

# Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Cooperative Connections

FEBRUARY 2017 VOL. 17 NO. 10



**Electricity**  
**Is at the Heart of**  
**the Home** P8-9

# The Cooperative's A-Team



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager

There has been much press recently regarding the A-Team being assembled by President Elect Trump. He is assembling a team of top advisors that will be challenged with leading our country and improving our economy for the next four years. The definition of A-Team refers to a group of elite soldiers or workers in an organization that come together to achieve a common goal. The recent Christmas Storm that left thousands of South Dakotans in the dark was an opportunity for

the Cooperative's A-Team from all across this state and our neighboring states to shine.

The storm that tracked across our state on Christmas Day left 23,000 cooperative members without electricity. On Christmas morning, our distribution system was covered in ice, but the warmer temperatures and rain melted the ice off before the winds arrived. Luckily, Central Electric only received minor damage that kept our crews busy only for a few days. Once we knew our system was no longer in jeopardy from the weather, we sent four linemen with equipment north to assist with storm repairs.

**In the cooperative family, there are many members of the A-Team that all play a role in how successful the team will be.**

The linemen who provided assistance were Norton Truman from Kimball, Jon Reichert from Plankinton, Cody Riggs and Tony Roth from Mitchell. We had additional linemen who wanted to help and were ready to go if more assistance was requested. In good humor, these four individuals referred to themselves as the cooperative's A-Team. When we need power restored, no matter the time or the conditions, we rely heavily on the talents and dedication of our linemen. For that, the label of A-Team sticks to each and every one of them.

In the cooperative family, there are many members of the A-Team that all play a role in how successful the team will be. The individuals who receive the least amount of credit for their role are the spouses and family members. This



**Lineman Jon Reichert repairs line near Ipswich, SD on FEM Electric's service territory. Photo by Lineman Norton Truman.**

year, they celebrated Christmas and New Year's while their family member was restoring electric service to people across the state whom they didn't even know. They took on all the responsibilities for taking care of their home and family while their loved one was away.

Others who deserve accolades are the individuals who work for the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA). They were tasked with coordinating the arrival of over 100 linemen and equipment from South Dakota, Iowa, and Minnesota that were needed for the restoration efforts. SDREA also provided the statewide communications, contacts with government officials, and news updates so we could stay informed on the progress being made.

We also must recognize the many cooperative member owners who helped cooperative linemen during the storm repairs. Those that offered equipment to clear snow, pull a truck out, offer a cup of coffee or just wait patiently are a big part of the Cooperative A-Team. Without that support, the work that has to be done can become very tedious and tiresome. It is amazing how a kind act can re-energize a person.

For anyone else who works behind the scenes and has not received proper recognition here in my column or elsewhere, "thank you" for your time and efforts for the cooperative.

Unfortunately, we at Central Electric have experienced our share of storm damage, and we know firsthand how important each and all of us are in getting through an event like the recent Christmas Storm. Each and every team member is important in achieving our goal. I am proud to say that I work with people like Norton, Jon, Cody, and Tony and the entire Cooperative A-Team.

# Central Electric Cooperative Connections

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## Scholarship Reminder Deadline: February 1



Central Electric will provide three \$1,000 academic scholarships for the 2016 - 2017 school year.

The Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship is in its 27th consecutive year and is funded by Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, ND. The Jay Headley Memorial Scholarships are in their 16th consecutive year and are funded by the family of the late Jay Headley.

Both scholarships are designed to recognize and encourage the academic and community achievements of the students in our area.

For more information, contact Central Electric Cooperative at 605-996-7516 or 800-477-2892.

You can also download information and application forms from the website [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop) or contact your Guidance Counselor.

See application for eligibility requirements.

### Office Hours

Monday through Friday,  
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24 - Hour Service  
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### Mission Statement

*Provide Energy & Services with  
a Commitment to Safety and  
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This institution is an equal  
opportunity provider and  
employer.

## Employee Years of Service

### Bruce Sparks

February 1 - 16 years

### Cody Riggs

February 9 - 2 years

*Thank you for all you do for the cooperative and our members!*

# Downed and Dangerous

**Downed power lines** can be deadly. ALWAYS assume a downed power line is live and avoid going near it or anything in contact with it.

## Use Precaution

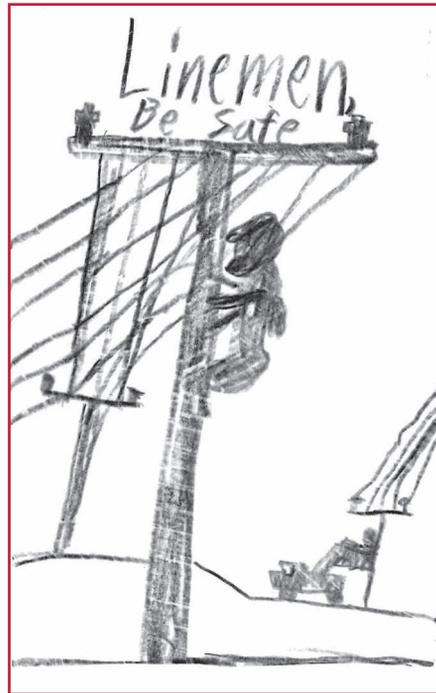
- Downed power lines can energize the ground up to 35 feet away.
- If you see a downed power line, immediately notify local authorities.
- Never drive over downed power lines or through water that is in contact with them.
- Never try to move a downed power line. Even using items that typically are not conductive will not prevent injury or death.

## Know What to Do

- The safe way to move away from a downed power line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times.
- If your car comes in contact with a downed power line while you are inside, stay in the car. Do not touch any part of the car's frame or any other metal. Use a cell phone or honk your horn to summon help. Allow only rescue personnel to approach the car.
- If your car is in contact with a downed power line and you must exit due to fire or another imminent threat:
  - Do not touch your vehicle and the ground at the same time with any part of your body or clothing.
  - Open the door to your vehicle without touching the metal door frame.
  - Jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and so both feet land at the same time.
  - Shuffle away so that the toe of one foot shuffles forward along the length of the other foot, ensuring that both feet are in constant contact and always touching the ground.
- If someone comes in contact with a downed power line or something else that has become electrified, call 911 immediately.
  - Never touch someone who has come in contact with a power line. They are energized and pose a danger to anyone who comes in contact with them.
  - Remember power lines don't have to fall in order to be dangerous. Always call 811 before you dig and keep yourself and your equipment at least 10 feet from overhead power lines.

Source: *esfi.org*

## Kids' Corner Safety Poster



**“Linemen – Be Safe.”**

**Colt Kopren, 9 years old**  
*Colt is the son of Randy and Heidi Kopren, Bison, S.D. They are members of Grand Electric Cooperative, Bison, S.D. Colt's dad is a lineman.*

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.

**92nd Legislative Session**

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# Bountiful Brunch



## Favorite Breakfast Bake

- |                                   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 lb. sausage, cooked and drained | 1/4 cup milk                   |
| 2 cups frozen hash browns, thawed | 1/2 tsp. salt                  |
| 1 pkg. crescent rolls             | 1/4 tsp. pepper                |
| 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese     | 2 T. onion, sliced thin        |
| 5 eggs, beaten                    | 2 T. green pepper, sliced thin |
|                                   | 2 T. Parmesan cheese           |

Pat crescent rolls into a 9x13-inch pan that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Spoon sausage over top. Sprinkle on hash browns and Cheddar cheese. Combine eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Gently pour over all. Top with onions and green pepper. Sprinkler with Parmesan cheese. Bake at 375°F. for 30 minutes.

**Jane Ham, Rapid City**

## Ultra-flexible Ham and Veggie Quiche

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 refrigerated pie crust (half of a 14.1 oz. pkg.) or 8-inch frozen deep-dish pie crust                                 | deli ham, ham steak or honey-glazed ham                                     |
| 1/2 cup sliced green onions or finely chopped white, yellow or red onions   | 1/2 cup (2 oz.) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese or provolone or Monterey Jack |
| 1/2 cup vegetable of choice, such as shredded carrots or thinly sliced asparagus, baby green beans or shredded zucchini | 6 eggs  |
| 1/2 cup chopped baked ham or  | 2/3 cup half-and-half (or 1/3 cup milk and 1/3 cup cream)                   |
|   | 1/2 tsp. salt   |
|   | 1/4 tsp. black pepper   |

Prepare crust, if necessary, according to package directions. Layer onions, carrots (or other vegetables), ham and cheese in crust. In a medium bowl, combine eggs, half-and-half, salt and pepper. Whisk until frothy. Pour mixture over veggies and ham. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F. until the top is set and light golden brown, about 50 minutes. Remove from oven and cool 10 minutes, then slice and serve.

**Judy Bierle, Utica**

## Overnight French Toast

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1/2 cup butter      | 5 eggs            |
| 3/4 cup brown sugar | 1/2 cup milk      |
| 1 tsp. cinnamon     | Dash salt         |
| 12 slices bread     | Vanilla, to taste |

Melt butter in a 9x13-inch pan. Add brown sugar and cinnamon. Put bread in 2 layers across pan. Mix remaining ingredients; pour over bread. Refrigerate overnight. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F. for 30 minutes. Invert on tray and serve.

**Mary Jessen, Holabird**

## Cinnamon Crunch Cake

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 2 cups flour                                  | 1 package (2-layer size) white cake mix |
| 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar             | 1 egg                                   |
| 1/2 cup granulated sugar                      | 1 cup sour cream                        |
| 2 T. McCormick® Cinnamon, Ground              | 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted      |
| 1 cup (2 sticks) cold butter, cut into chunks | 1 tsp. McCormick® Pure Vanilla Extract  |

Mix flour, sugars and cinnamon in large bowl. Cut in cold butter with pastry blender or 2 knives until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Set aside. Beat cake mix, egg, sour cream, melted butter and vanilla in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed about 1 minute or just until mixed. Spread evenly in greased and floured 13x9-inch baking pan. Sprinkle evenly with topping mixture. Bake at 350°F. for 30 to 35 minutes or until cake pulls away from sides of pan. Cool on wire rack. Cut into squares to serve. Makes 24 servings.

*Blueberry Crumb Cake: Prepare topping and batter as directed. Spread batter in baking pan. Sprinkle with 1 cup blueberries, then the topping mixture. Bake 45 minutes.*

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 265, Total Fat 13g, Cholesterol 41mg, Sodium 226mg, Carbohydrates 34g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Protein 3g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Eggs Benedict Casserole

- |                         |                                   |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 8 large eggs            | 3/4 lb. Canadian bacon, diced     |
| 3 cups milk, divided    | 6 English muffins, diced          |
| 3 green onions, chopped | 1 (.9 oz.) pkg. hollandaise sauce |
| 1 tsp. onion powder     | 1/4 cup butter                    |

Whisk eggs, 2 cups milk, onions and onion powder together in a large bowl until well mixed. Spray 9x13-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Layer half the Canadian bacon in prepared baking dish. Spread English muffins over meat and top with remaining Canadian bacon. Pour egg mixture over casserole. Cover baking dish with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Sprinkle casserole with paprika; cover with aluminum foil. Bake at 375°F. until eggs are nearly set, about 30 minutes; remove foil. Continue baking until eggs are completely set, about 15 additional minutes. Whisk hollandaise sauce mix with 1 cup milk in a saucepan. Add butter and bring to a boil, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to medium-low, simmer and stir until thickened, about 1 minute. Drizzle sauce over casserole to serve.

**Cortney Reedy, Tea**

## Egg Bake

- |                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 1/2 lb. sausage                 | 1/2 cup Bisquick |
| 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese | 1 cup milk       |
| 2 eggs                          |                  |

Mix together; pour into pie plate. Bake at 400°F. for 25 to 30 minutes.

**Diana Gillick, Tea**

*Please send your favorite seafood, appetizer or beverage recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2017. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.*

# Winter Storm “Europa” Hits



**Brian Bultje**  
Manager of Operations

The Winter Storm “Europa”—or the Christmas Storm of 2016—arrived Christmas morning wrapped with ice, rain, wind, and lightning across South Dakota.

In Central Electric’s service territory, we experienced outages to roughly 75 members and were able to restore power within the next day. Those areas with the largest number of members out of power included northeast of Chamberlain, north and south of Howard, and near Woonsocket. There were additional single or smaller outages across our service territory.

All in all, we were very fortunate in our territory. Ice had formed on the lines in the early morning. However, when the rain fell later in the day, much of the ice fell off the lines. If the ice had held onto our lines and system, we could have seen significantly more damage and outages.

Several other electric cooperatives across the state were not as fortunate. The storm caused outages to over 23,000 members of more than 20 South Dakota cooperatives. Those

areas hit hardest included the western and northeastern parts of the state. The western area received large amounts of snow in addition to the ice. In the northeastern territory, crews were reporting ice seven inches in diameter hanging on the lines. The ice makes the lines extremely heavy and difficult to work with. In order to just lift the sagging line or pull it out of the snow, crews can spend quite a bit of time clearing the ice off the line.

A significant amount of damage also took a toll on the transmission line during this storm, affecting East River Electric and Western Area Power Administration. Transmission line is the tier above your cooperative’s poles and wires in delivering power from the supplier to the local cooperative. The transmission line brings power into the substations, which the cooperatives use to deliver power out to our members. The damage to the transmission line caused many substations in the state to be down. Therefore, while some members might have buried line to their places, if the substation is down, there is no source of power, and members will still see an outage.

Central Electric did send two 2-man crews and equipment to assist in the northeastern regions. Cody Riggs and Tony Roth reported to assist Lake Region Electric near Webster, SD. Jon Reichert and Norton Truman reported to FEM Electric near Ipswich, SD, and then traveled to assist at Lake Region after restoring power at FEM Electric. Crews left on Monday, December 26th and returned a week later on Monday, January 2nd after restoring power to all the members there.

**Lineman Jesse Baker repairs a “floater”, or line that became untied, north of Chamberlain following the storm. Photo taken by Lineman DuWayne Moore.**

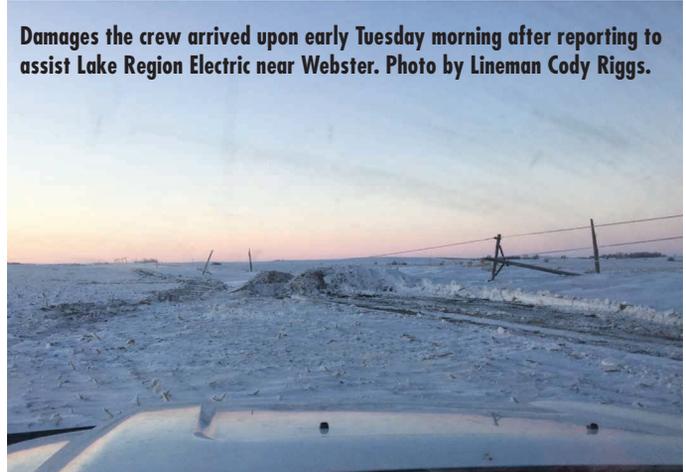


# Cooperatives on Christmas Day

In addition to our crews, help arrived from 15 other South Dakota electric cooperatives, 14 cooperatives in Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin, as well as 100 workers from private contractors.

## What does a “State of Emergency Declaration” mean for us?

Governor Dugaard declared a state of emergency on Monday, December 26 due to the large number of outages across the state. The declaration opens up channels for state resources to assist in the restoration process, such as assisting with snow removal. It allows out-of-state workers to cross the border and assist without needing the necessary in-state licenses or permits usually required. When requested, the declaration can also allow extension waivers for truck drivers who are delivering material and need to exceed the maximum number of hours they are allowed to drive.



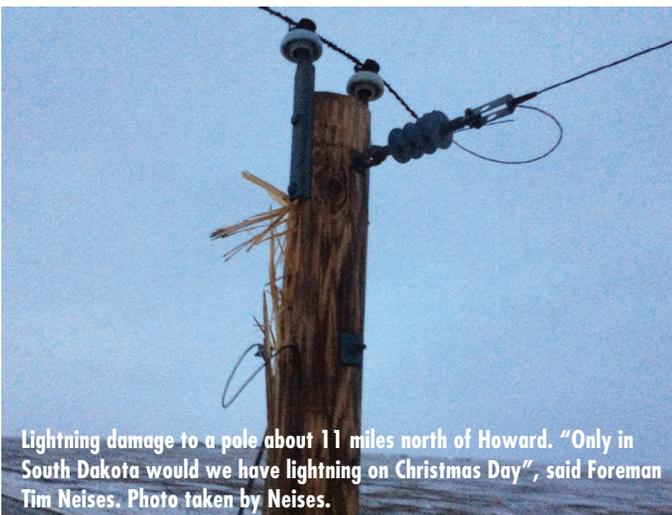
Damages the crew arrived upon early Tuesday morning after reporting to assist Lake Region Electric near Webster. Photo by Lineman Cody Riggs.



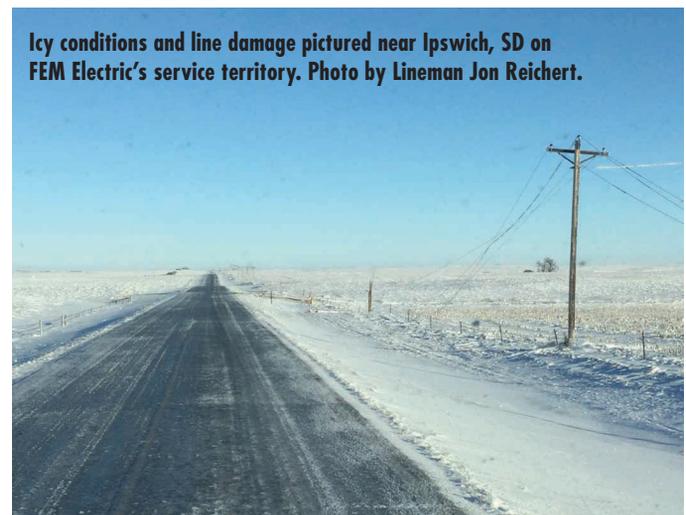
Central Electric crew and Southeastern Electric crew work to untie wire from a broken pole near Webster while assisting Lake Region Electric. Photo taken by Lineman Tony Roth.



Ice on the line near Milbank, SD. Taken by Sioux Valley Energy Lineman Steve Neises.



Lightning damage to a pole about 11 miles north of Howard. “Only in South Dakota would we have lightning on Christmas Day”, said Foreman Tim Neises. Photo taken by Neises.



Icy conditions and line damage pictured near Ipswich, SD on FEM Electric’s service territory. Photo by Lineman Jon Reichert.

# Electricity is the Best Choice

## for cost-savings and the environment

**K**EITH DENNIS SAYS ELECTRICITY IS A GOOD ENERGY choice for the environment. He cites a thought-provoking list of reasons in his peer-reviewed article published in *The Electricity Journal* in November 2015, titled “Environmentally Beneficial Electrification: Electricity as the End-Use Option.”

Paul Wesslund

Dennis is the senior principal of end-use solutions and standards at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). His article challenges basic assumptions about electricity and the environment that make a difference for top-level policymakers, as well as for co-op members.

His focus on water heaters and heat pumps is especially significant since heating water and air account for more than half of a home’s energy use.

Here are answers Dennis gave to questions about the research behind his article:

**A central claim in your article is that an electric water heater has less environmental impact than a natural gas water heater. How can this be true, when burning natural gas emits less greenhouse gas than burning coal, which generates about a third of our nation’s electricity?**

Technologies have gotten so advanced that a water heater in your home can be 200 percent or more efficient at converting electricity into heat. It does this by taking some of the energy out of the surrounding air in what’s called a heat pump.

Heat pumps are being used more and more for space heating and more recently, heat pump technology is being used in water heaters.

And a natural gas water heater actually burns the gas in your home. So you need to vent that air out of your home through a flue. To do that, you

are essentially making large holes in your home and pumping air in and out, reducing energy efficiency.

**Explain the contention in your article that**



**buying a gas water heater locks you out of future improvements in efficiency.**

Once you install a gas appliance in your home, you are stuck with that technology for its 10- to 20-year life. During that time, solar panels and wind turbines will be generating a bigger share of the nation's electricity. Coal power plant efficiency will be improving. The only way to benefit from those trends would be to have an electric appliance.

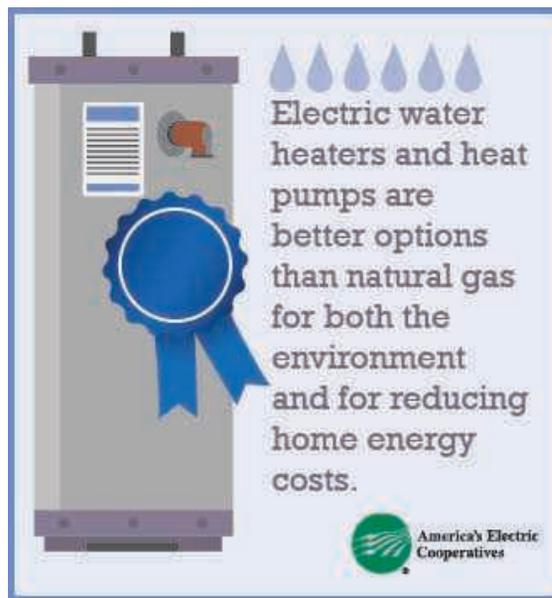
**You make a point that using an electric appliance can make you part of a broad, national solution to improving energy efficiency.**

In addition to the high efficiency of the electric appliance itself, there are electric system efficiencies that can be achieved through the ability to choose the time when you use the electricity. For example, your water heater is able to operate as a type of battery and better batteries are part of what's needed to make renewable energy more useful. Solar panels only make electricity when the sun shines and wind turbines only make electricity when the wind blows. A hidden value of water heaters is that they can serve as a storage technology – the water they heat stays hot for a long time because they are well insulated. An electric car can work the same way – once it's charged, it stores energy for when it's going to be driven. By storing energy when it is available and then using it when it is needed, these technologies are increasing the overall efficiency of our energy resources.

Many electric co-ops have load-control programs that take advantage of that energy storage ability to more effectively manage the flow of power. Those load control programs return that value to the co-op member by helping pay some of the up-front costs for these more efficient appliances through rebates or other incentives.

**You claim there's a huge flaw in the way we calculate a lot of the leading energy efficiency standards, from ENERGY STAR® ratings to construction standards. How do they miss the mark?**

The formulas being used to calculate energy efficiency for these major programs don't take into account several realities. Those include the increases in renewable energy and natural gas to generate electricity, power plant efficiencies, load management programs and other advantages of electricity we've talked about in this interview. Those metrics for calculating energy efficiency were designed before a lot of these trends. Despite these trends, the metrics still treat all electricity as coming from inefficient coal plants. That's just clearly wrong.



These incorrect efficiency metrics lead to bad energy decisions. In my article, I quote the Natural Resources Defense Council as saying that these metrics “have serious deficiencies for the purpose of setting a product standard; they are simply not the right numbers to inform good standards decisions.”

**NRECA and others have been working with policymakers to change those metrics. What is the status?**

Very positive. It's a long bureaucratic process, but we are hoping that the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency will work with us to address these issues. Along with the environmental community, the renewable energy community and other energy stakeholders, we have begun that process.

**You conclude your article with the bold statement that “incentivizing beneficial electrification with appliances available today would immediately reduce carbon dioxide emissions.”**

For policymakers and co-op members, more and more you are going to see the ability to achieve end-use emissions reductions and energy efficiency improvements by choosing electric end-use options over direct fossil fuel use like oil, natural gas, gasoline and diesel. This will achieve energy efficiency, cost savings and environmental benefits.

*Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

# Ethan Community Center Receives a Boost from Operation RoundUp

The Ethan Community Center recently received a check for \$3,000 from Operation RoundUp. The money will be used towards Community Center renovations as the volunteers bring to life a much needed gathering space for the community!

The City of Ethan purchased the former Catholic church for the purpose of the community center. Despite losing the church, the volunteers see this as a way to preserve the building and continue to use it for serving the community.

Central Electric member Don Garvis was baptized in the original church that stood where the current building is today, and now serves on the Ethan Community Center board. Garvis believes that the Center will be a great benefit to Central Electric members and the rural community of Ethan as well as the town members.

Garvis stated, "This is not a City of Ethan center; this is the Ethan Community Center."

The Center has already been requested for rent several times. The Ethan High School junior class inquired on using the center for their prom banquet, where in previous years students would need to travel to Mitchell for their meal.

The city hired their local contractor, Ethan Coop Lumber, to complete the renovations. Treasurer Betty Raymond states that Ethan Coop Lumber has been extremely generous with their time and material.

Improvements being made include a new kitchen and flooring. The choir room will be turned into a meeting room for small gatherings such as playing cards or a shower. Board members also hope to turn the cry room into an additional bathroom and the sacristy into a small library. The current library is at the school and not available during the summer. The school donated bookshelves for the center's library.

Raymond understands that community members might have a difficult time adjusting to the new space, especially having the kitchen area where the former altar stood: "I don't necessarily like it either, but I don't want to see the building go unused and neglected."

The volunteers are taking measures to preserve the church's history. They plan to utilize some church pews and create a framed dedication of the church to hang there.

Renovations will continue to be made as funding allows. The community has already provided overwhelming support for the center, including a fundraising event where nearly 300 people attended in a town with a total population of 324. Anyone interested in donating to the Center can contact the City of Ethan or any of the board members: Marty Royston, Shane Comp, Leah Mellegaard, Don Garvis, Michele Pollreisz, Michelle Klumb or Annie Haag.



Central Electric presents the check to the ECC board members. Left-right: Howard Caylor, Don Garvis, Don Jorgensen, Marty Royston, Betty Raymond, Michelle Klumb, Annie Haag, Butch Morrison, Ken Schlimgen



View from entrance of building to the kitchen area on the end



New kitchen area

# Fostering a Community of Safety in Kimball

While only having been in his position for about six months, Chief Matt Bilben has already taken measures to increase safety for his community. The Kimball Police Department applied for and received a check for \$2,000 from Operation RoundUp towards the purchase of a speed meter.

The speed meter is a digital monitor mounted near the road that notifies drivers of their speed. The meters would be used around town and near the school.

One meter has been purchased and installed along Main Street as you go into the downtown area. This street is a long stretch with no stops to slow drivers, and it can be very easy for drivers to pick up speed without realizing it.

Chief Bilben explained that the meter does document the speeds it records during the day, and he is able to review that data. Bilben stated, "The fastest speed its documented there is 50 miles per hour."

As the single officer for the Kimball Police Department, Chief Bilben's position can demand that he be in several places at once. This meter serves as an efficient and friendly reminder to drivers and will give Chief Bilben an idea of what speeds they are seeing along highly-populated roads or where children are crossing.



Ellen Speck with Operation RoundUp and Ken Schlingen present a check for \$2,000 to Chief Matt Bilben (center)



The speed meter is along Main Street. It shows the speed in red with "slow down" when a driver is speeding. It will be green and show "Thank You" for appropriate speeds as pictured.

## Basin Electric Bus Tour: July 19-21, 2017



Consider joining our bus tour this summer! We will travel to North Dakota and tour several facilities for our members to see where our electricity comes from first-hand.

The tour stops include the Oahe Dam, Cathedral on the Prairie, Antelope Valley Station, Coteau Coal Mine, Great Plains Synfuels Plant, plus one mystery tour!

The cost is only \$25 per person, which includes transportation, meals and lodging. The bus is limited to 50 passengers, and first priority is given to our members who have not participated previously.

For more information, contact our office. For an application, visit [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop). Please include your application and \$25 per applicant, and mail to Central Electric Cooperative, Bus Tour, 25487 403rd Avenue, PO Box 850, Mitchell SD 57301.

# Where Are They Now?

## *Rural Electric Youth Tour Alumni Walk Varied Paths*

**I**N 1963, ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES IN SOUTH Dakota started sending teenagers to Washington, D.C., for a week of learning, sight-seeing and meeting with our nation's leaders.

Since then, more than 1,300 students representing South Dakota cooperatives have made the trek which is held each June.

For some participants, the experience serves as a catalyst to explore public service and ways to enrich their communities. For others, it reinforces a sense that the wide open prairies are where they belong and are needed.

After a stint as the Student Association President at South Dakota State University and then finishing a master's degree there, 2008 Youth Tour alum Ben Stout now works to advocate for South Dakota farmers as part of the South Dakota Department of Agriculture.

Stout is the southeast ag development specialist for the Division of Agricultural Development, which assists with the development and promotion of agriculture and agricultural products in the state of South Dakota.

Stout, originally from Philip, S.D., represented

West Central Electric Cooperative in Murdo, S.D., on the tour.

Also representing West Central that year on the trip was Faith Begay of Lower Brule.

After earning an undergraduate degree at Stanford University and a master of public policy degree from Duke University, Begay can be found in Washington, D.C., where she works as a special assistant in the Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of Interior in Washington, D.C.

During the 2016 Youth Tour, Faith organized a meeting for the South Dakota and Wisconsin Youth Tour participants to meet with the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Indian Affairs Larry Roberts, a member of the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin.

During the meeting, Begay related to students the importance of getting involved in community and working for change.

A participant from the 1960s reflected on his experience in an e-mail to organizers last fall.

"I went on the 1968 Youth Tour, courtesy of Codington-Clark Co-op," said Maynard Resen,

By **Brenda Kleinjan**



referring to the Watertown, S.D.,-based cooperative which sent the South Shore native on his first trip to the nation's Capitol.

"It was a great trip, especially for a farm kid who 'didn't get out much.' The introduction to the sights in our nation's capitol was priceless and although I've been back several times, the memories of that first exposure as a teenager have stayed with me," said Resen, who now lives in Wolcottville, Ind.

"The functioning of our government became more understandable on that trip. I'm glad you are still taking young people there for that orientation," Resen wrote.

The connections Resen wrote of resonate through the years.

"The experience awakened me in ways I never thought possible. I think I realized that I really wanted to give back to the community that I reside in. I not only cover the news with my job, I have a real passion for focusing on where my tax dollars are used," said Kevin Larsen, who represented Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell S.D., on the 2006 trip. Originally from Howard, S.D., Larsen is the news director for KCCR radio in Pierre, S.D.

Viewers of the *Coyote News* broadcast at the University of South Dakota will see Youth Tour alum Nick Nelson in the anchor seat this semester. Nelson, who is from Newell, S.D., represented Butte Electric Cooperative on the 2014 tour.

"What I picked up from Youth Tour was a great fascination with how the government is run in Washington. It gave me an opportunity to get a closer look at what I've seen in the news for a while. If anything, it influenced me to dive deeper and seek a career in journalism to report on many of the things I experienced on Youth Tour," Nelson said.

That insight into how government works is one that influenced others as well, no matter when they participated.

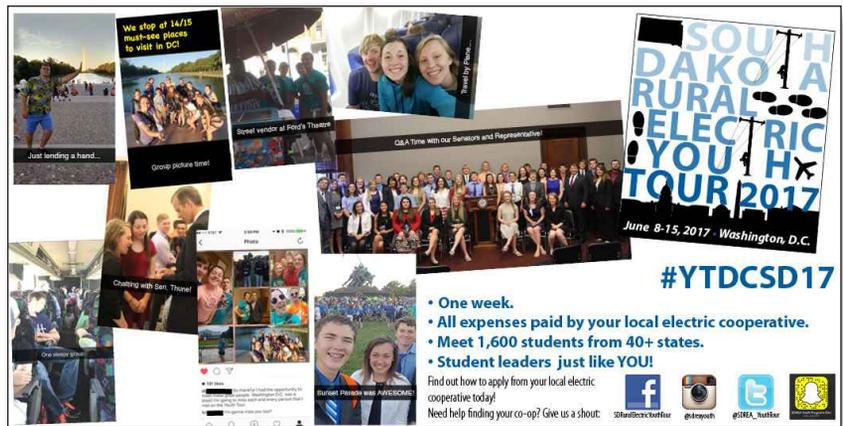
"It was an absolute trip-of-a-lifetime, take lots of pictures – you're going to have so much fun," said Sandra (Hohbach) Sieg as she delivered an impromptu message to the 2016 delegation as they boarded the bus for the ride to the airport. Hohbach was in their seat nearly 45 years prior when she represented what was then Tri-County Electric Association in Plankinton, S.D., on the 1972 trip. (Tri-County is now Central Electric.)

Sieg is project and risk management director for the Sioux Falls Federal Credit Union. The group was holding its annual meeting at the hotel the students were departing from.

"Because the trip offered opportunities to visit the major historical landmarks of D.C., I'll never forget how awestruck I was to see the huge memorials, the White House, the Capitol and the Washington Monument. That experience combined with the chance to see where and how our federal government worked, instilled a sense of patriotism and loyalty to the USA that I still have today," Sieg said. "It was truly humbling to walk through the same halls where history was made by patriots and some of our country's greatest leaders."

Another thing stands out for Sieg.

"In addition, the devastating Rapid City flood occurred while our group was in D.C. I'll never forget the empathy and



compassion shown to members of our group from Rapid City who were worried about how their family and friends might be affected by the flood. It was as true then as it is today – South Dakotans always pull together during times of crisis to support those in need – I witnessed that first hand on this trip," Sieg said. The following year, Sieg's sister, Lynette participated on the trip.

Also in that group was Koreen (Blomberg) Anderson who was representing Grand Electric Cooperative in Bison, S.D.

"The Youth Tour had a very profound, lasting impact on me. Washington, D.C., became a reality rather than just something one hears about," said Anderson, a marketing and grain accountant at the Lemmon, S.D. location of Southwest Grain, a division of CHS Inc. "Its was educational, it was fun, it was many "firsts" for me. Now many years later, I enjoy hearing the stories that participants share after attending the Youth Tour."

*Electric cooperatives in South Dakota and western Minnesota are taking applications for the 2017 Youth Tour. Contact your local electric cooperative for more information on the program.*



**Left:** Sandra (Hohbach) Sieg participated in the 1972 Youth Tour. A chance encounter with the 2016 delegation had her sharing words of advice for last summer's delegation.

**Above:** Among the participants in the 1973 tour pictured here was Sieg's sister, Lynette, and Koreen Anderson. **Opposite Page:** Youth Tour Alum Faith Begay talks to the 2016 delegation at the U.S. Department of Interior.

# Youth Tour

JUNE 9 -16, 2017 - WASHINGTON, D.C.

**What is it?** An all expense paid trip to Washington, D.C.

**Who is eligible?** Central Electric is sponsoring up to eight lucky students to the Youth Tour. You must be a junior in high school whose primary residence is located in Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Miner, Jerauld, Sanborn, Davison or Hanson counties or a dependent of a Central Electric member whose primary residence receives electric service from Central Electric. Children of Central Electric employees and directors are not eligible.

**What does it cost?** The tour is funded by the electric cooperatives of South Dakota who participate in the week-long event. Funding for each participant provides transportation, room and board, entertainment and sightseeing.

**How do I apply?** Submit an essay, not to exceed 1,000 words, on the following topic:

*“As a member-owned, not-for-profit utility, Central Electric Cooperative strives to improve the quality of life for our members. Discuss the benefits of your cooperative membership.”*

Essays must be typed and include a cover sheet that states the essay title, entrant’s name, email address, and phone numbers as well as the parent’s/guardian’s name, address, email address, and phone numbers and the school they attend. Winners will be asked to submit a digital photo for use in cooperative publications and give a brief presentation on their trip at the following district meeting in their county.

Send your essay to “Washington Youth Tour Contest”, Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell SD 57301 by March 1, 2017. All essays remain the property of Central Electric Cooperative.

One student from each county or director district may be awarded a trip to Washington DC.



[WWW.CENTRALEC.COOP](http://WWW.CENTRALEC.COOP)  
[WWW.YOUTHTOUR.COOP](http://WWW.YOUTHTOUR.COOP)

# Solar Informational Sessions Available

Do you have questions about solar energy and whether it could be useful for you? Join us for one of our informational sessions as we cover the following topics on solar energy:

- Comparing real output from the cooperative's solar project to a standard residential home
- Solar well pumps offered by Central Electric
- Solar option pro's & con's
- Questions to ask when considering solar

## Monday, February 20

7:00 PM

Betts Road Office Community Room  
Mitchell, SD

## Tuesday, February 21

7:00 PM

American Legion  
Wessington Springs, SD



Limited seating available. Please RSVP to your session of choice by contacting Courtney at the office via phone at 800-477-2892 or email at [courtneyd@centralec.coop](mailto:courtneyd@centralec.coop). Refreshments will be served.

## Regional Dateline

### December 15-March 31

South Dakota Snowmobile Trails Season, Lead, SD 605-584-3896

### January 18-26

38th Winter Art Show Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

### January 19-21

Snowmobile Rally Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

### January 20-21

ISOC Deadwood SnoCross Showdown, Deadwood, SD 605-578-1876

### January 21

Bark Beetle Blues Crawl Custer, SD, 605-440-1405

### January 21

Tommy: A Bluegrass Opry by the HillBenders, Spearfish, SD 605-642-7973

### January 27-February 5

Annual Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, Rapid City, SD 605-355-3861

### February 3-4

Who Got Greased? Murder Mystery Dinner Theater Elks Lodge, 705 Circle Drive Aberdeen, SD, 605-380-9743

### February 3-5

Winterfest of Wheels Car Show Sioux Falls, SD, 605-231-3100 [www.winterfestofwheels.com](http://www.winterfestofwheels.com)

### February 4

Twenty One Pilots in Concert Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288



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.

## Events of Special Note

### February 20

27th Annual Farm & Home Show, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Free Admission, Elementary School Gym, Wessington Springs, SD

### March 24-26

Black Hills Home Builders Home Show, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD [blackhillshomebuilders.com](http://blackhillshomebuilders.com)

### February 4

LHIA Fishing Derby 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., City Boat Landing Access Point Lake Hendricks, MN

### February 7-11

Winter Farm Show Watertown, SD, 605-886-5814

### February 10-11

Strawbale Winery Valentine Twilight Flights, Renner, SD 605-543-5071

### February 10-12

35th Annual Black Hills Sport Show and Outdoor Expo Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

### February 11

Ben Folds with the South Dakota Symphony Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

### February 11

Sioux Empire on Tap Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

### February 16-18

Sioux Falls Sno Jam Comedy Festival, Sioux Falls, SD [siouxfallssnojamcomedyfest@gmail.com](mailto:siouxfallssnojamcomedyfest@gmail.com)

### February 16-19

Steel Magnolias Community Theater, Spearfish, SD 605-642-7973

### February 17-19

Sioux Empire Wacipi Sioux Falls, SD, 310-922-1886

### March 4-7

Summit League Basketball Championship Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

### March 11-12

2017 Gun Show, American Legion Hall, Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. MST, Philip, SD 605-859-2635, 605-859-2280 605-859-2892 or 605-859-2219

### March 17-18

28 Below Fatbike Race Lead, SD, 605-584-3435

### March 18-19

Black Hills Motorcycle Show Rushmore Hall, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

### March 24-25, March 31-April 1

59th Annual Schmeckfest Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

### March 31-April 2

Professional Bull Riders Built Ford Tough Series Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

### April 7-8

Forks, Corks and Kegs Food and Wine Festival Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

### April 14-16

Sioux Empire Film Festival Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-4616