

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Rural Electrification

West Central - The Last Co-op to Incorporate

Pages 8-9

Generational Farmers

Pages 12-13

Rural Electrification served even the most rural communities.

# Planning for the Future: Preparing Our 2026 Budget



**Stephanie Horst**  
horst@byelectric.com

As we look ahead to next year's budget, we want to share with you how Basin Electric, East River Electric, and B-Y Electric are planning for the future. For the past decade, Basin Electric's wholesale power rates have remained steady, but growth across our region now requires new investments to ensure reliable, affordable power for years to come.

## Meeting Growing Demand

From 2018 to 2024, energy demand on the Basin system grew by 40%, while only one 45-MW plant was added. To keep pace, Basin will be adding generation resources. While the cost of new generation—currently about \$2,700 per kilowatt installed—is significant, it is necessary to serve the steady, native growth of our homes, farms, and businesses.

Importantly, this growth does not include large-scale data centers or cryptocurrency operations often seen in the news. Basin, East River, and B-Y Electric have put safeguards in place to ensure that these "hyper loads" pay their own way. Those costs will not be passed on to our members.

## Ensuring Reliability

Along with meeting new demand, Basin must also comply with the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) requirement to maintain a 36% reserve margin. This ensures that on the coldest winter days, when demand is high and wind resources are low, we will still have enough generation available to keep power flowing. To meet this need, Basin is already constructing a 1,400-MW natural gas plant in North Dakota—a major investment in long-term reliability.

## Local and Regional Investments

East River Electric continues to strengthen the transmission system that delivers wholesale power to our substations. Here at B-Y Electric, we're also investing locally. This past summer we converted 30 miles of older overhead line to underground east of Tabor, improving reliability and reducing future maintenance costs.

## Looking Ahead to 2026

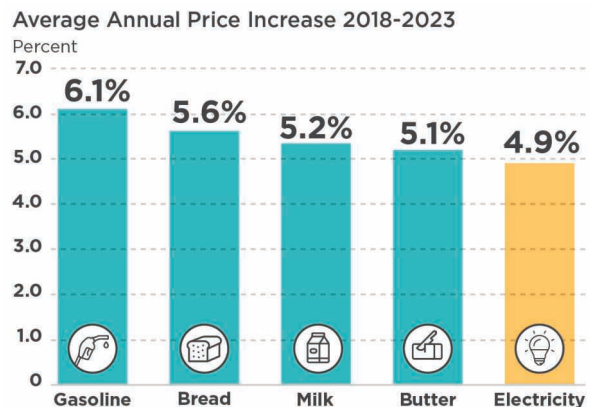
Because wholesale power makes up about 60% of B-Y Electric's total costs, changes at the generation and transmission level do affect us locally. At this point, wholesale power costs are expected to increase by at least 12% in 2026. While that does mean B-Y Electric will likely need to adjust rates, please know that we are committed to keeping electricity as affordable as possible while ensuring the reliability you depend on.

The Basin and East River boards will finalize their rate decisions in the coming months. As we build our 2026 budget, we will keep you informed every step of the way.

Our mission remains the same as it has for 80 years—providing reliable, safe, and affordable energy while planning responsibly for the future. Thank you for your trust and membership as we move forward together.

*Stephanie Horst, General Manager*

## ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Consumer Price Index

**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
- Dean Sternhagen

**General Manager:** Stephanie Horst

**Operations Manager:** Ken Carda

**Office Manager:** Nicole Einrem

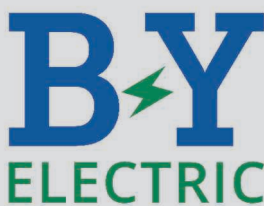
**Members Service Advisor:** Aaron Melichar

**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.

**Bon Homme Yankton Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.**



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# AUGUST BOARD MEETING

The August board meeting was held on August 20, 2025 at 8:00 am. Directors present were 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:**

- July 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- Capital Credits to Estates - \$8,185.13
- Review New Members & Cancellations
- Review Closed Work Order Inventory - None
- Review Special Equipment Purchases - \$25,573.74

**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
- Basin Annual Meeting Report

**OTHER GOVERNANCE**

- Approved 2025 Second Quarter Director & GM Expenses
- Appointed CFC Voting Delegate/Alternate (Ruppelt/Brandt)
- Appointed Federated Voting Delegate/Alternate (Brandt/Ruppelt)
- Authorize Horst to cast Co-Bank Mail-In Ballot
- Basin Rate Increase Resolution
- Director Succession Planning
- Appoint Brandt as SDREA Director
- Enter/Exit Executive Session - None
- Next Meeting date set for Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at 8:00 am.

FINANCIAL REPORT	JULY		YTD
	2024	2025	2025
<b>TOTAL ELECTRIC REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,117,409</b>	<b>\$1,177,671</b>	<b>\$7,462,957</b>
<b>COST OF POWER</b>	<b>\$647,360</b>	<b>\$728,639</b>	<b>\$4,422,412</b>
<b>TOTAL COST OF SERVICE</b>	<b>\$1,059,709</b>	<b>\$1,180,994</b>	<b>\$7,307,418</b>
<b>KWHS PURCHASED</b>	<b>9,504,333</b>	<b>9,271,194</b>	<b>61,221,967</b>
<b>RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE KWH</b>	<b>1,428</b>	<b>1,508</b>	
<b>RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE BILL</b>	<b>\$182</b>	<b>\$204</b>	

**Welcome New Members**

- |                                 |                            |                              |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Avon                            | Irene                      | DolgenCorp, LLC              |
| Logan Powers                    | Aaron Berry                | Dylan & Cheree Ishmael-Lynde |
| Tabor                           | Yankton                    | Kasik Transport, INC         |
| Doug Carstensen                 | Adam & Alicia Fernandez    | James & Lisa Roberge         |
| Michael & Emily Mesman          | Austin & Meghan Anderson   | Nicholas & Rickibeth Johnson |
| Koletzky Family LTD Partnership | Philip & Colleen Tonsoline | Craig D & Shari L Hillinger  |
|                                 | Daniel & Chris Parry       | Silas Jiricek                |
|                                 |                            | Yosvany C Diaz               |

# Go Above and Beyond for a Safe Harvest

Anne Prince  
NRECA

Modern farming often relies on data and equipment with GPS and auto-guidance systems. However, even with these modern conveniences, farm workers must remain vigilant. That's because farming is considered one of the most dangerous jobs.

Massive machinery is indispensable to farming, but the same impressive size, height and extensions make them particularly vulnerable to contacting power lines. That's why staying alert, focused and knowledgeable about potential hazards and safety procedures is crucial.

During a busy harvest season, the familiar sights around the farm can easily fade into the background, and farm workers can overlook the power lines overhead. However, failing to notice them can lead to deadly accidents.

### 360 Awareness

Awareness of your surroundings, around, above and below, and planning safe equipment routes can significantly reduce the risk of accidents. Even with GPS and auto-steering, it's imperative that farm workers keep a close eye on the equipment's location and are ready to take action if necessary.

Exposed underground powerlines, defective wiring in farm buildings and extension cords are also hazards. Grain bins can pose a potential danger as well. The National Electrical Safety Code requires power lines to be at least 18 feet above the highest point on any grain bin with which portable augers or other portable filling equipment are used.

### Smart Harvest Safety Tips

To ensure a safer harvest season, SafeElectricity.org recommends the following tips to avoid electrical accidents on the farm:

- Exercise caution near power lines. Be careful when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines. Ensure the spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines.

- Lower equipment extensions, portable augers or elevators before moving or transporting equipment. Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember that non-metallic materials like lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay can conduct electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.
- Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path. Doing so could result in electric shock or death.
- Avoid using metal poles inside bins. Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside or around bins.
- Hire qualified electricians. Ensure that qualified electricians handle work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

While rare, the only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire. However, if it happens, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the machinery and the ground at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.



### "Don't play with outlets!"

#### Kinzlee Klomp, Age 12

Kinzlee warns readers not to play with power outlets. Great advice, Kinzlee! Kinzlee's parents are Kaitlin and Austin Klomp from Box Elder, 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.

# Fresh BREADS

## ZUCCHINI BREAD

### Ingredients:

3 eggs  
2 cups sugar  
1 cup oil  
2 tsp. vanilla  
3 cups flour  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1/2 tsp. baking powder  
1 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
3 cups zucchini (shredded)

### Method

Cream together eggs, sugar and oil. Then add the vanilla. Mix together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and add to the egg mixture. Stir in zucchini. Pour into two loaf pans. Bake at 325°F for approximately one hour.

**Kimberly Grimm**  
Southeastern Electric

## GLUTEN FREE OATMEAL PANCAKES

### Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups oats  
1 tsp. baking powder  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 eggs  
1/2 cup milk  
3/4 cup applesauce  
3 tbsps. maple syrup  
2 tsp. apple cider vinegar  
2 tsp. vanilla

### Method

Grind 2 1/2 cups oats in blender until turned into flour. In large bowl, whisk together oats, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Form a bowl in center, add eggs and whisk them. Then, add milk, applesauce, maple syrup, apple cider vinegar and vanilla. Stir to combine. Wait five minutes to thicken batter. Cook in oiled pan.

**Jean Beauchamp**  
Southeastern Electric

## KUNSI' FRY BREAD

### Ingredients:

1 tbsp. yeast (quick rise)  
2 tbsps. sugar  
1 qt. warm water  
1 tbsp. oil/melted butter  
1/2 tsp. salt  
6 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tbsps. powdered dry milk  
4 cups oil for frying

### Method

Mix yeast, sugar, salt, warm water, oil/melted butter and let proof for 15 minutes. Mix flour and powdered dry milk. Make a well in the flour mixture and add yeast mixture. Gradually add warm water until dough comes together and is no longer sticky. Cover and let rise until doubled in size. Heat oil to fry dough. Separate dough into 10 to 12 baseball-size dough balls (or smaller if you want smaller pieces). Stretch dough balls and shape into oval discs or round discs approximately 1/4 inch thick. Test the oil to see if it's hot enough by dropping a small pea size piece of the dough in the oil. If it floats it's ready. Flatten the disc between your hands and stretch it again. Fry the bread until both sides are golden brown. Transfer to paper towel lined plate to drain. Continue until all the dough is fried. Enjoy with soup or a Spam and egg sandwich or taco toppings.

**Sheila Ironheart**  
Whetstone Valley Electric

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 5 Director: Brian Brandt

I have served on the B-Y Electric Board of Directors for just over a year. In that time, I have enjoyed meeting new people and gaining a deeper understanding of the electrical services provided to members. A highlight of serving on the board has been the opportunity to get more involved in the community while continuing to learn new things. I find it especially interesting to explore the opportunities and challenges facing the electrical industry with future load growth.

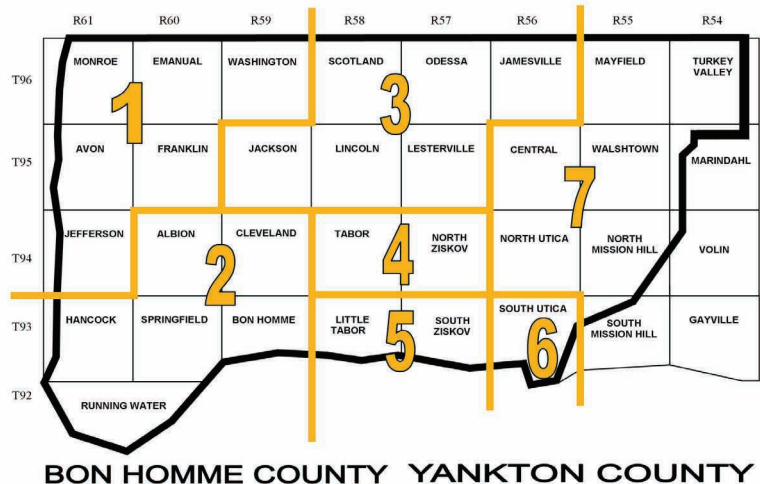
I and my wife, Stacy, have been married for 22 years and live west of Yankton with our three children. With a career in health care spanning 27 years, I currently work a couple days a week as a psychiatric nurse practitioner while also devoting much of my time to the family farm near Avon. In my free time, I enjoy working on tractors, including restoring a John Deere 4040 originally purchased new by my grandfather.



All active members in district 5 were put in a drawing in August 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 (John W Sedlacek)
  - July - District 2 (William P Minow)
  - August - District 3 (John Haase)
  - September - District 4 (Kenneth Decker)
  - October - District 5 (Gary B Gates)
  - November - District 6
  - December - District 7

**District 5 \$80 Bill Credit Drawing Winner: Gary B Gates**



# Employee Spotlight: Nathan Kloucek



**How long have you been at Bon Homme Yankton Electric?**  
I have been with B-Y Electric for 13 years.

**What does your job entail?**  
In a typical day, I install new power lines and equipment, maintain and inspect existing lines to prevent outages, and repair damage caused by storms or accidents.

**What do you love most about B-Y Electric?**  
I have always liked the variety of work I get to do. No two days are exactly the same.

**What is your favorite memory since starting work at B-Y Electric?**  
The 2019 ice storm and flood. Despite the challenges, it was a powerful reminder of the importance of reliable electricity and the dedication of crews working to restore power for members.

**How would you describe B-Y Electric in three words?**  
People helping people.

**A little about you outside of work.**  
My wife Justine and I live south of Tabor. We have three daughters. I own and operate a local fitness center, where I also work as a personal trainer. Along with running the business, I also farm on the side and stay active in the community as a volunteer wrestling coach. Originally from the Tabor area, I enjoy giving back to the community while balancing family, fitness, and farming.

## 2026 BASIN TOUR

Registration is now open for members interested in learning more about where your electricity is generated. Basin Electric Power Cooperative is open for tours and we are taking advantage of this. This FREE opportunity for our members will be held June 8-10, 2026. We will be traveling with members from Clay-Union Electric and Union County Electric. If you are interested in attending this tour, please fill out the form below and send to:  
Bon Homme Yankton Electric Attn: Chantelle Jungemann | PO Box 158 | Tabor, SD 57063

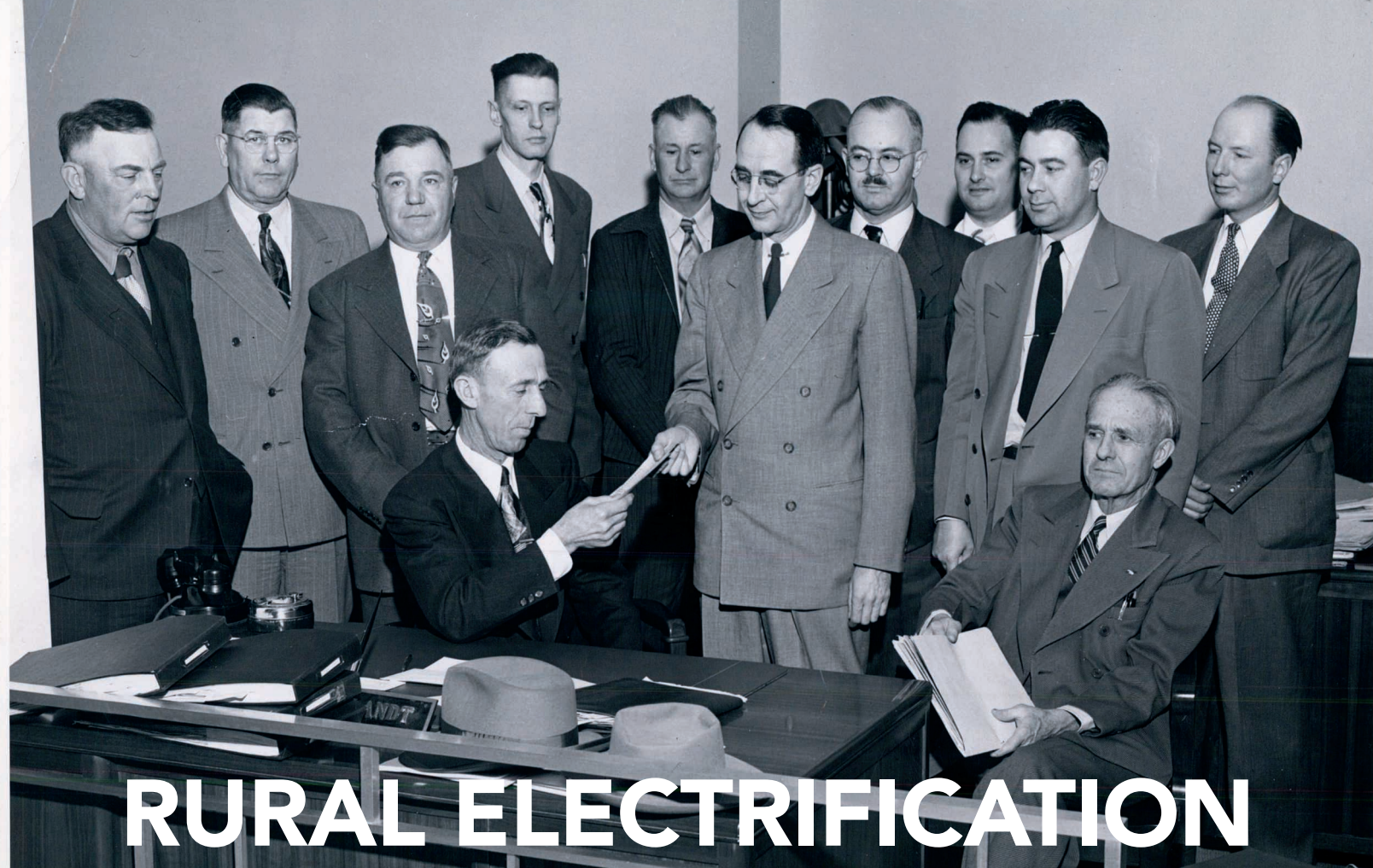
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(If registering as a couple/double, include both names.)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration is due by April 1, 2026 to: Chantelle Jungemann - [cjungemann@byelectric.com](mailto:cjungemann@byelectric.com)





# RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

## WEST CENTRAL

### Last to Incorporate, Lasting in Impact

**Frank Turner**

[frank.turner@sdrea.coop](mailto:frank.turner@sdrea.coop)

Before rural electrification, South Dakota's farmsteads ended the day in silence. There was no music from the radio playing in the living room or hum of an electric refrigerator in the kitchen. Over decades of work, power lines would stretch across the prairie through President Franklin Roosevelt's vision of rural electrification, carrying not only electricity but also a new way of life.

In 1935, President Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) as part of his New Deal policies to revive a nation struggling through the Great Depression and bring electricity to

America's rural communities, something that private and investor-owned utilities refused to do.

Clay-Union Electric was the first rural community in South Dakota to adopt the cooperative model in 1937, and West Central was the last in 1949. But as former West Central Electric CEO Steve Reed can attest, being the last to adopt the cooperative way didn't hinder their success. Once the path to forming a cooperative was established, the members of West Central benefitted from electricity's transformation from a luxury into a necessity with the rest of rural South Dakota.

"We couldn't rely on the power

West Central Electric board directors present a check to a representative of Central Electric and Gas in 1951, finalizing the cooperative's purchase of the private utility system. *Photo submitted by West Central Electric.*

companies to come out to serve rural South Dakota," said Reed, a 42-year cooperative veteran who joined West Central Electric as a lineman and worked his way up to CEO. "They were never going to do it at price that was affordable, so rural electric has been great for not only the members of West Central but the entire country."

So why was West Central the last to form a cooperative? According to Reed, the rural communities that organized West Central Electric in 1949 had several hurdles to clear. The first was overcoming the sheer remoteness of the territory, which then had a system that averaged 1.5 members per mile of line constructed, even including towns and

cities. Because members were few and far between, the REA needed the towns in the proposed West Central territory to become members: from Philip to Hayes and Murdo to Kennebec, where West Central Electric was incorporated.

That led to the next problem: the towns and cities in the proposed West Central Electric's service territory were already being served by Central Electric and Gas, a private company based out of Philadelphia. This obstacle didn't stop the people who had a vision of what rural electrification could accomplish. Following lengthy discussion in 1951, West Central Electric purchased systems from Central Electric and Gas for \$850,000 using low-interest REA federal funds.

Former West Central Electric Attorney John Larson outlined the discussions in his 50th Annual Meeting Speech: "There was no choice but to buy out the private supplier, Central Electric and Gas, and that was accomplished... (Former South Dakota Governor M. Q. Sharpe, who served as West Central Electric's attorney), showed up for the meeting that morning unshaven and unkempt, with a threadbare shirt and suit. For the entire morning, he listened with his head down and eyes shut to the Philadelphia lawyer types who represented the power company. After the dinner break, however, he showed up in a new suit, shaved, and took over the meeting by dictating exactly what West Central would do and what we would pay. During an afternoon break, one of the Philadelphia types was heard to mutter, 'You want to watch that old guy. When he's got his head down and eyes shut, he's not sleeping!'"

West Central Electric's 1951 purchase included all the electrical infrastructure within the town boundaries, as well as the diesel generation system extending west from Chamberlain. Shortly after, the evolution of West Central Electric progressed with the construction of distribution systems to farms and reconstructing the systems of various

towns, including the installation of street lights.

Since that iconic moment, West Central has continued to grow with its membership, meeting more demand for electrical energy than had been previously thought possible, a reflection of just how integral electricity has

become in day-to-day living for business owners, ag producers, and rural folk alike.

"That moment modernized us," said Reed. "It just did so much for everything – and without it, where would we be?"



(Top) A West Central Electric Annual Meeting.  
(Bottom) A West Central Electric Board Meeting with the REA.  
*Photos submitted by West Central Electric*

# Scotland SD Scottie Day's Parade and Yankton SD Annual Riverboat Days Parade

Bon Homme Yankton Electric was excited to participate in our local Scottie Day's Parade in Scotland SD and the 42nd Anniversary of Yankton Riverboat Days.

We continued our 80th celebration with members in both communities in the grand parades.



Aaron Melichar participating in the Scotland Scottie Day's Parade.



Ken Carda and Isabella Walter eagerly await for the Riverboat Day's Parade to start.

## 2025 Dakotafest



The Touchstone Energy Cooperative booth was at Dakotafest in Mitchell. Representatives from Bon Homme Yankton Electric and several area cooperatives were there to answer questions about energy use on the farm.



B-Y Electric member, Joellen Wormsbecher, was drawn as a winner of a brand new electric grill at Dakotafest.

# Sealed Bid Opportunity

Bon Homme Yankton Electric has a digger truck up for sealed bid.  
 All bids are due by October 10, 2025 @ 4:00 pm. For more information you can email Operations Manager, Ken Carda at [kcarda@byelectric.com](mailto:kcarda@byelectric.com) or call 605-463-2507.

- Description:
- 2009 International 4400
- 4X2
- 87,259 miles (still in use)
- Terex 42' Digger truck manual or remote operation
- Automatic transmission
- Boom tip winch
- Removable bucket
- Electric bumper winch
- Annual DOT, structure, and dielectric inspections
- Hours: 6,483 (still in use)
- PTO Hours: 2,321 (still in use)

MFD BY:	Dueco-Watertown
Job #	6542
DATE OF MFR:MO.	10 YR 09
GVWR:	KG ( 33000 LB)
GAWR-FRONT:	KG ( 13000 LB)
WITH	11R22.5 TIRES,
	22.5x8.25 RIMS, @ KPA
	( 1.20 PSI) COLD
GAWR-INTERMEDIATE(1):	KG ( _____ LB)
WITH	_____ TIRES,
	_____ RIMS, @ KPA
	( _____ PSI) COLD
GAWR-INTERMEDIATE(2):	KG ( _____ LB)
WITH	_____ TIRES,
	_____ RIMS, @ KPA
	( _____ PSI) COLD
GAWR-REAR:	KG ( 20000 LB)
WITH	11R22.5 TIRES,
	22.5x8.25 RIMS, @ KPA
	( 1.00 PSI) COLD
THIS VEHICLE HAS BEEN COMPLETED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRIOR MANUFACTURERS' IVD, WHERE APPLICABLE. THIS VEHICLE CONFORMS TO ALL APPLICABLE FEDERAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY STANDARDS, (AND BUMPER AND THEFT PREVENTION STANDARDS, IF APPLICABLE) IN EFFECT IN: MO. 07 YR. 09	
VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER:	1HTMKAAN2AH196007
VEHICLE TYPE:	Int 4400 4x2





Photo submitted by JT and Luann Weber.

# GENERATIONAL FARMERS

## Four Generations of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Members Ranch on Lake Benton-Area Land

**Jacob Boyko**  
jacob.boyko@sdra.coop

Nestled amongst the rolling green pastures of western Minnesota, there's a generations-old farm worked by one family for over three quarters of a century.

From their Lincoln County property, the Weber family watched rural electrification improve the prairie, connect neighbors and bring reliability to farmsteads. Now they watch precision agriculture guide planting, bovine genetics strengthen herds, and social media and the internet connect their business to the wider world.

It all started in 1947, when John and Marie Weber moved into the old three-bedroom farmhouse from nearby

Elkton, S.D. Luckily, the move came six years after Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative energized lines in the area, so the Weber home enjoyed many of the modern amenities brought on by rural electrification, including electric lights, kitchen appliances and a washing machine.

"I know I had the best mom and dad in the world," said JT, one of John and Marie's eight children, who today helps run the ranch with his wife, Luann, their three sons and their families. "Dad was very community-oriented. He was on the school board, the elevator board and the rural water board. In fact, he was instrumental in starting rural water. He went from place to place, talking people

into getting rural water."

JT was born on the farm in 1957 during a blizzard that left his parents unable to reach the hospital in town. As a boy, he remembers collecting rainwater in a cistern and using it for cooking, cleaning and baths. Even as rural electrification began to transform the countryside, life on the farm remained far different – and often harder – than life in town.

"When I grew up, back in the 60s and 70s, if you milked 40 cows that was quite a few," JT said. "We were milking about 100 cows – we were kind of ahead of our time. But we had a big family, and us boys, we got right in there."

He continued, "We were hauling silage, hauling manure, milking cows and doing chores. But Dad never told us to do anything. He always asked us if we wanted to, and there's a difference. You wanted to work for him. He made you want to work for him, and it was never a burden."

That was a quality JT kept in mind with his own seven children on that same

ranch where he grew up. Today, JT and Luann's sons Jake, Garret, and Matt all stay involved in the ranch, now Weber Bros. Cattle.

"Growing up, I kind of always had that bug to get in the tractor, chase cows, put up fence, and do what needs to be done," explained Jake, the oldest son.

Today, they specialize in raising purebred Angus bulls and Simmental-Angus crosses, while also producing corn silage and alfalfa to help sustain the operation. While the operation may be old, it's not at all low-tech.

"Our main thing is our bull program," Jake said. "We sell about 50 registered Angus and Simmental bulls by private treaty every spring, and we also develop 50 replacement and bred heifers, and market a portion of them. We do a lot of artificial insemination and embryo transfer. Some of the more elite donor cows we can get our hands on by buying females and buying embryos. We're just trying to make good cows."

Jake, like his dad, graduated from South Dakota State University with an animal science degree, and was excited to return to the ranch to incorporate some of his new skills into the operation.

"When I got back from school, we really amped up our embryo transfer program with different ideas and stuff I learned about genetics from contacts and producers we've met over the years," Jake continued. "We went from selling 10 bulls per year to selling close to 50 bulls."

Jake's younger brother and fellow SDSU animal science graduate, Garret, keeps involved on the family's ranch as well. Though he works full time as swine genetic company Hypor's US Sales Manager, he helps out with the operation and finds the time to run Weber Bros. Cattle's social media pages, which he says has successfully expanded their presence in the market.

"Whether it's Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or our company website, we're able to hit such a broad spectrum of people, and it's a great way to tell the story of our operation, what we're doing year-in and year-out and advertise the



genetics of the cattle that we're showing and selling," Garret explained. "We're able to have a much greater touch point of individuals that we can reach out to and market our livestock."

JT, Jake and Garret all credit their spouses and families for supporting them as they work to grow the operation.

"It took a long time and a lot of support for us to get established and get to where we are today," JT said.

Looking toward the future – and the next generation, their goals are to make an already successful operation even better.

"We'll keep working with the cow herd, continue to make improvements and make better genetics every year," Jake said. "I want this opportunity to be available to my kids, so that if they want to be able to do this, they'll have the same chance we did."

Garret added, "It's something that I hope my sons can do someday if we're able to continue to grow the operation. I hope it's something they're going to be able to share and cherish with their own kids, because those are the memories that stick with you forever."

JT and Luann Weber with their adult children, Jake, Garret, Matt and Sara Weber, Liz Mergen, and Maria Opheim, and families.

Back, from left: Garret Weber, Levi Weber, Kailey Weber, Jake Weber, Amanda Weber, Sara Weber, Cade Opheim, Maria Opheim, Tawnee Opheim, JT Weber, Luann Weber, Brent Mergen, Liz Mergen, Davie Fiedler, Matt Weber, Racheal Krog.  
Front, from left: Adam Weber, Chisum Weber, Abeline Weber, Vidalia Fiedler.  
Not pictured: Talon Weber



Photo submitted by JT and Luanne Weber.



A purebred Angus Heifer.  
Photo by Garret Weber

# Bon Homme Yankton Electric 2025 Drive Thru Annual Meeting

Bon Homme Yankton Electric’s Annual Drive Thru Meeting was held August 19th. We were happy to have 576 registered members attend. Members were greeted by board members, staff, and management.

Cars were lined up by 3:45 pm, so employees opened up and started registering members ahead of the 4:00 pm posted registration time.

After registering and turning in their prize drawing postcard, members received a ticket to pick up their ballot and attendance gift. The following station was turning in the ballot and receiving a \$20 meal certificate for one of the following restaurants: The Keg, Joe’s Substation, and The Marina Bar & Grill.



## BUSINESS MEETING

Board President Dean Sternhagen went live on Facebook to call the annual meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

At 6:40 pm, the business meeting continued live on Facebook with Secretary Dave Sternhagen verifying that a quorum was reached by exceeding 50 registered members. He also announced that the Official Notice of Annual Meeting was certified by General Manager Stephanie Horst as it was mailed to the members on July 25, 2025 and was contained within the Cooperative Connections news magazine.

The financial report and the minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting were also published in the news magazine. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by a vote of the members on the same ballot as the director election.

Attorney Sheila Woodward presided over the election of the directors.



General Manager, Stephanie Horst, Office Manager, Nicole Einrem and Linemen, Tyler Suess welcome members.



B-Y Electric employees welcoming members to each station of the drive thru annual meeting.



The election judges verified a valid election took place and tallied the votes to confirm that Robert Ruppelt District 2 was elected for a three year term.

Having no further business to conduct, President Sternhagen adjourned the business meeting and called upon the directors to draw for the grand prizes.

You only needed to be registered but not present to win. The grand prize was five \$100 bill credits.

**PRIZE WINNERS**

- Michael and Sandra Neth
- Robert Hauger
- Doug & Robin Brooks
- Alexander & Krista Veik
- Matthew and Carrie Smith

Congratulations to these members and we hope they enjoy seeing the credit on their electric bill.

**BOARD REORGANIZATION**

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| President      | David Sykora   |
| Vice-President | Rick Cheloha   |
| Secretary      | Brian Brandt   |
| Treasurer      | Robert Ruppelt |

## Service Awards Presented



(left to right) Director Rick Cheloha, 5 years and Director David Sykora, 10 years.

## Thank You

B-Y Electric,

A simple Thank You is hardly enough for 36 years of experience and lifelong friendships. I appreciate everyone who came to my retirement party and for the antique meter.

Cooperatively yours,  
Dave



David Sternhagen



**OCT. 10-12**  
**Black Hills Powwow**  
 Rapid City, SD  
 605-341-0925

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.

**UNTIL OCT. 31**  
**Wallace Dow, Prairie Architect**  
**Traveling Exhibit**  
 Lake County Museum  
 Madison, SD  
 605-256-5308

**OCT. 3**  
**DSU Architecture Walking Tour**  
 3-4 p.m.  
 Lake County Museum  
 Madison, SD

**OCT. 3-5**  
**Black Hills Film Festival**  
 Journey Museum  
 Rapid City, SD  
 605-574-9454

**OCT. 4**  
**Pumpkin Train, Vendor**  
**Showcase**  
 Prairie Village  
 Madison, SD

**OCT. 4-5**  
**Sioux Falls Quilt Guild**  
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
 Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.  
 Sioux Falls Convention Center  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-951-2034

**OCT. 10-11**  
**Holman Acres Pumpkin Fest**  
**& Vendor Show**  
 Fri. 12 p.m.-6 p.m.  
 Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.,  
 Philip, SD  
 605-441-1060

**OCT. 11**  
**A Celebration of Classic Hits**  
 7p.m.  
 Gayville Music Hall  
 Gayville, SD  
 605-760-5799

**OCT. 11**  
**Howard Fall Festival**  
 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
 Miner County 4-H Grounds  
 Howard, SD

**OCT. 18**  
**Arts & Crafts Festival**  
 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
 Faulkton, SD

**OCT. 18**  
**Northern Prairie Arts**  
**Barn Quilt Class**  
 Highland Conference Center  
 Register by Oct. 6  
 Watertown, SD  
 605-882-1780

**OCT. 18-19**  
**Heartland Quilting Stars Show**  
 Highland Conference Center  
 Mitchell, SD  
 605-770-1551

**OCT. 19**  
**Helping With Horsepower**  
**Year-End Horse Show**  
 10 a.m.  
 Reclamation Ranch  
 Mitchell, SD

**OCT. 24**  
**Humor for Heroes**  
**Comedy Night Fundraiser**  
 Comedians, Silent Auction  
 Tickets \$15, two for \$25  
 1600 W. Russell St.  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-336-3470

**OCT. 25**  
**The Greats of Country**  
 7p.m.  
 Gayville Music Hall  
 Gayville, SD  
 605-760-5799

**OCT. 31-NOV. 2**  
**Haunted Trail at**  
**Reclamation Ranch**  
 7-10 p.m.  
 Reclamation Ranch  
 Mitchell, SD

**NOV. 1**  
**Reliance Christmas Carousel**  
 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
 Reliance, SD  
 605-730-1462

**NOV. 1**  
**Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Show**  
 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  
 Dakota Christian School  
 Corsica, SD  
 605-366-7940

**NOV. 1**  
**Black Hills Meat Fest**  
 2-4 p.m.  
 Nerdy Nuts Expo Hall  
 Rapid City, 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.**