

# Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Cooperative Connections

NOVEMBER 2017 VOL. 18 NO. 7



## Art Emerging

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Lemmon Artist Reshapes Metal into Art

# Protecting Your Information



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager

Last month, Equifax revealed that highly sensitive personal and financial information for around 143 million consumers was compromised in a cybersecurity breach. These types of events are becoming too common place and serve as a reminder that each of us needs to take additional steps

to protect our information and ourselves.

We tend to think that only the large companies with lots of information are targets for these types of attacks. A recent test undertaken by an electric cooperative in South Dakota revealed that sources from outside the U.S. unsuccessfully attempted to access their computer network over 23,000 times in one month. These are just random attempts searching for an opportunity to gain access to a computer, any computer.

As you know, cyber security threats have become more prevalent than ever before. As the internet continues to impact our everyday life, remaining safe and secure while using the internet must be a priority for everyone.

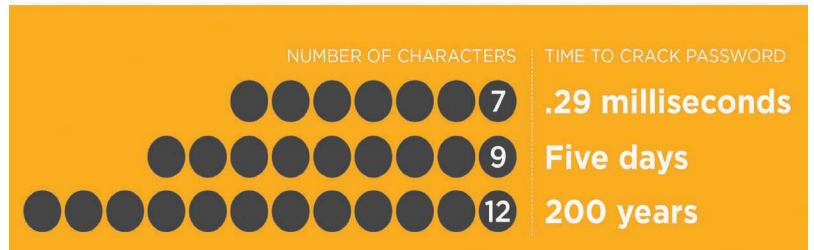
As you use the internet, social media, and open emails, you should always be on guard to make sure whatever you click on doesn't infect or attack your devices at home or at work.

Central Electric takes cyber security very seriously. Some of the tips for staying safe online that we have shared with our employees include:

1. Keep all software on internet connected devices – including PC's, tablets and smartphones – up to date to reduce risk of infection from malware.
2. Create long passwords with a mix of capital letters, numbers and symbols that only you will remember, and change them at least every 6 months. A strong password is 12 characters long.
3. Avoid the use of thumb drives and other portable memory devices.
4. Don't click on web links or attached files in emails when you're not certain who the sender is.
5. Keep pace with new ways to stay safe online. Check trusted websites for the latest information. Share security tips with friends, family and colleagues, and encourage them to be web wise.

## How long should your password be?

The length and complexity of a password has a direct impact on how difficult it would be to crack.



To protect yourself, learn more about how you can take steps to become more aware of potential cyber security threats. The Department of Homeland Security has resources on their website: [www.dhs.gov/topic/cybersecurity](http://www.dhs.gov/topic/cybersecurity)

October is National Coop Month, a time to recognize the value of cooperatives. Economic studies indicate that the 160 marketing, energy, communication, banking, and processing cooperatives in South Dakota contribute \$7-\$10 billion in annual output to our state's economy.

Central Electric is a not for profit cooperative formed in 2000 by the consolidation of Tri-County Electric Cooperative of Plankinton and Intercounty Electric Cooperative of Mitchell. The cooperative delivers electricity to almost 5,000 members across an eight county service area. "Providing reliable energy and services with a commitment to safety and member satisfaction" is our Mission Statement.

We are dedicated to our communities. Revenue generated by Central Electric goes back to our members, not to Wall Street investors. Each year we allocate the margins to members as capital credits. When our financial condition permits, your board of directors decides to retire, or pay, the capital credits.

For the first eight months of 2017, your cooperative is performing better than expected financially. Electric energy sales have been slightly above budget and expenses have been consistently below budget each month mainly due to favorable weather patterns.

We are developing our 2018 work plan and budget and will present that to the board in November. Our wholesale power costs are expected to remain stable for the coming year so that is very good news.

Please remember to be aware of your surroundings during this year's harvest. Be aware of what's overhead and know what to do if your equipment contacts a power line. We want everyone to come home safe this harvest season.

# Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS 018-963)

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www.centralec.coop



## Mission Statement

*Provide Reliable Energy & Services with a Commitment to Safety and Member Satisfaction*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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## Employee Years of Service

**Tim Neises**

November 19 - 38 years

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

**OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10  
IN OBSERVANCE OF VETERANS DAY.**



# Halloween Electrical Safety

**Halloween haunts** usually mean strings of decorative lights, fog machines, strobe and black lights, animatronics, electrically powered decorations and the list goes on. These things all add to the ambience of your haunt, but they also create the added dangers of fire, electrocution and other nasty and potentially disastrous accidents. It is very important that you look for and eliminate potential dangers from your Halloween lights and decorations that could lead to fires and injuries.

- Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Cracked or frayed sockets, loose or bare wires and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire. Discard damaged sets of lights or damaged props that can no longer be used safely.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Or, run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores). Don't staple or nail through light strings or electrical/extension cords – you could damage the wire or insulation, which could lead to an electrical shock or fire.
- Don't overload extension cords or allow them to run through water or snow on the ground. Before using any light strings, animated displays or other electrical products outdoors, make sure the product is approved by a nationally recognized certification organization and marked for outdoor use.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord. Don't use electrical decorations or light strings on materials that could catch fire. It is important to turn off all electrical light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed. Follow the use and care instructions that accompany your electrical decorations.
- Rule of thumb, most household circuit breakers are rated up to either 10 or 15 amps (you can tell by looking at the breakers themselves) and household current is generally 110 volts. Amps times volts equal the amount of watts that a breaker can handle without tripping. With caution, learn what breakers protect each section of your home and label them. Don't overload your circuit breakers/fuses.
- For added electric shock protection, plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters. Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold. GFCIs can be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire. Always have at least one fire extinguisher available and know how to use it. In homes with small children or animals, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.

Practice safety, use common sense and you'll have a happy, memorable Halloween!

Source: [www.halloween-online.com](http://www.halloween-online.com)

## Kids' Corner Safety Poster

**"Don't touch active wires."**



**Max Baker, 9 years old**

*Max is the son of Travis and Becki Baker, Fulton, S.D. They are members of Central Electric Cooperative, Mitchell, 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.

 Touchstone Energy\* Cooperatives

  
**PoweringYourSafety.com**  
 KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU HIT A POWER LINE

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**STAY PUT**

If your equipment contacts a power line, stay inside. **DO NOT EXIT. Call 911.**

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**JUMP CLEAR**

If you must exit due to a fire, jump from the equipment so that no part of your body touches the equipment and ground at the same time. Hop or shuffle with your feet together at least 40 feet away.

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**STAY AWAY**

When you are clear of the area, call for help and keep others away. **DO NOT** approach your vehicle again until utility crews and emergency responders tell you it is safe.

# Crockpot Creations



## Slow Cooker Potato Casserole

- 2 lb. pkg. frozen hash brown potatoes, partially thawed
- 2 (10 oz.) cans Cheddar cheese soup
- 1 (13 oz.) can evaporated milk, undiluted
- 1 can French-fried onions
- Salt and pepper to taste

Combine potatoes, soup, milk and half the onions. Pour into a greased slow cooker. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cover and cook on LOW 8 or 9 hours or on HIGH for 4 hours. Sprinkle remaining onions over top before serving.

**Carolyn Saugstad, Alcester**

## Slow Cooker Corn

- 2 (16 oz.) bags frozen corn
- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese
- 1 stick butter
- 2 T. sugar
- 2 T. water

Place frozen corn in slow cooker. Cut cheese and butter into small cubes. Add to corn with sugar and water. Cook on HIGH for 45 minutes. Stir with a wooden spoon. Turn to LOW for 3-1/2 hours, stirring occasionally.

**Shirley Miller, Winfred**

## Slow Cooker Whole Chicken

- 4 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. each cayenne pepper, thyme, onion powder and white pepper
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 large roasting chicken

In a small bowl, combine spices. Place frozen chicken in slow cooker. Pour seasonings over chicken. Do not add any liquid. Cook on LOW 4 to 8 hours.

**Teresa Affeldt, Box Elder**

## Sweet and Sour Pork

- 1-1/2 to 2 lbs. pork steak, cut into strips
- 2 T. canola oil
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 large green pepper, cut into strips
- 1 (4 oz.) can mushroom pieces
- 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 T. vinegar or Worcestershire sauce
- 1-1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 (10 oz.) jar sweet & sour sauce

Brown pork in oil; drain. Place all ingredients into slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW 6 to 8 hours. May serve over rice or noodles.

**Patricia Hopkins, Central City, Neb.**

## Slow Cooker Chocolate Pecan Pie Cake

- 1 pkg. (2-layer size) chocolate cake mix
- 2 tsp. McCormick® Cinnamon, Ground
- 1 T. plus 2 tsp. McCormick® Pure Vanilla Extract, divided
- 2 cups chopped pecans
- 1-1/2 cups light corn syrup
- 1-1/2 cups firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, melted

Spray inside of 6-quart slow cooker with no stick cooking spray. For the Chocolate Cake, prepare cake batter as directed on package, stirring in cinnamon and 2 tsp. vanilla. Pour into greased slow cooker. Place towel over slow cooker and cover with lid. Cook 2 hours on LOW or until cake is almost set. For the Pecan Pie Topping, sprinkle pecans over cake. Beat remaining ingredients with wire whisk until smooth. Slowly pour over pecans. Cover. Cook 10 minutes longer on LOW. Turn off slow cooker. Carefully remove slow cooker insert and place on wire rack. Cool 20 minutes before serving. Serve with vanilla ice cream, if desired.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 580, Total Fat 28g, Saturated Fat 7g, Sodium 377mg, Cholesterol 57mg, Carbohydrates 78g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Protein 4g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Thyen Family Slow Cooker Dressing

- 1/2 cup parsley
- 1 cup diced onions
- 2 (8 oz.) cans mushrooms
- 2 cups diced celery
- 1 cup butter
- 12 to 13 cups of bread crumbs
- 1-1/2 tsp. sage
- 1 tsp. poultry seasoning
- 1 tsp. thyme
- 4-1/2 cups chicken broth
- 2 eggs, well beaten

Saute first 4 ingredients in butter. Combine bread crumbs, sage, poultry seasoning and thyme. Mix together all ingredients. Put in slow cooker on HIGH for 45 minutes. Reduce heat to LOW for 4 to 8 hours.

**Emily Luikens, Tea**

## Morning Slow Cooker Casserole

- 1 (2 lb.) bag frozen hash brown potatoes
- 1 lb. diced, cooked and drained bacon or ham
- 3/4 cup diced onions
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- 12 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tsp. salt
- Pepper to taste

Place layer of frozen hash browns on bottom of slow cooker. Layer 2 or 3 times the bacon, onions, green peppers, cheese and hash browns; ending with cheese on top. Beat eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Pour over all; cover. Cook on LOW for 10 to 12 hours.

**Elaine Rowett, Sturgis**

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

# Scholar of the Week: Caleb Brouwer

Caleb Brouwer was named the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week for the week of Sept. 24-30, 2017.

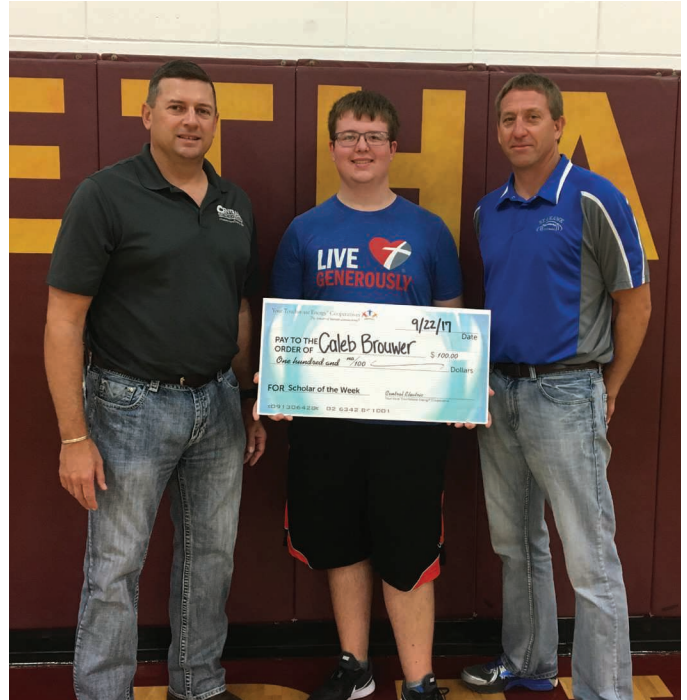
Caleb is the son of Lisa and David Brouwer of Dimock, S.D., and is currently a senior at Ethan High School.

Despite his grueling course load, Caleb holds a 4.0 GPA. He participates in band, chorus, One-Act Play, Oral Interpretation and Student Counsel. Eric Aisenbrey, the Science teacher at Ethan High School, stated, "Caleb is the dream student in the classroom. He shows up every day with enthusiasm and has so much pride in his work." Caleb has also helped with the live recording for many Ethan High School events, along with streaming the events online.

Following graduation, Caleb plans to either attend the University of South Dakota to study law or the South Dakota School of Mines to study engineering.

Central Electric awarded a \$100 scholarship to Caleb. Central Electric Manager of Member Services Patrick Soukup visited Ethan High School to recognize Caleb and present the award. Caleb was also featured on KSFY TV news, which can be found on KSFY.com.

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, services in the community and extracurricular participation. The KSFY staff makes weekly selections throughout the school year.



Manager of Member Services Patrick Soukup (left) presented a \$100 check to Scholar Caleb Brouwer (middle). Brouwer was nominated by Middle School/High School Principal Tim Hawkins (right).

## HALLOWEEN SAFETY



### WALK SAFELY

- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Always walk on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible. Children should walk on direct route with the fewest street crossings.



### TRICK OR TREAT WITH AN ADULT

- Children under the age of 12 should not be alone at night without adult supervision. If kids are mature enough to be without supervision, they should stick to familiar areas that are well lit and trick-or-treat in groups.



### KEEP COSTUMES CREATIVE AND SAFE

- Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors.
- Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.

# Operation Round-Up® Deadline Approaching

Operation RoundUp funds will be awarded this December to worthy organizations or individuals in our service territory. **The application deadline is November 1, 2017.**

The program is intended to benefit people and organizations within the Central Electric service area. The funding will be focused to the following categories:

- Community Service
- Environment
- Economic Development
- Disaster Relief
- Emergency Energy Assistance
- Education and Youth

Applications can be found at [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop) or by contacting our office. The Operation RoundUp Board of Trustees will meet in November to review applications.

Thank you to our members who participate in Operation RoundUp and make this possible. **Since the program's initiation in October 2015, our members have put \$35,500 back into your communities!** Your donation makes a direct impact in keeping money local, cooperation among cooperative members, and growing our local communities.



**Final Call for Applications:  
Deadline November 1, 2017**

## Use Extreme Caution When Burning Ditches

It is common practice in Central Electric's service area for some members to control weeds and clean debris by burning ditches in the spring and fall seasons. Left unattended, these fires can damage or even destroy everything in their paths, including your cooperative's utility poles, fiberglass enclosures and underground attachments to poles.

Electrical poles are treated with a protective coating that keeps moisture from entering the core of the pole and causing it to rot. Even if a pole appears to be slightly scorched or blackened, this protective coating has been damaged. The "life" of the pole has been shortened or the pole may even have become weakened and now a safety hazard or future power outage cause.

The person who starts the fire or owns the property is liable for such damage. Central Electric would like to remind you to do some planning before you begin burning. It is much less expensive to prevent a pole from being damaged than to pay for a new pole.

If you are planning on burning ditches or fields, clear the weeds or vegetation at least four feet around the base of all poles and wet the base of the pole with water before beginning to burn. If the fire gets out of hand and a pole becomes engulfed in flames, call the fire department immediately and notify Central Electric. Do not spray water close to the electrical conductors as this could cause serious injury or electrocution.

Report any fire damaged poles or underground enclosures to Central Electric. Not reporting the damage may cause a serious accident in the future.



# HAPPY THANKSGIVING

## Our office will be closed on November 23.

# Taking Shape

## *Lemmon Artist Transforms Old Iron into Masterpieces*

**Brenda Kleinjan**

**Below: Artist John Lopez stands in front of the his Cow Bossman statue which honors Ed Lemmon. The mural on the wall of the Kokomo Inn was created by Nigerian artists as a background for the sculpture.**

(Photos Courtesy Artist John Lopez)

**S**TUDY ONE OF JOHN LOPEZ'S HYBRID METAL ART sculptures long enough, you might just be able to decipher what an individual element's purpose was.

The filigreed piece that forms what looks like a shield on some pieces may have started out as a grate on a stove or in a building. Chains and gear links are formed into various parts of the sculpture. Disc blades give definition to large muscles on a finished horse or buffalo. The finely textured feathers of the peacock? Closer examination shows that they once graced many a dining room table as various patterns of silverware.

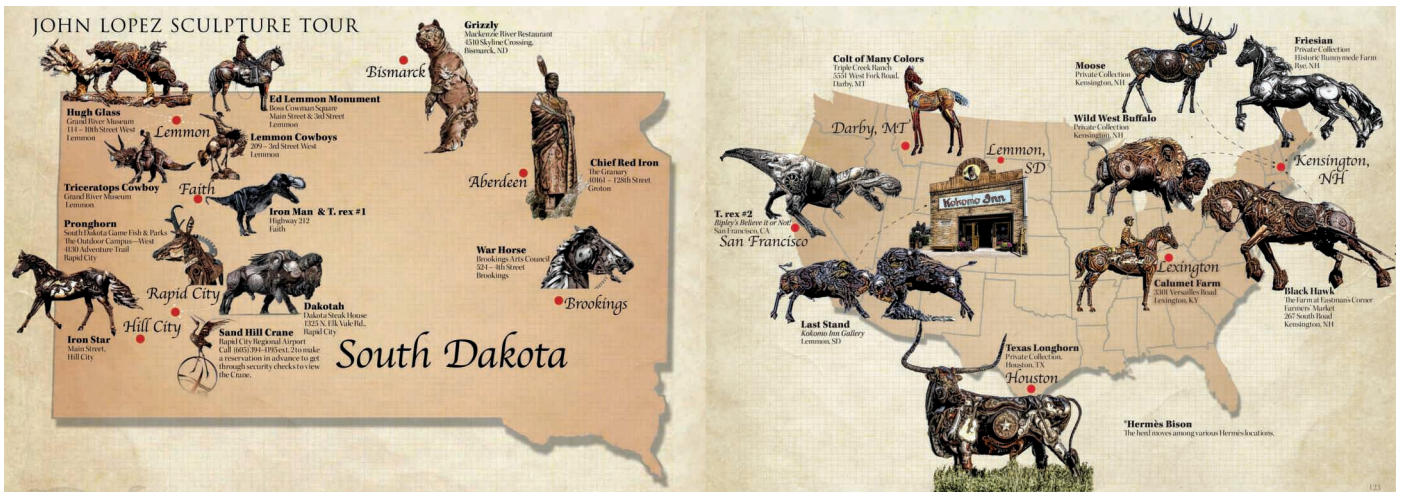
Whether farm implement or table ware or individual pieces of unidentifiable metal, Lopez's talented touch transforms that which may have been headed to the scrap yard into stunning pieces of art.

One of the artist's newest sculptures is that of Ed Lemmon, namesake of the northwestern South Dakota community. Lemmon, atop a horse, stands in the Cow Bossman Square next to Lopez's Kokomo Gallery in the Kokomo Inn on Main Street in Lemmon, S.D.

According to Lopez's description of the monument, he created the statue primarily using scrap iron donated by local friends and neighbors. The portrait of Ed Lemmon is cast in bronze making this monument a Hybrid Metal Sculpture. It took Lopez about six months to create the work. You can watch out for the revolver and jack knife donated in honor of Alvin Jacobs (a cowboy that inspired John). There are other personal items hidden within the sculpture which are the fingerprints of the community members.







At the Grand River Museum, also in Lemmon, Lopez has depicted the grizzly bear attack of Hugh Glass. The grizzly bear comes to life with chains and other metal pieces creating the bear's fur. Lopez's portrait of Glass depicts the terror of the attack as the ferocious grizzly advances.

"The Last Stand" depicts two bison – one with a likeness of Gen. George Custer and the other with a likeness of Sitting Bull – engaging one another. It is on display at the Kokomo Gallery, which is open Monday through Saturdays from May 1 to Oct. 30.

Also in the gallery, the aptly named "Silverware Peacock" captures the imagination. Utilizing steel cable and silverware to create the bird's tail, the 142 forks, 70 spoons, and 71 butter knives meld into a regal bird proudly standing on a pillar. The sculpture is one of



**Silverware Peacock can be viewed at Lopez's Kokomo Gallery in Lemmon, S.D.**

many of Lopez's to win awards. "Silverware Peacock" was the People's Choice Award at the annual Sculpture in the Hills Show in Hill City, S.D.

You can find Lopez's more traditional bronze sculptures as part of the The City of Presidents series in Rapid City (John Adams, John F. Kennedy and John, Jr., Calvin Coolidge, Teddy Roosevelt and Ulysses S. Grant) or in the Governor's Trail in Pierre (Arthur Mellette and Harvey Wollman).

His Hybrid Metal Art can be found across the breadth of the state and from coast to coast as pieces are on display in San Francisco, New Hampshire, Texas and points in between.

For more on Lopez's work, go to <http://www.johnlopezstudio.com/> There is also a coffee table book of Lopez's work, "John Lopez: Sculpture" available as well.



**Above: "The Last Stand" depicts two bison butting heads. The left bison includes a likeness of Gen. George Custer while the right buffalo pays tribute to Sitting Bull. Right: A close up of a portion of "The Last Stand" reveals the multi-levelled story telling that takes place in Lopez's statues. On the Cover: "War Horse" stands in front of the Brookings Arts Council building on Fourth Street in Brookings, S.D.**

# Schools Receive \$1 Million in Tax Revenue From Cooperative

**Central Electric Cooperative's** 2016 kwh sales taxes amounted to over \$1 million. The tax is based on total kwh's sold to the members in each school district.

Our wholesale power suppliers, East River Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, also pay the tax on the amount of kwh's purchased by Central Electric

Cooperative. The tax paid to school districts grows as members use more electric power and more members receive service.

The amounts listed are rounded to the nearest dollar and include the contribution from Central Electric Cooperative, East River Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

## Kwh Tax Listed by School District

<b>Bridgewater/Emery School District</b>	<b>\$6,195</b>	<b>Mitchell School District</b>	<b>\$281,967</b>
<b>Chamberlain School District</b>	<b>\$104,800</b>	<b>Mt Vernon School District</b>	<b>\$29,178</b>
<b>Corsica-Stickney School District</b>	<b>\$16,317</b>	<b>Oldham-Ramona School District</b>	<b>\$1,411</b>
<b>Ethan School District</b>	<b>\$15,262</b>	<b>Parkston School District</b>	<b>\$4,664</b>
<b>Hanson School District</b>	<b>\$50,619</b>	<b>Plankinton School District</b>	<b>\$50,751</b>
<b>Howard School District</b>	<b>\$267,068</b>	<b>Platte-Geddes School District</b>	<b>\$15,193</b>
<b>Huron School District</b>	<b>\$1,526</b>	<b>Sanborn Central School District</b>	<b>\$34,780</b>
<b>Kimball School District</b>	<b>\$46,911</b>	<b>Wessington Springs School District</b>	<b>\$47,546</b>
<b>Madison School District</b>	<b>\$590</b>	<b>White Lake School District</b>	<b>\$18,083</b>
<b>McCook Central School District</b>	<b>\$903</b>	<b>Woonsocket School District</b>	<b>\$18,136</b>
<b>Miller Area School District</b>	<b>\$222</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,012,122</b>

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spending more time in the kitchen during the holiday season? Here's one way to be more energy efficient: Unplug small kitchen appliances, like toaster ovens and microwaves, when not in use. You could save \$10 to \$20 per year.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy



# WHAT TO DO: IF YOUR CAR CRASHES INTO A UTILITY POLE

**Accidents happen.** Would you know what to do if your car crashed into an electric utility pole? Knowing what to do could be the difference between life and death.

**Always consider power lines and other electrical equipment to be live and dangerous!**

## IF A POWER LINE FALLS ON YOUR VEHICLE AND THERE IS **NO** FIRE:

Your safest option is to stay inside your vehicle until help arrives. The vehicle acts as a path for the electrical current to travel to reach the ground. You are safe inside the vehicle, but if you get out, you could be electrocuted.

**Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.**

## IF A POWER LINE FALLS ON YOUR VEHICLE AND THERE **IS** A FIRE:

Only attempt to leave your vehicle if it is on fire.

### To exit safely:

- Jump out of the vehicle, making sure NO part of your body or clothing touches the ground and vehicle at the same time.
- Land with both feet together and in small, shuffling steps, move at least 40 ft. away from the vehicle.
- The ground could be energized. Shuffling away with both feet together decreases the risk of electrical shock.

**Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.**



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES

# Lending a Helping Hand

*Organization Helps Those in Need Bring In the Harvest*

Jocelyn Romey

**D**URING TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES, FARMERS AND ranchers usually don't have many options. What happens when a natural disaster, injury, health issue or fatality is experienced by an agricultural family?

Getting the harvest in on time and cutting enough hay for the coming year can become major issues these families face when tragic circumstances occur. So, in the Midwest, farmers are helping farmers.

Farm Rescue – a nonprofit organization created in North Dakota and headquartered in Horace, N.D., just outside of Fargo, is providing help to farmers and ranchers through the organized efforts of volunteers. People from across the nation have volunteered their time and effort to assist agricultural families who need help getting their crops in during a family crisis. This organization's volunteers

not only help harvest and plant crops, but also haul grain and provide donated hay to farmers and ranchers affected by the drought.

Bill Gross, founder and president of Farm Rescue, started the organization in 2005 when it received its nonprofit status. In 2006, volunteers began their harvest heroism helping families in North Dakota. Since then, Farm Rescue has grown. It now offers help to agriculture communities in a five-state region with plans to expand. Currently, this region encompasses North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Montana and Minnesota.

Farm Rescue's Carol Wielenga, program coordinator, said roughly 100 volunteers are called upon every year. They are included in a database of nearly 1,000 nationwide. Most volunteers have an agriculture background and want to get back to the farm.





Yet, a few come from different demographics. Wielenga said one volunteer was a scientist from NASA.

Ted Smith, director of engineering and operations from Sioux Valley Energy in Colman, S.D., is one of those volunteers who dedicates his time off to helping others. He began his work with Farm Rescue in 2012.

While describing his volunteer services, Smith said, "Some people think I'm crazy to take my vacation time to go work, but I enjoy it...I've worked for really nice folks over the years."

Good deeds are not always easy to act out, however. Smith told one story in which he and his partner set a record for how many times they could become stuck in one day while volunteering.

Smith said, "I don't think anyone has broken our record yet, at least I hope not."

Farm Rescue not only relies on volunteers like Smith, but also sponsors and donors to aid farmers and ranchers.

One donor heavily involved in aiding agricultural families through Farm Rescue is RDO

Equipment Co. From the beginning, this company has been the sole donator of all the equipment needed by volunteers to plant, harvest and haul.

Currently, Farm Rescue employs four full-time employees and is managed by a board of directors. These directors make the qualification decisions of every applicant requesting help from Farm Rescue. Wielenga described the application process as easy and quick. She also noted that many requests for assistance are made anonymously by a friend of the family. Since Farm Rescue assists families who are usually stressed, the application process is simple and has no cut-off date. This ensures that help is available for any family in need.

Information regarding qualification for assistance can be found on Farm Rescue's website [www.farmrescue.org](http://www.farmrescue.org).



**Above:** Volunteers pause from their duties to pose for a photo.

**Top:** A Farm Rescue combine and semi trailer continue the harvest at dusk.

**Opposite Page:** Farm Rescue volunteers harvest soybeans.



**Left:** Farm Rescue volunteers operate an air seeder to help a farm family in crisis during

# Wildlife and Light Blinks



**Brian Bultje**  
Manager of Operations

Have your lights blinked recently? A feathered or furry cause could be on the other end of your power.

Wildlife causes power interruptions year round, with an increase in spring and fall as birds migrate. For example, starlings nest on poles or substations, especially in the fall. Raccoons, squirrels, possums, snakes, and even livestock rubbing on poles are also potential causes.

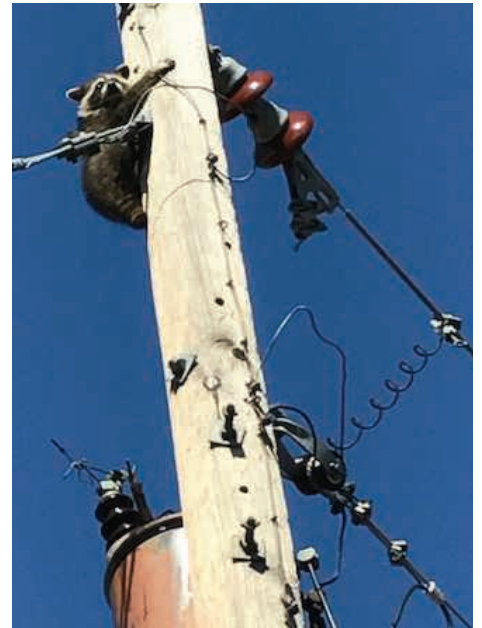
Power blinks or outages happen when power lines bounce and slap together, such as when birds land on or leave a power line suddenly. A lineman investigating this blink might not discover the cause if the birds leave. Power interruptions can also happen when an animal makes contact with both grounded and energized pieces of equipment. This causes an arc which opens the breaker, or “recloser.” Unlike a household breaker, this equipment will try to close again, hence the name. If the breaker closes, members only see a blink. If the breaker stays open (which means the cause did not clear from the line), an outage occurs.

While we cannot control wildlife activity, we construct

any new power equipment to protect wildlife and prevent power interruptions. “Bird guards” are installed to cover energized conductors. Poles are wrapped to prevent animals from climbing. Cross arms (the horizontal beam at the top of the pole) need to be at least ten feet long. This provides more room for a bird to land on a pole without

contacting live equipment. Additionally, our tree trimming efforts not only prevent tree damage to equipment but also eliminate an easy way for animals to access power equipment.

One might think an easy solution to protect animals and prevent interruptions would be to bury underground power line. However, our linemen still find animals or reptiles that burrow in our underground cabinets.



Your cooperative attempts to prevent outages, whether caused by wildlife, weather, or equipment related. Unfortunately, certain power blinks or outages are outside of our control, and we thank you for your patience during these times!

**Above:** A young raccoon found itself at the top of a pole. They feed off insects in the cracks of poles. To safely remove an animal, linemen will coax the animal off with an insulated stick. Photo by Tim Neises.

**Left:** Starlings crowded the Plankinton Substation in late September. Photo by Paul Koch.

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## Regional Dateline

### October 21

Black Hills Opry with Aces and Eights featuring Alan Crossland, Lead, SD 605-584-2067

### October 21

Nelly's Revenge Murder Mystery Dinner Theater Deadwood, SD, 605-580-5799

### October 22

Kidz Bop Kids Best Time Ever Tour, Sioux Falls, SD 605-367-7288

### October 27-28

Harvest Halloween, Yankton, SD info@harvesthalloween.com

### October 27-28

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

### October 27-29

Autumn Festival Sioux Falls, SD, 402-331-2889

### October 27-29

ZooBoo, Sioux Falls, SD 605-367-7003

### October 28

Scare in the Square Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

### October 28

ZOO BOO, Watertown, SD 605-882-6269

### October 29

Helping with Horsepower's SpiritHorse Therapeutic Riding Program Year-end Horse Show Reclamation-Ranch 1 p.m., Mitchell, SD helpingwithhorsepower.com www.reclamation-ranch.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHAD COPPCESS, SD...TOURISM

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

### October 21-January 7

Pheasant Hunting Season Statewide, Pierre, SD 605-223-7660

### November 12

Trinity Lutheran Church Lutfisk, Lefse and Meatball Supper, 4 to 7 p.m. Chamberlain SD 605-730-0553

### October 29

Trick or Treat Trails, Pierre, SD 605-773-2885

### November 4

Third Annual DCS Fall Fling Vendors, Bake Sale, and Lunch, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dakota Christian School 9 miles east of Platte along Hwy 44, Contact Sarah VanHofmann at 605-366-7940

### November 11

Holiday Extravaganza Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

### November 11

RSVP Holiday Vendor & Craft Show, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. James Valley Community Center, Mitchell, SD

### 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

### November 17-January 7

Winter Wonderland Sioux Falls, SD, 605-275-6060

### November 18-19

Winterfest 2017, A Winter Arts Festival, Aberdeen, SD 605-626-7025

### November 21-December 25

Christmas at the Capitol Pierre, SD, 605-773-3178

### November 24

Annual Parade of Lights Sioux Falls, SD, 605-338-4009

### November 24-December 23

1880 Train Holiday Express Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

### November 25

Holiday Celebration and Winter Market, Rapid City, SD 605-716-7979

### December 1-2

Festival of Trees, Lead, SD 605-584-2067

### December 1-2, 7-9, 14-16

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

### December 2

Christmas Stroll and Holidazzle Parade Spearfish, SD, 605-717-9294

### December 2

Christmas Parade, Custer, SD 605-673-2244

### December 2-3

Living Christmas Tree Aberdeen, SD, 605-229-6349

### December 9

Frontier Christmas Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

### December 9

Black Hills Cowboy Christmas Lead, SD, 605-584-2067

### December 15

Jazz Sessions: A Green Dolphin Jazzy Christmas Concert Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973