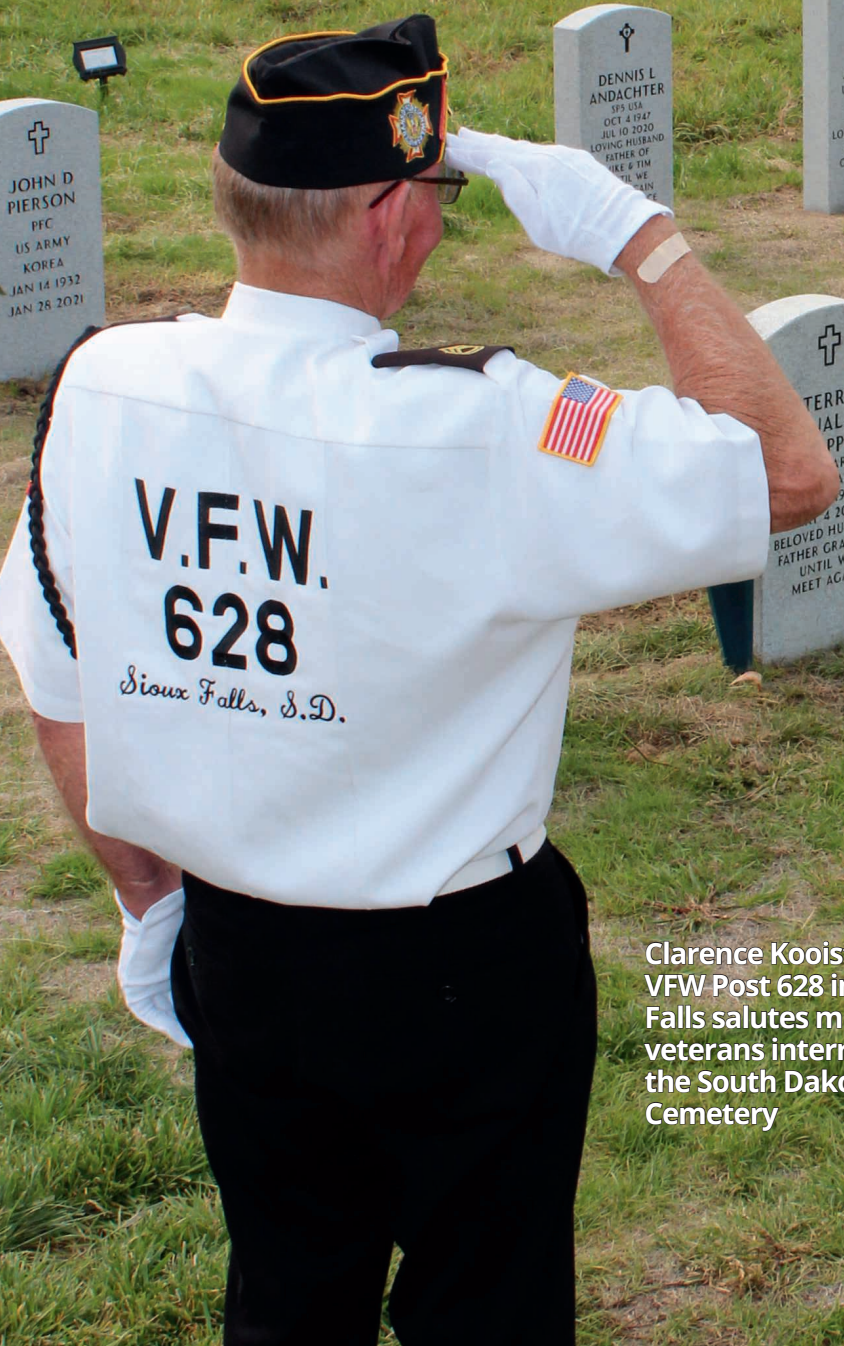


# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Clarence Kooistra of VFW Post 628 in Sioux Falls salutes military veterans interred at the South Dakota State Cemetery

## Honoring our Veterans

A new resting place for fallen soldiers  
Pages 8-9

First responders in rural South Dakota  
Page 12



# Electric Cars and Your Cooperative



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager

If you attended our annual meeting held on September 14, you not only saw three different electric cars on display, but you heard about the first-hand experiences of the driver of a Nissan Leaf. From all reports, electric car sales are booming in the U.S. with purchases doubling over just one year ago.

Last year, electric vehicles accounted for 2 percent of all car sales. This summer, that number jumped to 5 percent of light-duty cars and more than 20 percent of all passenger vehicle sales. This is according to the September report issued by Climatewire. Automakers are starting to build EV only assembly plants and new battery manufacturing facilities. Consumer choices in EV cars is exploding with an additional 40 EV models expected in the US by the end of 2022.

Polaris has announced its new, full-size all electric Ranger UTV to be available this December. The website says the new electric powertrain will elevate the ranger platform to a whole new level of capability, durability, and performance.

Your cooperative has been approved for a grant to help purchase the new electric UTV. We will measure its energy consumption and test its capabilities within our operations. We have plans to make it available for members to use in their

agricultural operations and to share it with the Power Sports Technology students at Mitchell Technical College.

Driving an electric car is, by many definitions, fun. They are loaded with features and the acceleration reminds me of my high school years where many cars were loaded with V8 engines, racing slicks and loud exhaust systems.

Electric cars will also save you money. Electric cars have fewer moving parts, which means less maintenance. While every car is different, electric vehicle owners are likely to spend about 60 percent less to power their ride. The Department of Energy has a website which will calculate how much you can save in fuel costs. The calculations I completed comparing my car to an electric car showed I would save 10 cents per mile driven. Annually that is estimated to be \$1,500.

As you can see the technology surrounding electric cars and the transportation industry is quickly evolving. Like a traditional vehicle, each model has its own capabilities and price range. Some models, like the Tesla, are more advanced, are built and designed for longer ranges and have a nationwide charging infrastructure. Other models, like the Nissan Leaf, are more affordable and designed for daily commuting. By the end of 2022 we will have many more models to choose from, and we will have to do our homework before picking out our next car.

Until Next Month, be safe!

**To contact your cooperative with questions, you may call 1-800-477-2892 or email [cec@centralec.coop](mailto:cec@centralec.coop).**



**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 - SDREA Director
- Jeff Gustafson - Director
- Merl Bechen - Director At Large

**Management Staff**

- Ken Schlimgen - General Manager
- Brian Bultje - Mgr. of Operations
- Dean Uher - Mgr. of Finance & Administration
- Lincoln Feistner - Sales/Project Mgr.
- Patrick Soukup - Mgr. of Member Svc. & Marketing
- Tara Miller - Editor, Mgr. 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 cooperative members on matters pertaining to their cooperative and living better with electricity. Also available at [www.centraleccoop.com](http://www.centraleccoop.com).

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

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@centraleccoop.com](mailto:cec@centraleccoop.com); website: [www.centraleccoop.com](http://www.centraleccoop.com).

**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.centraleccoop.com](http://www.centraleccoop.com)

**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](mailto: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 Aug. 16, 2021, at Central Electric Cooperative's Betts Road Service Center for the regular board meeting. The board approved the July 2021 meeting minutes. They then reviewed monthly reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and financials.

Director Wolbrink reported on East River Electric happenings. Discussion followed.

Directors Wolbrink and Reindl reported on the S.D. Rural Electric Association (SDREA) board leadership seminar they attended. Discussion followed.

Director Loudner provided SDREA board updates. Discussion followed.

**BOARD REPORT**

- General Manager Ken Schlimgen updated the board on the following:
- East River manager group meeting
  - Rural Electric Economic Development meeting
  - Chamberlain Smokey Grove housing development
  - Purchase agreement for land for future Howard outpost
  - Large commercial power supply agreement with POET
  - Power use demand management
  - Basin Electric updates
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mitigation funding availability
  - Pukwana maintenance agreement
  - Member letter regarding district meeting
  - Strategic planning initiatives

**BOARD ACTION**

The board considered or acted upon the following:

- A motion was made and seconded to require board members to complete a background check when taking their position on the board of directors. Motion carried by majority vote.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve a resolution accepting the 2022-2050 energy load forecast prepared by Basin Electric. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

The next board meeting was scheduled for Sept. 20, 2021.

Please contact the cooperative office if you have questions about the board meeting.

<b>FINANCIAL REPORT</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE AUGUST 2020</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE AUGUST 2021</b>
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	218,959,883 kWh	243,127,791 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$ 21,934,620	\$ 23,679,467
Total Cost of Service	\$ 20,852,628	\$ 23,194,408
Operating Margins	\$ 1,081,992	\$ 485,059

# A house full of Thanksgiving safety

Nearly every household uses extra electricity during the holidays - for cooking, decorating and heating. Take extra care to use electricity safely and to ask family members and house-guests to do the same. Here are some tips:

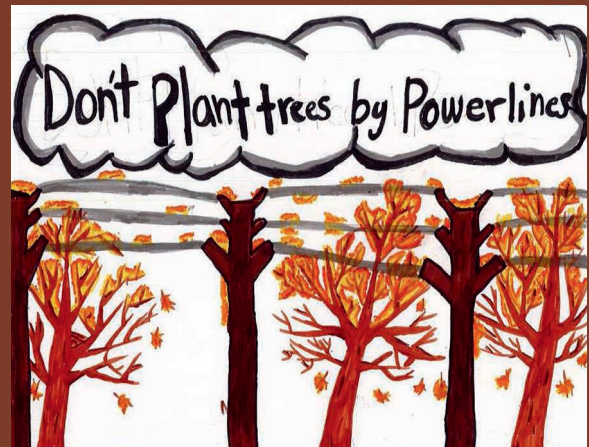
- Stay in the kitchen when broiling or doing any stovetop cooking.
- Keep children well away from cooking appliances while the appliances are in use.
- Keep towels, potholders and curtains away from hot surfaces in your kitchen.
- One of the riskiest holiday behaviors is overloading your electrical outlets. You will overload your wall outlets if you string strand after strand of holiday lights together and plug them into an extension cord that you plug into an outlet.
- Plugging multiple strands of cords into a power strip does not add any juice to the electrical circuit that powers the outlet you plug the strip into.
- Check decorative lights for damaged cords, plugs and sockets. Replace anything that's frayed, cracked or broken. Buy cords that are certified by UL; look for the UL symbol on the package.
- Don't run extension cords under rugs, carpets or baseboards, or anywhere they can be a tripping hazard.
- Only use decorations and cords outdoors that are properly rated for outdoor use.
- When you put up outdoor decorations, do not string lights in trees near power lines. Fasten outdoor lights carefully and securely with clips, never nails or tacks.
- Keep electric lights away from decorative metal trees.
- Keep all light strings and other decorations away from pets so they don't get tangled in them or chew the wires.
- Keep all decorations - and everything else - at least three feet away from heat sources such as fireplaces and space heaters.
- Always turn off your decorations when you leave home and when you're sleeping.
- Make sure smoke detectors are present and working properly.
- Use space heaters properly and safely. Keep them out of high-traffic areas and at least three feet from anything that can burn.
- Do not leave a space heater running unattended. Turn off space heaters and unplug them when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Never leave an open flame, including your fireplace or a candle, unattended.

## GOVERNOR'S STUDENT ART COMPETITION



The Governor's Office and the South Dakota Arts Council invite students to participate in the Governor's Student Art Competition.

Students in K-12 will compete in four age divisions. Winning entries will be exhibited in the State Capitol from January through September 2022. Submission deadline is Nov. 12, 2021. All artwork is to be submitted electronically as a high-resolution jpeg image, along with the Artwork Submission Form and the Authorization Release Form. Competition guidelines, instructions and all necessary forms are accessible at [https://artscouncil.sd.gov/events/student\\_art\\_Main.aspx](https://artscouncil.sd.gov/events/student_art_Main.aspx). Contact Rebecca.cruse@state.sd.us or call 605-773-3301 for details.



### Don't plant trees by power lines

Jazzlyn Magera

Jazzlyn shares good advice to avoid planting trees near power lines. Jazzlyn attends Brandon Elementary School and is the daughter of Rachel Schettler. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy.

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.



# SLOW COOKING BRINGS OUT FLAVORS OF FALL

## BABY BACK RIBS

### Ingredients:

2-1/2 lbs. pork baby back ribs, cut into eight pieces  
 5 cups water  
 1 med. onion, sliced  
 2 celery ribs, cut in half  
 2 tsps. minced garlic, divided  
 1 tsp. whole peppercorns  
 1/2 cup barbecue sauce  
 1/4 cup plum sauce (Asian section of grocery store)  
 Dash of hot pepper sauce

### METHOD

Place ribs in a 5-qt. slow cooker. Add water, onion, celery, 1 tsp. garlic and peppercorns. Cover and cook on low for six hours or until meat is tender. In a small saucepan, combine the barbecue sauce, plum sauce, hot pepper sauce and remaining garlic. Cook and stir over medium heat for five minutes or until heated through. Remove ribs. Discard cooking juices and vegetables. Coat grill rack with nonstick cooking spray before starting grill. Brush ribs with sauce. Grill, uncovered, over medium low heat for 8-10 minutes or until browned, turning occasionally and brushing with remaining sauce. Can also be finished in the oven using the broil setting.  
**Melissa Roerig, Sioux Falls**

## CHILI BEEF AND PASTA

### Ingredients:

2 lbs. lean ground beef  
 2 packages McCormick® Chili Seasoning Mix  
 1 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes  
 2 cans (8 oz. each) tomato sauce  
 1 cup coarsely chopped bell pepper  
 1 cup frozen or canned whole kernel corn  
 1 cup elbow macaroni, cooked and drained (about 2.25 cups)  
 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

### METHOD

Cook ground beef in large skillet on medium-high heat until no longer pink; drain. Place in slow cooker. Stir in Seasoning Mix, tomatoes, tomato sauce, bell pepper and corn until well blended. Cover. Cook six hours on low or three hours on high. Stir in cheese and cooked macaroni during the last 10 minutes of cooking.  
**mccormick.com**

## WHITE PHEASANT CHILI

### Ingredients:

3 boneless pheasants cooked and shredded  
 1 large onion chopped  
 4 Tbsps. butter  
 1/4 cup flour  
 3/4 cup chicken broth  
 2 cups half and half  
 2 cans Navy beans  
 1 tsp. Tabasco sauce  
 1-1/2 tsp. chili powder  
 1 tsp. cumin  
 1/2 tsp. salt  
 1/2 tsp. pepper  
 1-2 jalapeno peppers  
 1-1/2 cups Monterrey jack cheese  
 1/2 cup sour cream

### METHOD

Cook and shred pheasant. Set aside. Cook onion with 2 Tbsps. butter until soft, add flour and remaining butter, whisking constantly. Add broth and half and half while whisking. Bring to boil for 5 minutes, or until onions are tender. Put in crockpot and add remaining ingredients. Put on high heat for one hour then reduce to low heat for one to two hours.

**Alice DeHaai, Keystone**

Please send your favorite holiday dessert 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.



# 21ST ANNUAL MEETING HELD

Central Electric Cooperative held its 21st Annual Meeting at the Corn Palace on the evening of Sept. 14. A meal was served, and the official business meeting followed.

Reggie Gassman of Sioux Valley Energy was the featured guest speaker. He gave a presentation about electric vehicles, highlighting how they compare to gas-powered vehicles.

Merl Bechen of rural Mitchell was elected to serve as the cooperative's director-at-large during the meeting. The director-at-large represents all eight counties served by the cooperative. Bechen replaces retired director-at-large Jim Headley of White Lake, who served on the board since 1996.

Bechen said, "I know our co-op personnel very well and have a great admiration for the job they do day in

and day out." Bechen worked for East River Electric Power Cooperative for 43 years until his retirement this summer. In recent years, he worked out of Central Electric's Betts Road location.

Jeff Gustafson of Ethan was elected to represent Davison County this summer. He replaces retired director Butch Morrison of rural Mitchell who served on the board since 2003. Both new directors have been seated and are now representing the membership.

Board President Duane Wolbrink took a few minutes to recognize General Manager Ken Schlimgen for 35 years of service. He was gifted a custom-made meter lamp for the milestone he achieved in 2020.

Prize drawings capped off the evening for those in attendance. We thank our members for their continued support of the cooperative!



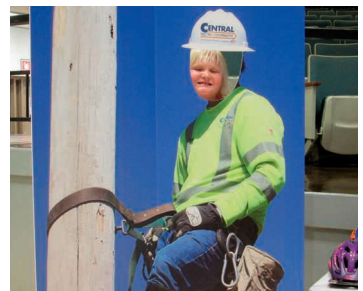
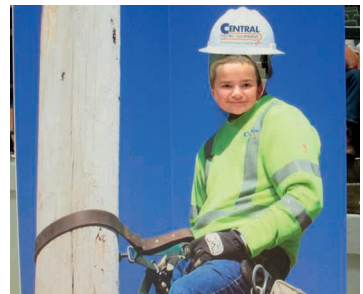
Director-at-large Merl Bechen of rural Mitchell speaks during the annual meeting at the Corn Palace on Sept. 14.



Board Vice President Todd VanWalleghen (right) presents General Manager Ken Schlimgen with a custom meter lamp for 35 years of service, a milestone he achieved in 2020.



# THANKS FOR ATTENDING CENTRAL ELECTRIC'S ANNUAL MEETING!





# A PLACE TO REST



The South Dakota Veterans Cemetery located northeast of Sioux Falls provides a new resting place for U.S. military veterans and their families. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

## State Veterans Cemetery in Sioux Falls opens new options for military families

**Billy Gibson**

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

A dozen distraught family members surrounded the casket conspicuously draped with a bright, crisp American flag. The brilliant hues of red, white and blue stood in stark contrast to the slate gray sky hanging overhead and the slight chill that filled the air.

As the gathered mourners paid their last respects and turned back toward the administration building at the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, the clouds suddenly burst open and a heavy rain began to fall.

“Well, your daddy was a rancher,” the grieving widow said to her son as they made their way down the hillside. “A good rain is exactly what he would have wanted. This would have made him smile.”

Erin Brown is director of the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery (SDVC) located northeast of Sioux Falls and she often hears stories that family members share about their loved ones who arrive at their final resting

place there. A military veteran herself, Brown said those stories bring added meaning and significance to her work.

“The veterans – and their families – are very important to us,” she said. “When I hear those kinds of stories and hear them describe a lifetime of memories and all the good times they had together, it reinforces the idea that there’s real value in what we’re doing here at the cemetery.”

The SDVC is the first federally funded, state-owned and operated veterans cemetery in the state, although there is no residency requirement for military veterans to be interred there. The Black Hills National Cemetery is located a few miles east of Sturgis.

The facility is located on 60 acres donated by the City of Sioux Falls and ultimately will have enough space for over 28,000 casket grave sites, cremation grave sites, a columbarium for cremated remains and a scattering garden. More than 600 in-ground crypts have already been installed. The facility was made possible by more

than \$7 million in federal money, state funds and private donations.

Since the ribbon-cutting ceremony last Memorial Day, the cemetery has seen a steady stream of burials. There were four on a recent Friday.

SDVC staff works with the families to arrange details of the burial services which typically include a final pre-service consultation with the families, a processional to the committal shelter, a 15-20 minute service, folding and presentation of the flag, and a rifle salute and Taps presented by local military-related volunteer organizations.







Members of the grounds crew are all veterans and can relate to military families in their time of grief.

Clarence Kooistra is one of those volunteers who donates his time to make sure veterans receive a proper burial and their families receive the proper respect. He's a member of the VFW Post 628 Honor Guard based in Sioux Falls.

"I just feel it's very important that these men and women are treated with the respect they deserve for the sacrifices they've made to preserve our freedoms and democracy in our country," Kooistra said. "It's a privilege for me to come out here and do this for the families."

While construction commenced on the cemetery two years ago, it took several years to bring the project to fruition. At the time the first federal grant application was submitted in 2017, Brown was serving as a veterans program manager in the State Department of Veteran's Affairs helping veterans navigate through the federal bureaucracy to receive their rightful benefits. She often found, however, that some of the former soldiers would balk at the benefits "so that someone they felt needed it more than them could get it."

When the cemetery director position opened up, she jumped at the chance to find another way to help veterans.

In performing her job, Brown

calls on her own military experience, which includes joining the Minnesota National Guard in high school and receiving advanced individual training at Fort Lee in Virginia. She returned and attended college for three years before getting deployed to Iraq for nearly two years.

She worked in supply management at a Marine base between Ramadi and Fallujah and eventually left the service as an E-5.

When she and her staff are interacting with veterans and their families, they have little difficulty relating to them on a personal basis.

"The military is the kind of experience that you don't know you want or need until you have it," she said. "All of those experiences have put me into one of the most rewarding jobs I've been able to do. Without it, I wouldn't be able to relate to the families and get the help they need and have earned. Once they realize I'm also a veteran, things change and they see me differently."

Brown and her staff - all of whom are veterans themselves - have

developed personal relationships with the families whose loved ones are interred at the facility. During their visits to the cemetery, family members often express their gratitude to the staff for their work in keeping the facility well maintained and give updates on how the family is faring and if they have any further needs.

Brown said she is looking toward the future with optimism for the



The Committal Shelter is the site of many outdoor funeral services for veterans.

cemetery and its mission, especially after the South Dakota Veterans Council last summer announced a \$2.1 million donation from philanthropist T. Denny Sanford, PREMIER Bankcard CEO Miles Beacom and his wife Lisa.

For more information, visit <https://vetaffairs.sd.gov/veteranscemetery/>.





## Grant Deadline Approaching

Applications for the Central Electric Cooperative Operation Round-Up® program are due November 1, 2021. Through Operation Round-Up, funds are awarded to local causes and organizations that benefit area communities. Funds may also be awarded for disaster relief and programs that coordinate energy assistance.

Applicants do not need to be members of Central Electric Cooperative, but eligible projects should directly influence Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld, Miner or Sanborn County. Local residents from each county make up the board of trustees that awards grant funds.

Complete funding guidelines and a fillable application can be found online at [www.centralec.coop/operation-round-up](http://www.centralec.coop/operation-round-up) or by contacting Central Electric at 1-800-477-2892.

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. Since the program's inception in 2015, Central Electric members have invested more than \$130,000 back into local communities.

# CO-OP HAPPENINGS

YEARS OF SERVICE



**Tim Neises**  
Howard Area Foreman  
42 years on Nov. 19



**Dean Uher**  
Manager of Finance and Administration  
3 years on Nov. 5



**Chase Phillips**  
Apprentice Lineman  
1 year on Nov. 2

## HARRINGTON RETIRING, WEIER PROMOTED TO STAKING TECHNICIAN

Staking Technician and former Mitchell Area Foreman Tim Harrington has decided to retire in December following 37 years of dedicated service to the cooperative. Harrington started his career at InterCounty Electric as a lineman in 1984.

With his upcoming retirement, we are pleased to announce that Journeyman Lineman Dustin Weier has been selected to fill Harrington's position of Staking Technician at Central Electric's Betts Road location outside of Mitchell.

Weier will work closely with Harrington, Line Superintendent Dusty Roskens and Manager of Operations Brian Bultje as he shifts into his new role. Weier has been employed by Central Electric since 2007. His experience will continue to be an asset to the cooperative and our membership as he learns the skills necessary to be successful in his new role.

Congratulations, Tim and Dustin!



**Tim Harrington**



**Dustin Weier**

*Office Closed*

Our office will be closed on the following dates:

- Nov. 11 in observance of Veterans Day
- Nov. 25-26 in observance of Thanksgiving
- Dec. 24 in observance of Christmas Eve
- Dec. 27 in observance of Christmas

*Thank you!*



# Helpful Cybersecurity Tips



**Ryan Mueller**  
Systems Coordinator

One of the most common phrases we hear today is “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” During the current pandemic, we have all put extra focus into maintaining good physical health and hygiene to prevent illness. This same type of approach should be taken as we focus on keeping our online lives healthy. Often times it takes an adverse event, such as a pandemic, to start making healthy changes in our life. In the cybersecurity world, we don’t have to look very far for adverse events like the cyber attacks on the Colonial Pipeline, JBS or Crystal Valley Farmers Cooperative.

The year 2020 broke all records when it came to the data and dollars lost in cyber attacks. Cyber attacks grew for all sectors, large corporations, government, small to medium sized business, and individuals. One study showed that cyber related crime was up 600% in 2020. So, what do we do at Central Electric to protect your information from cyber attacks?

## How we keep your information safe

Central Electric takes the security of our grid and your information very seriously and has pursued numerous cybersecurity measures:

- **Partnering with outside consultants.** We have contracted with a firm who specializes in cybersecurity to assist with our security measures.
- **Auditing for network vulnerabilities.** Our systems and networks are scanned for potential vulnerabilities to better protect our data.
- **Training our workforce.** All employees are trained on how to safely use company devices and spot malicious emails. In addition, they are provided monthly security pointers in the employee newsletter.

- **Using a secure payment system.** Members can securely make payments online via SmartHub or over the phone on a secure line by calling 855-730-8707. These systems are in compliance with credit card use requirements.

## Measures to protect yourself

No matter how robust your security software may be, human error or deception can open the door for potential threats. Use the following tips to protect your personal data:

- **Don’t open an attachment in an email unless you are expecting the information.** Hackers may attempt to get your to click on harmful content that will infect your device.
- **Don’t click on links in emails.** Links can appear harmless, but actually redirect you to a harmful site. When possible, open a new browser and go directly to the site. Only download information from web pages you trust.
- **Don’t reuse passwords.** While it may be quick and easy to remember, reusing passwords for multiple accounts allows hackers to quickly gain access to all of your accounts at once.
- **Don’t post current location.** You might be thrilled about the vacation beach photo you just took, but wait until you are home to post updates. Announcing that you are away from home can be an invitation to burglars.

- **There’s no such thing as a “free” app.** When downloading any app, read the terms and conditions carefully. Some apps will sell your information or provide an unwanted backdoor into your device.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month and one of this year’s themes is “Do Your Part: #BeCyberSmart.” With that in mind I would encourage everyone to take that “ounce of prevention” and make some positive changes to your online health, to be #CyberSmart.

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

1. Publication Title: Central Electric Cooperative Connections
2. Publication No.: 018-963
3. Filing Date: September 29, 2021
4. Issue Frequency: Monthly
5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 12
6. Annual Subscription Price: \$6 for members; \$12 Non-members
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher, Editor & Managing Editor: Publisher: Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301 Editor: Tara L. Miller, Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301 Managing Editor: Tara L. Miller, Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
10. Owner: Central Electric Cooperative, 25487 403rd Ave, Mitchell, SD 57301
11. Known bondholders/mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: US Dept of Ag, RUS, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-1566; Cooperative Finance Corp. (CFC), Woodland Park, 2201 Cooperative Way, Herndon, VI, 22071.
12. Tax Status: Purpose, function and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
13. Publication Title: Central Electric Cooperative Connections
14. Issue Date of Circulation Below: Oct. 2021

15. Extent and nature of circulation	Avg. copies prior year	October 2021 issue
A. Total number of copies (net press run)	4846	4849
B. Paid and/or requested circulation (outside county)	4617	4622
C. Total paid and/or requested	4617	4622
D. Free distribution by mail/outside mail	208	207
E. Total free or nominal (outside county copies)	208	207
F. Total distribution	4825	4829
G. Copies not distributed	21	20
H. Total	4846	4849
I. Percent paid/requested	96%	96%



# THE FIRST TO ACT



The state's emergency medical services workforce declined 30 percent last year, though some are still eager to serve.

## Though rural South Dakota is experiencing a shortage of first responders, some are still eager to bear the responsibility

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

The early morning fog had already settled in heavy and thick as a damp blanket when Joey Denison pulled out of his driveway in Lake Norden. He was headed to Lake Preston for his job as an electric lineman and just happened to be fresh off earning his paramedic license in his spare time.

Within just a few minutes of driving along Hwy. 81, the blurry image of a wrecked semi came into view through the haze. The rig was overturned and rested across the roadway. At first blush, the scene appeared to be a one-vehicle accident, but Denison soon saw the small pickup that was crushed beneath the trailer.

When he got close enough to peer inside the vehicle, he saw a young woman who had clearly sustained severe damage to her skull. His four years of training through EMT and paramedic school kicked into high gear.

"There were cars still running into the semi from the other side so I positioned

my truck where no one could run into her car," Denison recalled. "Then I pulled her car out from underneath the trailer with my truck. I could see her head was shattered and someone had already called 911 to report that she was dead. Eventually, we were able to get her out with the Jaws of Life and transport her to the hospital in Madison."

The young lady made a full recovery and she and Denison still stay in contact three years later.

Denison doesn't characterize his actions as heroic; he sees his response as something that neighbors and citizens simply do for one another. Spurred on by his passion for helping others, Denison began his EMT training seven years ago and now volunteers his services in Lake Norden and the surrounding area.

"I always kind of regretted not going into the military, so this is my way of being a community servant," he said.

These days he teaches classes in emergency training and notes a shortage of qualified volunteers to staff rural first responder operations.

According to the South Dakota Department of Health, over the past year the active EMS workforce has declined 30 percent.

Denison said assumptions sometimes depart from reality when it comes to EMS work, and he encourages those who have a penchant for serving others to consider first responder training.



Joey Denison says emergency response work is both challenging and rewarding.

"The physical act of rendering first aid is a lot of repetitive training and muscle memory, but people think it's too complex. If you can catch a baseball, you can put your hand over a cut. It's not that hard," he said. "We can't be afraid to help someone in need in an emergency situation. Someday it could be you who needs the help."



# A LIFETIME OF CO-OP SERVICE TO MEMBERS

*Co-op leaders recognized at SDAC Hall of Fame banquet*

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Harry Thomas still remembers turning on the “power switch” for the first time at his home when he was a youngster.

That was made possible by his local electric cooperative, and for Thomas it was a life lesson about the great things that can happen through co-op organizations. He went on to serve for nearly four decades on the board of Venture Communications and was one of four recent inductees into the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives Hall of Fame.

Thomas and Paul Symens were recognized as 2021 inductees at the ceremony held in Watertown Sept. 22, while Chuck Birkholt and Dan Lindblom were honored as 2020 inductees. Last year’s banquet was canceled due to the pandemic.

“I’ve been around cooperative systems all my life,” Thomas said. “I remember when the co-op brought power to the farm and when Sully Buttes built the first telephone line out there. Those things would not have happened if not for cooperatives. The Bell companies built in the towns, but they had no



Inducted into the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives Hall of Fame were Harry Thomas, Chuck Birkholt and Paul Symens. Not shown is Dan Lindblom, who was unable to attend the induction ceremony in Watertown.

interest in going into the country.”

Symens served on the board at Lake Region Electric in Webster before he was elected to the state Legislature in 1987 and again in 1996. He was a board member for Farmers Union Marketing and Processing for 36 years.

“I’ve put in a lot of time with cooperatives and I know how co-ops work. I was raised in co-ops and it has been a pleasure to be a part of that process. The magic of co-ops is people working together to help each other, and as long as board and management do their jobs, it’s going to be successful.”

Symens said his advice for the younger generation of co-op leaders would be to learn about the history of cooperatives, how they were founded and why they exist.

“Learning from history will teach you a lot and keep you from making mistakes,” he said.

Birkholt started his cooperative career

as a laborer at Cam Wal Electric in Selby. He went to work “digging holes and setting poles” for 85 cents an hour until he discovered he could make more money as a lineman.

He worked at the co-op for 45 years, the last eight as general manager. He went on to serve on the board at Venture Communications for the past 21 years.

“I told my wife I always wanted to see



Hall of Fame inductee Chuck Birkholt addresses the audience at the Watertown Event Center.

what it was like on the other side of the board table,” he said. “But I think she just wanted me out of the house.”

Lindblom, a long-time board member at Black Hills Electric in Custer, was unable to attend the banquet.



Duane “Stub” Miller, center, is greeted with enthusiasm by the patrons at Animal’s Bar and Grill in his hometown of Canova.

# VETERAN SHARES WORLD WAR II STORIES, WORDS OF WISDOM

## CANOVA NATIVE DUANE “STUB” MILLER REFLECTS ON D-DAY AND HIS TRIP BACK TO FRANCE.

**Billy Gibson**

South Dakota Rural Electric Association

The lunchtime crowd at the Animal’s Bar and Grill in Canova takes notice when Duane “Stub” Miller walks into the place.

“Hey Stub, how’s it going?” says one.

“Good to see you, Stub,” says another. “How ya been?”

The 96-year-old WWII infantry veteran makes the rounds to share a few jokes and engage in some gentle ribbing.

Once he and his son Ed settle into a nearby table, he quips that the lunchtime patrons always give him a heartier reception than he received back in 1946 when he arrived home from the war carrying shrapnel in his left knee.

“My dad met me at the railroad tracks at Sioux Falls,” Miller recalls.

“I told him I was getting hungry and he said, ‘We’ve got chores to do yet. Mom will feed you when we get home.’ It’s a different deal today. Nowadays, every general and every congressman is there to meet them at the gate.”

Transitioning into a civilian life of farming and ranching was a stark contrast to landing on the shores of Normandy after the D-Day invasion and battling German forces.

Miller recalls jumping off the side of a landing craft into the water and making his way to shore carrying a rifle and a full field pack. He was wounded one night while his unit was on patrol outside the town of Percy near St. Lo. The unit encountered a small band of German soldiers who lobbed hand grenades over the hedgerows.

“We were so close we could hear them talking. I could hear the hissing when they threw that grenade and someone yelled, ‘Drop down, boys!’” Miller remembered. “There were about four or five of us (wounded soldiers) who went into a barn. Some Germans came in

with their guns and saw us laying there and then just moved on. They could have killed us but they didn’t. I don’t know why.”

Miller was in St. Lo when the town was liberated from German occupation. Accompanied by his son Ed, Miller returned to the French town in 2012 to take part in an anniversary celebration commemorating the defeat of the Germans.

He was recognized by local officials, given a key to the city by the mayor and bestowed the Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor.

“It was a big celebration and a huge deal,” Miller recalls.

As for that shrapnel in his leg, Miller said the physician who treated him told him he’d never be able to regain full use of his left knee. But that didn’t slow him down a bit.

After returning home, Miller got together with his brother Bob and two others to organize a baseball team that would later be known as the Canova Gang and claim many championships.



He started off playing left field, but later found himself behind the plate as catcher.

“It was painful, you bet, but I enjoyed playing,” Miller said. He went on to earn a spot in the S.D. Amateur Baseball Hall of Fame for his baseball contributions on the field, and for his decades of service behind the plate as an umpire. Duane’s father, Vernon “Spike” Miller is also in the S.D. Amateur Baseball Hall of Fame.

Which begs the inevitable question: “What’s worse – going to war, or umpiring a game and dealing with angry baseball players and their parents in the stands?”

Miller is quick with a response and says with a chuckle, “It’s a toss-up. To umpire, you have to have good eyesight and poor hearing.”

Grid-scale electricity still had not reached the family farm outside Canova when he returned home in 1946. There was a windmill mounted on top of the roof and connected to a small generator that would deliver a few spurts of juice when the wind was blowing.

“But the wind didn’t blow too much

back in those days,” Miller remembers. “Especially when you needed electricity.”

Soon, InterCounty Electric Cooperative reached the area with grid-scale power, and later the co-op would become Central Electric Cooperative.

## “PEOPLE DON’T KNOW IT TODAY, BUT HAVING ELECTRICITY IS SOMETHING WE SHOULDN’T TAKE FOR GRANTED.”

Miller points out that four of his seven sons attended Mitchell Technical College to pursue careers as electric utility lineworkers, two of them crew foreman and two branching off into management. His daughter-in-law, Tara Miller, is Central Electric’s Manager of Communications, and he also has four grandsons that have worked as electric utility lineworkers or engineers.

His son Derrin took over the family farm, but died of cancer in 2019. Now,

Derrin’s son Tanner represents the fifth generation of farmers to oversee the operation.

“I’m proud of all of my kids and grandkids,” he said, adding that his daughter, Stacy, lives nearby and is always around to help. “All of my kids worked hard and did the best they could. Being a lineman isn’t easy work, but it really helps people so they can have the electricity they need. People don’t know it today, but having electricity is something we shouldn’t take for granted.”



Miller has four sons that have worked for electric utilities, including Southeastern Electric’s Salem foreman Travis Miller. Travis is the husband of Central Electric’s Manager of Communications, Tara Miller.



Miller poses with his baseball awards and memorabilia.



Ed and Duane Miller visited Omaha Beach when they traveled to France in 2012.

Miller was honored with a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor in 2012.



**Thanksgiving**  
November 25, 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.

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.

**OCTOBER 22-23**

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

**OCTOBER 22-24, 28-30**

**A Little Piece of Heaven**  
Grand Opera House, Pierre, SD, call 605-224-7826 to purchase tickets

**OCTOBER 23**

**Aberdeen Oktoberfest**  
Aberdeen Civic Arena, Aberdeen, SD, 605-380-8448

**OCTOBER 29-30**

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

**OCTOBER 30**

**16th Holiday Shopping Extravaganza**  
Davison County Fairgrounds, Mitchell, SD, call Cindy at 605-999-8563 for more info

**OCTOBER 30**

**Scare in the Square**  
Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

**OCTOBER 30**

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

**OCTOBER 31**

**Halloween Bash Weekend at Mazing Acres Pumpkin Patch**  
30851 433rd Avenue, Yankton, SD, 605-760-2759

**NOVEMBER 4**

**Chris Young Famous Friends Tour**  
Summit Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

**NOVEMBER 6**

**Cyrus Steele Comedy Show**  
Homestake Opera House, Lead, SD, visit <https://www.homestakeoperahouse.org/> for more info and tickets

**NOVEMBER 5-7, 12-14, 19-21**

**Julius Caesar**  
Black Hills Playhouse, Rapid City, SD, visit <https://www.bhct.org/> for more info and tickets

**NOVEMBER 12-13**

**Sioux Empire Arts and Crafts Show**  
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-332-6000

**NOVEMBER 13**

**Christmas at the Homestead**  
Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve, North Sioux City, SD, 605-232-0873

**NOVEMBER 13**

**Sisseton Area Merchants and 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

**NOVEMBER 20**

**Little Norge Fest: A Taste of Scandinavia**  
Canyon Lake Activity Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-342-4226

**NOVEMBER 26**

**Parade of Lights**  
Dakota Avenue, Huron, SD, 605-352-0000

**NOVEMBER 27**

**Holiday Celebration and Winter Market/Festival of Lights Parade**  
Downtown, Rapid City, SD, 605-381-4204

**NOVEMBER 26-28**

**Beautiful - The Carole King Musical**  
Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD, visit <https://www.washingtonpavilion.org/> for more info and tickets

**DECEMBER 2**

**Christmas on the Prairie**  
526 North Broadway Avenue Miller, SD, 605-853-3098

**DECEMBER 4**

**Rapid City Garden Club's Wreath & Centerpiece Sale**  
Central States Fairgrounds, Rapid City, SD, 605-343-0710

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