



Cooperative Connections

Winter Wonderland at Falls Park is a main attraction in Sioux Falls that draws visitors from far and near each year.

**COVID-19 Can't
Stop Christmas
from Coming**

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**Upgrade
Electronics to
Save Money**

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Renville-Sibley Board of Directors Approves Capital Credit Retirement



DeeAnne Newville, CEO

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Toll Free 800-826-2593

**As a member
of an electric
cooperative, you
invest in the
efficient operation
of your co-op.**

There are so many benefits that come with co-op membership, but perhaps one of the best benefits is capital credits. What are capital credits, you ask? At the end of each year, Renville-Sibley calculates its operating margin (or profit), which is the amount by which its income exceeded its expenses during the year. We then allocate the margin as “capital credits” to each member based on the amount of electricity they purchased throughout the year. Please see the article published in the September 2020 Cooperative Connections newsletter for more details on the 2019 margin that was allocated to the members.

When our board of directors determines it is financially feasible and prudent, and when we meet the financial requirements stated in our loan documents, we retire capital credits. This year, the board of directors approved a mid-year \$200,000 retirement that was given as a bill credit in June in an effort to relieve financial stress on members caused by the COVID-19 crisis. At the October board meeting, the board of directors of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association approved the disbursement of an additional \$400,000 retirement to be applied on the December statement. Checks will be issued to inactive members who have a capital credit balance in the years being retired. Roughly 1,470 members will receive a credit on their electric statement and approximately 640 inactive members will receive a check.

This retirement reflects the remainder of the 1997 and a portion of the 1998 allocations from East River Electric and a portion of the 2001 allocation from Basin Electric. East River and Basin Electric are our Generation and Transmission Cooperatives (G&Ts). Renville-Sibley will retire approximately 11 percent of the 2019 allocation.

You might wonder why we do this. As an electric cooperative, we are here to provide at-cost electric service. We are not here to make a profit, and we do not have shareholders. As a member of an electric cooperative, you invest in the efficient operation of your co-op. Unlike an investor-owned utility, we don't pay dividends or other amounts to shareholders who don't purchase electricity from us.

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

Common Capital Credits Questions:

What are capital credits?

An electric cooperative operates on an at-cost basis by annually “allocating” to each member, based upon the member's purchase of electricity and the operating revenue remaining at the end of the year. Later, as financial condition permits, these allocated amounts—capital credits—are retired. Capital credits represent the most significant source of equity for Renville-Sibley. Since a cooperative's members are also the people the co-op serves, capital credits reflect each member's ownership in, and contribution of capital to, the cooperative. This differs from dividends investor-owned utilities pay shareholders, who may or may not be customers of the utility.

(Continued on Page 14)

How Do Capital Credits Work?

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits.



Renville-Sibley

Cooperative Connections

(USPS 019-074)

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Web site: www.renville-sibley.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Scholar of the Month

Congratulations to Kassandra Piceno from Renville County West High School for being selected as the September Scholar of the Month. She was nominated because she has grown academically throughout her high school career and thinks outside of the box. She is a student who does the right thing whether people are paying attention or not and is always willing to lend a helping hand with no expectations in return. Renville-Sibley Co-op Power salutes Kassandra as the September Touchstone Energy Scholar of the month.



Kassandra Piceno, Renville County West High School

We would also like to congratulate Payton Chan from Renville County West High School for being selected as the October Scholar of the Month. He was nominated because he is a dedicated student and a talented participant in One-Act plays. He also demonstrates what it means to be a positive, active, and helpful part of the community. Renville-Sibley Co-op Power salutes Payton as the October Touchstone Energy Scholar of the month.

More information about the Scholar of the Month program can be found on our website www.renville-sibley.coop under the Customer Service tab.



Payton Chan, Renville County West High School

RECIPES NEEDED FOR THE

COUNTRY COOKIN' COOKBOOK

Your recipe could be featured in the 37th volume of East River Electric's Country Cookin' cookbook!

Submit recipes via email to ahall@eastriver.coop, fax to 605-256-8057, or contact your local cooperative for more information. Submission deadline is Tuesday, January 12, 2021.

Decorate Your Home Safely

It's time to deck those halls - safely. More than 800 home fires are caused by Christmas and holiday decorations each year, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

An additional 170 home fires are caused by Christmas trees each year. Keep these tips in mind for a safe holiday season:

- Carefully inspect all electrical decorations before you use them. Cracked or damaged sockets and loose or exposed wires can cause serious shock or start a fire.
- Make sure all extension cords and electrical decorations are being used properly - indoor-rated cords indoors, outdoor-rated cords for outside decorations.
- Inspect extension cords for damage and discard (not repair) any that are not completely intact.
- Never mount or support light strings in a way that might damage the cord's insulation.
- Outdoor electrical lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters.
- Exercise caution when decorating near power lines. Keep yourself and your ladder at least 10 feet from power lines.
- Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices. They can overheat and cause a fire.
- Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights together.
- Water your Christmas tree daily.
- Keep all decorations at least three feet away from heating equipment.
- Avoid using candles. The flames are just too dangerous with all the flammable decorations around.
- Purchase electrical decorations from reputable retailers and that are approved by a nationally recognized testing lab such as UL, Intertek or CSA.



Correction: Pheasant bag limit unchanged

A story on pheasant hunting in last month's issue incorrectly stated that the daily bag limit was increased from three to four birds. This proposed change was considered by South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks; however, the proposal was not approved.

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Do Not Shoot the Power Line!"

Luke Welsh, 10 years old

Luke is a resident of Oral, S.D., and is the son of Ryan and Rachel Welsh. He warns, "Do not shoot the power line. It might start a fire! Be safe."

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.

Delicious Holiday Desserts

Dorothy's Baked Carmel Corn

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 c. butter | 1/2 tsp. soda |
| 2 c. brown sugar | 1 tsp. vanilla |
| 1/2 c. dark Karo syrup | 6 qts. (24 c.) popped corn |
| 1 tsp. salt | |

Add butter, brown sugar, syrup and salt to a large pan. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Boil 4 1/2 minutes without stirring. Remove from heat. Add soda and vanilla. Stir 1-2 minutes. Pour over popcorn and stir well. Divide into 2 cake pans. Bake 250 degrees 1 hour, mix every 15 minutes. Break up and store in tight container.

Gloria Puetz, Salem, SD

Chocolate Kissed Macaroons

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 14 oz. pkg. sweetened angel flaked coconut | 1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk |
| 3/4 c. flour | 2 tsp. vanilla extract |
| 1/4 c. salt | 24 chocolate kisses, unwrapped |
| 1 egg white, beaten til frothy | |

Line two baking sheets with a silicone baking mat or parchment paper. In a medium bowl, mix together coconut, flour and salt. Add sweetened milk, beaten egg white and vanilla. Mix well. Mixture will be stiff. Use a cookie scoop, ice cream scoop or tbsp. to divide the dough dropping two inches apart on the baking sheet. Bake for 16-18 minutes or until golden. Remove from oven and gently press a candy kiss into the center. Remove to wire rack to cool.

Colleen Wolfe, Hot Springs, SD.

Scoops Ah Caramel

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1/2 c. butter | 1 can condensed milk |
| 1-1/2 c. brown sugar | 1 tsp. vanilla |
| 3/4 c. white syrup | 3 9-oz. bags Scoops |

Bring the butter, brown and white sugar and condensed milk to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Add vanilla. Stir. Put chips on a platter. Pour caramel over Scoops. May drizzle with hot fudge. Keep well refrigerated.

Ginny Jensen, Volga, SD

Reindeer Pecan Brownies

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Nonstick cooking spray | 1/2 cup cocoa powder |
| 1 stick (1/2 c.) unsalted butter, melted | 1 teaspoon espresso powder (optional) |
| 1 tablespoon pecan or canola oil | 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt |
| 1 cup, plus 2 tablespoons, granulated sugar | 20 raw pecan halves, cut in half |
| 2 large eggs | 40 candy eyeballs |
| 1 teaspoon vanilla extract | 20 red chocolate candies |
| 1/2 cup all-purpose flour | 1/4 cup chocolate chips |

Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray mini muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray. In large bowl, whisk melted butter, oil and sugar until well combined. Add eggs and vanilla extract; beat until mixture is thick and pale in color, about 1 minute. Sift in flour and cocoa powder. Add espresso powder, if desired, and salt. Using rubber spatula, fold dry ingredients into butter mixture until just combined. Batter should be thick. Using 1-tablespoon cookie scoop, transfer batter to prepared mini muffin tin. Bake 13-15 minutes until toothpick inserted in center comes out mostly clean, with some lingering crumbs. Add chocolate chips to heat-proof bowl; microwave until smooth and melted. Pour melted chocolate into sandwich bag and cut off small portion of one corner to use as tip. Use melted chocolate to "glue" on pecan antlers, candy eyeballs and red candy noses to brownies. Allow chocolate to set before transferring brownies to airtight container. Note: Brownies will stay fresh for up to three days.

AmericanPecan.com

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. 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; Rheidlerland 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 Feb. 1 for further information.

Five Electrical Safety Features to be Thankful for This Thanksgiving

Most days, we go about our lives without thinking too much about the many electronic gadgets and safety features that allow us to perform simple tasks at work and home. This Thanksgiving, let's take a moment to be thankful for some of the devices that help make our daily tasks safer and more convenient.

For your safety: built-in devices

1. GFCIs: Ground fault circuit interrupters are inexpensive devices that can be installed in your electrical system or built into a power cord to protect you from electrical shocks. GFCIs are generally installed where electrical circuits may accidentally come into contact with water, such as kitchens, bath and laundry rooms, outdoors or in the garage. Be sure to test GFCIs monthly to make sure they are working properly.

2. AFCIs: Arc fault circuit interrupters could potentially prevent more than 50 percent of electrical fires that occur every year. These devices are typically found within your electrical panel or receptacles. An arc fault is a dangerous electrical problem caused by damaged, overheated or stressed electrical wiring or devices.

3. Circuit breakers: Usually found in a garage, basement or laundry room, circuit breakers are an essential safety feature, preventing electrical injuries and fires. Each box is filled with individual circuit breakers designed to 'trip,' or shut off when necessary to stop the flow of electricity. Circuits trip for several reasons, including overloaded circuits (too much draw on one circuit) ground faults (abnormal flow in a circuit), and short circuits (when current travels along an unintended path).

Use them safely: convenience items

1. Device chargers: Whether for work or personal use, most of us can't go a day without accessing our favorite cell phone, tablet or laptop. While we rely on chargers to keep these items running, be sure to



While we rely on chargers to keep these items running, be sure to treat charging components with care.

treat charging components with care. Here are some safety tips:

- Personal electronic devices should NOT be placed under pillows or used on or underneath bedding.
- Do not leave cords plugged in when not charging because little ones or pets who put them in their mouths can get burned or shocked.
- Do not leave them around when not in use because toddlers might try to insert the wrong end into an electrical outlet and get shocked or burned (child proof your outlets as well if they are not tamper resistant).
- Don't use charging devices near water

or in damp conditions.

- Replace original charging components with the same brand and type. Using off-brand or generic versions can be dangerous if they are faulty.

2. Extension cords and multi-outlet power strips: Extension cords and multi-outlet power strips or devices, while handy, should be inspected for damage prior to use. Use them as a temporary fix, not a long-term solution, and use them safely:

- Plug them directly into an outlet, not into another extension cord or strip.
- If you are using a strip or extension cord outside, make sure it is rated for outdoor use.
- Never use an item that feels hot or is damaged in any way.
- Make sure cords and strips are approved by a reputable independent testing laboratory like UL.
- When using an extension cord, make sure the wattage rating of the cord and the appliance match.

For more information about safety around electricity, go to SafeElectricity.org.



Storybook Island captures the imagination of the young and old alike both during the summer and the holiday season.

CHRISTMAS IN SD

COVID-19 Hasn't Stopped Christmas from Coming

Billy Gibson

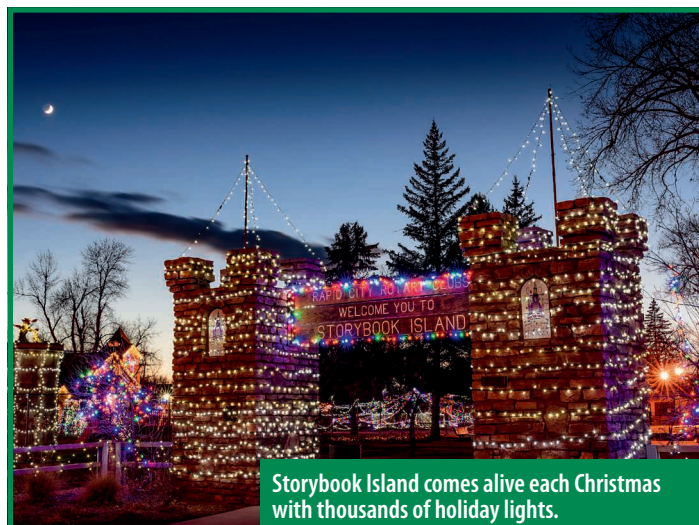
billy.gibson@sarea.coop

The coronavirus pandemic has certainly had a substantial “bah humbug” effect since it began sweeping across the globe last spring. And as the virus continues to pose a health risk going into the new year ahead, many familiar holiday festivals and events across the state have been canceled, curtailed or postponed until 2021.

But there are still a number of events across the state that are planning to proceed as scheduled, many of which have become annual holiday traditions for individuals and families looking to get into the Christmas spirit.

That’s the case for those who look forward every year to taking in the sights and sounds of the Winter Wonderland event held at Falls Park in Sioux Falls. For residents of the Sioux Falls area and thousands of out-of-town visitors each holiday season, the brilliant light display is a spectacle that not only sparks the Christmas spirit but also brings back memories of childhood wonder from previous seasons.

The Winter Wonderland exhibit includes 270 decorated trees and light poles and more than 25 miles of string lights throughout the complex that runs along the Big Sioux River. A five-story observation tower also gives park visitors a 360-degree bird’s eye view of the many eye-popping displays.



Storybook Island comes alive each Christmas with thousands of holiday lights.

The 29th Annual Parade of Lights will officially kick off the downtown Sioux Falls holiday season with festive music and a dazzling float parade along historic Phillips Avenue from 13th Street to 5th Street. But due to the pandemic this year, officials have announced there will be a twist: instead of the floats moving past the spectators, the spectators will walk along in front of the floats. The floats will remain stationary for the duration of the event and the public is invited to casually walk along the route and view the parked floats up close.

The “stationary parade” begins at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 27.



Black Hills Electric Cooperative in Custer shares the holiday spirit by decorating a bucket truck each year.

Everyone is encouraged to stay for an after-party and awards ceremony where there will be live musical entertainment and other activities. Admission is free.

Storybook Island, a popular attraction in the Rapid City area during the summer months, will hold its annual Christmas Nights of Lights display this season. The park boasts 16 miles of colorful lights, including dioramas, popular children's fictional characters and a variety of additional holiday-related themes. The event takes place Dec. 4-6, 11-23 and 26-31, from 5:30 to 8:30 each night at 1301 Sheridan Lake Rd. Admission is \$3 per person.

In Custer, the Annual Parade of Lights will take place downtown on Saturday, Dec. 5, beginning at 5:30 p.m. The annual event signals the kick-off of the holiday season in the Southern Hills area. After the parade, Santa and Mrs. Claus will make an appearance at Way Park for the Memorial Tree Lighting Ceremony. The parade begins at 8th and Mt. Rushmore Road and will end at Way Park on 4th and Mt. Rushmore Road.

The residents of Spearfish will celebrate the start of the season with the annual Holidazzle Light Parade and Christmas Stroll sponsored by the Downtown Business Association. The event will take place along Main Street on Saturday, Dec. 5, beginning in the morning and lasting all day.

The Christmas Stroll will take place immediately after the parade and will feature special sales and discounts at downtown merchants and business establishments. To add to the holiday mood, carolers will perform from 2 to 4 p.m., and there will be a



Winter Wonderland at Falls Park offers a unique light display along the Big Sioux River.

Community Chili Feed at Common Grounds at 5 p.m.

In Pierre, revelers will ring in the holiday season with the 20th Annual Parade of Lights on Monday, Nov. 23, from 5 to 7 p.m. Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place entries and there will also be a Mayor's Choice Award as well as a Griswold Award for gaudiest float.

Also in Pierre, the highly anticipated "Christmas at the Capitol" event will take place once again this year from Nov. 25 through Dec. 26. The rotunda and the hallways of the Capitol Building will be filled with the sounds of carolers and musicians as well as the scent of mountain pine and the soft glow emanating from nearly 100 lighted Christmas trees. The trees are decorated by cities, businesses, non-profit groups and other civic organizations.

Popular displays inside the Capitol include a set of hand-painted porcelain ornaments and a wooden nativity scene believed to be nearly 125 years old located on the second floor.

Before scheduling a visit, check for the most recent updates at www.facebook.com/ChristmasattheCapitol.



The Pumpkin Carriage is a popular attraction at Storybook Island.

Attention Members Impacted by COVID-19?

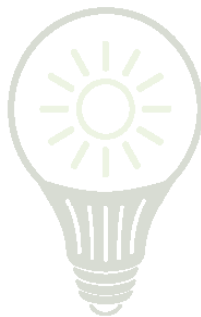
Renville-Sibley encourages members to contact the office to make arrangements if they are not able to pay their electric bill in full due to the impact of COVID-19. Renville-Sibley employees will work with members to enter into reasonable payment arrangements based on their individual circumstances.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like house guests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.



Where's the Number?

Last month Glen Maurer 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 3rd of December, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

Outage Report

Affecting 10 members or more:

None

Notice

Notice: Renville-Sibley's office will be closed at noon on Thursday, December 24th and all day on Friday, December 25th in observance of Christmas Day. The office will also be closed on Friday, January 1st in observance of New Year's Day.

Did You Know?

Before you begin any outdoor project, you should check that your power tools are designed for outdoor use and their cords are free of damage. Never carry a power tool by the cord or use it near water.

Thank You Note

Thank you for the \$50 Target gift card! It came in handy when I needed some air pods for college. Also, thank you for letting me be a part of your Student of the Year banquet.

– Tyler Rice

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

Wanted: Good used gas golf cart. Also, electric ceramic Christmas tree.

Dennis Hanlon, Franklin, MN 55333, 507-557-2441

October Board Meeting Highlights

The October board meeting was held on Monday, October 26 at 7 am via Zoom. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Newville, Gene Alex, Cindy Mertens and Lenae Wordes along with guests Ryan Breitbach, Barbara Marks and Richard Engan.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the September 28 board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of September
- Capital credits to estates
- Safety report for October
- Cooperative Network voting delegate and resolution
- Mid-West Electric Annual Meeting voting delegates
- Capital Credit retirement
- New Facility Budget

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

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

Notice:

The November board meeting will be held on Monday, November 30 at 8 a.m. The December board meeting will be held on Monday, December 21st at 9 a.m.

Comparative Report

	Current YTD through September 30, 2020	One Year Ago YTD through September 30, 2019	10 Years Ago YTD through September 30, 2010
Average # of Consumers	1,882	1,882	1,930
kWhs purchased	121,412,310	104,907,378	122,788,898
Cost of purchased power	\$7,675,417.95	\$6,061,800.72	\$5,001,194.97

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, December 10th. Application deadline is December 1. Information on the Operation Round Up program along with an application for donation can be found at renville-sibley.coop under the Your Co-op tab.

Board Changes Annual Mtg. Date

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 concerns, the Board of Directors has made the decision to change the date of the 2021 annual meeting from the typical end of March date to June. Watch upcoming newsletters for more information.



There are several popular electronics on the market that can help you use energy more efficiently.

Cut Energy Consumption

Upgrade Electronics for Energy Savings

Are you looking for easy ways to save more money on your monthly energy bills as the year comes to a close?

Beyond some of the more traditional energy efficiency measures, such as sealing air leaks or adding additional insulation, there are several popular electronics that can help you use energy more efficiently.

These devices are relatively easy to incorporate into your home, making them a simple way to help manage your energy use.

Smart thermostats are becoming an increasingly popular option to help save energy at home. With smart thermostats, there's no longer a need to constantly adjust the temperature. They can be programmed to follow a pattern of heating and cooling throughout the day and year to maximize your comfort and energy use at the same time.

Some advanced smart thermostats out on the market today can even learn your habits and adjust the temperature in your home accordingly. Another great benefit is the ability to control a smart thermostat remotely from an app on your phone, allowing you to set the temperature to your liking before you even arrive home.

Lastly, some smart thermostats can be integrated with a more complete smart home hub, like Amazon Alexa or Google Home,

which are both hot sellers in the market. Smart thermostats can be pretty pricey upfront, but if it's time to upgrade your home's thermostat, you'll soon discover that smart options offer more convenience and savings that make them worth the initial investment.

If you're looking for ways to save energy while you and your family are on a budget, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs can be inserted into any standard electrical outlet and can help you manage the energy of the devices that are plugged in. With con-



Smart thermostats are becoming an increasingly popular option to help save energy. Photo provided by Ecobee.

If your goal is to reduce your energy use at home, energy monitors can give you the information you need to achieve this goal.

trol of the smart plug, you can stop power-hungry devices from being on longer than necessary.

Some smart plug models have a scheduling option, allowing you to turn on lights or turn off the TV at certain times of the day, such as when you leave in the morning and when you anticipate returning home. Others offer a dimming function, allowing you to change the brightness of lights that are plugged into the smart plug. These features can be controlled through an app on your phone, and some models also have voice-controlled options when connected to a smart home hub.

Another useful gadget is the home energy monitor, which helps you monitor home energy use and set energy budgets. If your goal is to reduce your energy use at home, energy monitors can give you the information you need to achieve this goal. They are connected to your electric meter and provide a big picture on your home's energy use.

Additionally, some home energy monitors can show which appliances are using the most energy, giving you the knowledge on which devices to cut down on. There are also a few additional features among home energy monitors that provide several different benefits. Some models can show you real-time electricity use and costs, while some can help create a personalized plan for energy efficiency. Most home energy monitors can be connected through a smart phone app, which can send notifications, warn about abnormal energy use and provide tips for further energy savings.

These simple devices can help you save a little more energy each month. Considering what your needs are will help you choose a device with the appropriate features. As with any new product, do some homework first to determine which device suits your home best.

Plug into Presents that Pay Off with Safety

During the holidays, many of us turn our attention to gift giving, and while the shiny, trendy and pricey may make a big splash when the unwrapping's done, practical gifts can leave lasting impressions. What's more, they can really make a difference by enhancing safety and improving security.

Here are a few practical gift ideas that can make a real difference in helping to reduce safety risks year-round.

Smoke Detectors: Most of us have at least one in our homes, but experts say that's not enough. The National Fire Protection Association recommends that a working smoke detector be installed in every bedroom, on every level of a home, and in hallways outside of sleeping areas. And, if smoke detectors are more than 10 years old, they should be replaced.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms: Carbon monoxide, or CO, is a colorless, odorless gas

created by incomplete consumption of fuels like gasoline, wood, natural gas, propane, oil, coal or methane. The gas is highly toxic, so having CO detectors outside of sleeping areas and on every level of a home improves safety. Local fire departments respond to about 80,000 non-fire CO incidents each year. Fuel-burning heating equipment and cooking appliances should be professionally inspected once a year to reduce the risks of malfunction and detect structural problems early.

Extension Cords: They are not all created equal; subject to wear; have specific use guidelines; and are never recommended for permanent use. Brittle and cracked plastic can indicate heat damage, and exposed wires or frayed connections increase risk of shock, shorts or fires. An extension cord that's warm or hot to the touch is a good indication it's not designed to safely do the job. Consider giving an assortment of extension cords designed for indoor or outdoor use. Before you buy, look for the label of a nationally recognized testing lab like Underwriters Laboratories (UL), CSA-International (CSA) or Intertek (ETL).

Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters: Arcing and sparking are indications that a home's electrical wiring needs service. Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs) can help address fire hazards before they occur. Properly installed by a licensed electrician, AFCIs can often replace circuit breakers in the electrical panel box. This should be completed by a qualified electrician because the installation involves working inside the panel box, which carries current even when main circuit breakers are turned off.



Capital Credit Retirement, continued

Where does the money come from?

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

How are margins allocated?

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

Do investor-owned or municipal utilities retire capital credits?

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

Are capital credits retired every year?

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

Do I lose my capital credits in the years the co-op decides not to make retirements?

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

What years will be retired this December?

Renville-Sibley will be retiring the remainder of the 1997 and 94.5% of the 1998 allocations from East River Electric, about 75.3% of the 2001 allocation from Basin Electric and approximately 11% of the 2019 Renville-Sibley allocation.

How much will be retired in total in 2020?

A total of \$600,000 will be retired in 2020; \$200,000 was retired in June and \$400,000 will be retired in December.

I did not get service from Renville-Sibley 1997, will I get any retirement?

Maybe. Although you will not receive a retirement from 1997, you will receive a retirement if you purchased electric service in 1998, 2001 or 2019. This credit will be applied to the December statement.

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

Renville-Sibley will have paid just over \$13.2 million in capital credits retirements to current and former members by the end of this year.

How often do members receive capital credit retirements?

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

How will the retirement work?

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

What if I have moved?

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

How many people will get retirements?

Roughly 1470 active members will have a credit applied to their account and about 640 inactive members will receive a check.

Can I donate my retirement back to the cooperative?

Yes. If you would like to donate your retirement back to the cooperative, please call our office at 800-826-2593 or email our communications manager, Lenae Wordes, at lwordes@renville-sibley.coop for instructions. All donated capital credit retirements will be designated to our scholarship fund and will be awarded at the next annual meeting to students in our local communities.

Be Alert for Scams

Renville-Sibley has heard from a few members who say they received an automated call about their account being past due and subject to disconnect. At this time, Renville-Sibley does not disconnect between October 15th and April 15th. Please contact the office if you have any questions about the status of your account.



TIPS TO AVOID SCAMS

Scammers can threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

Here are a few reminders from your electric co-op.

- * Co-op employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- * Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Co-op representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- * Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- * If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let them know as soon as possible.

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 March 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. 553902

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 would like to be considered as a candidate, please let us know by calling Lenae at 800-826-2593.

Reporting Power Outages to Renville-Sibley Cooperative

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

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

After hours, all calls are transferred to CRC. Depending on the extent of the storm and the volume of calls coming into CRC, you may reach a live operator, or you may go into their automated system. It is helpful to your cooperative and CRC to have your phone number correct in Renville-Sibley's database when reporting an outage.

Members are asked to review the phone numbers that are printed on the bill statement for accuracy and notify the cooperative if a change should be made to this contact information.

You also have the option to send a text message to report an outage. To sign-up for this feature, please visit our web site www.renville-sibley.coop and click on Outage Reporting at the top of the page. You will be asked a series of questions to get this service set-up. Contact the office if you have any problems.

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

Happy Holidays!

The staff, management and board of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and happy holiday season.

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

November 20-21

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

November 21-22

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

November 24-December 26

Christmas at the Capitol, Free Admission, Pierre, SD

November 27

Hill City Olde Tyme Christmas Parade and Celebration Kick-Off, 5 p.m., Downtown Hill City, SD, 605-574-2368

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

November 27

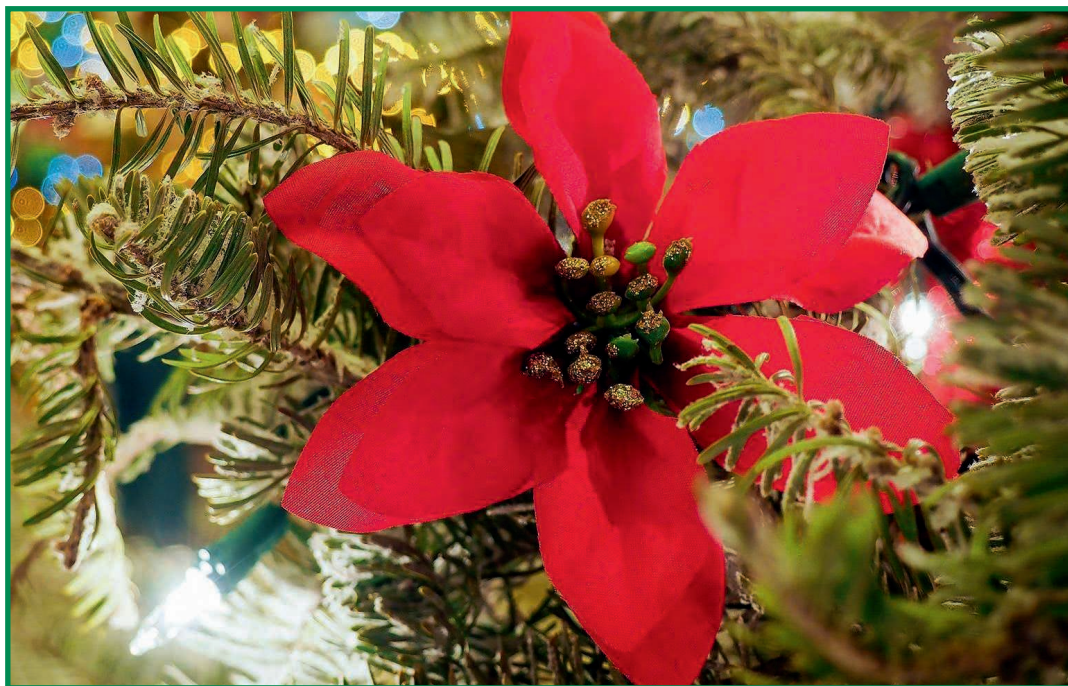
Annual Sioux Falls Parade of Lights, 7:30 to 9 p.m., Phillips Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 605-338-4009

November 28

Holiday Celebration and Winter Market, 2 to 6 p.m., Free Admission, Main Street Square in Downtown Rapid City, SD

November 27-December 27

Trees and Trains at the South Dakota Railroad Museum, Weekends, Contact the Museum for Days and Times. Hill City, SD, 605-574-9000



December 4

Christmas in the Hills Parade of Lights, 6 p.m., Downtown Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140

December 4-5

Creekside Crafters 13th Annual Bazaar, Snappers Club Building in City Campground, Friday 1 to 8 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Spearfish, SD

December 4-6 and 10-12

Same Time, Next Year, Dramatic Comedy by Bernard Slade, Grand Opera House, Pierre, SD, www.pierreplayers.com

December 5

Manager Medlodies Concert Christmas in the Hills, 7 to 9 p.m., Mueller Center, Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140

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

December 5

Custer Christmas Parade, 5:30 p.m., Downtown Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

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.

December 6, 20

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

December 12

Christmas for Kids, Ages 0-10 visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus, Custer High School, Preregistration is Required, Register via email custerchristmas4kids@gmail.com, Custer, SD

December 12

Frontier Christmas, 11907 434th Ave., Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

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.