

## Cooperative Connections



Ione Fejfar welcomes veterans to Operation Black Hills Cabin in Custer as a place of healing and restoration

**A Healing Place  
for Veterans**

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**Co-ops and the  
S.D. National  
Guard**

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# Thank You

## And Have a Safe Fall



**Ken Schlimgen**

General Manager

**Central Electric's purpose is to provide safe and reliable energy and services to the members we serve, but the ultimate result has always been to improve the quality of life for our members.**

Over the years, Central Electric has shared how we support and give back to our communities. As a cooperative, this is one of our core principles that sets us apart from other businesses. It is part of our DNA, and it is who we are as a cooperative.

Over the past several months, like so many of you, we have risen to meet new challenges, made numerous adjustments to our operations, and taken steps to protect our employees and our members from the spread of COVID-19.

One of the biggest adjustments was to hold our annual meeting as a drive-through meeting. After postponing our traditional meeting in April, we hosted a drive-through annual meeting on September 29th. This allowed members to safely register and vote on bylaw changes without leaving their cars. Over the past 4-5 years, we have averaged about 350 members attending the annual meeting. This year's drive-through event had 504 members register. The bylaw amendments that were proposed passed overwhelmingly. Thank you to all who came out and supported your electric cooperative.

As we experience the fall season, harvest is progressing quickly, and the holiday season is fast approaching. Central Electric's purpose is to provide safe and reliable energy and services to the members we serve, but the ultimate result has always been to improve the quality of life for our members.

One of the tools we use to improve quality of life is our Operation Round-Up program, where we take donations from generous members like you who have rounded up the amount on their electric bill to help organizations make improvements in their community. More information on the beneficiaries of the Operation Round-Up funds can be found in this newsletter.

Your cooperative also has a strong commitment to safety and not just for our employees. We visit schools to teach children how to stay safe around electricity. We have developed an award-winning Powering Your Safety program geared specifically towards the operation of large ag and construction equipment. We host safety demonstrations at community gatherings and training for first responders.

Your cooperative has invested in the economic development of several of our local communities either through the Rural Electric Economic Development loan fund, a financial donation, or by taking an active role through a local chamber or economic development office. Because we understand how important a strong local community is to everyone.

We know our core job is to keep the lights on and that directly improves the quality of life for our members. We also know that supporting our local communities is important because we live and work here, and we want to make it a better place.

If there is anything we can do to help you or your community, please reach out to us. The Board of Trustees for the Operation Round-Up fund will meet in early November to consider applications. Concern for you our members and for our community is who we are. Thank you again for the continued support of your cooperative. Remember to slow down and take time to ensure a safe harvest.

Until next month, take care and be safe!



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

(USPS 018-963)

## Board of Directors

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Todd VanWalleghen - Vice President  
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**General Manager:** Ken Schlimgen

**Editor:** Courtney J. Deinert,  
courtneyd@centralec.coop

**Assistant Editor:** Patrick Soukup

**CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS** is the monthly publication for the members of Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Central Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to their cooperative and living better with electricity. Also available at [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop).

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Subscription information: Central Electric Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301, and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301. Address all other correspondence to: Cooperative Connections, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301 Telephone: (605)996-7516; Fax: (605) 996-0869; e-mail: [cec@centralec.coop](mailto:cec@centralec.coop); website: [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop).

## Office Information

M-F 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
800-477-2892 or  
605-996-7516  
[www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop)



## Mission Statement

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

## CO-OP NEWS

# Board Meeting Summary

The board of directors met on September 21, 2020 at the Betts Road Service Center for the regular board meeting.

The board approved the August 17, 2020 meeting minutes and the August safety meeting minutes. The board then reviewed monthly reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and the financials.

## Board Report

Manager Schlimgen updated the board on the following:

- East River Managers' and Basin Electric Managers' meetings reports.
- Called for nominations for the SDREA Legacy of Leadership Award.
- Discussed future training opportunities for employees.
- Load forecasting.
- Local and state COVID statistics.
- EV charging and VW settlement funding.
- Contribution-in-aid analysis.
- SDREA updates.
- Basin Electric Annual Meeting and NRECA Regional Meeting logistics.
- Attendance at Governor's Buffalo Round-up.
- Annual Meeting details.

- East River transmission upgrade plan and 2021 plant budget.

Director VanWalleghen reported on the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives board meeting.

Director Wolbrink gave an update on the East River Electric Cooperative Board Meeting.

## Board Action

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

1. Approved a stipend for the tellers for four hours of service at the Annual Meeting.
2. Appointed Manager Schlimgen as delegate for the NRECA Regional Meeting.
3. Appointed Donita Loudner as delegate for the CFC meeting.
4. Appointed Manager Schlimgen as delegate and Roger Campbell as alternate for the Basin Electric Annual Meeting.
5. Approved to go into executive session.

The next board of directors meeting will be held October 19, 2020 at the Betts Road Service Center.

*Please contact the cooperative office for more information regarding the board meeting.*

Financial Report	August 2020	Year-to-Date
kWh Sales	27,517,867 kWhs	218,959,883 kWhs
Electric Revenues	\$2,736,131	\$21,934,620
Total Cost of Service	\$2,622,001	\$20,852,628
Operating Margins	\$159,930	\$1,284,614

## Office Closed November 11

Our office will be closed on Wednesday, November 11 in observance of Veterans Day.

## Office Closed November 26-27

Our office will be closed November 26-27 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

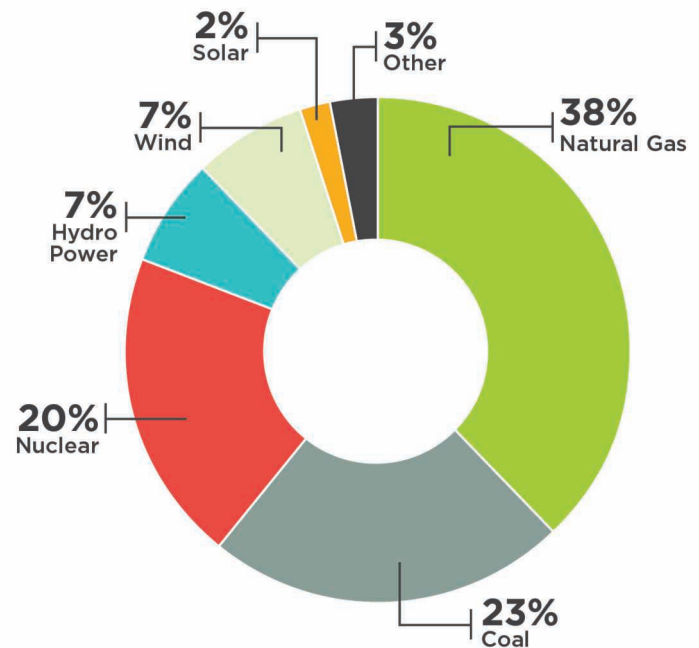
# Enjoy an energy-efficient feast this Thanksgiving

New electrical appliances use far less energy in your home than older ones, but that doesn't mean you should skimp on energy-efficient behavior in the kitchen.

During the frantic holiday season, making the simplest changes while cooking can save plenty of energy and money.

- There's usually no need to preheat the oven, especially if the food you're cooking - like a turkey or a ham - will be in it for a long time.
- Avoid opening the oven door to check on food. Instead, turn on the oven light and peer through the window to make sure your pumpkin pie or turkey isn't burning to a crisp. Opening the oven door - even for just a second or two - can drop the temperature inside the oven by 25 degrees.
- Place several items in the oven at once. All food will cook thoroughly if you leave enough room around pies or casseroles for air to flow.
- Electric ovens retain heat even after you turn them off, so it's safe to turn them off several minutes before a recipe's time is up. Electric stovetops work the same way: The metal element will keep cooking for several minutes after you turn it off.
- Choose glass or ceramic pans for the oven. They let you set the temperature 25 degrees lower than metal pans do.
- Match the pan size to the size of the stovetop burner so you don't waste heat. Just a 2-inch difference between pan and burner can waste 40 percent of the generated heat.
- Zap baked potatoes and vegetables in the microwave instead of simmering them on the stovetop. Microwaves use significantly less electricity than a stove or oven.
- Involve everyone in cooking. Leave the electric mixer in the cupboard and let the kids stir the cake batter by hand and recruit someone to chop the veggies instead of tossing them into a food processor. The experience might save some electricity and make everyone proud of contributing to the meal.

Keep these handy and helpful tips in mind as you prepare to entertain family and friends in your home this holiday season.



## Powerful Energy Sources

Nationally, electric co-ops and other utilities use a variety of fuels to power American homes and businesses. This diverse fuel mix supplies co-op members with the safe, reliable and affordable power they depend on.

## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



### "Keep Indoors!"

**Grace Austin, 7 years old**

Grace is a member of West River Electric Association based in Rapid City. She encourages readers, "During a storm, all kids and pets should be inside. So, don't go outside. It's dangerous."

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 Slow-Cook Selections

## Slow-Cooker Zucchini Soup

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 ½ lbs. sweet Italian sausage            | 2 tsp. salt                              |
| 2 c. ½-inch celery pieces                 | 1 tsp. white sugar                       |
| 2 lbs. zucchini, cut into ½-inch slices   | 1 tsp. dried oregano                     |
| 2 (28 oz.) cans diced tomatoes (or fresh) | 1 tsp. Italian seasoning                 |
| 2 green peppers, cut into ½-inch slices   | 1 tsp. dried basil                       |
| 1 c. chopped onion                        | ¼ tsp. garlic powder                     |
|   | 6 T. grated Parmesan cheese, or to taste |

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook and stir sausage in the hot skillet until browned and crumbly, 5-7 minutes; drain and discard grease. Mix celery into cooked sausage; cook and stir until celery is softened, about 10 minutes. Combine sausage mixture, zucchini, tomatoes, bell peppers, onion, salt, sugar, oregano, Italian seasoning, basil and garlic powder in a slow cooker. Cook on low for 4-6 hours. Garnish each serving with 1 T. Parmesan cheese. Note: Water is not needed in this recipe.

**Shelly Goetz, Sioux Falls, SD**

## Crock Pot Corn

- |                                    |                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 (16 oz.) bags frozen corn        | 6 T. sugar                |
| 8 oz. cream cheese (but in chunks) | 6 T. water                |
|                                    | ½ cup butter or margarine |

Put in crockpot on high for two hours or low for four. Stir every once in a while. Salt and pepper to taste.

**Helen Gregory, Lemmon, SD**

## Spaghetti Corn

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 can cream style corn   | 1 onion, diced         |
| 1 can whole corn         | 1 cup shredded cheddar |
| 2 cups spaghetti, broken | 1 stick butter, melted |

Break spaghetti into 2-inch pieces. Do not drain whole corn. Combine all ingredients. Pour into buttered casserole dish. Bake uncovered for 30 mins. at 350. Cover and put back in oven for 20 mins. OR place in crock pot for 2 hours. OR Cook on stove for 40 mins. on lowest heat, removing for 10 minute intervals.

**Jane Ham, Rapid City, SD**

## BBQ Steakhouse Chili

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 2 T. oil   | beans, rinsed  |
| 1 lb. beef top round steak, cut into 1/2-inch pieces | 2-1/2 cups undrained canned no-salt-added diced tomatoes |
| 1 lb. extra-lean ground beef                         | 1 bottle (18 oz.) KRAFT Hickory Smoke Barbecue Sauce     |
| 1 onion, finely chopped                              | 3/4 cup KRAFT Shredded Cheddar Cheese                    |
| 1/4 cup A1 Dry Rub Bold Original                     |  |
| 3 cloves garlic, minced                              |  |
| 2 cans (16 oz. each) kidney                          |  |

Heat oil in large skillet on medium. Add next five ingredients; stir. Cook 10 min. or until meat is evenly browned, stirring frequently. Spoon into slow cooker sprayed with cooking spray. Add all remaining ingredients except cheese; stir. Cover with lid. Cook on low 7 to 8 hours (or on high 4 to 5 hours). Serve topped with cheese.

**Provided by Kraft Heinz**

## Chicken Cacciatore

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1/2 cup KRAFT Zesty Italian                               | 1 green pepper, cut in strips                  |
| 1 tsp. dried oregano leaves                               | 1/2 lb. sliced mushrooms                       |
| 2 lbs. mixed boneless skinless chicken breasts and thighs | 1-1/2 c. CLASSICO Tomato and Basil Pasta Sauce |
|   | 3 c. rotini pasta, uncooked                    |

Mix dressing/oregano in pot sprayed with cooking spray. Add chicken; coat both sides of each piece with dressing mixture. Top with vegetables and pasta sauce; cover with lid. Cook on low 6-8 hours (or high 4-6 hours). About 15 min. before serving, cook pasta, no salt. Drain. Serve topped with chicken and vegetables.

**Provided by Kraft Heinz**

Please send your favorite holiday 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 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.





A “drive-through” style meeting was held at Central Electric’s headquarters west of Mitchell.

# “DRIVE-THROUGH” SUCCESS

## Over 500 Members Attend Annual Meeting

Central Electric Cooperative hosted its 20th Annual Meeting on September 29, 2020 in a “drive-through” format amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members in attendance pulled into the warehouse, presented their notice, and were given the meeting information and voting ballot. They pulled through the building and dropped off their checked ballot before exiting. No formal meal or presentation was given. However, a full video report on 2019 co-op business can be found on our website.

Five-hundred four members registered along with numerous other guests and “furry friends” along for the ride. Most unique vehicles to pull through included a livestock trailer with a bull, vacuum service truck for portable toilets, a boat, and Tesla electric vehicle.

The vote to amend the Bylaws passed. A full description of the Bylaws amendments can be viewed on our website. Members also passed to waive a formal reading of the meeting notice and previous meeting minutes, as they were provided in the Annual Report and handed out at the meeting.

All registered members received a \$30 bill credit applied to their account. Harvey Smith of Mitchell, SD won the Grand Prize drawn at random for a \$100 bill credit.



A variety of unique vehicles came through, including a Tesla electric car.

# Employee Years of Service



**Dean Uher**  
Manager of Finance &  
Administration  
November 5 - 2 years



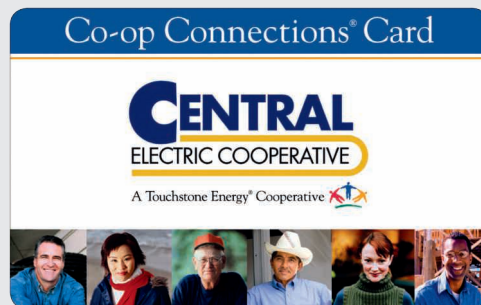
**Tim Neises**  
Area Foreman  
November 19 - 41 years

## OFFICIAL NOTICE OF PUBLICATION STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (REQUIRED BY 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Publication Title: Central Electric Cooperative Connections
2. Publication No.: 018-963
3. Filing Date: September 18, 2020
4. Issue Frequency: Monthly
5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 12
6. Annual Subscription Price: \$6 for members; \$12 Non members
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher:  
25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher, Editor & Managing Editor:  
Publisher: Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301  
Editor: Courtney J. Deinert, Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301  
Managing Editor: Courtney J. Deinert, Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
10. Owner: Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
11. Known bondholders/mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total  
Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: US Dept of Ag, RUS, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-1566; CFC, Woodland Park, 2201 Cooperative Way, Herndon, VI, 22071.
12. Tax Status: Purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal  
income tax purposes: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
13. Publication Title: Central Electric Cooperative Connections
14. Issue Date of Circulation Below: Oct. 2020

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Avg. Copies Previous Yr	October 2020 Issue
A. Total number of copies (net press run)	4828	4838
B. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (outside co.)	4596	4605
C. Total Paid and/or Requested	4596	4605
D. Free Distribution by Mail/Outside Mail	212	213
E. Total Free or Nominal (outside-county copies)	212	213
F. Total Distribution	4808	4818
G. Copies Not Distributed	20	20
H. Total	4828	4838
I. Percent Paid/Requested	95%	95%

## Local Discounts with your Co-op Connections® Card



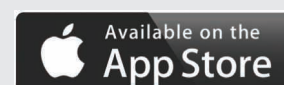
Your cooperative membership earns you discounts at local participating businesses.

Simply show your Co-op Connections Discount Card and save.

- 1) **Photography Unlimited, Mitchell, SD;**  
Free session & 10% off your order.
- 2) **The Pin Cushion, Mitchell, SD;**  
Buy 1 Aurifil thread at regular price and get 2nd one at 50% off.
- 3) **Rob's Short Stop, Mitchell, SD;**  
5% off of seafood purchase of \$20 or over.
- 4) **Sun Gold Trophies, Inc., Mitchell, SD;**  
15% off storewide, some exclusions apply.
- 5) **Tessiers, Mitchell, SD;**  
10% discount on residential service or maintenance work only. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount or for commercial work or installations.
- 6) **Two Dreams Boutique, Mitchell, SD;**  
10% off in store order.
- 7) **Village Bowl, Mitchell, SD;**  
Bowl 2 games, get the 3rd game free.

For a full list of ways to save, visit [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop).

To request a card or become a participating business, visit [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop) or call 800-477-2892 or 605-996-7516.







Operation Black Hills Cabin is a healing place for U.S. military veterans in Custer.

# HEALING PLACES

## Organizations cater to military veterans in need

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

*"After 21 years of learning to live with the scars, the limitations, the tremors and the nightmares...I can honestly say this experience has filled my heart with fresh hope." - Veteran Jason Cooper*

U.S. military veteran Jason Cooper needed some peace. He needed some quiet. He needed a reprieve from the rigors and stress of everyday life. So, Cooper gathered up his family and made the trip from his home in Kentucky to the Black Hills where he would find rest, relaxation and time for thoughtful contemplation.

Cooper and his crew spent a week-long vacation in a comfortable, cozy cabin in Custer as part of a project called Operation Black Hills Cabin (OBHC). Over the past 10 years, he and dozens of other wounded veterans have discovered a tranquil site to unwind and to enjoy the wide range of outdoor activities available in the area – all free of charge.

The program began as a service to provide veterans and their families with a free getaway and also as a means for organizers to express gratitude for the sacrifices made to protect freedom.

One of those founding organizers is Col. Marty Mahrt, a former Air Force pilot who joined the military in 1955 and flew 88 missions through two tours of duty in Vietnam. During his first tour, Mahrt was assigned to attack a munitions arsenal at Yen Bai Province. After releasing his ordnance and pulling away, Mahrt's F105 Thunderchief was hit in the right wing by enemy fire. The



Air Force veteran Col. Marty Mahrt is a founding board member of OBHC.

aircraft began a downward spiral, but Mahrt was able to eject and was soon rescued by a helicopter squadron and flown back to the U.S. for surgical treatment of a severe shoulder wound.

While Mahrt and his wife Colleen are usually on hand to greet the veteran visitors to OBHC, the guests rarely get to hear of Mahrt's combat experience. As he puts it, "They don't need to hear anything from me. They have their own problems. I just listen to them and let them know that we're here to help them."

Mahrt said that he was eager to join Pat and Jeff Baird when they began gathering local support for OBHC back in 2011.

"Just knowing a lot of people who didn't make it back, and seeing the wounded warriors coming back from Iraq, that was something that motivated us to get involved. You see these families, the whole structure of the family changes when a soldier



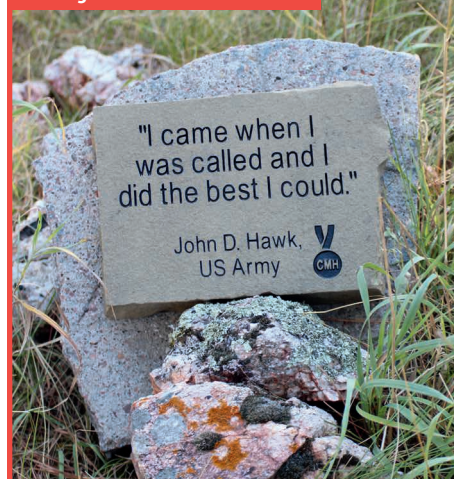


The Ranch Ministries in Blunt gives veterans an opportunity to hunt in one of the country's most prized pheasant harvesting territories.

and breadwinner is wounded and the wife has to take over," he said.

Mahrt points out that while the project isn't necessarily about providing psychological therapy for the veterans, there are emotional connections made in the process. He said a significant part of the program is the local community's participation. Business leaders and individuals provide free services or deep discounts for meals, entertainment, local tourist attractions and outdoor activities. The veterans also receive a gift card loaded with "Custer Cash" to help offset travel costs.

The Trail of Healing at Operation Black Hills Cabin has a series of messages etched in stone.



"We meet the families and welcome them," Mahrt said. "Sometimes the emotions get the best of me when I present them with their Visa card and they start crying and give me a hug. Sometimes you get emotional."

OBHC Board Secretary Ione Fejfar said the support of the community and way the residents of Custer treat the veterans and their families is part of the strength of the program.

"The people of Custer are absolutely wonderful," she said. "They really roll out the red carpet for them and everywhere our veterans go, they are treated with respect and honor and friendship. Between the cabin and the town, this is a very healing place."

She said every veteran who visits the cabin is asked to compose a brief letter of gratitude to the community that's published in the local newspaper.

## Oahe Electric Lends a Hand

The Ranch Ministries was founded by Marine veteran Ken Korkow on 540 acres in Blunt, roughly 20 miles east of Pierre. It's a faith-based retreat center he created to offer military veterans an open space to take part in team-building exercises, outdoor hunting and shooting sports, dirt track racing, firearms safety training, horseback riding and more.

According to Korkow, there's also a lot of bonding among brothers and spiritual growth that takes place along with all of the fun and games.

"We share the story of Christ, the one who heals and gives us purpose," said Korkow, who received citations for the Navy Cross and the Purple Heart.

Korkow explained the center is not only

open to veterans but to surrounding communities as well. Youth groups and adults have visited to participate in firearm safety and team-building exercises.

"A lot of people come here to get away from their everyday lives," he said. "We take care of the needs of our veterans, but we also depend on support and volunteers from the community for our success and we open our doors to those who want to come here and find fulfillment."



Liz and Ken Korkow provide a place where veterans can go to seek spiritual healing.

One of those supporting organizations is Oahe Electric, which has responded to requests to provide material and manpower to meet the ministry's needs.

According to Oahe Electric Member Services Manager Russ Hohn, "The Ranch has had a meaningful impact in our community and we've been able to give back through our Operation Round Up program, which is funded by our members. It's a prime example of our cooperative and our members demonstrating one of the seven cooperative principles: Concern for Community."





General Manager Ken Schlimgen presents a check to brothers Ross (middle) and Todd (right) Kieffer

# KIEFFER REPAIR & SALES

## Hometown brothers receive REED funding for White Lake business

**Kieffer Repair & Sales, owned by Todd Kieffer and Ross Kieffer, provides auto and diesel repair services, body work, and also recycles damaged vehicles for resale.**

Kieffer Repair & Sales has a new building for its diesel repair and body shop business with the help of a Rural Economic Electric Development (REED) loan through Central Electric Cooperative.

Kieffer Repair & Sales, owned by Todd Kieffer and Ross Kieffer, provides auto and diesel repair services, body work, and also recycles damaged vehicles for resale.

Ross has a degree in Diesel Mechanics, and Todd has a degree in Auto Technology from Lake Area Technical Institute. The brothers are excited to have a new shop in order to grow their business in the White Lake area.

Central Electric Manager, Ken Schlimgen said, “We are happy to help fill a gap in a rural community. Concern for community is one of the seven cooperative principles. Supporting locally owned new businesses is one way we can do that.”

Central Electric Cooperative utilizes the REED Fund to partner with local banks, other loan funds, and state and federal agencies to finance community and economic development projects. The REED Fund provides gap financing to new and expanding businesses that create jobs. The REED Fund also helps local communities finance improvements to local facilities, services and infrastructure.

New and expanding businesses or communities in need of financing for facilities or services should contact Central Electric Cooperative at 605-996-7516 for a loan application. Organizations can also contact the REED Fund at (605) 256-4536 or find more information at [www.reedfund.coop](http://www.reedfund.coop).



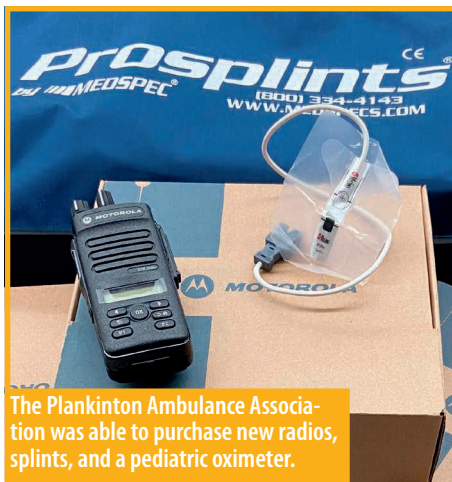
# Operation Round-Up Makes a Big Impact in Small Communities

## Plankinton Ambulance Updates Equipment

The Plankinton Ambulance Association received \$2,500 from Operation Round-Up to update equipment, including radios, splints, and a pediatric oximeter.

As technology rapidly evolves, so do the equipment needs of emergency responders. The radios serve as a lifeline between the 17 volunteers on the service and dispatch, members and supporting agencies. The splints will allow the service to safely immobilize a patient to reduce their discomfort and are compatible to use with X-ray or MRI equipment. The current oximetry readers utilized by the department can fit poorly on children, so the pediatric pulse oximeter will allow them to provide more accurate readings on a child patient.

“Our service is striving to stay up to date when it comes to technology as we see benefits that it provides to our patients, allowing us to provide the best care possible to the people of our community,” says Amy Bultsma, Secretary/Treasurer of the Association.



The Plankinton Ambulance Association was able to purchase new radios, splints, and a pediatric oximeter.

## White Lake Offers Summer Reading Program

The White Lake Library held an 8-week summer reading program this past year with 31 children signed up and an average of 23 children in attendance. The children enjoyed the program and followed social distancing guidelines with ease.

“Due to COVID’s economic impact, we did not feel right asking businesses for donations,” says Kim Ehlers. “Instead, we used funds to purchase snacks from each business on a rotating schedule.”

The program received \$500 from Operation Round-Up to aid in purchasing supplies, snacks and prizes. Funds were also donated from Jane Guericke and Thrivent.



Children enjoyed a variety of activities while social distancing on their own mat.



The “Good Witch of the North” even visited as a guest reader.

## Hanson County Angel Tree Makes Christmas a Bit Brighter

Hanson County Child Protection received \$1,000 in funding to aid their Angel Tree and Winter gear program last Christmas.

Funds were used to purchase snow boots, snow pants, bedding, and toys ranging from \$5-20 for children in need.

“Operation Round-Up money will keep children in Hanson County warm and happy this holiday season,” said Lisa McManus with the Hanson Co. Community Health Office.

In addition to the Angel Tree, the Hanson Co. Child Protection Team also accepts monetary donations to help with back to school supplies, school lunches, Freshman Impact in Alexandria, and occasion gas cards for mileage. Funds are also kept on hand for emergencies. The local schools will reach out to the program if they know a child or family is in need.



One angel tree was located in the Emery, SD grocery store.

Operation Round-Up is a charitable fund made possible by cooperative members who “round-up” their bills each month. For more information, contact our office or visit [www.centralecc.coop](http://www.centralecc.coop).



The South Dakota National Guard has been responsive in helping co-ops restore power to their members after natural disasters.

# S.D. NATIONAL GUARD

## Co-ops, SDNG work together to meet challenges

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

The South Dakota National Guard and the state's rural electric cooperatives share a synergistic relationship that goes back for decades. Both the Guard and the co-ops are highly skilled, highly motivated and highly prepared to respond in an emergency situation and to deliver help when and where it's needed.

For cooperatives, the response typically centers around restoring power after a natural disaster so that members can return their lives and their business operations back to normal as soon as possible. The state's 28 electric co-ops are part of a state, regional and national mutual assistance agreement that assures help will arrive when needed, and that, in turn, help will be dispatched upon request.

Cooperative operations personnel throughout the state work in conjunction with the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) in Pierre to formulate and maintain an emergency work plan designed to help expedite the process of responding to a natural disaster.

According to SDREA Manager of Loss Control Services Mark Patterson, the more than 125,000 electric co-op consumers across South Dakota can rest assured their local power provider has the resources available to meet any and all challenges.

"We have a well-connected professional network of electric co-ops in South Dakota that's made up of exceptionally skilled linemen and supervisors who are absolutely the best in the business," Patterson said. "They have the experience they need to do the job as quickly and safely as possible, and they also have the resources at their disposal to rebuild the system and get the

power back on for our members who desperately need it."

Similarly, emergency preparedness is the South Dakota National Guard's stock in trade; although the Guard's scope of emergency response is quite broader. Not only do soldiers stand ready to be deployed to just about anywhere across the globe at a moment's notice, they also are trained to assist in a variety of stateside tasks.

The Guard's heroic work after the Rapid City Flood, The Spencer Tornado, the 1997 blizzards and the 2011 mass flooding are just a few active duty missions where the Guard came to the rescue to help save and protect life and property.

Most recently and most prominently, the Guard has been summoned to help contain and control politically-motivated



Co-op crews have relied on the National Guard to assist in power restoration efforts.





The National Guard and electric cooperatives share a commitment to serve the citizens of South Dakota, especially in stressful times.

violence and also deal with problems brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

After a coronavirus outbreak at Smithfield Farms in Sioux Falls made national headlines, the Guard deployed 25 ambulance teams - including four air support teams - and was recruited to conduct contact tracing in both Sioux Falls and Rapid City. Roughly 2,600 Smithfield Farms employees and their family members were tested for the virus with the assistance of National Guard personnel.

Gov. Kristi Noem expressed her appreciation for the work of the National Guard soldiers. "We knew they would be ready, they always are, but I don't want anyone to take for granted how blessed we are to have men and women in our South Dakota National Guard that continue to step up."

Lt. Col. Anthony Deiss, Director of Public Affairs for the South Dakota National Guard, recalls being personally involved in previous missions to help electric cooperative crews transport poles and other equipment, control work zones along roadways and pull vehicles out of wet, muddy ditches.

He said the soldiers take a great deal of pride in their work and approach their respective missions with the same commitment to serve as cooperative line crews demonstrate on a daily basis.

"We've had a tremendous partnership with the electric cooperatives when working alongside them to help respond to winter storms over the years. Our co-ops are on the front lines when providing power restoration during and after natural disasters, and they serve a critically important role in public health and safety. Anytime the SDNG is called up by the state to assist our co-ops in their mission, we look forward to the opportunity to support them."

"It's important for different state agencies and organizations to coordinate and work together during emergencies. These

relationships are vital to our state and communities to help quickly mitigate, respond and recover from these disasters. We provide a variety of resources to assist civil authorities to ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens."

Patterson of SDREA concluded: "I think this is one of the things that makes our state very unique, the sense that we all need to pull together, especially in a crisis. Neighbors helping neighbors...that's what our National Guard and our co-ops are all about."



The National Guard takes pride in helping electric co-ops reconstruct downed power lines and poles.



# Four Ways to Save Energy in the Kitchen



**Patrick Soukup**

Manager of Marketing/Member Services

**There are small ways you can help your larger kitchen appliances run more efficiently.**

As the weather cools down and the holidays approach, the kitchen becomes a focal point in our homes. It's where we gather with family and friends for our favorite meals and memories. But like most of us, you probably aren't thinking about saving energy when you're planning that perfect dish. Here are four ways you can save energy in the kitchen with minimal effort.

**When possible, cook with smaller appliances.** Using smaller kitchen appliances, like slow cookers, toaster ovens and convection ovens is more energy efficient than using your large stove or oven. According to the Department of Energy, a toaster or convection oven uses one-third to one-half as much energy as a full-sized oven.

**Unplug appliances that draw phantom energy load.** Even after Halloween is over, it's possible you have energy vampires in your kitchen – these are the appliances that draw energy even when they're not in use, like coffee makers, microwaves and toaster ovens. The Department of Energy has estimated that one home's energy vampires left plugged in year-round can add up to \$100-\$200 in wasted energy costs. Unplug them when they're not in use, or better yet, use a power strip for convenient control.

**Help large appliances work less.** There are small ways you can help your larger kitchen appliances run more efficiently. For example, keep range-top burners clean from spills and fallen foods so they'll reflect heat better. When it's time to put leftovers in the refrigerator, make sure the food is covered and allow it to cool down first. That way, the fridge doesn't have to work harder to cool warm food.

**Use your dishwasher efficiently.** Only run full loads, and avoid using the "rinse hold" function on your machine for just a few dirty dishes; it uses 3-7 gallons of hot water each use. You can also save energy by letting your dishes air dry. If your dishwasher doesn't have an automatic air-dry switch, simply turn it off after the final rinse and prop the door open so the dishes will dry faster.

**Bonus tip:** The best way to save energy is to not use it. Try a tasty, no-bake dessert recipe. Your sweet tooth (and energy bill!) will thank you.

By slightly adjusting a few of your habits in the kitchen, you'll be well on your way to energy savings. Contact us to learn about additional ways you can save energy and money at home.





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you go on.

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

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**October 22**

Butte County CFEL Annual Christmas Fair, Newell City Hall, Newell, SD, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 605-456-9837

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**October 24**

Ladies Day Shopping Extravaganza, The Crossing Bar, Mina, SD, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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**October 29-30**

Helping with Horsepower's Phobia - A Haunted Trail, Reclamation Ranch, 40789 259th St., Mitchell, SD, 7-11 p.m. 605-770-2867

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**October 31-November 1**

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Assn. Sioux Falls Classic Gun Show, 3200 W Maple St. Sioux Falls, SD, 605-630-2199

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**November 1 and 15**

VFW Bingo, Wall Community Center, Wall, SD, 605-279-2663

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**November 6-8**

YFS Kids Fair, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD

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**November 7**

Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Fair, Dakota Christian School, Corsica, SD, 605-366-7940

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**November 7**

Fairburn Community Center Bazaar, Fairburn, SD, 5:30 p.m., 605-255-4807

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**November 7**

Silver Star Bazaar, Lake Norden Community Center, Lake Norden, SD, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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**November 7**

BH Meat Fest, Fundraiser for Shriner Patient Camps, BH Harley Davidson, Rapid City, SD, 605-415-3577

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**November 7**

Helping with Horsepower's RibFest, 4 p.m., Reclamation Ranch, Mitchell, SD, Contact mattcarter1421@gmail.com to register your team

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**November 11**

MasterChef Junior Live, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD

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**November 12**

Zonta Club of the BH Expo, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 14**

Winter Marketplace Pop Up, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 14**

Annual Holiday Extravaganza, Sisseton Area Merchants and Crafters, Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

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**November 17**

Baby Shark Live, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

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**November 20-21**

Holiday Arts Christmas Show, 112 E. 5th St. Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

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**November 21-22**

Winterfest: A Winter Arts Festival, 203 S. Washington St., Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-1557

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**November 27**

Black Friday Trap Shoot, Sioux Falls Izaak Walton League, 10:30 a.m., Lunch Available, 5000 North Oakview Place, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-332-9527

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**December 5**

Rapid City Garden Club's 59th Annual Wreath and Centerpiece Sale, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Lions' and Bridger Buildings, Central States Fairgrounds, Rapid City, SD, 605-343-0710

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**December 5**

Festival of Trees, Newell City Hall, Newell, SD, Admission: Two Cans of Non-Perishable Food Items Per Person, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**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.**