

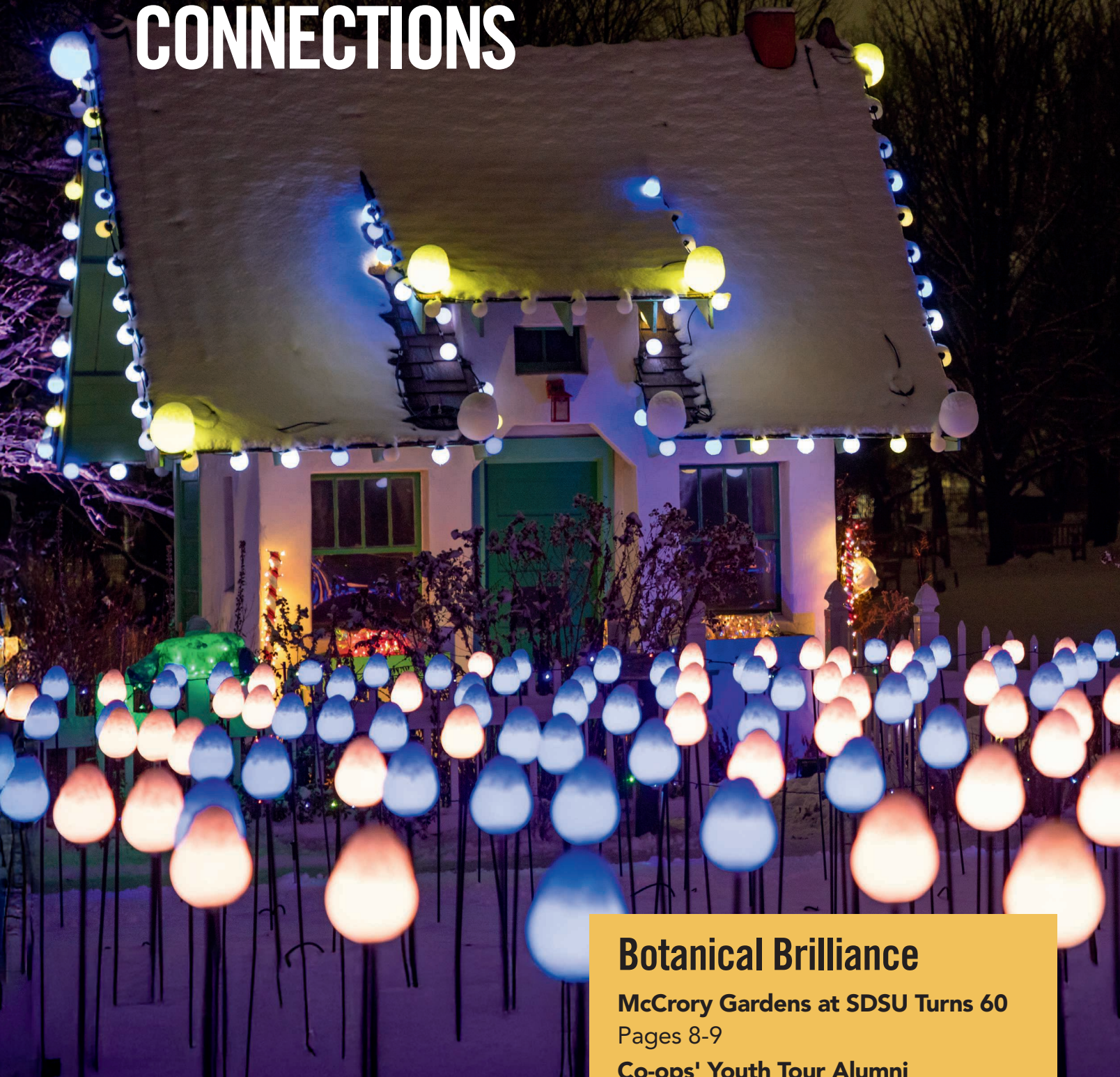


A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**RENVILLE-SIBLEY**  
**DECEMBER 2025 VOL. 26 NO. 8**

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## **Botanical Brilliance**

**McCrary Gardens at SDSU Turns 60**

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**Co-ops' Youth Tour Alumni**

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The annual Garden Glow celebration at SDSU's McCrary Gardens turns the space into a winter wonderland with festive lights and decorations.

*Photo by McCrary Gardens*



# Renville-Sibley Board of Directors Approve Capital Credit Retirement



**Amy Ervin**  
Executive Admin  
and HR

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

Did you know as a member of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association (RSCPA), you receive the perks of co-op membership? Renville-Sibley is a member-owned company, referred to as a Cooperative. As a cooperative, our main goal is to provide at-cost electric service. Anyone who uses or purchases electric energy is a member. As a member, you invest in the efficient operation of your co-op through your electric rates. Unlike an investor-owned utility, we don't pay dividends or other amounts to shareholders who don't purchase electricity from us.

Renville-Sibley pays all operating expenses throughout the year, and if any operating revenue is leftover, we allocate it as capital credits. When financial conditions permit, the cooperative's Board of Directors determine it is financially feasible and prudent, and when we meet the financial requirements stated in our loan documents, they will approve to pay out capital credits to the members. At the end of each year, any excess revenue is allocated back to the membership in the form of capital credits.

At the October board meeting, the Board of Directors of Renville-Sibley approved the disbursement of a \$250,000 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.

The allocation is based on the amount of electricity each member consumed during the year 2024 for the RSCPA portion of the

retirement and during the year 2004 for the East River and Basin Electric portions of the retirement. Please see the article published in the September 2025 *Cooperative Connections* newsletter for more details on the 2024 margin that was allocated to the members.

The December 2025 retirement includes retiring \$100,000 of the East River and \$100,000 of the Basin Electric capital credits from the 2004 allocation. East River and Basin Electric are our Generation and Transmission Cooperatives (G&Ts). Renville-Sibley will retire \$50,000 of the 2024 allocation. Please note that the value of your retirement from RSCPA is based on approximately 9% of your 2024 allocation, but the dollars will be retired from each member's oldest unretired allocation year(s).

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

### Common Capital Credits Questions:

#### 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 and operating revenue remaining at the end of the year. Later, as financial conditions permit, 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 any 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 to members 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 decides 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 requiring capital investments, 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.

#### How much will be retired in total in 2025?

Approximately \$250,000 will be retired in December.

#### I did not get electric service from Renville-Sibley in 2024, will I get any retirement?

Maybe. Although you will not receive a retirement from 2024, you may receive a retirement if you purchased electric service in 2004.

## I did not get electric service from Renville-Sibley in 2004, will I get any retirement?

Maybe. Although you will not receive a retirement from 2004, you may receive a retirement if you purchased electric service in 2024.

## How much has Renville-Sibley paid in total capital credits retirements since it began in 1938?

Renville-Sibley will have paid approximately \$15.5 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 decides 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 1,509 active members will have a credit applied to their account and about 606 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 [renville-sibley@rscpa.coop](mailto:renville-sibley@rscpa.coop) for instructions. All donated capital credit retirements will be designated to our scholarship fund. Scholarships are awarded each year at our annual meeting to students in our local communities.

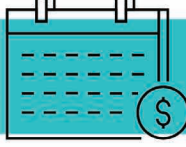


## HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK

Electric co-ops are not-for-profit and operate at cost. Capital credits are a financial benefit of co-op membership.



1. Members pay their electric bills, and we track their business with us each month.
2. The co-op pays operating expenses throughout the year and allocates any leftover operating revenue as capital credits.
3. When financial conditions permit, the co-op board votes to retire (pay) capital credits to the members.
4. We send members their share of capital credits as a bill credit or check.




## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### RENVILLE-SIBLEY CO-OP POWER

(USPS 019-074)

#### Board of Directors

Whitey Hinderman – Chair  
Roger Manthei – Vice Chair  
Vicky Firl – Secretary/Treasurer  
Jeff Boersma  
Gary Eekhoff  
Alan Neyers  
Gary Peterson  
Helen Ruebel  
Wayland Zaske

#### Renville-Sibley Employees

Gene Alex – 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 – Executive Admin and HR  
Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman  
Carren Frank – Cooperative Support Specialist  
DeeAnne Norris – CEO  
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman  
Marc Snyder – Cooperative Analyst  
Jill Woods – Member Services Professional

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Web site: [www.rscpa.coop](http://www.rscpa.coop)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# So, a Power Line Fell On Your Car...

Driving accidents can happen quickly and easily in the winter months with slick, inconspicuous coatings of black ice, reduced visibility and other weather-related safety hazards.

The important thing is that you know what to do if you find yourself in a collision with a utility pole – because what you don't know can seriously injure or kill you.

### If a power line falls on or near your vehicle and there is no fire...

Call 911 and remain in your vehicle until help arrives — this is where you are safest. Your vehicle may be insulating you from the electrical current. Once you leave the vehicle and place your foot on the ground, the electricity may take a path through your body and shock you.

Never go off looks; a downed power line may not be sparking or showing obvious signs of being live, but it may still be energized.

If someone attempts to assist you, warn them to stay back until the utility can de-energize the line.

### If a power line falls on or near your vehicle and there is a fire...

If your vehicle has caught fire, you must proceed with extreme caution. Again, even if a line isn't sparking, it may still be energized.

To make your escape, jump from your vehicle to the ground, making sure your body is not touching the ground and vehicle simultaneously. Making contact with both would make your body a direct conduit, and you would be electrocuted.

For that same reason, do not assist anyone else exiting the vehicle or accept help exiting the vehicle.

Once you're on the ground, keep your feet together and hop or shuffle away from the scene, at least 40 feet away. As you move, your goal is for there to not be a voltage difference between your feet. You do not want one foot off of the ground while the other foot is making contact with the ground.

Call 911 and warn others to stay away from the scene.

### If you come across downed power lines...

Stay no less than 40 feet away, as the ground can become energized. Never drive over downed power lines – not only do you risk electrocution and damage to your vehicle, but the added tension could pull down surrounding utility poles and create additional hazards.

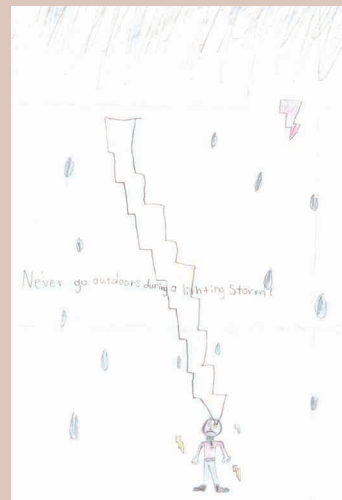
### If you're a first responder at the scene...

Always assume lines are energized. Contact the utility and wait for them to de-energize the lines and give you the all-clear.



Always assume a downed power line is energized. A downed power line may not be sparking or showing obvious signs of being live, but it may still be energized.

## "Never go outside during a lightning storm!"



### Josiah Krcil, Age 9

Josiah cautions readers on the dangers of going outside during a lightning storm. Great picture, Josiah! Josiah's parents are Andrew and Andrea Krcil from Dante, 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.



# Specialty SOUPS

## CHEESEBURGER VEGETABLE SOUP

### Ingredients:

1 lb. ground beef  
2 lbs. block Velveeta cheese  
(2) 12 oz. cans evaporated milk  
(3) 10.5 oz. cans cream of mushroom soup  
10.5 oz. can cream of celery soup  
1 can French style green beans  
1 can mixed vegetables  
1 can diced potatoes

### Method

Brown ground beef. Cut Velveeta into cubes. Put all ingredients into slow cooker. Cook on low six to eight hours, stirring halfway through or cook on high two hours, and then on low another two hours, stirring halfway through.

**Wendy Thorson**  
Northern Electric

## DUMPLING SOUP

### Ingredients:

1 tbsp. vegetable oil  
2 tsps. sesame oil  
1 cup carrots, shredded  
5 green onions, thinly sliced (whites and greens separated)  
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1/4 tsp. ground ginger  
1/4 cup white miso paste  
6 cups chicken vegetable broth, divided  
1 lb. frozen mini dumplings  
3 cups baby spinach  
3 tsps. soy sauce (plus more to serve)  
Hot sauce or chili oil to serve

### Method

In a large pot, heat the vegetable oil and sesame oil over medium heat. Add the carrots, green onion whites, garlic, and ginger. Cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables begin to soften, two to three minutes. In a small bowl, combine the miso paste with 1/2 cup broth, whisking until the miso is dissolved. Add the miso mixture and remaining broth to the pot and bring to a boil.

Add the dumplings and bring to a simmer. Heat until the dumplings are heated through, three to five minutes. Stir in the spinach, cooking until the greens are wilted, one to two minutes. Add the soy sauce and green onion greens.

Serve hot with hot sauce or chili oil, and extra soy sauce.

**Susan Forma**  
Union County Electric

## PHEASANT CHOWDER

### Ingredients:

2 pheasants (thighs and breasts: or only breasts if preferred)  
4 celery stalks, sliced  
1/2 lb. bacon strips, sliced  
1 large yellow onion, diced  
4 cups chicken broth  
4 medium size Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cubed  
3 cloves garlic, diced  
5 tsps. flour  
2 cups half-and-half  
1 cup parmesan cheese  
Salt and Pepper

### Method

Put cubed potatoes in a separate pot, cover with the chicken broth, and bring to a boil. Cook the potatoes until they are soft.

Slice the pheasant meat, across grain into 1/4 to 1/2 inch strips.

Cut bacon slices into small pieces and put in a Dutch oven on medium heat. Add diced celery and onion and cook until the bacon and celery are cooked through and onions are transparent. Add the garlic and pheasant. The meat should cook quickly because of the small sized pieces. Once meat is cooked, add the flour one tablespoon at a time while stirring the mixture, thoroughly coating the vegetables and meat.

Add the potatoes and broth from the separate pot. Once incorporated, stir in the half-and-half, then stir in the parmesan cheese. Salt and pepper to taste. This chowder is ready to eat once heated through, or you can let it simmer on low heat. Flavors should continue to meld.

**Nick Kvernevig**  
Lake Region 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.

## Holiday Open House



Mark your calendar! Renville-Sibley will be hosting our annual Holiday Open House on Thursday, December 4th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Those in attendance can register to win a \$50 energy credit to go towards their electric bill. While you are in town, be sure to stop over and visit Danube Upholstery and Minnwest Bank who will be having their open house that day as well!



## Holiday Closings

The Renville-Sibley office will be closed during the following holidays:

Thanksgiving – Nov. 27

Christmas – Dec. 25

New Year's Day – Jan. 1

## What To Do in Case of Power Outage

The weather can be challenging at times for our members as well as Renville-Sibley. While the cooperative hopes it will never happen, Mother Nature can cause damage to our power lines resulting in a power outage.

If you experience a power outage, please contact the office at 320-826-2593 or 800-826-2593. During business hours, your cooperative will do our best to answer as many calls as our phone system allows. If the number of calls coming into the office is overwhelming, the calls will be transferred to Cooperative Response Center (CRC) in Austin, MN.

After hours, all calls are transferred to CRC. Depending on the extent of the storm and the volume of calls coming into CRC, you may reach a live operator, or you may go into their automated system. It is helpful to your cooperative and CRC to have your correct phone number in Renville-Sibley's database when reporting an outage. Members are asked to review the phone numbers printed on the bill statement for accuracy and notify the cooperative if a change should be made to this contact information.

You also have the option to send a text message to report an outage. To sign-up for this feature, please visit our web site [www.rscpa.coop](http://www.rscpa.coop) and click on the [Setup Text Outage Reporting](#) in the middle of the home page. You will be asked a series of questions to get this service set up. Contact the office if you have any problems.

Remember, during times of large power outages, tune in to the following radio stations for updates on the status of the power outage: KLGR, KOLV, Q102, KWLM and KDJS.



# Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association

## SCHOLAR OF THE MONTH

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

-  Runs November 2025 - February 2026  
RSCPA will accept one nomination per school and we will select two winners each month as the Scholar of the Month.
-  8 winners will receive a \$100 donation to the department of their choice within the school.
-  Monthly winners will be featured with:
  - An ad on their local radio station
  - An ad placed in their local paper
  - Write-up in Renville-Sibley's newsletter *Cooperative Connections*
-  Banquet held in April 2026 to honor our 8 winners and random drawing of \$1,000 for one lucky student!



### TEACHERS NOMINATE STUDENTS BASED ON THEIR

- **INTEGRITY**
- **ACCOUNTABILITY**
- **INNOVATION**
- **COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY**







During the annual Garden Glow event, McCrory Gardens in Brookings is transformed into a winter wonderland.  
Photo submitted by McCrory Gardens

# NATURE GROWS & GLOWS AT MCCRORY GARDENS

**Jacob Boyko**

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Tucked among the towering pines at the busy corner of 6th Street and 22nd Avenue in Brookings, S.D., you'll find a little plot of botanical paradise.

For 60 years, South Dakota State University's McCrory Gardens has not only served as a mecca for horticulture enthusiasts, but also a versatile, community-focused space for weddings, workshops and other seasonal festivities.

"Here, our mission is connecting people and plants through education, research, discovery and enjoyment of the natural and built landscape," said Lisa Marotz, director of McCrory Gardens.

Working toward that mission, Marotz and staff keep a schedule full of activities for SDSU students and community members with a variety of seasonal events: a spring-time syrup-making workshop where participants are taught to tap trees; the summer-time TuliPalooza where more than 15,000 tulip bulbs are planted in a colorful display; and the family-focused fall festival during Hobo Day weekend featuring horse-drawn hay rides and food trucks.

"There really is always something to see — just maybe not always what you expect," said Kathryn Bowar, an SDSU ag science

student and McCrory Gardens intern from Hoven, S.D.

Bowar says the space is increasingly popular for students looking to take a break from busy campus life to study, hang out with friends, or just enjoy time alone in a tranquil, outdoor environment surrounded by nature.

"I grew up as a ranch kid and adjusting to city life was overwhelming at times," Bowar added. "Coming to McCrory Gardens was a breath of fresh air and helped me recenter in the beauty of nature."

The garden's hallmark event is the regionally renowned Garden Glow, which transforms the dormant grounds into a winter wonderland with bright and festive Christmas lights and decorations.

"Garden Glow is a way that we are able to bring thousands of people to a botanical garden in South Dakota in December," Marotz said with a laugh. "We started out in 2015 when about 51 people came. Last year we were up to about 13,000, so it's grown a lot in popularity."

At the upcoming Garden Glow, visitors will meander through the reindeer meadow, travel across the life-size "Candy Land" board, warm up with a stop at the hot cocoa hut and peek inside Santa's summer-time home while exploring all the garden has to offer.

And there's been a lot of change over the garden's 60-year history, from new flowerbeds and gardens to patios and memorials.

But despite that, Marotz says she and her staff work to ensure the original vision of the garden and the contributions of those who worked before her are preserved.

Rather than tearing out and replacing sections of the gardens, the staff update and add to the space, with each parcel of the 25-acre garden bearing the fingerprints of past enthusiasts who cultivated, researched and appreciated the flora that make the Midwest beautiful.

"We have visitors comment that they now know what heaven looks like," Marotz said. "That's what people feel here: sanctuary and peace."



Lisa Marotz – McCrory Gardens Director since 2016 – with intern Kathryn Bowar, who is beginning her third fall working at the garden.  
Photo by Jacob Boyko



With bright, blooming flowers, McCrory Gardens is the perfect stop for migrating butterflies and other helpful pollinators.  
*Photo by Jacob Boyko*



Many area visitors recognize this cottage as the 1928 Lawson Gas Station in Lake Preston, which was moved to McCrory Gardens in 1996 and renovated in 2024.  
*Photo by Jacob Boyko*



Each cactus in the cacti garden is dug up each fall and moved into a greenhouse on campus before being replanted in the spring.  
*Photo by Jacob Boyko*



The 1991 Sioux Quartzite rock garden and 2013 waterfall are a favorite fixture in the garden — and the site of numerous summertime marriage proposals.  
*Photo by Jacob Boyko*



A labyrinth of pathways and trails lined with mature trees and vines give garden visitors a sense of exploration — even though they're right in the middle of Brookings.  
*Photo by Jacob Boyko*



During the Garden Glow event, the East Terrace Lawn and Gazebo becomes The Enchanted Forest. Marotz notes this was the site of the first Garden Glow in 2015 — miniscule compared to today's expansive decorating.

**This winter, Garden Glow is open 5-9 p.m. from Dec. 6, 2025 through Jan. 6, 2026.**

*Photo submitted by McCrory Gardens*

# 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY THE MCCRORY STORY

*Photos submitted by  
McCrory Gardens*

## 1964

The S.D. Legislature approves funds to construct Bailey Rotunda and Wagner Hall on the site of SDSU's Horticulture-Forestry Gardens. Samuel A. McCrory, head of the horticulture department at SDSU, advocated for a research garden filled with S.D. flora that would also serve as a learning center for students. McCrory passed away March 10, 1964.



## 1966

The new horticulture garden is formally dedicated "McCrory Gardens" to honor the late department head.



## 1977

McCrory Gardens receives the prestigious All-American Display Garden Award. The Garden is now designated to receive and showcase winning plant selections each year.



## 1979

McCrory Gardens is named on a list of the top 10 small gardens in the U.S. by ARCO Travel Club Magazine.



## 1988

The first annual Garden Party is held to fund the maintenance and operating costs of the garden.



## 1994

The late Gov. George Mickelson is honored in the newly-constructed Mickelson Grove.



## 2012

The new Education & Visitor Center is dedicated.



## 2025

**McCrory Gardens celebrates its 60th anniversary!**

# Are You Interested in a New Adventure?

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is beginning to plan for the 88th Annual meeting of the membership that will be held on March 26, 2026, 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 Vicky Firlle. Vicky Firlle's term will expire in 2026.

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 Jeff Boersma. Jeff Boersma's term will expire in 2026.

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 2026.

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 last Wednesday 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 1-800-826-2593 before January 5th for further information.

## OUTAGE REPORT:

*Affecting 10 members or more*

**Date: 9-16-2025**

Time off: 7:56 AM

Time on: 9:04 AM

Substation: Henryville

Cause: Planned Outage

**Date: 8-12-2025**

Time off: 11:41 AM

Time on: 12:12 PM

Substation: Henryville

Cause: Unknown

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

## FOR SALE:

Like-New PetSmart PetTaxi 16 ½" x 25" \$20

Box Western Books (30+) \$10

Puzzles-500 & 1000 Piece, \$2.75-\$4

Darlene Konz

Olivia, MN 56277

320-523-2612

## WANTED:

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Did you know that not everything gets marked when you contact Gopher State One Call (GSOC)? Private underground facilities, such as private utility lines and private distribution networks, do not get marked by facility operators. When a property owner has any private underground facility, the property owner is responsible to locate those facilities or hire someone to locate them. Customer-owned lines could include any lines serving outbuildings, hot tubs, security lighting, pools and/or natural gas grills.

The free locating service available through GSOC applies ONLY to public facility operators.



The 2006 Youth Tour group takes a photo on the Albert Einstein Memorial in Washington, D.C.  
Photo by Brenda Kleinjan

# YOUTH TODAY. LEADERS TOMORROW.

## South Dakota's Youth Tour Continues to Inspire Leadership Years Later

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdeca.coop

Each summer, a new group of South Dakota teens will board a plane for Washington, D.C., full of excitement for the trip of a lifetime. They're part of the South Dakota Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, a weeklong experience that connects rural students to the people, places and ideas that shape our country.

The Youth Tour began after a 1957 speech by former Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson, who encouraged electric cooperatives to send young people to the Capitol so they could "see what the flag stands for." Since South Dakota sent

its first group in 1963, more than 1,300 students have made the trip.

During the trip, students visit landmarks like Ford's Theater, the National Archives and the U.S. Capitol. They meet members of Congress, make friends from across the country and see firsthand how decisions made in Washington affect people back home.

For many, the most meaningful part of the trip happens long after they return. The experience lights a spark that shapes how they view their communities and their roles within them.

Two of those alumni, Kevin Larsen and Andi Fouberg, still carry lessons from their Youth Tour experiences today.

### Kevin Larsen

Kevin Larsen remembers applying for Youth Tour in 2006 as a junior from Howard High School to represent Central Electric Cooperative.

"I've always been a history nut," he said. "My parents, like a lot of farmers, weren't made of money. This was a chance to go see the nation's capital, and I figured, why not apply?"

Once he decided to apply, he approached his high school English teacher, who helped him polish his essay, which landed on the desk of longtime Central Electric Cooperative General Manager Ken Schlimgen. "Lo and behold, the legendary Ken Schlimgen gives me a call," Larsen said. "And the rest is history."

Larsen now serves as the public information officer for the South Dakota State Historical Society in Pierre. He is also active in local organizations and community leadership roles, serving as president of the Pierre Kiwanis Club, incoming exalted ruler for the Pierre Elks Lodge, and in 2025



he ran for a position on the Pierre City Commission, only to come short by a handful of votes.

“These types of trips instill a passion for civics, and I think they mean a lot more for rural South Dakota kids,” Larsen said. “I’m from the middle of nowhere, Canova, South Dakota – a lot of people don’t even know where that is. The nearest town from our farm was six miles away, and that town is 100 people if everybody’s home. I think the opportunity to travel means more coming from somebody that was raised on a farm.”

He laughs when he thinks back to the trip. He keeps in touch with one of his roommates from that week. “You build connections you don’t expect,” he said. “One of the guys I roomed with ended up being a friend of my wife’s, and years later he attended our wedding.”

Larsen also credits his former Youth Tour Director, Brenda Kleinjan, for making the trip a success. “She was so passionate about the places we visited,” he said. “We weren’t just seeing historic monuments; we were learning what they meant.”

For Larsen, that week in D.C. helped set him on a lifelong path of leadership. “That trip really instilled that leadership ability and finding that inner voice to apply for something you might not think would ever happen,” he said. “When I sent off the essay in high school, I would have never imagined in my wildest dreams that I’d get an all-expenses-paid trip to D.C. We even ate well, too.”

## Andi Fouberg

When Andi Fouberg applied for the Youth Tour, she was a high school student from Letcher. “I’m pretty sure my best



**Kevin Larsen**  
2006 Youth Tour Alum  
*Submitted Photo*



**Andi Fouberg**  
1994 Youth Tour Alum  
*Submitted Photo*

friend went the year before, and I thought that seemed pretty cool,” she said.

Also representing Central Electric Cooperative, she joined the 1994 Youth Tour, a year she remembers vividly for an unusual reason.

“The night before we left was when O.J. Simpson went on the white Ford Bronco run through Los Angeles,” she said with a laugh. “We watched it on TV in the hotel in Sioux Falls because we met there and stayed the night before we all flew out together.”

The trip instilled an early passion for civic life in Fouberg. After college, she moved to Washington, D.C., and spent 10 years as Sen. John Thune’s communications director.

“Youth Tour was what prompted me to want to be in D.C. at some point,” Fouberg said.

While working for Sen. Thune, Fouberg would regularly meet new Youth Tour students visiting the Capitol every year in June.

“I’d see these students walking the same halls I once toured, wide-eyed and curious, and I’d think, that was me,” she said.

Now, Fouberg leads the South Dakota State University Alumni Association as its president and CEO. She credits that early trip with showing her what public service and connection can look like.

“The trip had an impact on me wanting to be out there and be part of that environment,” she said. “It made me want to be part of the process and feel like you are part of the government machine, but in a way that helps people.”

Reflecting on it now, she believes the experience gives students from small towns something they might not otherwise see.

“Growing up in Letcher or any small community in South Dakota, I don’t know that civic engagement is something you naturally imagine yourself doing without exposure from something like Youth Tour,” she said. “Without exposure to Washington D.C. through something like that, I probably would not have pursued that path. It all had its roots in Youth Tour.”



Kevin Larsen (left) takes a photo with Youth Tour friends at the FDR Memorial in 2006.  
*Photo by Brenda Kleinjan*

# October Board Meeting Highlights

The October board meeting was held on Tuesday, October 28th, 2025, at 8 a.m. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Norris, Nick Bruns, Gene Alex, Amy Ervin, and Carren Frank. 860802

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the September 18th, 2025 board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of September
- Safety Report for October
- Acknowledgement of C-MIP changes
- 2026 Market Rate
- Capital Credits to Estates
- 990 Report
- Brady Martz 2025 Audit Engagement Letter
- CoBank 2025 Proxy Ballot
- Capital Credit Retirement Recommendation

- MREA Annual Certification of Voting Delegates and Alternates for all 2026 Membership Meetings
- Director Expenses

The board reviewed the following items:

- Total new members
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:
  - o High-level Statement of Operations review – YTD through September (unaudited)
  - o Organization activities
  - o East River update
  - o Director meeting reports
  - o Linecrew work in progress, equipment update, and outage update
  - o Accounts Receivable
  - o Nominating Committee Appointments

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

## WHERE'S THE NUMBER?

Last month RSCPA member did not find their member number in the newsletter. The value of the energy credit will be increased to \$45. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by the 1st of December, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck with your search!

## REMINDER

Renville-Sibley encourages any member planning on making changes to their service in 2025 or 2026 to please contact the office as soon as possible. In order to complete these projects on time, material may need to be ordered well in advance as often there is extended lead time to get the appropriate material. In addition, crew time will be scheduled in the order projects and materials are received.

## SAFETY NOTE

If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, do not get out of the cab. Call 9-1-1 and the dispatched utility will de-energize the power so that you can safely exit your tractor or vehicle.

## 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



# Operation Round Up

The Operation Round Up Board of Trustees met on Wednesday, October 15, 2025. The following donations were approved:

**BOLD Baseball Association – \$500.00**

Provides funds to help build a batting cage at the Bird Island Lion's Memorial Park for various baseball programs within the community to utilize.

**Hector Swimming Pool – \$500.00**

Funds will help cover the many expenses needed to update the pool and allow them to be reopened and be used by the community members.

**Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota/LSS Meals Sacred Heart – \$500.00**

Funding helps provide 20 insulated meal delivery bags for home delivered meals to high-risk seniors in Renville County. The meals provide maintain their health and allow them to continue to live in their own homes thus enhancing their lives.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 2:30 p.m. The deadline for applications is Wednesday, December 31, 2025. If your non-profit organization has a project or event that would benefit the community, Operation Round Up funds may be available to help your group reach its goal.

Applications for donations can be found at [rscpa.coop/operation-round](http://rscpa.coop/operation-round). Contact the office at 320-826-2593 for more information.

## Recipe Request for Annual Cookbook

Deadline for recipe submission is December 15th.



**THE COUNTRY COOKIN' cookbook**

Submit to be entered into a drawing for 1 of 2 \$100 Visa gift cards

Submit recipes to [graphics@eastriver.coop](mailto:graphics@eastriver.coop) or contact your local co-op for more information.

## Notice

The December board meeting will be held on Thursday, December 18th, 2025 at 9 a.m.  
The board will not meet in January 2026.

## Mission Statement

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

## Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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Your E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_



**NOV. 25-DEC. 26**  
**Christmas at the Capitol**  
**8 a.m.-10 p.m. (holidays included)**  
Pierre, SD  
605-773-3178  
[christmasatthecapitol.sd.gov](http://christmasatthecapitol.sd.gov)

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.

**NOV. 21-JAN 5**  
**Winter Wonderland at the Falls**  
5 p.m.  
Falls Park  
Sioux Falls, SD

**NOV. 29**  
**Parade of Lights**  
6 p.m.  
Holly Boulevard  
Brandon, SD

**NOV. 29**  
**How the Grinch Stole Christmas Holiday Parade**  
6 p.m.  
Flandreau, SD  
605-864-1200

**NOV. 30**  
**Pepperberries Christmas Market**  
11 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
141 N. 3rd St.  
Emery, SD

**DEC. 1**  
**American Legion Post 15 Pancake Breakfast**  
8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.  
1600 W. Russell St.  
Sioux Falls, SD

**DEC. 5**  
**Colman Looney Lights**  
5 p.m.  
Colman, SD

**DEC. 5**  
**Hometown Christmas**  
Downtown  
Salem, SD

**DEC. 5**  
**Christmas Tree Lighting & Standstill Parade**  
5:30 p.m.  
Alcester, SD

**DEC. 5**  
**The Winter Roundup Holiday Vendor Fair**  
4-9 p.m.  
307 E. 6th St.  
Alcester, SD

**DEC. 5-7, 12-14**  
**Mighty Corson Players Humbug**  
Dec. 5-6, 12-13: 7:30 p.m.  
Dec. 7, 14: 2:30 p.m.  
Corson, SD  
[www.mightycorson.com](http://www.mightycorson.com)

**DEC. 6**  
**KJAM Parade of Lights**  
5:30 p.m.  
Madison, SD  
605-256-4514

**DEC. 6-7**  
**The Black Market**  
Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Expo Building  
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-332-6004

**DEC. 7**  
**Parade of Lights/Christmas Tree Lighting**  
5:30 p.m.  
Downtown  
Hartford, SD

**DEC. 13-14**  
**Alexandria Winterfest**  
Downtown  
Alexandria, SD

**DEC. 14**  
**Lake Campbell Lutheran Cookie Walk**  
9 a.m.  
46610 219th St.  
Volga, SD  
605-864-9907

**DEC. 14**  
**Canova Firemen's Pancake Feed**  
Legion Hall  
Canova, 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.**