

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



**Cross country skiing is a way to keep moving and maintain physical and mental health during the winter months.**

## **Skiing for fun and health**

**Nordic skiers find paradise on the snow**  
Pages 8-9

**Car dealers adapt to EV market**  
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# Despite supply challenges, capital credits issued and rates remain unchanged for 2022



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager

Your board of directors, management and employees wish you and your families a very happy and joyous holiday season. In the spirit of giving, your electric cooperative has a few gifts to offer our member owners.

The first gift is the announcement that general service electric rates will not change in 2022. We finished our predictions for the coming year, and we expect our revenue and expenses to allow us to meet our financial requirements without a rate change. I am proud to say your cooperative has held the current rates since January 2019. This is very good news during times when we are experiencing increases in so many other areas. Much credit for this announcement must go to East River Electric and Basin Electric for providing stable wholesale power costs once again.

The second gift coming from your cooperative is the retirement of capital credits. Due to our ending the year in good financial position, Central Electric will be retiring \$550,000. Basin Electric's and East River Electric's added retirements bring the grand total to almost \$826,000 to be returned to our members as we close out 2021. You should have seen this credit on the bill you received in December.

Last month I promised to share our plan of work for the coming year. We believe we will be able to restart the Basin Electric Bus Tour for members in July. We will also offer to send a select number of High School Junior Students to represent us on the NRECA Youth Tour.

We also plan to purchase two electric vehicles (EVs) in the coming year. Grant funds are being used to help pay for a new Polaris Ranger XP Kinetic EV. The Ranger EV side-by-side promises to need very little maintenance and be able to work harder and ride smoother than any UTV in its class. We will use the electric UTV in our operations and make it available for members to experience. You can read

more about the project on page 10. The other vehicle we plan to bring into our fleet is the Ford Lightning electric pickup. This will replace an existing vehicle in our fleet and enable us to educate ourselves, our members and the general public on electric transportation. Of course, these purchases depend on delivery in the coming year.

Your cooperative will invest almost \$3.5 million in building electric services to new members, making system improvements for reliability and replacing older equipment and meters. We plan to replace 55 miles of dated overhead lines in the coming year, which is an expected investment of \$2.4 million. We have about 1,630 miles of older overhead line remaining. Most of that will be replaced, but some will be removed as members disconnect farm sites or wells with no plans for future electric service. We have made significant progress in the past few years and will continue to focus on the future reliability of our system.

All of this depends on the ability of our suppliers to deliver materials. Andrew Baier, our Materials/Plant Supervisor and Brian Bultje, our Manager of Operations, work very closely with our suppliers and manufacturers to anticipate delays and plan our work. We have had to increase inventory and order materials much further in advance to keep operations running smoothly. To illustrate this point, we ordered a replacement bucket truck in the fall of 2020 and expect it to be delivered in spring of 2022. We are currently ordering transformers for delivery in 2023, as this industry is projecting deliveries are almost one year out. Our electricians and HVAC professionals have seen delays and price hikes to nearly all the materials they use daily.

Central Electric Cooperative will take what we have learned in 2021 and go into the new year ready to work with a willingness to change plans and practice patience. I expect another good year as we work together and support one another.

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)

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**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.centralelec.coop

**Our Mission**

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

**Non-Discrimination Statement:**

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

**October board meeting summary**

The board of directors met Oct. 18, 2021, at Central Electric Cooperative's Betts Road Service Center for the regular board meeting. The board approved the September meeting minutes. They then reviewed monthly reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and financials

Association updates. Discussion followed.

Director Wolbrink provided East River Electric Power Cooperative updates. Discussion followed.

Director VanWalleghen shared updates regarding the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives. Discussion followed.

**BOARD ACTION**

The board acted upon the following:

- A motion was made and seconded to appoint Director Bechen to the Operation Round-Up board of trustees. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
- A motion was made and seconded to adopt a resolution to approve the general retirement of capital credits to members for an amount not to exceed \$550,000 plus Affiliated Capital Credits of \$284,635.20. The general retirement will pay the years 1982 and 1983 in full with the balance applied on the remaining years by the percentage method. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

A special board meeting was planned to discuss the work plan and budget on Nov. 8. The next regular board meeting was planned Nov. 15.

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

**BOARD REPORT**

General Manager Ken Schlimgen updated the board on the following:

- Rural Electric Economic Development loan committee
- Basin Electric updates
- Chamberlain Smokey Groves housing development
- Legislative activities
- Pukwana maintenance agreement
- Howard land purchase for future outpost facility
- Community outreach activities
- Inventory updates
- 2022 cooperative work plan

Manager of Finance and Administration Dean Uher reviewed with the board the cooperative's 2020 IRS Form 990. Discussion followed.

The board discussed replacement of outpost facilities.

Director Loudner provided South Dakota Rural Electric Association updates. She discussed upcoming trainings and legislative activities.

Director Hofer provided National Rural Electric

<b>FINANCIAL REPORT</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE OCTOBER 2020</b>	<b>YEAR TO DATE OCTOBER 2021</b>
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	270,135,060 kWh	298,469,853 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$ 27,107,491	\$ 29,238,607
Total Cost of Service	\$ 25,553,867	\$ 28,537,859
Operating Margins	\$ 1,553,624	\$ 700,748

# Crunch the numbers on New Year's savings in your home

If your New Year's resolution to spend less and save more always fizzles out by March, don't fret. With a few simple adjustments in your house, you can save money on your energy bill each month. Here's how:

- Save up to 20 percent on heating by installing a programmable thermostat and setting it to automatically lower the heat when you leave the house for more than five hours and when the family goes to bed for the night.
- Save 1–3 percent on heating costs for each degree you turn the thermostat down. For optimal savings, set the thermostat at 68 degrees while at home and 65 degrees at night and before you leave the house for an extended period.
- Save up to 20 percent on heating and cooling bills by sealing air leaks around doors and windows with caulk and weatherstripping. This inexpensive energy saver will pay for itself within a year.
- Save at least 25 percent on air conditioning when you replace your old, inefficient central AC with one that has a seasonal energy-efficiency ratio of 14 or higher.
- Save up to 40 percent on what you spend to run your refrigerator by replacing an old unit with a new Energy Star-certified model.
- Save more than 50 percent on energy for cooking when you use a microwave oven instead of a conventional oven to heat meals.
- Save more than 10 percent on your water heating bill by lowering the water heater temperature from 140 degrees to 120.
- Save 75 percent or more on energy for lighting by replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs. They also last about 25 times longer. Switching out CFLs for LEDs will reduce lighting costs as much as 50 percent.
- Consistently turning off lights when not in use or when natural light is sufficient can reduce lighting expenses 10–40 percent.
- Enable the power management function on computers and sleep setting on appliances.

## CO-OPS IN ACTION



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 at local community events, youth leadership programs and charitable fundraising events like the annual Line Patrol Charity Ride. We've got South Dakota covered!

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



## Keep out of power boxes

### Trinity Kurtenbach

Trinity knows that those green "power boxes" that are often seen near homes or along roadways contain electrical equipment that can pose a hazard. Trinity is the child of Cory Kurtenbach and Tonya Buchholz-Froehlich of Nunda and attends Sioux Valley Elementary in Volga. 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.



# SOUPS FOR THE SOUL

## SMASHED POTATO SOUP

**Ingredients:**  
 1/2 cup coarsely chopped carrot  
 1/2 cup coarsely chopped celery  
 1 pkg 14 oz refrigerated mashed potatoes  
 1 14.5 oz can chicken broth  
 1/2 cup milk  
 1 garlic clove pressed  
 1/4 tsp salt  
 1/8 tsp pepper  
 1/2 cup sour cream  
 2 Tbsp fresh parsley

### METHOD

Place mashed potatoes in medium saucepan. Gradually add broth and milk, whisking until mixture is smooth. Stir in carrot, celery, garlic and salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, 10 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in sour cream and parsley. Top with desired toppings. 4 servings; 5 cups. Optional toppings: sliced green onion, shredded cheddar cheese, cooked, crumbled bacon.

**Becki Hausser, Tripp**

## CREAMY CHICKEN GNOCCHI SOUP

**Ingredients:**  
 6 Tbsp butter  
 2 Tbsp olive oil  
 2 cups onion  
 1 cup diced celery  
 4 garlic cloves (minced)  
 1/2 cup all-purpose flour  
 4 cups half and half  
 1 (32 oz) container chicken broth (add more for a thinner soup)  
 1 Tbsp thyme  
 2 cups carrots  
 2 cups spinach or kale  
 3 cups diced, cooked chicken  
 2 (16 oz) packages potato gnocchi  
 Salt and pepper to taste

### METHOD

Add butter and olive oil to large pot over medium heat. Sauté onions, celery, and garlic until tender. Add flour to create a roux and stir for one minute. Slowly add the half and half and chicken broth. Stir until it thickens. Add the thyme, carrots, spinach, chicken and gnocchi. Cook for 5-10 minutes until gnocchi is cooked and soup thickened. If soup gets too thick just add more chicken broth. Salt and pepper to taste.

**Tracey Burkett, Olivet**

## CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

**Ingredients:**  
 1-1.5 lbs chicken thighs bone in or boneless (skinless)  
 3 bay leaves  
 5 peppercorns, whole  
 1 small whole onion peeled, hairy end intact  
 3 large garlic cloves  
 12 cups chicken stock low sodium  
 2 large carrots diced  
 2 cups potatoes diced  
 1 1/2 cups egg noodles or any short pasta  
 1 1/2 tsp salt  
 1 tsp olive oil  
 3 tsp fresh dill, parsley or green onion finely chopped

### METHOD

In a large Dutch oven or pot, add chicken thighs, bay leaves, peppercorns, onion, 2 garlic cloves and stock. On high heat, bring soup to a boil covered then move lid to the side a bit to keep soup clear. Cook for 20 minutes, removing foam as it rises to the top with a mesh strainer. Dice potatoes and carrots. Chop dill and grate garlic. Add potatoes and carrots, stir and reduce heat to medium. Cook with half lid open for 5 minutes. Add pasta, stir and cook for another 5 minutes. Discard onion, bay leaves and peppercorns with mesh strainer. Add salt, olive oil, grated garlic clove, dill and ground black pepper to taste. You can also shred chicken right in the pot. Let sit covered for 5 minutes.

**ifoodreal.com**

**Please send your favorite soup 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.**

# Heating assistance available

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) helps eligible South Dakotans pay for home heating costs. Energy assistance may not pay for all your home heating costs, but it could help ease the strain of the heating season. Energy assistance is available from October 1 to May 15.

The program may also help if your heating costs are included in the cost of your rent or if you pay heating costs directly to your landlord in addition to your rent.

Eligibility is based on:

- Number of people in household
- Gross income of everyone in the household
- Your home's main heat source type
- County you live in

How to apply:

- E-mail LIEAPApp@state.sd.us to either request an application or e-mail a completed application.
- Call toll-free at 1.800.233.8503 to request an application be mailed
- Complete an application online at <https://dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/energyassistance/lowincome.aspx>
- Visit your local Department of Social Services office to obtain an application.

### 2021-2022 HEATING SEASON INCOME LIMITS

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	MAXIMUM 3-MONTH INCOME
1 Person	\$6,440
2 Person	\$8,710
3 Person	\$10,980
4 Person	\$13,250
5 Person	\$15,438
6 Person	\$17,567
7 Person	\$17,966
8 Person	\$18,365
9 Person	\$18,765
10 Person	\$20,153

# CO-OP HAPPENINGS

YEARS OF SERVICE



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager  
37 years on Jan. 28



**Tony Roth**  
Mitchell Area Foreman  
17 years on Jan. 3



**Kevin Johnson**  
Journeyman Electrician  
16 years on Jan. 16

## Central Electric Cooperative wishes our members a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Our office will be closed on the following dates:  
 Dec. 24 in observance of Christmas Eve  
 Dec. 27 in observance of Christmas  
 Dec. 31 in observance of New Years

We hope you enjoy time with family and friends this holiday season.

Happy Holidays from your Friends at



CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative









## Harrington retires

Staking Technician and former Mitchell Area Foreman Tim Harrington has retired from Central Electric Cooperative following 37 years of service. He is pictured above with his wife Karen during a retirement open house on Dec. 10. The Harringtons look forward to spending more time with family now that Tim is no longer on call.



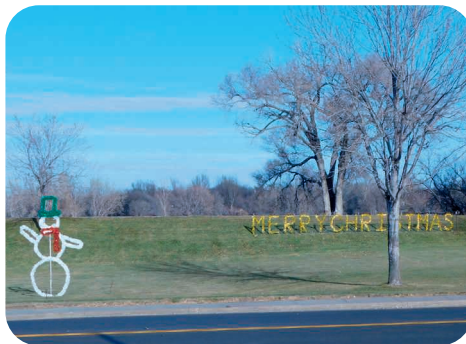
Tim talks with Central Electric Cooperative Director At Large Merl Bechen, President Duane Wolbrink and Ruth Wolbrink.



Tim poses for a family selfie. Pictured are son-in-law Cody Dimak, Tim holding granddaughter Chloe, Karen holding granddaughter Madeline, and daughter MaryAnne takes the photo.



## Chamberlain boasts holiday spirit





# FUN AND FITNESS ON THE SNOW

An estimated 5.2 million Americans participate in cross country skiing while reaping the rewards of being active during the winter months.

## Nordic Ski Club promotes the benefits of cross country skiing on mind, body and soul

**Billy Gibson**

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

Many winter sports enthusiasts are firm in their belief that snow skis are meant to travel in one direction only – downhill.

But members of the Black Hills Nordic Ski Club use their skinny skis to take them wherever the trail may lead.

The club's winter playground is located at Big Hills XC Trails seven miles southwest of Spearfish where its

members have frolicked in the snow since the 1970s. Early prospectors named the area after they encountered steep grades in their pursuit of gold and fortune, but these days people flock to Big Hill for fitness and fun.

With more than 1,200 Facebook followers, the group invites not only cross country skiers to enjoy the 13.6 miles of trails but also skate skiers, fat bikers, snow shoers and even snow man makers.

Immediate past president Josh Wangeman explains there are an

estimated 5.2 million Nordic skiing enthusiasts throughout the country who seek both physical and mental health restoration along the trails.

After spending his day teaching science to his eighth graders at Spearfish Middle School, Wangeman likes to unwind in the woods.

"I've found that it's a good way to escape the crowds and participate in the wonders of nature," he said. "It's a great sport if you're looking to find some solace, enjoy the outdoors and get a good workout at the same time."

Wangeman, who also enjoys swimming and cross country running, fell into the sport after joining the National Guard six years ago. He began training for the biathlon, a competition where skiers travel from check point to check point with a .22 caliber rifle and shoot at targets. He has represented the Guard at competitions in Minnesota, Wyoming, Vermont and Utah.

Like many outdoor activities, cross country skiing has seen a significant surge in interest in the past year. One of the top attractions of the sport is that the cost of entry is relatively small. For instance, a quality mountain bike can cost thousands of dollars and other pastimes require a substantial financial investment for equipment, gear, fees and more.

"You can find some used gear and get everything you need for around \$100, or \$300 for new equipment," he said. "Trail access is free and you'll be outdoors getting some great exercise. As far as learning the technique, it's a straightforward process that's almost as simple as walking."

Wangeman said skiing across the snowy terrain can be a cinch compared to the work that's required to keep the trails maintained. Members of the Nordic Ski Club join forces with the Grooming Alliance of





Cross country skiers receive both the mental and physical health benefits of a sport that's economical to pursue.

Spearfish and log hundreds of hours of labor and donate hundreds of dollars each season to keep the pathways well-groomed for all to share. Some trails are designated for snow shoeing and fat biking only. Volunteers have also built a warming shelter in a meadow that's situated among the five loop trails where skiers can take a break from the wind and cold.

Aside from the Big Hills XC Trails, the Black Hills National Forest area has other sites suitable for cross country skiing. The Eagle Cliff Network is located 15 miles southwest of Lead and offers 20 miles of trails that cross open meadows and meander through Ponderosa pine forests. Half the trails are rated "difficult."

Bear Mountain is situated 10 miles

southwest of Hill City and features rocky ridges, abundant wildlife and scenic overlooks along its 16-mile trail system.

Additional pathways in the area can be found at Beaver Creek, Bear Butte State Park, Custer State Park and portions of the Centennial and Mickelson Trails.

Here are a few helpful tips for those who are thinking about taking to the wintry trails:

1. Start your day right with a hot beverage.
2. Pack well, and don't forget gloves, hat and extra socks. Layer, layer, layer.
3. Choose the right place to ski with good grooming and a reasonable and amount of flat terrain.
4. Consider taking lessons to

## Cross country skiing sites

These state parks offer trails for cross-country skiers to enjoy:

- Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve
- Beaver Creek Nature Area
- Big Sioux Recreation Area
- George S. Mickelson Trail
- Hartford Beach State Park
- LaFramboise Island Nature Area
- Lake Herman State Park
- Lake Poinsett Recreation Area
- Newton Hills State Park
- Oakwood Lakes State Park
- Pelican Lake Recreation Area
- Richmond Lake Recreation Area
- Sica Hollow State Park
- Walker's Point Recreation Area



Volunteers keep the trails groomed for cross country skiing at Big Hill and also constructed a warming shelter, a popular site on cold and windy winter days.

improve your form.

5. Be prepared to fall. Acquiring balance takes time.

6. Keep your energy up with a ready snack such as a granola bar or an apple.

7. Have fun. Explore a bit and lose yourself in the rhythm of the sport.

8. Don't forget to look around you, and keep an eye out for wildlife or scenic vistas.

9. Reward yourself! You worked hard and did something adventurous.





# RURAL HORIZON

## GRANT ENABLES CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE TO STUDY THE FUTURE OF ELECTRIC FARM VEHICLES



**Patrick Soukup**  
Manager of Member Services & Marketing

Many of our agricultural members use side-by-sides, also known as utility terrain vehicles (UTVs). Chances are, they spend a great deal of money each year to operate and maintain gas-powered UTVs as part of their farming operations. Central Electric Cooperative was recently awarded a grant from the Beneficial Electrification League to help purchase an electric UTV and study its performance and cost of operation versus traditional gas-powered units.

Through the Rural Horizon project, the cooperative plans to study the performance and functionality of the electric UTV. We also want you to be part of this experience, so we plan to allow members to bring the UTV to their home, farm or business and try it for themselves.

It's possible that one of the greatest advantages of electric UTVs is the low maintenance cost. As we study the unit, we strive to educate our membership about the ability to

eliminate fuel costs, oil changes and maintenance expenses. As fossil fuels have seen drastic price fluctuations in recent decades, electricity prices have remained relatively steady.

New technology and enhanced capabilities of the 2022 Polaris Ranger XP Kinetic have the potential to greatly benefit agricultural producers, which is why we are excited to jump into this project. It also gives your cooperative the opportunity to learn about charging options and what impact it could have on our system as our rural members begin to adopt more electric technology.

### Rural Horizon objectives:

- Save agricultural producers money
- Improve quality of life for our members
- Benefit the environment
- Foster a more robust and resilient grid

As we evaluate performance and energy use associated with the electric UTV, we will share that data at area events and on our website.

Grant funds will be used to offset some expenses of the program. We look forward to learning more about the Polaris Ranger XP Kinetic once it arrives in 2022.





# Grant Recipients Announced

Central Electric Cooperative is awarding more than \$16,000 in Operation Round-Up grants to support area projects.

Through Operation Round-Up, participating cooperative members round their monthly electric bill to the next whole dollar. The average member contribution of 50 cents per month rolls into a charitable fund to support local causes. Grants are awarded from the fund twice each year.

The Operation Round-Up board of trustees approved the following grants in November:

- \$750 – Breaking Bread Ministries of Mitchell for the community Thanksgiving meal
- \$2,500 – Buffalo County Rural Fire District for jaws of life equipment
- \$2,500 – Community Organized Resources for Educating our Youth of Alexandria for the Freshman Impact Program
- \$1,000 – Davison County Horse Committee for arena upgrades
- \$500 – Gann Valley Community Center for building maintenance
- \$1,000 – Kimball Rodeo Club for grounds and equipment upgrades
- \$500 – Miner County Conservation District for youth projects
- \$1,500 – Plankinton Ambulance Association for airway mannequins or radios
- \$2,000 – Rosedale Fire Department for a grass fire rig
- \$2,100 – The Children’s Ark Daycare of Chamberlain for kitchen upgrades
- \$1,000 – Town and Kountry Kid 4-H for a new flagpole in Letcher
- \$1,000 – Westlawn Cemetery of Letcher for tree removal

The Operation Round-Up board of trustees includes Julie Dykstra of Stickney, Jill Ekstrum of Kimball, Ellen Speck of Gann Valley, David Jorgenson of Mitchell, LeAnn Moe of Alexandria, Scott Kolousek of Wessington Springs, Connie Hattervig of Carthage, Carla Amick of Letcher and Merl Bechen of Mitchell. The cooperative’s eight-county service area includes Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld, Miner and Sanborn Counties.

Since 2015, Central Electric Cooperative members have invested more than \$146,000 back into their local communities through Operation Round-Up. The funds are awarded to organizations that make a direct impact in the communities of Central Electric members. The next grant application deadline is May 2, 2022.

For more information, please call Central Electric Cooperative at 1-800-477-2892, visit our website at [www.centralec.coop/operation-round-up](http://www.centralec.coop/operation-round-up) or talk to your local Operation Round-Up trustee.





# CAR DEALERS ADAPT TO EV MARKET

Jesse Johnson of Jan Busse Ford in Highmore keeps customers informed of the latest industry news. *Photo by Billy Gibson.*

## Car dealers adapt to emerging EV industry by making new investments and keeping their customers informed

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Keeping up with the emergence of the electric vehicle market is like listening to the hushed intonations of the announcer at the end of a 1960s-style soap opera.

Will a reliable charging network be constructed?

Will EVs become more affordable?

Will drivers ever overcome their range anxiety?

Will the political winds change direction?

Tune in tomorrow. Same time. Same channel.

Scott Shepherd is no fan of soap operas, but he's happy to give you his take on the topic. Shepherd is a career educator who has taken the EV leap and last June invested in Ford's debut model: the Mustang Mach-E. Shepherd recently delivered a presentation

describing his experience and insights to a group of electric cooperative representatives.

Subtitled "The Good, the Kind of Bad, and the Ugly," the presentation was intended to be an unbiased, unvarnished and apolitical analysis of the investment he made last year. Though Shepherd admits to being somewhat of an EVangelist, audience members were eager to hear Shepherd's comments to help them convey useful, accurate information to their electric cooperative consumers back in their respective service areas.

On the positive side, Shepherd said the advanced technology and the instant torque of his Mach-E deliver an exciting driving experience, and he likes doing his part to reduce emissions. His dealer, Jesse Johnson at Jan Busse Ford (Pioneer Garage, Inc.) in Highmore, was knowledgeable and ready to answer all of his questions and concerns. He noted

that factoring in a federal tax credit of up to \$7,500, he was able to save nearly \$1,000 in his first 5,000 miles of travel in the Mach-E.

"There's no gas tank to fill at over \$3 per gallon and no oil to change," he said. "A trip to Sioux Falls cost me \$6 in electricity, compared to \$49 in gas for an ICE (internal combustion engine)."

**250**  
Approximate number of EV charging stations throughout the Upper Midwest.

On the not-so-good side, Shepherd pointed to the high front-end purchase price, reduced range during the winter months, the lack of Level 2 chargers in homes and the fact that traditional vehicles sometimes block access to public charging stations. He said in the rush to build out a reliable system of charging stations throughout the region,

standardized practices have yet to be developed.

“There can be a lot of inconsistent pricing with public charging stations,” he said. “Some require a connection fee plus a per-minute fee as high as 50 cents per kilowatt hour. The networks and the number of phone apps that are out there can be confusing, and I’ve also run across some charging stations that were malfunctioning.”

He pointed out that electric cooperatives, municipal utilities and investor-owned utilities in South Dakota and Minnesota are working together to create a charging network for public use that will reduce range anxiety for EV drivers. Presently, there are nine Tesla supercharger stations and four non-Tesla chargers in South Dakota, as well as more than 250 throughout the region and dozens more for the use of guests at hotels, campgrounds and other private properties.

Electrify America Fast recently announced the company is planning to install a bank of supercharging stations in Wall sometime in January, and state officials are looking to continue to invest money into light-duty charging stations from the second round of the Volkswagen Electric Vehicle Charging Station Program.

Johnson, Shepherd’s sales agent, said these days he’s getting lots of questions from scores of potential buyers who are ponying up the \$100 refundable



Jesse Johnson is shown adjusting the drive mode in the Ford Mustang Mach-E.

*Photo by Billy Gibson.*

fee at [www.ford.com](http://www.ford.com) to get placed on a waiting list for not only the Mach-E but also the new Ford F-150 Lightning, the company’s first electric-powered pick up. In fact, he has a personal spot on the Lightning list along with more than 160,000 others across the country. Tesla, GMC, Rivian and Chevrolet are also introducing their own pick ups.

“We’re getting calls from all kinds of people - retirees, commuting moms and dads, gear heads, collectors, technology buffs, environmentalists, farmers, you name it,” said Johnson, who has already sent two early adopting customers home with the Mustang Mach-E and has a third on his lot.

Johnson said car and truck dealers will have to redouble their efforts to provide service after the sale as the EV industry continues to emerge. He keeps his customers, including the many who are on the purchaser’s waiting list, apprised of any new developments

**160,000**  
Number of reservations made for the new Ford Lightning F-150 at [www.ford.com](http://www.ford.com).

in the market. For example, when manufacturers began recommending that owners refrain from exceeding an 80 percent charge - unless going on an extended trip - to extend the car’s battery life, Johnson made sure his customers got the memo.

In preparing for the transportation future, car dealers are having to make significant investments in education for their sales force, training for technicians and new service and maintenance equipment to accommodate EVs.

“EVs are fun to drive with their immediate torque and safe-driving technology,” Johnson said. “These vehicles are an excellent option for those wanting to forget about the price of gas, reduce maintenance and emissions. We understand they may not fit everyone’s lifestyle, but we see a definite place for them in the future.”



Scott Shepherd is shown above talking with students at the Lake Area Technical College Automotive Technology Program about his experience as an EV owner.



## SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR AREA STUDENTS

Each year, Basin Electric Power Cooperative awards one \$1,000 scholarship to a dependent of a member-owner of Central Electric Cooperative.

To be eligible, a student must be:  
1) a dependent of a member-owner whose primary residence receives electric service from Central Electric Cooperative;  
2) enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited post-secondary institution; and  
3) a U.S. citizen.

The Jay Headley Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 is awarded in honor of the late Jay Headley of White Lake.

To be eligible, a student must be:  
1) a dependent of a member-owner whose primary residence receives electric service from Central Electric Cooperative;  
2) pursuing a bachelor's of science degree in an agricultural related field; and  
3) a U.S. citizen.

### How to Apply

Applications are available at [www.centraleccoop.com/scholarships](http://www.centraleccoop.com/scholarships) or by contacting our office.

Scholarships can be emailed to [cec@centraleccoop.com](mailto:cec@centraleccoop.com) or mailed to Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301.

Scholarship applications are due Feb. 1, 2022.



## BROOKS AND WEBER FEATURED ON DAKOTA NEWS NOW

Central Electric Cooperative is pleased to share that Dilyn Brooks of Woonsocket and Julia Weber of Emery have been named Touchstone Energy Scholars of the Week.

Scholar of the Week nominations are submitted by area school principals and faculty whose selections are based on excellence in the classroom and service in the community.

Brooks, a senior at Woonsocket High School, is the child of John and Elizabeth Brooks and was featured on Dakota News Now on Nov. 21. She is involved with 4-H, FFA, chorus, National Honor Society, student council and community volunteer projects.

Weber, a senior at Bridgewater Emery High School, is the daughter of Doug and Wendy Weber and will be featured on Dakota News Now on Jan. 10. She participates in volleyball, basketball,

track, journalism, FCCLA, NHS, student council and youth group.

The Scholar of the Week program is a partnership between Dakota News Now Television, Central Electric Cooperative and other local Touchstone Energy Cooperatives that honors accomplished high school students.

As a Scholars of the Week, Brooks and Weber receive a \$250 scholarship from Central Electric Cooperative. They are also eligible to receive a \$1,000 scholarship or one of two \$500 scholarships that will be given away at the annual Scholar of the Year banquet.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives are local, active members of their communities, dedicated to building our communities and improving our way of life. Since the Scholar of the Week program began, more than \$80,000 has been awarded to more than 530 students. The

program is a partnership between local Touchstone Energy Cooperatives and their members that captures the commitment that electric cooperatives have to the communities they serve.



Dilyn Brooks  
Woonsocket H.S. Senior



Julia Weber  
Bridgewater Emery H.S. Senior

## LINKE FAMILY SHOWS APPRECIATION FOR RETIRED BOARD MEMBER



Following the Annual Meeting in September 2021, the Linke family of rural Woonsocket presented Jim and Cristine Headley with South Dakota State University apparel to thank them for helping the kids pay for college. Pictured from left: Aaron Linke, Megan Linke, Cristine Headley, Jim Headley, Nathan Linke and Jonathan Linke.

### AG ROOTS RUN DEEP IN THE HEADLEY AND LINKE FAMILIES

Since 2003, the family of the late Jay Headley of White Lake has generously funded 30 scholarships for outstanding students pursuing a bachelor's degree in an agriculture-related field. Jay was the son of former board member Jim Headley who served as a director for Central Electric and Tri-County Electric for a total of 25 years until his retirement in 2021.

Headley and his wife Cristine live north of White Lake. Jim attended South Dakota State University (SDSU) in Brookings before he began his farming career. He has been a farmer and rancher most of his life and has a passion for supporting ag education.

Ag roots run deep in the Linke family of rural Woonsocket. When Henry and Paula Linke's four kids were all awarded the Jay Headley Memorial Scholarship in a span of five years, one could say they fit well

within the scope and vision of the agriculture-focused scholarship. Especially considering scholarship recipients are selected by an outside judge who is not affiliated with Central Electric Cooperative or the Headley family.

To thank Jim and Cristine, the Linke family recently presented them with SDSU apparel for helping the kids pay to attend college there.

Jonathan Linke graduated from SDSU in 2020 and is working as a product placement supervisor for a seed company. Aaron, Nathan and Megan Linke are still attending SDSU.

The employees, management and board of directors at Central Electric Cooperative join the Linke family in thanking Jim and Cristine Headley for supporting education in Central Electric's service territory through the scholarship program. Their selflessness has made a difference in the lives of many families along the journey.

The Jay Headley Memorial Scholarship will once again be offered by Central Electric in 2022. For more information, call the office or visit [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop).



**61st Annual Black Hills Stock Show and Rodeo  
January 28-February 5, 2022**



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.

**DEC 20-22  
Central Electric Holiday  
Open House**  
Betts Road Office, Mitchell, SD,  
free coffee, cider and goodies,  
605-996-7516

**DECEMBER 23-24  
1880 Train Holiday Express**  
222 Railroad Avenue, Hill City,  
SD, 605-574-2222

**DECEMBER 26-31  
Christmas Nights of Lights**  
Storybook Island, Rapid City,  
SD, 1-605-342-6357

**DECEMBER 26-31  
Garden Glow**  
McCroory Gardens, Brookings,  
SD, 605-688-6707

**DECEMBER 31  
New Year's Eve With The  
Davis Sisters**  
601 Columbus Street, Rapid  
City, SD, 605-348-4676

**JANUARY 1  
Winter Wonderland Nature  
Hike**  
Big Sioux Recreation Area,  
Brandon, SD, 605-594-3824

**JANUARY 4-6  
Dakota Farm Show**  
USD DakotaDome, Vermillion,  
SD, more info available at  
[dakotafarmshow.com](http://dakotafarmshow.com)

**JANUARY 7  
Neal McCoy**  
The Dakota Event Center,  
Aberdeen, SD, 605-725-2641

**JANUARY 8  
Eric Church**  
Denny Sanford Premier Center,  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

**JANUARY 14-15  
Deadwood Red Dirt Festival**  
Deadwood Mountain Grand  
Event Center, Deadwood, SD,  
605-559-0386

**JANUARY 15  
Burning Beetle**  
10th Street, Custer, SD, find  
out more at [www.facebook.com/barkbeetleblues](http://www.facebook.com/barkbeetleblues)

**JANUARY 15-16  
Dakota Territory Gun  
Collectors Association  
Gun Show**  
Swiftel Center, Brookings, SD,  
605-793-2347

**JANUARY 16  
Sioux Falls Izaak Walton  
League January Trap Shoot**  
5000 N Oakview Place, Sioux  
Falls, SD, 605-332-9527

**JANUARY 16  
WWE Supershow**  
Denny Sanford Premier Center,  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

**JANUARY 21-23  
That Golden Girls Show**  
Orpheum Theater Center,  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

**JANUARY 22  
Reba McEntire**  
Denny Sanford Premier Center,  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

**JANUARY 28-29  
Deadwood Pro Snocross  
Races**  
Days of '76 Rodeo Grounds,  
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

**JANUARY 28-29  
27th Annual Dinner Theater**  
Reliance Legion Hall, Reliance,  
SD, call 605-730-0553 for  
more info and tickets

**JANUARY 28-31  
Lead Winterfest**  
Various Locations, Lead, SD,  
call 605-584-1100

**JANUARY 28-  
FEBRUARY 6  
Black Hills Stock Show &  
Rodeo**  
Central States Fairgrounds &  
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center,  
Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

**JANUARY 29-30  
Dakota Territory Gun  
Collectors Association  
Gun Show**  
National Field Archery Building,  
Yankton, SD, 605-731-9154

**FEBRUARY 5  
Lake Hendricks  
Improvement Association  
Ice Fishing Derby**  
Hendricks, MN, contact Tim at  
507-828-2113 for registration  
and more information

**FEBRUARY 5  
Lakota Games on Ice**  
3200 Indian Village Road,  
Mitchell, SD, 605-996-5473

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