


# Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Cooperative Connections

MARCH 2015 VOL. 15 NO. 11



# BRAVING THE SHAVE

Pg. 8

# District Meetings and Our Work in Progress



**Loren Noess**  
General Manager

In January, we held eight district meetings; one in each of the eight counties we serve. I want to thank everyone who came to hear the information about your electric cooperative. I would like to recap the information that was shared at the meetings.

The topic that was discussed that will affect most of our members in some way is our proposed change to the facility charge. Before I go on, I want to stress that Central Electric's

rates are providing sufficient revenue to meet our expenses, and we do not need an increase in overall revenue for 2015. We are still completing a complex review of our electric rates and while the rates are generating adequate revenue, there is much discussion about if the rates are being applied fairly to all our members.

Central Electric's monthly billing for a typical single phase service has included a facility charge and three steps for Kwh purchases since the 1970's. The current facility charge is \$29.00 and the three steps for the Kwh charges are 13.3 cents for the first 600 Kwh, 11.5 cents for 601-1200 Kwh, and 7.4 cents for every Kwh used over 1200. The purpose of the first two steps is to help pay for the cost of our facilities because our facility charge is not high enough. The discussion about fairness is because almost 800 accounts on any given month do not purchase any kwh's and therefore these accounts are not paying their fair share of the facility costs. It also means that those accounts that are purchasing kwh's are paying more than their fair share of the cost of these facilities.

Because we do not need an increase in revenue for 2015, we are discussing increasing the facility charge, but lowering the charges for Kwh purchases. The goal is to have any changes in our rates generate the same amount of revenue, no more and

no less. If you have an account and it uses none or very few Kwh's, your monthly costs will increase. If you have an account that uses several Kwh's, your monthly costs will decrease. Watch future issues of our newsletter for more information.

I also reviewed a new program that we hope to launch in 2015 called Operation RoundUp. This is a program that allows members to round up their electric bill to generate funds that can be used for community projects. I will provide more information on this program at a later date.

Scott Kroger updated everyone on the financial condition of the cooperative and future changes to the design of your billing statement. Your cooperative is updating our computer software and along with the new software we will be able to provide you with more information on your monthly statement. These changes are explained in more detail on pages 6-7 of this newsletter.

Brian Bultje reviewed the improvements we have made to the electric distribution system and what is planned for the coming year. He also reviewed the safety clearances that have to be adhered to around large ag equipment and grain handling systems. In 2014, we saw a few incidents where members have contacted power lines with large equipment. Too many people have stopped paying attention to where their equipment is in relation to the power lines. Please take time to insure your safety and the safety of your workers and family.

Ken Schlingens reviewed the various rebates and incentives offered by your cooperative to save you money. He also touched on the scholarships, Youth Tour contest and the annual bus tour to North Dakota.

New for 2015, your cooperative will be installing a solar photovoltaic system at our Betts Road Service Center. The solar system will allow us to provide you with accurate information about solar systems, what they can do and what their limitations are. We will also be offering LED security lights and we are gathering information on solar well pumping systems that may be utilized in place of a seasonal pasture pump.

You can see that we have several projects that we are working on all in an effort to serve you better. Please plan to attend the annual meeting on April 7th where Ken will give a short presentation on our solar project.

## Central Electric's Annual Mtg Mitchell Corn Palace - April 7, 2015



(USPS 018-963)

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Mission Statement  
Providing Reliable Energy and  
Services at a Good Value

This institution is an equal  
opportunity provider and  
employer.

# Facility Charge Explained

A facility charge is a monthly charge that Central Electric Cooperative members pay to help cover the basic cost of bringing electricity to their location. It covers some of the expenses the cooperative incurs regardless of how much electricity is sold. The facility charge helps cover such things as:

- Trucks, wire, transformers and power poles needed to build and maintain the electric distribution system.
- Labor to build and maintain the lines.
- Cost of insurance, interest, and taxes.

Because all cooperative members benefit from having reliable electric service available when they need it, the facility charge allows everyone to pay a share of the basic costs.

Members sometimes ask why Central Electric's facility charge is different than neighboring electric cooperatives. It's because of our low consumer density; Central Electric serves an average of 1.6 meters per mile of line. The average density for cooperatives across South Dakota ranges from a low of 1 meter per mile to a high of almost 6 meters per mile while the average is 2.4 meters per mile of line. It is always more economical to serve areas of higher density. However, Central Electric Cooperative's average rates remain competitive.

Central Electric Cooperative serves a diverse membership. Some of our members use a lot of electricity all year long, and some may use electricity only one or two months per year. Whether you use a lot or a little, the cost of getting electric power to your location remains the same. And that is why your electric bill has two separate charges: the facility charge to cover basic costs, and the per kWh charges for the actual amount of electricity consumed.

We hope this brief explanation helps answer your questions about the facility charge portion of your electric bill. Please call us if you have any billing questions.

## Director at Large Nominating Petition Available

The Director at Large seat on the Central Electric Board of Directors, currently held by James Headley, is up for election during the Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. annual meeting which will be held on Tuesday evening, April 7, 2015 at the Corn Palace in Mitchell.

Any Central Electric member with an interest in serving on Central Electric's Board of Directors may pick up a petition at the Bett's Road Service Center located at 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell SD on or after Monday February 23, 2015. The petition must be returned by 5 p.m. on Friday March 13, 2015.

When filed, the form must bear the names of at least ten (10) Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. members.

For complete qualifications on becoming a director and ByLaw information for director elections, please refer to pages 6 & 7 of the December 2014 "Cooperative Connections" newsletter or contact the Mitchell Office.

# There's An App For That...

If you're one of the millions of Americans with a smart phone or a tablet device, you are probably quite familiar with the phrase "there's an app for that." Here's a quick look at some useful apps in the co-op world:

## Politically Speaking

The **NRECA Advocacy** app by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Cooperative Action Network brings national issues to your finger tips and provides a quick way to contact your elected officials in Washington, D.C.

Published by South Dakota's electric cooperatives, the **South Dakota Legislative Roster**, app provides information about the South Dakota legislature and other statewide elected officials along with committee information and how to contact your leaders in Pierre. The app also provides information on the state's electric cooperatives.

And for tablets only, check out the **South Dakota Legislature's** bill tracking app.

## Before you Dig

Planning some outdoor projects involving digging? Check out the **South Dakota 811** or **Gopher State One Call**.

## Rain or Shine

Need road conditions? Yep, there's an app for that, too. Check out **South Dakota 511** and **511 Minnesota**.

And the **Weather Connection** app by Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives is a handy weather tool.

## Energy Efficiency

Want to save money on your energy bill? Check out the **TogetherWeSave.com** app also from America's Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives.

## In an Emergency

The **First Aid by American Red Cross** app is a good choice, giving you a portable first aid guide for a variety of emergencies. (**Pet First Aid by American Red Cross** is available for a small fee and is handy for helping out for your four-legged friends.) Other American Red Cross apps help you schedule blood donations, prepare for hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, wildfires and find shelters after disasters.)

Looking for news about electric cooperatives across the nation? Check out NRECA's **Co-op Nation** app.

## Being a Member Pays

Several co-ops offer the **Smart Hub** or a similar app to manage your electric bill. And, don't forget savings from the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives **Co-op Connections Card** app.

# March is Eye Safety Month

With so many people using computers at work and at home, complaints of eye strain, difficulty focusing and discomfort have become commonplace in doctors' offices.

One of the main reasons for this is although offices have marched into the age of technology, not much else has. People are still using the same lighting, furniture and desk configurations they had when using typewriters.

To mark March as Workplace Eye Safety Month, the American Academy of Ophthalmology has put together some tips to help us alleviate some of the eye problems modern technology has given birth to. They are:

- **First and most important** – **get an eye exam by your ophthalmologist**, who can rule out the possibility of eye disease as the cause of your symptoms. You could simply need glasses when working at a computer or your prescription might need updating;
- **Screen distance** – you should sit approximately 20 inches from the computer monitor, a little further than you would for reading distance, with the top of the screen at or below eye level.
- **Equipment** – choose a monitor that tilts or swivels and has both contrast and brightness controls;
- **Furniture** – an adjustable chair is best;
- **Reference materials** – keep reference materials on a document holder so you don't have to keep looking back and forth, frequently refocusing your eyes and turning your neck and head;
- **Lighting** – modify your lighting to eliminate reflections or glare. A hood or micromesh filter for your screen might help limit reflections and glare; and
- **Rest breaks** – take periodic rest breaks, and try to blink often to keep your eyes from drying out.

Another thing to remember is that the forced-air heating systems in big office buildings can increase problems with dry eyes during the winter months. The usual symptoms of dry eye are stinging or burning eyes, scratchiness, a feeling that there's something in the eye, excessive tearing or difficulty wearing contact lenses.

Over-the-counter eye drops, called artificial tears, usually help, but if dry eye persists, see your eye doctor for an evaluation.

Source: [wellnessjunction.com](http://wellnessjunction.com)

## Kids' Corner Safety Poster

"Never cut down trees by power lines."



**Norah Fadness,**  
10 years old

Norah is the daughter of Jon and Lisa Fadness, Minneota, Minn. They are members of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Tyler, Minn.

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.

# Satisfying Seafood



## Country Catfish

- 2/3 cup cornmeal
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- Few drops Tobasco sauce
- Catfish fillets
- 2 eggs, beaten lightly

Combine cornmeal and salt in small bowl; stir well. Dip fish in eggs seasoned with Tobasco sauce, then in cornmeal. Place fish on cookie sheet lined with foil and coated with cooking spray. Bake at 425°F. for 8 to 10 minutes until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork.

**Mary Jessen, Holabird**

## Crab Linguine

- 8 oz. linguine noodles, cooked and drained
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 2 cups mock crab, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 (10 oz.) cans cream of shrimp soup
- 1/4 cup onion flakes
- 2 T. parsley flakes

Cook celery in a small amount of water until tender; drain. Mix together all ingredients; simmer until bubbly.

**Barbara Angerhofer, Hendricks, MN**

## Seafood Slaw

- 6 oz. macaroni, cooked and drained
- 3 cups finely shredded cabbage
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1-1/2 cups cooked or canned salmon, tuna or shrimp
- 2 T. minced onion
- 1/4 cup salad oil
- 2 T. vinegar
- 1-1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper

Combine macaroni, vegetables and seafood in a large bowl. Mix remaining ingredients; pour over macaroni/cabbage mixture and toss lightly. Chill 30 minutes. Add 2/3 cup salad dressing for a more creamy salad.

**Shirley Dreher, Clark**

## Crab Salad

- 8 oz. crab sticks, cut into small pieces
- 16 oz. ranch dressing
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 ribs celery, diced
- 1 can water chestnuts, drained and diced
- 1 pkg. chicken-flavored ramen noodles and seasoning

Break noodles. Add dressing and let set for 10 minutes. Add seasoning packet and remaining ingredients. Chill.

**Donna Glanzer, Carpenter**

## Baked Salmon Over Apple-Ginger Quinoa

- 1 cup plus 2 T. Apple NESTLÉ® JUICY JUICE® 100% Juice, divided
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 T. honey
- 2-1/2 tsp. peeled, grated fresh ginger, divided
- 1 tsp. rice wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. sesame oil
- 4 (about 6 oz. each) salmon fillets
- 1 T. olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped shallots or onion
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 cup ivory quinoa, rinsed
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp. MAGGI Instant Chicken Flavor Bouillon
- Ground black pepper
- Sliced green onions (optional)

Whisk 2 T. Juicy Juice, soy sauce, honey, 1-1/2 tsp. ginger, vinegar and sesame oil. Reserve half of mixture for serving. Pour remaining mixture into shallow pie plate. Add salmon and turn to coat. Cover; marinate in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 450° F. Line baking sheet with foil. Heat olive oil in medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add shallots and garlic; cook, stirring frequently, for 2 to 3 minutes or until fragrant. Stir in quinoa; cook, stirring constantly, for 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in water, remaining 1 cup Juicy Juice, bouillon and remaining 1 tsp. ginger. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to low. Cover; cook for 15 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Fluff with fork; cover to keep warm. Place salmon on prepared baking sheet; sprinkle with pepper. Discard marinade. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Drizzle reserved marinade over salmon; serve with apple-ginger quinoa. Makes 4 servings

*Nutritional information per serving: 510 calories; 17g total fat; 2.5g saturated fat; 95mg cholesterol; 41g protein; 46g carbohydrates; 3g fiber; 990mg sodium; 12g sugars*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Shrimp Lover Squares

- 1 (8 oz.) tube refrigerated crescent rolls
- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/2 tsp. dill weed
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup seafood sauce
- 24 cooked, medium shrimp
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper
- 1/3 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese

In a greased 9x13 pan, unroll the crescent dough; seal seams. Bake at 375°F. for 10 to 12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool completely on a wire rack. In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, sour cream, dill weed and salt until smooth. Spread over crust. Top with sauce, shrimp, green pepper, onion and cheese. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. Cut into squares.

**Becki Hauser, Tripp**

*Please send your favorite appetizers, beverages, casserole and 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 June 2015. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.*



# How to Read Your New Monthly Statement

Over the past several months, we have been working diligently to upgrade the computer software that is used by your cooperative. The new software allows for more information to be included on your monthly statement beginning with the statement you will be receiving in March.

The new bill design will provide members with the most information possible to help track their electric usage.

**1** Central Electric contact information.

**2** Information or messages pertaining to you and your cooperative.


**3** This is the detailed information for your service. All meters, service dates, and usage is shown here.

**4** Your payment options include:

1. Mail your payment in the return envelope.
2. Pay in person at our office.
3. Place your payment in the drop box at our office.
4. Pay by bank draft or recurring credit card.
5. Pay online using SmartHub. Sign up at [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop)

**5** The statement date, account number and due date.


**6** This shows all the activity since your last bill, ending with any account balances. If this does not match your records, call the office.



**1** PO Box 850  
25487 403rd Ave.  
Mitchell, SD 57301  
(800) 477-2892

Pay or view your bill online at [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop)

12 1 SP 0.480 5 12  
CUSTOMER NAME  
ADDRESS LINE 1  
ADDRESS LINE 2  
LEBANON IN 46052



Statement Date	<b>5</b> 02/01/2015
Account Number	99999999
Payment Due	02/20/2015

**Service Summary**

Previous Balance	218.75
Payments Received	218.75
<b>Balance Forward</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Current Charges	219.04
<b>Total Amount Due 02/20/15</b>	<b>219.04</b>
<b>Total Due After 02/20/15</b>	<b>224.04</b>

**Message from CEC**

Your credit card information is about to expire. Please contact CEC immediately to update your credit card information and avoid potential late fees.

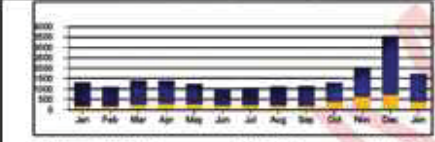
**2**

Page 1 of 2

Service Location: 1234567890

Service Address	Service Description	Meter Number	Services From	To	Days	Readings Previous	Present	Meter Multiplier	kWh Usage	Charge/Credit
123 MAIN ST	HOUSE	7777777	01/01/2015	02/01/2015	31	113379	115115	1	17.36	180.34
	SUB METER	8888888	01/01/2015	02/01/2015	31	1445	1464	20	380	21.28

**kWh Usage History**



PERIOD ENDING	12/18/2014	02/01/2014
Avg Daily Temp	0	0
Avg Daily kWh	56	43
Avg Daily Cost	\$6.79	\$5.89

**Current Service Detail**

Facility Charge		29.00
Energy (kWh) Charges	600 kWh @ 0.133	79.80
	600 kWh @ 0.115	69.00
	156 kWh @ 0.074	11.54
Sub Meter Charges	380 kWh @ 0.056	21.28
<b>Total Electric</b>		<b>210.62</b>
South Dakota State Tax		8.42
<b>Total Current</b>		<b>219.04</b>

**8**

**KEEP**    **SEND** Please do not staple or paperclip.


Comments/Address Change: \_\_\_\_\_


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**4**

Pay-By-Phone 800-477-2892

Account Balance, Monthly Usage, and Bill Payment are available at [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop)

We accept: 






**9**

Account Number	99999999
<b>Total Amount Due 02/20/15</b>	<b>219.04</b>
<b>Total Amount After 02/20/15</b>	<b>224.04</b>

Customer Name  
Address Line 1  
Address Line 2  
HUMBLE TX 77396-4580

CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOP  
PO BOX 850  
MITCHELL SD 57301-0850



440510015793001000016942000017442121820140

**7** To avoid paying a late fee, please make your payment by the due date shown on the bill.

**8** Detailed list of charges for this bill, including current Kwh usage.

**9** The total amount due upon receipt of this bill.

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# SmartHub: Your Secure Payment Gateway

## What is SmartHub?

We all lead busy lives and SmartHub is your gateway to accessing your accounts through your smart phone, tablet or computer.

## What Can I Do With SmartHub?

Did you forget to pay your bill or do you prefer to save the time, effort and postage each month? Are you out of town or is the weather bad and don't want to drive to deliver your payment?

Access your account through SmartHub to pay your bill electronically with your credit or debit card or directly from your checking account.

## Are you wondering if your bill is higher than normal for a particular time of the year?

View graphs comparing your usage over the past 13 months. Get usage information with an overlay of the average daily temperatures for that time period. Get your daily or hourly usage.

## Do you need to know your utility expenses for the past year for tax purposes?

Access your payment history online through SmartHub!

## Are you on a budget and wondering what your upcoming bill will be?

Check your usage history and see how much electricity you've used so far this year or month.



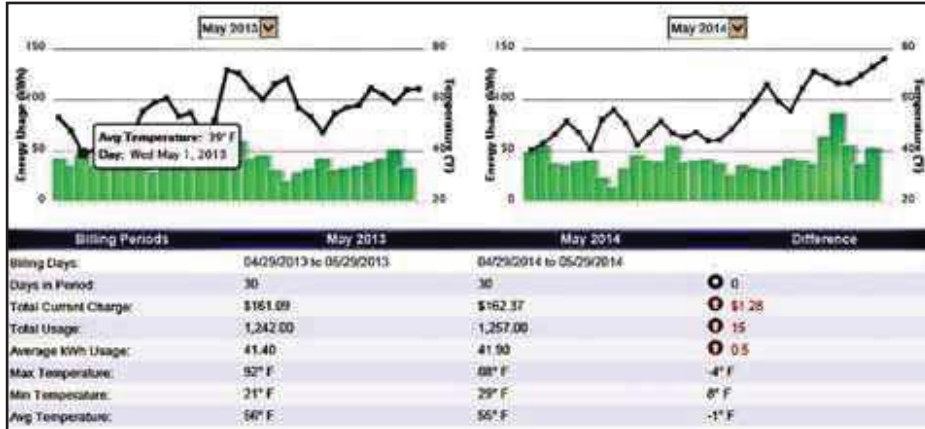
## Is it Secure?

The SmartHub system uses banking standards to securely store your credit card or checking account number and not have to worry about remembering it.

## How Do I Sign Up?

From any computer you can go to <https://centralec.smarthub.coop> and set up your account yourself.

For the Mobile devices, get the SmartHub app for free. Just search for SmartHub in the Google Play store for Android devices or in the App Store for Apple devices.



Above: View your usage or pay your bill 24/7 from anywhere you have service.



# Fighting Childhood Cancers One Shave at a Time

SCORES OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EMPLOYEES IN THE region will be facing the clippers in March as they raise money to fight childhood cancer as part of Basin Electric's 2015 Brave the Shave events.

The annual event brings area organizations, schools, citizens and kids together to go bald as part of Basin Electric's "Brave the Shave" campaign to raise funds for pediatric cancer research.

The Brave the Shave campaign has evolved from a single event in Bismarck/Mandan, N.D., to a multi-state campaign, featuring several head-shaving events throughout the community and beyond. Since 2008, nearly 1,500 volunteers have shaved their heads in solidarity of children with cancer and more than \$1.5 million has been raised for the St. Baldrick's Foundation.

The St. Baldrick's Foundation is a volunteer-driven charity dedicated to raising money for life-saving childhood cancer research and funds more in childhood cancer grants than any organization except for the U.S. government. Since the Foundation's first grants as an independent charity in 2005, St. Baldrick's has funded more than \$222 million to support the most brilliant childhood cancer research experts in the world.

A bulk of co-op employee involvement takes place at Basin Electric's flagship event, the Official Brave the Shave 2015 event on March 13 at the Missouri Valley Family YMCA, Bismarck, N.D.

Doors open at 1 p.m. for silent auction, kids' activities and other fun, including a Brave the Shave merchandise store.

By Brenda Kleinjan

From Basin Electric Press Releases







All photos courtesy Basin Electric



Basin Electric's Gerry Henricksen posed for before (above left) and after (left) photos at the 2014 event in Brookings. Above right: Kevin Crose from the Deer Creek team, Lynn Warnke of Dakotaland Federal Credit Union's team and Kyle Crose of the Deer Creek team livened up the event with dyed locks. Right: Warnke went on to become the Brookings event's first female shavee. Bottom right: Prize drawings are part of the festivities. Opposite Page: Participants at the main 2014 Brave the Shave event in Bismarck, N.D., pose for a photo. Cover: Brave the Shave Honoree, Dash Ohlsen, shaves his dad's head.



In South Dakota, employees of Basin Electric's Deer Creek Station located on the Minnesota/South Dakota border east of Brookings lead the charge, teaming up with the Brookings Fire Department and South Dakota State University's Sigma Lambda Chi to host a Brave the Shave on March 16 at 4:30 p.m. at the fire department's East Station at 607 20th Ave in Brookings, S.D.

The 2014 event in Brookings brought 33 participants together, including three from Deer Creek Station.

Basin Electric employees in western North Dakota and Wyoming will ring in St. Patrick's Day on March 17 with Brave the Shave events. At 10 a.m. MST, the hair clippers will be buzzing at the Dry Fork Station at Gillette, Wyo., and not long after, employees at Antelope Valley Station near Beulah, N.D., will be getting a trim for a cause.

"It's been humbling to watch this campaign grow from a modest goal to raise \$10,000 to a multi-state campaign that ranks among the top 10 St. Bal-

drick's campaigns in the world," says Mike Ettl, Basin Electric senior vice president of communications and administration, and annual shavee. "The reason why we do this is simple: the kids. We've met heroes, survivors, fighters and angels. For as hard as they fight, we'll continue to do our part to help."

Jennifer Holen, Basin Electric event planner/charitable giving coordinator, has been working closely with honoree families.

"It's been an honor to get to know our honorees and their families. They motivate us and inspire us with their kindness, fighting spirit and perseverance," Holen says.

Individuals and families who have someone they'd like honored can contact Holen at 701-557-5624.

The public is welcome to attend any of the Brave the Shave events. Silent auction items are welcome for the March 13 event. To participate, volunteer, donate or for more information go to [bravetheshave.coop](http://bravetheshave.coop) or contact Holen.



# Schwader Brings Service Grant to Howard Community



One Youth Tour participant used her opportunity in Washington D.C. to return home and benefit her local community.

Maria Schwader, a resident of Miner County, learned about a community service grant she could apply for while on Youth Tour in June. In conjunction with NRECA, the grant was sponsored by GenerationOn, a global service movement igniting youth to make their mark on the world.

Each youth tour participant was encouraged to apply for the grant, and only one was awarded to each state. Based on her project proposal, Schwader earned the grant and decided this would be the perfect opportunity to bring community members of all generations together to form a lasting bond.

On December 22nd, 2014, Schwader and her fellow Howard National Honor Society members teamed up with F.A.S.T., the Howard Elementary after school program. The two groups went to the local assisted living center, Whispering Winds, and performed a Christmas program.

The program consisted of describing the Christmas story using ornaments. Each ornament symbolized a specific event that occurred on the night of Jesus' birth. The National Honor Society, along with some of the older members of F.A.S.T., read while students placed the corresponding ornament on the tree.

Concluding the program, a box of ten puzzles was given to Whispering Winds, along with boxes of fruit. The week prior, the students also prepared gift bags for each resident, consisting of snacks, activity booklets, and lotion. Before departing, one NHS member said a prayer, and the students wished the residents a Merry Christmas.

After getting back to the elementary school, each student was also given a gift containing snacks, an ornament, and a puzzle game. The F.A.S.T. program received fruit, along with art supplies and card games to be used for the program's crafts and learning activities.

This project not only had a large impact on the community, but will continue to have a lasting effect on all who were involved. Schwader said, "This grant allowed us to begin a project that should have been done several years ago. Bringing

the community's youth into the lives of the elderly, and vice-versa, this project has sparked a connection between the many generations in our community."

Lea Selken, the F.A.S.T. director stated, "It is nice to see the bond between the generations! The smiles are priceless!"

Taking place during the busy Christmas season, this project slowed time down for a few hours and allowed all who were involved to enjoy each moment and one another and remember the true reason for the season.

Schwader stated, "Oftentimes, during the Christmas season, the elderly are missing their loved ones, so it was nice to make them feel cared for by bringing joyful youth to visit them. Because the grant allowed us the opportunity to bring these generations together once, it is very likely that the tradition will continue."

Kim Eggert, Whispering Winds director, added, "The residents loved it! They said they would enjoy something like that again. The program gave a great message and the kids also seemed to enjoy it."

Schwader further added, "Because Howard is a small, rural community, it is extremely important to unite all members, especially those of these ages. This lasting bond began because of the opportunity that this grant provided. It will prove to be a learning experience for the young students as they listen and absorb the wisdom of their elders, as well as a joyful opportunity for the elders to share these stories with the upcoming generations."





# Make Efficiency Affordable



**Ken Schlimgen**  
Director of Member Services

If you have purchased a new appliance recently, you probably found yourself comparing the annual energy consumption of various models. You probably also noticed that efficiency costs extra. When it comes to appliances, water heaters and HVAC systems, consumers face a classic dilemma: pay now or pay (more) later. The answer is simple: Make efficiency affordable.

Energy efficiency is part of an electric cooperative's DNA. More than 95 percent of electric cooperatives

nationwide offer efficiency programs. As consumer-owned, not-for-profit utilities, co-ops are constantly looking for ways to keep members' bills low, including programs to make high-efficiency appliances and equipment more affordable.

For example, Central Electric offers rebates on E-star appliances, and E-star heat pumps. We also offer rebates on lifetime warranty Marathon water heaters which are the most energy efficient electric water heaters made. In addition, we offer an energy audit program and rebates and incentives to make energy efficient improvements to your home. For non residential applications, we offer incentives to install more energy efficient lighting.

At Central Electric

Cooperative, we want our members to be armed with the information they need to make cost-effective investments in efficiency. Good information will lead to smart choices not only about appliances but about efficiency upgrades. A good place to start is online at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com), where members can conduct an interactive energy audit and gain access to a library of energy-saving how-to videos. You can also visit [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov) for tips and tools on how to save energy.

What qualifies as a smart efficiency investment will differ from member to member, of course. Many factors will determine whether you should put your money into insulation, replacing your water heater or purchasing an ENERGY STAR-qualified appliance. You may qualify for rebates and incentives that can help offset the cost of upgrades.

We understand there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all efficiency solution. We can help you sort out which energy efficiency investments make sense for you and your situation. Contact us at 800-477-2892.

Central Electric strives to be a trusted energy partner for every single one of our members. So come talk to us or visit our website at [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop) to see how we can help save you money!

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Source: [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov)

Your home works hard for you. Consider giving it an energy checkup. Hire a professional energy auditor to diagnose where your house could be losing energy and where you can start saving money. Auditors check for air leaks, inspect insulation, survey heating and cooling equipment and more. After making efficiency upgrades, you could save 5-30 percent on your energy bills!

# Diving In

## To the Southwest Power Pool

**A**FTER MORE THAN TWO YEARS OF STUDY AND CONSIDERATION, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and its member systems are jumping in to the Southwest Power Pool.

The process actually started a decade ago with initial meetings and discussions about joining a regional transmission organization.

The decision to join an RTO has been anything but quick and straightforward, especially for an organization as complex as Basin Electric, a generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative that provides electricity for other cooperatives – G&Ts and distribution co-ops that ultimately serve the end consumer. In addition, Basin Electric has worked in partnership with the Western Area Power Administration and Heartland Consumers Power District over decades to build a robust transmission

infrastructure, the Integrated System (IS).

In its own way, the IS has been like a mini transmission organization.

However, with the creation of surrounding RTOs, the IS became somewhat of an island, excluded from access to neighboring RTO's market power. The boundaries of the region and limited access to markets caused constraints in times of surplus generation or when the members required more power.

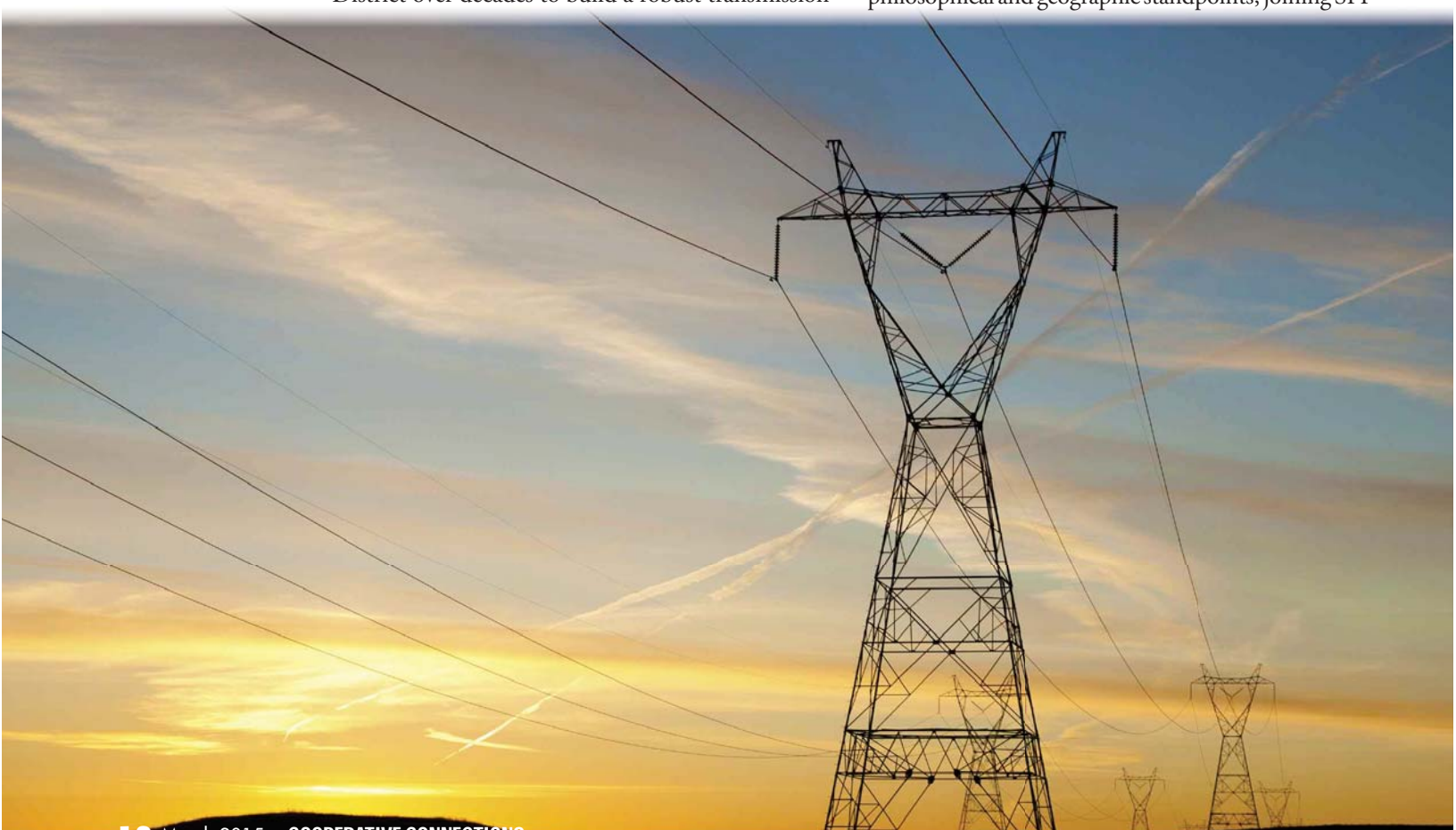
“Ultimately, we had to balance the needs of our membership,” says Mike Risan, Basin Electric senior vice president of transmission. “Basin Electric is charged with providing power for our members at the lowest possible cost.

From cost, benefits, transmission, market access, philosophical and geographic standpoints, joining SPP

By  
**Andrea Blowers**

**Editor's Note:**

*This story is reprinted from the September/October 2014 issue of Basin Today.*





(Southwest Power Pool) became our best option.”

Basin Electric’s board of directors agreed with staff’s recommendation and, at their July meeting, the directors authorized Basin Electric to join SPP, the RTO to the south.

The course to this decision has been somewhat uncharted and though it may seem that reaching the decision to join was the ultimate goal, it was really only half the journey.

For Basin Electric, its membership and the IS partners, the tasks yet to be addressed and fully vetted will take several months. Full membership in SPP will not happen until Oct. 1, 2015.

From here, Basin Electric staff and members will charge ahead tackling the tasks and outlining the details of integration for each of the eight defined areas of concentration: operations, transmission planning/engineering, information technology, regulatory, compliance, markets, settlements and training.

Part of those integration efforts reside in understanding how the SPP marketplace functions. Marketing and Asset Management Vice President Ken Rutter says in an RTO there are two markets – a day-ahead market and a realtime market.

“The day-ahead market is a kind of setup for what and how people think the real time is going to operate,” he says.

“At 11 a.m., the day before, we offer our generation units into the marketplace. We find out at 4 p.m. if they clear and what price they cleared for. Then, later that evening, right before real time, SPP begins running their real time models, which essentially gives the five-minute price signals to the marketplace. These should pretty closely replicate the day-ahead market,” Rutter says.

“The reason we have a different market for real time is because weather changes, loads can vary, units trip, the wind can pick up and different things happen where more or less generation is needed. So, every five minutes then the real time market gives a new price signal and a new dispatch signal from the marketplace, which will be the real signal in terms of how the unit will operate.”

That doesn’t necessarily mean the cooperative’s baseload units are going to be ramped up and down at five minute intervals. “We can fully control how we operate our units in the marketplace,” Rutter says.

“It’s critical that we understand our unit dispatch costs and structure our generation offers in the marketplace in order to maximize the value of the

membership.”

Rutter says every day Basin Electric will put in its offers for all of its generation on how the cooperative wants the units to run, for how long and other parameters. “We have control, in large part, as to how each of our units will operate in SPP. It’s a balancing act. Our goal is to have the baseload units baseloaded.”

Rutter acknowledges the process will not be successful without good communication between the marketing group and the folks at the plants.

“At this stage of development, this is one of the most important tasks,” Rutter says. “We want to ensure the employees at the plant sites have a good understanding of how the SPP market functions and how we’ll be working within that market and we need to have a good understanding of how each of the plants operate.”

Rutter has been making trips with John Jacobs, vice president of plant operations, to each of the facilities to talk with the plant operators and staff. The overall message during these trips is that Basin Electric is going to make every effort to replicate how the cooperative operates today, but still take advantage of the fact that it will have access to a broader marketplace.

“There’s a lot of training for everyone involved,” Rutter says. “For example, one of the other elements in an RTO

market is market monitors. These monitors ensure there’s no gaming in the market. They have rules in terms of how you can offer units, so an organization can’t manipulate the market. The market monitors test each organization’s offers every day and if they believe you’re violating rules, you’ll be penalized.”

Rutter says ensuring his staff is properly trained and advised on these nuances of SPP membership are vital to successful operation within an RTO.

In addition to training, other tasks on the marketing group’s to do list include determining the software for tagging and scheduling in the market, ensuring they have a full staff, defining their strategy for moving power west to east and east to west across the DC ties, congestion modeling and a number of other tasks.

“There’s a lot to do from all areas of the cooperative,” Rutter says. “Communication is going to be key to all our integration efforts. This has certainly been a journey and we’re learning every day, but as they say, it’s the journey that teaches you a lot about your destination.”



**The footprint of the Southwest Power Pool will expand in October 2015 when Basin Electric Power Cooperative joins the RTO.**

**“This has certainly been a journey and we’re learning every day.”  
~ Ken Rutter**

# Co-op Card



Did you know there is a money saving program available to you simply for being a member?

The Co-op Connections Card earns members

discounts at local and national businesses, and on prescriptions. All you need to do is show your card at the time of purchase.

For information on where to use your card, visit [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop). You can also download the "Co-op Connections" app for your Apple or Android phone or tablet.

If you do not have a card and would like one, stop by our office or call us at 800-477-2892.

# Rebates

Members who purchase an ENERGY STAR appliance may qualify for the following rebates:

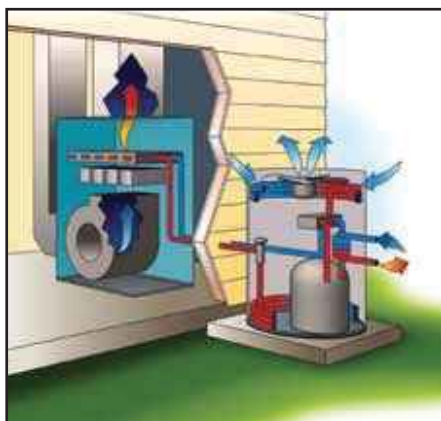
<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Freezer</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Dishwasher</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Clothes Washer</b>	<b>\$50</b>



Appliances do not need to be purchased from Central Electric. See application form for complete details and requirements to qualify.

To apply for a rebate, find the form at [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop) or call 800-477-2892.

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\*Members who install a non-ENERGY STAR heat pump or other types of electric heating equipment can receive a reduced electric heating rate. Rebates and loans are not available for residential systems that are not rated as ENERGY STAR. Contact Central Electric for information on program requirements and rebates for non-residential heating equipment.

## ELECTRIC HEAT LOANS

In addition to the rebate, members can take advantage of low interest financing for their ENERGY STAR electric heating equipment. Loans are available for 80% of the installed cost not to exceed \$20,000 at 5% interest with a 7-year term.



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**KOHLER Generators**  
KohlerGenerators.com

\*\*Based on generator and load size.  
\*\*14 and 20kW models feature corrosion-proof enclosures, all other models feature corrosion-resistant enclosures.

## Regional Dateline

### February 20-21

12th Annual Women in Blue Jeans Conference  
Friday 5 to 9:30 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Highland Conference Center  
Mitchell, SD, Conference  
schedule and registration  
details can be found at  
[www.womeninbluejeans.org](http://www.womeninbluejeans.org)  
or contact [wibjregistration@santel.net](mailto:wibjregistration@santel.net)

### February 22

Hub City Radio's Bridal  
Showcase, Aberdeen, SD  
605-229-3632  
[www.hubcityradio.com](http://www.hubcityradio.com)

### February 24-26

Ag Expo, Aberdeen, SD  
605-725-5551  
[www.aberdeenagexpo.com](http://www.aberdeenagexpo.com)

### February 28-March 1

Home Builders Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-886-5814  
[watertownhomebuilders.com](http://watertownhomebuilders.com)

### March 3

Nickelback, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-7288  
[dennysanfordpremiercenter.com](http://dennysanfordpremiercenter.com)

### March 6

Clint Black, Deadwood, SD  
605-559-0386

### March 6-7

Holiday Arts Spring Craft  
Show, Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Masonic Temple, Mitchell, SD  
Contact Nancy VanOverschelde  
at 605-248-2526 or email  
[nanvan@santel.net](mailto:nanvan@santel.net)



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRENDA KLEINJAN

## Events of Special Note

### February 26

18th Annual Liberty Ball  
Game, 7 p.m., Riggs High  
School Gym Pierre, SD  
605-341-4311

### March 7-10

Summit League Basketball  
Tournament, Sioux Falls, SD  
[www.sfarena.com](http://www.sfarena.com)

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.

### March 7-8

Big Boy Toy Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-884-3548

### March 7-8

Home Builders 14th Annual  
Home Show, Aberdeen, SD  
605-225-2055  
[www.aberdeenhba.com](http://www.aberdeenhba.com)

### March 13-14

Advantage RV Spring  
Camper Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-753-5022

### March 14-15

2015 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 19-21

Southern Hills Community  
Theatre Spring Play  
Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140

### March 21

South Dakota Taxidermy  
Competition, Watertown, SD  
605-886-6127

### March 21-22

Farm Toy and Collectibles  
Show, Aberdeen, SD  
605-225-4841

### March 21-22

Spring Craft Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-882-1734

### March 21-22

Curt Carter Gun Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-793-2347

### March 28

Mitchell Area Safehouse  
Second Annual "Night at the  
Races," 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Social Hour, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.  
Horse Races, Highland  
Conference Center  
Mitchell, SD, Tickets at The  
Chamber, County Fair and First  
Dakota

### April 4-5

Lions Club Ice Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-886-8588

### April 6

Shrine Circus, Huron, SD  
605-225-4841  
[www.yelduzshrine.org](http://www.yelduzshrine.org)

### April 9-11

Shrine Circus, Aberdeen, SD  
605-225-4841

### April 11

Spring Fling Home &  
Garden Show, Hot Springs, SD  
605-745-4140  
[www.hot springs-sd.com](http://www.hot springs-sd.com)

### April 11-12

Faulkton Area Arts Council  
25th Annual Arts Show  
Community Center (west side  
of school), Faulkton, SD  
605-598-4482 or  
605-598-4160