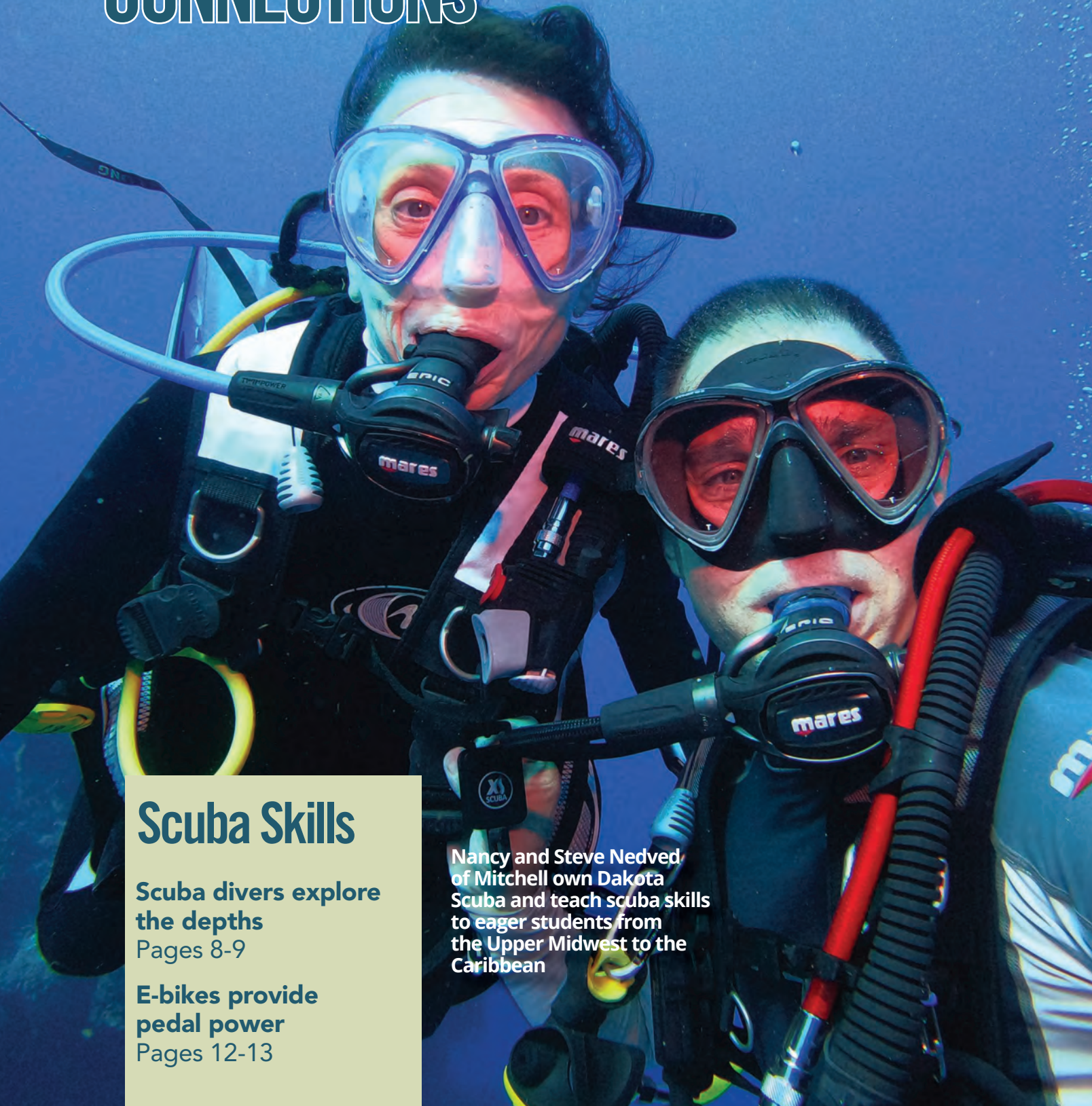


COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



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

BOARD REPORT



FEM board members and staff listen to an audit recap.

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of FEM Electric was held in Ipswich, South Dakota at 8:30 a.m. on April 19, 2022, pursuant to due call and notice. It being determined that a quorum was present, President Gary Bachman called the meeting to order. Secretary Eric Odenbach kept minutes of the meeting. The following directors were declared present by roll call: Gary Bachman, Paula Petersen, Kelly Melius, Eric Odenbach, Tom Thorpe, General Manager/CEO Scott Moore, Line Superintendent Rob Vetch, Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer. President Gary Bachman welcomed guest employee Carol Schaffner.

Ryan Holien and Jesse Brown were present until their reports were given.

Changes to the agenda: added notice of SD Wind Energy Association Annual Meeting.

Changes/Additions to Minutes from March 15, 2022, meeting: none

Next Meeting Date: After a review of calendars, directors agreed that the next regular meeting of the board would be on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. to be held at FEM Electric Board Room in Ipswich, South Dakota.

Motion by Kelly Melius, seconded by

Tom Thorpe and carried to approve administrative business.

Derrick Larson with Eide Bailly presented 2021 annual audit by teleconference.

Motion by Paula Petersen seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to approve FEM 2021 annual audit as presented.

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

The board was informed that Dalager Engineering has merged with Star Energy and has retained Dalager employees.

The board acknowledged reviewing the March 2022 Cyber Security Report.

Resolutions, Contracts, and Nominations:

Motion by Eric Odenbach seconded by Paula Petersen to approve the following policies: 410 Work Rules (revised), 411 Reimbursement of Business Expense (revised), 412 Seniority (Reviewed), 413 Insurance & Pension Benefits (revised), 415 Employment Practice Policy (revised), 311 Mutual Aid (revised), 531 Merchandising and Miscellaneous Service Charges (revised).

FEM board acknowledged notice of annual meetings for NCSC and CFC, no voting delegates were confirmed.

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

New Memberships, Member Cancellations and Contracts:

Disconnects: Bruce Edgar, Rockham, Active Farm – 10 grain bins, Active Farm; Delbert Stotz, Redfield, Vacant Farm; Vera Miller, Mansfield, Active Farm; Delbert Stotz, Redfield, Vacant Farm; Jeff Stoecker, Onaka, Vacant Farm, Active Farm/Shop, Active Farm, Grain Bin; Oster Feedlots, Eureka, Vacant Farm; APC Towers III, LLC, Chagrin Falls, OH, 2 Towers

Reconnects: Kyle & Theresa Edgar, Rockham, AF – 10 grain bins; Mark & Paula Stotz, Rapid City, Vacant Farm; Doug Miller, Mansfield, Active Farm; Stoecker Farms, LLC, Onaka, Vacant Farm, Active Farm/Shop, Active Farm, Grain Bin; Jeremy & Brittany Hoff, Eureka, Vacant Farm; APC Towers, LLC, Chagrin Falls, OH, 2 Towers; Cody & Sarah Edgar, Rockham, Active Farm

Contracts: Glenn Beutler, Eureka, Grain Bin; Cody Smith, Monango, ND, Irrigation
Retired Locations: None

Capital Credits:

Estates – March 2022 – three =
\$2,453.99

73 & Older – March 2022 - None

Financial Business: The board acknowledged reviewing the following financial information: Check register for the month of March 2022 contained information on checks #32369 through #32455 and all automatic payments/withdrawals for March 2022 totaling \$548,742.74.

Director of Finance and Benefits, Rhonda
Continued on pg 10

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

FEM ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

(USPS 189-720)

Board of Directors

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

CEO/General Manager

Scott Moore
info@femelectric.coop

Management Staff

Rob Vetch
Line Superintendent
Rhonda Tuscherer
Director of Finance and
Benefits

Editor's e-mail:

oban@femelectric.coop

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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Design assistance by SDREA

**FEM Electric is an equal
opportunity provider and
employer.**



Scott Moore
General Manager/CEO

It is easy to get distracted, with all the world and state issues, but we need to stay focused on our daily activities when it comes to safety. I find it easy to get distracted with the next project before completing the current task. This can become the beginning of a bad day. For safety reasons stay focused at the task you are currently working on. With the start of construction and farming it is imperative we stay focused and please do not take risk or short cuts.

When working please be aware of safety issues and your surroundings. If you have new help operating equipment, please keep them informed if they were to get tangled up in a powerline. Tell them to use their phone and do not exit the equipment. It is our job to provide safe reliable power, but we can only do that with your help.

You should also check your grain handling equipment early in case there are any electrical repairs that are needed. It seems available equipment for construction and repairs are on back order. Make sure to plan ahead.

June 28, 2022 is FEM's Annual meeting, we hope you plan to attend. There will be three choices of meals roast beef dinner, pork loin sandwich, and chicken

sandwich. There will be inflatables for the kids, and a \$40.00 energy credit if you turn in your slip after the meeting. The annual meeting is a valuable part of the cooperative business model. Board and management would encourage you to attend.

As we move towards summer, please be safe.

If you are planning to add any electrical load, please call Rob Vetch or Ryan Holien 605 426 6891.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

@FEMElectric on 

@fem_electric on 

@FEMElectric on 

We'll post outage updates, safety tips, news and more to keep our members informed on all the latest from FEM Electric.

Statement Mailing Dates

May 25, 2022 for May's energy

June 30, 2022 for June's energy

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

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.

OFFICIAL NOTICE

FEM Electric Association, Inc. Official Notice of Annual Meeting of Members

Notice is hereby given that the 74th Annual Meeting of the members of FEM Electric Association, Inc., will be held at the Ipswich High School in the City of Ipswich, State of South Dakota, at **six-thirty p.m. on Tuesday, June 28th, 2022**, for the purpose of:

1. The reports of officers, directors and committees
2. The election of directors for three-year terms
3. Review proposed bylaw changes

With the election of a director at this meeting, the following members have been nominated for director by the Nominating Committee in accordance with the bylaws of the Cooperative:

- Eric Odenbach - District 1
- Paula Petersen - District 4

Please take further notice that any fifteen or more members of the cooperative may make additional nominations by listing their nominee and the appropriate Directorate District and signing such Petition of Nomination. The petition must be submitted to the board of directors at least 25 day prior to the annual meeting. Any such petition so submitted will be posted, along with the list of nominations made by the Nominating Committee.

4. Transacting any such other business as may properly come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof.

*Eric Odenbach, Secretary
FEM Electric Association, Inc.*

**FEM ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
IPSWICH, SOUTH DAKOTA
March 31, 2021**

We, the Nominating Committee, in session on March 31, 2022, at the Beck Law Office in Ipswich, South Dakota, hereby nominate the following:


District 4 – Paula Petersen


District 1 -- Eric Odenbach



Secretary

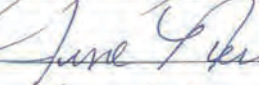

Chairman


We, the undersigned, certify that the foregoing minutes are true and correct.











We, the Nominating Committee, wish to place the above names in nomination.



Ryan Perrion prepares for the World Axe Throwing League championships in Minneapolis in July. *Photo by Billy Gibson*

Perrion works hard on his ‘axe-pertise’

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Just about anyone can hurl a hatchet toward a stationary target. Hitting the bullseye? Well, that’s going to require some practice.

Ryan Perrion is putting in all the practice time he can muster as he prepares for the 2022 World Axe Throwing League Championship (WATL) competition set for Minneapolis in July.

Ranked No. 33 in the overall WATL standings going into the tournament, Perrion is honing his hatchet blade – and his skills – in his quest to bring the world title back to his home in Aberdeen.

“I’m pretty confident in my abilities because I’ve put in the work to be the best I can be,” Perrion said. “A perfect score is 64, and right now I’m averaging about 55 or 56 in league play. Like a lot of sports, anyone can have a good match but consistency is the hard part.”

As a member of the WATL pro league and several regional leagues, Perrion also has plans to compete in Pennsylvania,

Missouri and Wisconsin in the coming months.

Perrion’s interest in the sport started out as a hobbyist. He set up a target in his back yard and as his abilities increased it was clear this wasn’t just a passing fad in his life. Perrion and his wife Amanda decided to go all in and open an indoor range to spread the axe-throwing love to the community. They launched Hub City Axe Throwing in Aberdeen with the goal of providing a venue for clean family fun.

“We built this place to bring a new sport into town and for families to get together and have a good time. That’s our true focus. I have four little kids and they love throwing things. You’re not allowed to throw a real hatchet until you’re 12, but kids like to come in here and throw foam axes and they have a great time with their parents. Anyone can do it at any level.”

Another goal, Perrion said, is to work with individuals of all ages and abilities and make them more knowledgeable about the sport and more skilled than when they arrived.

Meanwhile, interest in the sport is increasing both locally and across the region. Supervised lanes and leagues are available in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Spearfish and Madison. Woody’s Axe Throwing has facilities in Brookings and Sioux City, Iowa, and also has a mobile throwing range ready to roll.

While some questioned the safety aspect when Perrion was proposing the new axe-throwing facility, he said he’s never witnessed or heard of an incident where someone was injured by a thrown axe. He said all safety precautions are taken at Hub City to ensure safety, including sturdy chain-link barriers between the venue’s eight lanes.

Hub City offers recreational play, league play and special events. There’s also Glow Throws held on Friday nights to spice things up and add to the adventure.

“I find that it’s not only fun but very stress relieving,” Perrion said. “You can get a rush of adrenaline when you get a bull’s eye, but you also have to quiet your mind, settle down and focus.”

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

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.

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,

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.”

Continued from pg 2

Tuscherer reviewed March 2022 financials, 1st quarter 2022 Loan Summaries, 1st quarter Budget Projection/Financial Ratios, CFC Annual Ownership Statement of Benefits, and a discussion was held to continue contribution to CFC Integrity fund.

Motion by Tom Thorpe seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to approve the Allocation as of December 31, 2021, Patronage Capital and Operating Margins of FEM Electric \$73,370.00, East River \$370,745.98, Basin Electric \$275,668.76.

Motion by Eric Odenbach, seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to approve director and attorney fees.

Legal Update: none

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

The board acknowledged the receipt of the Safety Meeting Minutes with current accident and near miss reports from March 22, 2022 and employee meeting minutes from April 6, 2022.

Adjourn: President Gary Bachman declared the meeting adjourned.

2022 WORK BEGINS



Work commenced in the Eureka area in late April as FEM's contractor began to plow in underground line.

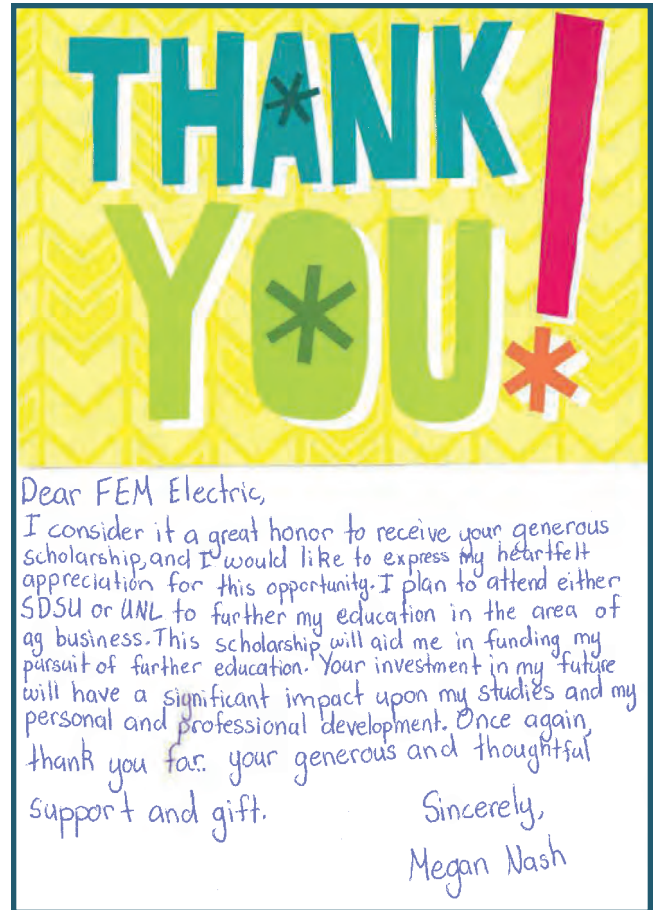
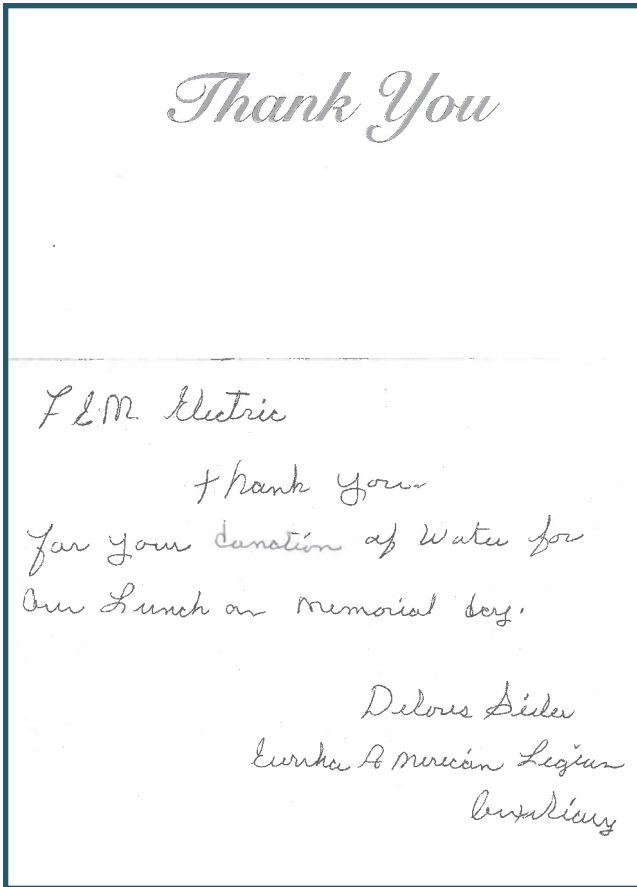


FEM IN THE CLASSROOM

FEM employees Crystal Thorson and Ryan Holien stopped at area public and colony schools this spring. They visited with 177 fifth graders throughout FEM territory. Students were able to interact with circuit boards, learn about electrical safety, and even dress up as a lineworker.



A fifth grader gets a taste of what it's like to dress like a lineworker. Maybe a future lineworker in the making? These visits wrap up the school year for FEM. However, FEM plans to be back in the schools in the fall.





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

SHE DID EVERYTHING RIGHT



Seventeen-year-old Mary Gehrig was driving home from a friend's house when a storm turned from average to angry.

The storm was not a problem during the first part of her drive, and she assumed it would stay that way during the half-hour ride home. "I've never really been afraid to drive in storms; I'm pretty good with them," she explained. "I've always been fascinated with thunder and lightning."

Unbeknownst to Mary, a stronger, more violent storm was about to erupt, and conditions grew worse than anyone had anticipated. The typically familiar and uneventful drive was neither of those things that June night.

Strong rotations formed and their herculean strength folded several metal transmission towers in half. Around 15 to 20 minutes into the drive, Mary's knuckles gripped the wheel as she struggled to see in front of her. During lightning flashes, she saw little white lines in the distance. As she got closer, she

realized that those lines were across the road, in her path, and that they were anything but small.

"I realized I was not going to (be able to) drive over it," Gehrig recalls. She slammed on the brakes and her car struck the object, which happened to be one of two high-voltage transmission power lines lying in the road. The massive cable stopped Mary's car in its tracks. The car's electrical system was damaged, and she was stuck there alone during the storm.

What happened next was life-changing — but in a good way. Mary picked up her phone and called her parents. When her dad heard that there was a downed power line involved, he told her to stay where she was, not get out of the car, and call 9-1-1.

Fire chief Rich Schock, who was on the scene that night, said, "Those are large transmission lines with a lot of volts in them," adding that the outcome could have been fatal had Mary gotten out. "Mary did everything right," he said.

KNOW WHAT TO DO

When there is an accident involving downed power lines, a padmount transformer or other related equipment:

- Call 9-1-1 and report that a downed line or other electrical equipment is involved.
- Do not get out of the vehicle until electric utility workers say it is safe to exit.
- Warn those involved in the accident to stay put and alert others who might approach to stay back.

Exiting the vehicle is a last resort and should only be attempted if the car is on fire or giving off smoke. If this is the case, exit the vehicle by crossing your arms and jumping from the vehicle without touching it. Then, hop with both feet together as far as you can.

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!

FEM Electric Annual Meeting

June 28th, 2022

Ipswich High School

DINNER AT 5:00 P.M.

3 Meal Options Available

Pork Loin, Roast Beef or Chicken Sandwich

BUSINESS MEETING AT 6:30 P.M.

Directors up for election

Bylaw revisions up for vote

\$500 YOUNG ADULTS LIGHT THE WAY SCHOLARSHIP

High School Junior and Seniors eligible

Must attend entire meeting with at least one member parent

**Members will
receive a \$40
energy credit!**

*Must attend entire
meeting in person to
receive credit.*

Kids activities will be available.

Meet the FEM directors that represent your district.

Meet FEM Staff and Linemen.

Keep up to date with **your** cooperative!



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

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
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

JUNE 2-5
Wheel Jam
South Dakota State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,
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

JUNE 11
The Big Mick
George S. Mickelson Trail, Deadwood, SD,
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/

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,
oahedays.com

JUNE 18
605 Summer Classic Beer & Music Festival
Cherapa Place, Sioux Falls, SD,
605magazine.com/605-summer-classic/

JUNE 18-19
Aberdeen Arts in the Park
Melgaard Park, Aberdeen, SD,
605-226-1557

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

JUNE 24-26
Black Hills Bluegrass Festival
Rush No More RV Resort & Campground, Sturgis, SD,
blackhillsbluegrass.com

JUNE 24-26
Main Street Arts & Crafts Festival
Centennial Park, Hot Springs, SD,
mainstreetartsandcrafts.com

JUNE 24-26
Quarry Days
Citywide, Dell Rapids, SD,
605-428-4167

JUNE 26
Prairie Village Variety Show
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,
605-256-3644

JULY 1-4
EurekaFest
Main Street, Eureka, SD,
605-282-9227

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