


Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

MARCH 2017 VOL. 17 NO. 11



A Lineman's Guide to
Good Eats!

P8-9

District Meetings in Review



Ken Schlingens
General Manager

On January 31, we completed the last of eight District Meetings for 2017. We host a district meeting in each county we serve every January. The purpose is to elect directors to represent you on your board of directors and to make ourselves more accessible to our member-owners.

I want to say “thank you” to everyone who attended one of these district meetings. I value your time and truly appreciate your wanting to stay in touch with the people who work for

you and your cooperative.

We try to have an informative agenda at each of our district meetings while, at the same time, realize we do not have enough time to cover every bullet point of every topic. The highlights for this year’s presentations included wholesale power costs, strategic planning, a financial overview, and a review of the cooperative’s construction plans, marketing programs, special projects like Youth Tour and Operation Round-Up and overhead powerline safety.

There were directors up for re-election in Buffalo, Brule and Aurora Counties this year. Roger Campbell of Brule County and Duane Wolbrink of Aurora County ran unopposed and were re-elected for another three-year term. Dave Gaulke of Buffalo County was narrowly defeated in his bid for re-election by Donita Loudner. Some of you may recall that Donita served on your board of directors from 2002 – 2008. Dave will continue to serve you on your board of directors until the April board meeting when he will take part in the officer elections and pass the torch to Donita for the next three years.

The meetings in Aurora, Hanson, and Sanborn Counties were led by the 2016 Youth Tour students representing those counties. Stephanie Faulhaber (Aurora), Abigail Hanson (Hanson) and Jennifer Luczak (Sanborn) spoke briefly about their experience in Washington, D.C. as representatives of Central Electric and South Dakota.

Following these future leaders, I spoke about the strategic planning session that your board and key staff conducted in the fall of 2016. Your cooperative goes through the strategic planning session every three years to identify issues that your cooperative should address in the near future.

The main outcome of the planning session was to



Manager of Member Services Patrick Soukup speaks at the Hanson County District Meeting, held at the Catholic Parish Hall.

evaluate and put together a plan for replacing more of the cooperative’s overhead powerlines. Central Electric has an aggressive maintenance program for testing and replacing poles, but most of the overhead conductor is still the original, aging wire. We have been aggressive for many years now and have replaced much of our three-phase backbone distribution system. We must continue with this replacement, but we also need to start the replacement of the overhead line that brings power down your driveways and to your homes. In the coming year, we will develop a plan and hopefully be able to start work in 2018.

We also reviewed your cooperative’s mission statement as part of this planning process. After much thought and discussion with the board and your employees, we agreed on a mission statement that I believe will help guide your cooperative into the future: **“Provide reliable energy and services with a commitment to safety and member satisfaction.”** Every policy, action, and service that comes from Central Electric will align itself with this mission statement or we should not be doing it. The employees were key to developing the mission statement and strongly support safety and member satisfaction in their daily job responsibilities. They truly appreciate who they work for.

Scott Kroger, Manager of Finance, reviewed Central Electric’s 2016 revenues and expenses as well as the 2017 budget. He explained the 2017 rates were increasing a half cent per Kwh to equal the increase in wholesale power costs for 2017. The resulting rate for our residential/farm accounts will average 12.2 cents per Kwh which is below the national average of 12.8 cents. Scott also shared that the rate for electric heating will not be changing, and the costs for operating the cooperative are

continued on Page 10

Central Electric Cooperative Connections

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Save the Date: Central Electric Annual Meeting Mitchell Corn Palace April 6, 2017



Reminder: Youth Tour Deadline

Youth Tour essays are due to our office by March 1st, 2017.

Please see pg. 15 for details on the trip and how to apply.



Office Hours
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24 - Hour Service
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Mission Statement
Provide Reliable Energy & Services with a Commitment to Safety and Member Satisfaction

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Employee Years of Service

Norton Truman
March 1 - 11 years

Lindsey Wilson
March 2 - 2 years

Ryan Bigge
March 3 - 3 years

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

Protect Your Family

According to the National Fire Protection Association, electrical cords and temporary wiring account for more than 25 percent of the estimated 81,000 electrical system fires that occur each year. These fires can be prevented by following these essential home electrical safety tips.

Extension cord safety

- Don't use extension cords as a substitute for repairing building wiring.
- Inspect extension cords for broken connectors, damaged insulation and missing hardware before each use.
- Do not run extension cords through walls, over beams, around corners or through doorways.
- Only use extension cords approved for the environment and loads expected.
- Equip extension cords with ground fault interruption (GFI) devices.
- Don't use coiled extension cords.
- Discard damaged extension cords; Don't try to repair them.
- Use only surge protected power strips. Inspect the power strips regularly for damage or signs of overloading.

Temporary wiring

- Don't substitute temporary and flexible wiring for repairing building wiring.
- Use temporary wiring only when needed for maintenance, repair or demolition activities.
 - Limit temporary wiring for holiday or ornamental lighting to no more than 90 days.
 - In outdoor settings, use only outdoor approved temporary wiring and extension cords.
- Don't route temporary wiring across floors, around doors or through walls.
- Locate temporary wiring at least 7 feet above any walking or working surface.
- Protect temporary wiring from sharp edges, heat and sunlight to avoid breakdown of the insulation.



Equipment power cords

- Inspect equipment cords for damage before each use.
- Don't operate equipment cords without a ground connection unless they are double insulated.
- Don't splice equipment cords to repair damage or to extend the original length.

Maintenance and inspection

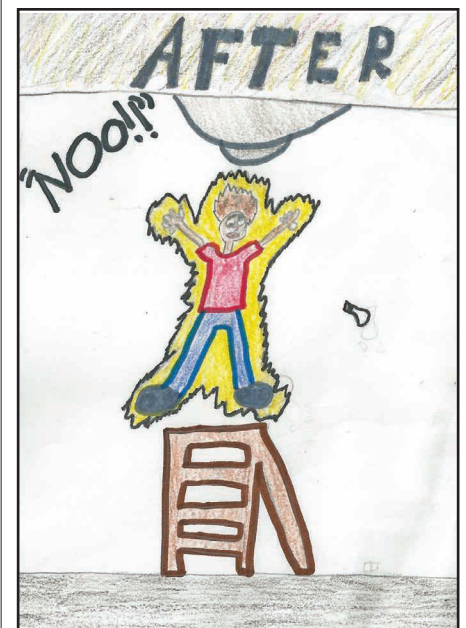
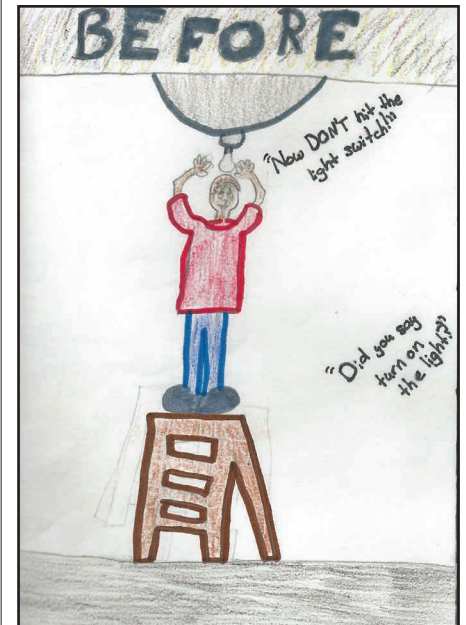
- Lock out or tag all electrical equipment or lines while they are being serviced, maintained or adjusted.
- Inspect all electrical appliances to ensure they're properly grounded. Cords that are frayed or damaged should be removed and replaced immediately, not spliced or taped. Shut down main power source when replacing fuses.

Safeguards to install

- Write the purpose of each circuit breaker, fuse or switch on the panel board.
- Label all disconnecting switches and circuit breakers.
- Make sure there is sufficient access and working space around all electrical equipment for safe operation and maintenance.
 - Cover all unused electrical openings (including conduit knockouts) with electrical enclosures and fittings.

Source: nationwide.com

Kids' Corner Safety Poster



Ashton Massey, Fourth-grader at Menno School District

Ashton is the daughter of Frank and Stacey Massey, Olivet, S.D. They are members of Southeastern Electric Cooperative, Marion, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

Savory Seafood



Lemon Pasta with Spinach and Shrimp

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 2 T. butter | 1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice |
| 2 T. olive oil | 1 T. grated lemon zest |
| 1 lb. uncooked large shrimp, peeled and deveined | 1/3 cup ricotta cheese |
| 1/4 tsp. salt | 1/2 tsp. black pepper |
| 8 oz. pasta such as fusilli | 8 oz. baby spinach leaves, fresh |
| 1 cup finely chopped onion | 1 cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese |
| 1 cup chicken broth | |

Melt butter in large skillet. Add olive oil and heat until very hot. Add shrimp and salt; saute until shrimp turns pink. Remove shrimp and set aside. Cook pasta in well-salted water until al dente. While pasta is cooking, add onion to butter and olive oil mixture; cook over medium heat until onion is soft. Add broth to pan, along with lemon juice and zest. Cook and stir until mixture reduces slightly and takes on a thicker consistency. Add ricotta cheese and pepper, stirring until smooth. Pull the al dente pasta out of the boiling water with a strainer. Drop it into the sauce. The little bit of starchy water that goes in with the pasta will help thicken the sauce. Stir in shrimp and spinach. The spinach will wilt as it heats up. When well combined and heated through, stir in Parmesan cheese. Makes 4 servings.

Deborah Rieck, Edgerton, MN

Simple Salmon Soup

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 (14-3/4 oz.) can salmon, undrained | 1/2 tsp. dried dill weed |
| 1 (10-3/4 oz.) can celery soup | Chopped fresh parsley or chives |
| 4 cups milk | Sliced, hard-cooked eggs, optional |

Remove and discard skin and bones from salmon. Break salmon into small pieces. Place into a large 4-quart saucepan. Combine soup, milk and dill weed; add to salmon. Heat over medium until hot, stirring occasionally.

June Herke, Watertown

Tuna and Noodles – On the Light Side

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 T. diet margarine | 1 can tuna, drained |
| 2 T. flour | Salt and pepper to taste |
| 1/2 cup evaporated skim milk | 4 oz. cooked peas |
| 1/2 can mushrooms, drained | 1/2 cup cooked noodles |
| 2 tsp. onion flakes | |

Combine margarine and flour in saucepan. Gradually add milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring until thickened. Remove from heat and add remaining ingredients. Place in casserole dish. Bake at 350°F. for 30 minutes.

Mary Ellen Luikens, Scotland

Baked Fish Dijon

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1-1/2 lbs. firm white fish fillets, such as cod, pollock, flounder or sole | 1 tsp. McCormick® Dill Weed |
| Juice of 1 lemon | 1/2 tsp. McCormick® Black Pepper, Ground |
| 1 T. Dijon mustard | 1/4 tsp. McCormick® Garlic Powder |
| 1 T. olive oil | 1 carrot, peeled and shredded |
| | 3 T. grated Parmesan cheese |

Rinse fish and pat dry. Set aside. Mix lemon juice, mustard, oil, dill, pepper and garlic powder in small bowl. Brush dressing on both sides of fish fillets. Arrange fish, overlapping thinnest portions, in 13x9-inch baking dish. Drizzle remaining dressing over fish. Arrange shredded carrot over fish. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake at 350°F. about 12 minutes or until fish flakes easily with fork. Makes 6 servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 131, Total Fat 4g, Cholesterol 54mg, Sodium 154mg, Carbohydrates 2g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Protein 20g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Crab Quiche

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 4 eggs, beaten | 6 oz. imitation crab |
| 3/4 cup milk | 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese |
| 1/2 tsp. salt | 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese |
| 1/2 tsp. ground thyme | 2 T. minced onion |
| 1 T. chopped pimento | 1 unbaked 10-inch pie shell |
| 1-1/2 cups fresh broccoli, chopped | |

Combine eggs, milk, salt, thyme and pimento; set aside. Toss chopped broccoli, crab, cheeses and onion together; place in pie shell. Pour liquid mixture over all. Bake at 350°F. for 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool 10 to 15 minutes before cutting. The red and green are pretty for a Christmas brunch.

Barbara Angerhofer, Hendricks, MN

Salmon Casserole

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 can salmon | 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce |
| 1/8 tsp. pepper | Milk Gravy: |
| 1 cup crushed saltine crackers | 2 T. butter |
| 1 egg | 2 T. flour |
| 1/3 cup chopped onion | 2 cups milk |
| 1 can cream of mushroom soup | Salt and pepper, to taste |
| 2 T. chopped celery | 2 slices cheese, if desired |

Combine all casserole ingredients; put in loaf pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F. for 30 to 40 minutes. For gravy, in skillet combine butter, flour, salt and pepper. Add milk slowly; cooking until thickened. Add cheese if desired. Serve over top of casserole.

Mary Jessen, Holabird

Please send your favorite appetizer, beverage or casserole 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.

Unclaimed Capital Credits:

These past members were mailed Capital Credit checks, and the checks were returned to our office or were never cashed. If you know of a correct address or telephone number for these individuals, please contact our office at 605-996-7516 or 800-477-2892.

Adams Building Contractors
Robert Anderson Jr
Darlene Anthonisen
Robert Ankrum
Est of Anton Arens
Laverne Arhart
Aurora Coop Oil Co
Ernestine Azure
Tammy Azure
Jake Backes Jr
Donovon Baer
Paul W Banuat
Doug Bechen
Randy Behr
Giovanna Big Eagle
Levi Big Eagle
Mike Bilben
Est of William S Bird/ Martha Bird
Rory A Bishop
Justin Boltjes
Jackie Bollock
Mrs. Nettie Breukelman or Carl Breukelman
Elliott Buckwheat
Dorman Butts
Merle Carlson
Gordon Carter
Vince Chapman
Carol Chase
Marvin or Joanne Chmela
David M Clutter
Timothy Coates
Brenda Collins or Joyce Loftis
Theresa Colombe
Krista Comes Flying
Ted Cook
Erick Crazy Bear
Yolanda Cuevas
Kay Currey
David Dalton
Tim Davids

Jim Davenport
Doug Decker
Grace R DeJong Living Trust
Charles Doty
John Dowty
Sunny R Eagle
Herman Ehrisman Jr
Vollie Elias
Dan Elwood
Audrey Erdman
Bennie Fauth
James Felicia or Madeline Felicia
Madeline Felicia or Lynn Felicia
Neda Fenske
Hans Fikse
Christian Filter
Todd Filter
Brad Fluck
Larry Fredericksen
Melanie Fridley
Myron Gassman
Clyde Goin
WM Graves
Spencer Grubb
William F Hagert
Tom Haiar
Sandy Hale
Kenneth Hall
Michael N Hall
Est of Nick Hanten
Becky Harris
Roland Hawk
Big Gulch Feeders Inc
Dr Jay Heezen
William C Heiam
Jeff Heil
Don Herrick or Barbara Herrick
Alfred Hettinger or Gordon Hettinger
Darrell Higgins
Terry Hill

Sharon Hopkins
HUD
Ralph E Hunt
James Hubbard
Rodney Jackson
Aaron Jarding
Ione Jennings
Richard D Jensen
Evelyn Johnson
Glenn Johnson
Jeffrey S Johnson
Manfred Johnson or Richard Ekstrum
Lawrence Ketel
Terry Kewley or Clarence Kewley
Mary J Kiner
Lloyd Klein
Gary Krell
Ralph Kroupa or Delores Kroupa
Mylan Kruse
Richard Kunkel
Heather M Larson
Shannon Larson
Michael Larrington
Scott Lawson
James Linn
Marlowe Lloyd or Delores Lloyd
Bill Lusk
Brandon Luthi
Elvina Maiden
Bill Martin
Marjean Martin
Greg Maritnjako
Ruth K Mathis
Rose - McGraw Farm
Thomas McLaughlin
Maureen Medicine Crow
A C Miller or Mrs. A C Miller
Ory Miller
Steve C Miller or Gaylord Miller
Mrs Vernetta Miller

Can you locate these people?

Cletus Mohnen or Gloria Kok
Joe Moody
James Moore
Wayne A Moore
Stephen Mueller
John Novachich Sr
Helen E Olinger
Roger Olivier or Jan Olivier
Craig Olson
Andrew Osterloo
Cadet Oxandaburu
Homer Parce
R W Parrott
George Peabody
Paul Peters
Adam Peterson
Charolette Peterson
Travis Peterson
Ryan Pfeifer
Jamie K Phillips
Wallace Podhradsky
Leo Pollreis
Linda Putnam
Merle Radel or Delores Radel
Verlyn Rice
Mike Rilling
Robert Rindels or Bernadine Rindels

Melvin Roduner
John E Sargent Jr
Donna Satter
Est of Joe Schaub
Corey Schnabel
Irene C Schmig
Pat Schoenfelder
Newley Schooler
Harry Schroeder
Greg Shefner
Harriett J Shepherd or Alexis Douville
Leonard Sheffield
Lynette Shields
Ryan Sievert
Larry Sills
Sioux Falls Const Co
Ron Sivigny
James E Skluzak or John Stuntebeck
Joseph J Skoda
Isabelle M Smith
Scott Smith
Mel Snow
Myron Sougstad
Keri St John
Syd E St Pierre
Timothy Stahl
David Stalcup

Lester J Steichen
Dale Stewart
Mark Strand
Danny Strong
Shelley Taylor
Steve Thomas
Robert Threadgold
Clarence Toman
Monica Traversie
Truck Arena Café or McDonald Oil Co
Kelly Uphoff
Andrew Vandenoever
Wayne Vander Vorste
Wendell Veurink
Gary Von Eye
E F Watson
Harold Wenzel
West Drive Inn Theatre
Paul Wheeldon
Susan Wittenhagen
Jacob Wolbrink Jr
V Wounded Knee Sr or Tammy Wounded
Knee
Robert Wulff or Eatons Ranch
Barbara J Young

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Warmer weather is on the way! Use energy efficient window treatments or coverings, like blinds, shades and films, to reduce heat gain in your home. These devices not only improve the look of your home but also reduce energy costs.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy



A Lineman's Guide to Good Eats

WHEN ONE'S 'MOBILE OFFICE' CAN TAKE ONE MILES and miles away from home in a given day, grabbing a quick bite to eat at home at noon isn't always an option.

For the hundreds of co-op linemen in the state, their work environment may often mean a sack lunch packed at home. But sometimes, the worksite is close enough that a lunch break at a favorite dining spot can happen. And, given that many towns in cooperative areas don't have a national chain restaurant in them, local eateries delight locals and visitors alike.

(At one time, according to the consumerist.com, a point east of Bison, S.D. was the furthest point from a McDonald's in the lower 48-states. But, when a California McDonald's closed its doors, a point in Nevada edged out the South Dakota loca-

tion by eight miles in 2013, measuring 115 miles to the closest golden arches.)

We asked a few linemen in different parts of the state for some recommendations for their favorite places to grab a bite to eat.

The responses varied and by no means does it provide a comprehensive list to the hundreds of great places to eat in South Dakota and western Minnesota, but below are a few of the recommendations.

The stretch of S.D. Highway 34 extending west from Fort Pierre to Sturgis doesn't look like it would yield many culinary offerings, but the food is good at Nellie's in Enning and down the road at Bull Creek in Union Center, said West River Electric Association Line Foreman Lane Butler, who works out of the co-op's Enning outpost.

Brenda Kleinjan



Eats and Drinks from South Dakota Tourism

Heading to the northeast, the Burger Shack in Faulkton hit the recommendation list. Located along U.S. Highway 212, the eatery specializes in different types of burgers.

Looking for a Mom and Pop type dining experience in northeast South Dakota?

Depending on the season, you may find Northern Electric Cooperative journeyman lineman Tyler Marken and his colleagues eating at one of several places, including the Wake Side Resort at Mina Lake west of Aberdeen. (Other places on the list? Pounders in Aberdeen, Anchors Away at Richmond Lake and the Airport Cafe made Marken's list.)

Heading south along the Interstate 29 corridor, H-D Electric lineworker Josh Risty offered a few suggestions.

The Sioux Land Bar and Grill along the shores of Lake Poinsett in Hamlin County made his list as did the State Line Bar and Grill on Lake Cochrane near Gary on the South Dakota/Minnesota border.

Having worked several storm jobs assisting other cooperatives, Risty had this observation.

"The local diners have always done a great job. I would say at times it is better than the restaurants anywhere," said Risty.

Getting into the Sioux Falls area there scores of options, but as one heads a bit to the west, The Battle Creek Steakhouse on Lake Vermillion near Canistota was one recommended by employees at Southeastern Electric Cooperative at Marion.

Looking for local recommendations and possibly meal deals?

The Touchstone Energy® Cooperative Connections Card has hundreds of restaurants participating. Many restaurants listed offer deals for co-op members. (There's even an app for Android and Apple devices so you have easy access to listings, even when on the road.)



Still seeking more? Check out the featured "Eat and Drink" listings at travelsouthdakota.com. Among the 169 places listed are:

Aberdeen: The Brass Kettle

Arlington: 1481 Grille

Belle Fourche: Belle Fourche Country Club

Brookings: Cafe Coteau; Nick's Hamburger Shop; The Pheasant Restaurant and Lounge

Crazy Horse: Laughing Water Restaurant

Custer: Bavarian Inn; Black Hills Burger and Bun; Blue Bell Lodge; Bobkat's Purple Pie Place; Legion Lake Lodge; Oliver's Twist Ice Cream and Eatery State Game Lodge; Sylvan Lake Lodge

DeSmet: Oxbow Restaurant

Elk Point: Edgar's Old Fashioned Soda Fountain and Pioneer Drug; H&S BBQ N More; Los Amigo's Restaurant

Gettysburg: Bob's Resort

Hartford: Hartford Steak Co. Tavern

Hill City: Alpine Inn, Hubcap Diner; Miner Brewing Company

Huron: 21 Baker Street; 444 Bar & Grill/Elks Lodge; Big D's Timeout Sports Bar & Grill; Burger Plus; Don't Spill the Beans; Putters and Scoops

Keystone: Mount Slushmore; Teddy's Deli

Lead: Stampmill Inn, Restaurant and Saloon

Milbank: Millstone Family Restaurant

Mitchell: Chef Louie's

Oacoma: Cedar Shore Resort

Philip: Badlands Trading Post

Pierre: Cattleman's Club Steakhouse; La Minestra; Mad Mary's Steakhouse and Saloon; Spring Creek Resort and Marina; View 34

You can also download the "Pints and Platters" e-guide at <https://www.travelsouthdakota.com/things-to-do/eat-drink>

Rapid City: Botticelli Ristorante Italiano; Everest Cuisine; Firehouse Brewing Company; Kathmandu Bistro; Kol; Tally's Silver Spoon; ¿Que Pasa? Cantina

Sioux Falls: Bracco World Cafe and Island Bar; Camille's Sidewalk Cafe; CH Patisserie; Foley's Fish, Chop and Steakhouse; Phillips Avenue Diner; Sanaa's 8th Street Gourmet

Vermillion: Cafe Brule; Old Lumber Company Grill and Bar; RED Steakhouse; The Silk Road Cafe

Wall: The Wall Drug Store, Inc.

Wessington Springs: Springs Inn Cafe and Lounge; Sweet Grass Bakery and Coffee Shop

Whitewood: Bullwacker's Saloon

Yankton: The Landing Restaurant and Lounge

Check out the full listing at <https://www.travelsouthdakota.com/things-to-do/eat-drink/list>

District Meetings Review continued:

not expected to increase in 2017.

Brian Bultje, Manager of Operations, reviewed the construction and maintenance projects that were completed in each county. Brian also reviewed the number of power outages we experienced in 2016, along with their causes and duration. Brian shared concerns over the increasing number of outages caused by ag equipment contacting power lines. Your cooperative has increased our efforts to create awareness and educate everyone of the dangers of contacting overhead powerlines.

Pat Soukup, Manager of Member Services & Marketing, provided information on the cooperative's rebate programs for water heaters, electric heating systems, energy star appliances and non-residential lighting systems. Pat also encouraged members to sign up now for this summer's bus tour.

Courtney Deinert, Manager of Communications, provided information on the youth programs and scholarships offered by your cooperative. She also updated everyone on the projects receiving donations from Operation Round-Up. She encouraged organizations to apply for future funds by May 1, 2017. Courtney also shared photos of the cooperative providing safety education with classrooms, grain elevators, implement dealers and working with our First Responders.

The meetings lasted for less than an hour, and I want to once again thank each of you that took the time to attend. These meetings are very important part of your cooperative's way of doing business. Please consider attending your annual meeting scheduled for Thursday April 6 at the Corn Palace in Mitchell.

Bill concerns? Check out SmartHub

For many of our members, these past couple months yielded some of the highest electric bills they've seen. Do you wish that you could see what exactly your home or operation was doing? We have good news—you can!

SmartHub allows you to view or compare the usage of each meter for the day, week, month, or more.

To access SmartHub, you simply need internet access and either a computer, tablet or smartphone. Go to www.centralec.coop or download the free SmartHub app.

To login, you will need the name on the account, account number and an email address.

As always, if you need help or have more questions about your bill, you can contact our office.



She saw her dad blow insulation into the attic to make the house more energy-efficient. Then, she got an idea. Find out how your local electric cooperative can help you lead by example at TouchstoneEnergy.com

ERICA BECAME
CONCERNED BY
THE LACK OF
INSULATION IN
HER DOLLHOUSE.



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Area Co-ops Represented by Trio

Three area men among 11 directors guiding Basin Electric Power Cooperative

By Chris Gessele and Tracie Bettenhausen
Basin Electric Power Cooperative

AS A COOPERATIVE MEMBER, YOU PROBABLY REALIZE THAT the board of directors of your local electric cooperative is comprised of people you probably call “neighbor.” But did you know that your cooperative makes up one of the largest cooperatives in the nation?

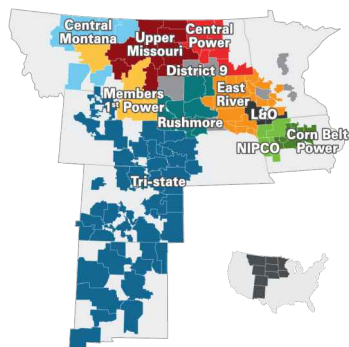
Rural electric cooperative pioneers in the Missouri River basin created Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D., in 1961 to provide supplemental wholesale power to their distribution cooperatives. Basin Electric’s growth and success during the past 50-plus years is due to the commitment, support and resolve of these visionary co-op leaders and their consumers.

Basin Electric’s 11-member board of directors are elected by its members – more than 140 cooperatives in nine states. These directors have been elected to the boards of their local distribution systems and then, with the exception of District 9, to their respective intermediate generation and transmission systems. Many of the Class A members are generation and transmission (G&T) electric cooperatives.

Basin Electric’s member systems’ service territories span 540,000 square miles from the Canadian to the Mexican borders. Its members constitute a vital network of generation, transmission and distribution systems that deliver electricity to 3 million consumers in parts of North Dakota,

South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Montana and New Mexico.

Here are profiles on three directors representing South Dakota and Minnesota electric cooperatives.



Kermit Pearson:

The more he got involved, the more he realized serving rural electric cooperatives was what he was meant to do.

When Kermit Pearson was asked to join the Webster, S.D.-based Lake Region Electric Association board in 1981, it was something he didn’t expect.

He had no experience in the electric cooperative world and had no family history there either. He was 35 years old and says even at that time, most of the directors on electric cooperative boards were nearing retirement age.

He was filling the seat of Art Jones, a pioneer in electric cooperative history. Jones helped to organize Lake Region Electric, East River Electric Power Cooperative and finally Basin Electric where he served as the first board president.

“There was some legacy there to follow,” Pearson says. He felt young, but the more he got involved, the more Pearson realized serving rural electric cooperatives was what he was meant to do.

In addition to the Lake Region Electric board, Pearson has served on the East River Electric board since 1989 and has served on the Basin Electric board since 1997, representing District 1. Currently he serves as the Basin Electric board’s vice president and represents Basin Electric on the South Dakota Rural Electric Association board of directors.

Since that unexpected phone call, Pearson has never been involved with another board. His energy is directed into the rural electrics. “Electric cooperatives are so well run and well organized and there are quality people in these organizations throughout,” he says. “Being around good people is fun and it’s fun when you’re all fighting for the same cause – to improve the quality of life for rural people.”

Pearson farms and ranches in partnership with his brother, Neal. The Pearson Gelbvieh Cattle Company sits a dozen miles east of Britton, S.D., in the northeastern corner of the state. Off the road leading to Fort Sisseton State Park, the farmstead has a nice thick buffer of trees, some that have been planted over the past 67 years by a Pearson, and at least one that was a good 25 years old before the Pearsons ever set foot on the place. There are lakes in almost every direction and many are named for the distance they are from the fort – Four Mile Lake, Nine Mile Lake and so on. In addition to the purebred Gelbvieh herd, Pearson grows soybeans, wheat, oats and alfalfa.

He hasn’t always lived this life, though. After college at South Dakota State University, Pearson taught vocational agriculture in Redfield, S.D., and then managed the South Dakota State Fair in Huron, S.D.

Kermit and Peggy Pearson were starting their lives together about that time and decided life in Huron would not be a long-term thing. The desire to farm and ranch pulled Pearson back toward his home. “Neal and dad were working together at that time. If we were to grow and expand, it took another hand and that was me,” he says. “I had an interest in the purebred aspect of the cattle operation. I guess you can’t take the farm out of a boy.”

Thinking back, Kermit Pearson says his state government experience with the South Dakota State Fair and his previous teaching experience is what made the Nominating Committee at Lake Region Electric think of him for a board seat.

From the days when Art Jones was the first president of the Basin Electric board, to his Lake Region Electric successor’s work today, Pearson says, “Basin Electric has always survived and not only have we survived, but we have grown and prospered as a result of the way we tackled those issues. We have a good cause to fight for.”

Pearson serves as the Basin Electric vice president.



Gary Drost:

Drost represents District 2, L&O Power Cooperative, and serves as Basin Electric's secretary/treasurer.

Gary Drost and his co-op companions stepped into the Longworth House Office Building cafeteria — a noisy and bustling expanse of well-dressed people. The cafeteria didn't seem much different than the rest of Capitol Hill.

Drost represents Basin Electric's District 2, L&O Power Cooperative of Rock Rapids, Iowa, and serves as Basin Electric's secretary/treasurer. He also serves on several Basin Electric subsidiary boards. He represents Sioux Valley Energy of Colman, S.D., on the L&O board of directors.

Drost's cafeteria stop was part of a mid-September 2014 trip to Washington, D.C., with other cooperative colleagues to visit legislators and attend the annual Fall Fly-In reception for congressional staffers, which is coordinated by Basin Electric. During the visits, the group visited the Minnesota, South Dakota and North Dakota congressional delegation and Roger Johnson, National Farmers Union president.

Each legislator was joined by at least one staff member who would take notes and ask visitors questions about the issues they face.

"We've been told by legislators, 'When you folks come in, we listen. You don't come in with three or four people — you come in with a delegation that's much larger.' There's strength in numbers," Drost says.

It was warm outside as the group moved between buildings. That fact and the day's frantic pace didn't wear down Drost: He's busy enough on his farm near Luverne, Minn., where he and Debra grow corn and soybeans. They farm with their son, who also raises beef cattle and hogs. Gary and Debra also have a daughter and three grandchildren.

Drost's life as a co-op director can take him far from home, but he knows the importance of these trips: co-ops were born in politics, linking co-op leaders and the nation's leaders.

It was a nonstop, tightly scheduled stay in D.C. for Drost and his cooperative counterparts, though well worth the effort to visit about topics that could have profound effects on the energy industry.

"The rural electric program was born in politics and will survive or die in politics," Drost says.

Drost, a former lineman and retired U.S. Navy Reserve serviceman, has been a Basin Electric director since 1999 and electric cooperative board member since 1987. He remembers his first visit to Basin Electric's annual meeting of the membership as a new cooperative board director.

"I was just awestruck by what Basin Electric was and everything Basin Electric was doing. I wouldn't have dreamed that 12 years later I'd be a director on the Basin Electric board," he says.

In 1987, the cooperative and its members were challenged by surplus generation. Drost and the other directors face challenges of a different sort today.

"It's a pretty exciting time because of the challenges of growth and capacity shortages we face going forward. Everything is continually changing, and we must meet the membership's needs while also recognizing needs of the future member," Drost says. "I'm comfortable looking toward the future because we have a committed staff and board at Basin Electric, and a membership that is committed to Basin Electric and is very much a part of our future."



Mike McQuiston:

McQuiston's first co-op memories are tied to needing the cooperation of neighboring homes.

The drive to Mike McQuiston's ranch in central South Dakota is similar to a trip into a national park. Prairie scenery gives way to bluffs and hills and valleys, roads wind and get more rugged and the sky opens up to endlessness.

Out in the pasture, driving in four-wheel over lumps and bumps, suddenly the land in front of your windshield gives way to the view of Lake Oahe sprawling as far as your eyesight can stretch.

"This part of the world can humble you pretty quickly," says McQuiston, Basin Electric director for District 7, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative in Rapid City, S.D.

McQuiston is showing off the artesian well system on his land. Wells 2,400 feet deep, flowing 35 to 40 gallons per minute. The water is potable but "it's got a taste to it. You don't have to take your vitamins," he jokes.

The wells keep the cattle watered and a reverse osmosis system in the house allows his family to use the water as well.

Living along the Missouri River, just north of the Oahe Dam, means McQuiston has the kind of views people will drive for hours to see. His family has a history on this land going back five generations. In the 1960s, his grandparents moved their house and barn to a higher altitude so that when the dam was built, they wouldn't be flooded. The house remains on that far-off hill, nobody living there for 40 years now.

McQuiston's first co-op memories are tied to needing the cooperation of neighboring homes. "Probably the first co-op function I went to was rural water and what is now Golden West Telecommunications. They were our phone provider," he says. "I can remember taking an old phone, going over to the neighbor's and there was a pole with a little deal at the bottom where you could wire the phone in. That's what we did when we had to make a phone call. And that was just the way it was."

Today, he takes his children, Zach and Ally, to electric co-op annual meetings. Zach went on the Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., in 2016.

And since McQuiston has been on the Basin Electric board since 2013, he made the choice to put his cattle out on shares so he has the time to attend Ally's soccer games and Zach's football and basketball games. "I decided, until they are out of school, I'm going to do electric stuff and I'm going to chase them and go where they go," he says.

McQuiston first got into "electric stuff" in 1996, when he was elected to the board of West Central Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Murdo, S.D. He knew quite a few of the co-op's members then because he spent his high school years working for the veterinarian at the local sale barn.

In 2010, McQuiston was elected to the Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative board, a Class A Basin Electric member. He also served on the South Dakota Rural Electric Association board from 2003-2010.

He was 26 years old when elected to the West Central Electric board. "You go to the meetings, you meet the people and you talk ag, so I really enjoyed it," he says. "Once you know your goal is to keep the lights on and the rates down, that fit me really well."



Scholar of the Week: Nicole Reuland

Nicole Reuland was named the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week for the week of February 5 – 11, 2017.

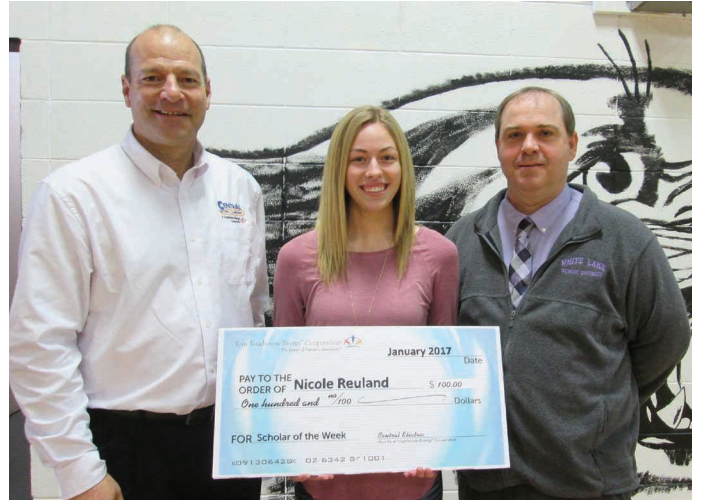
Reuland is the daughter of David and Lisa Reuland of White Lake, SD, and is currently a senior at White Lake High School.

Despite her grueling course load, Reuland holds a 4.0 GPA. She is a four-season athlete in volleyball, basketball, track, and softball. She has participated in the state track and field meet the previous 3 years. Additionally, Reuland is president of student council, a Girls State representative, Q107 Quiz Bowl captain, a football statistician and involved in yearbook, band, and choir.

Superintendent Robert Schroeder says, “Through my role as a teacher, coach, and now administrator at White Lake High School over the last 23 years, I have watched Nikki grow as a student, an athlete, and as a person. Nikki is a hard worker and takes pride in setting high standards for herself. Nikki takes her education very seriously as I can count on one hand the number of days she has missed in the last six years.”

Following graduation, Reuland plans to attend the University of South Dakota and pursue a degree in Dental Hygiene.

Central Electric awarded a \$100 scholarship to Reuland. Central Electric Manager Ken Schlimgen visited White Lake High School to recognize Reuland and present the award. Reuland was also featured on KSFY TV news, which can be found on KSFY.com.



Central Electric presented a \$100 scholarship to Reuland. Pictured left to right: General Manager Ken Schlimgen, Nicole Reuland, Superintendent Bob Schroeder

The Scholar of the Week scholarship was created by KSFY and Touchstone Energy Cooperatives to recognize outstanding students across the state who set an example of hard work and high academic standards. Area school principals and faculty nominate students for this award, based on excellence in the classroom, service in the community and extracurricular participation. The KSFY staff makes weekly selections throughout the school year.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Don't forget to spring forward on **March 12!** Set your clocks ahead by one hour...



...and don't forget to change your filter!

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
WWW.YOUTHTOUR.COOP

Regional Dateline

December 15-March 31

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

February 24-25

SD State High School Wrestling
Tournaments, Sioux Falls, SD
605-224-9261

February 25

11th Annual Outhouse Races
and Chili Cook-off Contest
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Nemo, SD, 605-578-2708

March 8-12

SD State Pool Tournament
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

March 9-11

SD State High School A Girls
Basketball Tournament
Frost Arena, Brookings, SD
605-224-9261

March 9-11

SD State High School B Girls
Basketball Tournament
Huron Arena, Huron, SD
605-224-9261

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

March 16-18

SD State High School AA Boys
and Girls Basketball
Tournament, Rushmore Plaza
Civic Center, Rapid City, SD
605-224-9261



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAKENZIE HUBER/SDSU/ COLLEGIAN

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 16-18

SD State High School A Boys
Basketball Tournament
Premier Center
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-224-9261

March 16-18

SD State High School B Boys
Basketball Tournament
Barnett Center, Aberdeen, SD
605-224-9261

March 18-19

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

March 23-25

SD All-State Band Concert
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-224-9261

March 24

Mother King In Concert
Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

March 24-25, March 31-April 1

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

March 24-26

Black Hills Home Builders
Home Show, Rushmore Plaza
Civic Center, Rapid City, SD
blackhillshomebuilders.com

March 25-26

SD State AAU Wrestling
Tournament, Rushmore Plaza
Civic Center, Rapid City, SD
605-394-4115

March 28

Badlands Bad River Regional
Job Fair and Business Expo
School Fine Arts Building
Philip, SD, 605-441-2059

March 30

I Love The 90's Tour
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

March 31-April 2

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

Events of Special Note

March 4-7

2017 Summit League
Basketball Championship
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

March 31-April 1

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
605-248-2526

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

April 22-23

Banff Mountain Film Festival
World Tour, Rapid City, SD
605-394-4101

September 15-16

Holiday Arts Fall Craft Show
Show, Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Masonic Temple, Mitchell, SD
605-248-2526

November 17-18

Holiday Arts Christmas Craft
Show, Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Masonic Temple, Mitchell, SD
605-248-2526