

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Small Town, Big Dreams

**Tucker Kraft's
Road to the NFL**
Pages 8-9

**Electrical Safety in
Action**
Pages 12-13



Another busy year ahead



Ken Schlimgen
General Manager

It looks like spring is here. We are finally enjoying warmer temperatures and most of our snow has disappeared. Like most businesses, we spent the last several months planning and preparing for projects, and now we are anxious to get started.

In 2019, Central Electric launched a pilot project to test a new metering system to replace aging meters. The pilot proved successful, so we started replacing meters in late 2019. The initial goal was to have all the meters replaced in a few years, but supply chain issues created delays, so installations are ongoing.

The new meters use cellular technology with two-way communication that does not require cooperative-owned infrastructure. The ability to exchange meter information could eventually allow us to proactively respond to outages and predict where problems are developing across the system. The technology has the potential to benefit the cooperative and its members.

All remaining Canon meters should be replaced with Verizon meters in 2023. Crews are replacing outside meters without notice, as we often do not need to interrupt your electric service to replace the meter. If you have a meter in your home for electric heat, we will schedule a time to replace that meter. Your cooperation in providing access is appreciated.

We continue replacing more than 60 miles of older overhead lines each year. This year we are moving our Chamberlain substation approximately 7 miles to a location where energy consumption is increasing. We expect to upgrade 140 electrical services and build 50 new services this year.

Supply chain issues have required extensive planning and increased inventory, but our employees and suppliers have done a great job of ensuring our work can get completed. Inflation is making every project more costly, but we are doing what we can to minimize the impact. I would encourage you to contact our office early so we can be ready to complete your project.

Your cooperative has buildings and employees in Mitchell, Howard, Wessington Springs, Kimball and Plankinton. Over

the past several years, your board and management have been taking a hard look at our most challenged facilities, which are in Plankinton and Howard. In 2022, we purchased land in Howard for a future new facility. We continue to investigate our options for improving our facilities in Plankinton.

We have been working diligently with our consulting engineers to develop our plan of work for 2024-2027. The plan of work will identify areas of our distribution system that need improvement. The engineers use metering data to determine how our system consumes energy throughout the seasons and if certain areas experience excessive power outages. They also study areas where energy consumption is growing.

This information is used to develop the plan of work with a budget reflecting the cost to complete the work. This month, the engineers will present the 2024-2027 plan of work and budget to our board of directors. The directors and management will ask questions, suggest changes and ultimately approve the plan. The work plan, along with environmental reports, are sent to the Rural Utility Service for their approval, which could take about nine months.

I know you are just as busy as we are, but we must remember to stop and enjoy spring just a little.

Until next month, stay safe!

Administrative Professionals Day is April 26!

Please show your appreciation for the front office team. This group is the calm during the storm, keeping us organized, sharing information and easing the minds of those we serve. Their work is appreciated!

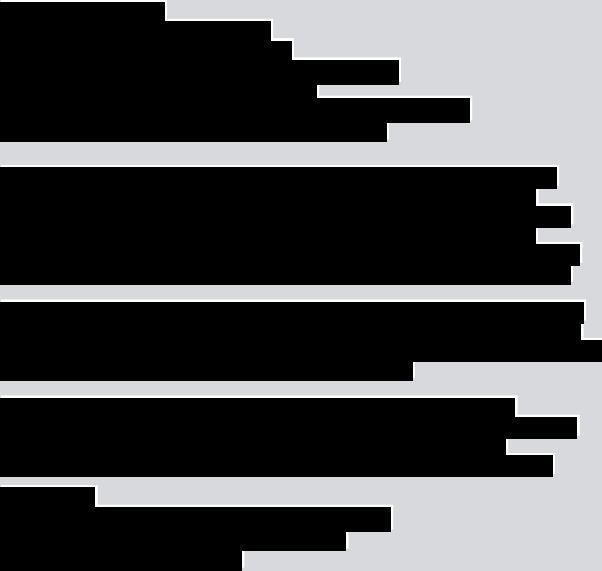
Administrative
Professionals
Day

CENTRAL ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS

(USPS 018-963)

Board of Directors

Duane Wolbrink - President (Aurora County)
Todd VanWalleghen - Vice President (Sanborn County)
Mark Hofer - Secretary & NRECA Director (Hanson County)
Mark Reindl - Treasurer (Jerauld County)
Donita Loudner - SDREA Director (Buffalo County)
Roger Campbell - Director (Brule County)
Jeff Gustafson - Director (Davison County)
Robert Banks - Director (Miner County)
Merl Bechen - Director At Large (All Counties)



Our Mission

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

Non-Discrimination Statement:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. Central Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The board of directors met on Feb. 20, 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 East River manager meetings, Basin Electric activities, Rural Electric Economic Development activities, planned parking lot improvements, grant opportunities, a pending proposal to provide commercial electric service and other management activities.

The board reviewed proposed cooperative by-law updates. Recommended updates to the by-laws will be discussed at district meetings and presented for approval of the membership at the annual meeting on September 19.

Director Bechen discussed NRECA infrastructure grant funding opportunities. Discussion followed.

Director Hofer reported on the NRECA Directors Conference. Discussion followed.

Directors VanWalleghen, Bechen and Banks reported on the East River Energize Forum.

Director Wolbrink reported on the East River Electric board meeting. Discussion followed.

The board discussed strategic planning topics. President Wolbrink discussed a number of upcoming projects and asked for feedback. More discussion will be held at future meetings.

The board reviewed monthly director expenses.

BOARD ACTION

The board considered or acted upon the following:

- A motion was made and seconded to authorize the board president and secretary to execute labor-only contracts for Larson Digging, Inc., Dave's Construction, Ivan's Boring and Zach Scott Construction on behalf of Central Electric. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve a member loan for a geothermal system. Motion carried.

There being no further business, President Wolbrink adjourned the meeting. The next board meeting was scheduled for March 20.

FINANCIAL REPORT	PRIOR YEAR TO DATE FEB. 2022	YEAR TO DATE FEB. 2023
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	68,117,509 kWh	63,458,460 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$ 6,506,457	\$ 6,250,813
Total Cost of Service	\$ 5,758,013	\$ 5,875,179
Operating Margins	\$ 748,444	\$ 375,634

Workplace Safety: Avoid Common Electrical Hazards

Contact with or exposure to electricity is one of the leading causes of workplace fatalities. Follow these tips to avoid electrical injury:

Overhead Power Line Contact

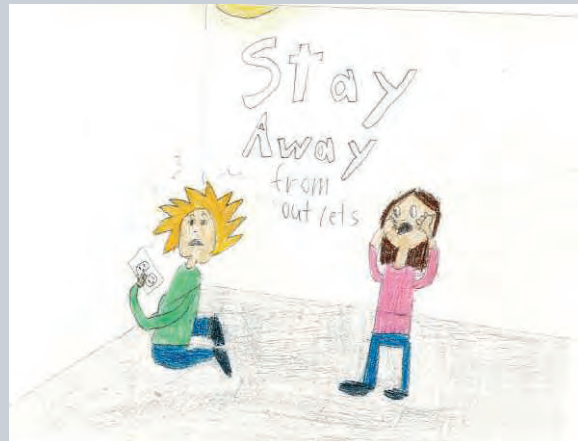
- 46% of all electrical fatalities are caused by contact with overhead power lines
- 57% of overhead power line fatalities were in non-electrical occupations
- Always assume all lines are live and dangerous
- Always look up; be aware of overhead power lines
- Keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines
- Do not touch anything that is in contact with overhead power lines
- Carry equipment, including ladders, horizontally to avoid contact with power lines
- Stay at least 35 feet away from downed lines

Accidental Contact with Energized Conductors or Parts

- 45% of all electrical fatalities were caused by working on or near energized conductors or parts
- 74% of these fatalities were in electrical occupations
- Always test for voltage before you perform work. Be sure to also test the area around the equipment you are working on to avoid accidental contact with energized equipment
- Always perform a site and risk assessment before conducting work. Hazards exist on and near the equipment you are working on
- When possible, turn off power before conducting work
- Follow proper lockout / tagout procedures
- Avoid complacency. Every job is different, make sure you follow the hierarchy of controls and other electrical safety work practices on every job

Electrical Safety in the Workplace

- 69% of all electrical fatalities involved non-electrical occupations
- Know when to say when. If you feel unsafe performing a job, say something
- Be aware of potential electrical hazards in the workplace. Avoid electrical rooms and other potentially hazardous areas
- All electrical work should be completed by qualified workers with proper training
- GFCI protection should be installed where electricity and water may come in contact
- Five sources accounted for 92% of all electrical fatalities
 - Overhead power lines
 - Unexpected contact with electricity
 - Working on energized parts
 - Ground faults
 - Damaged wiring



Power Line Safety

Serena Dekrey, age 9

Serena Dekrey, age 9, gives wise advice to readers on electrical safety. She cautions us to be careful around power outlets. Serena is the daughter of Don and Cassandra Dekrey, members of Sioux Valley Energy based in Colman, 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.

COMFORTING CASSEROLES

PHEASANT CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 pheasant
1/2 cup melted butter
Bacon grease
1/2 cup flour
4 cups milk
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper

METHOD

Mix flour, salt, pepper, and roll pieces of pheasant in the mixture. Brown in bacon grease. In separate pan, mix butter, milk, and 6 T flour. Stir and bring to a boil. Pour over the pheasant that had been put in a baking dish with bacon laid over it. Bake until tender.

Gail Klipfel
Ellendale, N.D.

TACO CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 1/2 pounds ground beef
1 package taco seasoning mix
1 can (16 ounces) pinto beans, drained and rinsed
1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
1 can (11 ounces) whole kernel corn, drained
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1 cup crushed tortilla chips

METHOD

Preheat oven to 400°F. Brown meat in large skillet on medium-high heat. Drain fat. Stir in seasoning mix, beans, tomato sauce and corn. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Spoon into 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese and tortilla chips. Bake 5 to 10 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve with assorted toppings, if desired.

mccormick.com

CHICKEN, BROCCOLI, AND RICE CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 lb. chicken tenders
1 cup long grain rice
1 1/2 cups chicken stock
1 cup milk
2 tsps. garlic powder
2 tsps. onion powder
1 1/2 tsps. whole rosemary leaves, crushed
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
1/2 tsp salt
2 cups broccoli florets
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

METHOD

Preheat oven to 400°F. Spread chicken and rice in greased 2-quart baking dish. Mix stock, milk and seasonings in medium bowl with wire whisk until well blended. Slow pour over chicken and rice. Cover with foil. Bake 45 minutes. Remove foil. Stir in broccoli. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake, uncovered, 15 minutes longer or until rice has absorbed all the liquid and broccoli is tender.

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.

District Meetings & Director Election Details

Eight local district meetings are planned throughout June. The meetings provide members with a chance to learn about cooperative happenings and have discussions with management and board members. Each member in attendance will receive one \$10 electric bill credit.

Members residing in Aurora, Brule and Buffalo County with an interest in serving on the Board of Directors may take out a nominating petition at Central Electric Cooperative's Betts Road office west of Mitchell. See the petition filing dates provided below. In order to be considered for a director position in your respective county, completed petitions must be returned before the close of the business day at 4:30 p.m.

central time on the petition due date. When filed, director petitions must have the signatures of at least ten Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. members from the director district in which the candidate is seeking election. Completed petitions must be filed at least 25 days prior to the District Meeting.

District 1, Aurora County, is currently represented by Duane Wolbrink of Stickney, who is eligible for reelection. District 2, Brule County, is currently represented by Roger Campbell of Pukwana, who does not intend to seek reelection. District 3, Buffalo County, is currently represented by Donita Loudner of Fort Thompson, who is eligible for reelection.

District	Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Petition Available	Petition Due
1- Aurora County	June 21, 2023	Ag Building, Plankinton, SD	May 8, 2023	May 26, 2023
2- Brule County	June 22, 2023	4-H Building, Pukwana, SD	May 8, 2023	May 26, 2023
3- Buffalo County	June 15, 2023	Tribal Gymnasium, Fort Thompson, SD	May 1, 2023	May 19, 2023
4- Davison County	June 8, 2023	Fairgrounds Building, Mitchell, SD	election in 2024	election in 2024
5- Hanson County	June 5, 2023	A1 Al's Pheasant Ranch, Emery, SD	election in 2024	election in 2024
6- Jerauld County	June 7, 2023	Springs Inn, Wessington Springs, SD	election in 2025	election in 2025
7- Miner County	June 12, 2023	4-H Building, Howard, SD	election in 2025	election in 2025
8- Sanborn County	June 14, 2023	4-H Building, Forestburg, SD	election in 2025	election in 2025

Director Election Bylaws

SECTION 4.05 Director Nominations

A. Nominating Petitions. An individual desiring to be a nominee for a Director position for which an incumbent Director's Director term is expiring must take out a nominating petition no more than forty-five (45) days prior to any Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect Directors. Said member shall return the completed Nominating Petition to the Cooperative at least twenty-five (25) days prior to the Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect Directors.

The completed nominating petition shall contain the name of the Nominating Petition Nominee; the Director position for which the Nominating Petition Nominee will run; and the printed names, addresses, and telephone numbers, and original signatures, of at least ten (10) Members residing in the Director District in which said nominee is seeking a directorship, or if for the Director-at-Large, ten (10) members residing in the Cooperative Service Area. After verifying that a Nominating Petition complies with this Bylaw, the Cooperative shall post the Nominating Petition nominees at the Cooperative's principal office.

B. Notice of Director Nomination. At least ten (10) days nor

more than twenty-five (25) days prior to any Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect Directors, the Cooperative shall notify Members of the Director positions for which the incumbent Director's Director term is expiring; and Names and corresponding Director positions of all Nominating Petition Nominees;

SECTION 4.06. Director Elections

Members located or residing in each Director District shall elect Directors, except for the Director-at-Large, which shall be elected by the Members of the Cooperative Service Area, as follows:

A. For District Director positions at the District Meeting for which the incumbent Director's Director term is expiring.

B. For the Director-at-Large position at the Annual Meeting by all Members located or residing in the Cooperative Service Area.

C. From the Nominating Petition Nominees.

D. At the Director District meeting by Members residing in said Director District by Member's written ballot, except for the Director-at-Large who shall be elected at the annual meeting by Members located or residing in the in the Cooperative Service Area by

Ready to Serve?

Board Member Eligibility Guidelines

Are you considering running for a position on the Central Electric Cooperative Board of Directors? Aurora, Brule and Buffalo County director terms expire in 2023. Director nominating petition deadlines are noted in the table on page 6.

Serving on the board of directors for an electric cooperative involves committing yourself to the following standards and guidelines. Central Electric Cooperative Directors must:

- Be a cooperative member in good standing
- Be willing and able to commit to 25+ working days per year to fulfill their duties
- Attend at least 10 out of 12 regular board meetings each year (usually the third Monday each month)
- Pass a background check that indicates no felonies within the last five years
- Permanently reside in the district from which they are elected
- Have their primary residence served by Central Electric Cooperative or meet corporate qualifications
- Not be a close relative of an existing director unless the director will cease serving within 1 year
- Not be a close relative of an existing cooperative officer, employee, agent or representative
- Not be employed by or materially affiliated with another director
- Not be affiliated with an individual or entity directly and substantially competing with the cooperative
- Not sell goods or services in substantial quantity to the cooperative or its members
- Obtain director certification from National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
- Comply with other reasonable qualifications determined by the board

This is a general snapshot of director eligibility guidelines. A full list of director eligibility requirements is available in the cooperative's bylaws which can be viewed at www.centralec.coop. Please contact General Manager Ken Schlimgen at 1-800-477-2892 if you have director eligibility questions.

Member written ballot. (Continued on next page.)
(Continued from previous page.)

F. By a plurality of the votes cast by a quorum of Members in person who are entitled to vote for the Director position. In case of a tie Director vote, the Director elected shall be determined by a drawing by lot. A quorum at any Member meetings, to include a Director District meeting and/or an Annual Meeting, shall consist of the minimum number of Members required by South Dakota law at the time of such meeting. If a quorum is not present within one (1) hour after the appointed time, no meeting shall be held. If an election of Directors is not held, a special Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect Directors shall be held within a reasonable time.

G. Tellers shall be appointed to collect and count the ballots.

H. If only one (1) nominating petition has been turned in for a Director position for which the incumbent Director's Director term is expiring, no election shall be held in that District and the Nominating Petition nominee shall be deemed elected as the Director from said District.

I. Names of Nominating Petition nominees shall be printed on

ballots in an order determined by drawing prior to the printing of ballots.

SECTION 4.07. Director Terms

A Director's term is three (3) years ("Director term"). A Director elected at the Annual District Meeting or at the Annual Member meeting will be seated following the adjournment of the recessed portion of the first regular monthly board meeting following the Annual Member Meeting and will terminate with the adjournment of the recessed portion of the first regular monthly board meeting following the Annual Member Meeting. The Cooperative shall stagger Director terms by dividing the total of authorized Directors elected from the Director Districts into three (3) groups of three (3) Directors each. Members thereafter will annually elect one (1) Director group. Decreasing the number of Directors or length of Director terms may not shorten an incumbent Director's Director term. Despite the expiration of a Director term, the Director continues to serve until a new Director is elected, or until the number of Directors is decreased. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Director term of a Director filling a vacant Director's position is the remaining unexpired Director Term of the vacant Director's position.

TUCKER KRAFT



SMALL TOWN, BIG DREAMS

Kraft refuses to go down amongst a group of Redbird defenders.

Tucker Kraft's Road to the NFL

Frank Turner

With a population of 500 residents, Timber Lake, S.D., may seem similar to many small-town communities across the state. The town is known for its scenic beauty, outdoor recreational opportunities, and rich history. However, what really sets Timber Lake apart from the rest is a homegrown NFL prospect: Tucker Kraft.

At an impressive 6-foot-5 and weighing 254 pounds, Kraft has proven himself to be South Dakota's latest up-and-coming football star. Ask any fan of college football and they will tell you that Kraft has the size and skill set to make waves on a professional level.

Luckily, Kraft's talents haven't gone unnoticed. During his latest breakout season as SDSU's All-American tight end, Kraft left an impression on NFL

scouts with his ability to outrun opponents, snatch incredible catches and charge through multiple tackles. A top contributor in nearly every game, Kraft led the Jackrabbits to their first-ever FCS National Championship. The historic season quickly cemented Kraft's place as a top tight end in the NFL Draft.

Kraft recalls the moment everything fell into place: "I just realized that when I had the ball, no one could touch me," he said. "I knew after that season that I was completely capable of playing with the pros."

Timber Lake High School head football coach Ryan Gimbel says he is not surprised to see his former stu-



Tucker Kraft

dent and player on the doorstep of the NFL. Countless hours in the weight room and gym, he said, revealed Kraft to be a student-athlete with incredible drive.

“Seeing the raw natural talent of Tucker spoke for itself and what he could accomplish, but he also had the dedication to take it to that next level,” said Gimbel. “To me, it wasn’t a surprise, and that was our running joke when he left high school – ‘I’ll see you playing on Sundays.’”

Kraft’s journey to the NFL, however, was not without its fair share of adversity. Growing up in Timber Lake, Kraft lost his father to a plane crash when he was only 12 years old. Kraft overcame the childhood tragedy with his two brothers and mother by working tirelessly on and off the field. Honoring his father’s legacy, Kraft followed in his father’s footsteps to become an All-American college star like his father had done before him.

“My brothers took a big part in raising me after my dad died,” said Kraft. “My mom, my aunts and uncles all played a role, but I pride myself on getting a lot of things done independently.”

Steely determination has carried Kraft to the highest level of football, and not even dramatic injury has been able to slow him down. In November Kraft officially declared his name in the NFL draft. Kraft’s friends and family cheered him on as he showed off his incredible strength and skill on national television at the NFL Combine. There, Kraft proved his ability to play alongside the likes of Dallas Goedert, Riley Reiff and South Dakota’s other pro footballers.

“I was kind of star-struck walking in,” said Kraft. “Sitting down with the head coaches of the NFL franchise, you realize that you are at this level now. This is a job interview.”

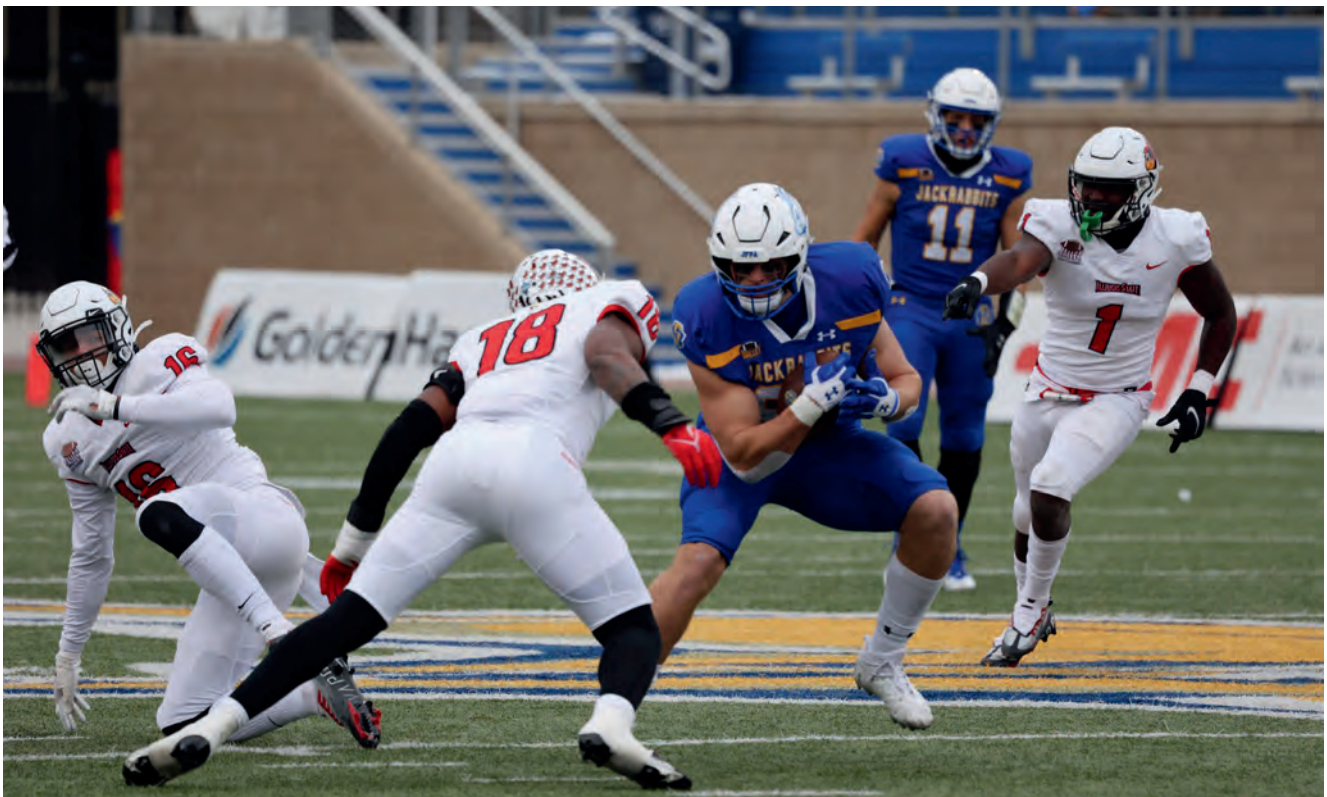
The NFL Combine, however, will

not be the last of Kraft’s time on national television. Ranked as the sixth top tight end, Kraft’s eyes are set on the draft in April. And, although he hails from somewhere small, Kraft plans to loom large on the field as a starting player with great potential.

“I want to go to a team that’s going to use me, whether I’m on the line of scrimmage in the trenches with the big guys or catching balls and getting yards after the catch. I want to make an impact on a team, day one.”

Whatever happens in April, Kraft’s hometown is ready to cheer him on. According to Gimbel, most of Timber Lake is ready to don colors and jerseys that they are not used to wearing to support their hometown kid.

“The buzz in our town has just erupted,” said Gimbel. “Our community, school, and family friends – they all want to see him be successful in the opportunity that he has worked for.”



NFL prospect Tucker Kraft evades a tackler, leading SDSU to a 31-7 win last November against the Illinois State Redbirds.


Notice of capital credit allocations

Each spring, members receive notification of capital credits acquired the previous year. Members will not receive a refund or bill credit for the allocation at this time. In the fall, the board of directors determines if a percentage of capital credits will be returned to members, and if so, what amount. The board makes the decision based on the financial condition of the cooperative.

As a member-owned cooperative, Central Electric does not earn profits like most other businesses. After Central Electric deducts costs and upkeep for yearly operations, the net profit is reinvested into the company to provide cash flow, collateral to show stability and to obtain loans. Any net profit over those costs is allocated back to the members in the form of capital credits. Every member of Central Electric has shares in capital credits. The more electricity you buy and the longer you use the service, the more monetary equity (allocations) you accumulate. Allocations are the total sum of annual equity accrued by the member during their prior year of service.

When the board decides to issue refunds, active members will receive a credit on their December bill and inactive members will receive a check. Capital credits are one of the many benefits of being a member of Central Electric Cooperative. When you have Central Electric as your electric provider, you are part owner of the cooperative through the equity you have invested.

IT Systems Coordinator



Kelly [redacted] has accepted a full-time position after interning for the cooperative since last summer. He will graduate from Mitchell Technical College in May with a degree in information technology. As an IT Systems Coordinator, he will collaborate with IT Systems Manager Ryan [redacted] on technology-related projects. His education and background will help the cooperative become more efficient and better utilize data from the metering system. Welcome aboard, Kelly!



CENTRAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

YEARS OF SERVICE



Dustin [redacted]
28 years on May 8



Donn [redacted]
24 years on May 17



Paul [redacted]
22 Years on May 21



Wade [redacted]
16 years on May 14



Dustin [redacted]
16 years on May 16



Aaron [redacted]
13 years on May 24



Rodney [redacted]
11 years on May 1



Dustin [redacted]
2 years on April 1

Metering and load management equipment upgrades

Central Electric Cooperative's mission is to provide reliable energy and services with a commitment to safety and member satisfaction. In accordance with that mission, the cooperative is nearing the end of a project to upgrade more than 10,000 electric meters and submeters.

Why do I need a new meter?

The metering upgrade project began in 2019 to replace aging and failing meters across the service area. Members were informed at district meetings, the annual meeting and in the Cooperative Connections newsletter at the time, and this is a friendly reminder for those who still need a new meter installed.

Verizon meters improve reliability and efficiency while providing two-way communication capabilities to help identify service interruptions and power quality issues. They allow the billing department to restore power to disconnected services, eliminating the need for cooperative personnel to show up and physically restore service after a payment is made. On top of that, new metering technology enables the cooperative to quickly identify issues and dispatch crews when necessary, improving member satisfaction.

Will crews enter my house?

You may see Central Electric personnel in your yard changing your meter. If you have an interior electric heat submeter to replace, crews will need to enter your home to

install a new one. If crews cannot enter a home to install a new submeter, that member could be disqualified for the reduced electric heat rate.

Load management receivers on the horizon

Members participating in the voluntary load management program can expect a future upgrade as well. Load management is a means of controlling energy use during times of peak energy demand. Peak demand typically occurs when a large volume of members are using appliances simultaneously. Energy peaks determine how much your cooperative pays for power.

When the cooperative reaches peak energy demand, load management devices kick on to conserve energy use. East River Electric's load management program has saved regional electric cooperatives more than \$260 million in avoided wholesale power costs since it launched in 1985. The savings help your cooperative keep electric rates affordable.

New load management receivers will soon be required in order to maintain compatibility with advancing technology. When your submeter needs to be replaced or you're due for a new load management receiver, expect to be contacted by Central Electric personnel. We will attempt to reach you at the phone number(s) on file. There is no charge for installing the new equipment. Thanks for your cooperation and for being a valued member!



Little Thunder named finalist in 'Who Powers You' contest

Rita Little Thunder of Howard was honored as a finalist in the Who Powers You contest being held by Central Electric Cooperative and the region's Touchstone Energy® cooperatives. The contest recognizes community members who make a difference in the lives of others.

Nominator Christa Coulter shared that Rita is involved with Special Olympics and other activities with her kids, and she makes a difference by caring for others at work and at home.

"Besides being an amazing mom, Rita always goes above and beyond at work. She takes initiative to get things done," Coulter wrote. "She works hard for the kids in her care and has the biggest heart."

The top three contest winners will be announced on Keloland Living on May 25. A video of Little Thunder's interview is available online at WhoPowersYouContest.com.



ELECTRIC SAFETY IN ACTION

In a controlled demonstration, Journeyman Lineman Brady Gaer uses life-size equipment on the high voltage demonstration trailer to educate students about electricity.

Empowering the Public to Stay Safe

Frank Turner

Electric safety is a topic that South Dakota students are excited to engage with. They often ask questions like, “What should you do if your tractor equipment touches a power line?” or “How can birds sit safely on a power line?” or even “What does it look like when something comes in contact with high voltage?”

These are some of the most popular questions Oahe Electric’s Chief Financial Officer Valerie Marso has not only been answering but also demonstrating for more than 20 years.

“They always just have tons of questions,” said Marso. “It’s always fun to hear what they come up with next.”

It’s not just for entertainment, however. Oahe Electric and its employees are committed to realizing their goal of zero accidents at home and at work. Part of preventing tragedy starts with educating the public, especially youth, on how to stay safe around electricity.

In the last year alone, Oahe Electric traveled to nine different schools and led demonstrations for more than 900 students. For Marso, verbal communication is only half the battle when it comes to educating students

about electric safety. The real impact, she said, comes from showing them.

“The visuals and the noise that the high voltage makes really lands in a way that you just can’t convey with words,” said Marso. “It can scare the students a little bit, but I think it gives them a healthy respect for electricity.

Co-op across the state, including Oahe Electric, use three different interactive safety demonstrations to hone their message about safety: Power Town, Co-ops in the Classroom and the high voltage demonstration trailer.

One of the most popular, Power Town, is a small-scale, tabletop model of a few quaint houses attached to a small power grid. The miniature electrical system shows students how electrical current moves through

various items they may encounter in their daily lives, presented in a fun and easy-to-learn format. Line-workers, who work on the real equipment every day, lead the demonstration and teach students about personal protective equipment worn by co-op employees to complete their jobs safely.

Co-op in the Classroom is yet another powerful initiative South Dakota co-ops engage in to promote safety across the state. Working in conjunction with East River's Education and Outreach Program, co-ops meet the students where they are in the classroom to teach local youth the importance of respecting electricity through hand-on lessons that engage and excite the audience.

Lastly, the high voltage demonstration trailer is a portable unit that carries life-size equipment from events to local schools. It's a demonstration that always leaves an impression. Within a safe environment, students get to see actual equipment, such as utility poles, electrical conductors and distribution transformers, in action. Each hour-long demonstration shows what can happen when objects such as animals, trees, ladders and even fruit come into contact with power lines.

"This is equipment that our linemen work on every day, so they are comfortable showing these students how energy works," said Marso.

These demonstrations not only

entertain, but also promote a healthy and safe environment for co-op members and the public. During one of Oahe Electric's latest outreach events, Marso recalled listening to a small group of kids talk about how they sometimes sit on "the green boxes." They were referring to underground transformers. It became a teachable moment that left an impact on both the students and teachers.

"We told them to never touch them," she said. "You never know what going on in there, and it's always better to be safe than sorry. It was at least one person who took something home and actually used it. Moments like that show we are really making an impact with these students."



Oahe Electric Power Supply Specialist Steve Long teaches electric safety using Power Town, a miniature model used in safety demonstrations.



Elementary students learn about electricity

Left: Adisyn Wingen of Hanson Elementary laughs at the effects of static electricity.

Right: Howard Elementary student Norah Callies has one hand on a Van de Graaff generator as she shocks Eli Callies, grandson of Howard Area Foreman Tim Neises.

What do light bulbs, socks and bicycles have in common? All these materials are used to teach students about electricity throughout Central Electric Cooperative's service area.

Co-ops in the Classroom is a program offered by Central Electric and its wholesale power

provider, East River Electric Power Cooperative. The interactive presentation was delivered to fourth and fifth graders at several area schools in March.

Jennifer Gross, Education and Outreach Coordinator, travels throughout East River's service

territory in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota to teach children about electrical safety, generation, conservation and economics.

A variety of hands-on demonstrations engaged the students. A Van de Graaff generator demonstrated the movement of electrons with hair-raising results.

Another device that invokes a lot of excitement is the pedal power bicycle generator. Students are asked to become power plants as they provide the energy that produces electricity for lights and small household devices.

Kids also learned about electrical safety on the farm. By the end of the presentation, students developed a new understanding and appreciation for electricity.

Classroom presentations are done for the year, and schools that didn't have a presentation this year will be offered a visit in 2024.

Hanson H.S. hosts 'Week of Work' event

South Dakota Week of Work introduces middle and high school students to career opportunities in their communities and across the state. It's a week of exploration, aiming to guide students, engage local businesses, and introduce employers to their future workforce.

To celebrate Week of Work, Hanson High School family and consumer sciences teacher Kelli Endorf organized the "Game of Life" for sophomores and juniors. Students consulted with Jill Pulkrabek from the Department of Labor, selected a career path, drew a salary within the expected range for the career path and then continued through the game.

Students learned their gross pay and then had taxes and benefits deducted. As they maneuvered through the game, they purchased homes, vehicles and insurance. They also paid utility bills, including water, sewer, phone, internet and, of course, electricity.

By the end of the exercise, the kids gained a greater appreciation for what it takes to budget and plan for unexpected bills. One student, Maddy, shared, "You have to really think about every payment and every choice. Every purchase, no matter how small, is going to affect you. You need to be responsible with your money and choices."

South Dakota Week of Work is sponsored by the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Department of Labor, Department of Education, S.D. Chamber of Commerce and Industry and S.D. Retailers Association. For more information, visit www.weekofwork.sd.gov.



Tara [redacted] of Central Electric (left) hands students their electric bills during the 'Game of Life' exercise.



Hanson H.S. teacher and 'Game of Life' organizer Kelli Endorf (right) talks to students about the importance of budgeting.

Juniors selected to attend Youth Tour

For the first time since 2019, Central Electric Cooperative is sending select high school juniors to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. The covid-19 pandemic caused recent trips to be canceled, but the event is back on and taking place June 17-23.

The 2023 Youth Tour trip winners are Hanson High School junior Cody Beaudry, son of Tami Beaudry, Mitchell High School junior Reed Bruns, son of David and Laura Bruns, Wessington Springs High School junior Abby Kolousek, daughter of Scott and Amber Kolousek, Plankinton High School junior Whitney Payne, daughter of Ken and Michelle Payne, and Kimball High School junior Tatum Tyrrell, son of Lorin and Amy Tyrrell.

Central Electric Cooperative sponsors the trip to support the development of future community leaders. These outstanding Youth Tour representatives will join approximately 1,500 students from across the country to tour Washington, D.C. Congratulations to these impressive students.



Cody Beaudry
Hanson H.S.



Reed Bruns
Mitchell H.S.



Abby Kolousek
Wess. Springs H.S.



Whitney Payne
Plankinton H.S.



Tatum Tyrrell
Kimball H.S.

Local students awarded scholarships



Brandon Jensen
Chamberlain



Kaylee White
Woonsocket



Brady Larson
Letcher



Cally Faulhaber
Plankinton

Central Electric Cooperative is awarding \$3,000 in scholarships to local students. The scholarships are funded by Central Electric, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the family of the late Jay Headley of White Lake.

Brandon Jensen of Chamberlain, son of Jeff and Penny Jensen, was awarded a \$500 Central Electric scholarship at Mitchell Technical College (MTC). He is a student in MTC's electrical utilities and substation technology program.

Kaylee White of Woonsocket, daughter of Jason and Bobbie White, was awarded a \$500 Central Electric scholarship at MTC. She is a student in MTC's ag business program.

Brady Larson of Letcher, son of Steve & Roxann Larson, will receive the \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship. Brady is a senior at Sanborn Central and plans to study Wi-Fi broadband technology or ag business at MTC.

Cally Faulhaber of Plankinton, daughter of Chuck and Sue Faulhaber, will be awarded the \$1,000 Jay Headley Memorial Scholarship. She plans to study agricultural education at South Dakota State University.

Congratulations to the 2023 scholarship recipients. For more information on youth programs, please contact the cooperative office.



May 28, 2023
Back When They Bucked
 Days of '76 Arena
 Deadwood, SD
 800-344-8826

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.

MAY 6
Cinco de Mayo Fiesta
 Lake Farley Park
 Milbank, SD
 605-432-6656

MAY 9
Helping with Horsepower County Fair Booth
 3 p.m.
 1305 W. Havens Ave.
 Mitchell, SD

MAY 17
Norwegian Independence Day
 6 p.m.
 Vivian, SD
 605-222-3296

MAY 20
Buggy Museum Open House
 10 a.m.
 Stockholm, SD
 605-938-4192

MAY 20
Booth Day
 10 a.m.
 Booth Fish Hatchery
 Spearfish, SD
 605-642-7730

MAY 20
Frühlingsfest and Spring Market
 1 p.m.
 Main Street Square
 Rapid City, SD
 605-716-7979

MAY 25
Wine Walk
 5 p.m.
 Downtown Businesses
 Aberdeen, SD
 605-226-3441

MAY 26-28
Hidden Treasure Heritage Festival
 Lead, SD
 307-259-4484

MAY 27
Back When They Bucked All-Day Rodeo
 9 a.m.
 Days of '76 Event Complex
 Deadwood, SD
 605-717-7642

JUNE 3
Health Connect of South Dakota: The Human Race 5K
 9 a.m.
 Sertoma Park
 Sioux Falls, SD

JUNE 11
River Honoring Community Potluck
 5 p.m.
 Clay County Park River Shelter
 Vermillion, SD
 605-670-0540

JUNE 16-18
Fine Arts In The Hills Show & Sale
 Main Street
 Hill City, SD
 605-574-2810

JUNE 18
Father's Day Fishing
 10 a.m.
 Palisades State Park
 Minnehaha County, SD

JUNE 21
2023 McCrossan Boys Ranch Golf Classic for Kids
 Central Valley Golf Course
 Hartford, SD
 605-339-1203

JUNE 23
Flandreau Fridays
 5 p.m.
 Downtown Flandreau
 Flandreau, SD

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