



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Anglers from across the region compete in the Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament each year to try their luck and test their skills

Hook, line and auger

Inside the Mobridge ice fishing tourney
Pages 8-9

Shake the blues with winter outdoor fun
Pages 12-13

Good people doing good things



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/
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Officer

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com

When you think of what it means to have holiday spirit, the act of giving comes to mind (or at least it does for me). There are so many ways, both big and small, to give back to our family and friends and even the larger community. The act of giving back doesn't have to be grandiose. Sometimes, just simply making coffee for your significant other in the morning can be a gift.

We live in a region where there is an abundance of generous and caring people. Good things are happening in this world thanks to good people! Those good people often don't get enough recognition and while they don't look for acknowledgement, I think we should show our gratitude more often. That is why I want to take a moment to publicly appreciate and thank those people for giving back, not just during the holidays, but all through the year.

Sioux Valley Energy has a program called Community Connections. This is an employee-led volunteer initiative. Our Community Connections volunteer program connects employees with area communities and non-profit organizations to help meet various needs throughout the Cooperative's service territory. Since the inception of the Community Connections program in 2019, SVE employees have volunteered over 1,600 hours to worthy causes. Some of our employee volunteer projects include working with the following organizations and efforts: Sleep in

Heavenly Peace, Prairie Village, American Red Cross, Colman Veterans Park, Madison Baseball, Feeding South Dakota, Project Joy, Children's Inn, Children's Home Society, Rake the Town, Meals on Wheels, Lights at the Lodge, The Foster Closet, Brookings Gun Club, Brandon Fire Department, Big Sioux River Clean Up, Rock Ranch, and The Gathering.

It's not just our employees who give back. It's YOU the member as well! Through the Cooperative's Operation Round Up (ORU) program, participating members "round up" their electric bill and many employees also donate a small amount from their paycheck. Those funds are then put into a trust which provides grants to local communities and non-profit organizations.

In the last 22 years, ORU has provided nearly \$2.2 million in grants and scholarships. It's a program that has touched nearly every one of our members in some way or another, whether they know it or not. That's a big impact. Again—good things are happening in the world thanks to good people. I want to offer a special shout-out to our SVE members who serve on the ORU Board of Trustees: Brenda Volkers (Brookings County), Alvina Harvey (At-Large), Dan LaRock (Rock County), Greg Benda (Lake County), Joyce DeClerk (Moody County), Connie Hillard (Pipestone County), and Jeff Thompson (Minnehaha County).

So, as you celebrate Christmas and ring in the New Year with your family and friends, remember all the good people doing good things in this world. Offer them special thanks for all they do for us and for others. Have a safe and Merry Christmas and New Year!



Everyone at Sioux Valley Energy wishes you and your family a Happy New Year!

Our offices will be closed Dec. 23 and 26 for Christmas and Jan. 2 for New Years.

Please call 800-234-1960 to report outages.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS
SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

(USPS No. 497-440)

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Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017. Families subscribe to *Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections* as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of *Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections* is to provide reliable, helpful information to Sioux Valley Energy members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

Sioux Valley Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

2023 DISTRICT MEETINGS SET

The Cooperative's District Meetings have been scheduled throughout the months of February and March. Four elections will take place in Districts 5, 6, 7 and 9. In District 6, only one at-large seat (Mark Rogen) is up for election this year. All incumbent directors have indicated they plan to run again.

Members will receive a mailed postcard inviting them to their District Meeting but are welcome to attend any of the locations listed below. However, members

are only allowed to vote in director elections within their respective district.

Each meeting will include a short program presented by the district's board member and a management update.

A meal will be served from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. The meeting and program will begin at 7 p.m.

Meeting dates and locations are listed below. Election meetings are indicated with an asterisk (*).

DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

| Date | District | Director | Location |
|---------------------|----------|---------------|--|
| Thursday, Feb. 23* | 9 | Johnson* | Pipestone Area High School, Pipestone, MN |
| Monday, Feb. 27 | 8 | Leuthold | Generations (Grand Prairie Event Center) Luverne, MN |
| Tuesday, Feb. 28 | 1 | DeGreef | McKnight Hall White, SD |
| Thursday, March 2 | 4 | Daniel | Dakota Prairie Playhouse, Madison, SD |
| Thursday, March 9 | 2 | Vostad | Sioux Valley School Volga, SD |
| Monday, March 13 | 3 | Heinemann | William J Janklow Community Center, Flandreau, SD |
| Tuesday, March 14* | 7 | DeMent* | West Central School Hartford, SD |
| Monday, March 20* | 5 | Weinacht* | Taopi Hall Colton, SD |
| Tuesday, March 21 | 10 | Roskamp | Edgerton Public School Edgerton, MN |
| Thursday, March 23* | 6 | Fish & Rogen* | Brandon Valley High School Brandon, SD |

*Denotes Election Meeting

Tips to use your electric blanket wisely

Heating pads and electric blankets cause around 500 fires throughout the U.S. each year. Almost all of these fires involve electric blankets more than 10 years old.

Learn how to stay safe and injury-free.

- Heating appliances should never be left unattended or used while sleeping.
- Do not plug electric blankets into an extension cord or power strip, as they could overheat and cause a fire.
- Look for dark, charred, or frayed spots or electrical cords that are cracked or frayed. Replace any worn or old heating pads or electric blankets.
- Never fold electric blankets when in use. Folded or tucked-in electric blankets could overheat and cause a fire.
- When purchasing electronics, including electric blankets, be sure to only purchase from reputable retailers. Purchase devices that have been approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Do not allow anything to rest on top of a heating pad or electric blanket when it is in use. It may cause the device to overheat.
- There are two types of personal heating appliances: electric blankets and heating pads that are placed directly on the mattress. They are not meant to be used interchangeably or at the same time.

Gums wins Connections annual recipe contest

Lily Gums of Clear Lake has been selected winner of the annual *Cooperative Connections* member recipe contest.

Gums submitted a beverage recipe she calls "Swamp Water" that was published in the April 2022 issue of the magazine. She received a \$25 gift card for her submission. Congratulations, Lily!

She is a member of H-D Electric Cooperative based in Clear Lake.

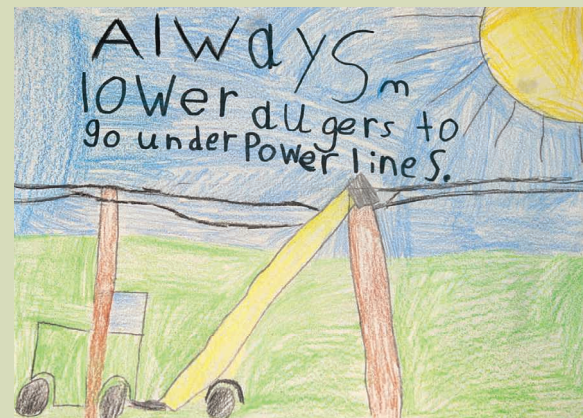


CO-OP LEADERS SERVE THEIR MEMBERS AND CONSTITUENTS



Ryan Maher is both a state senator and a board member at Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative in Timber Lake. He is one of three cooperative leaders who play unique roles in serving their co-op consumers while also serving their constituents as state lawmakers during the legislative session in Pierre.

To view the comments and insights of these lawmakers and learn more about how electric cooperatives work to improve our communities, visit Cooperative Connections Plus by scanning the QR code at right.



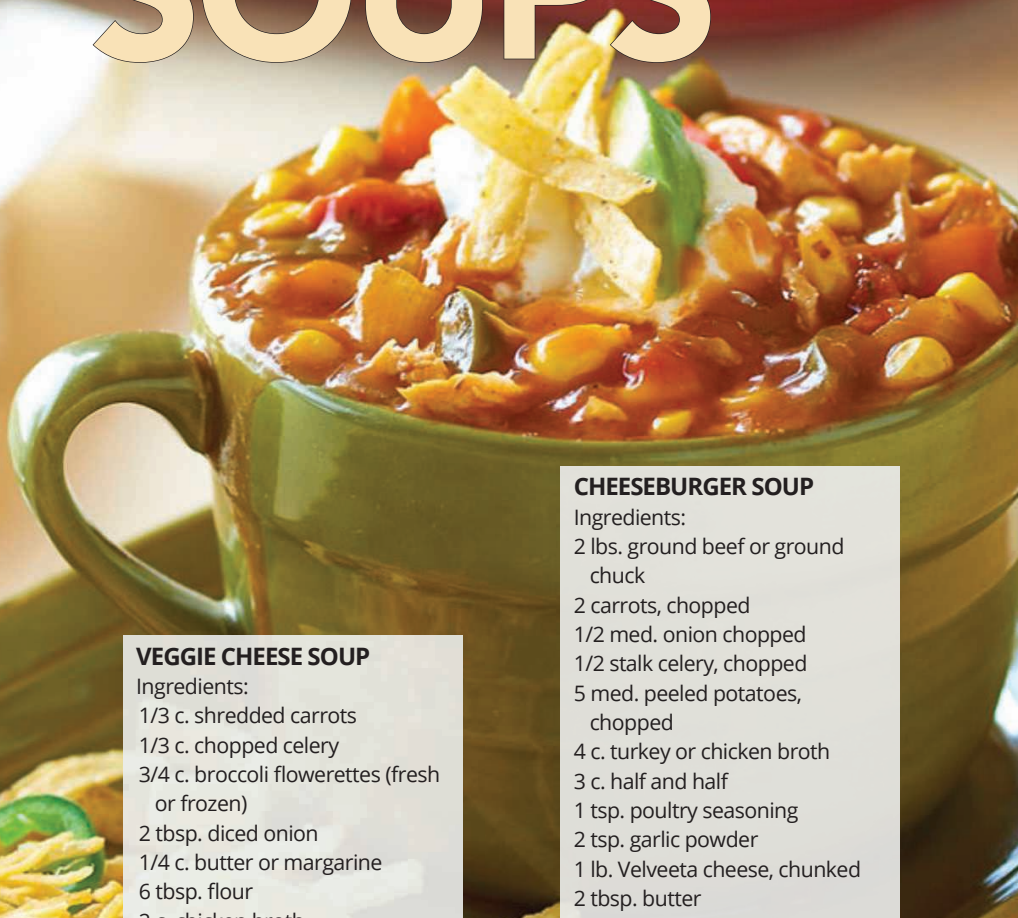
Be safe around power lines

Weston Kling

Weston Kling, age 7, urges equipment operators to always lower augers to accommodate for overhead power lines. Weston is the son of Tyler and Alexis Kling of Rapid City. They are members of West River Electric based in Wall.

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 SOUPS



VEGGIE CHEESE SOUP

Ingredients:

- 1/3 c. shredded carrots
- 1/3 c. chopped celery
- 3/4 c. broccoli flowerettes (fresh or frozen)
- 2 tbsp. diced onion
- 1/4 c. butter or margarine
- 6 tbsp. flour
- 2 c. chicken broth
- 2 c. milk
- 2 c. Velveeta cheese, cubed

METHOD

Cook carrots, celery and broccoli in 1 cup water until tender crisp. Saute onions in butter. Add flour to blend. Add milk and stir to make white sauce then add cheese and stir until melted. Add chicken broth and vegetables in remaining water. Blend until smooth.

Nancy Stenson, Fort Pierre

CHEESEBURGER SOUP

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. ground beef or ground chuck
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 1/2 med. onion chopped
- 1/2 stalk celery, chopped
- 5 med. peeled potatoes, chopped
- 4 c. turkey or chicken broth
- 3 c. half and half
- 1 tsp. poultry seasoning
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 lb. Velveeta cheese, chunked
- 2 tbsp. butter
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Brown ground meat in large pot. Drain and return to pot. Add butter, onion, carrots, celery and potatoes. Cook for 5 minutes. Add broth, poultry seasoning, garlic powder and continue cooking until vegetables are tender. Add half and half and Velveeta cheese and continue heating until cheese has melted. Salt and pepper to taste.

Kathleen Meier, Firesteel

CHICKEN FAJITA SOUP

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. oil
- 1 med. green bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 1 med. red bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 1 sm. onion, finely chopped
- 3 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 pkg. McCormick® Organics Fajita Seasoning Mix
- 3 c. chicken stock
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) petite diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 c. frozen corn
- 1 c. tortilla strips

METHOD

Heat oil in large saucepan or Dutch oven on medium-high heat. Add peppers and onion; cook and stir 2 minutes. Add tomato paste; cook and stir 2 minutes. Stir in chicken, Seasoning Mix, stock, tomatoes and corn. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer 20 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Ladle soup into bowls. Sprinkle with tortilla strips. Serve with desired toppings.

mccormick.com

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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Ring in the New Year with Savings



Sheila Gross
Energy Services
Specialist

Contact Sheila Gross at sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com to learn more.



Scan this code to check out our rebates and incentives:

Ring in the New Year with savings and efficiency! If watching your energy dollars is on the list for your New Year’s resolutions, Sioux Valley Energy has many programs, incentives, and tips that can help. The best way to begin is to be aware of how much energy you use each month and where it is being used. You can utilize SmartHub, our online account management tool, to help track your electric usage.

You have control over your electricity use by choosing the appliances and devices you use on a regular basis. The concept is simply use less—change your habits and start with easy adjustments:

- If you’re willing to shift the time of day you do some of your daily chores like laundry and dishwashing, then the Time of Use Rate might be a great fit to help you save money on your electric bill. Contact SVE to sign up for a three-month risk-free trial.
- Utilize a programmable or smart thermostat to adjust temperatures when no one is home or when you are sleeping. Buy a smart Wi-Fi enabled thermostat, sign up for the Time of Use Rate trial, and get a rebate of \$50 from SVE.
- Turn off the lights when you leave a room. Select light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs when you need to replace burned out, less efficient bulbs like CFLs, fluorescents, or incandescents to save energy and money. Smart LEDs can be managed by your smartphone.
- Use less hot water. Set your thermostat

on your water heater to 120 degrees F or less. If you are building or considering replacing an old water heater in your home, contact SVE to learn more about purchasing an efficient lifetime-tank/6-year parts warranted electric water heater from the Cooperative at an amazing price.

- Take care of your heating and cooling systems by replacing filters and cleaning coils. Is your existing system reaching the end of its life expectancy? When you choose electric, you know it’s clean, reliable, safe, and efficient—heat pumps are a great choice for cooling and heating your home. Sioux Valley Energy offers rebates and a special electric heat rate.
- If your home is feeling drafty or your heating and cooling bills are adding up, it may be time to add some insulation or do some air sealing measures around your doors, windows, etc. Contact SVE to schedule an energy audit, including infrared imaging and blower door testing.

If you’d like to learn more energy efficiency and savings tips, visit our website at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-programs/energy-efficiency-tools and click on the Use Energy Wisely Booklet or request a copy by calling our office at 800-234-1960.

Also, watch for the *Solutions Catalog* insert in a future edition of this publication for more details on program offerings and incentives.

TELL ME MORE!

Please contact me with more information about the topics indicated below.

Name: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
 Account #: _____ Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Mail this form to: Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heat Pump Rebate | <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Vehicle Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Smart Thermostat Rebate | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Saving Tips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Heat Rate | <input type="checkbox"/> Time of Use Rate | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial/Ag LED Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Interlock Kit/Generator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Audit | <input type="checkbox"/> Third-Party Irrigation Rebate | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Heat Rebates | <input type="checkbox"/> Marathon/HTP Water Heaters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loan Program | <input type="checkbox"/> SmartHub Account Tool | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewable Energy Credits | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Solar Project |



Bills More Than You Can Handle?

AREA AGENCIES MAY OFFER HELP

Some members find it difficult to pay their utility bills in the winter. Organizations in both South Dakota and Minnesota may be able to provide assistance. Listed is the contact information for some of these groups.

| South Dakota | |
|---|----------------|
| LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program | 1-800-233-8503 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |
| Brookings County | |
| Brookings County Welfare Office | 605-696-8261 |
| Brookings County Community Action | 605-692-6391 |
| Salvation Army of Brookings County | 605-692-8863 |
| My Neighbor | 605-691-3225 |
| Kingsbury County | |
| Interlakes Community Action | 605-854-3701 |
| Lake County | |
| Interlakes Community Action | 605-256-6518 |
| Lake County Welfare | 605-256-7619 |

| Minnehaha County | |
|---|--------------|
| Minnehaha County Human Services | 605-367-4217 |
| Minnehaha Community Outreach | 605-331-3935 |
| Minnehaha County Salvation Army | 605-332-2331 |
| Sioux Falls Interlakes Community Action | 605-334-2808 |

| Moody County | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Interlakes Community Action | 605-997-2824 |
| Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribal Office | 605-997-3891 |

| Minnesota | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Southwestern MN Opportunity Council | 1-800-658-2444 |
| Southwest Health & Human Services | 1-888-837-6713 |
| The Salvation Army Heat Share | 1-800-842-7279 |
| MN Department of Energy Services | 1-800-657-3710 |
| First Call for Help | 211 |

| Pipestone County | |
|--|--------------|
| Pipestone County Veterans Administration | 507-825-1171 |
| United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) | 507-537-1416 |

| Rock County | |
|--|--------------|
| Rock County Veterans Administration | 507-283-5061 |
| United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) | 507-727-1401 |

ICE FISHING IN MOBRIDGE



The annual Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament attracts more than 1,000 avid cold-weather anglers. *Photo by Mobridge Outdoors*

Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament offers fun and friendly competition

Billy Gibson

editor@sdrea.coop

Last fall, the world of competitive walleye fishing was shaken with a startling saga of deception and skulduggery worthy of a Tom Clancy novel.

Social media lit up showing the dramatic moment a tournament director in Ohio shouted at the top of his lungs with horror and disgust: “We got weights in fish! We got weights in fish!”

Suspicion had long surrounded a pair of locals who ultimately got nabbed stuffing lead weights down the gullets of their walleye. After the two sparked skepticism with a catch of nearly 36 lbs. - one-third heavier than the runners-up - the director gutted the fish right in front of the entire field of wary competitors and held aloft several shiny orbs the size of steel ping-pong balls.

The viral video received more than 10 million views as cameras captured the chaotic scene with one of the accused hanging his head in shame (his partner had slithered away to his truck) while fellow competitors cursed and threatened to inflict bodily harm upon the sly anglers who were later indicted on four felony counts.

Vinson Dargatz is pretty sure nothing close to that degree of high drama will be replicated at the 22nd Annual Mobridge Walleye Ice Fishing Tournament set for Jan. 14. Based on his experience participating in the event over the past 12 years, this competition is more fisherman-friendly and the atmosphere is much more focused on fun.

Dargatz, an apprentice electrician at Lake Region Electric based in Webster, has continued to make the four-hour trip from his home to Mobridge mostly

because of the fellowship and the relaxed, laid-back vibe of the festivities.

He typically gets together with his two brothers and three cousins for the tournament that he describes as a “yearly ritual.”



Vinson Dargatz is shown with one of his prize catches.

“We always have a lot of fun” he said. “We used to just bring a portable shack out on the ice and sit on some buckets while we fished. But now that we’ve gotten older, softer and a little smarter, we have an Ice Castle and we fish and hang out and grill some burgers.”

Number of two-person fishing teams competing

551

in last year's Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament

Dargatz confesses that the purchase of the 8 x 16-foot Ice Castle was actually his wife's idea. When it's time for an outdoor fishing excursion, the entire family with two boys and a girl always likes to come along. And mom insists on having adequate accommodations.

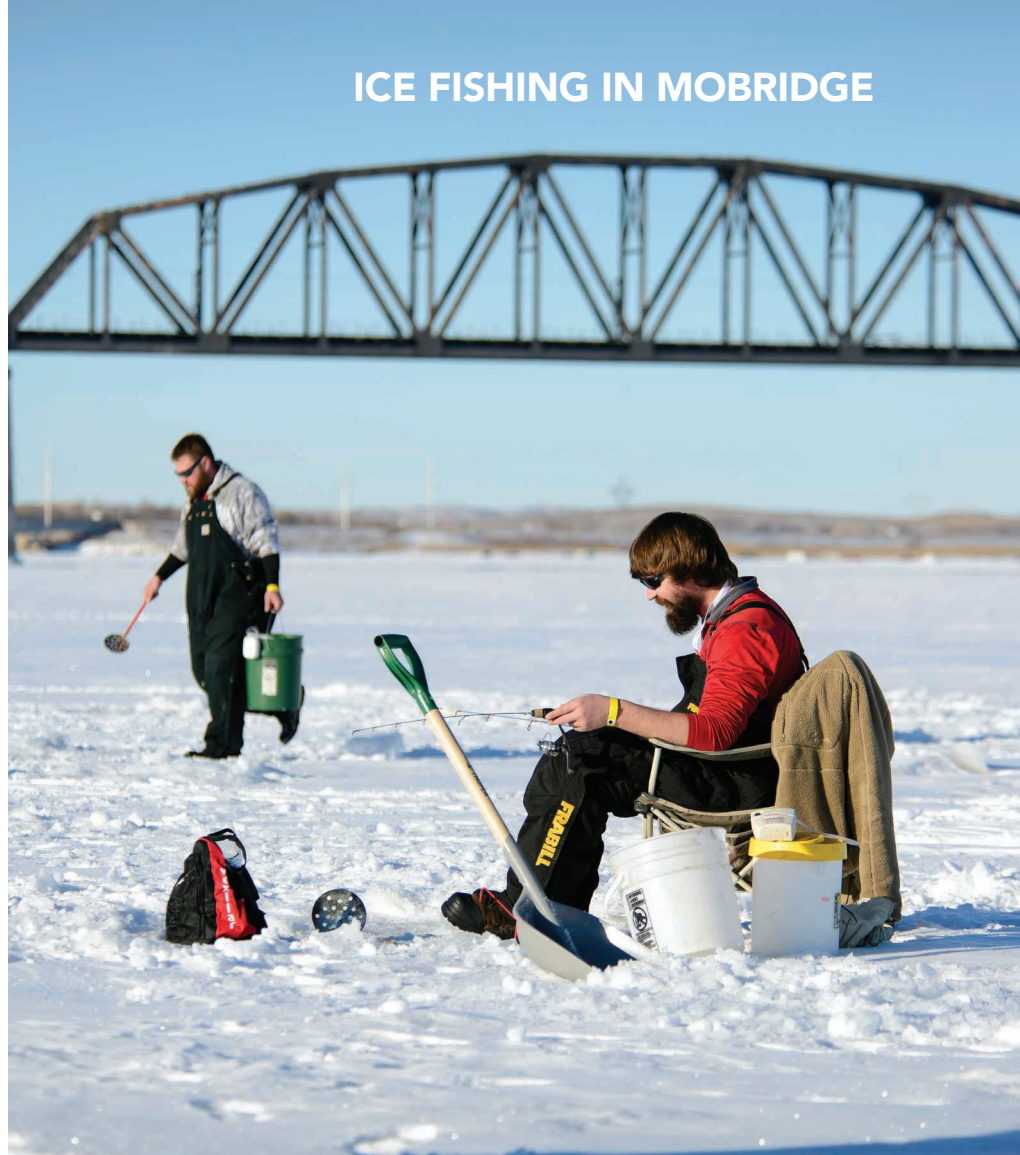
But Dargatz said when it comes to the annual winter escapes to Mobridge with the fellas, the family has to find something else to do. Besides, the town already doubles in size during tournament weekend and if every angler brought hangers-on in tow, Mobridge might expand to the size of Sioux Falls.

FILLED TO CAPACITY

Lately, the walleye population is standing less of a chance for survival against the increasing number of competitors testing their luck and skill in the annual tournament. The field has ballooned to the point of being capped at 551 two-person teams with fishermen swarming in from 16 different states.

Only so many humans can be stuffed into the town's expo center where the group events are held.

All of these developments have bewildered Jeff Jackson, one of the tournament's founders and owner of the Wrangler Inn in Mobridge. He recalls more than two decades ago sitting around the table with a group of town leaders who were trying to figure out a way to attract visitors to the area and capitalize on all the outdoor adventure the Missouri



The Mobridge Ice Fishing Tournament draws eager competitors from 16 different states.

Photo by Travel South Dakota

River and Lake Oahe have to offer.

In the first year, 50 eager contenders were lured to the event by the opportunity to claim the super grand prize of a Mr. Heater. These days, the prize list represents more than \$225,000 in assorted items such as Ice Castles, four-wheelers, a Polaris Ranger, clam shacks, \$8,000 worth of outdoor gear from Scheel's and Runnings, and more.

Anglers can keep their spot in the field if they register early in mid-July, otherwise their spot will be thrown into a lottery. Three guaranteed positions are drawn each year for those who participate in the town's summer fishing tournament, the Annual Denny Palmer Memorial Walleye Classic. Three spots are auctioned off on Ebay, which typically fetch up to \$4,000 apiece, while a

final spot is raffled off.

Last year's winners were Travis Bergstrom and Tate Merchant, who registered four fish weighing a total of 15.8 lbs. including one lunker that tipped the scales at 9.33 lbs. Jason Converse and Josh Spilde finished second with five fish weighing in at 13.4 lbs.

Dargatz already has the July 2023 registration date on his calendar and reminder notifications set to make sure he doesn't miss out. He's anticipating another adventurous outing in this year's tourney.

"I think it's great for the town to have so many people visiting and spending money. It's pretty wild that a small town can pull something like that together. They run it like a well-oiled machine and make sure everyone has a good time."



SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

\$20,000 in Scholarships Available | *Apply by January 13, 2023*

To be eligible you must...

- ➔ Be a graduating high school senior or a first-time attendee.
- ➔ Plan to be a full-time student in an accredited university or technical college.
- ➔ Be a son, daughter, or dependent of a Sioux Valley Energy member.
- ➔ Have a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA for a four-year college or university and a minimum of a 2.5 or higher for a technical college. Submit your ACT/SAT scores (if applicable).
- ➔ Provide a written recommendation from a teacher, administrator, or counselor.
- ➔ One winner per family/per year.

Application details...

Applications will be judged on the basis of grades, ACT or SAT test scores, work experience, school

activities, volunteer/community service, and an essay question. Scholarship funds must be used to pay expenses directly related to your continuing education (tuition, books, or room/board).

Application forms are available from your school counselor, from any Sioux Valley Energy Service Center (in Colman, Pipestone, Brandon, and Hartford), on the web at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com, or by calling 1-800-234-1960.

Deadline...

The deadline for this year's application is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, January 13, 2023. Applications and supporting materials (*postmarked no later than January 13, 2023*) may be sent to:

Sioux Valley Energy/Scholarship Contest
PO Box 216 | Colman, SD 57017



Joan, Melissa, Amanda, Holly, Sandy, Debra, Heather, and Toni comprise Sioux Valley Energy's Member Services Department.

SERVING OUR MEMBERS

Department Sees to Members' Questions

Brenda Kleinjan
brenda.kleinjan@siouxvalleyenergy.com

Sioux Valley Energy's seven-person Member Services team takes pride in helping the Cooperative's 28,000 members find answers to their questions.

"We enjoy helping them with questions on billing and setting up new services," said Member Services Supervisor Toni Kruger. The team's work is guided by Vice President of Human Resources and Member Services Debra Biever.

Each month, the department fields about 1,400 calls from

members, fielding questions about new services, deposits, and high bill concerns.

"With high bill concerns, we can look at the member's daily meter readings and help them identify what might be driving the energy use," Kruger said.

"Often it's seasonal; when we have long cold streaks, energy use goes up," said Kruger.

The member services representatives use a questionnaire that covers appliance use, heating equipment, pump equipment, and many other items.

"Space heaters are not efficient,"

Kruger said, noting that utilizing the Co-op's heat rate for electric furnaces and heat pumps is a better option.

Other significant energy users in cold weather can be outdoor hot tubs and heat lamps.

"We help them be aware of what they might be using electricity for," Kruger said.

Two tools that the MSR's urge members to use are the "101 Ways to Save" booklet available at <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-programs/energy-efficiency-tools> and the Co-op's SmartHub app.

The booklet walks members through different areas of energy use throughout the home and offers tips to help cut energy use.

"The SmartHub app enables members to monitor usage and also look at what the temperature was on a specific day," Kruger said. The timely information provided in the app allows members to make adjustments to their energy use.

"You can watch the usage daily and make notes as to big things that might be happening – such as turning on grain dryers, garage heaters, and such."

Additionally, members can make payments and set up automatic payments through the app.

"We really are member-focused. We enjoy talking to the members and get satisfaction from helping them, especially in signing up for services like SmartHub and auto pay," Kruger said.



WINTER OUTDOOR FUN

The chill of winter doesn't keep outdoors enthusiasts from finding adventure at Farm Island Recreation Area. *Photos by Travel South Dakota*

Winter adventure-seekers find wonder in the chilly outdoors

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Mental health counselors have discovered that seasonal affective disorder can be much more than just a harmless case of the blahs - it's a real condition that afflicts millions of people when the daylight diminishes and the temps turn colder.

They also agree that one way to defend against the winter doldrums is to get out of the house, embrace the crisp invigorating air and enjoy all the season has to offer.

It doesn't take much time or effort to create a list of fun things to do to get the blood pumping and the spirit soaring. Stepping away from a stuffy den and going outside to build a snowman, hike a nature trail, roast marshmallows over a bonfire and engage in other activities with family and friends can help bring back some

mental and emotional balance.

Nick Harrington of South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks said his department is eager to accommodate anyone looking to extract some fun from the chill of winter.

Harrington notes that many of the state's 50-plus public camping and recreation areas are open for attendance during the long winter months, although some facilities are closed in an effort to protect delicate nesting habitats

for eagles and other species of wildlife.

Some comfort stations may close down during winter but the state has modern lodges available with amenities such as heaters and running water, including cabins, suites and group lodges for cold-weather outdoor vacationing.

Harrington said that while many vacationers from far and wide flock to South Dakota in the summertime, the state boasts more than 1,500 miles of nature trails for cold-weather adventurers to discover and is one



Fat-tire biking in Spearfish Canyon

8 WINTER WONDERLANDS FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

- * Wind Cave National Park, Hot Springs
- * Snake Creek Recreation Area, Platte
- * Palisades State Park, Garretson
- * Custer State Park Spur, Custer
- * Randall Creek SRA, Pickstown
- * Pelican Lake, Pelican Township
- * Farm Island SRA, Pierre
- * Oakwood Lakes State Park, Bruce



Time spent outdoors during the winter can be beneficial to mental and physical well-being.

of the nation's top attractions for snowmobiling, snowshoeing, hiking, fat-tire biking and many other off-season outdoor adventures.

"Some people just enjoy getting out in the cold weather. They like the changing of the seasons we get in our region and they're always looking for new opportunities to explore what we have to offer without a lot of crowds," Harrington said. "It's already a beautiful state, but winter really changes the look of the landscape and is a big draw for many people looking for outdoor fun."

World-renowned summertime attractions such as the iconic Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse destinations take on an entirely different appeal during the snowy season. The Badlands geological formations, Ponderosa pine forests, open prairies, secluded lakes and

scenic waterways become even more alluring for landscape photographers, bird-watchers, hikers and wildlife enthusiasts when set against a charming and aesthetically pleasing wintry backdrop.

One of the most highly-attended state park destinations during both the summer and winter is Custer State Park with its 71,000 acres of trails, spectacular vistas and pristine lakes. The site is open year-round and during winter offers a wide array of things to see and do.

But there is still lots to explore across the state, including the more centrally situated Farm Island Recreation Area located four miles east of Pierre. Considered one of the park system's best-kept secrets, Farm Island sits nestled along the banks of Lake Sharpe

and the Missouri River and welcomes many winter guests who enjoy majestic glowing sunsets, ice fishing, eight miles of hiking trails, cross-country skiing and exploring the perfect natural habitat for birdwatching. There's also RV, primitive and cabin camping opportunities available.

For more ideas on how to plan trip and shake off the winter blues, check out this handy guide: www.travelsouthdakota.com/winter.

And after deciding on your winter vacation plans, don't forget to pack the following along with the rest of your cold-weather gear:

- Wool base layer
- Fleece mid-layer
- Windproof outer layer
- Waterproof boots
- Warm hat, scarf, gloves and socks.

Sioux Valley Energy's entry in the Hartford Hometown Christmas Parade of Lights was one of five award winners, earning the "Best Use of Lights" title.

CO-OP SPREADS HOLIDAY CHEER

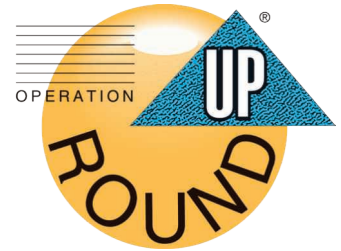


Above: Co-op members donated gifts for The Tree of Giving Hope drive for The Foster Network. **Middle Top:** Hardhats and safety cones adorn the SVE tree at Pipestone's Lights at the Lodge display. **Top right and middle right:** SVE employees Paul Anderson and Amy Voelker along with family members are ready for the Madison Parade of lights. **Lower right:** SVE employees Jake Dybedahl, Paul Anderson, Peyton Friesz, Amy Voelker, Jay Buchholz (taking photo) and families are ready for the Hartford Hometown Christmas parade. **Right:** SVE employees Brandon Lane, Josh Entzel, Jay Buchholz, and families are ready for the Brandon Parade of Lights.



\$140,000 Awarded in 2022

More than \$140,000 was awarded to nearly 70 non-profit organizations, communities, and schools in 2022 through the Cooperative's Operation Round Up program (ORU). The ORU program started in the year 2000 at Sioux Valley Energy. Since its inception, more than \$2 million has been awarded. Approximately 86 percent of SVE members are enrolled in Operation Round Up. The following received ORU funds in 2022:



- Arts & Mentoring Project
- Blue Dragon Foundation
- Breathe Bravely
- Brookings Area Camp Adventure
- Brookings County 4-H Leaders Association
- Brookings County Food Pantry
- Brookings County K9 Search & Rescue
- Brookings Backpack Project
- Calumet Players
- Catholic Community Foundation
- Character on Track
- Chester Area Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- Chester Area School
- Children's Care Hospital & School (Lifescape)
- Children's Inn
- City of Hills
- City of Pipestone Lights at the Lodge
- Colman Youth Baseball
- Colton Senior Citizens
- Crooks Flag Football League (CFFL)
- Cyclones '05 Red Softball Team
- Dell Rapids Community Haven
- Dynamic Dance Booster Club
- East Dakota Transit, Inc.
- Ewert Recreation Center
- Family Back 2 School Project
- Flandreau Elementary School
- Furniture Mission of South Dakota
- Garretson Childcare Corporation (Blue Dragon Academy)
- Generations, Inc
- Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sioux Falls
- Hartford Area Sports and Rec
- Ihlen-Eden Senior Citizens
- Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership
- International Association of Lions Club Jasper
- Jasper Ambulance Association
- Junior Achievement of South Dakota
- Lake County Historical Society, Inc
- Luverne Child Guide Program
- Luverne Elementary School
- Madison H.S.-Track & Field/Pole Vault
- McCrossan Boys Ranch
- Moody County Historical Society
- National Inventors Hall of Fame
- ORR 5th Grade Girls Basketball
- Pipestone Area Softball & Baseball
- Pipestone Area Youth Fastpitch
- Pipestone Educational Learning Center
- Pipestone Fire Department
- Pipestone Historical Society
- Pipestone Senior Citizens Center
- Progress
- Ramona Community Club
- Rock Ranch
- Sioux Council, Boy Scouts of America
- Sioux Falls Jaycees
- South Dakota Amateur Radio Council
- South Dakota FFA Foundation, Inc
- Special Olympics South Dakota
- St. Peter on the Prairie
- SWWC Foundation for Innovation in Education
- The Community Outreach
- University of Sioux Falls
- Washington Pavilion of Arts & Science
- West Central Education Foundation
- West Central Music Association



Above: The "Family Back 2 School Project" is a community effort to provide school supplies for families in Brookings County who are struggling with the cost. In 2022, 567 received supplies. In addition to school supplies, each child also received a voucher for \$25 towards a new pair of shoes.

WHEN ARE ORU APPLICATIONS DUE?

The Operation Round Up Board meets quarterly and all applications must be received by the 20th of the month preceding a Board meeting. Due dates are February 20, May 20, August 20, and November 20.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR ORU FUNDS?

Non-profit organizations within the Sioux Valley Energy service area may apply. The region served by the Trust is the

electrical service area footprint of Sioux Valley Energy which includes Rock and Pipestone counties in Minnesota and Brookings, Kingsbury, Lake, Minnehaha, and Moody counties in South Dakota.

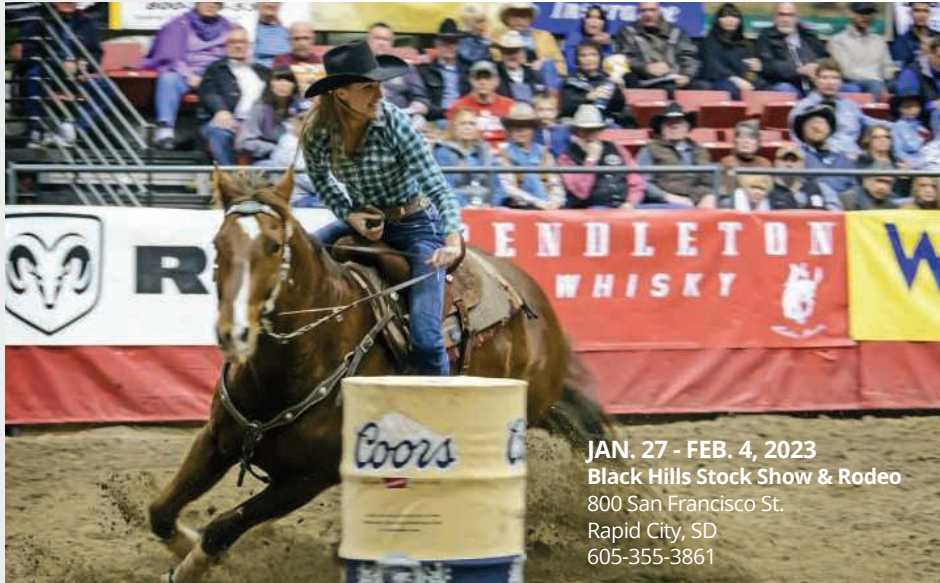


SCAN HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE OPERATION ROUND UP APPLICATION AND LEARN MORE.

REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth in LaCroix Hall at the Black Hills Stock Show to win an electric snow blower!

Your Phone Number: _____
Your E-mail Address: _____



JAN. 27 - FEB. 4, 2023
Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo
800 San Francisco St.
Rapid City, SD
605-355-3861

JAN. 1
American Legion Post 15
Pancake Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
South Dakota Military Heritage
Alliance Building
1600 W. Russell St.
Sioux Falls, SD

JAN. 13-14
ON YOUR FEET! THE MUSICAL
Show Dates:
Jan. 13, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 14, 2 p.m.
Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, SD

JAN. 14
Coats for Kids Bowling
Tournament
Registration Starts at 1 p.m.
\$80 for a four-person team
Meadowood Lanes
Rapid City, SD
605-393-2081

JAN. 14
Chinook Days
Winter Carnival
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Big Hill
Spearfish, SD

JAN. 20
Rapid Valley UMC
Soup Supper
4:30 p.m.-7 p.m.
Rapid City, SD

JAN. 21
Lakota Games on Ice
1 p.m.-4 p.m.
Mitchell Prehistoric Indian Village
Mitchell, SD

JAN. 27-28
Annual Deadwood Pro
Snocross Races
Jan. 27, 12:50 p.m.
Jan. 28, 8:25 a.m.
Days of '76 Rodeo Grounds
Deadwood, SD

JAN. 27 - FEB. 4
Annual Black Hills Stock
Show & Rodeo
Central States Fairgrounds and
The Monument
Tickets may be purchased
online and at the gate
Rapid City, SD
605-355-3861

JAN. 28
K9 Keg Pull
On-site registration
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Deadwood Street by
Outlaw Square
Deadwood, SD

FEB. 3-4
TOOTSIE
Show Dates:
Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 4, 2 p.m.
Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, SD

FEB. 10-11
Mardi Gras Weekend
Mardi Gras Events & Parade
Main Street
Deadwood, SD

FEB. 11
Songs of Romance
7:30 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, SD

FEB. 19
Trap Shoot
Izaak Walton League
Sioux Falls, SD
605-332-9527

MAR. 4
Annual Ag Day
9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Washington Pavilion
Sioux Falls, 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.

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