



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Clarence Kooistra of VFW Post 628 in Sioux Falls salutes military veterans interred at the South Dakota State Cemetery

Honoring our Veterans

A new resting place for fallen soldiers
Pages 8-9

First responders in rural South Dakota
Page 12

Balance and Planning are Key; EVs and Biofuels



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/
Chief Executive
Officer

Sioux Valley Energy hosted its first-ever 'Ride and Drive' Electric Vehicle (EV) event in Brandon last month and we estimate that more than 250 people attended. Public interest in EVs has been growing in recent years and because Sioux Valley Energy is member-focused, we have responded with a dedicated Beneficial Electrification department, various programs, and educational materials for our members who are interested in EVs and other electric technologies.

"In our view there is space for both technologies and we encourage members to consider their driving habits and their individual lifestyles when choosing a vehicle."

EVs are a great option for people who are looking to reduce their fuel and maintenance costs while being environmentally friendly. There are many benefits to driving EVs, but there are also advantages to using biofuels such as ethanol for gas-powered vehicles because of availability, eco-friendly attributes, and the fact that it's grown and produced right here in the Northern Plains. In our view, there is space for both technologies and we encourage members to consider their driving habits and their individual lifestyles when choosing a vehicle.

We are seeing an increasing number of vehicle manufacturers adding EVs to their

offerings. In fact, some have indicated that within 10 years they will only be selling electric vehicles. Whether or not that will come to fruition is yet to be seen but regardless, there will be a transition time. Two important steps before there is wide scale adoption of EVs will be the development of larger capacity batteries (so you can drive farther on them) and public charging infrastructure (which will make it easier to use your EV on a trip). With this in mind and as an electric service provider of biofuels facilities, we anticipate and are planning for the continued demand for biofuels well into the future.

As with so many things in life, balance and planning are key. A common question we get is whether the electric system can handle all the EVs that are currently being charged and those that are planned for in the future. Most of the charging for an EV is done at home during the overnight hours, which is exactly when we want people to charge their EVs because there is less demand on the system. We actually have rates set up to incentivize members to charge their vehicles overnight instead of during the day. Because the cost of electricity is much less during those overnight hours, members pay nearly half of the normal kWh rate to charge their EV, saving them a considerable amount of money. We are actively working on more innovative rates and programs to solve potential issues like this one while always keeping our members' best interests in mind.

In closing, I want to switch gears and congratulate Ann Vostad from Volga on being elected to the Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors representing District 2. You can find that story on Page 3. I also want to thank both of our other candidates—Chuck Miller and Karl Seidl.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

(USPS No. 497-440)

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Sioux Valley Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

DISTRICT 2 VOTERS ELECT VOSTAD

Volga woman emerges from field of three for vacant Board seat

Ann Vostad of rural Volga will represent District 2 on the Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors. She was elected at a special district meeting held Sept. 21 in Volga, S.D. Vostad, Chuck Miller of Arlington and Karl Seidl of Volga ran for the seat that was vacated when director Al Kooima died in April.



Ann Vostad
Volga, S.D.

Vostad farms with her husband, Kevin, near Volga. She also milks cows and feeds calves for a neighboring dairy and is a substitute teacher. She has been very active in 4-H. The Vostads have three grown children and nine grandchildren.

Vostad served on the Sioux Valley Energy Operation Round Up Board for seven years.

The initial term for the District 2 Director position will run from September 2021 to June 2025 (approximately three years and nine months). The extended term will ensure consistent staggering of board terms for all districts which the bylaws allow.



Board President, Gary Fish, and newly elected District 2 Director, Ann Vostad, smile for the camera. Vostad was elected at a September meeting held in Volga.

A house full of Thanksgiving safety

Nearly every household uses extra electricity during the holidays - for cooking, decorating and heating. Take extra care to use electricity safely and to ask family members and house-guests to do the same. Here are some tips:

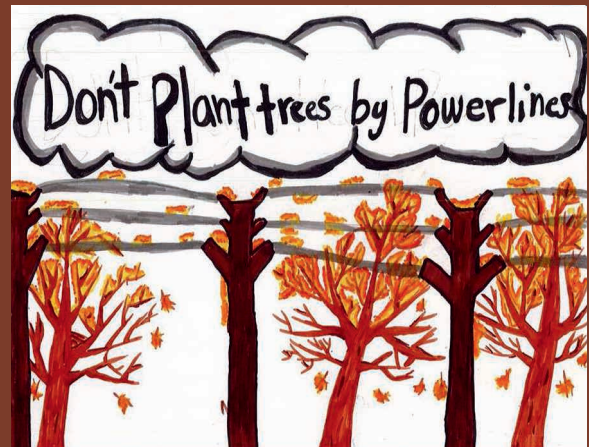
- Stay in the kitchen when broiling or doing any stovetop cooking.
- Keep children well away from cooking appliances while the appliances are in use.
- Keep towels, potholders and curtains away from hot surfaces in your kitchen.
- One of the riskiest holiday behaviors is overloading your electrical outlets. You will overload your wall outlets if you string strand after strand of holiday lights together and plug them into an extension cord that you plug into an outlet.
- Plugging multiple strands of cords into a power strip does not add any juice to the electrical circuit that powers the outlet you plug the strip into.
- Check decorative lights for damaged cords, plugs and sockets. Replace anything that's frayed, cracked or broken. Buy cords that are certified by UL; look for the UL symbol on the package.
- Don't run extension cords under rugs, carpets or baseboards, or anywhere they can be a tripping hazard.
- Only use decorations and cords outdoors that are properly rated for outdoor use.
- When you put up outdoor decorations, do not string lights in trees near power lines. Fasten outdoor lights carefully and securely with clips, never nails or tacks.
- Keep electric lights away from decorative metal trees.
- Keep all light strings and other decorations away from pets so they don't get tangled in them or chew the wires.
- Keep all decorations - and everything else - at least three feet away from heat sources such as fireplaces and space heaters.
- Always turn off your decorations when you leave home and when you're sleeping.
- Make sure smoke detectors are present and working properly.
- Use space heaters properly and safely. Keep them out of high-traffic areas and at least three feet from anything that can burn.
- Do not leave a space heater running unattended. Turn off space heaters and unplug them when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Never leave an open flame, including your fireplace or a candle, unattended.

GOVERNOR'S STUDENT ART COMPETITION



The Governor's Office and the South Dakota Arts Council invite students to participate in the Governor's Student Art Competition.

Students in K-12 will compete in four age divisions. Winning entries will be exhibited in the State Capitol from January through September 2022. Submission deadline is Nov. 12, 2021. All artwork is to be submitted electronically as a high-resolution jpeg image, along with the Artwork Submission Form and the Authorization Release Form. Competition guidelines, instructions and all necessary forms are accessible at https://artscouncil.sd.gov/events/student_art_Main.aspx. Contact Rebecca.cruse@state.sd.us or call 605-773-3301 for details.



Don't plant trees by power lines

Jazzlyn Magera

Jazzlyn shares good advice to avoid planting trees near power lines. Jazzlyn attends Brandon Elementary School and is the daughter of Rachel Schettler. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy.

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.

SLOW COOKING BRINGS OUT FLAVORS OF FALL

BABY BACK RIBS

Ingredients:

2-1/2 lbs. pork baby back ribs, cut into eight pieces
 5 cups water
 1 med. onion, sliced
 2 celery ribs, cut in half
 2 tsps. minced garlic, divided
 1 tsp. whole peppercorns
 1/2 cup barbecue sauce
 1/4 cup plum sauce (Asian section of grocery store)
 Dash of hot pepper sauce

METHOD

Place ribs in a 5-qt. slow cooker. Add water, onion, celery, 1 tsp. garlic and peppercorns. Cover and cook on low for six hours or until meat is tender. In a small saucepan, combine the barbecue sauce, plum sauce, hot pepper sauce and remaining garlic. Cook and stir over medium heat for five minutes or until heated through. Remove ribs. Discard cooking juices and vegetables. Coat grill rack with nonstick cooking spray before starting grill. Brush ribs with sauce. Grill, uncovered, over medium low heat for 8-10 minutes or until browned, turning occasionally and brushing with remaining sauce. Can also be finished in the oven using the broil setting.
Melissa Roerig, Sioux Falls

CHILI BEEF AND PASTA

Ingredients:

2 lbs. lean ground beef
 2 packages McCormick® Chili Seasoning Mix
 1 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes
 2 cans (8 oz. each) tomato sauce
 1 cup coarsely chopped bell pepper
 1 cup frozen or canned whole kernel corn
 1 cup elbow macaroni, cooked and drained (about 2.25 cups)
 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

METHOD

Cook ground beef in large skillet on medium-high heat until no longer pink; drain. Place in slow cooker. Stir in Seasoning Mix, tomatoes, tomato sauce, bell pepper and corn until well blended. Cover. Cook six hours on low or three hours on high. Stir in cheese and cooked macaroni during the last 10 minutes of cooking.
mccormick.com

WHITE PHEASANT CHILI

Ingredients:

3 boneless pheasants cooked and shredded
 1 large onion chopped
 4 Tbsps. butter
 1/4 cup flour
 3/4 cup chicken broth
 2 cups half and half
 2 cans Navy beans
 1 tsp. Tabasco sauce
 1-1/2 tsp. chili powder
 1 tsp. cumin
 1/2 tsp. salt
 1/2 tsp. pepper
 1-2 jalapeno peppers
 1-1/2 cups Monterrey jack cheese
 1/2 cup sour cream

METHOD

Cook and shred pheasant. Set aside. Cook onion with 2 Tbsps. butter until soft, add flour and remaining butter, whisking constantly. Add broth and half and half while whisking. Bring to boil for 5 minutes, or until onions are tender. Put in crockpot and add remaining ingredients. Put on high heat for one hour then reduce to low heat for one to two hours.

Alice DeHaai, Keystone

Please send your favorite holiday dessert 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.

DON'T LET YOUR WATER HEATER DRAIN YOUR BILL



Sheila Gross
Energy Services
Specialist

Water heating ranks in the top six energy users in U.S. homes. It accounts for about 13 percent of your energy bill based on the national average.

Here are a few ways you can save energy and reduce your water heating costs.

- Turn down your water heater to 120 degrees. This will also slow mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
- Consider insulating your hot water pipes. Doing so can reduce heat loss. Installing a water softener in areas with hard water will help with sediment buildup and the performance of your water heater. Refer to your owner's manual for regular maintenance.

Other tips to conserve hot water in your home include:

- Install low-flow shower heads and changing your laundry and dish washing habits.
- Wait to do full loads which means fewer cycles.
- Use the cold or warm setting to wash and cold to rinse your clothes.

- Keep showers brief and use water sparingly when taking a bath rather than filling up the tub.

Have you ever put a container under a leaky faucet to realize how much water you lose in a day? Take a few minutes to fix the leak.

You can also sign up for Sioux Valley Energy's Time of Use Rate to save money for shifting your usage and daily chores like laundry and dish washing to off-peak times.

If you are in the market for a new water heater, there are four things to think about: tank size, type of energy, warranty and overall efficiency. Sioux Valley Energy has an unbeatable water heater program. We carry energy efficient electric Marathon and Westinghouse water heaters for residential and ag/commercial applications. Get the peace of mind in having a water heater that is guaranteed against leaks for as long as you own your home or business (some restrictions apply). Water heaters are connected to a load management system that helps shift demand during peak usage on the system benefiting overall rates for members. Contact SVE for more information and to learn how you can purchase the last water heater you will ever need to buy for \$400 plus applicable tax.

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

TELL ME MORE!

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



Sioux Valley Energy's Sheila Gross presents Phillip Miller of Brandon with the Aventon e-bike he won.

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ANDERSON AWARDED JAY A. YORK SCHOLARSHIP

Kaitlyn Anderson, 2021 Luverne High School graduate, was recently awarded a \$400 scholarship through the Jay A. York Scholarship program. Anderson is currently attending the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul pursuing a degree in Business Management.



Kaitlyn Anderson
Luverne, Minn

The Jay A. York scholarship was established in recognition of the first Minnesotan to head the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Jay York was a prominent figure in rural electric cooperative issues for nearly 30 years. He was elected in 1964 to the Nobles Cooperative Electric (NCE) Board. Mr. York was not only well-known for his great leadership ability but also great dignity, a disarming understanding of the issues and an unyielding dedication to his fellow rural Americans.

This year eleven cooperatives participated in the scholarship in honor of Mr. York. They were Sioux Valley Energy, Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Federated Rural Electric Association, McLeod Cooperative Power Association, Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative, Nobles Cooperative Electric,

Redwood Electric Cooperative, Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association, South Central Electric Association, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric and Traverse Electric Cooperative, Inc. From these eleven cooperatives, four winners were randomly selected. In addition to Kaitlyn Anderson (Sioux Valley Energy), other recipients included: Lilly Ehrke (McLeod), Emily Matejka (South Central), and Carson Sobrack (Steele-Waseca).

Each winner receives a \$400 scholarship that is made available from the participating cooperatives.

A PLACE TO REST



The South Dakota Veterans Cemetery located northeast of Sioux Falls provides a new resting place for U.S. military veterans and their families. *Photos by Billy Gibson*

State Veterans Cemetery in Sioux Falls opens new options for military families

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

A dozen distraught family members surrounded the casket conspicuously draped with a bright, crisp American flag. The brilliant hues of red, white and blue stood in stark contrast to the slate gray sky hanging overhead and the slight chill that filled the air.

As the gathered mourners paid their last respects and turned back toward the administration building at the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery, the clouds suddenly burst open and a heavy rain began to fall.

“Well, your daddy was a rancher,” the grieving widow said to her son as they made their way down the hillside. “A good rain is exactly what he would have wanted. This would have made him smile.”

Erin Brown is director of the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery (SDVC) located northeast of Sioux Falls and she often hears stories that family members share about their loved ones who arrive at their final resting

place there. A military veteran herself, Brown said those stories bring added meaning and significance to her work.

“The veterans – and their families – are very important to us,” she said. “When I hear those kinds of stories and hear them describe a lifetime of memories and all the good times they had together, it reinforces the idea that there’s real value in what we’re doing here at the cemetery.”

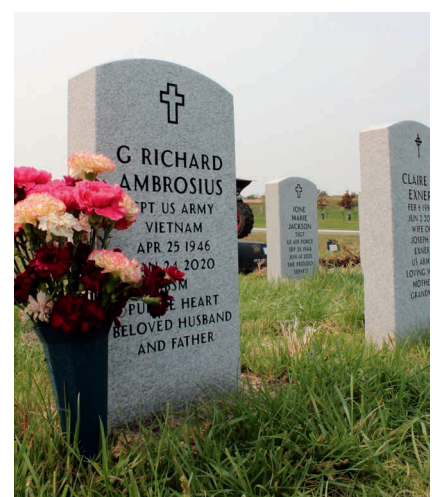
The SDVC is the first federally funded, state-owned and operated veterans cemetery in the state, although there is no residency requirement for military veterans to be interred there. The Black Hills National Cemetery is located a few miles east of Sturgis.

The facility is located on 60 acres donated by the City of Sioux Falls and ultimately will have enough space for over 28,000 casket grave sites, cremation grave sites, a columbarium for cremated remains and a scattering garden. More than 600 in-ground crypts have already been installed. The facility was made possible by more

than \$7 million in federal money, state funds and private donations.

Since the ribbon-cutting ceremony last Memorial Day, the cemetery has seen a steady stream of burials. There were four on a recent Friday.

SDVC staff works with the families to arrange details of the burial services which typically include a final pre-service consultation with the families, a processional to the committal shelter, a 15-20 minute service, folding and presentation of the flag, and a rifle salute and Taps presented by local military-related volunteer organizations.





Members of the grounds crew are all veterans and can relate to military families in their time of grief.

Clarence Kooistra is one of those volunteers who donates his time to make sure veterans receive a proper burial and their families receive the proper respect. He's a member of the VFW Post 628 Honor Guard based in Sioux Falls.

"I just feel it's very important that these men and women are treated with the respect they deserve for the sacrifices they've made to preserve our freedoms and democracy in our country," Kooistra said. "It's a privilege for me to come out here and do this for the families."

While construction commenced on the cemetery two years ago, it took several years to bring the project to fruition. At the time the first federal grant application was submitted in 2017, Brown was serving as a veterans program manager in the State Department of Veteran's Affairs helping veterans navigate through the federal bureaucracy to receive their rightful benefits. She often found, however, that some of the former soldiers would balk at the benefits "so that someone they felt needed it more than them could get it."

When the cemetery director position opened up, she jumped at the chance to find another way to help veterans.

In performing her job, Brown

calls on her own military experience, which includes joining the Minnesota National Guard in high school and receiving advanced individual training at Fort Lee in Virginia. She returned and attended college for three years before getting deployed to Iraq for nearly two years.

She worked in supply management at a Marine base between Ramadi and Fallujah and eventually left the service as an E-5.

When she and her staff are interacting with veterans and their families, they have little difficulty relating to them on a personal basis.

"The military is the kind of experience that you don't know you want or need until you have it," she said. "All of those experiences have put me into one of the most rewarding jobs I've been able to do. Without it, I wouldn't be able to relate to the families and get the help they need and have earned. Once they realize I'm also a veteran, things change and they see me differently."

Brown and her staff - all of whom are veterans themselves - have

developed personal relationships with the families whose loved ones are interred at the facility. During their visits to the cemetery, family members often express their gratitude to the staff for their work in keeping the facility well maintained and give updates on how the family is faring and if they have any further needs.

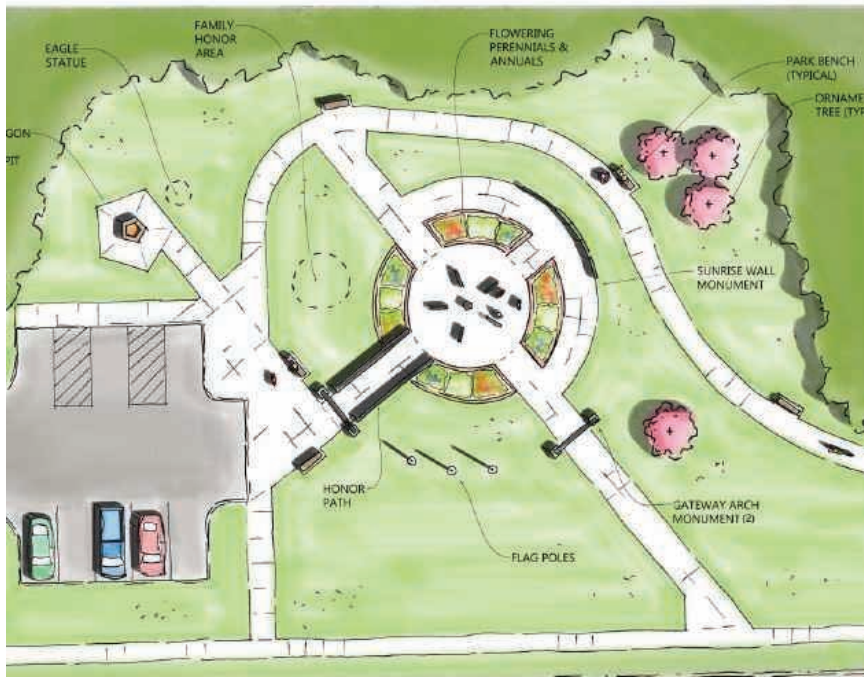
Brown said she is looking toward the future with optimism for the



The Committal Shelter is the site of many outdoor funeral services for veterans.

cemetery and its mission, especially after the South Dakota Veterans Council last summer announced a \$2.1 million donation from philanthropist T. Denny Sanford, PREMIER Bankcard CEO Miles Beacom and his wife Lisa.

For more information, visit <https://vetaffairs.sd.gov/veteranscemetery/>.



HONORING VETS

Veterans Honor Park Planned in Madison Gets Operation Round Up® Fund Boost

Brenda Kleinjan
Communications Specialist

A Veterans Honor Park along a busy stretch of South Washington Avenue in Madison, S.D., started to take shape this summer.

“We have the first honor path started and we’re hoping within the next month to have it installed,” said honor park chairman Danny Frisby-Griffin, indicating that initial phase of the project may be finished by Veteran’s Day 2021. The overall project is to be finished by November 2022.

Frisby-Griffin said the idea for a place to recognize veterans had

been discussed for a while, but momentum for the park started with a land donation.

The park is across from Lewis Drug and the land for the project was donated by Jerry and Sue Larsen. The intent of the project is to honor past, present and future veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. The park seeks to recognize all U.S. Veterans, not just those in the Madison, S.D., area and is a joint effort between the Ronald Westby VFW Post 2638 and the McKibbin-Mosher American Legion Post 25, both of which are based in Madison.

“It’s a way to show appreciation to the veterans and their families,” Frisby-Griffin said.

FUNDRAISING GOAL SET

Organizers are working to raise \$750,000 for the memorial and are two-thirds of the way to the goal. The park includes plans for three honor paths, with the first, consisting of 414 veterans’ names, being installed this fall. Each of the first two paths will include a granite arch and the paths will lead to a focal point of panels for each military service branch. A series of eight polished granite panels will form a sunrise wall as a backdrop to the circular monument area.

The group received a \$2,500 donation through the Sioux Valley Energy Operation Round Up® program in February.

For more information on the project, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/veteranshonor-parksd or call 605-256-6771.

MEMBERS MAKE OPERATION ROUND UP POSSIBLE

Operation Round Up started in the year 2000. Since that time, nearly \$2 million has been awarded to worthy causes throughout the Cooperative’s service territory.

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 www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/operation-roundup.

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

2022 DISTRICT MEETINGS SET

The Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors approved the 2022 District Meeting schedule during their September meeting. Three elections will take place in Districts 4, 6 and 10. In District 6, only one at large seat (Fish) is up for election this year.

Members interested in running for the Board must submit a Director Petition, Conflict of Interest Statement and Qualification Certification 60 days prior to the meeting date. Petitions must be delivered to a Sioux Valley Energy office location or postmarked by the petition deadline. Sioux Valley Energy encourages members to gather extra member signatures and to deliver or mail completed petitions in advance of the petition deadline to ensure time for member verification.

Petition deadlines are as follows:

- District 6 – Sunday, January 16, 2022**
- District 10 – Friday, January 28, 2022**
- District 4 – Sunday, January 30, 2022**

Petitions can be obtained at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com or by calling 800-234-1960. The Cooperative Bylaws state the qualifications needed to be a director (see below). Interested members are encouraged to

Date	District	Director	Location
Tuesday, February 22	5	Weinacht	Taopi Hall Colton, SD
Thursday, February 24	8	Leuthold	Grand Prairie Event Center Luverne, MN
Monday, February 28	1	DeGreef	Elkton Community Center Elkton, SD
Thursday, March 10	9	Johnson	Pipestone Area High School Pipestone, MN
Thursday, March 17*	6	Fish* & Rogen	Brandon Valley High School Brandon, SD
Tuesday, March 22	3	Heinemann	William J Janklow Comm. Center Flandreau, SD
Thursday, March 24	7	DeMent	West Central School Hartford, SD
Monday, March 28	2	Vostad	Sioux Valley School Volga, SD
Tuesday, March 29*	10	Roskamp	Edgerton Public School Edgerton, MN
Thursday, March 31*	4	Daniel	Dakota Prairie Playhouse Madison, SD

contact Brenda Schelhaas, Executive Assistant. All Board seats elected in 2022 will serve three-year terms.

* Denotes election meetings.

SVE Bylaws: Director Qualifications

SECTION 5. Qualifications. Any member shall be eligible to be nominated or elected or to remain a Director, provided that: (a) They are a natural person receiving electric service from the Cooperative at their primary residence or meet the qualifications for corporate representation; (b) They have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts; (c) They have been and shall remain a resident of the district for which they are or were nominated or elected for at least one (1) year prior to nomination, and continue to reside therein during their entire term as Director; (d) While a Director and during the five (5) years immediately prior to becoming a Director, they have not been convicted of a felony; (e) They or their spouse are not employed by, materially affiliated with or have a material financial interest in any individual or entity which either is: (i) Directly and substantially competing with the Cooperative, or any of its subsidiaries; or (ii) Selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative or its subsidiaries; or having sold goods or services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative or its subsidiaries within three (3) years of seeking nomination. (iii) Possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or any of its subsidiaries; or (iv) They are not in any way employed by the Cooperative or

any of its subsidiaries nor have they been employed by the Cooperative or its subsidiaries within three (3) years of the directors nomination, and (v) They are not a close relative of any existing Director or existing employee of the Cooperative or its subsidiaries. For the purpose of this section only “close relative” shall mean a person who is either a child, grandchild, stepchild, parent, grandparent, stepparent, brother or sister, by blood or in-law, of the principal. (f) A designated representative of any non-human member such as a corporation, shall, notwithstanding that he or she does not receive service from the Cooperative at their primary residential abode, be eligible to become a Director, if: 1) He or she is an officer of said non-human member; and 2) He or she is in substantial permanent occupancy, direction or use of the premises served by the Cooperative; and 3) He or she is a permanent year round resident within the district for which the Corporation or non-human member is receiving service, and 4) Otherwise meets the qualifications set forth herein, provided, however, that no more than one (1) such person as the designated representative may serve on the Board at the same time and in the event that he or she should resign or is unwilling to so act, the directorship shall become vacant.

THE FIRST TO ACT



The state's emergency medical services workforce declined 30 percent last year, though some are still eager to serve.

Though rural South Dakota is experiencing a shortage of first responders, some are still eager to bear the responsibility

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

The early morning fog had already settled in heavy and thick as a damp blanket when Joey Denison pulled out of his driveway in Lake Norden. He was headed to Lake Preston for his job as an electric lineman and just happened to be fresh off earning his paramedic license in his spare time.

Within just a few minutes of driving along Hwy. 81, the blurry image of a wrecked semi came into view through the haze. The rig was overturned and rested across the roadway. At first blush, the scene appeared to be a one-vehicle accident, but Denison soon saw the small pickup that was crushed beneath the trailer.

When he got close enough to peer inside the vehicle, he saw a young woman who had clearly sustained severe damage to her skull. His four years of training through EMT and paramedic school kicked into high gear.

"There were cars still running into the semi from the other side so I positioned

my truck where no one could run into her car," Denison recalled. "Then I pulled her car out from underneath the trailer with my truck. I could see her head was shattered and someone had already called 911 to report that she was dead. Eventually, we were able to get her out with the Jaws of Life and transport her to the hospital in Madison."

The young lady made a full recovery and she and Denison still stay in contact three years later.

Denison doesn't characterize his actions as heroic; he sees his response as something that neighbors and citizens simply do for one another. Spurred on by his passion for helping others, Denison began his EMT training seven years ago and now volunteers his services in Lake Norden and the surrounding area.

"I always kind of regretted not going into the military, so this is my way of being a community servant," he said.

These days he teaches classes in emergency training and notes a shortage of qualified volunteers to staff rural first responder operations.

According to the South Dakota Department of Health, over the past year the active EMS workforce has declined 30 percent.

Denison said assumptions sometimes depart from reality when it comes to EMS work, and he encourages those who have a penchant for serving others to consider first responder training.



Joey Denison says emergency response work is both challenging and rewarding.

"The physical act of rendering first aid is a lot of repetitive training and muscle memory, but people think it's too complex. If you can catch a baseball, you can put your hand over a cut. It's not that hard," he said. "We can't be afraid to help someone in need in an emergency situation. Someday it could be you who needs the help."

A LIFETIME OF CO-OP SERVICE TO MEMBERS

Co-op leaders recognized at SDAC Hall of Fame banquet

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Harry Thomas still remembers turning on the “power switch” for the first time at his home when he was a youngster.

That was made possible by his local electric cooperative, and for Thomas it was a life lesson about the great things that can happen through co-op organizations. He went on to serve for nearly four decades on the board of Venture Communications and was one of four recent inductees into the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives Hall of Fame.

Thomas and Paul Symens were recognized as 2021 inductees at the ceremony held in Watertown Sept. 22, while Chuck Birkholt and Dan Lindblom were honored as 2020 inductees. Last year’s banquet was canceled due to the pandemic.

“I’ve been around cooperative systems all my life,” Thomas said. “I remember when the co-op brought power to the farm and when Sully Buttes built the first telephone line out there. Those things would not have happened if not for cooperatives. The Bell companies built in the towns, but they had no



Inducted into the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives Hall of Fame were Harry Thomas, Chuck Birkholt and Paul Symens. Not shown is Dan Lindblom, who was unable to attend the induction ceremony in Watertown.

interest in going into the country.”

Symens served on the board at Lake Region Electric in Webster before he was elected to the state Legislature in 1987 and again in 1996. He was a board member for Farmers Union Marketing and Processing for 36 years.

“I’ve put in a lot of time with cooperatives and I know how co-ops work. I was raised in co-ops and it has been a pleasure to be a part of that process. The magic of co-ops is people working together to help each other, and as long as board and management do their jobs, it’s going to be successful.”

Symens said his advice for the younger generation of co-op leaders would be to learn about the history of cooperatives, how they were founded and why they exist.

“Learning from history will teach you a lot and keep you from making mistakes,” he said.

Birkholt started his cooperative career

as a laborer at Cam Wal Electric in Selby. He went to work “digging holes and setting poles” for 85 cents an hour until he discovered he could make more money as a lineman.

He worked at the co-op for 45 years, the last eight as general manager. He went on to serve on the board at Venture Communications for the past 21 years.

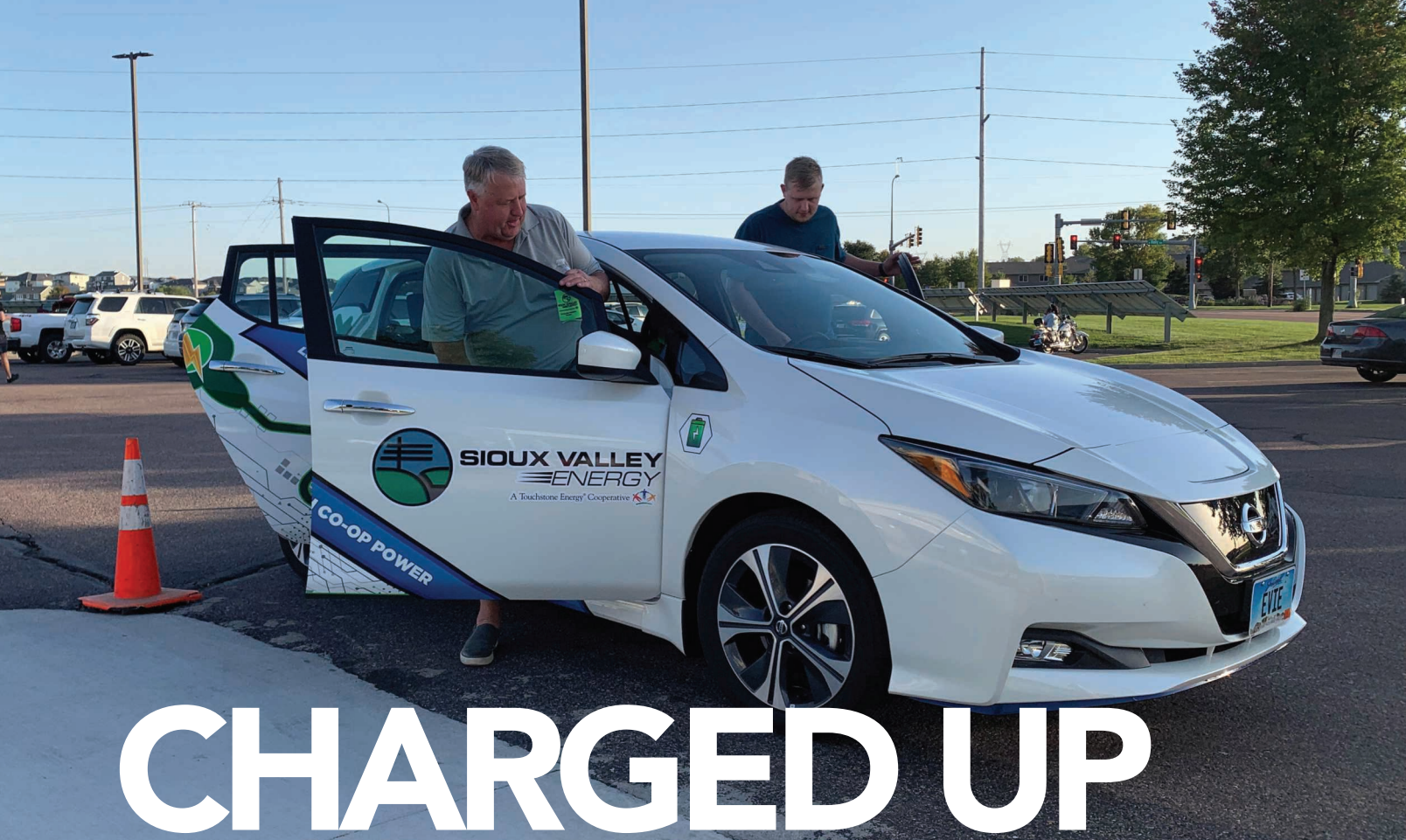
“I told my wife I always wanted to see



Hall of Fame inductee Chuck Birkholt addresses the audience at the Watertown Event Center.

what it was like on the other side of the board table,” he said. “But I think she just wanted me out of the house.”

Lindblom, a long-time board member at Black Hills Electric in Custer, was unable to attend the banquet.



CHARGED UP

Hundreds attend Ride and Drive Event and Electric Vehicle Show held in Brandon during National Drive Electric Week

Brenda Kleinjan
Communications Specialist

Enthusiasts, skeptics and the curious looked under the hood, kicked the tires and took various electric vehicles for a spin at an electric vehicle event held Sept. 28 in Brandon.

“A lot of people got an opportunity to drive an electric vehicle, which was one of the purposes of the event,” said Ben Pierson, Sioux Valley Energy Manager of Beneficial Electrification. “It was fun seeing how people were surprised by how driving an EV just feels different.”

Pierson accompanied drivers taking the Mustang Mach-E, provided

by Sioux Falls Ford, for a test drive.

“The most common comments were how quiet and smooth the EVs were,” Pierson said. “It seemed to change a lot of peoples’ minds about EVs by driving one.”

In addition to the Sioux Valley Energy Nissan Leaf and the Mach-E, other vehicles available to test drive included another Nissan Leaf from Billion Nissan, Vern Eide’s Mitsubishi Outlander and Tesla 3s provided by H-D Electric Cooperative in Clear Lake, S.D., and Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative in Tyler, Minn. Also available for test drives were a Harley-Davidson Livewire motorcycle simulator display and e-bikes provided by Erik’s Bike, Board, Ski of Sioux Falls.

E-SHOW & DRIVE VEHICLES

- Audi e-Tron
- Aventon Pace e-bike
- Chevrolet Bolt
- Ford Mustang Mach-E
- Harley-Davidson Livewire motorcycle
- Mitsubishi Outlander
- Nissan Leaf
- Porsche Taycan
- Tesla Model 3
- Tesla Model Y
- Tesla Model X



Brian Jeremiason of Lyon-Lincoln Electric gives a reporter a test drive in their Tesla 3.

MEMBERS SHARE THEIR ELECTRIC VEHICLE VOYAGES

Mike and Paula Wagner brought out their Mustang Mach-E with their “frunk” loaded with sodas. (The Mach-E’s front trunk area has a drain allowing it to double as a cooler space.) The sodas proved to be a conversation starter as the couple shared their EV experiences.

“We have it, we like it. we love it. When we’re driving it, it’s a sports car; makes us feel about 18,” said Mike Wagner. “But when we have to go to town, it’s like a truck: it will hold anything. For us, it’s a perfect mix, and it’s cheap to run.”

The Wagners, who are retired and live in the Brandt Lake area near Chester, estimate they put about 300 miles on the vehicle a week with trips to Sioux Falls and Brookings.

“We’re spending about \$2 for all that driving,” Mike said.

Like others attending the show, the Wagners took advantage of Sioux Valley Energy programs when they purchased their

9
ELECTRIC VEHICLES
AVAILABLE TO TEST DRIVE:
1 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER,
1 FORD MUSTANG MACH-E,
2 TESLAS, 2 NISSAN LEAFS,
1 HARLEY-DAVIDSON
LIVEWIRE AND
2 E-BIKES

400
MILES
TEST DRIVEN

DO IT. YOU’LL LOVE IT. IT’LL ONLY GET BETTER WITH TIME, AND IT’S PRETTY GREAT RIGHT NOW. - JASON KNUDSEN ON THOSE CONSIDERING AN EV

Mach-E, which has the moniker “Charge” on its plates.

The Wagners received a Level 2 charger rebate and have a separate submeter installed, allowing them to charge on off-peak times for about a nickle a kilowatt hour.

Other Sioux Valley Energy members who had their EVs on display in the show shared similar tales.

Jason Knudsen, who drives a Tesla Model Y, was looking for a family car and opted for the more SUV-like ride when selecting his EV.

“It’s just a complete different experience. There’s no gears or anything. You’re just going; it’s really hands-off. It’s intuitive; it’s phenomenal to be in,” said Knudsen, who lives in Brandon.

He estimates driving about 2,000 miles a month in the Sioux Falls area.

Like the Wagners, Knudsen is on the Cooperative’s plug in rate. EV owners can also opt for a whole-home Time of Use Rate.

“It’s an unbelievable rate per kilowatt – it’s five cents! I come from California where it was high 30s,” Knudsen said. “That’s a big difference. It costs about \$3.75 to fill up the car from E to F. That’ll take me about 300 miles.”

Knudsen’s advice for those thinking about adding an EV to their vehicle line up?

“Do it. You’ll love it. It’ll only get better with time, and it’s pretty great right now.”



Mike and Paula Wagner stand next to their Mustang Mach-E that they had on display during the EV Show on Sept. 28.



Thanksgiving
November 25, 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.

To view the publication's master event calendar, scan the QR code below:



Or visit <https://sdrea.coop/cooperative-connections-event-calendar> to view more upcoming events.

OCTOBER 22-23

Governor's SD Showcase
1201 N West Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-773-3301

OCTOBER 23

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

OCTOBER 22-24, 28-30
A Little Piece of Heaven

Grand Opera House, Pierre, SD, 605-224-7826

OCTOBER 23

Aberdeen Oktoberfest
Aberdeen Civic Arena, Aberdeen, SD, 605-380-8448

OCTOBER 29-30

Fort Sisseton Lantern Tours
11907 434th Avenue, Lake City, SD, Contact Ali at 605-448-5474 for more info

OCTOBER 30
16th Holiday Shopping Extravaganza

Davison County Fairgrounds, Mitchell, SD, call Cindy at 605-999-8563 for more info

OCTOBER 30

Yankton's Harvest Halloween
Downtown, Yankton, SD, email mandi@bostonsyankton.com for more info

NOVEMBER 4

Chris Young Famous Friends Tour
Summit Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

NOVEMBER 6

Cyrus Steele Comedy Show
Homestake Opera House, Lead, SD, visit <https://www.homestakeoperahouse.org/> for more info and tickets

NOVEMBER 5-7, 12-14, 19-21

Julius Caesar
Black Hills Playhouse, Rapid City, SD, visit <https://www.bhct.org/> for more info and tickets

NOVEMBER 12-13
Sioux Empire Arts and Crafts Show

W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-332-6000

NOVEMBER 13

Christmas at the Homestead
Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve, North Sioux City, SD, 605-232-0873

NOVEMBER 13

Deadwood's Big Whiskey Fest
Main Street, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

NOVEMBER 13

Sisseton Area Merchants and Crafters Holiday Open House Extravaganza
Sisseton, SD, call Beverly at 605-698-7425 for more info

NOVEMBER 19-20

Holiday Arts Christmas Show
Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

NOVEMBER 20

Little Norge Fest: A Taste of Scandinavia
Canyon Lake Activity Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-342-4226

NOVEMBER 26

Parade of Lights
Dakota Avenue, Huron, SD, 605-352-0000

NOVEMBER 26

Annual Sioux Falls Parade of Lights/ After Party & Awards Ceremony
Phillips Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-338-4009

NOVEMBER 26-28

Beautiful - The Carole King Musical
Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD, visit <https://www.washingtonpavilion.org/> for more info and tickets

NOVEMBER 27

Lights at the Lodge/Lighted Trail Walk
Hiawatha Pageant Park, Pipestone, MN, 507-825-3316

DECEMBER 2

Christmas on the Prairie
526 North Broadway Avenue Miller, SD, 605-853-3098

DECEMBER 3

Handel's Messiah
First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

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