

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



This year's sunflower crop is expected to be bountiful as market forces have driven up demand and prices

## **Sensational Sunflowers**

**Sunflower market blooms**

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**Everyone's welcome in the Chislic Circle**

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# As expenses rise, crews keep the gears turning



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager

The summer seems to be rushing by quickly. Dakotafest is just getting over, State Fair is around the corner and we will soon be hosting the cooperative's Annual Meeting. The event will once again be held in the Corn Palace in Mitchell on Monday, Sept. 26.

The Annual Meeting is an opportunity for the cooperative to show their appreciation to our membership and allow the membership to ask questions and

get updates regarding their cooperative. You will receive the Annual Report next month with information on the work completed by the cooperative in 2021 as well as how the cooperative ended the year financially. I hope to see each of you at the Annual Meeting.

Three years ago, Central Electric began a more aggressive plan of work with a goal to replace 60 to 70 miles of older overhead power lines annually. This year is no exception. We have installed about 20 miles of new underground cable in the Canova area. Our crews are connecting this new line to the system and then will begin removing the older overhead lines. So far, we have built about 13 new services, have 8 more to complete and 14 requests for new services that we are following up on. We continue to receive requests for services and are scheduling contractors to help us replace another 40 miles of overhead line before frost becomes an issue.

The plan for replacement of our metering system is behind schedule due to delays in receiving the new meters. We are about 60 percent complete with enough meters on hand to get to 85 percent completion. The remaining meters are not expected to arrive until late summer 2023.

The service department, which provides home appliances, electrical wiring and heating and cooling services, has nearly 80 jobs to complete with new requests each week. Members and non-members can utilize the service department for appliance upgrades, new heating and cooling systems, agricultural wiring, trenching projects and emergency generator installations.

Getting materials has been a major concern, and I believe that will continue for the next several years. Our material suppliers have done a very good job of identifying and communicating where problems in the supply chain exist. This has helped avoid delays in getting electricity to new projects.

Last year at this time your cooperative had \$3.8 million invested in on-the-shelf inventory; Currently, our on-the-shelf inventory is \$5.8 million. Part of the increase is due to inflation, but most of the increase is a result of supply chain issues requiring us to hold more inventory.

Unfortunately, higher inventory levels, fuel costs, labor and interest rates also increase our cost of doing business. Through July 1, our operating expenses are up about \$200,000 or 4 percent over the same time period in 2021. Despite the increases in costs, our financials look good and there is a lot of year left. All things considered, I feel your cooperative is doing very well.

In closing, I would ask you to include your electric cooperative early in your plans for adding equipment, construction, improvements or anything that will change your electrical usage. If we work together, we are more likely to avoid unexpected inconveniences with your new project.

Until next month, stay safe!



# CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

(USPS 018-963)

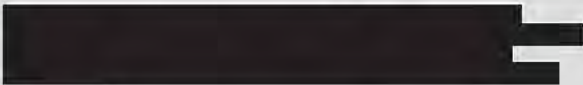
### Board of Directors

- Duane Wolbrink - President
- Todd VanWalleghen - Vice President
- Bernetta Burghardt - Secretary
- Mark Reindl - Treasurer
- Mark Hofer - NRECA Director
- Roger Campbell - Director
- Donita Loudner - SDECA Director
- Jeff Gustafson - Director
- Merl Bechen - Director At Large



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.

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### Our Mission

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

### Non-Discrimination Statement:

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## SAVE THE DATE

CENTRAL ELECTRIC'S ANNUAL MEETING IS MONDAY, SEPT. 26, AT THE CORN PALACE. REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 5:30 AND THE MEETING STARTS AT 7:00 P.M. JOIN US FOR A MEAL AND A CHANCE TO WIN DOOR PRIZES FOR ALL AGES.



## BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The board of directors met June 20, 2022, at Central Electric Cooperative's Betts Road headquarters for the regular board meeting. They reviewed monthly 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 following items:

- East River manager meeting
- Rural Electric Economic Development
- Basin Electric Power Cooperative
- Future cooperative bylaw updates

Director Hofer shared an update regarding activities of NRECA International. Discussion followed.

Director Wolbrink shared East River Electric board updates. Discussion followed.

The board reviewed monthly director expenses.

### BOARD ACTION

The board considered or acted upon the following item:

- A motion was made and seconded to donate \$1,000 to NRECA International. Motion carried.

There being no further business, President Wolbrink adjourned the meeting. The next board meeting was scheduled for July 18, 2022.

FINANCIAL REPORT	YEAR TO DATE JUNE 2022	YEAR TO DATE JUNE 2021
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	174,387,302 kWh	180,682,217 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$ 17,239,535	\$ 17,587,193
Total Cost of Service	\$ 16,423,566	\$ 17,311,009
Operating Margins	\$ 815,969	\$ 154,090

# Take safety precautions during harvest season

Harvest season brings long, grueling hours in the field, which can make workers weary and prone to neglect safety precautions that can prevent serious or fatal electrical injuries. Every year, an average of 62 farmworkers are electrocuted in the U.S., and many more are injured by shocks.

Farm operators, their family members and farm employees are urged to beware of overhead power lines, to keep farm equipment safely away and to know what to do if accidental contact is made with power lines.

The increasing size of farm equipment, particularly grain tanks on combines that have become higher with extensions, allows operators to come perilously close to overhead power lines over entrances to fields. It is vital to keep equipment safely away from these lines. Maintain a minimum 10-foot radius around electric lines.

Portable augers are the No. 1 cause of electrocution on the farm. Augers being maneuvered by hand around bin sites have caused the deaths of many farmworkers who became the path to ground for electricity when the top of the auger touched overhead power lines. Always retract or lower augers when moving or transporting.

Other equipment commonly involved in power line accidents includes oversized wagons, large combines and other tall equipment.

Harvest is the most likely period for farm-related injury accidents and fatalities. Combines and other equipment loaded onto trailers can contact power lines and cause electrocutions, as can raising the bed of a truck to unload. That's exactly how a 53-year-old Michigan truck driver was tragically killed when he raised the bed of his semitrailer truck while parked beneath a power line at the edge of a field. He was attempting to clean out the bed, and when he touched the truck bed, he became the path to ground for the electricity.

Follow these safety measures:

- Use a spotter when moving tall loads near power lines.
- Inspect farm equipment for transport height and determine clearance with any power lines under which the equipment must pass.
- Make sure everyone knows what to do if accidental contact is made with power lines. These accidents are survivable if the right actions are taken.

## STUDENTS LEARN HOW POWER IS PRODUCED

A group of high school students recently gathered together to take a trip and learn how electricity is produced and how it is used to power their homes, farms, appliances and local businesses.

The students traveled to Bismarck, N.D., to tour the power generation facilities of Basin Electric, which supplies electricity across nine states and is one of the largest power producers in the country.

To see a video of this event and learn more about how electric cooperatives serve our members, visit Cooperative Connections Plus by scanning the QR code at right.



Don't Mess With a  
Transformer Box



## Beware of the green box

**Cambrie Koistinen**

Cambrie, age 11, advises electric cooperative members to use caution around pad-mounted transformers, also known as green boxes, because they contain high-voltage power equipment. Cambrie is the child of Lance and Holly Koistinen of Hayti.

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.

# FRESH FROM THE GARDEN

## ZUCCHINI SPINACH CASSEROLE

**Ingredients:**  
 2 lbs. zucchini  
 1 lbs. frozen spinach  
 1 chopped onion  
 4 cloves of garlic  
 5 beaten eggs  
 1/2 cup salad oil  
 1-1/2 cup cracker crumbs (save 1/2 cup for top)  
 1-1/2 cup cheddar cheese (save 1/2 for top)

### METHOD

Cook and drain first four ingredients. Add eggs, salad oil, cracker crumbs and cheddar cheese. Add salt, pepper and parsley to taste. Spread the remaining crumbs and cheese on top. Bake at 350 for 40 minutes.  
**Glenda Morton, Sioux Falls**

## CREAMY CUCUMBER SALAD

**Ingredients:**  
 1 1/2 long English cucumbers cut in half moons  
 1 1/2 lb tomatoes on the vine sliced in segments  
 1/4 cup red onion thinly sliced (optional)  
 3 tbsp dill finely chopped  
 2 small garlic cloves grated  
 1/2 cup sour cream  
 1/2 tsp salt  
 Ground black pepper to taste

### METHOD

In a large bowl, add cucumbers, tomatoes, red onion, dill, garlic, sour cream, salt and pepper. Stir gently from the bottom in the center of the bowl until well combined. Serve salad within next six hours or so.  
**ifoodreal.com**

## CUCUMBER SANDWICHES

**Ingredients:**  
 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened  
 1 pkg. Good Seasons Italian Dressing Mix (dry)  
 1 mini loaf of cocktail rye bread  
 1 cucumber, sliced  
 fresh dill weed, chopped

### METHOD

The night before serving the cucumber sandwiches, mix together the cream cheese and the Good Seasons Italian Dressing Mix. Refrigerate overnight. Shortly before serving, spread some of the cream cheese mixture on a slice of the cocktail rye bread. Top with a slice of cucumber and sprinkle with dill weed.

**Elaine Rieck, Harrisburg**

## CHERI'S SALAD

**Ingredients:**  
 1-1 lb. pkg. veggie spiral noodles  
 2 1/2 c. diced ham  
 1 c. shredded cheddar cheese  
 1 c. chopped celery  
 1 bag frozen peas, thawed

**Dressing:**  
 1/2 c. mayonnaise  
 1/2 c. sour cream  
 1 tbsp. mustard  
 1 tbsp. sweet pickle juice  
 3/4 tsp. onion powder  
 1/3 c. sugar

### METHOD

Cook noodles according to package directions, drain and rinse. Mix ingredients together in a bowl and set aside. Mix until blended and pour over salad. Stir until well blended.

**Jan Antonen, Arlington**

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 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

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# CO-OP HAPPENINGS

## YEARS OF SERVICE



**Jonathan**

12 years on Sept. 1



**Ryan**

7 years on Sept. 1



**David**

4 years on Sept. 10



**Andrew**

6 years on Sept. 12



**Lincoln**

21 years on Sept. 17



**Heather**

6 years on Oct. 11



**Dwight**

32 years on Oct. 16



**Jesse**

20 years on Oct. 21

## Headley to be inducted into Co-op Hall of Fame

Jim Headley of White Lake, who served on your cooperative board of directors from 1996 to 2021, will be inducted into the S.D. Co-op Hall of Fame at the end of August. The Co-op Hall of Fame is organized by the S.D. Association of Cooperatives (SDAC), an organization that represents cooperatives across several industries.

Headley was elected to Tri-County Electric's board of directors in 1996. In 2000, Tri-County Electric consolidated with InterCounty Electric to form Central Electric Cooperative. Headley then served as the director-at-large, representing all eight counties in the service territory.

Headley has many accomplishments to be proud of during his 25 years of service. Some of his most notable achievements included his leadership in regional wind energy and being honored with the Basin Electric Cooperative Spirit Award. Congratulations, Jim!





# Banks elected to represent Miner County

Robert “Bob” Banks of Fedora was unopposed in Central Electric Cooperative’s Miner County election and he will begin serving on the board of directors following the Annual Meeting on Sept. 26.

In a written statement submitted with his petition, Banks shared, “I understand the importance electricity has played in my life as a farmer and a rural resident. The concept of cooperatives providing essential services to farmers and rural residents has always interested me.”

Banks will fill the board position currently held by Bernetta Burghardt, who declined to run for another term. We sincerely thank Burghardt for her 18 years of dedicated service to the cooperative and welcome Banks as our newest board member.

We have prizes for youth and adults. **Alex** of Mitchell was a recent winner. He took home a Minecraft Lego set and a “Say Watt” electrical education book. Thanks for playing!



# CO-OP TRIVIA

Mail form or enter online at: [tinyurl.com/cectrivia0922](https://tinyurl.com/cectrivia0922). Multiple entries per household may be submitted. Limited to one winner per household every two months. The adult prize this month is a \$20 bill credit and youth prizes vary depending on age. Answers do not need to be correct to enter the drawing.

1. What percent of Basin Electric Power Cooperative’s resource portfolio was hydro power in 2021?
  - A.) 2.3 percent
  - B.) 3.8 percent
  - C.) 4.4 percent
2. When is National Tradesmen Day 2022 celebrated in honor of electricians and other tradesmen?
  - A.) September 17
  - B.) September 21
  - C.) September 30
1. How many years has Bernetta Burghardt served as a director for Central Electric Cooperative?
  - A.) 6
  - B.) 12
  - C.) 18

(Name of co-op member, spouse or dependent/child)

(Complete mailing address with city)

(Phone number where you can be reached)

Circle one: 18+ (Adult prize) | Under 18 (Youth prize)

All ages are eligible, as long as the participant is a member, spouse or dependent living in the same household as a member of Central Electric Cooperative in South Dakota.

**Submit entries by Sept. 8.**  
**Enter online at**  
[tinyurl.com/cectrivia0922](https://tinyurl.com/cectrivia0922)  
**or mail to:**  
 Central Electric Cooperative  
 Attn: Trivia  
 PO Box 850  
 Mitchell, SD 57301

**CONGRATULATIONS to last month’s winners**  
 Youth Prize Drawing Winner:  
 Abigail Anne Raak of Mitchell  
 Adult Prize Drawing Winner:  
 Karen Sinkie of Gann Valley

- Correct answers from August issue:**
1. When is Central Electric Cooperative’s 2022 Annual Meeting?
    - B.) September 26
  2. What should you do if you receive a phone call demanding payment on your electric account?
    - C.) Hang up! This is probably a utility scam. Central Electric does not demand payments by phone for past due accounts. If you believe you are being scammed, HANG UP, then contact Central Electric and your local sheriff’s department to report it.
  1. What is the Touchstone Energy booth number at Dakotafest?
    - A.) 216



# Sunflower commodity prices are making farmers smile

**Billy Gibson**

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

It's hard to keep from smiling when you're driving past a field of golden sunflowers in full bloom during the late summer months.

Wall Drug billboards, old red barns and shiny grain bins are no match for the attention of motorists along I-90 when the sunflowers are bursting forth in all their spectacular yellow splendor stretching far into the horizon.

The subject of many aerial and terrestrial photographers across the region, sunflowers have a special appeal as they grow tall in the field and seem to greet the day leaning forward with a positive energy that exudes joy and optimism.

The current sunflower commodity market certainly has given farmers a reason to smile. South Dakota farmers raised nearly 600,000 acres and more than 1 billion pounds of sunflowers

last year, ranking second only to North Dakota for sunflower production. In fact, for the past decade the Dakotas and Minnesota have alternated the top three spots in their friendly competition depending largely on the vagaries of weather patterns. At least 75 percent of the U.S. commercial sunflower production has taken place in those three states.

About 1,000 of those South Dakota acres were grown by Brad Schecher, a fourth generation farmer who also rotates wheat, corn, flax and soybean crops on his 3,500-acre spread located near Bison in the northwestern part of the state, one of the hot-bed regions for sunflowers.

Schecher took over the family farm from his father nearly 10 years ago and said the military conflict in Ukraine and other economic factors have converged to form a "perfect storm" that has constricted international supplies and created a favorable environment for the

current global sunflower oil market. Commodity prices have broken all-time records by soaring 60 percent compared to a year ago.

"It's as good as any of the 10 years I've been involved in it," Schecher said. "Ukraine was the largest producer of sunflowers and the largest exporter of sunflower oil on the world market with about 50 percent of the overall market, but a lot of their crop has been destroyed or confiscated by the Russian military. That's one of the things that have driven prices up, and it's been good for the farmers."

High prices and high returns are keeping Schecher interested in raising sunflowers, but sometimes he has his doubts. Especially when he gets tired of fighting the fires, a battle that all sunflower farmers are bound to face at some point.

Schecher said that for all the eye appeal sunflowers hold, it's not always easy to bring in the crop. He explained that reaping the high-yield, high-oleic variety that he grows for the sunoil market can cause fires to break out during the combining process in the





Brad Schecher farms roughly 1,000 acres of sunflowers near Bison. *Photo by Brooke Schecher*

fall. The elevated oil content of the plant - ranging anywhere from 38 to 44 percent - along with the dust that's created during combining can result in a combustible mixture that is sometimes ignited by the presence of static electricity.

To make sure he's prepared, Schecher keeps a battery-operated leaf blower aboard the combine at all times.

"I have to keep blowing the combine off when I get to the end of the field to keep a fire from breaking out," he said. "You can see the accumulated piles of dust start glowing red-hot, and you can usually smell it and get it put out before it gets out of control. It's a hazard that you just have to contend with. Sometimes it can happen two or three times a day, especially when it's dry conditions."

Other farmers, such as Lance Hourigan of Lemmon, S.D., have addressed this common problem by investing in after-market solutions. Hourigan reached northward across the state border and recruited Stelter Repair out of New Leipzig, N.D., to manufacture an air tower to help

Estimated number  
of sunflower acres  
**600,000**  
planted in South  
Dakota in 2021

reduce the risk of fire during harvest time. Resembling a chimney, the device draws in air from above the combine where there is much less dust and debris billowing from the threshing process, and blows the air over the engine to help it stay cool and clean.

While Schecher focuses on the high-oleic variety that represents about 80 percent of the market, there are other varieties grown for silage, birdfeed and other uses. Confection sunflowers, grown mostly in the eastern part of the state, are those found bagged up on convenience store shelves, the kind loaded with an assortment of flavors and

seasonings and meant for chewing.

While sunflowers are native to the continent, their history in North America can be traced to American Indian tribes in present-day Arizona and New Mexico. Archaeologists have found that these tribes domesticated the crop as early as 3000 B.C. The seed was ground or pounded into flour for cakes, mush or bread. Some tribes mixed the meal with vegetables such as beans and squash. The seed was cracked and eaten for snacking, while the oil was squeezed from the seed and used in making bread.

Non-food uses included purple dye for textiles, body painting and other decorations. Parts of the plant were used to treat snakebites. The oil was used on the skin and hair, and the dried stalk was used as a building material.

Today, agricultural scientists are exploring new uses for the plant while also figuring out how to provide protection from wireworms and other threats. Meanwhile, bullish farmers are keeping their eye on the global markets while exuding the same sense of sunny optimism associated with the sunflowers they work so hard to raise.

# MEMBERS TRAVEL TO BASIN ELECTRIC



**Patrick**  
Manager of Member  
Services & Marketing

After taking a couple years off during the covid-19 pandemic, Central Electric Cooperative members once again traveled to North Dakota for the Basin Electric Bus Tour in July. This is a tradition that goes back many years, and it serves as a fun and educational opportunity for our members.

The group toured the Oahe Dam, Dakota Gasification Company (DGC), Antelope Valley Station (AVS) and Freedom Coal Mine.

DGC uses coal to produce synthetic natural gas, liquid nitrogen, urea and other commonly used commodities.

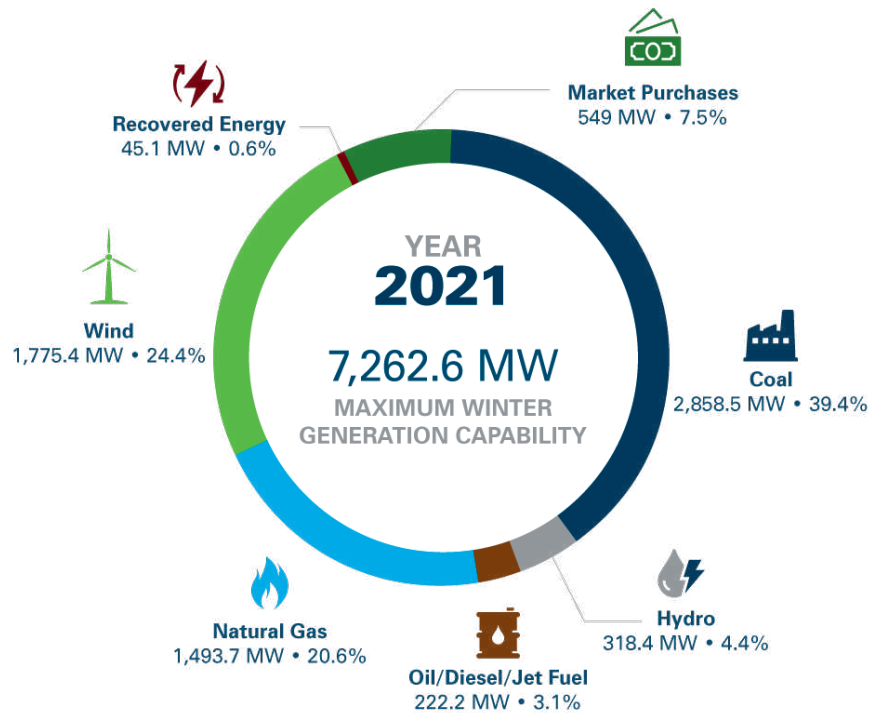
AVS, the newest of the coal-based power plants, can produce 900 megawatts of power per hour (or 9 million watts at 100 percent capacity). Antelope Valley is a zero-discharge facility, which means water can only leave through evaporation.

These two facilities receive their coal from Freedom Coal Mine, the largest lignite coal mine in the country. Next to the mine is reclaimed land, formerly mined for coal, that has been reconstructed, seeded and is now home to wildlife.

In addition to coal and natural gas, approximately one-third of our power comes from renewable resources. We are unique in South Dakota due to our access to hydroelectric energy from the Missouri River. We also receive nearly one-fourth of our supply from wind energy. The Crow Lake Wind project east of Chamberlain is the largest co-op owned wind project in the U.S.

The key to providing you with the most reliable and cost-effective power is a diversified portfolio. If you want to see your power in action, mark your calendars for the 2023 Basin Electric Bus Tour taking place July 19-21.

# Basin Electric Resource Portfolio



Basin Electric's Resource Portfolio (above) consists of generation in megawatts (winter ratings) from owned facilities and purchased power contracts longer than 3 years.



Members prepare for the Antelope Valley Station tour with hardhats, eye protection and hearing protection.



Temperatures reach more than 100 degrees at the top of the Antelope Valley Station boiler.



Members take in scenic views from the highest point in North Dakota inside Antelope Valley Station.



Approximately 40 attendees took a picture standing in front of an old dragline bucket at Freedom Coal Mine. [REDACTED] is in front holding the camera.



Roger and Lori Pietz claimed the New Age Nosh Award at last year's Chislic Festival in Freeman. Photos by SD Chislic Festival

## Step inside the Chislic Circle for unique food and lots of family fun

**Billy Gibson**

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

In a world already rife with scads of dander-raising hot-button issues, add chislic to the list. It seems that anytime more than a few cocksure chislic chefs gather around a grill, controversy can't be too far away.

The bickering typically begins with picking the proper protein. Opt for the traditional scrumptious cubes of mutton or lamb, or take a risk and go hog-wild with pork or maybe buffalo? How about swinging farther to the edge with venison, goat, beef or chicken? Dare we add emu to the list?

At least one restaurant is sending the chislic cosmos into spasms by serving up plates of (gasp) "fish-lic."

The plethora of opinions surrounding the preparation of chislic starts with the choice of meat and springboards from there into seasonings, cooking methods and even serving techniques. Grilled,

deep fried or air fried? Fork, toothpick or skewer? Don't get a chislic enthusiast started on the sauce selection.

Many people and various cultures have a strong attachment to their particular favorite types of food, but South Dakota's desire for chislic is unusually intense – especially for those who dwell within the Chislic Circle.

If the name Chislic Circle evokes images of a secret society that conducts mysterious midnight rituals around a raging bonfire deep in the forest, well, it's not quite that. It's more of a clever marketing concept, and an effective one for community leaders who take pride in their chislic lore. In fact, everyone is invited to come inside this circle.

At the center of the Chislic Circle lies Freeman, S.D., with the chislic realm falling inside a 100-mile radius and including communities such as Kaylor, Menno, Hurley, Marion, Bridgewater, Emery and others. The Circle was spun into creation in 2018 when a small

but passionate contingent of chislic connoisseurs decided to celebrate and demonstrate their pride in their unique culinary heritage.

Andrea Baer was part of that early chislic cadre. She said the catalyst came when chislic was officially declared the "state nosh" by the Legislature four years ago.

"Before then, when you mentioned chislic outside of the area, there was hardly anyone who knew what you were talking about," said Baer, who is a native of Turkey Ridge still living on the farm her forebears from Denmark settled several generations ago. "It's something that's very unique to the area and we



like to celebrate it.”

That celebration has taken the form of an annual event that’s been recognized by tourism officials as one of the state’s fastest-growing festivals with an estimated 10,000 attendees last year after a pandemic pause in 2020. Organizers were expecting up to a couple thousand for the inaugural event in 2018, but four times that many showed up. The following year, the party was moved from the Freeman softball field to the more spacious 40-acre Prairie Arboretum.

This year’s festival was held on July 30 with the usual food vendors touting their unique savory recipes, libations, live music, a family-friendly kid zone, bingo, dancing, a cornhole competition, 5K run/walk, helicopter rides and other forms of family-oriented fun.

Festival board member and chislic expert Ian Tuttle also presented, “From Russia with Love: The History of Chislic” at the nearby Heritage Hall Museum and Archives.

Tuttle enjoys telling the story of how chislic arrived in the late 1800s with a particular group of immigrants described as “Germans from Russia.” A group of German Mennonites and Hutterites originally fled religious persecution in the 16th century and migrated eastward through the Russian Empire where they raised crops and sheep.

They chopped the meat into small pieces, cooked it over a fire and called it “shashlik,” a word for “skewer” rooted in the Turkic languages of Central Asia. The word is a close cousin to the more widely known “shish kebab.”

Eventually, those migrants found their way to present-day southeastern South Dakota and made sure to bring their shashlik with them. Those residing



inside the Chislic Circle generally recognize Johann Hoellwarth as the individual who introduced chislic to the Dakota Territory. Born in 1849 to a German Lutheran family in the Crimea, Hoellwarth settled just outside of where Freeman is today and was laid to eternal rest in the town.

Each year a panel of seven fearless judges takes on the task of naming the festival’s “best chislic.” For the past two years the top Traditional Division Award has gone to Kyle Sturzenbecker and his squad of Sheep Flockers.

Sturzenbecker said he and his fellow chef Josh Goehring don’t characterize themselves as competitive, but he also isn’t about to give away any trade secrets.

“You don’t have to do a whole lot. I just let the flavor of the meat speak for itself,” he said. “Honestly, I never

thought I’d win. I just like to cook good food that people enjoy eating.”

In 2021, the non-traditional New Age Nosh Award was claimed by Roger Pietz, owner of the Pietz Kuchen Kitchen. The establishment is mostly known for its rich custard dessert, but for the festival Pietz decided to go in a different direction and put together a tangy chislic pizza.

Ultimately, the Chislic Festival is about celebrating family, honoring the past and preserving the rural lifestyle.

“The tradition of chislic comes not from cities, the wealthy, or the privileged,” Baer said, “but from the rural, hardworking farm tradition of the people who settled this area. We thrive on the rural, while building the region through vibrant community.”

# Youth Excursion 2022

A group of 14 high school students from throughout South Dakota participated in the 2022 Youth Excursion to visit Basin Electric Power Cooperative and learn how electricity is produced and distributed. Jamie Houston of White Lake and Evelyn Olson of Pukwana were selected to attend for Central Electric.

The group's schedule of events included a tour of Basin Electric headquarters (Bismarck, N.D.), one of the nation's largest generators of electricity serving more than three million homes, businesses and farms across nine states.

During the headquarters tour, Basin CEO Todd Telesz spoke to the students and explained how the organization was created by a group of electric distribution cooperatives in 1961 and has grown into a mammoth power generator with more than \$7 billion in assets.

The students were curious about current industry issues such as nuclear energy, renewable power, career choices, electric vehicles and more.

"We're keeping pace with the rapid changes that are taking place in the electric utility industry," he said, "but you and your generation

are going to be the ones who have to provide the leadership to make sure the electricity we need continues to be safe, accessible, affordable and environmentally responsible."

Telesz also touched on the key differences between electric cooperatives and other types of businesses.

"Our members are our owners and they determine the long-term success of their cooperative," he said. "The members vote for those individuals who will represent them on the board, and the board members also belong to the cooperative. So, everybody at every level of the organization has a vested interest in providing safe, reliable power."

Telesz closed by mentioning the many career paths available in the electric energy sector, including engineering, finance, cybersecurity, renewable technology and many more. Several Basin Electric staff members were on hand to answer specific questions about the organization and the power industry.

The students also traveled to Beulah, N.D., to tour the Antelope Valley Station power plant, the Freedom Coal Mine and Dakota Gasification Co.

They also explored the Bismarck State College campus and stopped at the National Energy Center of Excellence where they participated in a safe driving simulation and learned how electricity is moved from a generation facility across the regional power grid by regional transmission operators.

The institution offers degrees and certifications in energy-related careers such as power generation technology, nuclear power technology, electrical transmission systems technology and others.

The students were sponsored by nine electric distribution cooperatives, and the event was organized by the South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) based in Pierre.

"Electric cooperatives are committed not only to providing safe, affordable power, but also to providing opportunities to educate our future leaders," said event organizer Jocelyn Johnson of SDREA. "We need to make sure our young people have an understanding of where their power comes from and the complexities of providing grid-scale electricity that's not only affordable but accessible around the clock."



Jamie Houston of White Lake (daughter of Shelly Johnson & Jed Houston) and Evelyn Olson of Pukwana (daughter of Brad & Lacey Olson) attended Youth Excursion.



High school students from across South Dakota traveled to Basin Electric Power Cooperative's headquarters in Bismarck, N.D. for the 2022 Youth Excursion. The event took place July 25-28 and allowed students to learn while making new friends.

# Reasons to Celebrate!

**National Tradesmen Day** is Sept. 17. This is a time to honor electricians and those whose skills keep our lives running. For this occasion, we recognize the electricians in our service department and managers who previously worked as electricians for their contributions as tradesmen.

**National Information Technology Professionals Day** is Sept. 20, making it a great time to recognize Systems Coordinator Ryan [REDACTED]. Ryan is Central Electric's resident technical genius, and his contributions have streamlined workflows and improved capabilities across all departments. Thanks, Ryan!



**Brandon** [REDACTED]  
Electrician &  
Appliance Repair  
Technician



**David** [REDACTED]  
Electrician



**Kevin** [REDACTED]  
Electrician



**Dwight** [REDACTED]  
Electrician



**Patrick** [REDACTED]  
Electrician &  
Manager of Member  
Services/Marketing



**Ken** [REDACTED]  
Electrician &  
General Manager



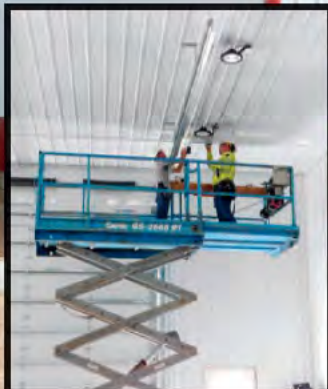
**Rodney** [REDACTED]  
Electrician



**Ryan** [REDACTED]  
Systems Coordinator

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## REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Your E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_



**SEPTEMBER 1-5**  
**South Dakota State Fair**  
*Photo Credit: SD State Fair*

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.

To view the publication's master event calendar, scan the QR code below:



Or visit <https://sdrea.coop/cooperative-connections-event-calendar> to view more upcoming events.

**AUGUST 24-28**  
**Corn Palace Festival**  
604 N Main St., Mitchell, SD,  
605-995-8430

**AUGUST 24-28**  
**Kool Deadwood Nites**  
Citywide, Deadwood, SD,  
605-578-1876

**AUGUST 25-28**  
**Steam Threshing Jamboree**  
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,  
605-256-3644

**AUGUST 26-27**  
**Hill City Wine, Brew and BBQ**  
Elm St., Hill City, SD, hillcitywine  
brewandbbq.com

**AUGUST 26-27**  
**Sizzlin' Summer Nights**  
Main St., Aberdeen, SD,  
605-226-3441

**AUGUST 26-28**  
**Hot Air Balloon Festival**  
Various Locations, Hot Springs,  
SD, fallriverballoonfest.com

**AUG. 30-SEPT. 4**  
**Sturgis Mustang Rally**  
Thunderdome, Sturgis, SD,  
sturgismustangrally.com

**SEPTEMBER 1-5**  
**South Dakota State Fair**  
890 3rd St. SW, Huron, SD,  
sdstatefair.com

**SEPTEMBER 8-11**  
**S.D. State Senior Games**  
Watertown, SD, 605-491-0635  
or 605-753-3668

**SEPTEMBER 10**  
**605 Black Hills Classic**  
Lions Park, Spearfish, SD,  
605-274-1999

**SEPTEMBER 10**  
**Germanfest**  
Fawick Park, Sioux Falls, SD,  
siouxfallsistercities.com/event

**SEPTEMBER 10**  
**Heroes Helping with  
Horsepower Military  
Appreciation Event**  
Ethan, SD, 605-770-2867

**SEPTEMBER 11**  
**Annual Farmer Antique Car  
and Tractor Parade**  
Farmer, SD, 605-239-4498 or  
605-215-8383

**SEPTEMBER 17**  
**Veterans Benefit and  
Wellness Fair**  
Davison County 4H Grounds,  
Mitchell, SD, 605-770-2867

**SEPTEMBER 17-18**  
**Northeast South Dakota  
Celtic Faire and Games**  
37925 Youth Camp Rd.,  
Aberdeen, SD, 605-622-0144

**SEPTEMBER 23-24**  
**Fall Arts and Craft Show**  
Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD,  
605-359-2049

**SEPTEMBER 23-25**  
**HNIRC Championship of  
Champions**  
Stanley County Fairgrounds,  
Fort Pierre, SD, horsenations  
indianrelay.com

**SEPTEMBER 26**  
**Central Electric Cooperative  
Annual Meeting**  
Corn Palace, Mitchell, SD  
Meal and door prizes  
Registration and meal at  
5:30 p.m., Meeting at 7:00 p.m.  
605-996-7516

**SEPT. 29-OCT. 1**  
**Custer State Park Buffalo  
Roundup & Arts Festival**  
Custer, SD, gfp.sd.gov/buffalo-  
roundup

**SEPT. 30-OCT. 1**  
**Oktoberfest**  
Citywide, Deadwood, SD,  
605-578-1876

**SEPT. 30-OCT. 2**  
**SiouxperCon**  
1201 N West Ave., Sioux Falls,  
SD, siouxpercon.com

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