



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



RENVILLE-SIBLEY
JANUARY 2023 VOL. 23 NO. 9

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Anglers from across the region compete in the Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament each year to try their luck and test their skills

Hook, line and auger

Inside the Mobridge ice fishing tourney
Pages 8-9

Shake the blues with winter outdoor fun
Pages 12-13

Thanks for all the wonderful memories

On Jan. 15, 1998, I walked through the front door of Renville-Sibley Co-op Power for the first time as an employee of the cooperative. I knew very little about electricity other than the fact that I used it often and was disappointed if ever it wasn't available. I was excited for the new adventure and to have a job closer to home. Yet, like any new employee, I was also a little bit nervous. Now, nearly 25 years later, I am preparing to walk out that same door for the last time as an employee of the cooperative.

I've learned a lot and had a lot of fun in those 25 years. One thing I learned was that electricity can be dangerous and needs to be respected. I have had the opportunity to bring that message to elementary students over the years with the help of Basin Electric and East River Electric. Jointly, we would teach the students how electricity is generated, had fun learning about static electricity using the Van de Graff generator, and taught them about electrical safety. It was always a joy to watch the young ones as they soaked up the information we shared.

Many of my favorite memories involve interactions with the members. I have enjoyed meeting members at various member events, including the Christmas Open House, member meetings, the Family-a-Fair night, and of course our annual meeting. It was always fun traveling with members on the Basin tour, East River tour, and any other tour I had the

opportunity to plan. Anyone who traveled with me most likely remembers the "fabulous prizes" that were handed out. There were some awesome prizes given away and many of you were lucky enough to be the recipient of those prizes. Don't worry if you missed out on receiving a fabulous prize. If you come to the annual meeting on March 30 at the Redwood Area Community Center, you might get one more chance to receive a fabulous prize.

I love my job at Renville-Sibley and I am truly thankful for the many opportunities that came my way. I have so many great memories, too many to share in this article. My co-workers are great and a team that will take good care of the membership in the years to come. Your directors truly care for and are looking out for the best interests of the cooperative in this ever-changing energy environment.

Just like when I walked through these doors 25 years ago, I am excited for my new adventure and a little nervous about leaving the job I enjoy. I look forward to slowing down and taking the time to do the things I enjoy. My plans are to spend more time with my family. I am hoping to get more grandma time with my precious grandchildren and the other special children in my life. I also enjoy spending time in my flower garden and hope to learn more about gardening as I take a class to become a Master Gardner. Wish me luck! I haven't had to study or take a test in a long time.

I am a member of Renville-Sibley and hope to see you at some member events in the future. Take care, my friends.



Lenae Wordes
Communications
Manager



This is a picture of the group of members on my very first Basin Electric tour back in 1998.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

RENVILLE-SIBLEY CO-OP POWER

(USPS 019-074)

Board of Directors

Roger Manthei – Chair
Wayland Zaske – Vice Chair
Alan Neyers – Secretary/Treasurer
Gary Eekhoff
Matt Haubrich
Whitey Hinderman
Gary Peterson
Kylie Rieke
Helen Ruebel

Renville-Sibley Employees

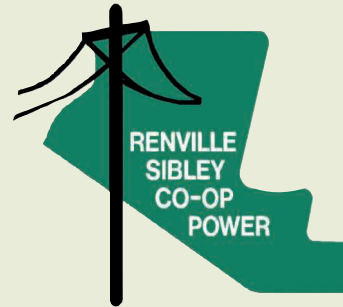
Gene Allex – Line Superintendent
Brian Athmann – Journeyman Lineman
Shawn Beckler – Crew Chief
Mike Benson – Journeyman Lineman
Brad Braulick – Crew Chief
Nick Bruns – Technology Manager
Anthony Carruth – Journeyman Lineman
Amy Ervin – Member and Board Services Representative
Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman
Cindy Mertens – Administrative Services Manager
DeeAnne Norris – CEO
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman
Kathy Ridl – Office Assistant
Shane Suess – PT Janitor
Lenae Wordes – Communications Manager

RENVILLE-SIBLEY COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association, 103 Oak Street, Danube, MN, 56230 for its members. Electric cooperative members devote 75 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$9 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Danube Post Office, Danube, MN 56230 and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Renville-Sibley Cooperative Connections, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230; Telephone (320) 826-2593; Toll Free 1-800-826-2593; Fax (320) 826-2679.

Web site: www.rscpa.coop

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ANNUAL MEETING



Renville-Sibley's 85th Annual Meeting will be held on March 30 at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls. More annual meeting information will be provided in upcoming newsletters.

Member informational meetings to be held in February

Renville-Sibley will be hosting our annual member informational meetings throughout the service area on February 11, February 14, and February 16. More information about the meeting dates will be published in the February issue of Cooperative Connections.

Energy audits

Renville-Sibley offers energy audits to all members. The audit includes a walk-through of your home, taking pictures with an infrared camera of any areas where cold air might be entering your home, along with a review of the energy consumption in your home. The cost of this audit is \$150. If the member makes

improvements recommended in the follow-up report and submits invoices showing that \$150 or more was spent on these improvements, the charge will be refunded. Please contact the office at 800-826-2593 for more information or if you are interested in having an energy audit of your home.

Tips to use your electric blanket wisely

Heating pads and electric blankets cause around 500 fires throughout the U.S. each year. Almost all of these fires involve electric blankets more than 10 years old.

Learn how to stay safe and injury-free.

- Heating appliances should never be left unattended or used while sleeping.
- Do not plug electric blankets into an extension cord or power strip, as they could overheat and cause a fire.
- Look for dark, charred, or frayed spots or electrical cords that are cracked or frayed. Replace any worn or old heating pads or electric blankets.
- Never fold electric blankets when in use. Folded or tucked-in electric blankets could overheat and cause a fire.
- When purchasing electronics, including electric blankets, be sure to only purchase from reputable retailers. Purchase devices that have been approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Do not allow anything to rest on top of a heating pad or electric blanket when it is in use. It may cause the device to overheat.
- There are two types of personal heating appliances: electric blankets and heating pads that are placed directly on the mattress. They are not meant to be used interchangeably or at the same time.

Gums wins Connections annual recipe contest

Lily Gums of Clear Lake has been selected winner of the annual *Cooperative Connections* member recipe contest.

Gums submitted a beverage recipe she calls "Swamp Water" that was published in the April 2022 issue of the magazine. She received a \$25 gift card for her submission. Congratulations, Lily!

She is a member of H-D Electric Cooperative based in Clear Lake.

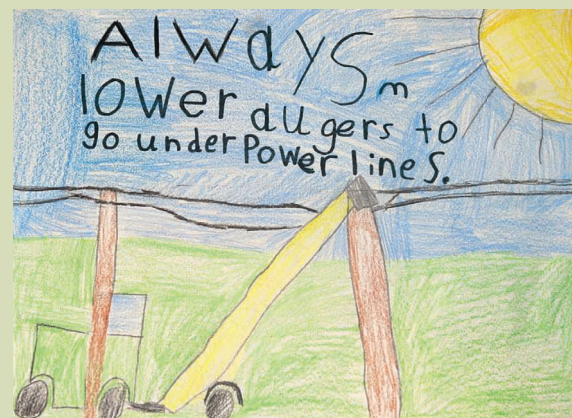


CO-OP LEADERS SERVE THEIR MEMBERS AND CONSTITUENTS



Ryan Maher is both a state senator and a board member at Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative in Timber Lake. He is one of three cooperative leaders who play unique roles in serving their co-op consumers while also serving their constituents as state lawmakers during the legislative session in Pierre.

To view the comments and insights of these lawmakers and learn more about how electric cooperatives work to improve our communities, visit Cooperative Connections Plus by scanning the QR code at right.



Be safe around power lines

Weston Kling

Weston Kling, age 7, urges equipment operators to always lower augers to accommodate for overhead power lines. Weston is the son of Tyler and Alexis Kling of Rapid City. They are members of West River Electric based in Wall.

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.

SUPER SOUPS

VEGGIE CHEESE SOUP

Ingredients:

1/3 c. shredded carrots
1/3 c. chopped celery
3/4 c. broccoli flowerettes (fresh or frozen)
2 tbsp. diced onion
1/4 c. butter or margarine
6 tbsp. flour
2 c. chicken broth
2 c. milk
2 c. Velveeta cheese, cubed

METHOD

Cook carrots, celery and broccoli in 1 cup water until tender crisp. Saute onions in butter. Add flour to blend. Add milk and stir to make white sauce then add cheese and stir until melted. Add chicken broth and vegetables in remaining water. Blend until smooth.

Nancy Stenson, Fort Pierre

CHEESEBURGER SOUP

Ingredients:

2 lbs. ground beef or ground chuck
2 carrots, chopped
1/2 med. onion chopped
1/2 stalk celery, chopped
5 med. peeled potatoes, chopped
4 c. turkey or chicken broth
3 c. half and half
1 tsp. poultry seasoning
2 tsp. garlic powder
1 lb. Velveeta cheese, chunked
2 tbsp. butter
salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Brown ground meat in large pot. Drain and return to pot. Add butter, onion, carrots, celery and potatoes. Cook for 5 minutes. Add broth, poultry seasoning, garlic powder and continue cooking until vegetables are tender. Add half and half and Velveeta cheese and continue heating until cheese has melted. Salt and pepper to taste.

Kathleen Meier, Firesteel

CHICKEN FAJITA SOUP

Ingredients:

1 tbsp. oil
1 med. green bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
1 med. red bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
1 sm. onion, finely chopped
3 tbsp. tomato paste
1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 pkg. McCormick® Organics Fajita Seasoning Mix
3 c. chicken stock
1 can (14.5 ounces) petite diced tomatoes, drained
1 c. frozen corn
1 c. tortilla strips

METHOD

Heat oil in large saucepan or Dutch oven on medium-high heat. Add peppers and onion; cook and stir 2 minutes. Add tomato paste; cook and stir 2 minutes. Stir in chicken, Seasoning Mix, stock, tomatoes and corn. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer 20 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Ladle soup into bowls. Sprinkle with tortilla strips. Serve with desired toppings.

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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Are you interested in a new adventure?

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is beginning to plan for the 85th Annual meeting of the membership that will be held on March 30, 2023 at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls, Minnesota. Three (3) directors will be elected during that time, each for a 3-year term.

The First District, consisting of the townships of Cornish, Severance and Moltke in Sibley County; the townships of Ridgely and West Newton in Nicollet County; and the townships of Cairo, Wellington, Martinsburg, Camp, Bandon and Palmyra in Renville County is represented by Alan Neyers, Whitey Hinderman and Kylie Rieke. Kylie Rieke's term will expire in 2023.

The Second District, consisting of the townships of Honner and Delhi in Redwood County; and the townships of Beaver Falls, Flora, Henryville, Birch Cooley, Norfolk, Melville, Bird Island and Kingman in Renville County is represented by Helen Ruebel, Wayland Zaske and Matt Haubrich. Matt Haubrich's term will expire in 2023.

The Third District, consisting of the townships of Roseland and Holland in Kandiyohi County; Rheiderland in Chippewa County the townships of Troy, Winfield, Emmet, Crooks, Sacred Heart, Hawk Creek, Ericson and Wang in Renville County is represented by Gary Eekhoff, Gary Peterson and Roger Manthei. Roger Manthei's term will expire in 2023.

As stated in the Renville-Sibley by-laws, the following is the Qualifications and Tenure for the position of Director:

Each director shall be a member of the Cooperative and shall be elected by the members within their respective district at the annual meeting of the members for a term of three years. No member shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who is not a bona fide resident in the area served by the Cooperative, or who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or space heating/cooling appliances, fixtures, or supplies to the members. When a membership is held jointly by two or more persons, including husband and wife, only one of such joint tenants may be elected a director, provided, however, that neither one shall be eligible to become a director, unless all shall meet the qualifications herein set forth.

Director qualifications required for service to the cooperative shall include:

- A. Must be an individual and must be at least 18 years of age.
- B. Must be competent and able to execute

a contract.

- C. Must not have been convicted of a felony or gross misdemeanor during the preceding 5 years prior to becoming a director for the Cooperative or during the period while serving as a director.
- D. Must have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- E. Must make a reasonable effort to become and remain knowledgeable about special issues regarding electric cooperatives by attending training, workshops and seminars.
- F. Must attend at least three-fourths (3/4) of all monthly scheduled board meetings during any twelve (12) month period.

Upon becoming a candidate for and/or to remain a Director, an individual must complete an annual conflict of interest disclosure form, approved by the Board of Directors. All Directors and/or Director candidates must comply with or meet the following conflict of interest qualifications:

- A. Shall not be a close relative of an existing Director, employee, agent or representative of the Cooperative other than an existing Director who will cease being a Director upon the candidate assuming office;
- B. Within 5 years immediately prior to becoming a Director, shall not have been a Cooperative Officer, employee, agent or representative of the Cooperative or any subsidiary or affiliated company;
- C. Shall not be employed by, materially affiliated with, nor share a material financial interest with any current Director;
- D. Shall not be engaged in any business, nor employed by, nor materially affiliated with, nor have a material financial interest in any individual or entity that:
 - 1. Is regularly, directly, and substantially competing with the Cooperative or any other entity that the Cooperative controls or in which the Cooperative owns a majority interest (Cooperative Subsidiary).
 - 2. Is regularly selling goods and services to the Cooperative or the Cooperative Subsidiary.
 - 3. Possesses a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or the Cooperative subsidiary.
- E. A former Director is ineligible for employment by the Cooperative for 5 years following the end of the tenure as a Director.

As a Director, the member agrees to:

- Abide by, promote and uphold the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws, both of which can be found on our

website, and Policies of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.

- Attend regular and special Board meetings of the Cooperative.
- Attend, when appointed, committee meetings of the Cooperative.

If anyone should decide to seek candidacy for the board of directors, there are many rewards to be enjoyed when elected. A director has the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership quality and increase their knowledge within the cooperative business environment and the electric industry. As a director, this person could play a significant role in the future development of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.

A director also has a very important responsibility which is to uphold and abide by the bylaws of the cooperative. Directors are to act as the trustees for the assets of the cooperative and are assigned the duties of formulating, approving and reviewing the policies that provide guidelines for the cooperative.

The board is responsible for sending representatives to the affiliated association meetings that often include voting requirements. They include East River Electric Power Cooperative, Minnesota Rural Electric Association, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, National Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, CoBank, Cooperative Network and the National Rural Electric Association.

Directors attend seminars and meetings of several organizations to learn about the industry. Directors are asked to lobby and remain informed on legislative issues that could impact this industry and/or the cooperative way of doing business. The Board meets monthly and reviews financial reports, work plans, annual audits, planning documents and evaluates the cooperative operations while approving budgets and purchases.

Most of all, a director should be available to visit with their constituents and have a genuine spirit of helping others at all times.

Board meetings are typically held on the fourth Tuesday of every month, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in December, January and February and beginning at 8:00 a.m. the rest of the year. Board meetings will be held in person or via Zoom. The estimated time needed to be committed annually is approximately 30 days which includes monthly meetings and committee assignments. Directors are compensated per diem for their time as well as all personal expenses.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate for the Renville-Sibley Board of Directors, contact the Renville-Sibley office at 800-826-2593 before January 3rd for further information.

New facility update: Check out the timeline video!

Final installation of the roofing material started in early November and progression was dependent on the weather conditions. Framing on both the East and North vestibules began mid-month November with the gas service also being installed at the facility.

On the interior, all underground plumbing and electrical are nearly completed, with the sand being fine-graded for the placement of under-

slab insulation. In-floor heat tubing along with trench drains was installed in mid-November with the plans of the floors being poured at the start of December. 756500

To watch the outside activity at the new facility, check out the video on our website: <https://rscpa.coop/news/renville-sibley-new-facility>

When you watch this video, it will seem like everything happened so fast

right away then nothing happened for a bit. Then, when the walls and roof went up, there was a lot of activity on site. Now that the walls and roof are installed, the contractors are working inside the building so it will again appear as if nothing is happening at the site.

However, there is a lot of activity going on this winter to prepare for our move into the building in 2023.

Scholarships to be awarded

Renville-Sibley Cooperative will offer \$5,000 in scholarship money to students in this region. The scholarships are for the 2023-24 school year.

Renville-Sibley is allocated a \$1,000 scholarship from Basin Electric to be awarded at the discretion of the cooperative. Another \$1,000 scholarship is from Renville-Sibley.

A committee of Renville-Sibley Board members, as well as an employee of the cooperative, will select the recipients of the \$1,000 Basin Scholarship and the \$1,000 Renville-Sibley Scholarship. These scholarships will be awarded based on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and overall GPA, work experiences, participation in school and community activities, the personal statement of career goals and the written recommendation by a third party. Additional consideration will be given to applicants interested in a position related to the electric industry for the Renville-Sibley scholarship.

The remaining four \$1,000 scholarships are distributed from uncashed capital credit checks and are awarded by a random drawing at the annual meeting from the remaining completed applications.

All scholarship applicants must be U.S. citizens and a dependent of a member of Renville-Sibley Cooperative. They must be a high school senior who plans to enroll as a full-time student in an undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school. Applications will be accepted until Feb. 23, 2023. Winners will be announced to the public at the Cooperative's Annual Meeting on March 30, 2023.

Renville-Sibley participates with other Minnesota electric co-ops in sponsoring the continuation of the Jay York Scholarship. He was a Lake Wilson farmer who dedicated his life to the rural electric program and education. He was the first Minnesotan to serve as president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Scholarships are available each year from this program and are selected by random drawing. Each participating cooperative may submit one candidate's name. The amount is determined based on the number of cooperatives that participate.

Only one completed application is required for an applicant to be considered a candidate for any of these scholarships. Incomplete applications will be excluded. For more information and an application form, contact Renville-Sibley at 800-826-2593 or 826-2593. Applications are available at our website www.rscpa.coop.

Scholar of the Month



Renville-Sibley Co-op Power, your local Touchstone Energy Cooperative, congratulates Katrina Baumgartner on being selected as the November Scholar of the Month. Katrina is a senior at BOLD High School. She was nominated because she serves as a great role model to her peers demonstrating her dependability and leadership whether that be in the classroom, the school choir or the dance team. She is also taking college classes and works within her community. Renville-Sibley Co-op Power salutes Katrina Baumgartner as the November Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Month.

ICE FISHING IN MOBRIDGE



The annual Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament attracts more than 1,000 avid cold-weather anglers. *Photo by Mobridge Outdoors*

Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament offers fun and friendly competition

Billy Gibson

editor@sdrea.coop

Last fall, the world of competitive walleye fishing was shaken with a startling saga of deception and skulduggery worthy of a Tom Clancy novel.

Social media lit up showing the dramatic moment a tournament director in Ohio shouted at the top of his lungs with horror and disgust: “We got weights in fish! We got weights in fish!”

Suspicion had long surrounded a pair of locals who ultimately got nabbed stuffing lead weights down the gullets of their walleye. After the two sparked skepticism with a catch of nearly 36 lbs. - one-third heavier than the runners-up - the director gutted the fish right in front of the entire field of wary competitors and held aloft several shiny orbs the size of steel ping-pong balls.

The viral video received more than 10 million views as cameras captured the chaotic scene with one of the accused hanging his head in shame (his partner had slithered away to his truck) while fellow competitors cursed and threatened to inflict bodily harm upon the sly anglers who were later indicted on four felony counts.

Vinson Dargatz is pretty sure nothing close to that degree of high drama will be replicated at the 22nd Annual Mobridge Walleye Ice Fishing Tournament set for Jan. 14. Based on his experience participating in the event over the past 12 years, this competition is more fisherman-friendly and the atmosphere is much more focused on fun.

Dargatz, an apprentice electrician at Lake Region Electric based in Webster, has continued to make the four-hour trip from his home to Mobridge mostly

because of the fellowship and the relaxed, laid-back vibe of the festivities.

He typically gets together with his two brothers and three cousins for the tournament that he describes as a “yearly ritual.”



Vinson Dargatz is shown with one of his prize catches.

“We always have a lot of fun” he said. “We used to just bring a portable shack out on the ice and sit on some buckets while we fished. But now that we’ve gotten older, softer and a little smarter, we have an Ice Castle and we fish and hang out and grill some burgers.”

Number of two-person
fishing teams competing

551

in last year's Mobridge
Ice Fishing Tournament

Dargatz confesses that the purchase of the 8 x 16-foot Ice Castle was actually his wife's idea. When it's time for an outdoor fishing excursion, the entire family with two boys and a girl always likes to come along. And mom insists on having adequate accommodations.

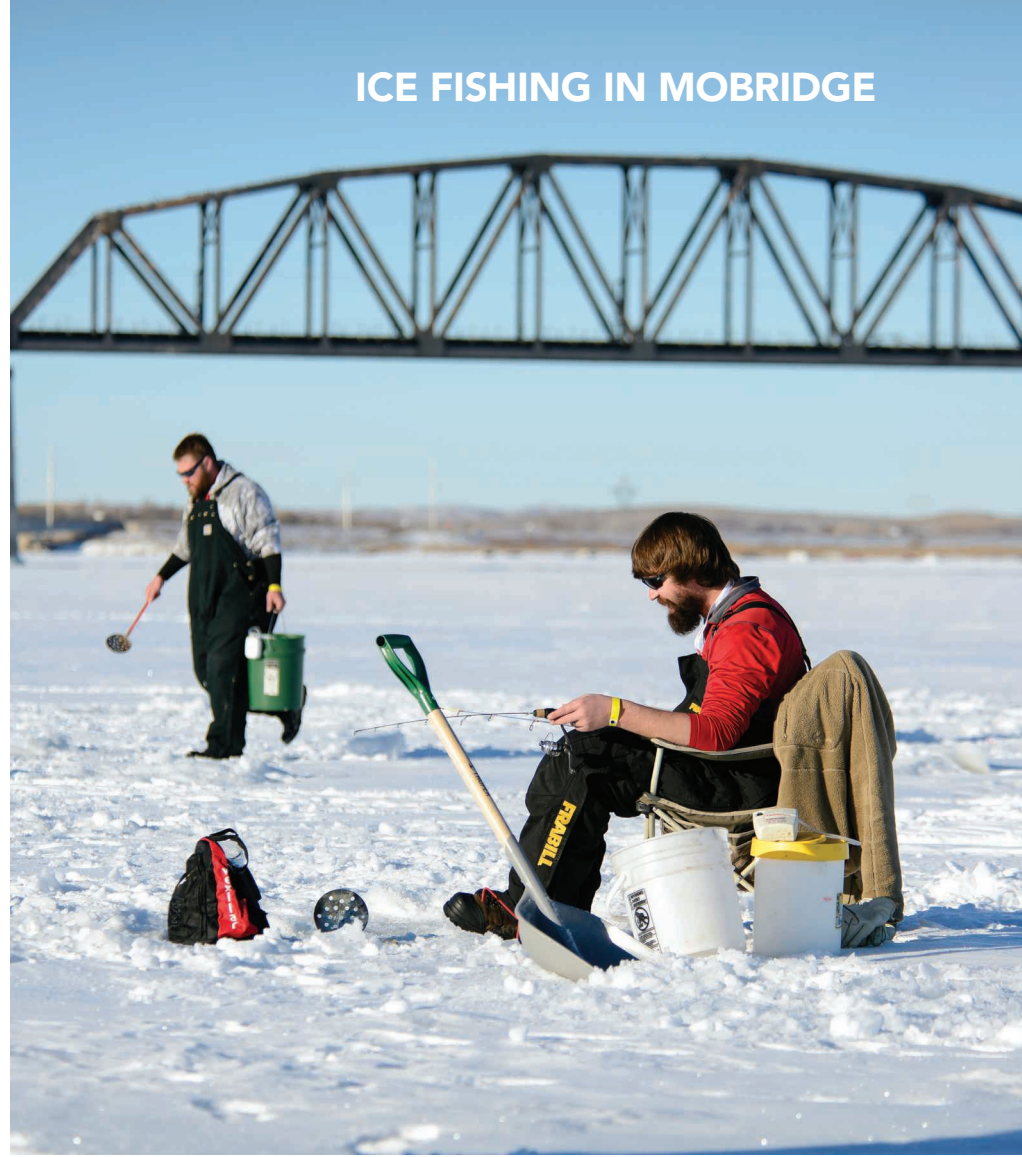
But Dargatz said when it comes to the annual winter escapes to Mobridge with the fellas, the family has to find something else to do. Besides, the town already doubles in size during tournament weekend and if every angler brought hangers-on in tow, Mobridge might expand to the size of Sioux Falls.

FILLED TO CAPACITY

Lately, the walleye population is standing less of a chance for survival against the increasing number of competitors testing their luck and skill in the annual tournament. The field has ballooned to the point of being capped at 551 two-person teams with fishermen swarming in from 16 different states.

Only so many humans can be stuffed into the town's expo center where the group events are held.

All of these developments have bewildered Jeff Jackson, one of the tournament's founders and owner of the Wrangler Inn in Mobridge. He recalls more than two decades ago sitting around the table with a group of town leaders who were trying to figure out a way to attract visitors to the area and capitalize on all the outdoor adventure the Missouri



The Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament draws eager competitors from 16 different states.

Photo by Travel South Dakota

River and Lake Oahe have to offer.

In the first year, 50 eager contenders were lured to the event by the opportunity to claim the super grand prize of a Mr. Heater. These days, the prize list represents more than \$225,000 in assorted items such as Ice Castles, four-wheelers, a Polaris Ranger, clam shacks, \$8,000 worth of outdoor gear from Scheel's and Runnings, and more.

Anglers can keep their spot in the field if they register early in mid-July, otherwise their spot will be thrown into a lottery. Three guaranteed positions are drawn each year for those who participate in the town's summer fishing tournament, the Annual Denny Palmer Memorial Walleye Classic. Three spots are auctioned off on Ebay, which typically fetch up to \$4,000 apiece, while a

final spot is raffled off.

Last year's winners were Travis Bergstrom and Tate Merchant, who registered four fish weighing a total of 15.8 lbs. including one lunker that tipped the scales at 9.33 lbs. Jason Converse and Josh Spilde finished second with five fish weighing in at 13.4 lbs.

Dargatz already has the July 2023 registration date on his calendar and reminder notifications set to make sure he doesn't miss out. He's anticipating another adventurous outing in this year's tourney.

"I think it's great for the town to have so many people visiting and spending money. It's pretty wild that a small town can pull something like that together. They run it like a well-oiled machine and make sure everyone has a good time."

OFFICE HOURS TO CHANGE

Beginning in January 2023, Renville-Sibley's office employees will shift to a four-day work week.

Office hours will be Monday – Thursday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. The office will be CLOSED on Fridays.

Cooperative Response Center (CRC) answers all after-hours calls for Renville-Sibley.

Anytime our office is closed on evenings, weekends, holidays, and now on Fridays, if there is an issue or concern that needs timely action, CRC reaches out directly to managers and employees who are on call.

Members unable to stop in during the new business hours are welcome to call the office at 800-826-2593 to schedule an appointment on a Friday.

The Renville-Sibley Board of Directors and employees are committed to providing excellent service to our members.

We welcome your feedback on the change in business hours or any other topic you would like to discuss.

Comparative Report

	Current YTD through October 31, 2022	One Year Ago YTD through October 31, 2021	10 Years Ago YTD through October 31, 2012
average # of Consumers	1,889	1,882	1,922
kWhs purchased	141,401,196	148,779,636	122,019,615
Cost of purchased power	\$8,080,649.10	\$9,678,672.87	\$6,106,675.38

FREE Want Ad Service

Members can submit ads for the following categories: Giveaway, For Sale, For Rent, and Wanted. Ads should be or are limited to no more than 15 words and must be received by the first of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter. Renville-Sibley reserves the right to edit content or exclude ads due to space restrictions. Ads will be run one time only unless resubmitted. Please complete the following information and mail it to the Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Ad to be placed (limit of 15 words per ad)

Type of ad: ☐ Giveaway ☐ For Sale ☐ For Rent ☐ Wanted

MISSION STATEMENT

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association will provide efficient, reliable electric energy and services to enhance the quality of rural living.

OUTAGE REPORT

Affecting 10 members or more

Date: 10/7/22

Time off: 12:44 a.m.

Time on: 2:06 a.m.

Substation: Emmet

Cause: Material or Equipment Fault/Failure

Date: 10/18/22

Time off: 8:55 a.m.

Time on: 9:19 a.m.

Substation: Wellington

Cause: Scheduled

Date: 10/20/22

Time off: 9:00 a.m.

Time on: 11:25 a.m.

Substation: Cairo, Wellington

Cause: Scheduled

Date: 10/31/22

Time off: 9:10 a.m.

Time on: 9:26 a.m.

Substation: Emmet

Cause: Scheduled

Please contact Renville-Sibley's office for more details about these power outages.

November board meeting highlights

The November board meeting was held on Tuesday, Nov. 22 at 8 am. All board members were present except Whitey Hinderman. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Norris, Gene Alex, Lenae Wordes, Cindy Mertens, and Amy Ervin.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the Oct. 25 board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of October
- Basin Load Forecast Resolution
- Resolution Authorizing Amendment of the Retirement Security Plan
- Resolution Authorizing Amendment of the Safe Harbor 401(K) Provisions Under the NRECA 401(K) Pension Plan
- Safety report for November
- Member Informational Meetings
- Nominating Committee Appointments
- Policy 108 – Open Board Meetings - revised
- Policy 420 – Payment Arrangements for Military Service Personnel – revised
- Policy 511 – Loans to Directors and Employees – remove
- Policy 518 – Computer Purchasing Program for Employees and Directors

- remove
- MREA Annual Certification of Voting Delegates
- Mid-West Electric Annual Meeting Voting Delegate Change
- NRECA Annual Meeting Voting Delegate

The board reviewed:

- Total new members
- 2023 Market Rate
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:
 - High-level Statement of Operations review – YTD through October (unaudited)
 - Organization activities
 - East River update
 - Basin Electric update
 - NRECA update
 - MREA update
 - Linecrew work in progress, equipment update, and outage update
 - Accounts receivable
 - New facility update

Please contact the Renville-Sibley office if you would like more information regarding the board meeting.

NOTICE:

The December board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 20 at 9 am.
The January board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 24 at 9 a.m.

*Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year*



Renville-Sibley's office will be closed on the following days:

- Monday, Dec. 26, in observance of Christmas Day
- Friday, Dec. 30 & Monday, Jan. 2, in observance of New Year's Day

WHERE'S THE NUMBER?

Last month Tonia Ridler did not find her member number in the newsletter. The credit will increase to a value of \$30. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by the 3rd of January, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

OPERATION ROUND UP MEETING SET

The next meeting of the Operation Round Up Board of Trustees will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2023, at 3 p.m. The deadline for applications is Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2023. Applications for donations can be found at <https://rscpa.coop/operation-round>.

ORU THANK YOU

Thank you for your donation and support to the 2023 After-Prom. We appreciate your generosity.

BOLD Prom Fundraising Committee

WINTER OUTDOOR FUN

The chill of winter doesn't keep outdoors enthusiasts from finding adventure at Farm Island Recreation Area. *Photos by Travel South Dakota*

Winter adventure-seekers find wonder in the chilly outdoors

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Mental health counselors have discovered that seasonal affective disorder can be much more than just a harmless case of the blahs - it's a real condition that afflicts millions of people when the daylight diminishes and the temps turn colder.

They also agree that one way to defend against the winter doldrums is to get out of the house, embrace the crisp invigorating air and enjoy all the season has to offer.

It doesn't take much time or effort to create a list of fun things to do to get the blood pumping and the spirit soaring. Stepping away from a stuffy den and going outside to build a snowman, hike a nature trail, roast marshmallows over a bonfire and engage in other activities with family and friends can help bring back some

mental and emotional balance.

Nick Harrington of South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks said his department is eager to accommodate anyone looking to extract some fun from the chill of winter.

Harrington notes that many of the state's 50-plus public camping and recreation areas are open for attendance during the long winter months, although some facilities are closed in an effort to protect delicate nesting habitats

for eagles and other species of wildlife.

Some comfort stations may close down during winter but the state has modern lodges available with amenities such as heaters and running water, including cabins, suites and group lodges for cold-weather outdoor vacationing.

Harrington said that while many vacationers from far and wide flock to South Dakota in the summertime, the state boasts more than 1,500 miles of nature trails for cold-weather adventurers to discover and is one



Fat-tire biking in Spearfish Canyon

8 WINTER WONDERLANDS FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

- ❄ Wind Cave National Park, Hot Springs
- ❄ Snake Creek Recreation Area, Platte
- ❄ Palisades State Park, Garretson
- ❄ Custer State Park Spur, Custer
- ❄ Randall Creek SRA, Pickstown
- ❄ Pelican Lake, Pelican Township
- ❄ Farm Island SRA, Pierre
- ❄ Oakwood Lakes State Park, Bruce



Time spent outdoors during the winter can be beneficial to mental and physical well-being.

of the nation's top attractions for snowmobiling, snowshoeing, hiking, fat-tire biking and many other off-season outdoor adventures.

"Some people just enjoy getting out in the cold weather. They like the changing of the seasons we get in our region and they're always looking for new opportunities to explore what we have to offer without a lot of crowds," Harrington said. "It's already a beautiful state, but winter really changes the look of the landscape and is a big draw for many people looking for outdoor fun."

World-renowned summertime attractions such as the iconic Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse destinations take on an entirely different appeal during the snowy season. The Badlands geological formations, Ponderosa pine forests, open prairies, secluded lakes and

scenic waterways become even more alluring for landscape photographers, bird-watchers, hikers and wildlife enthusiasts when set against a charming and aesthetically pleasing wintry backdrop.

One of the most highly-attended state park destinations during both the summer and winter is Custer State Park with its 71,000 acres of trails, spectacular vistas and pristine lakes. The site is open year-round and during winter offers a wide array of things to see and do.

But there is still lots to explore across the state, including the more centrally situated Farm Island Recreation Area located four miles east of Pierre. Considered one of the park system's best-kept secrets, Farm Island sits nestled along the banks of Lake Sharpe

and the Missouri River and welcomes many winter guests who enjoy majestic glowing sunsets, ice fishing, eight miles of hiking trails, cross-country skiing and exploring the perfect natural habitat for birdwatching. There's also RV, primitive and cabin camping opportunities available.

For more ideas on how to plan trip and shake off the winter blues, check out this handy guide: www.travelsouthdakota.com/winter.

And after deciding on your winter vacation plans, don't forget to pack the following along with the rest of your cold-weather gear:

- Wool base layer
- Fleece mid-layer
- Windproof outer layer
- Waterproof boots
- Warm hat, scarf, gloves and socks.

CO-OPS IN THE CLASSROOM



Renville-Sibley lineman Brayden Fischer shows BOLD students the personal protective equipment he uses while working on the lines.

'Co-ops In the Classroom' teaches electricity education at area schools

By Lenae Wordes

On Tuesday morning, Nov. 15, I joined Jennifer Gross from East River Electric to bring the Co-ops in the Classroom program to the fourth grade students at GFW. Jennifer went on to visit the fourth graders at Cedar Mountain school that afternoon.

Wednesday, Nov. 16, our lineman Brayden Fischer joined Jennifer for the presentation to fourth graders at BOLD school. This program helps students recognize where electricity comes from and ways to conserve electricity. The most important lesson, though, is to teach the students to respect and be safe around electricity. Jennifer explained the relationship between East River Electric and Renville-Sibley Co-op Power.

The hour-long presentation began with a discussion on static electricity,

protons, neutrons, and most importantly electrons. We also discussed what materials are conductors and insulators of electricity. The best way to learn about static electricity is by using the Van de Graaff generator. This is always electrifying! Most students think it is fun to get their hair to stand up and shock a fellow student. After this shocking experience, we reminded the students that this is static electricity, and this type of electricity does not power our daily electrical needs.

We asked the students how the power they use is generated. With a little help, most classrooms could name the following major energy sources: hydro, wind, solar, natural gas, nuclear, and coal. The students had a chance to generate power by pedaling a bicycle that powered a display board with incandescent, CFL and LED light bulbs.

The point of this experiment was for students to understand that incandescent and CFL light bulbs take more electricity, which require power plants to make more energy. LED light bulbs were the most energy efficient light bulbs in our demonstration. This led to the discussion of conserving electricity.

The hour-long presentation began with a discussion on static electricity, protons, neutrons, and most importantly electrons.

By the end of the presentation, students had developed a new understanding and appreciation for electricity. I thank the schools for allowing us the opportunity to come into their classroom to talk about electricity.

Directors Approve Capital Credit Retirement

By Lenae Wordes

Capital credits can be confusing to new members and sometimes even the more seasoned members could use a refresher course. So let me explain how capital credits work.

First of all, Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is a member owned company. As a cooperative, our main goal is to provide an at-cost electric service, not to make a profit. Anyone who uses or purchases electric energy is a member. As a member, you invest in the efficient operation of your co-op. Unlike an investor-owned utility, we don't pay dividends or other amounts to shareholders who don't purchase electricity from us.

Generally, co-ops operate at cost, meaning they collect enough revenue to run and expand the business without over-charging members. At the end of each year, any excess revenue is allocated back to the membership in the form of capital credits. The allocation is based on the amount of electricity each member consumed during the year. Please see the article published in the September 2022 Cooperative Connections for more details on the 2021 margin that was allocated to the members.

When our board of directors determines it is financially feasible and prudent, and when we meet the financial requirements stated in our loan documents, we retire capital credits. At the October board meeting, the board of directors of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association approved the disbursement of \$400,000 retirement to be applied on the December statement. Checks will be issued to inactive members who have a capital credit balance in the years being retired. Roughly 1,500 members will receive a credit on their electric statement and approximately 530 inactive members will receive a check.

This retirement reflects the remaining 2000 and 65% of the 2001 allocation from East River Electric, the remaining 2002 allocation, and 73% of the 2003 allocation from Basin Electric. East River and Basin Electric are our Generation and Transmission Cooperatives (G&Ts). Renville-Sibley will retire approximately 12.6% of the 2021 allocation.

Below are some common capital credit questions. If you have further questions, please contact the office.

WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

An electric cooperative operates on an at-cost basis by annually "allocating" to each member, based upon the member's purchase of electricity, operating revenue remaining at the end of the year. Later, as financial condition permits, these allocated amounts - capital credits - are retired. Capital credits represent the most significant source of equity for

Renville-Sibley. Since a cooperative's members are also the people the co-op serves, capital credits reflect each member's ownership in, and contribution of capital to, the cooperative. This differs from dividends investor-owned utilities pay shareholders, who may or may not be customers of the utility.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

Member-owned, not-for-profit electric co-ops set rates to generate enough money to pay operating costs, make payments on loans, and provide an emergency reserve. At the end of each year, we subtract operating expenses from the operating revenue collected during the year. The balance is called an operating "margin."

HOW ARE MARGINS ALLOCATED?

Margins are allocated as capital credits based on their purchases from the cooperative - how much power the member used. Member purchases may also be called patronage.

DO INVESTOR-OWNED OR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES RETIRE CAPITAL CREDITS?

No. Within the electric industry, capital credits only exist at not-for-profit electric cooperatives owned by their members.

ARE CAPITAL CREDITS RETIRED EVERY YEAR?

Each year, the Board of Directors makes a decision on whether to retire capital credits based on the financial health of the cooperative. During some years, the co-op may experience high growth in the number of new accounts, or severe storms may result in the need to spend additional funds to repair lines. These and other events might increase costs and decrease member equity, causing the board to not retire capital credits. For this reason, Renville-Sibley's ability to retire capital credits reflects the cooperative's strength and financial stability.

DO I LOSE MY CAPITAL CREDITS IN THE YEARS THE CO-OP DECIDES NOT TO MAKE RETIREMENTS?

No. All capital credits allocated for every year members have been served are maintained until such time as the board retires them. Renville-Sibley has retired all capital credits through 1996.

WHAT YEARS WILL BE RETIRED THIS DECEMBER?

Renville-Sibley will be retiring the remaining 2000 and 65% of the 2001 allocation from East River Electric, the remaining 2002 allocation, and 73% of the 2003 allocation from Basin Electric and 12.6% of the 2021 Renville-Sibley allocation.

HOW MUCH WILL BE RETIRED IN TOTAL IN 2022?

About \$400,000 will be retired in December.

I DID NOT GET ELECTRIC SERVICE FROM RENVILLE-SIBLEY 2000, WILL I GET ANY RETIREMENT?

Maybe. Although you will not receive a retirement from 2000, you will receive a retirement if you purchased electric service in 2001, 2002, 2003 or 2021. This credit will be applied to the December electric statement.

HOW MUCH HAS RENVILLE-SIBLEY PAID IN TOTAL CAPITAL CREDITS RETIREMENTS SINCE IT BEGAN IN 1938?

Renville-Sibley will have paid just over \$14.6 million in capital credits retirements to current and former members by the end of this year.

HOW OFTEN DO MEMBERS RECEIVE CAPITAL CREDIT RETIREMENTS?

The Board of Directors makes a decision each year by November whether or not to retire capital credits. When the cooperative is strong enough financially and member equity levels high enough, the board directs staff to retire some portion of past years' capital credits.

HOW WILL THE RETIREMENT WORK?

Active members will receive a credit on their December electric statement. Inactive members will be mailed a check provided the amount is over \$5. Due to the expense involved in printing checks, the minimum retirement check that will be written will be \$5.

WHAT IF I HAVE MOVED?

If you move or no longer have electric service with Renville-Sibley, it is important that you inform the cooperative of your current address, so that future retirements can be properly mailed to you. If you purchased electricity during the years being retired, then you will receive a capital credit retirement, even if you move out of our service area. If we have your current address, we will send your retirement check by mail.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL GET RETIREMENTS?

Roughly 1,500 active members will have a credit applied to their account and about 530 inactive members will receive a check.

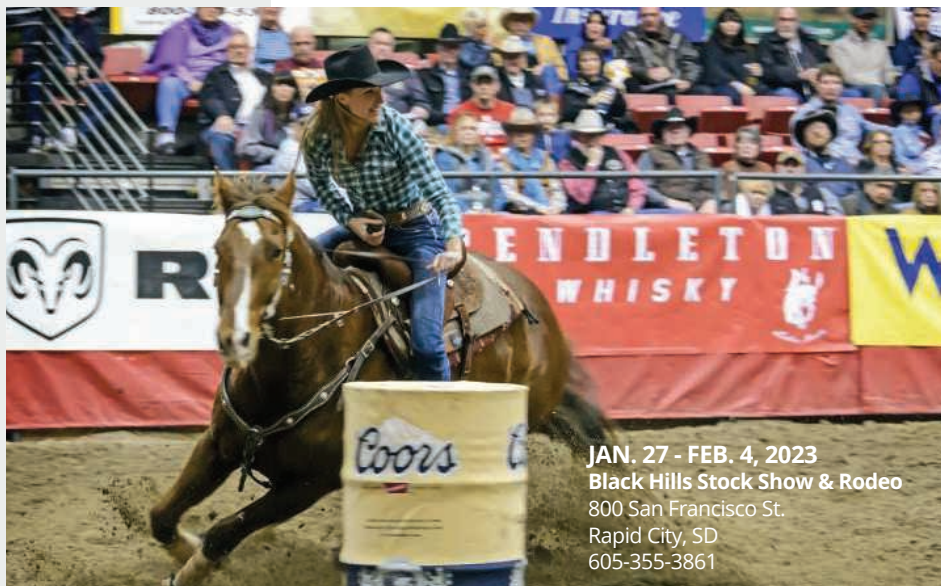
CAN I DONATE MY RETIREMENT BACK TO THE COOPERATIVE?

Yes. If you would like to donate your retirement back to the cooperative, please call our office at 800-826-2593 or email our Member and Board Services Representative, Amy Ervin, at aervin@rscpa.coop for instructions. All donated capital credit retirements will be designated to our scholarship fund and will be awarded at the next annual meeting to students in our local communities.

REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth in LaCroix Hall at the Black Hills Stock Show to win an electric snow blower!

Your Phone Number: _____
Your E-mail Address: _____



JAN. 27 - FEB. 4, 2023
Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo
800 San Francisco St.
Rapid City, SD
605-355-3861

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.

JAN. 1
American Legion Post 15
Pancake Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
South Dakota Military Heritage
Alliance Building
1600 W. Russell St.
Sioux Falls, SD

JAN. 13-14
ON YOUR FEET! THE MUSICAL
Show Dates:
Jan. 13, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 14, 2 p.m.
Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, SD

JAN. 14
Coats for Kids Bowling
Tournament
Registration Starts at 1 p.m.
\$80 for a four-person team
Meadowood Lanes
Rapid City, SD
605-393-2081

JAN. 14
Chinook Days
Winter Carnival
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Big Hill
Spearfish, SD

JAN. 20
Rapid Valley UMC
Soup Supper
4:30 p.m.-7 p.m.
Rapid City, SD

JAN. 21
Lakota Games on Ice
1 p.m.-4 p.m.
Mitchell Prehistoric Indian Village
Mitchell, SD

JAN. 27-28
Annual Deadwood Pro
Snocross Races
Jan. 27, 12:50 p.m.
Jan. 28, 8:25 a.m.
Days of '76 Rodeo Grounds
Deadwood, SD

JAN. 27 - FEB. 4
Annual Black Hills Stock
Show & Rodeo
Central States Fairgrounds and
The Monument
Tickets may be purchased
online and at the gate
Rapid City, SD
605-355-3861

JAN. 28
K9 Keg Pull
On-site registration
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Deadwood Street by
Outlaw Square
Deadwood, SD

FEB. 3-4
TOOTSIE
Show Dates:
Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 4, 2 p.m.
Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, SD

FEB. 10-11
Mardi Gras Weekend
Mardi Gras Events & Parade
sponsored by Deadwood
Chamber of Commerce
Main Street
Deadwood, SD

FEB. 11
Songs of Romance
7:30 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, SD

MAR. 4
Annual Ag Day
9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, SD

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