



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



RENVILLE-SIBLEY
SEPTEMBER 2021 VOL. 22 NO. 5

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Old Spink New Spink

**SD restaurants roll
with the changes**
Page 8

**Dealing with
drought**
Page 12

Joyce Schermer,
Karisma Tripp and Brad
and Lori Johannsen are
shown at Spink Family
Restaurant in Elk Point



East River: Enhancing value to our members

For 70 years, East River has worked alongside our member systems in providing safe, affordable and reliable power to our member-owners in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota.

By far, the biggest impact on our industry and our nation over the past year was the COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic brought immense struggles - big and small - it also showcased the strength of the cooperative business model and the resilience of our cooperative family. Member cooperatives stepped up to help each other through the crisis and leaned on each other for advice. The resilience of our cooperative structure also came to the forefront with our member systems pulling together to share resources, overcome challenges, support each other and keep the power on for hundreds of thousands of people in our region, including hospitals, schools and many other essential businesses.



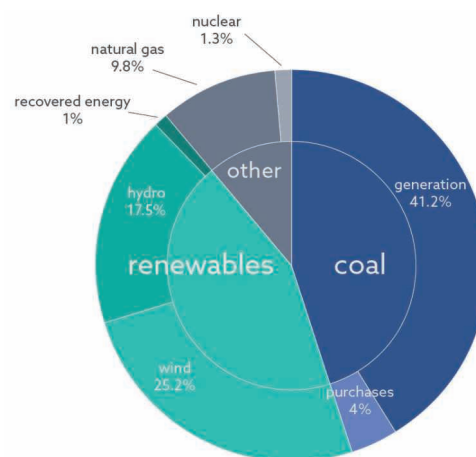
Tom Boyko
CEO, East River
320-826-2593 or
800-826-2593

Currently, over one-third of our cooperative family's generation mix comes from renewable sources including hydropower and wind, with plans for steady and fiscally responsible growth.

Outside of the pandemic, East River continued our critical work of fulfilling the objectives outlined within our strategic plan. Over the past year, we completed several key projects for our transmission system upgrade plan that will strengthen our system's backbone, improve reliability and provide for future load growth.

East River and our power supply partners are continuously looking to ensure we have a mix of power resources to serve our membership with reliable and affordable electricity. As a result, we employ an "all of the above" generation strategy. Part of that strategy is using renewable energy. Currently, over one-third of our cooperative family's generation mix comes from renewable sources including hydropower and wind, with plans for steady and fiscally responsible growth. Two new solar projects that have been announced

by Basin Electric Power Cooperative will also bring solar energy to our generation mix in the near future including what will be South Dakota's largest solar farm – the 128 megawatt Wild Springs Solar farm – beginning in 2022. Currently, about 25 percent of our energy mix comes from wind resources. Looking back about 10 years ago, just 8 percent of our power supply came from wind. Additionally, the percentage of coal in our power supply sales has dropped 15 percent in the past decade, now making up only about 45 percent. With nuclear and recovered energy, our total carbon free energy resources make up 45 percent of our power supply delivered to you.



East River's board-driven farm safety campaign continued in 2020. This marked the award-winning campaign's fourth year and it reminds farmers to be aware of electrical equipment when working on the farm. It also educates them on the steps to take if their equipment contacts a power line. We've heard many positive stories of how the campaign's message has led to farmers taking the proper actions after accidents involving their equipment and power lines. We're pleased to see that the campaign is achieving its goal of keeping our farming community safe while they do their important work.

East River exists to enhance the value of our member systems and open communication with each local co-op is essential for ensuring that East River's efforts are in sync with the needs of the membership. By staying connected and working together, our cooperative family will remain energized for the future.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

RENVILLE-SIBLEY CO-OP POWER

(USPS 019-074)

Board of Directors

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

Renville-Sibley Employees

Gene Allex – Line Superintendent
Brian Athmann – Journeyman Lineman
Shawn Beckler – Crew Chief
Mike Benson – Journeyman Lineman
Brad Braulick – Crew Chief
Nick Bruns – 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
Shane Suess – PT Janitor
Lenae Wordes – Communications Manager

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Web site: www.renville-sibley.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Keep safety in mind when using standby generators

While owning an emergency generator comes in handy during an extended power outage, you must consider the following.

To safely use standby generators, operate them only in well-ventilated areas outdoors so emissions can't enter your home. In addition, always turn off a generator when refueling it, and store gasoline, diesel fuel, or propane outside of living areas.

Plug appliances directly into a generator or use an extension cord. Do not try to power a home's wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet.

A permanently installed standby generator for a home or business requires a transfer switch to isolate it from the power grid. The main breaker on an electric panel does not qualify as a transfer switch under the National Electrical Code. 510700

Transfer switches are critical for two reasons:

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



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

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

Thank You to Renville-Sibley Electric Co-op Power

Thanks for a great meal and the \$25 gift card we won in the drawing. You do amazing work.

Gary & Janice Simondet

Thank you very much for the door prize of a \$25 credit towards our bill. Much appreciated!

LuAnn Nere

Thank you for your donation for the 4th of July. Morton appreciates your contribution to our event.

4th of July Committee

Thank you for sponsoring the Scholar of the Month program for area students. What a terrific program to

support your core values. In addition, I want to thank you for the gift cards you give to nominating teachers. It is very much appreciated.

Sincerely, Brenda Holm

I am sincerely honored to have been selected as the recipient of your scholarship. I will be using it towards my education at Minnesota State University – Mankato. I will be pursuing a degree in Computer Engineering. This scholarship is greatly appreciated to help me with my education goals. Thank you for the gift.

Kamren Freitag

Be aware of overhead power lines on farms

Powerlines pose a major hazard for South Dakota farmers. Lines over roads and rural areas have a minimum clearance of 18 feet but just 12.5 feet over residential private property.

Before working in a field or around shops or grain bins, always take the time to note the location of your cooperative's power lines so that you can make sure to remain a safe distance from them and stay free from harm. To stay safe around overhead power lines, farm operators and workers must:

- Always use a spotter when operating large machinery near utility power lines.
- Use extra caution when raising augers or grain truck beds around co-op power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines - at all times, and in all directions.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine the proper clearance.
- Always lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it to get added clearance.
- Call your electric cooperative immediately if a power line is sagging or is

hanging too low.

- If contact is made with a power line, remember that it is almost always safest to stay on the equipment. Make sure to warn others to stay away and call the cooperative immediately.

- The only reason to decide to make an exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, then remember to jump off the equipment with both of your feet together, avoiding touching the ground and vehicle at the same time.

Then, still keeping your feet together, "bunny hop" away from the vehicle until you reach a safe distance.

If you see someone else's equipment that has come in contact with a power line in your area, the best help you can give will be from a safe distance.

Make sure to yell out to, signal or call the equipment operator to make sure he or she remains in the vehicle, and notify your local cooperative immediately.

Please remember to follow these tips to avoid accidents during the harvest season.

TIPS FOR A SAFE HARVEST



The Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center offers this useful checklist for farm safety called Stop-Think-Act. Take these steps to minimize injury risks during harvest season.

Stop

- What could go wrong?
- How bad could it be?
- Has anything changed?

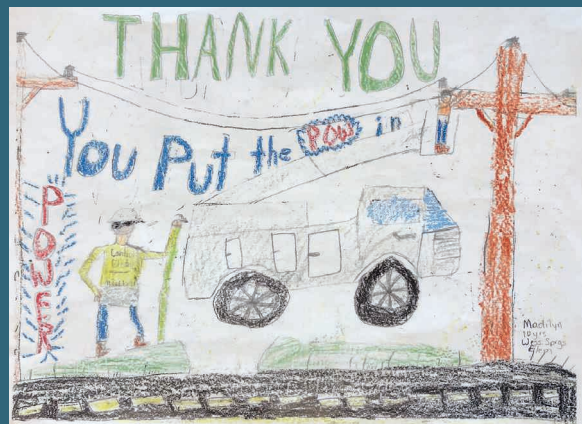
Think

- Do I clearly understand the task?
- Am I physically and mentally ready?

- Do I have the right equipment and tools for the job?

Act

- Make it safe.
- Use the right tools.
- Follow proper procedures.
- Reduce risks.
- Stop the task if it cannot be done safely.



You put the 'pow' in power!

Madilyn Gaikowski

Madilyn sends out a special note of appreciation for line workers across the state of South Dakota. She is the daughter of Gene and Loree Gaikowski. Gene serves as the Wessington Springs line foreman at Central Electric in Mitchell.

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.



CROCKPOT CRAVINGS

CROCKPOT APPLE BUTTER

Ingredients:

4 cups of sugar (more or less depending on sweetness of apples)
4 tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. cloves
¼ tsp. salt

METHOD

Fill a 5 quart crockpot full of chopped apples (quartered or smaller), no need to peel, but do remove seeds. Tart apples are best. Top with the ingredients above. Lid won't fit at first but settles down as apples cook. Begin cooking on high and when bubbling, put heat on low and cook all night, or until thick and dark color. Stir occasionally. If need be, blend a few seconds to soften peels. Pour into jars and seal.

Cherie Leibel, Timber Lake

SLOW COOKER BEEF STEW

Ingredients:

3 cups water
1 package McCormick® Classic Beef Stew Seasoning Mix Packet
2 lbs beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch pieces
1/4 cup flour
2 cups potato chunks
1 1/4 cups carrot chunks
1 medium onion, cut into thin wedges
1/2 cup sliced celery

METHOD

Mix vegetables, water and Beef Stew Seasoning Mix in slow cooker. Coat beef with flour. Stir into ingredients in slow cooker. Cover. Cook 8 hours on low or 5 hours on high until beef is tender.

mccormick.com

CROCKPOT BUTTERNUT SQUASH WITH APPLES

Ingredients:

1 ½ to 2 lbs. butternut squash, peeled and chopped (about 5 cups)
2 to 3 tart apples, chopped (about 2 cups)
¼ c. dried cherries or cranberries
1 ½ tsp. grated fresh ginger
½ tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
½ tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. nutmeg
½ c. apple cider
¼ tsp. salt

METHOD

Combine all ingredients in your slow cooker and stir together. Cover and cook on low 3-4 hours or until squash is tender, then turn to warm until serving. Can also be baked in conventional oven at 325 degrees until fork tender. Sweet potatoes can be used instead of butternut squash if desired.

Linda Sherry, Sioux Falls

Please send your favorite dairy 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Unclaimed capital credit checks

Listed below are Renville-Sibley members who were mailed a capital credit check in December of 2014 and have either not cashed the check or the check was returned to our office due to an old address. If you know of a correct address or telephone number for these members, please contact Renville-Sibley Co-op Power at 800-826-2593. If no contact is made with these members, the money is paid out to students through our scholarship program.

ALARCON, JOSE	KNUTSON, ERVIN
BARAJAS, RAMON	KOHLER, DARWIN
BEAGER, TODD	KORDOVSKY, DAN
BELLIG, RANDY	LOTHERT, DENNIS S
BITKER, JANET	MALLON, MIKE
CARLSON, DUSTHAN	MARK TWAIN CABLEVISION LP
CHAPMAN, BRENT	MARTIN, JERRY
COLUMBUS, CLYDE	MARXEN, BILL
DAVIS, ROBERT	MILROY, SALLY
DECLERCQ, JAMES	MORARIE, MARK
DEVRIES, LARRY	NESBURG, DAVID
ECKLAND, STEVE	OLIVIA CANNING CO
EDWARDS, JOHN	POMEROY, RANDY
EVANS, LEAMON JR	RADDATZ, MARJORIE
FISCHER, GERALD	REID, MARY
GOEPFERICH, GREG	RENNVILLE, RENEE
GRAFENSTEIN, STEVE	ROCHA, JORGE
HAASE, LINDA	ROEBKE, ALAN
HALE, TIM	RUTER, ED
HANSON, ERLAND	SALINAS, ERASTO JR
HANSON, LORI	SANDERS, JAMES
HANSON, MARK	SCHICKERT, DIANE
HEIMERMAN, JAMES	SCHMIDT, CHARLES
HELMUTH, WILLIAM SR	SCHULTZ, LEE
HILL, CATHERINE S	SCHWEISS FARM INC
HILLMANN, TODD	SMITH, KORY
HOLSTAD, JAMES	SWENSON, BRYAN
JENSEN, DERYL	THORNE, JAMES
JENSEN, DORIS M	TIMGREN, RONALD
JOHNSTON, MICHAEL L	TREVINO, OSCAR
JONES, LARRY	WHITELEY, JAMES J

Energy Star Rebates Available to Members

Renville-Sibley offers rebates to members who purchase the following Energy Star certified appliances for their home: refrigerator, freezer, dishwasher, clothes washer, clothes dryer, dehumidifier, central air-conditioner and room air-conditioner.

To qualify for the rebate, the unit must be currently Energy Star certified. Occasionally, Energy Star changes their qualification of what is certified. Therefore, what was Energy Star certified last year or even last month, may or may not be currently Energy Star certified due to a change in the requirements. Renville-Sibley would like to remind members to verify that the appliance they are purchasing is currently Energy Star certified by visiting the Energy Star website www.energystar.gov.

Once in the website, click on Find Products tab at the top of the page and then click on the appliance you are interested in purchasing. Next, click on the "Explore Models" and search by the brand of the appliance you are purchasing. Renville-Sibley also uses this web site to verify that the appliance is currently Energy Star certified before issuing the rebate. This web site has a host of other information to assist members in becoming energy efficient.

Rebate forms can be found on Renville-Sibley's website <http://renville-sibley.coop/content/energy-star-rebates>. Rebates must be submitted within 90 days of purchase. Please contact the office if you have any questions on rebates or on Energy Star products.



Renville-Sibley's office will be closed on Monday, September 6 in observance of Labor Day.

Comparative Report

	Current YTD through June 30, 2021	One Year Ago YTD through June 30, 2020	10 Years Ago YTD through June 30, 2011
average # of Consumers	1,882	1,882	1,928
kWhs purchased	97,438,868	82,917,981	84,502,006
Cost of purchased power	\$6,346,347.89	\$5,148,989.08	\$3,786,676.91

2020 Margin Allocated to the Membership

As a member of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association, you own a portion of the cooperative. One of the many ownership benefits is receiving an allocation of the co-op's margin. Generally, co-ops operate at cost. That means the goal of a co-op is to collect enough revenue to run and expand the business, without over-charging members.

Any excess revenue is allocated back to the membership in the form of capital credits. This allocation is based on the amount of electricity each member consumed during the year. The 2020 allocation information will be located on the August statement. Past members who received electricity from Renville-Sibley in 2020 and no longer have an active service with us will receive their allocation notice in the mail.

Please remember, this allocation is not payable now and does not represent cash, but rather your equity in the co-op. You cannot apply this amount to your electric bill. Renville-Sibley uses the allocated, but unretired capital credits to improve and expand our electric system and meet our other capital needs. This reduces our need to borrow money and helps us provide reliable electric service to the membership.

When our financial condition permits, the co-op retires, or pays, the capital credits to members in cash. Allocating and retiring margins to members helps distinguish the difference between cooperatives and other utilities. Renville-Sibley is proud to support our communities by putting money back into the local economy - and into the pockets of those we serve. The best way to ensure you receive this allocation when it is retired is to keep your mailing address up-to-date with the cooperative.

A common question regarding the allocation and retirement of capital credits is if this amount should be reported to the IRS. Renville-Sibley recommends members visit with their tax advisor on this matter.

1483 1 AB 0.412
ANY MEMBER
12345 ELECTRIC ROAD
ANYWHERE MN 56565

Renville-Sibley Co-op Power
103 Oak Street
PO Box 68
Danube MN 56230-0068
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Phone: (320) 826-2593 Toll Free (800) 826-2593
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
www.renville-sibley.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Statement Date 08/15/2021
Account Number 123400
Payment Due 09/03/2021

Service Summary

Previous Balance	\$222.00
Payment Received 08/03/2021	Thank You! -\$222.00
Balance Forward	\$0.00
Current Charges	\$121.00
Total Amount Due	\$121.00

Message from your Co-op

August member events include Farmfest and Family-a-Fair night. Remember to bring the coupon from the newsletter with you to Farmfest so you can be registered for a prize drawing. More information on both of these events can be found in the Cooperative Connections newsletter.

Map Location: 9876543 Service Location: 12345 ELECTRIC ROAD Substation: Emmet

Meter No.	From	To	Days	Previous	Present	Meter	kWh	Rate Description
81758445	07/01/2021	07/31/2021	31	314	318	160	640	GENERAL SERVICE
1708440	07/01/2021	07/31/2021	31	93423	93423	1	67	RESISTANCE HEAT

kWh Usage History

PERIOD ENDING 08/20/2021
Avg Daily Temp 70
Avg Daily kWh 21

Current Service Detail

Balance Forward	\$0.00
GENERAL SERVICE	
Customer Charge	\$42.00
Energy Charge	640 kWh @ 0.1202 \$76.93
Water Heater Credit	-\$6.50
RESISTANCE HEAT	
Sub Meter Charge	\$2.50
Total Electric Charges	\$114.93
Minnesota Sales Tax	\$5.93
Operation Round Up	\$0.14
Other Services & Credits	\$6.07
Total Electric, Other Services & Credits	\$121.00
Total Amount Due 09/03/2021	\$121.00
Total Amount Due After 09/03/2021	\$122.82

Capital Credit Statement

Category	Unretired Balance	2020 Allocation	TOTAL
East River	\$507.30	\$78.79	\$586.09
Basin	\$1,081.86	\$220.58	\$1,302.44
TOTAL	\$1,589.16	\$300.37	\$1,889.53

KEEP
SEND Please do not staple or paperclip.

ANY MEMBER
12345 ELECTRIC ROAD
ANYWHERE MN 56565

Please check here and complete the appropriate section on the reverse side to update your Mailing Address, Phone Numbers, or Email.

RENVILLE-SIBLEY CO-OP POWER 1
PO BOX 68
DANUBE MN 56230-0068

25072000041310000000123100000012282071120197

Farmers: Getting proper rest can make a big difference

For many farmers, fall requires long days in the field and little rest. The pressure to harvest as much as possible increases the risk of injury. In fact, most injuries occur during the spring and fall when stress and fatigue are common.

The safety and health of workers, including making time for sleep, should be a priority, according to Josie Rudolphi, University of Illinois Extension associate research scientist. "Rushing and cutting corners can lead to injury, which no one has time for, especially during harvest," she says.

Rudolphi grew up on a farm and understands the pressures of harvest season. She says getting proper rest can make a difference in staying safe, but during the time crunch of harvest season, farmers sacrifice sleep to work late into the night.



The demands of harvest are stressful, and a lack of sleep can intensify that and lead to errors in the fields or even on the roads.

To improve sleep, Rudolphi advises farmers to go to bed and wake up at regular times when possible. They can use rainy days to catch up on sleep.

Other sleep health tips include:

- Create a bedroom environment that encourages sleep; keep it quiet, dark and cool.
- Limit electronic device use.
- Avoid large meals, caffeine and alcohol before bedtime.

In addition to improving sleep, managing stress is an important component to injury prevention, health and safety, according to Rudolphi. "By using the 'Four A' Method of avoid (planning ahead), adapt (changing expectations), alter (changing the situation when you can) and accept (acknowledging that a situation is what it is), farmers can successfully manage the stress of long hours and unpredictability," she adds.

For information about safety around electricity, including farm and ranch safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Rhonda Otten, along with her husband and three sons, has worked to keep Spink Family Restaurant open for business.
Photos by Billy Gibson

Spink restaurant emerges strong from hardships brought by fire and pandemic

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Old Spink. New Spink.

That's how Rhonda Otten variously refers to her restaurant, depending on whether she's alluding to the Spink Café that burned down in 2019 or the Spink Family restaurant that was throttled by the pandemic but is thriving today.

For more than 20 years, the Spink Café was a big draw in the township located in Union County. The eatery was known for its Friday night fish fries during Lent, Sunday dinners and its famous Spinkburger. The 80-year-old structure had recently been re-decorated with a 50s theme, featuring old LPs, vinyl album covers on the wall and pictures of Elvis Presley.

But life for Otten and her husband Sam changed in November of 2019 when the area's most

popular attraction was totally consumed by fire.

The way the Ottens saw it, there was no option but to rebuild. But the planned resurrection of the business wouldn't occur in the confines of Spink. The new iteration, renamed Spink Family Restaurant, would be located in the old American Legion hall in downtown Elk Point.

By all accounts, the "new Spink" wasn't so easy to bring forth from the ashes. Two weeks after working hard to get the new facility ready for business in Elk Point, the pandemic hit and threatened to dash the Ottens' hopes for good.

"The fire was in November, we made the decision to keep going in December, and we re-opened in March. We were open for two weeks when the pandemic hit, Rhonda said. "Those two weeks were very, very busy. It was a madhouse in

here. We had a lot more space and we were finally getting in the groove."

Facing the same problems as just about every restaurant owner in the state and nation, the Ottens were forced to hit the pause button and try to figure out the next step to take. They closed for a month, regrouped, and then returned to offer carry-out service only.

Members of the community rallied to support the restaurant, including employees at Union County Electric located just two blocks away.

According to Union County Electric General Manager Matt Klein, the cooperative always strives to support other local businesses that help the community thrive.

"At lunchtime you're likely to see some of our guys eating there," Klein said. "When they had carry-out, we ordered food for meetings and just did what we could to help – just like we do with other members of the community. We help whenever and wherever we can."



Server Karisma Tripp tends to another satisfied customer at Spink Family Restaurant in Elk Point.

Rhonda said it was inspiring to see the town pull together to face the impact of the pandemic, and also to help the business survive after the back-to-back calamities.



Cody Olson, center, enjoys lunch with his co-workers from Valley Ag Supply.

“The community really supported us and we’re very grateful for that,” she said. “But we’ve seen this many times before; people watching out for each other and helping when there’s a need. That’s what really pushed us through.”

One regular patron who is happy to see the new Spink succeeding is Joyce Schermer. She occupied a table in the restaurant one recent lunch hour along with her son Brad Johannsen and his wife Lori. The Johannsens are regular visitors to the

area from Sedona, Ariz., and always make a point to stop at Spink, preferring the hot beef sandwich and the prime rib sandwich.

“It’s always good every time you come,” said Schermer, a resident of Akron who opted for her go-to French Dip. “You’re never disappointed in the food or the service. It’s wonderful.”

Also enjoying a lunchtime meal were several employees of Valley Ag Supply. The company is located a half mile from the old Spink building that was destroyed by fire.

“We used to go there all the time and we were disappointed when it burned down. You could see our fertilizer plant from there,” said Cody Olson while noshing on the French Dip. “Now there’s no place to go. So, we just drive into town because it’s so good. It’s great that they came back and are still operating.”

As for “old Spink,” the Ottens are still trying to figure out what to do with the heap left in the wake of the conflagration. The building had an upstairs apartment where several members of the family lived at



various times through the years.

“It’s going to have to be torn down eventually, but we just don’t want to let it go,” Rhonda said. “There are so many memories attached to that place; both of our parents were such a big part of it.”

She emphasized that while the restaurant is in a new location, the food is the same as before. The Ottens, who have always used family recipes, depend on all three of their sons – ages 17 through 23 – to handle the cooking to maintain consistency on a daily basis.

“The secret to our success is that the five of us do all the cooking here. We use time-proven family recipes that have been popular for decades,” Rhonda said.

Operation Round Up Board elects officers and approves donations

The Operation Round Up Board of Trustees met on Wednesday, July 14th. The board elected the following officers:

President – Ty Erickson
Vice President – Butch Buschette
Secretary/Treasurer – Louise Kiecker

The following donations were approved:

- Cedar Mountain Imagination Library - \$1,000
 - Books for children from birth to age 5 through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.
- Imagination Library Redwood Falls FPC - \$1,000
 - Books for children from birth to age 5 through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.
- Renville County Walk in the Park - \$500
 - Financial assistance for

Renville County survivors and the Cancer Research Pilot studies.

- SWWC Foundation for Innovation in Education - \$1,000
 - Activities and programs for students, families and over 70 schools in the 18 counties of southwest and west central MN.
- WC-CEO Program - \$1,000
 - MACCRAY, KMS and RCW collaborative effort to teach students about entrepreneurship by directly working with area businesses.
- Fairfax Royalty - \$1,000
 - Funds to run the program.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 13 at 3:30 pm. The deadline for applications is October 1.

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

WHERE'S THE NUMBER?

Last month Quentin Keehl did not find his member number in the newsletter. The credit will increase to a value of \$60. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by the 1st of September, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

OUTAGE REPORT

Outage Report – affecting 10 members or more

Date: 06-23-21

Time off: 8:15 am

Time on: 8:48 am

Substation: Emmet

Cause: Scheduled

Date: 06-23-21

Time off: 10:21 am

Time on: 10:27 am

Substation: Kingman

Cause: Scheduled

Date: 06-30-21

Time off: 1:00 pm

Time on: 1:57 pm

Substation: Birch Cooley

Cause: Scheduled

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

WANTED

Three - 14- or 16-inch fully mounted plows. Contact Roy Myers, Renville, MN 320-522-2749

July board meeting highlights

The July board meeting was held on Monday, July 26 at 8 am. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Newville, Cindy Mertens, Gene Allex and Lenae Wordes. Also in attendance was Attorney Jeff Whitmore.

The election of officers was held with the following results:

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

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the June 21 board meeting
- Director compensation –
 - per diem for other meetings increased from \$180/day to \$200/day
 - per diem for virtual meetings increased from \$30/hour to \$35/hour to a max of \$200/day
- Board committees
- Annual meeting is set for Thursday, March 31, 2022, location to be determined
- Board meeting dates and times from September 2021 to August 2022
- Officer appointments of the cooperative
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of June
- Capital credits to an estate
- Safety report for July
- RESCO Director Election
- Loan documents for RUS AA8 loan
- Corporate Debt Limit

- CoBank Director Election and Nominating Committee Candidates

The board reviewed:

- Conflict of Interest
- Minnesota Electric Cooperatives' Commitment to Transparency & Accountability
- Capital credits transferred
- Total new members

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

- High-level Statement of Operations review – YTD through June (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
- Renville-Sibley logo
- Farmfest
- Family-a-Fair night

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

NOTICE:

The August board meeting will be held on August 30 at 8 a.m. The September board meeting will be held on September 27 at 8 a.m.

MISSION STATEMENT

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

PLANNING A CHANGE IN SERVICE?

Renville-Sibley encourages any member planning on making changes to their service in 2021 to please contact our office as soon as possible. To complete these projects on time, material may need to be ordered well in advance as often there is an extended lead time to get the appropriate material. In addition, crew time will be scheduled in the order projects and materials are received.



LEARNING FROM ADVERSITY

The Dakota Lakes Research Farm produces information helpful to farmers and ranchers dealing with drought. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

SDSU agriculture researcher Dwayne Beck looks for better ways to gain higher yields through crop rotations and other techniques

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

The drought conditions that gripped the state through the summer months caused difficulty for farmers and ranchers. The drought in 2012 also made it difficult to grow and harvest a productive crop.

But it's the drought that occurred in 1988 that Dwayne Beck remembers most. Beck, 70, is a researcher with SDSU who runs the Dakota Lakes research farm near Canning.

According to the National Integrated Drought Information System, as of June 23 more than 97 percent of South Dakota and all of Minnesota were categorized as "abnormally dry."

As someone who considers himself a seasoned investigator and problem solver, Beck looks at the current drought conditions as an

opportunity to learn.

So, what exactly did the farming and ranching community learn in 1988 when adverse weather conditions caused an estimated \$60 billion in agricultural damage across the U.S.?

"We learned not to do tillage," Beck responds without hesitation. "This drought is about the worse I've seen since 1988, and we learned then that in this part of the country if you till, you're screwed. No-till gives you a chance to have a decent crop and run a viable farming operation."

And the key to succeeding without tilling is proper crop rotation. That's what keeps Beck and other researchers busy.

On a recent afternoon, Melanie Caffe and her assistant Nick Paul were operating a small combine to gather their test crops laid out in strips measuring five feet wide by 20

feet long. Caffe, a native of France, is an ag professor at SDSU, while Paul is a local farmer and research technician.

The two-member team moved from section to section, cleaning out the collection bin as they went to keep the samples from being contaminated and corrupting the research data. The samples were



Dwayne Beck runs the Dakota Farms research facility near Canning.



Melanie Caffé and Nick Paul collect samples from a field at the Dakota Farms Research Station near Canning.

bagged and taken into the lab where Caffé and Paul planned to perform fertility experiments with the goal of developing varieties with higher yield, higher quality and stronger drought resistance.

Much of the research centers around maximizing yields through effective crop rotations. Beck has spent much of his career considering the ways farming was conducted 100 or more years ago and how it can be improved.

"The Natives grew crops before the Spaniards came and brought horses. They were all no-tillers because they didn't have cows and horses to pull the plows. They grew 13 different kinds of corn, beans, squash and sunflowers. They were very successful. The settlers never asked anyone how to grow crops here, they just got out their plow and started turning over the soil."

Beck has seen the wonders of crop rotation in his research. Some of his fields are rotated five ways.

"Good rotations can produce a lack of disturbance in places where you don't have a lot of water. Our research shows 99 percent of resistance issues could be solved with better crop rotations. There are fields where we haven't used insecticides for 18 years."

Beck said his methods aren't always adopted by industry but he continues to gather data and push out the information obtained through research.

"The nice about being a research guy is you always have more things to learn," he said. "The more you research, the more you don't know, but we're always looking for answers."

HOPS GROWERS NAVIGATING THEIR WAY THROUGH CHANGING INDUSTRY

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

In many ways, Ryan Heine is like the average South Dakota farmer. He frets about the weather, plans for the future, worries about finances, watches the markets and is constantly trying to find a buyer for the crop he hopes will make.

But his crop is unlike most of the others that emerge from the South Dakota soil. Heine is owner of 6th Meridian Hop Farm near Yankton. His is one of six such farms left in the state growing hops for brewers to transform into craft beer.

Heine also sees his work as different compared to most farmers – he relies on his nose a lot.

"There's a lot of experimenting with different aromas. There are so many flavor profiles and varieties of hops that are used in creating craft beer," he said. "There's a vast palette of different aromas, and the market will dictate what consumers prefer."

Ryan and his wife Michelle launched their hop operation in 2014, leaving Omaha and returning to the small family farm near Yankton in pursuit of a more grounded lifestyle for their five children.

"We wanted to get out of the city and back to our farming roots," said Ryan, who works remotely as an electrical engineer for a company out of Minneapolis.

Ryan's interest in growing the essential elements of craft beer began when he was a student at Parks College in St. Louis, Mo. He went out with his friends and found most of what was offered at bars, pubs and restaurants was bland and uninspiring. He knew he liked the flavor of beer and he knew he liked the simplicity of the farming lifestyle.

"So I started doing some home brewing and found that it was a fun hobby to pursue. Now we have one of the biggest operations in the state," he said.

Heine's time on the farm is spent fussing over flavor and aroma profiles, acid levels, yeast growth, oil content, insect invasions, disease infections and more. He and Michelle do all the growing, harvesting, processing, drying, pulverizing, preserving, pressing and packaging.

He finds markets by visiting with brewers, forging relationships across the region and even keeping in touch with his college buddies.

"There are some college roommates I've kept in touch with who are brewers and we're always talking about how to improve our products," he said. "Hops growers are down to just a handful in the state, but for those who have survived, I think the outlook is good."



BULLISH ON BEES

Beekeeping industry struggles with drought and other obstacles along with overall agriculture sector

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Becoming a beekeeper wasn't something Chad Holbrook dreamed about back when he worked as a farm loan officer in Texas.

But he decided it might be an interesting hobby, so about 10 years ago he bought himself a hive just for the fun of it.

As things sometimes tend to go, one hive led to two, two hives led to four and before he knew it, Holbrook was giving his day job the boot. Goodbye business suit, hello beekeeping suit.

These days, Holbrook manages about 3,000 hives out of his main headquarters in Fairfax, MN, although he still has some hives back in Texas. A member of Renville-

Sibley Co-op Power, he ships his hives for pollination purposes all across the Midwest and to other regions as well to help growers gain higher crop yields.

"After I got my first bee hive I just really enjoyed doing it, and it snowballed and just kept increasing every year," Holbrook said. "I finally quit my day job to run the business in January of 2017, which is something I never thought I'd do."

That's a move that took some courage because Holbrook knew from his brief experience that while bees can be tough buggers, they also have plenty of obstacles threatening their place in nature and their very existence.

After all, some of the boxes, frames, pallets and extraction equipment he purchased to start

his own operation were acquired from beekeepers making a bee-line straight out of the business.

The list of real and potential apiary antagonists is long. Apiculturists are constantly trying to protect their colonies from various types of threats including several species of mites, insecticides, pesticides, extreme weather and destruction of their habitat.

One pitfall not often discussed in the public discourse is the attrition that takes place from merely moving colonies from one patch of farmland to the next, and in some cases, moving hives from one spot to another to protect them during the inclement non-pollinating months.

Holbrook figures the attrition rate can be up to 10 percent anytime hives are loaded onto a truck and hauled to different locations. It's a significant loss considering an estimated one-third of the world's food supply depends on the pollination work performed by



Honey bees pollinate roughly one-third of the world's agriculture crops.

honey bees. Since 2010, beekeepers in South Dakota, Minnesota and across the country have experienced historically high colony loss rates of nearly 30 percent a year impacting roughly 90 different agricultural crops ranging from almonds and apples on the West Coast to cotton and cranberries in the East.

"Keeping them alive is the hardest thing," Holbrook said. "There are substances farmers use to manage vegetation and help their crops, but it's causing a reduction in the forage area for bees. But everybody has to make a living and I don't fault the farmers...if I were them I'd probably be doing the same thing. But we can all look for ways to be more environmentally friendly because we're all making a living off nature."

Holbrook, who describes himself as a migratory commercial beekeeper, typically transports bees to California every January to pollinate that state's almond crop and then heads to his facility in Texas to extract honey. July is the slowest month of the year, then there's a short fall season before the bees head to an indoor storage facility in Idaho for protection against the cold.

Despite the drought conditions that have caused stress for farmers, ranchers and apiculturists across the region, Holbrook is bullish on the beekeeping industry. He noted that the city of Sioux Falls recently approved an ordinance that allows residents to maintain hives on their property. Would-be beekeepers must

apply for a permit, take an online class, inform their neighbors of their intentions and adhere to other prescribed guidelines.

Holbrook reports that through the spring and summer seasons - and despite the drought - honey prices have seen an upward shift. For instance, he said the price for honey in the region last year was about \$1.70 per pound but has climbed to more than \$2.25. The international market is expected to expand from \$9.2 billion to \$19 billion by 2028.

"We were fortunate that we've had some timely rains and the hot, dry weather hasn't caused problems for my business. It has been an average crop for me. But you don't ever really know for sure until the honey is extracted," he said.



According to owner Kiah Crowley, Sunrise Hives in Spearfish maintains about 400 bee colonies. *Photo by Sunrise Hives*

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Your E-mail Address: _____

South Dakota State Fair
September 2-6, 2021



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.

AUGUST 22

St. Andrew's Fun Fest, Music & Chicken Dinner
15 SE 1st Street, Fairfax, MN,
507-426-7739

AUGUST 26-29

58th Annual Steam Threshing Jamboree
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,
605-256-3644

AUGUST 27-28

Sizzlin' Summer Nights
Main Street, Aberdeen, SD,
605-226-3441

AUGUST 27-29

Fall River Hot Air Balloon Fest
Hot Springs Municipal Airport,
Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140

AUGUST 28

McCrossan Boys Ranch Xtreme Event Rodeo
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-339-1203

SEPTEMBER 2-6

South Dakota State Fair
State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,
605-353-7340

SEPTEMBER 9-12

SD State Senior Games
Watertown, SD, Contact
Howard at 605-491-0635 for
more information

SEPTEMBER 10

Mickelson Star Trail
Rochford Trailhead, Hill City,
SD, register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mickelson-star-trail-night-tickets-140121383831>

SEPTEMBER 10-11

Ribs, Rods & Rock n' Roll
Main Street, Vermillion, SD,
605-624-2021

SEPTEMBER 11-12

Fall Harvest Festival
Delmont, SD, 605-928-3792

SEPTEMBER 12

Annual Antique Car & Tractor Parade
Main Street, Farmer, SD,
605-239-4498

SEPTEMBER 17-18

Deadwood Jam
Main Street, Deadwood, SD,
605-578-1876

SEPTEMBER 18

Health Connect Fair
Sanford Pentagon, Sioux Falls,
SD, 888-761-5437

SEPTEMBER 18-19

Northeast South Dakota Celtic Faire and Games
37925 Youth Camp Road,
Aberdeen, SD, 605-380-5828

SEPTEMBER 23-25

Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup & Arts Festival
13329 US Highway 16A,
Custer, SD, 605-255-4515

SEPTEMBER 25

Great Downtown Pumpkin Festival
526 Main Street, Rapid City,
SD, 605-716-7979

SEPTEMBER 25-26

Menno Pioneer Power Show
Menno, SD, contact Daniel at
mennopowershow@yahoo.com
for more details

OCTOBER 1-3

SiouxperCon
1201 N West Avenue, Sioux
Falls, SD, visit siouxpercon.com
for more details and tickets

OCTOBER 8-10

2021 Black Hills Powwow
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center,
Rapid City, SD, 605-341-0925

OCTOBER 9-10

Sioux Falls Quilters' Guild Bi-annual Quilt Show
1201 N West Avenue, Sioux
Falls, SD, for more info visit
siouxfallsquiltersguild.com or
send an email to
sfqg2021show@gmail.com

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