859-2135

MARCH 8
Epiphany Sausage Sale
 10 a.m. until gone
 Parish Hall
 Epiphany, SD

MARCH 8
Minnehaha County
Pheasants Forever Banquet
 5 p.m.
 El Riad Shrine
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-376-8219

MARCH 14-15
Badlands Quilter Weekend
Getaway
 Fri. 5 p.m.
 Sat. 8 a.m.
 Community Center
 Wall, SD
 605-685-5718

MARCH 15
VFW Teener Baseball Bingo
Benefit
 5 p.m.
 Tyndall Auditorium
 Tyndall, SD

MARCH 22
Annual Banquet & Bash
 Britton Area Chamber of Commerce
 5:30 p.m.
 Britton, SD
 605-448-8130

MARCH 29
Ready. Set. Grow!
 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
 Couteau Prairie Master Gardeners
 Codington CTY Extension Complex
 Watertown, SD
 605-838-7098

APRIL 4
Mitchell Technical College
2025 Alumni Gathering
Cornhole Tournament
 5 p.m. Social
 6:30 p.m. Tournament
 The World's Only Corn Palace
 Mitchell, SD
 605-995-7342

APRIL 4-5
Annual Schmeckfest
 German Heritage Celebration
 748 S Main St.
 Freeman, SD
 605-925-4237

APRIL 4-6, 11-13
Women Playing Hamlet
 April 4-5, 11-12: 7:30 p.m.
 April 6, 13: 2:30 p.m.
 Mighty Corson Art Players
 Corson, SD
 www.mightycorson.com

APRIL 5-6
Youth & Family Kids Fair
 Sat. 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Sun. 12-4p.m.
 The Monument
 Rapid City, SD
 605-342-4195

APRIL 11-12
Junkin' Market Days Spring
Market
 Fri. 4-7 p.m.
 Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
 Sioux Falls, SD
 www.junkinmarketdays.com

JUNE 20-21
Czech Days
 Fun, Music, Entertainment,
 Dancing & Czech Food
 Tabor, SD
 www.taborczechdays.com
 Facebook.com/TaborCzechDays

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