



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Wings of Valor

**A Veteran's Hunting
Retreat**

Pages 8-9

**Celebrating American
Indian Heritage**

Pages 12-13

Planning for the Future

Lineworker Craig Sealey removes overhead power lines to be replaced with underground south of White Lake this summer.



Ken Schlimgen

General Manager

There is an old quote that says, “Failing to plan is planning to fail.” In a recent issue, I mentioned that every 4-5 years, your cooperative prepares a new construction

work plan. We have recently completed the plan which encompasses the next 4 years of anticipated replacement and construction of our electric distribution system.

The plan involves an in-depth engineering study that was completed by STAR Engineering to help identify where Central Electric should make improvements to the distribution system. The plan is then reviewed by your board of directors and the USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

RUS requires Central Electric to develop a construction work plan. This ensures that the distribution system will meet the requirements for reliability and allow for future growth. It also provides access to low-interest loan funds to make improvements and additions to our system more affordable.

The projects in the construction work plan are estimated to cost \$35 million over the next four years.

These projects have been carefully analyzed to make sure that we are making the best use of our money. Safety, reliability and affordability influence every decision we make. This is the largest dollar amount for a construction work plan in Central Electric’s history. Much of the higher costs are driven by inflation and increased requests for new services.

In this issue, you will read about our employee participation in training sessions led by safety experts from the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA). SDREA is tasked with educating our employees on every safety topic from defensive driving to CPR and first aid, to working safely around “live” high-voltage systems. In addition to monthly training, our employees conduct regular truck and tool inspections, and daily “tailgate” sessions.

Central Electric also works to raise awareness of electrical safety in our communities by performing demonstrations at local schools and community events. There, we show members and youth just how easily an accident can occur when working with electricity and how to prevent mishaps that could be dangerous, and sometimes deadly. We increase awareness of electrical safety by engaging with volunteer fire departments, emergency medical teams and sheriff’s departments on a regular basis, offering educational

courses and demonstrations. These programs keep our community safe.

Please take the time to be aware of your surroundings. Take notice of where that overhead line is located when moving large machinery or installing that new grain bin. Call to have underground facilities located before you dig. Be aware of where the meter, transformers, and boxes are located. We don’t want them to be an obstacle when moving snow or when driving around the yard. Taking a little extra time will prevent an accident that could affect your pocketbook or permanently change life as you know it.

November is a time when we and our nation give thanks. We recognize Veterans on November 11 and celebrate Thanksgiving on November 23. I would like to say thank you to those who protected our freedom by serving our country and now continue to serve our communities.

On a personal note, my coworkers and I want to say thanks to each of our members for the countless acts of kindness we receive throughout the year. We are thankful for your patience on the rare occasion when we are restoring your electric service and for your support all year long.

Have a Blessed Thanksgiving, and until next month – Be Safe.

CENTRAL ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS

(USPS 018-963)

Board of Directors

Aurora County - Duane Wolbrink, President
Brule County - Bradee Pazour
Buffalo County - Donita Loudner, SDREA Director
Davison County - Jeff Gustafson
Hanson County - Mark Hofer - Secretary & NRECA Director
Jerauld County - Mark Reindl, Treasurer
Miner County - Robert Banks - Director
Sanborn County - Todd VanWalleghen, Vice President
Director-At-Large - Merl Bechen

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 cooperative members on matters pertaining to their cooperative and living better with electricity.

Subscription information: Central Electric Cooperative members devote 50 cents of each 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 additional mailing offices.

Our Mission

Provide reliable energy and services with a commitment to safety and member satisfaction.

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Board Meeting Summary

The board of directors met Aug. 21, 2023, at Central Electric Cooperative's headquarters for the regular board meeting. They reviewed reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and financials.

BOARD REPORT

General Manager Schlimgen updated the board of directors on the East River Electric Managers Advisory Committee, Basin Electric activities, Rural Electric Economic Development activities, Southwest Power Pool updates, Mitchell soybean plant status and other management activities.

Schlimgen shared a recent donation request to support the new Wessington Springs Recreation Center. The project is nearing completion and will be used by the school and community. Director Reindl said it will also be used by producers for the local farm show.

Directors VanWalleghen, Gustafson and Bechen reported on S.D. Association of Cooperatives activities.

Director Wolbrink reported on the CoBank Directors Conference and East River Electric board meeting.

Director Hofer gave an update on the SDREA Legislative Committee. He gave an update on America's Electric Cooperatives (AEC) political action committee. Additional discussion followed.

Manager Schlimgen, Director Loudner and Director Reindl reported on Basin Electric's annual meeting.

The board of directors reviewed monthly director's expenses. Discussion followed.

BOARD ACTION

The board considered or acted upon the following:

- A motion was made and seconded to give a donation to the Wessington Springs Recreation Center. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve a member loan for a heating and cooling project. Motion carried.

There being no further business, President Wolbrink adjourned the meeting. The next board meeting was scheduled for Sept. 18.

FINANCIAL REPORT	YEAR TO DATE AUG. 2022	YEAR TO DATE AUG. 2023
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	233,149,788 kWh	230,756,297 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$ 23,189,372	\$ 23,677,617
Total Cost of Service	\$ 21,979,377	\$ 23,430,971
Operating Margins	\$ 1,209,995	\$ 246,646

Drowsy Driving

Drowsy Driving Prevention Week (Nov. 5-11, 2023), held every year during the first full week of November, is a good time to remember that drowsy driving is impaired driving.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 in 25 adult drivers report having fallen asleep while driving in the previous 30 days, and many more admit to driving when they were sleep-deprived.

These startling figures show how prevalent drowsy driving is. What drivers may not realize is how much drowsy driving puts themselves – and others – at risk. In fact, an estimated 6,400 people died annually in crashes involving drowsy driving, according to the National Sleep Foundation.

Impact of Drowsiness on Driving

Driving while drowsy is similar to driving under influence of alcohol.

- Drivers' reaction times, awareness of hazards and ability to sustain attention all worsen the drowsier the driver.
- Driving after going more than 20 hours without sleep is the equivalent of driving with a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.08% – the U.S. legal limit.
- You are three times more likely to be in a car crash if you are fatigued.

A driver might not even know when he or she is fatigued because signs of fatigue are hard to identify. Some people may also experience micro-sleep – short, involuntary periods of inattention. In the 4 or 5 seconds a driver experiences micro-sleep, at highway speed, the vehicle will travel the length of a football field.

Prevalence of Drowsy Driving Crashes

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that every year about 100,000 police-reported, drowsy-driving crashes result in nearly 800 fatalities and about 50,000 injuries. The real number may be much higher, however, as it is difficult to determine whether a driver was drowsy at the time of a crash.

A study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety estimated that 328,000 drowsy driving crashes occur annually. That's more than three times the police-reported number. The same study found that 109,000 of those drowsy driving crashes resulted in an injury and about 6,400 were fatal. The researchers suggest the prevalence of drowsy driving fatalities is more than 350% greater than reported.

Beyond the human toll is the economic one. NHTSA estimates fatigue-related crashes resulting in injury or death cost society \$109 billion annually, not including property damage.

Interventions for Drowsy Driving

Drowsy driving affects everyone, including adolescents and teens, who are not getting enough sleep (according to the CDC, it is recommended that teens get 8-10 hours of sleep each night). That means interventions focusing on this age group can help reduce drowsy

driving. One such intervention is for parents to incorporate discussions and rules on drowsy driving while completing their parent-teen driving agreements.

Other ways to reduce drowsy driving include:

- **Crash avoidance technologies:** New and existing safety technologies, such as drowsiness alert and lane departure warnings, can detect common drowsy driving patterns and warn drivers to stay in their lane or take a break
- **University interventions:** College students receive less than average sleep, with some estimates at less than six hours a night; education programs aimed at college students may help curb drowsy driving and instill healthier behaviors that can last into adulthood
- **Getting more sleep:** According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the Sleep Research Society, adults should get seven or more hours of sleep each night
- **Medication labels:** An article by Consumer Reports found that side-effect warnings are not always clear; new labeling guidelines may help drivers understand when to drive or not drive after taking these medications
- **Employers:** Workplaces with strong off-the-job safety and health programs can include key information on getting sufficient sleep and refraining from driving drowsy

Source: National Safety Council



Don't Fly Kites Near Power Lines!

Jason Willman, Age 9

Jason Willman advises people it's not safe to fly kites around power lines. Jason is the son of Dave and April Willman from Yankton, S.D., members of Clay-Union Electric Corporation.

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.

EASY CROCKPOT CREATIONS

MOM'S ROAST

Ingredients:

3-5 lbs. beef roast
1 can beefy mushroom soup
1 pkg. au jus (dry)

Method

Place roast in crock pot at bedtime. Mix au jus and soup together and pour over the roast. Cook on low. Roast will be ready to serve in its own gravy for dinner tomorrow.

Elaine Rieck
Harrisburg, S.D.

CREAMY GARDEN ROTINI

Ingredients:

1 lb. cooked and drained sausage or beef
1 large can (26 oz.) cream of chicken soup
1 soup can of milk
1 can (14.5 oz.) chicken broth soup
1 tbsp. Italian seasoning
1 cup fresh mushrooms
6 cups fresh spinach
1 pkg. Garden Rotini

Method

Add ingredients in the order given to the instant pot. Pressure cook on high for 20 minutes. Allow pressure to reduce to normal for 10 minutes, then serve! You will need an instant pot for this recipe!

Jean Cave
Sioux Falls, S.D.

CROCKPOT CASHEW CHICKEN

Ingredients:

1 pkg. slow cookers limited edition cashew chicken seasoning
2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken thighs, cubed
1 cup frozen chopped onion and pepper blend
1/3 cup water
3 tbsps. soy sauce
2 tbsps. ketchup
1 cup cashew pieces
2 green onions, finely chopped

Method

Place chicken and vegetables in slow cooker. Mix seasoning, water, soy sauce, and ketchup in bowl until well blended. Pour over chicken and vegetables; stir to coat. Cover. Cook eight hours on low or four hours on high. Stir in cashews. Sprinkle with green onions. Serve over cooked rice, if desired. If cooking on low, decrease water to 1/4 cup.

McCormick.com

Please send your favorite 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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

ANNUAL MEETING



Central Electric Cooperative hosted its 23rd Annual Meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 21, at the Corn Palace in Mitchell. We extend special thanks to all 325 members and their guests who attended. A three-meat buffet was served, electric vehicles were on display and kids had the chance to gear up like lineworkers.

At the meeting, members voted to pass the recently proposed bylaw amendments. The updated bylaws are published online at www.centralec.coop.

Manager Ken Schlimgen discussed the cooperative's goals of safety, reliability and affordability. He also shared progress on the accelerated line replacement project that's been underway since 2018. Over the last five years, the system's total miles of underground line increased by 347 miles, which is a positive step for enhanced reliability.

Schlimgen also shared how the Environmental Protection Agency's new power plant proposal would negatively affect energy reliability and affordability. Industry partners at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association are working through the challenges of the proposal at the federal level.

Board President Duane Wolbrink recognized retiring Director Roger Campbell, who decided not to run for reelection this year. The Brule County board position has been filled by Bradee Pazour of Pukwana. She was elected by the members at the district meeting in June.

Jill Ekstrum of Kimball and Ellen Speck of Gann Valley were recognized for their service on the

Operation Round-Up board of trustees. They reached their term limits and new trustees will be appointed to fill the vacancies in Brule and Buffalo County.

At the end of the meeting, drawings were held for youth prizes and energy bill credits. Youth prize winners are pictured on page 7.

Central Electric Cooperative's mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to its member-owners. Your input is imperative to help ensure a bright future, so we thank you for attending.



Retiring Director Roger Campbell accepted a plaque and thanked members for allowing him to represent Brule County for 9 years.

Attendees register for the Annual Meeting in the lobby of the Corn Palace.



Alessia Schoenfelder won a \$400 gift card to Ron's Bike Shop to pick out her own bike.



Azariah Mitchem won a fun STEM arcade set.



Term-limited Operation Round-Up Trustees Ellen Speck and Jill Ekstrum were recognized for their service. From left: Donita Loudner, Ellen Speck, Jill Ekstrum, Merl Bechen.



Madison Schiefen shows off her new remote-controlled Hummer.



Marisa Hegg picked up a drone at the meeting.



Attendees enjoyed roast beef, chicken and broasted pork chops with all the fixings.



General Manager Ken Schlimgen speaks with members at the Annual Meeting.



Future lineworkers? Thanks for visiting the photo booth!



Ready for work and sporting all the right safety gear.



At the end of the meeting, Patrick Soukup, Lincoln Feistner and Brian Bultje conducted the drawing for electric bill credits.



Hanson H.S. senior Cody Beaudry won the \$250 Luck of the Draw Scholarship.





Veterans enjoying their stay at Wings of Valor.

WINGS OF VALOR

A Veteran's Retreat

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Wings of Valor Lodge isn't just a hunting retreat offering veterans a good time and a free pheasant hunt, it's a place for them to come home.

The non-profit organization offers all U.S. military veterans an all-expense paid hunt in the heart of pheasant country, about five miles south of Parker, South Dakota.

The organization runs almost entirely on volunteers, donations and sponsorships and has already served more than 500 veterans from over 40 states since it began operations in 2019.

Sean Adams, the organization's president and co-founder, said the idea to open a hunting lodge came after discussions with the organization's now-CEO Bruce Weller back in 2018.

Weller owned a private hunting lodge called Birds, Bucks and Berries, and was host to Adams and other veterans during his annual veterans' hunt.

"Bruce was saying how the veterans' hunt was always the best day of the year, so I said, we can make every day the best day of the year if you want," said Adams.

Adams, who was grievously injured while serving in Afghanistan resulting in a double amputation of his legs in 2012, said he was well-versed in the non-profit community by the time he and Weller began discussing opening a hunting lodge that served veterans.

"I know pretty much how it works. If you do what you say, do it on time, do it well, serve veterans with a level of professionalism, and have a little faith, people will come," Adams said.

"From that conversation to Nov. 1, 2019, we worked on build site plans that I designed with one of the volunteers. We took a pavilion area that (Weller) used for weddings and put chalk lines everywhere, which is how we mapped out a building plan."

Adams said he rolled his wheelchair around each room, and if he hit a chalk line, he'd remark the line to ensure it was handicap accessible. That was in



Above: CPL USMC (RET) Sean Adams

Right: Sean Adams recovers in a hospital after suffering serious injuries in an IED explosion in Afghanistan in 2011.



January of 2019. Eleven months later, the lodge had been built and a group of veterans came to hunt under the newly established Wings of Valor Lodge.

Adams said a premise of Wings of Valor Lodge is to welcome veterans' home to something that's not chaotic, a place where they can find purpose and peace.

There's no religious angle, nor any requirements other than having taken the oath to serve our country for a veteran to have their travel expenses and entire hunting trip paid for by the non-profit.

"My generation fought in a war that was religious based," Adams explained. "We do have a spiritual setting, but we don't press anything. We never want a veteran to feel that they are oppressed by any sort of a faith."

Whether a veteran is religious, Christian, Muslim, atheist, or simply spiritual, they will be amongst others who understand what they've been through.

"No veteran is broken, they just need to come home," Adams said.

"God did not call the qualified, he called the unqualified that were willing to do

whatever was asked. Don't think because you did something overseas that your any worse than the pastor in the pulpit. We're all sinners on this earth."

Nature is also a powerful tool that Adams believes helps mend the mind, body and spirit. It's peaceful, which he said is the type of environment veterans need.

"You need all those to regroup yourself back in society. It's really hard to come out of a war, or wars, and describe that to the average human being," Adams said.

The lodge has hosted veterans of World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam to

veterans who have served in the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Operation Desert Storm.

Many of the veterans that have come to the lodge have never had a chance to heal or "come home", Adams said.

Some of those

men were Marines that Adams served with directly a decade ago.

"They saw me in an IED blast. They didn't have time to heal. They were able to see that I was okay and it was time for them to start healing. They had given enough to the country. It was time to start the healing process," Adams said.

"We also had a veteran talk about

Vietnam. He hadn't talked about it since 1968," Adams said.

Combat veterans, regardless of where they served or experienced warfare, establish a connection with one another at the lodge.

Older veterans find purpose in helping their younger counterparts. Adams said the connection can be overwhelming at times for the Vietnam veterans because of the newfound sense of purpose they find in these interactions.

Adams said raising kids and having companionship with your wife or husband is meaningful to veterans, but they often go without the relationships they had with their fellow soldiers they had beside them in the heat of battle.

"Giving someone millions of dollars, houses, or trip – that's great. But that's only mending the problem. Giving someone a sense of purpose is something we have to do," Adams said.

"When the Vietnam veterans tell my generation 'I get it, and it won't last forever', it gives the Vietnam guys a sense of purpose. The longer you hold it in the deeper it gets. That's something we realized at Walter Reed. We started getting off our medications the more we talked about what happened."

Adams said any veteran who wants to come and hunt at the Wings of Valor Lodge need only apply.

Individual applications come to the lodge free of charge. That means the organization will cover the cost of travel and any other expenses incurred to ensure the veteran doesn't pay a dime out of their own pocket.

To apply for a hunt or learn more about Wings of Valor Lodge, go to www.wingsofvalorlodge.org.



A handicap accessible bedroom at Wings of Valor lodge

Training & Equipment Testing



Brian Bultje
Manager of Operations

Delivering reliable power takes more than the simple flip of a switch. Your cooperative has to meet rigorous ongoing training requirements throughout the year to help ensure safety on the job.

Operations crews and electricians recently collaborated with South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) to test the electrical insulation of their bucket trucks. Dielectric testing is performed yearly on bucket trucks to ensure adequate insulation performance and protection of electrical workers. Tests confirmed the cooperative's bucket trucks have sufficient insulation.

Line crews also completed pole top rescue training. Annual rescue exercises help ensure they are prepared to safely take action if an emergency occurs.

Training and equipment testing measures are critical for all electric cooperatives. Employee safety is one of our highest priorities, and we thank SDREA for helping us meet those obligations for our employees and our members.



*Office
Closed*

November 10
in observance of
Veterans Day.

November 23-24
in observance of
Thanksgiving.

Thank you!

Employee Years of Service



Chase

3 years on Nov. 2



Dean

5 years on Nov. 5



Tim

44 years on Nov. 19

October is National Co-op Month

October is National Co-op Month, and Central Electric Cooperative joins other co-ops across the U.S. to celebrate. Electric co-ops exist to serve their members. Our goal is to provide reliable, affordable energy and services to our local communities. Because we are led by you, the members we serve, we have evolved to meet your needs. As families, farms and local businesses have increased energy use over the years, the co-op has adapted to meet the growing demand.



This October, as we celebrate Co-op Month, we are focusing on the ways “Co-ops Grow” for their members.

Co-ops Grow Communities:

Concern for Community is one of our guiding principles. Co-ops help communities grow by promoting economic empowerment, fostering community engagement and supporting the unique needs of co-op members.

Co-ops Grow Together: Co-ops are all about cooperation, not competition. That’s why electric co-ops work together to share lessons learned, successful strategies and better ways to serve our members. We partner with our regional cooperatives as members of East River Electric Power Cooperative. We are all better when we grow together!

Co-ops Grow Tomorrow’s Leaders:

Electric co-ops serve as fertile ground for growing tomorrow’s leaders through a variety of youth engagement programs. Whether through school demonstrations, community events or the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program, we’re committed to providing opportunities for local youth to learn and thrive in our community and beyond.

Co-ops Grow for You: At Central Electric Cooperative, safety and satisfaction embody our core values. It’s why we were formed many years ago to fulfill a uniquely local purpose. We’ve come a long way since then, and your needs continue to evolve. That’s why we’ll never stop growing for you!

We sincerely thank our members and employees for all they do to ensure the cooperative continues going strong and adapting to meet the demand for energy and services well into the future.

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 28, 2023
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: Tara L. Miller, Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
Managing Editor: Tara L. Miller, 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; Cooperative Finance Corp. (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. 2023

Extent and nature of circulation	Avg. copies prior year	October 2023 issue
A. Total number of copies (net press run)	4,894	4,905
B. Paid and/or requested circulation (outside county)	4,670	4,679
C. Total paid and/or requested	4,670	4,679
D. Free distribution by mail/outside mail	203	206
E. Total free or nominal (outside county copies)	203	206
F. Total distribution	4,873	4,885
G. Copies not distributed	21	20
H. Total	4,894	4,905
I. Percent paid/requested	95%	95%



Dignity courtesy of Travel South Dakota

DIGNITY

Celebrating American Indian Heritage

Scott Waltman

Rising from the prairie land as it gives way to bluffs on the east side of the Missouri River is a spectacular sculpture commemorating both South Dakota's 125 anniversary and the state's original inhabitants.

Dignity of the Earth and Sky was built by Sturgis-based sculptor Dale Claude Lamphere, who used to be the state's poet laureate.

The sculpture was erected in 2016 after Norm and Eunabel McKie announced it as a gift to South Dakota upon the state's quasiquicentennial in 2014.

Dignity towers 50 feet above the ground, beckoning motorists as they travel along Interstate 90. From the

east, it's the gateway to West River en route to the beautiful Black Hills. From the west, it's a sign to travelers that they are closer to the Minnesota border than the state's most popular playgrounds that range from Wall to Spearfish to Hot Springs.

Ashley Riehle of Sylvania, Ohio, which is on the northwestern outskirts of Toledo and just south of the Michigan

border, said the stretch of I-90 alone makes South Dakota one of the best road trip states in the nation.

She visited South Dakota in 2021, driving from Sioux Falls to the Black Hills and back and twice stopping at the Dignity monument. She planned to visit the sculpture during her drive but said the Chamberlain area also doubled as a logical place to take a break.

As a history buff, Riehle appreciates





Jeremy and Stacey Waltner of Freeman visit the Dignity of Earth and Sky sculpture in 2018.

both the beauty and the significance of Dignity.

"I thought it was great that South Dakota acknowledges the first people that occupied the state," she said.

Many states don't, she said, and she doesn't know of any such significant recognitions in Ohio or Michigan.

Jeremy Waltner of Freeman, South Dakota, also appreciates the sculpture on multiple levels.

"It is as impressive as you can imagine just in terms of both size and impact," he said.

Being a South Dakotan, he knew of Dignity and that he wanted to visit. But he also wanted to make sure his wife Stacey, daughter Ella and son Oliver could share the experience. They stopped during a trip west in summer 2018.

The sculpture pays homage to South Dakota's Native American population, setting it apart from so many other tourist stops in the state, Waltner said.

"It's education as much as it is art," he said, adding that the context behind Dignity is critical.

Three Native American women from Rapid City served as models for the sculpture, which was created east of the town in an isolated area along the Cheyenne River.

Lamphere's other creations include work in the South Dakota State Capitol in Pierre and the Arch of Dreams in Sioux Falls. He's done commissioned portraits of Bob and Dolores Hope, Burl Ives, Walter Annenberg, George and Eleanor McGovern and others, according to his website.

For Dignity, he had a specific goal.

"I wanted something that would really honor the indigenous people of the Great Plains, and I kept that in mind all the time. I made the work reflect the name that it has of Dignity, and I think that's part of what makes it work so well," Lamphere has said of his creation.

Riehle noted that the star quilt Dignity wears has meaning.

It's comprised of more than 100 blue diamonds as Dignity holds it behind her back in her outstretched arms.

In Native American culture, star quilts are a sign of respect and are often given as gifts to honor somebody for a substantial achievement in their life.

Including the quilt was a nice touch that took some planning, Riehle said, because it's a direct tie to the Lakota culture.

While there is a plaque at Dignity that briefly tells the story of the sculpture, Waltner said he's not sure most people realize the history.

In fact, he said, he's not sure if most people set out to visit Dignity or just happen across her as they zip through the heart of the state on the interstate.

"It's South Dakota's greatest conversational piece outside of two gigantic granite carvings in the Black Hills," Waltner said, referring to Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial.

Either way, he said, people who take time to admire the grand piece of art wind up learning a little bit.

When he stopped with his family, he said there was a good crowd of people visiting about the sculpture, smiling as they looked on in awe and waiting in line so they could get their pictures taken

with Dignity.

Waltner said he has stopped to see the sculpture twice on his own.

Riehle met friends from Denver and Chicago in the Black Hills as part of her trip. She had been to South Dakota before but got to see and do much more in 2021. She visited Sioux Falls, Mitchell's Corn Palace, Deadwood, the Badlands, Wall Drug, Spearfish Canyon, Custer State Park, the Chapel in the Hills, Pactola Lake, Palisades State Park and other popular places.

All were fun, but Dignity was special, she said, because it is a reflection of the true foundation of South Dakota's history.

"So much history focuses on when the white settlers got there," Riehle said.

Dignity is deeper.

The McKies donated \$1 million to the Dignity project. Less than a decade later, that investment helps the thousands upon thousands of people who stop just east of Chamberlain each year take a moment to remember and acknowledge the rich history of South Dakota's first citizens.

Additional Facts:

- November is National American Indian Heritage Month. It's a time to remember and celebrate the important contributions of Native people and their cultures, traditions, and histories.
- The first state to declare and celebrate an American Indian Day was New York on the second Saturday in May 1916.
- In 1990, the month of November was approved by a joint resolution and signed by President George H. W. Bush as "National American Indian Heritage Month."
- Central Electric Cooperative proudly powers Dignity and the rest area where thousands of visitors stop each year to celebrate the beauty of the American Indian.

Studying EVs



Patrick Soukup

Manager of Member Services & Marketing

In an effort to study home charging and its potential impact on your power distribution system, Central Electric is diving into the world of electric vehicles (EVs). As your energy experts, it is incumbent upon us to learn as much as we can about this emerging technology. After all, powering your life is our business, and we must take steps to plan for the future.

FORD LIGHTNING

Central Electric purchased the Ford F-150 Lightning with an extended-range battery that can travel approximately 320 miles on a full charge. Many of our farmers drive pickups and we live in South Dakota, so we thought this was a good fit for the cooperative's first EV.

There is so much to share about the Lightning. Some of you may have seen it at Dakotafest in 2022 before it was purchased from a local dealership. It's hard to notice any difference between the standard F-150 and the EV version. It looks like a normal pickup in many ways. There are minor differences in the hood, some external lighting and Lightning decals. To see what sets it apart, you can pop the hood, which functions as a front trunk or frunk.

In-town driving has been amazing. When traveling longer distances, the range anxiety is real. I have experienced this several times now. When I drive the speed limit on the interstate, I can get up to 1.8 miles per kWh, versus 3.5+ miles per kWh in town. Wind speed and direction are factors, and cold temperatures will come into play this winter.

Let's talk about performance. If you're looking for some get-up-and-go, driving the Ford Lightning is like an amusement ride that pulls you back into the seat. It is very exciting to experience. I compare this to climbing a tree, but in your truck. Keep in mind, it also has standard driving modes for a more traditional driving experience.

At-home charging is the most economical option for those who chose to go electric. Please consult with your dealership, an electrician and your electric cooperative before installing a home-charging system to ensure you have the appropriate electric service in place to meet your needs.

If you're interested in the annual savings, let's compare a gas-powered pickup that gets 15 miles per gallon to the Ford F-150 Lightning at a modest 2 miles per kilowatt hour (kWh). Miles per kWh is a metric used to measure the energy efficiency of EVs. It represents the distance an electric vehicle can travel on one kilowatt-hour of electricity.

FORD F-150 LIGHTNING VS. GAS-POWERED PICKUP

Ford Lightning

Average Efficiency: 2 miles per kWh

Electricity cost: \$0.11 per kWh

Annual electricity cost: (10,000 miles / 2 miles per kWh) x \$0.11 per kWh = **\$550**

Gasoline-Powered Pickup

Average Efficiency: 15 miles per gallon (mpg)

Gasoline cost: \$3.69 per gallon

Annual gasoline cost = (10,000 miles / 15 mpg) x \$3.69 per gallon = **\$2,460**

\$1,910 in annual savings by going electric

This comparison assumes you drive a pickup that gets 15 miles per gallon 10,000 miles per year and EV charging is done at home, which is usually the case. The Lightning would cost approximately \$550 per year in electricity, while the gasoline vehicle costs \$2,460 per year in fuel.

When considering oil changes would be a thing of the past, the Ford Lightning is roughly \$2,000 less expensive to operate every 10,000 miles compared to a gasoline-powered pickup.

There are also tax incentives available to purchase electric vehicles. Visit www.fueleconomy.gov to calculate the long-term financial benefit of going electric to determine if it's right for you.

POLARIS RANGER XP KINETIC

Central Electric was approved for a grant from the Beneficial Electrification League in 2021 to help purchase an electric utility terrain vehicle (UTV), also known as a side-by-side. So, we placed an order for an all-electric Polaris Ranger Kinetic.

I have been told good things come to those who wait, and wait we did. After a few delays, the unit arrived this summer. I can't say enough about how pleased I was with Mettler Implement for working with us and putting the unit together in short order so we could take it on the road and share information with the public.

We've been able to showcase the electric UTV at Dakotafest, the S.D. State Fair, the annual meeting, two homecoming parades and a high school football tailgate event. Doug Cunningham with Today's Farm Life featured the Kinetic in a story posted online at www.todaysfarmlife.com.

While showing off the Kinetic, I've been asked many questions – how far will it go, how fast does it go, and are you giving this away as a door prize? We didn't! Needless to say, the electric UTV has sparked some interesting conversations, and I think this technology could play a key role in combatting rising fuel expenses on the farm.

We invite our members to come and test drive the side-by-side at our shop this fall if you have time. Please give me a call and we can schedule a time to drive the Kinetic, and maybe enjoy a cup of coffee. I hope to see you this fall.

Central Electric Cooperative
2023 Coloring Contest (Ages 3-12)



Coloring Contest Guidelines: The contest is open to kids 3-12 years old living in Central Electric Cooperative's footprint. List age as of the date it was colored. Member and non-member children are eligible. Age divisions for judging are 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12. One winner from each age group will receive a prize of art supplies. Winners will be published in the February 2024 Cooperative Connections newsletter. Entries may be shared on Central Electric's Facebook page: facebook.com/CentralElecSD. Entries can be dropped off at Central Electric's Betts Road office; mailed to Central Electric, PO Box 850, Mitchell SD 57301; or emailed to cec@centralecc.coop. Entries must be received by Dec. 15, 2023.

Artist
Name: _____ Age: _____ Town: _____

Suggest a name for the electric side-by-side UTV: _____

Parent or Teacher
Name & Phone #: _____



Nov. 2-4
Huron Ringneck Festival and
Bird Dog Challenge
 Huron, SD
 605-352-0000

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.

OCT. 27-28
Plankinton Haunted House
 \$10 entry fee, 7-9 p.m.
 405 E. 1st St.
 Plankinton, SD

OCT. 28
Hill City Children's Boo Bash and Pumpkin Festival
 Hill City Visitor's Center
 Hill City, SD
 605-574-2368

OCT. 28-29
Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association
 Ramkota Hotel Exhibit Hall
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-731-9155

NOV. 3
Plankinton Service Club Fun Night, Dueling Duo (21+)
 \$40 advanced, \$50 at door
 7 p.m.
 Aurora County Ag Building
 Plankinton, SD

NOV. 4-5
Benson's Flea Market
 W.H. Lyons Fairgrounds
 Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 5
American Legion Post 15 Pancake Breakfast
 8:30 a.m.
 S.D. Military Heritage Alliance Building
 Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 5
Turkey Dinner/ Silent Auction
 11:45 a.m.
 RVUMC
 Rapid City, SD

NOV. 10-12
Christmas at the Barn
 10 a.m.
 Groton, SD

NOV. 10-11
Sioux Empire Arts & Crafts Show
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
 Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 11
Sisseton Area Merchants & Crafters Holiday Extravaganza
 Sisseton, SD

NOV. 12
Lutefisk, Lefse & Meatball
 4-7 p.m.
 Trinity Lutheran Church
 Chamberlain, SD
 605-730-0553

NOV. 24
Parade of Lights
 7 p.m.
 Dakota Avenue
 Huron, SD

NOV. 25
Mid-Winter Fair
 Gregory Auditorium
 Gregory, SD
 605-830-9778

NOV. 30-DEC. 3
Hatchery Holidays
 D.C. Booth Fish Hatchery
 Spearfish, SD

DEC. 2
6th Annual Holiday Party, Tour of Homes, Silent Auction
 4 p.m.
 Olive Grove Golf Course
 Groton, SD

DEC. 8
Alexandria's Winter Festival, Courthouse Trees
 5-7 p.m.
Parade of Lights
 7:30 p.m.
 Alexandria, SD
 mudderkendra@gmail.com

DEC. 9
Alexandria's Winter Festival, Nativity Petting Zoo & Downtown Festivities
 Alexandria, SD
 mudderkendra@gmail.com

DEC. 17
Christmas Cantata
 3 p.m.
 Hermosa United Church of Christ
 Hermosa, SD

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