

Cooperative Connections



The Annual Buffalo Round Up at Custer State Park is one of many activities of interest for visitors to South Dakota

**SD Tourism
continues
steady pace**

Page 8-9

**Anglers in hot
pursuit of cold
fish**

Pages 12-13

BOARD ACCOUNTABILITY

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of FEM Electric was held in Ipswich, Edmunds County, South Dakota at 8:30 a.m. on November 17, 2020 pursuant to due call and notice. It being determined that a quorum was present, President Gary Bachman called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Secretary Larry Bowar kept minutes of the meeting. The following directors were declared present by roll call: Gary Bachman, Tom Thorpe, Paula Petersen, Larry Bowar, Eric Odenbach, General Manager/CEO Scott Moore, Line Superintendent Rob Vetch and Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer. President Gary Bachman welcomed guest employee Jesse Brown. Employees Angie Sieh and Ryan Holien attended the budget portion of the meeting.

Motion by Larry Bowar, seconded by Tom Thorpe and carried to approve administrative business.

Changes to the agenda: Add SDREA Board Report

Minutes from October 20, 2020 meeting: none

Next Meeting Date: After a review of calendars, directors agreed that the next regular meeting of the board would be on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. to be held at FEM Electric Board Room in Ipswich, South Dakota.

Motion by Paula Petersen, seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to acknowledge manager, staff, and electrical department reports.

The board acknowledged reviewing the October Cyber Security Reports.

Resolutions, Nominations, and Contracts: The board acknowledged receiving Notice of NRTC Nominating Committee.

The board acknowledged the Official Notice of Mid-West Annual Meeting.

Motion by Tom Thorpe, seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to retain NRECA's Proposal for Compensation Analysis for 2021, option 2.

Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer reported that confirmation was received from RUS to treat the Verizon AMI Expense as a prepaid expense for 2021-2030 and future years as needed.

Membership Business: The board acknowledged the following membership business as presented:

New Memberships, Member Cancellations and Contracts: Motion by Eric Odenbach, seconded by Tom Thorpe to approve and sign four Line Construction Contracts.

Disconnects: June Malsom, Ipswich, Active Farm; Kevin & Pam Holt, Mina, Active Farm; Nathan & Beth Locken, Aberdeen, Active Farm; Gerald & Judith Toennies, Cresbard, Grain Bin

Reconnects: Blake Heinz, Ipswich, Active Farm; Sheldon & Brandi Holt, Cresbard, Active Farm; Milton & Lisa Hancock, Mina, Active Farm; Trevor Toennies, Cresbard, Grain Bin

Contracts: Verlin Jakober, Leola, Shop; Scott Raile, Eureka, Pasture Pump; East River Electric, Madison, Substation Service, Cody &



Morgan Knutson, Ipswich, Residence

Retired Locations: None

Estates: November 2020 – None

73 & Older: November 2020 – Two early retirements = \$4,242.27

Market rate for Agtegra Bowdle was tabled to get further clarification from East River Electric.

Board acknowledged the Unclaimed Property List of Capital Credits to be published. Discussion was held on why some deceased names were still on list. The FEM bylaws Article XI, Section 7 and SD statutes require cooperatives to advertise unclaimed property for 6 years. In the case of a deceased member, the personal representative or beneficiary is required to notify FEM and complete the final estate paperwork to clear the unclaimed property balance.

Financial Business: The board acknowledged reviewing the following financial information: Check register for the month of October 2020 contained information on checks #31020 through #31098, and all automatic withdrawals for October 2020 totaling \$375,159.94.

October 2020 financials were reviewed.

Board and staff reviewed 2021 preliminary budget.

Motion by Larry Bowar, seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to approve director and attorney fees.

Legal Update: Motion by Tom Thorpe, seconded by Larry Bowar and carried to settle a bankruptcy with the bankruptcy trustee. FEM will pay trustee \$3,417.52 as final settlement and retain \$3,704.66 as forfeited capital credits.

Motion by Eric Odenbach, seconded by Paula Petersen and carried to cancel membership #5815 and retain half of capital credits to be applied to bad debt from that membership for non payment on energy account. Half will remain in capital credits.

Meeting Report: East River board update was given by Gary Bachman. Tom Thorpe discussed SDREA board meeting.

The board acknowledged the receipt of the October 27, 2020 Safety Meeting minutes along with near misses, accident reports and investigations.

Adjourn: President Gary Bachman declared the meeting adjourned.



A Touchstone Energy[®]
Cooperative 

Cooperative Connections

(USPS 189-720)

Board of Directors

Gary Bachman, President
Tom Thorpe, Vice President
Larry Bowar, Secretary
Paula Petersen, Treasurer
Eric Odenbach, Asst. Sec./Treasurer
Vaughn Beck, Attorney

CEO/General Manager

Scott Moore
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Rob Vetch, Line Superintendent
Rhonda Tuscherer, Director of
Finance and Benefits

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8 am to 4:30 pm

FEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of FEM Electric Association, Inc., 800 5th Ave., Ipswich, SD 57451. FEM Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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FEM Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Scott Moore
General Manager

What a fall it has been. I have noticed a good share of fall application of fertilizer and field work getting completed. This should help relieve some stress in the spring, along with little to no crop drying and an increase in corn and soybean prices. These factors all point to a better 2020 than what we expected at the start of the year or in the spring. Not only should agriculture producers have a good year, but also contractors and businesses with the extended nice weather and strong rural economy.

With the 2020 election behind us, we will likely see a 180-degree or even a 360-degree change in the direction of energy policy in Washington, D.C. President elect Joe Biden has publicly campaigned on clean, green, renewable power moving forward. Since 2006, fourteen years ago, Basin Electric has gone from

less than one percent renewable power to over thirty percent by 2020. Basin Electric's, FEM Electric's, renewable portfolio does not include the hydro dams on the Missouri River as the federal government excluded using the hydro power as part of reaching renewable goals. FEM Electric, through East River Electric, is allocated about seventeen percent of our power consumption from Western Area Power, the Missouri River dam system.

In my opinion, the electric cooperatives have done a great job at converting a portion of our electric generation portfolio to renewables in the past fourteen years, while maintaining our fleet of baseload and peaking plant generators that are fueled by coal and natural gas. I believe, along with most electric cooperative managers and directors in the State, that we need a mixture in electric generation- coal, hydro, natural gas, wind, and solar.

Renewables are important to the electrical grid and power generation now and in the future, but they are currently not a stand-alone power source. In August of 2020, California had black outs to thousands of homes and businesses due to excessive heat and an overreliance of intermittent/renewable power generation. On August 14, 2020, the wind stopped blowing and the California electrical grid lost about 1000 megawatts of wind power with no baseload generation to pick-up the electrical load. This left one option, "Turn the switch off." Now we are with no lights or air conditioning; so much for reliable power. How much is 1000 megawatts? If you take all the electric cooperatives in the State of South Dakota both east and west of the river where most of the small communities' are served by cooperatives and turn off the power, the electric grid would drop around 1000 megawatts. I am speculating, but this would probably happen on the hottest or coldest day of the year, and hopefully not a day that the doctor is halfway through doing open heart surgery on me.

This begs the question, "Can this happen in our region and South Dakota?" The answer is, yes, it could happen. One instance in 2019 was the polar vortex where utilities had significant challenges to keep reliable power flowing to homes and businesses. FEM Electric has two ISO's (Independent System Operators) that manage the electric grids that serve FEM Electric power. Midcontinent Independent Operator (MISO) and

Statement Mailing Dates

December 30th for December's energy.

January 28th for January's energy.

Regardless of the statement mail out date payments are due in the office by the 9th of the following month.

Manager's col. continued to page 14

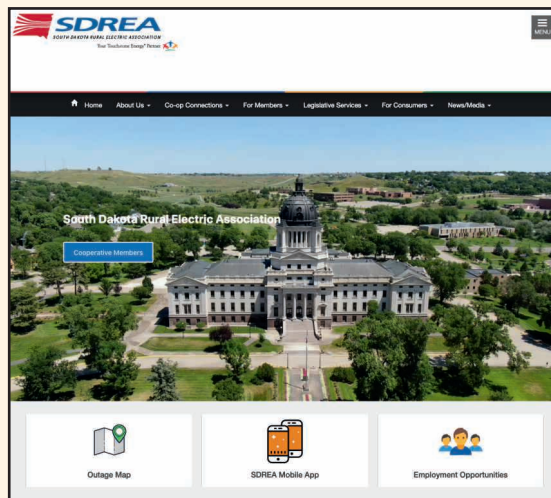
National Cut Your Energy Costs Day

If you resolved to spend less and save more in 2021, cutting back on a few regular expenses is a good place to start. Sunday, Jan. 10, is National Cut Your Energy Costs Day, so we've rounded up a few tips to help you trim your utility bills without making major lifestyle changes.

- **Cut heating and cooling costs.** We spend a great deal of energy heating our homes in the winter and keeping them cool in the summer, but are we really doing our best to minimize the cost of our comfort? A programmable thermostat can allow you to adjust the temperature when you're out of the house or sleeping. There's no reason to blast the heat when everyone is at work, and it's doubtful you need to sleep with the hot air on high. So program your schedule into your thermostat, and it'll do all the work for you.
- **Watch out for energy draining appliances.** Big appliances like refrigerators, washers and dryers consume a lot of energy, so the next time you replace one of these appliances, upgrade to an energy-efficient Energy Star-certified model. These are designed to use much less energy than their older counterparts and often end up paying for themselves in savings over time. Keep these appliances clean and well maintained to ensure optimal performance and efficiency.
- **Pull the plug.** As we continue to be more and more "plugged in," it should come as no surprise that a greater proportion of our energy goes toward keeping our devices charged. To keep costs reasonable, plug electronics into a power strip and turn it off when they're not in use. This cuts off "phantom" usage and can save you a bundle. Some newer power strips even include an automatic shut-off feature.
- **Hit the lights.** As always, turn off the lights when leaving a room. You can also swap out light bulbs to increase your home's energy efficiency. Replace incandescent bulbs with LED versions for an easy and affordable way to save on electricity. Not only do LEDs last significantly longer, they also require much less energy.
- **Start with a simple home assessment.** Interested to know how your home's energy use compares to similar homes? Check out Energy Star's Home Energy Yardstick at energystar.gov to learn how much of your home's energy use is related to heating and cooling versus other appliance use, lighting and hot water.

Visit the new SDREA.coop

Want to know more about South Dakota's rural electric cooperative system? Check out our newly redesigned website at www.sdrea.coop. You'll find lots of useful information about our generation, transmission and distribution systems, energy efficiency ideas, legislative issues that impact electric rates, a statewide outage map and much more.



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Watch Out for Downed Power Lines!"

Gracie Richter, 9 years old

Gracie is a resident of Buffalo, S.D., and is the daughter of Jody Richter. They are members of 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.

Warm and Cozy Soups

Tomato-Tortellini Soup

2 - 14 ounce cans reduced-sodium chicken broth
1 - 9 ounce package of refrigerated tortellini
1 - 8 ounce tub cream

cheese spread with chive and onion
1 - can tomato soup
Fresh chives (optional)

In a medium sauce pan bring broth to a boil. Add tortellini then reduce heat to simmer uncovered for 5 minutes. In a bowl whisk 1/3 cup of hot broth into the cream cheese spread. Whisk until smooth. Pour contents into sauce pan. Stir in tomato soup and heat through. Serve with fresh chives, if desired.

Family Features/Better Homes and Gardens

Slow Cooker Split Pea Soup

1 lb. dried green split peas (rinsed)
1 cup sliced carrots
2 stalks celery, diced, plus leaves
2 cups chopped onion

2 cloves garlic, minced
1 bay leaf
1/4 cup chopped parsley
6 cups chicken broth
salt and pepper, to taste

Layer ingredients in slow cooker in order given, adding broth last. DO NOT stir ingredients. Cover and cook on high for 4-5 hours or low for 8-10 hours until peas are very soft.

Gail Lyngstad, Pierre, SD

Baked Potato Soup

2/3 cup butter
2/3 cup flour
7 cups milk
4 to 6 baked potatoes, peeled and cooled
4 green onions chopped

6 slices of bacon, cooked and crumbled
1-1/2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1 cup sour cream
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper

Melt butter, add flour and stir until smooth. Add milk and stir. Add potatoes and onion. Cook until mixture comes to a boil. Turn to low heat immediately and add bacon, cheese, sour cream, salt and pepper. Stir well. Makes 1 crockpot full.

Terri Halstead, Sioux Falls, SD

Clam Chowder

4 slices thick bacon cut and fried
1 onion
1 cup celery
1/3 cup flour
1 tsp. pepper

4 cans 6.5 oz. minced clams (save juice)
1 15-oz. can chicken broth
2 potatoes
2 cups cream
1 bay leaf

Cut and fry bacon. Add diced onion and celery and cook about five minutes. Stir in 1/3 cup flour using the drained clam juice until slightly thick. Add 1 teaspoon pepper, one can broth, 4 cans clams, 2 diced potatoes and one bay leaf. Cook until potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes. Add cream. Enjoy!

Sharon Waltner, Freeman, SD

My Mother's Tomato Soup

2 cups tomato juice or pureed canned tomatoes
1/2 tsp. soda

1 qt. milk
salt to taste
1 tbsp. butter

Combine tomatoes or juice with soda in a saucepan. Let froth up. Add milk, salt and butter. Heat and serve.

Doris Ekberg, Hamill, SD

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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Replace standard power strips with advanced power strips to save energy. Advanced power strips look like ordinary power strips, but they have built-in features that are designed to reduce the amount of energy used by standby electronics that consume energy even when they're not in use (also known as phantom load).

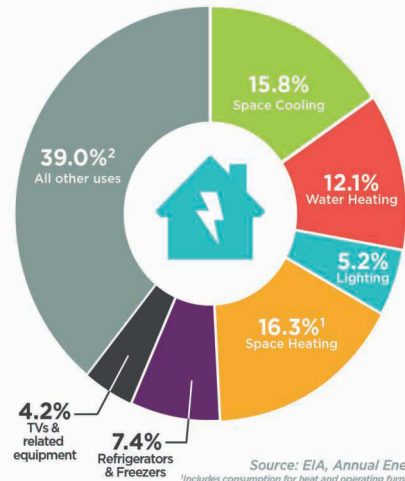
The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) estimates that the average home loses \$200 annually to energy wasted by phantom load.

Source: www.nrel.gov



How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, computers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment (noted as "all other uses" below) accounts for nearly 40% of electricity consumption in American homes.



Source: EIA, Annual Energy Outlook 2020

¹Includes consumption for heat and operating furnace fans and boiler pumps.
²Includes miscellaneous appliances, clothes washers and dryers, computers and related equipment, stoves, dishwashers, heating elements, and motors.

2021

HAPPY NEW YEAR

FEM Electric will be closed on Friday January 1st in observance of the holiday.

Indigenous Front Man Mato Nanji Eager to Get Back on the Road

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Mato Nanji is too gentle of spirit to be compared to a lion looking to leap out of a cage.

But ever since the blues and rock guitarist was blocked from touring by COVID-19 restrictions, he's been positively itching to get back out on the road.

Nanji, the front man for the band Indigenous, was reared on the Yankton Sioux Reservation. And that's where he's been sidelined since the coronavirus disrupted the highly popular Experience Jimi Hendrix tour last spring.

The soulful guitar slinger was in his prime element traveling around the country playing with some of his heroes, including former Hendrix bandmate Billy Cox, David Hidalgo of Los Lobos and Louisiana-born blues legend Buddy Guy. But last spring he returned to southeast South Dakota and has been spending ample time with his wife and collaborator, Leah, and their five children.

One of those children is 20-year-old Evan, who has joined Indigenous on rhythm guitar, along with Nanji's childhood friends Curt Olsen on drums and Justin Cournoyer on bass. They've been composing new songs, working on developing their sound and plan to do some touring of their own after the pandemic subsides.

"It's been great being here and being back home with family," said Nanji, 46. "I've been out playing since I was 18, so it's good to have a break. But I can't wait for the next opportunity to get out on the road. It's in my blood."

Music really is in Nanji's blood. He was inspired to pursue music by his father, who introduced him to the work of artists like Otis Redding, Jimmy Reed and Carlos

Santana. A big source of inspiration was the late Stevie Ray Vaughn and his band Double Trouble.

When on tour with the Experience Hendrix show, Nanji often finds himself sharing the stage with Double Trouble bassist Tommy Shannon and drummer Chris "Whipper" Layton.

"Chris and Tommy are great guys and very talented," Nanji said. "I remember I was about 15 when Stevie Ray came through Sioux Falls, but I didn't get to see him. He inspired thousands of players. My dad brought home the album 'Couldn't Stand the Weather' and said, 'Check this out.' It blew me away. He had such a great feeling and vibe. It's an honor for me to play with members of his band and try to capture that tone. It's very inspiring for me."

Vaughn died in a helicopter crash not long after that Sioux Falls tour stop.

Along with getting Indigenous back into top form and headlining some of the Native American fair and festival events around the country, Nanji said he also has another goal to have the Experience Hendrix tour make a stop in South Dakota next year.

"It's an incredible show and I feel honored to play with such outstanding musicians," he said. "It's a special event and it's something I want to bring to the fans in



Indigenous front man Mato Nanji is eager to get back on tour with his band Indigenous in 2021. Photo courtesy of Experience Hendrix Tour.

South Dakota. I think it's something they'd really enjoy. It's good to come back home and be around people you grew up with."

In the meantime, Nanji will continue composing, collaborating and co-writing with Leah. They grew up together on the Yankton Reservation - which he calls his "base" - and were high school sweethearts. Leah typically comes up with a melody and then Mato fills in with the musical hooks, themes, tempos and riffs.

More than anything, he's grateful to be able to integrate his musical pursuits and the closeness of his family.

"Evan is a great kid. He's talented, and it's a thrill to have him in the band," he said. "Leah is also a great talent and always has new and refreshing ideas. A lot of musicians are into going out to parties after the show. I like going out, playing, and then coming home to my family."



Tourism in South Dakota has remained robust despite the impact of the global pandemic. Photos courtesy of the SD Tourism Department.

SD TOURISM GOING STRONG

Tired of Being Shut In: Visitors Flock to South Dakota

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Probably the last time a member of the Hustead family was worried about going broke, it was back in the 1930s.

Ted and Dorothy Hustead had just purchased a small drug store in Wall and were having a hard time getting the business to grow in the middle of a severe drought and the Great Depression.

The business that went on to become known as Wall Drug has been named one of the busiest tourist attractions in the northern part of the country. The prospects of the Husteads going broke have been very slim since the store hit its stride.

That is until last March.

Third-generation owner Rick Hustead won't lie: he was downright worried that Wall Drug might bite the dust when COVID-19 prompted lockdowns and travel restrictions.

The entire operation – the stores, the restaurants, the galleries and even the free ice water – came grinding to a stop for 71 days just as the travel season was about to kick into gear.

“I was afraid we might go broke and we might not make it. They're projecting that half of the restaurants out there are going to close down permanently,” Hustead said. “We were closed that whole time and had to cut back on our employees because we felt that trying to ‘flatten the curve’ was the right thing to do.”

The business reported losses through the summer, but returned to the black in August due in part to traffic from the Sturgis motorcycle rally. Hustead reported that September and October also showed considerable increases over 2019 numbers.

“People just got tired of being shut in and they got in their cars and on their motorcycles and their RVs and came to South Dakota,” he said, noting that even President Trump made his way to Mount Rushmore for a Fourth of July gathering.

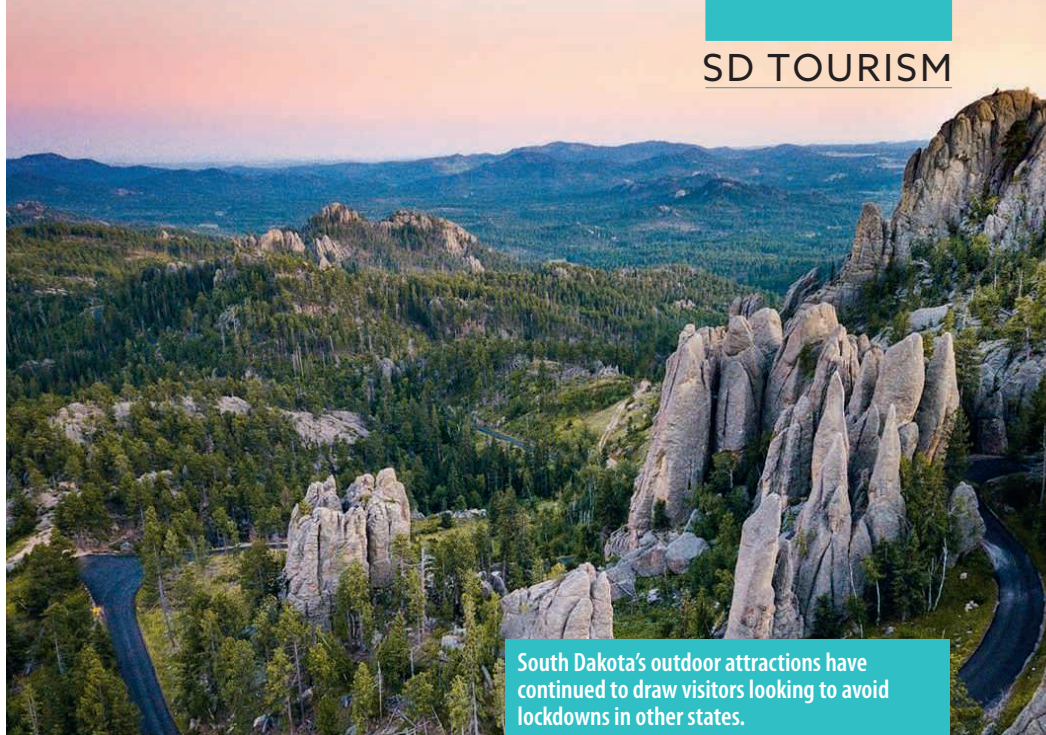


The annual Buffalo Round Up at Custer State Park continues to attract visitors from throughout the country.

The Thing I Love Most about Living in South Dakota is...

What do you love most about living in South Dakota? Share your thoughts with us (200 words or less) and you could win a \$25 gift card!

Send your response to editor@srea.coop by Jan. 4, and don't forget to include your contact information.



South Dakota's outdoor attractions have continued to draw visitors looking to avoid lockdowns in other states.

Hustead said he took public safety measures such as installing Plexiglas barriers, posting hand-sanitizer stations and requiring that employees wear masks. He said no employees have been known to contract the coronavirus. The bottom line also received a boost from some federal relief money.

Once the financial fog lifted, Hustead called his mother Marjorie – who is in a care facility in Rapid City but is “still involved in the business” – and told her he felt Wall Drug was going to make it through the crisis after all.

“I told her, ‘Mom, I think we’re going to make it.’ And that made her happy,” Hustead said.

He was quick to heap praise on the South Dakota Office of Tourism and leader Jim Hagen.

In assessing the state of tourism in South Dakota, officials paint a picture similar to Hustead. While many annual events have been canceled or postponed to a later date, outdoor events and activities such as Sturgis, walleye fishing, pheasant hunting and the many outdoor tourist attractions have led to a healthy industry performance and outlook.

Hagen's office has also taken the initiative to develop innovative programs to ensure that South Dakota stays top-of-mind when people throughout the region and nation make their travel plans.

The department recently launched an on-line learning program for children and their families to learn more about South Dakota and experience the attractions of the state from the comfort of their homes or in a classroom setting. There are eight virtual pages that allow site visitors to learn more about the icons, wildlife, people and history of the state, each featuring games and activities for the entire family to explore.

“These online lessons provide an opportunity to educate children and adults alike about our state's Great Faces and Great Places,” said Gov. Kristi Noem. “We hope that they are used as a tool to engage families

and inspire them to explore our great state.”

The department also partnered with Badlands National Park to promote its virtual Junior Ranger program. Once the virtual exploration is complete, kids can become official Badlands National Park Junior Rangers.

Last summer, the department teamed up with tourism officials in Wyoming to develop a program called “Black to Yellow” to entice travelers to explore scenic routes that wind from the Badlands National Park to Wyoming's iconic Yellowstone National Park.

To help travelers plan their trip, the states put together itineraries that explore their most well-known attractions and lesser-known gems. From taking in roadside stops, like Wall Drug and Wyoming's Devils Tower, to exploring the scenery of Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area and Badlands National Park, travelers were encouraged to explore the beauty of the states' wide open spaces, unparalleled wildlife and the freedom of the open road.

State tourism leaders will meet in Pierre on Jan. 20-21 for the 2021 Governor's Conference on Tourism. There will be limited in-person engagement as well as an online attendance option. The theme for this year's meeting is, “Onward!” While 2020 could have been worse, leaders are hoping that travel will continue to be a significant economic driver in the state.



Wall Drug shut down for 71 days last spring but rebounded to have a successful 2020.

Unclaimed Capital Credits

If you know any of the listed past members and have current contact information on them, please call the FEM Office at 605-426-6891 or 800-587-5880 and ask for Angie.

ADM ALLIANCE NUTRITION, STAYE
 HOOSE, MGR
 ALLBEE , RENA E.
 ANDERSON, DULCIA D.
 ANTAR, ISHMAEL
 ARCHER , DOUGLAS D.
 ARCURI, ROBERT L.
 AMATO , VINCENT
 BELTZ, DAVID
 BENSEN , ORPHA
 BICHLER, ALEX
 BINDER , MALIDA
 BLANK , GRACE
 BRAUSEN, BARON OR JANELLE
 CARRICO, JODI R.
 CASTLE, WENDY
 DAKOTA GRAIN TRANSFER
 DAVIS , CHAD
 DEATON, JOHN
 DEVOSS , MICHAEL
 DOCKTER, MARTHA
 DOSCH , MIKE
 DUNAWAY, EDNA
 DUTENHOEFFER, GARY A.
 ENG, DALE
 EVANS, WESLEY R.
 FISCHER , EDWARD
 FREWALDT, LISA
 GAB, ROBERT
 GUSTAFSON , VERNA
 HALL , RODERICK

HAPALA, VIRGINIA
 HEACOCK , JACK
 HEILMAN , MARY
 HEILMAN , PETER G.
 HELGELIEN, CLARE
 HENDERSON , CLAIR
 HENDERSON , MARGUERITE
 HUBER, ALAN
 HUBER, OSCAR E.
 HUBERS , ELIZABETH
 HUBERS , KURT D.
 ISHEE , WILLIAM OR RACHEL
 JONES , CATHY A.
 KELLER , LLOYD
 KOOB, DR JOSEPH E.
 KRAMLICH, HELEN
 KRONBERG, RUSSELL & CAROLINE
 L & J PROPERTIES
 LANGSTON, LEE
 LANDSMAN, THOMAS
 LONG, RAY AND LOIS
 LUX, DAVID J.
 MARTINMAAS, CRAIG
 MEEHL, JIM
 MEYER , JOHN J.
 MILLER , HAROLD
 MILLIRON H RANCH
 MITCHELL , EUGENE L .
 MOTOROLA COMMUNICATIONS
 MULSKE, ELMER

OAKLEY , DALE
 OHNSTAD, DAWN
 OMLAND , JEFF
 PFEIFLE, EDMUND
 QUENZER, SHANNON
 RAMSAY, KEVIN
 REED, CARL H.
 RETTKE , MARK
 RIEBEN, RICHARD
 RITTERHOUSE , YVONNE
 ROHRBACH, RICK
 RUBIE'S BAR & GRILL , MAUREEN MILLER
 SCEPANIAK, TED
 SCHAUER, SCOTT OR JESSICA
 SCHILLING , JACOB
 SCHIPKE , LORENTINA
 SCHNABEL , ROGER
 SCHUMACHER , EDMUND
 SCHWAB, BILL
 SEHNERT , TAMY
 STROMAN, ROBERT
 STUCKLE, ALAN
 VOEGELE, BRUCE
 WARREN , MONTE
 WERNER , DOUGLAS A.
 WESTERN COMMUNICATIONS
 WILLIAMS , RICHARD
 WINKELMAN , ALBERT
 WITTROCK , KINTON G.
 WOLF, VIOLET B.

Come join us at

FEM Electric's Annual

Please bring paper products for FEM to distribute to the area Food Pantries.

Pancake & Sausage Breakfast

Friday, February 5th, 2021

FEM North shop building

7 a.m to 10 a.m.

Serving our Members through the years!





Ice fishing is a pursuit that's enjoyed each winter by South Dakotans of every stripe.

Guys, Gals and Castles on Ice

South Dakotans Stay in Hot Pursuit of Cold Fish

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

What happens if you hold an ice fishing tournament and it turns out there's no ice?

You improvise.

That's what organizers of the annual Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament had to do 10 years ago when Mother Nature refused to cooperate and left them scrambling to come up with a Plan B.

At that time, the tournament was just gaining traction as a main winter attraction for Mobridge. No one dreamed that what started as just a handful of anglers vying to win an ice auger has grown into a field that's capped at 525 two-person teams arriving from 16 different states.

Jeff Jackson is owner of the Wrangler Inn in Mobridge and one of the founders of the tournament marking its 20th anniversary this year. He remembers a bit of panic setting in when hundreds of fishermen were scheduled to descend on Mobridge and the ice on the Missouri River wasn't thick enough to ensure the safety of competitors. Fortunately, the organizing committee had scheduled enough attractions and activities around the one-day tournament that there was plenty for the eager visitors to do.

"We got the word out that the competition was canceled, but 420 out of the 450 teams that were registered showed up anyway," Jackson recalls. "They wanted to come and have a good time."

Those non-angling activities included raffles and prize drawings, an expo featuring all the latest fishing gear, gizmos and gadgets, and according to Jackson, lots of libations.

"People keep coming back year after year," Jackson said, noting that the town's population doubles in the second week of each January. "We've had to limit the number of participants so we have an Ebay auction for three spots that can go as high as \$3,000, and we have another lottery drawing for 26 spots where we usually have up to 800 names."

Instead of a simple ice auger as a grand prize, today the tournament gives away roughly \$225,000 in prizes, including Ice



Hundreds were in attendance at the Dakota Anglers Fishing Expo in Sioux Falls. Photo provided by Dakota Angler.



Castles, four-wheelers, a Polaris Ranger, \$5,000 worth of Scheel's gear, \$3,000 in Runnings gear, clam shacks and more.

The tournament is a boon for Mobridge, bringing an economic impact of \$500,000. According to Jesse Konold, chairman of the town's tourism committee, over the past four years proceeds paid for South Dakota's first climate-controlled indoor fish cleaning station, ADA compliant bathrooms, improvements to the town's rodeo grounds and more than \$100,000 in donations to local non-profits. This year's tournament will be held Jan. 7-9 at the Sherr-Howe Center in Mobridge.

Not Everyone is Hooked

Among the state's population of electric cooperative linemen, there are many who look forward to chasing walleye in winter. In Josh Lemburg's case, the term "chasing" walleye would be close to accurate.

Lemburg, operations foreman at Moreau-Grand Electric who lives in Timber Lake, prefers to stay on the move when he fishes on the ice. Eschewing the "ice castle" approach that calls for staking out a spot and staying put for the weekend, Lemburg uses a portable flip-over shack and keeps his auger close at hand.

"Ice castles are fun, but I'm not afraid to move around and dig holes," he said. "If I'm not catching fish in an hour, I'll 'run-and-gun' til I find them."

Even with his "move-and-groove" approach, Lemburg has failed to get his entire family sold on the merits of ice fishing. Even hooking a lunker walleye didn't

convince his son to swear a life-long oath to ice fishing.

Several years ago, Lemburg took his dad and his elementary-age kids, Landon and Kendal, out on the ice. His dad and daughter were in one shack and he and Landon were in the other. After a few hours, just as Landon was getting bored and ready to call it a day, a walleye snatched his bait.

"Landon had his line in the water and I saw a big mark on my Vexilar," Lemburg recalls. "I told him he had a big fish on the line but he just gave me his pole and said he wasn't interested. I kept trying to get him to reel it in, but he kept giving me the pole back. Finally, I got the fish to the surface I looked in the hole and there was nothing but fish. My dad reached down in the water to his armpits and it was a 12-pound walleye."

Brent Reilley is an electrician at Selby-based Cam Wal Electric, which serves the Mobridge area. Over the past 20 years, he has only missed the tournament twice - once when he had to decide between ice fishing and a week in Cancun.

He and his wife, Tandy, have actually both claimed titles at the prestigious Mobridge tournament. One particular year the husband-and-wife duo were on separate teams. Brent was on the first-place team and Tandy and her partner placed second. But Tandy believes she has her



Above, hundreds attend the Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament each year. Below, "ice castles" bring comfort and convenience to the sport.



husband beat: her second-place finish was clinched by reeling in a 25-inch walleye while she was six months pregnant.

The two have always had pretty good luck with the raffles and random prize drawings as well. Tandy won a side-by-side one year and a family friend has won two four-wheelers.

"We just love being outdoors in the winter when there's nothing else to do," Reilley said. "You can get outside and enjoy the fresh air. It gets cold, but it beats sitting inside and it's something great to do with the family. My son is addicted. He'd love it if all he could do is fish all day."

Manager's col. continued from page 2

Southwestern Power Pool (SPP). It is their job/responsibility to coordinate power generation and power transportation over the power grid, but even they cannot always predict when the wind will stop blowing and the sun stops shining. Natural gas peaking plants can start and produce electricity quickly and coal plants, if idled, are slow and steady to get back to full power.

We need a good solid energy plan that will keep reliable and affordable power flowing to rural South Dakota. Electricity should never become a luxury, but it is a necessity to keep our rural economy strong.

I am not big on politics, but I have witnessed what can happen if we are not at the negotiating/planning table in Washington, D.C. and Pierre, South Dakota when it comes to policies that affect our members and employees. We have good representation in both capitals with National Rural Electric Association (NRECA) and South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) to monitor and help guide energy and employment policies that are beneficial and not harmful to rural America.

The electric cooperatives are focused on providing safe, affordable, and reliable power to each electric service, helping to create a strong economy.

As the manager, along with the directors, we need to make sure policy makers keep informed on the importance of providing reliable and affordable energy to FEM Electric members. An all of the above electric generation is what we need moving forward.

FEM Electric, along with many electric cooperatives, were told in the 1970's you can't use natural gas to produce electricity, we will run out. Today the oil fields are burning the natural gas off just to get rid of it. Cooperatives built and invested in coal generators; some of the cleanest burning plants in the world are here in America. Coal fueled generators are baseload and deliver some of the most reliable power at the lowest cost, even after all the regulations are met. I am speculating again, but we will probably see a push from the federal level to implement a carbon tax on all fossil fuel generators. We will need to have patience as we move forward and work hard at keeping your power reliable and affordable.

If you are planning to add any additional electric load, please call Rob Vetch or Ryan Holien early in the planning process. We are experiencing shortages with some electrical equipment.

From FEM Electric to our members, I hope you have a safe and happy holiday season, and we look forward to a productive 2021.



Attention Students & Parents

Are you a high school graduate heading to college or trade school next fall? Could you use some financial help?

If yes, please stop by the high school counselor's office for an application for a chance to win a scholarship from FEM Electric.

There are three scholarships available and only one application needs to be submitted for a chance to win

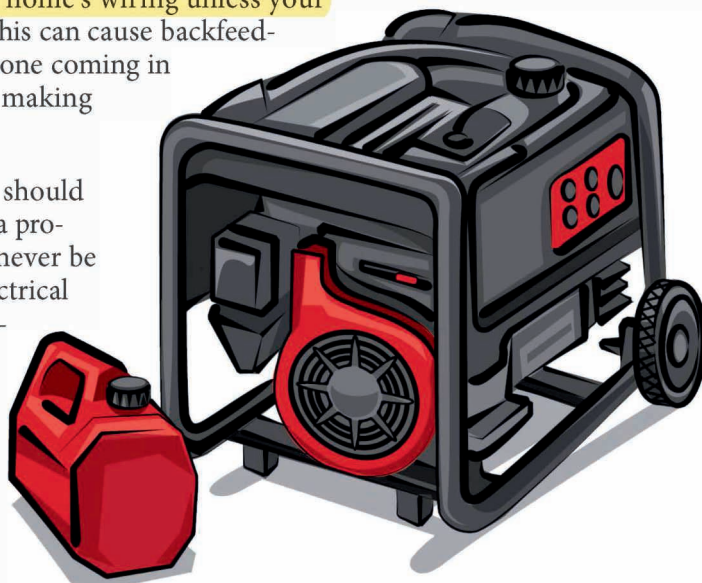
one of the three scholarships below:

- **\$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative**
- **\$500 FEM Electric Cooperative**
- **\$500 FEM Electric Cooperative**

You may also pick up an application at the FEM Electric office in Ipswich, or find it on the FEM website. Applications must be returned to FEM Electric by February 12, 2021.

GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS

- Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring unless your home has been wired for generator use. This can cause backfeeding along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including lineworkers making repairs.
- To prevent back feed, standby generators should have a transfer safety switch installed by a professional and portable generators should never be plugged directly into a home outlet or electrical system - use an extension cord to plug appliances into an outlet on the generator to power them.
- Always plug appliances directly into generators. Connecting the generator to your home's circuits or wiring must be done by a qualified, licensed electrician who will install a transfer switch to prevent backfeeding.
- Ensure your generator is properly grounded, and use heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords. Make sure extension cords are free of cuts or tears and the plug has three prongs. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage.
- There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- Never overload a generator. A portable generator should only be used when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.
- Shut down the generator properly. Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- Keep the generator dry. Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary when the weather creates wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- Never fuel a generator while it is operating, and remember to always have a fully charged fire extinguisher nearby.
- Read and follow all manufacturer's instructions for safe operation. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator. Never cut corners when it comes to safety.
- Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation. Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them. Remember maintenance between uses. It is also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and to start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency occurs.



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

November 27-December 27

Trees and Trains at the South Dakota Railroad Museum, Weekends, Contact the Museum for Days and Times. Hill City, SD
605-574-9000

December 4-25

Fort Sisseton Drive Thru Christmas Light Display, Fort Sisseton Historic State Park, Lake City, SD
605-448-5474

December 5-January 1

Custer State Park Festival of Trees, Custer, SD
605-255-4515

December 5-January 6

Garden Glow, McCrory Gardens Education & Visitor Center, Evenings From 5-8 p.m., Brookings, SD
605-688-6707

December 16-19

Lakota Nation Invitational, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD
605-394-4115

December 17-20, 27

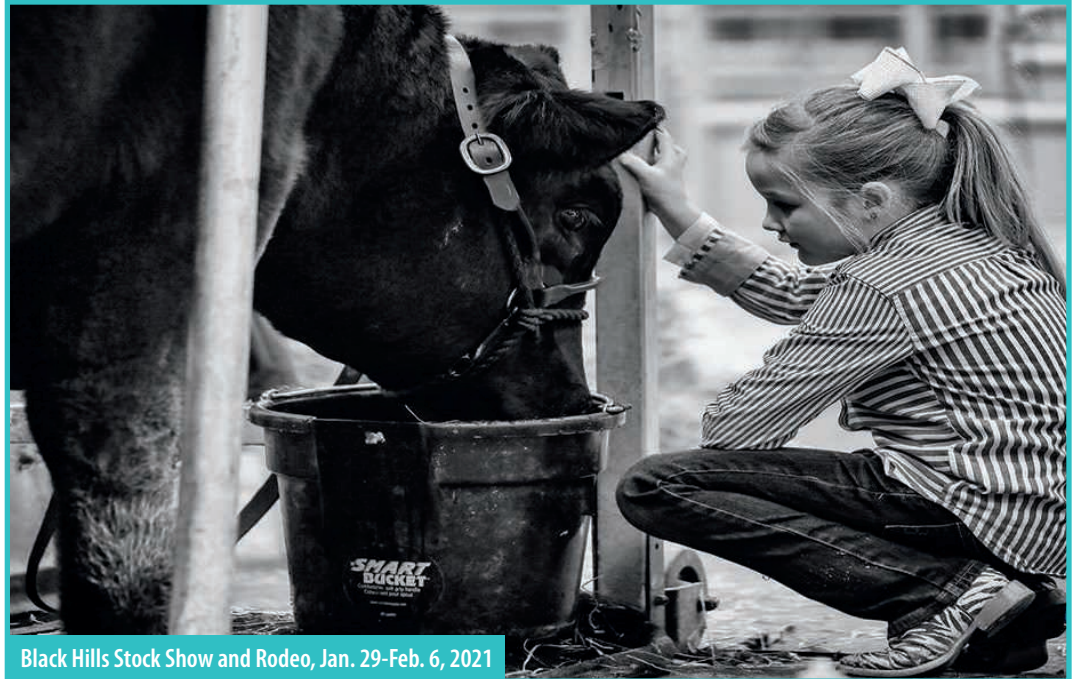
Twilight Flights, Strawbale Winery, Renner, SD,
605-543-5071

December 19

Cirque Dream Story, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD
605-394-4115

January 9

Dakota Ridgetop Toy Show, Codington County Extension Complex, Watertown, SD
712-261-0316



Black Hills Stock Show and Rodeo, Jan. 29-Feb. 6, 2021

January 14-17, 21-24

Elf The Musical, Area Community Theatre, Mitchell, SD
605-996-9137

January 15-17

BH Rapid Winter Classic Indoor Soccer Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD
605-394-4115

January 16

Annual Burning Beetle Festival, 5 p.m., Pageant Hill, Custer, SD
605-673-2244

January 18-25

Chinook Days, Spearfish, SD
605-717-9294

January 29-February 6

Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD
605-335-3861

January 29-30

Pro Snocross Races, Days of '76 Rodeo Grounds, Deadwood, SD
605-578-1976

January 29-31

Winterfest, Lead, SD
605-335-3861

February 5-6

Mardi Gras Weekend, Main Street, Deadwood, SD
605-578-1976

February 10-13

Watertown Winter Farm Show, Codington County Extension Complex, Watertown, SD
605-886-5814

February 18-25

Twelfth Annual Black Hills Film Festival, Virtual,
605-574-9454

February 20-27

SD State High School Wrestling Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD

March 13-14

Philip Area Annual 2021 Gun Show, American Legion Hall, Philip, SD
605-859-2280

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.