

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Small Town, Big Dreams

**Tucker Kraft's  
Road to the NFL**

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**Electrical Safety in  
Action**

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# 2023 Cost of Service Study



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

Tim.McCarthy@  
siouxvalleyenergy.  
com

As we have announced, the Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors has determined that electric rates will remain stable in 2023. The Cooperative routinely conducts a Cost of Service study with an independent engineering firm to review rate designs to ensure appropriate levels of revenue are collected based on the cost of service for various classifications of electric users such as urban residential, rural residential, large power, and general service (just to name a few).

A Cost of Service study helps the Cooperative identify the average cost responsibility of members within a rate class but doesn't identify the specific cost of providing service to an individual member. That would not be possible given there are more than 28,000 members on the electric system. Electric utilities from across the country conduct similar studies. It is up to each utility to determine how to allocate costs using its own rate philosophy, assumptions, and methodologies.

Sioux Valley Energy has worked hard over the years to minimize subsidization between rate classes. Each rate component (energy, basic service/facility, and demand) is considered when developing rates. Fair and equitable rates and assigning costs to cost causers (cost causation) are just a few of the objectives the Cooperative uses for rate development. Other objectives include making sure the rate design is understandable, that we avoid abrupt changes to members, and we promote efficient use of electricity.

While rates are remaining stable this year, we do anticipate needed adjustments in the future. We hope to keep those minimal when and if they are required. There are quite a few things that can impact the need for rate adjustments such as weather, reduction/increase in home and business construction, interest rates, cost of materials and equipment, and even load growth. Once we get closer to the end of the year, we will have a better idea of what is expected for 2024, and the most recent Cost of Service study will allow us to allocate costs appropriately to each class of service.

**“Sioux Valley Energy has worked hard over the years to minimize subsidization between rate classes. Each rate component (energy, basic service/facility, and demand) is considered when developing rates.”**

On another note, and as I end this month's column, I would again like to remind you to be aware of SVE crews that may be working on the side of the road this spring and summer. Please slow down and give them space to work. Additionally, as you are out working on home projects or planting your fields, be aware of overhead powerlines and call 811 before you dig. Stay safe and hope to see you at the Annual Meeting scheduled for June 6!



## WHO POWERS YOU?

Congratulations to Heidi Briseno, a finalist in the 'Who Powers You' contest. Heidi is from Brookings and was featured on the March 30 edition of *Keloland Living* for her community involvement. Heidi was nominated for her volunteer work with the Brookings Multicultural Center and also as a volunteer doula. Sioux Valley Energy celebrates Heidi's dedication to her community. Learn more about Heidi's volunteerism at [www.keloland.com/keloland-living/meet-who-powers-you-contest-nominees-heidi-laura](http://www.keloland.com/keloland-living/meet-who-powers-you-contest-nominees-heidi-laura)

## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

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(USPS No. 497-440)

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Website: www.siouxvalleyenergy.com

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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.**



**SIoux VALLEY ENERGY**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

## 2023 Annual Meeting

### Tuesday, June 6

**5:00-7:00 p.m. – Picnic Meal *plus* Bingo (ends at 6:45 p.m.) • Childrens' Activities**

**7:00 p.m. – SVE Annual Meeting**

**7:45 p.m. – Entertainment**

**Hartford**



The Barn Flies

**Luverne**



Allie LaRock

**Volga**



Lizzy Hofer

# SEE YOU JUNE 6

## Three locations will host SVE members for the Co-op's 2023 Annual Meeting

Sioux Valley Energy's Annual Meeting will look a little different this year. To help more members take part in the Annual Meeting, the Co-op plans to host three different sites in Hartford, Volga, and Luverne.

"The Sioux Valley Energy service territory is pretty large and sometimes it is difficult for members who want to attend, but live 50 plus miles away. We are trying something new with providing multiple locations," said Vice President of Public Relations Carrie Vugteveen.

The main meeting site location will be at the West Central High School in Hartford. The two remote locations will be held at Sioux Valley School in Volga and Generations Event Center in Luverne. Each location will have a picnic-style meal of hamburgers and hotdogs, along with potato salad, beans, chips, and a bar.

Each location will also have children's activities, bingo with prizes and local entertainment.

The entertainment will be as followed in each location:

### HARTFORD: THE BARN FLIES

The Barn Flies is the alt-country and Americana duo of Casey Wilson and Carleen Wild Wilson. The Wilsons live in the Flandreau area.

### VOLGA: LIZZY HOFER

Lizzy Hofer grew up near Estelline, South Dakota, and sings a variety of genres: country, rock n' roll, gospel, jazz/blues, opera, and pop.

### LUVERNE: ALLIE LAROCK

Allie LaRock grew up in Hills, Minnesota, and plays songs by artists ranging from Adele and ABBA to NEEDTOBREATHE and Lady Gaga. Allie also performs original music.

## Workplace Safety: Avoid Common Electrical Hazards

Contact with or exposure to electricity is one of the leading causes of workplace fatalities. Follow these tips to avoid electrical injury:

### Overhead Power Line Contact

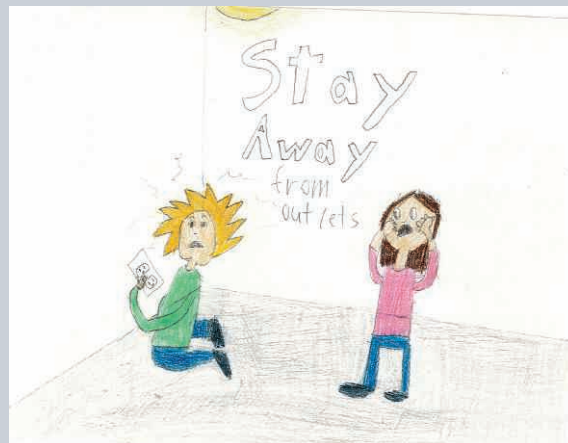
- 46% of all electrical fatalities are caused by contact with overhead power lines
- 57% of overhead power line fatalities were in non-electrical occupations
- Always assume all lines are live and dangerous
- Always look up; be aware of overhead power lines
- Keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines
- Do not touch anything that is in contact with overhead power lines
- Carry equipment, including ladders, horizontally to avoid contact with power lines
- Stay at least 35 feet away from downed lines

### Accidental Contact with Energized Conductors or Parts

- 45% of all electrical fatalities were caused by working on or near energized conductors or parts
- 74% of these fatalities were in electrical occupations
- Always test for voltage before you perform work. Be sure to also test the area around the equipment you are working on to avoid accidental contact with energized equipment
- Always perform a site and risk assessment before conducting work. Hazards exist on and near the equipment you are working on
- When possible, turn off power before conducting work
- Follow proper lockout / tagout procedures
- Avoid complacency. Every job is different, make sure you follow the hierarchy of controls and other electrical safety work practices on every job

### Electrical Safety in the Workplace

- 69% of all electrical fatalities involved non-electrical occupations
- Know when to say when. If you feel unsafe performing a job, say something
- Be aware of potential electrical hazards in the workplace. Avoid electrical rooms and other potentially hazardous areas
- All electrical work should be completed by qualified workers with proper training
- GFCI protection should be installed where electricity and water may come in contact
- Five sources accounted for 92% of all electrical fatalities
  - Overhead power lines
  - Unexpected contact with electricity
  - Working on energized parts
  - Ground faults
  - Damaged wiring



### Power Line Safety

#### Serena Dekrey, age 9

Serena Dekrey, age 9, gives wise advice to readers on electrical safety. She cautions us to be careful around power outlets. Serena is the daughter of Don and Cassandra Dekrey, members of Sioux Valley Energy based in Colman, S.D.

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.

# COMFORTING CASSEROLES

## PHEASANT CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

- 1 pheasant
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- Bacon grease
- 1/2 cup flour
- 4 cups milk
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper

**METHOD**

Mix flour, salt, pepper, and roll pieces of pheasant in the mixture. Brown in bacon grease. In separate pan, mix butter, milk, and 6 T flour. Stir and bring to a boil. Pour over the pheasant that had been put in a baking dish with bacon laid over it. Bake until tender.

**Gail Klipfel**  
Ellendale, N.D.

## TACO CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 pounds ground beef
- 1 package taco seasoning mix
- 1 can (16 ounces) pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce
- 1 can (11 ounces) whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup crushed tortilla chips

**METHOD**

Preheat oven to 400°F. Brown meat in large skillet on medium-high heat. Drain fat. Stir in seasoning mix, beans, tomato sauce and corn. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Spoon into 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese and tortilla chips. Bake 5 to 10 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve with assorted toppings, if desired.

**mccormick.com**

## CHICKEN, BROCCOLI, AND RICE CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. chicken tenders
- 1 cup long grain rice
- 1 1/2 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tsps. garlic powder
- 2 tsps. onion powder
- 1 1/2 tsps. whole rosemary leaves, crushed
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

**METHOD**

Preheat oven to 400°F. Spread chicken and rice in greased 2-quart baking dish. Mix stock, milk and seasonings in medium bowl with wire whisk until well blended. Slow pour over chicken and rice. Cover with foil. Bake 45 minutes. Remove foil. Stir in broccoli. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake, uncovered, 15 minutes longer or until rice has absorbed all the liquid and broccoli is tender.

**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.

# Go exploring with an e-bike



**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:

As winter's snows recede, more people are turning to outdoor activities, and for many, there may be an electric motor involved.

Interest has been growing in recent years for electric options for bicycles and recreational vehicles.

At the National Ride and Drive Event held last September in Sioux Falls, we had several of these technologies on display, including electric bicycles, an electric motorcycle, and electric golf carts.

According to eBicycles.com, there are three classes of electric bikes; all three have a maximum of 750 watts. Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes are restricted to a top speed of 20 mph, with Class 1 relying on pedal assist and Class 2 using pedal assist and throttle. Class 3 bikes can reach a top speed of 28 mph, but the throttle cannot assist the rider at speeds above 20 mph. It's a good idea to check with local jurisdictions to learn where it is permissible to ride the different classifications of bicycles, as some state and national park systems may have restrictions on which types can be used in certain settings.

With the added boost of the electric motor, e-bikes are enabling more people to ride a bicycle and also to increase the number of trips taken and distances ridden.

If an electric bike is in your future, contact



Linda Allen of Flandreau was the winner of the EGO Snow Shovel given away in March as our first Energy Makeover Contest prize of the year. More than 1,500 people registered for the contest. She is pictured with SVE's Beneficial Electrification Manager Ben Pierson.

one of several area bicycle dealers to learn more about what features and type of bicycle will best suit your needs.

Members attending the Cooperative's annual meeting June 6 can register to win an e-bike.

Contact us at 1-800-234-1960 for more information on programs and incentives. Learn more about Sioux Valley Energy's programs by scanning the code at left.



E-Bike test drives were a popular activity during the 2022 National Drive Electric Week event in Sioux Falls.

**Notice of Capital Credit Allocation**  
**THIS IS NOT A BILL -- DO NOT PAY**

CAPITAL CREDIT STATEMENT		
Year	Capital Credit No.	
2022	00000	
Acct. No.	Total Billing	Capital Credits
000000000	1,982.98	163.47

The capital credits reflected on this statement represent your share of the margins (revenue over expenses) realized by your cooperative for the year indicated. These margins have been allocated to all members who purchased electric service from the cooperative during the year in proportion to the billed electric revenue rendered to each member.

The money represented by members' capital credits (known as patronage capital) is used by your cooperative to repay its long-term debt, for financing of certain plant requirements, necessary reserves, contingencies, and for other proper purposes. Patronage capital will be paid to you when the financial condition of the cooperative will permit and in accordance with provisions contained in the by-laws.

Should you cease to purchase electric service from the cooperative and change your present address, you should notify the cooperative of any address changes. This will help

**ALLOCATION NOTICE INCLUDED IN MAY BILL**

Sioux Valley Energy members will notice an extra sheet of paper with their May bill indicating the amount of their 2022 capital credit allocation. (Those receiving their bill via Smart-Hub can view the statement on line.)

Each year, after the Cooperative's financials have been audited and the Cooperative's books have been closed, the allocation is calculated for each member-owner.

Allocated capital credits appear as an entry on the permanent financial records of the Cooperative and reflect your investment in SVE. When capital credits are retired, a bill credit is issued to you (or check, if you no longer are a member), and your ownership in the Cooperative is reduced. The Board of Directors determines the amount and timing of capital credit retirements.

**ADDING GRAIN BINS?**

If your operation's plans call for adding additional grain storage bins or increasing motor sizes, make sure that a call to Sioux Valley Energy is an early part of the process.

Contacting SVE early on can help address your site's electric needs and is especially important if relocating a bin site or expanding one. Many producers impacted by the May 2022 derecho are eligible for financial assistance under the Farm Service Agency's Emergency Grain Storage Facility Assistance Program (EGSFP).



# SPRING WORK GETS UNDERWAY

As the temperatures warm up and the year progresses, you'll be seeing a lot of activity by Sioux Valley Energy and its contractors. Here's a brief run down of some of the things you may encounter in the area:

**RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE**

As part of our ongoing efforts to maintain system reliability, you'll see our tree trimming contractor, Friest Tree Experts, continue their work in our territory. We trim trees each year, rotating through the entire service territory to address areas that may cause issues and lead to outages. Friest Tree Experts will be working in southern Brookings County and northern Moody County.



Friest Tree Experts cleared trees for SVE after the 2022 Derecho.

**INSTALLATION OF LOAD MANAGEMENT EQUIPMENT**

A delay in equipment caused a small backlog of load management equipment installation. The needed devices are now in and we'll be contacting affected members to schedule installation of the devices.

Load management helps the Co-op reduce its demand on the electrical system, which is good for co-op members. Load management saves member-owners over \$1 million in power supply costs each year by shifting electrical loads to off-peak time periods. Members can save through program incentives in having equipment

connected to the load management program. Installation of the equipment is required as part of the load management program.



**POLE INSPECTIONS**

Employees with SBS Inspections will be examining approximately 5,000 poles in northern Minnehaha County as part of the Cooperative's pole inspection program.

The process involves visually inspecting each pole and its accompanying hardware for potential problems. The base of the poles are dug around so that the pole can be probed to detect potential decay. Any poles that fail the inspection are scheduled for replacement.



Poles that fail inspection are marked for replacement.

TUCKER KRAFT



# SMALL TOWN, BIG DREAMS

Kraft refuses to go down amongst a group of Redbird defenders.

## Tucker Kraft's Road to the NFL

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sirea.coop

With a population of 500 residents, Timber Lake, S.D., may seem similar to many small-town communities across the state. The town is known for its scenic beauty, outdoor recreational opportunities, and rich history. However, what really sets Timber Lake apart from the rest is a homegrown NFL prospect: Tucker Kraft.

At an impressive 6-foot-5 and weighing 254 pounds, Kraft has proven himself to be South Dakota's latest up-and-coming football star. Ask any fan of college football and they will tell you that Kraft has the size and skill set to make waves on a professional level.

Luckily, Kraft's talents haven't gone unnoticed. During his latest breakout season as SDSU's All-American tight end, Kraft left an impression on NFL

scouts with his ability to outrun opponents, snatch incredible catches and charge through multiple tackles. A top contributor in nearly every game, Kraft led the Jackrabbits to their first-ever FCS National Championship. The historic season quickly cemented Kraft's place as a top tight end in the NFL Draft.

Kraft recalls the moment everything fell into place: "I just realized that when I had the ball, no one could touch me," he said. "I knew after that season that I was completely capable of playing with the pros."

Timber Lake High School head football coach Ryan Gimbel says he is not surprised to see his former stu-



Tucker Kraft



dent and player on the doorstep of the NFL. Countless hours in the weight room and gym, he said, revealed Kraft to be a student-athlete with incredible drive.

“Seeing the raw natural talent of Tucker spoke for itself and what he could accomplish, but he also had the dedication to take it to that next level,” said Gimbel. “To me, it wasn’t a surprise, and that was our running joke when he left high school – ‘I’ll see you playing on Sundays.’”

Kraft’s journey to the NFL, however, was not without its fair share of adversity. Growing up in Timber Lake, Kraft lost his father to a plane crash when he was only 12 years old. Kraft overcame the childhood tragedy with his two brothers and mother by working tirelessly on and off the field. Honoring his father’s legacy, Kraft followed in his father’s footsteps to become an All-American college star like his father had done before him.

“My brothers took a big part in raising me after my dad died,” said Kraft. “My mom, my aunts and uncles all played a role, but I pride myself on getting a lot of things done independently.”

Steely determination has carried Kraft to the highest level of football, and not even dramatic injury has been able to slow him down. In November Kraft officially declared his name in the NFL draft. Kraft’s friends and family cheered him on as he showed off his incredible strength and skill on national television at the NFL Combine. There, Kraft proved his ability to play alongside the likes of Dallas Goedert, Riley Reiff and South Dakota’s other pro footballers.

“I was kind of star-struck walking in,” said Kraft. “Sitting down with the head coaches of the NFL franchise, you realize that you are at this level now. This is a job interview.”

The NFL Combine, however, will

not be the last of Kraft’s time on national television. Ranked as the sixth top tight end, Kraft’s eyes are set on the draft in April. And, although he hails from somewhere small, Kraft plans to loom large on the field as a starting player with great potential.

“I want to go to a team that’s going to use me, whether I’m on the line of scrimmage in the trenches with the big guys or catching balls and getting yards after the catch. I want to make an impact on a team, day one.”

Whatever happens in April, Kraft’s hometown is ready to cheer him on. According to Gimbel, most of Timber Lake is ready to don colors and jerseys that they are not used to wearing to support their hometown kid.

“The buzz in our town has just erupted,” said Gimbel. “Our community, school, and family friends – they all want to see him be successful in the opportunity that he has worked for.”



NFL prospect Tucker Kraft evades a tackler, leading SDSU to a 31-7 win last November against the Illinois State Redbirds.

# FUNDING FUTURES

Forty-three graduating high school seniors were awarded a total of \$23,500 in technical college and university scholarships from Sioux Valley Energy and its power suppliers this year. The majority of scholarship funds came from Sioux Valley Energy's Operation Roundup® program, with additional funds from Basin Electric Power Cooperative, L&O Power Cooperative, and the Rodney Park Memorial Scholarship. Rodney Park was a journey line worker who worked at Sioux Valley Energy from 1973 until 2006 when he passed away. A scholarship was created to honor his memory and is funded by Sioux Valley Energy.



**Mackenzie Schelhaas**  
Sioux Falls Christian High School  
\$1,000 Basin Electric Power Scholarship



**Brooklyn Goelz**  
Pipestone Area High School  
\$1,000 L&O Power Scholarship



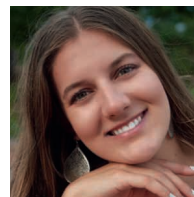
**Layne Kuper**  
Lennox High School  
\$1,000 Rodney Park Scholarship



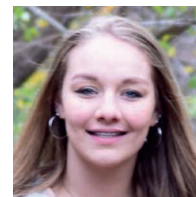
**Lorena Misar**  
Arlington High School  
\$1,000 Technical College Scholarship



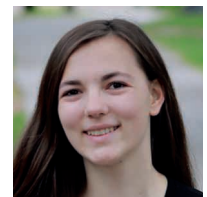
**Drew Pederson**  
Garretson High School  
\$1,000 Technical College Scholarship



**Elizabeth Price**  
Dell Rapids High School  
\$1,000 Technical College Scholarship



**Jazlyn Vander Poel**  
Ellsworth High School  
\$1,000 Power Line Scholarship



**Elizabeth Aaseng**  
Brandon Valley High School  
\$750 Scholarship



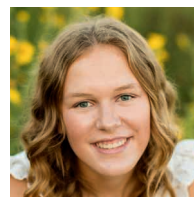
**Josie Baumberger**  
Dell Rapids St. Mary High School  
\$750 Scholarship



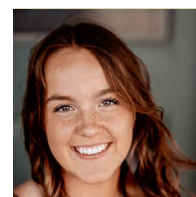
**Grace Davis**  
Brookings High School  
\$750 Scholarship



**Madelyn Ebberts**  
Estelline High School  
\$750 Technical College Scholarship



**Elizabeth Johnson**  
West Central High School  
\$750 Scholarship



**Brooke Koppatschek**  
Deubrook Area High School  
\$750 Scholarship



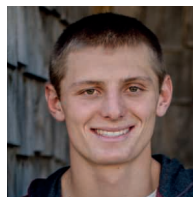
**Emily Robbins**  
Elkton High School  
\$750 Scholarship



**Tristan Niewenhuis**  
Brandon Valley High School  
\$750 Scholarship



**Vander Sage**  
Brandon Valley High School  
\$750 Power Line Scholarship



**Connor Siemonsma**  
West Central High School  
\$750 Scholarship



**Zachary Uhl**  
Garretson High School  
\$750 Technical College Scholarship



**Connor Eich**  
West Central High School  
\$500 Scholarship

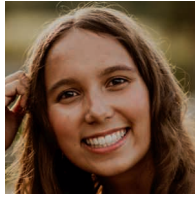


**Paige Hanson**  
Oldham-Ramona High School  
\$500 Scholarship



**Eli Haugen**

Flandreau High School  
\$500 Technical College Scholarship



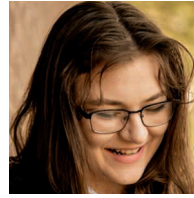
**Lisa Koopman**

Tri-Valley High School  
\$500 Scholarship



**Leah Kruse**

Adrian High School  
\$500 Scholarship



**Rachel Lindholm**

Chester Area High School  
\$500 Scholarship



**Emily Wright**

Brandon Valley High School  
\$500 Scholarship



**Jared Zerr**

Brandon Valley High School  
\$500 Scholarship



**Olivia Bork**

Hills-Beaver Creek High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Ledger Burggraff**

Tri-Valley High School  
\$250 Scholarship



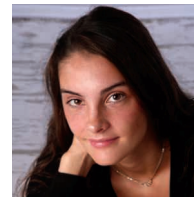
**Mya Dissing**

Tri-Valley High School  
\$250 Scholarship



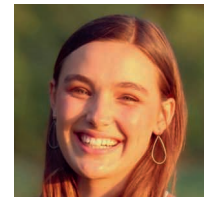
**Madison Fick**

Southwest Minnesota Christian High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Jessica Fourney**

Brookings High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Evelyn Graham**

Madison Central High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Camille Hohn**

West Central High School  
\$250 Scholarship



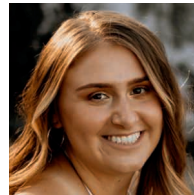
**Sydney Klein**

Dell Rapids St. Mary High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Kadance Landis**

Colman-Egan High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Alexa Larson**

West Central High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Callie Lingen**

Pipestone Area High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Brayden Metzger**

Hills-Beaver Creek High School  
\$250 Scholarship



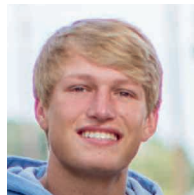
**Makenna Moss**

Southwest Minnesota Christian High School  
\$250 Scholarship



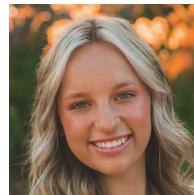
**Cassandra Richarz**

Sioux Valley High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Dylan Sherard**

West Central High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Ashlyn Strom**

Madison Central High School  
\$250 Scholarship



**Katelyn Welgraven**

Russell-Tyler-Ruthton High School  
\$250 Scholarship

A total of 112 high school seniors applied for the scholarships. Applications were judged on the basis of grades, work experience, school activities, volunteer community service and an essay.



# ELECTRIC SAFETY IN ACTION

In a controlled demonstration, Journeyman Lineman Brady Gaer uses life-size equipment on the high voltage demonstration trailer to educate students about electricity.

## Empowering the Public to Stay Safe

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sirea.coop

Electric safety is a topic that South Dakota students are excited to engage with. They often ask questions like, “What should you do if your tractor equipment touches a power line?” or “How can birds sit safely on a power line?” or even “What does it look like when something comes in contact with high voltage?”

These are some of the most popular questions Oahe Electric’s Chief Financial Officer Valerie Marso has not only been answering but also demonstrating for more than 20 years.

“They always just have tons of questions,” said Marso. “It’s always fun to hear what they come up with next.”

It’s not just for entertainment, however. Oahe Electric and its employees are committed to realizing their goal of zero accidents at home and at work. Part of preventing tragedy starts with educating the public, especially youth, on how to stay safe around electricity.

In the last year alone, Oahe Electric traveled to nine different schools and led demonstrations for more than 900 students. For Marso, verbal communication is only half the battle when it comes to educating students

about electric safety. The real impact, she said, comes from showing them.

“The visuals and the noise that the high voltage makes really lands in a way that you just can’t convey with words,” said Marso. “It can scare the students a little bit, but I think it gives them a healthy respect for electricity.”

Co-op across the state, including Oahe Electric, use three different interactive safety demonstrations to hone their message about safety: Power Town, Co-ops in the Classroom and the high voltage demonstration trailer.

One of the most popular, Power Town, is a small-scale, tabletop model of a few quaint houses attached to a small power grid. The miniature electrical system shows students how electrical current moves through

various items they may encounter in their daily lives, presented in a fun and easy-to-learn format. Line-workers, who work on the real equipment every day, lead the demonstration and teach students about personal protective equipment worn by co-op employees to complete their jobs safely.

Co-op in the Classroom is yet another powerful initiative South Dakota co-ops engage in to promote safety across the state. Working in conjunction with East River's Education and Outreach Program, co-ops meet the students where they are in the classroom to teach local youth the importance of respecting electricity through hand-on lessons that engage and excite the audience.

Lastly, the high voltage demonstration trailer is a portable unit that carries life-size equipment from events to local schools. It's a demonstration that always leaves an impression. Within a safe environment, students get to see actual equipment, such as utility poles, electrical conductors and distribution transformers, in action. Each hour-long demonstration shows what can happen when objects such as animals, trees, ladders and even fruit come into contact with power lines.

"This is equipment that our linemen work on every day, so they are comfortable showing these students how energy works," said Marso.

These demonstrations not only

entertain, but also promote a healthy and safe environment for co-op members and the public. During one of Oahe Electric's latest outreach events, Marso recalled listening to a small group of kids talk about how they sometimes sit on "the green boxes." They were referring to underground transformers. It became a teachable moment that left an impact on both the students and teachers.

"We told them to never touch them," she said. "You never know what going on in there, and it's always better to be safe than sorry. It was at least one person who took something home and actually used it. Moments like that show we are really making an impact with these students."



Oahe Electric Power Supply Specialist Steve Long teaches electric safety using Power Town, a miniature model used in safety demonstrations.



An advisory group of five members from the 2022-23 EmPOWER group will be working with the 2023-24 program.

# HS JUNIORS:

# JOIN US IN 2023-24

**QUESTION: What is EmPOWER Youth Leadership?**

**ANSWER:** The EmPOWER Youth Leadership Program helps area teens build leadership skills and develop a comprehensive understanding of cooperatives.

“EmPOWER is more than just bringing 40 high school juniors and seniors into a room together to listen to a speaker, eat great food, or play fun games. It’s a program that transforms lives – it shows them the opportunities out there that fit their strengths, it helps them dig deep into seeing who they can be as a leader, it teaches them how to build relationships with each other that will last a lifetime,” said Chinelle Christensen, Sioux Valley Energy’s Training and Education Coordinator who leads the EmPOWER program.

**QUESTION: When is it held?**

**ANSWER:** The program is offered

over four interactive sessions held on state holidays in October, November, January, and February.

**QUESTION: What happens at EmPOWER Youth Leadership?**

**ANSWER:** Each session builds upon skills learned in the previous session and extends into exploring career opportunities, networking with other students and business leaders, and learning more about the cooperative business model. Students are also eligible for scholarships and additional learning opportunities through travel to Washington, D.C. and cooperative facilities in North Dakota.

“The students who participate in the EmPOWER program not only walk away with tons of new knowledge about cooperatives or careers, but they walk away with a deeper look at who they want to be as a leader and how that can impact their future,” Christensen said.

**QUESTION: How many students participate in EmPOWER Youth Leadership?**

**ANSWER:** The program went on a hiatus in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic but kickstarted for the 2022-23 school year with 40 participants. More than 250 teens have gone through the program since 2014.

**QUESTION: When are applications due?**

**ANSWER:** Applications for the 2023-24 group are due May 12.

**QUESTION: How do I apply?**

**ANSWER:** Application materials were distributed to area schools in March and April. The application is also available at [www.siouxvalleyenergy.com](http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com)



**CO-OP CONNECTIONS® CARD CORNER**

The Co-op Connections Card is a partnership between Sioux Valley Energy and local businesses! Each member received the Co-op Connections Card free in their January magazine. You get your Co-op Connections Card simply because you're a member of Sioux Valley Energy. Each month, we'll include a listing of businesses participating in the program. Below are businesses located in several local communities:

**Colman**

Colman Building Center, Inc.

**Crooks**

Pump N Stuff

**Dell Rapids**

Dell Rapids Ace Hardware  
Dells Theatre LLC  
Pizza Ranch

**Edgerton**

Douglas J Vermeer O.D.  
M&H Hardware  
Tinklenberg Lumber & Hardware

**Egan**

Blue Jays

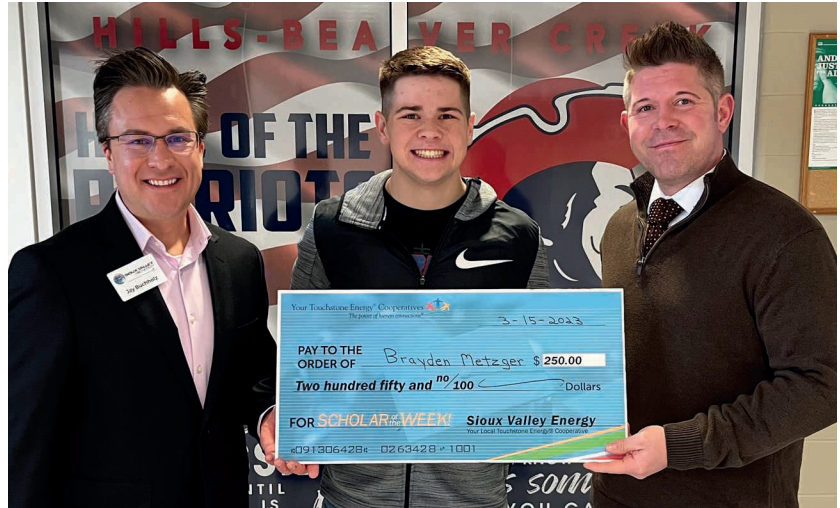
**Elkton**

The Knotty Pine Supper Club

**Garretson**

Nordstrom's EWE Pullet  
Nordstrom's Full-Service Auto Recycling  
Nordstrom's Installation & Diagnostic Center

Scan this code to access the Sioux Valley Energy website where you can download the Cooperative Connections Card app for mobile devices.



Sioux Valley Energy's Jay Buchholz and Brandon Lane present a \$250 scholarship to Brayden Metzger for being named Scholar of the Week in April. Metzger was also featured on *Dakota News Now* for his achievements.

**BRAYDEN METZGER RECOGNIZED**

**Hills-Beaver Creek Senior is Touchstone Energy® Scholar of the Week for April 9**

Brayden Metzger, a student at Hills-Beaver Creek High School, has been chosen as a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 'Scholar of the Week.' Metzger was recognized with a scholarship by Sioux Valley Energy and was featured on *Dakota News Now* for his accomplishments. He is the son of Ross and Heather Metzger of Hills, Minnesota.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, like Sioux Valley Energy, have joined together with *Dakota News Now* to recognize the achievements of high school seniors throughout the region. Recipients are highly motivated high school seniors who excel in the classroom and community. This program was founded on the four pillars of Touchstone Energy: Integrity, Accountability, Innovation, and a Commitment to Community.

"Brayden's talent is evident both through his extracurricular activities and outstanding academic record. He is a great example of the type of young leader that deserves to be honored with the Scholar of the Week award," said Tim McCarthy, Sioux Valley Energy General Manager/CEO.

Brayden is involved in football, basketball, track, knowledge bowl, math league, student council, and the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) team.



May 28, 2023  
**Back When They Bucked**  
 Days of '76 Arena  
 Deadwood, SD  
 800-344-8826

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.

**MAY 6**  
**Consignment Auction**  
 Historic Prairie Village  
 Madison, SD  
 605-256-3644

**MAY 7**  
**Opening Day**  
 Historic Prairie Village  
 Madison, SD  
 605-256-3644

**MAY 20**  
**Buggy Museum Open House**  
 10 a.m.  
 Stockholm, SD  
 605-938-4192

**MAY 20**  
**Booth Day**  
 10 a.m.  
 Booth Fish Hatchery  
 Spearfish, SD  
 605-642-7730

**MAY 20**  
**Frühlingsfest and Spring Market**  
 1 p.m.  
 Main Street Square  
 Rapid City, SD  
 605-716-7979

**MAY 25**  
**Wine Walk**  
 5 p.m.  
 Downtown Businesses  
 Aberdeen, SD  
 605-226-3441

**MAY 26-28**  
**Hidden Treasure Heritage Festival**  
 Lead, SD  
 307-259-4484

**MAY 27**  
**Back When They Bucked All-Day Rodeo**  
 9 a.m.  
 Days of '76 Event Complex  
 Deadwood, SD  
 605-717-7642

**JUNE 3**  
**Miss Prairie Village/Miss Prairie Princess Pageant**  
 Madison, SD  
 605-256-3644

**JUNE 9**  
**Northern Bull Riding Tour**  
 Madison, SD  
 605-256-3644

**JUNE 11**  
**River Honoring Community Potluck**  
 5 p.m.  
 Clay County Park River Shelter  
 Vermillion, SD  
 605-670-0540

**JUNE 17**  
**Opera House Concert Series: Divas Gone Country**  
 Madison, SD  
 605-256-3644

**JUNE 18**  
**Father's Day Fishing**  
 10 a.m.  
 Palisades State Park  
 Minnehaha County, SD  
 605-594-3824

**JUNE 24**  
**Railroad Days**  
 Madison, SD  
 605-256-3644

**JUNE 26-28**  
**Brandon's Big Celebration**  
 Celebration United Methodist/  
 Mac Carnival  
 Brandon, SD  
 605-582-7995

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