

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Great Goats

**Goats gaining
in popularity**
Pages 8-9

**Irrigators benefit
from load control**
Pages 12-13

Bennett and Matea Gordon
of Whitewood are part of a
rising trend in teens choosing
to show goats at youth
exhibits and competitions



Prioritizing Safety Year-Round



Jeff Birkeland
CEO

At West Central Electric, we recognize Electrical Safety Month every May, but we also know the importance of practicing safety year-round. From our co-op crews to you, the members we serve, we recognize that everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. Electricity is a necessity, and it powers our daily lives. But we know first-hand how dangerous electricity can be because we work with it 365 days a year.

For West Central, safety is our No. 1 priority. It's every employee's responsibility to keep themselves and their co-workers safe. Additionally, we want to help keep you and all members of our communities safe. That's why you'll see West Central Electric hosting safety demonstrations at community events and in schools throughout the year, to demonstrate the dangers of electricity. We discuss emergency scenarios, such as what to do in a vehicle/tractor accident involving a utility pole and downed power lines. We also caution students on the dangers of using grain augers near power lines and a host of other scenarios.

Electricity is an integral part of modern life. Given the prevalence of electrical devices, tools and appliances, I'd like to pass along a few practical electrical safety tips.

Frayed wires pose a serious safety hazard.

Power cords can become damaged or frayed from age, heavy use or excessive current flow through the wiring. If cords become frayed or cut, replace them, as they could cause a shock when handled.

Avoid overloading circuits. Circuits can only cope with a limited amount of electricity. Overload happens when you draw more electricity than a circuit can safely handle – by having too many devices running on one circuit.

Label circuit breakers to understand the circuits in your home. Contact a qualified electrician if your home is more than 40 years old and you need to install multiple large appliances that consume large amounts of electricity.

Use extension cords properly. Never plug an extension cord into another extension cord. If you “daisy chain” them together, it could lead to overheating, creating a potential fire hazard. Don't exceed the wattage of the cord. Doing so also creates a risk of overloading the cord and creating a fire hazard. Extension cords should not be used as permanent solutions. If you need additional outlets, contact a licensed electrician to help.

I encourage you to talk with your kids about playing it safe and smart around electricity. Help them be aware of overhead power lines near where they play outdoors.

Our top priority is providing a safe and reliable energy supply 24/7, 365 days per year. But equally important is keeping our members safe around electricity.

PLUG INTO SAFETY



ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Make electrical safety a priority this month, and every month.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 018-988)

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**Our Mission is to Provide
Safe, Reliable Service
to our Member Owners.**

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Call 605-669-8100
24-hour Dispatching**

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Design assistance by SDREA

YOUTH EXCURSION JOIN IN THE FUN!

Calling all high school students! Is your parent or guardian an active member-owner of West Central Electric? If so, you're eligible to apply for an unforgettable summer experience: Youth Excursion 2022!

If chosen, you will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Bismarck, N.D., for a youth event unlike any other. From **July 25-28**, participants will stay on-campus at Bismarck State College. During this time, they will have the opportunity to sightsee, make friends from all across the state and gain a new understanding of where their electrical power comes from.

Once participants arrive on the campus, they can look forward to two whole days of building friendships, taking in the sights of North Dakota's capitol and learning "The Story Behind the Switch." During their stay, students will get to hear from power industry experts and participate in hands-on activities. Students will be given the opportunity to tour the Great Plains Synfuel Plant, Freedom Coal Mine and Antelope Valley Station Power Plant to see where South Dakota's power is generated.

There will also be plenty of time built in for recreation and socializing – students will play games, go on a scenic

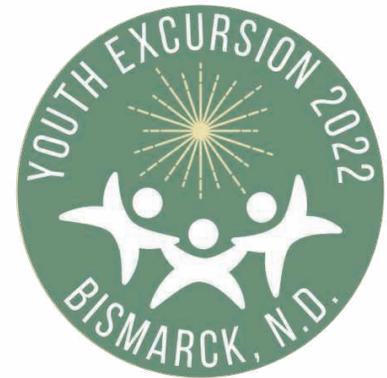
cruise in the Lewis and Clark Riverboat and much more. Participants can look forward to connecting with students from all across South Dakota, building strong friendships and learning from their peers.

To be eligible for Youth Excursion, students must be in high school, and their parent or guardian must be an active member-owner of West Central Electric.

Please contact West Central Electric at 605-669-8100 for more information.

To apply, please fill out the application below and mail it to West Central Electric – P.O. Box 17; Murdo, SD, 57559.

Application deadline is June 1, 2022.



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: _____

Return this information by June 1, 2022, to: Jessie Tucker at West Central Electric.

Budget-friendly efficiency upgrades

There are two ways to measure energy efficiency improvements.

There's the payback period - the amount of time it will take for the improvement to pay for itself. Then there's comfort.

Improvements can often increase the comfort level of a home - not easy to measure but one of the driving forces behind home weatherization efforts. There are several areas of the home that can be improved easily, without breaking your budget.

LIGHTING - There has been a steady decline in the price of LED bulbs for residential consumers. Nowadays, 60-watt-replacement LEDs can be purchased for \$5 or less. LEDs should save 60 percent or more on power costs compared to incandescent bulbs and last for many years. New LED fixtures are also an affordable option. They come with LED bulbs built in so you never need to change the bulbs.

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING - The Energy Information Administration estimates that heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems account for 22 percent of a typical home's annual electric bill. While newer systems can be 20-45 percent more efficient than older ones, the upfront cost is often a barrier to adoption.

But there are still ways to save. Simple solutions such as changing air filters at least every three months will increase airflow to rooms, increase the life of the HVAC unit's motor and improve air quality in the home. Sealing and insulating ductwork can be done in a weekend and results in energy savings of up to 20 percent.

To lessen the amount of work that heating and cooling systems need to do, it is important to find and seal air leaks. Look for leaks around exterior doors and windows, electric outlets, and entrance points for TV and phone cables. Also check dryer vents and any place with an opening in the wall. To seal leaks, apply caulk, spray foam or weather-stripping to these areas.

Simple acts such as cooking outdoors on a hot summer day or keeping curtains closed to keep out the summer sun will keep the interior of your home cooler and reduce the amount of time AC units need to operate.

EV REGISTRATIONS SEE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE



According to the South Dakota Dept. of Revenue, the state experienced a boom in electric vehicle registrations in 2021.

At year-end, there were 1,313 electric vehicles registered in the state. That compares to just 242 from the year before. EV registrations saw a slight jump from 227 in 2015 to 236 in 2019.

Minnehaha County led the state with 406 registered EVs, followed by Pennington County with 228 and Lincoln with 151. Nine counties had no EVs registered.



Stay away from power lines

Naomi Goldade

Naomi Goldade likes to have outdoor fun in the spring and summer but reminds co-op members to stay away from power lines. Naomi is the daughter of Alex and Rachael Goldade of Timber Lake. They are members of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative.

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.

SUPER CASSEROLES

TUNA PASTA CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

- 4 oz. dried whole-wheat rotini pasta (about 1-1/2 cups)
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 16 oz. frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
- 1 pouch (11 ounces) low-sodium chunk light tuna
- 1 can (10-3/4 oz.) low-fat, low sodium condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 cup chopped roasted red bell peppers
- 1/2 cup fat-free half-and-half
- 1 tsp. all-purpose, salt-free seasoning blend
- 3/4 cup crushed low-sodium, whole-grain crackers
- 1/4 cup shredded or grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD

Prepare pasta according to package directions, omitting salt. Using colander, drain well. Transfer to large bowl. Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly spray 2-quart glass baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Stir mixed vegetables, tuna, soup, roasted peppers, half-and-half and seasoning blend into pasta until combined. Transfer to baking dish. Top with crackers and Parmesan cheese. Bake, uncovered, 25-30 minutes, or until casserole is warmed through and topping is golden brown.

familyfeatures.com

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

ONE DISH CHICKEN AND RICE

Ingredients:

- 1/2 to 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup green and/or red bell pepper
- 1 can cream of chicken soup (or cream soup of your choice)
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 2 cups chicken, cooked and chopped
- 1 cup peas (frozen)
- 2 cups cooked white rice
- 1 cup shredded cheddar, divided

METHOD

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 9-inch x 13-inch baking dish and set aside. Sauté onion and bell pepper in olive oil or butter. Blend soup, milk, salt, pepper, and mayo in a bowl. Add chicken, peas, sauteed onions and peppers, and rice to the prepared baking dish. Mix gently. Pour soup over chicken mixture. Mix gently. Fold in half of the cheddar. Top with remaining cheese. Bake until top is golden brown, about 25 minutes.

Becky Walker, Sioux Falls

CHICKEN AND CHEESE CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

- 2 cups uncooked elbow macaroni
- 2 5-oz. cans of chicken chunks
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cans cream of chicken soup
- 4 oz. sliced mushrooms
- 1/4 cup chopped onion

METHOD

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, mix all seven ingredients together. Pour into a 9x13 baking pan. Bake at 350 for 45 minutes or until bubbly and golden brown.

Jeanette Kleinsasser, Iroquois



Aerial view of lots as highlighted in red.

CENTRAL DAKOTA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Joni Moore

The housing crisis in this country is a frequent topic on the news. As most of us are aware, it is not just an urban problem. Rural areas feel the housing shortage just as much as their city counterparts. In Kennebec, there is an innovative effort to alleviate the housing crunch.

Kennebec, like many towns, needed a place to build much needed homes and businesses, but it is somewhat landlocked. This is where the Central Dakota

Development Corporation, founded by Rod Bowar, Matt Collins, and Nancy Bowar, comes in. The Ronald and Beth Moore family offered to sell their land west of Beth's house on the eastern edge of town to the Central Dakota Development Corporation. The corporation then approached Eugene and Betty Jean Mertens to see if they would sell their piece of land next to the Moore land and the Mertens graciously agreed because they too saw that it could be beneficial for the town and its future. The addition's sole purpose is to provide developed

land to build houses, duplexes or apartments, and small businesses.

Nancy Bower had this to say about the addition, "Our great hope is to bring our 'homegrowns' home. Over the past year and a half, we have learned that you can work from home with a good broadband connection. Hopefully, the homegrowns that have ventured off for employment and experience elsewhere will have an opportunity to come back. With this project, now they will have a place to build a home or start a small business. Another option that the lots provide is an existing home in Kennebec could open up now because a current resident has a place to build a home more suitable for their current lifestyle."

The community of Kennebec has been enthusiastic about the development. Central Dakota Development held a public meeting to show everyone the plan and explain the purpose. Current residents expressed their struggle to find a place to live when they moved to Kennebec, so the development has been received with welcoming arms.

The timeline for the project is to have water, sewer, electricity and broadband done by July or August. There is already one lot with a sale pending.

West Central will be presenting a check for \$300,000 to the Central Dakota Development Corporation. This loan is from the Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) Fund, which is governed by 25 electric cooperatives. The REED Fund loans are low-interest and are dedicated to offering loans that promote growth, contribute to job and wealth creation, and improve

the infrastructure in rural areas.

Central Dakota Development Corporation would like to thank the REED Fund and the Dakota Prairie Bank of Presho for their support behind this project. They would also like to thank West Central Electric for their encouragement, preparation, and hard work towards the progress of the addition.

For more information on Central Dakota Development Corporation, call 605-869-2660. You can also like and follow their Facebook page for project updates.

Sign of the Ronald and Beth Moore Addition by the Central Dakota Development Corporation



**Powering Lives.
Empowering Communities.**

Our mission is to serve. Our priority is you.

GOATS STEAL THE SPOTLIGHT



Anna Johnson and Jessemy Sharp groom at the 2021 Brown County Fair. *Photo by Donna Sharp*

Ag students show a fondness for working with goats at youth exhibitions and competitions

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Matea Gordon's goats always keep her guessing.

The 17-year-old is one of four Gordon siblings from Whitewood who have been highly active - and highly successful - on the 4-H and FFA competition scenes over the past decade.

She prefers to work with market goats because the animals force her to stay on her toes. She never knows what she's going to get.

"They tend to have big personalities. Sometimes they're shy and cute. Other times they can be pretty stubborn. You just never know," she said. "Plus, it's fun to see how much progress you can make with them throughout the year."

Her younger brother, Bennett, enjoys raising and feeding the goats daily.

"I've learned about genetics, animal health and feed nutrition. The goats kind of become your friend as you bring them up and take care of them."

The brother-sister duo are part of a

trend in ag exhibition circles that finds eager competitors opting to work with goats. Their mom, Kindra Gordon, said all four of her children have been fond of tending to goats.

She said the family started with two goats a decade ago, and their involvement grew from there. Today, they travel and compete at nearly a dozen shows throughout the year. Likewise, she has seen youth participation in goat exhibitions double over the past few years.

"When the kids joined 4-H, they wanted to do a project and the goats just seemed to fit our lifestyle," she said.

Regardless of what animals her children choose, she has found there's much to be gained in participating in the competitions and other opportunities that youth ag programs provide.

"The kids have learned about responsibility, life skills and the agriculture industry. They learn about sportsmanship and how to manage stress. We tell them to be happy for their friends when it's their time to win, and

they'll be happy for you when you win. We've met a lot of people and made a lot of friends along the way."

One of those friends is Tessa Erdmann, a freshman at SDSU from Groton who serves as president of the state FFA. She is long-time friends with Matea and her older sister, Danika, both of them winners of Butte Electric Cooperative's college scholarship program.

Tessa said her choice to work with goats mostly came down to a practical matter. She cites her smallish physical stature as one reason for channeling her focus on the species.

"I'm 5 feet tall and I came to the conclusion that I didn't want to hold on to something way bigger than me," she said.

At age 12, Tessa went with her father, Darrin, to an auction and brought home her first three animals: Buttercup, Sassy and Thunderbolt. She describes the event as "love at first sight." In her first year to show at the Brown County Fair, Tessa won ribbons in the breeding and showmanship divisions and has placed many times since then.

A former gymnast and a member of Northern Electric based in Aberdeen,

Moose sees goat-breeding as a gift



Garret Moose isn't sure if he chose goats or goats chose him. In 2004, Moose received twin Nubian kids – a buck and a doe – as a birthday gift. That gift sparked an interest in goats that has led him to building a top breeding operation in southwest Minnesota.

By 2011, Moose was ready to hit the show circuit with only marginal success in the early stages. It would take a couple of years to make it to the American Dairy Goat Association National Show in St. Paul where Moose-G Foxy was named Reserve Junior National Champion Recorded Grade. He saw it all as a learning process.

“When I started out I didn't win anything but I learned a lot, and not to mention I met so many great people that I now call close friends,” he said. “When Foxy won, that's what really got us excited and dedicated to continue on this path with dairy goats.”

Moose raises and markets Alpines, Lamanchas, Saanens, Toggenburgs and Recorded Grade Seniors and Juniors.

He said he enjoys working with the animals and is especially appreciative of his “goat family.”

“It's a tight community and we're always seeing each other at shows, exchanging information and sharing ideas,” he said. “I couldn't do what I do without my family and friends.”

For more information, Moose can be contacted at 507.530.3175.



Clockwise from top/left: FFA President Tessa Erdmann; Kylee Ellerton of Custer; Taylor, Tate and Tye McGraw of Raymond.



Tessa said she has also experienced a large measure of mutual support within the animal exhibition community.

“Everybody is always so nice and you can count on everyone to help one another,” she said. “We're competitive inside the ring, but outside we're family and we don't hate each other. One year, someone's father was hurt and couldn't make it to the competition. Everyone chipped in to help the family out.”

Becca Tullar is a 4-H advisor in Brown County. She explained what she believes is the reason for the rising interest in goats.

“They're a good starter animal and youngsters get used to them and many of the students stick with them. They kind of grow up together,” she said.

“They're easy to handle. Once you get them halter-broke they'll go wherever you want. They're fun animals to show.

They're almost like pets and they build easy bonds.”

One competitor who has a way with his goats is Tate McGraw, a 17-year-old from Raymond who has Down syndrome. His father, Wade, said Tate has been showing since he was 8.

“It's been a real blessing. He's easy-going and just has a way with the animals. He can get them to do things that other handlers can't,” he said.

His other son Tye, 14, and daughter Taylor, 13, also show goats and other animals and McGraw said they each have their individual strengths.

“The best thing as a father is to see the network of friends they've developed across the state. They all support each other and they've learned to respect one another because they know one day they could be on top and the next day they could be on the bottom.”

WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS TO AREA YOUTH



Abby Hutmacher

Abby Hutmacher – I am a lifelong resident of Oacoma, S.D. My parents are Robin and Casey and I have two brothers, Austin and Adam. While attending Chamberlain High School, I was active in cross country, basketball, track, swimteam, choir, show choir and a member of NHS. I will be attending Black Hills State University in the fall to pursue a degree in business management.



Alexis Moran

Alexis Moran – I am the daughter of Chris and Angie Venard and Jeff Iwan. I've grown up in Murdo and attended school here throughout all my school years. I have also participated in sports like volleyball, basketball, cheer and track throughout most of those years. I plan on furthering my academic career at South Dakota State University and majoring in advertising.



Allison Williams

Allison Williams – I'm currently attending Philip High School. I live on our farm/ranch and help in any way possible throughout the year. During my time at school, I have had the opportunity to be a part of our great sports teams, as well as FFA, FCCLA, National Honor Society and Student Council that our school offers to students. I have greatly enjoyed my time here, but I'm looking forward to this next chapter of my life!



Bailey Siedschlaw

Bailey Siedschlaw – I am the daughter of Lynn and Richard Siedschlaw. I was born and raised in the Fort Pierre area. I grew up working on the family ranch and have continued to be involved in numerous extracurricular

activities in Stanley County throughout my high school career. I am so blessed to have grown up in the Fort Pierre area and to be so close with the people of the area.



Bobbie Jarvi

Bobbie Jarvi – I'm currently a senior at Philip High School. A few things that I enjoyed doing in high school was being as involved in my school as possible. I really enjoyed competing in FFA and FCCLA events, and I have met a lot of people and grown as a person through being involved in these groups. I am excited, yet a little nervous to see what the future holds!



Brin Heltzel

Brin Heltzel – I am a senior at Philip High School. Throughout high school, I have been active in Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), State Student Council, basketball and academics. I am very thankful for all the opportunities PHS has offered to me. After graduation, I plan to attend Lake Area Technical College to pursue a degree in nursing.



Carson Daly

Carson Daly – I am from Midland, S.D. My parents are Steve and Julie Daly. I live and work on the family farm and ranch operation. I am currently a senior at Philip High School. I am active in FFA, band, choir, golf and several other activities. After high school, I plan on attending South Dakota School of Mines and Technology to major in mechanical engineering and minor in electrical engineering.



Clark Hindman

Clark Hindman – I am a senior at Kadoka Area High School. My Parents are Brigit and Luke Schofield. I have one older sister, one younger sister and

one younger brother. I plan on attending Sheridan College in Sheridan, Wyo., for the ranchland management program. Throughout high school, I have participated in football, basketball, track, FFA and choir.



Colton Collins

Colton Collins – I currently attend Lyman School and have lived in Kennebec my whole life, my parents are Matt and Christie Collins. I also have two siblings – an older brother, Carter Collins, and a younger sister, Chloe Collins. In high school, I have participated in football, basketball, golf, track, FFA, shooting sports and National Honor Society. I will be attending Mitchell Technical College this fall.



Derrick Rasmussen

Derrick Rasmussen – I'm a senior at Chamberlain High School, I've been a resident of the area since 2019. My parents are Heidi Farnsworth and Anthony Farnsworth, and I have two siblings – Matteo and Gianna. My post-high school plans are to attend USD and to major in accounting for both undergraduate and graduate education.



Jenna Johnson

Jenna Johnson – I live in Reliance and I am the daughter of JJ and Lori Lafferty. I attend Chamberlain High School and plan to attend Mitchell Technical College in the fall of 2022 majoring in the precision agriculture program. I have been active with 4-H, FFA, volleyball, track and field and youth group.



Johanna Herman

Johanna Herman – I have lived in Reliance my entire life. My siblings and I are home-schooled. During high school, I was involved in youth group, TeenPact (a government class), volunteering at church and summer rec. I recently had the amazing opportunity to participate in track and volleyball as well. My free time was filled with artwork, babysitting and attending Bible camp. I plan to attend Mitchell Tech this fall for Radiologic Technology. I am so grateful to be a recipient of this scholarship. It will

help me in my endeavor to further my education, grow in character, and positively influence the lives of others.



Kennadee Shook

Kennadee Shook – I have lived in Lyman County my whole life. My parents are Teresa Hanson and Jason Shook. I have six siblings: Karralynn, Kallie, Kash, Kori, Kais and Kami. I plan on going to college at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology for mechanical engineering.



Luke Jones

Luke Jones – I am a senior at T.F. Riggs High School in Pierre. I am the son of Todd and Darcy Jones and am the youngest of two children. My family owns and runs our farm northwest of Hayes and I aspire to return to help run the business. My favorite hobbies are school trap league, hunting, fishing and motorsports. I plan to attend Lake Area Technical College in the fall 2022 for ag production.



Madelyn Host

Madelyn Marie Host – I am a senior at Jones County High School. My parents are Ann and David Geisler and I have two younger brothers, Tristen and Ryder. I have been involved in volleyball, football and basketball cheer, track, band, pep-band, choir, jazz choir, NHS, school play, FFA, 4-H, Turner Youth, FCA (fellowship of Christian athletes) and Methodist Youth Group. After I graduate, I

plan on attending South Dakota State University and majoring in exercise science.



Mccoey Peterson

Mccoey Peterson – I have lived in Philip all my life, enjoying the small-town life and growing to love the outdoors; therefore, I have chosen to study power line construction and maintenance at Mitchell Technical College. This career would allow me to work outdoors. Some sports I participated in are football, wrestling and golf.



Rachel Hoffer

Rachel Hoffer – I live in Lyman, S.D., with my parents, Deo and Lisa Hoffer, and my brother, Jacob. I am currently a senior at Lyman High School. While in high school, I have been an active participant in athletics, student government and the fine arts. I plan to attend Dakota State University in the fall after I graduate and will pursue a degree in graphic design. Thank you for the opportunity.



Sam McClanahan

Sam McClanahan – I am a Senior at Lyman High School in Presho, S.D. This fall I will be attending Mitchell Technical College and pursuing a degree in electrical construction maintenance. In high school, I participated in football, basketball, and track, along with Student Council and National Honor Society. I plan on coming back to my community to live and work after college.



Tanner Brunskill

Tanner Brunskill – I was born in Rapid City, S.D., and I have five brothers. I went to school in Pierre until 4th grade, then I moved to Murdo, S.D., to be closer to my Mom's family. I have grown up working on the family ranch and working with cows in horses since then. Over the past few years, I have day-worked for people in all the neighboring towns.

Taylee Stroup – I live on a ranch in Fort



Taylee Stroup

Pierre and attend Stanley County High School. I participate in volleyball, basketball, track, National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society and student council. I spend my free time hanging out with my friends on the river and attending rodeos around the state. I plan to attend South Dakota State University next fall and major in ag communications.

Taylor Feddersen – I live in Murdo, S.D.



Taylor Feddersen

I am the daughter of Chris and Beth Feddersen, and sister to Morgan and Cooper Feddersen and Erica Mund. I am a senior at Jones County High School. Throughout my high school, I have participated in basketball, volleyball, band, choir and FFA. I plan to go to school next year to get an exercise science degree and become a physical therapist or athletic trainer.

WE WILL NEVER FORGET.

*We salute you.
We thank you.*

Let us remember those who courageously gave their lives this Memorial Day.

We celebrate our mothers this Mother's Day.

Happy Day Mother's

THE POWER OF LOAD MANAGEMENT

Chris Danielski monitors an irrigation pivot control panel from his phone app. Photos by Billy Gibson

Load control program reaps big rewards for both residents and large energy users

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Danielski Farms didn't become a blue chip producer over the past four decades by making boneheaded business decisions.

In 2013, the company was invited by Cherry-Todd Electric to participate in the cooperative's irrigation load management program. Load management is a term used to describe a co-op's ability to balance the system's electrical load by adjusting or controlling network demand.

Better balance brings greater efficiency and lower costs for all consumers on the system.

Len Danielski recalls pulling the leadership team together and weighing the pros and cons. The proposal included installing specialized equipment that would allow Cherry-Todd to temporarily interrupt power - when warranted - to any of roughly 200 irrigation pivots across 18,000 acres.

While different electric co-ops have their own load management policies, Cherry-Todd's guidelines call for a lower irrigation rate for participants and the right of the consumer to withdraw and return to the regular rate at any time.

The deliberation process was helped along by the fact that Danielski's General Manager Gary Garvin previously served as a board member at Cherry-Todd. He was aware the cooperative business model was designed and intended to produce "win-win" situations for both the co-op and its owner-members.

Danielski Farms ultimately decided to place all of its irrigation system under load management and Len Danielski reports the results have exceeded expectations.

"We found it was a winner all the way around. We have the choice to place one pivot, two pivots, or all pivots on the load control program, or none," he said. "We've analyzed the benefits over time and found that the company wins,

the cooperative wins and the co-op members win. It's a great partnership."

Chris Rahn, Cherry-Todd's primary key account contact, said load management is a tremendous benefit for members because it allows the cooperative - working in concert with both the member and the co-op's wholesale supplier Rushmore Electric - to distribute power more efficiently.

Rahn explained that one of the best ways to deliver power at the lowest possible cost is to "shave the peak" or to make sure supply and demand stay in a constant state of equilibrium as conditions such as weather, member consumption and market forces change constantly. Utilities are able to control supply but can find it challenging to project what consumer demand will be at any point in time.

Educated projections are important, but there are occasions when it helps for the co-op to have some control over demand. In the end, everyone benefits.

"We've had a residential water heater load control program for quite a while and it's been well-received by our

members,” Rahn said. “It enables us to get a better handle on the demand side and that’s a benefit for all the members on our lines.”

Garvin said another mitigating consideration for Danielski Farms is the fact that Cherry-Todd has done its part by making significant improvements to its infrastructure over time.

“We used to joke that we were always under load management because the power would go out a lot, but things have changed dramatically for the better and we hardly ever get bumped these days,” Garvin said. “I’ve also got load management on my water heater at home and it works for us.”

Len Danielski said that under the load control program power to his pivots rarely gets disrupted and typically only for a few hours when it does. He said the company is pleased to participate in a program that will ultimately benefit all co-op members across the system.



From left, Gary Garvin, Len Danielski, Chris Danielski and Chris Rahn discuss Cherry-Todd Electric’s load management program.

“We’ve found interruptions are usually during times when we don’t need to be irrigating anyway, like in the heat of the day when a lot of the water will only get evaporated,” he said. “And if it helps the cooperative and saves every member on the system some money, that’s great.”

Another element that makes the program work for Danielski Farms is the installation of a remote irrigation control system. All of Danielski’s pivots



All of the roughly 200 irrigation pivots at Danielski Farms are under Cherry-Todd Electric’s load management program.

are connected to the Ag Sense phone app that enables a user to turn the pivots on or off individually or in groups, and receive an abundance of electronic data.

Chris Danielski manages the app and said the telemetry allows him to track exactly when load control is being implemented, though he usually receives information from the co-op as well. He said efficiencies gained through both programs have resulted in net savings.

“If we have an hour or two of load management, once we get the notice that we’re back on I can restart the pivot from inside the office,” he said. “It used to take several hours to get someone to go out and restart the system.”

East River Electric, based in Madison, is a power supply cooperative that delivers wholesale electricity to 24 distribution co-ops in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. East River has offered its co-ops a load management option since 1985 and has saved members roughly \$260 million in avoided wholesale power costs.

More than 75,000 different electric loads in homes, farms and businesses are connected to the system, including water heaters, air conditioners, irrigation systems and other big energy users.

Chris Larson, general manager of Clay-Union Electric, said the co-op based in Vermillion offers end-use consumers a load control program for

water heaters, irrigation systems, grain bins and other commercial processing equipment.

The cooperative has 320 irrigation systems under load management with requests for 10 more in the near future as drought conditions show no signs of abating.

Larson emphasized that every cooperative has its own unique rate structure and load management policies when it comes to discounts, demand charges, time-of-use, system peaks and other variables. He said it’s important for consumers to contact their local co-op for details and to work closely with staff to find the best solutions for the member.

He said co-ops are obligated to capture their costs of providing power but are also responsible for finding ways to accommodate their member-owners and helping them achieve their individual goals.

“Load management really is essential to maximizing system efficiency,” Larson said. “It’s a sophisticated process that ultimately leaves the member with plenty of choices. If we’re controlling irrigation or commercial operations at a time that’s not good for them or complicates their workflow, they need the ability to override the control system so they can make a good business decision that’s best for them.”



NATIVE SPECIES GARDENING

Southeastern Electric member Sue Nipe of Sioux Falls puts in a lot of work tending to her native species garden but also receives many rewards for her efforts. *Photos by Brett Snyders*

Native species gardens are good for the environment, diet and soul

Billy Gibson

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If you're a big fan of grass, you might not be too impressed with Sue Nipe's yard. That's because there's isn't a blade of grass to be found.

Nipe lives in a conventional middle-class subdivision in southeast Sioux Falls, but there's nothing conventional about her yard. She's a huge proponent and practitioner of native species gardening and her property stands out prominently from all the rest.

Diagnosed with celiac disease in 2013, Nipe decided to focus on eating healthy and growing much of her own food right there on her own plot of

suburban ground. She decided to pull out all the grass and weeds by their roots, plant some vegetables and herbs - along with a smattering of ornamentals - and before long her corner lot was bursting with native species from porch to curb.

Her key to maintaining a thriving native species garden? Well, there are several, but mulch appears somewhere at the top of the list. Ecologically friendly wood mulch, she explained, is necessary to keeping the weeds out and locking in the moisture.

"I put mulch around everything," Nipe said, noting that she purchased 150 bags of wood mulch last year and had just one weed-pulling session over

the entire spring and summer seasons

"Some try to use small rocks but most of the time they have them removed because during the summer they heat up and burn the plants from the bottom up," she cautioned.

Nipe said native species gardens are in many ways easier to maintain than exotics and are better for the local ecosystem because the plants have adapted to the climate and soil conditions over many generations, are largely resistant to pests and fit into the natural landscape both ecologically and aesthetically.

They are also better at preventing soil erosion, they help reduce air pollution in the local area, use less water, and they provide nectar, pollen and seeds for native butterflies, insects and birds to munch.



A visitor would be hard-pressed to find a blade of grass in Nipe's home landscape.

Moreau-Grand Electric member Doug Hofer is a horticulture teacher at the Cheyenne River School System in Eagle Butte. He said teaching students about the benefits of cultivating native species is important to the preservation and conservation of the landscape.

He uses the school's well equipped greenhouse to teach his students about the fundamentals of horticulture, including vegetables, ornamentals,

succulents and herbs. Toward the end of each semester, the students are instructed to choose a native species that they can find and identify on the prairie, conduct some research and produce a slide show on the topic. They also sell their plants at local markets in the spring and donate their proceeds to their FFA chapter.

Hofer also teaches a class on wildlife and fisheries at the school.

"Everything with the environment and landscape all tie in together," he said. "I think students need to learn about native species and working with those plants that have adapted to our climate and thrive in our part of the world. We also talk about how these plants and herbs have been cultivated and used by people who have inhabited the Great Plains for hundreds and thousands of years."

Studer named winner of TSE's Distinguished Service Award



East River Electric's Chief Member and Public Relations Officer Chris Studer has been named the 2022 Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives Distinguished Service Award recipient. Touchstone Energy Board President Deb Mirasola presented Studer with the award at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's annual meeting in Nashville.

Studer was honored for promoting the cooperative difference and helping Touchstone Energy evolve into a strong brand with more than 650 members in 46 states.

"Chris exemplifies the values of our brand and provides unwavering support to his member systems and local community," Mirasola said.

PHOTO CONTEST: WINTER IN JULY

By the time the summer heat sets in, many South Dakotans will be looking back with fond memories of the winter season.

Readers of Cooperative Connections are invited to send us a photo of your favorite experience from the winter of 2022. The top selected photos will be published in the July edition. A \$50 gift certificate will go to the winning photographer.

Send your photo to billy.gibson@sdrea.coop with the subject line "Winter Memories." File format should be jpeg, PNG or PDF.

The deadline to enter is May 20. Good luck to all contestants.



MAY 14-15
Ellsworth Air & Space Show
 1940 EP Howe Drive, Ellsworth AFB, 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.

APRIL 27-30
45th Annual Kingswood Rummage Sales
 Southwest Sioux Falls, SD,
kingswoodrummage.com

APRIL 28
MercyMe: The Inhale (Exhale) Tour
 Denny Sanford Premier Center,
 Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

APRIL 28-30
26th Annual Black Hills Dance Festival
 The Monument, Rapid City, SD,
blackhillsdancefestival.com

APRIL 29-MAY 1
State USBC Women's Bowling Tournament
 Village Bowl, Mitchell, SD,
 605-336-5583

APRIL 29-MAY 1, 5-7
Ordinary Days
 Grand Opera House, Pierre,
 SD, pierreplayers.com

APRIL 30
SDSO Centennial Finale
 Washington Pavilion, Sioux
 Falls, SD, sdsymphony.org

MAY 3-8
Come From Away
 Washington Pavilion, Sioux
 Falls, SD, www.washingtonpavilion.org/event/come-away

MAY 7
Cinco de Mayo Fiesta
 131 E Falls Park Drive, Sioux
 Falls, SD, 605-274-3735

MAY 8
Mother's Day Tours
 Historic Adams House and
 Days of '76 Museum,
 Deadwood, SD, 605-578-3724

MAY 14-15
AMA Coins and Sports Cards Show
 Denny Sanford Premier
 Center, Sioux Falls, SD,
 605-321-9195

MAY 14-15
Ellsworth Air and Space Show
 1940 EP Howe Drive, Ellsworth
 AFB, SD, ellsworthairshow.com

MAY 15
PAW Patrol Live!
 Swiftel Center, Brookings, SD,
www.swiftelcenter.com

MAY 17
Norwegian Independence Day
 Main Street, Vivian, SD,
 605-222-3296

MAY 20-22
Annual Sound of Silence Tesla Rally
 615 Washington Street, Custer,
 SD, 605-673-2244

MAY 20-22
Open House and Free Fishing Weekend
 Statewide, SD, 605-223-7660

MAY 21
Booth Day
 D.C. Booth Fish Hatchery,
 Spearfish, SD, dcboothfishhatchery.org

MAY 21
Frühlingsfest & Spring Market
 Main Street, Rapid City, SD,
 605-716-7979

MAY 28
Deadwood Live: Hank Williams Jr.
 Outlaw Square, Deadwood, SD,
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

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

MAY 30
Prairie Points Quilt Guild Show
 Harding County Memorial Rec
 Center, Buffalo, SD,
 605-641-5591

JUNE 2-5
Wheel Jam
 South Dakota State
 Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,
www.wheeljam.com

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

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