

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Mitchell Technical College launches careers in a wide range of fields including training for linemen like Lacreek Electric's Matt Kruid.  
*Photo by Billy Gibson*

## Tech Training

**Mitchell Technical College**  
Pages 8-9

**Promoting tribal tourism**  
Pages 12-13

# 2023 Work Plan and Budget



**Tim McCarthy**  
General Manager/  
Chief Executive  
Officer

Tim.McCarthy@  
siouxvalleyenergy.  
com

Happy New Year! The Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors met in December to consider the 2023 Work Plan and Budget, which they approved. Each year, the budget undergoes a rigorous process of development, research, and vetting as we plan for the Cooperative's line construction/maintenance and various member initiatives. While there is a great amount of documentation and detail to the Cooperative's plans, below is a high-level overview.

Rates will remain steady in 2023 with the help of deferred revenue. The Cooperative has approximately \$5 million in its deferred revenue account as of December 2022 and the Board plans to use half of that in 2023 to hold off a rate increase. If the current forecast holds true, we may have the opportunity to set up another deferred revenue plan at the end of this year to help with future rate increases, as we do expect the need for an adjustment in the coming years.

We anticipate our wholesale power purchases (which make up 62 percent of the Cooperative's Operating Budget this year) to be over \$62 million in 2023 with nearly 1 million MWh in purchased power. Electric sales revenue is budgeted to be almost \$98 million with approximately 930,000 MWh in sales. Other budgeted financial highlights include:

- Net Margins: \$4.8 million
- Capital Credit Retirement: \$2.792 million
- Distribution Plant Additions and Replacements: \$18.803 million
- Total Utility Plant: \$346 million (Total Utility Plant has grown from \$128 million just 11 years ago. The Cooperative is planning for 547 new services, with the number of accounts expected to hit almost 29,000 this coming year.)

This year's Capital Budget is set at \$18.8 million. This budget is similar to last year's with a slight reduction in total miles of replacement. The following top five categories represent about 90 percent of Capital Budget expenses:

- Conductor Replacement: \$4.9 million
- System Improvements: \$8.8 million
- Transformers and Meters: \$1.8 million
- New Services: \$1.7 million
- Sectionalizing Equipment: \$1.3 million

General plant additions and replacements is budgeted to be \$8.76 million which includes an addition to the Cooperative's Brandon service center. Twelve percent of this budget includes carryover expenses from 2022 due to delivery delays of trucks, etc. The Operating Budget will be \$100.4 million in total and includes the following:

- Power Cost - \$62.4 million
- Direct Costs - \$7.2 million (cable locating, right of way clearing, pole and ground testing, consumer billing, cooperative meetings, software, director expenses, building maintenance, etc.)
- Expensed Labor - \$13.2 million
- Indirect Costs - \$15.9 million (interest, depreciation, and taxes)
- Operating Margin - \$1.7 million

The Cooperative plans to again provide member-focused programs and services including the construction of a community solar array at the Colman headquarters. Solar panels were sold to individual members in 2022 and the array is full. Battery storage will also be explored as an emerging technology

Total Utility Plant is expected to reach  
**\$346 million**  
in 2023.

Rates will remain steady in 2023 with the help of  
**\$2.5 million**  
in deferred revenue.

Continued on next page.

## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

(USPS No. 497-440)

**Board President:** Gary Fish

**Board of Directors**

Dan Leuthold - Vice

President

Don DeGreef - Secretary

Dave Daniel - Treasurer

Rodney DeMent

Dr. Leslie Heinemann

Gregg Johnson

Mark Rogen

Lucas Roskamp

Ann Vostad

Allan Weinacht

**CEO/General Manager:** Tim McCarthy

**Chief Financial Officer:** Jason Maxwell

**V.P. of Engineering & Operations:** Ted Smith

**V.P. of Human Resources**

**& Member Services:** Debra Biever

**V.P. of Public Relations:** Carrie Vugteveen, Editor

**V.P. of Technology:** Justin Moose

**Executive Assistant:** Brenda Schelhaas

*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.

**Subscription information:** Sioux Valley Energy members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Colman, SD 57017 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to *Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections*, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017; telephone 605-534-3535; toll free 800-234-1960.

How to contact us: Phone: 1-800-234-1960  
e-mail: sve@siouxvalleyenergy.com  
Website: www.siouxvalleyenergy.com

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found on-line at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

**Sioux Valley Energy is an  
equal opportunity provider and employer.**

# Work Plan and Budget

## (Continued)

with the investment of dollars from the Renewable Energy Credit fund. A Residential Peak Demand rate pilot project will be tested this coming year, and we will be working with members who may be interested in helping us learn more about this type of rate in a residential setting.

As mentioned above, the Board did approve an addition to the Brandon Service Center as our membership continues to grow and our personnel, physical, and operational needs expand. We will be working with an architect on plans and hope to share more in the coming months.

As in years past, Sioux Valley Energy will offer incentive and rebate programs for various beneficial electrification efforts such as controlled water heating, electric vehicles, and heat pumps.

Our commitment to community is as strong as ever and is reflected in the 2023 Work Plan and Budget with the continuation of community support and economic development initiatives through the REVIVE 2030 program, sponsorships, and donations. District meetings will begin at the end of February and the Annual Meeting will look a little different this year. We plan to host a main site for the Annual Meeting at the West Central School in Hartford with two "satellite" sites in Luverne and Volga. The goal is to make it a little easier for members to attend without having to travel quite as far. We will have details about that plan closer to the June 6 date.

As you can imagine there is a lot more to the 2023 Work Plan and Budget, but we hope this high-level overview will give you a feel for what will be happening at your electric cooperative this year. As always, stay safe and we hope to see you at our upcoming district meetings!

**A Residential Peak Demand rate pilot project will be tested this coming year, and we will be working with members who may be interested in helping us learn more about this type of rate in a residential setting.**

## Check out this handy electrical fire check list

Electrical Fires do not have to happen. Use this checklist to help you find and fix electrical fire hazards in your home before they can start a fire.

Smoke Alarms – Smoke alarms save lives!

- ✓ Do you have enough smoke alarms?
- ✓ Are they working?
- ✓ Do you test them?

Switches and Outlets – Be on the look-out for signs of trouble.

- ✓ Are they working?
- ✓ Do they make crackling, buzzing, or sizzling sounds?
- ✓ Are they warm to the touch?
- ✓ Do plugs fit snugly?

Cords – Never use damaged cords.

- ✓ Is there fraying or cracking?
- ✓ Are they pinched or pierced?
- ✓ Do you use extension cords all the time?
- ✓ Are cords getting enough air?

Lamps and Appliances – Use them safely.

- ✓ Are you using the right bulbs?
- ✓ Do you use space heaters safely?
- ✓ Are appliance cords protected from damage?

Electrical Panel – Know the basics.

- ✓ Do you have AFCIs?
- ✓ Have you tested your AFCIs?
- ✓ Are all circuit breakers and fuses the proper size?



## KEEPING UP WITH ELECTRIC METERING TECHNOLOGY



South Dakota's electric cooperatives recently held an electric meter school in Pierre where more than 45 co-op employees learned about the latest technology in residential and industrial kilowatt hour metering processes. Metering is a key component of providing reliable, safe and affordable power to cooperative members all across the state.

To view scenes from this important training program and learn more about how electric cooperatives work to improve our communities, visit Cooperative Connections Plus by scanning the QR code at right.



## Take care when flying kites

### Jaclyn Koistinen

Jaclyn Koistinen, 11, is already thinking ahead to spring when kite-flying is a popular activity. She warns kids and adults both to take care when putting that kite in the air. Jaclyn is the daughter of Patrick and Jenilee Koistinen, members of H-D Electric based in Clear Lake.

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.

# BRUNCH SWEET BRUNCH

## CRAB QUICHE

### Ingredients:

- 1 (6 oz.) can crab meat (rinsed and drained)
- 1 c. shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/4 c. chopped green onion (or fresh chives)
- 4 eggs.
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. dry mustard
- 1 c. milk (or half-n-half)

### METHOD

Grease or spray pie pan. Combine crab, cheese and onion. Press into pie pan and up the sides. Whisk together the milk, eggs, salt and mustard. Pour mixture into pan. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake in 400 degree oven about 30 minutes or until set. Let set 5 minutes before cutting and serving.

**Elaine Rowett, Sturgis**

## PRALINE PECAN CRUNCH

### Ingredients:

- 1 (21 oz.) box Quaker Oat Squares cereal (about 8 c.)
- 2 c. pecans
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 c. light corn syrup
- 1/4 c. margarine
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda

### METHOD

Heat oven to 250 degrees. Mix cereal and pecans in 9x13 inch pan. Set aside. Mix corn syrup, brown sugar and margarine in glass bowl. Microwave on high 1-1/2 minutes. Stir. Microwave 1 to 1-1/2 minutes more or until boiling. Stir in vanilla and baking soda and pour over cereal mixture. Stir to coat evenly. Bake 1 hour, stirring every 20 minutes. Spread on baking sheet to cool. Break into pieces and store in airtight container.

**Nancy Stenson, Fort Pierre**

## CINNAMON APPLE BRUNCH BAKE

### Ingredients:

- 1 can (21 oz.) apple pie filling
- 1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 3 tbsp. butter, melted
- 2 tsp. McCormick® Ground Cinnamon
- 1 1/2 tbsp. McCormick® All Natural Pure Vanilla Extract
- 1 can (12 oz.) refrigerated biscuits
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts

### METHOD

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix apple pie filling, brown sugar, butter, cinnamon and vanilla in medium bowl. Spread 1/2 of the apple mixture in 2-quart shallow baking dish. Cut each biscuit into quarters. Arrange biscuit pieces, points up, over apple mixture. Spread remaining apple mixture over biscuits. Sprinkle with nuts. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until golden brown. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

**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.**

# Snow Woes? Try a power snow shovel



**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:

With the crazy weather and all these snow storms so far, who else is looking for an easier way to move snow?

One option to consider adding to your winter snow clearing arsenal is an electric snow shovel. For small spaces to clear, the snow shovel may be a good alternative to bulkier equipment.

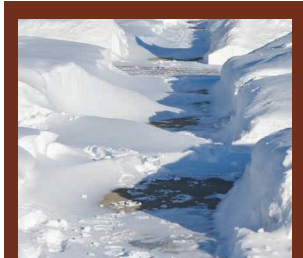
And, good news, we're giving one away! You can register for an EGO POWER+ snow shovel kit below. We'll have the snow shovel on display at our district meetings in February and March where you can also register to win. The way the winter is going, the lucky winner will probably still get use out of it this season. The contest ends March 24.

Electric snow shovels have several features that can make them appealing:

- **Easier on your body** – the snow shovel clears 12 inches at a time and throws snow up to 25 feet. It can clear a four-car driveway with six inches of snow on a single charge.
- **Easy to use** – just push a button to start, no cords to pull.
- **Convenient** – Electric snow shovels are easy to store and use
- **No fumes**
- **Did I mention no back-breaking shoveling?**

Charging the snow shovel (and other battery-powered snow removal and lawn equipment) on our Time of Use Rate during off peak times can save you money on your recharge.

Snow shovels and other types of electric equipment are examples of beneficial electrification – the application of electricity to end uses that would otherwise use fossil fuels.



## REGISTER TO WIN!

Don't let the snow get you down! Make shoveling a little easier with a power snow shovel!

For our first Energy Makeover Contest of 2023, we're giving away an EGO POWER snow shovel kit. The kit comes with power head and snow shovel attachment, 4.0 AH ARC lithium battery and 320 watt charger. Register to win online, through the mail, and at the district meetings. Contest ends March 24.

## SIGN ME UP TO WIN AND TELL ME MORE!

Register me to win the EGO POWER+ snow shovel kit!

Also, 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    |



The Brookings Backpack Project is governed by a board of nine volunteers.

# BROOKINGS BACKPACK PROJECT

One out of every six children is at risk of going hungry in South Dakota, according to [feedingsouthdakota.org](http://feedingsouthdakota.org). It's a surprising number, yet each year community organizations like the Brookings Backpack Project (BBP) see the need for their weekend food services increase.

"The week before Christmas vacation, volunteers packed 487 bags to be distributed to all Brookings District Schools, Head Start, Sioux Valley, and Elkton public schools. This is 100 more than we packed last year the week before Christmas. Our numbers continue to increase weekly as families struggle with utilities and grocery prices escalate," said BBP Executive Director Cathy Ching.

The BBP received a \$3,000 grant from Operation Round Up to help purchase food that is placed in weekly "backpacks" or bags for children and youth in Brookings County. The food is also provided during summer months. Bags are packed every Wednesday and transferred to the schools for distribution by teachers or counselors as children leave the building on Friday.

"Our program is open to all children; Head Start through Senior

High and we require no financial information to receive assistance. The BBP receives no government funding—relying on individual, business and service club monetary donations, grants from various resources, fundraising, churches, employee incentives, and the generosity of the Brookings area," said Ching.

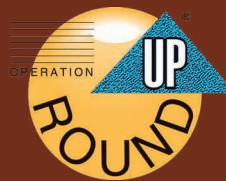
Ching added, "We are independent from other food insecurity entities in Brookings who also provide nutrition to families. We procure our food from Feeding South Dakota and local grocery stores as well as food drives and donations."

The Brookings-based program has officially been a non-profit organization since 2016 and was initially started by a concerned group of citizens and operated under the umbrella of the Brookings United Church of Christ. The first distribution was in 2010 providing 80 bags of food to children in the Brookings

School District.

Volunteers are the backbone of the BBP program and put in over 3,000 hours each year packing bags, unwrapping food to be placed in the bags, and delivering totes of food to the schools weekly and assisting with other duties to make sure children don't go to bed hungry.

For more information on the BBP, log on to [brookingsbackpackproject.org](http://brookingsbackpackproject.org) or find them on Facebook or Instagram. Brookings County families can sign up to receive food by contacting the school or emailing [coordinatorbbp@gmail.com](mailto:coordinatorbbp@gmail.com). If you are interested in volunteering, contact the BBP via email at [volunteersbbp@gmail.com](mailto:volunteersbbp@gmail.com) or log on to <https://volunteer.helplinecenter.org/opportunity>.



## 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.



Mitchell Tech facilities were used for the annual electric cooperative rubber gloving school last summer. *Photo by Billy Gibson*

## Mitchell Tech prepares linemen to deliver the 'right stuff' for members

**Billy Gibson**

editor@sdrea.coop

It's rare that you find a cooperative lineman in the state of South Dakota who hasn't been through the training program at Mitchell Technical College.

Mike Puetz doesn't remember all the names and faces, but his mentorship has played a key role in turning loads of wannabe linemen into highly skilled craftsmen over the past 25 years.

Puetz serves as head of the lineman training department at MTC and is giving some thought to hanging up his hooks in the next year or so. When he reflects on his teaching career, he swells with pride at how the program has improved exponentially over time.

There have been many milestones in the emergence of the lineman education program rising to become one of the best of its kind in the country.

Back in 2018, for instance, the power line construction and maintenance school was named winner of the inaugural Siemens-Aspen Community College

STEM award. The honor is given by the Aspen Institute to eight colleges nationwide that provide "outstanding preparation" for students in high-demand jobs and provides selected schools with \$50,000 to apply toward scholarships and other forms of financial assistance.

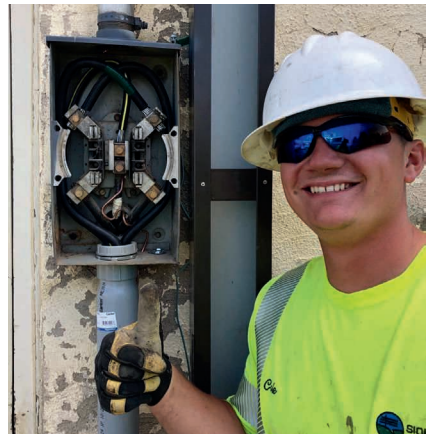
"That was definitely a shock," Puetz said. "There's a lot of good programs out there, and for us to be chosen for that prestigious award was unbelievable. We work hard to be able to say we have a very strong program, and that just gave us some validation that we're moving in the right direction. It's icing on the cake."

Mark Patterson, manager of loss control services at the South Dakota Rural Electric Association based in Pierre, has worked with Puetz for 15 years. He's hard-pressed to find many co-op linemen who haven't trained under Puetz.

"Mike has been around so long, and I'd estimate about 80 percent of the electric co-op linemen out there today have been trained by him," Patterson said. "They do a fantastic job of teaching the fundamentals, whether a student ends

up at a municipal, an investor-owned or a co-op. And our superintendents do an exceptional job of working with the graduates to help them gain the field experience they need to serve our members with a mindset of safety and efficiency."

Over the years, Puetz said, MTC has not only distinguished itself among similar programs but has also greatly expanded its array of academic and technical career tracks. There are tracks for construction and manufacturing, business and service industries, health sciences, engineering technologies and agriculture and transportation.



Sioux Valley Energy's Cole Anderson learned his trade at MTC.





At left, Mike Puetz has trained hundreds of future linemen. Above, Mitchell Technical College is well equipped to give electric linemen the real-world skills they need to succeed. *Photo by Billy Gibson*

Cole Anderson is a lineman at Sioux Valley Energy based in Madison. He graduated from the training program four years ago and recalls why he selected MTC to learn the ropes of line work.

“I had an uncle who was a lineman in another state and I knew that’s what I always wanted to do,” said Anderson, a graduate of Chester Area High School. “I started looking at schools and noticed they had limited positions open and they were always taken very quickly. That told me how good their reputation was.”

Anderson received his certification in May of 2018, joined the cooperative as a 1,000 hour lineman, and eventually worked his way into a journeyman position.

Oddly enough, he met Puetz a year before he enrolled at MTC. While still in high school, Anderson was on a tour of the facility when he happened to encounter Puetz in the hallway. The two shook hands and after a brief conversation, Puetz said: “If I don’t see you here next year, I’m coming to track you down.”

Anderson said he finds himself frequently relying on his lineman education and remembering the things Puetz taught him, including those lessons that don’t necessarily have to do with line work.

“I think he’s awesome. He’s big on work ethic and he always told us that no matter what we did in life, a good work ethic will allow you to accomplish your goals and stand out from the rest,” Anderson said. “He also had a thing about belts. You had to wear a belt. If he saw you and you didn’t have one on, he’d take his off and give it to you.”

Anderson and his wife, Sarah, recently built a new home outside of Madison and are expecting a baby boy in March. He said he’s grateful for the outstanding

instruction he received during his education phase and is also thankful to have a position at an outstanding organization within the electric cooperative system.

“I just feel fortunate. It’s been a great experience all the way through,” he said. “I think it’s a privilege to be able to do a job I enjoy and to work with professionals who know their craft, and an organization that is focused on delivering the highest quality service to its members.”

For more information about MTC, visit [www.mitchelltech.edu](http://www.mitchelltech.edu).



MTC is a prime training ground for future co-op linemen. *Photo by Billy Gibson*



From left, Hills Councilman Alan Leenderts, SVE's Brandon Lane, Hills Councilman Stacen Burgers, Hills Mayor Keith Elbers, SVE CEO/General Manager Tim McCarthy and SVE Operation Round Up Trust member Greg Benda were on hand for the check presentation which will buy playground equipment for the day care center planned for the building in the background.

# REVIVE

## 2030

### Cooperative invests \$25,000 in local community projects

Projects in Hills, Minnesota, and Colton, South Dakota, were given a boost at the end of December, thanks to Sioux Valley Energy.

#### HOUSING A CRITICAL NEED IN COLTON

The Colton Economic Development group received an inaugural investment of \$15,000 from Sioux Valley Energy. The funding comes from the Cooperative's REVIVE 2030 program which was designed to partner with local communities to assist with growth and development.

Colton Mayor Trevor Bunde said the early financial boost will make a big difference as the city begins to develop land for the Geraets Addition. The first phase of the housing development includes 70 acres and 49 homes.

"Sioux Valley members should be really proud they are part of an electric co-op that makes investments into communities like this," said Bunde.

Sioux Valley Energy CEO, Tim McCarthy, added that while financial investments are helpful, the Cooperative is focused on providing "boots on the ground" assistance

in partnership with other organizations like Sioux Metro Growth Alliance.

"Colton is a vibrant community that is focused on the future and what they have accomplished is impressive. We are hopeful that Sioux Valley Energy's REVIVE program, along with assistance from Sioux Metro Growth Alliance, will help other communities grow and prosper as well. There is so much more to economic development than just financial investment—it takes time, dedication, and commitment and we are ready to be a strategic partner to help them reach their goals," said McCarthy.

Sioux Metro Growth Alliance's, Jesse Fonkert, agreed.

"Successful economic development requires strong partnerships. Sioux Valley Energy has demonstrated this time after time with the support they offer their members and communities. We're excited to support the work of the Colton Economic Development Group and know this gift will be well utilized," said Jesse Fonkert, President and CEO of Sioux Metro Growth Alliance.

#### ADDRESSING DAY CARE NEEDS IN HILLS

The city of Hills, Minnesota recently received a total of \$10,000 in donations from Sioux Valley Energy to purchase playground equipment. The funding will help support a city-owned facility that will house up to three childcare locations.

"The city has been working diligently to try and find a solution to help with the daycare provider shortage problem. This project has been in the making for quite some time. We can't say thank you enough to our many

local and corporate partners who have stepped up to help make this project a reality for us. It is a long process but together with everyone's help and the generosity of partners like Sioux Valley Energy, we are going to make this a reality for the city of Hills," said Mayor Keith Elbers.

Childcare challenges not only impact individual families but can also affect the entire community. Sioux Valley Energy supports the city of Hills' innovative approach to an ongoing problem.

"One of the Cooperative's core principles is commitment to community, and this is the type of project that really embraces and highlights that. We know that availability and affordability of childcare is a challenge, especially in smaller or more rural communities, and we stand ready to be strategic partners in finding solutions," said Tim McCarthy, Sioux Valley Energy CEO.

The funding, presented to the city of Hills at the end of December, comes from the Cooperative's Operation Round Up® program which provides grants for worthy causes to communities and non-profits from funds collected when members 'round up' their electric bills. A matching donation was provided by Sioux Valley Energy's REVIVE 2030 program.

## revive2030

Energizing local communities to thrive, grow, and prosper.

Sioux Valley Energy has developed the REVIVE 2030 program to partner with and/or assist communities with community and economic development. The Cooperative is ready to work with your community to grow and thrive!

REVIVE 2030 offers (or can provide access to) a variety of services to communities within the Cooperative's service territory footprint. Limited funding may be available as well.

**For more information, call  
Brandon Lane or Jay Buchholz at  
800-234-1960.**



Colton Finance Officer Seth Sando, left, SVE's Brandon Lane, Colton City Councilman Chaz Foster, SVE's Jay Buchholz, Colton Mayor Trevor Bunde, SVE CEO/General Manager Tim McCarthy, Colton Economic Development Group Vice President Monte Koopman, Sioux Metro Growth Alliance President & CEO Jesse Fonkert, Colton Economic Development Group member Roger Burgers, and Colton Superintendent of Public Works Jerrit Pedersen were gathered for the check presentation at Colton, S.D.



# NATIVE TOURISM

## Native Tourism Alliance shines spotlight on tribal nation culture

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

Sure, many of the 15 million travelers who visit South Dakota each year may have marveled at the Mount Rushmore Memorial, snapped a selfie at Wall Drug or beheld the fast-moving waters in Falls Park.

But how many of them have witnessed the whirling splendor of a wacipi, the traditional Native American celebration of life? How many have paused to watch a Native artist crafting a colorful piece of beaded jewelry?

Several years ago, a blind spot was noticed in the Department of Tourism's efforts to attract visitors – not much attention was being focused on the state's nine federally-recognized tribal nations.

In an effort to address that oversight, the department teamed up with the George Washington University International Institute of Tourism Studies

and the tribes to develop a sustainable indigenous tourism industry by letting visitors know there are many points of interest available for exploration far beyond the beaten paths.

The five-year plan has been described as a “groundbreaking endeavor” and is one of the first initiatives of its kind under the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act and was unveiled in August of 2021. More than 60 state, local and federal organizations collaborated to formulate the strategy as a catalyst for economic growth.

“I think the Alliance is a potential revenue source for our tribes, and it’s a way for us to generate income, alleviate poverty and help conserve our natural resources and culture,” said Dew Bad Warrior-Ganje, a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

The plan identified five guiding principles:

### Native Tourism Alliance

**CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBE**  
PO Box 590, Eagle Butte, SD 57625  
605-964-4155

**CROW CREEK SIOUX TRIBE**  
PO Box 50, Fort Thompson, SD 57339  
605-245-2221

**FLANDREAU SANTEE SIOUX TRIBE**  
PO Box 283, Flandreau, SD 57028-0283  
605-997-3891

**LOWER BRULE SIOUX TRIBE**  
PO Box 187, Lower Brule, SD 57548  
605-473-5561

**OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE**  
PO Box 2070, Pine Ridge, SD 57770  
605-867-5821

**ROSEBUD SIOUX TRIBE**  
PO Box 430, Rosebud, SD 57570  
605-747-2381

**SISSETON WAHPETON OYATE**  
PO Box 509, Agency Village, SD 57262  
605-698-3911

**STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBE**  
PO Box D, Fort Yates, ND 58538  
701-854-8500

**YANKTON SIOUX TRIBE**  
PO Box 1153, Wagner, SD 57380  
605-384-3641

- 
- Unity - Reunification of the Očhéthi Šakówi Oyate through shared history, commonalities, and collaboration on developing regional tourism.
  - Preservation - Promotion of art and culture in order to enhance self-identity and pride as well as preserve the culture, including language and traditional knowledge.
  - Woksape - Recognition of Elders as the driving force of traditional knowledge and wisdom in the development of regional tourism and educating the youth to be stewards of the language and culture.
  - Education - Creation of cross-cultural bridges and educating the World about Native American communities.
  - Self-sufficiency - Development of opportunities for Tribal Nations to become self-sufficient and create pathways to enhance livelihood.

Organizers gathered together and developed detailed goals and methods to achieve those goals. Planners were forced to start from the ground floor as not much data existed to determine the present status of Indigenous tourism.

They initially identified a “rich mix” of 145 existing natural, cultural and heritage attractions and special events to promote, in addition to potential agritourism initiatives.

Nearing the halfway point in the plan’s prescribed timetable, stakeholders report substantial progress and greater interest from visitors seeking an authentic cultural experience.

Calvin Bloemendaal, who has represented the South Dakota Department of Tourism in the Alliance from its inception, pointed out several specific measures of success.

Chief among them is the creation of a nine-day motorcoach tour of tribal territory that starts in Rapid City and terminates in Bismarck. The tour, coordinated with assistance by the tourism department, will begin this summer and will be operated through Destination America and Trafalgar Tours.

“It’s one of the first tours of its kind,” Bloemendaal said. “Destination America caters to an upscale clientele of individuals who like to travel a lot and have been to a lot of places. They’re looking for something unique and interesting they haven’t seen before.”

He also mentioned the progress that has been made in building a network of support for tribal tourism and the development of themed destination experiences.

There’s also a marketing guide that is part of the department’s general ongoing promotional efforts. More than 30,000 of the helpful guides were printed and are being distributed at visitor centers, trade shows and other industry events.

“I was at a trade show in Denver and people were extremely interested in this idea and gravitating toward it. The guide is an effective tool that inspires people to visit,” he said. “We’re making a lot of headway as far as putting together pitches and itineraries to attract more tour operators to the state.”



# Sioux Valley Energy Employees Recognized for Years of Service in 2022



**Lori George**  
25 Years



**Lisa Johnson**  
25 Years



**Justin Moose**  
25 Years



**Ryan Olson**  
25 Years



**Kim Brendsel**  
20 Years



**Tim Fey**  
20 Years



**Brenda Schelhaas**  
20 Years



**Matt Seivert**  
20 Years



**Molly Williams**  
20 Years



**Jan Christiansen**  
15 Years



**Matt Determan**  
15 Years



**Kara LeBrun**  
15 Years



**Josh Entzel**  
10 Years



**Chad Lade**  
10 Years



**Chinelle Christensen**  
10 Years



**Matt Behlings**  
5 Years



**Jay Buchholz**  
5 Years



**Molly Burmeister**  
5 Years



**Heather Buss**  
5 Years



**Josh Kearin**  
5 Years



**Jason Langford**  
5 Years



**Jace Martens**  
5 Years



**Alex Christensen**  
1 Year



**Peyton Friesz**  
1 Year



**Chris Graff**  
1 Year



**Melissa Hennings**  
1 Year



**Adrian Ilchuk**  
1 Year



**Nolan Johnson**  
1 Year



**Jason Maxwell**  
1 Year



**Larry Voss**  
1 Year

## OSSEFOORT RETIRES

Dave Ossefoort, Sioux Valley Energy's Manager of Purchasing and Materials, retired in December after 32 years with the Co-op.



## Statement of Nondiscrimination

Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found on-line at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by:

1. Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
2. Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

## Co-Generation Notification

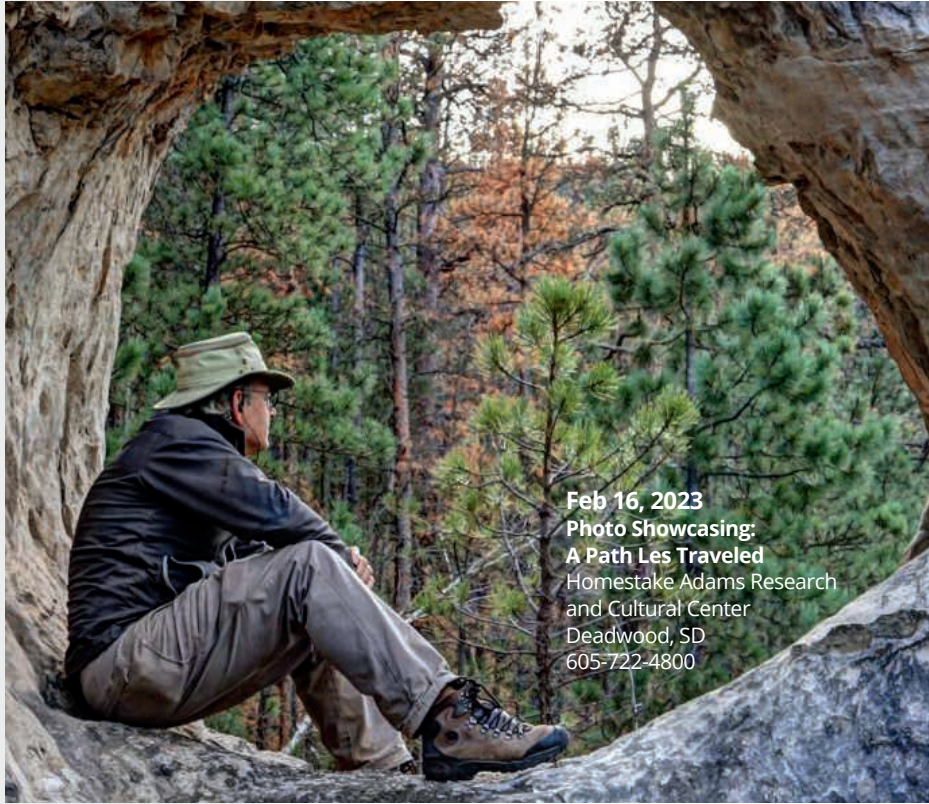
In compliance with Sioux Valley Energy's adopted rules relating to Co-Generation and Small Power Production, Sioux Valley Energy is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers whom satisfy the conditions of a qualifying facility. Sioux Valley Energy is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Cooperative. Interested members should contact Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017 or call 800-234-1960.



## DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

\*Denotes Election Meeting

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 and Rogen*	Brandon Valley High School, Brandon, SD



**Feb 16, 2023**  
**Photo Showcasing:**  
**A Path Les Traveled**  
 Homestake Adams Research  
 and Cultural Center  
 Deadwood, SD  
 605-722-4800

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.

**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  
 605-367-6000

**FEB. 4**  
**Lake Hendricks Fishing Derby**  
 9 a.m. registration  
 Hendricks City Public  
 Lake Access  
 Hendricks, MN  
 507-828-2113

**FEB. 4**  
**James River Gobblers  
 Hunting Heritage Banquet**  
 Highland Conference Center  
 Mitchell, SD  
 605-999-3208

**FEB. 10-11**  
**Mardi Gras Weekend**  
 Mardi Gras Events & Parade  
 Sponsored by Deadwood  
 Chamber of Commerce  
 Main Street  
 Deadwood, SD

**FEB. 11**  
**Songs of Romance**  
 7:30 p.m.  
 Washington Pavilion  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-367-6000

**FEB. 16**  
**Photo Showcasing:**  
**A Path Les Traveled**  
 12 p.m.-1 p.m.  
 Homestake Adams Research  
 and Cultural Center  
 Deadwood, SD  
 605-722-4800

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

**FEB. 24**  
**Calamity's Shindig**  
 6 p.m.-9 p.m.  
 Homestake Adams Research  
 and Cultural Center  
 Deadwood, SD  
 605-722-4800

**FEB. 28**  
**BIG Career & Internship Fair**  
 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  
 Ramkota Hotel  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**MARCH 4**  
**Annual Ag Day**  
 9 a.m.-1 p.m.  
 Washington Pavilion  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-367-6000

**MARCH 18**  
**Shamrock Shuffle Fun Run**  
 12 p.m.  
 Main Street  
 Presho, SD

**MARCH 25-26**  
**Greater Sioux Falls Model  
 Train Show**  
 Multi-Cultural Center  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**MARCH 30**  
**"The Wildest Banquet  
 Auction in the Midwest"**  
 5:30 p.m.  
 South Dakota Military  
 Heritage Alliance  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-339-1203

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