

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Old Spink New Spink

**SD restaurants roll with the changes**  
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**Dealing with drought**  
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Joyce Schermer, Karisma Tripp and Brad and Lori Johannsen are shown at Spink Family Restaurant in Elk Point

# The Cooperative Difference: Be Engaged and Make Your Vote Count



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

I know we have said it before but we will say it again...Cooperatives are special! We like to call it the 'cooperative difference' and it centers around YOU, the member. That's right—you are a member of this Cooperative and as such have a say in the governance of Sioux Valley Energy through your vote. Just last year, Sioux Valley Energy members took an active part in and approved amending the bylaws to address several issues that came to light during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, over 3,100 members took part in the bylaw amendment process through their vote.

**Your vote is also important when it comes to determining who represents you on the Cooperative Board of Directors. This is a key element of the 'cooperative difference'.**

Your vote is also important when it comes to determining who represents you on the Cooperative Board of Directors. This is a key element of the 'cooperative difference'. The end use consumer (YOU) decides who will serve on the Board. Not every electric utility allows for this which is why the cooperative model is special. The cooperative

model encourages member engagement and involvement.

An engaged membership IS important. If you think about the fundamental significance of electricity in your life today, you may start to understand why you should get involved. What would your week look like if you only had electricity two days out of seven, month after month? What if you had to pay \$2.00 per kWh? These are extreme scenarios, and they won't happen, but I bet if they did, you would know who represented you on the Board of Directors and would definitely show up for elections!

While we don't want to go to extremes to make sure members are engaged, we do want to encourage you to take part in decisions that deal with the governance of this Cooperative and will be integral in shaping the future of this business.

District 2 members will have that opportunity on September 21. Three members from that district have filed petitions to run for the open board seat. We would like to thank Ann Vostad, Chuck Miller, and Karl Seidl for their willingness to step up and serve the members of this Cooperative. You can find a bio for each one of these Sioux Valley Energy members on page 11. They will each have the chance to speak to the membership at the District 2 meeting on September 21 in Volga, SD. If you live in District 2, please consider coming to the meeting to make your vote count.

As things stand now, we are planning to hold regular District Meetings again this winter and we hope to see many of our members from all the other districts then!

**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**

**SIoux VALLEY ENERGY**

(USPS No. 497-440)

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

# CELEBRATE DRIVE ELECTRIC WEEK AT SVE

Check out electric vehicles at the ride and drive event Sioux Valley Energy is hosting at the Brandon Service Center on September 28.

The event, which includes an electric vehicle show, kids activities, and food, will be informative and fun.

## MEET EVIE

Sioux Valley Energy's Nissan Leaf electric vehicle will be on display and available for test drives. Teslas, owned by Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative and H-D Electric Cooperative, are also scheduled to be at the event.

members who own EVs. Sioux Falls area EV dealers plan to showcase locally available EVs at the event as well. Additionally, recreational vehicles like e-bikes and electric motorcycles will also be shown.

## FAMILY FUN SCHEDULED

A bounce house will be set up for the kids and food trucks will be available for the whole family. **Stop by to grab a free cookie and register to win a \$1,200 e-bike!**

## ELECTRIC VEHICLE SHOW

Members of the South Dakota Tesla Owners Club will have their cars on display as will Sioux Valley Energy

## RIDE AND DRIVE EVENT


& Electric Vehicle Show

Join us for




Take a ride or test drive **EVie**, Sioux Valley Energy's Nissan Leaf electric vehicle.

Check out electric vehicles from area EV dealers, Sioux Valley Energy members, and the South Dakota Tesla Owners Club.



**Tuesday, Sept. 28 | 4:30-7:00 p.m.**

Brandon Service Center | 108 N Heritage Rd, Brandon, SD



**SIoux VALLEY ENERGY**

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Exclusive automotive sponsor since 2012  
Nissan Leaf owners have shown their support for this industry.

# Be aware of overhead power lines on farms

Powerlines pose a major hazard for South Dakota farmers. Lines over roads and rural areas have a minimum clearance of 18 feet but just 12.5 feet over residential private property.

Before working in a field or around shops or grain bins, always take the time to note the location of your cooperative's power lines so that you can make sure to remain a safe distance from them and stay free from harm. To stay safe around overhead power lines, farm operators and workers must:

- Always use a spotter when operating large machinery near utility power lines.
- Use extra caution when raising augers or grain truck beds around co-op power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines - at all times, and in all directions.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine the proper clearance.
- Always lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it to get added clearance.
- Call your electric cooperative immediately if a power line is sagging or is

hanging too low.

- If contact is made with a power line, remember that it is almost always safest to stay on the equipment. Make sure to warn others to stay away and call the cooperative immediately.

- The only reason to decide to make an exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, then remember to jump off the equipment with both of your feet together, avoiding touching the ground and vehicle at the same time.

Then, still keeping your feet together, "bunny hop" away from the vehicle until you reach a safe distance.

If you see someone else's equipment that has come in contact with a power line in your area, the best help you can give will be from a safe distance.

Make sure to yell out to, signal or call the equipment operator to make sure he or she remains in the vehicle, and notify your local cooperative immediately.

Please remember to follow these tips to avoid accidents during the harvest season.

## TIPS FOR A SAFE HARVEST



The Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center offers this useful checklist for farm safety called Stop-Think-Act. Take these steps to minimize injury risks during harvest season.

### Stop

- What could go wrong?
- How bad could it be?
- Has anything changed?

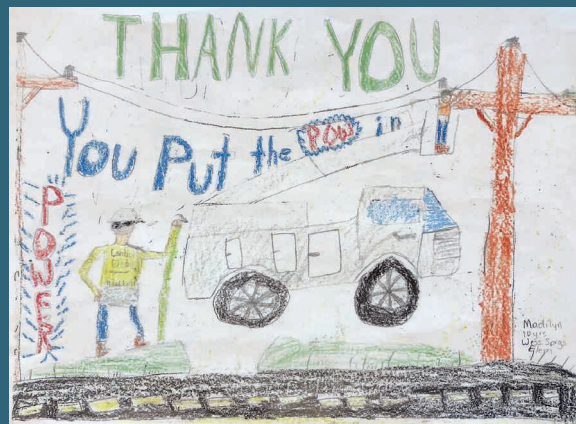
### Think

- Do I clearly understand the task?
- Am I physically and mentally ready?

- Do I have the right equipment and tools for the job?

### Act

- Make it safe.
- Use the right tools.
- Follow proper procedures.
- Reduce risks.
- Stop the task if it cannot be done safely.



## You put the 'pow' in power!

### Madilyn Gaikowski

Madilyn sends out a special note of appreciation for line workers across the state of South Dakota. She is the daughter of Gene and Loree Gaikowski. Gene serves as the Wessington Springs line foreman at Central Electric in Mitchell.

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.

# CROCKPOT CRAVINGS

## CROCKPOT APPLE BUTTER

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of sugar (more or less depending on sweetness of apples)
- 4 tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. cloves
- ¼ tsp. salt

**METHOD**

Fill a 5 quart crockpot full of chopped apples (quartered or smaller), no need to peel, but do remove seeds. Tart apples are best. Top with the ingredients above. Lid won't fit at first but settles down as apples cook. Begin cooking on high and when bubbling, put heat on low and cook all night, or until thick and dark color. Stir occasionally. If need be, blend a few seconds to soften peels. Pour into jars and seal.

**Cherie Leibel, Timber Lake**

## SLOW COOKER BEEF STEW

Ingredients:

- 3 cups water
- 1 package McCormick® Classic Beef Stew Seasoning Mix Packet
- 2 lbs beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 cups potato chunks
- 1 1/4 cups carrot chunks
- 1 medium onion, cut into thin wedges
- 1/2 cup sliced celery

**METHOD**

Mix vegetables, water and Beef Stew Seasoning Mix in slow cooker. Coat beef with flour. Stir into ingredients in slow cooker. Cover. Cook 8 hours on low or 5 hours on high until beef is tender.

[mccormick.com](http://mccormick.com)

## CROCKPOT BUTTERNUT SQUASH WITH APPLES

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ to 2 lbs. butternut squash, peeled and chopped (about 5 cups)
- 2 to 3 tart apples, chopped (about 2 cups)
- ¼ c. dried cherries or cranberries
- 1 ½ tsp. grated fresh ginger
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. nutmeg
- ½ c. apple cider
- ¼ tsp. salt

**METHOD**

Combine all ingredients in your slow cooker and stir together. Cover and cook on low 3-4 hours or until squash is tender, then turn to warm until serving. Can also be baked in conventional oven at 325 degrees until fork tender. Sweet potatoes can be used instead of butternut squash if desired.

**Linda Sherry, Sioux Falls**

**Please send your favorite dairy recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.**

# Home Charging Options for EVs



**Sheila Gross**  
Energy Services  
Specialist

Electric vehicle (EV) owners have multiple options for charging their vehicle at home. There are three common EV charging levels: Level One, Level Two and DC Fast Charge.

## LEVEL ONE CHARGING

Level One is the most basic charging level. If you choose this option, your EV will typically include an adapter that plugs into a typical 120-volt outlet. This is the easiest and cheapest charging solution, but it will take much longer to charge your EV.

## LEVEL TWO CHARGING

Level Two is about three to five times faster than Level One, but this level of charging often requires separate purchases and installation. The EV is plugged into a 240-volt outlet which is used for larger appliances like a clothes dryer. Most homes do not include a 240-volt outlet in garages, so the outlet must be installed by a licensed professional. You typically see Level Two charging stations at shopping malls, office buildings and multi-family community spaces.

## DC FAST CHARGING

DC Fast Charge stations are typically seen

near high-traffic public areas, like gas stations, rather than in homes. This is the fastest charging level, with the ability to charge an EV at 80 percent in under 30 minutes. As EVs continue to become more popular, you can expect to see more DC Fast Charge stations throughout South Dakota and Minnesota.

If you're charging an EV at home, please contact us to learn about our available programs. EV charging creates additional energy demand. The time of day you charge your EV can have an impact on the grid and your monthly energy costs. By letting us know about your EV charging levels, we can help ensure your home is prepared for the additional energy consumption, and you can take advantage of our off-peak charging rates and rebate programs.

## RIDE AND DRIVE EVENT SEPT. 28

Join us Sept. 28 for our National Drive Electric Week Ride and Drive Event at the Brandon Service Center. Learn more on Page 3.

Contact Sheila Gross at [sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com](mailto:sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com) to learn more.



### WIN AN E-BIKE!

For our September Energy Makeover Contest, you can register to win this \$1,200 e-bike!

# REGISTER TO WIN

Register to win an e-bike! You can register online at [www.sioxvalleyenergy.com](http://www.sioxvalleyenergy.com) or by filling out the form below. Attend the National Drive Electric Week Ride and Drive Event on Sept. 28 for an additional registration opportunity. Register by Sept. 28 for your chance to win!

**PLEASE REGISTER ME TO WIN!** I would also like to be contacted about the topics below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Account #: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

### I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON:

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



Dozens of high school students from across South Dakota took part in a youth leadership experience sponsored by South Dakota electric cooperatives. As part of the event, attendees learned about electric power production (pictured above).

# CONNECT CON

## SVE youth representatives attend South Dakota Electric Co-op Youth Gathering

April Hof and Bridgette Baumberger, both of Dell Rapids, were among 26 high school students from across the state to participate in Connect Con: A Youth Leadership Experience July 26-29.

The event was sponsored by Sioux Valley Energy as part of the Cooperative’s ongoing commitment to education and youth development.

The conference agenda was packed with hands-on activities, social interaction and informational presentations on electrical power production, energy conservation, renewable sources of power and much more.

Based at Black Hills State

University, the students received a tour of the Spearfish Hydro Plant as well as Butte Electric Cooperative where the young leaders received an electric safety demonstration, learned about various safety equipment typically used by electric utility linemen and were lifted nearly 50 feet into the air in a hydraulic bucket.

Jocelyn Romey of the South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre organized the trip and noted that conference attendees learned more about the cooperative business model and how electric cooperatives provide safe, reliable, affordable power to more than 125,000 homes and businesses across the state.

“The electric power industry is changing rapidly with new technology being introduced on a regular basis and a greater emphasis on renewable resources such as wind and solar,” Romey said. “The students were very attentive during our presentations because they know that one day they will be involved in the process as ratepayers and as voters.”

SVE youth attendee and student at Dell Rapids St. Mary’s, April Hof said it was a great experience. “I enjoyed meeting new people and being able to call them friends by the end of the week.”

Bridgette Baumberger, student at Colman-Egan, also represented Sioux Valley Energy. She agreed with Hof’s assessment of the event.

“I thought the speakers were very informative and enjoyed making new friends. The leadership skills we were taught will be beneficial for the end of high school and getting ready to go into the work force.” Baumberger said. “It was also interesting to learn about how cooperatives work and discover career opportunities within them.”

The students had the chance to visit with Congressman Dusty Johnson via teleconference and heard from motivational speaker Scyller Borglum. Dr. Sid Suryanarayanan, head of the South Dakota State University Department of Electrical Engineering, outlined the many career paths available in the electrical power industry, while Malcom Chapman delivered a presentation on leadership and led a hands-on team-building exercise. Sioux Valley Energy’s Chinelle Christensen instructed the students on the structure and purpose of member-owned electric cooperative organizations.

# RISING FROM THE ASHES



Rhonda Otten, along with her husband and three sons, has worked to keep Spink Family Restaurant open for business.  
 Photos by Billy Gibson

## Spink restaurant emerges strong from hardships brought by fire and pandemic

**Billy Gibson**  
 billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Old Spink. New Spink.  
 That's how Rhonda Otten variously refers to her restaurant, depending on whether she's alluding to the Spink Café that burned down in 2019 or the Spink Family restaurant that was throttled by the pandemic but is thriving today.

For more than 20 years, the Spink Café was a big draw in the township located in Union County. The eatery was known for its Friday night fish fries during Lent, Sunday dinners and its famous Spinkburger. The 80-year-old structure had recently been re-decorated with a 50s theme, featuring old LPs, vinyl album covers on the wall and pictures of Elvis Presley.

But life for Otten and her husband Sam changed in November of 2019 when the area's most

popular attraction was totally consumed by fire.

The way the Ottens saw it, there was no option but to rebuild. But the planned resurrection of the business wouldn't occur in the confines of Spink. The new iteration, renamed Spink Family Restaurant, would be located in the old American Legion hall in downtown Elk Point.

By all accounts, the "new Spink" wasn't so easy to bring forth from the ashes. Two weeks after working hard to get the new facility ready for business in Elk Point, the pandemic hit and threatened to dash the Ottens' hopes for good.

"The fire was in November, we made the decision to keep going in December, and we re-opened in March. We were open for two weeks when the pandemic hit, Rhonda said. "Those two weeks were very, very busy. It was a madhouse in

here. We had a lot more space and we were finally getting in the groove."

Facing the same problems as just about every restaurant owner in the state and nation, the Ottens were forced to hit the pause button and try to figure out the next step to take. They closed for a month, regrouped, and then returned to offer carry-out service only.

Members of the community rallied to support the restaurant, including employees at Union County Electric located just two blocks away.

According to Union County Electric General Manager Matt Klein, the cooperative always strives to support other local businesses that help the community thrive.

"At lunchtime you're likely to see some of our guys eating there," Klein said. "When they had carry-out, we ordered food for meetings and just did what we could to help — just like we do with other members of the community. We help whenever and wherever we can."





Server Karisma Tripp tends to another satisfied customer at Spink Family Restaurant in Elk Point.

Rhonda said it was inspiring to see the town pull together to face the impact of the pandemic, and also to help the business survive after the back-to-back calamities.



Cody Olson, center, enjoys lunch with his co-workers from Valley Ag Supply.

“The community really supported us and we’re very grateful for that,” she said. “But we’ve seen this many times before; people watching out for each other and helping when there’s a need. That’s what really pushed us through.”

One regular patron who is happy to see the new Spink succeeding is Joyce Schermer. She occupied a table in the restaurant one recent lunch hour along with her son Brad Johannsen and his wife Lori. The Johannsens are regular visitors to the

area from Sedona, Ariz., and always make a point to stop at Spink, preferring the hot beef sandwich and the prime rib sandwich.

“It’s always good every time you come,” said Schermer, a resident of Akron who opted for her go-to French Dip. “You’re never disappointed in the food or the service. It’s wonderful.”

Also enjoying a lunchtime meal were several employees of Valley Ag Supply. The company is located a half mile from the old Spink building that was destroyed by fire.

“We used to go there all the time and we were disappointed when it burned down. You could see our fertilizer plant from there,” said Cody Olson while noshing on the French Dip. “Now there’s no place to go. So, we just drive into town because it’s so good. It’s great that they came back and are still operating.”

As for “old Spink,” the Ottens are still trying to figure out what to do with the heap left in the wake of the conflagration. The building had an upstairs apartment where several members of the family lived at



various times through the years.

“It’s going to have to be torn down eventually, but we just don’t want to let it go,” Rhonda said. “There are so many memories attached to that place; both of our parents were such a big part of it.”

She emphasized that while the restaurant is in a new location, the food is the same as before. The Ottens, who have always used family recipes, depend on all three of their sons – ages 17 through 23 – to handle the cooking to maintain consistency on a daily basis.

“The secret to our success is that the five of us do all the cooking here. We use time-proven family recipes that have been popular for decades,” Rhonda said.

# DISTRICT 2 ELECTION

## Sioux Valley Energy members from District 2 are invited to attend an election meeting on September 21 in Volga

Members of Sioux Valley Energy District 2 will gather Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021, at the Sioux Valley School in Volga to elect a director from the district.

Three members from District 2 submitted petitions to run for the vacant Board seat. Candidates include Chuck Miller of Arlington, Karl Seidl of Volga and Ann Vostad of Volga. Candidate bios can be found on Page 11.

A complimentary meal (broasted chicken, cheesy hashbrowns, green

beans and a cookie) will take place prior to the meeting from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The election meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Each candidate will have the opportunity to speak to the members in attendance prior to the vote. Once members vote, the Credential Committee will tally the votes and the winner will be announced. Sioux Valley Energy will follow all applicable local, state, and federal COVID-19 mandates that are in place at the time the meeting is held. Currently,

District 2  
Election Meeting  
**Sept. 21**  
5:30 - 7:00 p.m. – Meal  
7:00 p.m. – Election  
Sioux Valley School  
Volga, S.D.

masks are optional and social distancing along with regular hand washing is encouraged. If you feel sick or have been in close contact with someone that has been diagnosed with COVID-19 recently, please do not attend the meeting.



Time is a precious commodity, especially during harvest. However, cutting safety corners while harvesting around power lines can be deadly. Taking a moment to be prepared can help prevent catastrophic accidents. Knowing what to do if an accident does occur can be the difference between life and death.

Contact your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative or visit [YourCoopPower.com](http://YourCoopPower.com) to find safety tips and make a plan.



## MEET THE DISTRICT 2 BOARD CANDIDATES



**Chuck Miller**  
Arlington, S.D.

We live on the farm I grew up on eight miles west of Volga on Highway 14.

I graduated from Arlington High School and Lake Area Tech College with a degree in Ag Business.

I have worked 40 years in retail agriculture, mostly in the cooperative system. I started my career driving Terragators and finished my last decade as a General Manager with CHS in Brandon, S.D. This CHS cooperative is a \$450 million

sales business unit with 200+ employees in more than 20 locations. Most of my career was in the Garretson/Brandon area. Since I retired from full time employment with CHS INC in 2017, I have been filling roles as an interim general manager in several locations for CHS.

I have the time, energy, and skills to continue to contribute

to the cooperative system and look forward to learning more about the energy business and applying my business experience to join with the Board of Directors and management to make the best decisions for the members. Having spent over 30 years in cooperative system board of director meetings, I understand the process that is necessary to be successful. I will bring a positive attitude, the ability to communicate with people, and the willingness to work to make the best decision for all.

I served several terms as a director on the South Dakota Ag Business Association in Pierre and served one term as President of the Association. I also served on numerous industry committees and advisory boards over the years including Lake Area College, Ag Expo, and CHS.

My wife, Pam, and I have two sons and four grandsons. We have been customers of Sioux Valley Energy most of our lives, and we are looking forward to giving back to our communities.



**Karl Seidl**  
Volga, S.D.

I have worked as an Electrical Design Engineer at Daktronics since graduating from SDSU in 2011.

I would like to be a Sioux Valley Energy Director because I would like to be more involved in my community and learn more about the electric utilities industry. I also would like to be a part of keeping Sioux Valley Energy an excellent asset to the community and making it even better in the future.

The skills that I would bring to the Board of Directors are my background in electrical design.

Also, I am a detail oriented person and I enjoy learning new things and helping others. In addition, I have in the past and currently am a member of the leadership team for my church.

I have lived in the District 2 area for over 20 years and love this area. I also enjoy traveling and seeing new places. My hobbies include volunteering, fixing vehicles, and maintaining my acreage.



**Ann Vostad**  
Volga, S.D.

My husband, Kevin, and I live on a farm southwest of Volga and farm about 150 acres of soybeans north and west of there. We have three grown children and nine grandchildren. As the children were growing, we had a small dairy operation that allowed me to be at home with the kids while Kevin was and continues to work at Twin City Fan in Brookings. In addition, I have milked cows and fed calves for Marv and Joy Post for 27 years and will

be starting my 26th year of substitute teaching at Sioux Valley Schools in Volga.

I have learned some about the workings of Sioux Valley Energy while serving on the Operation Round Up® Board and am interested in learning more. The rural electric cooperative system has made such an impact on development of rural America and as we work to balance the rural customer load and the municipalities there are many critical decisions to be made.

I have had the opportunity to serve in several leadership

roles which I feel will benefit me as a Sioux Valley Energy Director. I was an active member of both the Sioux Valley Booster Club and Music Masters when the kids were in school, serving as president of the Booster Club and treasurer of Music Masters where I was responsible for maintaining over 100 individual student balances. Another role with Music Masters was helping to coordinate the bi-annual trip for the high school band and choir. Having been an active 4-H leader for 28 years has also placed me in several roles at the county level, including president, vice president and currently secretary of the Leader's Association. I also served as the president of the State Leaders Association. Listening to the opinions of others and being willing to learn from them is a skill that I feel is important as a board member. Being involved in a wide variety of activities has helped me develop this skill as well as improving my organizational skills. As the sports writer for the Volga Tribune I have had to learn to work with my different communication styles and think about how the information I am presenting will be viewed by others.

# LEARNING FROM ADVERSITY



The Dakota Lakes Research Farm produces information helpful to farmers and ranchers dealing with drought. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

## SDSU agriculture researcher Dwayne Beck looks for better ways to gain higher yields through crop rotations and other techniques

**Billy Gibson**

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

The drought conditions that gripped the state through the summer months caused difficulty for farmers and ranchers. The drought in 2012 also made it difficult to grow and harvest a productive crop.

But it's the drought that occurred in 1988 that Dwayne Beck remembers most. Beck, 70, is a researcher with SDSU who runs the Dakota Lakes research farm near Canning.

According to the National Integrated Drought Information System, as of June 23 more than 97 percent of South Dakota and all of Minnesota were categorized as "abnormally dry."

As someone who considers himself a seasoned investigator and problem solver, Beck looks at the current drought conditions as an

opportunity to learn.

So, what exactly did the farming and ranching community learn in 1988 when adverse weather conditions caused an estimated \$60 billion in agricultural damage across the U.S.?

"We learned not to do tillage," Beck responds without hesitation. "This drought is about the worse I've seen since 1988, and we learned then that in this part of the country if you till, you're screwed. No-till gives you a chance to have a decent crop and run a viable farming operation."

And the key to succeeding without tilling is proper crop rotation. That's what keeps Beck and other researchers busy.

On a recent afternoon, Melanie Caffe and her assistant Nick Paul were operating a small combine to gather their test crops laid out in strips measuring five feet wide by 20

feet long. Caffe, a native of France, is an ag professor at SDSU, while Paul is a local farmer and research technician.

The two-member team moved from section to section, cleaning out the collection bin as they went to keep the samples from being contaminated and corrupting the research data. The samples were



Dwayne Beck runs the Dakota Farms research facility near Canning.



Melanie Caffe and Nick Paul collect samples from a field at the Dakota Farms Research Station near Canning.

bagged and taken into the lab where Caffe and Paul planned to perform fertility experiments with the goal of developing varieties with higher yield, higher quality and stronger drought resistance.

Much of the research centers around maximizing yields through effective crop rotations. Beck has spent much of his career considering the ways farming was conducted 100 or more years ago and how it can be improved.

“The Natives grew crops before the Spaniards came and brought horses. They were all no-tillers because they didn’t have cows and horses to pull the plows. They grew 13 different kinds of corn, beans, squash and sunflowers. They were very successful. The settlers never asked anyone how to grow crops here, they just got out their plow and started turning over the soil.”

Beck has seen the wonders of crop rotation in his research. Some of his fields are rotated five ways.

“Good rotations can produce a lack of disturbance in places where you don’t have a lot of water. Our research shows 99 percent of resistance issues could be solved with better crop rotations. There are fields where we haven’t used insecticides for 18 years.”

Beck said his methods aren’t always adopted by industry but he continues to gather data and push out the information obtained through research.

“The nice about being a research guy is you always have more things to learn,” he said. “The more you research, the more you don’t know, but we’re always looking for answers.”

## HOPS GROWERS NAVIGATING THEIR WAY THROUGH CHANGING INDUSTRY

**Billy Gibson**

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

In many ways, Ryan Heine is like the average South Dakota farmer. He frets about the weather, plans for the future, worries about finances, watches the markets and is constantly trying to find a buyer for the crop he hopes will make.

But his crop is unlike most of the others that emerge from the South Dakota soil. Heine is owner of 6th Meridian Hop Farm near Yankton. His is one of six such farms left in the state growing hops for brewers to transform into craft beer.

Heine also sees his work as different compared to most farmers – he relies on his nose a lot.

“There’s a lot of experimenting with different aromas.

There are so many flavor profiles and varieties of hops that are used in creating craft beer,” he said. “There’s a vast palette of different aromas, and the market will dictate what consumers prefer.”

Ryan and his wife Michelle launched their hop operation in 2014, leaving Omaha and returning to the small family farm near Yankton in pursuit of a more grounded lifestyle for their five children.

“We wanted to get out of the city and back to our farming roots,” said Ryan, who works remotely as an electrical engineer for a company out of Minneapolis.

Ryan’s interest in growing the essential elements of craft beer began when he was a student at Parks College in St. Louis, Mo. He went out with his friends and found most of what was offered at bars, pubs and restaurants was bland and uninspiring. He knew he liked the flavor of beer and he knew he liked the simplicity of the farming lifestyle.

“So I started doing some home brewing and found that it was a fun hobby to pursue. Now we have one of the biggest operations in the state,” he said.

Heine’s time on the farm is spent fussing over flavor and aroma profiles, acid levels, yeast growth, oil content, insect invasions, disease infections and more. He and Michelle do all the growing, harvesting, processing, drying, pulverizing, preserving, pressing and packaging.

He finds markets by visiting with brewers, forging relationships across the region and even keeping in touch with his college buddies.

“There are some college roommates I’ve kept in touch with who are brewers and we’re always talking about how to improve our products,” he said. “Hops growers are down to just a handful in the state, but for those who have survived, I think the outlook is good.”





# DREAM BUILDERS

## Operation Round Up® grant funds Community Connections build for Sleep In Heavenly Peace organization

**Brenda Kleinjan**  
Communications Specialist

Sawdust hung in the air while sanders hummed in the background as Sioux Valley Energy volunteers built 20 beds for children through the Sleep In Heavenly Peace (SHP) organization on a July Saturday morning.

The build combined two of the co-op's community programs – Community Connections and Operation Round Up® – to make a difference locally.

The Community Connections program connects employees

with area organizations that need volunteers. Operation Round Up is a program of the Co-op's membership and employees that awards grants throughout the year. Operation Round Up recently provided a \$5,000 grant to Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Sixteen volunteers built the beds while the ORU monies purchased the necessary supplies for the build.

### SERVING A NEED

“When all is said and done today, these beds will be ready to deliver to kids,” said Dave Miller, Chapter President of the SHP-Brookings

Chapter. “The need is very real.”

Since the chapter's 2018 start, more than 1,100 beds have been donated in the area.

The beds built by the SVE employees on July 24 were delivered to children the following week. Each child gets a bed including a mattress, sheets and quilt as well as a stuffed animal and a book.

To learn more, go to [SHP.org](http://SHP.org).

### POOLING YOUR PENNIES

Sioux Valley Energy members contribute to ORU by having their electric bill rounded up to the next highest dollar and that money is collected for Operation Round Up. Many Sioux Valley Energy employees also help by deducting a small amount from their paychecks. Learn more about Sioux Valley Energy's Operation Round Up program at <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/operation-roundup>.

The next application deadline for Operation Round Up is Nov. 20.



**Above:** SVE's Sarina Hanson and her mom pose for a photo while sanding.



**Right:** SVE Director Dave Daniel pauses to acknowledge the camera.



**Far right:** SVE's Reggie Gassman and Debra Biever work on sanding. **Opposite Page:** Sioux Valley Energy volunteers take a photo before getting to work building beds.



**Above:** SVE General Manager Tim McCarthy drills holes as part of the assembly process. **Left:** SVE's Dana Foster sands 1x4s.

**Above Left:** SVE's Sheila Gross and Operation Round Up Board member Ann Vostad assemble a frame. **Above right:** SVE's Chinelle Christensen and Lori George sand bed rails.

## REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Your E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

South Dakota State Fair  
September 2-6, 2021



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.

**AUGUST 26-29**  
**58th Annual Steam Threshing Jamboree**  
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,  
605-256-3644

**AUGUST 27-28**  
**Sizzlin' Summer Nights**  
Main Street, Aberdeen, SD,  
605-226-3441

**AUGUST 28**  
**McCrossan Boys Ranch Xtreme Event Rodeo**  
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus,  
Sioux Falls SD, 605-339-1203

**AUGUST 27-29**  
**Fall River Hot Air Balloon Festival**  
Hot Springs Municipal Airport,  
Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140

**SEPTEMBER 2, 30**  
**Downtown Hartford Market**  
Main Avenue, Hartford, SD,  
605-999-6660

**SEPTEMBER 2**  
**Closing Day**  
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,  
605-256-3644

**SEPTEMBER 2-6**  
**South Dakota State Fair**  
State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,  
605-353-7340

**SEPTEMBER 9-12**  
**SD State Senior Games**  
Watertown, SD, Contact  
Howard at 605-491-0635 for  
more information

**SEPTEMBER 11**  
**Bean Bag Tournament Benefit Event for the Brandon Valley Hockey Association**  
Bottoms Up, Corson, SD, email  
Sarah.rasmussen@yahoo.com  
for details

**SEPTEMBER 11-12**  
**Fall Harvest Festival**  
Delmont, SD, 605-928-3792

**SEPTEMBER 12**  
**Annual Antique Car & Tractor Parade**  
Main Street, Farmer, SD,  
605-239-4498

**SEPTEMBER 18**  
**Health Connect Fair**  
Sanford Pentagon, Sioux Falls,  
SD, 888-761-5437

**SEPTEMBER 18-19**  
**Northeast South Dakota Celtic Faire and Games**  
37925 Youth Camp Road,  
Aberdeen, SD, 605-380-5828

**SEPTEMBER 24-25**  
**Holiday Arts Fall Show**  
Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD,  
605-359-2049

**SEPTEMBER 25**  
**Harvest Festival Supper**  
West Nidaros Lutheran  
Church, Crooks, SD,  
605-212-5730

**SEPTEMBER 25-26**  
**Menno Pioneer Power Show**  
Menno, SD, contact Daniel at  
mennopowershow@yahoo.com  
for more details

**OCTOBER 2**  
**Pumpkin Train**  
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,  
605-256-3644

**OCTOBER 9-10**  
**Sioux Falls Quilters' Guild Bi-annual Quilt Show: Fall in Love with Quilting**  
Sioux Falls Convention Center,  
Sioux Falls, SD, for more info  
visit [siouxfallsquiltersguild.com](http://siouxfallsquiltersguild.com)  
or send an email to  
sfqg2021show@gmail.com

**OCTOBER 23**  
**Hartford Women of Today Craft Fair**  
West Central School, Hartford,  
SD, 605-359-2049

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