

# Cooperative Connections



Lone Fejfar welcomes veterans to Operation Black Hills Cabin in Custer as a place of healing and restoration

**A Healing Place  
for Veterans**

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**Co-ops and the  
S.D. National  
Guard**

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# October is National Co-op Month



Lenae Wordes

lwordes@renville-sibley.coop

As an electric cooperative, our top priority is to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the consumer-members we serve. Because we are a cooperative, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local community. I like the word local. The adjective definition of the word means belonging or relating to a particular area or neighborhood. Local also means your electric cooperative. You belong to Renville-Sibley because it is made up of you and your neighbors; you own the cooperative.

October is National Co-op Month and it makes sense to use this opportunity to recognize and celebrate the value of belonging to a cooperative family. On Aug. 26, 1938, Renville-Sibley's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws were approved and adopted. At that time the rural community was talking about the lights they could see in the city but didn't have themselves. They weren't likely to get those modern conveniences because no company saw a profit in stringing wires to power a few light bulbs in a remote farmhouse. So, the local farmers took matters into their own hands. They visited their neighbors, pooled the \$5 startup fees and organized a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative called Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.

Today there are around 900 electric co-ops providing electricity to more than 19 million businesses, homes, schools and farms. They cover more than half the land in the United States and employ 71,000 people. Overall, electric cooperatives invest \$12 billion a year in their local economies. The largest electric cooperative serves nearly 350,000

members and the smallest 113 members. Renville-Sibley serves 1,882 connected consumer-members. Another way to look at the variety of cooperatives is by the number of members served by each mile of power line. The co-op with the densest population serves 78 members for each mile of line. The most remote co-op averages less than one person per mile of line. Renville-Sibley serves 1.81 consumer-members per mile of line.

Serving these members became more of a challenge in the recent months with the COVID-19 virus. Renville-Sibley, along with other cooperatives, has been challenged to operate differently to ensure the reliability of your power supply. Groups of employees were isolated from each other so if one fell ill with COVID-19, only the employees working directly with that person would need to be quarantined. This procedure would allow us to continue to provide uninterrupted service to our members and also protect our employees. In the office, we closed the doors to the public as there is not enough space in the lobby to maintain a 6-foot distance. Members are encouraged to call the office to schedule a time to stop in or to ring the doorbell if at the office and we will welcome them in provided no other visitors are in the lobby at the time. These steps were taken to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members. We think these measures were the prudent course of action during this pandemic.

Renville-Sibley cares about our members and this community - because we belong to this neighborhood too. That's what it means to be a local electric cooperative.

Then. Now. Always.  
We're proud to power your life.  
October is National Co-op Month.



#PowerOn

**Renville-Sibley, along with other cooperatives, has been challenged to operate differently to ensure the reliability of your power supply.**

# 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  
Amy Ervin – Consumer Accounts Representative  
Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman  
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](http://www.renville-sibley.coop)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## Preparing for the Big Hunt? Consider Electrical Safety Too

As you prepare for hunting season, keep in mind that along with general hunting safety, electrical safety should also be top of mind.

You might be preoccupied and excited about the big hunt, but be sure to look up and out for power lines. Never place a tree stand near a power line. Contact with the power line, utility pole, or related equipment can alter the path to ground, sending electricity through anyone or anything that comes too close or in direct contact with the power source. (Even coming within 10 feet can cause an arc, transferring energy from the power line/source to an object or person.)

In addition, do not shoot near or toward power lines, utility poles, transformers or substations. Stray bullets or pellets could damage equipment, possibly interrupting electric service. Even more concerning, they could drop a power line to the ground, causing a hazardous scenario: those who get within 50 feet of the downed line could be shocked or electrocuted. #613400

Renville-Sibley Co-op Power and Safe Electricity remind hunting enthusiasts of these electrical safety tips:



- Familiarize yourself with the area before heading out to hunt. Take note of power lines and equipment, especially when hunting in densely wooded areas.
- Observe all signs or postings that advise electrical safety, especially when scouting out a location for your tree stand.
- Do not use power poles to support a tree stand.
- Do not locate a tree stand near a power line or pole.
- Be in the habit of looking up and out for power lines and do not come within 10 feet of an overhead line or pole when setting up or taking down a stand.
- Never climb a utility pole.

Please report any damage to a line or other related equipment to us so that we can address it. Although we perform routine maintenance, damage may not be noticed for weeks or months unless an outage occurs due to the vast amount of lines that cover our service area.

Of course, always take the time to observe general hunting safety measures as well. Stay safe out there!

For more information about safety around power lines and other sources of electricity, go to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



Never attach deer stands to power poles.

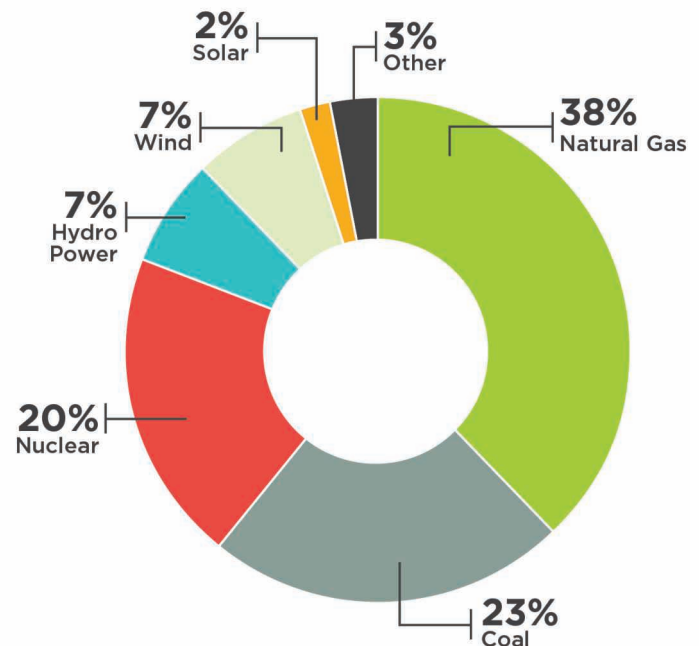
# Enjoy an energy-efficient feast this Thanksgiving

New electrical appliances use far less energy in your home than older ones, but that doesn't mean you should skimp on energy-efficient behavior in the kitchen.

During the frantic holiday season, making the simplest changes while cooking can save plenty of energy and money.

- There's usually no need to preheat the oven, especially if the food you're cooking - like a turkey or a ham - will be in it for a long time.
- Avoid opening the oven door to check on food. Instead, turn on the oven light and peer through the window to make sure your pumpkin pie or turkey isn't burning to a crisp. Opening the oven door - even for just a second or two - can drop the temperature inside the oven by 25 degrees.
- Place several items in the oven at once. All food will cook thoroughly if you leave enough room around pies or casseroles for air to flow.
- Electric ovens retain heat even after you turn them off, so it's safe to turn them off several minutes before a recipe's time is up. Electric stovetops work the same way: The metal element will keep cooking for several minutes after you turn it off.
- Choose glass or ceramic pans for the oven. They let you set the temperature 25 degrees lower than metal pans do.
- Match the pan size to the size of the stovetop burner so you don't waste heat. Just a 2-inch difference between pan and burner can waste 40 percent of the generated heat.
- Zap baked potatoes and vegetables in the microwave instead of simmering them on the stovetop. Microwaves use significantly less electricity than a stove or oven.
- Involve everyone in cooking. Leave the electric mixer in the cupboard and let the kids stir the cake batter by hand and recruit someone to chop the veggies instead of tossing them into a food processor. The experience might save some electricity and make everyone proud of contributing to the meal.

Keep these handy and helpful tips in mind as you prepare to entertain family and friends in your home this holiday season.



## Powerful Energy Sources

Nationally, electric co-ops and other utilities use a variety of fuels to power American homes and businesses. This diverse fuel mix supplies co-op members with the safe, reliable and affordable power they depend on.

## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



### "Keep Indoors!"

**Grace Austin, 7 years old**

Grace is a member of West River Electric Association based in Rapid City. She encourages readers, "During a storm, all kids and pets should be inside. So, don't go outside. It's dangerous."

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.



# Savory Slow-Cook Selections

## Slow-Cooker Zucchini Soup

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 ½ lbs. sweet Italian sausage            | 2 tsp. salt                              |
| 2 c. ½-inch celery pieces                 | 1 tsp. white sugar                       |
| 2 lbs. zucchini, cut into ½-inch slices   | 1 tsp. dried oregano                     |
| 2 (28 oz.) cans diced tomatoes (or fresh) | 1 tsp. Italian seasoning                 |
| 2 green peppers, cut into ½-inch slices   | 1 tsp. dried basil                       |
| 1 c. chopped onion                        | ¼ tsp. garlic powder                     |
|   | 6 T. grated Parmesan cheese, or to taste |

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook and stir sausage in the hot skillet until browned and crumbly, 5-7 minutes; drain and discard grease. Mix celery into cooked sausage; cook and stir until celery is softened, about 10 minutes. Combine sausage mixture, zucchini, tomatoes, bell peppers, onion, salt, sugar, oregano, Italian seasoning, basil and garlic powder in a slow cooker. Cook on low for 4-6 hours. Garnish each serving with 1 T. Parmesan cheese. Note: Water is not needed in this recipe.

**Shelly Goetz, Sioux Falls, SD**

## Crock Pot Corn

- |                                    |                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 (16 oz.) bags frozen corn        | 6 T. sugar                |
| 8 oz. cream cheese (but in chunks) | 6 T. water                |
|                                    | ½ cup butter or margarine |

Put in crockpot on high for two hours or low for four. Stir every once in a while. Salt and pepper to taste.

**Helen Gregory, Lemmon, SD**

## Spaghetti Corn

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 can cream style corn   | 1 onion, diced         |
| 1 can whole corn         | 1 cup shredded cheddar |
| 2 cups spaghetti, broken | 1 stick butter, melted |

Break spaghetti into 2-inch pieces. Do not drain whole corn. Combine all ingredients. Pour into buttered casserole dish. Bake uncovered for 30 mins. at 350. Cover and put back in oven for 20 mins. OR place in crock pot for 2 hours. OR Cook on stove for 10 mins. on lowest heat, removing for 10 minute intervals.

**Jane Ham, Rapid City, SD**

## BBQ Steakhouse Chili

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 2 T. oil   | beans, rinsed  |
| 1 lb. beef top round steak, cut into 1/2-inch pieces | 2-1/2 cups undrained canned no-salt-added diced tomatoes |
| 1 lb. extra-lean ground beef                         | 1 bottle (18 oz.) KRAFT Hickory Smoke Barbecue Sauce     |
| 1 onion, finely chopped                              | ¾ cup KRAFT Shredded Cheddar Cheese                      |
| ¼ cup A1 Dry Rub Bold Original                       |  |
| 3 cloves garlic, minced                              |  |
| 2 cans (16 oz. each) kidney                          |  |

Heat oil in large skillet on medium. Add next five ingredients; stir. Cook 10 min. or until meat is evenly browned, stirring frequently. Spoon into slow cooker sprayed with cooking spray. Add all remaining ingredients except cheese; stir. Cover with lid. Cook on low 7 to 8 hours (or on high 4 to 5 hours). Serve topped with cheese.

**Provided by Kraft Heinz**

## Chicken Cacciatore

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1/2 cup KRAFT Zesty Italian                               | 1 green pepper, cut in strips                  |
| 1 tsp. dried oregano leaves                               | 1/2 lb. sliced mushrooms                       |
| 2 lbs. mixed boneless skinless chicken breasts and thighs | 1-1/2 c. CLASSICO Tomato and Basil Pasta Sauce |
|   | 3 c. rotini pasta, uncooked                    |

Mix dressing/oregano in pot sprayed with cooking spray. Add chicken; coat both sides of each piece with dressing mixture. Top with vegetables and pasta sauce; cover with lid. Cook on low 6-8 hours (or high 4-6 hours). About 15 min. before serving, cook pasta, no salt. Drain. Serve topped with chicken and vegetables.

**Provided by Kraft Heinz**

Please send your favorite holiday 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.

# Are You Interested in a New Adventure?

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is beginning to plan for the 83rd Annual meeting of the membership that will be held March 25, 2021 at the Island Ballroom in Bird Island Minnesota. Three (3) directors will be elected during that time, each for a 3-year term.

The First District, consisting of the townships of Cornish, Severance and Moltke in Sibley County; the townships of Ridgely and West Newton in Nicollet County; and the townships of Cairo, Wellington, Martinsburg, Camp, Bandon and Palmyra in Renville County is represented by Alan Neyers, Whitey Hinderman and Kylie Rieke. Alan Neyer's term will expire in 2021.

The Second District, consisting of the townships of Honner and Delhi in Redwood County; and the townships of Beaver Falls, Flora, Henryville, Birch Cooley, Norfolk, Melville, Bird Island and Kingman in Renville County is represented by Helen Ruebel, Wayland Zaske and Matt Haubrich. Helen Ruebel's term will expire in 2021.

The Third District, consisting of the townships of Roseland and Holland in Kandiyohi County; Rheideland 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. Gary Peterson's term will expire in 2021.

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:

1. 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.

2. Attend regular and special Board meetings of the Cooperative.

3. 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 Monday 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 meeting 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 Jan. 4 for further information.



## Renville-Sibley Electric Cooperative seeks Nominating Committee Members

Renville-Sibley is looking for members who would like to serve on the cooperative's nominating committees. Nominating committees (one for each director district) will be meeting in January and will be looking for candidates to run for the board of directors.

Candidates chosen by the nominating committee will be put on the ballot. A member may also appear on the ballot by petition of 10 or more members residing in such district. The candidates for each district will be voted for at the annual meeting.

If you would like to be on one of the Nominating Committees, if you would like to be considered as a candidate, or if you know of someone that you would like to be considered as a candidate, please let us know by calling Lenae at 800-826-2593.

## Three Energy Efficient Appliances to Consider for Your Kitchen

With more people staying at home, many of us are spending more time in the kitchen. Whether you're roasting a chicken, blending your favorite smoothie or baking sourdough bread, kitchen appliances are used nearly every day.

Using energy efficient appliances can help you save energy over the long run and ultimately lower your monthly bills. For any home chef interested in new, electric gadgets for the kitchen (while also being energy efficient), there are several options.

Stoves consume a great deal of energy. One of the most energy efficient forms of cooktop cooking is with an induction cooktop. Electromagnetic energy used in induction cooktops is directly transferred to the pan, helping to reduce cooking times, which saves energy. Gas stovetops are generally less energy efficient than any other type of electric cooktop. This is because a significant amount of energy from the gas stovetop is not transferred directly to the food, instead heating the surrounding air and warming up your kitchen. Since induction cooktops use a magnetic field, you can touch the stove without burning yourself. It's important to note induction cooktops only work with compatible magnetic cookware.

A cup of morning coffee is a daily ritual for many. This makes the hot water kettle an essential part of the kitchen.

Electric kettles are more energy efficient than cooktop kettles, since the heating component underneath the kettle directly heats the water. The electric kettle's automatic shutoff feature further helps to reduce energy and prevents overheating.

smarter. Some microwaves can even scan barcodes of microwaveable meals and heat them accordingly. Others can be paired with an Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant and react to voice commands. Many of these additional features are



Another benefit with electric kettles is that you can choose the exact temperature to heat the water, which brings out the best flavor in any tea or coffee. Overall, electric kettles are more convenient, efficient and portable than their cooktop counterparts.

Microwaves are typically the most efficient way to cook or heat food, and state-of-the-art microwaves are becoming much

becoming increasingly common among smart home devices to provide extra comfort and convenience.

Kitchen appliances aren't replaced often, so be sure to do your research before you purchase any new gadgets. Different types of products provide varying benefits, and understanding your needs on the front end will help you make the right choice.



Operation Black Hills Cabin is a healing place for U.S. military veterans in Custer.

# HEALING PLACES

## Organizations cater to military veterans in need

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

*"After 21 years of learning to live with the scars, the limitations, the tremors and the nightmares...I can honestly say this experience has filled my heart with fresh hope." - Veteran Jason Cooper*

U.S. military veteran Jason Cooper needed some peace. He needed some quiet. He needed a reprieve from the rigors and stress of everyday life. So, Cooper gathered up his family and made the trip from his home in Kentucky to the Black Hills where he would find rest, relaxation and time for thoughtful contemplation.

Cooper and his crew spent a week-long vacation in a comfortable, cozy cabin in Custer as part of a project called Operation Black Hills Cabin (OBHC). Over the past 10 years, he and dozens of other wounded veterans have discovered a tranquil site to unwind and to enjoy the wide range of outdoor activities available in the area – all free of charge.

The program began as a service to provide veterans and their families with a free getaway and also as a means for organizers to express gratitude for the sacrifices made to protect freedom.

One of those founding organizers is Col. Marty Mahrt, a former Air Force pilot who joined the military in 1955 and flew 88 missions through two tours of duty in Vietnam. During his first tour, Mahrt was assigned to attack a munitions arsenal at Yen Bai Province. After releasing his ordnance and pulling away, Mahrt's F105 Thunderchief was hit in the right wing by enemy fire. The



Air Force veteran Col. Marty Mahrt is a founding board member of OBHC.

aircraft began a downward spiral, but Mahrt was able to eject and was soon rescued by a helicopter squadron and flown back to the U.S. for surgical treatment of a severe shoulder wound.

While Mahrt and his wife Colleen are usually on hand to greet the veteran visitors to OBHC, the guests rarely get to hear of Mahrt's combat experience. As he puts it, "They don't need to hear anything from me. They have their own problems. I just listen to them and let them know that we're here to help them."

Mahrt said that he was eager to join Pat and Jeff Baird when they began gathering local support for OBHC back in 2011.

"Just knowing a lot of people who didn't make it back, and seeing the wounded warriors coming back from Iraq, that was something that motivated us to get involved. You see these families, the whole structure of the family changes when a soldier



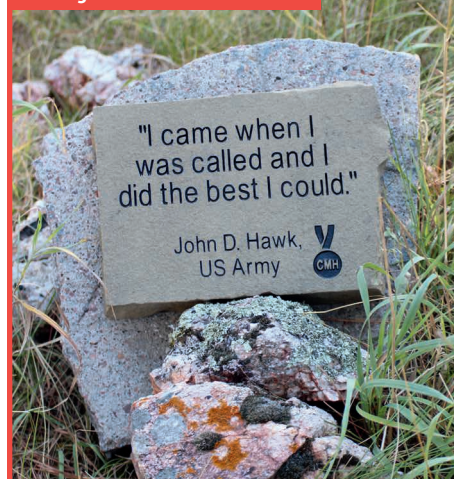


The Ranch Ministries in Blunt gives veterans an opportunity to hunt in one of the country's most prized pheasant harvesting territories.

and breadwinner is wounded and the wife has to take over," he said.

Mahrt points out that while the project isn't necessarily about providing psychological therapy for the veterans, there are emotional connections made in the process. He said a significant part of the program is the local community's participation. Business leaders and individuals provide free services or deep discounts for meals, entertainment, local tourist attractions and outdoor activities. The veterans also receive a gift card loaded with "Custer Cash" to help offset travel costs.

The Trail of Healing at Operation Black Hills Cabin has a series of messages etched in stone.



"We meet the families and welcome them," Mahrt said. "Sometimes the emotions get the best of me when I present them with their Visa card and they start crying and give me a hug. Sometimes you get emotional."

OBHC Board Secretary Ione Fejfar said the support of the community and way the residents of Custer treat the veterans and their families is part of the strength of the program.

"The people of Custer are absolutely wonderful," she said. "They really roll out the red carpet for them and everywhere our veterans go, they are treated with respect and honor and friendship. Between the cabin and the town, this is a very healing place."

She said every veteran who visits the cabin is asked to compose a brief letter of gratitude to the community that's published in the local newspaper.

## Oahe Electric Lends a Hand

The Ranch Ministries was founded by Marine veteran Ken Korkow on 540 acres in Blunt, roughly 20 miles east of Pierre. It's a faith-based retreat center he created to offer military veterans an open space to take part in team-building exercises, outdoor hunting and shooting sports, dirt track racing, firearms safety training, horseback riding and more.

According to Korkow, there's also a lot of bonding among brothers and spiritual growth that takes place along with all of the fun and games.

"We share the story of Christ, the one who heals and gives us purpose," said Korkow, who received citations for the Navy Cross and the Purple Heart.

Korkow explained the center is not only

open to veterans but to surrounding communities as well. Youth groups and adults have visited to participate in firearm safety and team-building exercises.

"A lot of people come here to get away from their everyday lives," he said. "We take care of the needs of our veterans, but we also depend on support and volunteers from the community for our success and we open our doors to those who want to come here and find fulfillment."



Liz and Ken Korkow provide a place where veterans can go to seek spiritual healing.

One of those supporting organizations is Oahe Electric, which has responded to requests to provide material and manpower to meet the ministry's needs.

According to Oahe Electric Member Services Manager Russ Hohn, "The Ranch has had a meaningful impact in our community and we've been able to give back through our Operation Round Up program, which is funded by our members. It's a prime example of our cooperative and our members demonstrating one of the seven cooperative principles: Concern for Community."

## Attention Members Impacted by COVID-19?

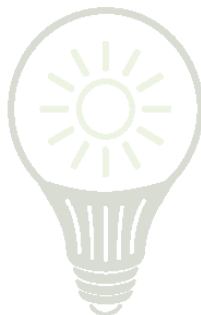
Renville-Sibley encourages members to contact the office to make arrangements if they are not able to pay their electric bill in full due to the impact of COVID-19. Renville-Sibley employees will work with members to enter into reasonable payment arrangements based on their individual circumstances.



### Energy Efficiency

#### Tip of the Month

Keep cold air out to save energy. Seal air leaks around pipes and any gaps around chimneys and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.



## Where's the Number?

Last month Christopher Kane did not find his member number in the newsletter. The credit will increase \$15 to a value of \$30. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by Nov. 3, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

## Outage Report

Affecting 10 members or more:

Date: 08-05-20  
Time off: 9:00 am; Time on: 9:24 am  
Substation: Emmet  
Cause: Scheduled

Date: 08-06-20  
Time off: 9:00 am; Time on: 12:18 pm  
Substation: Troy  
Cause: Scheduled

Date: 08-08-20  
Time off: 2:53 pm; Time on: 6:08 pm  
Substation: Emmet  
Cause: Lightning

Date: 08-08-20  
Time off: 2:59 pm; Time on: 8:35 pm  
Substation: Birch Cooley  
Cause: Tree

Date: 08-08-20  
Time off: 3:52 pm; Time on: 4:45 pm  
Substation: Emmet  
Cause: Scheduled

Date: 08-19-20  
Time off: 9:00 am; Time on: 10:39 am  
Substation: Emmet  
Cause: Scheduled

Date: 08-31-20  
Time off: 12:36 am; Time on: 1:20 am  
Substation: Birch Cooley  
Cause: Lightning

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

## 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, P.O. 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

For Sale: Used pingpong table, plus accessories - \$50 or B.O.

LuAnn Nere, Danube, MN, 320-826-2447



# September Board Meeting Highlights

The September board meeting was held on Monday, Sept. 28 at 7 a.m. via Zoom. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Newville, Gene Allex, Cindy Mertens and Lenae Wordes.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the August 28 board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of August
- Safety report for September
- CFC District 6 candidate selection
- CFC Nominating Committee approval
- Basin Electric Annual Meeting voting delegates
- 990 Report
- Breitbach General Contractor Contract
- Fitzner Realtor Agreement

The board reviewed:

- Total new members

- Capital credits transferred

Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:

- High level Statement of Operations review – YTD through August (unaudited)
- Organization activities
- Facilities update
- East River update
- Basin Electric update
- NRECA update
- MREA update
- Linecrew work in progress, equipment update and outage update
- Accounts receivable
- Annual meeting minutes

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

## Notice:

**The October board meeting will be held on Monday, October 26 at 8 a.m. The November board meeting will be held on Monday, Nov. 30 at 8 a.m.**

## Comparative Report

	Current YTD through August 30, 2020	One Year Ago YTD through August 30, 2019	10 Years Ago YTD through August 30, 2010
Average # of Consumers	1,882	1,882	1,929
kWhs purchased	104,721,467	94,189,310	106,290,749
Cost of purchased power	\$6,572,837.36	\$5,518,470.22	\$4,309,494.37

## Mission Statement

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

## Operation Round Up

The next meeting of the Operation Round Up Board of Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 10. Application deadline is Dec. 1. Information on the Operation Round Up program along with an application for donation can be found at [renville-sibley.coop](http://renville-sibley.coop) under the Your Co-op tab.

## Heat Credit Begins

Members who have electric heat (metered with a separate sub-meter) pay only \$0.06/kWh for energy used to heat your home/shop during the months of October through April. This lower rate will be reflected starting with the November statement. If you have a separate breaker for your heat meter, please remember to turn it on or you will be billed at the regular energy rate. If the majority of your home is heated with electric heat and you are **not** on our metered electric heat rate, please contact the office for more information.



The South Dakota National Guard has been responsive in helping co-ops restore power to their members after natural disasters.

# S.D. NATIONAL GUARD

## Co-ops, SDNG work together to meet challenges

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

The South Dakota National Guard and the state's rural electric cooperatives share a synergistic relationship that goes back for decades. Both the Guard and the co-ops are highly skilled, highly motivated and highly prepared to respond in an emergency situation and to deliver help when and where it's needed.

For cooperatives, the response typically centers around restoring power after a natural disaster so that members can return their lives and their business operations back to normal as soon as possible. The state's 28 electric co-ops are part of a state, regional and national mutual assistance agreement that assures help will arrive when needed, and that, in turn, help will be dispatched upon request.

Cooperative operations personnel throughout the state work in conjunction with the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) in Pierre to formulate and maintain an emergency work plan designed to help expedite the process of responding to a natural disaster.

According to SDREA Manager of Loss Control Services Mark Patterson, the more than 125,000 electric co-op consumers across South Dakota can rest assured their local power provider has the resources available to meet any and all challenges.

"We have a well-connected professional network of electric co-ops in South Dakota that's made up of exceptionally skilled linemen and supervisors who are absolutely the best in the business," Patterson said. "They have the experience they need to do the job as quickly and safely as possible, and they also have the resources at their disposal to rebuild the system and get the

power back on for our members who desperately need it."

Similarly, emergency preparedness is the South Dakota National Guard's stock in trade; although the Guard's scope of emergency response is quite broader. Not only do soldiers stand ready to be deployed to just about anywhere across the globe at a moment's notice, they also are trained to assist in a variety of stateside tasks.

The Guard's heroic work after the Rapid City Flood, The Spencer Tornado, the 1997 blizzards and the 2011 mass flooding are just a few active duty missions where the Guard came to the rescue to help save and protect life and property.

Most recently and most prominently, the Guard has been summoned to help contain and control politically-motivated



Co-op crews have relied on the National Guard to assist in power restoration efforts.





The National Guard and electric cooperatives share a commitment to serve the citizens of South Dakota, especially in stressful times.

violence and also deal with problems brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

After a coronavirus outbreak at Smithfield Farms in Sioux Falls made national headlines, the Guard deployed 25 ambulance teams - including four air support teams - and was recruited to conduct contact tracing in both Sioux Falls and Rapid City. Roughly 2,600 Smithfield Farms employees and their family members were tested for the virus with the assistance of National Guard personnel.

Gov. Kristi Noem expressed her appreciation for the work of the National Guard soldiers. "We knew they would be ready, they always are, but I don't want anyone to take for granted how blessed we are to have men and women in our South Dakota National Guard that continue to step up."

Lt. Col. Anthony Deiss, Director of Public Affairs for the South Dakota National Guard, recalls being personally involved in previous missions to help electric cooperative crews transport poles and other equipment, control work zones along roadways and pull vehicles out of wet, muddy ditches.

He said the soldiers take a great deal of pride in their work and approach their respective missions with the same commitment to serve as cooperative line crews demonstrate on a daily basis.

"We've had a tremendous partnership with the electric cooperatives when working alongside them to help respond to winter storms over the years. Our co-ops are on the front lines when providing power restoration during and after natural disasters, and they serve a critically important role in public health and safety. Anytime the SDNG is called up by the state to assist our co-ops in their mission, we look forward to the opportunity to support them."

"It's important for different state agencies and organizations to coordinate and work together during emergencies. These

relationships are vital to our state and communities to help quickly mitigate, respond and recover from these disasters. We provide a variety of resources to assist civil authorities to ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens."

Patterson of SDREA concluded: "I think this is one of the things that makes our state very unique, the sense that we all need to pull together, especially in a crisis. Neighbors helping neighbors...that's what our National Guard and our co-ops are all about."



The National Guard takes pride in helping electric co-ops reconstruct downed power lines and poles.



## Notice to Co-Generators

In order to comply with Minnesota Statutes 216B.164 and in compliance with RSCPA's adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, RSCPA is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers, who satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility. RSCPA is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the RSCPA Board.



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(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		0		0	
(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		0		0	
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(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		100		98	
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d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100)		94%		94%	
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18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner					Date 09/30/2020
I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).					



# Leadership Team Provides Update on New Facility Planning Project

The Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association Board of Directors and the facilities committee, which is made up of a cross-section of employees and board members, have agreed on the top three most suitable locations for a new office, garage, warehouse, and pole yard. Renville-Sibley hired Fitzner Real Estate & Land Co. to begin the process of negotiating with the current property owners for a minimum of a 10-acre plot of land.

As mentioned in previous articles, Breitbach Construction out of Elrosa will serve as the General Contractor, and Engan Associates Architects out of Willmar will create the project design. Engan will complete the building and

pole yard designs once the designated property is purchased.

The Renville-Sibley leadership team will be hosting in-person and virtual Zoom meetings in November and December for members interested in receiving an update on the facilities project. Shown at right is a list of scheduled dates and times for these meetings.

Please register by the day prior to the meeting you are interested in attending. If you would like to schedule a visit (in-house or Zoom) outside of these scheduled meetings, to discuss the facility or any other topic, please contact the office at 800-826-2593.

## Facility Meetings

### In-house:

Tuesday, November 3 – 8:30 a.m. to noon  
 Tuesday, November 17 – noon to 4:00 p.m.  
 Thursday, December 3 – 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
 Saturday, December 5 – 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
 Tuesday, December 15 – 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

### Zoom:

Thursday, November 5 – 8:30 a.m.  
 Tuesday, November 24 – 11:30 a.m.  
 Saturday, December 5 – 8:30 a.m.  
 Tuesday, December 8 – 3 p.m.  
 Thursday, December 17 – 6:30 p.m.

# Haubrich Earns CCD Certification

## Training Program Provides Foundation of Co-op Knowledge

Congratulations to Renville-Sibley Board Member Matt Haubrich for completing all of the required training courses to become a Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD). To receive this designation, Haubrich completed five courses and a learning assessment of each respective course.

These training courses are specially designed to provide the foundation of knowledge needed for effective leadership as a Renville-Sibley board member and are administered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association based in Arlington, VA.

Co-op board members take on a tremendous responsibility for providing leadership, direction and policy positions that are necessary for the organization's ongoing success on behalf of its members.

The courses contained in the program which Haubrich completed include:

- Strategic Planning
- Financial Decision Making
- Director Duties and Liabilities
- Understanding the Electric Business
- Board Roles and Relationships

Completing these courses demonstrates the commitment he has to the success of your cooperative. Congratulations Matt!



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

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**October 22**

Butte County CFEL Annual Christmas Fair, Newell City Hall, Newell, SD, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 605-456-9837

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**October 24**

Ladies Day Shopping Extravaganza, The Crossing Bar, Mina, SD, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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**October 29-30**

Helping with Horsepower's Phobia - A Haunted Trail, Reclamation Ranch, 40789 259th St., Mitchell, SD, 7-11 p.m. 605-770-2867

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**October 31-November 1**

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Assn. Sioux Falls Classic Gun Show, 3200 W Maple St. Sioux Falls, SD, 605-630-2199

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**November 1 and 15**

VFW Bingo, Wall Community Center, Wall, SD, 605-279-2663

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**November 6-8**

YFS Kids Fair, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD

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**November 7**

Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Fair, Dakota Christian School, Corsica, SD, 605-366-7940

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**November 7**

Fairburn Community Center Bazaar, Fairburn, SD, 5:30 p.m., 605-255-4807

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**November 7**

Silver Star Bazaar, Lake Norden Community Center, Lake Norden, SD, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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**November 7**

BH Meat Fest, Fundraiser for Shriner Patient Camps, BH Harley Davidson, Rapid City, SD, 605-415-3577

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**November 7**

Helping with Horsepower's RibFest, 4 p.m., Reclamation Ranch, Mitchell, SD, Contact mattcarter1421@gmail.com to register your team

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**November 11**

MasterChef Junior Live, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD

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**November 12**

Zonta Club of the BH Expo, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 14**

Winter Marketplace Pop Up, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 14**

Annual Holiday Extravaganza, Sisseton Area Merchants and Crafters, Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

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**November 17**

Baby Shark Live, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 20-21**

Holiday Arts Christmas Show, 112 E. 5th St. Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

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**November 21-22**

Winterfest: A Winter Arts Festival, 203 S. Washington St., Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-1557

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**November 27**

Black Friday Trap Shoot, Sioux Falls Izaak Walton League, 10:30 a.m., Lunch Available, 5000 North Oakview Place, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-332-9527

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**December 5**

Rapid City Garden Club's 59th Annual Wreath and Centerpiece Sale, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Lions' and Bridger Buildings, Central States Fairgrounds, Rapid City, SD, 605-343-0710

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**December 5**

Festival of Trees, Newell City Hall, Newell, SD, Admission: Two Cans of Non-Perishable Food Items Per Person, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**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.**