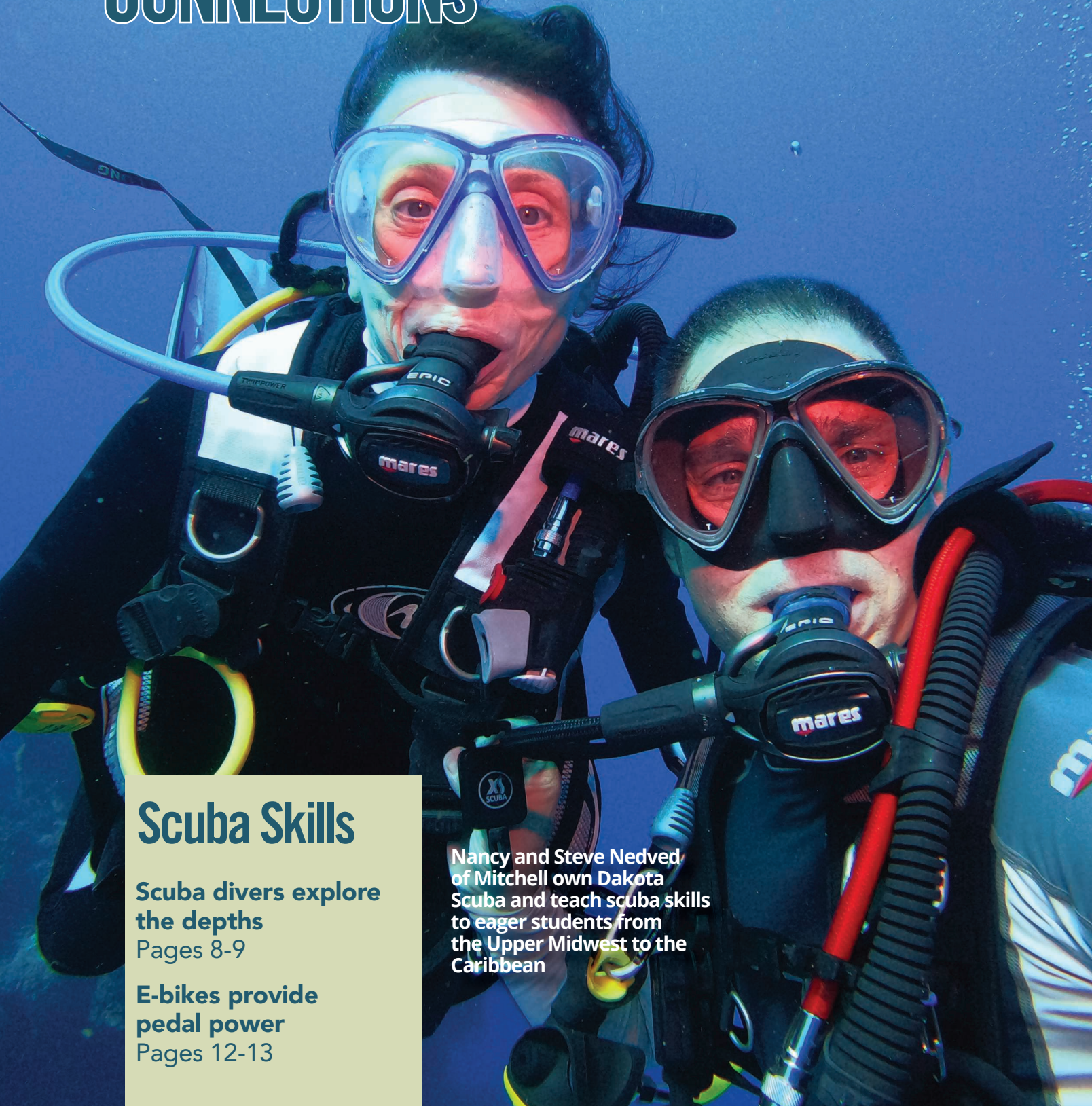


# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Scuba Skills

Scuba divers explore  
the depths  
Pages 8-9

E-bikes provide  
pedal power  
Pages 12-13

Nancy and Steve Nedved  
of Mitchell own Dakota  
Scuba and teach scuba skills  
to eager students from  
the Upper Midwest to the  
Caribbean

# See you at your local District Meeting



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager

If you are reading this newsletter, I want to say thank you. I know you have a lot on your plate. Most of us find ourselves multitasking, constantly checking phones and email in order to make good decisions to manage our business and time. There is not always enough time in the day to sit down, relax and occasionally look at a newsletter from your electric cooperative.

With so many pressing obligations, we like to protect our “spare” time. Invitations to attend in-person meetings are weighed carefully as we decide whether or not our time and effort to attend is beneficial. You may think attending a Central Electric District Meeting would be easy to brush off as a meeting that has little benefit to you. However, I’d ask you to think again.

Central Electric’s mission has always been to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to its member-owners – that’s you! The ultimate goal of this mission is to improve the quality of life for our members and our local communities. Initially that meant providing light, running water and automating farms. Today we power all kinds of modern conveniences. Electricity protects our homes and is essential to our safety and well-being.

The District Meetings held in Miner, Sanborn and Jerauld Counties include director elections. These are the local people who will represent you for at least the next three years. As a member of our cooperative and our community, you have a perspective that is valuable and this is where you can help.

Each District Meeting will be very informal. We will discuss priorities and challenges for your cooperative for the coming years. We want to hear your perspective and field your questions. There are several potential topics including distribution replacement plan, cybersecurity, power supply, buildings, future rates, capital credits, economic development, material and equipment supply challenges, electric vehicles, employee recruitment and retention, and new technologies. You pick the topic or the question.

Perhaps you feel that you have nothing to add to the discussion, so there is no need to attend the meeting.

However, every energy bill you pay to the co-op helps ensure better service and reliability for the whole community. Your dollars are reinvested locally into improvements that impact the reliability and affordability of your energy, and your cooperative needs to hear from you to help us make decisions as we plan for the future.

While you can pay your bill electronically and send us emails, there are times when there is no substitute for a face-to-face conversation. When members of our community come together for a common purpose, we create an opportunity to improve the quality of life for everyone in our corner of the world.

If it’s been a while since you have attended one of our District Meetings, please stop by. We look forward to visiting with you! We’ll have good food, exchange information and provide an attendance gift in appreciation for your time.

You will receive a post card as your invitation to your local District Meeting. If you are unable to attend that night, you are welcome to attend one of the other District Meetings that we are hosting. The dates of all the District Meetings are listed on page 7 of this newsletter. I look forward to seeing you there. Until next month, stay safe!

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



Bring the family! District Meetings are informal gatherings with good food and attendance gifts to show our appreciation. Official notices were mailed for each county. View the remainder of the schedule on page 7.

**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](http://www.farmers.gov) 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 March 21, 2022, at Central Electric Cooperative's Betts Road headquarters for the regular board meeting. They reviewed monthly reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and financials.

**BOARD REPORT**

General Manager Schlimgen updated the board of directors on the following:

- East River manager meeting
- Rural Electric Economic Development
- Basin Electric Power Cooperative
- Electric vehicles
- New service inquiries
- Central Electric District Meetings

Directors Bechen and Wolbrink reported on NRECA Power Exchange. Discussion followed.

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

The board reviewed monthly director expenses.

**BOARD ACTION**

The board considered or acted upon the following:

- A motion was made and seconded to approve non-site-specific labor contracts for Highline Construction inc., LDI Inc., Dave's Construction, CMC Excavation, Ivan's Boring and Zach Scott Construction. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve a resolution for a Mitchell Technical College USDA REDLG loan application for campus improvements. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded in support of a REED loan application to the Mount Vernon Fire Department for building improvements. Motion carried.

There being no further business, President Wolbrink adjourned the meeting. The board and senior management then toured the POET ethanol plant facility in Loomis. The next board meeting was scheduled for April 18.

FINANCIAL REPORT	YEAR TO DATE MARCH 2022	YEAR TO DATE MARCH 2021
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	98,677,722 kWh	97,807,249 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$ 9,455,826	\$ 9,298,274
Total Cost of Service	\$ 8,763,700	\$ 9,224,092
Operating Margins	\$ 692,127	\$ 74,182

## June is National Safety Month

While your local electric cooperative often focuses on electric safety and provides information to keep you and your family free from harm, there are many other dangers lurking out there.

In recognition of National Safety Month, we're sharing the National Safety Council's list of the top causes of preventable injuries and death away from the workplace.

**POISONING.** In 2011, accidental poisonings overtook car crashes for the first time as the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for all age groups combined. Poisoning deaths are often caused by exposure to gases, chemicals and other toxic substances, but prescription drug overdose is by far the leading cause.

**VEHICLE CRASHES.** Crashes are the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death overall. Impaired driving, distracted driving, speeding and inexperience can cause a life to be cut short in the blink of an eye.

**FALLS.** Falling is the third-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death over all age groups, but it's the No. 1 cause of death for those aged 65 and older.

**CHOKING AND SUFFOCATION.** Choking on food or other objects is a primary cause of harm and death. Suffocation and choking rank higher among the elderly and infants.

**DROWNING.** It's the No. 1 cause of death for children from ages 1 to 4, mostly due to children falling into pools or being left alone and unsupervised in bathtubs.

**FIRES AND BURNS.** Fires often start at night, when families are asleep and most vulnerable. A working and well-maintained smoke alarm will cut in half the chances of dying in a fire.

**NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL INCIDENTS.** Weather-related disasters claim hundreds of lives per year. You should learn all you can about emergency preparedness and always have an emergency kit on hand in your home.

## BOWLING FOR CHARITY IN MITCHELL



More than 80 cooperative employees showed up in Mitchell for the 7th Annual Line Patrol Charity Bowling Tournament sponsored by Central Electric. The Lacreek Electric Headhunters shown above (Tiff Pettit, Terri Gregg, Cody Allen, Ryan Pettit) took top honors. The event was organized to raise money for a fund used to help electric co-op employees and their families in times of need. Find out more about this event and South Dakota's electric cooperatives by visiting Cooperative Connections Plus. Simply scan the QR code at right.



## Call 811 before you dig

### Maddy Pannell

Maddy Pannell, age 10, reminds electric cooperative members to call 811 before digging into the ground when planting trees or pursuing other outdoor projects. Maddy is the daughter of Southeastern Electric members Scott and Kim Pannell 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.

# DELICIOUS DAIRY

## SWEDISH CREME

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 cup, plus 2 tsps. sugar, divided
- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 1 tsp. almond extract
- 1 tsp. clear imitation vanilla extract
- 2 cups (16 oz.) sour cream
- 1 cup fresh or frozen red raspberries

### METHOD

In a saucepan, combine cream and 1 cup sugar. Cook and stir constantly over low heat until candy thermometer reads 160 degrees, or steam rises from pan. (Do not boil). Stir in gelatin until dissolved; add extracts. Cool 10 minutes. Whisk in sour cream. Pour into eight dessert glasses or small bowls. Chill at least 1 hour. Before serving, combine raspberries and remaining sugar; spoon over each serving.

**Joanne Singrey-Johnson,  
Watertown**

## TUNA EGG SALAD

### Ingredients:

- 3 6 oz. cans tuna packed in water
- 3 eggs hard boiled, peeled and chopped
- 2 small dill pickles diced
- 1 large celery rib diced
- 1/4 cup red onion minced
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice or red wine vinegar
- 2 tsp. garlic powder, optional
- 1/4 tsp. salt, or to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt, 2% fat
- 2 tbsp. mayo

### METHOD

Drain cans with tuna well. Transfer to a large bowl and separate into flakes with a fork. Add chopped and peeled hard boiled eggs, pickles, celery, red onion, lemon juice, garlic powder (if using), salt, pepper, yogurt and mayo. Stir well with a fork and refrigerate. Serve cold in a sandwich or over salad greens. Make Ahead: Tuna egg salad tastes best cold. For best results, refrigerate 30 minutes before eating.

**ifoodreal.com**

## EASY SHERBET

### Ingredients:

- 1 pkg. orange or lime jello
- 1 cup boiling water
- 3 cups milk
- Pinch of salt
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1-1/4 cup sugar

### METHOD

Dissolve jello in boiling water. Add remaining ingredients. Freeze until 1/2 inch thick at edge of tray. Empty into mixing bowl and beat thoroughly. Return to freezer. This works well if put in a loaf pan.

**Joy Hagen, Webster**

## EXTRA GRILLED CHEESE

### Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. butter, softened
- 2 tsp. Parmesan cheese, grated
- Dash of garlic powder
- 4 slices bread
- 2 slices sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 slices Swiss cheese

### METHOD

In a small bowl, combine butter, parmesan cheese, and garlic powder. Spread an even layer on one side of each slice of bread. Place 1 slice of cheddar cheese and 1 slice of Swiss between two bread slices, with the buttered side facing out. Cook in hot skillet for about 2 minutes, until the crust is golden. Flip sandwich and grill until crust is golden and the cheese is melted. Slice and serve. May add grilled onions if you choose. Just saute in the pan before cooking the sandwiches and add to the sandwiches between the cheese slices.

**Kristina Manecke, Midland**

**Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.**



## June 22 is National HVAC Technician Day!

Pictured above from left to right: Wade, Aaron, Donn and Lincoln. Big shout out our HVAC team for keeping us comfortable every day of the year.

Is your HVAC system is ready to beat the summer heat? Our team of experienced HVAC professionals will do whatever it takes to keep you comfortable by maintaining your current system or installing a new energy-efficient system.

Call today to schedule a \$95 system cleaning and check-up.

1-800-477-2892

1-605-996-7516

[www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop)



# Carson Weber of Emery named Scholar of the Week

Central Electric Cooperative and Bridgewater-Emery High School are pleased to share that Carson Weber, the son of Victor and Kellie Weber of Emery, was named the Touchstone Energy® Scholar of the Week from May 8 to May 14, 2022. Weber was featured on Dakota News Now for his accomplishments.

According to Bridgewater-Emery High School agriculture instructor Alex Toupal, Weber excels in school and is active with the National FFA Organization. He currently serves as the 2021-2022 Chapter FFA Reporter and has earned a South Dakota State FFA Degree and District IV 4th Place Star Placement Award. Weber was also part of the state qualifying team for Natural resources and Agronomy. After high school, he plans to study agronomy at Mitchell Technical College.

“Central Electric received several nominations for deserving students,” said Tara Miller, Central Electric manager of communications. “We commend Carson Weber and all students who set an example of hard work and high academic standards.”

The Scholar of the Week program is a partnership between Dakota News Now, Central Electric Cooperative and other local Touchstone Energy Cooperatives that demonstrates the commitment electric cooperatives have to the communities they serve. Nominations are submitted by principals and faculty whose selections are based on excellence in the classroom and service in the community.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives are active in the community and dedicated to improving our way of life. Since the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week program began, over \$80,000 has been awarded to more than 530 students. Nominations for outstanding high school seniors will be accepted again this fall.



Bridgewater-Emery H.S. senior Carson Weber accepts his Scholar of the Week award from Tara Miller, Manager of Communications at Central Electric Cooperative.

# Notice of annual capital credit allocations

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

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

If the cooperative incurs additional costs for repairs due to storms, putting in underground cable, upgrading equipment or other expenses, the board may decide to forgo retiring capital credits. When the decision is made to issue refunds, active members will receive a credit on their December bill and inactive members will receive a check.

Capital credits are one of the many benefits of being a member of Central Electric Cooperative. When you have Central Electric as your electric provider, you are part owner of the cooperative through the equity you have invested.

## District Meetings underway

District Meetings are taking place throughout May and June in all eight counties served by Central Electric. The meetings are informal and open to all members and their families. Good meals will be served and free will offerings for local food pantries are optional but appreciated.

Members who attend the meeting will receive a \$10 bill credit, limited to one per household.

Elections are scheduled for the meetings in Jerauld,

Miner and Sanborn County. At the time of this newsletter publication, candidates were unknown.

District 6, Jerauld County, is currently represented by Mark Reindl of Wessington Springs. District 7, Miner County, is currently represented by Bernetta Burghardt of Fedora, who does not intend to seek reelection. District 8, Sanborn County, is currently represented by Todd VanWalleghen of Letcher.

District	Meeting Date	Meeting Location
Aurora County	May 23, 2022	Ag Building, Plankinton, SD
Brule County	May 19, 2022	4-H Building, Pukwana, SD
Buffalo County	June 16, 2022	Powwow Grounds, Fort Thompson, SD
Davison County	May 16, 2022	Fairgrounds, Mitchell, SD
Hanson County	May 25, 2022	A1 Al's Pheasant Ranch, Emery, SD
Jerauld County	June 8, 2022	Springs Inn, Wessington Springs, SD
Miner County	June 13, 2022	4-H Building, Howard, SD
Sanborn County	June 6, 2022	4-H Building, Forestburg, SD

# DEEP DIVES

Dozens of scuba divers from South Dakota and Minnesota pursue their hobby not only in local lakes and rivers but also in the Caribbean. *Photos by Steve Nedved*

## Divers explore underwater habitats from the lakes of the Upper Midwest to the Caribbean

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

It's a sunny springtime Saturday morning and outdoors enthusiasts all across the state are buzzing with excitement to kick off another weekend adventure.

They're saddling up their horses, slinging their fishing gear into their boats, cranking their ATVs and lacing up their hiking boots.

In a small shop just south of Mitchell, there's a different kind of energy and amped-up anticipation filling the air. Steve Nedved is busy rigging up scuba tanks and inspecting air regulators for about 20 fledgling divers eager to learn a new skill and experience new thrills.

Nedved is owner of Dakota Scuba and he's finding that more and more adventurers are becoming interested in exploring the aquatic world through a fisheye view, whether that's in the chilly waters of the Missouri River or the crystal-clear surf of the Caribbean.

While the scuba diving season in

the Upper Midwest is relatively short, Nedved stays busy most months out of the year teaching scuba lessons in the Mitchell area and tending to vacationing clients from his Villa Dakota retreat in Cozumel.

It turns out that he and his student-clients can board a plane in Sioux Falls at 7 a.m., make a quick stop in Dallas-Ft. Worth, and be ready to hit the water in Cozumel just after lunch.

"It works out pretty well, and people love to take a fall and winter vacation and explore Cozumel, which is one of the best spots for diving because the visibility can be more than 100 feet and there's so much marine life to see," Nedved said.

The master diver's interest in scuba was sparked back when he was a firefighter and paramedic in Mitchell. After responding to too many emergency situations involving bodies of water, he and his colleagues decided they needed to be trained in diving as part of meeting their professional responsibilities and serving the public.

He received his certification in short order and later decided to venture down to Cozumel to earn his teaching certification through the Professional Association of Dive Instructors so that he could be qualified to train his colleagues back in Mitchell.

He and his wife Nancy, who together own the Nedved Media radio network, fell in love with the tropical paradise and after a dozen diving trips decided it made sense to purchase a home right on the water. Before he knew it, he found many others were beating the same path to Mexico to enjoy the sun, sand and scuba adventures.

"I didn't really start it with the intention of going public, I just didn't realize at the time how much interest there was," he said. "People around here in Mitchell started asking me to train them for recreational certification and then they'd dive here or they'd go to Florida or Cozumel on vacation with their families. We started renting out our place in Cozumel to accommodate people during the times we couldn't be there ourselves."

He also noticed an increasing interest in spearfishing in places like the Oahe





Downstream Recreational Area and Pactola Lake in the Black Hills, so he decided to open the shop to serve as a local and regional outfitter.

Nedved, who has logged more than 1,000 dives since he started in 2006, uses the Mitchell Recreation Center for local training and has played a role in certifying individuals from age 10 to 70.

“It’s not that physically laborious or difficult. Of course, you have to be in condition as with any kind of outdoor sport, but it’s not inherently dangerous in any way if you follow the guidelines,” he said.

Allen Hiller of Pierre is one of Nedved’s recent proteges. Though he had done some snorkeling and diving at sites like Sully Flats, Cow Creek and below the Oahe Dam, Hiller decided he wanted to kick his scuba game up a few notches. So he enlisted Nedved’s services and spent eight days at Villa Dakota last March earning his open water diving certificate.

At the age of 53, Hiller is a veteran of Desert Storm and Desert Shield, a former diesel and aircraft mechanic,



## SCUBA DIVING

Steve Nedved is shown at left with his catch after a day of spearfishing at Sully Flats. Above, Nedved (at right) works with student Allen Hiller on open water certification.

and spent nearly 20 years working for the Union Pacific Railroad in North Platte, NE. He describes himself as an avid hunter and fisherman who is always up for an adventure. Since his visit to the Caribbean, Hiller says he wants to expand his knowledge and experience under water.

“I really caught the diving bug being down there in a beautiful part of the world with the sun and the sand and the clear water where it seems like you can see forever. I want to continue on and get my PADI certification, my night diving certification, and become a master diver,” Hiller said. “I also want to do a lot of spearfishing and learn how to get better at it. Steve was really great to work with.”

Nedved said that once his students become accustomed to the awkward act of breathing through a mouthpiece, they begin to relax and enjoy the experience of discovering a new environment with different lights, colors and sounds.

“People like to hunt for fish and explore underwater quarries and see what’s on the bottom of the river bed,” he said. “When I take them out for the first

## SCUBA RULES

Here are four requirements for scuba diving in South Dakota:

- Divers are required to use a red and white Diver Down flag when diving
- Dive flags must be at least 8"x10"
- Divers must stay within 75 feet of their dive flag
- Boaters and vessel operators are required to stay at least 75 feet from dive flags

time, we can’t really speak when we’re underwater, but when we come up they start chatting away with excitement about the things they saw. It’s really addictive. You rarely see just one person in a family that’s a diver. Usually, after one person does it, the others have to follow. It’s a good sport for a lot of people.”

## Co-op leaders working for you in Washington



Central Electric Director Mark Hofer, Director Donita Loudner and General Manager Ken Schlimgen traveled to Washington, D.C. in early May for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Legislative Conference.

They joined other cooperative leaders from around the nation to engage in discussions with our congressional delegation about energy incentives and infrastructure. These meetings put the cooperative in a strong position to advocate for you when energy policies and infrastructure decisions have potential to affect our membership.

## Welcome to the IT team

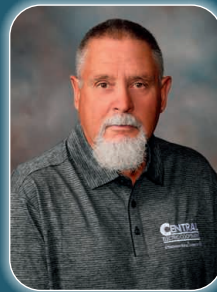


Kelly K. recently started working as a temporary business technology intern. He is assisting Ryan, our IT Systems Manager, with daily tasks for the cooperative. We are excited to have Kelly on the team this summer.

## Central Electric will be closed May 30 for Memorial Day.



## YEARS OF SERVICE



**Curt G.**  
Plankinton Foreman  
(Retired May 13)  
46 years on May 1



**Dustin R.**  
Line Superintendent  
27 years on May 8



**Donn K.**  
Lead HVAC  
Technician  
23 years on May 17



**Paul K.**  
Journeyman Lineman  
21 Years on May 21



**Wade B.**  
HVAC Fabricator &  
Installer  
15 years on May 14



**Dustin W.**  
Staking Technician  
15 years on May 16



**Aaron P.**  
HVAC Fabricator &  
Installer  
12 years on May 24



**Rodney W.**  
Journeyman Electrician  
10 years on May 1



**Dustin C.**  
Journeyman Lineman  
1 year on April 1



## Share farm safety tips with family & hired help

Each year Central Electric crews respond to incidents involving farm machinery contacting power lines and equipment.

As planting season wraps up, farmers will be operating sprayers, haying equipment and other machinery that could damage power poles and put them at risk.

Accidents can happen to anyone, and many occur while completing routine activities that are performed on a regular basis. This is a dangerous situation that can be avoided.

# Pole testing planned May through July

Central Electric Cooperative's annual pole inspection program is scheduled from May 15 to mid-July in the areas outlined below in Aurora, Brule and Davison Counties.

The cooperative contracted with SBS Pole Inspections to complete the testing. SBS will utilize a crew of three to five workers who have performed testing in our area in previous years.

Members may notice the crew digging around poles or riding ATVs and pickups along power lines. Crews will identify themselves by using Central Electric magnets on vehicles and other possible means.

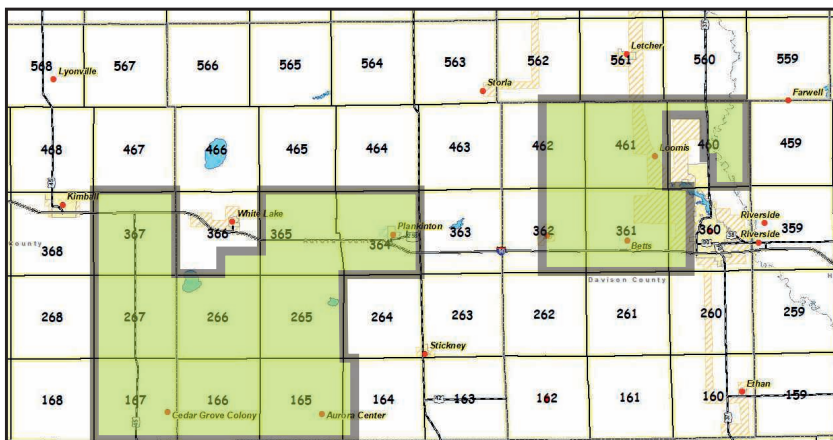
The inspection program is intended to detect poles with potential faults and prevent future unplanned outages or damages. Approximately 5,000 poles will be tested.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Central Electric Cooperative by calling 1-605-996-7516 or 1-800-477-2892.



Remember to "Look Up and Look Out" for all overhead and underground power equipment. If you do contact a line, here's what to do:

- STAY PUT and CALL 911 or your electric utility. Staying in the equipment is the safest place.
- In case of fire, JUMP CLEAR from the tractor or vehicle. Do not touch the tractor and ground at the same time.
- SHUFFLE or HOP AWAY from the equipment, keeping your feet together for at least 40 feet. Walking or running puts you at risk for electrocution.





Desmond Dean of Dakota Sports in Aberdeen says e-bikes are all the rage among outdoors enthusiasts. *Photo by Billy Gibson*

## Electric bicycles give riders the little extra push they need - or not

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Sometimes when you find yourself struggling to move ahead, all you need is a little boost to get where you need to go.

That's the idea behind the invention of the electric bicycle. For those who enjoy mountain biking, pedaling for fitness or just commuting back and forth to work in the open air, the electric bike is becoming the cycle of choice.

Desmond Dean is manager of Dakota Outdoors in Aberdeen and he reports that sales are brisk with his line of Trek e-bikes. The first misconception he typically has to address with his growing list of curious customers is that an e-bike isn't a motorcycle.

"It's a bicycle. There's no throttle and you're in complete control the whole time. The battery and small motor are just there to give you some assistance when and if you need it," he explained.

"They're getting so popular because you can get a wide range of exercise. If you're having trouble with the wind or going up a hill, or if you just want to increase your distance, you can get the extra push you need. You can get some assistance or no assistance."

A battery usually takes about 5-6 hours to fully charge and there are models built for navigating off-road trails, touring, cruising or just moving around town from one point to the next. Prices can range from a few hundred dollars for a youth model to several thousand bucks for adult versions. Some bikes can top out at nearly 30 mph in the highest gear settings and some sweat equity.

Dean highly encourages his customers to take his e-bikes out for a spin around Aldrich Park across from the store because once the shopper puts the Trek through its paces and gets accustomed to the experience, "the bikes tend to sell themselves."

Mary Duvall, a state senator from

Pierre representing District 24, is a life-long fitness buff and has done a lot of pedal pumping over the years. So when her husband Rob suggested they purchase a pair of e-bikes, she was admittedly skeptical. What would be the point of pedaling if you're not going for the burn?

"I looked at it like it would be cheating and we wouldn't get a quality workout," she said. "But I quickly learned I was wrong. I can work as hard as I want and get whatever workout I feel like, or take it as easy as I want, depending on the day."

The Duvalls invested in his-and-her Aventons with thick sturdy frames and wide tires for handling uneven surfaces like the Black Hills, the Badlands and the undulating terrain around Pierre. They also chipped in for safety helmets equipped with an intercom system so they can keep in constant audio contact.

The couple covered 80 miles in a single day on the Mickelson Trail, stopped overnight in Hill City to recharge their batteries and their weary quadriceps, then rode another 56



Shown at left, Mary and Rob Duvall of Pierre have enjoyed their investment in e-bicycles and can go for long distances to see new sights. *Photos provided by Mary Duvall*

miles the following day. They ended up encountering another couple who had hauled their e-bikes from Texas to tour the Mickelson Trail. Another couple they met from Minnesota were using their e-bikes to complete the entire trail from Edgemont to Deadwood.

“We ride them at least once a month and they’ve opened up lots of options that we couldn’t tackle with regular bikes,” Duvall said. “It’s a fun way for us to get outside and enjoy some exercise and fresh air.”

its own pedal-assist system. By the end of 2023, worldwide e-bike sales are expected to reach 40 million units, or more if gas prices continue to escalate.

Surveys consistently indicate most e-bike buyers make the purchase with the goal of replacing trips they’d otherwise take in their cars. But Ron Block of Webster bought his for another reason: he needed to keep up with his wife Nancy, a school teacher who also

happens to be a competitive marathon runner.

“She was leaving me behind, so I figured I needed some assistance to make it a little easier on me,” Ron said. “I rode a lot when I was a kid, but now I’m middle-aged and the bike gives me the ability to set the power to however much help I need.”

The Blocks enjoy biking together each week as part of a local cycling club, though occasionally they like to venture farther afield. Last summer, they biked among the giant redwoods in northern California and Oregon and also pedaled the Katy Trail in Missouri. This year they plan to take a trip to The Netherlands and rent bikes to see the sights.

Ron said he would encourage those who may be interested in purchasing an e-bike to find a nearby dealer, or find a friend who already has one and ask to take it for a test ride.

“That’s what I did before I bought one and I’ve been very satisfied,” he said. “I’ve talked to a lot of people who have them and they’re very happy they made the investment.”

Ron Block of Webster pedals his e-bike along a floating bridge on the Mesabi Trail in northern Minnesota. *Photo provided by Ron Block*



Approximate number of e-bikes

**40 million**

expected to be sold worldwide in 2023

Of course, the idea of attaching a small battery-powered motor to a bicycle frame isn’t new. The first patent for an e-bike was issued in 1895. There was a global surge in sales of 35 percent between 1993 and 2004 after Yamaha invented, manufactured and marketed



# South Dakota Rural Electric YOUTH EXCURSION

July 25-28, 2022

The Youth Excursion Tour will be held July 25-28, 2022, in Bismarck, N.D. The deadline for to apply is **JUNE 8**. Teens attending this event will:

- Have the opportunity to sightsee and to meet new friends from other participating cooperatives.
- Learn about “The Story Behind the Switch” and see where South Dakota’s electricity generates.
- Tour the Great Plains Synfuel Plant, Freedom Coal Mine and Antelope Valley Station Power Plant.
- Spend their evenings swimming, shopping and cruising on the Lewis and Clark Riverboat.

Central Electric Cooperative will select the winning students on June 10. The cooperative provides transportation, lodging, meals, entertainment and sightseeing events. Students are required to supply their own personal and shopping money.

## 2022 Youth Excursion Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian’s Names: \_\_\_\_\_  
School: \_\_\_\_\_ Year in School in 2022-2023 School Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_

High school freshmen, sophomores and juniors who live within Central Electric Cooperative’s footprint are eligible to apply. Interested students should return this information by June 8, 2022, to **cec@centralec.coop** or mail to **Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell SD 57301**. Central Electric Cooperative will select the winning students on June 10.

# Lengkeek and Moe recognized for making a difference

East River Electric and its member cooperatives are recognizing local people who make a difference in the lives of others through the #WhoPowersYou contest. Two individuals from our service area have been selected as finalists in the regional contest.

LeAnn Moe of Alexandria and Peter Lengkeek of Fort Thompson were recently selected as contest finalists and featured on the television program Keloland Living for their contributions to the community.

Moe was recognized for her outreach efforts that include speaking to high school kids about the importance of wearing seat belts. Her daughter Ashley's life was taken after an automobile accident in 2019, and she shares her story to empower others. Moe is also an active community member and serves as a volunteer trustee for the Operation Round-Up community grant program at Central Electric Cooperative.

Lengkeek is Chairman of the Hunkpati Oyate Crow Creek Sioux Tribe and a champion of several issues impacting his community. He advocates for suicide prevention, victims of domestic violence, youth mentoring, elder support programs, military veterans' initiatives and cultural preservation.

Chairman Lengkeek has developed partnerships on the local state and federal levels. He is active with the Hunkpati Suicide Intervention Task Force, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives (MMIR), Tribal Foster Care Committee, South Dakota Native Tourism Alliance and the White House Tribal Nations Summit.

There are 20 finalists, and the top three in East River Electric's region will be awarded a cash prize. We thank LeAnn Moe and Peter Lengkeek for all they have done to make a difference in the lives of others.



We have prizes for kids and adults. **Jasper Steele**, age 8 of Mitchell, was one of our trivia prize drawing winners in April. He took home a remote control helicopter and a "Say Watt" electrical education book. Thanks for playing!

# CO-OP TRIVIA

## Congratulations to last month's winners!

- Kid Prize Drawing Winner: Olivia Murray, Letcher.
- Adult Prize Drawing Winner: Leanne Wiczorek, Mount Vernon. Limited to one winner per household every 2 months. Answers do not need to be correct for entry in the prize drawing.

## Complete this month's Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) trivia to enter the next drawing.

1. When is National HVAC Technician Day?
  - A.) June 2, 2022
  - B.) June 15, 2022
  - C.) June 22, 2022
  - D.) June 30, 2022
2. Who invented air conditioning?
  - A.) Willis Carrier
  - B.) Albert Einstein
  - C.) Clarence Birdseye
  - D.) Thomas Edison
3. Ideally, how often should you change your air conditioner filter?
  - A.) Every 2 months
  - B.) Every 3 months
  - C.) Every 6 months
  - D.) Every 12 months
4. Who was the first U.S. president to have air conditioning installed in the White House?
  - A.) Calvin Coolidge
  - B.) Woodrow Wilson
  - C.) Herbert Hoover
  - D.) Warren Harding
5. Who should you call to repair or maintain your HVAC system?
  - A.) Ghost Busters
  - B.) Your handy neighbor
  - C.) Jenny at 867-5309
  - D.) The HVAC professionals at Central Electric Cooperative

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Cooperative Member, Spouse or Dependent/Child)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Mailing Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Phone)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Age) To determine adult/child prize. All ages are eligible, as long as the individual is a member, immediate family or dependent living in the same household as a member.

### Submit entries by June 8.

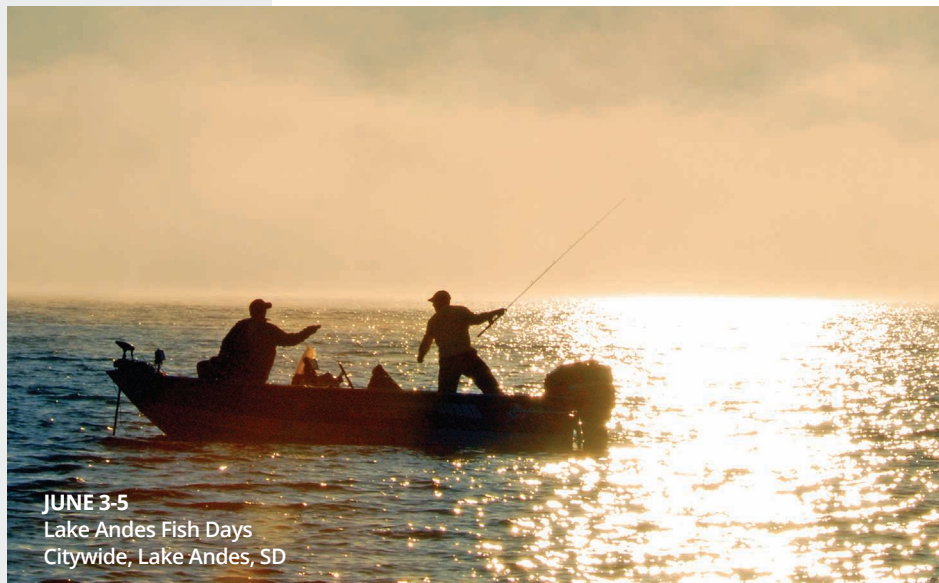
Online trivia can be accessed here: [tinyurl.com/centraltrivia](https://tinyurl.com/centraltrivia)

### Email to [cec@centralec.coop](mailto:cec@centralec.coop) or mail to:

Central Electric Cooperative  
Attn: Trivia  
PO Box 850  
Mitchell, SD 57301

### Correct answers from May issue:

1. What are the different options for making a payment on my Central Electric account? D.) All of the above
2. When bills are calculated on the 1st of each month, what timeframe are members being billed for? A.) Previous month
3. What are the benefits of having a SmartHub account? D.) All of the above
4. If members sign up for automatic payments, on what date are payments generally deducted? B.) 15th of every month
5. When members have service work performed, such as HVAC service, it is automatically included in the monthly electric billing statement. B.) False



**JUNE 3-5**  
Lake Andes Fish Days  
Citywide, Lake Andes, SD

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.

**MAY 28**  
**Deadwood Live: Hank Williams Jr.**  
Outlaw Square, Deadwood, SD,  
[www.deadwoodlive.com](http://www.deadwoodlive.com)

**MAY 28**  
**Memorial Weekend in Mitchell**  
Main Street, Mitchell, SD,  
605-292-4444

**MAY 28-29**  
**Black Hills Renaissance Faire**  
Manuel Brothers Park, Lead, SD,  
[www.blackhillsrenfest.com](http://www.blackhillsrenfest.com)

**MAY 29-30**  
**Back When They Bucked**  
Days of '76 Arena, Deadwood, SD,  
605-718-0810

**MAY 30**  
**Prairie Points Quilt Guild Show**  
204 Hodge St., Buffalo, SD,  
605-641-5591

**JUNE 2-4**  
**Annual Black Hills Quilt Show & Sale**  
The Monument, Rapid City, SD,  
[bhquilters.org/events](http://bhquilters.org/events)

**JUNE 2-5**  
**Wheel Jam**  
South Dakota State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,  
[www.wheeljam.com](http://www.wheeljam.com)

**JUNE 3-5**  
**Fort Sisseton Historical Festival**  
11907 434th Ave., Lake City, SD,  
605-448-5474

**JUNE 3-5**  
**Lake Andes Fish Days**  
Citywide, Lake Andes, SD,  
605-487-7694

**JUNE 10-12**  
**Annual Custer Off-Road Rally**  
Various Locations, Custer, SD,  
[custersd.com/Off-Road-Rally](http://custersd.com/Off-Road-Rally)

**JUNE 11**  
**The Big Mick**  
George S. Mickelson Trail, Deadwood, SD,  
[mickelsontrailaffiliates.com](http://mickelsontrailaffiliates.com)

**JUNE 16-18**  
**Czech Days**  
Lidice Street, Tabor, SD,  
605-463-2478

**JUNE 16-18**  
**Wild Bill Days**  
Main Street, Deadwood, SD,  
[deadwood.com/event/wild-bill-days/](http://deadwood.com/event/wild-bill-days/)

**JUNE 16-19**  
**South Dakota Shakespeare Festival**  
Prentis Park, Vermillion, SD,  
605-622-0423

**JUNE 17-18**  
**Oahe Days Arts & Music Festival**  
Steamboat Park, Pierre, SD,  
[oaheadays.com](http://oaheadays.com)

**JUNE 18-19**  
**Brookings Kite Festival**  
Fishback Soccer Complex, Brookings, SD, 605-695-9071

**JUNE 22-25**  
**Crystal Springs Rodeo**  
17803 479th Ave., Clear Lake, SD,  
[crystalspringsrodeo.com](http://crystalspringsrodeo.com)

**JUNE 24-26**  
**Scavenger's Journey**  
Various Locations, SD,  
[scavengersjourney.com](http://scavengersjourney.com)

**JUNE 25**  
**Leap to Lane**  
City Park, Lane, SD,  
605-539-1929

**JULY 7, 14, 21, 28**  
**Music in the Garden**  
Shakespeare Garden, Wessington Springs, SD,  
605-539-1929

**JULY 22-23**  
**Foothills Rodeo**  
Jerauld County 4H Grounds, Wessington Springs, SD,  
605-770-5720

**AUGUST 5-6**  
**Arts in the Garden**  
Shakespeare Garden, Wessington Springs, SD,  
[wessingtonsprings.com/currentevents](http://wessingtonsprings.com/currentevents)

**AUGUST 6**  
**Rockin Ribfest**  
City Park, Wessington Springs, SD,  
[wessingtonsprings.com/currentevents](http://wessingtonsprings.com/currentevents)

**AUGUST 13**  
**Hot Rods for the Hatchery Car Show**  
D.C. Booth Fish Hatchery, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7730

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