



Cooperative Connections

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History**

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A Mark of
Safety**

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Renville-Sibley Annual Meeting Rescheduled; Office to Reopen by Appointment Only



DeeAnne Newville, CEO

dnewville@renville-sibley.coop
Phone: 320-826-2593 or
Toll Free 800-826-2593

The 82nd annual meeting of Renville-Sibley Co-op Power will be held on Thursday, August 27 at the Island Ballroom in Bird Island. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. More information will be in next month's newsletter.

In March, we canceled our annual meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing requirements. The Renville-Sibley board of directors has rescheduled the annual meeting for Aug. 27, beginning at 6 p.m. This meeting will take place at the Island Ballroom in Bird Island and will be held in person or drive-up depending on the status of the COVID-19 situation in Minnesota at that time. Watch for more information in next month's newsletter.

We established a pandemic protocol that was implemented on March 17. We have modified our plan a few times based on the feedback we received from our employees, as well as guidelines established by the state and the federal government. Our lineworkers are split into two crews who make every effort not to intermingle. Our office is currently staffed with half of our employees working in the office and the other half working from home on a rotating basis. All shared surfaces throughout the organization are disinfected after use, and employees have been issued cloth facemasks, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and hand sanitizer.

Our office is closed to the public. However, beginning June 22, we will meet with members by appointment only. We do not have enough space in our lobby to allow members to maintain a 6-foot distance. Only one member can be in the office at a time due to space constraints. Please contact the office at 320-826-2593 or 800-826-2593 if you would like to make arrangements to come in for an appointment or to schedule an appointment using another form of technology. While visiting our office, you are welcome to wear a face mask. We encourage our members to continue to use our drop box, mail, or on-line methods to make payments on your account.

The COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented. We know our member-owners may be facing financial challenges, and we understand some may have trouble paying their electric bills during this critical time. Any members who are worried about their ability to pay an upcoming electric bill or who currently have a past-due balance, please know that we are here to assist you. We continue to work with members who call in to set up payment arrangements and waive late fees based on their circumstances.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate through this pandemic. We will continue to assess the situation daily to determine if any additional steps are needed. The health and safety of our members and employees are of vital importance. We are working proactively to mitigate risks by following all guidelines and evaluating operating procedures. Our priority is to provide reliable electric service to our members while protecting employees and members from unnecessary risk.

We will continue to assess the situation daily to determine if any additional steps are needed.

Renville-Sibley

Cooperative Connections

(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 Alex – Line Superintendent
Brian Athmann – Journeyman Lineman
Shawn Beckler – Crew Chief
Mike Benson – Journeyman Lineman
Brad Braulick – Crew Chief
Nick Bruns – Systems Coordinator
Anthony Carruth – Journeyman Lineman
Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman
Amy Ervin – Consumer Accounts Representative
Cindy Mertens – Administrative Services Manager
DeeAnne Newville – CEO
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman
Kathy Ridl – Office Assistant
Lenae Wordes – Communications Manager

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Web site: www.renville-sibley.coop

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VARIETY OF PAYMENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

Renville-Sibley members have a variety of options available to pay their monthly electric bill.

Located on Renville-Sibley's website www.renville-sibley.coop is the SmartHub and PayNow option. The difference between these two options is the SmartHub application requires a username and password and will give more account information such as view and manage your usage tool, billing and payment history, the ability to manage the contact information, set-up account notifications along with the option to make a payment or set-up auto pay.

The PayNow option can be accessed by entering the account number and last name. The only option available on this site is to make a payment on the account.

Along with the traditional payment method of mailing or dropping off a check, Renville-Sibley offers an automated pay by phone option which is available in both English and Spanish. Members can call 844-244-1498 to make a payment on the account, update phone number or update bank draft information.

More and more members are setting up their accounts for automatic payment on

the 3rd. This convenient service can be set-up by completing an in-house form which allows Renville-Sibley to deduct the balance from either a checking or savings account on the 3rd of each month. Members also have the option to set-up automatic payment in SmartHub. Through SmartHub, members can select the payment source to be either a checking or savings account or a credit card.

Also available to the membership is budget billing. Members on budget billing pay the budget amount, which is the average bill calculated over the past 12 months factoring in any rate increases for the next year if applicable.

Budget billing is great for members who experience a higher electric bill during the winter months and want to level their payments throughout the year. All accounts in the budget payment plan must be paid in full each year with the July 3rd payment. The new budget amount begins with the next bill.

Anyone interested in budget billing should contact the office to determine what their monthly budget amount will be and to get signed up for the program.

Summer Electrical Safety Tips

The summer is a season almost everyone looks forward to – after all, who doesn't love the warm temperatures that summer brings? Hanging by the pool, summer cookouts, and barbecues bring family and friends together. However, safety should still be your priority. If you don't want to ruin your summer fun due to the lack of electrical safety in your home, we've put together a list of summer electrical safety tips to follow:

- **Keep electronics away from the water** – If you've got an outdoor pool, then you might be thinking about throwing a little get together with friends and family – a pool party if you will. However, think twice about putting your new speakers or mp3 player right by the poolside. All electronics should be kept at least 10 feet away from the pool or any other water source. It doesn't matter how careful you are, accidents can and do happen.
- **Use outdoor-rated extension cords** – If you're going to set up your mp3 player or smartphone outside to play some music while you grill out, make sure that you are using the right extension cord. What is the right extension cord? One that is rated for outdoor use. There's a good chance it will be exposed to moisture outside – and an outdoor-rated extension cord will be able to handle small exposure to water.
- **Inspect your extension cords for damage** – Before using an extension cord, inspect it carefully for damage. The last thing you should do is use a damaged cord as it presents a safety risk – especially if you plan on using it outdoors. Any cracked extension cords or exposed wires should not be used outdoors.
- **Install GFCIs** – A GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) is a device that can help improve the safety of your outlets. Outlets that are near water sources, such as outdoor outlets or bathroom outlets, should have GFCIs installed. A GFCI will shut off the power to the outlet if the circuit is compromised, such as if it gets exposed to water, a spilled drink, etc. This will help to improve the security of your electrical appliances as well as the safety of those in your home.
- **Trim your tree branches** – If the branches on your property are growing a little too close to any power lines, have them trimmed to prevent any downed power lines during high winds or thunderstorms.
- **Don't fly kites or drones near power lines** – If you have power lines that are located relatively close to your home, instruct your children (if you have any) not to fly their kites or model drones in this area. These types of airborne toys should be reserved for flight in wide open spaces, like the park.
- **Know where your breaker box is** – If there's an electrical emergency in your home, then you'll need to know where the breaker box is so that you can shut off the power in a hurry.

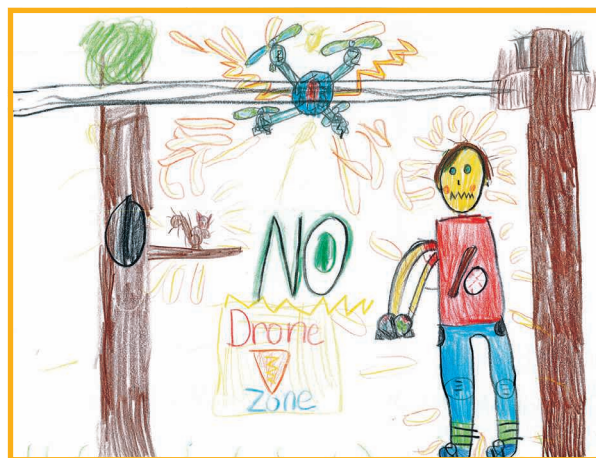
Source: www.jaffeelectric.com

Four common culprits of electrical fires

There are 24,000 electrical fires per year across the country. To reduce your risk for damage, check the following areas of your home:

- **Electrical outlets:** Faulty outlets are a leading cause of home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them. Any loose, damaged or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.
- **Electrical wiring:** Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights and burning smells are warning signs. If your home is more than 20 years old, it may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, contact a qualified electrician.
- **Overloaded cords and outlets:** Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your big-screen TV, home theater system and other electronics are plugged into extension cords, it's time to have additional outlets installed.
- **Old appliances:** Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets.

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"No drone zone."

Alli Bares, 9 years old

Alli is the daughter of Tony and Angie Bares, Sioux Falls, S.D. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, 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.

Delectable Desserts

Aloha Cake

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 pkg. (2-layer size) yellow cake mix | instant pudding mix |
| 4 tsp. McCormick® Coconut Extract with Other Natural Flavors, divided | 1 (20 oz.) can crushed pineapple, drained |
| 1 pkg. (4-serving size) vanilla | 1 (8 oz.) container frozen whipped topping, thawed |

Prepare cake mix as directed on package, stirring in 3 tsp. of the coconut flavor. Pour into greased and floured 13x9-inch baking pan. Bake at 350°F. for 30 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool completely in pan. Prepare pudding mix as directed on package, stirring in remaining 1 tsp. coconut flavor. Spread pineapple and pudding over cake. Frost with whipped topping. Refrigerate 1 hour or until ready to serve. Makes 24 servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 188, Total Fat 8g, Cholesterol 28mg, Sodium 221mg, Carbohydrates 27g, Fiber 0g, Protein 2g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Buster Bar Dessert

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1/2 cup butter | 1/2 gallon vanilla ice cream |
| 2/3 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips | 1-1/2 cups Spanish peanuts, optional |
| 2 cups powdered sugar | Crust: |
| 1-1/2 cups evaporated milk, divided | 1 lb. Oreo cookies |
| 1 tsp. vanilla | 1/4 cup melted butter |

Melt butter in heavy saucepan. Add chocolate chips, stirring constantly. Put powdered sugar in mixing bowl; add 1/2 cup evaporated milk, stirring well. Add remaining evaporated milk. Pour mixture into melted butter and chocolate chips, stirring constantly. Bring to a boil, turn heat to medium and boil 8 minutes, stirring often. Remove from heat; add 1 vanilla. Cool completely. **For crust:** Crush Oreo cookies; add butter, mixing well. Press into a 9x13-inch pan. Put pan into freezer. When frozen, quickly spread ice cream over cookie crust. Sprinkle peanuts over crust, if desired, before adding ice cream. Freeze for at least 2 hours. When ice cream layer is completely frozen, quickly pour cooled chocolate layer on top; return to freezer. Can be prepared several days ahead of time.

Betty Leuthold, Magnolia, MN

Summer Peach Dessert

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 14 graham crackers, finely crushed | 24 large marshmallows |
| 1/2 cup sugar | 1/2 cup milk |
| 1/4 cup melted butter | 2 cups whipped topping |
| | 3 cups chopped peaches |

Mix graham cracker crumbs, sugar and butter until well blended; reserving a few crumbs for top. Press mixture into a 9x9-inch pan. Heat marshmallows and milk until melted; cool. Fold in whipped topping and peaches. Spread over crust, sprinkling reserved crumbs over all. Chill.

Elaine Rowett, Sturgis, SD

Raspberry Delight

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 2-1/4 cups flour | 1/4 tsp. salt |
| 2 T. sugar | 2 cups Cool Whip |
| 3/4 cup butter, softened | Topping: |
| Filling: | 1 (6 oz.) pkg. raspberry gelatin |
| 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened | 2 cups boiling water |
| 1 cup powdered sugar | 2 (10 oz.) pkgs. sweetened, frozen raspberries |
| 1 tsp. vanilla | |

In a bowl, combine flour and sugar; blend in butter with wooden spoon until smooth. Press into an ungreased 9x13-inch pan. Bake at 300°F. for 20 to 25 minutes or until set (crust will not brown). Cool. In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, powdered sugar, vanilla and salt until smooth. Fold in Cool Whip. Spread over crust. For topping, dissolve gelatin in boiling water; stir in raspberries. Chill for 20 minutes or until mixture begins to thicken. Spoon over filling. Refrigerate until set. Cut into squares; garnish with additional Cool Whip, if desired. Makes 12 to 16 servings.

Becki Hauser, Tripp, SD

Please send your favorite vegetarian, garden produce and pasta 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 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Attention Members Impacted by COVID-19?

Renville-Sibley encourages members to contact the office to make arrangements if they are not able to pay their electric bill in full due to the impact of COVID-19. Renville-Sibley employees will work with members to enter into reasonable payment arrangements based on their individual circumstances..



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spending more time at home? Try an online energy audit to assess the overall efficiency of your home. Visit www.energystar.gov, then enter "home energy yardstick" in the search box to get started!



Where's the Number?

Last month, Phillip Graves found his member number in the newsletter. Congratulations! The credit will start over with a value of \$15. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by the July 3, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

Outage Report

Affecting 10 members or more:

None

Did You Know?

On June 3, 1889, the first long-distance transmission of electricity took place, linking a powerhouse at Willamette Falls to a string of lights in Portland, Oregon, 14 miles to the west.



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 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.

May Board Meeting Highlights

The May board meeting was held via Zoom on Thursday, May 28 at 7 a.m. All board members were present except Helen Ruebel. Others present were Attorney Jeff Whitmore, CEO DeeAnne Newville, Gene Alex, Cindy Mertens and Lenae Wordes.

The election of officers was held with the following results:

- Chairman – Roger Manthei
- Vice Chairman – Wayland Zaske
- Secretary/Treasurer – Alan Neyers

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the April 28 board meeting
- CoBank Incumbency Certificate
- Director Compensation – no change
- Board committees
- 82nd Annual Meeting – see Manager's column for more information
- 83rd Annual Meeting set for March 25, 2021
- Officer appointments for the cooperative
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of April
- Safety report for May
- Attorney Services Agreement
- Consent agenda/calendar

The board reviewed:

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

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

Notice:

The June board meeting will be held on Monday, June 29 at 8 a.m. The July board meeting will be held on Monday, July 27 at 8 a.m.

Comparative Report

| | Current YTD-April 30, 2020 | One Year Ago YTD-April 30, 2019 | 10 Years Ago YTD-April 30, 2010 |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Average Number of Consumers | 1,882 | 1,882 | 1,929 |
| kWhs purchased | 68,322,842 | 61,456,255 | 70,040,156 |
| Cost of purchased power | \$4,344,954.84 | \$3,632,799.07 | \$2,2868,600.21 |

Thank You

Thank you for selecting me as a recipient of the \$1,000 scholarship. It is greatly appreciated! I will use these funds towards my upcoming college expenses. I plan to attend Ridgewater College in Willmar this fall. I will be pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing through the MANE program at Ridgewater. 430601 Thank you again for selecting me as a scholarship recipient this year.

Jessica Beckendorf

Thanks so much for donating to the upcoming 2020 Gibbon Funfest Celebration. Your generous donation is much appreciated. Please come and join the Gibbon Funfest weekend on July 16, 17, 18 and 19th 2020. Hope to see you there! We truly appreciate your ongoing support!

The Gibbon Funfest Committee

The Danube Area Athletic Club would like to thank the Renville-Sibley's Operation Round Up program as well as the Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Charitable Trust for the grant of \$2,500 to help our organization. We will make sure to share our pictures along the way as we work towards completing our project. Thanks again!

Danube Area Athletic Club



The Old Fort Meade Museum details the history of Fort Meade, its residents, life as a cavalry officer and military history throughout the 66-year history of the fort.

FORT MEADE

Historic Outpost Has Varied Past

Susan Smith

Contributing Writer

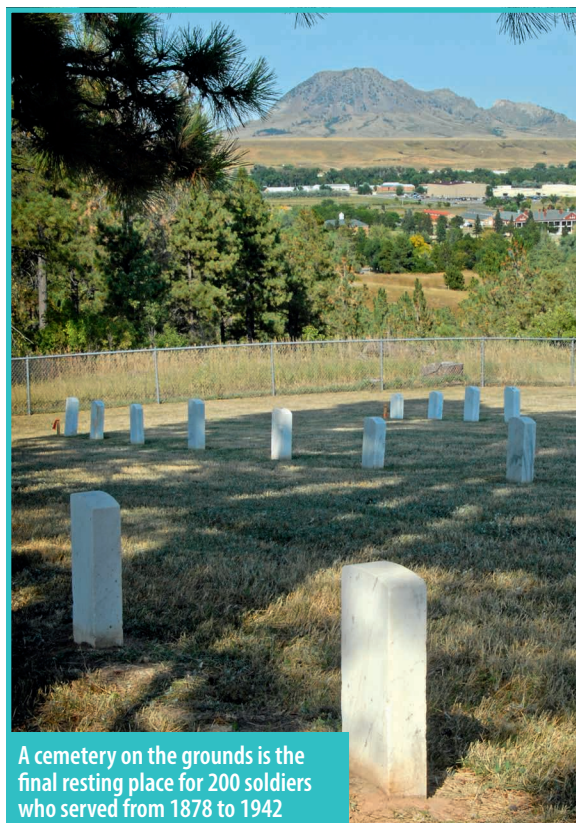
Named for Civil War Gen. George Meade, Fort Meade was built as a peacekeeping military outpost in 1878, two years after the infamous Battle of the Little Bighorn.

The fort provided an early customer base to the town of Sturgis, named for 7th Cavalry commander Col. Samuel Sturgis. According to fortmeademuseum.org, General Phil Sheridan, a Civil War Cavalry leader, selected the location after riding around the then-envisioned mile-square grounds and pointing to the location of future buildings with his saber.

“The fort was established to provide protection for the stage lines and freight routes that came in here as well as the miners and the settlers that came into the area for the many gold locations in the Black Hills and the Deadwood area,” said Robert Kusser, current president of the Fort Meade Museum Board.

Many of the buildings on the grounds of Fort Meade are from the 1900s. One building remains from 1878 and stables that were there from the beginning were rebuilt from wood to stone. Kusser said cannon wheels that are rimmed in steel but have wooden spokes were refurbished and ready for the coming tourist season. Artist Len McCann created figurines of soldiers that are on display in the museum. An exhibit of the U.S.S. Constitution is also on display. Unfortunately, COVID-19 sidelined many plans for the 2020 season, Kusser said. The museum will be opening for the summer 2020 as soon as possible.

Unlike most forts of the era, where hardly anything of significance remains, Fort Meade is still involved with military training with the South Dakota Army National Guard, which holds officer candidate training each summer. When the fort was officially deactivated in 1944, the Veterans Administration was approached to take over the post hospital, the VA Black Hills Health Care System, which cares for veterans in a 200-mile radius and also maintains the complex. A cemetery overlooking the fort is the final resting place for 200-plus



A cemetery on the grounds is the final resting place for 200 soldiers who served from 1878 to 1942

Fort Meade is still attached to the South Dakota National Guard, which holds officer candidate training at the fort each summer.

soldiers, family members and employees who served from 1878 to 1942, Kusser said. Streets that pass around the original parade field and buildings are still occupied and historically maintained.

"We're fortunate to still be able to maintain a visual presence of history," Kusser said.

The 4th Cavalry, one of the units stationed longest, and two separate times at Fort Meade, provided security when President Calvin Coolidge was at the game lodge in Custer State Park, a summer White House in the Black Hills, in 1927. The cavalry unit was deployed to the European theater in World War II.

Kusser said beginning in June 1945, 113 POWs were housed at the fort. That number grew to 600 by 1946. They worked in the



Belle Fourche region in agriculture, mainly to help with beet farming. They also did community work and helped convert the fort from an active military post to a veteran's hospital by doing stonework and creating sidewalks.

After his retirement from state government, Kusser was director of the Fort Meade Museum for several years. The three-story building he still oversees as board president houses numerous artifacts commemorating the history of the fort and recreating what life was like as a cavalry soldier.

The museum is organized around the 66-year history of the fort, with most of that information on the main floor, Kusser said. The lower level includes more military displays and the top floor features a ballroom and views of Bear Butte, the parade field and a view of the prairie. The museum also contains information about the early days of the town of Sturgis.

The Old Fort Meade Museum is located in the historic headquarters building 55, Sheridan Street on Fort Meade, one mile east of Sturgis on Hwy. 34.

Co-ops and the Old Nut Box

There are few things more satisfying for a pack rat than to find just the right thingamajig at the bottom of a growing pile of doodads.

I know a guy who has so much stuff stashed in his storeroom, it's like walking through a dense jungle forest. You never know when you might need a backup buggy whip. Or the crusty mother-board of a Commodore C64. Or a clutch release bearing for a 1956 Farmall tractor.

Every now and again, I'll put him to the test...

"I was looking for a book of Green Stamps from June of 1975. Can you sort through all that clutter and see if you can find one for me?"

Or, "Hey, I need a 26-inch inner tube for a 1962 Huffy Aerowind bicycle. Can you help me out with that?"

He hasn't managed to fulfill any of my quirky requests so far, but he'll spend all day and half the night searching.

While my own garage is only mildly untidy, I did have one of those pack rat discovery moments recently when I was working on my son's 2000 Honda 80R. Not that I'm much of a motorcycle mechanic, but I had to crack the carburetor open to clean out the pilot jet and discovered I needed a replacement bolt.

I contemplated a trip to my local Hanks Hardware, but then I remembered what my Dad used to call "the nut box." Not a very descriptive name, to be sure, but this nut box has some unique characteristics. First of all, it's not really a box. It's a round container made of heavy metal that my father had back when he was a young man and a pretty decent mechanic.

And like any good pack rat, I've been hanging onto that thing through every change in address and spring cleaning session for decades.

Another unique quality of the nut box is that over the years it has been repainted many times and many colors with the kind of paint that would trigger a code-red biohazard alert by today's standards.

But the nut box has been around so long even that super industrial strength paint is peeling off. Though I tried to mitigate the damage, a chunk of dime-thick paint flew off when I wedged open the top of the container.

Clawing through a thousand nuts, bolts, screws and some stray nails, I lucked up and grabbed just the size I was looking for. Small victories, I know.

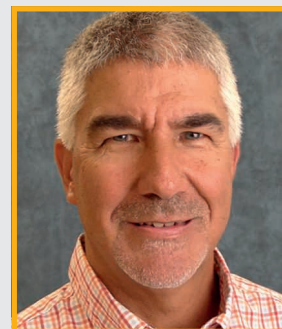
That dip into the nut box came to mind when I received a package from a faithful Cooperative Connections reader. The note inside stated: "I've enclosed an ad from a 1961 newspaper you might be interested in. My mom kept some old newspapers in her boxes and I found it there."

The focal point of this gentle reader's curiosity was a full-page spread featuring a caricature image of the sun wearing a pair of sunglasses, displaying a wide smile and sporting an incandescent light bulb for a nose.

The headline read: "Casting light on what rural electric cooperatives really mean to South Dakota." The page was filled with information about what rural electric co-ops are, what they aren't, and why they're good for the state.

When it comes to the mission of rural electric co-ops, not much has changed through the decades. Our co-ops are still firmly committed to serving our members as they were on the day they were founded.

Serving homes and businesses the safe, affordable, reliable power they need is what we've done and will continue to do. That's a responsibility and a purpose that will be around even longer than that trusty old nut box.



Billy Gibson

editor@sdrea.coop

STANDBY GENERATOR

Keep safety in mind when using emergency power

While owning an emergency generator comes in handy during an extended power outage, it is important that you consider the following.

To safely use standby generators, operate them only in well-ventilated areas outdoors so emissions can't enter your home. In addition, always turn off a generator when refueling it, and store gasoline, diesel fuel, or propane outside of living areas. Plug appliances directly into a generator or use an extension cord. Do not try to power a home's wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet.

A permanently installed standby generator for a home or business requires a transfer switch to isolate it from the power grid. The main breaker on an electric panel does not qualify as a transfer switch under the



Staying Safe: Portable Generators

Portable generators are useful when temporary or remote electric power is needed, but they can be hazardous. **The primary hazards? Carbon monoxide poisoning, electric shock or electrocution, and fire.**

National Electrical Code.

Transfer switches are critical for two reasons:

- They prevent the backflow of current across distribution lines that could electrocute lineworkers trying to restore power during an outage.

- They protect the generator from damage when electric service has been restored.

Installation of a standby generator should be done by a licensed electrician and must comply with the National Electrical Code as well as state and local codes.

OVERLOADING YOUR HOME'S ELECTRICAL SYSTEM COULD PUT YOUR FAMILY IN HARM'S WAY

With power strips and outlet converters (a multiple outlet "bar" plugged directly into an existing outlet), we can plug in multiple items in or near the same outlet.

But, like eating a whole box of chocolates, just because we can do something, doesn't mean we should.

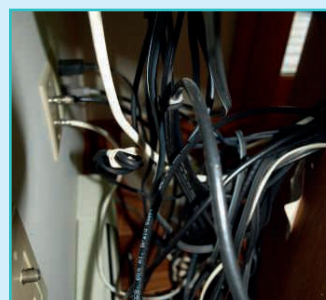
Just like chocolate consumed in excess can overload your body with too many calories, attempting to draw too much power from an outlet can overload your home's electrical system. Depending on how your home is wired, you may get away with it — or you may not. If too much current is drawn, usually a circuit breaker would trip or fuses would blow, but this is

never guaranteed.

The results of overloading a circuit could range from a damaged appliance to starting a fire. That is because when too much current flows thorough a circuit, things can overheat. Whether it is a wire or any other part along the electrical path, excess heat can cause serious problems.

Renville-Sibley Co-op Power and Safe Electricity remind you of the following electrical safety tips to help prevent overloading a circuit:

- Do not plug too many things in one outlet, extension cord, power strip, multi-outlet device or outlets on the same circuit.
- Look for loose connections



or damaged or corroded wires, which can also cause an overload.

- If you continually upgrade your home with more electrical demands (lighting, appliances, electronics and so on), your home's circuits may not be able to handle the increased load.
- Plug in a space heater to a dedicated outlet (with nothing else plugged in) and do not

plug a space heater into an extension cord.

- Major appliances (e.g., refrigerator, stove, washing machine) should be plugged into their own outlet since they draw a lot of power. For smaller appliances, do not plug more than two into one outlet.
- Know how much power you draw on an outlet or circuit; some experts recommend no more than 1,500 watts per outlet or circuit.
- Consult a qualified electrician to assess your home's electrical system, especially if you have an older home.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Powering Up After an Outage

When the power goes out, we expect it to be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm or natural disaster causes widespread damage, extended outages may result. Our line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark:

1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines:

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

2. Distribution Substation:

A substation can serve hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself or if problems exist further down the line.

3. Main Distribution Lines:

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

4. Tap Lines:

If local outages persist, supply lines (also known as tap lines) are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

5. Individual Homes:

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issue.



Underwriters Laboratories Inc., (UL) sets safety standards for various products. The UL mark appears on billions of products globally.

A MATTER OF TRUST AND SAFETY

The UL symbol marks safety of products for consumers across the globe

Brenda Kleinjan

Contributing Writer

Have you ever examined the hairdryer you use each morning? How about the coffee pot or the cords of your cell phone charger? Chances are they bear a circle with an “UL” inside. If not, they probably should.

That UL symbol is not a talisman but rather an indicator that the product used has been tested and is designed to operate as intended safely.

“When people see that UL mark on the product when they’re shopping – when they see that mark of safety – they know they can trust it has been certified by a third-party organization as safe,” said Jonette Herman, a Standards Engineer/Project Manager for Underwriters Laboratories Inc., based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.

Herman, a South Dakota native, develops safety standards. UL maintains more than 1,600 safety standard documents that define how they test and certify that a product is safe.

As an organization, Underwriters Laboratories is dedicated to fostering safe living and working conditions to people throughout the world.



“We do that through science and hazard-based safety engineering,” said Herman. Simplified, Herman says they look at an object and determine where the hazards might be.

“I grew up in Pierre. In high school, I always thought I’d be good at making sure that things work the way they should,” said Herman. That led her to the University of Minnesota where she pursued a degree in electrical engineering.

“I remember looking at my hairdryer and seeing that UL mark and wondering what it was about. After college, I moved out to North Carolina and found that UL was located there,” Herman said.

That was 27 years ago. Since then Herman has worked on making products from chainsaws to appliances to motors and batteries safer.

“Several years ago, I worked on the chainsaw standards. We were finding a lot of those injuries were due to fatigue and the operators not wearing personal protective equipment (PPE). That’s when accidents were occurring,” Herman said.

UL continued to analyze the equipment.

“Instruction manuals include important information that people should read,” Herman said. But, knowing that many people don’t read the manuals, UL seeks to ensure that “safety is built into the product as much as possible.”

“That’s part of that safety-based hazard approach. We

look at the product and how it’s used,” Herman said.

Worldwide, UL has more than 14,000 employees. In the non-profit portion of UL which Herman works, there are more than 200 people dedicated to research and education.

Today, Herman’s work focuses on wire positioning devices, motors and generators and energy storage, and energy distribution, among other areas.

“We’re constantly seeing new technologies introduced. All this innovation inherently creates risk.”



Jonette Herman
Standards
Engineer/Project
Manager
Underwriters
Laboratories, Inc.



Underwriters Laboratories

More than 400 panels and committees work with UL in developing the standards for various products. The panels and committees are comprised of an array of stakeholders including producers of the products, regulators and consumers.

“It’s important for consumers to educate themselves. How do they know a new product is safe? Looking for that certification on the product is helpful to the consumers.”

UL is working to make lithium ion battery storage safer. Herman cautioned that excessive damage to a product with a lithium ion battery, such as caused by repeated dropping, could cause it to go into thermal runaway, causing it to overheat and potentially catch fire.



Human trafficking in South Dakota is showing signs of growing due in part to the coronavirus pandemic. This crime impacts individuals across the demographic and geographic spectrum.

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

Coronavirus emboldens trafficking predators

By Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Becky Rasmussen is clear in her contention that her vocation is a clarion call coming straight from her Creator.

In her heart and in her soul, Rasmussen carries a deep concern for those who find themselves victimized by human trafficking - whether it comes in the form of labor or sexual exploitation.

Rasmussen, executive director of Call to Freedom in Sioux Falls, traces the path that led her from a partially satisfying professional position to running a program dedicated to steering victims clear of their perpetrators and helping survivors rebuild their lives.

The journey began when she received what she describes as a direct and unambiguous message from a higher power.

At the time, she was signed on as a volunteer for the program that later became the present-day Call to Freedom non-profit organization. When one of the program leaders appealed to her to take the reins, Rasmussen listened carefully for that still small voice.

"I'm a prayer girl. I'm the type who steps out in faith and sees what kind of plan God has in store for me," she said. "I was prompted by prayer to get involved."

Rasmussen led the program's transition to full non-profit status, attained in January of 2016, and managed to hold down two jobs along the way. Today, Call to Freedom boasts a contingent of 18 staff members - including eight case managers - who facilitate a wide range of services such as victim identification, safety assessment, housing, transportation, medical care, counseling trauma/addiction, education/employment and legal advocacy.

It's a prescribed glide path to freedom that includes the following key components: victim referral, emergency assistance, intake

Youth of all ages can become a target.



and assessment, implementation and referrals, long-term care and self-sufficiency.

Marissa's Housing Project

It was during a trip to the Sturgis Rally the previous year that Rasmussen discovered her true calling. When speaking to civic groups, she often recounts the story of a young woman named Marissa to illustrate the plight of those who fall prey to trafficking and find themselves in the clutches of an oppressor.

Amid all the frenetic fervor of the 75th anniversary of Sturgis, she noticed a young girl who wore a certain disturbing look on her face. Rasmussen immediately recognized it as the terrified, distance gaze of teenager who had unwillingly slipped under the power of a dark and sinister force.

There was a quick and strong connection.

"Something just prompted me to go up to her and introduce myself," she recalled. "In two minutes she was crying and was scared and was looking around. She said she couldn't talk and she

said I had no idea of how horrible her day had been.”

Working in conjunction with the program Free International, Rasmussen tapped into a database later that day and discovered Marissa was one of 117 girls in the region between the ages of 12 and 18 who were identified as victims. In fact, the teen was reported by family members as missing on two separate occasions, once in October of 2014 and then in May of 2015.

Rasmussen pointed out that the fact Marissa had been reported as missing twice is part of a known cycle of reverting back into victimhood and is a result of traffickers who use a variety of techniques designed to keep their subjects under their control. Some of those nefarious tactics include depriving the victim of housing and financial resources, separating them from their families and devising ways to push them into a legal morass with the judicial system.

The day after finding out more information about Marissa’s background, Rasmussen felt convicted to find her and offer to help. She waded into the massive crowds at Sturgis and went on a determined quest to find the troubled teen.

As Rasmussen describes it, locating Marissa once again set the wheels in motion for the formation of the Call to Freedom non-profit and also the creation of the Marissa Housing Project.

The Marissa Housing Project is a seven-unit apartment complex that provides a safe haven for victims who receive the support, stability and separation from their perpetrators necessary to achieve

“It’s a problem that’s proliferating.”
Becky Rasmussen



long-term success and integration back into society.

Coronavirus Impact

Like many other areas in the post-Covid world, the pandemic has changed the dynamic when it comes to human trafficking. And not in a positive way.

In fact, Rasmussen noted, the impact of the pandemic is creating a situation that has even more traffickers crouching low in the weeds, just waiting for a prime opportunity to pounce.

The financial stress and economic hardship that comes as a consequence of a locked down community only compounds problems for those already susceptible to captivity and emboldens those set on exploiting others.

As the unemployment rolls expand, fraudulent offers of modeling contracts, high-wage processing plant positions and other means of employment look more enticing to those facing financial ruin.

Adding to the problem is the fact that at the same time the potential for trafficking is increasing, services have been more scant. There is a statewide network of safe places where victims can receive assistance in Mobridge, Pierre, Rapid City, Pine Ridge Reservation, Sioux Falls, Watertown, Winner and Yankton.

However, most of those services are currently operating with limited resources

and are working to build back up to full strength when possible.

“It’s a problem that’s proliferating as we see our shelter numbers declining and resources designed to help are struggling,” Rasmussen lamented. “It’s important, especially now, that if a recruiter comes up to you and offers a job opportunity that sounds too good to be true, stay away. Be aware of those tactics.”

She pointed out that pornographers are blatantly attempting to capitalize on the pandemic - and consequently creating more victims - by offering “free 30-day memberships” on pornography websites.

One of the more popular websites, Porn Hub, has seen a 12 percent increase in activity over the past few months.

“We see that where there is pornography, especially child pornography, there is human trafficking,” she said.

How to Help

Recognizing the signs of trafficking can go a long way toward addressing the problem, Rasmussen said. Because human trafficking impacts all levels of society across

**IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER,
PLEASE ASK FOR HELP.**

NHTRC

1-888-373-7888

Call 24 hours a day,
7 days a week.
Confidential.

NATIONAL
HUMAN TRAFFICKING
RESOURCE CENTER

Text HELP to
233733 (BeFree)

Open 2pm-10pm CST

CALL 911 if you are in an emergency.



Trafficking victims suffer the pain of separation and despair.

every demographic and geographic profile, many subtle indications can go unnoticed.

“We see problems in farming communities as well as population centers throughout the state,” she said. “It happens to the poor and the middle-class alike. Everyone needs to stay on the lookout for the signs.”

Those interested in supporting Call to Freedom’s mission can contribute in a number of ways, including purchasing a Freedom Candle, direct monetary donations, in-kind donations of hygiene and household products and volunteering.

Visit www.calltofreedom.org to find out more about the organization’s mission.

Register to Win!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

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

August 4-6

Minnesota Farmfest
28269 Hwy 67, Argon, MN
800-877-1177
www.ideagroup.com/farmfest

September 3-5

South Dakota State Fair:
Perfect Vision of Fun,
1060 3rd St. SW, Huron, SD
800-529-0900
www.sdstatefair.com

July 3, 18, 25 and August 1, 22

The Murder of Miss Kitty
Comedy Mystery Dinner
Theater, Holiday Inn Express
& Suites, Deadwood, SD,
605-580-5799

June 19, 26 and July 3, 10

River City Friday Nights, 6
to 10 p.m., Live music, beer
garden, vendors, food trucks,
games and activities, Main
Street, Chamberlain, SD,
605-683-9051

June 27

Railroad Day, Prairie Village,
Madison, SD, 800-693-3644

June 28

Variety Show, Prairie Village,
Madison, SD, 800-693-3644

July 18-19

Charles Mix Saddle Club
Fourth Annual SDRA Rodeo,
Geddes, SD, 605-680-1580

July 21-25

98th Annual Days of '76 PRCA
Rodeo, Arena, Deadwood,
SD, 1-888-838-BULL,
www.DAYSOF76.com

Your Phone Number: _____

Your E-mail Address: _____



July 3:

Independence Day celebrations at
Mount Rushmore National Memorial
www.nps.gov/moru/planyourvisit/independence-day-events.htm

Photo courtesy: travelsouthdakota.com

July 23-24

Jr. Miss Rodeo South Dakota
Pageant, The Lodge and Days
of '76 Rodeo, Deadwood, SD,
605-641-8604,
jrmisrsd@gmail.com

July 24-26

Catfish Derby Days, Franklin,
MN, 507-557-2259

July 24-25

Senior Games, Brookings,
SD, Contact Traci Saugstad at
605-692-4492

July 26

15th Annual Car Show
Langford, SD, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
605-493-6597

July 31-August 1

Senior Games, Yankton,
SD, Contact Kristi Hauer at
605-665-4685

July 31-August 1

Plein Air & Arts in the Garden,
Wessington Springs, SD,
605-354-3826

August 1

Rockin' Ribfest BBQ
Competition, Wessington
Springs, SD, 605-505-1135

August 1

Foothills Classic, Wessington
Springs, SD, 605-350-1687

August 8-9

Threshing Show, Twin Brooks,
SD, www.threshingshow.com

August 8-10

Red Power Round Up,
Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,
605-460-0197

August 22

World of Outlaw Sprint Car
Races plus Wissota MWM,
Dakota State Fair Speedway,
Huron, SD, 605-352-4848

September 7

Hidewood Valley Steam
Threshing Show, 1 p.m.,
47326 183rd Ave., Clear Lake,
SD, 605-881-8405

September 12-13

Fall Harvest Festival,
Delmont, SD, 605-928-3792,
www.twinriversoldiron.org

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.