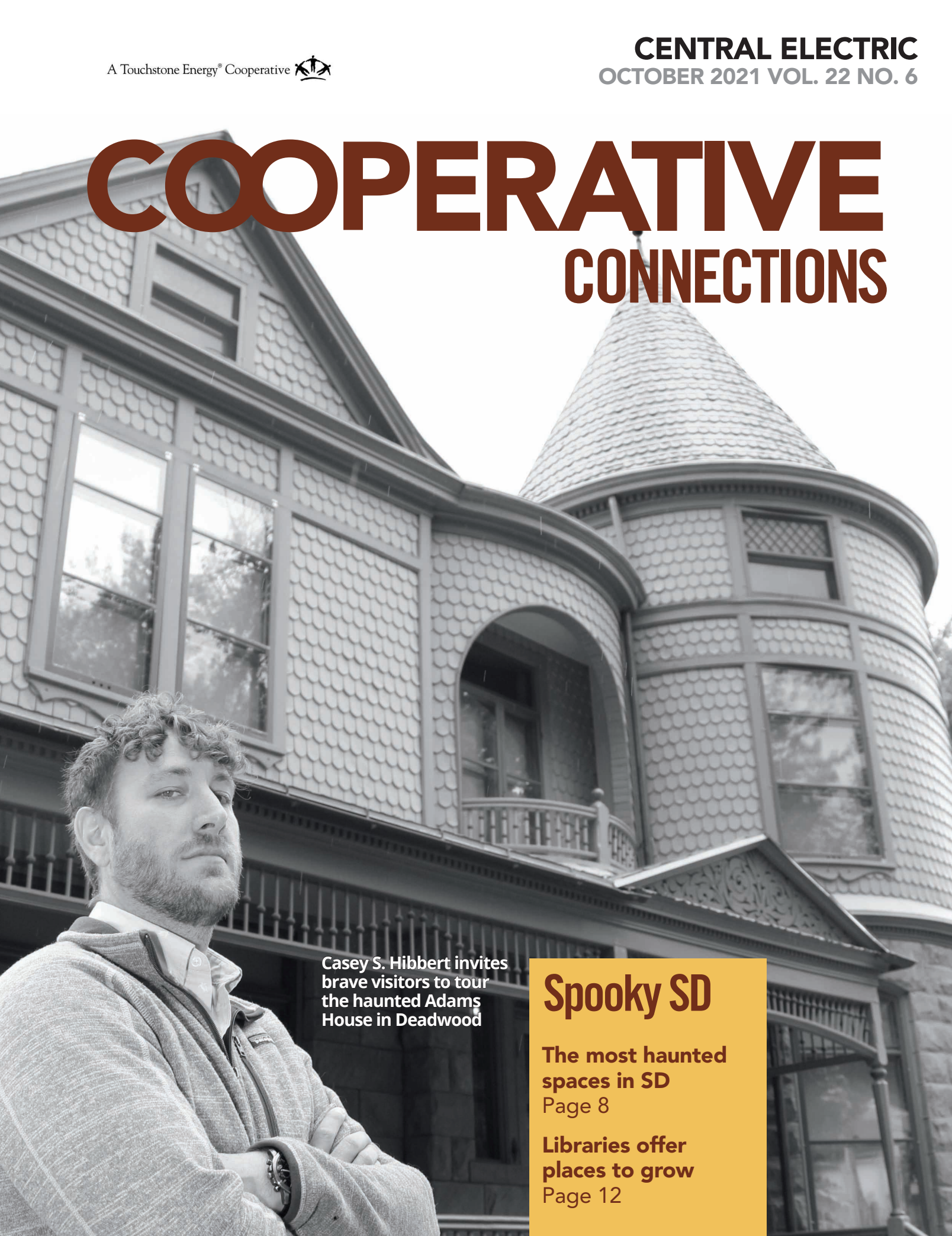


# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Casey S. Hibbert invites  
brave visitors to tour  
the haunted Adams  
House in Deadwood

## Spooky SD

**The most haunted  
spaces in SD**

Page 8

**Libraries offer  
places to grow**

Page 12



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager

# Principles guide us during National Cooperative Month, and always

From all indicators, Fall will be here soon. Harvest plans are in full swing, the nights are cooling off, and soon we will celebrate October as National Cooperative Month. My sincere thanks to everyone who attended our annual meeting. Your attendance is greatly appreciated.

Having just celebrated our 21st annual meeting, this is the perfect time to reflect on some of the cooperative principles that have stood the test of time and provide a framework for your cooperative's future.

Just like all cooperatives, Central Electric was formed out of necessity. There was a need that was not being met and a group of people banded together to organize a cooperative to meet that need. Membership to Central Electric is open to everyone in our service area which follows the principle of "Voluntary and Open Membership."

As demonstrated at our annual meeting, Central Electric is locally governed. Each member has a voice and a vote to elect their representation on Central Electric's board of directors. This also means members have a say in how the cooperative is operated and each member has one vote. Our board establishes policies and long-term priorities for the cooperative and they live here. This follows the principle of "Democratic Member Control."

Every member contributes equitably to the capital of Central Electric Cooperative. At least part of the cooperative's revenue is used for co-op programs, investments and the support of various activities approved by the board of directors. This follows the principle of "Members Economic Participation."

Education and training for members, directors and employees is important to serving the members of Central Electric. "Education, Training and Information" is another cooperative principle. Your employees and directors are continuously learning about our industry, new technologies and methods we can use to better serve you. The cooperative places great emphasis on communications to inform our members about their cooperative and the programs we have in place.

Working together through local, national and regional training, your cooperative can improve services, help our local economy, and deal more effectively with social and community needs. By attending meetings with other cooperatives, employees are able to build a network of peers and better serve our members. Operation Round-Up, the NRECA Youth Tour, scholarships, and the Basin Bus Tours are great examples of ideas that Central Electric adopted from other cooperatives. These activities fall under the principle of "Concern for Community".

Our connection to our members and communities helps us gain perspective to make informed decisions. Because we are guided by these cooperative principles, it's not just about dollars. It's about providing opportunities for everyone and practicing fairness when engaging with our members. The cooperative business model is a values-based, democratic way of conducting business.

Our mission is to provide reliable energy and services with a commitment to safety and member satisfaction. As you complete the work of the fall harvest, please make a commitment to staying safe. Be aware of your surroundings at all times, be prepared for what may happen and come home each night to your family.

Until next month, be safe!



**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**

**CENTRAL ELECTRIC**

(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 - SDREA Director
- Darwin "Butch" Morrison - Director
- James Headley - Director At Large

**Management Staff**

- Ken Schlimgen - General Manager
- Brian Bultje - Manager of Operations
- Dean Uher - Manager of Finance & Administration
- Lincoln Feistner - Sales/Project Manager
- Patrick Soukup - Manager of Member Services & Marketing
- Tara Miller - Manager of Communications

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

This cooperative is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found on-line at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202 690-7442) or e-mail at [program\\_intake@usda.gov](mailto:program_intake@usda.gov).  
Subscription information: Central Electric Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301, and at additional mailing offices.

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

**Contact Us**

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Phone: 1-800-477-2892 or 1-605-996-7516  
Website: [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop)

**Our Mission**

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

**Board meeting summary**

The board of directors met July 19, 2021, at Central Electric Cooperative's Betts Road Service Center for the regular board meeting. The board approved the June 2021 meeting minutes. The board then reviewed monthly reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and financials.

Systems Coordinator Mueller provided an IT cybersecurity update. Discussion followed.

**BOARD REPORT**

General Manager Ken Schlimgen updated the board on the following items:

- East River Manager's Advisory Committee
- Rural Electric Economic Development and Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program updates
- Basin Electric Power Cooperative load shed plan
- Pending commercial power agreement
- Director background check process
- Upcoming events

Schlimgen provided an update on strategic planning for outpost facilities in Howard and Plankinton. Discussion followed.

The board discussed revising the Town of Pukwana service agreement

for clarification. The revisions will be finalized and reviewed at the next regular board meeting.

Director Loudner provided SDREA board updates. Discussion followed.

Director Hofer provided NRECA board updates. Discussion followed.

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

**BOARD ACTION**

The board considered or acted upon the following:

- A motion was made and seconded to support the Horizon Health Care Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) loan application. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
- A motion was made and seconded to nominate Headley to the Cooperative Hall of Fame. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve board and manager fees and expenses. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve quarterly legal fees and expenses. Motion carried by majority vote with one member abstaining.

The next board meeting was scheduled for Aug. 16, 2021.

**To contact your cooperative with questions, you may email [cec@centralec.coop](mailto:cec@centralec.coop).**

<b>FINANCIAL REPORT</b>	<b>JULY 2021</b>	<b>YEAR-TO-DATE 2021</b>
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	30,898,778 kWhs	211,580,995 kWhs
Electric Revenues	\$ 3,047,917	\$ 20,635,110
Total Cost of Service	\$ 2,994,630	\$ 20,305,640
Operating Margins	\$ 53,287	\$ 329,470

# Practice fire safety this fall and winter

When the weather turns colder, you inevitably start hearing more news about house fires. Even a small fire can be devastating.

Most house fires are caused by cooking that gets out of hand, according to the National Fire Protection Association. But the second most common cause is materials in the home that catch fire. This often occurs when a heat source, such as a space heater or flying embers from a fireplace, comes into contact with fabric or paper, which then ignite. Once a fire starts, it can move so rapidly that even the best efforts to put it out may fail.

When it comes to old houses, the risks are even higher. The older the wood is that a house is constructed of, the faster it burns. Once flames invade the walls of an old house, they move with frightening speed.

Fire protection in any home is absolutely necessary, but even more careful precautions should be taken if your house is older. Here's how to help ensure the safety of your house and everyone in it.

**Smoke detectors.** These are the first and best line of defense; they allow you to get out of the house at the first whiff of smoke. The NFPA found that six in 10 deaths in house fires occurred in homes that did not have working smoke detectors. Go beyond the federal recommendations and put a smoke detector in every room. Stay on the even safer side by opting for those that detect both smoke and carbon monoxide.

**Fire extinguishers.** Keep small fires from getting out of control with fire extinguishers that are easily accessible. Choose several fire extinguishers that are light enough for even kids to handle. Make sure they have simple pull mechanisms that don't require much strength. Look for fire extinguishers that work for various parts of the house; for instance, an extinguisher in the kitchen should be able to handle grease fires.

**Install arc-fault interrupters.** These ingenious little gadgets detect the electrical arcing that occurs when an old wire buried deep in your wall begins to fail. Speak with an electrician about where best to install interrupters and how your particular ones work.

**Maintain it all.** Finally, test everything on a regular basis. Smoke detectors should be tested every month, their batteries replaced every six months, and old smoke detectors replaced every 10 years. Opt to purchase an extra fire extinguisher so your family can take it to the backyard and practice using it.

**Have a plan.** What if the worst happens and those smoke detectors go off? Have a plan to get out fast. Make sure those on upper floors have a fire ladder that can get them safely to the ground. Designate a meeting place for all family members, and practice your safety plan at least once every six months.

Does all of this sound like overkill? It's not! Fire safety is imperative year-round for every home. Your home deserves to have the care required to keep it safe and sturdy, but more importantly, your family deserves the peace of mind that comes from knowing they are protected in an emergency.

## WE'VE GOT SD COVERED



South Dakota's electric cooperatives deliver affordable, reliable power to our members in every corner of the state. But we do so much more!

Visit our Co-op Connections Plus YouTube channel and you'll see co-ops in action providing valuable consumer information at Dakotafest and the South Dakota State Fair. You'll see co-ops at local community events and youth leadership programs. We've got South Dakota covered!

Simply scan the QR code to the right and be sure to subscribe!



### Call 811 before you dig!

#### Fletcher Nutt

Fletcher reminds readers of Cooperative Connections to be sure to call 811 before digging. Fletcher's parents are Donald Nutt and Amanda Larron of Sioux Falls.

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.

# PERFECT PASTA PICKS

## RATTLESNAKE PASTA

### Ingredients:

1/4 c buttery spread  
 2 T all-purpose flour  
 3/4 c dairy milk  
 1/2 c vegetable broth  
 1 T vegetable base  
 1/2 c Parmesan cheese, shredded  
 salt, to taste (optional)  
 pepper, to taste (optional)  
 1/4 c pickled jalapeno slices  
 3 T minced garlic  
 10 oz. cooked rotisserie chicken, shredded  
 1 green bell pepper, sliced  
 1 red bell pepper, sliced  
 1 handful fresh cilantro, minced  
 1 pound whole-wheat linguini, cooked

### METHOD

In medium pot, melt buttery spread then add flour; mix well. Slowly add dairy milk and vegetable broth, stirring well. Add vegetable base and Parmesan cheese; heat slowly until thickened. Add salt and pepper, to taste, if desired. Add jalapenos, garlic, bell peppers and roasted chicken; heat thoroughly. Serve over cooked linguini.

### Family Features

## HERB BAKED CHICKEN AND PASTA

### Ingredients:

2 cups uncooked medium pasta, such as rotini, penne or ziti  
 1 pound uncooked boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch cubes  
 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided  
 1 1/2 cups water  
 1 package McCormick® Italian Herb Baked Chicken & Pasta Seasoning Mix  
 1 can (14 1/2 ounces) petite diced tomatoes, undrained

### METHOD

Preheat oven to 375°F. Place pasta, chicken and 1 cup of the cheese in 13x9-inch baking dish. Mix water, Seasoning Mix and tomatoes until well blended. Pour over pasta and chicken. Stir to coat well, making sure most of the pasta is covered with sauce. Cover with foil. Bake 45 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Remove foil and stir. Sprinkle with remaining 1 cup cheese. Bake, uncovered, 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand 5 minutes. (Sauce will continue to thicken upon standing.)  
[mccormick.com](http://mccormick.com)

## SPAGHETTI PIE

### Ingredients:

6 oz. spaghetti  
 2 T. butter  
 2 well beaten eggs  
 1/3 c. Parmesan cheese  
 1 c. cottage cheese  
 1 lb. ground beef  
 1/4 c. chopped green pepper  
 1/2 c. chopped onion  
 2 c. chopped tomatoes  
 1 tsp. sugar  
 1 tsp. oregano  
 1/2 tsp. garlic salt  
 1/2 c. shredded mozzarella

### METHOD

Cook spaghetti, drain. Stir in butter, Parmesan cheese and eggs. In buttered 10 inch pie plate, form the mixture into a crust. Spread the cottage cheese over crust. Cook beef until browned. Drain fat. Stir tomatoes, sugar, oregano and garlic salt into cooked beef. Put all in spaghetti crust. Bake 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Add mozzarella and cook five minutes more or until cheese is melted. Bulk sausage may replace ground beef.

Linda Sherry, Sioux Falls

Please send your favorite dairy 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

## PLACE BIDS ON SURPLUS TRUCK

- 2012 Dodge 5500 Heavy Duty 4x4
- 223,810 miles
  - Regular cab chassis
  - 6-speed automatic transmission
  - 37-foot Telect Terex manlift
  - 2007 utility box remounted in 2012 (2,289 hours)
  - Starting Bid Price: \$20,500

The vehicle will be available to purchase at Central Electric's Betts Road office at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, Oct. 7. Interested parties must be present. If multiple interested parties are present, an auction will begin and parties can increase their bid from the listed price. For more information, contact Lincoln Feistner at 1-800-477-2892.



## SHOWCASING THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE AT THE STATE FAIR



Manager of Member Services and Marketing, Patrick Soukup (right), has a conversation with State Fair attendees. Soukup fielded questions about various topics surrounding energy generation and consumption.

Your cooperative can review your energy use in great detail, so please consult with us before embarking on a project such as solar panels or a generator. We are here to help!

Central Electric participates in events like the State Fair to engage with members and provide educational opportunities to children and adults.

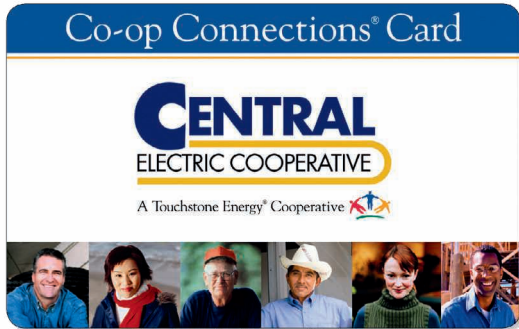
## FORESTBURG MELONS REMAIN A TRADITION FOR FAIRGOERS

Traveling to Huron for the South Dakota State Fair can be an exciting event. The open prairies south of Huron are not only beautiful, they are literally quite fruitful.

Produce stands between Forestburg, Woonsocket and Huron feature locally grown melons and other juicy items. Larson's Melon Market south of Huron is a popular stop for many fairgoers.

We encourage members to support area farmers and local businesses to ensure they continue to enrich our lives with goods such as fresh produce well into the future.





# CHA- CHING!

## Cash in on the savings with your Co-op Connections Card

Your cooperative membership earns you discounts at local participating businesses. Simply show your Co-op Connections Card and save.

Get your card or become a participating business by contacting our office. For more information, call 1-800-477-2892 or email [cec@centralec.coop](mailto:cec@centralec.coop).

A list of local discounts can be viewed on our website by visiting [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop) and selecting "Member Programs" on the homepage menu.

BUSINESS	TOWN	DISCOUNT
New Leaf Body Spa	Mitchell	\$5 off a 60 minute massage
On Sight 24/7	Mitchell	10% off products, some exclusions apply
Photography Unlimited	Mitchell	Free session & 10% off your order
The Pin Cushion	Mitchell	Buy 1 Aurifil thread at regular price and get 2nd at 50% off
Sun Gold Trophies	Mitchell	15% off storewide, some exclusions apply
Tessiers Inc.	Mitchell	10% discount on residential service or maintenance work. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount or for commercial work.
605 Vision	Chamberlain	15% off services and materials; Cannot be combined with insurance or other offers.



# SEARCHING FOR SPOOKS

Casey S. Hibbert peers out into the natural world through a window in the top floor of the haunted Adams House in Deadwood. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

## Paranormal enthusiasts search for signs of the hereafter in SD's haunted spaces

**Billy Gibson**

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

Those eerie, creaky footsteps heard coming from the stairwell in Deadwood's historic Adams House could be the restless spirit of former owner W.E. Adams. Or they could simply be a figment of the imagination.

Maurice "Mo" Miller isn't going to try to convince you either way. He just wants to collect evidence that there was in fact an unexplained sound and let you draw your own conclusions.

Miller is founder and lead sleuth of the Black Hills Paranormal Investigations team. He and his six-member squad aren't out to bust ghosts or chase mischievous spirits away. They only want to make a friendly connection with inhabitants of the afterlife, maybe say hello and spend some quality time together.

For the past 10 years, Miller and his crew have been conducting their missions all across the Black Hills area and have logged scores of audio recordings and other evidence they offer as possible proof of the existence of the hereafter.

Every October, Miller invites fearless guests to accompany the investigators on their missions. But he often warns visitors beforehand: Don't come dressed in a Dracula costume or some silly getup - this is serious business.

"This isn't a dog-and-pony show," Miller said. "We never do investigations with the public on Halloween because people will come dressed up as a vampire or a witch and think it's the county fair. The shows on TV are for entertainment. We have fun, but we don't contrive things for entertainment value and promise we'll deliver a ghost in a jar or yank one out into the open with a hook."

Miller developed a passion for the paranormal when he had an unexplained experience as a youngster.

"I was in my bedroom and - I don't know how or why it happened - the closet door blew off the hinges and went flying across the room. My parents thought the door came down because I'd been swinging on it like a monkey. I was a little unnerved and slept on the couch for a month. But I started reading academic material on the subject to see if there was really something to this paranormal thing, and it's been my passion ever since."

The BHPI team has several black metal cases, or "spirit boxes" full of devices, contraptions and gizmos they use to detect the presence of wandering ghosts. There are electromagnetic field meters, binoptic cameras, infrared static cameras, digital audio recorders and more.

They've completed investigations of many haunted places in Deadwood and the surrounding area such as the Homestake Opera House, the Bullock Hotel, the Brothel Deadwood, the Lucky Nugget Casino and others.





Black Hills Paranormal Investigations team member LeAnn Harlan keeps an eye out for spirits during a recent visit to a private residence in Spearfish. Above/right, a device used by BHPI triggers when spirits are detected nearby.

As far as the fear factor goes, Miller said during late-night investigations he often finds himself keeping a close eye on BHPI Case Manager Mark Shadley, a retired police sergeant and seasoned law enforcement officer. If the former lawman starts showing

selling author Ann Charles, but there are many other famously haunted places and spaces around the state.

Author Chad Lewis has been researching paranormal activity in South Dakota, across the region, and around world for nearly 30 years and has written 25 books on the supernatural, including *The South Dakota Road Guide to Haunted Locations* as part of his “Unexplained” series. While Lewis has made many television appearances, he often speaks to local audiences and calls attention to some of the lesser known haunted sites such as Devil’s Gulch in Garretson and Spirit Mound State Historic Prairie near Vermillion.

“Spirit Mound’s legends date back as far as Lewis and Clark. In their journals, they wrote that once arriving upon Spirit Mound, their guides would go no further as they feared small creatures that looked like little people and were very good with poisonous arrows.”

He has explored many haunted sites in the Hills such as the Mount Moriah Cemetery and the Keystone Mount View Cemetery at the foot of Mount Rushmore. But Lewis has also studied spooky places in eastern South Dakota such as the Orpheum Theatre and Old Minnehaha Courthouse in Sioux Falls, Mount Marty College and Dakota

### Visit these haunted sites if you dare

Here is our Top 10 list of the eeriest, scariest, most haunted places in South Dakota. Enter at your own risk:

- Bullock Hotel - Deadwood
- Adams House - Deadwood
- Old Minnehaha Courthouse Museum - Sioux Falls
- Dakota Theater - Yankton
- Hotel Alex Johnson - Rapid City
- Sioux San Hospital - Rapid City
- Lucky Nugget Casino - Deadwood
- Homestake Opera House - Lead
- Eastons Castle - Aberdeen
- Mount Marty College - Yankton



BHPI lead investigator Maurice “Mo” Miller discusses strategy with Deb Sutton and Kayleigh Johnson.

signs of fright or starts heading for the door, then it’s probably time to scam.

The Black Hills area is often considered a hotbed of paranormal activity of the kind depicted in local folklore and in the tales spun by best-

Theatre in Yankton, Eastons Castle in Aberdeen and others.

With Halloween coming up, Lewis encourages anyone interested in all things unexplained to get out and explore haunted sites and also to learn more about the history, lore and culture of different locations.

“I think people should venture out and see things for themselves and make their own determinations,” he said. “If you go out to Spirit Mound, make sure to leave an offering like a shiny rock or candy for the Little People. This will protect you from them getting followed home.”

# CO-OP HAPPENINGS

YEARS OF SERVICE



**John Vetch**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker  
33 years on Sept. 6



**Dwight Keegel**  
Lead Electrician  
31 years on Oct. 16



**Lincoln Feistner**  
Sales & Project  
Manager  
20 years on Sept. 17



**Jesse Baker**  
Kimball Area  
Foreman  
19 years on Oct. 21



**Jonathan Reichert**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker  
11 years on Sept. 1



**Ryan Mueller**  
Systems Coordinator  
6 years on Sept. 1



**Andrew Baier**  
Materials & Plant  
Supervisor  
5 years on Sept. 12



**Heather Wiczorek**  
Customer Service  
Representative  
5 years on Oct. 11



**David Henkel**  
Journeyman  
Electrician  
3 years on Sept. 10

## HEADLEY & MORRISON RETIRE FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Directors Jim Headley (left) and Butch Morrison (right) attended their last official board meeting for Central Electric Cooperative in August. Headley, of rural White Lake, served 25 years on the board. Morrison, of rural Mitchell, served 18 years. Both directors decided to forego reelection bids in 2021.

Headley and Morrison possess extensive industry knowledge and cooperative governing expertise. They were recognized for their outstanding service during Central Electric's Annual Meeting at the Corn Palace on Sept. 14.

With sincere gratitude, we thank all of our present and past directors for the time they dedicate to ensure our members' lives are powered reliably and affordably.





Central Electric Cooperative awarded an Operation Round-Up grant of \$500 to the White Lake Library in support of the summer reading program. The funds were used toward the purchase of books and activity kits for participating children.

# SUBMIT OPERATION ROUND-UP GRANT APPLICATIONS BY NOV. 1

Grant applications for the Central Electric Cooperative Operation Round-Up program are due November 1, 2021. Funds are intended to benefit people and organizations within the Central Electric service area. Funding priorities include projects focused on community service, economic development, education and youth, environment, emergency energy assistance and disaster relief.

Applicants are not required to be members of Central Electric Cooperative, however, eligible projects should directly benefit residents in Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld, Miner or Sanborn County. Each county Central Electric

serves has a representative on the Operation Round-Up board of trustees that provides a voice to help decide how funds are dispersed.

Operation Round-Up® is a voluntary program in which members round up their electric bill to the next whole dollar each month, and the extra cents flow into a charitable fund that is earmarked for grants.

Since the program's inception in 2015, Central Electric members have given more than \$130,000 back to support local causes. More details and funding guidelines can be found online at [www.centralec.coop/operation-round-up](http://www.centralec.coop/operation-round-up) or by contacting the Central Electric office at 1-800-477-2892.



# A PLACE TO GROW

Public libraries across the state continue to serve the needs of their communities as places to go for a wide range of experiences.

## South Dakota's public library system grows and adapts to an ever-changing cultural and technological landscape

**Billy Gibson**

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

The state's public library system got its start even before there was a state.

In 1886, three years before South Dakota achieved statehood, the Howard Public Library was chartered and quickly became a point of pride for the people of present-day Miner County.

The contents of the library have long since been relocated to a modern facility in the town's Municipal Building, but the original structure can still be visited at Prairie Village in nearby Madison.

As the first of its kind in the state, the Howard Public Library is still a thriving entity and serves as a testament to the versatility and resiliency of the state's library system. Standing strong through world wars, recessions, depressions, funding pressures, political challenges and

changes in culture and contemporary lifestyles, South Dakota's libraries are still delivering the goods - and the books - in their respective communities.

Mary K. Schlim is the head librarian in Howard and says the community takes a lot of pride in being home to the state's first facility. She takes an optimistic view of the future of libraries...as long as they continue to adapt.

"I think libraries have a bright future," she said. "You just have to keep updating and modernizing and keeping up with the trends and the technology. We have the computers, but we're adding new books all the time. There will always be demand from people who want an actual, physical book to read. There will always be a need for libraries."

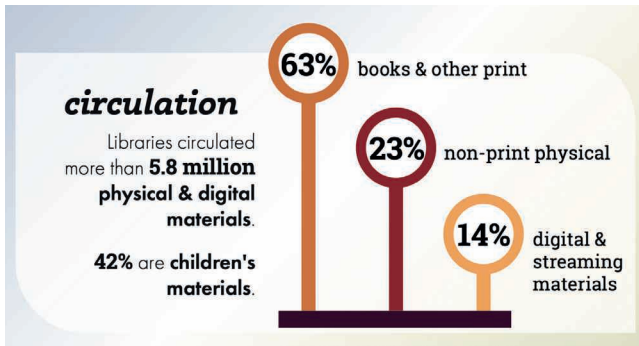
Schlim said her facility is open six days a week with more than 14,000 books on the shelves, five public

computers with internet access, 37 subscriptions to magazines and periodicals, and free WiFi access.

In the year prior to the pandemic, 3.7 million visits were made to the state's 107 public libraries while nearly half the state's residents held a library card. In 2019, more than 600 of the state's citizens were employed at a public library, and a collective 5.8 million digital and physical materials were circulated.

Brenda Hemmelman, access and development services director for the state library system, said libraries return \$4 in various programs and services for every \$1 invested. She describes libraries as a sound investment in communities large and small.

Hemmelman recently announced the distribution of nearly \$2 million in grant money disbursed to a total of 78 public, local school and academic libraries across the state. The grant money came from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.



“This will help our libraries invest in infrastructure, technology and materials that will serve their patrons through modern, innovative facilities and practices well into the future,” Hemmelman said.

Grant-funded items include the following:

- Technology to replace old computer equipment
- Podcasting equipment
- Digitization equipment
- Books, audio books, e-books
- 3D printers and other makerspace equipment
- Furniture with embedded technology
- Library automation software
- SMART boards/Promethean boards for classroom teaching and displays.

The state system also purchased an additional \$76,000 worth of audiobooks and e-books for the South Dakota



Titles to Go (SDTTG) consortium with funds from IMLS through ARPA. Hemmelman said SDTTG program usage increased 18 percent from 2019 to 2020 as users checked out more than 400,000 titles.

Hemmelman said libraries face an ongoing challenge to remain relevant and useful in a rapidly changing technological

landscape. She said libraries were fortunate to receive the recent grant money after 96 percent of the state’s facilities closed temporarily during the pandemic.

She was quick to note, however, that 86 percent continued to provide public services even though the physical facility may have been closed. More than 80 percent provided outside or curbside checkout services and all of them increased access to digital materials.

For Hemmelman, those indicators point to a promising future for the state’s public library system.

## STATE LIBRARY DIGITIZES 41 VOLUMES OF SOUTH DAKOTA HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS



As the South Dakota State Historical Society celebrates its 120th year, the South Dakota State Library has digitized all 41 volumes of the South Dakota Historical Collections. From 1902 to 1982, this series was published biennially by the Department of History (now the South Dakota State Historical Society) as part of its mission to collect, preserve and make accessible the history of the state. All 41 volumes are now available via the Featured Collections section of the South Dakota State Library’s Digital Collections.

These volumes cover a wide array of topics and are a valuable resource for students, teachers, and scholarly researchers. Six editors presided over the South Dakota Historical Collections during its run, including Doane Robinson, Will G. Robinson and Dayton Canaday. Their different editing styles and interests are evident throughout the volumes. Taken as a whole, the series represents an evolution in perspectives on the state’s history, heritage and culture. In 1989, an index to the collection was compiled and published to aid researchers.

The South Dakota State Library serves as the state’s depository for current and historical state agency publications, some of which go back to territorial days.

The South Dakota State Library’s Digital Collections reflect the history and culture of South Dakota. Primarily of interest to librarians, researchers, and genealogists, the digital collections include newspaper articles, South Dakota library photographs, state government annual reports and research reports, South Dakota Codified Laws, Session Laws, House and Senate Journals and more. Access the collections at: [sdsdl-montage.auto-graphics.com/](https://sdsdl-montage.auto-graphics.com/).

# CRAZY ABOUT CO-OPS



Entertainer and Mount Vernon Mayor Weston Frank bears a co-op logo on his forearm in memory of his great grandfather.

## South Dakota’s cooperative leaders leave a legacy of service in local communities throughout the state

**Billy Gibson**

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

Some people place a lot of faith and belief in the cooperative way of doing business.

And then some people don’t mind letting the world know exactly where they stand on cooperatives and what they represent.

When Weston Frank pulls up his shirt sleeve, everyone can see how much cooperatives mean to him. He has the word “COOP” tattooed in big, bold letters right there on his forearm.

Frank, who is mayor of Mount Vernon and an entertainer well-known throughout the state, had the cooperative logo inked into his arm for a special reason. He got the tat in memory of his great grandfather,

Howard Frank, who started working at the ag co-op in Wessington Springs after his gas station business burned to the ground. He eventually retired from the co-op in the mid-1990s.

When Weston Frank takes a glance at that image on his arm, he remembers a man who had earned the respect of everyone in his community.

“I love the double circle co-op logo because it’s something my great grandfather wore every day. Everyone knew him as a kind and quiet man who would help anyone. He’d stay late to get a job done, then head out to the 281 Junction on Sunday afternoon at the drop of a hat to help a stranded stranger. I never met one person who had something bad to say about him.”

As for Weston Frank, the co-op symbol has an even deeper meaning than the memory of his great grandfather.

“That logo stands for a time when men did what they said they would. You could trust the word of your fellow man, and the local co-op board. I have on occasion caught grief from some folks who associate the double circle with poor memories and situations. I always apologize that they feel that way, but the co-op provided for my family for many years without incident. For me, the logo helps me remember the man, the good he did and the love he had for his family.”

Cooperatives have been part of South Dakota’s landscape for well over 100 years, and have an estimated annual economic impact of \$8 to \$10 billion. Collectively, cooperatives provide an estimated 16,000 jobs for South Dakotans, and contribute almost \$600 million in tax revenue to the state.



The cooperative spirit also runs through the veins of Brenda Forman, executive director of the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives. Her introduction to the co-op world came early in life when she was a girl growing up in Gettysburg where both her grandfather and father served on the Cenex board of directors.

**“THAT LOGO STANDS FOR A TIME WHEN MEN DID WHAT THEY SAID THEY WOULD. YOU COULD TRUST THE WORD OF YOUR FELLOW MAN, AND THE LOCAL CO-OP BOARD.”**

At the age of 14, Forman landed her first job at the local Cenex station and worked there through high school and college, often filling a spot on the spraying crew. She joined the co-op association 25 years ago and has carried on the mission of serving the association’s members and lauding the many benefits of cooperative businesses, including telecommunications, farm supply, marketing and electric organizations.

Her father, Richard Mangin, held a position on the Cenex board for



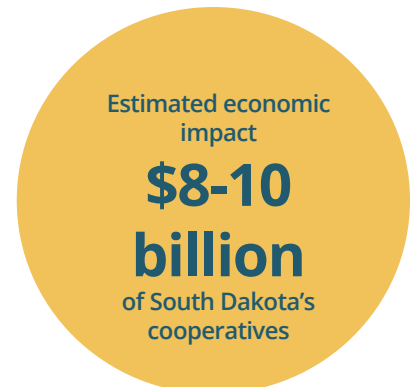
South Dakota Cooperative Association Hall of Famer Charles Birkholt served as general manager of Cam Wal Electric Cooperative for the last eight of his 45 years there. After retiring from Cam Wal, Birkholt served on the board of Venture Telecommunications.

25 years. At the end of December each year, she would accompany her dad down to the co-op to help take inventory.

“On the way over we’d talk about the co-op and how it got started and why he served on the board, to help people,” Forman recalled. “Something that touched me deeply happened when a gentleman came up to me once and I told him I was from Gettysburg. He said he knew my dad and they worked on the Cenex board together. He looked around at the other people and told them I come from good stock. That was one heckuva of a compliment, coming from someone who thought that much of my dad and granddad and their involvement in the co-op.”

Charles Birkholt is a member of the SDAC Hall of Fame and has served consumers of both a telecommunications co-op and an electric co-op. Back in 1952, Birkholt joined Cam Wal Electric in Selby as a groundsman at the rate of 85 cents an hour. He climbed his way up to manager and recalls farmers complaining about their \$5 monthly power bills. He later retired after 45 years of service at Cam Wal.

But Birkholt wasn’t done yet. Shortly after retiring 20 years ago, he joined the board of Venture Communications.



“I enjoyed working at both co-ops and being able to see things on both sides of the board table,” he said. “It gives you different things to think about and makes you understand you have to keep an open mind. But in both positions, you’re working to improve the service and your relationship with your members.”

Birkholt said he encourages all cooperative members, employees and leaders across the state to pause a moment during Co-op Month in October to reflect on the importance of these not-for-profit organizations.

“The consumer is our primary goal, our only reason for existing. That is very unique and isn’t the case for investor-owned enterprises. We’re the underdogs, so that just means we have to work harder,” he said.



**Pheasant Hunting Season  
Opening Day  
October 16, 2021**

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.

**SEPTEMBER 24-25**

**Holiday Arts Fall Show**  
Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD,  
605-359-2049

**SEPTEMBER 25-26**

**Menno Pioneer Power Show**  
Menno, SD, contact Daniel at  
mennopowershow@yahoo.com  
for more details

**SEPTEMBER 25-26**

**Reza: Edge of Illusion**  
Oscar Larson Performing Arts  
Center, Brookings, SD, tickets  
on sale at  
<http://www.RezaLive.com>

**SEPTEMBER 30**

**7th Annual Taste of  
Sioux Falls**  
Washington Pavilion, Sioux  
Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

**SEPTEMBER 30 -  
OCTOBER 3**

**Festival of Books**  
Various Locations, Deadwood,  
SD, 605-688-6113

**OCTOBER 1-2**

**Oktoberfest**  
Various Locations, Deadwood,  
SD, 605-578-1876

**OCTOBER 1-3**

**SiouxperCon**  
1201 N West Avenue, Sioux  
Falls, SD, visit [siouxpercon.com](http://siouxpercon.com)  
for more details and tickets

**OCTOBER 2-3**

**Fort Pierre Horse Races**  
Stanley County Fairgrounds,  
Fort Pierre, SD, 605-223-2178

**OCTOBER 7-10**

**Annual Great  
Scarecrow Festival**  
Campbell Park, Huron, SD,  
605-354-0491

**OCTOBER 8-9**

**Junkin' Market Days**  
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux  
Falls, SD, 605-941-4958

**OCTOBER 8-10**

**Pumpkin Festival**  
Country Apple Orchard,  
Harrisburg, SD, 605-743-2424

**OCTOBER 9-10**

**Sioux Falls Quilters' Guild  
Bi-annual Quilt Show - "Fall  
in Love with Quilting"**  
Sioux Falls Convention Center,  
Sioux Falls, SD, for more info  
visit [siouxfallsquiltersguild.com](http://siouxfallsquiltersguild.com)  
or send an email to  
[sfqg2021show@gmail.com](mailto:sfqg2021show@gmail.com)

**OCTOBER 11**

**Native American Day  
Celebration**  
Crazy Horse Memorial, Crazy  
Horse, SD, 605-673-4681

**OCTOBER 16-17**

**Heartland Quilter's Guild**  
Highland Conference Center,  
Mitchell SD, Contact Karen at  
605-996-6726 for more info

**OCTOBER 22-23**

**Governor's South  
Dakota Showcase**  
1201 N West Avenue, Sioux  
Falls, SD, 605-773-3301

**OCTOBER 29-30**

**Deadweird**  
Various Locations, Deadwood,  
SD, 605-578-1876

**OCTOBER 30**

**16th Holiday Shopping  
Extravaganza**  
Mitchell Fairgrounds, Mitchell,  
SD, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., 605-999-8563

**OCTOBER 30**

**Yankton's Harvest  
Halloween**  
Downtown, Yankton, SD, email  
[mandi@bostonsyankton.com](mailto:mandi@bostonsyankton.com)  
for more info

**NOVEMBER 13**

**Sisseton Area Merchants &  
Crafters Holiday Open  
House Extravaganza**  
Sisseton, SD, call Beverly at  
605-698-7425 for more info

**NOVEMBER 14**

**Trinity Lutheran Church 27th  
Annual Lutefisk, Lefse &  
Meatball Supper**  
902 S Main Street,  
Chamberlain, SD, 605-730-0553

**NOVEMBER 19-20**

**Holiday Arts Christmas Show**  
Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD,  
605-359-2049

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